

IN SEARCH OF SIKHS

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ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਪੰਜਵੀਂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਦਿਵਸ ਤੇ ਉੱਤਰੀ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਪਰਦੇਸਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹੀ ਚਿੱਠੀ

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ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼

ਇਹ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ ਹੈ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਪੰਜਵੀਂ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਇੱਕ ਅਸੂਲ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਜਾਨ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਰਤਾਜ ਬਣੇ।

ਸਿੱਖ ਵੀਰੋ ਤੇ ਭੈਣੋ:

ਇਸ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜੇ ਗਏ ਦਾਸ ਦੇ ਲਿਖੇ ਹੋਏ ਕੁਝ ਸਫੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਗਾਈਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਕੁਝ ਹੋਰ ਖਬਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਲਿਖਤਾਂ ਆਦਿ ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗ ਹੀ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਕੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਆਪ ਜੀ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਣੇ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। ਇਸ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਤਦ ਪਈ ਜਦ ਕੋਈ ਅਖਬਾਰ ਇਹ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਨਾ ਆਪ ਤੱਕ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਣ ਨੂੰ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਇਆ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਹਰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਾਪੀਆਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡਣ ਅਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡਣ। ਜੇ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਕਰ ਲਵੇ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਵੰਡਣੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਹਿੰਮਤ ਕਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਕਰ ਲੈਣ ਦੇਣ। ਅੱਗੇ ਜਿਸ ਵੀਰ ਜਾਂ ਭੈਣ ਪਾਸ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਜਾਵੇ, ਉਸ ਅੱਗੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇੱਕ, ਦੋ, ਪੰਜ, ਦਸ ਜਿੰਨੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਕਾਪੀਆਂ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਗੁੰਜਾਇਸ਼ ਹੋਵੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਵੰਡਣ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲਤਾ ਕਰਨ। ਆਪ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਸੇਵਾ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਦੀ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਭਲਾਈ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਖਤਮ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਦੂਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਉੱਥੇ ਰਹਿ ਗਏ ਹਨ, ਰਾਧਾਸੁਆਮੀ, ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ, ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ, ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ, ਦੋਧੜੇ, ਨਾਮਧਾਰੀਏ, ਅਖੰਡਕੀਰਤਨੀਏ, ਬੱਬਰ, ਹੇਮਕੁੰਟੀਏ, ਟਕਸਾਲੀਏ ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਆਦਿ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੇਸਾਧਾਰੀ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਹਿੰਦੋਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਵਿਧਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਕੀ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਹੱਕ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਪਾਕੇ ਮੰਗ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਕਾਪੀ ਭੇਜੋ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਉਤਨਾਂ ਹੀ ਗਲਤ ਹੈ ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਨਾਨਕਸਰ ਦੇ ਠਾਠਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਸਮਝਣਾ। ਜੇ ਹਾਲ ਬੁੱਧ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਉਹੀ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਾਲ ਬੀਤ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣਵਾਦ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਖਾ ਲਿਆ ਹੈ। ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਆਹ ਅਨੰਦਕਾਰਜ ਐਕਟ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ, ਅਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਦ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੈਰਿਜ ਐਕਟ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ। ਮੰਦਰਾਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਬੁੱਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੀ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਘਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਵੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਸੰਤ ਜਾਂ ਬਾਬੇ ਦੀ ਫੋਟੋ ਰੱਖੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਵੀ ਤਸਵੀਰਾਂ ਬਣਾਈਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ ਹਨ। ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ। ਅਗਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਆਪਣਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਛੱਡਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਕੀ ਉਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਚਿੱਤਰਕਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਵਾ ਕੇ ਅਸਲੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਛੱਡ ਸਕਦੇ? ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਚੀਜ਼ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਛੱਡ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਆਪਣੇ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਹੀਂ? ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਹੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਦੇਹ ਹਨ, ਆਤਮਕ ਸਰੂਪ ਹਨ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਘਰੀਂ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਨਕਲੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ।

ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਸਿਰਫ ਉੱਥੇ ਦੇ ਬਸਿੰਦੇ ਹੀ ਬਚਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਦਲਦੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਉੱਥੇ ਕੋਈ ਤਬਦੀਲੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਉਣੀ। ਬੁੱਧ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਬਚਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਉਸ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਆਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪ ਉਪਰਾਲਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਪਵੇਗਾ। ਜੇ ਆਪਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਵੱਲ ਹੀ ਦੇਖਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਤਾਂ ਉੱਥੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਆਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੜਾਈ ਝਗੜਿਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਹੀ ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮੇ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਰਹਿਣਗੇ। ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਵਿਧਾਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਤਾਂ ਹੈ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਆਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੇਸਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਆਪਣੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਮੰਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਆਰਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ, ਉਲਟਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਧਿਆਨ "ਲੰਗਰ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਖਾਈਏ" ਵੱਲ ਲੱਗਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਉਹੀ ਫੁੱਟਾਂ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹਨ। ਪਰ "ਲੰਗਰ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਖਾਈਏ" ਦਾ ਅਸਰ ਸਿਰਫ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਹੀ ਪਵੇਗਾ। ਜੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਏਕਤਾ ਲਿਆਉਣੀ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਸੀ। ਇਜ਼ਰਾਈਲ ਦਾ ਮੁਲਕ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਯਹੂਦੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਹਿੰਮਤ ਨਾਲ ਬਣਿਆ ਸੀ। ਜੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੌਮੀ ਹੱਕ ਮਿਲਣਗੇ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਵੀ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਮਿਲੇਗਾ ਜੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਵਿਚ ਏਕਤਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ।

ਦਾਸ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਪਰ ਉਸਦੇ ਮਾਇਕ ਦਾਤੇ ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਚੰਗੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਬੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਚੰਗੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਜਾਣਦੇ ਹਨ (ਮਿਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ), ਪਰ ਉਹ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਰਨਾਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਖਮੋਸ਼ ਹਨ। ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ 1993 ਵਿਚ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਸਕੂਲ ਖੋਲ੍ਹਣ ਦਾ ਪਖੰਡ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੋ ਲੱਖ ਅਮਰੀਕਨ ਡਾਲਰ ਉਧਾਰ ਲੈ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਮਈ 1995 ਵਿਚ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਸਤੇ ਮੁਕੱਦਮਾਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਪਿਆ। ਮੁਕੱਦਮੇ ਦੇ ਜਵਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਰਕਮ ਮੇਰੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਟਾ ਸੀ। ਫਿਰ ਕਹਿਣ ਲੱਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਨਾ ਇਹ ਭੇਟਾ ਸੀ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਉਧਾਰ। ਪੈਸੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਤੋਂ ਆਏ ਸਨ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਉਹ ਸਬੂਤ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰੇਗਾ। ਸਬੂਤ ਕਦੀਂ ਪੇਸ਼ ਹੋਏ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਉਸਨੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਦਿਨ ਮੇਰੇ, ਮੇਰੇ ਵਕੀਲ ਦੇ, ਟੀਕਾਕਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਦਾਲਤੀ ਨਾਜ਼ਮ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ, ਅਕਤੂਬਰ 11, ਨਵੰਬਰ 13, 14 1995 ਵਾਲੇ ਬਿਆਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਸਹੁੰ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਖੂਬ ਝੂਠ ਬੋਲਿਆ। ਮੁਕੱਦਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਤੋਂ ਇੰਡੀਆ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਅਹਿਮਦਗੜ੍ਹ ਮੰਡੀ ਦੇ ਇੱਕ ਡਾ: ਗੁਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਬੀਮਾਰ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ (Rotational Vertigo-ਚੱਕਰ ਆਉਣੇ) ਫੈਕਸ ਭੇਜ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਜੱਜ ਨੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਚਾਲ ਸਮਝ ਲਈ। ਮੁਕੱਦਮਾਂ ਮੁਲਤਵੀ ਨਾ ਹੋਇਆ। ਜਿਹੜੇ, ਚੱਕਰ ਆਉਣ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਤਿੰਨ ਹਫ਼ਤੇ ਦਾ ਡਾ: ਗੁਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਘਰ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਅਰਾਮ ਕਰੇ, ਉਸ ਅਰਸੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਨੇ ਰੋਜ਼ਵਿਲ ਦੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਦੀ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ਤਿਆਗਣ ਦੇ ਕਾਗਜ਼ਾਤ ਤੇ ਦਸਖਤ ਲੈਚਵਰਥ, ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਬੈਠੇ ਨੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਸਨ। ਇਸ ਮੁਕੱਦਮੇ ਦੇ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਕਈ ਮੁਕੱਦਮਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਗੁਜ਼ਰੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿਚ (ਇਸ ਦੇ ਭੂਤਕਾਲ ਵਿਚ) ਹੋਈਆਂ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੇਤ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹੇ। ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਐਸੇ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ ਨੂੰ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾ 13ਵਾਂ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਪੋਪ ਅਖਾਵਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਘਰ ਬੁਲਾ ਕੇ, ਉਸ ਤੋਂ 51,000 ਰੁਪਏ ਦਾ ਸਰੋਪਾ ਲੈ ਕੇ, ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ, ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਕੌਮ ਨਾਲ ਐਸਾ ਹੀ ਧੋਖਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੈ ਜੈਸਾ ਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਅਰੂੜ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਜਲ੍ਹਿਆਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਬਾਗ ਦੇ ਕਾਤਲ ਜਰਨਲ ਡਾਇਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਵਿਚ ਸਰੋਪਾ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ।

ਇੱਕ ਛੋਟੇ ਮੋਟੇ ਡਿਗਿਆਣਾਂ ਆਸ਼ਰਮ ਦੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਾਂ ਨਾਨਕਸਰ ਦੇ ਗੁਟਕੇ ਛਾਪਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਤਨਖਾਹੀਆ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਭੱਜਕੇ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਪਰ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਮਹੰਤ ਤੋਂ ਕਈ ਗੁਣੇ ਮਾੜੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਟਕੇ ਛਾਪਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਹ ਛਾਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਲਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿਸ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਐਸੇ ਹੋਣ ਉਸ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਰਾਖੇ ਤਾਂ ਰੱਬ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਨਾ।

ਸਾਡੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਦੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ ਕਿ ਜੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਵੀ ਗਲਤੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਮਿਲੇ। ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਥੇਦਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਕਾਬਲ ਨਹੀਂ। ਇਸ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਇੱਕੋ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਆਪ ਅਸਤੀਫਾ ਦੇਵੇ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮੌਕੂਫ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ। ਕੁਝ ਵਾਰਦਾਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਤਾਂ ਐਸਾ ਜਾਪਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਛੱਡਿਆ ਹੀ ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵਧ ਕੇ ਫੁੱਟ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ:

- 1) ਬੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਰਸਾਲੇ "ਕੌਮੀ ਦਰਦ ਜਨਵਰੀ-ਮਾਰਚ, 1997 ਦੇ 32ਵੇਂ ਪੰਨੇ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਲਿਖਣ ਦੀ ਕੀ ਲੋੜ ਸੀ, ਕਿ "ਉਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਪੰਥਕ ਭਲੇ ਲਈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਵੀ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਆਵੇਗਾ, ਉਹ ਪੂਰੀ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ੍ਹਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਪੂਰਤੀ ਕਰਨਗੇ।" ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਦੇ ਦੋਨਾਂ ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਮੰਨਣਾ ਇੱਕ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਆਹ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੋਟਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਮਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਸਿਰ ਤੇ ਹੱਥ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਤੇ ਪੰਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਤਾਂ ਇੱਕ ਪਾਸੇ ਰਿਹਾ, ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦਾ ਲੰਗਰ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਛਕਦਾ। ਇਸ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਖਾਸ ਭੋਜਨ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸ਼ਰਧਾਲੂਆਂ ਦੇ ਘਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਸਟਰ ਬੈਡਰੂਮਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠਕੇ ਖਾਸ ਬਣਿਆ ਭੋਜਨ ਛਕਣ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਪਰੰਤ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਜੂਠ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਾਦ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਵਰਤਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਬਣਨ ਦੀ ਦੇਰ, ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਉਸ ਪਾਸ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।

- 2) ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਸੰਤ ਸਮਾਜ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਕੀ ਲੋੜ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਥੱਲੇ ਚੱਲਣਗੇ ਅਤੇ ਵਰਲਡ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦਾ ਸਾਥ ਦੇਣਗੇ। (ਤੁਸੀਂ ਕਿੰਨੀ ਵਾਰ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਗਤ ਵਿਚ ਭੁੰਨੇ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਲੰਗਰ ਛਕਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ?)
- 3) ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਕਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਕੀ ਲੋੜ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਸਾਰੇ "ਸੰਤ ਮਾੜੇ ਨਹੀਂ। ਸਿਰਫ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਚੇਲੇ ਹੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਖੁਦਗਰਜ਼ੀ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਪੈਸਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਦਾ ਬਾਈਕਾਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਪਰ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਰੱਖਣਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਹੈ।"

ਸੰਤ ਸਮਾਜ ਹੈ ਕੀ? ਇਹ ਕੀ ਬਲਾ ਹੈ? ਇਸ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨਾਲ ਕੀ ਸਬੰਧ ਹੈ? ਕੀ ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਾਸ਼ਾਮੀ ਬਣਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ?

ਮੈਂ ਕੁਝ ਸੰਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹਸਤੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਆਪ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਾਂਝੇ ਕਰਨੇ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹਾਂ। 8 ਅਪਰੈਲ 1998 ਨੂੰ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਹੱਕਾਂ ਸਬੰਧੀ "ਲੋਕ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ" ਬਣਾਉਣ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ। 13 ਅਪਰੈਲ 1998 ਨੂੰ ਬਾਦਲ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਇਹੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਅੰਤਮ ਚੇਤਾਵਨੀ ਖਤਮ ਹੋ ਗਈ। 26 ਅਪਰੈਲ 1998 ਨੂੰ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਨੇ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਣਾਨ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ 6 ਦਿਨ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ 20 ਅਪਰੈਲ 1998 ਨੂੰ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਕੇ ਲੰਗਰ ਛਕਣ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ।

ਜਸਟਿਸ ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਨੂੰ ਜੋੜਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਦਾ ਐਲਾਨ (ਹੁਕਮਨਾਮਾ) ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੋੜਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਚੰਭੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦਾ ਸਰਪ੍ਰਸਤ ਹੈ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦਾ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ! ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਬਣੀ ਹੋਈ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ-USA ਦਾ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਬਣਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਂ ਤਿਆਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਇਆ। ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਛਤਰ ਛਾਇਆ ਹੇਠ ਬਣਾਈ ਸੀ। ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦਾ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ, ਉਸਨੇ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ।

ਇਹ ਬੜੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਸਟਿਸ ਨੇ ਲੋਕ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਅਫਸੋਸ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ **Committee For Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab** ਬਣਾਈ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਵਕੀਲ ਦਰਬਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਹੈ। ਮਈ 1995 ਵਿਚ ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਵਾਅਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਸੀ, ਕਿ ਜੇ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਪਾਸ ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਕਈਆਂ ਲੜਕੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਾਪਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਬਿਆਨ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਭੇਜੇਗਾ। ਜਦ ਇੱਕ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਬੀਤ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ ਬੈਠੇ ਨੂੰ ਲੱਭਿਆ। ਉਸ ਦੀ ਸੁਰ ਬਦਲ ਚੁੱਕੀ ਸੀ। ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ, ਦਰਬਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਭੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾੜਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸੇਵਾਦਾਰ ਉਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਗਲਤ ਅਫਵਾਹਾਂ ਉਡਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ। ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲੜਾ (ਕੌਮਗਾਟਾ ਮਾਰੂ ਦੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਗੁਰਦਿੱਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਪੋਤਾ) ਵੀ ਬਾਦਲ ਅਕਾਲੀ ਦਲ ਦੇ **Human Rights Wing** ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਲਾਸ਼ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲ ਰਹੀ। ਜਿਹੜੇ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਮਹਿਕਮੇ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਕਤਲ ਦਾ ਇਲਜ਼ਾਮ ਲਗਾਇਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਉਹੀ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਦਰਬਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਇਜ਼ਾਜ਼ਤ ਦੇ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜਦ ਚਾਹੇ ਪਾਸਪੋਰਟ ਬਣਾ ਲਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਮੁਲਕ ਦਾ ਵੀਜ਼ਾ ਚਾਹੇ ਉਹ ਲੈ ਲਵੇ। ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਜਸਟਿਸ, ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਰਬਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਗਿੱਲ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੱਢ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਜਿੰਨਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਜਸਟਿਸ, ਕੌਸਲ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਦੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਛਤਰ ਛਾਇਆ ਤੋਂ ਕੱਢ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਸਲ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਕੁਝ ਸਵਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕੇਗੀ, ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਮੱਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਨੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ।

ਜਸਟਿਸ ਕੁਲਦੀਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਮੈਂ 23 ਮਾਰਚ, 1998 ਨੂੰ 279 ਸਫਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਲਿਖੀ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਦ ਕਈ ਵਾਰੀ ਫੈਕਸ ਭੇਜ ਚੁੱਕਾ ਹਾਂ। ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ ਆਇਆ। ਜਵਾਬ ਦੀ ਉਡੀਕ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਹੈ।

ਬਾਦਲ ਨੂੰ 226 ਸਫੇ ਦੀ ਚਿੱਠੀ 17 ਅਪਰੈਲ 1997 ਦੀ ਭੇਜੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਅੱਜ ਤੱਕ ਕੋਈ ਜਵਾਬ ਨਹੀਂ। ਨਾ ਹੀ ਉਮੀਦ ਹੈ।

ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸਤੇ 326 ਸਫੇ ਦੀ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਮੇਰੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਦੇ 19 ਸਫੇ **Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh** ਵਾਲੇ ਡਾ: ਖੜਕ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਹੱਥੀਂ ਜਨਵਰੀ 1998 ਵਿਚ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪੁਚਾ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਸਨ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਬਾਅਦ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਸਤਿਕਾਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿੱਥੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਾਉਂਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਿੱਥੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ। ਕੋਈ ਮੁਕਾਬਲਾ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ। ਅਸਲੀ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਨੇ ਤੜਫਾ ਤੜਫਾ ਕੇ ਮਾਰਿਆ, ਨਕਲੀ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਖੂਨੀ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਰਿਹਾਅ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ। ਦੂਸਰੇ ਨਕਲੀ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਉਹੀ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਜਦ ਉਹ ਚਾਹੇ **Clearance** ਦੇ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਬਾਹਰਲੇ ਮੁਲਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਆ ਕੇ ਉਹ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੰਗਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਬਲਕਿ ਦੋਸਤਾਂ ਮਿੱਤਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲ ਕੇ ਵਾਪਸ ਚਲੇ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ।

19 ਮਈ 1998 ਨੂੰ **Committee for Coordination in Disappearances in Punjab** ਦੇ **Press Release** ਤੋਂ ਪਤਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ 5 ਜਨਵਰੀ 1993 ਨੂੰ ਜਦ ਬਾਦਲ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਾਉਂਕੇ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਅਫਸੋਸ ਕਰਨ ਗਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਰੋਕ ਲਿਆ ਸੀ। ਜੇ ਉਹ ਰੁਕਾਵਟ ਸੱਚੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਬਾਦਲ ਨੇ ਚੀਫ ਮਨਿਸਟਰ ਬਣਦੇ ਸਾਰ ਹੀ ਕਮਿਸ਼ਨ ਬਣਾਉਣੀ ਸੀ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹੋ ਕਿ ਬਾਦਲ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਚਮੁੱਚ ਰੋਕਿਆ ਸੀ ਦਿਖਾਵਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਣਾ ਪਵੇਗਾ:

1. ਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸੱਚ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੈਂਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਸੱਚੀਂ ਮੁੱਚੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਹਵਾਈ ਅੱਡੇ ਤੇ ਰੋਕਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਅਚੰਭੇ ਵਾਲੀ ਗੱਲ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਐਂਬੈਸੀ ਦੇ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਵਿਚ ਵੀਜ਼ਾ ਲੈਣ ਵੇਲੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਿਕਲਿਆ। ਪਰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੰਪਿਊਟਰ ਵਿਚ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਕਲ ਆਇਆ।
2. ਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸੱਚ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੈਂਸ ਨੇ WSO ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਖਾਲਿਸਤਾਨ ਦਾ ਨਾਹਰਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੱਚੀਂ ਮੁੱਚੀਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਪਤਾ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਦਾ ਫਾਇਦਾ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਨੂੰ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ। ਬਾਦਲ ਦੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਅਤੇ ਕਲਿੰਟਨ ਦੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਦੱਸੇ ਤੋਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਲ ਆਈ।
3. ਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸੱਚ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਡਾ: ਜਗਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੌਹਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਹਵਾਈ ਅੱਡੇ ਤੇ ਸੱਚੀਂ ਮੁੱਚੀਂ ਕੁੱਟ ਪਈ।
4. ਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸੱਚ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਮਲੇਸ਼ੀਆ ਗੌਰਮਿੰਟ ਤੋਂ ਮਲੇਸ਼ੀਆ ਵੜਨ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਦਗੀ ਭਰ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਮਨਾਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਈ। ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇਸ "ਬ੍ਰਹਮਚਾਰੀ" ਨੂੰ ਸਿੰਘਪੁਰ ਠਾਠ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਮਨਾਹੀ ਕੀਤੀ।
5. ਕਿ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਸੱਚ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਹੁਰਬੰਸ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਗਾਧਰੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਿਟਾਇਰਡ ਜੱਜ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਸੀਪਲ ਬਲਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਝੂਠ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਦ ਉਹ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਲੇਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਕੱਢ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਸੀ। ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਭਰਾ ਗੁਰਚਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੱਸੀਆ ਅਤੇ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੱਚ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਕਲੇਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਰੋਸਾਇਆ ਬਣਾ ਗਏ ਸੀ।

ਸਿਖੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੜ ਚੁੱਕੇ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣਵਾਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੋ ਮਸਾਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਇਸ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਦੀ ਸਮਾਪਤੀ ਹੈ।

1. ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਲੋਂ ਛਪਵਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਦੇਖੋਗੇ ਕਿ ਕਲੇਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਾਬਾ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਅਖੰਡਪਾਠ ਕਰਵਾ ਕੇ ਬੋਦੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਤਾਰੇ (Comet) ਦੀ ਬੋਦੀ ਖਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਤੇ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਰਨਾਕ ਘਟਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾ ਲਿਆ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਕੁਰੂਕੁਸ਼ੇਤਰ ਸੂਰਜ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਤੋਂ ਆਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਮਿਲਦੀ ਹੈ?
2. ਹੋਮਕੁੰਟੀਏ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਦਿਲਵਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਜਾਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਤਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਰਬਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਪੱਸਿਆ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਦੇ ਗਏ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਗ੍ਰਹਿਸਤੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਹਾੜਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤਪੱਸਿਆ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਲਾਭ ਨਹੀਂ। ਦਸਵੇਂ ਜਾਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਸਿੱਧਾਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਕੰਮ ਆਪ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਕਹੇ ਤੇ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਛੱਡਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ। ਇਸ ਹੋਮਕੁੰਟ ਫਾਊਂਡੇਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਹੁਣ ਤੱਕ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸੀ (ਸਵਰਗਵਾਸੀ) ਜ਼ਰੀੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਨ (ਸਿਮਰਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਾਨ ਦਾ ਪਿਤਾ) ਅਤੇ ਜਲ੍ਹਿਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਬਾਗ ਦੇ ਕਾਤਲ ਜਨਰਲ ਡਾਇਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਵਿਚ ਸੱਦ ਕੇ ਸਿਰੋਪਾ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਅਰੁੜ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਜਵਾਈ। ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਮਕੁੰਟੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਨੁਮਾਇੰਦਾ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਹੋਮਕੁੰਟ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਮਾਇਕ ਅਪੀਲ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੁਝ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ।

ਸਿੱਖੋ ਜਾਗੋ! ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ ਆਪ ਹੋ। ਜੇ ਕੋਈ ਸਹੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਨਿੰਦਕ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਝੂਠੇ ਹਨ, ਬੇਈਮਾਨ ਹਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੀਡਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਪਖੰਡੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਚੋ। ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪਖੰਡੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਣ ਹਨ। ਇੱਕ ਛੋਟੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਲਿਸਟ ਨਾਨਕਸਰੀਏ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਆਪ ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਈ ਹੈ। ਅਖੀਰਲਾ ਪੰਨਾ ਦੇਖੋ। ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਛਪਾਏ ਹੋਏ 20" X 30" ਇਸ਼ਤਿਹਾਰ ਨੂੰ 8" X

10" ਤਿਆਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਉਮੈ ਨਾਲ ਭਰੇ ਪਖੰਡੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੋਲਣ ਦਾ ਮੌਕਾ ਨਾ ਦਿਉ। ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਬਾਬੇ ਨੂੰ, ਸੰਤ ਜਾਂ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੀ Human Rights Commission ਵਾਸਤੇ ਪੈਸੇ ਭੇਜਣ ਦੀ ਵਜਾਏ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਪੈਸੇ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ੀ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਸਕੂਲ ਬਣਾਉ। ਹਰ ਇੱਕ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਚ Khalsa Kindergarten (ਕੱਚੀ ਪੱਕੀ) ਸਕੂਲ ਜਾਂ Khalsa Montessori School ਖੋਲ੍ਹੋ ਅਤੇ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜਮਾਤ ਤੋਂ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਵਿਚ ਬਣਾਏ ਹੋਏ ਰਿਹਾਇਸ਼ੀ ਸਕੂਲ ਵਿਚ ਭੇਜੋ। ਐਸੇ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵਿਚ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਬਾਬਾ, ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਤ, ਨਾ ਕਥਾਕਾਰ, ਨਾ ਪਖੰਡੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਫੀਸ ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਯਾ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਜਿਹੜੇ ਮਨ ਅਤੇ ਧਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਣ, ਮਾਇਆ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਆਵੇ। ਜੇ ਤਨ ਮਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਣ, ਉਹ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਕਤ ਦੇਣ। ਜੇ ਤਨ ਮਨ ਧਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰ ਸਕਣ ਉਹ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਾਜ਼ਰੀ ਭਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਸੇਵਾ ਵਿਖੇ। ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਸੌ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ ਜੇ ਆਪਾਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਸੁਧਾਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਇਹ ਕਾਰਜ ਕਰ ਦੇਈਏ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਸੇਵਾ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ। ਆਪਣੇ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਬੱਚੇ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਤੇ ਵਿੱਦਿਆ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਆਪਣੇ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ, ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦਾ, ਆਪਣੀ ਬੋਲੀ ਦਾ, ਆਪਣੇ ਰੀਤੀ ਰਿਵਾਜਾਂ ਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੱਭਿਅਤਾ ਦਾ ਪੂਰਾ ਗਿਆਨ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਯੋਗ ਹੋਣਗੇ ਜਿਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਮਹਾਨ ਗੁਰੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਧਰਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੇ ਅਸੂਲਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਰਧਾ ਬਣੀ ਰਹੇਗੀ।

ਜਿਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਏਕਤਾ ਹੋ ਗਈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਦਰਬਾਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਵੈਟੀਕਨ ਵਾਲੀ ਪਦਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜਾਵੇ। ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਇਹ ਮੰਗ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਵੇ ਕਿ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖ਼ਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਚੋਣ ਸਾਰੀ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਲਾਹ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਬਹੁਤ ਯੋਗਤਾ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਨਨਕਾਣਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਐਸੀਆਂ ਸਹੂਲਤਾਂ ਮੰਗੀਆਂ ਜਾਣ ਜੈਸੀਆਂ ਈਸਾ ਮਸੀਹ ਦੇ ਜਨਮ ਅਸਥਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਹਨ।

ਜਿਹੜੇ ਸੱਜਣ ਆਪਣੇ ਆਗੂਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਮਜ਼ੋਰੀਆਂ ਦੇਖਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਲੜਾਈ ਝਗੜੇ ਦੇਖਕੇ ਤੰਗ ਆ ਕੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਹਟਕੇ ਬੈਠ ਗਏ ਹਨ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਮੈਦਾਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ। ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਦੱਸਦੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਫੌਜਾਂ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਤੇ ਹਮਲੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਲੁੱਟ ਲੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਰਹੀਆਂ, ਉਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੁਣ ਸਾਡੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੁਸਤਾਨ ਤੋਂ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਬਾਬਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਥੱਲੇ ਲੁਟੇਰੇ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਧਨ ਲੁੱਟ ਕੇ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜਿੰਨੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਖੂਹ ਵਿਚ ਪਾਈ ਹੈ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਹੁਣ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਥੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸੋਹਣਾ ਸਕੂਲ ਖੁੱਲ੍ਹ ਸਕਦਾ ਸੀ, ਜਿੱਥੇ ਸਾਰੀ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਦੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੱਚਿਆਂ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਾ ਬੰਦੋਬਸਤ ਵੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਕੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਦੀ 300 ਸਾਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਯਾਦ ਵਿਚ ਇੰਨਾਂ ਕੰਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ? ਆਪ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਤੇ ਸਹਿਯੋਗ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰ ਫਤਹਿ। ਦਾਸ।

ਹਰਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਸ਼ੇਰਗਿੱਲ

ਨੋਟ: ਜਿਸ ਕਿਸੇ ਨੂੰ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਦੱਸੇ ਨੁਕਤੇ ਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਲਿਖਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਮੰਗਵਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ। ਜੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਾਸ ਕਿਸੇ ਪਖੰਡੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਕੋਈ ਸਬੂਤ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਪੂਰਵਕ ਦਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜ ਦੇਣਾ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਸਲੇ ਦੀ ਸਮੱਗਰੀ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਸਥਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ।

SIKHS ARE A NATION
Whole World Is Our Stage
[From The Sikh Bulletin April 2002]

God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son. Abraham was willing. But at the critical moment God spared the child and accepted the sacrifice of a lamb instead. Not for us these myths. Our history is real. Two of our Gurus and four Sahibzadas *really* gave their lives. Thus has the Panth of our Gurus been nurtured. It is eternal. It is upto us to keep it in 'charhdikala'. But first we have to bury our differences and selfishness. *So long as we are divided we will have no friends. Once we are united we will have no enemies. So long as we put self and 'bhaichara' ahead of Panthic interest everybody suffers. In Panthic 'bhal' is 'sangat da bhal'.*

As we celebrate 533rd anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak this Vaisakhi day let us resolve to forge a Sikh Nation without geographical boundaries. The following article had appeared in The Sikh Bulletin Vol. 1 No. 1. Thirty issues later it is time to update it and solicit readers' input.

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines nation as:

1. A body of people associated with a particular territory, that is sufficiently conscious of its unity to seek or to possess a government peculiarly its own.
2. The territory or country itself.
3. A member tribe of an Indian Confederation (Canada and USA).
4. An aggregation of persons of the same ethnic family, often speaking the same language or cognate languages.

All of the above support the Sikhs' claim to be considered a nation. In addition we have many other attributes of a nation that even many member nations of the United Nations do not possess:

1. Sikh kingdom during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
2. Independent Sikh states, not part of British India, until they were absorbed into India after partition in 1947.
3. Our own territory, Punjab, severely truncated even though it is.
4. Our own religion, very different from other religions in India, with its own body of Scriptures.
5. Our own language complete with a script designed for and used only by the Sikhs.
6. Our own marriage ceremony, different from any other.
7. Our own flag.
8. Our own calendar - Nanakshahi - adopted by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in 1998.
9. Our own Red Cross, ' Sikh Sewa Dal'

10. Our own National Anthem that we would like our readers to help select from the entries included below. Readers may also make suggestions but the selections must be from Guru Granth Sahib.

Sikhs can be a nation within the reconstituted Indian Federation. Decimation of the Congress party is the most welcome sign to steer India towards a Federal system. In the absence of a national party, regional parties should be more inclined towards a move to give greater power to the states. Recent events in and around Ayodhya and Gujrat should be an eye opener for the minorities and Dalits. All should get together to create a joint front.

We invite readers to help select one of the following Shabads as our National Anthem:

1.

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥ (੬੧੧-੧੯, ਸੋਰਠਿ, ਮਃ ੫)
ਸੁਣਿ ਮੀਤਾ ਜੀਉ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਸੀ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦੇਹੁ ਦਿਖਾਈ
ਸੁਣਿ ਮੀਤਾ ਧੂਰੀ ਕਉ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਭਾਈ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਪਾਵ ਮਲੋਵਾ ਮਲਿ ਮਲਿ ਧੋਵਾ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੈ ਕੂ ਦੇਸਾ ॥
ਸੁਣਿ ਮੀਤਾ ਹਉ ਤੇਰੀ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਆਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਿਲਉ ਦੇਹੁ ਉਪਦੇਸਾ
ਮਾਨੁ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ਸਰਣਿ ਪਰੀਜੈ ਕਰੈ ਸੁ ਭਲਾ ਮਨਾਈਐ ॥
ਸੁਣਿ ਮੀਤਾ ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤਨੁ ਅਰਪੀਜੈ ਇਉ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਪਾਈਐ
ਭਇਓ ਅਨੁਗ੍ਰਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਸੰਤਨ ਕੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮਾ ਹੈ ਮੀਠਾ ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਗੁਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰੀ ਸਭੁ ਅਕੁਲ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਡੀਠਾ

2.

ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਤਾ ॥ (੧੦੩-੧੨, ਮਾਝ, ਮਃ ੫)
ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੰਧਪੁ ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਭ੍ਰਾਤਾ ॥
ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸਭਨੀ ਥਾਈ ਤਾ ਭਉ ਕੇਹਾ ਕਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੧॥
ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਤੇ ਤੁਧੁ ਪਛਾਣਾ ॥
ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰੀ ਓਟ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਣਾ ॥
ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਅਖਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੨॥
ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤ ਸਭਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਉਪਾਏ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਭਾਣਾ ਤਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਲਾਏ ॥
ਸਭ ਕਿਛੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਅਸਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੩॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇ ਮਹਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਤਲਾਇਆ ॥
ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਵਜੀ ਵਾਧਾਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਤਾ ਬਿਖਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ

3.

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥
ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥
ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ ॥
ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ॥੨੦॥
ਨਾਲਿ ਕਿਰਾੜਾ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਕੂੜੈ ਕੂੜੀ ਪਾਇ ॥
ਮਰਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਮੂਲਿਆ ਆਵੈ ਕਿਤੈ ਥਾਇ ॥੨੧॥
ਗਿਆਨ ਹੀਣੰ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਪੂਜਾ ॥
ਅੰਧ ਵਰਤਾਵਾ ਭਾਉ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੨੨॥
ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਰਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥

ਸਚ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਖੀ ਮੂਲੋ ਨ ਬਾਕੀ ॥੨੩॥
 ਮਾਣੂ ਘਲੈ ਉਠੀ ਚਲੈ ॥
 ਸਾਦੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਇਵੇਹੀ ਗਲੈ ॥੨੪॥
 ਰਾਮੁ ਝੁਰੈ ਦਲ
 ਮੇਲਵੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਲੁ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ॥
 ਬੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਸੈਨਾ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਜੁਝੁ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸੀਤਾ ਲੈ ਗਇਆ ਦਹਸਿਰੋ ਲਛਮਣੁ ਮੂਢਿ ਸਰਾਪਿ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰਣਹਾਰੁ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਥਾਪਿ ਉਥਾਪਿ
 4.

ਜਾ ਤੂ ਮੇਰੈ ਵਲਿ ਹੈ ਤਾ ਕਿਆ ਮੁਹਛੰਦਾ ॥
 ਤੁਧੁ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਮੈਨੋ ਸਉਪਿਆ ਜਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਬੰਦਾ ॥
 ਲਖਮੀ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਖਾਇ ਖਰਚਿ ਰਹੰਦਾ ॥
 ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਸਭ ਸੇਵ ਕਰੰਦਾ ॥
 ਏਹ ਵੈਰੀ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਸਭਿ ਕੀਤਿਆ ਨਹ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਮੰਦਾ ॥
 ਲੇਖਾ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਪੁਛਈ ਜਾ ਹਰਿ ਬਖਸੰਦਾ ॥
 ਅਨੰਦੁ ਭਇਆ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਮਿਲਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦਾ ॥
 ਸਭੇ ਕਾਜ ਸਵਾਰਿਐ ਜਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੰਦਾ ॥

5.

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥ (੧੩੪੯-੧੯, ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤੀ, ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ)
 ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਦੇ
 ਲੋਗਾ ਭਰਮਿ ਨ ਭੂਲਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥
 ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਖਲਕ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸ੍ਰਬ ਠਾਂਈ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
 ਮਾਟੀ ਏਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਭਾਂਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਾਜੀ ਸਾਜਨਹਾਰੈ ॥
 ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਪੋਚ ਮਾਟੀ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਪੋਚ ਕੁੰਭਾਰੈ ॥
 ਤੂੰ ਮੇਰੀ ਓਟ ਤੂੰਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਾਣਾ ॥
 ਤੁਝ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਖੇਲੁ ਅਖਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੨॥
 ਜੀਅ ਜੰਤੁ ਸਭਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਉਪਾਏ ॥
 ਜਿਤੁ ਜਿਤੁ ਭਾਣਾ ਤਿਤੁ ਤਿਤੁ ਲਾਏ ॥
 ਸਭ ਕਿਛੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਿਛੁ ਅਸਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ ॥੩॥
 ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇ ਮਹਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
 ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਸੀਤਲਾਇਆ ॥
 ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਵਜੀ ਵਾਧਾਈ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਤਾ ਬਿਖਾੜਾ ਜੀਉ

3.

ਜਉ ਤਉ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਖੇਲਣ ਕਾ ਚਾਉ ॥
 ਸਿਰੁ ਧਰਿ ਤਲੀ ਗਲੀ ਮੇਰੀ ਆਉ ॥
 ਇਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਪੈਰੁ ਧਰੀਜੈ ॥
 ਸਿਰੁ ਦੀਜੈ ਕਾਣਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ॥੨੦॥
 ਨਾਲਿ ਕਿਰਾੜਾ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਕੂੜੈ ਕੂੜੀ ਪਾਇ ॥
 ਮਰਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਮੂਲਿਆ ਆਵੈ ਕਿਤੇ ਥਾਇ ॥੨੧॥
 ਗਿਆਨ ਹੀਣੰ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਪੂਜਾ ॥
 ਅੰਧ ਵਰਤਾਵਾ ਭਾਉ ਦੂਜਾ ॥੨੨॥
 ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਧਰਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਧਿਆਨੁ ॥

ਸਚ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਖੀ ਮੂਲੋ ਨ ਬਾਕੀ ॥੨੩॥
 ਮਾਣੂ ਘਲੈ ਉਠੀ ਚਲੈ ॥
 ਸਾਦੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਇਵੇਹੀ ਗਲੈ ॥੨੪॥
 ਰਾਮੁ ਝੁਰੈ ਦਲ
 ਮੇਲਵੈ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਲੁ ਅਧਿਕਾਰ ॥
 ਬੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਸੈਨਾ ਸੇਵੀਐ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਜੁਝੁ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥
 ਸੀਤਾ ਲੈ ਗਇਆ ਦਹਸਿਰੋ ਲਛਮਣੁ ਮੂਢਿ ਸਰਾਪਿ ॥
 ਨਾਨਕ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਰਣਹਾਰੁ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਬਾਪਿ ਉਬਾਪਿ
 4.

ਜਾ ਤੂ ਮੇਰੈ ਵਲਿ ਹੈ ਤਾ ਕਿਆ ਮੁਹਛੰਦਾ ॥
 ਤੁਧੁ ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਮੈਨੋ ਸਉਪਿਆ ਜਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਬੰਦਾ ॥
 ਲਖਮੀ ਤੋਟਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਖਾਇ ਖਰਚਿ ਰਹੰਦਾ ॥
 ਲਖ ਚਉਰਾਸੀਹ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਸਭ ਸੇਵ ਕਰੰਦਾ ॥
 ਏਹ ਵੈਰੀ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਸਭਿ ਕੀਤਿਆ ਨਹ ਮੰਗਹਿ ਮੰਦਾ ॥
 ਲੇਖਾ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਪੁਛਈ ਜਾ ਹਰਿ ਬਖਸੰਦਾ ॥
 ਅਨੰਦੁ ਭਇਆ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਮਿਲਿ ਗੁਰ ਗੋਵਿੰਦਾ ॥
 ਸਭੇ ਕਾਜ ਸਵਾਰਿਐ ਜਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੰਦਾ ॥

5.

ਅਵਲਿ ਅਲਹ ਨੂਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕੇ ਸਭ ਬੰਦੇ ॥ (੧੩੪੯-੧੯, ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤੀ, ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ)
 ਏਕ ਨੂਰ ਤੇ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਕਉਨ ਭਲੇ ਕੋ ਮੰਦੇ
 ਲੋਗਾ ਭਰਮਿ ਨ ਭੂਲਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥
 ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਖਲਕ ਖਲਕ ਮਹਿ ਖਾਲਿਕੁ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਸ੍ਰਬ ਠਾਂਈ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
 ਮਾਟੀ ਏਕ ਅਨੇਕ ਭਾਂਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਸਾਜੀ ਸਾਜਨਹਾਰੈ ॥
 ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਪੋਚ ਮਾਟੀ ਕੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਨਾ ਕਛੁ ਪੋਚ ਕੁੰਭਾਰੈ ॥

Hardev Singh Shergill

HUKAMNAMA CONSPIRACY! [EDITORIAL]

[From The Sikh Bulletin November 2003]

When a Sikh speaks of a Hukamnama he or she is commonly referring to the Hukamnama taken from Guru Granth Sahib, whether it is the one relayed worldwide from Darbar Sahib, from the neighborhood Gurdwara or from the scriptures at home. The Encyclopedia of Sikhism defines it as: "A compound of two Persian words *hukam*, meaning command or order, and *namah*, meaning letter, refers in the Sikh tradition to letters sent by the Gurus to their Sikhs or *sangats* in different parts of the country. *Currently, the word applies to edicts issued from time to time from the five Takhts...*". It is the latter that is now the center of controversy.

If we examine the hukamnamas during the period of most recent three Jathedars, Ranjit Singh Ghataura, Puran Singh and Joginder Singh Vedanti, they were not only controversial but also part of a grand conspiracy. It is also clear that the unquestioned supremacy of Akal Takhat in the hearts and minds of Sikhs has been abused by corrupt politicians to silence their critics and win personal favors from

Delhi at the expense of the Panth through appointments of yes-men subservient to them as Jathedars. They have used these incompetent weaklings to pass hukamnamas that serve their agenda and annul those that bring them grief. They have further succeeded in making the position of the Jathedar of Akaal Takhat synonymous with the Akaal Takhat itself. **Herein lies the danger.** *Even the most educated Sikhs can be mislead into believing that any opposition to any 'hukamnama', right or wrong, from Akaal Takhat is tantamount to disrespect to the seat of Almighty and therefore 'anti - Panthic'.* **It is this 'anti-Panthic' ruse that master manipulator Manjit Singh Calcutta is now using against those who are organizing the October 26th Conference at Chandigarh.** Tribune News Service carries the following in its Amritsar, October 5, 2003 edition:

“Sammelan challenge to Takht says Calcutta. Dubbing the proposed ‘World Sikh Sammelan’ as ‘anti-Panthic’ the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) today decided to take up the issue in the Dharm Prachar Committee and executive committee meeting, scheduled to be held at Fatehgarh Sahib on October 10. Meanwhile, Mr. Manjit Singh Calcutta, Chief Secretary, SGPC (honorary), held a meeting with Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, Jathedar, Akal Takht, to discuss this topic even as Akal Takht Secretariat and SGPC offices were flooded with letters from all over the world opposing the ‘World Sikh Sammelan’ scheduled to be held at Chandigarh on October 26. Mr. Calcutta said that it was a matter of concern that certain Sikh leaders, who considered themselves to be an authority on Sikhism, had openly challenged the age-old institution of Akal Takht and its ‘Hukamnama’. Mr. Calcutta said that such a development amounted to divide the Sikh masses. Mr. Calcutta said that if the organisers of the proposed ‘Sikh

Sammelan’ went ahead with the function, it would be considered as a direct challenge to the ‘sovereignty’ of Akal Takht. He said the SGPC and its Dharm Prachar Committee might recommend to the Jathedar to declare the organisers as **‘Tankhaiya’** (guilty of religious misconduct). The SGPC alleged that the proposed sammelan was being held by certain anti-Panthic forces, which was clear from the agenda given to the press. Mr. Calcutta said that no Sikh could tolerate any challenge to Akal Takht. Akal Takht had already convened an emergency meeting of Sikh clergy here on October 8 to discuss the proposed Sikh Sammelan. Akal Takht sources had already made it clear that the organisers of the proposed conference would have to **face the music** as it was being held after the excommunication of Mr. Gurbax Singh Kala Afghana from the Sikh Panth. **The Sikh Students Federation had also announced that ‘come what may’ the proposed Sikh Sammelan would not be allowed to be held.”**

Could these people who are declaring World Sikh Sammelan on October 26, 2003 as direct challenge to Akaal Takhat Sahib explain to the Sikh Panth who is supreme? Shri Guru Granth Sahib or Akaal Takhat? If Guru Granth is the supreme and eternal Guru of the Sikhs then they should be taking action against any challenge to SGGS first rather than perceived challenge to the Akal Takhat. The side-by-side ‘Parkash’ of so called Dasam Granth and SGGS at Takhat Patna Sahib and Takhat at Hazoor Sahib is grave challenge to the supremacy of SGGS. They have either lost all sense of proportion or they are helplessly following the dictates of their political masters. Rather than taking action against the culprit Jathedars for this blasphemous act they punish gursikhs like Mohinder Singh Romana who object to it.

It is interesting to note that not only do Akali Dal parties grow like mushrooms, so do Sant Smajs and Sikh Student Federations. It is equally interesting that those calling themselves Akalis are not really Akalis, those calling themselves Sants are not really Sants and those calling themselves Sikh Students are neither Sikhs nor Students. Following is a news item in The Tribune News Service, Amritsar, October 4, 2003 from one such Sikh Student Federation:

“Federation vows not to allow Sikh conference. ‘The Sikh Students Federation’ today announced that it **won’t allow** the supporters of excommunicated Sikh Gurbax Singh Kala Afghana to hold the proposed World Sikh Conference in Chandigarh on October 26. Addressing a press conference here today, **Mr.**

Gurcharan Singh Grewal, the president of the federation, alleged that the proposed conference was a direct challenge to the authority of Akal Takht. He said to spread awareness among Sikh masses on the issue, the federation would organize a seminar on October 14 at Bhai Gurdas Hall here. The general secretary of the federation, **Prof. Sarchand Singh**, said a six-member committee had been formed to meet all Sikh organisations and the Akal Takht Jathedar in this regard”.

It was Jathedar **Ranjit Singh** Ghataura who popularized the term ‘*sarkari*’ Jathedar for his successor, Jathedar **Puran Singh**, but in essence all three were *sarkari* Jathedars, he of Delhi Govt. and the last two of Badal Govt. Ranjit Singh exonerated Tohra and Vedanti exonerated Badal and yet no two people have done more harm to the Sikh nation than this duo. In that they were helped by none other than **Manjit Singh Calcutta** whose sense of ‘Panthic-sewa’ is so strong that inspite of legal challenges to his position as Mr. SGPC he is prepared to work as ‘honorary Chief Secretary’. It was he along with Ahluwalia (then Congress MP now BJP) who engineered the appointment of Ranjit Singh as Jathedar of Akal Takhat while in prison, his release in 1996 fully three years before the 300th Tercentenary of The Khalsa so that he could plan its failure and issuance of visa to the United States in Dec. 1998, a visa that was clearly a violation of United States’ laws. Visa waiver would have been legal but not the visa. Now that Ranjit Singh has served the purpose, he has been discarded as is the fate of Manjit Singh when RAW would consider him a liability rather than an asset.

A two issue publication called “**Kaumi Dard**” carried a story in its second and last issue of January-March 1997 under the heading ‘**Sant Baba Amar Singh Ji Barundi Walian Vallon Pakhandian Nu Sakhat Tarhna**’. It was a clear case of pot calling kettle black. In that Amar Singh pledges to obey every order emanating from Akaal Takhat. We knew immediately that that did not bode well. Master stroke of all the hukamnamas that Ranjit Singh was made to issue was the notorious *langar* hukamnama which the readers are familiar with. But what probably they are not familiar with is that its application was to be selective with British Columbia, Canada and especially a Gurdwara in Surrey the real target. At that time seven British Columbians were excommunicated, one of them even murdered and one did not have the courage of his conviction and appeared at Akaal Takhat. Two of them are still Presidents of the same Gurdwaras. Ironically the most recent excommunicatee, S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana, is also a British Columbian. This is such a blessed land!

On April 25, 1935 five Sikh scholars had a meeting of the ‘Dharmik Shlahkar Committee’ of the SGPC and passed a resolution authorizing placement of chairs in the Gurdwaras in foreign countries. Full text of that resolution and the names of participants are given below in Punjabi. Ask yourselves a question: Is Ranjit Singh any match for Kahn Singh Nabha, Prin. Jodh Singh, Prof. Teja Singh, Prof. Ganga Singh and Jathedar Mohan Singh? Ranjit Singh can overturn their resolution without winking an eye but no one can over turn his? No one can overturn Vedanti’s *hukamnama* but he can overturn all of Puran Singh’s? This SGPC Dharam Parchar Committee that Manjit Singh Calcutta is threatening the potential participants in the Oct. 26th conference with is really an **Adharam Parchar Committee** consisting of derawalas and sold out intellectuals. **If there is a split in the Panth the entire responsibility lies with this committee, Manjit Singh Calcutta, Tohra and Badal.**

ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੀ ਦੂਜੀ ਇਕੱਤਰਤਾ, 25 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ 1935 ਨੂੰ ਦਿਨ ਦੇ 11:30 ਵਜੇ ‘ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਿਸ਼ਨਰੀ ਕਾਲਜ ਦੇ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਵਿਖੇ ਅਰੰਭ ਹੋਈ। ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਮੈਂਬਰ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਨੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦਿੱਤੇ:-

1. ਸ੍ਰ: ਬ: ਸ੍ਰ: ਕਾਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਨਾਭਾ 2. ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਜੋਧ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ 3. ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਤੇਜਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ 4. ਪ੍ਰੋ: ਗੰਗਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ, 5. ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਮੋਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ

ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਵੇਰਵੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਰਬ-ਸੰਮਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਹੋਈ:-

(ਸ) ਗੁਰੂ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਤੇ ਕੁਰਸੀਆਂ

“ਯੂਰਪ ਜਾਂ ਅਮਰੀਕਾ ਆਦਿ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਕਿ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਅਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੁਰਸੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਣ ਦਾ ਰਿਵਾਜ ਹੈ ਐਸੀ ਥਾਈਂ ਜੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਉੱਚੀ ਥਾਂ ਤੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਕੁਰਸੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਬੈਠਿਆ ਜਾਏ ਤਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਹਰਜ ਨਹੀਂ।”

ਪ੍ਰਸਤਕ 'ਪੰਥਕ ਮਤੇ', ਸੰਪਾਦਕ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ (ਡਾਕਟਰ), ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਕ ਡਾ. ਮਾਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਰੀਟਾਇਰਡ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਸੀਪਲ ਮੈਡੀਕਲ ਕਾਲਜ
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ। ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ : 2002, ਕਾਪੀ : 500॥

A true Sikh is he who makes society's, truthfulness and weaks' problem his own just as the Gurus did. That is what Prof. Gurtej Singh and his companions have done. **To me they are the true Sikhs.** They are not challenging Akaal Takhat. They are questioning the qualifications, method of hiring, firing, duties, responsibilities and abuse of power that the Jathedars have assumed. (See 'Save Sikhi To Be Saved' p.4) We are hearing stories about Atty. **Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba** calling up those associated with Missionary Colleges and threatening them with excommunication if they attend the conference on 26th as if it is he who makes decisions about who to excommunicate, which probably he does. We have **Manjit Singh Calcutta** practicing *stick and carrot* policy with some prominent educators i.e. first threatening them and then offering SGPC funds to author a book. There are others engaged in similar acts of intimidation and falsehood. We will tell you about them in the next issue.

It is appropriate here to look back at the editorial in the July 2000 issue of The Sikh Bulletin:

Sikhi Reform Movement

In the beginning of the 21st century we find ourselves facing the same problems as the founders of the 19th century Singh Sabha Lehr and the 20th century Akali Lehr. The former saved Sikhi from annihilation in post Ranjit Singh era and the latter liberated Gurdwaras from the Mahants. The tasks before us in the 21st century are to reform Sikhi and then propagate it among not only those who are born into Sikh families but also among the people of other faiths and no faiths. Deras have flourished at the expense of Gurdwaras. In the vacuum created by the absence of SGPC missionaries in the villages and the world stage, Babas, Sants, Shiromani Sants and yogis have replaced Mahants and in most cases flourished with the covert and not so covert support of the SGPC officialdom. As is clear from the events of May 14th, 2000 gathering at Akal Takhat convened by the acting Jathedar Joginder Singh Vedanti not much has changed. Only strategy has changed. Jathedar Ranjit Singh, after a long period of throwing his weight around, had called a 'Sarbat Khalsa' consisting primarily of Sant Smaj when he realized his days were numbered. Vedanti is being smarter by creating an image of Panthic involvement in the beginning of his tenure of office. This is the same person who got every 'Who is who' of SGPC to praise and endorse his compilation of the *vulgar* and *blasphemous* book, 'Gurbilas Patshahi – 6'. (See Sikh Bulletin of May and June 2000 for critical analysis of that book. It was Manjit Singh Calcutta who financed its publication at the expense of SGPC).

In a mature and civilized society leaders step aside when they have made blunders whether advertent or inadvertent. That unfortunately is not the case with us. Jathedar Vedanti, although saying all the right things, sounds hollow because he gave in to Badal's pressure not to name RSS for its anti Sikh Activities. Jathedars Kewal Singh and Manjit Singh have already admitted to condoning wrong doings of and signing along with Jathedar Ranjit Singh. As far as the fence sitter Giani Mohan Singh is concerned, read about it on p.2 of June 2000 Sikh Bulletin. These four gentlemen who were in the forefront of this May 14th event must leave the stage. They are not going to do that voluntarily, nor are they going to be removed by the present hierarchy that appointed them in the first place. **What is needed is a rebellion in the ranks of the SGPC and SAD that we in diaspora should support. Alternative is complete break with Punjab and creation of our own SGPC in diaspora as proposed in the June 2000 Sikh Bulletin.**

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL GURU NANAK

[Editorial from Nov.-Dec. 2004 Sikh Bulletin]

Nanak was not only a great Guru but also a great missionary. At a time when there were no means of convenient and fast transportation and media was nonexistent, the Guru developed a strategy of being present at Hindu and Muslim places of pilgrimage to find maximum audience for maximum impact. He also used a unique system of arousing curiosity of the pilgrims about his out of the ordinary actions to gather an attentive audience. Several of those became his followers for whom he established a string of Dharamsals along his routes of travel.

Nanak traveled to various Hindu and Muslim places of pilgrimage and debunked the priests and Qazis for misleading and fleecing the gullible. Debunking is precisely what is needed in the case of our current so called Jathedars who are globetrotting very frequently, especially this year on the pretext of 400th Anniversary celebrations. Net result of their travels is not gurmat parchar but intensification of split in the Diaspora communities, because they are invited by and rub shoulders with the wrong people. Why would a Sikh in his right mind invite abroad those who pronounce so called irreversible and divisive non issue Hukamnamas, make statements such as our Gurus being descendants of Luv and Kush and silence critics of the so called Sri Guru Dasam Granth at the same time giving license to the promoters of it to carry on its 'parchar' with gusto?

When Nanak went around to Hindu places of pilgrimage he spoke against the empty rituals and exposed the hypocrisy and falsehood of the priestly class. The people listened and followed him. Just as the time was ripe then for someone like Guru Nanak to free the masses from empty ritualism, it is time, once again, for understanding and propagating Guru Nanak's real message since same ritualism has made heavy inroads into Sikhism today. **Singh Sabha International came into existence with that goal in mind.** Unless we come back to practice what Guru Nanak preached, ours will be the same fate as that of other religions i.e. being hijacked by extremists.

Even a cursory study of the situation today and during the lifetime of Guru Nanak makes a shocking revelation. When I read Kahn Singh Nabha's book '**Ham Hindu Nahin**' I was shocked to realize that not only have we not advanced Sikhi or Sikh way of life in the last one hundred years or so since this book was written but we have regressed into the pits that Gurus, during their period, had pulled us out of. Similarly, if we make even a cursory comparison of the period of Guru Nanak and the times today the picture of same shocking similarity emerges. Only characters have changed.

In His book 'Nanak, An Introduction', Purushottam Nijhaawan writes, "In the 15th century, Indian society was a disturbing picture of rank ritualism, superstition, bigotry and social decay. The birth of Nanak in 1469 in the little village of Talwandi near Lahore, however, came as a miracle. The deteriorating Indian society had now found a redeemer". How is the situation different today? Have we discarded ritualism, superstition, bigotry and stemmed social decay? Sikhism, meant to be a way of truthful living, has been shackled by ritualism much the same way as Hinduism and Islam of Guru Nanak's period. We are told that when Nanak came back after his disappearance into or beyond the river the first words he uttered for his listeners were, "Na Mai Hindu Na Mussalman". If he were to appear again today would he rephrase himself, "Na Mai Hindu, Na Mussalman, Na Mai Sikh"?

He lectured Pundits on the real significance of Janaeu and to the Qazis on real significance of Namaaz five times a day. Would he not today lecture Sikh Priests (High and Low), who are not even supposed to exist in Guru Nanak's scheme of things, on the real significance of Gatra and five Baanis? Would he even be allowed to speak his mind at Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat Sahib as, apparently, Hindu priests and Muslim Qazis allowed him to speak at their Holy Places? What would Guru Nanak say to the Sikh 'High

Priests' for the treatment they mete out to those few brave Gursikhs who dare to question the anti gurmat practices and pronouncements of the so called guardians of Guru's message?

Just as Nanak proclaimed Ram of Hindus and Rahim of Muslims to be one and the same, today he would say the same thing about Allah of Muslims and Lord of Christians. That is the relevance of Guru Nanak's universal message today, that is the uniqueness of Guru Nanak's God.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

ISSUES AND PERSONALITIES

[Editorial from January 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

Since my active involvement with Sikh affairs in 1993, I have come to the sad realization that the **entire** Sikh leadership, whether political or religious, is so morally corrupt and spiritually bankrupt and the practice of Sikhi that is prevalent in **all** the Gurdwaras, without exception, is so out of line with Gurbani, that nothing short of revolution will be needed to bring into light the message of Guru Nanak.

To bring about any change you need **good** reformers, leaders and followers. Unfortunately there is a scarcity of **all three** among Sikhs. A vast majority of us who call ourselves Sikhs are either ignorant of Sikhi or allow our selfish interests to cloud our judgment and dictate our actions no matter how ridiculous or how harmful to the community they may be. The remaining handfuls who are trying to do something can't seem to work together with each other.

Time and again, since the publication of The Sikh Bulletin began in November 1999, I have been advised by some well meaning people that we should focus on issues and not the personalities. What that really means is that, if it is criticism, do not name the person because that will invite controversy but if it is praise and the person belongs to the establishment or an organization that has become an institution, name identification is ok. What I have found is that issues and personalities are intertwined. If you do not identify the personalities you are discussing the issues in a vacuum.

After two years of search I found **one reformer** who was prepared to bell the cat and who, we, I and those whose judgment I respect, thought, had not only put his finger on the **crux** of the problem but also suggested a very simple **solution**. The **reformer** we found was *S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana*, **crux** of the problem he identified was '*Bipran Ki Reet*' that had crept into the practice of Sikhi and his **solution** was to re-examine our historical and religious literature *in the light of Gurbani* and introduce Gurmat practices in the Gurdwaras. Tribune News Service dated Dec.7, 2004 reports that re-editing of Suraj Parkash has already begun to remove mythological content that is in direct contradiction with Gurbani and Gurmat. That is precisely what Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana has been saying. For this, instead of getting an Honorary D. Lit. from Guru Nanak Dev University, which he richly deserved, he got excommunicated, because in the course of his writings he had examined the writings of *Gurbachan Singh of Damdami Taksal* and *Randhir Singh of Akhand Kirtani Jatha* upon which he commented with the support of Gurbani. He also commented on *Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale's* role, among others.

All this did not sit well with the two organizations that these personalities belonged to and S. Kala Afghana started receiving death threats just as *Dr. Sangat Singh* had upon writing 'Sikhs in History' and 'Jathedar' *Iqbal Singh* alleges to be receiving from 'Jathedar' *Vedanti* now for opposing *Giani Gurdit Singh's* book 'Mundavani'. Giani Gurdit Singh, as a member of the SGPC Dharam Parchar committee, supported the excommunication of S. Kala Afghana which Vedanti carried out under pressure both from AKJ and Damdami Taksal and upon learning that Kala Afghana's critique of his publication 'Gurbilas

Patshahi 6' had reached the publishers. Now both Vedanti and Giani Gurdit Singh are targets of excommunication at the hands of Iqbal Singh, 'Jathedar' of Patna Sahib for not recognizing 'Ragmala' as part of AGGS. ***Would it not be in the Panthic interest to apologize to Kala Afghana and invite him to join a group of real Sikh scholars, not the plagiarizing kind, to clean out anti gurnat myths from Sikh literature?***

Recently I came across this in The Economist:

“The Economist First Published in September 1843 to take part in a severe contest between intelligence, which presses forward and an unworthy, timid ignorance obstructing our progress.” This seemed to apply to the reasons for the publication of The Sikh Bulletin, except that the ignorant obstructing our progress are not timid. On the contrary, because of the powers behind them, they are outright bullies. According to news in The Tribune dated Nov.26, 2004, *Mr. Prithipal Singh Sandhu*, who is a mere *sala* of 'Jathedar' *Vedanti* but often acts as if he is himself 'Jathedar', while referring to SSI-WSC at Dixie Road Gurdwara in Mississauga, *“alleged that the Sikh scholars had used most derogatory language against the ‘Jathedar’ during the function.”* The reality is that these two characters have dragged the good name of Akal Takhat down to an all time low. For the most appropriate words to describe them one will have to look to what Gurbani says about a manmukh. Their commitment is not to the Guru nor to the Sikh Community but to the powers that appointed them. In their battle royal about the book 'Mundavni' the two 'Jathedars' of Akal Takhat and Patna Sahib are at each other's throat. What goes around comes around. There was a time when Giani Gurdit Singh recommended excommunication of Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana and 'Jathedar' Vedanti carried it out. Now, over the book 'Mundavni', Giani Iqbal Singh, 'Jathedar' of Patna Sahib, is threatening to excommunicate these two. In his statement to the press on Dec.7, 2004 about 'Jathedar' Vedanti's *'sala'* *Mr. Prithipal Singh Sandhu*, Iqbal Singh asked some very interesting questions the answers to which we would like to get: *“SGPC had terminated the services of Mr. Sandhu following serious allegations, he continued to work as personal assistant to Jathedar Vedanti. He asked the SGPC to probe under what capacity Mr. Sandhu had been ‘dictating’ to the Sikh clergy during the meetings”.*

So, dear reader, I find it very difficult to keep the personalities out of the issues under discussion. It is all the more difficult when the personality itself is an issue as is the case with the position of mukh sewadar of Akal Takhat. We all respect the institution of Akal Takhat but the mukh sewadar as an individual has to earn that trust, especially since all the mukh sewadars of recent times have not been worthy of that trust. ***Until and unless we all understand this distinction and stop courting these people just because they hold that office we are doing injustice to the integrity and moral authority of Akal Takhat itself.***

Issues are many and they all have personalities attached to them. One reason for that may be that we have come to believe the distortion of Guru's message by these middlemen and lost sight of the true meaning. Some like 'Sant Babas' Atar Singh, Nand Singh and Isher Singh deliberately became the middlemen and created the environment for a locust of not so 'noble' that followed them. Others created separate movements in the name of Sikhs of the Guru perhaps against the wishes of these people. Ram Singh, a Sikh of Guru Nanak, has been elevated one big step above the Guru and a chair established for 'Sat Guru Ram Singh' at mere 'Guru' Nanak Dev University.

What follows in this issue is a specific mention of a few of such personalities in the words of their observers. The purpose of this is not to belittle them. Rather it is to give wider publicity to their words and deeds for the Diaspora Sikh sangat's information and let the sangat be the judge as to who is helping the Sikh cause and should be helped and who is harming it and should be hindered.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
BANI AND BANA
[Editorial from Feb. 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

Punjabi University Patiala Punjabi-English dictionary defines the terms as:

ਬਾਣੀ [Bani] speech, utterance, voice, same as Gurbani [ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ] and [ਬਾਣਾ] [Bana] dress, habit, apparel, garb. When Bani and Bana are uttered in the same breath it evokes only one image, that of an Amritdhari Sikh with 5Ks. To such a person that in fact is the only definition of a Sikh. Appearance is more important than the character, otherwise why would our religious and political leaders vie with each other to become more corrupt than the next guy? After all ਬਾਣਾ [Bana] gives them the license. There again, Bana seems to confine itself to above the neck. As long as hair is uncut and covered with a turban, no matter how tied, the rest of the dress could be pant, pajama or *kchhehra* and of course appropriate shirt or *chola*. In fact there are certain ‘*kathakars*’ who live the life in India in western clothing, except the turban, of course, but switch to ‘*chola*’ while visiting abroad. This, unquestionably, has become the image of a Sikh.

A recent news item (See p. 3) informs us that Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) had formed a special board of leading community scholars and leaders to suggest ways to handle what it called ‘the current **cultural crisis** facing the religion’. That cultural crisis is the disappearing turban for which they have created ‘**Save Turban Panel**’. The names forming the panel are all very familiar. There may be a few honorable exceptions but the hypocrisy of most of them and others like them is the primary reason for what they call the ‘**cultural crisis**. When they themselves lack integrity and credibility, how effective can they be in stemming this tide of cultural decline? **We will come back to the term ‘cultural’ later.**

Another term often used these days is ‘*patit*’ (p.3). Same dictionary defines ਪਤਿਤ [patit] as: fallen (in moral or religious sense), **apostate**, sinner, degraded. The Random House Dictionary of the English Language defines ‘**apostate**’ as one who forsakes his religion, cause, etc. What it boils down to is this: for Sikhs the religion is invariably associated with the uncut hair and turban. Character is relegated to insignificance and does not count.

At the SSI-WSC conference in Sydney, Australia on September 18th and 19th 2004 I was repeatedly asked the definition of a Sikh by a group of honorable and well meaning Amritdhari Sikhs. Every time I read the definition from the Sikh Rehat Maryada which reads: “*Any human being who faithfully believes in One Immortal Being; Ten Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh; The Guru Granth Sahib; The utterances and teachings of the ten Gurus and the baptism bequeathed by the tenth Guru, and who does not owe allegiance to any other religion, is a Sikh.*” Apparently what they were looking for was the mention of uncut hair, but that is not in the definition quoted from the December 2000 English version of The Sikh Reht Maryada published by the Dharam Parchar Committee of the SGPC.

June-July 2004 issue of The Sikh Bulletin carried an article, ‘Who am I’, by Bawa Singh Jagdev of Sidney, Australia. In it he narrates a response from a student from a private Catholic School who had received some informational material on Sikhism from him. It is very pertinent here for the point I wish to make. “*Sir, thank you so much for the literature, on Sikhism, you sent to me, it was very descriptive, elaborately informative and very interesting. The basic philosophy of the religion, Sikhism, of which I knew nothing about before, fascinates me. It is simple and easy to follow. It helped me a lot to complete my project, and am sure my teacher will like it too. However my elder brother has read it and gone through the few pages you sent to me and whenever he finds time he discusses about the Sikh religion with me. But one of his friends told him that to become a Sikh you must never cut your hair and carry a*

long sword all the time, which scared him. He likes the philosophy of the Sikh Gurus and is very much interested in becoming a Sikh but he doesn't like to grow long hair or carry a sword. Could you please explain to me as to why one has to grow long hair and wear a long sword to become a Sikh and whether someone can become a Sikh without, growing long hair and carrying a sword.....?"

On page 4 we carry an article by a Brazilian Sikh, **Claudia G. S. Martins**, "Sikhi: Unfinished Agenda at the Dawn of XX1 Century". In it she bemoans the absence of Sikh missionary activity in Brazil which is ripe for it. But she also has a warning: ***Traditional Sikhism with saffronised Amritdharis carrying long kirpans as the only standard to be followed has little chance to be implemented in Brazil.***

Garon Lee was a young High School student in South Carolina back in 1996-97 when he started corresponding with me about Sikh religion. He was in inquisitive mode. He has done enough study of our faith to ask intelligent questions. Here is his latest query: *"Reading the Rahit and knowing some of the basic teachings of the Gurus it seems that it is full of contradictory material. For example, if I'm not mistaken the Gurus said that all rituals should be done away with and the Rahit is full of them. Is not the concept of "Anand Karaj ceremony" contrary to gurmata, in that it is full of rituals? Shouldn't a marriage be a consensual agreement between two competent people, instead of arranged? Also, the Rahit says to remember the 10 Gurus at all times. I thought that the important thing to Sikhs was the message that the Gurus brought and not so much the person who delivered them. Also, it says that in a congregation only a Sikh can perform kirtan. This doesn't make sense to me, because much of the SGGS was composed by people who were Muslims and Hindus".* Thank you, Garon Lee.

To quote Bawa Singh Jagdev from his SB June-July 2004 article 'Who am I?' again: *Whereas tenets of Sikhism are eternal and immutable, culture, traditions and values do undergo changes as our modes of living change and have changed with time. We don't do things the way our elders did. Even our gurus questioned every cultural, religious or political tradition and proclamations and changed as situation demanded. Our Gurus were unconventional. Guru Nanak stood up against the long held traditions and futile rituals of the Hindus and Musalmans, He never advocated the use of arms, yet Guru Hargobind had to take up arms so did Guru Gobind Singh. Not only that, to escape arrest by the Mughal forces, he, as suggested by Nabi Khan and Gani Khan, discarded his Sikh uniform and put on the robes of Muslim Pir and even partook food with the Muslim General. (Glorious history of the Sikhs G.K.Narang)*

What Bawa Singh Jagdev is saying is that from the time of Guru Nanak to the time of Guru Gobind Singh, Sikhism has evolved and that evolution need not stop. Let us take ourselves to the time of Guru Nanak. Guru is giving a sermon. Who is he giving the sermon to? In his audience are Hindus and Muslims, adherents of the two dominant faiths of that time. Did he treat them differently from each other or did he treat them as humans eager to make sense out of this life? Did he see Hindu and Muslim faces or Human faces?

ਕਬੀਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਇਕ ਸਿਉ ਕੀਏ ਆਨ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਜਾਇ॥
ਭਾਵੈ ਲਾਭੇ ਕੇਸ ਕਰੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਘਰਿ ਮੁਛਾਇ॥ ੫੧੩੬੫

Earlier I have made reference to the 'Save Turban Panel' created by the DSGMC to handle what it called 'the current cultural crisis facing the religion'. This panel will not be able to solve the problem because for all of them uncut hair and turban is an integral part of Sikhi. But, inadvertently, they have used the correct term, 'cultural crisis'. Long hair, not necessarily uncut, has been part of the ancient cultures. During Guru period people of all faiths kept long hair. Even today some people in some faiths keep long beards and others long hair. Hair and dress are cultural phenomenon. For those of us who are calling Diaspora our home, to expect our children to keep long hair and turban/chunni is and will remain a disheartening experience.

We often read about the glowing tributes that foreign scholars have paid to AGGS. One such tribute by Max Arthur Macauliffe is on **page 3**. Mr. Macauliffe gave up a very promising career in British India Civil Service to devote his life to the study of Guru Granth Sahib but he did not convert to Sikhism; nor did scores of others who lauded the Sikh scriptures in similar language. Have we been instrumental in denying the Gurbani experience to the rest of the world?

Is it not time, to use the language of Col. Avtar Singh in his letter to the editor on **page 23** ‘that Sikhs residing outside India need to **delink** themselves from the petty politics of Punjab’, but modify it to read ‘**that Sikhs residing outside India need to delink Sikhi from restrictions of Bana**’? This must in no way be construed as opposition to Bana. We should first expose the individual to **Gurbani** and let the desire for **Bana** come from within.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
SIKH, SINGH AND KHALSA
[Editorial from March 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

Two incidents from my teenage years growing up in Ganganagar District of Rajasthan stand out. One was the death of a great grandmother whose death at over 105 years of age was celebrated as a joyous occasion by four generations of her family that hailed from District of Jalandhar in Panjab. Whereas this death was celebrated joyfully, the other incident brought the same family into mourning. In 1951 one of the fourth generation cut his hair and shaved whatever beard he had. He was only seventeen. I can still sense the grief of the entire family. Today the situation both in Ganganagar District and Districts of Panjab is completely topsy-turvy.

The editorial ‘Bani and Bana’ in last month’s issue has evoked considerable response, both in favour and against. Sikhs are no longer confined to Panjab or other parts of India. During earlier migrations to foreign lands during British Colonial era Sikhs were able to transplant themselves in foreign lands but still maintain their personal appearance and cultural traditions of Panjab. But the whole world has undergone rapid transformation. Racial, religious, geographical, linguistic and cultural barriers are breaking down. We can no longer afford the luxury of deferring important decisions as we have done in the case of ‘Dasam Granth’ and ‘Ragmala’. Nor are we going to allow ourselves to be answerable to self styled clergy and other religious leaders back in Panjab for reasons eloquently detailed by S. Suaran Singh’s article ‘Urgent Need for Reformation in Sikhi’¹. Sikhs in Diaspora are not surrounded by a sea of ‘Hinduism’ that has adversely influenced our growth and development during the last three hundred years. Nor are we concerned about Hindu sensitivities while discussing those hymns in Guru Granth Sahib that are critical of Hindu practices. We cannot wish the problems to go away. We have to face them squarely. This editorial is invariably tied to the previous month’s editorial ‘Bani and Bana’ and should be read in that context.

The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism published by The Punjabi University, Patiala defines **Sikh, Singh** and **Khalsa**². If we could dispassionately accept these definitions we will be on the road to ‘*charhdi kala*’. There really is no other choice.

SIKH:

To quote from The Encyclopaedia, “*The word Sikh goes back to Sanskrit sisya, meaning a learner or disciple. In Pali, sisya became sissa. The Pali word sekha (also sekkha) means a pupil or one under training in a religious doctrine (sikkha, siksa). The Punjabi form of the word was Sikh.*”

With the passage of time common noun sikh became proper noun Sikh used exclusively for the followers of Guiru Nanak. In this definition there is no reference to a person’s appearance. To quote from the

previous month's editorial, *"Let us take ourselves to the time of Guru Nanak. Guru is giving a sermon. Who is he giving the sermon to? In his audience are Hindus and Muslims, adherents of the two dominant faiths of that time. Did he treat them differently from each other or did he treat them as humans eager to make sense out of this life? Did he see Hindu and Muslim faces or Human faces?"* He was, clearly, addressing his Sikhs. Bhatti Sardar Rai Bular and Mardana were among his Sikhs as were, later, Bhai Nand Lal, Bhai Kanhaiya, Kaura Mall, Des Raj, Dina Nath and Bhai Vasti Ram.³

As time went on changes took place. Children born into Sikh families were automatically considered as Sikhs without any formal initiation rite. One may consider that as their birth right. Among some Hindu families the eldest son was raised as a kesadhari Sikh while the rest of the family with cut hair came to be called sahadhari. That word for a cleanshaven Sikh is inappropriate. The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism defines '*sahaj*' as "...a state of mental and spiritual equipoise without the least intrusion of ego..." Not many 'sahadharis' would meet that criteria. More appropriate term, as opposed to kesadhari, would be non-kesadhari (*mona*). A person converting from one faith to another obviously has to undergo some initiation rite. So far that rite is '*Khande di Pahul*'.

SINGH:

To quote from The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, *"Singh, from Sanskrit sinha for lion, is an essential component of the name for a Sikh male. Every Sikh male name must end with 'Singh'. Historically, this was so ordained by Guru Gobind Singh on the Baisakhi day, 30 March 1699, when he inaugurated the Khalsa, They were to adopt the five prescribed emblems, including kesa or unshorn hair and share a common end-name 'Singh' in token of having joined the self-abnegating, martial and casteless fellowship of the Khalsa...While 'Sikh' is a spiritual appellation, 'Singh' has socio-political overtones in addition."*

Historically the word Singh is not unique to the Sikhs. It predates the Guru period. India's current Foreign Minister, Natwar Singh, is not a Sikh. Thus all Singhs are not Sikhs. The dilemma is should all Sikhs be Singhs? Dr. Harbans Lal is a Sikh, just as Bhai Nand Lal was a Sikh. Dr. Harbans Lal's Sikh credentials are accepted by the Sikh establishment in India and abroad, including the so called 'Jathedars', SGPC, Sikh faculty of Universities in Panjab, Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh, Sikh Review, Calcutta and Dr. Chahal's Institute for Understanding Sikhism, Laval. He even held the position of President of All India Sikh Student Federation during his student days in Panjab. He participates and leads in various national and international Sikh gatherings. Similarly, Alice Basarke in Canada and Claudia Martins in Brazil consider themselves Sikhs and I do accept all of them as such.

KHALSA:

To quote from The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, *"Khalsa, from Arabic khalis (lit. pure, unsullied) and Perso-Arabic khalisah (lit. pure; office of revenue department; lands directly under government management), is used collectively for the community of baptized Sikhs... In the Sikh tradition, the term appears for the first time in one of the hukamnamas (lit. written order or epistle) of Guru Hargobind (1595-1644) where a sangat of the eastern region has been described as Guru ka Khalsa (Guru's own or Guru's special charge). It has also been employed in the same sense in one of the letters of Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-75) addressed to the sangat of Patna. The word occurs in Sikh Scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, once, but there it carries the sense of the term khalis, i.e. pure...The term "Khalsa", however, acquired a specific connotation after Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) introduced, on 30 March 1699, the new form of initiatory rites — khande di pahul (rites by khanda or double-edged sword). Sikhs so initiated on that Baisakhi day were collectively designated as the Khalsa — Khalsa who belonged to Vahiguru, the Supreme Lord."*

Just as the words Sikh and Singh pre-date Guru period, so does the word Khalsa (and so does the word Gurmukhi). For the Sikhs, however, they have become synonymous with their faith. Even Gurus started

using the term Khalsa prior to the beginning of '*khande di pahul*' initiation. It is obvious that an event of tremendous significance took place on March 30, 1699 but the details are inexplicably unclear.⁴

What needs to be done today is what should have been done 300 years ago. Why is it that no two of these twelve writers describing the events of March 30, 1699 agree with one another? Is it too late even to go back 300 years in search of truth? Would that research not answer some of the often asked questions representing different points of view? Was the initiation voluntary or mandatory? What exactly was the initiation ceremony and why did the Guru not leave clear instructions to administer it as he did in the case of Guru Granth Sahib? How did banis from outside of Guru Granth Sahib, bestowed upon us by the Tenth Nanak himself, come to play such an important role in today's *Khande di Pahul* preparation and *Nitname* when he himself, in his wisdom, chose not to include them in Guru Granth Sahib?

To quote The Encyclopaedia again, "*Khalsa is repeatedly extolled as composed of men of excellent moral qualities, spiritual fervour and heroism.*" Many '*amritdharis*' have started penning '*Khalsa*' after Singh in their name. I know many such people but there is not one of them, including a past '*Jathedar*'⁵ who has added Khalsa to his name, who meets the qualifications of a Khalsa stated above and yet they all look down upon those who have not taken '*Khande di Pahul*'. It takes time and learning to get to that stage.

Let people become Sikhs before they become Khalsa and take on the designation Singh. Those of us who were born in a Sikh household have the privilege of being named Singh automatically whether we undergo any initiation rites or not. Let us make it possible for those who are not born into Sikh households the choice of being called Sikhs, as was the case in Guru Nanak's time. Let them work their way up to become a Khalsa, i.e. Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa, complete with 5 virtues – humility, patience, mercy, contentment and truthfulness. Thus all Khalsa will be Sikhs but not all Sikhs will be Khalsa.

As of today the pool of potential Khalsa exists only among the children born into Sikh families. Even that is dwindling. One glance at the matrimonial ads in the Tribune, Panjab, India, will prove that point. Along with the caste of the groom will be the requirement that he be clean shaven. To create new pool, both among Sikh and non-Sikh family children we must accept them as Sikhs without prerequisite name or appearance change. **Only change we should expect and require is their belief in and practice of the teachings of AGGS.** Once they have been exposed to this incomparable treasure, allow them to grow and decide for themselves if and when to become Khalsa and take on the name designation Singh.

Kesadharis and non-kesadharis (*mona*) should be able to consider themselves Sikhs without the necessity of outward signs and symbols and without any feeling of guilt on the part of *monas* and sense of superiority by kesadhari Sikhs. The latter should show the same magnanimity towards the *monas* as Gurus did and not consider them any lesser Sikhs. **We should create the requisite conditions for Sikhi to meet its destiny of becoming a truly universal world religion for the entire mankind and not remain just a parochial Panjabi faith.**

'The World Population of Sikhs'⁶ compiled by S. Gurmit Singh of Australia followed by 'The numbers Racket' by Dr. I. J. Singh of USA beg a question: Who should we include in that count?

Hardev Singh Shergill

1. page 6

2. page 3

3. For more information see p.13 Vol. IV of The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, First Edition).

4. See Sikh Bulletin Sept. 2002.

5. See page 26 for the character of our Takhat '*Jathedars*'.

6. page 5.

EDITORIAL
AMRIT AND KHANDE DI PAHUL
[Editorial from April 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

Being born into a Sikh family, like most others in that situation, this writer always thought himself a Sikh. Neither the Gurdwaras nor schools and colleges that I **attended in India** had taught me anything about Sikhi. In reality I could be considered an agnostic. When I came to this country in 1960 there were two Gurdwaras in California and one in British Columbia, Canada. I was always far from them. But that really was not a drawback because my experience with Gurdwaras since then assures me that they would have taught me nothing either. A change in circumstances in 1996 brought me to a situation where I had to confront my ignorance of Sikhi. It did not take me long to shed my agnosticism and accept ***Guru Nanak's God, the Creator, who is visible in all the Creation***. But to find Sikhs was another matter. For two years my efforts were fruitless. Then in May 1998 I circulated one thousand copies of a letter '***In Search of Sikhs***' (ਸਿਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼).

This effort resulted in my meeting with S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana who introduced me to Vir Bhupinder Singh, whose tapes on explanation of Gurbani I found a refreshing discovery. A few years ago I came across one of his tapes on Amrit:

ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਏਕੁ ਹੈ ਦੂਜਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥

M2, GGS 1238

nanak amrit ek hai doojaa amrit naahi ||

O Nanak, there is only One Ambrosial Nectar;
there is no other nectar at all.

This was written way before Vaisakhi 1699. Question that rose in my ignorant mind was that if there is no Amrit other than what is referred to in this shabad then how did the 1699 Amrit come into being? Logical solution was to ask those who are knowledgeable about this, our kirtanias and kathakars.

This is not the only reference to '*Amrit*', but not one involves any reference to water converting into Amrit. If that were the case then Hindu belief in water of river Ganga being amrit would be irrefutable.

ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਵਸੈ ਤੂੰ ਭਾਣੈ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਆਵਣਿਆ ॥ ਪ. ੧੧੯

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਰਸੁ ਪੀਜੈ ॥ ਪ. ੧੬੧

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਰਸੁ ਚਾਖੇ ॥ ਪ. ੩੫੨

ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਬਾਣੀ ਪੀਵਤ ਹੀ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ਭਇਆ ॥ ਪ. ੩੬੦

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਰਸੁ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਨੇ ਕੋ ਵਿਰਲਾ ਪੀਵੈ ॥ ਪ. ੪੦੦

I had already made up my mind that at that Vaisakhi the Kirtan Jathas will be asked to refrain from reciting anything from so called '*Dasam Granth*' and '*Sakhis*'. A very famous ragi Singh was requested to recite the shabad ਨਾਨਕ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਏਕੁ ਹੈ ਦੂਜਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਨਾਹਿ, explain it and also refrain from reciting anything from Dasam Granth. He resented the second request and expressed his inability about the first because '***he was not prepared for it***'.

That came as a surprise to me. This was one of a string of disillusionments that I have faced while coming across our kirtanias and kathakars. Nevertheless, he had a very impressive repertoire of other appropriate shabads from GGS and gave an exceptional performance as was expected of a man of that caliber. But

what he said at the conclusion of his presentation raised more questions. What he basically said was that prior to '*khande di pahul*' the Gurus used to offer '*charanpahul*' to their followers.

The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism also says the same thing¹. "*In the history of the Sikh faith, the initiation ceremony has passed through two distinct phases. From the time of Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder, up to 1699, charanamrit or pagpahul was the custom. Charanamrit and pagpahul meant initiation by water touched by the Master's toe—the charan and pag both being equivalents of the word 'foot'. In early Sikhism, the neophytes sipped water poured over the Guru's toe to be initiated into the fold.*"

Ragi Singh could be wrong. He could be trained in a dera. But how could a well thought out and researched Encyclopaedia be wrong? **Equally difficult is to imagine Guru Nanak summoning Mardana and asking him to bring a bowl of water for him to dip his toe into it to consecrate it to initiate his Sikhs.** Guru Nanak's answer to '*charanpahul*' in his own words seems to be resounding **no**:

ਨੀਚਹੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਅਤਿ ਨਾਨ੍ ਹੋਇ ਗਰੀਬੁ ਬੁਲਾਵਉ ॥੧॥ ੫.੫੨੯

Become the lowest of the low, the very least of the tiny, and speak in utmost humility. || 1 ||

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਮ ਨੀਚ ਕਰੰਮਾ॥ ੫.੧੨

Says Nanak, my actions are contemptible!

ਨੀਚਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਨੀਚੀ ਹੂ ਅਤਿ ਨੀਚੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਾਥਿ ਵਡਿਆ ਸਿਉ ਕਿਆ ਰੀਸ ॥ ੫.੧੫

Nanak seeks the company of the lowest of the low class, the very lowest of the low.

Why should he try to compete with the great?

ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ਹਉ ਆਖਿ ਨ ਸਾਕਾ ਹਉ ਮੂਰਖੁ ਮੁਗਧੁ ਨੀਚਾਣੁ ॥ ੫.੭੩੬

I cannot describe the glorious greatness of the Lord;

I am foolish, thoughtless, idiotic and lowly.

Then there is the question of whether the correct expression for the initiation ceremony is '*Khande di Pahul*' or '*Amrit*'. Some scholars and others very familiar with Sikh affairs tell us that initially the term used to be '*khande di pahul*' and not '*amrit*'. Among others, they point out the practice of singing '*peo pahul khande dhar, hove janam suhela*'. In the scheme of Brahminical intrusion into Sikh affairs this seems to be yet another.

Principal Harbhajan Singh² has summarized the events of that day as stated by eleven writers. Akhand Kirtani Jatha has also circulated a Missive³. Most charitable comment on all these narratives of the events of Vaisakhi 1699 is that **no two agree with each other and none of them agrees with what is practiced today**. In fact comparison of various editions of the Rehat Maryada itself will show no uniformity. This coupled with the fact that nothing directly attributed to the Guru is found by way of clear instructions about the initiation ceremony leads to many questions.

It is obvious that an event of great historical significance took place on Vaisakhi day 1699 but its specifics are lost or we have not been able to find them. Perhaps it is time our scholars looked into this matter. Some of the questions that need answering are:

1. Was the initiation ceremony voluntary or mandatory for all men, women and children?
2. How was and is the *pahul* to be prepared?

3. Which Banis were and are to be recited?
4. Why among the current five *banis* three are from so called '*dasam granth*'?
5. Why did the Guru not include them and any of his other *banis* in the GGS that he himself bequeathed to us?
6. Did the Guru state, explicitly or implicitly, that any one not partaking '*khande di pahul*' is a lesser Sikh or not a Sikh at all?
6. Did the Guru mandate specific appearance for a Sikh?
7. If the Guru instructed his '*khalsa*' to do the '*nitname*' of certain banis, what instructions did he leave for the rest of the bani in GGS?

Would it be unreasonable to assume that just as Granth Sahib instructs the Muslims about their five prayers⁴:

"The first prayer is praise of God, second contentment, third humility and the fourth is well-being of all. The fifth is keeping five impulses under restraint. These constitute divine prayer (9). O man of Allah, know that all the creation represents one creator. Make this knowledge, your Maudifa (all time uninterrupted prayer). Giving up evil is the water pot used for cleansing body. The faith that there is one God be this your prayer call. Thus you will become an obedient child of God, make this your Burgoo a long horn/trumpet used by Muslim Fakirs. (10). O Mullah earn your livelihood by legitimate means, this is Halal" GGS p.1084", Guru might have something similar to say to his Sikhs? Has not the mere repetitive recitation of '*nitname banis*' given us a '*karmkand*' to do, given the *nitnamis* false sense of being a better Sikh, distanced them from the rest of the treasure in the GGS and created a rival Granth (Dasam Granth)?

These are taboo questions. But they need to be faced for the survival of Guru Nanak's message.

Hardev Singh Shergill

1 page 3

2 page 5

3 page 7

4 SB Feb 2005 p.21

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

[From May 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

We regret to announce that in the face of unrelenting opposition by some individuals since 1996, joined by some other individuals in 2000 and massive opposition since October 2003 Mohali conference, Sikh Center and Gurdwara Sahib Roseville have ceased to exist. Last service was performed on April 17th. Full story about our financial situation was published in the January 2005 issue. It again appears in updated form on page 31 of this issue. It has become painfully clear that majority of Sikh Sangat really does not concern itself with what goes on in the Gurdwaras. With the exception of a very small minority, most families attend Gurdwara services for *bhaichara* reasons, by invitation only. If no family has taken Langar sewa, as has been the case on most Sundays in our case since October 2003, very few people attend the service since the Guru does not make phone calls nor does the Guru hold grudges. The management, with few honourable exceptions, is largely left in the hands of those people who do not really have *nishkaam sewa* ideal in mind. Depending on the individual, what drives them to stay involved in Gurdwara management by whatever means is ego, *andhvishvash*, misuse of funds and opportunity to bring people from India for money or for family reasons or a combination of these.

To keep publishing the Sikh Bulletin financial support of its readers is absolutely essential. This financial support also has to be voluntary. Many of you have already voluntarily donated from \$5.00 to \$5,000.00 and more. You are in the best position to become fund raisers since you read it and agree with the effort and the difference we are trying to make.

If you have the capacity to receive electronic copy of the SB please let us know. That will save on the postage. If you are receiving bulk copies for local distribution please let us know if you need more or less or none at all. We know that circumstances can change. We will comply with your changed needs. If you wish for a copy to go to a friend or a family member please give us their email address if they have one.

Operations for preparing the Sikh Bulletin have been moved to KTF's home base. Electronic copy will appear on www.sikhbulletin.com every month. Printed copy will be mailed as funds permitted.

Thank you.

Editor.

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GUEST EDITORIAL

REHT MARYADA: TIME FOR AN UPDATE

[Editorial from May 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

Every religion demands that its followers accept that the Scripture of **that** religion is for-all-time, that it is immutable. Sikhism is no exception. The followers of every religion, including Sikhs, on faith, accept this as 'fact'. The big question is whether everything else associated with Sikhism must be accepted unquestioningly. Is the *Reht Maryada* also immutable? Clearly a Sikh, having accepted the existence of God and the truth of spiritual matters as contained in the AGGS on faith, has a right to demand a reasonable explanation for any religious requirement not covered by the AGGS but made in the name of the faith, has a right to be consulted on matters that affect him, a right to be heard without any fear of "excommunication". The *Reht Maryada* is not divine; it was meant to guide the Sikhs, to serve as a Code of Conduct and Conventions, in order to maintain uniformity vis-à-vis Sikh practices.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) initiated the preparation of the *Reht Maryada* (RM) in 1927 and approved the final version only in 1945. [1] This long process was necessary to allow Sikh scholars to deliberate on the sources that were used to formulate the *Maryada*; they rightly rejected those portions of the available *rahitnamas*, and other documents, that they considered out of harmony with the AGGS and those that were considered inappropriate (or politically incorrect, to use the current jargon). These scholars were not infallible and may well have incorporated in the *maryada* injunctions that are absurd by today's standards, needing expunging or modifications. Whenever a suggestion is made that we consider revising or modifying the RM, a common refrain is that our great scholars have already deliberated upon the matter and there is no need for any further review. To these people the older the tradition the more of a sacred cow it becomes, almost as if the thought processes of those scholars

somehow superior to those of current scholars. Perhaps a few examples of the ‘outdated-ness’ of the current RM will help throw some light on the issue.

As the RM deals with matters of concern only to Sikhs it is not out of place to first decide on the definition of a Sikh. This will, as always on every issue concerning Sikhs, involve a protracted discussion. Here there is a proposal to define a Sikh as follows: ***A Sikh is a person who solemnly affirms that he is a Sikh, believes in the Guru Granth Sahib and no other scripture, believes in the Ten Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, and has no other religion.***

This definition is a modification of the affirmation required under the Sikh Gurdwaras Act 1925. The reason is that this definition, in contrast to the others, like the one in the Delhi Gurdwara Act 82 of 1971, is by far the broadest. This definition will encompass the many who claim to be Sikhs but would by other definitions be excluded. It leaves out the requirement of the Khalsa initiation and the requirement of being keshdhari as being prerequisites to being recognized as a Sikh. One can imagine the virulent objections of the “orthodox” to this proposal, but the ground realities (at least in the Diaspora) would make the “orthodox” definitions farcical; far too many would, by definition, become non-Sikhs, or we would have to continue to accept them as Sikhs despite the definition requirements not being met – a rather hypocritical situation!

A wide definition, such as this, will allow any Sikh so qualified to undertake some of the ceremonies, etc, where the Maryada says ‘only a Sikh...’ can do it.

Article IV of the RM refers to the several compositions that a Sikh is expected to recite daily (*Nitnem*). Whilst there must be some individuals who faithfully recite all the required banis daily, the majority fail miserably. The sheer volume of the prayers required is impractical. Then there is the problem of reciting ‘banis’ from the so-called Dasam Granth (DG), bearing in mind the controversy surrounding the said Granth; though why there should be any controversy (regarding the DG) is difficult to comprehend, considering that it is not a sacred scripture, all the other objections notwithstanding.

In relation to Ardas, the obvious objection is to the reference to *bhagauti*, even though the reason for its use has been conveniently explained away by apologists. A portion of Chapter IV Article V of the RM states:

“Only an Amritdhari (baptized) Sikh man or woman, who faithfully observes the discipline ordained for the baptized Sikhs, can enter the hallowed enclosures of the takhts. (Ardas for and on behalf of any Sikh or non-Sikh, except a fallen or punished (tankhahia) Sikh, can be offered at the takhts.”

If this requirement is to be strictly followed almost no one will qualify, including the Jathedars of the Takhts (keep in mind the words *faithfully observes the discipline ordained for the baptized Sikhs*). Moreover, there is no reasonable explanation as to why anyone should be disallowed from entering the enclosures as long as he is respectful and meets the basic requirements such as covering the head, etc. Strange that one can offer Ardas for a non-Sikh but not for a “fallen” Sikh. Why? Is it against the “Sikh God” to forgive or accept prayers/ardas on behalf of His erstwhile believer? It must reflect a very small god.

Chapter VI Article VII (d) reads:

“Only a Sikh may read out from the Guru Granth Sahib for others. However, even a non- Sikh may read from it for himself/herself.”

Can someone explain this, please? If ‘*Only a Sikh may read out from the Guru Granth...*’ how does ‘*...even a non-Sikh... read from it himself/herself...*’?

Clearly many of the injunctions were made because the Sikhs of old were still following the practices and rituals of other religions, especially Hinduism, and it was deemed necessary to wean them away from

such practices. Today many of these appear absolutely absurd and should be expunged from the RM, whilst others are simply common sense that including them in the Code is laughable.

For the English language version of the *Reht Maryada*, the language used needs polishing. The translators of the RM should request the services of those with a sound understanding of the use of the English language.

If one looks at the current *Reht Maryada* objectively and dispassionately, it will be abundantly clear that it needs reviewing and updating and should not be a cause for dispute. But such is our nature as a Community and our lack of unity, compounded by the current “leadership’s” lack of credibility and their steadfast refusal to allow common sense and reason to prevail, that the *Panth* is in for a long haul. A start has to be made and it is already underway: the Sikh Diaspora will have to lead.

References:

[1] The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Vol. III. Ed. Harbans Singh. Punjabi University, Patiala, 1997. P 426. The wordings of the English language version of the *Reht Maryada*, and the reference to Chapters and Articles have been taken from the SGPC’s website and/or from the Sikhnet website.

Dr Sarjeet Singh Sidhu, MBBS, FRCOG, FICS, LLB (Hons), Malaysia, 25 March 2005

EDITORIAL GURDWARAS

[Editorial from June-July 2005 Sikh Bulletin]

Upon receiving the May issue of The Sikh Bulletin a friend called from clear across the country to express his dismay at the closure of Sikh Center and Gurdwara Sahib Roseville and made the comment that this is the first time he had heard of a Gurdwara closing down; normally they multiply. Yes, normally they do multiply; Sacramento area has seven. Before the year was out one Gurdwara that was started to shut us down split into two. With us out, Roseville still has two Gurdwaras paying \$13,300.00 in monthly rent (we paid no rent because the use of 7,900 square ft building was donated rent free and the donations were being used to invite those speakers, hold discussions, publish books and this Bulletin, sort of things that will not be allowed in other Gurdwaras) and doing precisely that to spread the message of Gurbani that every other Gurdwara is doing, *which is nothing*. When asked if he knew of a *single Gurdwara that preaches what is actually written in SGGS*, after a momentary reflection his answer was *no*, not to his knowledge, including one Gurdwara where he was President for one year. That explained to him what was very clear to us i.e. *any Gurdwara that tries to implement reform will self destruct*.

At Gurdwara Sahib Roseville we were the first to implement SGPC approved but Jathedars Ranjit Singh and Puran Singh disapproved Nanakshahi calendar. Jathedars do not have that kind of power or right, so we exercised our Guru given right to a Sikh and implemented the SGPC’s decision on Nanakshahi Calendar.

In August 2003, after the Singh Sabha International passed a resolution, we substituted ‘*akalpurakh*’ for ‘*bhagauti*’ in our ‘*ardaas*’. At this stage we also asked our granthi Singhs to implement SGPC approved ‘*rehat Maryada*’ (in spite of its many flaws). That did not sit well with them because it affected them financially. Besides it is human nature not to unlearn. We feel comfortable with what is familiar.

This is what the *rehat Maryada* says about the practice of akhand paths in chapter vii article ix:

*Akhand Path ... is carried on at hard times or on occasions of elation or joy ... reading must be clear and correct ... Reading too fast, so that the person listening in to it cannot follow the contents, amounts to irreverence to the Scriptures ... Whichever family or congregation undertakes the non-stop reading should carry it out itself through its members, relatives, friends, etc., all together. The number of reciters is not prescribed ... If a person himself cannot read he should listen in to the reading by some competent reader. **However, it should never be allowed to happen that the reader carries on the reading all by himself/herself and no member of the congregation or the family is listening in to the reading ...** Placing a pitcher, ceremonial clarified butter fed lamp, coconut, etc. around, during the course of the uninterrupted or any other reading of Guru Granth Sahib, or reading of other Scriptural texts side by side with or in the course of such reading is contrary to the gurmata (Guru's way).*

What can be clearer than this? **1.** Akhandpaths should be performed only on rare occasions. **2.** There is no provision for a string of Akhandpaths, one after the other for a whole month, as Yuba City, California does before its annual event of 'display' of SGGS on a float in the manner of Hindus displaying the stone image of their favourite god or goddess (*darshan*) once a year; **3.** or simultaneous multiple Akhandpaths in the same room at the same time as is being done at Baru Sahib at its school in Himachal Pradesh and at the world's most expensive Gurdwara in Southall, England where many glass faced cubbyholes to perform multiple Akhandpaths are lined up on either side of the main parkash of SGGS; **4.** or reading from a pothi as the akhandpaths is going on as the Nanaksarias and perhaps many deras do. Almost all of them place butter-fed lamp, coconut and pitcher of water beside the SGGS to turn it into '*amrit*' without thinking how could water be affected by the reading of SGGS when it has no effect on them. ***Akhandpaths have been turned into fund raising rituals having no religious value.*** Senior granthis also pull rank in scheduling their turn at reading. They prefer the time when no one would be present to listen. This way they do not have to read loud and clear or not read at all.

After the Oct. 2003 Mohali conference we urged our congregation to follow rehat Maryada, especially when it comes to Akhandpaths and borrow Prof. Sahib Singh's ten volume 'SGGS DARPAN' from us to do sadharan path themselves while understanding its meaning. Our own granthis spread the rumour that we are against Akhandpaths. They did the same thing when in 2004 we stopped the recitation of *Chaupai* which is part of '*triachritar*' #404 of '*Chritropakhyan*' in the so called '*Dasam Granth*'. Even Akal Takhat 'Jathedar' acknowledges that '*Chritropakhyan*' is not the bani of Guru Gobind Singh.¹ That was propagated as us having no respect for SGGS. ***No Gurdwara reform is possible without first completely purging most of our current crop of granthis and kirtanias and at the same time creating institutions to prepare a fresh cadre of persons knowledgeable about the correct meaning of Gurbani.*** We are supposed to have no priestly order but we do have priests and as long as present system of Gurdwara service stays in vogue we will need granthis to do '*parkash*' and '*sukhasan*'. So we might as well train them properly and make the proper understanding of Gurbani meaning mandatory for a granthi.

Not too long ago at a family wedding I was asked to thank the guests. Noticing a large number of young people born in this country present in the audience (during normal Sunday services young people are conspicuous by their absence) I chose to address them. First I made a confession that just as our parents failed us about our faith we have failed them; that there is not a single Gurdwara (including ours in Roseville) where Gurbani *parchar* is taking place; that they are fortunate to be living in a truly free society where they do not have to unquestionably follow the rituals and beliefs that are wrong but have become traditions. Then I told them about the unique simplicity and universality of the message in Guru Granth Sahib; that ***Guru asks them to do three things and not do two.*** Three things the Guru asks them to do are: *kirt karo*, *wand chhako* and *naam japo* i.e. do honest work, share the fruit of your honest labour with the less fortunate and always remember your Creator. Two things that the Guru does not want you to do are: do not consume that substance which is harmful to your body and do not do anything that you will later regret. It was very heartening when several young people commended me for saying what I said. But

later that evening at the reception I was approached by another young person who assured me not all Gurdwaras are lost cause. Their Gurdwara teaches them about Gurbani. Who says ignorance is not bliss!

Misinformation about Gurbani is a malady that afflicts us all, laymen as well as the experts. ***One of the most remarkable things about our Gurus was that there was no difference in their 'kathni' and 'karni'*** i.e. words and deeds. That is not the case with us or with our professional religious leaders. In the Panjabi section² Giani Jagtar Singh Jachak has extracted some quotes from Sant Singh Maskeen's last book. Any one reading this would be in complete agreement with Maskeen Ji. Yes, 95% (or even more) of the Gurdwaras are under the control of selfish political types who have no knowledge of Gurbani. Yes, 90% (or even more) derawala *sadhs* are ignorant of Gurmat. But ***we know that Maskeen Ji lived a lie his entire life, his posthumous award of 'Gurmat Vidya Martand' from SGPC notwithstanding.*** He spent his entire life in doing katha in precisely those Gurdwaras that were managed by the 'ignorant about Gurbani political types'. Knowledgeable people did not extend to him the invitation. He spent his entire life visiting the *Thaths* of Nanaksaria Thug 'Sant Baba' Amar Singh Barundi, who is not only ignorant about Gurbani but also a congenital liar and world class con artist, even after he was personally made aware of Amar Singh's despicable conduct by his victims. For his lifelong support Amar Singh rewarded him and his son with green cards through his Florida Thath in 2004. Any one even remotely familiar with Gurbani would know that Maskeen Ji regularly blemished it with Hindu mythihas³. He became a sworn enemy of Giani Bhag Singh¹, a rare individual with courage of his conviction.

Another person in Maskeen Ji's company is former Akal Takhat 'Jathedar' Prof. Darshan Singh Khalsa, himself brought up at that blemish on Sikhi, Nanaksar. He was there when Amar Singh arrived at Nanaksar at age 8 and perhaps present, just as Harbans Singh Jaghadhari was, when 'Sant Baba' Isher Singh expelled Amar Singh from Nanaksar for his immoral conduct. In Dec. 1996 Harbans Singh Jaghadhari joined every other kirtania in Panjab to do kirtan for Amar Singh at a 'rented' Gurdwara in Jalandhar to honour the newly installed Akal Takhat 'Jathedar' Ranjit Singh. By 2004 Prof. Darshan Singh Khalsa also threw in his towel and joined Maskeen Ji and others at Amar Singh's dera in Hays, UK to perform kirtan. Amar Singh projects himself as 13th Guru Nanak, after Nand Singh and Isher Singh. In his interview with The Spokesman Weekly, published in its monthly issue of April 2003 under the heading, ***"For the good of Sikhism, politicians must be ousted from Gurdwara administration"***, Prof. Darshan Singh derides both the 'pseudo claimants to Guruship' and the politicians. Yet like Maskeen he patronized both his entire life.

Non Sikhs, scholars and laymen alike, seem to have better appreciation of the treasure of Gurbani that we inherited by virtue of our birth in a Sikh household.⁴

1. ***"Yes, it has the capability, (of guiding mankind) but the Sikhs have not brought out in the broad daylight, the splendid doctrines of this religion which has come into existence for the benefit of the entire mankind. This is their greatest sin and the Sikhs cannot be freed of it."***
Bertrand Russell.
2. ***Did you know that they believed in Democracy, freedom of speech, choice, expression, freedom of religion, pluralism, human rights, equality between men and women, equality of all people regardless of race, religion, caste, creed, status etc. 300 years before the existence of the USA?... In their holy book, there is a round earth, water is made from chemical elements, and there is even mention of the evolution process, big bang and life on other planets!***

What goes on in a typical Gurdwara setting during the religious service? We walk in, bow before the SGGS, make our offering, in many cases make an offering to the kirtani jatha or the kathakar, take *parsaad*, sit down to listen to whatever is going on at that time, even if the speaker is dead wrong in whatever he is saying and some of us know it we stay silent, stand up for ardaas, listen to the order of the day which most of us do not understand and most of the time granthis do not explain it either for lack of time or knowledge, take *parsaad*, eat Langar, chat and leave. If you know of a Gurdwara that is different

than this we would like to know. That was precisely the sequence of events when a friend took an American Christian friend of his to a Gurdwara in Los Angeles some years back:

“Many years ago a Christian friend accompanied me to Vermont Gurdwara in Los Angeles. After a hearty langer he enquired, “How do you teach religious and ethical values especially to children if the religious service consists of only singings hymns”? The question has haunted me ever since. We are now wondering why our younger generation is not following Sikh religion. Recently a Sikh college student asked, after reading the translation of Benti Chaupai from the Rehras, if Gurbani says we have no enemy and no one is stranger to us, we get along with all, then why is the guru praying for God to kill all his enemies one by one? How are we to explain daily recitation of such contradicting spurious Banis to our enquiring children?”⁵

Talking about the function of a Gurdwara, The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism⁶ states: **The Gurdwara also serves as a community centre, a school, a guest house for pilgrims and travelers, occasionally a clinic, and a base for local charitable activities.** It is sometimes true, in some Gurdwaras, at some occasions, for some of these activities. As a general rule Gurdwaras shy away from non-religious activities. Bhangra and Giddha associated with Punjabi mela at Vaisakhi are generally shunned. But Gurbani says:

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭੇਟਿਐ ਪੂਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ॥
ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ॥੨॥
ਮਃ ੫ ॥ ਪੰ: ੫੨੨

O Nanak, meeting the True Guru, one comes to know the Perfect Way. While laughing, playing, dressing and eating, he is liberated. ||2||

Instead of multiple Gurdwaras a well equipped Sikh Center that looks after both the religious as well as cultural needs of the community would be more efficient use of resources and serve our younger generation better.

Like us, the Mormon Church also does not have a priestly class. But unlike us, they have a strong missionary training program for its members. *“Every Wednesday, more than 200 young people arrive, bid goodbye to their parents, and settle in for four to eleven weeks. They are taught how to speak to a stranger about faith and salvation and to do it in any of 47 languages before they are sent for two years to locations far from their homes. This is the Missionary Training Center of the Mormon Church, an efficient religious engine that has helped propel the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints into a global faith, 10.4 million strong”. (New York Times).*

We too have missionary training centers but none outside of India. They produce only Panjabi speaking missionaries who cannot communicate with our young people. News is circulating on the internet about a new ‘Sant Baba’ on the Canadian scene. **‘Sant’ Ranjit Singh Dhadriwala** has caused traffic jams and over flow crowds in Toronto, Calgary and Vancouver. We are told that during a three day program at one Gurdwara, the Gurdwara’s take was \$90,000.00. What would be the ‘Sant’s’ take? **When are we going to learn a better way to spend our community’s resources? Would we live to see that day?**

Hardev Singh Shergill

¹. ਮਸਕੀਨ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਭਾਗ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ ਧੋਖਾ p25

². ਮਸਕੀਨ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਕੌਮ ਨੂੰ ਆਖਰੀ ਸਨੇਹਾ p24

³ Giani Sant Singh Maskeen 15

⁴. Sikhism, a Universal World Faith p.5

⁵. SB March 2004 Guest Editorial by Gurpal Singh Khaira

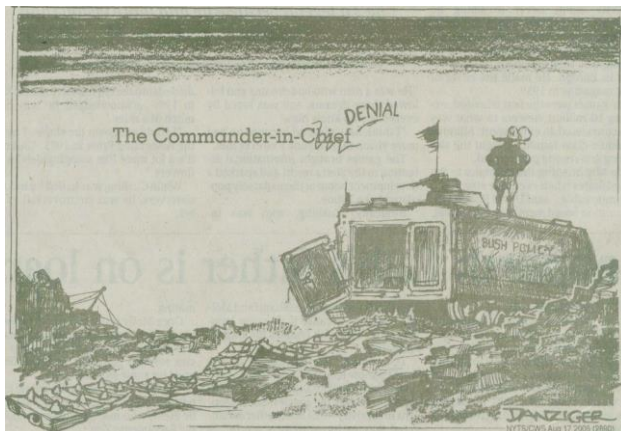
⁶. p.4

EDITORIAL THE ROOT CAUSE

[Editorial from September-October 2006 Sikh Bulletin]

This writer is beholden to two nations, one that gave him birth, the Sikh Nation and the other that he now calls home, the United States of America. In case of the former the Creator made the choice for him, in case of the latter the choice was his. There is a lot to be admired about both of these nations yet at this juncture in their histories both are saddled with most despicable leadership. For a long time the reason for this state of affairs was a puzzle. Then suddenly, during Israeli destruction of Lebanon, blessed by President Bush, a clear picture of the reasons began to emerge. It is a complex combination of leaders' arrogance, absence of humility and intense desire to control others with whatever means possible regardless of common human decency or national or international laws coupled with total gullibility and stupidity of the masses, comfort of status quo and 'why should I stick my neck out' attitude of the intellectuals and naked unbridled greed of the media.

Time and again while speaking on the issue of Israeli invasion of Lebanon President Bush, and the US media, including CNN, for that matter, spoke of the capture of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah as the **root cause** of the latest conflict. Unfortunately it is not that simple. Without going into too many details, most people would agree that if there is a single **root cause** it would be the abandonment by European powers of the European Jewish people made refugees by Hitler's Germany. Europeans simply washed their hands off by dumping hapless homeless at the door step of the Palestinians whose lands they had already forcibly occupied. At the same time while referring to the UN resolutions governing Lebanon and Israel, repeated references were made to the disarming of Hezbollah according to UN Resolution 1559 that had not happened. The President and the media, at least the US media, never mentioned the other key provisions of the same resolution that Israel had failed to implement i.e. release of thousands of Lebanese prisoners held by Israel and the vacating of its occupation of Lebanese territory known as Sheba farms while at the same time there was no mention of the UN resolutions that both the Israelis and the Americans have ignored for decades vis-à-vis the Israelis and the Palestinians. Only people to bring up those resolutions were the Syrian officials who pointed out that both the Israelis and Americans while harping on Resolution 1559 have completely ignored Resolution 242 from 1967 and Resolution 338 from 1973, both mandating Israel return occupied land, including the Golan Heights to Syria. Every time this happened the CNN anchor simply ignored the point raised by the Syrians and either cut them off without comment or changed the subject. While engaging in this rhetoric both Bush and Israelis conveniently forgot the fact that Hezbollah was born out of desperation about two decades ago as a resistance movement when Israel, with the US blessing, was occupying Lebanon in order to destroy PLO. While loudly accusing Syria and Iran of supporting Hezbollah they also conveniently forgot that the tanks, bullets and bombs that Israel was using against the civilians in Lebanon were US made and paid for with US tax payers' dollars. *What is good for the goose should be good for the gander.*



The entire US policy in the Middle East is flawed. *The tail is wagging the dog.* There was a time when a US president told the Israelis in no uncertain terms to get out of the Sinai and another froze the US aid funds to stop the construction of illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land in the West Bank. Slowly and imperceptibly, however, under pressure of a very clever Israeli lobby, members of US Congress have given up their power of independent thought and blindly accepted the dictates of Israeli policy in the Middle East. The corrupt US lackey governments, two

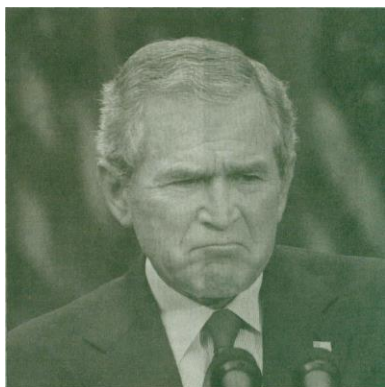
Kingdoms of Jordan and Saudi Arabia (not

Jeff Danziger New York Times Syndicate. Aug. 17, 2006

democracies) and one dictatorial 'Democracy' of Egypt have been neutralized. Unfortunately, this President Bush has outdone the Congressmen in his support of Israeli policy which is based upon brutal use of force, 'might is right'. For someone who dodged the draft, war is like a computer game and he can play The Commander-in-Chief and declare with a grin after the fall of Baghdad, **"mission**

accomplished"; he wants Osama bin Laden **"dead or alive"**; and in an unpresidential manner challenges Al Qaeda and Sunni resistance to **"bring it on"**. Was the mission accomplished or had the unfolding of American and Iraqi tragedy just begun? Has Osama bin Laden been killed or caught or is he laughing in his 'cave'? And as to the unstatesman like swaggering cowboy, bar room brawl style dare of "bring it on", he got it but paid for it with the lives of sons and husbands of others, not his or **Cheney's or Rumsfeld's**.

US attack on Iraq was a criminal act financed with US tax payer dollars. The blood of thousands of American dead and tens of thousands wounded and tens of thousands of Iraqi dead and millions put in jeopardy is on the hands of this President. Even if in November the Democrats win both houses, they do not have the moral standing or spine to impeach Bush, which he should be. Republicans had gone after Clinton for no grounds at all. Isn't there another party that could try this administration in The World Court? Does the fear of impeachment over the treatment of prisoners by the CIA, under explicit orders of this President, on the territory of rogue states paying obeisance to this American administration have anything to do with his quest to modify the Geneva Convention to shield him for violations of Title III, especially when his own Supreme Court had ruled that Geneva Convention did apply to Bush's prisoners? Wouldn't **"Iraq-gate"** and **"torture-gate"** be more in this nation's interest than was the "Monica-gate"? First denying that CIA had torture chambers in other countries and then admitting to their presence after bringing the prisoners to Guantanamo Bay, after adverse ruling by the Supreme Court, Bush prefers to use harmless sounding phrase **"alternative set of procedures"** used in their interrogation. For massive killings of civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq the phrase is **"collateral damage"**. To bring the gravity of the situation home let us create two scenarios. Firstly, let President Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld spend a day or two at **Abu Ghraib** prison and have themselves subjected to these alternative set of procedures and see if they violate human dignity. That would be a sure way of bringing **'clarity'** to what Bush calls **'vagueness'** in Geneva Convention. Secondly, in a family of four in Iraq the parents and a younger sister of a teenage Iraqi girl were killed by drunken US soldiers before they raped and killed her too. Bush's is also a four member family. If the same treatment is meted out to them would that be considered collateral damage or a horrendous crime? In both cases it should be the latter and responsibility for bringing that situation around will rest with the one person who triggered the chain of events by attacking Iraq in violation of all International laws and against the wishes of the United Nations.



There is no doubt in any reasonable mind that this administration's whole argument to go to war in Iraq was based on falsehood garnished with manipulated intelligence; and when **Colin Powell** was making a case before the Security Council to go to war against Iraq he was lying and he knew he was lying. That is why he had **CIA Chief George Tenet**, who along with **Cheney** was a willing accomplice in this crime of manipulating intelligence to attack a UN member nation without UN authorization, sit behind him. After Tenet was done doing his dirty work Bush thanked him by awarding him a civilian medal of service. All those Congressmen and Senators from both parties, who voted for this war, ought to have resigned. Now they are equally guilty. There are reports in the press that Bush administration is seriously planning air strike against Iran's nuclear power facilities and its encouragement to Israel to go after Hezbollah was a

trial run geared towards that goal. Hezbollah survived and perhaps so did the long range rockets that could reach Tel Aviv, to be unleashed only if and when US tax payer financed bombs fall on Tehran. Iraq war has already benefited Iran beyond their wildest dreams; turned United States into an international pariah; and an attack will further improve Iran's position in the Middle East and the world. **Colin Powell** has finally mustered some moral courage and in a letter to **Sen. John McCain** who has teamed up with Senators **John Warner and Lindsey Graham**, all Republicans, in opposing Bush's attempt to change the Geneva Convention Title III, come out with the statement that **"the world is beginning to doubt the moral basis of our fight against terrorism"**, leading to the following frown and statement from Bush:

"It's unacceptable to think that there's any kind of comparison between the behavior of the United States of America and the action of Islamic extremists," President Bush says at Friday's (Sept. 15, 2006) news conference.

Is it really? Ask those on the receiving end of the US behavior.

At the United Nations he talked down to the people of Iran and Syria. He lectured the Iranians about their government squandering their resources on terrorists and implied that they are not a democracy. Having squandered hundreds of billions of this country's dollars in throwing his weight around in Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and itching to do the same in Iran it is a case of a ***pot calling kettle black***. Iran is not a democracy but Israel is where non-Jews are second class citizens?

Population make up in USA is rapidly changing. Without blind US support Israel is nothing. If Israel continues on this course of arrogance there is no doubt in this writer's mind that a day will come, may be in not too distant future, when history will repeat itself. If Israeli leaders are wise they would beg the Arab countries to once again offer to recognize it in exchange for withdrawing from the occupied Arab lands, an offer it had arrogantly refused only a few years ago. Solution is political not military. Otherwise, in the next round the corrupt states and lap dogs of USA, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt won't be there to condemn Hezbollah or its successor, just as Hezbollah wasn't there when Sharon the butcher authorized and watched the massacre of Palestinian women and children in Beirut by the Lebanese Christians. Israel fully expected for Christians to rise against Hezbollah and greet them as liberators just as Bush crowd expected to be greeted as liberators in Iraq; neither transpired.

Bush crowd lives in a world of make believe, totally divorced from reality: ***'Iraqis will greet them as liberators'***, not as invaders and occupiers; rush to announce ***'Mission Accomplished'*** when in reality the troubles were just starting; ***'Situation in Iraq is improving'*** when the Iraqis say they are in a civil war; ***'Hezbollah has lost'*** when not only the rest of the world, Tony Blair excluded, but also even the Israelis hold the opposite view. **Some leaders create great nations while others bring them into decline. Bush Blair duo is doing it to USA and UK.**

In his column in Washington Post, Peter Baker writes, "For 10 minutes, the talk show host grilled his guests about whether George Bush's mental weakness is damaging America's credibility at home and abroad. For 10 minutes, the caption across the bottom of the television screen read, IS BUSH AN IDIOT. But the host was no liberal media elitist. He was Joe Scarborough, a former Republican congressman turned MSNBC political pundit. And his answer to the captioned question was hardly "no". While other Presidents have been called stupid, he said: 'I think George Bush is in a league by himself'." George Bush may or may not be stupid or an idiot but he has squandered world's good will generated by the tragic events of 9/11, brought disgrace to the office of Presidency, lost friends in the world, multiplied the enemies of the United States and in the process did Bin Laden's dirty work and made it possible for him to achieve what he could not under Saddam Hussein's Iraq i.e. establish Al Qaida's strong presence in Iraq. When Bush claimed Iraq/Al Qaida connection to make a case for attack on Iraq he was lying. His actions have now made it a reality. Secretary of State **Condoleezza Rice** got offended when the **Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez** called **Bush** the **"devil"** during his speech to the **United Nations** and termed

those remarks “*not becoming for a head of state*”. She is right but they equally apply to her boss, perhaps more so.

When Nanak spoke about ‘*hlemi raj*’ (benevolent rule of justice for all) **Babar** was ravaging India. Bush is the current Babar ravaging Iraq himself and having Israel ravage Lebanon. For the sake of the United States and well being of the entire world **Bush** should abandon *his vicious God* engaged in mortal feud with **Bin Laden’s God** and pay heed to **Guru Nanak** and practice ‘*In God We Trust*’ and substitute the Sikh prayer term ‘*God Bless Us All*’ for ‘*God Bless America*’. *O God of all humanity please save us from gods of Bush, Bin Laden and Pope Benedict XVI* who recently quoted with admiration the words of a Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Paleologus to cowardly describe his personal feelings about Islam: “*Show me just what Muhammad brought that was new and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached*”.

This country was built upon individual freedom and pursuit of happiness, a symbol of liberty, a heaven on earth. Hope is what it should be exporting. **Under Bush/Cheney it is exporting terror** and its response to terror was with terror, not with justice. In pursuing his own terror he made his own rules. May history judge him correctly?

Things are not any better in the **Sikh Nation. Mann, Badal or Amarinder**, none of these leaders or any others whose names are almost always in the news, is going to bring any changes in the lives of Sikhs in Panjab let alone anywhere else. Recently announced **Second Gurdwara Sudhar Lehar** by various Akali factions led by **Mr. Manjit Singh Calcutta** is a fraud. For almost a quarter century, hand in hand with Tohra, Manjit Singh Calcutta has done everything in his power to stop Gurdwara reform. Latest example was his despicable attempt at no holds barred opposition to the *October 26th 2003 World Sikh Convention in Mohali*. (SB Dec.2003). He was also responsible for publishing at SGPC’s expense the very book that Singh Sabha Lehar had removed from the Gurdwaras, “*Gurbilas Patshahi 6*”. As to the head of corruption in Sikhi we publish the May-August 2006 Editorial again in this issue. Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

The Sikh Bulletin May-August 2006

VEDANTI – AN ENEMY OF SIKHI



“Akal Takhat Sahib is the most supreme seat of the Sikh nation. All Sikhs owe their loyalty solely to this throne.” (Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer). It should be emphasized that loyalty is to the ‘Institution of Akal Takhat Sahib’, not to the caretaker. Our current leadership, headed by Vedanti, by its shameful conduct has damaged this Institution but other than isolated cries of concern by a few individuals the vast majority of people calling themselves Sikhs and all the ‘Sikh’ Organizations are oblivious to the undermining of the very basic principles of Guru Nanak’s message that Akal Takhat is supposed to uphold.

‘Jathedar’ Vedanti has graced pages of The Sikh Bulletin many times since his appointment by Badal after the unceremonious sacking of his predecessor, Puran Singh, on March 28, 2000, largely because of his fraternization with unsavoury characters like Nanaksaria ‘Sant Baba’ Amar Singh Barundi. (*See SB May, June, Nov. 2000; June & Oct. 2001; Feb. & Aug. 2002.*) and ‘Sant Baba’ Daljit Singh Chicago. It did not take us long to see through him and in the June 2000 issue of the SB we identified him as a ‘*Trojan*

Horse'. He has proven us right, beyond our expectations. He has consistently tried to present the scums of Sikhi as its religious leaders. Unlike the tradition established by our Gurus who practiced what they preached, Vedanti says one thing but does exactly opposite.

In the Tribune dated Oct. 30/2001, dateline Amritsar Oct.29, under the banner, "Drive against dera system", Vedanti is quoted as saying, "...meanwhile, Jathedar Vedanti appealed to the Sikh sangat to oppose those who were running deras and adopting practices which went against the tenets and principles of Sikhism. He said whenever any act of religious misconduct came to light the matter should be reported to the Akal Takhat secretariat" ... "Khalsa Panth had the potential to take care of its enemy".

Khalsa Panth may have the potential to take care of its enemies but it certainly has not shown the ability to recognize them. Most recently four such enemies were back, again, in this country – Tarlochan Singh, caretaker of Kesarh Sahib, who played a major role in protecting Daljit Singh Chicago from a punishment harsher than listening to kirtan for his transgressions already well publicized in the media; Iqbal Singh, caretaker Patna Sahib, who considers himself superior to the caretaker at Akal Takhat Sahib and justifies his two marriages on the fallacy of two (or more) marriages of Guru Gobind Singh; Joginder Singh Vedanti, caretaker Akal Takhat Sahib; and his tail, Ranjit Singh, granthi at Gurdwara Sees Ganj. They were here at the invitation of Satpal Singh Khalsa, Son-in-Law of Yogi Bhajan, the deceased leader of Sikh Dharma in the western world, who used Sikhism as a prop for his business practices in this country. To understand the true character of this leader of Sikh Dharma, copies of various law suits against him can be had from The Sikh Bulletin by those engaged in research in matters concerning Sikhi.

Vedanti speaks against derawalas, yet he graces their deras with his presence. **Daljit Singh of Chicago**, a one time Giani in Chandigarh and Baba in Chicago became an instant 'Sant' after being blessed by Vedanti's visit to his dera, in May 2001, a visit that was vigorously opposed by the sangat of Chicago. (**SB June 2001**). During his same visit we presented him with a dossier on **Amar Singh**, a world class con artist and congenital liar, from whom he had already received a siropa in New Delhi on Nov.16, 2000. Not only did we not receive any response from him to our dossier, he lead a delegation of likes of Avtar Singh Hitt, then President of DGPC, Talwandi and others to Amar Singh's dera in London in August 2001 and he has been there many times since then. While there he ignored the pleas of a Gursikh to be taken to meet some of the victims of Amar Singh.

Remember his public statement about any religious misconduct to be brought to his attention? Among the first to be brought to his attention was the moral misconduct of **Baba Dhanwant Singh**, the rape by him of the daughter of one of his devotees. Vedanti had assigned the investigative task to his wife's brother, **Prithipal Singh Sandhu**, who was then his SGPC paid personal assistant. According to reports by the **Shiromani Khalsa Panchayat**, by accepting a bribe of several thousand rupees, Sandhu exonerated the Baba completely. Public hue and cry that ensued resulted in Sandhu losing his job, ostensibly, not for any misconduct but for being overage for SGPC job. Thanks to Panjab Police and Indian Judiciary Baba Dhanwant Singh went to jail for committing rape. For some unexplained reason, even though Prithipal Singh Sandhu is no longer an employee of SGPC he still accompanies Vedanti on his foreign jaunts and press refers to him as Vedanti's PA. More recently when the Sangat of Palatine Gurdwara took the case of Daljit Singh Chicago to Vedanti he justifies the very mild punishment (He does not even call it punishment; he terms it sewa.) by stating that after listening to both sides i.e. sangat of Palatine Gurdwara and Daljit Singh, and affidavits of the Bibi in question and her husband, Daljit Singh was punished for lying to the media. Obviously Vedanti chose to believe Daljit Singh's second explanation, after his on the air denial of his or his van ever being at the Motel, for being with a married woman in the middle of the night i.e. he was counselling the woman. Amar Singh's standard excuse was also always the same.

Punjabi Weekly 'Panjab Times' of April 29, 2006 carries highlights of 'Jathedars' latest visit, reported by Amolak Singh. At Milwaukie's Brookfield Gurdwara, where they were invited by the "wealthy Sikh

businessman S. Darshan Singh Dhaliwal”, (obviously by inviting these people he is not using his wealth to help the cause of Sikhi), Vedanti urged the sangat to not to buy, read nor support those who create ‘*dubidha*’ (ਦੁਬਿਧਾ) in the panth and question centuries old practices and call ‘Jathedars’ *pujaris*.. According to the reporter, although Vedanti did not name names, clear targets of his comments were two individuals that he had excommunicated, Joginder Singh, Editor and Publisher of Spokesman and Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana.

Dictionary defines ‘*dubidha*’ as double mindedness, doubt, dilemma and quandary. Those who have read and understood the writings of these two gentlemen with open mind do not agree with Vedanti. They say that any ‘*dubidha*’ has been created by Vedanti and people like him. One of the first acts after being appointed caretaker of Akal Takhat, Vedanti issued a directive banning any discussion about so called ‘*Dasam Granth*’. While people like *Baba Virsa Singh* were free to propagate Dasam Granth right under Vedanti’s nose, Sikh institutions like Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh under *Dr. Kharak Singh* chose to obey the anti-gurmat order by Vedanti.

Vedanti’s real *dubidha*’ (ਦੁਬਿਧਾ) causing work was ‘*Gurbilas Patshahi 6*’, a book which is basically a ‘*kanjar kahani*’. It had disappeared from the Gurdwaras under the influence of Singh Sabha movement but resuscitated in June 1998 on Guru Hargobind Sahib’s 400th birth anniversary as a ‘gift’ to the Panth, under the editorship of Vedanti, with SGPC funds facilitated by Manjit Singh Calcutta. (See SB May & June 2000 for detailed analysis of this book). Vedanti’s most cherished wish was to see the resumption of *katha* of this book in all the Gurdwaras.

Yet another instance of his *dubidha*’ (ਦੁਬਿਧਾ) creation is his hypocrisy about *Hukamnamas*. Upon being appointed successor to Puran Singh he voided all *Hukamnamas* issued by Puran Singh but not those by Ranjit Singh Ghataura, including the notorious ‘sit-on-the-floor-for-Langar’ *hukamnama*. This, even in the light of the fact that on April 25, 1935 the five member ‘*Dharmik Sihakar Committee*’ consisting of S. Kahn Singh Nabha, Prof. Jodh Singh, Prof. Teja Singh, Prof. Ganga Singh and Jathedar Mohan Singh had passed a resolution allowing Sikhs in Europe and America, where there is tradition to sit on chairs inside places of worship, to sit on chairs even inside Darbar hall by raising the platform for parkash of Guru Granth Sahib.

When Amolak Singh, the reporter for Panjab Times, pointed out Vedanti created ‘*dubidha*’ (ਦੁਬਿਧਾ) in matter of Langar *hukamnama* by going to Didar Singh Bains’ house in Yuba City but not to the Tierra Buena Gurdwara where he is president, because of the chairs, although Iqbal Singh of Patna Sahib has no compunction about going to the Gurdwara himself, and on this trip laying the foundation stone of a Gurdwara in Lodi, California, with chairs in the Langar hall, Vedanti confidently asserted that at Lodi Gurdwara the sangat had resolved to remove the chairs by *jaikara* (ਬੈਲੇ ਸੇ ਨਿਹਾਲ...) and Tierra Buena Gurdwara will do so soon. We have news for Vedanti. Sangat at Lodi Gurdwara overruled the management’s decision to placate Vedanti and put the chairs right back. Same has been happening at Tierra Buena Gurdwara for years.

Recently Vedanti has come out with a ‘*Gurmata*’ giving choice to all excommunicated persons to rejoin the Sikh fold by January 13, 2007 without undergoing any ‘*tankhah*’ provided they accept the authority of Akal Takhat. Problem is that Vedanti has neither the legal nor moral authority to issue a ‘*Gurmata*’; nor does he, or any so called jathedar, has any authority to issue a *hukamnama*. Two people ‘excommunicated’ by him and several ‘excommunicated’ by Ranjit Singh Ghataura in Canada do not consider themselves ‘excommunicated’ in the eyes of the Granth and the Panth; nor do they deny the supremacy of Akal Takhat. What these rare Sikh individuals are challenging is the abuse of the power of Akal Takhat by undeserving people like Vedanti who behave as peons of the politicians who appointed them.

Vedanti talks about the sanctity of centuries old practices i.e. only three centuries since the Guru period. Because he is Vedanti, expert in Vedas, and not Giani, expert in Guru Granth Sahib, should we excuse him for not knowing that Guru Nanak had preached for discarding tens of centuries old practices because they were an abomination? The biggest and most important such practice was the *janeu* ceremony for him which he rejected when he was only a child.

Just the other day I was listening to a radio talk show with the President of American Bar Association as the guest. Conversation was about the conduct of the Bush administration in the war on terror and scandals at Abu Ghraib, Haditha, Hamandiya, Ishaqi and Guantanamo Bay. With reference to the detainees at Guantanamo Bay his comments were that the administration's conduct there is clearly not "American". Vedanti Ji, even though you do not like to be called '*pujari*' that is precisely what you and your companions are and you have transformed Sikhi to pre Guru Nanak period and destroyed the contributions and sacrifices of Ten Gurus and countless Sikhs. The pretense of Sikhi that you make is not 'Sikhi'. I would like nothing better than for you to excommunicate me from your Panth because my Panth and your Panth have nothing in common. In your Panth the GGS, although held in high esteem by your way of thinking, is actually shown disrespect because you have come to treat it just as another deity as a Hindu idol and thus worshipped as such and like the Hindu idols *sangat* comes for its '*darshan*' and just like Hindu idols it is taken out for '*darshan*' in the form of a *nagar kirtan*. My Panth considers it a treasure-trove of knowledge to be read, comprehended and made part of daily life. GGS makes no distinction between Hindus and Muslims (and Sikhs, Christians and Buddhists for that matter) and the gender but you forbid Mardana's descendents and women from doing *kirtan* and other *sewa* at Darbar Sahib. The list of your transgressions is unending.

Finally, one wonders which group is the worst enemy of Sikhi, the holier than thou clowns who frequently come out of India or the moneyed people in Diaspora who pay for them to visit their homes and Gurdwaras. Unfortunately the vast majority of Sikhs, both in India and in Diaspora, are totally unconcerned about both of these groups.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
EDITORIAL COMMENTS
[From November-December 2006 Sikh Bulletin]

The following was an Editorial in the November 2006 issue of the Capsis Hotel's magazine in Thessaloniki, Greece:

Dear friends,

Allow me this time to recount a short fairy-tale, without commenting or further explaining. Once upon a time, there was an "island" where **Happiness, Sorrow, Knowledge, Love, Wealth, Arrogance** and "others" used to live. One day they found out that the island would sink and they all went to their "boats" and began to leave. **LOVE** was the only one to be left behind. She wished to remain there until the last moment. When the "island" began to sink, **LOVE** asked for help and seeing **Wealth** asked him: "Can you take me with you?" "No, I can't. I have gold and silver in my boat and I have no space". Passing by next to him was **Arrogance**: "Please help me", **LOVE** said to him. "I can't. You are wet and you will dirty my beautiful boat. **Happiness** was the last to go by. However, she was so happy that she did not hear **LOVE** pleading for help. Suddenly, **LOVE** heard the voice of an old man she did not know: "Come here, I'll take you with me", he said. When they reached land, the man left in a hurry and **LOVE** did not have the opportunity to thank him. **Knowledge**, who was that man who helped me?", **LOVE** asked. **Time**, replied **Knowledge**. "And why did **Time** help me?" **LOVE** asked again. Then, **Knowledge** smiled and said to

her: "Only Time can understand the importance of LOVE in life".

A bientot, Lena Kapsi

The significance of importance of "Time" struck this writer with reference to the current state of Sikh affairs. Gurus devoted ten generations to nurture the tree of Sikhi, establish its roots, see it blossom and left their original writings. Not only that, the Tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, especially ordered the Sikhs to recognize only **Sri Guru Granth Sahib**, and none other, as their perpetual Guru. Sikh scholars do not tire of making a strong distinction between Sikhi and other world religions that are attributed to single individuals whose writings were penned from memory long after they were gone from the world stage. But what is puzzling is that although the other religions have also seen distortions and misinterpretations of their original teachings, they pale when compared to the distortions and misinterpretations that have crept into Sikhism.

Other religions also tolerate research into arriving at the truth after cutting through the fog of distortions over centuries. In contrast Sikhism is barely 500 years old, 200 years of which were the Guru period. Sikh organizations, on the other hand, resort to violence and murder even to thwart research. Not only that, the most outspoken champions of those distortions and opposing any reformation in Sikhi also claim to be the Guru designated guardians of Sikhi. I am talking about two organizations in particular who consider themselves '*thekedars*' of Sikhi, **Akhand Kirtani Jatha** and **Damdami Taksal**. Until these organizations are literally banished from Sikhi, Guru Nanak's message is not going to see the light of day.

These two organizations have taken on the task of denying, with threats and violence, any stage to those who are capable and willing to bring Guru Nanak's message to the sangat on one hand and propagate and spread the filth in '*kanjar kahani*' and '*kanjar kavita*' in so called '**Dasam Granth**' on the other. Then there are multitudes of others such as '**Radhaswamis**' and '**Nanaksarias**' who pick a word, a phrase or a whole shabad from Gurbani and plant it like a chip in the gullible's brain and establish their control for life. In case of Radhaswamis the recipient of '*naam*' is supposed to keep it secret even from other members of the family. *When would the Time come for the significance and importance of Guru Nanak's message to be realized and practiced upon by the rest of the mankind even if the Sikhs, to whom it was entrusted, opt out? I hope in my life Time.*

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

**"THE DIVINE 'WORD' MANIFESTS ITSELF IN AMBROSIAL BANI
AND THE GURU ORIENTATED PEOPLE PRESENT IT TO OTHERS FOR HEARING."**

[From January-February 2007 Sikh Bulletin]

ਸਬਦੇ ਉਪਜੈ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਣੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖਿ ਸੁਣਾਵਣਿਆ (ਮ:੩ ਪੰਨਾ ੧੨੫)

Mankind is one but it speaks in many tongues. Bani in Guru Granth Sahib is also in many languages although the script is Gurmukhi. It can be written in Devnagri script without translation and be understood by Hindi speaking people to the same degree as the Gurmukhi script version is understood by the Panjabi speaking people. That represents a small percentage of the humanity. How do we reach the rest? To address this issue we published four articles, including the Editorial, in the November-December 2006 issue of the Sikh Bulletin on how to make the message in GGS universal. Extracts from two articles are presented below:

Devinderjit Singh, St. Catherine's College, Oxford wrote: "What would be most helpful, in my view, is the availability of 'commentaries' in a variety of languages (English, Chinese, Spanish, Arabic and so on) along the lines of Professor Sahib Singh's *magnum opus* in Punjabi, 'Sri Guru Granth Darpan'. Here each

word (albeit its transliteration) should be translated one at a time, notes provided to explain the background and context of any references used in a Hymn (e.g. Indian mythology, Hindu and Muslim beliefs and rituals, Yogic practice etc.) and then the overall message of the Verse described in a narrative style. This is a mammoth task, and needs a dedicated group of individuals with the relevant knowledge and skills to work on it together for a number of years.”

Prof. Gurtej Singh wrote: “It (GGS) defies being classified as the scripture of a particular religious denomination but tenderly and most profoundly caters to the human heart in search of an intimate relationship with the Ultimate Reality... The Order of the Khalsa, the finished product of the Sikh movement, was created by the incomparable Tenth Guru to embody the teachings of the *Guru Granth*, and to be the ultimate guardian of the Truth of the *Guru Granth*. Order of the Khalsa was to perform this sacred duty until at least the rest of humankind generally became aware of its message. As it now appears, the Khalsa neglected its primary duty and pursued matters immediately relevant to survival. Now in the year two thousand and seven it obviously has no such urgency. The unfinished task is beckoning the *panth* and the Order of the Khalsa.”

There are many translations of GGS into English and some other languages but they are all individual efforts and have serious flaws. For example in one version bhagat **Kabir's** '*gur gur meetha-deena*' is translated as '**God gave me molasses**'. In the past several months I have come across two instances where a chance introduction to Quran (in English) led to the conversion, of a famous Christian musician in England and a recently elected member of US Congress, to Islam. I wonder if at the same time these two gentlemen were exposed to a proper translation of GGS what the outcome would be. We have a donor who is committed to finance the effort. What we need are a group of people well versed in Gurbani and its grammar, all the languages in GGS and English. If you can help please volunteer and/or recommend someone you know.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL DOWN TO EARTH COMMON SENSE SIMPLICITY OF GURU NANAK'S MESSAGE

[Editorial from March-April 2007 Sikh Bulletin]

This Vaisakhi day I wish we were celebrating Guru Nanak's birthday by spreading his true teachings rather than the hinduised version being preached and practised in the Gurdwaras today; but knowing all the world's Gurdwaras and the Sikh religious leadership in Amritsar have already celebrated it in 'Katak' (October) I am obviously living in a fool's paradise.

The other day when I read that a researcher in Italy has probably identified the person whose portrait is the famous Mona Lisa, I could not help but marvel at the Roman civilization and its legacy. This researcher found the birth and death records of the subject of Mona Lisa. She was born ten years after Guru Nanak's birth. Legacy our Guru's have left us is the GGS. But what have we done? We have accepted a rival Granth, 'Sri Dasam Guru Granth Sahib Ji' without questioning its historical authenticity or examining its very controversial contents with the touch stone of Gurbani. A non-practicing attorney, D. S. Gill, even has the stupidity of asserting that he had difficulty understanding Gurbani in GGS until he happened to read Dasam Granth first. He would have us believe that the key to Gurbani is not the writings of Bhai Gurdas but what some of us call '*kanjar kahani*' and '*kanjar kavita*'.

He is even a bigger fool than I thought when I first got to know him in 1995. And why would the leadership not correct this error about the birth of Guru Nanak? It has become the accepted practice '*maryada-ban-chucki-hai*' so why upset the apple cart? Not even for a moment do they think that they are

talking about a person who threw away centuries old *maryada*. At a very young age he refused to wear the janeu; discarded the caste system; preached against idol worship; recognized the equality of mankind; asserted the equality of men and women; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell, incarnation, transmigration, 84 lakh juni, *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses; and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*'. **We have neither Ten Commandments nor Sharia. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind. Simple as that!**

One example of increasing brahmanical influence on Sikhi was in the Sacramento Bee news paper recently – the controversy about Guru Nanak's picture in a California School textbook. But the opposition by some members of the Sikh community was not to the presence of the picture but the version of the picture. They wanted to replace the version selected by the publisher according to their standards of authenticity by a more recent version that they preferred. **For a Sikh 'gur murat gur shabad hai'. Rest is 'moorakh jhagra'.**

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

HIGHJACKING OF GURU GRANTH SAHIB

[Editorial from November-December 2007 Sikh Bulletin]

A couple of months ago some self appointed 'thekedars' of Sikhi beat up members of the publishing house of Jiwan Singh and Chattar Singh of Amritsar, Taliban style. Jiwan Singh and Chattar Singh have been publishing GGS birs and other Sikh religious literature for a very long time. Unfortunately they have also been publishing the fake Sikh literature as well, for example, Sri Guru Dasam Granth Sahib. But that is not why they were beaten up. Their crime was transporting Birs in a van. They were also accused of shipping Birs by sea in containers. In fact this prompted the Sikh establishment in Amritsar to send a fact finding team to Bombay to inspect containers. However, there was no mention in the press of the fact that the Malik brothers of Vancouver, Canada and Los Angeles, California have been importing Birs in the containers, along with their other merchandise, ever since they got into import business decades ago.

In 1992 I had brought a Bir of GGS from The Sikh Missionary Society of UK. It traveled with me as a carry on. I am certain that the Birs that The Sikh Missionary Society of UK distributes also were brought to UK on common carrier. It is also likely that they were published by Jiwan Singh and Chatter Singh, because, as I have heard, to get a Bir from SGPC five bodies have to go to fetch it. In 1993 we ended up 'loaning' our Bir, temporarily we thought, to the Thath that one of the scoundrel Nanaksaria Thug 'Sant Babas', Amar Singh Barundi, established in Roseville, California. Two other families loaned, temporarily, a harmonium and tabla. None of us got them back because this Thug was not in the religious business. His business was to con people in the guise of religion. As the recent reports indicate even the old man Khushwant Singh has been duped by him; or it is also likely that Khushwant Singh is doing the dirty work for the RSS by promoting scoundrels like Amar Singh Barundi to malign the faith founded by Guru Nanak.

Eventually in 1995 we replaced that Bir with the one we obtained from Satnam Education Trust of Vancouver, Canada, operated by Bhai Jiwan Singh and S. Ripudaman Singh Malik. It had traveled in a container from Bombay to where it had traveled by train from Amritsar or Delhi and from Vancouver transported to California in a Chevy van. But to the establishment in Amritsar that is showing disrespect to the Birs of GGS. However, there is no disrespect if the same establishment publishes anti-Gurmat

literature such as blasphemy ‘Gurbilas Patshahi 6’, distorts Sikh History and accepts ‘kanjar kahani’ and ‘kanjar kavita’ as ‘Sri Guru Dasam Granth Sahib’.

Prof. Darshan Singh, former Jathedar Akal Takhat, has made his contribution to this controversy by declaring that the Holy Birs could not be sent through shipment. One wonders how he got the Bir for his Gurdwara in Toronto and how did the turn of the Twentieth century Gurdwaras in Vancouver and Stockton got their Birs.

My attorney, who won our law suit against Amar Singh, was Jewish. I asked him if it would be possible for me to get a copy of their religious scripture, The Torah. I got it from their library, shelved with other books. I also found out that The Torah that they use for the service in the Synagogue is not in the book form. Scripture is hand written on sheep skin scroll and when not being used, is wrapped in silks and housed in an elaborate niche behind the Rabbi’s podium much the same way as we wrap GGS in Silks and place it on a palki. I already had the bible, which is readily available in all the hotel rooms in North America, and in 1999 picked up a copy of Buddhist scriptures from a hotel in Singapore. To complete my scriptural collection I needed a copy of The Holy Quran. I found that in the store of a Pakistani friend of mine stacked on a shelf with other books, movie and music tapes.

Thanks to the managements of SGPC and DSGMC, Sikh religious scholars like Prof. Darshan Singh, multitude of uncouth and illiterate clergy and uncaring ‘bhed-chaal’ attitude of ‘educated’ Sikhs in Panjab and Diaspora, Guru Nanak’s message is not only distorted, it has become a crime to publish it. According to The Tribune of December 6, 2007, *“The Punjab Cabinet today approved the law for prevention of printing, publication, storage, distribution and sale of Birs of Guru Granth Sahib by private persons except the SGPC or those authorized by it. The ‘Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ordinance 2007’ approved by the Cabinet will be converted into an Act through presentation of a Bill in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha starting on Monday (December 17, 2007)”*. Don’t be surprised if the first outfit authorized by the SGPC to print and distribute the Birs of GGS is the RSS, licensed to take liberties with the text of the GGS as they have already done in case of so called Dasam Granth, Gurbilas Patshahi 6 and Sikh History.

How sad that a message with universal appeal transcending boundaries of traditional religions, race and geography has been hijacked by politicians and priests (that we are not supposed to have). That which was supposed to be read, heard and deliberated upon has been turned into an idol to be only seen and worshipped. Like the Hindu practice of ‘Devi Darshan’ we too take GGS out on a procession for a Darshan. Like Hindu ‘jagrata’ we too sit through the night listening to ‘ran savai’ kirtan. Just as the Brahmin had forbidden the low caste even to hear the Hindu scriptures we are on target to making the reading and listening to Bani in GGS as the prerogative of the select few.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
A SPECIAL ISSUE
DASAM GRANTH CONTROVERSY
[Editorial from January-February 2008 Sikh Bulletin]

Something extraordinary happened on March 28, 2000. That day, the Executive Committee of the SGPC, under the Chairmanship of Bibi Jagir Kaur, unceremoniously sacked the then Jathedar of Akal Takhat, Puran Singh. His claim to fame, among other things, was to declare Sikh Gurus as the progeny of mythical sons of Ram, Luv and Kush. At the same meeting Joginder Singh Vedanti was appointed acting Jathedar of Akal Takhat. He promised to perform his duties **“as per established maryada”**. **But he was lying.** We soon learned that he was the Editor of the blasphemous book ‘Gurbilas Patshahi 6’. On May 14, 2000 he banned any discussion of Dasam Granth (see p.2). He promised to appoint a committee of

Sikh scholars to critically examine the contents of this Granth and resolve the controversy for good. As of this date there is no such committee.

His ‘**hukam**’ was in fact a ban against those who were critical of this Granth. Dr. Kharak Singh Mann of Institute of Sikh Studies immediately complied and banned the publication of any articles on this in the Institute’s magazine even though he had co-edited with S. Daljeet Singh a book ‘**Sikhism: Its Philosophy and History**’ that had two articles critical of this Granth, one each by **S. Daljeet Singh and Prof. Gurtej Singh**. Both of those articles are reproduced in this issue. Pro Dasam Granthias like **Lamba, D. S. Gill and Virsa Singh** were free to preach Dasam Granth. **We saw through Vedanti and declared him a ‘Trojan Horse’ in the June 2000 issue of The Sikh Bulletin and demanded his dismissal.** Of course that did not materialize.

Now Mr. Lamba tells us that Vedanti overturned his own ‘**hukam**’ on Nov. 27, 2006 so that Dasam Granthias can blunt the ‘**propaganda**’ against Dasam Granth by the ‘**trouble makers**’. But the Akal Takhat letterhead letter that he circulates (**p.41**) has neither the date nor the letter Number. Mr. Lamba has the uncanny ability though to speak for Akal Takhat Jathedar. Several months before S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana was actually excommunicated and his books banned, Mr. Lamba had released on the internet an Akal Takhat Hukamnama to that effect but in reality that resolution was not passed that day because of opposition from within the group of five and intervention by several concerned Sikh scholars who opposed that action of the Jathedar.

Mr. Lamba was joined by several others at Sacramento’s Bradshaw Road Gurdwara on Feb. 23rd for a seminar on Dasam Granth. All the speakers were vehement that ‘entire’ Dasam Granth was the composition of Guru Gobind Singh and the people who are denigrating Dasam Granth are ultimately targeting Guru Granth Sahib.

One of the speakers was **Gurinder S. Mann** from Leicester, UK. Dasam Granth was the topic of his Master’s thesis in 2000 and like scores of other graduates of Hindu and Patiala Universities he ‘proved’ entire Dasam Granth to be the creation of Guru Gobind Singh. His entire presentation was based on comments on projected pictures. There was uncanny resemblance of his presentation to the one by **Dr. Jeevan Singh Deol**, [whom I affectionately call ‘**McLeodian grand student**’ because he is a student of **Dr. Harjot Oberoi**,] at the October 2, 2000 meeting of The Smithsonian that I attended (**See p. 35**).

Bradshaw Road Gurdwara has lately come under the control of **AKJ** and they sponsored this seminar, along with Damdami Taksal, although under the name of Khalsa Alliance, perhaps their new ‘sanitized’ name. Dr. Parhar, the President of this Gurdwara and Dr. Cheema, the stage secretary for the seminar had both asked to speak at one of our seminars at the Roseville Gurdwara many years ago where they attacked our efforts at reforming the Sikh practices in the Gurdwaras in their speeches in side while their comrades, under the valiant command of **Navjot Khalsa**, raised slogans of ‘death to Kala Afghana, death to Prof. Gurtej Singh and death to Shergill, outside while committing vandalism.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

PUNJABI & MONGOLIAN?

[Editorial from July-August 2008 Sikh Bulletin]

Recent UNESCO report on languages concluded that languages of the world are disappearing at an alarming rate; “...**most languages disappear because their speakers voluntarily abandon them**”; and **included Punjabi among them**. That did not come as a surprise to me. Way back in 1960 I had travelled through Pakistan on my overland trip from New Delhi to Seattle, USA. Although everybody I came in contact with in Pakistan, from Lahore to the Iranian border, spoke beautiful Punjabi and only Punjabi,

their official language was Urdu. Later when I visited Punjab (India) in 2001, after an absence of 25 years, I had to ask myself why did Sikhs in Punjab agitate for Punjabi scuba if they were not going to use the language? [See p. 2]. But just imagine my surprise as I turned to page 137 while recently reading “Marco Polo: From Venice to Xandau” by Laurence Bergreen.

This was my surprise: An alphabet adopted by **Kublai Khan** in 1269 to be used for transcribing all the languages of his vast empire that extended from China Sea to the Caspian Sea was Punjabi. Arrangement of letters is top to bottom, unlike Gurmukhi script which is left to right, but sound sequence is the same except for the missing fourth consonant in each row. This alphabet was devised by a Tibetan monk, **Matidhvaja Sribhadra**, in Kublai Khan’s court at the latter’s request. It is obvious that the monk was well aware of the use of Gurmukhi script in Punjab. He did, however, adapt it for use for transcribing sounds specific to various languages in Kublai Khan’s empire. It is inconceivable that it is a mere coincidence. Relevant text from that book appears on **page 2**.

Hardev Singh Shergill

Consonants				Vowels		
ᳵ ka	ᳶ tta	᳷ pa	᳸ zha	᳹ ha	ᳺ i	
᳼ kha	᳽ ttha	᳾ pha	᳿ za	ᳺ 'a	᳻ u	
᳾ ga	᳿ dda	ᳺ ba	᳻ -a	᳼ qu	᳽ e	
ᳺ nga	᳻ nna	᳼ ma	᳽ ya	᳾ xa	᳿ o	
᳻ ca	᳼ ta	᳽ tsa	᳾ ra	᳿ fa	ᳺ ee	
᳽ cha	᳾ tha	᳿ tsha	ᳺ la	᳻ gga		
᳾ ja	᳿ da	ᳺ dza	᳻ sha			
ᳺ nya	᳻ na	᳼ wa	᳽ sa			

EDITORIAL

SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB

Editorial from September-October 2008 Sikh Bulletin]

It was on October 7, 1708 that Tenth Nanak bestowed the Guruship for the Sikhs upon Sri Guru Granth Sahib, thus making us the only people in the Orient the ‘*People of the Book*’; and the Sikhs all over the world are celebrating this 300th anniversary of Gur Gaddi Divas.

Sikh religious scripture is unique among world’s religious Granths in more ways than one. This is the only Granth that has the authentic, original, unadulterated writings of the authors. They were recorded by the authors themselves. Not only that, in addition to the writings of six Gurus, it also includes the writings of Bhagats, both Hindu and Muslim, and Bhats in its 1430 pages, including Ragmala. It goes without saying that only those writings of Bhagats and Bhats are included that are compatible with the message of Guru Nanak. Ragmala is a controversial entry. Yet another controversy is about some banis attributed to Mardana by some scholars while others contend Mardana is not the author of those banis. Perhaps that explains the discrepancy in number of banis attributed to Bhagats in various sources.

Substantial sums of money are being spent over this celebration but the celebration would be more meaningful if at the same time attempts are made to translate SGGS into other languages of the world, just as the Bible has been translated. This writer is familiar only with the English language and has

examined at least four different translations of SGGS in this language. They all fall short of conveying the real meaning of Gurbani. One reason could be that they are attempts by individuals and very literal. What is needed is a cooperative effort by several scholars expert in English and languages used in SGGS, expertise in grammar of SGGS, ability to translate poetry in one language into prose in another language and mastery at conveying the real ‘meaning’ of a word or phrase rather than ‘literal’ translation that makes ‘*gur gur meetha deena*’ mean ‘*God gave me molasses*’.

Thanks to the efforts by S. Harcharan Singh, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Sikh Virsa in Calgary, this writer also got an opportunity to participate in one such seminar on 300th anniversary celebrations. That paper and two papers from two other participants are included in this issue. In addition to his paper on the subject of SGGS, S. Gurcharan Singh Brar’s article ‘ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਪਿੰਡ ਸੰਭਾਲੋ’ deserves a special mention. Of all the people who got involved with the Singh Sabha International movement that began at Roseville, California, he is the only person who, with the help of a few dedicated associates, has carried on the torch to spread the message of Guru Nanak. In cooperation with the Missionary College in Ludhiana that supplies qualified missionaries, his group, Singh Sabha International Canada, matches the missionaries with those generous Sikhs in Diaspora who wish to fund the cost for the benefit of their villages. We urge you to support this effort financially.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL NANKIAN PHILOSOPHY [Editorial from January-February 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

“Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) originated a unique philosophy and challenged the existing concepts about God, heaven/hell, reincarnation/transmigration, idol worship, caste system, astrology, mantra systems, etc. in Southeast Asia.” Amen! Halleluia! This quote came to me from a Sikh scholar who is doing a great service to the cause of Sikhi and I could not help but compliment him and told him that I agreed with his quote whole heartedly.

To that I added, that Guru Nanak was not a prophet in the sense of Biblical or Muslim prophets who claimed to speak to or spoken to by God, directly as in the case of Moses or indirectly, as in the case of Mohammed who had an Angel as an intermediary. When Bani talks about ‘*dhur-ki-bani*’ it is not God talking to Nanak; **Sikhi is not a ‘revealed’ religion**; it is born out of Guru’s life experience; it is Guru’s own inspiration and thought process that inspires him to seek and speak fundamental truths. He wrote back that he was pleased to read my response but observed, “No Sikh scholar could dare to say what you have said.” He is right and therein lies the tragedy. I am not afraid to say it precisely because I am not a scholar. The tragedy is that Sikh scholars are too fearful of consequences if they break with the established tradition; as Mr. Tohra had explained away the unsikh practice of denial of sewa to the women at Harmander Sahib because of the long established tradition. The fact that Guru Nanak had broken many traditions going back centuries was inconsequential.

Bhai Ardaman Singh, a Sikh scholar of yore, in his book ‘Thoughts of Bhai Ardaman Singh’ writes, **“In Sikhism, certain philosophical interpretations are common with Hindu thought, like life after death,...while such concepts as Oneness of God...Sikhism is nearer to Islam than to Hinduism.”** Unfortunately, **he is dead wrong on both counts.** As for the comparison with Hinduism Dr. Baldev Singh’s article, which is this entire issue, explodes that myth. Comparison with Islam and the other two Middle Eastern religions, Judaism and Christianity, all three the people of the Book and believers in One God, is also not kosher. Although all three believe in One God and share historical personalities, **each one of them has their own separate One God.** Jews claim to be the chosen people of their God who

bequeathed for eternity strictly for them the lands of Palestine and they are still waiting for their Messiah. Christian God delivered his own son to die for the sins of only those who will accept his son as their savior and had him crucified but only to raise him from the dead to come back to the earth for the second and the last time. Muslim God declared Mohammed the last prophet among the peoples of the book, with no more to come. Guru Nanak does not agree with any of it. His God is loving and merciful God of the entire universe and all the creation in it.

In this issue we are presenting a revolutionary interpretation of Gurbani by Dr. Baldev Singh. It will, no doubt, cause controversy. We would welcome reasoned response to further the intellectual discussion that involves the use of ‘**bibek budhi**’.

Hardev Singh Shergill

[Editor’s Note: Entire January-February 2009 issue of The Sikh Bulletin was devoted to the writings of Dr. Baldev Singh. It can be accessed at www.sikhbulletin.com . Sikh qaum suffered a great loss when Dr. Baldev Singh passed away on October 1, 2009 at Yuba City, California.]

EDITORIAL

WHO IS A SIKH?

[Editorial from March-April 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

“A person, who follows Sikhi (Gurmat/Sikhism) that is based on Gurbani, incorporated in the Aad Guru Granth Sahib by Guru Arjan, and Guru Gobind Singh, the Fifth and Tenth Gurus in succession to the ‘House of Nanak’ (Mahla), respectively, is a Sikh. Consequently, that person is the follower solely of Sikhism and does not practice any other religion simultaneously.” This is the suggested definition of a Sikh by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal in his article on page 2 in which he details various definitions as enshrined in the Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925, Mahan Kosh, SGPC Rehit Maryada, and Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) Constitution, and to which this writer can subscribe.

Notable omission in this definition is the issue of hair that started the current controversy in Panjab over denial of admission to SGPC operated Medical College to a Sikh girl because she trims or plucks her eye brows. But even so, only one of four legal definitions, DSGMC’s, includes the requirement of unshorn hair. But why get lost in manmade definitions. Why not look to Guru Granth Sahib for guidance in defining a Sikh? That is precisely what Avtar Singh Missionary has done on page 27. He points out one relevant statement from GGS: ਕਬੀਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਏਕ ਸਿਉਂ ਕੀਏ ਆਨ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਜਾਇ॥ ਭਾਵੈ ਲਾਂਬੇ ਕੇਸ ਕਰੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਘਰਿ ਮੁਭਾਇ॥ GGS ਪਾ 1365।

In the past I used to hear the words *"Saabat soorat dastaar sira"* from the GGS in defense of uncut hair requirement in Sikhi. Lately I have come across another phrase, *"Hukam rajai chalnaa Nanak likhia naal"*. Now that is really a stretch. As for ‘saabat soorat’, it clearly did not have Sikhs in mind. It was addressed by Guru Arjan Dev to a Muslim holy man of Abdaal order about Islamic beliefs and practices. In it, referring to the five prayers the Muslims are required to perform daily, the Guru advises that rather than performing the ritual five times a day bring about a positive change in your thought and actions. Seeing God in all is your perpetual prayer. (See *shabad and its explanation by Dr. Baldev Singh on page 27*).

Sikh writers and speakers do not get tired of proclaiming Sikhism to be the most universal and the fifth largest religion in the world. But as Dr. Sarjeet Singh Sidhu points out in his article on page 5, with the standard for a Sikh being set in Panjab there are not any Sikhs in Malaysia and to which I might add, anywhere else.

I often get approached by clean shaven, nattily dressed young men in pairs, of Mormon faith, volunteering their time to proselytize. I do engage them and end up telling them two fundamental truths, that their faith is false Christianity but their dedication is what Guru Nanak's message needed and I wish it had been entrusted to them because we certainly are not deserving of this honor.

Guru Nanak had spoken against the practice of Janaeu. Now we have hog tied Sikhi with 'gatra' and imprisoned it inside a net made of unshorn hair. What was a purely voluntary step, necessitated by that time, by able bodied followers of the Guru, has become the touchstone to be a Sikh.

It is time, at least in the Diaspora, to liberate Sikhi from the politics of Panjab. To convert to Islam the simple requirement is '*shahadah*', the statement, "There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet". Our '*shahadah*' could be "**I believe only in the teachings enshrined in the GGS and no other scripture, and I proclaim myself to be a Sikh; and my name is Barack Hussein Obama, Nicolas Sarkozy, Angela Merkel, Gordon Brown, Dmitry Medvedev, Hu Jintao, Manmohan Singh...**". It is sad to say that blind are leading the blind in Sikhi today.

Hardev

Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

WHITHER SIKH LEADERSHIP?

[Editorial from May-June 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

A quarter century has passed since the Indian state (**World's largest democracy?**) unjustly attacked and destroyed Akal Takhat, looted, burned and carted away Sikh Reference Library and killed thousands of innocent men, women and children who had come for a pilgrimage in remembrance of the first Sikh martyrdom, that of Guru Arjun. At the time of the attack, a Sikh, 'Giani' Zail Singh, was the President of India. Today, a Sikh, Manmohan Singh, is the second term Prime Minister of India. Neither one spoke up against the state tyranny against their people.

This issue contains some pictures and letters back home to Punjab by Sikh soldiers who fought in Europe during World War I. They were neither defending their home land, Punjab, nor India. Being under the British colonial rule they were being used by the British to save their home land from another European power. They did most of their fighting and dying in France. France has now returned the favour by banning wearing of the turban in its public schools, civil service, Army and when being photographed for driver's license. The French banned all the head coverings, motivation for which came from Muslim women's head covering that identified them as Muslims. Head covering for Muslim women is a cultural requirement not a religious one. Turban is also largely a cultural head covering common in Middle East and Indian sub-continent unless you are a Kesadhari Sikh. For them it becomes a religious requirement.

In this country I personally know two Kesadhari Sikhs, one medical doctor and the other a dentist, both recently retired from the United States Army after honourably serving in their Kesadhari and turbaned sarup. But in this issue you will also find the story of two more Kesadhari Sikhs, interestingly one a medical doctor and the other a dentist, whose professional training was paid for by the United States Army in exchange for their future service to the country. Now they are being told that they have to shave their hair and remove their turbans. Their case is being pursued by the **Sikh Coalition**, one of three known Sikh Organizations in this country, the other two being the **United Sikhs** and **SALDEF**. All three are doing useful work for the benefit of the U.S. Sikhs. After we started publishing the Sikh Bulletin in 1999 we wrote to all three organizations offering them space in the Bulletin for their projects with the faint hope to persuade them gradually to unite to create a more effective and forceful Sikh lobby. None of them responded.

We have people close to the power center in Washington D. C. whom we had also approached to work together. We were rebuffed there as well. Same was the case with self styled Sikh human rights activists in U. K. and India. In case of these individuals we soon found out their reasons to stay away from working in collaboration with others. They had the Indian State as their master to whom they owed their 'leadership' status. They have all been named in the previous issues of the Sikh Bulletin, including their authentic Green Cards and Indian passports but under false names; and their involvement in covering up and protecting child molester 'priests'. Even those who know all this still rub shoulders with them. Sikhs will have to wait for its leadership to emerge.

Hardev Singh Shergill

A BIGOT IS DEAD; LONG LIVE BIGOTRY

W. H. McLeod (1932-2009)

[Editorial from July-August 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

Dictionary defines a bigot as, "a person who is utterly intolerant of any creed, belief or opinion that differs from his own". Despite his assertion that he never really believed in any religious system or held any belief in God, and that he really has always been an unbeliever, the fact still remains that he was born into a Christian family, was a student of Christianity, his education was funded by the Church, was an ordained Christian Minister, overseas Christian Missionary, who never ever not only did not renounce his birth and professional religion, he never wrote anything critical about Christianity. He seems to have saved his venom for Guru Nanak. If any of his students has any of his writings that deny Jesus' virgin birth, resurrection, second coming, that Jesus multiplied fish, walked on water, gave eyesight to the blind and limbs to the crippled, God made the world in six days, made man in His image and woman from man's rib, there is life after death in heaven or hell (other than during this life and on this earth, as Guru Nanak preached) and a Minister can forgive someone's sins, I would love to receive them and promise to publish them in the Sikh Bulletin.

That he went after Guru Nanak to belittle and denigrate him becomes clear from the following quotations from his book, "Sikhs and Sikhism", Oxford University Press 1999 edition:

P. 6 "If he (man) refuses (life of meditation on the divine self-revelation and of conformity to it) he follows the path of spiritual death and remains firmly bound to the wheel of transmigration."

In Guru Nanak's message 'meditation' was only one among three commandments: "kirat karo, wand chhako, naam japo" Transmigration, along with reincarnation, are Hindu beliefs. There is no belief in either of these in Sikhism.

P. 13 "Of the four (Janamsakhis) the least reliable is the Bala tradition, but its influence has been immense."

Immense, indeed; this Bala was a fiction, his image, along with Guru Nanak's and Mardana's above the entrance to Darbar Sahib notwithstanding. It was this Janamsakhi that turned me off from Sikhi even before my teenage years. Having received my elementary and middle school education through Hindi medium in the former Bikaner State, I learnt Panjabi at home by reading books like 'Bale dian sakhian'. I did not believe a single karamaat ascribed to Guru Nanak and to me Guru Nanak became just another mythical Hindu Devta that I had read about in Hindu granths. Dr. McLeod should have debunked this Janamsakhi completely.

P. 39 “In response to Mardana’s inquiry concerning the inequalities of the human condition Baba Nanak replied, ‘joy and pain come in accordance with the deeds of one’s previous existence’.” (From Puratan Janamsakhi)

Sikhism does not subscribe to the Hindu concept of previous life which is an excuse for the caste system that Guru Nanak condemned.

But Dr. McLeod is not quoting from the various Janamsakhis to elaborate on Guru Nanak’s philosophy. After devoting pp. 34-110 to the details in Janamsakhis, he concludes:

P. 111 About Guru’s visit to Assam, “It must, however, be both challenged and rejected”.

P. 112 About Guru’s visit to Dacca, “The tradition must, however, be summarily dismissed”.

P. 117 About Guru’s visit to Ceylon, “The tradition that Guru Nanak visited Ceylon must accordingly be rejected”.

P. 119 Guru’s encounter with Sajjan Thag, “As it stands, however, it must be classified with the improbable sakhis”.

P. 120 The discourse on Mount Sumeru, “In this case, however, the arguments which must be brought against the tradition do compel us to reject it”.

P. 125 Visits to Mecca and Medina, “The Mecca and Medina sakhis must accordingly be classified as highly improbable”.

*[One of the arguments he has used to support his conclusion is that Guru, being a non-Muslim would not have been allowed to visit. **“Guru Nanak would doubtless have been sufficiently conversant with Muslim belief and practice to have sustained the disguise, but it would have been a violation both of his manifest honesty and of his customary practice of plain speaking”.** We should be grateful to Dr. McLeod for considering Guru Nanak to be honest and plain speaking.]*

P. 132 The visit to Baghdad, “The Janamsakhis traditions offer insufficient evidence and the support hitherto claimed on the basis of the inscription must be withdrawn. Although there remains a possibility that Guru Nanak visited Baghdad we are now compelled to regard it as an unsubstantiated possibility. The tradition may be classified with the possible sakhis, for Baghdad was certainly not beyond the range of a traveler from India and access to the city would not have been refused as in the case of Mecca. The weakness of the evidence indicates, however, a remote possibility, not a strong one”.

P. 138 Babur and the sack of Saidpur, “...but the nature of the reference points to the 1524 capture of Lahore, not to the 1520 sack of Saidpur...The same cannot, however, be said for the claim that Guru Nanak actually met Babur...It cannot be ruled out as completely impossible, but it certainly appears to be most unlikely”.

P. 142 Visits to Multan, “As they stand, however, all of the accounts which describe Multan visits must be rejected”.

Kindest comment I can make is that Mr. McLeod studied the philosophy of Guru Nanak not from the only authentic source we have, the Guru Granth Sahib, but observing as it was incorrectly practiced by the Sikhs when he was in Punjab and unfortunately incorrectly practiced today in every Gurdwara in

the world and the worst of all places, Darbar Sahib in Amritsar. He compounded this error by failing to recognize the fallacy in and relying on the Janamsakhis that had distorted Guru Nanak's message by miraculous tales that had turned me off Sikhism in my early teenage years since these Janamsakhis were the source for me to learn Panjabi at home because the regular school education was in Hindi, the place of my early childhood education being District Ganganagar of Bikaner State of a Hindu Raja, Maharaja Ganga Singh.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

ORIGINAL SOURCES OF DASAM GRANTH REVEALED

[Editorial from November-December 2009 Sikh Bulletin]

J

This issue of The Sikh Bulletin is primarily dedicated to the original research done on the origins of Dasam Granth by S. Dalbir Singh M. Sc. of New Delhi, India. His entire book ‘ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ / ਅਖਉਤੀ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਦੀ ਅਸਲੀਯਤ’ (*Dasam Granth-di-Asleeyat*), published in August 2009, is included in this issue. Also included is an article by Dr. Gurmeh Singh Sidhu of Fresno State University, Fresno, California, ‘ਚਰਚਤ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਇਆ? ਇਤਿਹਾਸਕ ਤੱਥ ਅਤੇ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣ’ which, like Dalbir Singh's work, is very timely and an eye opening research.

S. Dalbir Singh's lengthy research resulted in him identifying poet Shyaam (Kabi Shyaam), poet Raam (Kabi Raam) and poet Kaal (Kabi Kaal) as the three authors of Dasam Granth, all worshippers of Mahakal-Kalka, but not Guru Gobind Singh and the following four Hindu granths as sources of everything included in the so called Dasam Granth:

1. Shrimadd Bhagwat-sudha-sagar (Shuksagar), Gita Press
2. Shiv Puran, Gita Press
3. Markandey Puran, Gita Press
4. Shri Durga Sapatshti, Gita Press

Until now many people, who did not acknowledge the entire Dasam Granth as the work of Guru Gobind Singh, believed some writings to be his because ‘they did not conflict with Gurbani’, a very poor excuse. If in spite of this incontrovertible proof produced by S. Dalbir Singh people in position of authority still want to believe in the three banis used for *khande-di-pahul* and *nitnem*, I am afraid, there is not much hope for the renaissance in Sikhi which is urgently needed.

Recently during Jathedar Darshan Singh vs. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba controversy, Tarsem Singh, President, Dharam Parchar Committee of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee advised against criticism of those three banis. That is no surprise. In 2004 I had an occasion to meet with S. Paramjit Singh Sarna, then President of DSGMC. When told that at Roseville Sikh Center we had dropped ‘*pratham bhagauti simerke*’ from ardas and banned Chaupai from recitation in the Gurdwara and at people's homes, he jumped from the sofa as if a bolt of lightning hit him and exclaimed, “do you mean to say our fore fathers took *khande-di-pahul* in vain?”

In his third letter to Jathedar Akal Takhat dated October 15, 2008, none of which were answered, S. Dalbir Singh expresses his dilemma that if out of *respect of hukam* of GGS against *kachi bani* he does not recite *Jaap*, *Swaiyya*, and *Chaupai*, he is *panth-dokhi* and if he recites them he becomes *Guru-dokhi* by disobeying Guru's hukam against *kachi bani*. He is beseeching the Jathedar to guide him; he can until the hell freezes over. You have to be Lamba to get Jathedar's ears. Do not become *Guru-dokhi*, one cannot become *panth-dokhi* because there is no Panth. Badal/Tohra killed it long time ago.

For the sake of saving Guru Nanak's message unadulterated for the future generations, **controversy about any part of Dasam Granth**, including the three compositions recited during *Khande-di-Pahul* ceremony and mandated for *Nitnem*, as being authored by the Tenth Nanak, **should now end**. Baba Virsa Singh is dead. It is now time to put Atty. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba, the now champion of promoting the false Dasam Granth, in his place.

In the preface of his book S. Dalbir Singh narrates an incident on October 2, 2007 at Rajaury Garden, New Delhi, involving Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba, where Mr. Lamba makes the outrageous statement that he acquired '*gurmata gian*' not from Guru Granth Sahib but from the so called Dasam Granth. I recall a similar statement from Atty. D. S. Gill of Ludhiana, a companion of G. S. Lamba. It is obvious that these two gentlemen, both attorneys, are not stupid. They possess a *bibek budhi*, hallmark of a Sikh. They fully understand what Dasam Granth is; for them it is not a matter of blind faith but a much more sinister agenda.

In an Editorial in the September 2002 issue of The Sikh Bulletin, reproduced on page 5 of this issue, we had challenged Mr. G. S. Lamba to: "*We invite all these intellectuals, leaders of these 'panthic' organizations, Jathedars and management committees of Patna Sahib and Hazoor Sahib, all those others who believe in Dasam Granth as the bani of The Tenth Nanak, and especially S. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba, to please gather their wives, daughters, sons, fathers, mothers and all those family members they hold dear to read and explain the following from Dasam Granth. Since Gurbani preaches that its teachings should be made part of one's daily life, they should also have handy the ਸਮਗਰੀ (ingredients) listed in there so they might practice what Dasam Granth preaches*":

ਪੋਸਤ ਭਾਂਗ ਅਵੀਮ ਮਿਲਾਇ, ਆਸਨ ਤਾਂ ਤਰ ਦਿਯੋ ਬਨਾਇ ।
 ਚੁੰਬਨ ਰਾਇ ਅਲਿੰਗਨ ਲਏ, ਲਿੰਗ ਦੇਤ ਤਿਹ ਭਗੋ ਮੋ ਭਏ ॥੨੪॥
 ਭਗ ਮੋ ਲਿੰਗ ਦਿਯੋ ਰਾਜਾ ਜਬ, ਰੁਚਿ ਉਪਜੀ ਤਰਨੀ ਕੇ ਜਿਯੋ ਤਬ ।
 ਲਪਟਿ ਲਪਟਿ ਆਸਨ ਤਰ ਗਈ, ਚੁੰਬਨ ਕਰਤ ਭੂਪਨ ਕੇ ਭਈ ॥੨੫॥
 ਗਹਿ ਗਹਿ ਤਿਹ ਕੋ ਗਰੇ ਲਗਾਵਾ, ਆਸਨ ਸੋ ਆਸਨਹਿ ਛੁਹਾਵਾ ।
 ਅਧਰਨ ਦੋ ਦੋਊ ਅਧਰ ਲਗਾਈ, ਦੁਹੂੰ ਕੂਚਨ ਸੋ ਕੂਚਨ ਮਿਲਾਈ ॥੨੬॥

(ਛੰਦ ੨੪-੨੬ ਚਰਿਤਰ ੪੦੨) ਪ. ੧੩੫੮

੧Male Organ; ੨Female Organ

To this list we suggest to include the management of the Gurdwara on Bradshaw road in Sacramento who hosted a daylong seminar on Dasam Granth on Saturday Feb. 23rd 2008, and all those attendees including Mr. G. S. Lamba and 'Professors' from Patiala University and Dasam Granth 'scholars' from UK. We should also include the members of the Asa-di-Var group of Sacramento to join in since they are so keen bhagats of 'Chaupai' which is **Chhand 377-402, in Chritar 404 on p.1386** from the same chapter in Dasam Granth as the **Charitar 402 on p.1358 quoted above**.

Also included in the very beginning of this issue are three previous editorials from The Sikh Bulletin and an article by late Principal Harbhajan Singh, '**Which 'banis' did the Tenth Guru recite at the time of administering 'amrit'?**' A reading of his research reveals that of the eleven sources he found, some of them claiming to be present at the 1699 Vaisakhi ceremony, no two agree as to what transpired and none of them agrees with what is happening today. In spite of my best efforts I have not found any Sikh scholar who could throw some light on the evolution of *khande-di-pahul* banis. But I am not hesitant to hazard a guess.

In his article in this issue on p. 104 Dr Gurmel Singh Sidhu attributes introduction of Dasam Granth as Sikh scripture to the British. This could very well be the case. British were masters of the art

of 'divide and conquer'. They did not hesitate to overwhelmingly recruit Sikhs in their army and they made *khande-di-pahul* mandatory for all the Sikh soldiers, built Gurdwaras in Sikh cantonments and GGS was always at the head of Sikh troops in both world wars. **It would be the British who introduced three of five banis into khande-di-pahul and nitnem through their hired Sikh hands much the same way as right wing Hindu extremists have hired hands among Sikhs today to carry on what the British started.** They succeeded remarkably well in sowing discord among us. **Dasam Granth as the source of three out five banis for khande-di-pahul is Mr. Lamba's strongest argument.** Dr. Gurmeh Singh Sidhu quotes Giani Gian Singh in his *Panth Parkash* attributing **authorship of Dasam Granth to Patna Granthi Sucha Singh and his son Charat Singh in this issue on page 104.**

At the same time the British entrusted our Gurdwaras to *Mahants* who introduced anti Gurmat practices in our historical Gurdwaras thus giving us a split personality. They also released from the military service scores of 'Sants' starting with Mastuanevala Sant and the fauji who 'discovered' Hemkunt. Research might also show that Bhai Randhir Singh Grewal, the founder of Akhand Kirtani Jatha, whose father was an employee of the British, was a British plant. How else does one explain his ardent and blind endorsement of Dasam Granth as the creation of Guru Gobind Singh and that too in its entirety?

As a result of efforts of Singh Sabha Lehr a reformation started. SGPC and Akali Dal came into existence but first the British and then the Congress government of free India corrupted both of these institutions. RSS replaced the British in pushing Dasam Granth down our throats. Panth Ratan Tohra got co-opted by Congress and Badal saw his fortunes tied with the RSS and its political wing, BJP. Between the two of them they have made a nice mess of Sikh aspirations.

Lots of people I know, myself included, have often wondered at the sad state of Sikh affairs in India. In my opinion it has to do to a great extent with the mind set of those people who are in the fore front to do something good but at just the crucial moments self interest raises its ugly head. Here I would like to share my personal experiences with three people of diverse back grounds:

1. Prof. Darshan Singh, Sabka Jathedar Akal Takhat, was invited by us in 1994 to perform kirtan/katha at the Nanaksar Thath Isher Darbar, started by an akhauri saadh 'Sant Baba' Amar Singh Barundi in Roseville, California. He had claimed to be *gurbhai* of Darshan Singh. Darshan Singh, who knew Amar Singh since his 8th birth day because both of them were from original Nanaksar Thath of Nand Singh/Isher Singh, was offered a golden opportunity to come clean about Amar Singh as a sociopath, psychopath, rapist and murderer but instead chose a safer path, for himself, of making an excuse about being busy but certainly sometime in the future.

Ten years later, in 2004, he along with all the big Whigs from India, was a guest of Amar Singh at his Thath in London and when confronted about his judgment while being fully aware of Amar Singh's *kartoots*, he pleaded pressure but that he had them remove pictures of Nand Singh/Isher Singh from the presence of GGS and had spoken against *santdom*. Problem, however, was that he provided Amar Singh with his pictures in his Gurdwara to be used as an example of Darshan Singh endorsing Amar Singh's activities.

Later, when we came across one of his statements about providing Missionary College trained missionaries to villages in Panjab, we not only published that in the Sikh Bulletin but also brought it to the attention of Singh Sabha International, Canada in Toronto area where Darshan Singh makes his second home. SSI Canada was already engaged in this type of work and S. Gurcharan Singh Brar personally went to see him. Jathedar made promises but never kept them.

That is a tragedy, because of all the Akal Takhat Jathedars he is the one most knowledgeable about Gurbani and willing to change as he has in the matter of Dasam Granth. Right now he is in the news about his anti Dasam Granth statements brought to the attention of Jathedar Akal Takhat by, who else but,

Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba. See pp. 114-117 of this issue. Page 118 also has the report of the SSI Canada's work in providing missionaries to the villages.

2. Paul Singh Purewal: We first met at the first ever conference held at Sikh Center Roseville in November 1999. He presented his paper on Nanakshahi Calendar. Until then no action had been taken on it by Akal Takhat. That was no concern of ours. We saw the merit and passed a resolution for us to adopt it. Another resolution passed was to do away with '*pratham bhagauti*' in ardas. We had firmly come to believe that reformation in Sikhi was of utmost urgency and we cannot depend upon corrupt officials of SGPC or their employees masquerading as Jathedars.

The following year there was a conference in San Jose. Mr. Purewal read his paper on Nanakshahi Calendar there as well but failed to mention that Roseville Sikh Center had already adopted it. When asked, he excused himself by saying that he will mention it at the second sitting where all the speakers will participate in Q&A format. He failed to mention it there as well. It turned out that he was bamboozled by the Sikh Youth of America as a body controlling large number of Gurdwaras under North American Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee which he thought would be a good start and knowing their animosity against us he chose a stronger group, so he mistakenly thought, to side with. Subsequently he made lame excuses to come to any of our other conferences.

3. Dr. Gurbakhash Singh Gill, Dean (Retd.) Agricultural University, Ludhiana, came to Roseville in December 2000 for a think tank type seminar and conference which was also attended by S. Gurbakhash Singh Kala Afghana and many others from Canada and USA. By virtue of his long experience with Sikh affairs in North America he played a leading role. It was he who suggested the formation of Singh Sabha International to carry on the work of the 18th century Singh Sabha. He was to move to Roseville and take charge of the reformation movement.

But, unfortunately for the reform movement, he was friends with late Dr. Kharak Singh of Institute of Sikh Studies in Chandigarh, who could care less for reform and was an establishment loyalist by virtue of being a long standing member of the SGPC Dharam Parchar Committee. Year 2001 was to be the year for Badungar, a friend of Kharak Singh, to take over the Presidency of SGPC. Dr. Gill was told to bide his time until that happened and got appointed as an Adviser to the Dharam Parchar Committee with a car, driver and stipend.

But our reform movement did not come to a halt. October 2003 saw a major World Sikh Conference in Chandigarh arranged from Sikh Center Roseville. Jathedar Vedanti and Manjit Singh Calcutta did their best to deny us the venue and actually managed to cancel three venues before we had to involve the judiciary to enforce a contract. Calcutta then formed a 21 member Religious Advisory Board to 'frame rules for priests' and actually oppose us. The Board would also scrutinize the complaints being received by Akal Takhat before they are taken up by the Sikh Clergy.

Dr. Gurbakhash Singh Gill was one of those 21 members. He was now not a reformer but a member of the establishment. Although the reports were that Calcutta had ordered secrecy in its deliberations but we found out that most vocal opponent of us was Dr. Gill. It will come as no surprise to us if we found out that it was he who suggested to shut us down, because as soon as I returned from Chandigarh I found that a three year lease was signed for a rival Gurdwara while I was still in Chandigarh. Before the year was out this Gurdwara had split into two because the only thing they had in common was opposition to us. In the face of three Gurdwaras where there was one we shut the reform Gurdwara in April 2005.

When there is no leadership to inspire, sangat does not like change.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
MARTIN LUTHER HE IS NOT
[Editorial from March-April 2010 Sikh Bulletin]

Martin Luther was born in Germany 14 years after the birth of **Guru Nanak** and died 7 years after Guru's passing. His father wanted him to become an attorney after he completed his M.A. degree. But he preferred to become a priest instead. At age 27 he traveled to Rome, the highest seat of Catholic Church. There, instead of religious discourses and activities he witnessed rampant corruption. He witnessed sinful transgressions forgiven in exchange for money. He witnessed religious offices and positions being sold. Utterly disgusted and disappointed he returned to his native Germany and started preaching true Christianity. At the age of 34 he pinned to the Church door his famous 95 theses and demanded answers from the Pope. Pope summoned him to Rome. But his companions and well wishers, knowing that he will not get justice from the Pope, did not allow him to proceed to Rome. He kept on preaching. Pope accused him of 41 violations. He burned them in the presence of multitude of intellectuals, doctors and his students. Pope excommunicated him. His books were burnt. He was thrown in Jail. **In the prison Protestant Church was born. Christianity split into two.** At this time Catholic Church is under siege in the courts of U.S.A. and Europe for the moral degradation of its clergy and the number of its adherents is on the decline. The number of the faithful in protestant churches is on the increase.

Does this sound familiar? Is the situation described above in 15th Century Europe not repeating itself in today's Panjab and Sikh Community? A few months back there was a golden opportunity for our own Martin Luther to come forward, **Darshan Singh Khalsa, at one time himself Akal Takhat Jathedar.** But Martin Luther he did not become; just as almost ten years ago when I invited him to join us in the movement for reformation in Sikhi, he chose to stay out. To his credit, inspired by his upbringing in the environment of Nanaksar and his lifelong adherence to the corrupt practices that have crept into Sikhism, including the acceptance of Dasam Granth as the writings of Guru Gobind Singh, a transformation did come in him with regard to Dasam Granth about ten years ago upon reading Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana's critique of Bachittar Natak.

More recently he has been more forthcoming in his criticism of Dasam Granth and thus ran afoul of those who are pushing Dasam Granth as the rival Granth in order to dilute the message of Guru Nanak by splitting the community; among them Atty. D. S. Gill, Atty. G. S. Lamba, Akhand Kirtani Jatha and Damdami Taksal.

Unlike Martin Luther, Darshan Singh Khalsa did respond to the summons of the Jathedar (Sikh 'Pope') by appearing at Akal Takhat before what would have been a kangaroo court anyway. **That was his first mistake.** Obviously he did not have companions and well wishers of the same caliber as did Martin Luther otherwise he would have been advised to not to appear before the servants of Badal family, themselves servants of BJP and RSS.

His second mistake was to muddy the waters of his otherwise admirable stand against Dasam Granth when he chose to obey the dictates of so called Sikh Rehat Maryada, that nobody follows, to keep on reciting the three 'banis', which are clearly 'kachi banis', as part of his Nitnem, which in itself is a ritual.

In my editorial of Nov-Dec 2009 Sikh Bulletin, which was dedicated entirely to S. Dalbir Singh M. Sc. of New Delhi's research on sources of Dasam Granth, following is what I suggested to him and would urge Darshan Singh Khalsa to consider my suggestion:

"In his third letter to Jathedar Akal Takhat dated October 15, 2008, none of which were answered, S. Dalbir Singh expresses his dilemma that if out of respect of hukam of GGS against kachi bani he does

not recite Jaap, Swaiyya, and Chaupai, he is panth-dokhi and if he recites them he becomes Guru-dokhi by disobeying Guru's hukam against kachi bani. He is beseeching the Jathedar to guide him; he can until the hell freezes over. You have to be Lamba to get Jathedar's ears. Do not become Guru-dokhi, one cannot become panth-dokhi because there is no Panth. Badal/Tohra killed it long time ago."

May Guru spare us the tragedy that occurred in Europe 500 years ago. Guru Nanak had ushered a new movement of universal brotherhood. He rejected centuries old ritualistic and discriminatory practices that had crept into the society. By doing so he gravely hurt the feelings of not only his parents and family but also the entire high caste society, the establishment of the day. Unfortunately within 500 years we have turned away from the path shown to us by Guru Nanak. Instead new but similar organizations have been created, who under the pretext of hurt 'religious' feelings are threatening the revival of Gurus' message. Guru did not waver under that threat; nor shall we. What Guru said during his time **“ਰਜੇ ਸੀਰ ਮੁਕੱਦਮ ਕੁੱਤੇ”** is apt today. You know who are the rulers of today and who are the dogs. We are not advocating a new faith. All we are asking for is necessary reformation as per teachings of Guru Nanak.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

**Editorial from the September-October 2010 Sikh Bulletin
Special Issue on Bhajan Yogi
Letter to the Editor, The Register-Guard
Eugene, Oregon**

Recently, a friend who knew that I have written about Bhajan Yogi in my magazine, The Sikh Bulletin, in the past, sent me a couple of articles on Yogi's organizations involved in litigation in Oregon, that appeared in The Register-Guard. This was no surprise to me. But the letters to the editor that followed, critical of the reporter and some implied criticism of writing negative about minorities, prompts me to briefly throw some light on the subject. Bhajan Yogi was extremely good at what he did but propagation of Sikhism it was not. Criticism of Bhajan Yogi's cult cannot be construed as criticism of Sikhism. Bhajan Yogi's cult was based in Los Angeles and New Mexico but Oregon has had its own share of cults of Indian origin. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh moved into the central Oregon town of Antelope and created a commune of free love, immigration scam, mass murder plots and 93 Rolls Royces, gifted to him by his very wealthy twenty and thirty-some things, during 1981-85, before his deportation by Presidential intervention.

Dr. Trilochan Singh, a distinguished Sikh scholar, in his book 'Sikhism and Tantric Yoga', published in 1977, describes Bhajan Yogi, succinctly and devastatingly, in the following words: *"Yogi Bhajan is a Sikh by birth, a Maha Tantric by choice but without training, and a 'Sri Singh Sahib' and self styled Leader of the Sikhs of Western Hemisphere by fluke and mysterious strategy"*.

There was no mystery to his strategy. All he had to do was to ingratiate himself with the Sikh Religious leadership in Panjab that was more corrupt than the Vatican during the time of Martin Luther (1483-1546), founder of the Protestant Church.

According to the Tantrics the best form of worship is the fullest satisfaction of the sexual desires of man therefore in Tantric worship sexual intercourse with any woman is prescribed as a part of worship. In the annals of abuse of women some had harems, others had concubines and Bhajan Yogi had Secretaries. The Sikh Gurus condemned the Tantrics and their practices. When I received copies of the court documents of

cases against Yogi from the Federal Govt. archives in Colorado I was incredulous about one disciple of Yogi luring her own sister into a rape victim but just then news papers reported exactly a similar story where a sister conspired to have her own sister raped by her boy friend. All the cases mentioned in The Register-Guard had merit, otherwise Yogi would not have settled out of court. In some cases, such as lottery scam, some of yogi's lieutenants shouldered the entire blame and served prison time but some innocent families were destroyed, including their faith in Sikhism (falsely taught).

Yogi devised '*The Siri Singh Sahib Bhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogi Ji*' as his full name/title. That is eleven words. The person whose teachings Yogi was supposedly practicing and preaching had conquered his ego and used only one word in his name – Nanak. But yogi was full of it. Humility is the hallmark of a Sikh and Yogi did not have any of it. Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, himself describes people like Bhajan Yogi in succinct language, ***“Nanak, those are real asses, who have no virtues but are filled with egotistical pride. GGS P. 1246.”***

Sikhism is unique among the world's religions because it is unlike any of them, except certain principles of ethics and moral norms which are common to all religions as well as the atheists. Sikhism is the only religion of The Book from the East, 'Guru Granth Sahib', like the three Semitic religions of, 'The Torah', 'The Holy Bible' and 'The Holy Quran'. But similarity ends right there; fundamental difference being the concept of God. Superficially all four religions believe in one God, but which one? God of Jews favours only his chosen people who are still waiting for their Messiah; Christian God would save only those who believe in his son Jesus Christ, the Messiah who has already come, and the Muslim God has the last word because Mohammed is the last Messiah and there shall be no more. President Bush has a different God than Osama-bin-Laden.

Guru Nanak rejected **all** the religions of his day, including the one he was born into. **Guru Nanak's God is the God of entire creation**, *“God is ONE. His name is Truth. He is the creator. He is fearless and not inimical. He is without death and without birth. He is self-existent. Humans can attune to him through Guru's grace.”* “God existed in the beginning; He existed when time started running its course; He exists even now and He shall exist forever and ever”.

When the Pope had **Galileo (1564-1642)** jailed for advocacy of **Copernicus' (1473-1543)** theory, condemned by the Roman Catholic Church as heretical, that earth revolves around the sun, **Guru Nanak (1469-1539)** was postulating views on the origin of the Universe that will make the Big Bang theorists proud and stating unambiguously that there are countless Earths, Moons and Suns. He called the natural laws that govern their motions in space '*hukam*' (Cosmic Law). Cosmos is the manifest form of God, *hukam* (Cosmic Law) is the invisible form that pervades the cosmos. And long before **Darwin's (1809-1882)** theory of origin of species, Nanak had declared that life began in water and evolved through many life forms in the water, over and under the land and in the air with human beings the ultimate life form. Death is a loss of consciousness. When a person dies he/she does not go to heaven or hell, because heaven and hell exist only on this earth, in this life and we make them. A person gets human form only once. Upon death, the spark we call soul merges with the cosmic law/God and body turns to star dust.

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu household but with that faith Sikhism shares nothing, not even the concept of One God. At a very young age he refused to wear the janeu (Hindu sacred thread worn by high caste males); discarded the caste system (a religiously sanctioned discrimination still entrenched in the 21st century democratic India); preached against idol worship; recognized the equality of mankind; asserted the equality of men and women; condemned the Hindu practice of *Sati* (live immolation of widow on her husband's funeral pyre); instructed the women to discard veil; allowed widow and widower remarriage; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell (after death), incarnation, transmigration, 84 lakh juni (8,400,000 life forms) *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses; and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*' (wishing

well being of all, not just of oneself, one's own family or one's own country) in his prayers. **His was a faith of Universal Humanism.**

Sikhism has neither anything like Ten Commandments nor Sharia. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind. Simple as that! Guru Nanak rejected the concepts of virgin birth, resurrection (death is final), specific times and facing specific direction for prayer, starving the body for a day or day time and then gorging at night fall, pilgrimage for spiritual gain and feeding the Brahman to sustain deceased relatives.

In Sikhism, no one place is holier than the other because all places are created by God and God permeates everywhere. Eugene, Oregon is just as holy as Hardwar, Banaras, Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem; no time or day is more auspicious than the other; but only that time is blessed when one remembers God/Truth; **Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful living because that is union with God.**

Hardev Singh Shergill
President
Khalsa Tricentennial Foundation of N. A. Inc.
Editor-in-Chief
The Sikh Bulletin
editor@sikhbulletin.com
May 24, 2010

[With my permission the Editors of the Newspaper condensed this letter, very nicely I must say, to bring it within their number of words limit but they could not bring themselves around to printing the words **'real asses'** in the quote from GGS p.1246. ED.]

[For an amazing look at Yogi World click at this link: Gurmukhyoga.com ED.]

WHO ARE THE SIKHS?

[From January-February 2011 Sikh Bulletin]



1 GOD

A Sikh is a believer in and a follower of **Guru Nanak's** teachings.

Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was born in what is now Pakistan Punjab. There were two dominant religions in India at that time, Hinduism and Islam. He was born in a Hindu family but his lifelong companion was a Muslim, Mardana, as were many of his other followers. The Guru wrote hymns and sang to the music of Mardana's Rabab, a folk stringed instrument of that time. He was well versed in both Hindu and Muslim scriptures and in his writings he commented on both. To spread his message of oneness of God, the Creator, and oneness of humanity, he traveled to Muslim places of worship as far west as Mecca in Saudi Arabia and Hindu and Buddhist places of worship to the borders of Tibet in the North, Burma in the East, and Ceylon in the South.

Guru Nanak rejected centuries old ritualistic and discriminatory practices that had crept into the Indian society and ushered in a new movement of universal brotherhood, regardless of one's birth in a particular caste or religion. By doing so he gravely hurt the feelings of not only his family but also the entire high caste Hindu society and the Muslim administration, the establishments of the day.

Sikhism is unique among the world's religions because it is unlike any of them, except certain principles of ethics and moral norms which are common to all religions as well as the atheists. Like the three Semitic religions of, 'The Torah', 'The Holy Bible' and 'The Holy Quran' the Sikhs believe in their own scripture, Guru Granth Sahib. But the similarity ends right there. There are three fundamental differences:

1. The [Sikh](#) religion differs as regards the authenticity of its [Scriptures](#) from all other major world religions. None of their founders have left a line of their own composition and we only know what they taught through tradition or second-hand information put in writing long after they were gone and obviously influenced by the writers' interpretations. All 1430 pages of Guru Granth Sahib are poetry, set to Indian musical notes, and every word and verse can be attributed to **Guru Nanak**, five of his successor Gurus and 29 others, among them fifteen Hindu and Muslim Saints. These were godly men belonging to whole range of social and religious backgrounds, including those dubbed untouchables by the society.

In the Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, the core concepts are **Guru Nanak's** but they are supported, elaborated and reinforced by all these other writers of diverse backgrounds, religions and regions of India. This makes Guru Granth Sahib a truly universal scripture. The following verse from Guru Granth Sahib on the subject of **Creation and Oneness of Humanity** is by one of those Saints. His name is Bhagat **Kabir**, whose pedigree is unknown but as an orphan he was brought up by a family of **Muslim weavers**:

First, Allah created the Light; then, by His Creative Power, He made all mortal beings.

From the One Light, the entire universe welled up.

So who is good, and who is bad? ||1||

*O people, O Siblings of Destiny,
do not wander deluded by doubt.*

*The Creation is in the Creator,
and the Creator is in the Creation,
totally pervading and permeating all places. ||1||Pause||*

*The clay is the same,
but the Fashioner has fashioned it in various ways.*

*There is nothing wrong with the pot of clay –
there is nothing wrong with the Potter. ||2||*

*The One True Lord abides in all;
by His making, everything is made.*

*Whoever realizes the Hukam of His Command,
knows the One Lord.*

He alone is said to be the Lord's slave. ||3||

The Lord Allah is Unseen; He cannot be seen.

The Guru has blessed me.

*Says Kabeer, my anxiety and fear have been taken away;
I see the Immaculate Lord pervading everywhere. ||4||3||*

[Guru Granth Sahib page 1349]

2. Sikhism is a philosophy which has validity for all cultures and religions. Sikh Scriptures speak to a person of every religion or no religion. Anyone who agrees with and practices the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib is a Sikh, regardless of the faith of his/her birth. This makes the Sikhs welcome people of all faiths as brothers and sisters. However if there is a conflict between the teachings of the Guru Granth Sahib and of the other faith, the Sikh will only follow his Guru.

3. The Sikh concept of God is also unique. Most world religions believe in one God, but which one? God of Jews favours only his chosen people who are still waiting for their Messiah; Christian God would save only those who believe in his son Jesus Christ, the Messiah who has already come, and the Muslim God has the last word because Mohammed is the last Messiah and there shall be no more. President Bush has a different God than Osama-bin-Laden.

Guru Nanak's God is the God of the entire humanity. In a Sikh place of worship (called a Gurudwara - Guru's door), people of all races, colours, sexes, religions and nationalities are welcomed as equals without any question about their faith. No effort is made here at proselytization. Another unique feature of Sikhism is the '**Langar**', (food prepared in the community kitchen by volunteers and served to all those who enter the Guru's door. See page 4.). Everybody is invited to it without any distinction of caste, creed, colour or nationality

Guru Nanak's God is the God of entire creation, *"God is ONE. His name is Truth. He is the creator. He is fearless and not inimical. He is without death and without birth. He is self-existent. Humans can attune to him through Guru's grace. God existed in the beginning; He existed when time started running its course; He exists even now and He shall exist forever and ever"*. **Guru Granth Sahib page 1.**

Sikhism is a modern, scientific, and practical religious way of life. It abhors asceticism and advocates an active life of a married house-holder in a classless and casteless society. It commands its followers to:

1. Earn their living by doing honest and productive work;
2. Share the fruit of their honest labour with the needy and those unable to help themselves; and
3. Remember the Lord, the Creator, at all times.

When the Pope had **Galileo (1564-1642)** jailed for advocacy of **Copernicus' (1473-1543)** theory, that earth revolves around the sun, condemned by the Roman Catholic Church as heretical, **Guru Nanak (1469-1539)** was postulating views on the origin of the Universe that will make the Big Bang theorists proud. He stated unambiguously that there were countless Earths, Moons and Suns. He called the natural laws that govern their motions in space His '*hukam*' (Cosmic Law). Cosmos is the manifest form of God and *hukam* (Cosmic Law) is the invisible form that pervades the cosmos.

Long before **Darwin's (1809-1882)** theory of origin of species, **Guru Nanak** had declared that life began in water and evolved through many life forms. Later it spread in the water, over and under the land and in the air. Human beings are the ultimate life form. Death is a loss of consciousness. When a person dies he/she does not go to heaven or hell, because heaven and hell exist only in our imagination. It is we who make a heaven or hell of our lives, here on this earth, during our life time. Upon death, the spark, we call soul, merges with the cosmic Consciousness and our physical body turns to dust of which it is made.

Although **Guru Nanak** was born into a Hindu household he shares not even the concept of God with Hinduism. At a very young age he refused to wear the janeu (Hindu sacred thread worn by high caste males); discarded the caste system (a religiously sanctioned discrimination still entrenched in the 21st century democratic India); preached against idol worship; recognized the dignity and equality of every human being; asserted the equality of men and women; condemned the Hindu practice of *Sati* (live immolation of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre); instructed the women to discard veil; allowed widow and widower remarriage; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell (after death), incarnation, transmigration, 84 lakh juni (8,400,000 life forms) *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses. He preached '*sarbat da bhala*' (good of

everybody) which is unique only to Sikhism. **His was a faith of Universal Humanism and is a faith for this Scientific Age.**

Sikhism places emphasis on individual human dignity and intellect. It has nothing like the Ten Commandments or the Sharia Law. Instead the Guru simply says do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind. Simple as that! **Guru Nanak** rejected the concepts of virgin birth, resurrection, specific times or directions for prayer. Starving the body for a day time (as fast) and then gorging it at night fall was abhorrent to him. Pilgrimage for spiritual gain and feeding the Brahman to sustain deceased relatives has no value in Sikhism

In Sikhism, no one place is holier than the other because all places are created by God and God permeates everywhere. The place where you live is just as holy as Hardwar, Banaras, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem and Salt Lake City. No one time or day is more auspicious than another. Only the time spent in honest productive work and prayers is considered blessed.

Women constitute one half of humanity but no religion accords women the status that **Guru Nanak** demands for women:

From woman, man is born; within woman, man is conceived; to woman he is engaged and married. Woman becomes his friend; through woman, the future generations come. When his woman dies, he seeks another woman; to woman he is bound. So why call her inferior? From her, kings are born. From woman, woman is born; without woman, there would be no one at all. O Nanak, only the True Lord is without a woman. That mouth which praises the Lord continually is blessed and beautiful. O Nanak, those faces shall be radiant in the Court of the True Lord. || 2 ||Guru Granth Sahib page 473.

Sikhism openly states:-“*Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is truthful living*” because that is union with God’. (Guru Granth Sahib page 62)

Hardev Singh Shergill

[Please feel free to copy, translate into other languages and distribute this very brief introduction to Sikhism.]

EDITORIAL

BIBEK BUDHI-SO ELUSIVE

[From September-October 2011 Sikh Bulletin]

Gurbani lays so much emphasis on the importance of *bibek budhi* (discerning mind) yet the people who inherited Gurbani, whose heritage Gurbani is, refuse to use their *Bibek budhi*. Regardless of what some say, Gurbani is not easy to comprehend, even in the language it is written in. Even the English translations, flashed on the large screens in many Gurdwaras, carry glaring errors in translation. One of the three English translations I have translates Bhagat Kabir’s ਗੁਰਿ ਗੁੜ ਦੀਨਾ ਮੀਠਾ (P.1350) as “*God gave me molasses*”. It is easy to assume that there would be countless other gems like this. For Panjabi speaking people English is common second language. Just imagine someone reading Gurbani in any other foreign language! This kind of translation and interpretation would drive those in search of new thoughts away from Gurbani.

As a rule I do not go to Gurdwaras because for me it is a very hurtful experience. But the other day I attended a Gurdwara function for my grand niece’s first birthday. Kirtania Singh sang ਰਾਮ ਜਪਉ ਜੀਅ ਐਸੇ ਐਸੇ॥ ਧੂ ਪ੍ਰਹਿਲਾਦ ਜਪਿਓ ਹਰਿ ਜੈਸੇ॥(P. 337). When he started the explanation I gave him my rapt attention. He explained how Prahlad was evicted from his father’s lap by his step mother, how his mother explained to

him that the kingdom on earth is nothing compared to the kingdom of heaven and he, at the age of five, leaves his father's home for the forest to do tapasya. In the forest he has just met a holy man when the Kirtania drops the name of Baba Isher Singh, winner against his rival bihangams, to succeed to the Gaddi at Nanaksar, but at the barrel of a gun. I immediately got up in disgust and walked out. Later at home I looked up Prof. Sahib Singh's interpretation. In his '*shabad da bhav*' he avoids 'tapasya in the forest' theme to reach the kingdom of heaven but he does not explain what Gurbani has to say about '*japna*'. May be he has done it somewhere else. But a Kirtania cannot be excused of this omission because for the *sangat* this half hour is the best opportunity to be connected to Gurbani.

In the October 24, 2011 issue of our local newspaper, The Sacramento Bee, I read the following in connection with the "occupy Wall Street movement" in the United States: **"Every movement for social change that has really made a difference has included the power of God, the power of the spirit and the power of the people of conscience" said the Rev. Stephanie Sellers, one of the Episcopalians "protest chaplains" praying with protesters at different sites."** Notice that she has enunciated **three powers**. Guru Nanak would say that these are not three separate powers; God and the Spirit are both inside and integral part of those people who have the conscience.

Although born in Panjab at my *nanke* home, being the first born, I grew up in Hindi speaking Bikaner state. I learned to write and read Panjabi during my 3rd and 4th grades at home from my mother and practiced reading on various granths my father had. One of those granths was '*Bale-dian-Sakhian*' and another '*Bachittar Natak*'. From 5th grade I was sent to a boarding school. A novel feature, and a good one, of Bikaner State's education system was called 'Special Class' in the 5th year where in the Middle Schools children from village schools were placed. They were taught only English, grades 3rd and 4th level in the first half of the school year and grade 5th in the second half. In the sixth grade village and city students were brought together. Village students had completed math, geography, history and other subject of 5th grade city students in the 3rd and 4th grades. So, in this special class I had plenty of spare time and used that to read Hindu granths, including Ramayan and Mahabharat. I found similar myths in them as I had found in '*Bale-dian-Sakhian*' and '*Bachittar Natak*'. Besides it seemed that every time a rishi muni was succeeding in his tapasya, God would send an *apasra* (heavenly prostitute) and the inevitable outcome would be tapasvee's fall from grace.

That experience turned me into a confirmed agnostic before I turned thirteen. It remained that way until late 1990's when I acquired ownership of a Gurdwara building through court order. In this case a Nanaksaria thug, 'Sant Baba' Amar Singh Barundi, had reneged on returning a large sum of loan which he now claimed was a donation. Building was awarded to me by the court in lieu of what he owed me plus the attorney fees and court costs. For three years I operated this Gurdwara at my expense hoping that the community would buy it from me but that did not materialize. Three years into it I decided to start learning about Sikhism. **That is when I read Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal's explanation of '*Manglacharan*', commonly referred to as '*Moolmantar*'. Once I understood God as described by Guru Nanak I had no problem accepting it. My beef was with the God/Gods of all the other religions that laid claim to divine revelation and proclaimed man to be created in the image of God. In reality what they have done is create God in the image of man.** Within four years I had contact with enough concerned Sikhs from many countries who also felt the same need to reform Sikhi. Our efforts culminated in a World Conference in Chandigarh in October 2003.

While preparing for my speech for this conference I thought to look into European contemporaries of Guru Nanak (1469-1539) because that was the period of renaissance in Europe. To my delight I found Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543), a Polish Mathematician, called the founder of modern Astronomy. He was the first to shatter the prevalent belief, supported by the Church, that Earth is the center of the universe and that Sun revolves around the Earth. **Here were two contemporaries, thousands of miles apart, one a scientist and the other a prophet but both saying the same thing.** So, those who claim that Sikhi is also a revealed religion, like the other religions, are doing a grave disservice to Guru Nanak. Would they also say that Copernicus received divine revelation too? Copernicus himself makes no such claim. **The fact of the matter is that there is no such thing as revelation. Any religion making that claim is false.** Guru Nanak and Copernicus both used their *bibek-budhi*, an evolutionary gift that only humans possess, even though they share 90% of their DNA with mice and 98% with chimpanzees. Copernicus published his theory in 1530; Guru Nanak put his view of Universe more than a decade earlier in ਜਪੁ (Jap).

One of the strongest arguments presented in support of Gurbani as revealed is reference to ਗੁਰ-ਕੀ-ਬਾਣੀ. S. Gurbachan Singh Sidhu, in an article on that topic appearing in this issue (p.28), makes an argument that that is not so. Also appearing in this issue is a review by Dr. D. P. Singh of a book by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal, ‘**Nanakian Philosophy: Basics for humanity**’. In this book Dr. Chahal repudiates the views of copycat scholars who claim Guru Nanak’s teachings to be based on Vedantic philosophy, the very view being heavily emphasized, unfortunately, by the University in Amritsar that carries Guru’s name.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL [From March April 2012 Sikh Bulletin] EVOLUTION OF GOD

By the time I stepped into my teenage years I had become a confirmed agnostic. I did not know much about religion and concept of God to deny the existence of the latter so I could not be an atheist. But I did know enough from observation and reading literature that God, as being described and worshipped, could not exist. In the mostly Hindu literature that I read it seemed that any time someone with a long and hard tapasya got within reach of God, he would send a heavenly prostitute (apasra) to make them fall from grace.

It was in my sixties that I got introduced to Guru Nanak’s concept of God and that God, I thought, I could accept because it was unlike any other God and whom everyone could accept. More on Guru Nanak’s concept of God will be the subject of next issue of The Sikh Bulletin.

One of the writings that explained the meaning of Moolmantar/Manglacharan, the very first words in Guru Granth Sahib, was that of Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal. Starting with the September-October 2011 issue of The Sikh Bulletin, in which we published a review of his book “Nankian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity”, we have begun publishing chapters from that book in every successive issue. This issue has Chapter 12, ‘**Concept of God**’. In preparation for that I decided to look for a book on evolution of the concept of God.

The book that I chose to read on this subject was **“The Evolution of God” by Robert Wright**, published in June 2009 by Little, Brown and Company. This book put into words my thoughts that I had developed over time. It was gratifying to learn that I shared a basic belief with Aristotle. **According to the book of Genesis, God created man in his own image, but according to Aristotle, men create gods after their own image.**

Religion was created to bring order to the social organization in the absence of secular codes of conduct and means to enforce their implementation. God did not appear on Mount Sinai to Moses. Moses himself chiseled the Ten Commandments on a slab of stone to put fear of God to control the desperate and increasingly unruly people. Evolution of God and religion also came in handy for the powerful to stay powerful and for ambitious and charismatic characters like Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805 – 1844), the founder of [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#). Like Mohammed he too was led to God’s word by an Angel, Gabriel for former and Moroni for the latter, and if God was accessible to Moses and Mohammed then why not to Joseph Smith and he got witnesses to prove it although they had not witnessed anything. Today there are plentiful Evangelical Christian preachers who claim to have been commandeered by God himself to do His work.

Human nature, governed by evolution, being the same prompted the Shamans, Medicine men, Chiefs and Kings, from the Pharaohs to rulers of more recent times and some even today, with their divine right to rule, to use religion and God to perpetuate their special and superior status. Kings of Egypt, Mayan Kings and more recently English Kings claimed to be the sole agents of the Gods. Henry VIII in England dissolved the monasteries and abbeys of Roman Catholic Church in 1536 and set the Anglican Church apart from the Roman Catholic Church. Constantine the Great (272-337) became the first Roman Emperor (306-307) to convert to Christianity that his predecessors persecuted because it suited his political ambitions. Mohammed was a political ruler. His moral compass made necessary adjustments depending upon the circumstances.

Beginning of monotheism is generally attributed to Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. But here is an interesting point to ponder. The concept of Indo-European Languages, and therefore people, is well accepted. This is the largest language family group with three billion speakers. Of the [twenty languages with the largest numbers of native speakers](#) twelve are Indo-European, English and Punjabi among them. Take the English word CREATOR and Punjabi word KARTAR that Guru Nanak used to address ‘God’. Word sounds come from consonants. So when we remove the vowels from both of these words we are left with C R T R and K R T R. Now C and K in English produce the same sound unless they are followed by letter H which is not the case here. Would it be a stretch to suggest that perhaps, at least among the Indo European speaking people, monotheism preceded the concept of multiple Gods? It is very tempting to have exclusively your own God. In ancient Israel each city state had its own Yahweh until the most powerful tribe’s Yahweh triumphed over the other weaker Yahwehs.

While reading this book I also came across a couple of Hebrew words that carry the same meaning in Punjabi.

Hebrew word for RIVER is NAHAR (flowing water) and Hebrew God of death is called MOT (מֹת).

Whether multiple Gods preceded or followed the One God the fact remains that idols were an integral part of that belief system. Mohammed pitted himself against idol worship in the Arab world and was successful. Christianity had the same effect in Greece where the stone images of Gods lie in ruin. But stone Gods are alive and well in Hindu India. Over centuries nothing has changed. There is so much in

common between Greek and Hindu mythology and human and animal mix in their Gods that it is hard to miss.

Finally, the concept of Miri Piri in Sikhism is the tail end of the ancient concept of religion and politics, being the flip sides of the same coin. Its impracticality is shown by the current control of SGPC by the Badal clan in Punjab.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From May-June 2012 Sikh Bulletin]

GURU NANAK'S GOD

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ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

The opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib, shown above, is accepted as Guru Nanak's description or definition of God. English translation of the above verse by Manmohan Singh in 'Sri Guru Granth Sahib', published by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee is as follows:

There is but one God. True is His name, creative His personality and immortal His form. He is without fear, sans enmity, unborn and self illumined. By the Guru's grace (He is obtained).

Guru Nanak is quite certain that God is a singularity, unlike Hindu or Christian Trinity, and calls it Truth. It is the Creator of everything, visible and invisible. It created itself but unlike its creation It is timeless and formless. But then he mentions two attributes that are purely human, fear and enmity, but says God does not show either. Then why mention it unless Guru Nanak wishes man to aspire to be God like. If one treats others as he would like to be treated then there would be no enmity. If there is no enmity, there is no hostility and fear will disappear. That is a strong indication of life course that Guru Nanak would like us to follow.

Here I would like to confess to my personal belief that might be considered a blasphemy and offend most people, even those who know me well. That is that Guru Nanak did not initiate another religion. There were too many religions and divisions among them in his time as is the case today. Today he will surely say that 'I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim; neither a Sikh nor a Christian'. He showed mankind a path to life and living. The tragedy is that 'well meaning people', which would be 99.9% of us all, have turned it into yet another divisive and suffocating faith.

Guru Nanak's belief in One God was so absolute that the very next thing that follows the opening verse is:

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1||

Of all the creatures in Its Creation only human specie is equipped with *budhi* (brain, mind, intelligence, wisdom). Guru Nanak puts so much importance on *bibek budhi* (discerning mind) that he wants us to use it even when listening to him.

Unfortunately, when it comes to understanding Gurbani, 99.9% of us do not use *bibek budhi* and they end up as mindless *sangat* listening to fables in the Gurdwaras or devoted *chelas* in *deras* which are more numerous than the villages in Panjab.

Those who do use *bibek budhi*, use it in two different ways. Those who think intuitively do not perceive God as Guru Nanak would want them to. For them God is traditional to whom they can pray for Its protection, largesse and favoritism. It also requires no effort. Rare are those individuals who think of God analytically, the way Guru Nanak did, that requires more effort.

Guru Nanak's God is bountiful God of the entire universe and all the creation in it. It does not micro manage Its Creation; nor It applies its laws selectively.

So how can we describe in simple easy to understand words Guru Nanak's God? We will have to elaborate on the traditional interpretation of the opening verse. It describes God definitely not human or any other life form because it has neither a form nor any human attributes such as fear and enmity. It was there before the Creation, at the time of Creation, now and it will be there in the future, for ever and ever. It was there when there was *sunni*, nothingness. Out of this nothingness It created the cosmos, in an instant.

Does that sound like 'Big Bang' theory? Yet we do not perceive Guru Nanak as a scientist but we do consider his contemporary, Copernicus, as a scientist. [Alfred Wegener](#) published his Theory of Continental Drift in 1912 but he was not believed because he was unable to provide a convincing explanation for the physical processes which might have caused this drift. But he was right nevertheless. Similarly Guru Nanak was right about the origin of universe. It took only 500 years for the 'scientists' to propose that theory.

Similarly Guru Nanak turned the Hindu concept of transmigration into 'Origin of Species' attributed to Charles Darwin, 400 years after Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak's God is inside every living cell of our bodies. Truth be told that our bodies are made of stardust with a spark of the Creator. You may call it soul but it is not located in any specific part of the body; it permeates the body. That is why Guru Nanak can say to a Muslim, and for that matter to an 'amritdhari' Sikh, that if you can see God in every face that in itself is your five daily prayers or recitation of five banis, respectively. In simplest language Guru Nanak's God is '**Mother of all the Forces of Nature**'.

Yes, I do believe in God but only of Guru Nanak's and not of any other religion. Most powerful instrument Guru Nanak had was his mind, *bibek budhi*. Even most of our scientists are so hide bound as to ignore what should be obvious to them under the negative influences of their formative years.

Following excerpt from the Jan-Feb 2009 Sikh Bulletin editorial is appropriate here:

"Guru Nanak (1469-1539 CE) originated a unique philosophy and challenged the existing concepts about God, heaven, hell, reincarnation, transmigration, idol worship, caste system, astrology, mantra systems, etc. in Southeast Asia."

Amen! Halleluiah! This quote came to me from a Sikh scholar who is doing a great service to the cause of Sikhi and I could not help but compliment him and told him that I agreed with his quote whole heartedly.

To that I added that Guru Nanak was not a prophet in the sense of Biblical or Muslim prophets who claimed to speak to or spoken to by God, directly as in the case of Moses or indirectly, as in the case of Mohammed who had an Angel as an intermediary. When Bani talks about 'dhur-ki-bani' it is not God talking to Nanak; Sikhi is not a 'revealed' religion; it is born out of Gurus life experience; it is Guru's own inspiration and thought process that inspires him to seek and speak fundamental truths. He wrote back that he was pleased to read my response but observed, "No Sikh scholar could dare to say what you have said."

He is right and therein lies the tragedy. I am not afraid to say it precisely because I am not a scholar. The tragedy is that Sikh scholars are too fearful of consequences if they break with the established tradition, as Mr. Tohra had explained away the unsikh practice of denial of sewa to the women at Harmander Sahib because of the long established tradition. The fact that Guru Nanak had broken many traditions going back centuries was inconsequential."

In a random email exchanges on the internet among many, the following caught my attention: ***"Do the Sikhs really know who the Nanak is? Is he Guru or mystic or reformer or philosopher or scientist or something else?"*** The person who wrote that was also the person who triggered my response above. That was Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal, whose book 'Nanakian Philosophy' we are serializing in The Sikh Bulletin.

Freed Zakaria, in his book 'The Post American World, Release 2.0' writes, "Indeed, the hundred years between 1450 and 1550 marked the most significant break in human history – between faith, ritual and dogma, on the one hand and observation, experimentation and critical thought, on the other. And it happened in Europe..."

Freed is referring to the period of Renaissance in Europe. One of the personalities of that period in Europe was Copernicus (1473-1543) who went against the teachings of Catholic Church by asserting that it was the earth that was revolving around the Sun and not the other way around. At the same time in India Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was challenging the Hindu concept of cosmos by asserting that there are countless earths, moons and suns and that their movements were governed by Laws of Nature.

Freed Zakaria does not know that Nanak existed; nor did Jawahar Lal Nehru. But we, the Sikhs, cannot lay entire blame on Zakarias and Nehrus. The religious scholars and religious leaders that we have produced have mostly been copy cats and influenced by right wing Hindu organizations such as Rashtriya Sikh Sangat and institutions of learning such as Banaras Hindu University. One of our recent and notorious in terms of ethics 'Jathedar' was a Vedanti, not a scholar of Gurbani. Central government, which is basically a Hindu government, whether Congress or BJP, has also done everything in its power to deny us our true faith. Indian constitution pronounces us Hindus as does most of the world.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL [I]

[From the July-August 2012 Sikh Bulletin]

OAK CREEK, WISCOSIN

August 5, 2012

This issue of the Sikh Bulletin was and is going to be about our family in North America, Canada and The United States of America, a case study in Diaspora Sikh Family, because there are many more like us and

with whom I wish to establish empathy. An editorial pertaining to that had already been written but then comes 8/5/2012 in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. Now this issue is going to have two editorials.

I had come to this country by a rather unusual mode of travel, hitchhiking, from New Delhi to University of Washington, Seattle, June 24th 1960 – September 21st 1960. During this sojourn, in many countries of the Middle East and Europe and six states of USA, I met a multitude of very kind people but also a very few not so nice.

I had kept detailed journals of my travel and they had continued during my stay here although with less regularity.

It was during the research of those travels for this issue on August 7, 2012, two days after the carnage in Wisconsin that I came across the following:

September 7, 1960, Monahans, Texas:

“...I crossed over to the other side of the road to buy some tomatoes from a roadside vegetable stall. The old proprietor was a strange character. The first thing he asked me was how the hell I was there? How did I get the passport to get to USA? And finally grumbled and cursed his government which lets foreigners come to USA. I do not know why he grudged this. And the tomatoes he was selling at 20 cents a pound, I did not buy, thinking they were too costly and when I asked him did he know for how much we can buy them for in India (which was my way of politely educating him as to where I was from), with contempt in his eyes he said, for nothing. I walked away before I could lose my temper at that sad silly man...”

A deputy sheriff of Monahans even checked my papers. I guess his ignorance, or pride of authority, would not allow him to distinguish between me and an illegal Mexican. In this sense he was no different than the Pakistani Police ASI who, on June 28th 1960 at the Khanewal Railway Station, sent a policeman to bring me out to him to show my passport. He leafed through my passport and gave it back to me. Our contempt for each other was so obvious that no words were exchanged.

Today, on August 7th 2012, as I transcribe this from my diary, even after more than half a century of this experience of mine, after Oak Creek, Wisconsin, Gurdwara tragedy on Sunday, 5th August that saw six innocent lives snuffed and many injured, including a policeman, there is no shortage in this country of senseless hate mongers, including the Republican law makers, one of whom even aspired to become the President of this only super power in the world, who are directly responsible for creating an environment for this hate filled crime with their ignorant and obsessive hatred for **all** the Muslims, their four years long effort to label Obama as a Muslim and spineless and cowardly legislators who have sold their souls to the National Rifle Association.

To that bunch you can add the Republican legislator who shouted ‘you lie’ to the President of the United States during his State of the Union address; a Republican Supreme Court Justice who showed his intelligence, or lack of it, by mouthing something similar; Republican Supreme Court that decided for us dummies who our President ought to be and pushed down our throats that ‘Corporations are People’ ruling; the Republican leader of the Senate whose primary goal is not to help the economy to turn around and help people find jobs but to make Obama a one term President; a party that insulted the American electorate and the world by nominating a Vice-Presidential candidate a person who did not even possess a passport. Did the party ever think what that meant? It meant that the world could face as a leader a person whose vision was no larger than a frog in a well.

And what do we have now? A shameless flip flopper Republican Presidential candidate who shows not even an iota of ethics, who has spent his entire life making money at the expense of the less fortunate, milked the system for every penny in tax avoidance, likes firing people and not concerned about very

poor, naming his Vice-Presidential candidate a person, the only Republican who has put in black and white his budget ideas that consist of further lowering taxes for the very rich, increasing or maintaining the current expenditures on military, reduce, modify or eliminate Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Food Stamps and Welfare programmes, in other words turn this country into a Banana Republic of 1% filthy rich and 99% peons. Republican should be a derogatory word in this country's lexicon.

As if the Republican Party was not doing enough damage, there is the Right Wing Media Machine, including the Fox News (?). In its lexicon 'Liberal' is a bad word and main stream media is also vilified. The strategy works. They control plenty of television but a lot of radio. Of the radio hosts two foul mouths that I get to listen in Sacramento, California, one claims to be using only half of his brain to vilify Democrats. He learned nothing from Bill Clinton completing his two full terms even though he would start counting number of days left in his presidency on the day of inauguration. Nor did he learn anything from Obama's victory. I think that he got to sleep at the White House during Bush Jr's presidency, whose biggest accomplishment was the gift of Iraq to Ayatollahs of Iran at an exorbitant cost to the American tax payer and wasted life of brave men and women of Armed Forces. He also played Santa Claus to the very rich by reducing their taxes while engaging in two costly wars fought by poor and middle class Americans. Another radio host calls himself Savage. I do not know whether that is his real name or he just likes the label.

Republican Party is not alone in this matter. There are a bunch of DINO's, Democrats In Name Only, rightly called DOGS of a certain hue who are just like their Republican cousins. I rather have RINO's, Republicans In Name Only, running the show. If Abraham Lincoln or Dwight Eisenhower, who warned this nation about the Military-Industrial complex, were the Republican leaders today, I will be a Republican.

We are waging a ruthless war against the terrorists around the globe, including some who are US citizens. Why not wage the same war with the same intensity against the home grown terrorists, "white supremacist skinheads" and "frustrated neo-Nazi"?

The world also needs to know that even though the last Republican President went to war in Iraq to bring Democracy to the Middle East, among other excuses, practically every state in the Union that has a Republican Governor, is actively engaged in passing legislation to deny legitimacy to some voters. Their target are the poor, the elderly, and the minorities and even students, all a traditional constituency of Democrats, all under the pretext of suppressing voter fraud, which fraud is not even occurring.

Neither of the two Presidential candidates deserves my vote but vote I shall for Obama, the lesser of the two evils. I am not a whole hearted supporter of Obama because he missed an opportunity to use the first two years of his term when both Houses of Congress had Democrat majority. His problem was the Blue Dog Democrats, if they deserve to be called Democrats.

He should have whipped them in line and if not single payer system for health insurance at least an option for single payer should have been an important part of his health reform. The only way to reduce cost of health insurance is to take profit motive out of it and US manufacturers and businesses should be relieved of the burden to provide health insurance to their workers. It should be federal and portable across State lines as Medicare and Social Security. His stimulus package was weak and he played too cozy towards the financial interests who were given loads of money with no strings attached.

With Paul Ryan as his V-P candidate, Romney's vague statements about what he will do to improve the economy are now very explicit thanks to Ryan's budget proposal that Republicans have already passed. There is no wiggle room. This is an opportunity for the American electorate to redeem itself from the

goofs of two terms for Bush Jr. They can earn the respect of the entire world by giving President Obama a fifty state victory.

That would also be a sweet victory over the right wing Republican Supreme Court that declared corporations as people. Perhaps that will also trigger the resurrection of a Republican Party that is truly compassionate conservative and not a farce that Bush Jr. gave us.

Hardev S Shergill

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EDITORIAL [II]

[From the July-August 2012 Sikh Bulletin]

GURBANI & SIKH REHT MARYADA SOME CONTRADICTIONS

Quotes from Guru Granth Sahib:

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਹਾਈ ॥

The One God is our father; we are the children of the One God. You are our Guru. GGS Page 611

ਨਾ ਕੇ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥੧॥

No one is my enemy, and no one is a stranger.

I get along with everyone. GGS Page 1299

Both quotes above are from the Bani of Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev Ji. Guru Ji is stressing that whole Human Race is one big Family. Guru Nanak preached the same thing to his Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Muslim audiences in India and the Middle East and to the Christian and Jewish audiences whom he must have come across during his visit to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad. Scientific research on human origins confirms the same thing. In fact it even pin points origin of human race to an 'African Mother'.

Quotes from

'Sikh Reht Maryada:

The Code of Sikh Conduct & Conventions',

Published by

Dharam Parchar Committee

Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee

December 2000 (English version)

*"Only a Sikh may perform kirtan in a congregation".
(Chapter V Article VI c) p.15*

*"A Sikh daughter must be married to a Sikh".
(Chapter XI Article XVIII b) p.26*

Two questions arise:

1. Why the distinction between daughter and son when Gurbani gives both sexes an equal status?
2. If the entire humanity is child of one God then why discriminate in the name of religion which is man made?

It is logical to assume from the above quotes that a Sikh can be recognized by his appearance alone. A key determinant of that is unshorn hair. Yet there is no mention of the requirement for a Sikh to keep unshorn hair in Guru Granth Sahib. If anything, it says that it makes no difference to the creator whether we keep long hair or a bald head; what counts are our deeds, our conduct in our daily lives.

ਕਬੀਰ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਏਕ ਸਿਉਂ ਕੀਏ ਆਨ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਜਾਇ॥
ਭਾਵੈ ਲਾਬੇ ਕੇਸ ਕਰੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਘਰਿ ਮੁਛਾਇ॥ GGS ਪ। 1365।

If the Gurus kept unshorn hair, covered with a turban, they were simply following one of the then prevalent Indian customs that also included completely shorn and partially shorn hair. It were Hindus and Muslims, in various forms of appearance, who came to listen to the Gurus and none was barred based on their appearance or for any other reason.

Mardana, a Muslim, perhaps should be considered first among Guru Nanak's Sikhs because he spent his entire adult life in Guru's company and provided music for Guru's hymns. Today his descendants are not allowed to perform kirtan at Darbar Sahib or any other Gurdwara.

The requirement of keeping unshorn hair started with the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, but only for those who volunteered to partake '*khande-di-pahul*' and alongwith unshorn hair they were also required to carry four more articles of faith. At no time were the non-pahuldhari Sikhs considered any lesser.

In time the children of pahuldhari Sikhs, and many others, started keeping long hair without taking pahul, and now we are at a point where non-kesadhari Sikh is not just looked down upon but not even considered a Sikh. There is one kesadhari and pahuldhari sect among us that does not consider as Sikhs even those kesadhari and pahuldhari Sikhs who have not been baptized by their ritual and do not agree with their interpretation of Gurbani. Members of this group have resorted to violence in UK, Canada and USA to stop missionaries trained in Gurmat Gian Colleges from performing katha in our gurdwaras.

It is an interesting coincidence that both terms, **Sikh** and **Taliban**, literally mean the same thing, 'the student'. Unfortunately, we have seen the emergence of Sikh Taliban in the Diaspora. **We should never forget that a Sikh is one who lives by the teachings enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib that embodies the philosophy of Guru Nanak. Gurus lived their lives as they preached. There was no difference in their *kathani* and *karni* and they did not expect anything less from their Sikhs.**

It would be appropriate here to quote from my May-June 2012 Sikh Bulletin editorial:

"Here I would like to confess to my personal belief that might be considered a blasphemy and offend most people, even those who know me well. That is that Guru Nanak did not initiate another religion. There were too many religions and divisions among them in his time as is the case today. Today he will surely say that 'I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim; neither a Sikh nor a Christian'. He showed mankind a path to life and living. The tragedy is that 'well meaning people', which would be 99.9% of us all, have turned it into yet another divisive and suffocating faith."

Several days after this issue of the Sikh Bulletin was released on the internet, Dr. Harbans Lal sent me an article for publications about the findings of **Syed Mushtaq Hussain Mirpuri**, a Kashmiri Muslim,

during his stay at a madrasa in Mecca from 1927-1930. Following quote is from that article to be published in the September-October 2012 issue of the Sikh Bulletin:

*“Siyahito Baba Nanak Shah Faqir, by **Haji Tajjudin Naqshbandhi**, who had met Guru Nanak during the hajj. Tajjudin caught up with Guru Nanak in the town of Undlas located between Erar and Bagdad and travelled thereafter with him as a member of his entourage. **He thus remained with Guru Nanak during the years of 1504-06.***

*During Guru Nanak's visit to Mecca, **Qazi Ruknuddin** was among the first batch of Muslims who had extensive dialogue with him. After the incident in which Nanak was found sleeping with his feet pointing in the "wrong" direction, several Hajjis or pilgrims to Mecca-Medina gathered around Guru Nanak, seeking a dialogue.*

Qazi Ruknuddin then asked Nanak:
“Fala Allah mazabo”? (What is your religion?)

To that Guru Nanak responded:

“Abdulla Allah la mazaboo” (I am a man of God and belong to no religion.)

This was one of some 360 questions and answers from Guru Nanak's dialogues during his Middle-East Visit.”

This response by Guru Nanak reminded me of a similar utterance I heard in a scene of a play, ‘*Bulleshah*’ (1680-1757) performed in Chandigarh by a Pakistani group, about ten years ago. Two of his disciples were accosted by the religious police while eating during daylight during the month of Ramadan. When asked what religion they belonged to they responded that they were Muslims. Bulleshah told them that with their response they asked for that treatment because a Muslim is not supposed to eat during the day time during the month of Ramadan fasting; that their answer should have been ‘we are men of God’.

Guru period and Mughal period were contemporary periods. There should be a wealth of original information in the archives of the Mogul Empire in Persian, the official language of the court. We need to train future researchers, proficient in Panjabi, Persian and English.

Hardev S. Shergill

EDITORIAL
NANAK (1469-1539)
The One and Only of His Kind
(From the November-December 2012 Sikh Bulletin)

Before Nanak's coming there had been no body like him, including the founders of world's largest faiths, and nobody since.

During the age of European Renaissance of the 14th–17th centuries Guru Nanak was the only person who brought renaissance to the Indian sub-continent. Human mind, that Gurbani calls ‘*dasam duar*’, is so unique that at any given time more than one person can arrive at the same conclusion about the fundamental truths of the physical world. **Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and Copernicus (1473-1543)**, thousands of miles apart and unknown to each other, arrived at the **same conclusion about the cosmos, including that it is in constant change.**

Guru Nanak also planted the seeds of the future successes to come in the field of science, such as: the Big Bang theory, EMC², origin of life in water, Evolution of Species and from the point of view of nurturing the body, no difference between meat and vegetables. These were world changing pronouncements and yet the world never heard about them; not then, not now.

First article in this issue is “**Origin of Universe**”, Chapter 15 of Dr Devinder Singh Chahal’s book, ‘*Nanakian Philosophy*’. It is worth repeating here the first two paragraphs in his introduction to this chapter to illustrate the above point:

“I would like to quote the following statement of Carl Sagan before describing the origin of universe according to Nanakian Philosophy: *“A religion, old or new, that stressed the magnificence of the universe as revealed by modern science, might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths. Sooner or later, such a religion will emerge”*. Carl Sagan, Pale Blue Dot (1995) [17].

“I was wonder-struck when I came across the above statement of Carl Sagan. I immediately went back to the 15th century, when the science was just emerging as a powerful tool to find the truth; Guru Nanak was describing the origin of universe, which appears to be very close to scientific version of today. And he laid the foundation of a new religion, Sikhi (Sikhism), which is now being envisioned by Carl Sagan as above”.

Magnificence of the universe described with reverence and awe and that too through poetry is what Carl Sagan wanted a religion to stress; how sad that we who claim to be the lawful recipients of this priceless gift have it hidden from every Carl Sagan of this world.

Born as baby Nanak, because he was born at his mother’s paternal house, he died known as Guru Nanak. **He gave a priceless gift to mankind but it was not a religion.** Advocate Surinder Singh Kanwar, in his article in this issue, ‘*sikh-di-pehchaan*’ makes the same point that **Guru Nanak wanted to rid the masses of conflicts in the name of religion rather than introduce still another religion.** What Guru Nanak gave was what **S. Parminder Singh Parmar** in his article in this issue calls *jeewan-jaach* (**How to live**). His philosophy got distorted and ritualized into a traditional religion by lesser people who came to inherit it.

Since Nanak himself rejected the **concept of Second Coming**, the corner stone of the world’s largest ritual filled religion, we just have to hope and wish that the world will produce, sometime down into the future, another personality like him, to implement what he started, **a universal concept of mankind living in a righteous, peaceful and prosperous world as one family, marked by brotherly love, tolerant of our petty differences, enlightened citizenry conscious of its responsibility towards the animal and vegetation kingdom as the highest form of life on this little speck of star dust that we call planet Earth.** That just might delay the eventual oblivion of life on this planet that the cosmic law is speeding us towards.

In a random email exchanges on the internet, among many, the following had caught my attention: **“Do the Sikhs really know who the Nanak is? Is he Guru or mystic or reformer or philosopher or scientist or something else?”** The person who wrote that was **Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal**, and that triggered our serialization of his book ‘*Nanakian Philosophy*’ in *The Sikh Bulletin*.

I humbly submit, and beseech discerning minds among us, to consider that Guru Nanak was all of these. As **Principal Sawan Singh Gogia** aptly states in his article in this issue, ‘*Guru Nanak Dev about*

Muslims': **"His tenets preach liberation of humanity from social, political, religious and economic exploitation."**

Blinded by our egos we have turned a pipe dream of life after death into an article of blind faith and invented Gods and Goddesses as impeccable witnesses to it. And then some of us have the audacity to claim that God created mankind in His image. But unfortunately it is all based on falsehood and this falsehood is the basis of all the world's religions. **Blind have been and are leading the Blind.**

In this country, the United States of America, a Republican Medical Doctor can unashamedly claim the world to be 6,000 years old (younger than Chinese history) because The Bible says so. A young and University educated type, Republican potential 2016 Presidential candidate, when cornered about the same question hee-hawed but did not commit himself to the answer by alleging not being a scientist. All this because a sizeable majority of the 47% who voted for Republican Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney believe in that kind of falsehood being preached in multiple denominational Christian Churches and over radio waves. They also oppose teaching of Theory of Evolution in their schools; God created man in his image; this in a country that claims to be the leader of the world.

Nanak was a child prodigy; he was a born genius. At the very young age he mastered the religious and philosophical literature of both the Hindu and Muslim faiths of his time and he yearned for knowledge in search for which he went to the scholars of that period and engaged in intellectual discourses. **Neither God Himself nor his Angel appeared to give Guru Nanak his philosophy.** That is a myth propagated by the world's religions for their founders.

He was also an accomplished linguist. Otherwise how could he have communicated with all those diverse people in and around the Indian sub-continent? As **Dr. Sarbjit Singh** of Mumbai states in his article in this issue, '*Guru Nanak Sahib knew more than hundred languages*'.

He formulated his philosophy by use of his keen observation and use of his *bibek budhi* (discerning mind). Once his mission was clear to him he took leave of his young family of a wife and two teenage sons and travelled to four corners of the globe from Tibet in the north, to Burma in the east, Ceylon in the south and Mecca in the west. He accomplished all that on foot and by boat. No flying carpets and no magic tricks for him. One can imagine the criticism he must have endured from family and friends. But there was a much larger family that needed to hear him, the human family.

In His book '*Nanak, an Introduction*', Purushottam Nijhaawan writes, **"In the 15th century, Indian society was a disturbing picture of rank ritualism, superstition, bigotry and social decay. The birth of Nanak in 1469 in the little village of Talwandi near Lahore, however, came as a miracle. The deteriorating Indian society had now found a redeemer"**.

It would be correct to say that the **world at large** had found a redeemer.

He had simple and straightforward messages for all the world's religions. To those who sought salvation in after life but went begging for food at the door of a householder in this life, Nanak prescribed the **life of a householder and to seek salvation in this life.**

To those who walked the earth barefeet with their mouths covered (Jainism) so as not to harm minute life, he made them aware of plenty of such life already swarming in side their bodies.

To those who worshipped stone images of multitudes of Gods and Goddesses (Brahmanism), Guru advised that there is only One God and it has no image.

To those who faced towards a specific direction while praying (Muslims) Guru revealed that God is not confined to one spot; It is everywhere and permeates everything.

If Guru had come across the faith that holds its redeemer to be the only son of God (Christians) and who was resurrected from death for a second coming sometime in the future he would have rejected that belief by saying that for the birth of a human to take place it needs a man's semen and a woman's egg in side her womb and the clock of death cannot be turned back.

Long before the modern scientific thought developed Guru Nanak sowed the seeds of it in the opening verse of Guru Granth Sahib and the bani 'Jap' that follows it. This editorial is followed by some selections from GGS to illustrate these points.

The opening verse:

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

"God is ONE. His name is Truth. He is the creator. He is fearless and not inimical. He is without death and without birth. He is self-existent. Humans can attune to him through Guru's grace."

What does it really mean? What does it describe? Certainly it is not anything akin to a human. It is formless and timeless and yet is self-existent. In the opening line of 'Jap' Guru unequivocally reasserts his firm belief that what he is saying is an absolute truth.

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥

ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੇਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

ਅਰਥ:- ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਮੁੱਢ ਤੋਂ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ, ਜੁਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਢ ਤੋਂ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਵੇਲੇ ਭੀ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਅਗਾਂਹ ਨੂੰ ਭੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਰਹੇਗਾ।੧।

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1||

There is a single English word that describes what Guru is saying and that word is *ENERGY*.

Referring to death Guru asks what has died. Then he answers his own question; nothing has died. Body has simply gone back to its elements. The breath mixes with air, body becomes dust and the spark of *ENERGY* merges with the *ENERGY*. I see seeds of $E=MC^2$.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL PRAYER - ARDAAS

[From the January-February 2013 Sikh Bulletin]

Practice of prayer has a universal presence in all societies, primitive to very advanced and in all the religions. Whether it helps or not is another matter and depends upon an individual's beliefs. One thing is certain, however, prayer might help a person if it is about self and that not because of any divine intervention but because of the placebo effect, well known in the field of medicine. To pray for someone else's good health and rainfall during drought is a fruitless exercise.

Dr. Chahal, in his article on Ardaas (p.2) with extensive quotes from Gurbani has come to the conclusion that Guru Nanak's belief about prayer was different from what his followers are now proclaiming and practicing, and it is best summed up by his quote by Albert Einstein, "Scientific research is based on the idea that everything that takes place is determined by laws of nature, and therefore this holds for the actions of people. For this reason, a research scientist will hardly be inclined to believe that events could be influenced by a prayer, i.e. by a wish addressed to a supernatural Being."

Had Albert Einstein read the philosophy of Guru Nanak he would have said that same advice was given by Guru Nanak during the 15th century (the Period of Renaissance in Europe) to the people of the Indian Sub-continent and the Middle East.

Prayer is an essential component of all the faiths but in the Sikh prayer that is recited in Gurdwaras and homes there are glaring words and phrases that are in conflict with Gurbani. Commencing word, 'Bhagauti' and 'meditate then on revered Hari Krishan on seeing whom all suffering vanishes' are just two examples.

Dr. Chahal has correctly pointed out that a Sikh's Ardaas is found in the Guru Granth Sahib itself. **This Ardaas begs for nothing from the Creator** because the Creator has already provided all the means of sustaining all the living things, including mankind. In this Ardaas a Sikh offers thanks to the Creator for Its bountiful blessings and describes Creator's characteristics.

The Ardaas that Dr. Chahal chose from the Guru Granth Sahib is from page 268. He has given a better English rendition than the literal ones you will find. Same Ardaas is presented below with meanings in Panjabi by Professor Sahib Singh:

ਤੂੰ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥
ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ ॥
ਤੁਮ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੇਰੇ ॥
ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਮਹਿ ਸੂਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ॥

ਕੇਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਅੰਤੁ ॥
ਊਚੇ ਤੇ ਉਚਾ ਭਗਵੰਤ ॥
ਸਗਲ ਸਮਗ੍ਰੀ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਸੂਤ੍ਰਿ ਧਾਰੀ ॥
ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ॥
ਤੁਮਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ॥੮॥੪॥ {ਪੰਨਾ 268}

ਅਰਥ:- (ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ!) ਤੂੰ ਮਾਲਿਕ ਹੈਂ (ਸਾਡੀ ਜੀਵਾਂ ਦੀ) ਅਰਜ਼ ਤੇਰੇ ਅੱਗੇ ਹੀ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਜਿੰਦ ਤੇ ਸਰੀਰ (ਜੋ ਤੂੰ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ) ਸਭ ਤੇਰੀ ਹੀ ਬਖਸ਼ੀਸ਼ ਹੈ ।
ਤੂੰ ਸਾਡਾ ਮਾਂ ਪਿਉ ਹੈਂ, ਅਸੀਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਬਾਲ ਹਾਂ, ਤੇਰੀ ਮੇਹਰ (ਦੀ ਨਜ਼ਰ) ਵਿਚ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਸੁਖ ਹਨ ।

ਕੋਈ ਤੇਰਾ ਅੰਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾ ਸਕਦਾ, (ਕਿਉਂਕਿ) ਤੂੰ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਉੱਚਾ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਹੈਂ ।
 (ਜਗਤ ਦੇ) ਸਾਰੇ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਤੇਰੇ ਹੀ ਹੁਕਮ ਵਿਚ ਟਿਕੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ; ਤੇਰੀ ਰਚੀ ਹੋਈ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਤੇਰੀ ਹੀ ਆਗਿਆ ਵਿਚ
 ਤੁਰ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ।
 ਤੂੰ ਕਿਹੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਹੈਂ ਤੇ ਕੇਡਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਹੈਂ—ਇਹ ਤੂੰ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈਂ । ਹੇ ਨਾਨਕ! (ਆਖ, ਹੇ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ!) ਤੇਰੇ ਸੇਵਕ
 (ਤੈਥੋਂ) ਸਦਾ ਸਦਕੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ।੮੧੪।

English translation by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal:

Part 1: First Stanza deals with the Ardaas (prayer) or Thanksgiving

Our prayer is before You, Oh God.
 Our lives and bodies, granted to us, are Your creations (blessings).
 You are our Mother and Father and we are Your children.
 With Your blessings, we have numerous joys.

Part 2: Who is that God to Whom we pray or thank?

Nobody knows Your limits (You are infinite).
 You, the God, are the highest of the high.
 Everything (matter and antimatter) in this universe is under Your Laws (Laws of Nature/Universe).
 Everything is happening under Your Laws (the Laws of Nature/Universe).
 It is only You, Who knows Your State of Being and Limits (Infiniteness).
 Nanak, the servant, sacrifices himself on you, the God. AGGS, M 5, p268.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
[From The Sikh Bulletin March-April 2013]
RECASTING OF THE SIKH BULLETIN
November-December 1999 – March-April 2013
AS
GURU NANAK MISSION

The Sikh Bulletin commenced publication in November 1999 with the sole objective of bringing about reformation in Sikhi. But it has become clear; to me at least, that Sikhi cannot be reformed. After considerable soul searching it became obvious why not. A look back at the history of all the world's major religions reveals that no religion has ever been reformed. In fact there has been only one, initially successful, attempt at reformation when Martin Luther (1483-1546) ushered Protestant Reformation with his 95 Theses followed by Edict of Worms in 1521. Today Catholic Church is still one but Protestant Churches have multiplied. Interestingly, in the same period, in his own unique way, Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was trying to bring about simultaneous reformation in Hinduism and Islam in the Indian sub-continent. **He did not succeed and I strongly believe that he did not start a new religion.** Sikhi just happened, in due time, in response to evolving social and political circumstances. In this last issue of The Sikh Bulletin I would like to acknowledge the selfless contribution, from the goodness of their hearts, by several people and record a synopsis of the very brief life of this publication in its original direction.

TWO FACES RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PUBLICATION OF THE SIKH BULLETIN



Sarbjit Singh Sandhu



Amrinder Singh Sandhu

Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana

I am very grateful to S. Sarbjit Singh Sandhu and his eldest son Amrinder Singh Sandhu of Elk Grove, California. Without their dedicated support I would not have been able to publish the Bulletin for so long.

Sarbjit Singh is a 1985-86 graduate of the two year correspondence Gurmat course from the Sikh Missionary College, Field Ganj, Ludhiana, Panjab. It was this background that enabled him to understand that Kala Afghana's thinking was on right track. If he had not taken those courses and had not acquired some knowledge of Gurbani, he himself thinks that he would have been a critic of Kala Afghana. Basic understanding of Gurbani, he says, was essential to understand and appreciate Kala Afghana.



Mr. Sandhu came into contact with me in response to my open letter '*Sikhan-di-talash*'. I had circulated one thousand copies of that open letter on May 29, 1998. As a direct result of that letter I received a



phone call from Collegeville, PA to call a certain party in Sydney, Australia, who in turn asked me to go see S. Gurbakhsh Singh Kala Afghana in Seattle, Washington, which I did, and I invited S. Kala Afghana to visit us at Sikh Center Roseville for a week or two and he very kindly agreed.

I then spread the word around Sacramento to invite people with knowledge of Gurbani to come to listen to him. Sarbjit Singh Sandhu was one of them and he brought with him late S. Gian Singh of Elk Grove, who not only commented

favourably on discourses of S. Kala Afghana but also became a very active member of our reform movement. His own discourses on Gurbani were also extremely valuable and he gave freely of his time. He is sorely missed. He was a graduate of both the University of New Delhi and Missionary College Delhi.

Soon after we started on this course of reformation in Sikhi, I had the good fortune of meeting late Dr. Sulakhan Singh Dhillon of Berkeley, California. I being so green in matters of knowledge of Gurbani and paucity of acquaintance with scholars in this field, he took me under his wings, so to speak. In the words of his wife, Darleen Dhillon, *"He was a wonderful Sikh, embodying all the best teachings, and showing by example what a Sikh should be. He was my hero and best friend as well as my dear husband of 42 Years"*.

I first met him in his role as a founder member of the group that started teaching of Panjabi at the U. C. Berkeley. He helped me hold educational and informational seminars at the Sikh Center Roseville to which he brought as speakers and resource persons educators from the faculties at the University of The Pacific in Stockton and Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B. C., Canada. His passing, in blissful sleep, was a great personal loss to me but even more so for the Sikh community because he was a unifier and a bridge builder.

He helped arrange our first annual conference in November 1999 to which Dr. Pashaura Singh was especially invited, his first appearance at a gathering of Sikhs since his thesis controversy. Notable achievements of this conference were:

1. Singh Purewal, in its original form, at this conference, long before the SGPC finally approved it.
2. Substituting words 'Akal Purakh' for 'Bhagauti' in the Sikh Ardaas.
3. Birth of The Sikh Bulletin as an instrument of reform in Sikhi.
4. Initiation of practice of annual conferences.
5. Adoption of Nanakshahi Calendar, as presented by Pal

Next person who came into my Sikhi Reformation life has very kindly agreed to assume the major responsibility for the publication of The Sikh Bulletin in its new vision, as Editor-In-Chief, to carry the message of Guru Nanak to the non-Sikhs and to those Sikhs who choose to listen to unadulterated version of Gurbani, unencumbered by rituals and miracles being practiced in all of our Gurdwaras, including Darbar Sahib. He is S. Gurpal Singh Khaira.

Gurpal Singh Khaira left India at a very young age and was educated in England and Canada. After a very successful career at upper management level in the Canadian Government and private sector which took him all over the world, he retired to Sacramento area to be closer to his Doctor Sons and grandchildren. He is a Punjabi language poet and fiction writer and loves Sikh classical kirtan music. He had been very active most of his life organizing Sikh conferences to teach and propagate **Guru Nanak's mission** as enshrined in Shri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. He had been frequent speaker at Sikh forums and his articles have been published in Sikh Review, Sikh Bulletin, and other local publication.

He started visiting us in Roseville around the year 2000 when he moved to this area from Southern California. This was the time when we had decided to call our reform movement 'Singh Sabha International'.

I address him as Singh Sahib because he really foots the bill; he considers me as his older brother. But more appropriately he would be my brother-in-law because he is married to a Shergill from my ancestral village in District Jalandhar that my great-grandmother and her family left for Bikaner state nine decades ago, my great-grandfather having passed away at a rather young age. Or it could be a relationship one generation up or down. It is not unusual among large families that have stayed in the same place over a long period of time to have age differences that create unusual relationships.

The only time I went to my family's ancestral village was when my father took me there when I was six years old. I remember three things from that visit:

1. Mela at Kultham with all its fun events.
2. Train with just as many passengers riding on the roof as inside and a whole lot hanging from the doors.
3. And in the house of my father's second cousin kids twice my age looking at me and giggling while addressing me as their granduncle.

Being a student of History, Geography and Indo-European language I cannot help but wonder where my family's roots lie in the distant past. North Indians belong to a group called Caucasians because they supposedly migrated east and west from the region of Caucasus Mountains. The two syllables of my first name 'Har' and 'Dev' have clearly Indian connotation because in Hinduism they both refer to 'God'. The two syllables of my last name 'Sher' and 'Gill', however, are clearly of Persian origin, meaning 'Lion' (Shir) and 'soil' in Persian. A northern province of Iran that slopes down from the mountains to the shores of the Caspian Sea is called '**Gilan**' and its inhabitants are called '**Gils**'. Surname Gill or versions of it are widespread. Pakistan has Gilani surnames, Pakistan and India have Gills and Shergills, British Isles have Gills, McGills, Cowgills and Scargills.

Sorry I got carried away; you cannot be immersed in Gurbani and not think everybody is your cousin.

ਏਕੁ ਪਿਤਾ ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੂ ਮੇਰਾ ਗੁਰ ਰਾਈ ॥

GGS P 611

ਨਾ ਕੈ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥ GGS P. 1299

It is ok to take these words of Gurbani literally, sometimes.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From May-June 2013 issue of The Sikh Bulletin]

SAT KARTAR

At the Singh Sabha International Canada conference in Brampton in September 2012, when the Constitution and By-Laws were being voted upon, only four of us among about sixty participants, voted against the requirement that all members of the Executive Committee be kesadhari.

In an earlier editorial I have expressed my views that on one hand we make a case, and rightly so, that in matters of religious scriptures there is nothing like the Guru Granth Sahib. All other scriptures were written by many authors and that too after the founders' passing. Guru Granth Sahib not only has the original scriptures by Guru Nanak and some of his successor Gurus but also the writings of Hindu and Muslim writers, who were not kesadhari. Guru Nanak's lifelong companion, a Muslim, Mardana, was also most likely a non-kesadhari, as his descendants are today.

We can truly describe GGS as a universal message. But over time the outward appearance for a Sikh has gained precedence. Hair has become so sacred that the SGPC went to court to get the definition of a Sikh as Kesadhari to deny admission to one of its Medical Colleges to a Sikh daughter who plucked her eyebrows and succeeded. SGPC should really have gone to Guru Granth Sahib instead.

Upon reflection, though, the decision of that conference made sense. It reminded me of Mr. Tohra's response when asked why women were not allowed to participate in sewa at Darbar Sahib. His prompt and honest answer was that it has become '*maryada*' (tradition) now. He did not have a moment's hesitation in giving that response even though he must have known that the person whose institutions he was managing broke most of the '*maryadas*' of the religion and the society that he was born into.

That event in that conference did put me on a course of serious thinking. The idea of Singh Sabha International had germinated at Roseville, California in December 2000. There it died but in Ontario, Canada it is doing a positive job of funding missionary graduates of the Missionary College in Ludhiana and preparing CD's on gurbani and other religious literature for mass distribution. Their work is confined primarily to Punjab and few other parts of India. Any attempt on their part to negate the significance of uncut hair would impede their effort back '*home*'.

In another editorial I have stated that I became a confirmed agnostic at the age of twelve after reading '*Bachittar Natak*' and '*Bale-dian-Sakhian*' to practice reading and writing Panjabi at home and reading '*Mahabharat*' and '*Ramayan*' from the middle school library. Being born into a Sikh household I had uncut hair when I arrived in this country in 1960 at the age of twenty-six but within four months I was clean shaven.

That lasted until 1997 when Bhai Jeewan Singh and Ripudaman Singh Malik of Satnam Education Society of British Columbia, Canada came to the Roseville, California Gurdwara to hold summer gurnat camp. It was their earnest desire that I should serve the congregation in '*Sikhi Sarup*'. I complied and even though now I have definite views on the matter and the Roseville Gurdwara has been closed since April 2005, because the *sangat* was not supportive of the reforms that we were introducing, I have no intention of cutting my hair because I consider them part of my culture, not a religious requirement.

I cannot reconcile with many practices of Sikhism today with what they ought to be, key among them the issues of *kes* and definition of a Sikh. These, just like any religion, are divisive. Guru Nanak was not a divider; he was a uniter. In an age when you ventured away from your neighborhood at your peril he travelled far and wide to every corner of India and to Ceylon, Tibet and Mecca beyond, regardless of what W. H. McLeod and his students assert.

Guru Nanak was born into a Hindu household but with that faith Sikhism shares almost nothing, not even the concept of One God. At a very young age he refused to wear the *janeu* (Hindu sacred thread worn by high caste males); discarded the caste system (a religiously sanctioned discrimination still entrenched in the 21st century democratic India); preached against idol worship; recognized the equality of mankind; asserted the equality of men and women; condemned the Hindu practice of *Sati* (live immolation of widow on her husband's funeral pyre); instructed the women to discard veil; allowed widow and widower remarriage; rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life salvation, *tapasya*, heaven and hell (after death), incarnation, 84 lakh *juni* (8,400,000 life forms) *yatra* to holy places, fasting, multiple gods and goddesses; and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*' (wishing well being of all, not just of oneself, one's own family or one's own country) in his prayers. **His was a faith of Universal Humanism. I, therefore' am a Nanakpanthi as represented by the Gurbani of Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji.**

To the above we should add that Guru Nanak was an **environmentalist** half a millennium ahead of his time.

ਪਵਣੁ¹ ਗੁਰੂ² ਪਾਣੀ³ ਪਿਤਾ⁴ ਮਾਤਾ⁵ ਧਰਤਿ⁶ ਮਹਤੁ⁷ ॥

Pavan gurū pānī pitā mātā dharat mahat.

Air¹ is like a Guru², water³ like a father⁴ and the Earth⁶ like the great⁷ mother⁵ (which provides all types of resources and food).

The quote above is taken from the article '**EARTH DAY, ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ, EARTH, THE GREAT MOTHER**' by Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD in the following pages of this issue.

The positions of Guru, Father and Mother are the most highly regarded in Indian culture. By associating those with the three most essential life support elements Guru Nanak wants people to show the same consideration to these elements as they do to the three human relationships. In other words, do nothing that will pollute them.

His mission was to spread the message of common origins and brotherhood of mankind and importance of truthful living. *Truth is higher than everything; but higher still is truthful living.* //5// AGGS, M 1, p 62. Religions can be changed, voluntarily or by inducements as in Christianity and by the sword as in Islam, but truthful living does not have to change with change in faith.

I firmly believe that Guru Nanak and Guru Granth are not for starting a new religion. Sikhism is a way of life. Whereas religions compartmentalize people, Sikhism breaks those barriers.

An excellent example of that is the incorporation of writings of both Hindus and Muslims that are compatible with gurbani. It is true that the Christian Bible incorporates the Old Testament, the Jewish scripture, and Mohammed accepted the Jewish and Christian prophets; but that is all among the one family of Semitic people who shared common origins, culture and history. Christ himself was a Jew. His was a crusade for reform in the practice of Jewish faith that had come to be controlled by the Temple Priests. It was the rejection of Christ by the establishment Judaism that gave an impetus to what came to be known as Christianity. Islam, on the other hand, was an alien faith in the Indian sub-continent, with no common history or bond with the native religions of India. But Guru Nanak found fellow interpreters of

Koran among Muslims and incorporated their writings to reinforce his views which had universal application.

Another issue that concerns me is the prevalent effort to claim Sikhism to be a revealed religion in league with the three religions of the Middle East. In my judgment that does not add any prestige to Sikhism. These three religions do believe in one God but each one has its own one God.

Jewish God discriminates among people as the Jews claim to be God's chosen people. This God, like other Semitic and Hindu Gods, demands human sacrifice, like Abraham's son; and when Abraham prepares to sacrifice his son, God becomes kinder and gentler God and asks Abraham to slaughter a lamb instead.

Christian God fathered a child from Mary and his son, Jesus, established his own religion, Christianity, and proclaimed that only those who believe in him will achieve salvation. Then his 'FATHER' allowed for him to be crucified for the sins of others; but then HE raises Jesus from the dead, on the third day, and gives him life.

Guru Nanak rejects all three fundamentals of Christian faith. Guru Nanak's Creator neither goes around fathering children from virgins, nor does anybody die for sins of others; each is responsible to face the consequences of his or her own actions; and once anyone dies it cannot be reversed, even by the Creator. According to Guru Nanak only The Creator never dies but anything that has been created will surely die, even this Cosmos.

Mohammed's God chose not to talk to Mohammed directly but through an Angel, just as in the 19th century Joseph Smith who founded Mormon faith was to claim. But Allah did not instruct Mohammed to bring equal justice to women in Arabia, such as one man one wife. Nor did God forbid him to marry a child which in the 21st century would be called pedophilia, a criminal act. Mohammed not only had many a women as sex slaves but also was married to a dozen of them, including marriage to a six year old child and consummated that marriage when she was nine.

When people proclaim that there are similarities between Sikhism and other faiths on basic concepts, it makes me cringe.

Guru Nanak's concept of God is not the same as in the Middle Eastern religions where God (Male) dictates the Law and gives direction to the prophets (Male) nor is it like Hindu Gods who incarnate as humans (Men specifically). Although he incorporated into his Bani the multiple names for God in other religions, his personal word for the 'God' entity is '**Karta Purakh**' or '**KARTAR**', formless, ageless, and everlasting and devoid of human attributes.

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ

ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ik oaṅkār sat nām kartā purakh nirbhā'o nirvair
akāl mūrati ajūnī saibhaṅ gur parsād.

I would interpret this phrase, called 'Moolmantar'/Gurmantar' as:

'There is One and Only, a Singular Reality, called The Creator, that created Itself; It has no human attributes such as fear, enmity, limited life span, an image and therefore it does not communicate with the Prophets directly or through others, as the Semitic religions claim, nor does it incarnate as a human as

Hinduism (actual term should really be Brahmanism) claims. IT can only be comprehended through knowledge.”

Thus Guru Nanak discarded the pre Nanak God concept completely and unequivocally. Not only that, to press his point home even more strongly, in the very first verse in Jap that immediately follows the above ‘Moolmantar’ the Guru reasserts the basic truth:

ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ॥ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥੧॥

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout The Ages. True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever True. ||1||

The word **KARTAR** in Punjabi and **CREATOR** in English come from the parent language, Indo-European. If one removes the vowels from both, the consonants in both languages are the same ‘KRTR’ and ‘CRTR’ and sound exactly the same. It might not be too far out to speculate that the Indo-European people, before they spread to the present geographical expanse from British Isles through Europe and Iran to the Indian sub-continent, developed the concept of a single Creator but as the time went on it evolved into multiple private single Gods. The man first showed his audacity by first creating a God and then having that God create man in HIS image.

I am told by one knowledgeable source that in Guru Nanak’s time the greetings were ‘**Sat Kartar**’. The fact that Guru Nanak named his settlement **Kartar Pur**, the ‘place to practice righteousness’, further reinforces that and also the fact that he chose his own name for Bhagwan, Ishwer, and God and that name was ‘**Karta Purakh**’.

It is time for us to bring the teachings of Guru Nanak to the notice of the outside world. Best way to do that is through the medium of English first and then translation from English into other languages. What I think we need to concentrate on is to take advantage of the electronic media and use the pages of The Sikh Bulletin to coordinate the translation of the Bani of Guru Nanak into English. For sure there are several versions of it already but none of them do justice to what the Guru is saying.

I ask the readers of The Sikh Bulletin in the Diaspora to create a *dharamsal* in their own homes, become *missionaries* for Guru Nanak and let their computer be the channel of communication. Email to me one hymn of Guru Nanak and its English translation that you think is worthy of being brought to the notice of the population in the countries of our residences. We will invite our readers’ opinions, arrive at a consensus and then make it available for everyone to use.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL
MILK BARS TO DESI SHRAB BARS
IN THE LAND OF THE GURUS

[From The Sikh Bulletin March-April 2014]

It was more than half a century ago, June 25th 1960 to be exact, that I stepped off the Indian soil and on to Pakistan’s at Wagah border, hitchhiking my way across the Middle East, Europe and the United States to the University of Washington in Seattle.

My first return visit to India came in 1968. Eight years had brought changes but mostly in the increased population. Before 1960 I had seen people ride on top of the trains but this time, at least in Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, people were riding on top of the buses as well and not the double decker kind.

There was, however, one bright development in Panjab. At almost every road crossing over the irrigation canals there was a Milk Bar and my favourite was almond milk. Cold bottle of milk was so refreshing during Panjab's summer and healthy, I still remember it fondly.

In 1976, to avoid the summer heat because my family with six and four year olds was with us, I chose to travel during January through March. It had its own discomfort, very cold for lack of central heating that we take for granted here. I do not have a memory of whether the Milk Bars were still there in 1976 or not. But this time there was no sign of them but '*desi shrab thekas*' were in every village, thanks, no doubt, to both the ruling parties in Panjab.

This year, after 38 years, I decided to pay a visit to my village, 35BB in Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, the village that I left in 1960, for good, where I grew up and where my nine siblings were born. I wanted to see what miracle my youngest brother had brought to the place where he was born. (Please see The Sikh Bulletin July-August 2012 at www.sikhbulletin.com).

This time the changes since 1976 were profound. For starters we travelled by car from New Delhi airport to 35BB, in the middle of the night in thick fog, in many ways more convenient than train, although even train travel has improved. All the narrow gauges in District Ganganagar are now to the standard of the rest of the country and one does not have to switch trains going from New Delhi to Ganganagar. Paved roads are plentiful, although they have a lot of room for improvement including educating the public in the rules of the road.

But not only one thing has not changed it has added to its ranks another of God's creatures. To the wandering cattle on the streets of the cities you can now add stray dogs. In Goa the visitors had to avoid disturbing at least half a dozen stray dogs, blissfully asleep, at the entrance to a historical Church. The stray dogs in the cities are just as numerous as the cattle used to be and still are and they make themselves comfortable on sidewalks, streets, and at the entrance to the shops, totally oblivious to the pedestrians and noisy traffic.

But what is missing in every city are the trash bins; as a result the whole city is a trash bin. What I learnt about cleanliness of human surroundings in first grade in the village school in 35BB has escaped the city folks and even the village folks. 35BB Primary School that had one teacher and 22 students grades 1-4 in my time has four teachers in a Middle School for twice that many students and within two miles of the village are two Public (Private that is) Schools, for profit, with English medium. As the educational opportunities have increased, the civic sense has disappeared. When we visited my alma mater I could not help but point out to the teachers bits of paper littering the ground around the children seated on the floor. Response was shocking. Parent involvement in their children's education has increased so much that they have forbidden the teachers to ask their children to keep the school litter free.

In New Delhi when our tour bus stopped for lunch in a rather posh area, with tourist emporiums surrounding a fenced park, I asked a security guard outside one such emporium where I could throw the banana peel in my hand. He pointed to a corner of the fenced park across the street where I could see a cluster of cattle and dogs. I walked up to see a heap of garbage with the animals munching on it. I added my contribution to this recycling bin.

Tongas and rickshaws are mostly gone, at least in Panjab but vehicles of various kinds are plentiful. The family of one of my sisters had gone from the States to their village in Ganganagar District for the

wedding of their granddaughter, a month before my visit. As is the custom in India these days, they had hosted 1200 people for the party. I asked my brother in law where he accommodated all the relatives during the nights. No body stayed the night, he responded, everybody has cars and after the functions everybody went home and came back the next day.

Every village in Ganganagar District, at least where all of my relatives live and whom I visited, are linked with paved roads. Same is true in Hoshiarpur District of Panjab. During my college days the travelling time to relatives' villages that used take most of a day now took less than an hour by car; now that is a real improvement. And yes India has toll roads too.

Where ever we drove in Rajasthan, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh and flying from Udaipur to Bombay, there was one common sight, the brick kiln chimneys. I do not recall seeing any during my last two visits. As a result adobe homes in the villages are being replaced with baked brick and villages have water works and electricity. Now that is a real improvement.

As before, the villages are cleaner, quieter and healthy to live in and the cities are crowded, noisy, filthy, smelly and unhealthy to live in. In Panjab's Doaba, several villages, ancestral home to NRIs in Canada, United State and UK, have been adopted by their Diaspora sons and living conditions improved by bringing modern sanitary practices. Water, sewer and drainage has been piped underground, streets are paved and wired for electricity.

One fact manifested itself every place I went to, a very large growth in India's population. The places I knew, I failed to recognize and nobody seems to be concerned about it.

We had combined three visits into one, eleven days to visit relatives in Ganganagar District of Rajasthan and where I and my wife were born and educated, in Panjab, seventeen days of a guided tour of New Delhi, Agra, Rajasthan, Bombay and Goa, through Virgin Vacations and three days in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. It was a miracle that everything went smoothly and exactly as planned, in spite of the hectic and chaotic days.

I had never been south of the Chandigarh, Delhi, Jaipur line. While teaching Geography for the Indian Air Force in New Delhi in 1959 I had planned a student excursion to Ceylon. All of my colleagues were very concerned about us, northerners, travelling by train for days through the territory of the southerners. Relief was felt by them all when on the morning of the day we were to depart New Delhi the news broke that the Ceylonese had assassinated their Prime Minister, Mr. Bandaranaike, forcing us to cancel the trip. The change in that kind of attitude this time was refreshing. Our driver was from Uttra Khand, the Chefs and other hospitality industry workers were from all over India, placed in the hotels and restaurants by their privately run hospitality schools.

I had lived in Delhi for two years, 1958-1960, had visited the Red Fort, Chandani Chowk, Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib, but neither the Jama Masjid nor the alleys and narrow streets around it. Most charitable comment I can make is that I am so grateful I do not have to live there.

Bombay, the Slumdog Millionaire city, was a pleasant contrast to Delhi. Both are big and home to India's ethnic diversity but Bombay appeared to be much cleaner and more accepting of India's ethnic diversity than New Delhi and much safer. While Delhi newspapers carried daily stories of rapes and murder, it was pleasantly surprising to see young couples of all religious beliefs, including scarf clad young Muslim women and, even single young women, strolling and jogging on the Marine Drive across from our hotel in Nariman Point. The best pleasant surprise was Udaipur, the City of Lakes, the cleanest city of all that we visited.

The culmination of this trip was the three night stop in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the city of the future, in the present, a *mangal* in the desert, with a crowning jewel for a Sikh, not the Burj Khalifa, but Gurudwara Guru Nanak Darbar. I had wanted to see it in person since 2012 when I first reported about it in the September-October 2012 issue of The Sikh Bulletin.

Result of this wish fulfillment is this special issue of The Sikh Bulletin on this Gurudwara.

Our tour manager/guide, Mr. Kapil Rohatgi, was so eloquent and knowledgeable about India that I requested him to write for this issue what he was telling the tourists. His article appears very last.

Hardev Singh Shergill

GURU NANAK DARBAR GURUDWARA, DUBAI

[From The Sikh Bulletin March-April 2014]

On the way back from India I had planned to stop over in **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**, to visit the first ever in the Arab world, **Guru Nanak Darbar Gurudwara**. I am so glad that I was not only able to do just that but also get to meet, face to face, with the person whose leadership brought this all about, Mr. Surender Singh Kandhari.

Other than the first article, which is a reproduction of first reference to this Gurudwara in the September-October 2012 issue of the Sikh Bulletin, most of the material in this issue has been provided by him; rest has been found on google.

According to THE SIKH 100, *“Surender Singh is youngest President of the Automobile Association of Andhra Pradesh and youngest Captain of the Emirates Golf Club in Dubai. Chairman of Al Dobowi Group, one of the largest tyre distribution companies in the world, he contributed a total of 65million Arab Emirate Dirhams to build the first ‘legal’ Gurudwara in the United Arab Emirates. It is built on land donated by the ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The structure is over 100,000sq foot and has served over 40,000 worshippers in a single day. The Gurudwara had its opening ceremony in 2012.”*



Mr. Surender Singh
Kandhari

According to Wikipedia, The United Arab Emirates, sometimes simply called the Emirates, or the UAE, is a country located in the southeast end of the [Arabian Peninsula](#) on the [Persian Gulf](#), bordering [Oman](#) to the east and [Saudi Arabia](#) to the south, as well as sharing sea borders with [Qatar](#), [Iran](#) and [Pakistan](#).

Established on 2nd December 1971, the country is a [federation](#) of seven [emirates](#) (equivalent to [principalities](#)). Each emirate is governed by a hereditary [emir](#) who jointly form the [Federal Supreme Council](#) which is the highest legislative and executive body in the country. One of the emirs is selected as the [President of the United Arab Emirates](#). The constituent emirates are [Abu Dhabi](#), [Ajman](#), [Dubai](#), [Fujairah](#), [Ras al-Khaimah](#), [Sharjah](#), and [Umm al-Quwain](#).

The capital is Abu Dhabi, which is one of the two centers of commercial and cultural activities, together with Dubai. [Islam](#) is the official religion of the UAE, and [Arabic](#) is the [official language](#).

Over the years as the economy of UAE grew, so did its need for man power. In this global movement of manpower and capital, Sikhs take second seat to no one. According to current estimates there are roughly **50,000 Sikhs in UAE of which 48000 are blue collar workers and 2000 are white collar and businessmen.**

There has been Sikh presence in the Muslim world for a long time but not in the Arab world. There still is sizeable, though dwindling, population of Sikhs in Afghanistan who are Afghan nationals. Tehran and Zahedan in Iran have had Sikh populations, primarily businessmen, going back to prior to 1947. At that time even Mashad, Iran's second largest city and close to Afghanistan border, boasted a large Sikh population to even have a Gurudwara, like the two other Iranian cities.

But by 1960 Mashhad's Sikh population had dwindled literally to '*sava lakh khalsa*'. I know that personally because when I was hitchhiking my way from New Delhi to Seattle in 1960, I stayed with the last Sikh couple in Mashad. Sikhs in Zahedan and Tehran also played host to me.

An interesting story told to me in Zahedan was that the naming of that city came about when the father of the last Shah of Iran visited Zahedan and saw the white bearded Sikh businessmen he named the city Zahedan, home of the pious.

The effort to build **Guru Nanak Darbar Gurudwara** began around the year 2002 when the Sangat of **United Arab Emirates** felt the need for a better and larger facility to accommodate its increasing numbers. It took five years of concerted effort just to get the permission to build, which was an accomplishment in itself and another five years to build.

Unfortunately, by the time the permission came through the world had entered a global recession of 2008. That made raising funds not an easy task. It taxed the willingness and capacity of the sangat to support the fund raising effort.



However, two things came together to make it happen; the perseverance and commitment to the cause by a few dedicated souls and a grand gesture by [HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH MOHAMMED bin RASHID AL MAKTOUM](#). Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, who donated the land for Gurudwara site. What that effort achieved is the most modern Gurudwara Sahib in the world that officially opened its doors on **January 17th 2012**.

Gurdwara is managed by an Advisory Board of 14 members, from all sections of the society, chaired by S. Surender Singh Kandhari. It meets once in three months to supervise and advise. It is assisted by a staff of 2 managers, 12 Granthis, 7 cleaning staff, 10 kitchen staff
2 drivers, 2 helpers, a total of 35 paid staff.

In the following pages of this special issue of The Sikh Bulletin the readers will find not only the story of the evolution of this unique and first Gurudwara in the Arab world and its serene beauty but, thanks to Geeta Chhabra Ji, also an uplifting look into the upbringing and life of an enterprising, inspiring and socially conscious individual, Surender Singh Kandhari, who sets a shining example for all of us to emulate.

Surender Singh Kandhari has found joy in giving. I hope it is contagious.


I am personally grateful to Kandhari Ji for his prompt and full cooperation in preparing this issue.

It is my earnest wish that Sikhs living in Europe and North American Diaspora will, just as I have done, make Dubai a stopover, enroute to or way back home from India and be a witness to this unparalleled event in the history of Sikhism.

Hardev Singh Shergill

TRANSITION FROM THE SIKH BULLETIN TO GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI

November-December 2014

Guru Nanak cut through the fog of multiple religions and multiple Gods by his simple statement of 'Ek Onkar' symbolized as .

The following excerpt from the March-April 2013 Sikh Bulletin is appropriate here to begin the new direction for the future issues of this publication:

EDITORIAL RECASTING OF THE SIKH BULLETIN November-December 1999 – March-April 2013 AS GURU NANAK MISSION

*"The Sikh Bulletin commenced publication in November 1999 with the sole objective of bringing about reformation in Sikhi. But it has become clear; to me at least, that Sikhi cannot be reformed. After considerable soul searching it became obvious why not. A look back at the history of all the world's major religions reveals that no religion has ever been reformed. In fact there has been only one, initially successful, attempt at reformation when Martin Luther (1483-1546) ushered Protestant Reformation with his 95 Theses followed by Edict of Worms in 1521. Today Catholic Church is still one but Protestant Churches have multiplied. Interestingly, in the same period, in his own unique way, Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was trying to bring about simultaneous reformation in Hinduism and Islam in the Indian sub-continent. **He did not succeed and I strongly believe that he did not start a new religion.** Sikhism just happened, in due time, in response to evolving social and political circumstances."*

Our focus in the future issues of this publication is not going to be reformation in Sikhism. Rather the **focus will be on Guru Nanak, his life and times and his Bani.** We invite our readers to send us articles relevant to that, in English only, and good English translations of Guru Nanak's Bani. It is our hope that all English speaking people, including the Sikhs, might benefit from it.

DISCOVERING GURU NANAK THE ONE AND ONLY MY JOURNEY

Hardev Singh Shergill

Born into a khande-di- pahul dhari Sikh household, I had turned agnostic by the time I turned eleven. Being educated in a Hindi medium state, my mother had taught me Gurmukhi at home. For practice I read my father's books, among them Bale-dian-Sakhian and Bachittar Natak. My father had run away from home as a teenager and when he returned he was Khande-di-pahul dhari, had learned to read and write Gurmukhi, read GGS and do kirtan. In fact I grew up knowing people addressing him as Giani Ji because he performed all the monthly services, Gurburabs, weddings and kirtan in the village gurdwara. Resident Granthi did only Sukhasan and Parkash.

I did not believe a word in those two books. Most galling thing I remember is the writer taking us as fools, when talking about God coming to Guru Gobind Singh while he was doing tapasya at Hemkunt in his previous life and wanting to send him to earth (*maatloke*) to save the mankind. Two questions arose in my ten year old mind: Hemkunt was already on this earth in Himalayas, so Guru Gobind Singh was already on this earth. Secondly, if this Guru was to be deputed by God to save the humanity then which God had sent Guru Nanak, ten generations earlier, whose message Guru Gobind Singh was propagating.? I was not confused; I was turned off religion.

Last straw was the Hindu granths in my Middle School library where I had gone to boarding school beyond our village school's four grades. Since English in Bikaner State started in 3rd grade and village teachers knew no English, the curriculum for the grades 1 to 5 had two streams, one for village schools and another for city schools. Village 4th grade pass students were enrolled in a class called Special Class in which they studied only English; grade 3 and 4 English during the first half of the year and grade 5 English during second half. Other 5th grade city subjects were mastered in the 3rd and 4th grades of village schools.

From 6th grade village and city kids followed the same curriculum. So I had plenty of time in my 5th grade to read all the Hindu granths in the school library, including Mahabharat and Ramayan. My strongest memory from all that reading is the wonderment in my mind about God. Any time a tapasvee had done enough tapasya to reach God, God would send an Apasra (I called them heavenly prostitutes) and the poor tapasvee would fall from grace. To an eleven year old there was no difference between Hinduism and Sikhism. I turned agnostic.

Around age sixty, after acquiring a Gurdwara building through Court Order and learning the meaning of Moolmantar, the opening verse in GGS, in English, I said to myself that Guru Nanak's 'God' I could believe in because it was not human at all. In fact Moolmantar says clearly that Ek Onkar is Nirbhau Nirvair, Akaal Murat, Ajuni...all the attributes that humans don't possess. To the best of my understanding Guru Nanak's 'God' was some mysterious and all powerful ENERGY that cannot be described and there was only one of its kind and self-created.

I could not bring myself to run Gurdwara as the other Gurdwaras were run. I wanted to understand what entire GGS meant. I searched for and met some practicing Sikhs; but they were so few. In 2003 we started a Sikhi Reform movement as was the case with Singh Sabha movement during the British Raj. Year 2004 was the second most audacious attempt when Prof. Gurtej Singh and I went around the world for six weeks and held six major and three minor conferences in six countries.

All that came to naught when the Amritsar, Panjab based Sikh religious establishment first tried desperately to deny us a venue for the 2003 conference in Chandigarh. We had to obtain a court order to hold our conference, less than 24 hours hence. The judge had to hold court in his house on Diwali day, Saturday, before our Sunday conference.

By the time I came back home two weeks later, there was a new Gurdwara in our vicinity, established on short order and with three year lease at \$8,300.00 per month. Upon return home after six worldwide conferences in 2004 I found that the 2003 Gurdwara had split into two, the second group paying over \$5,000.00 monthly rent.

By this time we had banned from our Gurdwara everything from Dasam Granth, including beloved Chaupai, dropped Bhagauti from Ardas, adopted Nanakshahi calendar before SGPC or Akal Takhat approved it and best of all stopped the practice of Akhandpaths. We closed doors on Vaisakhi day in 2004 for lack of sangat.

Seventy years later I have not only come full circle but also gone beyond. I am now a confirmed atheist. **God and religion are the two worst farces ever committed on the mankind.** Religions cannot be reformed and that includes Sikhism. **If Guru Nanak were to be here today he will surely say he is neither Hindu, nor Muslim nor Sikh.**

In fact, I believe, Guru Nanak discarded the concept of religion and God as preached by all the prevalent religions. First three words of Moolmantar, Ek Onkar, Satnam, Kartapurakh to me mean there is only one entity whose True Name is Kartapurakh, The Creator that created Itself.

With the Sept-Oct 2014 issue The Sikh Bulletin has completed 15 years of publication. This period concludes my fifteen year unsuccessful attempt at reformation in Sikhi.

November-December 2014 issue is going to be a transitional issue. From 2015 on my attempt is going to be to collect as good English translation of only Guru Nanak's bani as is possible. First issue of 2015 will carry all of Guru Nanak's bani with page numbers in GGS in Gurmukhi. Subsequent issues will publish English translations that convey Guru Nanak's bani as close to its real meaning as humanly possible which the readers can incorporate in their own computer files.

We invite our readers to submit any meaningful translations into English of Guru Nanak's bani that they may have come across.

Now the purpose of November-December 2014 transitional issue is to inform our readers why the change and also publish my journey from childhood to current old age in search of...?

I think I have now found what I have been searching for and I marvel at what Guru Nanak taught us 500 years ago but we still do not want to know or understand him. The following quote from my November-December 2012 Sikh Bulletin Editorial summarizes in nutshell what I have found:

*"During the age of European Renaissance of the 14th–17th centuries Guru Nanak was the only person who brought renaissance to the Indian sub-continent. Human mind, that Gurbani calls 'dasam duar', is so unique that at any given time more than one person can arrive at the same conclusion about the fundamental truths of the physical world. **Guru Nanak (1469-1539) and Copernicus (1473-1543), thousands of miles apart and unknown to each other, arrived at the same conclusion about the cosmos, including that it is in constant change.***

Guru Nanak also planted the seeds of the future successes to come in the field of science, such as: the Big Bang theory, EMC², origin of life in water, Evolution of Species and from the point of view of nurturing the body, no difference between meat and vegetables. These were world changing pronouncements and yet the world never heard about them; not then, not now."

No literary, historical, religious or political writer or leader in India has acknowledged Guru Nanak's contribution to Indian culture, literature and philosophy. Those who claim to be successors to his message have almost reversed themselves 180 degrees in the opposite direction from where the Guru was taking us.

I am also certain I am not alone in this. So I am asking those few I know to write about their journey. Never know, once our experience goes out we might find others who think the same way and we could all make some contribution to Guru Nanak's selfless endeavor to teach mankind how to live and love, half a millennia after Guru Nanak first tried it.

Hardev Singh Shergill

COMMENCING VERSE FROM GGS

[From The Sikh Bulletin January-February 2015]

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Ik oaṅkār sat̃ nām kartā purakh̃ nirbhā'o nirvair akāl mūrati ajūnī saibha'n gur parsād̃.

I would interpret this opening verse in Guru Granth Sahib as:

‘There is One and Only, a Singular Reality, whose True Name is The Creator, that created Itself; It has no human attributes such as fear, enmity, limited life span, an image and therefore it does not communicate with the Prophets directly or through others, as the Semitic religions claim, nor does it incarnate as a human as Hinduism claims. IT can only be comprehended through knowledge.’

That is also why Guru Nanak named the commune he established in his later life, ‘Kartar Pur’ and salutation as ‘Sat Kartar’. His followers were called ‘Nanakpanthi’.

Hardev Singh Shergill

I HAVE NO RELIGION

My Journey of Finding Guru Nanak (1469-1539)

The One and Only

[From The Sikh Bulletin March-April 2015]

Peace on Earth will not prevail until all the manmade Religions and their Gods are DEAD and mankind learns to live within Hukam.

First time I said that was at age twelve. Fifty years later, when a responsibility to operate a Gurdwara was thrust upon me, I tried my best to become a Gursikh; but eighteen years into that effort made me realize that a Gursikh has no place in Sikhism. That was a great disappointment but not for long because I soon discovered that I was in excellent company of no other than Guru Nanak himself, the One and Only gift of the Creator to mankind, and under whose name Sikhism as a religion is being touted.

Truth is that Guru Nanak rejected the existing three **Semitic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)** and three **Indian religions of his time (Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism)** and **their Gods** and he was not about to start a yet another religion to add to them. Religions divide people whereas Guru Nanak was a uniter who devoted his entire life to make mankind realize that humanity is One.

His **first** pronouncement to this effect came upon his return from across the **Vein River** that oral tradition quotes him uttering his first words as **“Na Ko Hindu Na Mussalman”**; **(there is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim)**, meaning we are all members of the human family. His **second** pronouncement came during his visit to Mecca during his dialogue with Qazi Ruknuddin when Guru Nanak was found sleeping with his feet towards Kaaba. To Qazi Ruknuddin’s question to Guru Nanak about his religion the Guru responded, **“I am a man of The Creator, and belong to no religion”**. The **third** pronouncement is by **Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan**, on p.1136 of Adi

Granth, **“Na Ham Hindu Na Mussalman’ (We are neither Hindus nor Muslims).** He is using plural ‘WE’ because by this time the number of people believing in teachings of Guru Nanak had become substantial and distinct enough group to be reckoned by the state. **Note that he does not say ‘We the Sikhs’.**

However, Guru Nanak was not the first person to reject religion as an institution. **Rumi (1207-1273)**, a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic who inherited and expanded a centre for Sufism in **Konya in Turkey** wrote: **“I’m not from the East or the West. I’m not Christian or Jew or Muslim. I’m not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen. I don’t belong to any established religion or any cultural system. I’m neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my beloved.”**

Hardev Singh Shergill

WHAT SIKHS MUST KNOW ABOUT GURU NANAK

[From The Sikh Bulletin May-June 2015]

Guru Nanak was a child prodigy, showing early maturity when questioning his teacher on meaning of life and his priest on meaning of Janeu. A born linguist, he mastered Sanskrit and Arabic, two languages in which the Hindu and Islamic literature was written, the literature that he read in depth, and Persian which was the official language of his time, at a very young age. He communicated in the countries he visited in their language, wore their clothes and ate their food.

To spread his message he travelled the length and breadth of the Indian-subcontinent to Nepal and Tibet in the north to borders of Burma in the East, Ceylon in the south and Mecca, Medina and the neighbouring countries in the Middle East to the west. Within India he travelled extensively to meet and have discourse with Indian scholars of various faiths. He travelled to Mecca by sea with the Muslim pilgrims on Haj and returned to Panjab overland via Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, along the well-travelled military and trade routes.

Not much is known about the details of his travels in the Arab world but reason and Guru Nanak’s innate curiosity and search for knowledge dictates that his travels in the realm of the **Ottoman Empire**, which was at its peak in the 16th century when Guru Nanak visited the Middle East, would have been a must and travel within it would have been safer than it is today. Ottoman Empire was a powerful multinational, multilingual empire controlling much of Southeast Europe, Western Asia, the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Horn of Africa.

It is more than likely that he must have, in addition to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad, that is commonly referred to about his Middle East travels, visited, **Konya, Turkey**. Konya was a Centre of learning for Sufi Islam established by the followers of Maulana Jallaluddin **Rumi**, himself a transplant from present day Afghanistan of Persian parents.

Sufis consider themselves to be the original true proponents of this pure original form of Islam. Guru Nanak was drawn to Islamic scholars of Sufi Islam than the Islam practiced in India by the rulers of his time. During his studies of Islamic literature it stands to reason that Guru Nanak had access to Rumi’s writings and must have engaged in discussions with Sufi scholars in India.

Guru Nanak must have found Rumi's philosophy to his liking:

"I'm not from the East or the west.

I'm not Christian or Jew or Muslim.

I'm not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi or Zen.

I do not belong to any established religion or any cultural system.

I'm neither body nor soul, for I belong to the Soul of my Beloved."



Fig. 2-4. Maulana Jallaluddin Rumi of Konya, Turkey with turban on *Kula* (cap) and one end of his turban is coming out.

If Guru Nanak did travel to Konya, his travels would surely have taken him to Jerusalem, place sacred to the three Semitic religions and on to Istanbul and may be Baku, Azerbaijan. Background for Guru Nanak's portrait below is intriguingly similar to views of Straits of Bosphorus in Istanbul today. With today's research this is the closest we come to placing Guru Nanak in Istanbul, Turkey.

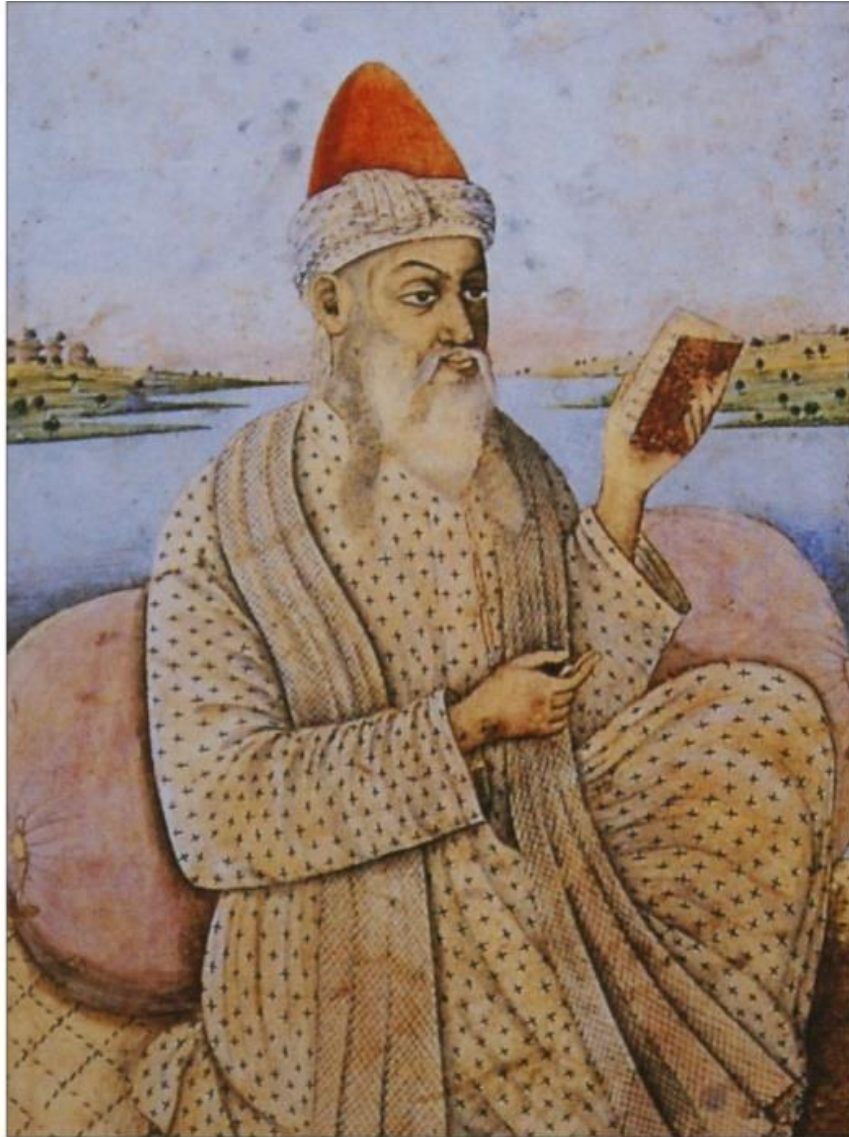


Fig. 2-3. Guru Nanak with a turban on *Kula* (cap) and one end of his turban is coming out. The turban style is very similar to that of Maulana Jallaluddin Rumi of Konya, Turkey (Fig.2-4). Guru Nanak is shown holding a notebook in which he used to write his Bani. The most prominent feature to be noted is that there is no *tilak* (frontal mark), no rosary (*mala*) in his hand or around his neck or around his turban. (Reproduced with permission from Rooli Books from *The Sikhs* by Khushwant Singh and Raghu Rai)



Straits of Bosphorus, Istanbul, separating Asia from Europe

A narrative to his visits to Mecca, Medina and Baghdad has been found in “**Babania Kahania**” by **Inderjit Singh Jhajj**, given to me by Dr. Harbans Lal:

*“During Guru Nanak’s journeys in the Middle East, a local author, **Taajudin Naqshabandhi**, joined Guru Nanak and remained with him for roughly one-and-a-half to two years. Taajudin documented his time with Guru Nanak in great detail. Four centuries later, a young man from Kashmir, **Syed Mushtaq Hussain**, chanced upon Taajudin’s handwritten manuscript while studying to become an Islamic scholar. This manuscript changed Mushtaq’s life. He converted to Sikhism and went on to become the renowned **Sant Syed Prithipal Singh**.*

*In the absence of any facility available for copying the book in facsimile, Mushtaq Hussain took notes from Taajudin's manuscript. He also took notes from another book, **Twarikh-e-Arab**, written by **Khwaja Jainul Abdin**, a Muslim author who also accompanied Guru Nanak during his travels to Mecca. Mushtaq’s notes later formed the basis of the Punjabi book, **Babe Nanak di Baghdad Pheri**.”*

Inderjit Singh Jhajj, December 26, 2012

Another intriguing look into Guru Nanak's travels to the Middle East comes from *"My Travels outside Bombay: Iran, Azerbaijan, Baku"* by Ervad Shams-ul-Ulama Dr. Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, B. A., Ph. D. C. I. E. (1854-1933).



Fig. 2-2. The inscription of 'Commencing Verse' of the Aad Guru Granth Sahib (commonly called as 'Mool Mantra' by many Sikhs) found on a wall in a temple in Baku, Azerbaijan. Reproduced with permission from Dr Joseph H. Peterson's

Web site:<http://www.avesta.org/modi/baku.htm>

(Modi, Jivanji Jamshedji. 1924. My Travels outside Bombay, Iran, Azerbaijan, Baku.

<http://www.avesta.org/modi/baku.htm>)

[Rumi and Guru Nanak portraits and the inscription of Commencing Verse of Aad Guru Granth Sahib in an ancient Zoroastrian Temple in Baku, Azerbaijan are published with permission from Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal from his book "Nankian Philosophy: Basics for Humanity".]

What you see here is the **Commencing Verse** of the Adi Granth, courtesy Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal. It is inscribed in stone above a doorway of a temple that originally was a prominent centre of Zoroastrianism in Baku, Azerbaijan, that fell into disrepair after onset of Islam. Long ago, traders from India managed to get permission to convert a small portion of this complex of Zoroastrian Temples as their place of worship.

I first saw it in Dr. Chahal's magazine and then on web under "My Travels outside Bombay: Iran, Azerbaijan. Baku" by Ervad Shams-ul-Ulama Dr. Sir Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, B. A., Ph. D. C. I. E. (1854-1933). He had gone on a pilgrimage to the places associated with his Zoroastrian ancestors.

My latest exposure to reference to this inscription came in 2014 when I read, “*A Journey from Bengal to England, through The Northern Part of India, Kashmire, Afghanistan, And Persia, And into Russia, by the Caspian-Sea*” By George Forster. In the Civil Service of The Honourable The East India Company. Printed for R. Faulder, New Bond-Street, London, 1798. (Original Edition).

George Forester had left Bengal for this overland Journey from Calcutta on March 23, 1782 arriving in London on March 31, 1784. Quite a feat! On March 27, 1784 he visited this temple complex in Baku, saw these inscriptions both in Gurmukhi and Devnagri script and met a group of aging ‘Moultan Hindu Traders’ who told him that they were the last ones because their children were not interested in following in their footsteps.

Now this is something worth researching by a Sikh scholar. **Did Guru Nanak visit Konya and Istanbul in Turkey and perhaps Baku in Azerbaijan where he ran into Traders from Multan from his backyard in Panjab?** After all these carvings were there in 1784 only two and a half centuries after Guru Nanak and trade between India and that part of the world had gone on for centuries. In fact it is highly likely where the ancestors of many Panjabi’s came from. My last name is Shergill, two Persian words put together, and meaning the same as in today’s Panjabi. And, to boot, there is still a province of northern Iran along the south shore of the Caspian sea called, ‘Gilan’, land of Gils/Gills.

It is time for us to bring the teachings of Guru Nanak to the notice of the outside world. Best way to do that is through the medium of English first and then translation from English into other languages. **What I think we need to concentrate on is to take advantage of the electronic media and use the pages of The Sikh Bulletin to coordinate the translation of the Bani of Guru Nanak into English.** For sure there are several versions of it already but none of them do justice to what the Guru is saying.

I ask the readers of The Sikh Bulletin in the Diaspora to create a *dharamsal* in their own homes, become *missionaries* for Guru Nanak and let their computer be the channel of communication and Social Media the *Courier Pigeon*.

Email to me one hymn of Guru Nanak and its English translation that you think is worthy of being brought to the notice of the population in the countries of our residences. We will invite our readers’ opinions, arrive at a consensus and then make it available for everyone to use.

Guru Nanak was One of a Kind, just as his concept of Kartar/Creator was One and Only. The world had never produced anyone like him before nor since. His philosophy is unique and is applicable in all countries and cultures at all times.

He possessed a brilliant mind. He was a **Deist** two centuries before European intellectuals coined the term. **Deism rejected revelation and authority** as a source of religious knowledge with the conclusion that **reason and observation of the natural world are sufficient to determine the existence of a single creator of the universe.** Deism gained prominence among intellectuals during the Age of Enlightenment, especially in Britain, France, Germany and the United States, who, raised as Christians, believed in one god but became disenchanted with organized religion and notions such as the Trinity, Biblical inerrancy and the supernatural interpretation of events such as miracles. Included in those influenced by its ideas were leaders of the American and French Revolutions.

Guru Nanak threw away centuries old *maryada*. At a very young age he refused to wear the *janeu*; discarded the *caste system*; preached against *idol worship*; recognised the *equality of mankind*; asserted the *equality of men and women*; opposed the practice of '*sati*' (self-immolation by widows upon their husbands' death, still prevalent in Hindu society), rejected the then prevalent concepts of *karma*, after life *salvation*, *tapasya*, *heaven* and *hell*, *incarnation*, *transmigration*, *84 lakh juni*, *yatra* to holy places, *fasting*, *multiple gods* and *goddesses*, and of course, unique only to Sikhism, wished '*sarbat da bhala*'. He gave us nothing like Ten Commandments or Sharia Law. Instead the Guru simply says '*do not commit an act that you will later regret and do not eat or drink that is unhealthy for your body and mind*'. He wanted mankind to use '*bibek budhi*', the only species that has it.

In this special issue some hymns have **English translation by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal** from one of his articles and English translation of **all the hymns quoted by Dr. Baldev Singh in his manuscript** that we are planning on publishing this year.

This is an invitation to the readers who may wish to join us in spreading the message of Guru Nanak to the English speaking world. Our estimate is that the printing cost of the book will be around US \$1.00. If you wish to join us please contact us. The cost of shipment will be your responsibility and it might come to more than printing. But if you or your family often travel to India you can bring the books as personal luggage. Contact email: editor@sikhbulletin.com

Some Contemporaries of Guru Nanak and some who came later but developed their theories similar to Guru Nanak's on the basis of their own '*bibek budhi*':

Guru Nanak (1469-1539):

Nicolaus Copernicus, Poland, (1473-1543). They shared the modern concept of Cosmos.

Martin Luther, Germany (1483-1546). Guru, had he met him, would have advised him against attempting reformation of Christianity because a religion can never be reformed.

Vasco da Gama, Portugal (1460-1524).

Michelangelo, Italy (1475-1564).

Henry VIII, England (1491-1547).

Babur, Uzbekistan (1483-1530). Started Mogul dynasty in India.

Galileo, Italy (1564-1642) believer in Copernicus cosmic view; spent last nine years of his life under house arrest.

Environmentalism (2015) What a refreshing change from the Vatican, in Galileo's time and now. Pope Francis Encyclical on climate change (2015) is very refreshing and completely opposite to his predecessors' actions. Besides, it is fun to watch United States Republican 2016 Presidential hopefuls, all totally devoid of conscience, quiver. It took the world 500 years to catch up with Guru Nanak, and yet not all the world.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) "*On the Origin of Species by means of natural Selection*", was published in 1859, 300 years after Guru Nanak had expressed it in his hymns.


Alfred Wagner (1880-1930), Germany hypothesized in 1912 that the [continents](#) are slowly drifting around the Earth. He too had used his *bibek budhi*, as Guru Nanak did, by observing the coast lines of world's oceans and got laughed at because he could not explain the mechanism. Answers came half a century later with advancement in science.

Hardev Singh Shergill

EDITORIAL

[From The Sikh Bulletin July-August 2015]

EDITORIAL FROM NOV-DEC 2014 SIKH BULLETIN TRANSITION FROM THE SIKH BULLETIN TO GURU NANAK AND HIS BANI November-December 2014

Guru Nanak cut through the fog of multiple religions and multiple Gods by his simple statement of 'Ek Onkar' symbolized as . The following excerpt from the March-April 2013 Sikh Bulletin is appropriate here to begin the new direction for the future issues of this publication:

EDITORIAL RECASTING OF THE SIKH BULLETIN November-December 1999 – March-April 2013 AS GURU NANAK MISSION

*"The Sikh Bulletin commenced publication in November 1999 with the sole objective of bringing about reformation in Sikhi. But it has become clear; to me at least, that Sikhi cannot be reformed. After considerable soul searching it became obvious why not. A look back at the history of all the world's major religions reveals that no religion has ever been reformed. In fact there has been only one, initially successful, attempt at reformation when Martin Luther (1483-1546), a contemporary of Guru Nanak, ushered Protestant Reformation with his 95 Theses followed by Edict of Worms in 1521. Today Catholic Church is still one but Protestant Churches have multiplied. Interestingly, in the same period, in his own unique way, Guru Nanak (1469-1539) was trying to bring about simultaneous reformation in Hinduism and Islam in the Indian sub-continent. **He did not succeed and I strongly believe that he did not start a new religion.** Sikhism just happened, in due time, in response to evolving social and political circumstances.*

Our focus in the future issues of this publication is not going to be reformation in Sikhism. Rather the focus will be on Guru Nanak, his life and times and his Bani. We invite our readers to send us articles relevant to that, in English only, and good English translations of Guru Nanak's Bani. It is our hope that all English speaking people, including the Sikhs, might benefit from it.

Hardev S Shergill

This issue of the Sikh Bulletin is moving us towards the fulfillment of that mission. We start with the most modern translation of Jap Bani by Col. Sardar Manmohan Singh Scout of Mohali, supplemented by translations by late Dr. Baldev Singh in his manuscript "Nanakian Philosophy (Gurmat): The Path of Enlightened" that we published in a special issue of The Sikh Bulletin in January-February 2009 and by Dr. Devinder Singh Chahal from his publication "Nanak: The Guru - The Founder of Sikhism" published in January-February 2015 Sikh Bulletin.

Hardev S Shergill
