

English Section



Editor : Diljit Singh 'Bedi'

DAYS COMMEMORATING HISTORICAL EVENTS
(16th January to 16th February)

16 January	Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib was born at Kiratpur Sahib. (16-1-1630)
17 January	The Govt. accepted Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee as the new name of Central Management Board. (17.1.1927)
18 January	Sher Singh (younger son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) installed as Maharaja. (18.1.1841)
19 January	The Keys Agitation won by the Sikhs. The Government handed over the keys to the Sikhs. (19.1.1922)
22 January	Delhi court awarded death sentence to Bhai Satwant Singh, Bhai Kehar Singh and Balbir Singh (In Indira Gandhi murder case). (22.1.1986)
24 January	129 members of SGPC and over one lac Sikhs took a vow before Akal Takht Sahib to lay their lives for Punjabi Suba. (24.1.1960)
25 January	Sikh Jatha reached Tarn Taran Sahib. The hired men of Mahant attacked the Sikhs. Several Sikh including Bhai Hazara Singh and Bhai Hukam Singh seriously wounded. (25.1.1921)
26 January	Baba Deep Singh Shaheed born in Pahuwind (Amritsar). (26-1-1682)
30 January	Martydom of Bhai Haqiqat Rai. (30.1.1742)
31 January	Ban on the Sikh sword withdrawn. A notification declared that Kirpan was not a weapon. (31.1.1936)
10 February	Anglo Sikh battle at Sabhraon. The Sikhs lost the battle due to treason of Lal Sinh, Teja Sinh and Gulab Sinh Dogra. Martydom of Sardar Sham Singh Attariwala. (10.2.1846)
15 February	Akali Dal swept the SGPC elections. (15.2.1939)



In continuation with the last edition:

SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR SAHIB JI (1621-1675)

-S. Surjit Singh 'Gandhi'

We are taking pleasure while publishing these contents from the book '*History of the Sikh Gurus*' by S. Surjit Singh Gandhi former Head of Sikh History Research Board (SGPC).

Pontificate given to Sri Guru Har Rai Ji

In the last week of February, 1644, Sri Guru Hargobind Ji invested Sri Guru Har Rai Ji with Guruship and asked his sons to show reverence due to the pontificate. Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was the first to bow to Sri Guru Har Rai Ji. Sikh records state that 'a change occurred in Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib disposition even during the life of Sri Guru Hargobind Ji and he grew indifferent to the world and its matters. Taking into consideration these tendencies of his, Sri Guru Hargobind Ji considered him unfit for the Guruship and bestowed it on Sri Guru Har Rai Ji'.

Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was not given Guruship because the people mistook him

The aforesaid circumstances leading to the non-bestowal of the pontificate on Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji are not convincing, firstly because Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji never turned recluse, hesitant of doing work or taking interest in the affairs around him; his was only contemplative silence and secondly if Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib had really turned a recluse, Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib had not told his wife, Nanaki on her anxiety to know as to why his noble son had been by-passed. 'He will live long enough to shoulder his responsibility and do great deeds'. It appears that Sri Guru Hargobind Ji had to ignore the claim of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji not because he was renouncer of the world; but because the people in general mistook his contemplative silence. Immediately after the passing of the Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji alongwith his wife and mother Nanaki went to Bakala, an historic village in Amritsar district about two miles and a half north of the Beas Railway station and which was a flourishing business centre in the seventeenth century. The possible reason for retiring to Bakala was that his stay at Kiratpur might not create an in-group of his followers.

At Bakala

A misconception

The Guru was deeply concerned with worldly affairs

For nearly twenty years (1644-64) the Guru Sahib lived at Bakala in the house built by Bhai Mehra¹ specially for the Guru Ji. He was amply provided by income from Hargobindpur² and the whole of Amritsar district which was considered as his diocese. It is wrong to presume that the Guru Ji confined himself in the underground cell of his residence and had got no social intercourse with the world. The Guru Sahib did meditate but to conquer the senses in the clear sight of the insight; but at the same time he did maintain contacts with the world outside. 'He was deeply concerned with keen interest social and political changes that were taking place, as an artist watches a drama in which he is to play hero's part. His brother-in-law, Kirpal Chand who was a soldier in Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib army came twice a year and informed him of all the small and great things that were happening at Kiratpur. Baba Dwarka Das, the descendant of Sri Guru Amar Das Ji and the eminent Sikh of Amritsar district, like Bhai Gurhia Ji, and Baba Gurditta Ji came to pay him homage and brought with them the news of Lahore.³ Now and then he even went out for hunting. He did not practise any self-mortification; nor did he undergo any monastic penance of an ascetic.⁴ He attended to household affairs as other people did.

Pays visits to principal holy shrines

After staying at Bakala for about twelve long years, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji along with his family decided to visit some of the principal holy Shrines of the country. With that end in view, he proceeded to Kiratpur⁵ wherefrom he vended his way through Ropar and Banur and reached the first big sacred centre, Karukshetra around the middle of A.D. 1656 (1713 B.K.). From here he set out for Hardwar where he reached on 29 March A.D. 1657.⁶ Having stayed here for three months the party left for Prayag via Garh Mukteshwar, Mathura and Agra. The Guru Sahib along with his party reached Prayag⁷ in the beginning of A.D. 1661. After a month's stay there, the onward journey was resumed. The party reached Kashi (Benares) on 21st June, A.D. 1661.⁸ From Benares the Guru Sahib reached Sasaram and then Gaya where he met Bhai Jetha Seth a devoted Sikh of Sri Guru Hargobind Ji who took him to Patna. It was here that the news of the passing away of Sri Guru Har Rai Ji (Katik Vadi 9, 1718 BK.-6th October, A.D. 1661) reached

him and he decided to return to Kiratpur to mourn the death of the seventh Guru Ji. On the way back he along with his party, arrived at Prayag⁹ on 5 Magh 1719 BK (3 January, A.D. 1663). When he was approaching Delhi, he learnt that the late Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib son and successor Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji had arrived in Delhi accompanied by his mother, Mata Sulakhni Ji. Thereupon, he changed his programme and resolved to break his journey at Delhi. The actual date of his arrival at Delhi was 21 March, 1664.¹⁰ The Guru Sahib stayed at Dharamsala Bhai Kalayan for some time where a large number of devout Sikhs paid their respects to him. Baba Ram Rai also called upon him at this place and informed him in detail about the visit of Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji to Delhi. Shortly after, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji accompanied by his mother and other people waited upon Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji and his mother Sulakhni Ji at the residence of Mirza Raja Jai Singh and expressed profound sense of sorrow and sympathy in their bereavement. Immediately after this, Sri (Guru) Tegh Bahadur Ji left for Bakala.

Notes and References

1. Bhai Mehra was a devout Sikh of Guru Hargobind.
2. Gyan Singh : Twarikh Guru Khalsa p. 264.
3. Trilochan Singh: Guru Tegh Bahadur pp. 94-5.
4. Ibid., p. 93
5. Sarup Singh Kaushish, Guru Kian Sakhian A.D. 1790. Sakhi 13. Reference taken from Dr. Fauja Singh's Book Guru Tegh Bahadur Martyr and Teacher, p. 22.
6. Bhat Vahi Talauda,
7. According to Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni, Tegh Bahadur and his family were present at Prayag on the full moon of day of Baisakhi, 1719 BK. (19 April, 1661).
8. Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni,
9. Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni, Khata Barhtion ka,
10. Bhat Vahi Purbi Dakhni, and Guru Kian Sakhian,

Cont...

ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਣ॥

(ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)

ੴ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫ਼ਤਹ ॥



Avtar Singh

**President,
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee,
Sri Amritsar.**

**Mr. Richard R. Verma, Ambassador,
Embassy of United States of America,
New Delhi**

Dear Mr. Verma

As already intimated to you in our earlier communication that Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee is an apex body of the Sikhs settled the world over, and is known as Mini Parliament of the Sikh Community.

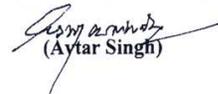
It has been brought to our notice that in the early hours of 28 December, 2015 a Gurdwara (Sikh Temple) in Flogs Park, near New York has been put to fire, causing great damage to interiors and exterior of the building. We fear that this has been done probably on account of mistaken identity.

In another incident an elderly Sikh gentleman Amrik singh Bal was beaten up by two miscreants in Fresno area of California and the victim has suffered serious injuries in this incident as he was brutally hit. The miscreants yelled at him saying "Why are you here?" We are certainly concerned about the safety and security of Sikhs in the United States of America.

We will hasten to add that in the past also there have been instances of hate crimes against Sikhs in U.S.A. We trust that you will seriously take up this issue with the U.S. Federal Government & the necessary steps will be taken very promptly.

Thanking You

Yours Faithfully,


(Avtar Singh)

ੴ ਸਾਹਿਬਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹ ॥



Avtar Singh

**President,
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee,
Sri Amritsar.**

Respected Mr.Narendra Modi ji

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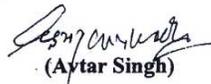
We have in past also, written to you regarding problems being faced by Sikh Diaspora living in Western Countries, problems related to mistaken identity are on the rise following terrorist attack in Paris.

Sikh community being a part of Indian democracy seeks a strong support of the Indian Government in this matter. We trust that the government of India will take up the matter of mistaken identity of Sikhs with the U.S. Government.

We request that this serious issue would claim your prompt attention please.

Thanking You

Yours Faithfully,


(Avtar Singh)

**Hon'ble Prime Minister,
Government of India,
New Delhi.**