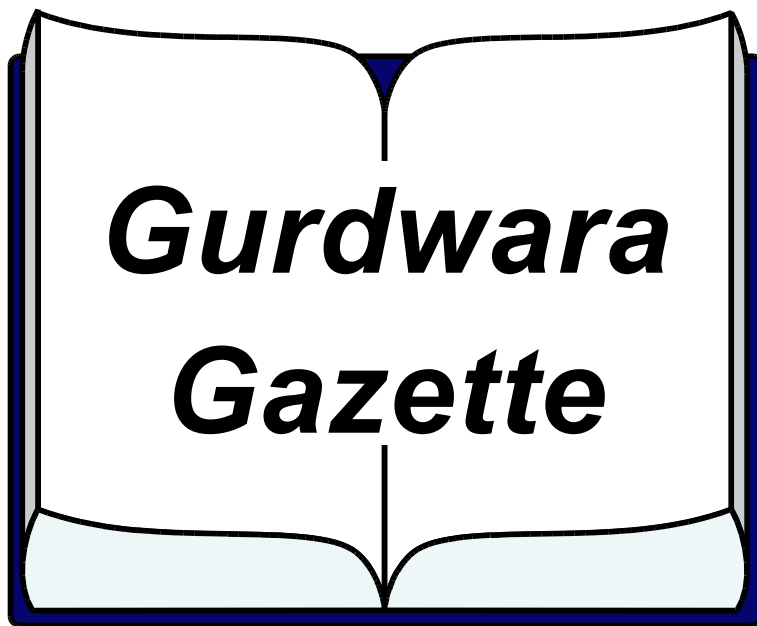


English Section



Editor : Diljit Singh 'Bedi'

DAYS COMMEMORATING HISTORICAL EVENTS
(16th September to 15th October)

- 16 Sep. (a) Assassination of S. Ajit Singh and S. Lehna Singh Sandhawalia. (16-9-1843)
(b) Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur died. Guru Gobind Singh Sahib visited Bilaspur to join his last prayers. (16-9-1692)
(c) Students of Khalsa College Amritsar took out a protest procession to condemn police atrocities at Chando Kalan (Haryana). The Police entered the College campus and attacked the students injuring and arresting several of them. (16-9-1981)
- 18 Sep. (a) Martyrdom of Bhai Shango Shah and Bhai Jit Mal (sons of Bibi Vero. daughter of Guru Hargobind Sahib) Bhai Udha (son of Bhai Khema Chandania) and Bhai Hari Das (brother of Bhai Mani Singh) etc. (18-9-1688)
(b) Coronation of Maharaja Dalip Singh, the youngest son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the last ruler of the Sikh Empire. (18-9-1843)
- 20 Sep. (a) Master Tara Singh elected as the president of S.G.P.C. (20-9-1955)
(b) Akali leaders and Lal Bahadur Shastri (Home Minister) held talks on the issue of Punjabi Suba. (20-9-1961)
(c) Akali MLA's walked out of Punjab Assembly to protest against Police raid on Gurdwaras. (20-9-1961)
- 21 Sep. Kaka Inderjit Singh, a small Sikh boy, was killed and his dead body was thrown in the well by the Police because he had raised pro- 'Punjabi Suba' slogans. (21-9-1960)
- 23 Sep. Indian Government appointed three member cabinet committee comprising of Indira Gandhi, Mahanvir Tyagi, Y.B. Chavan to discuss the Punjab issue. (23-9-1965)
- 24 Sep. The founder of the Singh Sabha Movement and a Sikh missionary Prof. Gurmukh Singh passed away. (24-9-1896)
- 25 Sep. (a) Ban on Sword withdrawn. (25-9-1935)
(b) All Parties conference, held at Chandigarh, demanded return of Chandigarh to Punjab. (25-9-1969)

- 28 Sep. Akali Dal condemned Gandhi's comments about sword. (28-9-1940)
- 29 Sep. (a) Firing at Baz Baz Ghat Calcutta. Several Sikh passengers of Komagata Maru Ship died in Police/army firing. (29-9-1914)
(b) Army left Darbar Sahib Central Area. (29-9-1984)
- 30 Sep. Indian Government banned sacred Sikh Sword in the domestic flights too. (30-9-1981)
- 1 October Master Tara Singh agreed to break his fast unto death on formation of a High Powered Commission to discuss the issue of Punjabi Suba. (1-10-1961)
- 2 October Sant Chanan Singh elected as the president of S.G.P.C. (2-10-1962)
- 3 October The Sikhs, under the command of Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, captured the town of Rahon. (3-10-1710)
- 5 October (a) Baba Banda Singh Bahadur left Nanded for the Sikh Home-land. (5-10-1708)
(b) Sikhs took over the control of Gurdwara for Babe-Di-Ber, Sialkot (Pakistan) from the Mahant. (5-10-1920)
(c) S. Pritam Singh elected the president of S.G.P.C. (5-10-1952)
- 7 October (a) Death of Mata Sulakhni Ji (wife of Guru Nanak Sahib). (7-10-1539)
(b) Bhai Makhan Shah Lubana announced publically at Baba Bakala about installation of Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib as the 9th Nanak. (7-10-1664)
- 8 October Bhai Taru Singh resident of village Poohla district Lahore was arrested on charge of his helping the Sikhs and his scalp was removed when he spurned the purposal to embrace Islam. (8-10-1745)
- 9 October Dogra Dhian Singh killed Chet Singh (a close friend of Maharaja Kharak Singh). (9-10-1839)
- 12 October The committee of 25 Singhs took charge of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib under the leadership of Jathedar Teja Singh Bhuchar. (12-10-1920)



In continuation with the last edition:

**SRI GURU GOBIND SINGH JI
(1666-1708)**

-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).

Sikh Polity and Sikh Social Ideals

Chapter 14

SIKH POLITY

Before determining the pattern of Sikh Polity we will have to find answers to certain important questions: (i) Did politics fall within the jurisdiction of Sikh religion; (ii) Did the Gurus take interest in political affairs; (iii) Did political power or basic moral issues form the fulcrum of the interest of the Gurus?

So far as the first question is concerned, our reply is that politics fell within the jurisdiction of the religion of the Gurus. This fact can be supported by adducing moral as well as historical arguments. The Gurus, as it is ascertained from their utterances, wanted to establish an order where goodness should prevail and unrighteousness be eliminated, and where people should have absolute faith in the oneness of God. To make the people righteous, the Gurus laid emphasis on the discipline of the individuals as also of the groups. In 'Jap' Guru Nanak spells out the steps which one should take to regenerate oneself. It is also mentioned that the regenerate should endeavour to make the society righteous.

The regenerate persons are variously known in Sikh religious literature. Guru Nanak calls them Gurmukhs, Sri Guru Arjan Dev ji Brahm Giani and Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji Khalsa. Now what is unrighteousness? The Guru, somewhere explicitly and somewhere implicitly, explains that what is not based on justice, fellow-feeling, liberty and equality is unrighteous or oppression. But how to ensure righteousness? Obviously some agency is needed and in fact since the inception of the civilized society, the need has continuously been felt.

It was this need to which state and politics owe its existence. As a matter of fact,

need to translate certain moral issues have always been the determinant of the nature and pattern of the political power. In tribal society the panchayats or patriarch of a tribe was the symbol of power. When the society transcended that stage, the oligarchy became the wielder of the power more. Oligarchy gave place to monarchy when the former outlived its advantage. The changes in the society on moral and social planes always effected corresponding changes in the polity or the agency to wield political power.

The Sikh Gurus were committed to certain moral issues which formed the basis of the society of their concept could not help take interest in politics. But their interest was not simply an expression of their anguish for the political unrighteousness but it had a moral dimension also. For a proper appreciation of Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji's response to the events in question, the Babar Vani verses must be considered together. In these, Guru Nanak Dev ji mentions the sufferings caused by war and explains that all this has happened because of the people's blind pursuit of wealth and riches. Because of wealth, it went hard with many, wealth cannot be amassed without sins and it does not accompany the dead. Indeed, 'He who is destroyed is first deprived of his Virtue.'¹

It is thus clear that Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji's response to war and to sufferings caused by war is not only an ample expression of his rage but also involved a moral issue, the issue of the importance of virtue in the nation's healthy growth and stance.

Historical references in Sri Guru Granth Sahib also go to prove that political affairs were not alien to the Guru ji's religion. Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji's familiarity, even interest in contemporary politics may be inferred from the occurrence in his verses of the phrases: Sultan, Patshah, Shah-i-Alam, Takht, Taj, hukam, Malik, Shiqder, Qazi, Chaudhari, Muqqaddam, Raiyat. Also Sri Guru Nanak Dev ji makes use of the references such as court, palaces, royal, canopy, elephants, armour, cavalry, trumpets, treasury, coins, mint, salary, taxes and revenue-free land.² Furthermore, in one of his hymns, Guru Nanak Dev ji in a general references, called the Rajas as 'blood sucking rajjas'.

'The rajjas are lions and the muqqaddams dogs;
They fall upon the raiyat day and night.
Their agents inflict wounds with claws (of power)
And the dogs lick blood and relish the liver'.³

Reference:-

1. *Guru Granth Sahib*, pp. 417-18
2. *The relevent verses occur in Sri Rag (Astpadian), Rag Gauri (Astpadian), Rag Asa, Japji, Rag Vadhans (Chhant and Alahnian), Var Majh etc.*
3. *Guru Granth Sahib*, p. 1288, *Var Malar*.

Interfaith Harmony for Global Civilisation

*-Kiranjot Kaur**

One of the important traits of a civilisation are its religion and culture. "Culture" is a shared way of life of a large number of people: the way they dress, cook their food, their music, arts and how they connect with each other socially. The way people perceive, define their place in the Universe, find meaning to their existence and how they relate to the Supreme Creator, that is their religion. The history of civilisation is all about war, grabbing others' land and conflict when forcing people to the conqueror's religious beliefs. Since the end of the Cold War, a new world order has emerged. The most important distinctions among people are now cultural. People and nations try to define who they are through their ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs etc, at the broadest level of their civilisation. So now, the conflict is due to clash of civilisations in most parts of the world; often followed by terrorism.

Moreover, technology has changed the world in different ways like social, economic, cultural and religious. The way we socialise has changed with the advent of several social networking sites on internet and a very connected Global Civilisation has emerged. New values and ethics have emerged. Materialism and consumerism have impacted religious and cultural practices in a way that renders them very superficial and mechanical, sans any religious conviction. The focus is on the individual- me, myself, to the extent of great selfishness. Self-interest, self-gratification and self-promotion have replaced compassion and humility. It has changed social values and impacted social interaction even within a family. Cell phones decide whether a family interacts with each other! A grandparent sitting on the computer at the other end of the world is closer than a grandparent sitting next to you, wanting to talk to you.

In the changed social set-up, communal tensions and conflicts have escalated. There is more religiosity and less of religion. More focus on rituals and less on core philosophy. Religious sentiments get hurt easily over non-issues which aggravate on getting viral over social networking sites. Sanity needs to be restored. This imbalance can be addressed by religious leaders by re-interpreting their religious and spiritual philosophy

**Member, SGPC, Sri Amritsar Sahib.*

according to the need of the Global Civilisation. We Sikhs, look up to the model presented by founder of our faith Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji travelled to places of different faiths, Mecca, Jagannath Puri, Gorakh Nath Siddhas, Haridwar etc and left a legacy of interfaith dialogue. During his travel to Buddhist Ladakh, he was called Rimpoche Lama by the monks. He had such rapport with people of different religions that when he left his body, Hindus wanted to cremate him as their Guru and Muslims wanted to bury him as their Faqir. This is the message of universal spirituality and humanity that forms the basis of Sikh beliefs and a guide towards harmony in a Global Civilisation.

The Creator created the Universe and pervades in it at the same time. He created an eco-system that sustains His Creation. Human beings breathe in the oxygen released by plants and plants absorb carbon dioxide released by human beings. The Earth grows food and decomposes human waste to manure for next cycle of food. Other eco-systems are created for animals, plants etc. All these eco-systems depend on each other however, internally bound with each other and the binding force working among them, has been denoted in Sri Guru Granth Sahib as qudarat. 'God's bounties are equal for all, it's us who have created divisions and distinctions.'

It is believed in many different philosophies that five evils propensities of human nature are the root cause of all conflicts. They are sought to be suppressed, eliminated or discarded. Sikhism stresses upon the righteous use of these impulses as the base of harmonious social as well as individual house hold life. Human being is God's most beautiful creation because it exists with a divine spark deep inside and has the potential to acquire the wisdom to recognise it. Humans have intelligence to start an internal dialogue with their five inherent weaknesses -sexual urge, anger, greed, attachment and ego. Sikhism teaches control and positively channelising these traits. It is possible to be a divine person while living as an ordinary householder. Learning to take responsibility of others, experiencing emotions like unconditional love, unconditional care is learnt in a family. Loyalty to spouse is strongly advocated in Sikhism and extra-marital affair is one of the four sins that if committed, one is no longer recognised as a Sikh. It also forms a strong basis for a family, an institution that is under threat in the Global Civilisation.

In dialogue with a Yogi of the Nath Community, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji enunciates on being asked how to swim across ocean of life successfully and how to get liberation by remaining detached while still living:

ਦੁਨੀਆ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਦੁਤਰੁ ਕਰੀਐ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਪਾਰੇ ॥ (SGGS p. 938)

The world-ocean is treacherous and impassable; how can one cross over it

Guru Nanak Dev Ji replies that one can achieve liberation by remaining detached from the impurities of life while living in this world and by making the human heart the abode of the Supreme Being and not by renouncing the world:

ਜੈਸੇ ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਕਮਲੁ ਨਿਰਾਲਮੁ ਮੁਰਗਾਈ ਨੈ ਸਾਣੇ ॥ (SGGS p. 938)

ਮੁਰਤਿ ਸਬਦਿ ਭਵ ਸਾਗਰੁ ਤਰੀਐ ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਖਾਣੇ ॥ (SGGS p. 938)

'As the lotus flower floats untouched upon the surface of the water and as the water fowl swims through the stream; so, with one's consciousness focused on the Guru's words and contemplating the Name one can cross over the terrifying world-ocean.'

In Sikh way of life, it translates to earning an honest living, nurturing the divine inside into spiritual consciousness and sharing fruits of one's labour with the needy.

Gurbani-Guru's Word, is a cogent synthesis of spiritual and moral values. The Sikh ethical values are catalyst for the attainment of divine experience. Without developing qualities of altruism, justice, compassion, love and service, one cannot claim to be walking on the religious path. Usurping things of others is a sin and exploitation is denounced. To quote an example "If one's clothes stained by blood become dirty, will not the mind of those who suck blood of human beings (by way of exploitation) be defiled." "Man, without love is an empty shell which soon crumbles and is reduced to dust" (GGS 62) "As metal melts into metal so does love run to love" (GGS 725).

Sewa (service) without expectation of any reward is one of the basic pillars of Sikhism. Perhaps you remember the time when an earthquake devastated Gujarat. Sikh institution, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee came all the way from Amritsar to serve food to victims of the earthquake. When a cloudburst hit Kedarnath, we went with food and first aid for Hindus and other pilgrims. When a cloudburst hit Kashmir, we went with food, blankets, medicines for Muslims and others in distress. And currently the 30 member team of SGPC is providing food and medicines to Kerala flood victims. Why? Because that is our Dharam (Religion). Our institution of Langar underlines equality in a caste ridden society through service of food. Everybody who partakes langar is expected to either help in cooking and serving or contributing towards raw material. It is a community effort fostering brotherhood, humbleness and devotion.

In an increasingly multicultural and multi-religious society, intolerance to others' culture breeds conflict to the extent of violent attack on minority's religious places. What is strange is how newfound extremism is trying to kill decades of peaceful coexistence at some places. A Sikh Gurdwara Dongmaar (Assam) which commemorates Guru Nanak

Dev Ji's visit to Assam has recently been evaded by local Buddhists. Sikhs living in far-east Meghalaya since the Partition of the country in 1947 and even before, are suddenly perceived as outsiders and a threat to the Assamese culture although their third generation has integrated into the local culture!

We are inspired by our 9th Master Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji in defending the right of Hindus to their way of beliefs. In the 17th century, Kashmiri Pandits were being threatened to choose Islam or death by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. In distress they approached to Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and requested to protect their religious belief to wear the sacred thread 'Janaeu' and a 'Tilak'. Guru ji chose to stand as a rock between Aurangzeb and Kashmiri Pandits by challenging Aurangzeb to convert him to Islam first. If he could not, then he had to promise to accept Kashmiri Pandit's right to Hindu beliefs. Aurangzeb executed Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji but could not convert him to Muslim. I have not read about any other religious Saint who sacrificed himself for other's faith. Respect for other's religious beliefs, not just tolerating is direly needed in Global Civilisation.

Conflict in the name of religion is meaningless because each one of us has the same destiny. Our Guru says "ਜਗਤੁ ਜਲੰਦਾ ਰਖਿ ਲੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਧਾਰਿ ॥ ਜਿਤੁ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਉਬਰੈ ਤਿਤੇ ਲੈਹੁ ਉਬਾਰਿ ॥" (SGGS p. 853)

Bless the world burning in the fire (of malice, violence and hatred) through gate of Dharma (Religion). The Guru is not eulogising or disclaiming any particular faith for final liberation. Implicitly, all religions have been considered fit for spiritual elevation. This is the value of respecting a fellow human being's religious and spiritual beliefs that a Global Civilisation needs to imbibe.

The holiest shrines of different religions are sending messages that we need to catch and spread. What a beautiful story emanates from the Church of Holy Sepulchre where Jesus Christ was crucified, buried and then resurrected on the land of Jewish people. The church door opens each day when a Muslim family brings the keys to unlock the entrance for the Christians! Sikhs have another beautiful story. The Fifth Sikh Guru, Sri Guru Arjun Dev ji invited a Muslim Sufi, Hazrat Mian Mir ji from Lahore to lay down the foundation stone of our holiest and sacred place Sachkhand Sri Harimandir Sahib. That is popularly known as Golden Temple in the world. The architecture of Harimandir Sahib denotes an openness that cuts across caste, religion, gender or any particular auspicious direction. A vegetarian Langar that transcends the dietary needs of different religions and provides food everyone can sit and eat together. This is the spirit that needs to be cultivated for a harmony in a global civilisation. ■



ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੋਂ ਸੰਤ ਬਾਬਾ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ 'ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ' ਦੀ ਉਪਾਧੀ ਦਾ ਸਨਮਾਨ ਬਾਬਾ ਅਮੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੁੱਖੀ ਜਵੱਦੀ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਪੰਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ। ਨਾਲ ਹਨ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਭਾਈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਲੌਂਗੋਵਾਲ।

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**ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਰਪਿਤ ਸਜਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਨਗਰ ਕੀਰਤਨ
 ਸੰਚਮੰਡ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਪਰਿਕਰਮਾ 'ਚੋਂ ਲੰਘਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ।**

ਕੋਲਕਾਤਾ ਆਰਜੰਟ ਪੈਸ, ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਹਮਸਫਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ 'ਚੋਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵੱਲੋਂ
 ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸਿੱਖ 'ਬੋਲੀ' ਪ੍ਰਿੰਟਰ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਲਿਸ਼ਟ ਨੇ ਛਪਵਾ ਕੇ ਵਕਤਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਤੋਂ ਜਾਰੀ ਕੀਤਾ।

ਡਿਜ਼ਾਈਨ : ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ
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ਮਿਤੀ : 15-09-2018