

NISHAAN

IV / 2008

NAGAARA



**The Guru Eternal
Nanded, 2008**

Contents

Issue IV/2008



The evocative images in this issue of the *Nishaan* (as also those in issue III/2008) have been taken by Malkiat Singh.

Born in 1974 in Delhi, Malkiat Singh did his BFA from the Rajasthan Collage of Art. His photographs first appeared in the book 'Great Glory of Sikhism' published by Rupa & Co., the next being in 'Guru Granth Sahib' by Dr Mohinder Singh, published by Himalayan Books. Ongoing projects include three additional books, including 'Journey of Faith' on the Garhwal Himalaya, the 'Nihangs' and 'Hazoor Sahib', the latter marking the 300 years of Gurta Gaddi.

The images in *Nishaan's* issue III/2008 ('1708: Remembering the last journey of Dasam Guru') are part of the expansive collection to be published as the book '1708'.

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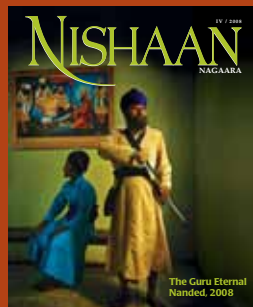
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The Guru : His Commissioning and Ordination

In Guru Granth Sāhib, there is an ode in Ramkalī rāga wherein the bards Balvand and Sattā make this fundamental observation, 'In the Sikh tradition, all the Sikh Gurus shared the same One Light and the same Way of Action; the Master only turned over into another body' (p.966). This seminal statement raises the question: how was Guru Nanak commissioned and how the ordination of his nine successors take place ?

Guru Nanak, indeed was commissioned by *Akal Purakh* (the Lord Eternal) Himself. All the *Janam Sakhis* (chronicles of Guru Nanak's life) unanimously tell the following story:

One day, he went to the river to bathe as usual, but did not return. Even after frantic search he could not be found for three days and nights. Then suddenly he reappeared as if from nowhere. This three-day absence was, for him, a period of intense mystical experience of direct communion with God:

'As the Supreme Lord wished, Nanak the devotee was escorted to His exalted presence. A cup filled with *amrit* (divine ambrosia) was offered him, which he gratefully accepted. A command was then given him, "This is the draught of adoration. Drink it...I am with you and hereby bless you and exalt you. This cup of *amrit* that I have given you is a pledge of my favour. Go and rejoice in my Nām and instruct others to do so...I bestow upon you the gift of my Nām. Let this be your calling".

Nanak then stood up and made salutation. The voice spoke again, "Nanak ! Do you discern me well?" Nanak then recited what the Sikh tradition now calls *mool mantra* (the Prime Revelation).

The voice was heard again: "He who receives your Grace, Nanak, shall abide in Mine. My Name is the Supreme Lord, yours, the divine Guru". Nanak had become Guru Nanak after that communion.

Guru Nanak travelled for thirty years singing to people praises of the Lord's Name and striving to bring people into the Lord's fold to abide dauntlessly there under His protectorate. But he felt that one life time was too short for the mission he longed to fulfil. He would have a line of successors to carry his work to completion.

Towards the later days of his life, he had come to Kartarpur and lived with his family. One day, when he left his home, his wife asked him as to where was he heading. He told her, that his successor is on his way towards him and he is going out to receive him. It was Lehna coming on horse back. He had not seen Nanak before so could not recognise him. Which is why he asked Nanak himself if he could lead him to Guru Nanak's residence. Guru Nanak, holding the stirrup of his horse, brought him home, asked him to tether his horse outside, then come into the house to meet Nanak. When Lehna went in, he found to his surprise that the person who led his horse to that home was none else but Guru Nanak himself. He was simply in adoration of Nanak and decided never to leave him.

In Sikh lore, it is ordained that 'if you take but one step towards the Guru, the Guru shall take a million steps to receive you'. How come then Lehna himself had come to meet the Guru ? Sikh faith does not reckon the physical body of the Guru as the real Guru. It is his Word that is the real Guru. The Guru's Word had travelled to Lehna, hearing of which from his neighbour Jodha, he decided to join the Guru.

Chronicles of Guru Nanak's life describe the series of difficult tests that Nanak gave Lehna over time which appeared to test his dedication and obedience. And Lehna never faltered. However when Nanak already knew that Lehna was to be his successor, why did he put him to test so many times ? All those tests were also given to others including the Guru's own sons. They all faltered. Thus, the tests were given in order to make it apparent to one and all that Lehna was most devoted of the Guru's followers. The last test was the most amazing and was given to the entire congregation. The Guru assumed a terrible visage, in tattered clothes, dagger in one hand and hunting dogs with him. He proceeded to the forest ostensibly for a chase. Seeing this, several of his followers went away. Others who followed him, found copper coins scattered along the road. Some picked those up and departed. A little ahead, the path was strewn with silver coins and further ahead with gold coins. Most Sikhs pocketed those and vanished. The Guru threatened all of the remaining few with his dagger. All left but Lehna. The Guru then asked Lehna, "Why have you not gone

away?" Lehna replied, "I have no one but you to whom I can turn." The Guru then clasped Lehna into his arms and said, "Lehna, if you have none but me, I also have none but you whom I can call 'mine'. You are now *Angad*, like my own limb."

Guru Nanak knowing that his life's end was approaching, then appointed Angad as his successor, instead of his own sons. He placed the umbrella of spiritual sovereignty over Angad's head and ceremoniously bowed to him as the next Guru. Guru Nanak had sensed that the 'same Light and the same *modus operandi*' was operative in his successor.

This decision was neither acceptable to his sons nor to most of the community members. The community decided to send their representatives to meet the Guru in order to remonstrate on why had had neglected his own sons.

The Guru said, "They are noble, indeed, but do not have the vision of Guru Angad Sahib." (Let this be noted that Guru Nanak no longer calls him Lehna or Angad, but reverently as Guru Angad Sahib).

"Please let us know how your son's vision is different from that of Lehna?" The Guru said, "I will presently let you see". He then picked up a coin that had been offered him and grasped it into his fist. Then addressed his sons and asked them, "Can you tell me what is there in my hand?" Sri Chand, his elder son said, "Father, you have only a coin in your hand. I have seen you pick it up." Then the Guru asked his younger son, "Lakshmi Das, you tell me what is there in my hand?" He said, "My brother is quite right, you have only a coin there." Then he addressed his successor, "Sri Guru Angad Sahib, kindly you tell them what is in my hand." Guru Angad with folded hands said, "My intellect is too small to gauge what all you have in your hand. You have emancipation and salvation in your hand, you have the control of the entire universe in your hands. What is there that you do not have in your hand?" The Guru then addressed the delegates and said, "See, my sons could not see beyond that coin. Only Guru Angad Sahib has transcendent vision."

There are lessons to be drawn from this event. First, in Guru Nanak's house, the criterion for appointing a religious leader is not 'popularity' with people, but 'transcendent vision'. If Guru Nanak's successor was to be elected by popular vote, Guru Angad could never have been elected. No one might have even proposed his name. Second, Guruship is not hereditary. One cannot claim it by asserting such a right but would

gain it through complete self surrender. Third, even an ordinary man by virtue of unrelenting faith, unflinching reliance on the Guru and continually meditating the Eternal Lord can become elevated to the level of a Guru, as was Guru Angad.

Guru Angad's successor was Guru Amar Das. He was 62 years of age when he met Guru Angad and instantaneously knew that he had found his Guru. Guru Angad at that time was a younger man of 37. Amar Das not only accepted him as his Guru but also continued to serve him for eleven years before he was chosen as successor. Guru Angad acknowledged his service with great reverence. In prevalent Hindu society, those who served were considered as 'low caste' *shudras* and those who were served, such as the Brahmins, were the 'high caste'. As per the Sikh Gurus, serving others was considered as the most dignified act. The Sikh Gurus had clearly established dignity of labour.

Chronological age mattered little in the Guru-Sikh relationship. Was it not amazing that Sri Amar Das accepted as his Guru a person who was a quarter century younger to him? Is it not also amazing that Guru Amar Das was chosen as the Guru when he was 73, an age that, in those times, was normally considered as senile, if not hypersenile? However, what made everyone marvel was the wealth of spiritual compositions of Guru Amar Das and how he organised the Sikh community.

In the same manner as Guru Nanak and Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das also did not appoint any of his sons as his successor, but chose Ram Das, his son-in-law, for the high temporal responsibility. That kinship relationship as well as selection as Guru, were the consequence of such qualities as humility, devotion, and moral rectitude that Guru Amar Das had observed in him. Guru Amar Das's son called on Guru Ram Das and seeing his long flowing beard, asked him, "What for have you grown such a long beard?" Guru Ram Das replied, "To dust the feet of worthy persons like you" and immediately thus started brushing the honoured visitor's feet. His visitor then said, "It is such inimitable humility of yours that made you deserve the Guruship."

It had become patently clear that the Guru's position was not a hereditary one. However, Guru Ram Das's wife who was also Guru Amar Das's daughter, could foresee that the attitude of the Mughal rulers towards the Sikh faith was no longer benign as it was during Emperor Akbar's time. She

clearly apprehended adverse vicissitudes befalling the Sikh Gurus and their followers. So she pleaded before her father and her husband to “let the future Guruship remain with the Sodhi clan (i.e. the clan of her husband) for hardly any others would be able to endure the coming calamities.” The Gurus could appreciate her apprehension and so the Guru’s position was focussed on the Sodhi clan, yet not necessarily directly heritable in the traditional sense.

Guru Ram Das chose his youngest son Arjan, neither of the elder ones, to succeed him on the Guru’s seat. Guru Arjan Dev compiled the first rendering of Granth Sahib and had the Harmandir Sahib (later known as the Golden Temple) erected in the midst of the ‘Pool of Immortality’, *Amritsar*. His following began to increase. However, the first challenge soon befell the Sodhi clan when Guru Arjan Dev was executed by the Mughal Emperor Jehangir as he considered the growing following of the Guru as threatening Islam. The Guru gave his life but not his faith, and thus established the Sikh tradition of martyrdom.

Guru Arjan passed on the *Gur-Gaddi* (the Throne of Guruship) to his twelve year old son whom he expected would prepare Sikhs to respond adequately to the unjust tyranny of the rulers. The twelve-year old Guru proved to be the right choice for this commission. He turned his Sikhs into *saint soldiers*. There was now unfolding of Guru Nanak’s mission of creating a commonwealth of those who not only worshipped the Supreme Lord, but by virtue of their faith in Him also became undaunted themselves. The Guru also assumed ‘Temporal authority’ besides the Spiritual one. He established the *Akal Takht* (Throne of the Immortal Lord) from where he would adjudicate over temporal issues of the community so that they would not have to turn to prejudiced and unjust Mughal courts.

Guru Har Rai, the next Guru passed on Guruship to his five-year old son because his elder son had altered the sacred text of Guru Nanak to please Emperor Aurangzeb and for this depravity the Guru had ordered him away in disgrace. The five year old Guru had only three more years to live, but declining of Aurangzeb’s invitation to meet him gave clear evidence of his undaunted spirit. Also, his indication that his successor was in village Bakala was evidence of his spiritual sagacity.

The Baba in Bakala was Tegh Bahadur who became the ninth Guru after the child Guru, Harkishan. His infinite contribution to the sanctity of religion was unique. He offered to lay down his life to save the

Hindu community from forcible conversion to Islam upon the threat of death. It was his nine year old son, Gobind Rai, who said that his father was the most appropriate to offer martyrdom for the freedom of faith. He reinforced the tradition of martyrdom that had been initiated by Guru Arjan Dev. He gave up his life but not his resolve. Before his execution, he sent out a message to the Sikhs that after him his son Gobind Rai shall succeed him as the next Guru.

Gobind Rai proved to be a great nation builder. He instituted Order of the Khalsa, warriors of the Divine Lord, demanding the sacrifice of lives of the first five initiates. Then he anointed with *Amrit*, the ‘nectar of steel’ and assigned them the surname Singh (a lion). Then, from those first five, designated as *Panj Piare* (the five beloved Ones) he himself sought initiation into the sublime Order of the Khalsa. That transformed him to be Guru Gobind Singh from Guru Gobind Rai.

His life was one of supreme sacrifice. He had encouraged his father to sacrifice his life to stem the tyranny of Mughals converting Hindus to Islam and so to protect their faith. His elder two sons gave up their lives fighting the Mughul hordes that had betrayed their sworn oath. His younger two sons were martyred by the tyrannous rulers. His mother passed away of that shock. Finally, he himself was treacherously attacked by a Mughal conspiracy. All his family, and he himself became martyrs for their faith.

As Guru Gobind Singh’s end drew near, he asked his Sikhs to bring him a volume of Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book. Before it he ceremonially bowed and told the Sikhs that after him, the holy Granth Sahib shall be their eternal Guru.

Guru Nanak had made very clear that the real Guru was not his body, but his Word, his instruction. Guru Granth Sahib is repository of the Gurus’ Word and so abiding as Guru for eternity.

We are reminded of what the bards, Balwand and Satta, had said: “all the Sikh Gurus shared the same One Light and the same Way of Action; the Master only turned over into another body”. The Light was the Word, the modus operandi was a life of dauntless courage. The Word had been encapsulated in the holy Granth and modus operandi in the Order of the Khalsa also known as the Pānth. The holy Granth Sahib on the one hand and the community of faith on the other, hold the spiritual and temporal aspects of Guruship, which shall remain for all time.

Centuries of Tradition : Gur ta Gaddi From Gurdwara Nagina Ghat to Takht Hazoor Sahib



The revered 300-year-old handwritten *Bir* of Guru Gobind Singh's time is taken in a golden palanquin from Gurdwara Nagina Ghat, situated on the banks of the Godavari, to Takht Hazoor Sahib in a procession to commemorate the many centuries tradition of *Gur ta Gaddi*.

The present building of Gurdwara Nagina Ghat is situated on a high plinth and comprises a square hall in which *Shri Guru Granth Sahib* is seated on a canopied 'palaki' of white marble, and a smaller square room topped by a dome on the first floor.

Led by Panj Pyaras and *Shri Guru Granth Sahib*, the short distance of some yards between Gurdwara Nagina Ghat and Takht Hazoor Sahib was covered in five hours.

In front of Gurdwara Nagina Ghat, original bir of Gur ta Gaddi, with procession moving towards Sachkhand. The Granthi of Nagina Ghat is dressed in red robes.

Nanded, October 2008



Since time immemorial, religion and faith have been key drivers in the evolution of cities and their growth. The Temple Mount in Jerusalem, Vatican City in Rome, Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, Golden Temple at Amritsar and Balaji Temple Tirupati in South India are few examples of the flourishing cities

whose development was driven by the presence of monuments of religious significance.

It is in this context that Nanded draws its inspiration with transformation of the city influenced by the religious event that occurred 300 years ago – a landmark in Sikhism, now the fifth largest religion in the world.



Down at Takhat Sachkand, Hazoor Sahib, during the Gur ta Gaddi celebrations.

Sri Guru Gobind Singhji, tenth guru of the Sikhs, is an epitome of spiritual divinity, great leadership, teacher par excellence and sacrifice unparalleled, who immortalised Nanded in such manner. In 1708, towards the eve of his life, Guru Gobind Singhji spent about eleven weeks in Nanded before consecrating the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* as the eternal Guru (Gur ta Gaddi)

with not an inch of space left on the 1500 metre walk from banks of the river Godavari near the historic Gurdwara Nagina Ghat to the main gurdwara complex of Sachkhand Sahib.

The atmosphere reverberated with 'Jo Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal' as the faithful moved in groups, carrying vessels of all shapes and sizes, known as 'gagar', on

All roads lead to Nanded

Faith, as they say, can move mountains. On 27 October 2008, a sea of humanity moved by faith descended on the newly spruced banks of the river Godavari and tonnes of water added to the sacred waters of the ancient 'bauli' (well) situated inside the complex to wash the Takht Sachkhand Hazoor Sahib, to prepare for the coming week-long celebrations of the Gur ta Gaddi diwas.

On 30 October, this historic gurdwara celebrated 300th year of consecration of the 'Eternal Guru' of the Sikh faith, the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. It was at this place that Guru Gobind Singh passed on the 'gaddi' to the holy book in October 1708. For those of the global Sikh community, who descended upon this town in Maharashtra, this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be witness to the historic event.

The sacred ceremony, 'Takht Ishnaan', is performed once a year on Diwali eve and attracts impressive crowds, but this time the number of pilgrims crossed all records,



their heads and descended on the gurdwara complex early in the morning. Soon, every inch of the gurdwara was full of volunteers, who also climbed up on the gold-gilded domes to scrub the structure clean. The silver doors of the structure were cleansed with milk while the golden doors of the sanctum sanctorum were washed from the outside. The area behind the golden doors was accessible only to the Jathedar of the Takht Hazoor Sahib, Giani Kulwant Singh, who, dressed in bright saffron yellow robes, scrubbed the place clean.

Outside, there was unique opportunity for the devout to have a closer look at some 3,000 'shastar' (weapons), including the bows and arrows and wooden, hand-crafted guns, belonging to Guru Gobind Singh, which were brought out on 27 October morning before the cleaning ceremony of the Takht. All the while, a huge

'nagara' drum was struck inside the gurdwara, adding to the enthusiasm of those taking part in the seva.

The ceremony continued till late afternoon, during which the devotees collected the water trickling down from the doors, walls and windows after the washing and then devoutly carried it home.

On the night of 28 October, on occasion of Diwali, the gurdwara precincts were decorated with lights while the *Akhand path* would start earlier in the morning. On the concluding day, 30 October 2008, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh participated in the festivities, a huge procession bringing the hand written 'bir' (the holy book) from Nagina Ghat gurdwara to Sachkhand Sahib before the ardaas was recited.

*Ramaninder K Bhatia
(at Nanded)*



Top of Takht Sachhkhand Sri Hazoor Sahib, Isnaan with milk.

Hazoor Sahib Awash In Holy Water

It was a rare sight and a rare feeling when over a lakh of devotees thronged the banks of the Godavari to bring holy water to wash the Takht Hazoor Sahib shrine and 'shastars' (weapons of the Guru's period) at Hazoor Sahib on 27 October 2008.

This is the only Takht where 'ishnan' (holy bath) of the main shrine, including 'angeetha' of Guru Gobind Singh and traditional weapons, takes place on the eve of Diwali. The devotees started gathering since dawn,



Takht Isnaan with waters of the Godavari.

carrying 'gaagars' (holy utensils) although the official time was given as 10 a.m. Rarely before had the holy city witnessed such a mega event.

Nanded was overflowing with devotees who came to celebrate *Gur ta Gaddi* of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Many devotees were seen playing the 'narsinga' (war trumpet) and 'naubat' (traditional music) in front of Takht Hazoor Sahib while the holy bath was taking place. The washing of the shrine first with tonnes of milk, with the help of fire brigade tenders and then with the holy water, was an incredible sight.

Apart from the Godavari, water from two sources on the premises of the Takht was also poured on the building. The devotees cleaned the entire building, from



Giani Pratap Singh (sitting) reading handwritten Guru Granth Sahib in the sanctum sanctorum of Hazoor Sahib.



Dakhini Sikh Family at prayers.



Nihang Dera.

silver doors of the sanctum sanctorum to the top of the golden domes.

A large number of devotees from America, Britain, Germany, Canada and various parts of the country also converged on banks of the river Godavri. The Maharashtra government and the management of Takht Hazoor Sahib had made special security arrangements while divers of the Navy were also deployed.

Among those present included Bhai Mohinder Singh of the Nishkam Sewa Jatha from Birmingham, Mahant Kahan Singh, chief of the Sewa Panthi, Gonyana, Baba Sewa Singh, Khadoor Sahib, Baba Kashmir Singh Bhooriwale, Baba Balwinder Singh Langarwale, Bibi Inderjit Kaur Khalsa, Bhai Satpal Singh and a number of American Sikhs belonging to the Sikh Dharma International and the Guru Ram Das Sikh Mission in New Mexico, USA.





Distributing sherbat on the streets of Nanded.



Sacrifice by Dakhini Sikhs inside campus of Hazoor Sahib.



Langar seen through a fish-eye lens.



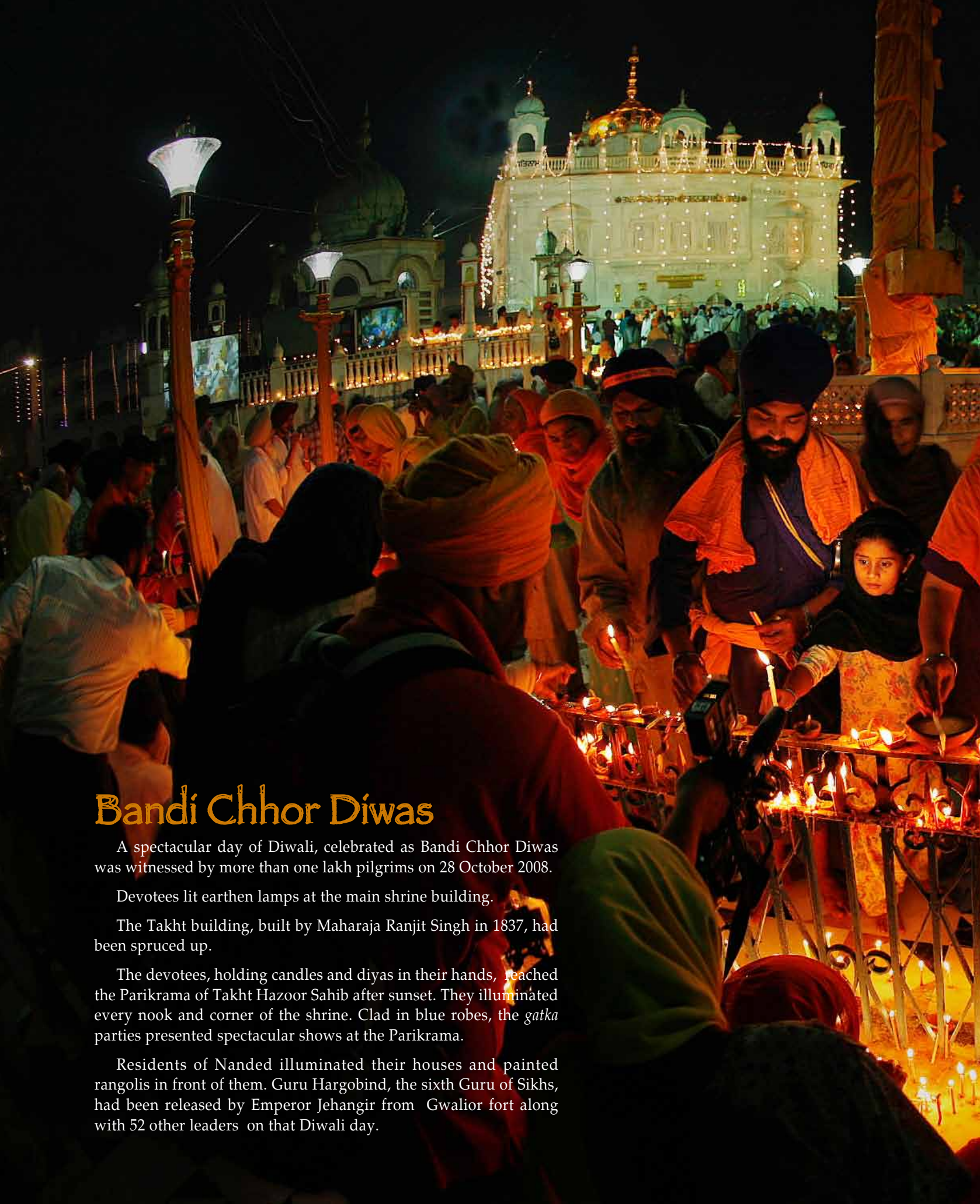
Devotional fervour at Nanded Sahib

Unprecedented upsurge of devotional fervour was witnessed during the tercentenary celebrations to mark Gur ta Gaddi Diwas at Hazoor Sahib even as Sikh babas from the Punjab, Haryana and Delhi set up separate langars.

Many babas spent crores of rupees to organise community kitchens for the devotees who had started thronging Sachkhand Hazoor Sahib and other historical Sikh shrines, with enough rations to serve langar for more than a month.

Baba Maan Singh of Pehowa's dera served 300 dishes ranging from Chinese noodles to gol-gappas, ice cream, and much else during the celebrations.

The Dera of Baba Makhan Singh of Amritsar spent more than Rs 10 lakh on the purchase of dry milk alone. More than 500 quintals of *atta*, 200 quintals of pulses and 1,000 tins of *ghee* was used at these community kitchens.



Bandi Chhor Diwas

A spectacular day of Diwali, celebrated as Bandi Chhor Diwas was witnessed by more than one lakh pilgrims on 28 October 2008.

Devotees lit earthen lamps at the main shrine building.

The Takht building, built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1837, had been spruced up.

The devotees, holding candles and diyas in their hands, reached the Parikrama of Takht Hazoor Sahib after sunset. They illuminated every nook and corner of the shrine. Clad in blue robes, the *gatka* parties presented spectacular shows at the Parikrama.

Residents of Nanded illuminated their houses and painted rangolis in front of them. Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru of Sikhs, had been released by Emperor Jehangir from Gwalior fort along with 52 other leaders on that Diwali day.





Anmol, said to be an offspring of the steed of Guru Gobind Singh, was bedecked with 50 kg gold and taken in the Nagar Keertan. Five other horses also followed Anmol in the procession.

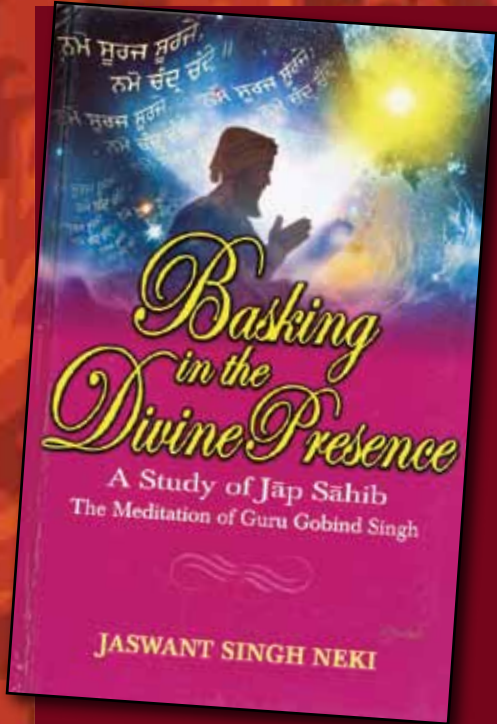




Procession scenes.



Maharshtrians reciting Shabad while taking part in procession.



A Study of Jāp Sāhib The Meditation of Guru Gobind Singh

ਤਿਭੁਗਤ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ॥ ਅਛਿੱਜ ਹੈ ਅਛੂਤ ਹੈ॥
ਕਿ ਨਰਕੰ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸ ਹੈ॥ ਪ੍ਰਿਥੀਉਲ ਪ੍ਰਵਾਸ ਹੈ॥੧੩੦॥
ਨਿਰੁਕਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਾ ਹੈ॥ ਸਦੈਵੰ ਸਦਾ ਹੈ॥
ਬਿਭੁਗਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ॥ ਪ੍ਰਜੁਗਤਿ ਅਨੂਪ ਹੈ॥੧੩੧॥
ਨਿਰੁਕਤਿ ਸਦਾ ਹੈ॥ ਬਿਭੁਗਤਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਾ ਹੈ॥
ਅਨਉਕਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ॥ ਪ੍ਰਜੁਗਤਿ ਅਨੂਪ ਹੈ॥੧੩੨॥

*Tribhugat sarūp haiṅ. Achhijj haiṅ achhūt haiṅ.
Ki narakaṅ praṇās haiṅ. Pṛithīul pravās haiṅ.(130)
Nirukt(i) prabhā haiṅ. Sadaivaṅ sadā haiṅ.
Bibhugt(i) sarūp haiṅ. Prajugt(i) anūp haiṅ.(131)
Nirukt(i) sadā haiṅ. Bibhugt(i) prabhā haiṅ.
Anukt(i) sarūp haiṅ. Prajugt(i) anūp haiṅ.(132)*

Inviolable and intangible,
Enjoy You all three worlds,
Annuler of all infernos,
Inheritor of the earth.(130)
Ineffable is Your glory,
Perpetual is Your State,
Intangible is Your form,
And incomparable style.(131)
Eternal, and unpraiseable,
Transcendent is Your Splendour,
Indescribable Your Charm.
Your fellowship ever unique.(132)

ਚਾਚਰੀ ਛੰਦ ॥
ਅਭੰਗ ਹੈ॥ ਅਨੰਗ ਹੈ॥
ਅਭੇਖ ਹੈ॥ ਅਲੇਖ ਹੈ॥੧੩੩॥
ਅਭਰਮ ਹੈ॥ ਅਕਰਮ ਹੈ॥
ਅਨਾਦਿ ਹੈ॥ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਹੈ॥੧੩੪॥
ਅਜੈ ਹੈ॥ ਅਬੈ ਹੈ॥
ਅਭੂਤ ਹੈ॥ ਅਧੂਤ ਹੈ॥੧੩੫॥

*Chācharī Chhāṅd.
Abhaṅg haiṅ. Anāṅg haiṅ.
Abhekh haiṅ. Alekh haiṅ.(133)
Abharm haiṅ. Akarm haiṅ.
Anād(i) haiṅ. Jugād(i) haiṅ.(134)
Ajai haiṅ. Abai haiṅ.
Abhūt haiṅ. Adhūt haiṅ.(135)*

Chācharī Chhāṅd.
Indestructible,
Incorporeal,
Un-attired,
Un-accountable.(133)
Beyond delusion,
Sans any ritual,
Sans inception,
Beyond all Time.(134)
Conquered never,
Ever Undaunted,
Insubstantial,
And Un-shakeable.(135)

ਅਨਾਸ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਉਦਾਸ ਹੈਂ ॥
 ਅਧੰਧ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਅਬੰਧ ਹੈਂ ॥੧੩੬॥
 ਅਭਗਤ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਬਿਰਕਤ ਹੈਂ ॥
 ਅਨਾਸ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ ਹੈਂ ॥੧੩੭॥
 ਨਿਚਿੰਤ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਸੁਨਿੰਤ ਹੈਂ ॥
 ਅਲਿੱਖ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਅਦਿੱਖ ਹੈਂ ॥੧੩੮॥

*Anās haiṅ. Udās haiṅ.
 Adhāṅdh haiṅ. Abāṅdh haiṅ.(136)
 Abhagat haiṅ. Bīrakat haiṅ.
 Anāsh haiṅ. Prakāsh haiṅ.(137)
 Nichiṅt haiṅ. Suniṅt haiṅ.
 Alikkh haiṅ. Adikkh haiṅ.(138)*

Indestructible,
 Ever indifferent,
 Un-entangled,
 Sans any bond.(136)
 Indivisible,
 Uninvolved,
 Indestructible,
 Ever effulgent.(137)
 Anxious never,
 Lasting ever,
 Unaccountable,
 Hiding ever.(138)

ਅਲੇਖ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਅਭੇਖ ਹੈਂ ॥
 ਅਢਾਹ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਅਗਾਹ ਹੈਂ ॥੧੩੯॥
 ਅਸੰਭ ਹੈਂ ॥ ਅਗੰਭ ਹੈਂ ॥
 ਅਨੀਲ ਹੈ ॥ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਹੈ ॥੧੪੦॥
 ਅਨਿੱਤ ਹੈ ॥ ਸੁਨਿੱਤ ਹੈ ॥
 ਅਜਾਤ ਹੈ ॥ ਅਜਾਦ ਹੈ ॥੧੪੧॥

*Alekh haiṅ. Abhekh haiṅ.
 Adhāh haiṅ. Agāh haiṅ.(139)
 Asāṅbh haiṅ. Agāṅbh haiṅ.
 Anīl haiṅ. Anād(i) haiṅ.(140)
 Anitt haiṅ. Sunitt haiṅ.
 Ajāt haiṅ. Azād haiṅ.(141)*

Unaccountable,
 Unparalleled,
 Indomitable,
 Inexhaustible.(139)
 Self-appointed,
 Fathomed never,
 Immaculate,
 Sans incipience.(140)
 Un-appointed,
 Ever eternal,
 Unbegotten,
 Free of bonds.(141)

ਚਰਪਟ ਛੰਦ ॥ ਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਸਰਬੰ ਹੰਤਾ ॥ ਸਰਬੰ ਗੰਤਾ ॥
 ਸਰਬੰ ਖਿਆਤਾ ॥ ਸਰਬੰ ਗਿਆਤਾ ॥੧੪੨॥
 ਸਰਬੰ ਹਰਤਾ ॥ ਸਰਬੰ ਕਰਤਾ ॥
 ਸਰਬੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੰ ॥ ਸਰਬੰ ਤ੍ਰਾਣੰ ॥੧੪੩॥
 ਸਰਬੰ ਕਰਮੰ ॥ ਸਰਬੰ ਧਰਮੰ ॥
 ਸਰਬੰ ਜੁਗਤਾ ॥ ਸਰਬੰ ਮੁਕਤਾ ॥੧੪੪॥

*Charpaṭ Chhāṅd. Tva Prasād(i).
 Sarbaṅ haṅtā. Sarbaṅ gaṅtā.
 Sarbaṅ khiātā. Sarbaṅ giātā.(142)
 Sarbaṅ hartā. Sarbaṅ kartā.
 Sarbaṅ prāṅaṅ. Sarbaṅ trāṅaṅ.(143)
 Sarbaṅ karmaṅ. Sarbaṅ dharmaṅ.
 Sarbaṅ jūgātā. Sarbaṅ mukātā.(144)*

Charpaṭ Chhāṅd. By Your Grace.

Destroying all,
 Salvaging all,
 Discoursed by all,
 Aware of all.(142)
 Depriving all,
 Creating all,
 The Breath of all,
 The Strength of all.(143)
 In every work,
 In every creed,
 Attached to all,
 And free from all.(144)

ਰਸਾਵਲ ਛੰਦ ॥ ਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਨਮੋ ਨਰਕ ਨਾਸੇ ॥ ਸਦੈਵੰ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸੇ ॥
 ਅਨੰਗੰ ਸਰੂਪੇ ॥ ਅਭੰਗੰ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ ॥੧੪੫॥
 ਪ੍ਰਮਾਥੰ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਥੇ ॥ ਸਦਾ ਸਰਬ ਸਾਥੇ ॥
 ਅਗਾਧ ਸਰੂਪੇ ॥ ਨ੍ਰਿਬਾਧ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ ॥੧੪੬॥

*Rasāval Chhāṅd. Tva Prasād(i).
 Namo narak nāse. Sadaivaṅ prakāse.
 Anaṅgaṅ sarūpe. Abhaṅgaṅ bibhūte.(145)
 Pramāthaṅ pramāthe. Sadā sarab sāthe.
 Agādh sarūpe. Nribādh bibhūte.(146)*

Rasāval Chhāṅd. By Your Grace.

Salutations to
 The destroyer of hell,
 The Light Perennial,
 Formless Beauty,
 Royalty Integral.(145)
Salutations to
 The slayer of all the wicked,
 Companion to one and all,
 Beauty most incredible,
 And unending Glory.(146)

ਅਨੰਗੀ ਅਨਾਮੇ॥ ਤ੍ਰਿਭੰਗੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਕਾਮੇ॥
ਨਿਭੰਗੀ ਸਰੂਪੇ॥ ਸਰਬੰਗੀ ਅਨੂਪੇ॥੧੪੭॥
ਨ ਪੋਤ੍ਰੈ ਨ ਪੁੱਤ੍ਰੈ॥ ਨ ਸੱਤ੍ਰੈ ਨ ਸਿੱਤ੍ਰੈ॥
ਨ ਤਾਤੈ ਨ ਮਾਤੈ॥ ਨ ਜਾਤੈ ਨ ਪਾਤੈ॥੧੪੮॥
ਨਿਸ਼ਾਕੰ ਸਰੀਕ ਹੈ॥ ਅਮਿਤੋ ਅਮੀਕ ਹੈ॥
ਸਦੈਵੰ ਪ੍ਰਭਾ ਹੈ॥ ਅਜੈ ਹੈ ਅਜਾ ਹੈ॥੧੪੯॥

*Anāṅgī anāme. Tribhaṅgī trikāme.
Nribhaṅgī sarūpe. Sarbaṅgī anūpe.(147)
Na potrai na putrai. Na satrai na mitrai.
Na tātai na mātai. Na jātai na pātai.(148)
Nrisākaṅ sarīk haiṅ. Amīto amīk haiṅ.
Sadaivaṅ prabhā haiṅ. Ajai haiṅ ajā haiṅ.(149)*

Salutations to the One

Sans limb or name,
Fulfiller, destroyer, of all Three Worlds,
Unblemished Charm,
Unrivalled Grace.(147)

Salutations to the One

Sans sons or grandsons,
friend and foe.

Sans father or mother,
and caste or clan.(148)

Salutations to the One

Without kin or peer,
With seamless depth,
With endless Glory,

Unhumbled, unborn.(149)

ਭਗਵਤੀ ਛੰਦ ॥ ਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਕਿ ਜਾਹਰ ਜਹੂਰ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਹਜ਼ੂਰ ਹੈ॥
ਹਮੇਸ਼ੁਲ ਸਲਾਮ ਹੈ॥ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਕਲਾਮ ਹੈ॥੧੫੦॥
ਕਿ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਹੁਸਨਲ ਚਰਾਗ ਹੈ॥
ਕਿ ਕਾਮਲ ਕਰੀਮ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਰਾਜ਼ਕ ਰਹੀਮ ਹੈ॥੧੫੧॥
ਕਿ ਰੋਜ਼ੀ ਦਿਹਿੰਦ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਰਾਜ਼ਕ ਰਹਿੰਦ ਹੈ॥
ਕਰੀਮੁਲ ਕਮਾਲ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਹੁਸਨਲ ਜਮਾਲ ਹੈ॥੧੫੨॥

Bhagvatī Chhaṅd. Tva Prasād(i).

*Ki zāhar zabūr haiṅ. Ki hāzar hazūr haiṅ.
Hameshul salām haiṅ. Samastul kalām haiṅ.(150)
Ki sāhib dimāgh haiṅ. Ki husnul chiraṅgh haiṅ.
Ki kāmal karīm haiṅ. Ki rāzak rahīm haiṅ.(151)
Ki rozī dibiṅd haiṅ. Ki rāzak rahiṅd haiṅ.
Karimul kamāl haiṅ. Ki husnul jamāl haiṅ.(152)*

Bhagvatī Chhaṅd. By Your Grace.

Unambiguous Your presence,
'Here and now' Your Splendour,
Un-declining Amity,
All Your word divine.(150)
The Master Lord of Wisdom,
The brilliant Lamp of Beauty,
The Consummate Compassion,
The all-providing Mercy.(151)
Provider of every morsel,
Bestower of gifts enormous,
Compassion most supernal,
And Beauty most benign.(152)

ਗ਼ਨੀਮੁਲ ਖ਼ਿਰਾਜ ਹੈ॥ ਗ਼ਰੀਬੁਲ ਨਿਵਾਜ ਹੈ॥
ਹਰੀਫੁਲ ਸ਼ਿਕੰਨ ਹੈ॥ ਹਿਰਾਸੁਲ ਫ਼ਿਕੰਨ ਹੈ॥੧੫੩॥
ਕਲੰਕੰ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸ ਹੈ॥ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਹੈ॥
ਅਗੰਜੁਲ ਗ਼ਨੀਮ ਹੈ॥ ਰਜਾਇਕ ਰਹੀਮ ਹੈ॥੧੫੪॥
ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਜੁਬਾ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕਿਰਾ ਹੈ॥
ਕਿ ਨਰਕੰ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸ ਹੈ॥ ਬਹਿਸਤੁਲ ਨਿਵਾਸ ਹੈ॥੧੫੫॥

*Ghanīmūl kḥirāj haiṅ. Gharībūl nivāj haiṅ.
Harīful shikān haiṅ. Hirāsul fīkān haiṅ.(153)
Kalānkaṅ praṅās haiṅ. Samastul nivās haiṅ.
Agaṅjul ghanīm haiṅ. Razāik rahīm haiṅ.(154)
Samastul zubān haiṅ. Ki sāhib kirā haiṅ.
Ki narkaṅ praṅās haiṅ. Bahishtul nivās haiṅ.(155)*

Chastiser of the tyrants,
Supporter of the humble,
Destroyer of oppressors,
Dispeller of alarm.(153)
Erasing every stigma,
Inhabiting every soul,
By enemies undefeated,
Provider most Benign.(154)
Of every tongue, the utterance,
Of every fate, the Master,
Destroyer of every Hell,
Inhabiting every Heaven.(155)

ਕਿ ਸਰਬੁਲ ਗਵੰਨ ਹੈ॥ ਹਮੇਸ਼ੁਲ ਰਵੰਨ ਹੈ॥
ਤਮਾਮੁਲ ਤਮੀਜ ਹੈ॥ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਅਜੀਜ ਹੈ॥੧੫੬॥
ਪਰੰ ਪਰਮ ਈਸ ਹੈ॥ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਅਦੀਸ ਹੈ॥
ਅਦੇਸੁਲ ਅਲੇਖ ਹੈ॥ ਹਮੇਸ਼ੁਲ ਅਭੇਖ ਹੈ॥੧੫੭॥
ਜਮੀਨੁਲ ਜਮਾ ਹੈ॥ ਅਮੀਕੁਲ ਇਮਾ ਹੈ॥
ਕਰੀਮੁਲ ਕਮਾਲ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਜੁਰਅਤਿ ਜਮਾਲ ਹੈ॥੧੫੮॥

*Ki sarbul gavaṅn haiṅ. Hamesul ravaṅn haiṅ.
Tamāmūl tamīz haiṅ. Samastul azīz haiṅ.(156)
Paraṅ param īsh haiṅ. Samastul adīs haiṅ.
Adesul alekh haiṅ. Hameshul abhekh haiṅ.(157)
Zamīnul zamān haiṅ. Amīkul imān haiṅ.
Karimul kamāl haiṅ. Ki jur-at(i) jamāl haiṅ.(158)*

Going in all directions,
Moving in time and space,
Familiar with all urbanity,
The Darling of every soul.(156)
The Deity most supernal,
Concealed from every eye,
Sans residence and sans vignette,
And sans a garb or guise.(157)
The Lord of space eternal,
Creating faith profound,
Perfection of Compassion,
And beau Courage unbound.(158)

ਕਿ ਅਚਲੰ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਅਮਿਤੋ ਸੁਬਾਸ ਹੈ॥
ਕਿ ਅਜਬ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਅਮਿਤੋ ਬਿਭੂਤ ਹੈ॥੧੫੯॥
ਕਿ ਅਮਿਤੋ ਪਸਾ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਆਤਮ ਪ੍ਰਭਾ ਹੈ॥
ਕਿ ਅਚਲੰ ਅਨੰਗ ਹੈ॥ ਕਿ ਅਮਿਤੋ ਅਭੰਗ ਹੈ॥੧੬੦॥

*Ki achlan̄ prakāsh haiṅ. Ki amito subās haiṅ.
Ki ajab sarūp haiṅ. Ki amito bibhūt haiṅ.(159)
Ki amito pasā haiṅ. Ki ātam prabhā haiṅ.
Ki achlan̄ anaṅg haiṅ. Ki amito abhaṅg haiṅ.(160)*

Eternal is Your radiance,
Singular is Your fragrance,
Wonderful is Your elegance,
And limitless Your effulgence.(159)
Measureless is Your extent,
You glow in every soul,
Inviolable Your Essence,
Immeasurable is Your dole.(160)

ਮਧੁਭਾਰ ਛੰਦ ॥ ਤੂ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਮੁਨਿ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰਨਾਮ॥ ਗੁਨਿ ਗਨ ਮੁਦਾਮ॥
ਅਰਿ ਬਰ ਅਗੰਜ॥ ਹਰਿ ਨਰ ਪ੍ਰਭੰਜ॥੧੬੧॥
ਅਨ ਗਨ ਪ੍ਰਨਾਮ॥ ਮੁਨਿ ਮਨਿ ਸਲਾਮ॥
ਹਰਿ ਨਰ ਅਖੰਡ॥ ਬਰ ਨਰ ਅਮੰਡ॥੧੬੨॥
ਅਨਭਵ ਅਨਾਸ॥ ਮੁਨਿ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ॥
ਗੁਨਿ ਗਨ ਪ੍ਰਨਾਮ॥ ਜਲ ਥਲ ਮੁਦਾਮ॥੧੬੩॥

*Madhubhār Chhaṅd. Tva Prasād(i).
Mun(i) man(i) pranām. Gun(i) gan mudām.
Ar(i) bar aganj. Har(i) nar prabhānj.(161)
An gan pranām. Mun(i) man(i) salām.
Har(i) nar akhaṅḍ. Bar nar amāṅḍ.(162)
Anbhav anās. Mun(i) man(i) prakāsh.
Gun(i) gan pranām. Jal thal mudām.(163)*

Madhubhār Chhaṅd. By Your Grace.

Saluted ever by sages,
The Lord of limitless merit,
Unharméd conquering opponents,
Demolisher ultimate.(161)
Invoked by mighty legions,
Saluted by every sage,
The potent God of mortals,
Unchallenged, un-installed.(162)
Unfailing Your intuition,
O Light of sages' heart,
Worshipped by every mortal,
The Lord of ocean and land.(163)

ਅਨਛਿੱਜ ਅੰਗ॥ ਆਸਨ ਅਭੰਗ॥
ਉਪਮਾ ਅਪਾਰ॥ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਉਦਾਰ॥੧੬੪॥
ਜਲ ਥਲ ਅਮੰਡ॥ ਦਿਸ ਵਿਸ ਅਭੰਡ॥
ਜਲ ਥਲ ਮਹੰਤ॥ ਦਿਸ ਵਿਸ ਬਿਅੰਤ॥੧੬੫॥
ਅਨਭਵ ਅਨਾਸ॥ ਧ੍ਰਿਤ ਧਰ ਧੁਰਾਸ॥
ਆਜਾਨ ਬਾਹੁ॥ ਏਕੈ ਸਦਾਹੁ॥੧੬੬॥

*Anchhijj aṅg. Āsan abhaṅg.
Upmā apār. Gat(i) mit(i) udār.(164)
Jal thal amāṅḍ. Dis vis abhaṅḍ.
Jal thal mahaṅt. Dis vis beaṅt.(165)
Anbhav anās. Dhrit dhar dhurās.
Ājān bāhu. Ekai sadāhu.(166)*

Inviolable is Your Being,
Immutable is Your Throne,
Immeasurable is Your Glory,
Unlimited Your Resource.(164)
You reign over land and waters,
Inviolate Your Repute,
Supreme over lands and oceans,
Infinite, ensouled, Perfection.(165)
Inviolate Your experience,
The prop of the great Cosmos,
Long-armed Your mighty reach,
O 'One' and 'One' indeed.(166)

ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਆਦਿ॥ ਕਥਨੀ ਅਨਾਦਿ॥
ਖਲ ਖੰਡ ਖਿਆਲ॥ ਗੁਰ ਬਰ ਅਕਾਲ॥੧੬੭॥
ਘਰ ਘਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਨਾਮ॥ ਚਿਤ ਚਰਨ ਨਾਮ॥
ਅਨਛਿੱਜ ਗਾਤ॥ ਆਜਿਜ ਨ ਬਾਤ॥੧੬੮॥
ਅਨਝੰਜ ਗਾਤ॥ ਅਨਰੰਜ ਬਾਤ॥
ਅਨਟੁਟ ਭੰਡਾਰ॥ ਅਨਠਟ ਅਪਾਰ॥੧੬੯॥

*Oaṅkār ād(i). Kathanī anād(i).
Khal khaṅḍ khiāl. Gur bar Akāl.(167)
Ghar ghar(i) pranām. Chit charan nām.
Anchhijj gāt. Ājiz na bāt.(168)
Anjhañjh gāt. Anrañj bāt.
Antuṭ bhaṅḍār. Anṭhaṭ apār.(169)*

Your first emanation, *Om*,
The Primal, Creative tone,
Your intent slanders malice,
Disperses doubt and gloom.(167)
Admired in every hamlet,
Chanted by every heart,
Imperishable Your existence,
Nor debile, nor alarmed.(168)
Your Being can't be disrupted,
Your Words can't be disputed,
Exhaustless is your Treasure,
And Fathomless Your Splendour.(169)

ਆਡੀਠ ਧਰਮ॥ ਅਤਿ ਢੀਠ ਕਰਮ॥
ਅਣਬੁਣ ਅਨੰਤ॥ ਦਾਤਾ ਮਹੰਤ॥੧੭੦॥

ਹਰਿਬੋਲਮਨਾ ਛੰਦ॥ ਤੂ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

ਕਰੁਣਾਲਯ ਹੈ॥ ਅਰਿ ਘਾਲਯ ਹੈ॥
ਖਲ ਖੰਡਨ ਹੈ॥ ਮਹਿ ਮੰਡਨ ਹੈ॥੧੭੧॥
ਜਗਤੇਸੂਰ ਹੈ॥ ਪਰਮੇਸੂਰ ਹੈ॥
ਕਲਿ ਕਾਰਣ ਹੈ॥ ਸਰਬ ਉਬਾਰਣ ਹੈ॥੧੭੨॥

*Ādīṭh dharam. At(i) dhīṭh karam.
Aṅbraṅ anañt. Dātā mahānt.*(170)

*Har(i)bolmanā Chhañd. Tva Prasād(i).
Karunālyā haiñ. Ar(i) ghālyā haiñ.
Khal khañdan haiñ. Maih mañdan haiñ.*(171)
*Jagteshvar haiñ. Parmeshvar haiñ.
Kal(i) kāraṅ haiñ. Sarab ubāraṅ haiñ.*(172)

Invisible are your images,
Unhindered are your Actions,
Inviolable Your Infinity,
And Generous is your Bounty.(170)
Harbolmanā Chhañd. By Your Grace.
You are the home of Mercy,
Destroy You all resistance,
Dispel You vain stupidity,
Adorn You earth with beauty.(171)
O You the Cosmic Sovereign,
Our Great Transcendent Lord,
The cause of every conflict,
Yet, Saviour o' every soul.(172)

ਪ੍ਰਿਤ ਕੇ ਧੁਣ ਹੈ॥ ਜਗ ਕੇ ਕੁਣ ਹੈ॥
ਮਨ ਮਾਨਿਯ ਹੈ॥ ਜਗ ਜਾਨਿਯ ਹੈ॥੧੭੩॥
ਸਰਬ ਭਰ ਹੈ॥ ਸਰਬ ਕਰ ਹੈ॥
ਸਰਬ ਪਾਸਿਯ ਹੈ॥ ਸਰਬ ਨਾਸਿਯ ਹੈ॥੧੭੪॥
ਕਰੁਣਾਕਰ ਹੈ॥ ਬਿਸੁੰਭਰ ਹੈ॥
ਸਰਬੇਸੂਰ ਹੈ॥ ਜਗਤੇਸੂਰ ਹੈ॥੧੭੫॥

*Dhrit ke dhraṅ haiñ. Jag ke kraṅ haiñ.
Man māniya haiñ. Jag jāniya haiñ.*(173)
*Sarab bhar haiñ. Sarab kar haiñ.
Sarab pāsiya haiñ. Sarab nāsiya haiñ.*(174)
*Karunākar haiñ. Bisvañbhar haiñ.
Sarbeshvar haiñ. Jagateshvar haiñ.*(175)

The prop of all the Cosmos,
The Cause of every cause,
Adored by every wisdom,
And known to every heart.(173)
Sustain You all existence,
The Primeval Cause of causes,
Perceivable right at hand,
Demolishing strait and strand.(174)
Embodiment of Clemency,
Sustaining all Creation,
Commanding every soul,
Of all Cosmos, the Lord.(175)

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡਸ ਹੈ॥ ਖਲ ਖੰਡਸ ਹੈ॥
ਪਰ ਤੇ ਪਰ ਹੈ॥ ਕਰੁਣਾਕਰ ਹੈ॥੧੭੬॥
ਅਜਪਾ ਜਪ ਹੈ॥ ਅਥਪਾ ਥਪ ਹੈ॥
ਅਕ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥੧੭੭॥
ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥ ਕਰਣਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥
ਅਕ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥ ਧਰਣੀ ਧ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥੧੭੮॥

*Brahmañdas haiñ. Khal khañdas haiñ.
Par te par haiñ. Karunākar haiñ.*(176)
*Ajapā jap haiñ. Athapā thap haiñ.
Akrītā krit haiñ. Amritā-mrit haiñ.*(177)
*Amritā-mrit haiñ. Karṇā krit haiñ.
Akrītā krit haiñ. Dharṇī dhrit haiñ.*(178)

The Life of all existence,
Demolisher of every Knave,
Remoter than the farthest
The fount of Mercy Great.(176)
The Great un-chanted Chant,
The Deity un-installed,
The One uncaused Cause,
The fountainhead of *Amrit*.(177)
The Lord of immortality,
Embodiment of Clemency,
The One uncaused Cause.
Sustainer of the globe.(178)

ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤੇਸੂਰ ਹੈ॥ ਪਰਮੇਸੂਰ ਹੈ॥
ਅਕ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥੧੭੯॥
ਅਜਬਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥
ਨਰ ਨਾਇਕ ਹੈ॥ ਖਲ ਘਾਇਕ ਹੈ॥੧੮੦॥
ਬਿਸੁੰਭਰ ਹੈ॥ ਕਰੁਣਾਲਯ ਹੈ॥
ਨ੍ਰਿਪ ਨਾਇਕ ਹੈ॥ ਸਰਬ ਪਾਇਕ ਹੈ॥੧੮੧॥

*Amriteshvar haiñ. Parmeshvar haiñ.
Akrītā krit haiñ. Amritā mrit haiñ.*(179)
*Ajbā krit haiñ. Amritā amrit haiñ.
Nar nāik haiñ. Khal ghāik haiñ.*(180)
*Bishvañbhar haiñ. Karunālyā haiñ.
Nrip nāik haiñ. Sarab pāik haiñ.*(181)

The One immeasurable Lord,
The Deity most transcendent,
The One facile Creator,
The fountainhead of *Amrit*.(179)
Wonderful are Your Actions,
Heavenly are Your Nectars,
Guide You works of humans,
Annul You imbecility.(180)
Replenisher of the universe,
The Treasure of Compassion,
The One Sovereign supreme,
Protector shield of all.(181)

ਭਵ ਭੰਜਨ ਹੈ॥ ਅਰਿ ਗੰਜਨ ਹੈ॥
 ਰਿਪੁ ਤਾਪਨ ਹੈ॥ ਜਪੁ ਜਾਪਨ ਹੈ॥੧੮੨॥
 ਅਕਲੰ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥ ਸਰਬਾ ਕ੍ਰਿਤ ਹੈ॥
 ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰ ਹੈ॥ ਹਰਤਾ ਹਰਿ ਹੈ॥੧੮੩॥
 ਪਰਮਾਤਮ ਹੈ॥ ਸਰਬਾਤਮ ਹੈ॥
 ਆਤਮ ਬਸ ਹੈ॥ ਜਸ ਕੇ ਜਸ ਹੈ॥੧੮੪॥

*Bhav bhanjan haiṅ. Ar(i) gaṅjan haiṅ.
 Rip(u) tāpan haiṅ. Jap(u) jāpan haiṅ.(182)
 Aklaṅ krit haiṅ. Sarbā krit haiṅ.
 Kartā kar haiṅ. Hartā har(i) haiṅ.(183)
 Parmātam haiṅ. Sarbātam haiṅ.
 Ātam bas haiṅ. Jas ke jas haiṅ.(184)*

Destroying all anxiety,
 Vanquishing every foe,
 Chastising all the sinful,
 Inspiring all to bow.(182)
 Creator, artless, faultless,
 Designer o' fate and form,
 The Cause of every action,
 Depriving plunderers all.(183)
 Transcendent Soul Supreme,
 The Spirit of all Cosmos,
 You hold Your own control,
 Deserve You generous Praise.(184)

ਭੁਜੰਗ ਪ੍ਰਯਾਤ ਛੰਦ ॥

ਨਮੋ ਸੂਰਜ ਸੂਰਜੇ ਨਮੋ ਚੰਦ੍ਰ ਚੰਦ੍ਰੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਰਾਜ ਰਾਜੇ ਨਮੋ ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਅੰਧਕਾਰੇ ਨਮੋ ਤੇਜ ਤੇਜੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਬਿੰਦ੍ਰ ਬਿੰਦ੍ਰੇ ਨਮੋ ਬੀਜ ਬੀਜੇ॥੧੮੫॥

Bhujāṅg Prayāt Chhāṅd.

*Namo sūraj sūrje namo chāṅdra chāṅdre.
 Namō rāj rāje namo indra indre.
 Namō andhkāre namo tej teje.
 Namō brīṅd brīṅdre namo bij bije.(185)*

Bhujāṅg Prayāt Chhāṅd.

Salutations to

The sun of all the suns,
 The moon of all the moons,
 The King of all the kings,
 The God of all the godlings,
 The darkness most profound,
 The Brilliance most effulgent,
 The Lord of multitudes,
 The seed of all the seeds.(185)

ਨਮੋ ਰਾਜਸੰ ਤਾਮਸੰ ਸਾਂਤ ਰੂਪੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਪਰਮ ਤੱਤੰ ਅਤੱਤੰ ਸਰੂਪੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਜੋਗ ਜੋਗੇ ਨਮੋ ਗਿਆਨ ਗਿਆਨੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੇ ਨਮੋ ਧਿਆਨ ਧਿਆਨੇ॥੧੮੬॥

*Namo rājsaṅ tāmsaṅ shānt rūpe.
 Namō param tattaṅ atattaṅ sarūpe.
 Namō jog joge namo giāṅ giāṅe.
 Namō maṅtra maṅtre namo dhiāṅ dhiāṅe.(186)*

Salutations to the Lord

Of Sloth, Passion and Peace,
 The Substance insubstantial,
 The Essence most supernal,
 The *Yogi* of all *yogas*,
 The Wisdom of all wisdoms,
 The *Mantra* of all *mantras*,
 Contemplator profound.(186)

ਨਮੋ ਜੁਧ ਜੁਧੇ ਨਮੋ ਗਿਆਨ ਗਿਆਨੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਭੋਜ ਭੋਜੇ ਨਮੋ ਪਾਨ ਪਾਨੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਕਲਹ ਕਰਤਾ ਨਮੋ ਸਾਂਤ ਰੂਪੇ॥
 ਨਮੋ ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੇ ਅਨਾਦੰ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ॥੧੮੭॥

*Namo judh judhe namo giāṅ giāṅe.
 Namō bhoj bhoje namo pān pāṅe.
 Namō kalah kartā namo shānt rūpe.
 Namō indra indre anādaṅ bibhūte.(187)*

Salutations to

The Victor of every battle,
 The Wisdom most sublime,
 Ravishing every aliment,
 Imbibing every potion,
 The Cause of all turmoil,
 The Harbinger of peace,
 The God of all the godlings,
 Your fame transcending Time.(187)

ਕਲੰਕਾਰ ਰੂਪੇ ਅਲੰਕਾਰ ਅਲੰਕੇ ॥
ਨਮੋ ਆਸ ਆਸੇ ਨਮੋ ਬਾਂਕ ਬੰਕੇ ॥
ਅਭੰਗੀ ਸਰੂਪੇ ਅਨੰਗੀ ਅਨਾਮੇ ॥
ਤ੍ਰਿਭੰਗੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਕਾਲੇ ਅਨੰਗੀ ਅਕਾਮੇ ॥੧੮੮॥

Kalaṅkāra rūpe alaṅkāra alaṅke.
Namo āsa āse namo bāṅka baṅke.
Abhaṅgī sarūpe anaṅgī anāme.
Tribhaṅgī trikāle anaṅgī akāme.(188)

Salutations to
The Seed of all the Order,
The Brilliance of the jewels,
The Hope in every hope,
The Charm of every Beauty,
Existence Imperishable,
Sans Limb, Sans Form Sans Name,
The Lord of Space and Time,
Sans limb and sans desire.(188)

ਏਕ ਅਛਰੀ ਛੰਦ ॥

ਅਜੈ ॥ ਅਲੈ ॥ ਅਭੈ ॥ ਅਬੈ ॥੧੮੯॥
ਅਭੂ ॥ ਅਜੂ ॥ ਅਨਾਸ ॥ ਅਕਾਸ ॥੧੯੦॥
ਅਗੰਜ ॥ ਅਭੰਜ ॥ ਅਲੱਖ ॥ ਅਭੱਖ ॥੧੯੧॥
ਅਕਾਲ ॥ ਦਿਆਲ ॥ ਅਲੇਖ ॥ ਅਭੇਖ ॥੧੯੨॥

Ek Achharī Chhaṅd.

Ajai. Alai. Abhai. Abai.(189)
Abhū. Ajū. Anāsh. Akāsh.(190)
Aganj. Abhanj. Alakkh. Abhakkh.(191)
Akāl. Diāl. Alekh. Abhekh.(192)

Ek Achharī Chhaṅd.

Invincible,
Immortal,
Undaunted,
Immutable.(189)
Uncaused,
Immovable,
Imperishable,
Pervasive.(190)
Insuperable,
Imperishable,
Unknowable,
Un-munchable.(191)
Immortal,
Compassionate,
Exceptional,
Ungarbed.(192)

ਅਨਾਮ ॥ ਅਕਾਮ ॥ ਅਗਾਹ ॥ ਅਢਾਹ ॥੧੯੩॥
ਅਨਾਥੇ ॥ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਥੇ ॥ ਅਜੋਨੀ ॥ ਅਮੋਨੀ ॥੧੯੪॥
ਨ ਰਾਗੇ ॥ ਨ ਰੰਗੇ ॥ ਨ ਰੂਪੇ ॥ ਨ ਰੇਖੇ ॥੧੯੫॥
ਅਕਰਮੰ ॥ ਅਭਰਮੰ ॥ ਅਗੰਜੇ ॥ ਅਲੇਖੇ ॥੧੯੬॥

Anām. Akām. Agāh. Aḍhāh.(193)
Anāthe. Pramāthe. Ajonī. Amonī.(194)
Na rāge. Na raṅge. Na rūpe. Na rekhe.(195)
Akarmaṅ. Abharmāṅ. Aganjē. Alekhe.(196)

Un-nameable,
Uncoveting,
Unfathomable,
Infallible.(193)
Autonomous,
Supernal,
Unbegotten,
Unsilenced.(194)
Sans ravishment,
Sans tincture,
Sans Structure,
Sans Feature.(195)
Sans action,
Sans error,
Immutable,
Ineffable.(196)

ਭੁਜੰਗ ਪ੍ਰਯਾਤ ਛੰਦ ॥

ਨਮਸਤੁਲ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਮੇ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸੇ ॥
ਅਗੰਜੁਲ ਅਨਾਮੇ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਨਿਵਾਸੇ ॥
ਨਿਕਾਮੰ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਸਰੂਪੇ ॥
ਕੁਕਰਮੰ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸੀ ਸੁਧਰਮੰ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ ॥੧੯੭॥

Bhujang Prayāt Chhaṅd.

Namastul praṇāme, samastul praṇāse.
Aganjul anāme samastul nivāse.
Nrikāmaṅ bibhūte samastul sarūpe.
Kukarmaṅ praṇāsī sudharmaṅ bibhūte.(197)

Bhujang Prayāt Chhaṅd.

Salutations to
The Master most adorable,
The great Annihilator,
The Unnamed and immutable,
Pervading every corner,
Renouncer un-allured,
The Splendour of every form,
Annuler of every vice,
The Keeper of Law Eternal.(197)

ਸਦਾ ਸੱਚਿਦਾਨੰਦ ਸੱਤ੍ਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸੀ ॥
ਕਰੀਮੁਲ ਕੁਨਿੰਦਾ ਸਮਸਤੁਲ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ॥
ਅਜਾਇਬ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ ਗਜਾਇਬ ਗਨੀਮੇ ॥
ਹਰੀਅੰ ਕਰੀਅੰ ਕਰੀਮੁਲ ਰਹੀਮੇ ॥੧੯੮॥

*Sadā Sacchidā-nānd sattraṇ praṇāsī.
Karīmul kunindā samastul nivāsī.
Ajāib bibhūte ghazāib ghanīme.
Harīaṇ karīaṇ karīmul rahīme.(198)*

Truth, Consciousness and Bliss,
Vanquisher of every foe,
Benign Creator of all,
Pervading all existence,
The Grandeur most amazing,
The Terror to every tyrant,
The Creator-cum-Destroyer,
Dispensing Clement Mercy.(198)

ਚੱਤ੍ਰ ਚੱਕ੍ਰ ਵਰਤੀ ਚੱਤ੍ਰ ਚੱਕ੍ਰ ਭੁਗਤੇ ॥
ਸੁਯੰਭਵ ਸੁਭੰ ਸਰਬਦਾ ਸਰਬ ਜੁਗਤੇ ॥
ਦੁਕਾਲੰ ਪ੍ਰਣਾਸੀ ਦਿਆਲੰ ਸਰੂਪੇ ॥
ਸਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਸੰਗੇ ਅਭੰਗੰ ਬਿਭੂਤੇ ॥੧੯੯॥

*Chattra chaktra vartī chattra chaktra bhugte.
Suyānbhav subhaṇ sarb-dā sarb jugte.
Dukālaṇ praṇāsī diālaṇ sarūpe.
Sadā aṅg saṅge abhaṅgaṇ bibhūte.(199)*

The Lord of foursome quarters,
Gladsome in every state,
Self-luminous and auspicious,
Affine to one and all,
Erasing virulent time,
Embodiment of Compassion,
The Ever-so-near Companion,
The Grace that vanishes never.(199)

Spiritual Growth through Jāp Sahib

Jāp Sahib is a work of intense meditation spoken by a prophet in a state of profound ecstasy. That is why this, when a seeker chants it with real devotion, can transport the seeker into a state of intense spiritual activation. It provides experience of the Presence of the Almighty Lord in all His Grandeur and Glory. Vision of the Supreme Lord that one meets here is that of a valorous Lord at war with the forces of evil. In the superb verses of this incredible work, one discerns Divine Splendour brimming with holy Resoluteness, the Flag of Righteousness held up for Him. It inspires the devotee to join the mighty forces of the Lord as His 'knight-at-arms'. One then automatically becomes responsive to His call. One is impelled to bow before the Great Lord who is, at once, the maker of strife and the restorer of peace (*Namo kalah karta namo shant rupe*). Meditative attention upon this work heralds the devoted seeker into the realms of Divine Resplendence.

A devotee who lets the mind soak in the Names of God, would not need to observe rituals. To him any ritual begins to appear as vain and so, he resolves to abandon it. He become devout worshipper of the One Transcendent Reality, the Eternal Cosmic Person (*Akal Purakh*). His singleminded devotion becomes charged with the ever-ascending spiritual optimism (*Charhdi Kala*).

The devotee then finds the Presence of the Lord by his side (*ang-sang*), supporting and sustaining him, providing him courage and valour and inspiring him to become defender of the weak and destroyer of the tyrannous, at once imbued with spiritual inspiration and animated with resolute gallantry. The spirit of sacrifice wells up in him and fear of death vanishes altogether.

In thought, word and deed, the devotee becomes prompted to look after those who are in need of care and help. In this, one considers oneself an inspired agent and a humble consignee of the Divine. He feels inspired into benevolent undertakings for the welfare of mankind. This he does because he finds in all humankind his own kinsfolk—the children of his own Father. He discovers that

Here, there and everywhere, He (the Lord) is pervasive at Love. Jattr tattr disha visha, hue phailio anurag. (V. 80)

One, who partakes of Divine Love, considers oneself accountable for that gift, and liable to reciprocate to it by providing love to every creature of the Lord. One comes to sense deeply that God, being *amazhabe* (*sans* a constrictive creed), belongs to no sectarian religion,

and being *adharman* (*sans* religious binding) favours no schism. He is sheer Love and His devotees must follow the model of His generosity. This, in effect, brings about a revolution in the spiritual life of the devotee.

We have seen that *Jāp Sahib* employs with equal ease diction derived from the Aryan as well as Arabic-Persian tradition. It also eulogises the Divine Names in vogue in both Indian and Semitic traditions. Such a non-sectarian attitude of this work impresses one with the universal import of this work. Anyone who recites this work with empathic insight, automatically rises above sectarian loyalties and ritual observances.

The panegyric hymnology of *Jāp Sahib* makes one effortlessly eulogise the Almighty in the choicest terms having great spiritual import. Some accomplished souls vouchsafe that continual recitation of the verses of this great work – even just the monosyllabic verses 94 and 95 – generates enormous spiritual insight in one who regularly dwells upon them.

Regular recitation of this powerful *bani* enhances one's psychic prowess and sharpens one's intuitive sensitivity. One's mind is purged of iniquitous pollutants, indecorous depravity, and nefarious wickedness. A sense of gratitude to the Creator swells up and His Grace reveals itself and leads quest of the seeker into a responsive embrace. New spiritual aspirations evolve and horizons of perception enlarge. Doubt and disbelief melt away, fear and suspicion vanish, jealousy and hatred disappear, worries and anxieties bother no more. Faith sharpens, trust enhances, confidence enlarges, courage blossoms and, thus, *Charhdi Kala* prevails.

Feelings soften, charity widens, forgiveness enlarges and goodness gains ground. Love for Truth expands, beauty sprouts from within, and untutored morality takes shape. Step by step, one draws closer and closer to that Supreme Transcendent Reality whose attributive Names one has been reciting. One has the assurance that

You become the like of the one you worship.

ਜੇਹਾ ਜੇਹੈ ਤੇਹੋ ਹੋਵੈ ਚਲੈ ਜੇ ਤਿਸੈ ਰਜਾਇ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ 549)

Reciting *Jāp Sahib* one ultimately merges with the One whom one has involved and unto whose haven one has entrusted oneself.



Gur ta Gaddi

Antecedents and Symbolism

Since the compilation of Guru Granth in 1604, Sikhs have paid obeisance to it, chanted and disseminated its knowledge. Therein, what was the significance of *gur ta gaddi* in October 2008?

Pointers to an answer are found in the biography of Guru Gobind Singh and the elaborate symbolism

employed during and antecedent to ordination of the Granth. Throughout his life, the Guru's sermons addressed multi-faith audiences and used all modes of communication. He abolished the institution of clerics and clergy. Instead of places of Sikh prevalence in North, West and Eastern India, Guru Gobind Singh travelled great distances to the South, to the River



(All photos by Malkiat Singh)

Godavari known for pilgrimage sites on its banks, agreed to the requests of Emperor Bahadur Shah to accompany him to Nanded accepted gifts of land from Muslim donors. On 20 October, 2008, he held the congregation of spiritual seekers for his final sermon where Bhai Nath Mal sang sacred hymns and Guru ji gave his sermon of gur ta gaddi ordaining that

no cleric or godmen was intermediary to represent The Knowledge. There was no presence of family members. Guruji designated the Khalsa as 'Keepers of Light' who would protect, promote and disseminate the Guru Granth, permitting no bar on its spread. By selecting Damdama over Kartarpur version for gur ta gaddi, the importance of content over cover

was stressed; the hymns were ordained for study, deliberation, dissemination, with a clear impact on life. *Baani* (hymns of the Guru Granth) and *sangat* (congregation of seekers) was designated as basic unit of the new society.

Since 9/11 (and 26 November 2008 in Mumbai) worldwide terrorist attacks in the name of religion are etching deep marks on the collective psyche of people of civil societies. As we struggle to heal our minds, no less than wounds, we are given this opportunity to commemorate the tercentennial of the *guru ta gaddi* by Guru Gobind Singh, the great messiah and spiritual leader. He changed the course of history in paradigm manner and his own life is telling story of an invaluable legacy that is very much relevant in today's World.

The prophet lived at a time (1666-1708) when religious fanaticism in South Asia was at its worst, endlessly posing grave threat to the human spirit of freedom and liberty. Practice of pluralism and a multicultural life was in peril. Those with faith practices different from the misguided rulers were persecuted and various religious places superimposed with those of others. It was a dark, grim and ominous period in human history.

The innate human desire for individual expression and diversity of belief was being severely curtailed. Guru Gobind Singh raised the banner and gave birth to institutions that would deter the evil doer and broaden appreciation among God's people and creativity. To stifle the Sikh voice, the Guru's great grandfather, father, four sons and countless followers were put to death by powers of the time. This article is to highlight the Guru's contribution in establishing guidelines of human behavior and beliefs not just for today, but forever.

Guru's Ecumenical Identity

From his very childhood, young Gobind took to interfaith dialogues and, appreciating all true faiths, smashed artificial social barriers. It all began with installation of the infant guru to his prophetic rank. Contrary to established practices of initiating a child by clergy of the faith of his forefathers, a renowned Muslim saint, Syed Bhikhan Shah, was given this honour.

According to history, the manner of recognition of divinity was first acknowledged publically in unique way. One day Bhikhan Shah was observed to bow towards the east during his morning prayers. Certainly

this was contrary to established Islamic practice of bowing in direction of the Qibla. When his followers looked askance, the Pir explained this unusual act: a special child, the saviour ordained by God, was taking birth in Patna which was towards the East, where he now faced to say his prayer.

The Pir was inspired by God to make his way to the Guru's birthplace, Patna, so to bless the day-old Gobind and pronounce him *divine*. The Pir gathered his followers and led them to a pilgrimage of Patna in order to see the newborn. Although this was unusual, the mother of this newborn brought out the child for public viewing.

The Pir again presented the child a pre-meditated riddle. He placed two bowls of sweets before him, one purchased from a Hindu's shop, the second from a Muslim's shop, the two major contemporary religions in India. The Pir sought answer to an unspoken question which sought guidance as to which religion this divine prophet would belong to. The response would permit the Pir to pronounce the Guru's divinity and his prophetic authority to lead the people.

To everyone's astonishment and deep satisfaction, the baby placed his hands on both bowls, indicating that he would not profile people among religious divides signifying that all religions would be dear to him. He honoured a Muslim holy man to be the medium of his message. The Pir and his Muslim as well as Hindu companions were pleased and felt fulfilled.

Thus in his very first public message, Guru Gobind Singh laid the path to interfaith dialogues, sanctioned inter-religious appreciation and accommodation. Further, he chose symbolic language over the languages considered sacred by various religions to communicate his first public sermon: he chose to tell through a profound public demonstration.

Although minimising religious divide was Guru Gobind Singh's first sermon, it was not the first time in Sikh tradition that such a sermon was aired.

Similar too had been the first sermons of Guru Nanak, founder of the Sikh faith. When Guru Nanak made his debut after receiving divine ordination at the banks of River Bein, he gave a sermon to those who had gathered to welcome him as the prophet.

Guru Arjan paraphrased this sermon in the following hymn:

ਨ ਹਮ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ॥ ਅਲਹ ਰਾਮ ਕੇ ਪਿੰਦੂ ਪਰਾਨ ॥

I am not a Hindu, nor am I a Muslim. My body and breath of life belong to Allah - to Raam – the God of both.

Guru Arjan, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1136.

Do not profile me or anyone else as a Hindu or a Muslim; we are all children of same God parent. Our deeds alone will determine our place in the court of Almighty, thus said Guru Nanak.

Diversity in Human Ecology a Divine Order

Sikh theology firmly believes that diversity is a fundamental rule of creation and is applicable in all spheres of existence. Guru Amar Das wrote that diversity in creation is the Schema of God.

ਮੇਰੈ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਸਾਚੈ ਇਕੁ ਖੇਲ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥

ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕਿਸ ਹੀ ਜੇਹਾ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥

ਆਪੇ ਫਰਕੁ ਕਰੇ ਵੇਖਿ ਵਿਗਸੈ ਸਭਿ ਰਸ ਦੇਹੀ ਮਾਹਾ ਹੇ ॥ 1 ॥

My True Lord God has staged a play. He has created no one like anyone else. He made them different, and he gazes upon them with pleasure; he placed all the flavours in the body.

Guru Amar Das, Guru Granth Sahib, p.947.

Diversity is a law of nature and a law of life. Plants and animals diversify to evolve and survive; they perish if they don't. Structures of stars and worlds vary millions of times in size and so do the cell and biological particles in the human body. The law of diversity is thus universal and rather more common than an exception.

The Creator has not shaped us the same, although He has made us all equal. God has given a distinct composition to all entities of the cosmos from the tiniest quantum particle to the mightiest galaxy, assigning each its own orbit, its own energy and its own life cycle. This was the cosmic vision (*Hukam*) of the Infinite Wisdom (*Waheguru*) clearly articulated in *Granth Sahib*.

The Creator's vision of diversity, thus, materialises in the distinctiveness of all individuals, including uniqueness of children, even identical twins, born to same parents. The Scripture underscores this diversity in the creation in the following verses spoken by the various Gurus:

ਵੇਕੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਉਪਾਈਅਨੁ ਸਭ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ਸਮਾਹੀ ॥

The Creator created the world with its diversity; by his design (Hukam) the creatures appear and then merge into the grand schema.

Guru Amar Das, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 947.

Guru Arjan Dev puts it this way:

ਹੁਕਮੇ ਅਨਿਕ ਰੰਗ ਪਰਕਾਰ ॥

By His Schema (Hukam), there are so many colours and forms in this world.

Guru Arjan, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.277.

ਹੁਕਮੇ ਨਾਨਾ ਵਡਾ ਥੀਵੈ ॥

By His Schema (Hukam) some creatures become tiny and others gigantic.

Guru Arjan, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 962.

Just as our physical world is diverse, so are our religions, our cultures, social systems, orbits and traditions. The law of diversity applies to religions, too. Pluralistic religions originate out of the human ecology of diversity. They are best suited to survive along with human evolution and human ecology.

They all gather strength from diversity, serving as invaluable components within the Creator's order. It is the Creator who enabled people to devise diverse identities, even of the Divine. *Guru Granth* recognises these identities. Let us quote Guru Nanak in this regard in the following verse:

ਸਿਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਲੋਕਾ ਪਾਵ ਹੈ ॥ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਜਾਉ ਜੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਵ ਹੈ ॥

Nanak places his head at the feet of all people and is a sacrifice to as many identities ascribed to You, O' God.

Guru Nanak, Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1168.

Guru Gobind Singh Reiterated

Guru Gobind Singh reiterated the message of *Gurmat* established by Guru Nanak in so many ways and on so many occasions. He continued to promote inter faith appreciation and unity of Divine Will. He worked tirelessly to restore society's confidence in the time-tested human values of unity in diversity, freedom of faith practices, justice and compassion. He challenged the ruling and dominant powers with clenched and determination. With the same might he challenged the wide-spread religious bigotry among world religions.

The Guru's defiance of political and antagonistic cultural onslaughts extracted a heavy price. Both his parents and four sons faced martyrdom in the struggle, in front of his eyes. However, his commitment and resolve did not weaken despite enormous adversity. In the process, the Guru founded an army of saint-soldiers committed to serve the divine mission and be partisans of truth and freedom in the conflict against evil.

Regarding religious differences, he pronounced that these were man made. In the eyes of God there is no difference among various people.

ਕੋਊ ਭਿਏਓ ਮੁੰਡੀਆ ਸੰਨਿਆਸੀ ਕੋਊ ਜੋਗੀ ਭਇਓ ਕੋਊ
ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਾਰੀ ਕੋਊ ਜਤੀ ਅਨੁਮਾਨਬੋ ॥

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕੋਊ ਰਾਫਸੀ ਇਮਾਮ ਸਾਫੀ ਮਾਨਸ

ਕੀ ਜਾਤ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ ॥ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰੀਮ ਸੋਈ ਰਾਜਕ
ਰਹੀਮ ਓਈ

ਦੂਸਰੇ ਨ ਭੇਦ ਕੋਈ ਭੁਮ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਮਾਨਬੋ ॥ ਏਕ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਸੇਵ ਸਭ ਹੀ ਕੋ
ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਏਕ ਏਕ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੈ ਜੋਤ ਜਾਨਬੋ ॥

*Many believe that they become superior by accepting
celibacy or undertaking meditation, by giving up material
comforts, by making themselves look different, or by
wearing long and matted hair or no hair.*

*Others feel higher by joining a particular sect of Islam as
Shia, Sunni, etc. But no one should overlook the basic fact
that followers of all religions are the same human beings.*

*The Creator of all provides for the needs of all humans.
There is one God of all and that God alone should be
worshipped.*

*Do not remain ignorant and believe in anyone else except
the One. All humanity is equal, each one of us carries the
reflection of the Creator in us, we are all manifestations
of one Creator.*

Akal Ustat : Chaunnvee Bane Dasam Granth

To spread his message of a perfect egalitarian society based on one-ness of God that celebrates diversity in all its myriad forms, Guru Gobind Singh related the origin of all diversity to the One Being.

ਜੈਸੇ ਏਕ ਆਗ ਗੇ ਕਨੂਕਾ ਕੋਟਿ ਆਗ ਉਠਹਿੰ, ਆਗ ਕੇ ਕਨੂਕਾ
ਫਿਰ ਆਗ ਮੈਂ ਮਿਲਾਹਿੰਗੇ ।

ਜੈਸੇ ਏਕ ਧੂਰਿ ਤੇ ਅਨੇਕ ਧੂਰਿ ਪੂਰਿਅਤ, ਧੂਰਿ ਕੇ
ਕਨੂਕਾ ਫਿਰ ਧੂਰਿ ਹੀ ਸਮਾਹਿੰਗੇ ॥ ਜੈਸੇ ਏਕ ਨਦਿ ਤੇ ਤਰੰਗ ਕੋਟਿ
ਉਪਜਤ, ਪਾਨ ਕੇ ਤਰੰਗ ਸਭ ਪਾਨ ਹੀ ਕਹਾਹਿੰਗੇ ॥ ਤੈਸੇ ਬਿਸਵ
ਰੂਪ ਤੇ ਅਭੂਤ ਭੂਤ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਇ, ਤਾਹੀਂ ਤੇ ਉਪਜਿ ਸਬੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਮੈ
ਸਮਾਹਿੰਗੈ

*As out of a single fire arise millions of sparks; but all of
them merge back into the same fire.*

*As out of same dust arise millions of dust particles; but
all of them merge back into the same dust.*

*As out of a single ocean arise millions of waves; but all of
them merge into the water.*

*So from God's form emerges all creation, animate and
inanimate; and all of them are in equilibrium with the
Creator.*

Akal Ustat, Chhand 86.1.2.

Guru Gobind Singh believed that the differences among humans in terms of colour, appearance and ethnicity were owed to God's creative process; all human beings had a moral responsibility to cherish and preserve this sacred creativity. He emphasised the unity of human spirit despite many apparent distinctions.

He said:

ਮਾਨਸ ਸਬੈ ਏਕ ਪੈ ਅਨੇਕ ਕੋ ਭਰਮਾਉ ਹੈ

*All human beings are one and the same, although there is
a deception of differences.*

Akal Ustat, Chhand 86.1.2.

Guru Gobind Singh was a champion of the human right to be diverse. He advocated freedom of culture, religion and thought for every individual. He explained that the differences in our outward appearance, clothes, customs and practices are attributed to the choices that only we make.

ਦੇਵਤਾ ਅਦੇਵ ਜੱਛ ਗੰਧੂਬ ਤੁਰਕ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਨਿਆਰੇ ਨਿਆਰੇ ਦੇਸਨ ਕੇ
ਭੇਸ ਕੋ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਉ ਹੈ

ਏਕੈ ਨੈਨ ਏਕੈ ਕਾਨ ਏਕੈ ਦਹੇ ਏਕੈ ਬਾਨ ਖਾਕ ਬਾਦ ਆਤਸ਼ ਔ
ਆਬ ਕੋ ਰਲਾਉ ਹੈ

*Many are gods or demons, or celestial musicians. There
are heavenly tribes and the learned people or artists. They
may be seen as people of different religions as Muslims
(citizens of Islamic nations) or Hindus (natives of Indian
subcontinent). They all look and act differently, but their
apparent differences are owed to the influences from their
countries and cultures, or in the clothes they wear.*

Akal Ustat, Chhand 86. 1.3.

The world view of Guru Gobind Singh is all inclusive. Indeed, Guru Gobind Singh's ideal of appreciation for diversity as a pivotal feature of all human activity is also a new age ideal. We must ever defend it. On this day of his coming, we take pride in its celebration.

ਮਾਨਸ ਕੀ ਜਾਤਿ ਸਬੈ ਏਕੈ ਪਹਿਚਾਨਬੋ

Recognise all humans as one and the same race.

Akal Ustat, Chhand 85. 1.4.

The Guru further elaborated on the apparent differences among people.

Degradation of Clergy

To seal the message of unity among religions for ever, Guru Gobind Singh preserved the eternal guruship of the Holy Scripture in his last sermon. By doing so he closed forever doors to the clergy class.

He honoured the many prophets and holy men who have blessed us with their hymns which were included in the Holy Granth. By doing so he exhibited full awareness of history which takes its own toll on every blessing. In religions, the toll is emergence of a cleric or a priestly class. They are self-installed caretakers that surface once the prophet leaves the scene. He well knew that it was the clergy class who created all religious divides, geared for their own benefit.

Guru Gobind Singh condemned the *masand* or god men of the time very forcefully and asked his followers not to follow them in any way. He condemned in no uncertain terms the godmen and clergy who indulged in the evil of distorting religion. Guru Gobind Singh is said to use the following stern terminology to describe the evil doings of these godmen.

ਪਾਪ ਕਰੋ ਪਰਮਾਰਥ ਕੈ ਜਿਹ ਪਾਪਨ ਤੇ ਅਤਿ ਪਾਪ ਲਜਾਹੀ ॥
Some as godmen do evil deeds and commit sins in the name of parmarath (the divine path or religion), their sins put any other sin to shame.

Bachiter Natak in Dasam Granth, Sawjia 99.

Guru Gobind Singh was echoing what Guru Amar Das earlier said.

ਅਭਿਆਗਤ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਪਰ ਘਰਿ ਭੋਜਨੁ ਕਰੇਨਿ ॥
 ਉਦਰੈ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਹਲੇ ਕਰੇਨਿ ॥
They are not to be called godmen who are dependent on others for their livelihood and who, for sake of their commerce, wear various religious robes and take on external religious garb.

Guru Amar Das, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 949

Historically, the clergy class in every religion have promoted religion as contrary to teachings of their founders. Instead of nurturing and promoting the religion which they served or the culture associated with such religious practice, they subvert the religious beliefs and practice to their advantage. Under their influence, the original purpose of the religion was often lost.

Whereas founders of the most religions meant to connect human beings to the Universal Divine on a cosmic basis and ethnic differences as not associated with any real faith doctrine, many 'caretakers' of religious treasures consider religion as a commodity of commerce or a trade for profit. They find it profitable to superimpose on the original religion a variety of ethnic rules that promote exclusivity and divisiveness.

Often clergy would define a deity so uniquely that they ended up elevating themselves as exclusive interpreters of God's message; they themselves become godmen. This is not limited to Sikhism; numerous examples from religions of the world, both the Semitic and Indian religions, illustrate such schemes of clerics. To inculcate and nurture our faith it is customary to throw the faithful and their congregations at the mercy of the priestly class or godmen.

Ordination of Guru Granth

Guru Gobind Singh believed that Sikh theology was meant to be identical to the theology solidified in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. By the last proclamation of Guru Gobind Singh asking Sikhs to follow Sri Guru Granth Sahib as their eternal guru and as their only Guru, it was clearly meant that no distortion would be allowed of the scripture or scriptural meaning to formulate any theology, philosophy or mode of believing.

The word *gurmat* that was coined by the Gurus was permanently embedded in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It needs to be widely used by Sikh scholars and Sikh exponents to suitably and pragmatically translate the Guru's wisdom for guiding the Sikh way of life.

The only requirement today would be to update its mode of presentation and reception to suit modern vocabulary and understanding. Only this perspective must be echoed by contemporary scholars to evolve and promote the central points about the Sikh religion in the new century.

Our scripture has permanently sealed the role of any clergy to come between a Sikh and his Shabad guru.

As Kabir wrote

ਹਮਰਾ ਝਗਰਾ ਰਹਾ ਨ ਕੋਊ ॥ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਮੁਲਾਂ ਛਾਡੇ ਦੋਊ ॥

There is no quarrel left with anyone. I have abandoned both the Pandit, the Hindu priest, and the Mullah, the Muslim priest.

Kabir, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.1159

Similarly, Kabir rejected the path of the priestly class who advocated any sort of *karam dharma*.

ਕਬੀਰ ਜਿਹ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਗਏ ਪਾਛੈ ਪਰੀ ਬਹੀਰ ॥
 ਇਕ ਅਵਘਟ ਘਾਟੀ ਰਾਮ ਕੀ ਤਿਹ ਚੜਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਕਬੀਰ ॥

Crowds follow the path of clergy and religious scholar; but there is another climb direct to the cliff of Divinity needing none to intercede, that Kabir would track.

Kabir, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1373

To Guru Nanak there is only one central theology of religion, to imbibe the truth.

ਏਕੋ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਸਚੁ ਕੋਈ ॥

There is only one law of religion; every one must imbibe the Truth.

Guru Nanak, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1188

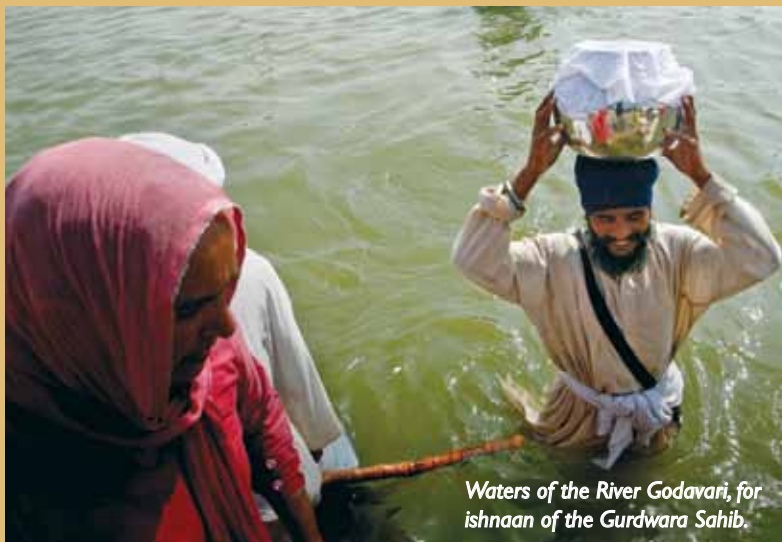
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪੰਥ ਸੁਖ ਚਾਹਤ ਸਕਲ ਪੰਥ

Bhai Gurdas, Kabit 58, line 1

From Bein to Godavari

It was not coincidental that Guru Gobind Singh elected to associate many of his life events with the symbolism of universality and with intermingling of major religions of the time.

He made three major pronouncements at three different corners of the Indian sub-continent. All the three places were extensions of those used by his predecessor Gurus. All dissociated from the birth place of any Guru, or much association with any significant Sikh history. In selecting those places Guru Gobind Singh avoided any patronisation of a culture, language, people, land, time, season, or surrounding.



*Waters of the River Godavari, for
ishnaan of the Gurdwara Sahib.*

The Guru elected to be born in eastern India's soil in the town of Patna in contrast to western India where much of the history related to Sikh communities had been until then. He made his first pronouncement through the inter-faith event orchestrated through Pir Bhikhan Shah.

To focus on the significance of Vaisakhi, Guru Gobind Singh chose a hilly area, later named as Anandpur Sahib in the North West. There the Guru

founded an army of those committed to serve the divine mission, be partisans of truth and freedom in the conflict against evil.

When came the time for his final sermon he chose banks of the River Godavari in the South. Whereas Guru Nanak chose the River Bein to make the pronouncement of his prophetic mission, Guru Gobind Singh came to banks of the Godavari to deliver his last sermon. Thus the Dasam Patshah added a new place to the list of our Holy shrines such as Janam Asthan Sri Nankana Sahib, Kartarpur Sahib, Sri Harmandir Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, Damdamda Sahib and Sri Sisganj Sahib.

The river Godavari connects peoples of the Arabian Sea to those inhabiting the Bay of Bengal, fusing two diverse cultures on the west and east of India's great peninsula.

The Godavari has been held as a special place of pilgrimage for many thousands of years. Many famous figures of history bathed in her waters as an act of worship. They included Sri Baladeva, elder brother of the Hindu Avtar, Lord Krishna. Baldeva touched the banks of Godavari nearly 5000 years ago. Then around the time of Guru Nanak, five centuries ago, the social reformer of the Hindu society, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu chanted prayers and imparted his teachings the banks of River Godavari. Sri Chaitanya was a notable proponent for the Vaishnava school of Bhakti yoga based on the philosophy of the Bhagavata Purana and Bhagavad Gita. Guru Nanak visited Nanded at almost the same time.

As tradition goes, the land where the Guru Granth was first compiled was gifted by the Muslim ruler Akbar and legalised by the Mogul King Jahangir. The land where Guru Gobind Singh ordained the Adi Granth to Guru Granth was also gifted by a the Muslim family of the Nanded area. Whereas Muslim Faqir Bhai Sahib Mian Mir accompanied Guru Arjun in laying the foundation stone of Amritsar to install the Adi Granth, the Mughal King Bahadur Shah accompanied Guru Gobind Singh to Nanded in founding the holy centre where the Guru Granth Sahib would be installed as the Eternal Guru. A century later, around 1823, Raja Chandu Lal, diwan of Hyderabad state, initiated transfer of Gurdwara management to the Sikhs. In 1832, the Nizam of Hyderabad secured the permanence of Sikh shrines through an endowment of 525 acres of land. Thus

persons and places of diverse religions have been associated with the events leading to the Gur ta gaddi.

Whereas Guru Nanak chose the banks of Bein River in the North Western of India to initiate inter-faith dialogues to spread his message, Guru Gobind Singh chose the banks of Godavari to establish the institutional templates which would form the cornerstone of Sikhs' religious life and serve as the lighthouse of divine wisdom for mankind.

The Content Over Cover

The holy volume symbolically given the honour of ordination or gurgaddi was not the one selected by Guru Arjan for the First Parkash at Harimander Sahib. Guru Arjan compiled the first volume in 1604 and installed it at Amritsar. It was known as the Kartarpur volume and was preserved throughout those years. It is said that Guru Gobind Singh could not obtain the volume in the possession of Dir Mal at that time. If Guru Gobind Singh had thought that the Kartarpur volume was particularly sacred and was required for nobility of the gurgaddi, he could have secured it. The Guru had enough personnel strength to do so. Rather, he asked for the Damdami volume to prove that there was no special sanctity

attached to any particular paper, volume, ink or scribe. Rather, it was the material contained within it that was worthy of the honour. This was his vivid demonstration to establish the high place of content over cover in the Guru Granth Sahib.

While preparing the Volume which Guruji planned to install at the Nanded event, he recruited a Sikh scholar of very high standing rank. Bhai Mani Singh was a scholar of high at the Guru's time just like Bhai Guru Das who inscribed the volume by Guru Arjan. Bhai Mani Singh was well versed in the languages used in the Granth and a devout Sikh.

The Choice of Custodian

Daya Singh was head of the Five Beloved of Vaisakhi fame. By asking him to bring the holy volume to install and serve as the granthi for this historic occasion, the Guru gave a clear message that the Khalsa would be the *Keepers of the Light*. They were the ones who were bestowed with power of steel by the Guru at Anandpur Sahib and they would be prepared to volunteer for the cause. The cause was to preserve and protect institution of the Guru Granth by serving as the Keepers of the Light.



Carrying waters from the Godavari, devotees at Takhat Sachhkhand, Sri Huzoor Sahib.

Since the discovery of Bhatt Vahis, new history books contain their version. According to Bhatt Vahi Talanda Pargana Jind, on Wednesday 6 October 1708, Guru Gobind Singh Ji asked Bhai Daya Singh to bring Sri Granth Sahib. In obedience to his orders, Daya Singh brought Sri Granth Sahib. The Guru placed before it the five coins and a coconut and bowed his head before it. He said to the Sangat,

‘It is my commandment : own Sri Granth Sahib in my place....’.

The Milieu to confirm Baani and Sangat

Guru Gobind Singh clearly and carefully orchestrated the milieu to reiterate the institution of *Baani and Sangat* as the basic unit for the learning and practice of Sikh teachings. This institution would then flourish and multiply and form lifeline of the Sikh nation throughout the world. As Guru Arjan, the first compiler of the Granth, said, ‘the holy book would serve as the place of divine knowledge around which would flourish the Sikh congregations.’

ਪੋਥੀ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਕਾ ਥਾਨੁ ॥ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਗੁਣ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਪੂਰਨ
ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥

*This Holy Book is home of the Transcendent God.
The seekers sing the Glorious Attributes of the ONE
The Sacred Sangat or congregations of the Holy, may
receive such perfect knowledge of God.*

Guru Arjan, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p. 1226.

The Sikh theologian Bhai Gurdas further elaborated on the institute of Baani and Sangat as:

ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਾਇ ਕੈ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਸੁਣੈਦਾ ॥

*A Sikh goes to the congregation of the elevated ones and
listens to riches of the Gurbani or the Guru's hymns.*

Bhai Gurdas, Var 40, Pauri 11, line 3.

Bhai Gurdas further states.

ਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਬਿਨਾ ਦੁਜੀ ਓਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਰਾਈ ॥

*A Sikh has no other place to lean on than the congregation
of the Guru where the Gurus' hymns are imparted.*

Bhai Gurdas, Var 1, Pauri 42, line 4.

Congregational service on this historic day of Gur ta gaddi was performed by Bhai Nath Mal.

According to Ganda Singh, a *Sehajdhari* Sikh Bhai Nath Mal Dhadhi accompanied Guru Gobind Singh to Nanded.

Bhai Nath Mal Dhadi was the ballad singer who served as the court poet and cantor of Guru Hargobind and all the succeeding four Gurus. He and his companion party, *dhadhi jatha*, performed in the service of Guru Gobind Singh as the gurdwara cantors during the Guru's last days in Nanded.

Bhai Nath Mal Dhadhi composed a ballad known as *Amar Namah*, which consists of 146 verses, which was composed under the name of the Guru himself in the first person. It described the Guru's last days at Nanded in 1708.

Ganda Singh, quoting Koer Singh, paraphrased the description of the last act of Guru Gobind Singh as he “bowed to Sri Granth, prayed in all reverence, made offerings to rababi musicians (Bhai Nath Mal Dhadhi) and was absorbed in the Word of the Guru Granth Sahib”.

According to *Amar Namah*, Guru Gobind Singh spoke as a man of Truth and gave a sermon on that day which included many aspects, some related to this occasion are as follows :

Thus the Guru advised that Sikhs should always have faith in the *Akal Purakh* the Guru himself worshipped. They should bow only to the One Omnipotent God in prayer, and from Him alone they should derive the power and the glory.

Do not ever think of following any tradition of multiple gods.

They should help those helpless people who are drowned in ignorance and who do not accept the divine wisdom of the Guru included in the Guru's hymns.

After the congregation you sit together with other honest people and eat from the common kitchen. Let no person remain hungry.

Sikhs must not follow the edicts of unholy god men or clerics.

Sikhs have been granted sovereignty of both the worlds and must maintain high spirits, *Chardi Kalab* under all circumstances.

Guru Gobind Singh conferred the Gur ta gaddi to the Granth which was then exalted to be Sri Guru Granth Sahib.

With the institution of *Banni* and *Sangat*, being the Gurus' hymns, the congregation would flourish and the Light would spread as was predicted by scholars of the Guru's time.

The famous scholars of Guru Arjan era believed that hymns of the Guru, when shared, would ever continue to swell.

They wrote:

ਲੰਗਰੁ ਚਲੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵੀ ਖਟੀਐ ॥
ਖਰਚੇ ਦਿਤਿ ਖਸੰਮ ਦੀ ਆਪ ਖਰਦੀ ਖੈਰਿ ਦਬਟੀਐ ॥

Langer, the free kitchen of the Guru's teaching, is always open and its supplies never run short. Its supplies are given by the Creator to be shared and would never run out.

Balvand and Sata, Sri Guru Granth Sahib.p 967.

We can thus see that 'self-righteousness' which comes from dividing the world into 'us' and 'them' has no place in Guru Gobind Singh's vision. His sacrifices made the great difference and diversity was preserved throughout the Indian sub-continent

Santokh Singh, a great historian of India, rightly observed

ਛਾਇ ਜਾਤੀ ਏਕੇਤਾ ਅਨੇਕਤਾ ਬਿਲਾਏ ਜਾਤੀ, ਹੋਵਤੀ ਕੁਚੀਲਤਾ
ਕਤਬੇਨ ਕੁਰਾਨ ਕੀ.

ਪਾਪ ਪਰਪਕ ਜਾਤੇ, ਧਰਮ ਧਸਕ ਜਾਤੇ, ਬਰਨ ਗਰਕ ਜਾਤੇ ਸਾਹਿਤ
ਬਿਧਾਨ ਕੀ.

ਦੇਵੀ ਦੇਵ ਦਿਹੁਰੇ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੂਰ ਹੋਤੇ, ਰੀਤ ਮਿਟ ਜਾਤੀ ਸਭ
ਬੇਦਨ ਪੁਰਾਨ ਕੀ.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਾਵਨ ਪਰਮ ਸੂਰ, ਮੂਰਤ ਨ ਹੋਤੀ ਜੋ ਪਹਿ,
ਕਰੁਣਾ ਨਿਧਾਨ ਕੀ.

Were Guru Gobind Singh not there at the critical junction of Indian history, there would have been only uniformity; diversity would have taken wings.

In favour of one religion, all others would have disappeared and their holy places destroyed.

Sin would have replaced virtue.

Bhai Santokh Singh, Suraj Parkash.

By carefully choosing the places of his historic sermons Guru Gobind Singh called attention to the universal fact that the Guru's message was meant for peoples in all four corners of the world, without any distinction or prejudice. This was fully believed by the scholars of the Guru's court at the time of Guru Granth compilation.

ਉਗਵਣਹੁ ਤੈ ਆਥੁਣਹੁ ਚਹੁ ਚਕੀ ਕੀਅਨੁ ਲੋਆ ॥ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨ
ਸੇਵਿਓ ਮਨਮੁਖਾ ਪਇਆ ਮੋਆ ॥ ਦੂਣੀ ਚਉਣੀ ਕਰਾਮਾਤਿ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ
ਸਚਾ ਢੋਆ ॥

Guru meant to spread the Light from the direction of sunrise to the sunset, in all continents.

Those who do not serve the cause of the Guru in this way are selfish and may go in shame.

It is a miracle of God that the Light will increase many fold as it is spread.

Balvand and Sata, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, p.968.

By carefully orchestrating the milieu, Guru Gobind Singh formalised the institution of *Baani* and *Sangat* as basic aspect for the learning and practice of Sikh teachings.

Let us reflect on and find ways to share the Light as we continue to celebrate centennials. Let us exhibit this, display this and share this in every way so that all humanity can find warmth and compassion in its glow. We should celebrate so that all may be empowered to connect to the Word and work together towards our goal of a spiritual and just social order for all mankind.

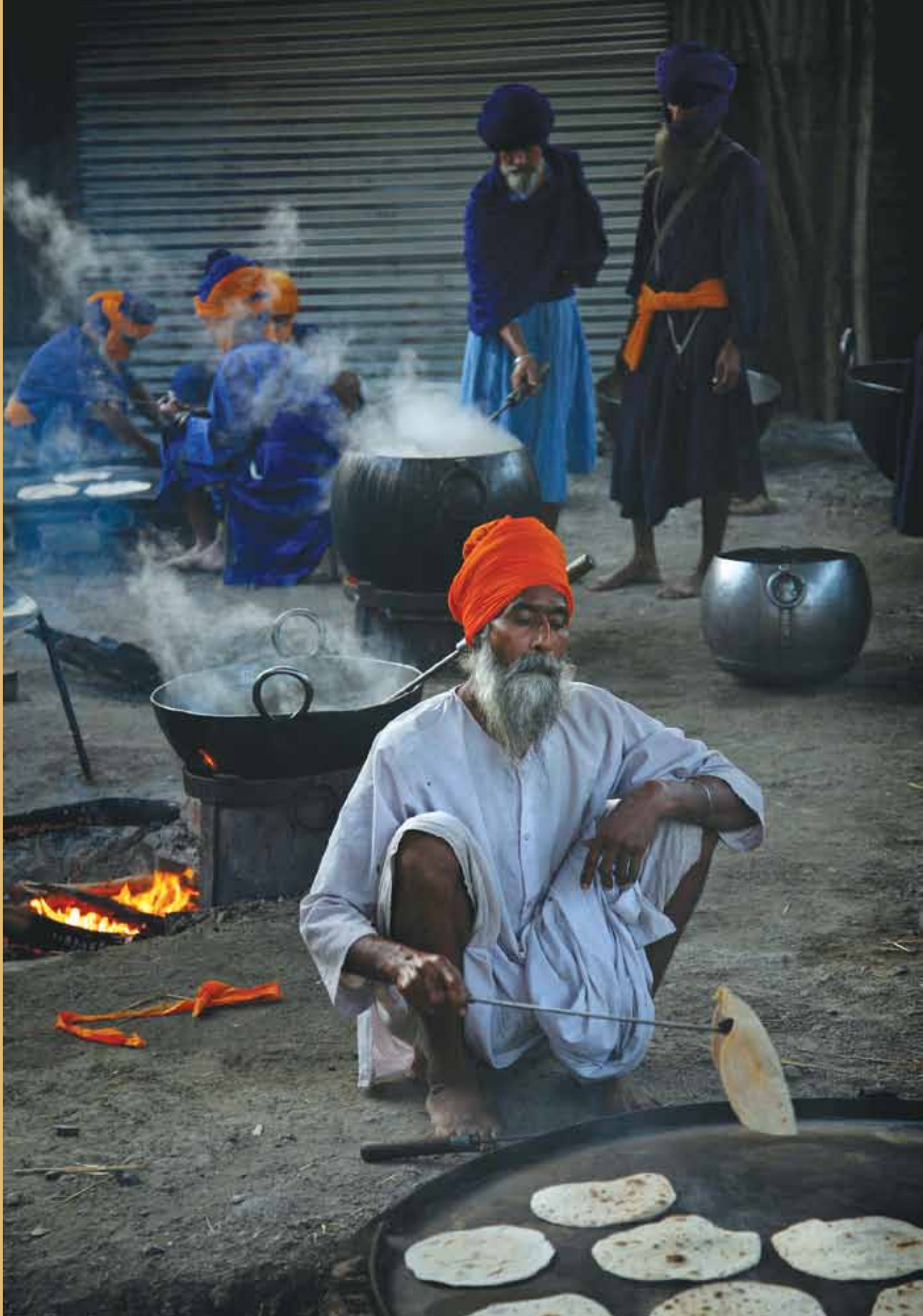
In celebrating this auspicious Centennial we should not permit clerics and godmen to pervert those lofty teachings and lofty practices based upon Gurmat.

In essence,

- ☉ Sikhee is based on teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib.
- ☉ Sikhee is universal in its appeal and meant for the global village of the new age.
- ☉ Icon of Sikh spirituality is rooted with the commencing hymn of the Guru Granth and represented by < *Ik Onkaar*
- ☉ Major pillars of Sikh Living are *Naam* (experiencing divinity everywhere and all the time), *Daan* (altruism, seeking and gratitude) and *Isnaan* (actions that cleanse both body and mind).
- ☉ Sikhee is a Religion of Service, Peace, Freedom, Equality, Justice, Humility and Tolerance
- ☉ In Sikhee, there is no priestly class, no dogma, social class nor gender discrimination, nor idol worship

Prof. Harbans Lal

[As presented during the International Interfaith Conference on Guru Granth Gur ta Gaddi at Sri Hazoor Sahib, Nanded on 25-28 September 2008]



The essence of Sikh life : naam, daan and isnaan. Langar at Nanded.

The Sikh World View as enunciated in Guru Granth Sahib

According to the Sikh World View, despite being the creator, God is both transcendent and immanent. He is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent but He is not confined in any mundane or celestial place. He is formless but all forms are His (being His creation). He neither takes birth nor dies: He does not incarnate in any form whatsoever.

The visible and invisible universe and whatever happens in it is the creation of Almighty and is in the ambit of inexorable alone Divine law (*Hukam*). Nothing is free from the jurisdiction of the said law. The universe exists, pulsates, persists and exists at the pleasure of Him, whose sport it is. Although ephemeral by nature, the universe is real because it is the creation of God and depends upon the Lord, who is the Absolute Truth and resides in every pore of it. The Sikh World View does not despise the world as any hindrance in God realisation. On the contrary.

God, nature and man form an important triad in the Sikh World View. God is indisputed creator of the universe and all inanimate and animate things found in it. Universe is interalia, the abode of its creator. Man has two aspects, the body



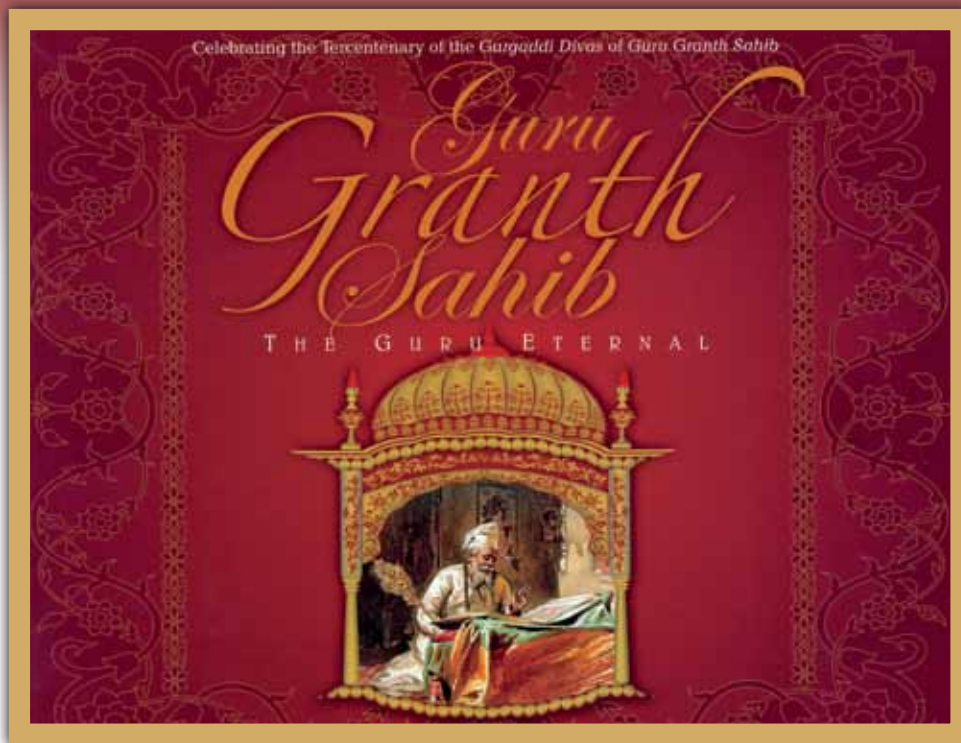
and soul. The body is a product of earthly elements and soul is the Divine spark which animates this earthy cage. The human soul, while living in the world, strives to know not only about its surroundings but also about itself. This endeavour towards self knowledge and realisation necessitates adoption of spiritual path leading to the goal of human existence which according to the Sikh World View is the merger of human

soul into Over soul. The Sikh World View underlines the importance of spiritual guides who must lead man towards the said goal. But at the same time the fact should not be winked at, that spiritual guide should be, realised soul himself : he should be God-like. That is why in Guru Granth Sahib, God Himself has been referred to as Guru. It is not the body of the Guru which is important. Infinitely more important than the body is the spiritual instructions and guidance imparted by the Guru.

Ritualism is *bete noire* of the Sikh World View which advocates a through and through practical socio-spiritual life stressing on the metaphysical foundation of human existence. Sikh World View converges on a life affirming holistic ideology which condemns any defeatist view which encourages some to lead an ascetic life and in turn become parasites on society. In Sikh World View, the woman is not considered to be *maya* incarnate. It approves neither of beggary nor the life of inactivity nor passive existence. It advocates an active life of a house holder who, while actively executing all his worldly responsibilities does not lose sight of the ultimate goal of human existence. The ideal man here is the regal saint soldier.

Guru Granth Sahib

The Guru Eternal



The cover.

To my mind, this is the finest example of a 'coffee table book' but my heart rebels at such a moniker for it. It is much, much more than that; it indeed is a labour of love, with a lot more to teach us than simply being delightful to the visual senses.

The year 2008 marks exactly 300 years since Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Sikh Master, invested the almost 1400-page tome that was the Adi Granth as the Guru Granth - eternal living Guru of the Sikhs and the repository of their entire spiritual heritage.

Sikhism is a young religion. The period of its founder, Guru Nanak, parallels that of Western Reformation and Renaissance and an era that saw great ferment of ideas in the world. And we do live in interesting times: we have experienced many important commemorations in a very short span. The 500th anniversary of Guru Nanak's birth

in 1969; tercentenary of Guru Gobind Singh's birth in 1966, and of the Khalsa in 1999; four centuries of the Adi Granth in 2004; and now 300 years of Guru Granth Sahib.

The book opens with a commendatory remark by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He pointedly notes that "The vision of Guru Granth Sahib embraces the whole of humanity – its concerns are universal and transcend geographical and linguistic boundaries".

An Introduction by Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki, that is both rigorously scholarly and movingly devotional, sets the tone for this magnificent tribute to the

Guru Granth. In it, he very aptly quotes Arnold Toynbee, the celebrated historian, as saying, "In the coming religious debate, the Sikh religion and its scripture, the Adi Granth, will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world."

Dr. Neki is at his most inspiring here when exploring the nature of revelation in the mystical experience that is common to the world's great religions. He reminds us that Sikhism makes no

Dr Mohinder Singh, 2008; Himalayan Books in association with National Institute of Panjab Studies, New Delhi, India; 256 Pages, ISBN: 81-7002-101-4; Price \$120.00

Review by Dr. I.J.Singh, New York University



*'Arjan, The Guru, is seated on Nanak's Throne; lo, how sparkles his star-studded canopy.'
[From chapter 'Revelation in Guru Granth Sahib']*

॥ १७३ ॥

ਮੁਕਤਾਪੁਰਖ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰ ॥

ਆਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

ਜਪਾ ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਰੇ

ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋ ਸੀ ॥ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਸੈ

ਰਿਨਾ ਹੋ ਵਈ ਜੇ ਸੋ ॥ ਰੀ ਲਖ ਵ

ਪੈਰੁ ਪਨ ਹੋ ਵਈ ਜੇ ਲਾ ॥ ਠਿਗਾ ਗਲਿ

ਕੁਖਿ ਆ ਕੁਖ ਨ ਚਿਤ ॥ ਗਿ ਜੇ ਬੀਨਾ ਪੁਰ

ਕੁਗ ॥ ਸਹ ਸ ॥ ਸਿਆ

ਲਖ ਹੋ ਰਿਤੁ ਏਕ ॥ ਨਚੇ

ਵਸ ਰਿ ਆਗੈ ॥ ਈ

ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ ਜੁਕਮ ॥ ਰ

ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ॥



Photo by Malkiat Singh

claims to exclusivity in revelation, and that the doctrinal emphasis unchangingly remains on the universality of the divine. He goes on to note that Guru Granth remains perhaps the first, if not the only, sacred scripture that was compiled by actual founders of the faith.

Most significantly, Guru Granth contains the writings of 36 authors but only six of the ten Founder-Gurus. Three are Muslim holy-men, 12 are Hindus (5 Brahmins, 3 Rajputs, 4 low-castes); 4 honoured Sikhs, while 11 are minstrels and bards (Bhatts). This makes Guru Granth a monumental interfaith scripture, and thus, unique. Another highly unusual feature is that most of the poetry in Guru Granth is set in the notes of classical Indian musicology. This then makes music an inseparable part of and integral to Sikh worship, where **Word** is the revelatory medium.



Guru Granth Sahib being carried from Kotha Sahib to the sanctum sanctorum of Harimandir Sahib for Parkash. [Photo by Malkiat Singh]

Seven inspiring chapters follow the Introduction.

The first chapter, *Sikh Religion & the Sikh Scripture*, explores the life and enlightenment of Nanak, and follows that with a brief summation of his message, including *Japjee*, the primal creed, and the institutions he founded, including *keertan* as well as the community kitchen (*langar*). It then reminds us that "Of all religions the best religion is to utter the holy name with love and do good deeds."

The next chapter, *From Pothi to Guru Granth Sahib*, traces the colourful history and compilation of the Adi Granth in 1604, as well as its contributors and how they came to be included.

The following chapter on *Installation of the Adi Granth in the Harimandir Sahib* recapitulates some interesting history: how, in 1604, Guru Arjan escorted the Adi Granth (the precursor

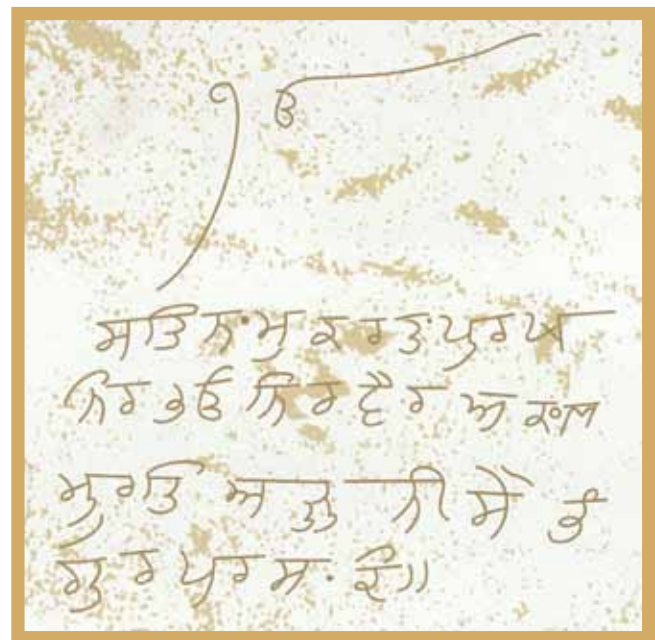




Guru Granth Sahib at the sanctum sanctorum of Harmandar Sahib, Amritsar [Photo by Malkiat Singh].

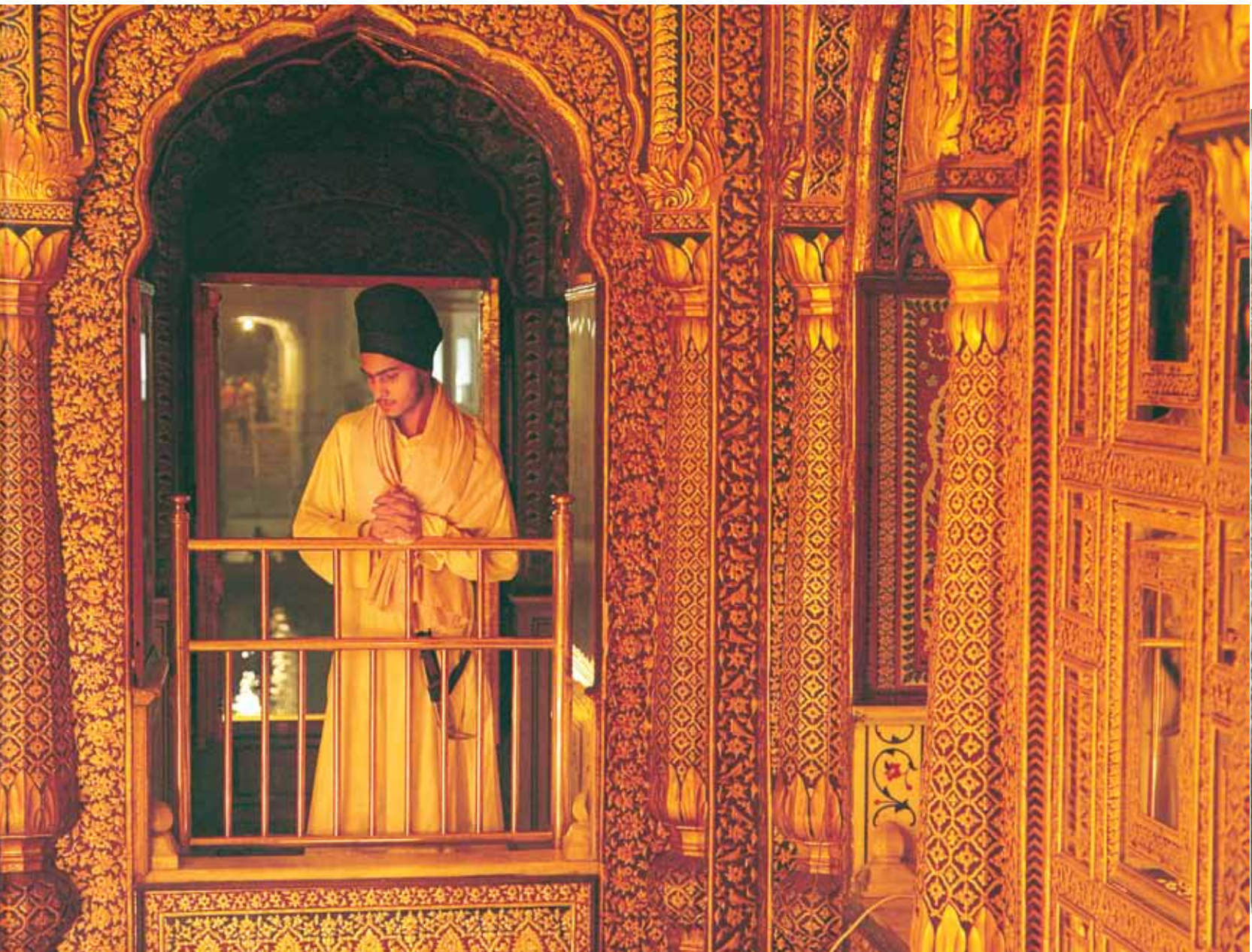
to Guru Granth) with great ceremony, respect and adoration to the Harimandir. It is a protocol that is followed to this day. Doors to the Harimandir open at 2:30 a.m. to the sounds of keertan. Guru Granth is ceremoniously escorted in from the Akal Takht at 4:30 a.m. Keertan continues all day; finally at 10:30 p.m. Guru Granth is carried back to the Akal Takht for the night. In a sense then, Guru Granth holds court all day for its disciples.

I found the fourth chapter – *Contributors of Guru Granth Sahib* – extremely enlightening. It summarises very nicely what we know of the lives of those whose writings were honoured by inclusion. We know so little of so many bhagats and bards. We know that the writings of these Hindu and Muslim contributors are also set to ragas, but who did the setting? Was it Guru Arjan or was it the author, even though several of the authors preceded the Gurus by a considerable period? I still wonder – this monumental work provides no hint or answer.



Mool Mantra in the hand of Guru Arjan Dev:
[Kartarpuri Bir with the Sodhi family.]

Important *Hukumnamas* & *Nisans* comprise the next chapter. The word *Hukumnama* means an edict or command. Occasionally in response to a particular purpose or need, the Guru would issue a letter, like an encyclical, to the congregation, which would respect and obey it like a royal edict. Many genuine *hukumnamas* have survived the ravages of time and they provide a critical window into Sikh history and religion of that time. Obviously they are not included in *Guru Granth* but some of these, including one by Mata Sahib Dewan, are explored in this chapter.



At Darbar Sahib (Photo by Malkiat Singh)

Obviously, for Guru Granth to become incorporated into our lives, it is necessary that we understand the Word. But the Word was written over 300 to 500 years ago. Also, the languages in Guru Granth are many and there are myriad references to Hindu and Islamic mythology. The next chapter, *Interpretations and Translations of Guru Granth Sahib*, focusses on the many translations and expositions that are now available in numerous languages, such as French, German, Urdu, Hindi, and others. In Punjabi there are many. Even in English there are more than one, starting with first attempt by Ernest Trumpp that was not well received.

Some historical hand written recensions of Guru Granth exist, but India does not yet have the tradition of preservation and restoration of such material. The last chapter of the book, *Conserving Rare Guru Granth Sahib Birs*, focuses on the need to digitise and preserve

our heritage. The need is critical; the time for action is now. The author, Mohinder Singh, has taken the lead in initiating the process of digitisation of our treasured manuscripts; he deserves to be commended and supported.

I have devoted ample space to summarising and presenting to readers the contents of the written chapters. They are but a small part of this work, however. The most eye-catching and significant portion of the contents is the art : it cannot be described, only experienced. I have not seen anything better.

William Baker's photograph of the Harimandir taken in 1864-65 is absolutely stunning, as is William Simpson's 1860 water colour of the Akal Takht. The credits include some of the legendary photographers and artists, including Raghu Rai, Hardev Singh,



Prayer Book of Guru Gobind Singh, kept with the Bagrian family (Courtesy: Bhai Jujhar Singh Bagrian).

Malkiat Singh, Sondeep Shankar, and many others, including the USA-based Gurumustuk Singh, founder of the internet forum, Sikhnet. Painters of this and the last century, such as Sobha Singh, Devender Singh and Kirpal Singh also find a place of pride.

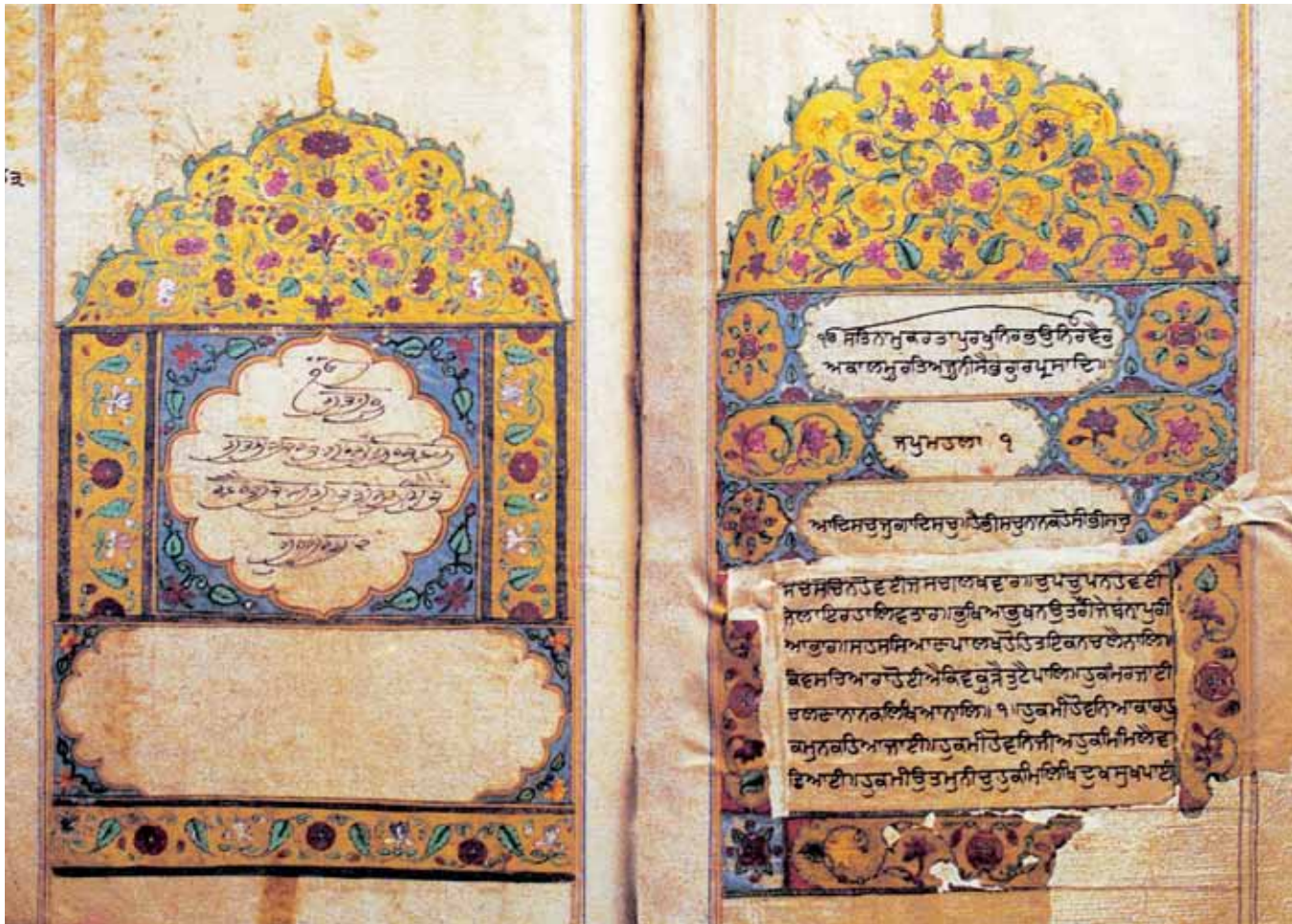
Most of the art and artists are identified. Sometimes, though, it is difficult to put the two together. There are artistic representations aplenty of the Gurus and others who have found a place in Guru Granth or in its history. But how true are they? We know that no credible pictures or paintings of the Gurus exist. I imagine the story is not much different when we speak of Kabir, Farid, Bhikan and other bhagats, nor are there any images of Bhai Mardana, Baba Buddha, Bhai Gurdas or Bhai Mani Singh. So where do all the representations come from? Some explanation – even hypotheses – would surely have been timely.

Baba Buddha, the first *granthi* at the Harimandir in 1604 is identified as 'Head Priest'. I find that troublesome, because in Sikhi there is no priestly institution with its associated ecclesiastical authority. A *granthi* is more like a church elder than a priest.

These minor caveats aside, this book is a straightforward account of Guru Granth and associated events of Sikh history, minus the cunning passages and contrived corridors that are the hallmarks of any historical narrative.

The strength of the book is its unmatched collection of art and photographs, and its lavish printing. It is impossible to peruse this book and automatically not bow to the Gurus for their wisdom and sagacity and not feel a quiver of devotion and respect.

The author, Dr Mohinder Singh, is no stranger to our readers. His scholarly credentials include



Opening page of Guru Granth Sahib at Jakhat Sri Patna Sahib with Mool Mantra by Guru Gobind Singh.



Morning vaak from Guru Granth Sahib being written for the sangat.

an unmatched history of the Akali Movement that has shaped Sikh politics – its national and international consciousness – for better than 70 years. As Director of the National Institute of Panjab Studies, he has been a resurgent intellect in how Sikhi defines its place in the modern world. Another of his milestones was the publication of *Guru Arjan Dev: Life, Martyrdom and Legacy* in 2005, co-authored with Professor Prithipal Singh Kapur. Mohinder Singh's publications are many and much valued, but this one on Guru Granth is in a class by itself.

At \$120.00 many would find the book prohibitively expensive, but it is well worth the price. It would be an acquisition of lasting value for libraries – both institutional and personal.



Inside the Gumbad at Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar.

Basking in the Divine Presence

The Books of Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki

On 27 November 2008, The Nagaara Trust organised a function at the India International Centre in New Delhi for the release of four Books by Dr Jaswant Singh Neki : *Divine Intimations: Nit Nem; Basking in the Divine Presence : a Commentary on Jap Sahib; Sada Vigas* a collection of spiritual essays in Panjabi) and *Panjabi Has Vilas* or Panjabi folk humour.

S. Pushpinder Singh welcomed the guests and S. Anup Singh introduced the distinguished speakers.

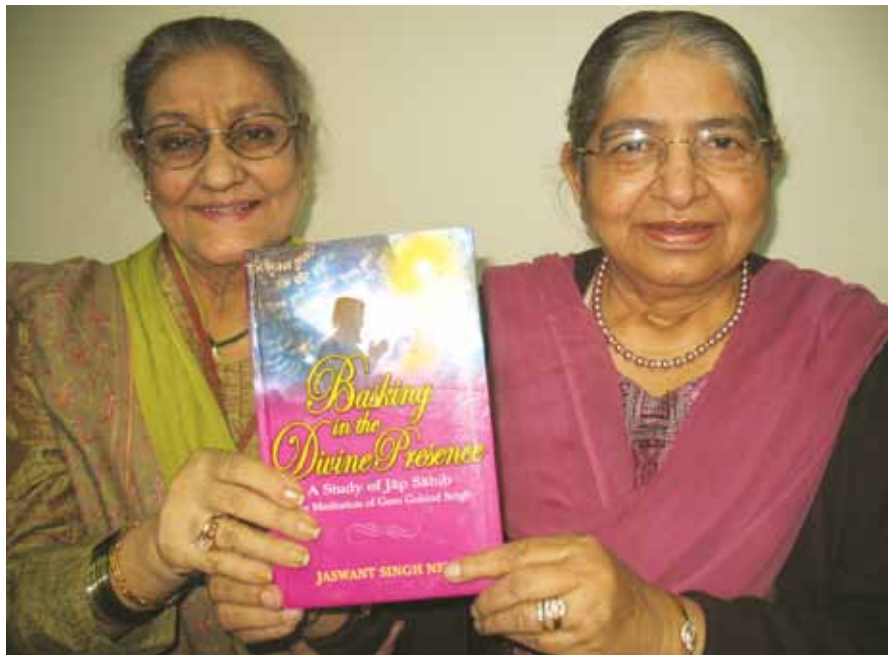
Dr Bhagwan Josh, Professor of History at JNU, introducing the author, eulogised his versatility 'renowned psychiatrist, a distinctive poet and a reputed theologian.' According to him, Dr. Neki ranks with such poets as Bhai Vir Singh and Puran Singh, but is quite distinct from them. "Bhai Vir Singh espouses to give verse form to Sikh values somewhat pedagogically. Puran



Bhayee Sikander Singh.



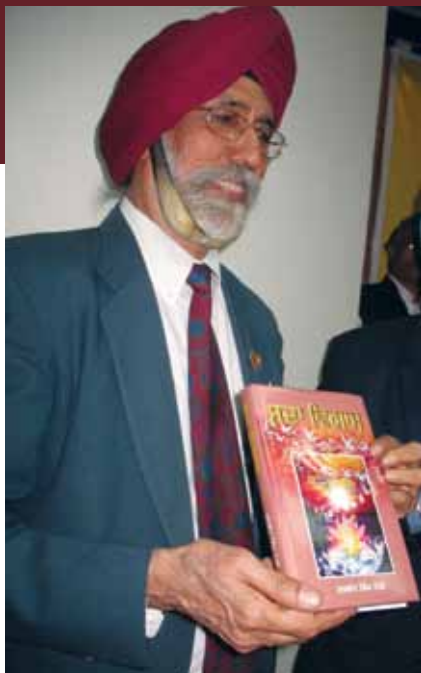
Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki.



Dr. Mohinder Kaur Gill and Sardarni Jaswant Singh Neki.

Singh thrills his readers with his inspired emotional and spiritual sensibility. Dr Neki with his global world view relates himself to basic human concerns and brings forth appreciable psychological insights and philosophical discernment to his suave verse." Dr. Josh stressed that, "Neki di sangat vich rangat hai."

Bhayee Sikandar Singh, the Sikh theologian, spoke about 'Divine Intimations' and at length brought into relief how each bani of *Nit Nem* describes the Indescribable, 'the One' Universal God and also charts the way for the devotee to reach Him.



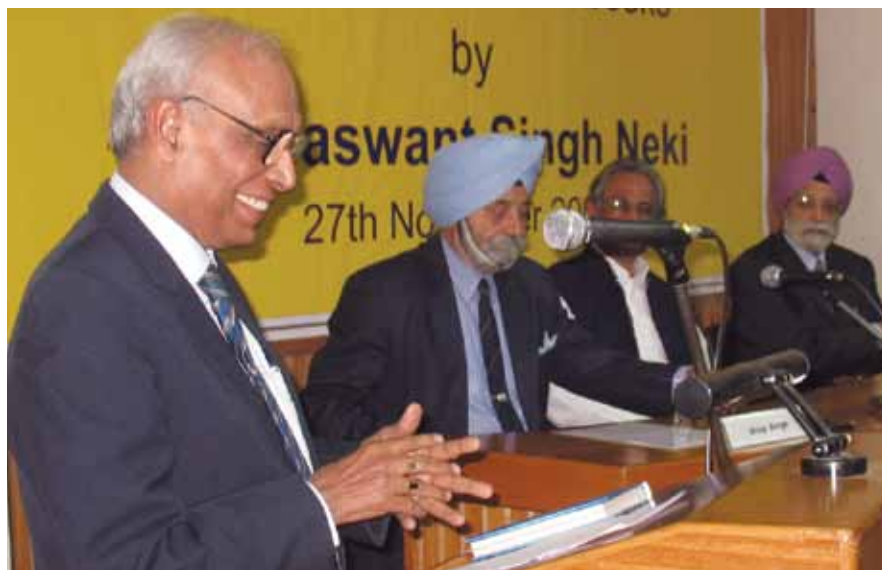
Dr. Mohinder Singh.



Dr. Bhagwan Josh.



Ms. Nazhat Hassan.



Dr. Indra Nath Chowdhuri at the book launch.

Dr. Indra Nath Chowdhuri, former Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi, spoke on 'Basking in the Divine Presence' and expressed his marvel about the amazing rhythms of *Jāp Sahib*. He said, "Dr. Neki has not just translated this great spiritual composition but has, in places, even further embellished it."

Dr. Mohinder Kaur Gill, the renowned Sikh scholar and former Principal of Mata Sundri College,

talked about *Sada Vigas*. She found it a seminal work that needs a detailed discussion forum for each of its chapters. Dr. Vanita further observed that the book is valuable not only for its profound thought, but also for the aptness of its diction and distinctive style of its prose.

Dr. Neki's book on Panjabi humour was commented on by Ms. Nazhat Hassan, Director of the National Book Trust. She

observed that Dr. Neki is not only an academician, but also one with impressive personality and an attic wit that is reflected in his book on Panjabi humour.

Dr. Neki, in his inimitable manner, thanked all the speakers for saying "only nice things" about him. He said that he was painfully aware of his multifaceted inaptnesses. Quoting Farid he said, "Gunhi bharia main phiran, lok kahin darvesh."

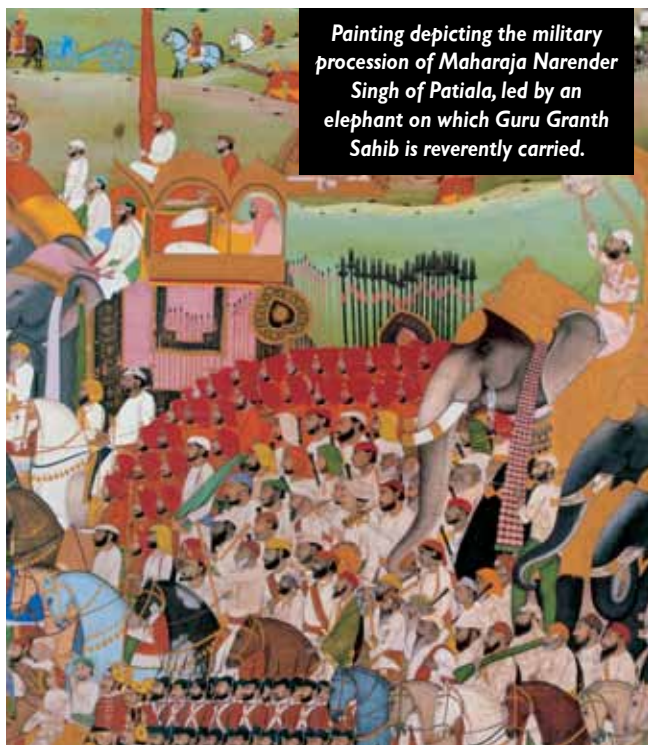
At the conclusion, Ms. Prabeen Kaur proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers and the audience.



Observations by Dr. Vanita

The Inspiration and the Glory

Guru Granth Sahib inspires Warriors to supreme valour in glory of the Lord



Painting depicting the military procession of Maharaja Narender Singh of Patiala, led by an elephant on which Guru Granth Sahib is reverently carried.



Darshan of Guru Granth Sahib, seen in the Gurdwara of 5th battalion of the Sikh Regiment (47th DCO Sikhs) is paramount in the lives of all officers and men.



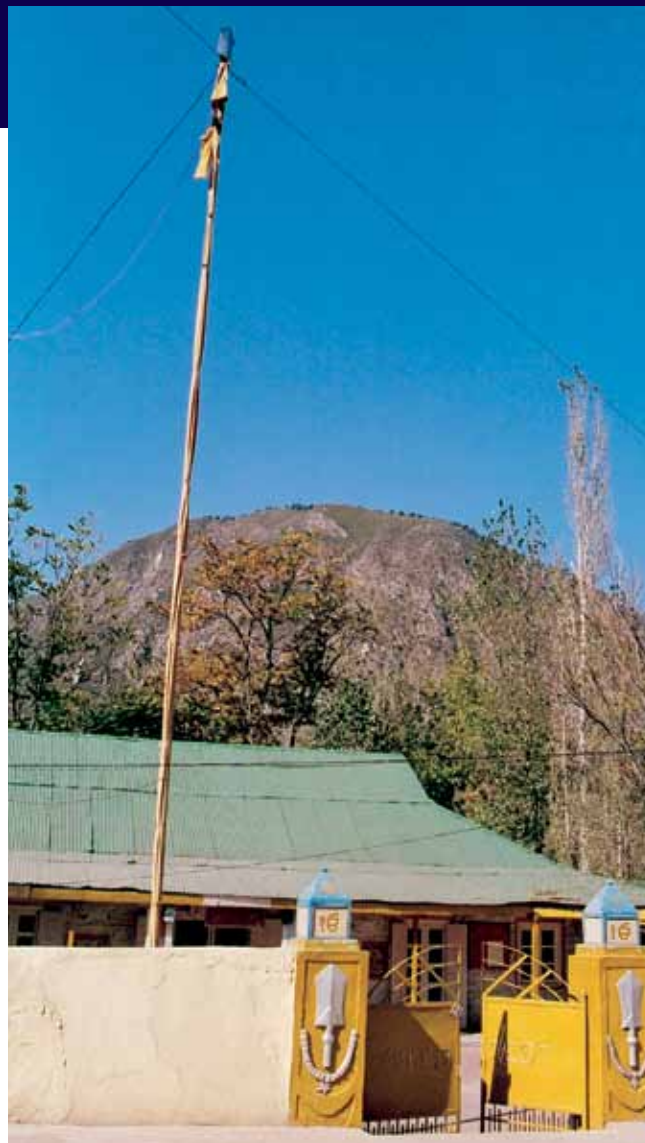
Sikh soldiers marching behind Guru Granth Sahib in the desert during the Mesopotamian campaign in 1917.



Guru Granth Sahib eternally inspires the Sikh Warrior, who is recruited into the Army after taking an oath on the Guru Granth Sahib (here, attestation parade at the Sikh Regimental Centre, Meerut).



Commanding Officer 5th Sikhs, Colonel Suneel Limaye, with others at the Regimental Gurdwara.



Gurdwara at Uri in the Vale of Kashmir : legend has it that Baba Farid meditated on the mountain seen at the background.



Entrance to a unit Gurdwara at a forward location in Kashmir.



Paying obeisance in a Gurdwara at Baramulla.



Sikh troops prepare to pay obeisance at the Mudki Gurdwara where sehaj paath has been continuously recited, after the opening battle of the first Anglo Sikh War in December 1845.



Sikh troops in battle gear outside the Saragarhi Gurdwara in Ferozepore.

The Hazoor Sahib Declaration

International Interfaith Conference on Guru Granth Sahib

In celebration of the Tercentenary of Gur ta Gaddi (ordination of Guru Granth Sahib as Eternal Guru of the Sikhs) an international conference was held at Guru Gobind Singh Institute of Engineering & Technology at Nanded during 25th – 28th September 2008.

Speakers and scholars from all continents and countries including the USA, Canada, the UK, Pakistan, East Africa, Australia, Dubai and other countries in Europe, representing world religions including Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Baha'i and the Sikh Dharam participated at the Conference.

'They encouraged governments and civil societies to respect scriptures of all traditions', stated the conference convenor, Sukhbir Singh of England.

According to Dr Parvinder Singh Pasricha, Chairman of the Administrative Committee, Takhat Sachkhand Sri Hazoor Sahib, Nanded and Coordinator, Gur ta Gaddi celebrations 2008, "the purpose was to further promote interfaith dialogues, for developing greater insight of religious beliefs, as well as opening the door to the understanding of all religions".

"It is not an attempt for fusion of religions, but a quest to nurture an appreciation of similarities and to value the differences. Such initiatives will reduce global conflicts and promote peace", said Bhai Mohinder Singh of the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha, from Birmingham in the U.K.

"This conference aimed to reach academics, spiritual leaders and civil society as a whole to build bridges in faith communities. To achieve these objectives will be the best tribute to the composers of the Guru Granth's hymns", said American scholar,

Dr Harbans Lal who is President of the Academy of Guru Granth Studies in Texas.

This international conference was prelude to the series of celebrations and conferences held throughout the world. Sri Hazoor Sahib, Nanded hosted the major celebrations at the end of October 2008 when Dr Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India, also visited the city.

Singh Sahib Kulwant Singh, Jathedar of Takhat Sri Abchnagar Hazur Sahib, welcomed the participants. Singh Sahib Gurbachan Singh, Jathedar of Sri Akal Takhat, said that "Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji's message was not for Sikhs alone, but is a lighthouse for all humanity." Jathedar Iqbal Singh of Patna Takhat and former Jathedar of Akal Takhat Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, also spoke and led prayer meetings.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that "religion should be used as basis for friendship, brotherhood and sisterhood. Active dialogue can lead to mutual enrichment of ethics and spiritual practice. We should encourage an increase in contacts among the followers of different religions and visits to each other's places of pilgrimage and prayer."

The conference also served as a pre-Parliament event for the next Council for the Parliament of the World Religions' international conference to be held in Melbourne, Australia in December 2009. Dr William Leshner, President of CPWR was keynote speaker at the Nanded conference.

The four day conference concluded with unanimous adoption of the Hazoor Sahib Declaration of the **Guiding Principles for Civil Society** based upon the Guru Granth philosophy as deliberated by over 50 scholars and religious leaders.



Guiding Principles for Civil Society

- To recognise the presence of Divine Light in every living being.
- To recognise that the earth is created according to God's cosmic blueprint and is therefore intrinsically beautiful. Nature is our mother, our home, our security, our peace, our past and our future. It is our obligation to treat natural things and habitats as our sacred shrines, to be revered and preserved in all their intricate and fragile beauty.
- God is the Creator and creative manifestation extends to all humans. Therefore, all humans are intrinsically creative in partnership with God.
- It is human destiny to emulate divine attributes, such as identity with Truth, Fearlessness without Animosity, Eternal Personality, beyond genetic and mimetic imprisonments and the Free Spirit that lives in gratitude and humility.
- To experience Divinity in work and service, in art and science, in philosophy and religion and in the environment and creation.
- To follow the principles of righteous living by believing in: Human Equality, Human Dignity, Justice, and Human Behaviors that cleanse the Body and the Mind.
- To build institutions of altruism and sharing in all social infrastructures. Examples are Guru's Langer, institutions like Pingalwara for the unfortunate beings, Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha in the UK.
- To be advocate for those who are most vulnerable in our society.
- To harness spiritual and moral responsibility to guide politics and political institutions, and to provide guidelines for leadership of religions organisations.
- To build a world order without the culture of "mera (mine) tera" (yours) psychology.

The Mayor of the City of Sri Hazoor Sahib Nanded, Balwant Singh Gadiwale, invited all speakers and delegates for a reception and introduction to the City. There were evenings of sacred music and folk cultural presentations. The delegates were given a pilgrimage tour of Sikh holy shrines, as well as shrines of other religions.

Dr Harbans Lal

Tercentenary Celebrations
Gur Ta Gaddi
of
Sri Guru Granth Sahib, 2008.



Transformation of Nanded in Maharashtra

The Status on 30 October 2008

Redevelopment of Sri Sachkhand Gurudwara Complex

Sri Sachkhand Gurudwara was built in 1837 by Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In due course of time several other structures were erected and the nearby area inhabited by local people. For the redevelopment of



Sri Sachkhand Gurudwara precinct a comprehensive development plan was prepared. Land was acquired and many existing structures had to be removed. As part of redevelopment a huge and properly landscaped premise of a marble court yard, surrounded by G+2 building was developed. The complex was ready to serve the pilgrims with 163 deluxe rooms, 9 suites and 24 multipurpose halls with a fully operational langar. The entire pristine white structure was ready to host the historic event.

The Rehabilitation Colony

For those who sacrificed their land and houses for redevelopment of the Sri Sachkhand Gurdwara



complex, a comprehensive redevelopment package was prepared, under which a rehabilitation colony has been developed.

Modern dwelling houses, in a well planned colony, have been allotted to the project-affected entities. The colony was inaugurated in February 2008; making this is a unique example where rehabilitation of project-affected people has been completed before commencement of the event.

Airport named after Dasam Patshah

Newly constructed airport named after Guru Gobind Singhji was inaugurated in the presence of Chief Minister of Maharashtra and other dignitaries on 4 October 2008. The airport, with modern



amenities like night landing facility, 2300 metre Boeing-standard runway and infrastructure, shall provide improved connectivity and place Nanded on the country's air traffic map.

Commercial flights have started, linking Nanded to Mumbai, Latur and Amritsar.

Nanded and Maltekdi Railway Station

- To remove congestion of city traffic due to passage of goods carriers from Nanded railway station, a new goods shed and a passenger station has been constructed at Maltekdi. The new Railway Station and Goods Shed are now fully operational.



- Nanded Railway station has been renovated with improved passenger amenities, additional platform, foot overbridge, circulating area development etc.
- Special trains were arranged for the mega-event that included trains from Amritsar, Chandigarh, Howrah, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, etc. In all, 131 additional train trips were expected at Nanded for the event.

City Access Roads

About 65 kms of access roads to the city including Parikrama Road (connecting important Gurdwaras) bridges across the river Godavari and Asna, railway overbridges, underpasses etc were constructed and operational. These not only provide excellent connectivity to the city but also enable bypass of through traffic without entering the city. Some of the projects like Eastern By Pass Road / Bridge, Shivaji Nagar Railway Over Bridge were completed under challenging circumstances and time frame.



All important city roads (measuring 26 km) critical for the Gur ta Gaddi event were completed and made operational. These roads, forming part of JNNURM outlay, have been designed to cater for vehicular, pedestrian and non motor-able vehicle traffic. Once all the projects are completed, Nanded, perhaps, will be the only city in India to have 46 km of city roads with dedicated cycle tracks, pedestrian ways, parking bays etc.

Godavari Riverfront development

A picturesque 1500-metre long ghat has been constructed to facilitate pilgrims taking holy bath in the River Godavari. Wide promenade, well landscaped gardens public amenities and various other facilities make this River Front one of the most beautiful and pleasurable experience for tourists and pilgrims visiting Nanded.

The project was inaugurated by Sonia Gandhi of the United Progressive Alliance on 7 October 2008.





Wajegaon Barrage

To retain adequate water along the river front throughout the year, a barrage downstream the ghat



has been constructed. This not only adds to beauty of the Ghats but also enables better retention of groundwater level in the surrounding areas.

Yatri Niwas

The Gurdwara Board has constructed a number of Yatri Niwas to accommodate pilgrims during the event. New Yatri Niwas like the Punjab Bhavan, SGPC guest house, NRI guest house funded by Punjab



Government, SGPC and NRIs, augmented the capacity by over 1100 rooms to provide comfortable staying arrangement for pilgrims.

Government Rest Houses

The fully furnished and renovated Government rest house building was inaugurated on 4 October 2008 in the presence of Chief Minister of Maharashtra. All rest houses of the PWD and Irrigation Dept. have



been renovated and their capacity augmented. A total of 41 rooms including VIP suites, deluxe rooms, were available for the Event.

Power Infrastructure

To ensure adequate power supply to the city during the event, new 132 kv and 33 kv



substations were set up at Elichpur and Matasahib respectively.

Health Infrastructure and Facilities

Facilities at the Civil Hospital were augmented and improved including an additional 80 beds, with blood bank, blood component separation facility, mortuary, ancillary equipment and stocks of medicines.



Capacity of Municipal Dispensaries and Hospitals were augmented and 130 beds earmarked for event-related casualties.

A 150-bed temporary camp hospital was set up at Vishnupuri for meeting any eventuality. Three Trauma Care Centres, having a capacity of 500 beds were in readiness for any casualties. 27 Camp Site Dispensaries having 5 beds each were established at various camps and operational throughout the day. Besides, 42 ambulances, 8 mobile medical units remain in complete readiness. 3000 medical personnel including 850 doctors and para medical were deployed around the clock to provide medical facilities to pilgrims. Necessary medicines, equipment and accessories were procured.

Camp accommodation facilities

Five well planned temporary camp sites to accommodate approximately a million pilgrims were established at South Nanded (Kautha), Nanaksar, Matasahib (Mugat), Babapur and Nerli.

All the camps were provided with internal roads, water supply, electricity, tents, toilets/bathrooms, information centres, health centres, parking/transport zones.

Types of accommodation at camp sites include Shamianas, Dormitory Tents, EP Tents, and Swiss Cottages.



Transportation for the Event

Dedicated bus services were available for transportation of pilgrims between the Railway Station, Bus Terminus, Camps and other important venues. 350 buses of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation were deployed for this purpose.

Camp Administration

Temporary administrative offices were established at major entry points of the city for the allocation of Camp Sites. Each Camp Site was manned by adequate number of administrative staff, technical personnel (for water supply, sanitation etc.). Over 1800 personnel including mela officers, camp commanders, support



team have been deployed at camp sites and other locations to manage the camps and provide service to Pilgrims.

Security and Disaster Management

More than 7500 police personnel from all over Maharashtra, units of SRPF etc. were deployed at various locations to ensure incident free events. 'Incident Command System' was established under the Disaster Management Act. The Collector Nanded was the 'incident commander' and assisted by officers from various departments. Nine response teams were trained at 145th CRPF battalion, NDRF (National Defense Response Force) at Talegaon, (Pune).





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