

THE KHALSA

GENERALS



Gurbaksh Singh

Canadian Sikh Study & Teaching Society
P.O. Box 67653, Vancouver, B.C.
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Lord, You are our Master, we pray to You.
By Your grace were given soul, and body, too.
We are Your children. Father and Mother are You.
All peace we enjoy, You bestow.
How great You are no one can know.
The whole creation listens and obeys Your command.
Whatever is created abides by Your hand.
Your greatness is known only to You.
Nanak, Your pupil, sacrifices his all to You.

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By

Gurbaksh Singh — 1927

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PREFACE

The Sikh community all over the world received a big shock in June 1984 when the Harimandar Sahib at Amritsar, famous as the Golden Temple, was stormed by the Indian Army. Thousands of people worshipping in the Gurdwara were murdered during the attack in which even tanks and helicopters were employed. This third genocide of the Sikhs by the Indian government reminded them of two earlier massacres in 1746 and 1762. The sufferings of the Sikhs and the sacrifices made by them for human rights have been recorded by many eye-witness writers and appreciated by many scholars. The author discussed this heritage of the Sikh nation and Sikh philosophy with the trainees at Sikh youth camps in North America. The youth offered a very positive and encouraging response to these lectures and the feelings expressed by them appeared in the press. One such report regarding the 1987 Sikh youth camp in North Carolina was mentioned in the July 25 Washington Post:

'Always before', said Pushpinder Kaur, 17, 'I felt like I wanted to be a Christian, a regular American ... Now I'm really proud to be a Sikh.'

Such feelings are quite prevalent among the Sikh youth attending the camps and many times were also expressed to the author. These media reports were noted by the members of the Canadian Sikh Study and Teaching Society. They decided to publish the contributions of the Sikh nation and their sacrifices during the 18th century in the form of a booklet for educating Sikhs, particularly the youth in North America.

The 18th century is a golden period of the Sikh nation. The people adored Sikhs for their ideal character and the sacrifices made by them for securing human rights for the helpless and downtrodden. The Mughal army and police

hunted Sikhs to destroy them but instead they became the rulers of the land through their service to the people.

The C.S.S.T.S., therefore, felt that the Sikh youth must know their heritage in order to understand the greatness of their nation and then enjoy the honor of belonging to it. They thought that the publication of the achievements of their ancestors will help the modern day Sikh youth feel dignified, rather than getting embarrassed, by appearing as Sikhs and living as Sikhs.

The purpose of this book will be served when the youth become aware of their great and heroic past, feel proud of being connected to it and are inspired to live their lives as brave Sikhs committed to their faith.

The book will also meet the needs of those persons who are interested in having an overall view of the Sikh struggle for human rights during the 18th century.

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We are indebted to S. Gurbakhsh Singh, Ph.D. (Ohio), formerly Dean of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India, who agreed to author this booklet.

Sukhbinder Kaur and Jaspaul Singh, two youths of Burnaby, B.C., Canada deserve our thanks not only for typing the manuscript but also for revising it to meet the needs of the North American Sikh youth. It is their commitment to the Sikh cause that helped us present this booklet to the readers. Mrs. Surjit Kaur of McLean, Virginia, U.S.A. kindly agreed to edit it.

Taranjit Singh undertook the responsibility of preparing the print copy of *The Khalsa Generals* by incorporating the editorial changes in the manuscript. He planned and prepared the format to help us publish this book for the benefit of the Sikhs in general and the youth in particular. They are obliged to him for his devoted services.

INTRODUCTION

This book describes briefly the development of the Sikh community from a congregation of holy fakirs to the masters of the Punjab. They brought peace and the rule of justice to the state. To appreciate the sacrifices of the Sikh nation, the Khalsa, one needs to understand the administrative set up against which they had to struggle for human rights of the weak and the poor.

The rulers of Iran and Afghanistan considered India a gold mine owned by a weak, timid and divided people. They looted and robbed it at their will. In the 16th century, the Mughals established a regular government in India and started ruling the country as if it was their own land. They did not allow the Hindu people, who formed about 90 percent of the population, their due civil rights. In the Punjab region, they had appointed three Subedars (Suba is equivalent to a state and Subedars were like modern governors) at Lahore, Sirhind and Multan. At Jallandar, another important center in the Punjab, was a Faujdar, a military administrator, under Lahore. There were many smaller counties ruled by local Nawabs or mayors, appointed by the Governors.

The Subedar ruled on behalf of the federal government. He assigned officials to small counties and villages to collect revenues. The Subedar was also required to keep an army and a police force to protect his state and run his administration according to the command of the Emperor of India.

The government was nothing more than an organization for collecting money for their pleasures. The officials were corrupt and concerned only with the extraction of money from the people. The ruling Muslims provided virtually no human rights to the Hindus, who in spite of their large numbers, were harassed, tortured and even murdered if they refused to change their faith and become Muslims. The Brahmans, the Hindu

religious leaders, who were supposed to protest such state terrorism, were themselves greedy and interested only in forcing meaningless rituals upon their clients to obtain money from them.

Guru Nanak Dev experienced all this himself, and strongly criticized both the rulers and the religious leaders for failing to perform their duty towards the people. He expressed it in his hymns and used very harsh language to awaken the conscience of the leaders:

The rulers behave as blood-sucking beasts and the officials act as dogs. They prey upon the helpless people. Guru Granth, pg. 1288.

The judges, being biassed and corrupt, do not deliver justice. The religious leaders, Brahmans and Yogis rip off their clients for selfish motives by making them practise meaningless rituals. They do not know the path to a virtuous life. Together, they all are responsible for the miseries of the people. Guru Granth, pg. 662.

Guru Nanak, therefore, started a movement for political and religious freedom of the people, to assure everyone of his/her political, civil and religious rights. This revolution, founded by Guru Nanak Dev, became popular under the name Sikhism. It is recognized today among the principal religions of the world. Based on numbers, they are fifth in the world, being next to Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists, followed closely by Jews. Based on their philosophy, H.L. Bradshaw of the U.S.A. wrote in the Sikh Review of Calcutta, India:

Sikhism is a Universal World Faith ... a message for all men. This is amply illustrated in the writings of the Gurus. Sikhs must cease to think of their faith as just another good religion and must begin to think of Sikhism being the religion for this New Age.

Guru Nanak's philosophy was practised and preached by the succeeding nine Gurus resulting in the creation of the Khalsa in 1699 by the tenth Guru, Gobind Singh. After the death of Guru Gobind Singh in 1708, the Khalsa passed through challenging and trying times. They were put on the "hit list" of the Mughal Government. They had to leave their homes and

pass their days in the deserts, forests and inaccessible mountainous regions of the land. The government was so weak that invaders from the Middle East repeatedly plundered India and raided its wealth.

In addition, young women were taken to their country and sold there for a coin each. The corrupt and tyrannical governments in Punjab and Delhi failed to provide security for the people and their property. The Sikhs, though always pursued by killing squads, would unexpectedly emerge from their hideouts to save the women prisoners from the invaders and escort them back to their respective homes safely, thus protecting the dignity and honor of the people.

This book briefly outlines the services rendered by the Khalsa to the people of the Punjab in helping them set up their own government. The unique and unparalleled sacrifices made by the Sikhs touched the hearts of the people who loved and respected them. However, the Khalsa earned the enmity of the government and the invaders from the west, both of whom wanted to destroy them in order to have a free hand to loot. Wholesale murder of the Sikhs was ordered in 1710. The Khalsa passed through very difficult times during the eighteenth century but because of their devotion and commitment to their mission, they were soon a force to be reckoned with.

To face the government violence against them, all units of the Sikhs grouped themselves into one organized body called the Dal Khalsa. The Dal had two wings, Taruna Dal (the youth wing) and Budha Dal (the seniors). Later, in 1748, on Baisakhi day, the Khalsa met at Amritsar and decided to reorganize themselves into five major divisions later called Misls, internally independent units of the Khalsa. Each Misl had its own commander and Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was made their supreme commander. Before the turn of the century, the Misls occupied most of the Punjab. Ranjeet Singh of the Sukerchakia Misl united them all and became Maharaja of Punjab in 1801. The Sikhs ruled the state for about half a century before it was annexed by the British and made a part of their Empire.

A brief life sketch of only the leading Khalsa generals who guided the Sikhs during the most difficult times is mentioned. The achievements of two famous generals who helped in the establishment of the Khalsa Raj are also included.

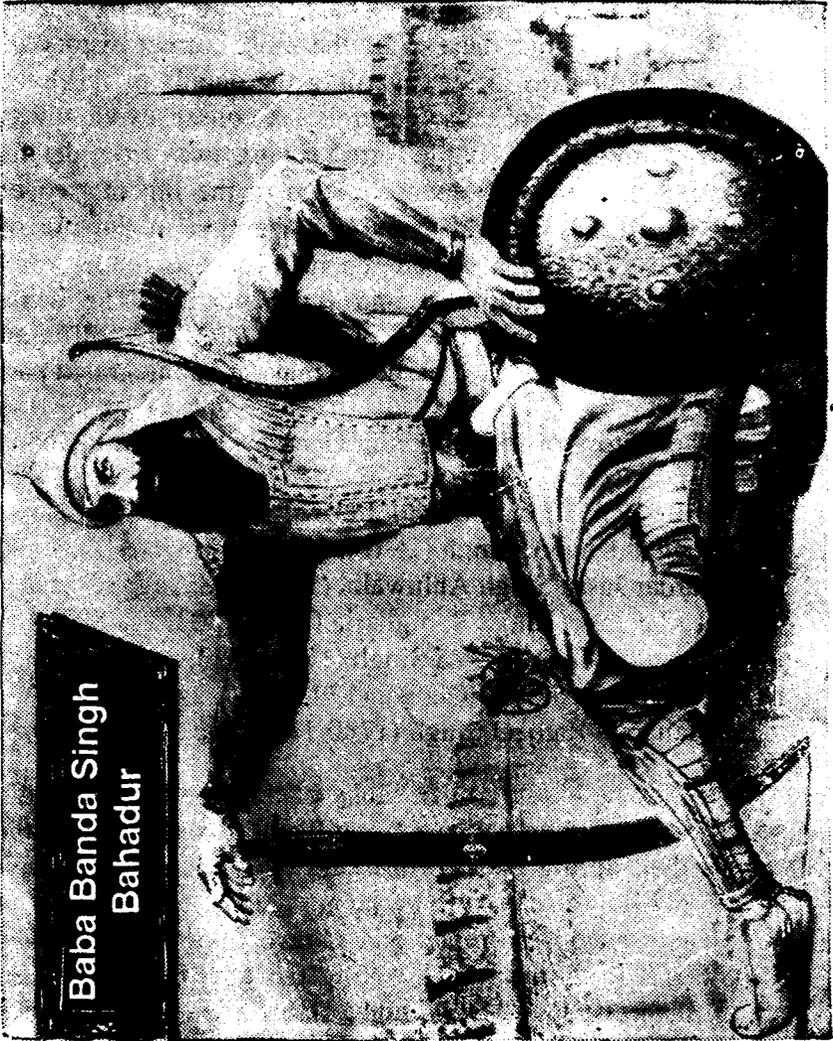
This is not contended to be the most correct history of their lives. Historians differ regarding the details of the lives and accomplishments of these generals. A consensus view was taken and presented in a simple form keeping away from details and minor happenings. Incidents related to the life of two or more contemporary generals may find mention in the life of each general. This was considered necessary to render each biographical sketch complete and independent. The same incident, when mentioned the second time, may have different details than those mentioned earlier to make it an integrated part of that chapter.

The history of the following Generals has been included in this book:

1. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur (1670-1716, age 46 yrs.)
2. Nawab Kapoor Singh (1697-1753, age 56 yrs.)
3. Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (1718-1783, age 65 yrs.)
4. Sardar Jassa Singh Ramgharia (1723-1803, age 80 yrs.)
5. Jathedar Akali Phoola Singh (1762-1823, age 61 yrs.)
6. General Hari Singh Nalwa (1791-1837, age 46 yrs.)
7. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh (1780-1839, age 59 years)

It may be observed that many of the Khalsa leaders did not live long but they achieved significant goals. Two of the Generals died during their forties, and two others during their fifties. Only Ramgharia lived to the mature age of eighty years.

There have been many other brave Sikh Jathedars who led the Sikhs in their struggle during the 18th century. They include Shaheed Bhai Mani Singh, Baba Deep Singh, Sardar Charhat Singh and Sardar Jai Singh Kanahya. Contributions of such Sikh *sardars* and *shaheeds* are intended to be dealt with in a separate book.



Baba Banda Singh
Bahadur

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur

CHAPTER I

BABA BANDA SINGH BAHADUR

Shaheed Baba Banda Singh Bahadur came to the Punjab scene in 1708 when the Mughal government was planning the genocide of the Sikhs, but the daring deeds of the Khalsa under his leadership made the Sikhs the rulers of the eastern region of the state.

Banda was born on 16 October 1670 at Rajori Village in Jammu. He was named Lachman Das. Wrestling, horseback riding, and hunting were his major hobbies. As a young man he shot a deer and was shocked to watch the mother and her aborted doe writhing in pain and dying. After this gloomy scene he had a change of heart. He left his home and became a disciple of a *Bairagi sadhu* who gave him the name Madho Das. In the company of the sadhus he traveled to Nanded, situated on the bank of the river Godawari, where he built a hut to meditate upon God.

Banda joins Khalsa Panth

In September of 1708, Guru Gobind Singh happened to go to Madho Das' hut while hunting. Madho Das was impressed by the personality of the Guru. The Guru asked him, "Who are you?" In great humility, he replied, "I am your *banda* (slave)." After taking Amrit, he was given a Sikh name, Gurbakhsh Singh -- but he remained popular known as Banda. Historians, therefore, mention him as Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, or simply as Banda Bahadur.

Guru Gobind Singh hoped that Emperor Bahadur Shah would fulfill his promise and do justice in the Punjab by punishing the Governor of Sirhind and his accomplices for their crime against the people. Finding him reluctant, the Guru deputed Banda Bahadur, under the leadership of five Sikhs, to

end state terrorism in the Punjab.

On his way to the Punjab, Banda punished robbers and other criminal elements which made him popular with the people. Banda possessed no army. Instead, his strength lay in the *Hukamnama* (edict) of Guru Gobind Singh to the people of Punjab, calling them to arms under the leadership of Banda to overthrow and destroy the oppressive rulers. This sent such a wave of relief and enthusiasm among the people that some even sold their bullocks and property to purchase arms. Not only the Sikhs saw Banda as their deliverer but the oppressed Muslims and Hindus also joined him in the popular revolt against the tyrants.

Victories of Banda Bahadur:

Banda had approximately 500 men with him when he reached the borders of the Punjab. He easily took over two centers, Sonapat and Kaithal. Meanwhile, more people joined him. Samana, a large Mughal city famous for minting coins, was conquered on 11 November 1709. About 20,000 people are said to have been killed there. With the treasury in their hands, the Sikhs became financially stable. Two other army centers, Mustafabad and Sadhora (near Jagadhari), were also taken.

These victories of the Sikhs sent a clear signal of coming events to Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sirhind. He knew that justice was about to be delivered and he would soon be punished for his crimes. Wazir Khan lost his sleep and started collecting his army and ammunition. He sent urgent orders to all the commanders in the region, and also recruited mercenaries.

Another *jatha* of the Sikhs gathered near Anandpur Sahib and marched towards Sirhind but their advance was blocked by a section of the state army. A bloody battle took place at Ropar (Roop Nagar) in which both of the Mughal commanders were killed. Afterwards, there was nobody to

check the *jatha* from joining Banda. The Sikhs were now ready for their final battle to become the rulers of the Cis-Satlej areas of the Punjab.

The Sikhs, although they did not have the required arms to defeat the army, were emotionally charged with the memory of the cold-blooded murder of the two youngest sons of Guru Gobind Singh at Sirhind. They attacked the city on 12 May 1710 and were its masters on 14 May. The death of Wazir Khan and his lackeys brought a long awaited relief to the people. In his first administrative order, Banda gave the ownership of the land to the farmers and let them live in dignity and self respect.

Petty officials were also satisfied with this change. Nawab Ameen-Ul Daula mentions the new image of the Sikhs in these words: "Dindar Khan, an official of the nearby village, took Amrit and became Dindar Singh. The newspaper writer of Sirhind, Mir Nasir Uddin, became Mir Nasir Singh."

Founding of the Khalsa Rule

In the north-east of the Punjab, between Sadhora and Nahan, Banda developed the village Mukhlis Garh, made it his capital and renamed it Lohgarh (fortress of steel). He established his own mint. One side of the coin reads: *The power of the sword granted by Guru Nanak won the two worlds. Guru Gobind Singh became victorious by the grace of the True Lord.* The other side reads: *Issued from the beautiful capital of Good Luck, a place of peace for the world.* The official papers were identified by the stamp: *The authority for service was received from Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh.*

Banda sent Sikhs to the Uttar Pardesh (U.P.), a large state to the north of Delhi, because of charges against many officials and administrators regarding repression of the people, particularly of harassment of non-Muslims. The Sikhs took over Saharanpur, Jalalabad, and other areas nearby, bringing relief to the population.

Also, in the west of the Satlej, and in the regions of Jallandar and Amritsar, the Sikhs started fighting for the rights of the people. They used the newly established power of the people to remove many corrupt officials, and replaced them with honest ones.

The march of the Emperor

The rule of the Sikhs over eastern Punjab obstructed the communication between Delhi and Lahore, the capital of Punjab, and it worried Emperor Bahadur Shah. He gave up his plan to subdue the rebels in Rajasthan and marched towards Punjab. The entire Indian force was organized to defeat and kill Banda Bahadur. The governors were ordered to immediately dispatch their armies to the Punjab, and new fighters were recruited. All the generals were directed to join the Emperor's army. To ensure that there were no Sikh agents in the army camps, an order was issued on August 29, 1710 to all Hindus to shave off their beards. The emperor knew that the Sikhs loyal to their faith would not cut their beards, hence would leave his army, and would not be able to spy.

Meanwhile, the Sikhs, after taking Sirhind and founding their capital, spread to different regions in U.P and Punjab. Banda, himself, was in U.P. when the army marched to Sirhind. Before the return of Banda, they had already taken Sirhind and the areas around it. The Sikhs, therefore, moved to Lohgarh for their final battle. As soon as the emperor's army reached there, the Sikhs fell upon them and defeated them.

Khafi Khan writes, "The sudden attack of the fakirs (Sikhs) threatened the army seriously. Watching their dead and wounded, one could conclude that the army is losing the battle." Kanwar Khan describes the battle in these words: "I saw with my eyes every wretched Sikh jumping out of his trench, attacking the soldiers bravely and dying fearlessly."

However, ever increasing supplies of men and materials to the army generals fighting Banda, helped them to take over

the fort. Sikhs lost two of their commanders and 2,500 men. Baba Banda Singh left the fort at night and went to a secret place in the hills.

The failure of the army to kill or catch Banda shocked the Emperor. On 10 December 1710 he ordered that, wherever a Sikh was found, he should be murdered. The Emperor lost his mental balance, became sick and died on 18 February 1712.

Banda takes over Hill Rajas

Banda wrote letters to the Sikhs to get themselves reorganized and form groups to fight state repression. The Sikhs gathered near Keeratpur and defeated Raja Bhim Chand in the Spring of 1711. He was responsible for organising all the hill rajas against Guru Gobind Singh and instigating battles with him. Bhim having been completely routed, other rajas willingly accepted their subordinate status, and paid revenues to Banda.

When the new Emperor, Farakhsyar, sent a strong force to arrest him, Banda moved away from the Punjab to the Jammu hills, where he stayed for about a year.

Arrest of Banda Bahadur

In March 1715, Baba Ji entered the Punjab near Gurdaspur. He was in the village of Gurdas Nangal, when the army laid siege to it. The Sikhs fought bravely and defended the small fort for eight months. Mohd Quasim writes:

The brave and daring deeds of the infernal Sikhs were amazing. Twice or thrice a day, some forty or fifty Sikhs would come out of their enclosure to gather grass for their animals. When the combined forces of the imperialists went to oppose them, they made an end of the Mughals with arrows, muskets, and swords. Such was the terror of the Sikhs, that the

commanders of the royal army prayed that God might so ordain things that Banda should seek his safety in flight from the village.

However, on 7 December 1715, the exhausted and starving Sikhs were tricked when Banda was approached to reconcile with the Government and meet the commander to discuss the terms for making him the Governor of Jammu. He was arrested instead and put in an iron cage. Other Sikhs were captured, chained and brought to Delhi in a procession. Along with 700 Sikh prisoners from the Punjab, there were 2 000 Sikh heads hung on spears at the head of the procession to terrorize the population.

They were put in the Delhi fort and pressured to give up their faith and become Muslims. On their firm refusal all of them were ordered to be executed. Every day, one hundred Sikhs were brought out of the fort and murdered in public. This horrible butchering of the Sikhs was witnessed and documented by many. The brave Sikhs showed no sign of dejection or humiliation, instead they sang their sacred hymns; none feared death or gave up his faith. The British Embassy at Delhi recorded, "It is not a little remarkable with what patience they undergo their fate and to the last it has not been found that one apostatized from this new formed religion."

According to a Muslim historian, a nobleman received permission to see Banda Singh Bahadur before he was executed. He asked Banda Singh, "It is surprising that one who shows so much acuteness in his features and so much nobility in his conduct, should have been guilty of such horrors." With the greatest composure, Banda replied, "I will tell you, whenever men become so corrupt and wicked as to relinquish the path of equity and to abandon themselves to all kinds of excesses, then the Providence never fails to raise up a scourge like me to chastise a race so depraved; but when the measure of punishment is full then he raises up men like you to bring him to punishment."

On 9 June 1716, Banda's eyes were gouged, his limbs severed, his skin removed and then he was killed.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur thus became a martyr. A Bairagi, having become an Amritdhari Sikh, committed himself to live as a protector of the rights of the people. He offered his own life while fighting the tyranny of the state. Though his rule was short-lived, reforms brought about by him still exist today. Banda Singh demonstrated that the people have within them the power to topple tyrannical rulers.

Subsequently, the people, guided by the Khalsa, destroyed the oppressive rulers of Punjab and became the masters of their state.



Nawab Kapoor Singh

CHAPTER II

NAWAB KAPOOR SINGH

Sardar Kapoor Singh was born in 1697 in a village near Sheikhpura, now in Pakistan. His father, Chaudhri Daleep Singh was a devoted Sikh, whose virtues were passed on to the young boy. The boy memorized Gurbani Nitnem, and was taught the arts of war. He became an Amritdhari in 1721. When the Governor of Punjab offered the Sikhs the Nawabship (ownership of an estate) and a valuable royal robe, the Khalsa accepted it all in the name of Kapoor Singh. Henceforth, he became known as Nawab Kapoor Singh.

Sikhs get Organized

Sardar Kapoor Singh was one of the thousands of Sikhs who were attracted to the Khalsa Panth after the sacrifice of Bhai Tara Singh of the village of Van, in 1726. The murder of this devoted Sikh, popular both with Muslims and Hindus, forced the Sikhs to unite and organize themselves to respond to state repression against them.

The Khalsa held a meeting to make plans for future actions. They decided to appropriate government money and weapons in order to weaken the administration, and to equip themselves to face the everyday attacks. Kapoor Singh was assigned to plan and execute these projects. Information was obtained that money was being transported from Multan to the Lahore treasury. The Khalsa then came like hawks from nowhere, looted the money, took over the arms and horses of the guards, and vanished in moments, leaving the guards stunned. In another raid, they took over the revenues of the Kasoor estate. A third foray, against a caravan from Afghanistan, resulted in capturing numerous arms and horses, so important to them in their fight against state forces. Some

war supplies were being taken from Afghanistan to Delhi. When Kapoor Singh learned of it, he organized an attack to capture them. In another attack, the Khalsa recovered gold and silver which was intended to be carried to Delhi.

The able leadership of Jathedar Darbara Singh and Sardar Kapoor Singh strengthened the Khalsa and provided them with the confidence and the strength to destroy the foreign tyrants and establish self rule.

The looting of the government treasury created a panic in Lahore. The governor approached the Emperor in Delhi for help. He sent a strong army to search for the Sikhs and kill them, but the Sikhs hid in the forests and sedges near the river beds, not easily approachable by the army. Finding no Sikhs around, the government falsely announced in each village with the beat of a drum, that all Sikhs had been eliminated. This met with little success. People knew the truth and did not stop supporting the Khalsa who were spread all over the area. The Sikhs did not face the army directly, but adopted guerilla warfare tactics which suited their small numbers. Once, while coming to Amritsar, Sardar Kapoor Singh and his contingent met, by chance, the roaming squads of the army near Ropar. In the ensuing skirmish the Sikhs prevailed and won the day.

Sikhs befriended

The rulers and the commanders lost all hope of defeating the Sikhs through repression. To develop some other strategy, Khan went to Delhi where it was decided to befriend the Sikhs and rule in cooperation with them.

Accordingly, in 1733 the Delhi rulers withdrew all orders against the Khalsa. Their torture and killing was stopped. They were permitted to own houses and lands, and to move freely without any state violence against them. To cooperate with the Khalsa Panth, and win the goodwill of the people, the government sent an offer of an estate and Nawabship through a famous Lahore Sikh, Sardar Subeg Singh. This offer was accepted and this honor was bestowed on

Kapoor Singh.

During this truce, Kapoor Singh guided the Sikhs in strengthening themselves and preaching Gurmat to the people. He knew that peace would be short lived. As a strategy for the future, regular communication links were developed among Sikhs to unite them. They were encouraged to freely visit their Gurdwaras and meet their relatives in the villages. Sikhs, thus, were able to create strong ties among themselves and with the general population.

Khalsa reorganized itself into two divisions: Sikhs above the age of forty years were named Budha Dal while the younger generation formed Taruna Dal, which provided the main fighting force. Budha Dal had the responsibility of the management of the Gurdwaras and Gurmat preaching. They were to keep track of the movements of the government forces to plan their defense strategies. They also provided a reserve fighting force for the Taruna Dal.

Khalsa for self-rule

Nawab Kapoor Singh undertook several measures to secure firm footing for the Khalsa among the people and to prepare them for self-rule in the Punjab, . To establish internal rules of discipline and mutual understanding, it was jointly agreed that:

1. All money obtained from anywhere by any Jatha would be deposited in the Common Khalsa Fund. All provisions for different Jathas regarding their arms, horses, clothes, etc. would be met out of that fund.
2. The Khalsa would have their common Langar for both the Dals.
3. Every Sikh would respect the orders of his Jathedar. Anyone going anywhere would get permission from him and report to him on his return.

Preaching by the Budha Dal helped many persons to

become Sikhs and many young Sikhs joined the Dal Khalsa. The membership of the Taruna Dal quickly increased to more than 12 000 and it soon became difficult to manage the housing and feeding of such a large number of people at one place. It was, therefore, decided to have five divisions of the Dal, each to draw rations from the central stocks and cook it's own langar. These five divisions were stationed at five *sarovars* (sacred pools) around Amritsar, namely Ramsar, Bibeksar, Lachmansar, Kaulsar and Santokhsar. The divisions later became known as Misls and their number increased to eleven. Each took over and ruled a different region of the Punjab.

Nawab Kapoor Singh, being the leader of the Khalsa, was assigned another responsibility by Mata Sundar Kaur, wife of Guru Gobind Singh. She sent him an emissary along with Jassa Singh Ahluwalia who was then a young boy. Her instructions were that Jassa Singh was like a son to her and the Nawab should raise him as an ideal Sikh. Ahluwalia, under the guidance of Kapoor Singh, was given a good education in Gurbani and thorough training in managing Sikh affairs. Later, he became the founding Jathedar of the Ahluwalia Misl and played an important role in leading the Sikhs to self-rule.

Campaign against Sikhs

In 1735, the rulers of Lahore attacked and repossessed the estate given to the Sikhs only two years before. This was intended to check the growth of the Sikhs. However, it only acted as a further stimulant. Kapoor Singh decided that the whole of Punjab should be taken over as their estate. This was endorsed by the Khalsa and all the Sikhs assured him of their full co-operation in his endeavor for self-rule.

The decision was taken against heavy odds. Khan sent roaming squads to hunt and kill the Sikhs. Orders were issued to all administrators down to the village level officials to seek Sikhs, murder them, get them arrested, or report their whereabouts to the government. One year's wages were offered to anyone who would murder a Sikh and deliver his head to the police station. Rewards were also promised to those who

helped arrest Sikhs. Persons providing food or shelter to Sikhs were severely punished.

It was a time of unspeakable state violence against the followers of Guru Nanak. These orders forced the committed Sikhs into hiding. Becoming a Sikh was like signing one's own death warrant. If one of two brothers became a Sikh, the family presumed they had only one son; the other, they would say, is "dead." This was the period when the Sikhs were sawed into pieces, burnt alive, fed to dogs, their heads crushed with hammers and young children were pierced with spears before their mother's eyes. To keep their morale high, the Sikhs humorously developed their own high-sounding terminologies and slogans. For example:

Tree leaves boiled for food were called *green dish*; the parched chick-peas were *almonds*; the Babul tree was a *rose*, a blind man was a *brave man*; getting on the back of a buffalo was *riding an elephant*.

When Mir Manu intensified his attacks for the genocide of the Sikhs, they responded with the rhyme, "Manu is our sickle, we are his weeds all know. The more he cuts us the more we grow."

Sikhs respond

The army pursued the Sikhs hiding near the hills and forced them to cross the rivers and seek safety in the Malwa tract. When Nawab Kapoor Singh reached Patiala, Baba Ala Singh took Amrit and Nawab Ji helped him increase the boundaries of his state. In 1736 the Khalsa attacked Sirhind, where the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh were murdered. The army fought frantically to protect the city. However, the advancing tide of the enraged Sikhs could not be checked, and the Khalsa took over the city and the treasury. They established the Gurdwaras at the historical places and withdrew. After this expedition Kapoor Singh returned to Amritsar.

These victories of the Sikhs naturally upset the

government of Lahore. A huge army was sent to recover the treasury and punish the Sikhs. Khalsa troops were camping near Amritsar when the army attacked them. Kapoor Singh entrusted the treasury to Jassa Singh Ahluwalia and told him to take it to a safe place. He himself had sufficient Sikhs with him to keep the army engaged. When Jassa Singh was out of the reach of the army, the Nawab ordered a strategic retreat, and they reached Taran Taaran without the army being able to do any serious damage to them.

To fight the advancing army, the Nawab sent messages to the Taruna Dal to join them in the fight. The Sikhs dug themselves into trenches and waited for the army to attack. When they were within range, the Sikhs showered bullets on them. The fight lasted the entire day without either side gaining the upper hand. Finding the army exhausted and the commanders in low morale by the evening, Kapoor Singh attacked the commanding posts. This swift and daring attack by two hundred Sikhs stunned the enemy. Three generals, along with many officers, were killed. Whereupon the army retreated to Lahore realizing that they were no match for the adventurous and committed Sikhs.

Khan called his advisors to plan another strategy to deal with the Sikhs. It was suggested that the Sikhs should not be allowed to visit the Amrit Sarovar, the fountain of their lives and source of their strength. Accordingly, strong contingents were posted around the city and all entries to Harimandar Sahib were checked. The Sikhs, however, risking their lives, continued to pay their respects to the holy place and take a dip in the Sarovar in the dark of night. For some Sikhs, the price of doing so was their lives.

One time, when Kapoor Singh went to Amritsar, he had to fight with Kazi Rehman. He had declared that Sikhs, the so-called lions, would not dare to come to Amritsar and face him. In the ensuing fight Kazi was killed. When his son tried to save him, he too lost his life. Later, Massa Rangar took over the control of Amritsar. While smoking and drinking in the Harimandar Sahib, he watched the dances of the nautch girls.

The Sikhs who had moved to Bikaner, a desert region, for safety, were outraged to hear of this desecration. Bhai Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh, went there disguised as revenue collectors. They tied their horses outside, walked straight into the Harimandar Sahib, cut off his head, and took it with them. It was a lesson for the rulers that no tyrant would go unpunished.

Delhi challenges Sikhs

A senior royal commander, Samad Khan, was sent from Delhi to subdue the Sikhs. Kapoor Singh learned of this and he planned his own strategy accordingly. As soon as the army was out to hunt the Sikhs, a Jatha of commandos, disguised as messengers of Samad Khan, was sent to the armory. The commander there was told that Khan was holding the Sikhs under siege and he wanted him, with all his force, to go and arrest them. The few guards left behind were overpowered by the Sikhs, the arms and ammunition were looted and brought to the Sikh camp. It helped the Khalsa win the big battle against the royal army.

Samad Khan sent many roaming squads to search for, and kill Sikhs. He was responsible for the torture and murder of Shaheed Bhai Mani Singh, the administrator of the Harimandar Sahib. The Sikhs had not forgotten this violence against them. He was so afraid of the Sikhs, that he remained far behind the fighting lines to keep himself safe. However, Kapoor Singh had a plan to punish him. During the battle, he ordered his men to retreat, drawing the fighting army with them. He then wheeled around and fell upon the rear of the army. Khan and his guards were lying dead on the field within hours. The death of the commander of such a strong army was a message to the Punjab governor that his turn was next. He was so scared that he started living in the fort. He would not even dare to visit the mosque outside the fort for prayers. The governor knew that even his best guards would not be able to save him once the Sikhs located him.

Protecting the innocent from the invaders

On the request of the Budha Dal members, Kapoor Singh visited Patiala. The sons of Sardar Ala Singh, the founder of the state, gave him a royal welcome. Kapoor Singh stormed and subdued all local administrators around Delhi who were not behaving well towards their people.

Nadir Shah of Iran was a terror for the Delhi rulers. In 1739, he murdered more than 100 000 people in Delhi and carried off all of the gold and valuables. He added to his caravan hundreds of elephants and horses, along with thousands of young women. When Kapoor Singh came to know of this, he decided to warn Nadir Shah that if not the local rulers, then the Sikhs would protect the innocent women of Muslims and Hindus from being sold as slaves.

The returning caravan was closely watched by the Sikh informants. They planned to get the women released and to recover as much of the wealth as possible before Nadir left the Punjab. While crossing the river Chenab, Nadir relaxed his vigilance, and the Sikhs suddenly attacked the rear end of the caravan, freed many of the women, and recovered part of the treasure. The Sikhs continued to harass him and lighten him of his loot until he withdrew from the Punjab.

Nadir wanted to know who the men with beards and turbans were, against whom he could not protect himself although he had already crushed the royal army. After hearing about them he observed, "The Sikhs will soon be the rulers of the Punjab."

Zakaria Khan died in 1745. His successor tightened the security around Amritsar. Kapoor Singh planned to break the siege of Amritsar. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was made the commander of the attacking Sikh forces. In 1748, the Sikhs took a do or die decision. The commander at Amritsar also had a large army to fight the Sikhs. Ahluwalia, with his commandos behind him, dashed to the army commander and cut him into two with his sword. The commander's nephew,

trying to save him, got an arrow in his chest and fell dead to the ground.

To be recognized as a power, the Sikhs built their first fort, called Ram Rauni, at Amritsar. This sent the message to the government that their days were numbered and that Sikh rule over Punjab was imminent. In December 1748, Governor Manu had to take his forces outside of Lahore to stop the advance of Abdali. Kapoor Singh took advantage of his absence from the capital and led a contingent of top Sikh fighters to the police station in Lahore. The Sikhs quickly overpowered the police defending the station and confiscated all of their weapons. The Nawab then occupied the office and ordered the sheriff to release all prisoners. Before leaving, he told the sheriff to inform the Governor that Nawab Kapoor Singh, the "sheriff" of God, the True Emperor, came and did what he was commanded to do. All of this was accomplished in a very short time. Before the stunned policemen could report the matter to the authorities, or the army could be called in, the Khalsa were already riding their horses back to the forest.

In 1753, Kapoor Singh took control of Amritsar and called a general meeting of the Sikhs to organize the Khalsa forces for the future. He thanked them for their co-operation and told them that his end was near and that their new commander would be Jassa Singh Ahluwalia. The sword he had received from Mata Sundar Kaur Ji was also handed over to Ahluwalia. Before he breathed his last, the beloved jathedar thus passed on the responsibility to another able general. The body of Nawab Kapoor Singh, the great leader who led the Khalsa to the threshold of self-rule, was cremated near Gurdwara Baba Atal.



S. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia

CHAPTER III

SARDAR JASSA SINGH AHLUWALIA, SULTANUL KAUM

Sardar Jassa Singh was born in 1718. Unfortunately, his father, Sardar Badar Singh, died when Jassa Singh was only four years old. He was taught by his mother to recite Gurbani and do kirtan. When his mother took him to Mata Sundari Ji at Delhi, she was impressed by his melodious singing of hymns and kept the boy with her. Later he was adopted by Nawab Kapoor Singh, the leader of the Sikh nation. Jassa Singh, thus, got into the stream of political leadership. This helped him develop his talents and duly become the next leader of the Sikh nation.

The singing of the *Asa Ki Var* in the mornings by Jassa Singh was appreciated by all in the Dal Khalsa. He was a handsome young man, always smiling and keeping himself busy in doing *sewa* (volunteer service). He became very popular with the Sikhs. He learned horseback riding and swordsmanship from expert teachers. Thus, this holy singer also became an excellent soldier. Having lived in Delhi, he used to tie his turban in the Mughal fashion. He often used words of the Delhi dialect which became a favorite topic of discussion among the Sikhs. It provided them with many light moments.

Under the leadership of Jassa Singh, the Dal Khalsa took over Lahore, the capital of Punjab, for the first time, in 1761. They were the masters of the city for a few months and minted their own coins in the name of Guru Nanak. Because of his services to the Khalsa and bringing them this success, Jassa Singh was honored with the title of Sultanul Kaum, the King of the Nation.

Reclaiming the honor of the Golden Temple

Sikhs were under great pressure because of government violence against them. They became enraged when they found that Massa Rangar, the official in charge of the Amritsar region, drank alcohol and smoked in the Golden Temple. Two Sikhs, Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh, came disguised as revenue collectors and cut off his head. It was a signal to the government that the Sikhs would never tolerate any disrespect to their sacred Harimandar Sahib.

The Governor of Lahore sent military squads to kill the Sikhs. When Jaspat Rai, brother of Lakhpat Rai, the Dewan (premier) of Lahore, faced the Sikhs in a battle, one of the Sikhs held the tail of his elephant and got on his back from behind. With a quick move, he chopped off his head, giving another blow to the government's image.

Lakhpat Rai, after this incident, committed himself to destroying the Sikhs. In 1746, a new wave of violence was started against them with all of the resources available to the government. The army was sent to destroy the Sikhs. All of the village officials were ordered to co-operate in the expedition. About 15,000 Sikhs including Jassa Singh and other important leaders were camping in riverbeds in the Gurdaspur district (Kahnuwan tract). Local people were forcibly employed to search for the Sikhs to be killed by the army. An estimated 7,000 to 10,000 Sikhs were thus murdered. Those Sikhs who were arrested alive were taken to Lahore, tortured and executed near the Horse Market. There now stands a Gurdwara called Shaheed Ganj. Even the Sikhs living in peace in the city were arrested without any reason. They were also butchered. This first massacre of 1746 is known as the Chhota Ghalughara (the small massacre) of the Sikhs.

In 1747, Shah Nawaz took over as Governor of Lahore. To please the Sikhs, Lakhpat was dismissed by the new Governor. Having been removed from office, Lakhpat received severe punishment and was killed by the Sikhs.

The first Sikh Fort, Ram Rauni

In 1747, Salabat Khan became the commander. He placed police around Amritsar and built observation posts to spot and kill Sikhs coming to the Amrit Sarovar for a holy dip. Angered by this, the Sikhs decided to free Amritsar. Even though Sikhs were given a very heavy blow only a year before, Jassa Singh and Nawab Kapoor Singh lead the Sikhs to Amritsar. Salabat Khan was killed by Jassa Singh and his nephew was killed by the arrow of Nawab Ji. After great sacrifices, the Sikhs freed the holy city of Amritsar and celebrated their Diwali gathering there.

By the year 1748, the Khalsa had many brave Jathedars. They decided to reorganize themselves under one command. On the advice of their aging Jathedar, Nawab Kapoor Singh, the Khalsa chose Sardar Jassa Singh as their supreme leader. They also decided to declare that the Punjab belonged to them and they would be the sovereign rulers of their state. It was at this time that Sikhs built their first fort, called Ram Rauni, at Amritsar. Its construction was a clear message to the government that their end had come and Sikh rule over Punjab would soon be a reality.

However, a new wave of state terrorism against the Sikhs was soon started. Adina Beg, the Faujdar (commander and administrator of a tract under a Governor) of Jallandar, sent a message to the Dal Khalsa chief to cooperate with him in the civil administration, and he wanted a meeting to discuss the matter. But in essence, this was only a trick to disarm the Sikhs and keep them under government control. Jassa Singh replied that their meeting place would be the battle ground and the discussion would be carried out by their swords.

Beg attacked the Ram Rauni fort at Amritsar and besieged the Sikhs there. Dewan Kaura Mal¹ advised the Governor to lift the siege and prepare the army to protect the

¹Kaura Mal was called "Mitha Mal" by the Sikhs because of his friendship with them. In Punjabi, "Kaura" means bitter and "Mitha" means sweet.

state from the invader, Ahmed Shah Abdali. To win the good will of the Sikhs, Kaura Mal got a part of the revenue of Patti area allocated for the improvement and management of Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. Kaura Mal had to go to Multan to quell a rebellion there. He asked the Sikhs for help and they agreed to join him. After the victory at Multan, Kaura came to pay his respects to the Darbar Sahib, and offered 11,000 rupees. He also spent 3,000,000 rupees to build Gurdwaras at Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak Dev.

In 1752, Kaura was killed in a battle with Abdali and state policy towards the Sikhs quickly changed. Mir Manu, the Governor, started hunting Sikhs again. He arrested many men and women, put them in prison and tortured them. In November 1753, when he went to kill the Sikhs hiding in the fields, they showered him with a hail of bullets. He fell from the horse and the animal dragged him to death. The Sikhs immediately proceeded to Lahore, attacked the prison, and got all the prisoners released and led them to safety in the forests.

There were twelve Misls of the Sikhs and Jassa Singh was the head of the Ahluwalia Misl and the leader of all the Misls, jointly called Da' Khalsa. It was with his guidance and brave handling of the leadership that the Khalsa got nearer to their goal of self-rule in the Punjab.

Khalsa as Rulers

In May 1757, the Afghan General Jahan Khan attacked Amritsar with a huge army. The Sikhs were not prepared to face the army at that time. Therefore, they decided to withdraw to the forests. Their fort, Ram Rauni, was demolished. Harimandar Sahib was blown up, and the army desecrated the Sarovar by filling it with debris and dead animals. Baba Deep Singh Shaheed made history when he attacked Jahan Khan to recover Amritsar from army control. Fatally wounded, Baba Ji cut through the army column to reach the Harimandir Sahib.

Some unexpected developments took place in the state which proved favorable for the Sikhs. Adina Beg did not pay

revenues to the government. The Governor dismissed him and appointed a new Faujdar in his place. The army was sent to arrest him and this prompted Adina to request Sikh help. The Sikhs took advantage of the situation and to weaken the government, they fought against the army. One of the commanders was killed by the Sikhs and the other deserted. Later, the Sikhs attacked Jallandar and thus became the rulers of all the tracts between Satlej and Beas rivers, called Doaba. This raised the political status of the Khalsa. Instead of roaming in the forests, now they were ruling the cities.

After this, the Sikhs started bringing more areas under their control and realizing revenue from them. In 1758, joined by the Marhattas, they conquered even Lahore and arrested many Afghan soldiers who were responsible for filling the Amrit Sarovar with debris a few months earlier. They were brought to Amritsar and made to clean the Sarovar. After the cleaning of the Sarovar, the soldiers were allowed to go home with a warning that they should not do that again -- which was a novel and humane punishment, all things considered.

Abdali came again in October 1759 to loot Delhi. The Sikhs gave him a good fight and killed more than 2,000 of his soldiers. Instead of getting involved with the Sikhs, he made a rapid advance to Delhi. This meant that the Khalsa were considered a formidable power in the Punjab. They decided to collect revenues from Lahore to prove to the people that the Sikhs were the rulers of the state. The Governor of Lahore knew that he could not face the Sikhs, so he closed the gates of the city and did not come out to fight against them. The Sikhs laid siege to the city. After a week, the Governor agreed to pay 30,000 rupees to the Sikhs.

Khalsa, the saviours of the innocent

Abdali returned from Delhi in March 1761 with lots of gold and more than 2,000 beautiful, young girls as prisoners. The Sikhs decided to save these innocent girls. Jassa Singh formulated a strategy. When Abdali was crossing the river

Beas, the Sikhs swiftly fell upon them. They freed the women prisoners and escorted them back to their homes. The people felt that the Sikhs deserved to be the rulers of the Punjab. They alone could protect the people and their honor from the invaders.

The Sikhs took over Lahore in September of 1761, after Abdali returned to Kabul. They parceled it up among themselves and minted their coins in the name of Guru Nanak Dev. Sikhs, as rulers of the city, received full cooperation from the people. Jassa Singh was given the title of Sultanul Kaum.

Ahmed Shah Abdali had been very much agitated for having to yield the share of the looted wealth to the Sikhs and for having lost the young women whom he would have sold to the Afghans in Kabul. During the winter of 1762, he brought a big, well equipped army to finish the Sikhs forever. Sikhs left the cities and were near Ludhiana on their way to the forests and dry areas of the south, when Abdali moved from Lahore very quickly and caught the Sikhs totally unprepared. They had their women, children and old people with them. As many as 20 000 to 30,000 Sikhs are said to have been murdered by the army. Jassa Singh himself received about two dozen wounds. The Sikhs call it Wada Ghalughara, or the Great Massacre.

Abdali, fearing Sikh retaliation, sent messages that he was willing to assign some areas to the Sikhs to be ruled by them. Jassa Singh, the leader of the Khalsa, rejected his offers and told him that Sikhs own the Punjab and they do not recognize his authority at all. Abdali went to Amritsar and blew up the Harimandar Sahib, hoping to destroy the source of "life" of the Sikhs. However, within a few months, the Sikhs attacked Sirhind and moved to Amritsar. Abdali was still in Lahore and was surprised to find the Sikhs so close to him within such a short time of having been dealt the greatest blow of their history. He felt forced to fight them.

A terrible battle was fought between the Sikhs and the invaders on 17 October 1762. Abdali knew that if he lost that battle to the Sikhs, he could not dare to come again to the

Punjab. Sikhs were angered not only because of the heavy loss of lives, but also because of the destruction of the Harimandar Sahib. It was the day of the solar eclipse, and the Sikhs fought a fierce battle with the Afghans. Finding the Sikhs taking the upper hand, the Afghans took advantage of the darkness and fled back to Lahore.²

Army afraid of the Sikhs

The defeat of Abdali at the hands of the Sikhs sent shock waves to Kabul and Delhi. In 1764, the Sikhs punished another commander of the army. Jain Khan was away from Sirhind recovering revenues from different Nawabs, when Sikhs moved in to face him before he could get back into the fort. When encircled by the Sikhs, he tried to slip away leaving his men entangled with the Sikhs. But Jassa Singh had organized the attack very well. When Khan was leaving the battlefield to escape, the watchful Sikhs shot him dead. The regions around Sirhind were divided among the Sikh Misldars and monies recovered from the treasury were used to rebuild the Harimandar Sahib. Gurdwara Fatehgarh Sahib was built in Sirhind where the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh were murdered. Sikhs took over Lahore again in 1765.

In 1767, when Abdali came again, he sent messages to the Sikhs for their co-operation. He even offered them the governorship of Punjab but none of them accepted it. Instead, the Sikhs continued to harass him with repeated guerilla attacks. They took away his caravan of 300 camels loaded with fruits from Kabul. As soon as he crossed the river Satlej on his way to Delhi, the Sikhs were again in control of the areas between Satlej and Ravi. Jassa Singh had so well prepared his men to fight that Abdali did not dare return to Kabul through Amritsar and Lahore. He took a long circuitous route through Multan.

²The third Ghalughara took place in June 1849 when the Indian army stormed the Harimandar Sahib, Amritsar and murdered about 10,000 Sikhs. The Prime Minister of India was shot dead in October of the same year. It may be noted that anyone who ordered the murder of Sikhs received due punishment from them.

After his departure to Kabul, Sikhs crossed the Satlej and brought Sirhind and other areas right up to Delhi, under their control.

The Emperor of Delhi, Shah Alam II, was staying away in Allahabad; he did not come to Delhi for fear of the Sikhs. Alam ordered his commander Zabita Khan to fight the Sikhs. Zabita, knowing that he could not face the Sikhs, made a truce with them instead. Later, Alam dismissed him from service. Zabita Khan came to the Sikhs' camp and he was welcomed by them. He became a Sikh, and was given a new name, Dharam Singh.

The high character of the Sikhs and their bravery are documented by an eye-witness and translated below:

Sikhs are great experts in the use of the sword and the art of war. Like lions, they jump on the enemy, like foxes they run away and get out of our reach. Their bodies are rock hard and in physical strength, one Sikh is the equivalent of more than 50 men. If they flee in a battle, don't assume that they have been defeated. That is just part of their tactics because they suddenly turn back and murder all those who pursue them. Come and see these lions in the battlefield to learn the art of war from them.

They do not kill a woman, a child or a coward running away from the fight. They do not rob any person nor do they take away the ornaments of a woman, be she a queen or a slave girl. They commit no adultery, rather they respect the women of even their enemies. They always shun thieves and adulterers and in generosity, they surpass Hatim.

These comments are from the pen of Qazi Nur Mohammed, who came to Punjab with Abdali. These words are very significant because the Qazi was present during many Sikh battles and himself was an enemy of the Sikhs.

Peace in Amritsar

Abdali thought that having demolished their fort and desecrated their holy Sarovar, he had made Sikhs unable to face the Afghans. However, within months, the Sikhs, guided by Ahluwalia, were strong enough to make Afghans their prisoners, and made them clean up the Amrit Sarovar. Within a few years, the same Abdali feared the Sikhs so much that he did not dare follow his normal route through Punjab to return to Kabul. He knew that the Sikhs were ready to tell him that they owned the Punjab and not the Afghans.

Jathedar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, honored as Sultanul Kaum (King of the Nation) was a devout Sikh. He was not greedy and did not attempt to add more areas to his Misl. Instead, whenever any wealth or villages came into the hands of the Sikhs, he distributed them among the Jathedars of all the Misls. Having lead the Sikhs through very trying times, Jassa Singh passed his last years in Amritsar. With the resources available to him, he repaired all the buildings, improved the management of the Gurdwaras, and provided better civic facilities to the residents of Amritsar. He was a contented man, having given his life for the cause of the Khalsa Panth. He wanted every Sikh to take Amrit before joining the Dal Khalsa. It were his actions as a true Sikh that kept the Khalsa united and helped them to become a power in the Punjab.

Jassa Singh died in 1783 and was cremated near Amritsar. There is a city block, Katra Ahluwalia, in Amritsar named after him. This block was assigned to his Misl in honor of his having stayed there and protected the holy city.



S. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia

CHAPTER IV

SARDAR JASSA SINGH RAMGARHIA

Sardar Jassa Singh, son of Giani Bhagwan Singh, was born in 1723. His ancestors were great Gursikhs devoted to Gurbani and *sewa*. They lived in the village of Ichogil, near Lahore. His grandfather took Amrit during the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh, and joined him in many battles. Later, he joined the forces of Banda Singh Bahadur.

Sardar Jassa Singh was the oldest of five brothers. Like his grandfather, he lived his life as a brave soldier of the Khalsa Panth. His father trained him in reading Gurbani. He memorized Nitnem hymns and took Amrit when he was still young.

Award of an Estate:

In 1733, Zakaria Khan, the Governor of Punjab, having failed to subdue the Sikhs, decided to befriend them. He needed their help to protect himself from the Afghan invader, Nadir Shah. He offered the Sikhs an estate and a royal robe. The Sikhs accepted it. Sardar Jassa Singh and his father joined the Sikhs to fight against Nadir Shah. The father died in battle. Zakaria Khan gave five villages to his sons in reward for his bravery. Village Vallah was awarded to Sardar Jassa Singh, where he gained the administrative experience required to become a leader, Jathedar, of the Sikhs. During this period of peace with the government, the Sikh Jathedars had become quite strong and built their fort, Ram Rauni, in Amritsar.

Honored as Ramgarhia

Zakaria died in 1745 and Mir Manu became the Governor. He was worried about the increasing power of the Sikhs. To finish the Sikhs, he let loose unspeakable terror

against them. A mention of the sacrifices of these Sikhs is made in the Ardas. Mir Manu also ordered Adina Beg, Faujdar (Administrator) of the Jallandar region, to kill the Sikhs. Adina Beg was a very smart politician and wanted the Sikhs to remain strong to keep Manu involved with them. In order to develop good relations with the Sikhs, he sent secret messages to them. But, as the Sikhs were in hiding in different places, they could not get together for a collective Panthic decision. Thus, the Individual Jathedars responded differently as it suited their plans. Jassa Singh agreed to cooperate with the Faujdar and was made a Commander. This position helped him develop good relations with Dewan Kaura Mal at Lahore and assign important posts to the Sikhs in the Jallandar division.

This favorable situation for Jassa Singh did not last long. The Governor of Lahore ordered an army attack on Ram Rauni to kill the Sikhs staying in that fort. For this purpose, Adina Beg was required to send his army as well. Jassa Singh, being the commander of the Jallandar forces, had to join the army to kill the Sikhs in the fort. This was very painful for him. After about four months of siege, Sikhs ran short of food and supplies in the fort. They were on the verge of leaving the fort to fight their way out with the certain loss of many Sikh lives. Jassa Singh could not bear the thought of the impending fall of the fort and murder of the Sikhs. He contacted the Sikhs inside the fort and joined them. It was a great morale booster for the Sikhs and a big jolt to the army surrounding the fort. Furthermore, Jassa Singh used the good offices of Dewan Kaura Mal and had the siege lifted.

Every Sikh in the Dal Khalsa appreciated his courage and liked him for his timely help. The fort was strengthened and named Ramgarh; Jassa Singh, having been designated the Jathedar of the fort, became popular as Ramgarhia.

Fighting the tyrannical government

Manu intensified his violence and oppression against the Sikhs. There were only 900 Sikhs when he surrounded the

Ramgarh fort again. The Sikhs fought their way out bravely through thousands of army soldiers. The army demolished the fort. The hunt for and torture of the Sikhs continued until Manu died in 1753.

Manu's death left Punjab without any effective Governor. It was again an opportune period for the Sikhs to organize themselves and gain strength. Jassa Singh rebuilt the fort and took possession of some areas around Amritsar. The Sikhs took upon themselves the task of protecting the people in the villages from the invaders. The money they obtained from the people was called Rakhi (protection charges).

The new Governor, Taimur, son of Ahmed Shah Abdali, despised the Sikhs. In 1757, he again forced the Sikhs to vacate the fort and move to their hiding places. The fort was demolished, Harimandar was blown up, and Amrit Sarovar was filled with debris.

The Governor decided to replace Adina Beg. Beg asked the Sikhs for help and they both got a chance to weaken their common enemy. Adina Beg won the battle and became the Governor of Punjab. Sikhs rebuilt their fort Ramgarh and repaired the Harimandar. Beg was well acquainted with the strength of the Sikhs and he feared they would oust him if he allowed them to grow stronger, so he led a strong army to demolish the fort. After fighting valiantly, the Sikhs decided to leave the fort. Beg died in 1758.

Wada Ghalughara

The greatest blow to the Sikhs was the Wada Ghalughara or Great Massacre, in February of 1762. The Sikhs were moving towards dry areas to safety, when Ahmed, the Afghan invader, attacked them with vengeance and without warning. The Sikh deaths are estimated between 20,000 and 30,000. Jassa Singh himself suffered about two dozen wounds in this battle.

This heavy blow, instead of demoralizing and incapacitating the Sikhs, committed them to greater service of

the Panth. They gathered at Amritsar and defeated Ahmed on 17 October of that year. In the dark, he left the battlefield and escaped to Afghanistan. The Sikhs were again in a position to take control of many areas of the state. Each Misl, a section of the Sikhs, occupied a different region. There were eleven such Misls of the Sikhs (excluding the one which ruled Patiala, the region to the east of the Satlej River). Collectively, they called themselves the Sarbat Khalsa.

When, in 1764, Ahmed again came to crush the Sikhs, they left for their safe hide outs and let him move forward. On his return from Delhi, when he crossed the Satlej, Sikhs attacked him swiftly and ferociously. They took away his looted wealth and escaped. Ahmed received the same treatment when he invaded again in 1767. Even though he defeated the Marhattas and looted Delhi many times, he could not subdue the Sikhs, who continued to stand in his way.

Because of the vengeful behavior of Ahmed and the honorable character of the Sikhs, the Muslims of Lahore bluntly told Ahmed that they would not co-operate with him unless he offered the Governorship of Punjab to the Sikhs. But the Sikhs declined the offer of governorship, because they were already the de facto rulers of Punjab and people regarded them as their saviours.

Ramgarhia Misl Estate

Sardar Jassa Singh Ramgarhia occupied the area to the north of Amritsar between the Ravi and the Beas rivers. He also added the Jallandar region and Kangra hill areas to his estate. He had his capital in Sri Hargobindpur, a town founded by the sixth Guru. The large size of Jassa Singh's territory aroused the jealousy of the other Sikh Misls. They did not want him to become too powerful and the ruler of a big region.

Although Jai Singh and Jassa Singh were close friends, strong differences arose between them because of mutual jealousy. Bhangi Misl sardars also developed differences with Jai Singh. As a result, a big battle was fought between Jai

Singh, Charaht Singh, and Sardar Ahluwalia on one side and Bhangis, Ramgarhias and their associates on the other side. The Bhangi side lost the battle.

Later, the Ahluwalia sardar, one day while hunting, happened to enter Ramgarhia territory where Jassa Singh's brother arrested him. Jassa Singh apologized for the misbehavior of his brother, and honorably returned Ahluwalia with gifts. However, their old differences increased further. Other sardars also took a grim view of this Ramgarhia act.

Mutual Misl wars

Due to mutual jealousies, fights continued among the Sikh Sardars. In 1776, the Bhangis changed sides and joined Jai Singh to defeat Jassa Singh. His capital at Hargobind Pur was taken over and he was followed from village to village, and finally forced to vacate all his territory. He had to cross the river Satlej and go to Amar Singh, the ruler of Patiala.

Amar Singh welcomed the Ramgarhia sardar in order to make use of his bravery, fighting skill, and ruling experience. He gave him the areas of Hansi and Hissar which Jassa Singh handed over to his son. He himself joined Amar Singh to take control of the villages on the west and north of Delhi, now forming parts of Haryana and Western U.P. The Sikhs disciplined and brought to justice all the Nawabs who were harassing their non-Muslim population. Jassa Singh Ramgarhia entered Delhi in 1783. Shah Alam II, the emperor, did not dare face the Sikhs, rather he extended them a warm welcome. Ramgarhia left Delhi after receiving gifts from him.

Because of the differences arising out of the issue of dividing the Jammu state revenues, long time friends and neighbors Mahan Singh, Jathedar of Sukerchakia Misl and Jai Singh, Jathedar of the Kanahya Misl, became enemies. This resulted in a war which changed the course of Sikh history.

Mahan Singh requested Jassa Singh to help him. In the battle, Jai Singh lost his son Gurbakhsh Singh while fighting with Ramgarhias. His widowed daughter-in-law, Sada Kaur,

though very young, was a great statesperson. She saw the end of the Khalsa power through such mutual battles. She could foresee that to rule Punjab, Sikh Misls must give up their mutual jealousies and unite to form one big power. She was able to convince Mahan Singh to adopt the path of friendship. For this she offered the hand of her daughter, then only a child, to his son, Ranjeet Singh (later the Maharaja of the Punjab), who was then just a boy. The balance of power shifted in favour of this united Misl. Some other sardars also joined them. This made Ranjeet Singh the leader of the most powerful union of the Misls.

When the Afghan invader, Shah Zaman, came in 1788, the Sikhs, however, were still divided. Ramgarhia and Bhangi Misls were not willing to help Ranjeet Singh to fight the invader, so the Afghans took over Lahore and looted it. As soon as the Afghans went back, Ranjeet Singh occupied Lahore in 1799 but the Ramgarhias and Bhangis did not accept him as the leader of all the Sikhs. They got the support of their friends and marched to Lahore to challenge Ranjeet Singh. The forces, who were 12 miles outside the city, were finalizing their plans to attack, when the Bhangi leader died. This discouraged Jassa Singh and he returned to his territory.

Jassa Singh was eighty years old when he died in 1803. His son, Jodh Singh, developed good relations with Ranjeet Singh and they never fought again.

The critical decision of Jassa Singh to join the Khalsa and save the Ram Rauni fort changed the course of not only his own life but that of Sikh history as well. He was honored as Ramgarhia. His name will always remain alive as the founder of the Great Ramgarhia Misl, who played a major role in the battles of the Khalsa Panth.



Akali Baba Phoola Singh

CHAPTER V

AKALI PHOOLA SINGH

The great Sikh General, Jathedar Akali Phoola Singh, was born in 1761. His father Ishar Singh was fatally wounded during the great massacre of Sikhs (Wada Ghalughara) in 1762. Before his death he charged Bhai Narain Singh of Misl Shaheedan with the responsibility of raising his infant son.

Akali Ji, by the age of ten, could recite Nitnem and other Gurbani hymns. At Anandpur Sahib, he always kept himself busy doing sewa or reading Gurbani, and he became very popular with the sangat. Because of his scholastic attitude and commitment to Panthic welfare, he was made the leader (Jathedar) of the Misl after the death of Bhai Narain Singh. In 1800, he came to Amritsar and made the Mahants improve the management of the Gurdwaras. The major credit for extending the boundaries of the Sikh Raj goes to Akali Ji, the legendary general of the Sikhs.

Respected by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh

In 1802, Maharaja Ranjeet Singh sent his army to take over Amritsar and annex it to his kingdom. On the advice of Akali Phoola Singh, the Maharaja agreed to give an estate to the Bhangi Misl, then ruling Amritsar. He also ordered the army not to loot the inhabitants of the city.

In 1807, Phoola Singh was, for the first time, involved in a major battle against the Nawab of Kasoor, who had the protection of a strong fort. The Sikhs fought bravely and were finally able to demolish a section of the wall. The Nawab was arrested. The Sikhs took pity on him and allotted him an estate near the Satlej river. The bravery of Akali Ji during the battle very much impressed the Maharaja.

In 1808, a British representative was sent to Amritsar for talks for developing better relations between the two

governments. A Muslim platoon with the British emissary organized a procession to celebrate their festival chanting loud slogans. When passing near the Akal Takhat, they were advised not to create noise, because it disturbed the Sikh congregation. However, the leaders of the procession insulted the Sikhs instead of listening to their suggestion. On hearing this disturbing news, Akali Ji himself went to settle the matter with the British platoon. The soldiers apologized and behaved respectfully in the future. No more noisy processions were taken near the Gurdwara again.

Loss of faith in the Maharaja

The internal political policy pursued by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh went against Sikh interests. Major points of differences were that the Maharaja had:

1. Delegated too much authority of the government to Dogras who were insincere and disloyal to the Sikhs.
2. Appointed relatives of his cronies to important posts instead of selecting competent persons.
3. Developed misunderstanding with his sons by listening to the misinformation given by the Dogras.³

When Akali Phoola Singh Ji went to discuss domestic policies of the government with Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, the Dogras did not allow the meeting to take place. Akali Ji forced his entry into the palace and was warmly received by the Maharaja. Showing his hospitality, the Maharaja offered Akali

³Later, it was found that Akali Ji was right and justified in asking the Maharaja not to place all his confidence in the Dogras alone. The Dogras had a secret understanding with the British, who had already taken control over much of India. The Dogras caused the downfall of the Sikh Raj. They were made the rajas of Kashmir as a reward for helping the British infiltrate the Sikh raj. The Dogras also informed the Kabul regime about the Sikh army and they planned the murder of the hero of the Sikh raj, Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa, who was considered a terror by the Afghans and Pathans.

Ji a splendid meal. Akali Ji declined his offer stating that unless the Maharaja changed his policies, and realized his own entrapment by the Dogras, this was to be their last meeting. After delivering this message to the Maharaja, Akali Ji left for Anandpur Sahib.

The Prince of Jind⁴ state developed differences with the British raj. He moved to Anandpur Sahib and took protection under Akali Ji. The British desired the Prince to be handed over to them. They approached the Maharaja when Akali Ji refused to surrender him to them. The Dogras misinformed and misguided the Maharaja and accused Akali Ji of creating enmity between the British and the Sikh raj. The army at Phillaur was, therefore, instructed to arrest Akali Phoola Singh. The army, however, declined to obey the Maharaja recognizing that Akali Ji was the holiest man amongst the Sikhs.

The British also tried to capture Akali Ji by ordering the Nawab of Malerkotla and Raja Jaswant to attack Anandpur Sahib and arrest Akali Ji along with the Prince of Jind. Both of them knew of Phoola Singh's goodness and greatness. They also endorsed his stand and refused to cooperate with the British. Finally, Maharaja Ranjeet Singh thought of another plan to get Akali Ji on his side. He sent Baba Sahib Singh Bedi, a close friend of Akali Phoola Singh, to escort him with honor to Amritsar where a spectacular welcome was arranged by the Maharaja. The two were finally reconciled. Unfortunately, the Maharaja did not take advantage of his advice to keep the Dogras away from the helm of administration.

Protector of the Sikh Faith

Some administrators of the Kashmir area broke their agreement. Akali Phoola Singh and General Hari Singh were sent to punish them. In 1816, Akali Ji lead his forces against the rebels in the west and south of Punjab, including the Nawab

⁴Jind was then a part of the British Raj. Now it is a part of the Haryana state of India.

of Multan who had not paid his taxes. In 1817, Phoola Singh was sent to Hazara to recover the taxes. The administrator paid his dues and was, therefore, allowed to continue in his position by Akali Ji.

The Nawab of Multan again declined to pay his taxes to the state. When the army was sent to collect the dues, he defeated the Lahore army. The Maharaja then sent his son with a strong force who pushed the Nawab into the fort, but could not achieve his mission. At last, the Maharaja came to Amritsar and humbly requested Akali Phoola Singh to help the Khalsa Panth. Akali Ji angrily asked: "O supporter of the disloyal Dogras, why did you not tell me earlier?" Akali Ji took his men to Multan. They demolished the wall of the fort. A bloody hand to hand battle followed. The brave Nawab, his five sons and 12,000 soldiers lost their lives in the battle. Akali Ji was wounded. On his return to Amritsar, Akali Ji was honored and given the title "Protector of the Sikh Faith."

Battles for Peshawar

In 1818, the Maharaja himself led the expedition to bring the rebellious Pathans under control. A pontoon bridge was constructed across the river Attock and a small Jatha was sent to assess the situation, but it was attacked. This enraged the Maharaja. He sent Akali Phoola Singh and general Hari Singh Nalwa against the rebels. As soon as the Sikh army was within firing range, they were showered with a rain of bullets. Akali Ji ordered a tactical retreat. This made the rebels come out of their bunkers to follow the retreating Sikhs and push them out of their area. When the enemy was in the open battlefield, Akali Ji ordered a severe attack and then encircled them. Their commander Feroze Khan accepted his defeat and requested the Sikhs to end the battle.

The next target of the Sikh army was to retrieve the control of Peshawar. The rebels decided to obstruct their path to the city. When Akali Ji was informed about this he immediately attacked them before they could gather and

organize a coordinated resistance to his advance to Peshawar. This strategy proved useful. The Ghazis (Muslim fighters) did not dare to face the Sikhs and ran for their lives. The road was left open for the Sikhs to proceed to the city where they raised their flag on the fort. After the Sikhs took control of Peshawar, Yar Mohammed Khan sent gifts to Maharaja Ranjeet Singh to express his loyalty. The Maharaja accepted the gifts and made him the Governor of Peshawar. But Khan, too, proved disloyal to the Sikh raj.

Battles for Kashmir

In 1819 Akali Ji was deputed to discipline the ruler of Kashmir who had broken the agreement made with the Maharaja. Unable to proceed through the Pass protected by the army, the Sikhs were instructed to follow footpaths through the hilly terrain. By this tactical move they took over all the outer defense posts without much difficulty. After heavy fighting, they captured the strong fort as well.

The Sikh army was unable to make further progress, as the route to Pir Panchal Pass was blocked by the Pathans. The Pathans, occupying the sides of the path, rained bullets on the Sikh army. Akali Ji directed his soldiers to get on the mountains, instead of moving through the Pass. The Sikhs fought the Pathans hand-to-hand and continued their journey through the Pass.

The next battle took place with Jabar Khan, who had built a strong army with thousands of Afghans. Diwan Chand ordered the Sikh army to open gun fire on Afghan positions, but it did little harm to them. He then directed his men to advance their guns to get closer to the defenses for effective firing. As soon as the Sikhs stopped firing in order to move their guns, the Afghans came out of their bunkers and attacked them, capturing several Sikh guns.

Finding the Afghans in the open battlefield, Akali Ji responded with a lightning attack by his men, who were considered the best swordsmen. Jabar Khan was wounded and

he fled. The Khalsa won the battle and took control of the Kashmir state.

Defeating Kabul forces

In 1823, Mohammed Azim Khan, the ruler of Kabul, made plans to take over Peshawar. Yar Mohd Khan, the Governor of Peshawar, appointed by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was his brother. He agreed to help the Kabul regime by withdrawing from the city and leaving it unoccupied. The Khan's army came and occupied the city without firing a single bullet. Local administrators and communities were instigated to rebel against the Sikh raj. They occupied all the routes to Peshawar making it very dangerous for the Sikh army to go there.

When this news reached Lahore, the Maharaja called General Hari Singh Nalwa and sought his advice. He suggested that Akali Phoola Singh must join him to recover the state from Khan. Nalwa immediately left for Peshawar, with the Maharaja and Akali Ji following him. When they reached Attock, they found that the pontoon bridge had been destroyed to stop the Sikhs from crossing the river and helping Nalwa.

General Nalwa and his forces were engaged in a bloody battle on the western side of the river while the Maharaja and the main Sikh army were delayed on the eastern bank. Hearing the fight across the river, the Sikhs became more worried and distressed at their situation. A messenger, who swam across the river, informed Akali Phoola Singh and the Maharaja that unless Nalwa and his soldiers received help, he would most likely lose the battle. Hearing this, Akali Phoola Singh got on his horse and crossed the river followed by the Maharaja and the rest of the forces. The news of the arrival of the Maharaja demoralized the opponents and they lost all hope of winning the battle. They ran to save their lives and took shelter behind their second defense line, Nawshehra fort, to prepare a strong defense.

After re-organizing their forces, the Sikhs decided to

move forward to take over the fort. Having said their prayers, the Jathas started marching, when a scout brought the news that a new army of 10,000 men with forty guns had arrived from Kabul to support the rebels. The Maharaja wanted to wait for their own guns to arrive but Akali Ji said, "The Khalsa has started its march after prayer, now no one can stop them!"

When the Sikh army was within their range, the Ghazis opened fire on the Sikhs. Akali Ji ordered them to move forward suddenly and engage them in hand to hand combat, an art in which no army could match the Khalsa. Bullets were coming from all sides, but Akali Ji was moving forward with his men. His horse was killed by a bullet. He immediately boarded an elephant to continue his advance on the Ghazis. Watching the daring deeds of the Akali platoons, the Maharaja could not resist joining them. Meanwhile the Akali men had reached the firing lines and started fighting with their swords. The Afghans were no match for the quick swords of the Sikhs. Fresh Sikh army and gunmen also reached the battlefield by that time and the Sikhs claimed another victory.

The Sikh Nation bereaved

Unfortunately, the Sikhs sustained a grievous wound: the death of Akali Phoola Singh Ji. A Pathan, hiding behind a boulder, shot Akali Ji from close range as he was pressing the Pathans to retreat.

Thus, the Sikhs lost their great General, a true Sikh. He was a fearless and skilled commander. He maintained the Sant-Sipahi (Saint-Soldier) tradition of the Khalsa. Akali Phoola Singh Ji remains a role model for all Sikhs.



General S. Hari Singh Nalwa

CHAPTER VI

GENERAL SARDAR HARI SINGH NALWA

Sardar Hari Singh is regarded as one of the greatest of Sikh generals. During 1881, European newspapers wrote articles comparing him to the great European Generals such as Napoleon, Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, the Duke of Wellington, as well as Asian Generals such as Haluku Khan and Genghis Khan. The British concluded that Sardar Hari Singh Nalwa was the greatest of them all. With a limited force of men and materials, he freed not only Kashmir and Multan, but also Peshawar state and made them part of the empire of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. Peshawar had been under Afghan control for more than eight centuries when Afghans murdered Raja Jaipal in a battle fought in 998 A.D.

Sardar Nalwa was a courageous, devoted and farsighted general. He impressed the Governor General of India with his statesmanship when he met him at Simla in 1831 as an emissary of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. When the question of a successor to Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was discussed among the top Sikhs, Nalwa opposed the opinion of the majority. He suggested that not Kharak Singh, but the Panj Pyaras should succeed Ranjeet Singh. Had his suggestion been listened to, the history of India would have been different today.

Early life

Hari Singh, born in 1791, was the son of Sardar Gurdial Singh of Gujranwala, now in Pakistan. His father died when he was only seven years old but his mother provided him a good religious education and trained him in martial arts. Hari Singh took Amrit at the age of ten. Observing his mastery in the use of arms, the Maharaja placed him in his army. When on a

hunting mission with the Maharaja, Hari Singh was attacked by a tiger. He smartly defended himself and killed the tiger; this act gave him the title, Nalwa (tiger).

Sardar Hari Singh's first major battle was fought against the Nawab of Kasoor, (now in Pakistan) who was always a troublemaker for the Sikhs in Amritsar during the 18th century. Later he participated in the battle against Multan to free the people from the Nawab of the region. Nalwa demonstrated his superb fighting skills during these battles.

Releasing Shah Shuja

Hari Singh's next expedition was to the state of Kashmir. He joined the other two famous commanders, Akali Phoola Singh and Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala, in obtaining the release of the imprisoned Shah Shuja, the king of Afghanistan. Shuja was ousted by his own brother and he had no alternative but to move to the Punjab and seek the protection of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. Later, when Shuja attempted to take over Kabul, he was defeated, imprisoned, and detained in Kashmir. His begum (wife) requested that the Maharaja once again free her husband. In return, she offered him the greatest and most famous of all diamonds, the Kohinoor.

The success of the expedition to bring Shah Shuja safely from Kashmir to Lahore so enraged the ruler of Afghanistan, that he sent his army to take over the fort of Attock in 1813, and oust the Sikhs. Hari Singh Nalwa, however, led his army to victory against great odds and retained Sikh control over the area.

Annexation of Multan

The Nawab of Multan, who was governing that state on behalf of the Maharaja, refused to observe the agreements and promises made by him. Nalwa was deputed to bring him under control. The General fought bravely and took over the strong fort of Multan. Ranjeet Singh granted him the estate of

Gujranwala as a reward for his accomplishment. In 1818, the Nawab again rebelled against Lahore. Nalwa had to fight a long bloody battle to annex Multan and make it a part of Punjab to resolve the problem forever.

Freedom for Kashmiris

In 1819, the Kashmiris sent a deputation to Lahore, asking Maharaja Ranjeet Singh to free them from four centuries of foreign rule. Three famous Sikh Generals, including Hari Singh Nalwa, were sent to Kashmir again. After defeating the ruler there, Sardar Nalwa was made the Administrator of Kashmir. He streamlined the whole administration and ensured justice for everyone, which made him very popular with the Kashmiri people. However, his stay there was short lived as he was recalled in 1821 to reassert Sikh control over the western regions.

Along with Nalwa, the Maharaja himself led the Sikh forces. Hazara was brought under the Lahore administration. Hari Singh Nalwa was appointed Governor of that area as the previous Governor died fighting against the rebels.

Retaking Peshawar

General Nalwa could never be free from fighting the Pathans and Mughals of Afghanistan. Yar Mohd Khan, who had been appointed Governor of Peshawar, was the brother of the king of Afghanistan. He became disloyal to the Sikh raj and joined his brother, which necessitated sending another Sikh expedition to Peshawar.

The Sikh army built a pontoon bridge over the river Attock and challenged the Pathans. At the height of the battle, a contingent of Pathans cut the bridge. When Maharaja Ranjeet Singh and Akali Phoola Singh reached the scene, they found the bridge washed away. They could hear the fighting on the other side of the river. They had no other choice but to take the great risk of crossing the flooded river on horseback. The battle,

however, had been won by Nalwa by the time the Maharaja reached there.

The major battle for retaking Peshawar still lay ahead. Thousands of soldiers and Mujahideens (religious zealots) had gathered there to stop the Sikhs from reaching Peshawar. A bloody battle was fought, where both sides were determined to win at any cost. The Mughals and Pathans found the Sikh sword too strong and beat a hasty retreat to Kabul. The Sikhs again took over Peshawar, although they paid a very high price for it. They lost their general Akali Phoola Singh who was shot by a Pathan hiding behind a rock when he was forcing his opponents to retreat.

In another uprising of a local Nawab in 1824, Sardar Hari Singh was severely injured. One of the boulders, exploded by the retreating enemy, hit him and he rolled down the hill. However, an urgent and timely search saved his life.

The king of Kabul made yet another attempt to take over Peshawar. A Syad, after returning from Mecca, went to Kabul. He told the king that God had advised him to take over Peshawar. Another attack on Peshawar was therefore organized by them. The Sikhs proved to be too powerful to be ousted and Syad was defeated and killed in May of 1831. The remaining army returned to Kabul leaving the Khalsa to rule Peshawar. Sardar Nalwa was given an award of 50,000 rupees for winning the battle. Under an agreement with Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, a local Burkzaee was appointed Governor. In 1834, the Maharaja decided to annex Peshawar and make it a part of Punjab, as every local Governor appointed there had rejoined Kabul once the Sikh army left. Nalwa was appointed as the Governor of Peshawar.

The annexation of Peshawar enraged, Dost Mohd, the King of Kabul. He sent a very large, well equipped army to take Peshawar back from the Sikhs. General Hari Singh was the commander-in-chief of the defending Sikh army. Though fewer in numbers, the Sikhs organized a defense and counter-attack so brilliantly that the larger Kabul army was disarrayed and defeated. Dost Mohd was able to save his life by running

away at night.

The Khalsa Raj was thus established over all the areas of the present Pakistan, Kashmir, and Punjab up to the West of Satlej.

Nalwa as the Governor of Peshawar

Nalwa, as the Governor of Peshawar, relieved the Hindus of the tax which they had been paying since the 17th century. He managed the whole state effectively to bring peace, and stopped the looting of the people by Pathans and Afghans. To maintain order in the state, he established police stations all over the region and built forts at strategic places. The fort of Jamrud was the most famous and it blocked the Khyber Pass, not permitting any army to come from the Kabul side. The king of Kabul, finding himself controlled by the chain of forts built by Nalwa, was always devising plans to break the Sikh administration.

The last battle

The Dogras in the cabinet of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh were working secretly with the British and the King of Kabul to bring down the Khalsa Sarkar. These traitors, Gulab Singh and Dhyani Singh, finally succeeded. They obtained the rule of Kashmir and handed over the Punjab to the British in 1849. Kabul would have never dared to attack Peshawar during the lifetime of Hari Singh Nalwa. The mention of the name of the general would scare the Pathans. If they wanted to silence their crying children, they would say, "Be silent. Hari is coming."

The Dogras knew every secret of the army and its deployment. Being in charge of the government, they were in a position to misinform the Maharaja.

In 1837, the Peshawar army was back at Lahore for the wedding of Kanwar Naunihal Singh, the son of the Maharaja. General Nalwa was tired and exhausted, lying sick in the bed. No senior person was in Peshawar to guide the Sikh soldiers.

All of this information was sent to Kabul by the Dogras and the Afghans were told to attack Peshawar. Such a message was very encouraging to the Afghans and the king of Kabul immediately sent his army to drive the Sikhs out of Peshawar.

After crossing the Khyber Pass, they attacked Jamrud. It was here that Bibi Harsharan Kaur (Sharnagat Kaur) played a heroic role by walking from Jamrud to Peshawar and reporting the attack on Jamrud. Nalwa, though sick, repulsed the attack, losing his own life due to the treachery of the Dogras. It was Nalwa's presence which resulted in the Sikh victory; otherwise, the small Sikh army numbering only a few thousand, was no match for the 30,000 Afghan army supported by civilian fanatics.

During this time, Hari Singh Nalwa sent to Maharaja Ranjeet Singh three letters, all of which were kept by the Dogras. They did not let the Maharaja know of them. Recent research has shown that the Afghans and Dogras connived to murder the General. This is evidenced by the fact that the person who shot Nalwa from very close range, was wearing a Sikh soldier's uniform.

By the time help arrived from Lahore, the battle had been won by the Sikhs. Peshawar was thus retained in the Khalsa raj, the credit for this going to Bibi Harsharan Kaur and General Nalwa's bravery.

General Hari Singh Nalwa was an eloquent statesman and an able administrator. He was instrumental in bringing Kashmir under Sikh control and brought peace and prosperity to the people as the Governor of the state. Peshawar, a region of Punjab which had been partitioned from it for eight centuries, was again made a part of it due to the bravery of Nalwa. He has since been known as the "Hero of Peshawar" and was rated as the greatest general of his time. The forts he built there to stop invaders from looting Punjab and Delhi, were effective long after his death. A large part of his successes can be attributed to his being a kind and devoted Sikh, committed to his people and possessing a keen sense of duty and responsibility.



Maharaja Ranjit Singh

CHAPTER VII

MAHARAJA RANJEET SINGH

Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, known as the "Lion of the Punjab", was born at Gujranwala on 13 November 1780 to Sardar Mahan Singh. Mahan Singh got the news of his birth when he returned victorious from a battle; hence, he gave the name Ranjeet Singh to his newborn son. Budh Singh, the great grandfather of Mahan Singh, founded the Sukerchakia Misl. Charhat Singh, the father of Mahan Singh, was famous for his attacks on Ahmed Shah Abdali, the invader from Afghanistan. When Mahan Singh died in 1792, Ranjeet Singh, being his only son, became the head of this Sikh Misl.

Ranjeet Singh justified his title when he was only about ten years old by accompanying his father to a battle. A Pathan attacked him unexpectedly but Ranjeet Singh saved himself by quickly cutting off his adversary's head. It was considered a miracle and everyone who was told about this incident believed that Ranjeet Singh would become a great general.

In another battle, his father became ill and left the battlefield. Before leaving, he handed over the command to Ranjeet Singh, who was then not even a teenager. Mahan Singh was running a very high fever and soon died. Before his death, however, he received the news of his son's victory. Leadership qualities and fighting skills of Ranjeet Singh helped him to achieve the cherished dream of the Khalsa to be the rulers of their state.

Early life

Ranjeet Singh, as mentioned above, lost his father when he was still a boy. But he made remarkable progress under the advice and guidance of his mother-in-law, Sada Kaur, of the Kanahya Misl. The joint strength of the two Misls made him the head of the most powerful unit of the Khalsa.

In 1796, Shah Zaman, the King of Afghanistan, attacked Punjab and asked Ranjeet Singh to submit to him. Ranjeet Singh sent him a bravely worded reply that the Sikhs were owners of their own Punjab, and did not recognize any other ruler. The Shah took over Lahore and proceeded to Amritsar, where the Sikhs had gathered. A bloody battle ensued and the Sikhs defeated the invader, forcing him to retreat to his country. When Shah invaded again in 1798 and occupied Lahore, Ranjeet Singh led the Sikh forces and besieged Lahore. Shah found his life in danger. After remaining within the fort for some days, the Shah secretly left Lahore during the night, never to look upon Punjab again.

Lahore was administered by three Bhangi sardars who were, for most of the time, fighting one another. The administration was in very bad shape and the residents were dissatisfied with them. The Nawab of Kasoor wanted to take over Lahore, and lay his claim to the Governorship of Punjab. But he did not have a good reputation as a ruler. The residents wanted Ranjeet Singh to come to Lahore because the people under his rule were happy and at peace. In 1799, a joint deputation of Sikhs and Muslims of Lahore went to Ranjeet Singh and invited him to come to Lahore. The combined forces of Ranjeet Singh and his mother-in-law were too strong for the Bhangi sardars; also, the mood of the people was a warning to the Bhangis that it was time for them to leave. Thus, Ranjeet Singh became the ruler of Lahore without fighting any big battles. The Nawab of Kasoor got help from some Sikhs and attacked Lahore, but was defeated by Ranjeet Singh. To keep the Bhangi sardars on his side rather than making them his enemies, Ranjeet Singh gave them estates befitting their status.

Ranjeet Singh was now eighteen years old and competent enough to be the ruler of his Misl. Possession of Lahore gave him the needed image of the ruler of the state. He decided to bring self-rule to the old Punjab areas as well.

He took over Jammu and Sialkot. Their rulers agreed to submit to him. Britain also noted the ascendancy of this brave youth to the leadership of the powerful Khalsa Panth. They

accepted him to be the ruler of the Punjab and befriended him by sending him gifts and exchanging representatives with his government.

The Maharaja

On Baisakhi Day in 1801, Ranjeet Singh held a big council. All the prominent rulers and outstanding citizens of Punjab and the neighboring areas came to Lahore to attend the enthroning of Ranjeet Singh as the Maharaja of Punjab and offer their hand in friendship. Sahib Singh Bedi put the ceremonial mark on his forehead. The city of Lahore rejoiced for many days. Prayers were said in temples, mosques, and gurdwaras for the long life of Ranjeet Singh. New coins known as "Nanak Shahi" were minted. Ranjeet Singh called it a raj of the Khalsa Panth and, hence, the coins were struck in the name of Guru Nanak Dev. The coins minted on the first day were distributed among the poor as a reminder of the love of the Guru for the needy.

To make it a rule of the people, the city and state were divided into wards and zones; local people were assigned the job of conducting their affairs. A Muslim, Kazi Noordin, was appointed the Chief Justice of the city. A government hospital was established for free treatment of the sick people. A police department was created to keep peace and discipline in the city. Imam Bakhsh, a kindly man, was appointed as chief of the Police. Panchayts were established in the villages to provide local administration. They delivered immediate and swift justice at virtually no cost to the people.

Punjab united

Punjab was divided up among different Sikh Misls and some Nawabs. Central Punjab, Doaba⁶ and Malwa⁷ were under the control of the Sikhs. The southern and western Punjab was

⁶The area between the Satlej and Beas rivers.

⁷The areas beyond Satlej.

ruled by Muslim Nawabs and the hilly portions and mountainous regions were occupied by Rajput chiefs.

Ranjeet Singh was related to the Kanahya and Nakai Misls through marriage. Also, he obliged some Jathedars by giving them estates, and they gladly joined him. Those who opposed him were subdued but he later befriended them by giving them personal estates and befitting positions in the army. The Ahluwalia Misl also accepted Ranjeet Singh as the Maharaja of the Punjab. Ranjeet Singh accepted Jathedar Ahluwalia as his brother and they exchanged turbans to solemnize this new relationship.

The Maharaja provided peace, justice and order throughout his kingdom. All the people, including Muslims, got relief from wars, and looting by the invaders. His popularity was spreading far and wide which helped bring all areas of the Punjab under the Lahore administration.

Kasoor was a strong state, situated very near Lahore and ruled by a Nawab who was the source of problems for the Sikhs. In 1801, Ranjeet Singh defeated this Nawab who then agreed to pay revenues to him. The Nawab, however, rebelled again when the Maharaja was busy in the western areas of the Punjab. The Sikh forces took over Kasoor, but the Nawab apologized and promised to behave in the future. In 1807, his brother became the Nawab and refused to pay the revenues. Finally, Ranjeet Singh annexed Kasoor and brought it under Lahore rule. He gave the Nawab an estate near the Satlej river.

In 1803, Ranjeet Singh defeated the Nawabs of Multan and Jhang. They agreed to be a part of the Lahore government and pay revenues to it. In 1807, the hilly areas of Pathankot and Chamba were also made a part of the Punjab.

The Sikh states in Malwa, the region on the eastern side of the Satlej, were made British Protectorates when they were misled into believing that Ranjeet Singh wanted to overrun them. Thus, when Ranjeet Singh suggested to the states that they seek their independence, they opted for British protection instead. Therefore, the eastern areas of the Punjab beyond the Satlej, could not join the Punjab and become a part of it during

Sikh rule.

In 1809, Kangra, Jammu state and other areas around it became part of Punjab. In 1810, the Nawab of Multan again rebelled. When the Sikh forces defeated him after a big battle, he again asked for forgiveness, agreed to behave in the future, and pay the revenues regularly.

The Kohinoor diamond

The Kohinoor diamond was with the Emperors of Delhi. When Nadir Shah looted Delhi in 1739 he carried it to his country along with other valuables. Shah Shuja, the king of Kabul who was defeated by his brother, came to the Punjab for protection. Ranjeet Singh let him stay in his state and allotted him a pension for his expenses. After some time, the Shah went to Kabul and dethroned his brother. However, his opponents soon defeated him. He was arrested and sent to Kashmir.

The wife of the Shah requested Ranjeet Singh to save her husband and obtain his release. She promised to present the Kohinoor to Ranjeet Singh in appreciation of his help. The Sikh army marched to Kashmir. After many battles, they were successful in bringing the Shah to Punjab. Kohinoor, the biggest diamond, thus became a prized possession of Lahore. When the British annexed the Punjab in 1849, it went into their hands. Now, it adorns the crown of the English Monarch.

Victories in southwest Punjab

During the Kashmir war, the Sikhs had their taste of fighting the Pathans. Having defeated them, the Sikhs were encouraged to recover the areas of Punjab under the control of Pathans for more than eight centuries. When the Sikhs moved to Attock, the king of Kabul sent a huge army to check their advance. However, before the army could organize itself, Sikhs were already in Attock occupying the fort. The army besieged the fort in the hope of forcing the Sikhs to surrender. The

Sikhs, however, came out of the fort, counter-attacked, and wounded the commander. The army retreated and the Sikhs brought Attock and areas around it under their control, frustrating any chances of anyone invading Punjab from the west. The Pathans and Afghans had looted the Punjab often over a long period of time. This occupation of Attock in 1813 closed that path forever.

During the summer months of 1814, the Sikh army marched to Kashmir. The Maharaja himself joined it. After taking over the outer defense lines, they reached Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. The ruler, Azim Khan, sent gifts and wanted to be a friend of Ranjeet Singh. In view of this friendship, the war for Kashmir was given up.

In 1817, the Nawab of Multan rebelled against Lahore yet again. The army was sent there. The Nawab occupied the strong fort, and hoped to frustrate the Sikhs. The top fighters along with Akali Phoola Singh were sent to win the battle. This was a big and bloody battle resulting in the loss of many lives. Among the dead were the Nawab and five of his sons. His other two sons, who were taken alive, were given estates. Thus Multan also formed a part of the Punjab.

In 1818, the Maharaja himself led the expedition to expand his rule to Peshawar in the west, then under the rule of Kabul. A small group of Sikhs crossed the river Attock to survey the area and the road to Peshawar. However, the Pathans had known the Sikh plans and were ready to stop them from proceeding to Peshawar. A couple of thousand Pathans suddenly fired a volley of bullets and killed the survey party. This enraged the Maharaja. He marched elephants into the river and the Sikh army followed him. The bloody battle resulted in the death of thousands of Pathans. They accepted their defeat leaving the path to Peshawar open to the Sikhs. Yar Mohd Khan, the ruler of Peshawar, did not dare to face the Sikhs and he fled. The Sikhs took possession of the city. Yar sent a request to be made the Governor of Peshawar and agreed to pay revenues regularly to Lahore and be the ally of the Sikhs.

His request was accepted.

The only important area left under the control of the Pathans was Kashmir. The governor, J. Khan, was a cruel ruler. He ill treated Hindus. Therefore, his Hindu minister, Bir Dev, left the state and requested the Maharaja to save the people in Kashmir from Pathan repression.

Kashmir under Sikh Raj

In 1819, the Sikh army was ordered to march to Kashmir. They took over the outer army posts. The local administrators submitted to the Sikhs and agreed to be loyal to the Maharaja. They were, therefore, allowed to continue in their positions. After crossing the mountain, the Sikh army was in the Kashmir valley. Pathans brought their powerful guns to fight the Sikhs. After heavy gunfire from both sides and the loss of many lives, the Sikhs took over Kashmir. The Maharaja took special care to see that the Kashmiris did not suffer anymore. To ensure the liberties of the people and to provide peace and order in the state, General Hari Singh Nalwa was appointed Governor of Kashmir. When, in 1833, there was a famine, the Maharaja sent all the reserve grain to Kashmir to save the people from starvation.

The Maharaja travelled to all the states of Punjab to talk to the people and be sure that every administrator was performing his duty properly. All lazy and cruel rulers were replaced, the most important being Sham Singh Pashoria, who ruled Multan. He was dismissed and imprisoned for his ill-treatment of the people.

Dera Gazi Khan and Hazara were also brought under the Lahore administration during his visit to the southwest Punjab.

Peshawar united with Punjab

The king of Kabul did not like that his brother, Yar Mohd Khan, the Governor of Peshawar, should be a subordinate of Ranjeet Singh. The king sent a big, well

equipped army to take over Peshawar. The Maharaja deputed General Hari Singh Nalwa, Akali Phoola Singh and other generals to march their armies to Peshawar. A big battle took place at Jahangir. When the Pathans heard that the Maharaja himself was able to cross the river, they felt demoralized and retreated to Nawshehira.

After requesting God's help, as was customary with the Sikhs, on 14 March 1824, Sikh armies decided to advance. Just at that time, Ranjeet Singh was informed that the opponents had brought forty more guns. Therefore, he advised his commander, General Akali Phoola Singh, to wait for the Khalsa's guns which were still being brought over the river. But Akali Singh followed the earlier decision and marched forward to meet the Pathans. When a bullet killed his horse, he commanded from an elephant. The Sikhs fought bravely and soon forced the Pathans to yield. Akali Ji received a fatal bullet shot. Meanwhile, guns also arrived to help the Sikhs. Azeem Khan, the Pathan commander, was scared and was ashamed of the defeat of his huge, well equipped army. He escaped but died on his way to Kabul.

Yar Mohd Khan was again apologetic and begged for forgiveness. He agreed to remain loyal to the Maharaja for the rest of his life.

However, a Pathan, Syad Ahmed, wanted to destabilize the administration there and make Muslim Pathans rebel against Sikh rule. He killed Yar Mohd Khan. The Maharaja sent his army again to take over Peshawar. Syad Ahmed was murdered in 1831 and peace was once again brought to the region. Finally in 1834, Peshawar was made a part of the Punjab and placed under the control of General Hari Singh Nalwa. He built many forts to keep the peace in the area and protect it from the Pathans.

The Maharaja and the British

The shrewd British wanted to remain on good terms with Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. They often exchanged gifts with him and received his representatives with great respect. They

sent their representative to attend the marriage of Kharak Singh, the eldest son of the Maharaja, in 1812. In 1827, the British Governor of India himself paid a visit to Lahore. A special meeting took place between Lord Bentick and Maharaja Ranjeet Singh in 1831, in order to strengthen the ties of friendship.

Dost Mohd, the king of Afghanistan, was unhappy to have lost Peshawar to the Sikhs. He tried many times to create a rebellion and send his army to help the Pathans but failed to dislodge the Sikhs. He even resorted to a trick. For the purpose of deciding boundary lines between the Kabul raj and the Sikh raj, he asked the Maharaja to send his emissaries, and then arrested them in order to pressure the Maharaja into returning Peshawar to him. Soon, he realized his blunder and released them. He also apologized for his irresponsible action.

Again in 1837, when Hari Singh Nalwa was sick, they attacked Jamrud. Hari Singh was a terror for the Pathans. His very presence in the war was sufficient to scare the Pathans away. Hari Singh won the battle but lost his life. This was the last time the Pathans fought with the Sikhs. The British, with the help of the Sikhs, got Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul by defeating Dost Mohd. This was done to check the advance of Russia into India through Afghanistan.

To protect Kashmir from the North, the Sikhs also took over Ladhak. This opened trade routes to Tibet and China.

Prince Kharak Singh becomes the Maharaja

In 1839, Ranjeet Singh grew very ill and became paralyzed. Knowing his end was near, he called a general meeting of his Darbar. He put the ceremonial mark on his son, Kharak Singh's forehead to make him the next Maharaja of the Punjab. He gave his hand to Dhyan Singh Dogra to hold and told him to stay loyal to Kharak Singh. Dogra agreed to serve the new Maharaja with loyalty and devotion.

In his heart, Dhyan Singh was disloyal to the Sikh raj, but Ranjeet Singh did not know of this. The Dogras conspired with the British in creating fights among the family members of

the Maharaja. Finally, the Sikh raj was handed over to the British. As a reward for their treachery to the Khalsa Raj, the Dogras were awarded the states of Jammu and Kashmir, while the British annexed the Punjab and made it a part of their raj.

GLOSSARY

A. Terms related to the Sikh faith

Akali Akal means God, (i) one who worships only Akal, specifically used for the Sikhs led by Akali Phoola Singh, the Khalsa general. (ii) a member of the Akali Dal (Party), the political wing of the Punjab Sikhs named themselves Akali Dal in 1920 and fought for the freedom of the Gurdwaras and the Indian subcontinent from the British rule.

Akal Takht A throne built on a high platform by Sri Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru, after the murder of his father, Guru Arjun Dev in 1606. It was named Akal Bunga (House). It is located opposite the entrance to the Harimandar Sahib. The Khalsa Panth has five Takhts, the seats of administration, namely (i) Akal Takht, Amritsar (ii) Patna Sahib, Bihar State, (iii) Kesh Garh, Anandpur, (iv) Damdama Sahib, district Bhatinda (v) Hazur Sahib (Abicahl Nagar), Nanded, Maharashtra State. Three of these Takhts are located in Punjab. Akal Takht is the headquarters of the Sikhs.

Amrit A drink which is supposed to make a person immortal (Hindu mythology) ; In Gurbani the term is used as a synonym for Naam, God's virtues. In the Khalsa Rahit it refers to the sanctified water first prepared by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699 for Panj Pyaras by reciting specified Gurbani hymns while stirring the water with a khanda, double-edged sword. Now it is prepared for initiating members to the Khalsa Panth.

Amritdhari A Sikh who has taken Amrit and has been formally initiated into the Khalsa Panth. He is required to practice the Sikh way of life as prescribed in the bulletin, the Sikh Rahit Maryada, published by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar.

Amritsar See Section C. (iii) Places

Baba A respectable person; grandfather; a holy man.

Baba Atal A nine-story gurdwara in memory of Baba Atal Rai, the son of Guru Hargobind. He died at the age of 9 in 1628. The building was constructed by the Sikhs during 1778 - 1784. It is located by the side of Kaul Sar near Harimandar Sahib.

Baisakhi The first day of the Indian calendar month, Baisakh. It falls in the middle of April. It is the birthday of the Khalsa. Guru Gobind Singh prepared Amrit for the Panj Pyaras on this day in 1699 and founded the Guru Khalsa Panth.

Dal A very large gathering; the term was first used for the military wing of the Khalsa, fighting for the human rights of the people during the 18th century.

Diwali The festival of lamps, held all over India on a moonless night, usually in October. During 18th century, Sikhs visited Amritsar on Diwali day for their annual get together.

Golden Temple See Harimandar Sahib

Gurbani The hymns of the Gurus and other Holy men included in the Sikh holy scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, and the hymns of Guru Gobind Singh in Dasam Granth.

Gurdwara A house of God, a Sikh religious place where board and lodging are provided free to the visitors, irrespective of their faith, race, or country. Gurbani recitation and singing is performed there both morning and evening.

Gurmat The wisdom of the Guru, the Sikh faith.

Guru A teacher, a guide, specifically one of the ten Sikh Masters from Guru Nanak Dev Ji to Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The holy scriptures and the corporate body of the Amritdhari Sikhs are also given this title and addressed as Guru Granth and Guru Khalsa Panth respectively.

Guru Granth Sahib The holy scripture of the Sikhs, containing about 6,000 hymns written by six Gurus (First-Fifth, Ninth), and more than 2 dozen holy people born in Hindu, Muslim, and low-caste families. The language which is most often Sant Bhasha, is very close to Punjabi. Some hymns are in Persian, Marathi, and Sanskrit based languages. The script used is Gurmukhi which is very akin to Hindi. It was compiled and first installed in the sanctum, Harimandar Sahib, in 1604 by Guru Arjun Dev. Later, the hymns of the ninth Guru were added to it. There is another scripture, Dasam Granth, containing the hymns of the tenth Guru. It was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh Shaheed after the death of the Guru. To identify the two Granths, the Guru Granth is also addressed as Adi Guru Granth, Adi means the first one.

Harimandar Sahib The sanctum built by Guru Arjun Dev and now famous as Golden Temple, the name given by the British because of the gold plating of its domes and upper story walls. It is in the middle of the Amrit Sarovar and was completed in 1604. The city is known as Amritsar.

Hukamnama An edict, the order of the Guru; the hymn read from the Guru Granth Sahib after a formal prayer.

Jathedar A Sikh leader, commander of a Sikh unit.

Khalsa Panth The corporate body of the Amritdhari Sikhs; Panth means (i) a faith, (ii) a group of people with a distinct identity and beliefs, (iii) an organization (iv) a path

Langar Free community meals provided from the volunteer contributions of the people, specifically when served in a Gurdwara; the place where Langar is served.

Mahant Custodian of a Gurdwara or Sikh historical place including the real estate attached to it. Mahants took care of the Sikh places during the 18th century when Sikhs moved to forests to seek safety from the government tyranny. However, the descendants of many of the Mahants gave up their religious path and lead a licentious life. They were removed from the Gurdwaras during early 20th century after great sacrifices by the Sikh nation. Under the Gurdwara Act 1935, Sikhs got control of the gurdwaras.

Mata Sundri The wife of Guru Gobind Singh. She was born at Lahore, married in 1684 at Anandpur, and died in 1747 in Delhi. She was recognized as the leader of the Sikhs after the death of the Guru in 1708.

Misl A division of the Khalsa Panth of the 18th century, The Khalsa were grouped into five divisions. This number later increased to 12, namely Ahluwalia, Bhangi, Kanhya, Ramgarhia, Shukarchakia, Shaheedan, etc.

Nitnem Gurbani hymns a Sikh is advised to read daily.

Sangat A holy congregation singing the virtues of God usually in the court of the Guru Granth Sahib, where everybody, a Sikh or a non-Sikh, are treated equal.

Sardar A chief; a leader; courtesy title, corresponding to Mister, used for a Sikh.

Sarovar A sacred pool, usually attached to a Gurdwara.

Sewa Voluntary service to help the needy, community service, services done at a religious place.

Shaheed A martyr.

Shaheed Ganj A memorial to a martyr.

Sikh A disciple, specifically a member of the Sikh faith. The faith was founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1469-1539). He preached that there is one Universal God, who loves all people whatever their race or faith and judges them by their deeds and not by the name of their religion. No prophet, Avtar, Guru, or Saviour, can have a franchise on Him. Any person who loves him (by loving and serving people, His children) can realize Him. Heaven and hell are concepts and not any specific places beyond this earth. They are not the goal of human life. Sikhs worship the Creator and not the creation, sun, moon, earth, animals, trees, etc. Of course, they marvel the creation and "see" God working in it.

Sikh Rehat Maryada A code of conduct for a Sikh; the daily religious routines and the procedures to be followed at birth, Amrit ceremony (initiation into the Sikh faith), marriage and death.

B. General Terms

Afghan A native of Afghanistan.

Bairagi One who gives up worldly life; a sect of Vaishnavs.

Brahman The highest caste of Hindus; Kashtryas, the fighting people, and Vaish, the business community, being the next. Shudras are considered the lowest caste by the Brahmins.

Burkzaee A sect of Pathans.

Dogras A community living in hills (doongar); a sub caste of Rajputs, who ruled Jammu, a region in the Northwest of Punjab.

Ghalughara A great blood shed, a holocaust. Three Ghalugharas are recorded in Sikh history, (i) in 1746 about 10,000 Sikhs were murdered by the Mughal government forces. It's called Chhota (small) Ghalughara (ii) Wada (Big) Ghalughara took place in 1762 when Ahmed Shah suddenly took Sikhs in Malwa moving with children, women, and old people to the dry region. He murdered about 20,000 - 30,000 of them. (iii) Under the orders of Indira Gandhi, Indian army attacked Golden Temple, Amritsar in June of 1984 and murdered 5,000 - 7,000 Sikhs visiting the sacred place in memory of the martyrdom of Guru Arjun Dev.

Faujdar An army commander ruling a region under the orders of a Suba (governor) during Mughal rule in India.

Maharaja A ruler of a big state, ranking above a raja, usually some subordinate rajas pay tribute to him.

Mughal A simpleton; a brave sect of Tatars who worship fire; Timur, was a famous Mughal general. Babur, one of his descendants defeated Lodhis in 1526, conquered Delhi and established the Mughal rule in India. Akbar was a just and popular Mughal emperor. Later, Mughal rule degenerated to brutal tyranny and the rulers tortured non-Muslims to forcibly convert them to Islam. During the Mughal rule, the Sikh faith was established in Punjab by the Sikh Gurus. It was not to the liking of the Muslim priests and the later Mughals, hence the clashes between them and the Sikhs. By the later half of the 18th century, Sikhs became the masters of their motherland.

Nawab A representative of a king or raja, an official with administrative power during the Mughal rule.

Pathan A community living in the West (Pascham) of India, famous as soldiers, now living on both sides of the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The native language is Pashto. The region was a part of India during the rule of Poris. Alexander the Great conquered it. In 998 A.D., Afghans defeated Raja Jaipal and made it a part of Afghanistan. During the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, General Hari Singh Nalwa conquered it and made it a part of the Punjab state. When in 1947, India obtained freedom from the British raj and was divided into Pakistan and India, it became a part of the Pakistan.

Raja A title adopted by the ruler of a state in India.

Rajput A member of the land-owning and the military caste of the former rulers of Rajputana. They ruled much of central India from the 7th-18th century.

Rakhi Protection money, a tax paid by people to the Sikhs during the 18th century for their protection from the invaders/robbers.

Suba A state of the Mughal empire in India.

Subedar Governor of a state during the Mughal raj in India.

C. Persons, Places and Provinces

(i) Persons

Adina Beg Faujdar of Jallandar under Governor of Punjab, an opportunist, and a shrewd person, seized governorship of Punjab for a limited period and died in 1758.

Ahmed Shah Abdali Also known as Durrani, Abdali is a sect

of Pathans, the son of a poor father. He proved to be a good soldier and rose to become the general of Nadir Shah. After the death of Nadir Shah, he became king of Afghanistan in 1747. He invaded India eight times and died in 1773.

Massa Khangar An administrator of Amritsar region, appointed by Zakaria Khan in 1740. He was murdered by Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh for desecrating Harimandar Sahib.

Mir Mannu A tyrant governor of Punjab during the Mughal Raj. His father was a minister in Delhi. He shifted his loyalties to Ahmed Shah of Afghanistan and was therefore dismissed from the governorship. Through his minister Kaura Mal, he obtained Sikh support and regained his position. However, he could not tolerate the growing Sikh power and after the death of Kaura Mal became a bitter enemy of the Sikhs. He was notorious for the torture and murder of the Sikhs, their women and children. He died in 1753.

Nadir Shah A poor shepherd. By his intelligence and competency became the ruler of Persia (Iran) in 1736. He seized Afghanistan in 1738 and invaded India. He massacred and looted Delhi in 1739. He took away all the valuables along with Kohinoor diamond and Peacock Throne to Iran. He died in 1747.

Zakaria Khan Also called Khan Bahadur, a tyrant governor of Punjab during 1733 to 1745.

(ii) Places

Amritsar First it was known as Chak Guru and later as Ramdaspur. It is famous for its Amrit Sarovar and Golden Temple. The city was founded in 1577 by Guru Ram Das, the fourth Nanak, who dug the Amrit Sarovar. His son Guru Arjun

Dev built the Harimandar Sahib in the middle of the Sarovar. His grandson Hargobind built the Akal Takhat. There are many other Gurdwaras related to the Gurus and Sikh martyrs. The city is also famous as a trade center. Lahore (the capital of Punjab) is 30 miles from it.

Bikaner A desert area in the south of Punjab, now a part of Rajasthan State. It was ruled by Rajputs. Sikhs harassed by Mughal government often took shelter in this region.

Delhi The capital of India since the Mughal period. It was founded in 1639 and is located on the banks of the river Jamuna. Important historical places include Purana Kila (Old Fort), Red Fort, and Kutab Minar. Gurdwara Sis Ganj and Gurdwara Rakab Gang are related to the murder and cremation of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Gurdwaras related to Mata Sundri, Guru Har Krishan, and Guru Gobind Singh are other important Sikh Centers in Delhi.

Jammu A region to the north of Punjab. Jammu is the capital city.

Kabul Capital of Afghanistan on the Kabul river, a tributary of the Indus river.

Khyber Pass A narrow 28 mile mountainous Pass (3370 meters summit) connecting Kabul (Afghanistan) with Peshawar (Pakistan), scene of many bitter fights 1838-42 and 1878-80 between British and Afghans.

Lahore Capital of the Punjab State since Mughal period, located on the banks of the river Ravi, now the largest city of Pakistan. It is the birth place of Guru Ram Dass. Guru Arjun Dev was murdered here in 1606. Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj is in the memory of Sikh men and women who were tortured and

murdered in Lahore. It was a capital of the Sikh Raj. It is also known for Mughal Gardens and Mughal Fort. Maharaja Ranjit Singh's tomb is located near the Ravi river.

Multan The chief city of the southern region of Punjab during the Mughal rule. It was famous for its strong fort which was conquered by Akali Phoola Singh.

Patiala Founded in 1753 by Baba Ala Singh, one of the descendants of Baba Phul, blessed by Guru Hargobind. It was the largest Sikh State in the Malwa region, The Patiala State and other Sikh States of Malwa did not become a part of the Khalsa Raj but became protectorates of the British empire. After India became free, all the States were made a part of the Punjab State.

Peshawar An important city of Pakistan near Khyber Pass, the only route to Kabul.

Pir Panchal Pass The only route to Kashmir before the digging of the all-season Banihal tunnel. It is closed during snowfall periods.

Sirhind Literally the head of India, i.e. the gate for India, chief and rich town of the Mughal Raj. Feroze Shah Tuglak made it the capital of the Sirhind State consisting of 28 counties. Governor Sirhind joined the Hill rajas to oust Guru Gobind Singh from Anandpur Sahib. The two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh and his mother were murdered here when they became separated from the Guru after leaving Anandpur in 1704. The Nawab was killed when Banda Bahadur took over Sirhind in 1710.

Srinagar The summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir. It is famous for Dal Lake and gardens. It was visited by Guru Hargobind.

(iii) Provinces & Countries

Afghanistan A hilly country strategically located between Turkistan (USSR), Tibet (China), Iran, and Pakistan. Kabul is the capital. The only passage to the east is through the Khyber Pass. It was conquered by Timur and made a part of his empire in 1504.

Haryana A state to the southeast of Punjab, a part of Punjab before it was divided into Punjabi and Hindi regions.

Himachal Pradesh Rajput hill states in the north of Punjab. They were made a union territory in 1947 and later in 1970 they became a full state called Himachal Pradesh. Its capital is Simla and its northern borders touch Tibet. All the Punjab rivers arise from this origin.

Jammu-Kashmir A twin state, Jhelum river forms the deep valley of Kashmir, 80 miles long, 20 miles wide. It was ruled by Hindus till 14th century when it fell to the Muslims who ruled it till 1819. Later it became a part of the Khalsa Raj when Hari Singh Nalwa conquered it. In 1846, it became a part of the British Raj. Now it is a disputed territory between India and Pakistan.

Pakistan In 1947, the British left India after dividing it into India and Pakistan. It consists of the western half of the old Punjab, North Western Frontier Provinces, and Sindh states of India. Many gurdwaras related to Guru Nanak Dev, Nankana Sahib, Kartarpur, Panja Sahib, and others are situated in Pakistan.

Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) the largest province in the north of India touching Nepal and China.

Rajasthan A northwest state of India located to the south of Punjab. Jaipur is its capital. It was ruled by independent Rajput rajas, some of them were conquered by the Mughal rulers.



ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਕਾਲਜ (ਰਜਿ:) ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ

ਵਲੋਂ ਚਲਾਏ
ਜਾ ਰਹੇ

ਧਰਮ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਜੈਕਟ

(ੳ) ਦੋ ਸਾਲਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਕੋਰਸ : ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਨੌਜੁਆਨ ਸਿੱਖ ਵੀਰ ਤੇ ਭੈਣਾਂ ਦਾਖਲਾ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਘਰ ਬੈਠੇ ਬਿਠਾਏ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਸਹੀ ਤੇ ਪੂਰੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰਾਸਪੈਕਟ 7 ਰੁ: ਦੀਆਂ ਡਾਕ ਟਿਕਟਾਂ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਕਾਲਜ ਦੇ ਪਤੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੰਗਵਾਉ ਜੀ। (ਦਾਖਲਾ ਫੀਸ ਕੇਵਲ 10 ਰੁ: ਅਤੇ ਹਰ ਤਿਮਾਹੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਭੇਟਾ ਕੇਵਲ 50 ਰੁ: ਹੈ)

(ਅ) ਸਿੱਖ ਫੁਲਵਾੜੀ ਮਾਸਿਕ ਮੈਗਜ਼ੀਨ : ਜੋ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੀ ਵਿਚ 70 ਹਜ਼ਾਰ ਦੀ ਗਿਣਤੀ ਵਿਚ ਛਪ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਘਰ-ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਹਿਤ ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਦਾ ਸੰਦੇਸ਼ ਪੁੱਜ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਪੁੱਛੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਵਾਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਜਵਾਬ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

(ੲ) ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣੀਕ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ : ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਲਾਗਤ ਮਾਤਰ ਕੀਮਤ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣੀਕ ਖੋਜ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਕਾਲਜ ਵਲੋਂ 300 ਦੇ ਲਗਭਗ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਹਰ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਤੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਜਾ ਚੁੱਕੀਆਂ ਹਨ।

(ੳ) ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਰੈਗੂਲਰ ਕਾਲਜ : ਇਕਸਾਰ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਵਾਲੇ ਉੱਚੇ-ਸੁੱਚੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਮਿਆਰੀ ਧਰਮ-ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਭੌਰ ਸੈਦਾਂ (ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਕੁਰੂਕਸ਼ੇਤਰ, ਹਰਿਆਣਾ), ਜਲੰਧਰ, ਬਰੇਲੀ (ਯੂ.ਪੀ.), ਜੰਮੂ ਅਤੇ

ਟਾਂਗਰਾ ਵਿਖੇ ਕੁਲ ਟਾਈਮ ਕਾਲਜ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੰਗਤ ਅਕੈਡਮੀ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ।

ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਸਕੂਲਾਂ/ਕਾਲਜਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪ੍ਰੀਖਿਆ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਲਗਭਗ 8,00,000 ਰੁਪਏ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਇਨਾਮ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰੀਖਿਆ ਹਰ ਸਾਲ ਅਕਤੂਬਰ/ਨਵੰਬਰ ਦੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਸਿਲੇਬਸ ਤੇ ਨਿਯਮ ਕਾਲਜ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਦੋ ਰੁਪਏ ਦੀਆਂ ਡਾਕ ਟਿਕਟਾਂ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਮੰਗਵਾਉ ਜੀ।

(ਕ) ਫੀ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ ਦੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਨਾਲ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਹਿਲੂ ਤੇ ਹਰ ਮਹੀਨੇ 60000 ਦੇ ਲਗਭਗ ਫੀ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ ਮੰਗਵਾ ਕੇ ਵੰਡ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ। ਇਸ ਫੰਡ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਦੇ ਦਸਵੰਧ ਦਾ ਕੁਝ ਨਾ ਕੁਝ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਪਾਉ ਜੀ।

(ਖ) ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਪਬਲਿਕ ਸਕੂਲ : ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ-ਨਾਲ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਵਿਦਿਆ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਸਲੇਮ ਟਾਬਰੀ, ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ ਵਿਖੇ ਇਹ ਆਦਰਸ਼ਿਕ ਸਕੂਲ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

(ਗ) ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਨੌਜੁਆਨਾਂ ਲਈ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਹਫਤਾਵਾਰੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕਲਾਸਾਂ : ਇਹਨਾਂ ਕਲਾਸਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਨੌਜੁਆਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਸੁੱਧ ਪਾਠ ਸਿਖਾਇਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਦੀ ਭਰਪੂਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਵਿਰਸੇ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਇਲਾਕੇ/ਕਾਲੋਨੀ ਵਿਚ ਲੱਗ ਰਹੀ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਫੀ ਹਫਤਾਵਾਰੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਕਲਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜ ਕੇ ਲਾਭ ਉਠਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ।

(ਘ) ਗੁਰਪੁਰਬ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਮਾਗਮ : ਗੁਰਪੁਰਬ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਮਾਗਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਥਾ, ਕੀਰਤਨ ਤੇ ਲੈਕਚਰ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਾਲਜ ਵਲੋਂ ਤਿਆਰ 'ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ' ਪੂਰੀ ਤਨ ਦੇਹੀ ਨਾਲ ਨਿਭਾਅ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਤੁਸੀਂ ਘਰ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਹ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਾਲਜ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ।

(ਙ) ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨੀ : ਸਕੂਲਾਂ, ਕਾਲਜਾਂ,

ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਜੋੜ ਮੇਲਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਕਾਲਜ ਦੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਾਮ ਸਿੱਖ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਵੀਰ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨੀ ਲਗਾ ਕੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਲੜ ਲਗਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।

(ਚ) ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਗੁਟਕੇ : ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਆਕਰਣ

ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੁਖੈਨ ਸੋਝੀ, ਯੋਗ ਥਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਬਿਸਰਾਮ ਦੇਣ ਲਈ ਖਾਲੀ ਥਾਂ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ, ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਗੁਟਕੇ ਨਿਤਨੇਮ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਸਾਈਜ਼ ਵਿਚ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਨਾ ਸੌਖਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਛੇਤੀ ਹੀ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਕਾਗਜ਼, ਛਪਾਈ ਤੇ ਜਿਲਦ ਵਧੀਆ ਪਰ ਕੀਮਤ ਲਾਗਤ ਮਾਤਰ ਰੱਖੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਗੁਟਕਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਪਾਠ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਕਰਾਉ ਜੀ।

(ਛ) ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸੰਚਾਰ ਤੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਮਾਗਮ : ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਸਮੇਂ

ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖਰੀਆਂ ਕਲੋਨੀਆਂ ਵਿਖੇ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਤੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਸੰਚਾਰ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਮੁੱਚੀ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਧਾਰੀ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ।

ਕਵਿਤਾਵਾਂ, ਕਵਿਜ਼ (ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨਤਰੀ) ਤੇ ਲੈਕਚਰ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਇਨਾਮਾਂ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ ਪੱਤਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਸਨਮਾਨਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

(੩) ਆਡੀਓ ਵੀਡੀਓ ਕੈਸਟਾਂ : ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਨੂੰ ਮੱਦੇ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਰੱਖਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਣਿਆਂ ਵਾਲਜ਼ ਵਲੋਂ ਧਰਮ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਲਈ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਵਿਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵੀਚਾਰ, ਲੈਕਚਰ, ਕਵਿਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਆਡੀਓ ਵੀਡੀਓ ਕੈਸਟਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸੀ. ਡੀਜ਼. ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ।

(੪) ਸਮਾਜ ਭਲਾਈ ਕਾਰਜ : ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਪ੍ਰਾਜੈਕਟਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਸਿਵਾ ਲਾਇਬ੍ਰੇਰੀਆਂ, ਡਿਸਪੈਂਸਰੀਆਂ ਕਈ ਸਰਕਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਚੱਲ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਲੋੜਵੰਦ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਫੀਸ, ਫੀ ਕਿਤਾਬਾਂ, ਕਾਪੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਸਰਕਲ ਪੱਧਰ ਤੇ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਜਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਸਿੱਖ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਰਿਸ਼ਤਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ ਵਿਖੇ ਮੈਟਰੀਮੋਨੀਅਲ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਵੀ ਚੱਲ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿਕਲੀਗਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਣਜਾਰੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਲਾਈ ਲਈ ਖਾਸ ਯਤਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ।

ਵਧੇਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ -

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