

# **SELECT STORIES FROM SIKH HISTORY**

*(Part - 1)*

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## Sermon to Vaishno Ascetic

In 1508 Guru Nanak Dev ji set out to propagate his mission. This odyssey was particularly aimed at visiting Hindu places of pilgrimage. During this mission when Guru ji reached Hardwar from Kurukshetra, he camped bank of river Ganges. It was the first day of *Baisakh*, close to the second month of Indian calendar and considered sacred according to the Hindu belief. A *Vaishno* hermit was also camping nearby, who enjoyed a good amount of admiration. People would come from far off places and keep his company. He was showing off to be a very religious person.

Guru ji knew that he was a fake hermit. Therefore, Guru Nanak had camped there to make public his deceit. Next day, early in the morning, the hermit took a bath in the river and commenced the process of preparing his meals. He plastered a patch of ground with cowdung to sanctify it for using it as a '*Chaunka*' (a cooking place open to sky). He washed the firewoods to purify them and then drew a line\* around the '*Chaunka*' and lit the fire. Guru ji sent Bhai Mardana to him to get some burning ambers to light their own fire. When Bhai Mardana reached near his '*Chaunka*', the hermit was flushed with anger and started abusing him and said, "you have defiled my *Chaunka*". In his anger, he took a burning wood from the hearth and ran after Bhai Mardana. Bhai Mardana reached Guru ji and the hermit followed him on his heels.

When Guru ji asked the hermit why he was so furious, when he had only asked for a small amount of fire to burn their own hearth. The hermit replied that the shadow of this '*Mirasi*' (a bard) had fallen on his

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\*According to Rishi Attrey, if a line is not drawn, then the extract of the food is taken away by the demons. (It is a superstition of Brahminism).

'*Chaunka*' which had become unholy. He being a '*Shudra*' (a low caste) had desecrated his life.

"How can it be, said Guru ji, when he (Bhai Mardana) is also a human being?" 'No, he is not a human being, he is a '*Shudra*'', said the hermit. Guru ji impressed upon the hermit that God was never pleased by these externalities, those depicted outward piety. His abode was in the heart of all human beings.

'If the heart has cruelty, hatred, slander and anger for others, God, certainly would not be residing in such a malicious mind. Look for Him in the whole mankind. Don't hate a person believing him to be of low caste. Just despise the bad deeds.

The arguments which were being exchanged loudly particularly from the hermit, caused many other people to gather around and asked each other what the dispute was all about. The hermit kept making noise accusing and maligning Bhai Mardana in utter anger. He was saying that that the '*Shudra*' had defiled his '*Chaunka*' with his shadow, and how would he prepare his meal now? Hearing the hermit's affliction, Guru Nanak Dev ji pronounced the following cantos –

*Kubudh(i) dumani, kudaiya kasain(i),  
par ninda ghat chuhri, muthi krodh(i) chandal(i).  
Kâri Kadhî Kîya Thiai jan charey baithian nâl(i).  
Sach(u) sanjam(u) karni kârân navan(u) nâou japahi.  
Nanak agai uttam sei je papañ pand(i) na dehi.\**

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\*False-mindedness is the drummer-woman; cruelty is the butcheress; slander of others in one's heart is the cleaning-woman, and deceitful anger is the outcast woman.

What good are the ceremonial lines drawn around your kitchen, when these four are seated there with you ?

Make truth your self-discipline and make good deeds the lines you draw; make chanting of the *naam* your cleansing bath.

O Nanak, those who don't walk in the ways of sin shall be exalted in the world hereafter.1.

After completion of the Cantos, all present sat around Guru ji to listen to his sermons and new ideas. The vaishno hermit also realized how much full he was with evil thoughts. How could he then call himself holy? The words of wisdom spoken by Guru Nanak impressed the hermit so much that he along with many others become a devout Sikh of the Guru and accepted this true way of life.

Many fake hermits and mendicants, gianis (learned people), Yogis and preachers wearing the garb of holy man and displaying externalities are duping the gullible seekers of the truth. They themselves are totally in the grip of worldly desires and Maya (memon). Thier minds are soiled with lust, anger, greed, attachments and false pride beside other ill traits. Sikhs must be cautious of such imposters. They must strive to understand and grasp the philosophy of Sikhism as propounded by Guru Nanak.

## Correcting Kaljug Pandit

During his first preaching odyssey (Udasi) Guru Nanak he reached Jagannath Puri via Cuttack. Enroute, he apprised the masses of his ideology, freed people from superstitions and infructuous deeds, caste based differences and freeing them from the shackles of fake hermits and *Yogis*. This incident took place in 1510. A Brahmin named 'Kalyug' had made his abode there. He was a learned man beside being very rich. Many pilgrims were his followers and often stayed in his Dera (Camp).

This Pandit was swindling the gullible people who were not aware of what the true religion was. Many rich persons who visited him were more interested in knowing about their future life or the life hereafter. They would feel happy listening to good and favourable stories about themselves. Pleased with such fables, they would make handsome offerings to him.

In Jagannath Puri, where Satguru ji condemned the ritualistic. *Aarti* (A form of prayer in temples), he also unmasked the deeds of 'Kalyug' pandit. Kalyug Pandit was sitting in meditative mood while many devotees were surrounding him. He had a small pitcher like metallic container placed in his front in which the pilgrims were putting their offerings. He would close his eyes for sometime and open them again. Sometimes he would close one of his nostrils, either right or left with his hand. Then he would suddenly declare that he is seeing Vishnu Bhagwan in the heaven. Similarly he would claim an audience with other gods and his visits

to Brahmpuri (Abode of Brahma) and Shivpuri (Abode of Shivji). The devotees were listening to all his claims with rapt silence and expected that soon he would take them to the divine trip too. He then asked all those present to shut their eyes and perceive the heaven in their minds, and he would help them see it.

When all those present there closed their eyes, Guru ji signalled Bhai Mardana to pick up the small pitcher like container from his front and hide it behind him in a bush. When the 'Panda' opened his eyes, he did not see the container in his front. He was beside himself with rage and started shouting loudly and asking who had taken his small container. "Don't crack jokes with the Saints. We don't crave for money... etc.", he said. The pilgrims in his attendance were also surprised. Hearing his shouts, many more people gathered around. Guru ji stepped forward and said, "Pandit ji, you were able to see *Brahmpuri*, *Shivpuri* and *Vishnupuri*, why don't you look around in this Universe ? You may be able to locate where the container is lying". Hearing these remarks the 'Panda' vexed still more. Some present also said, "Pandit ji, you were seeing the divine abode but now you can't find your small pitcher. How could it be ?" People understood the deceit of the Pandit. Guru ji well disclosed his beguile and advised people that those who sit in meditative postures, closing their eyes, nose and ears were not to be trusted. They were like herons who stood still on one leg in the water to pounce upon at fish and frogs. Here was that 'Pandit' who could see the divine abodes but could not spot his money container lying behind him. Guru ji further explained that these

were the tricks used by the imposters to swindle people of their hard earned money.

Satguru ji explained to all the pilgrims that one may succeed in collecting money by closing eyes, nose, ears and sitting still like a heron, but it can neither lift the character of a man nor raise his spiritual life. This human life is not meant to be wasted in such spurious and fake acts. Remembering God is the right path of this life. Perpetual meditation of His name relieves a man from the worldly desires.

Kalyug Panda was highly impressed by the personality of Guru ji and his sermons. He requested Guru ji to honour him with his stay in his abode. Guru ji agreed and during this period apprised him with his ideology. He was then appointed as a missionary by Guru Nanak to spread his message; whereas he used to swindle the people earlier, now he was teaching them to follow the right path of life as dictated by the Guru.

The place where Guru ji stayed in front of the temple, it still exists and is named 'Mangoo Math'.

For our guidance, Guru Nank Dev ji composed the above event in the following hymn of *Rag Dhanasri*.

### Dhanasri Mehla Ghar(u) 3.

*Kâl(u) nâhî jog(u) nâhî, nâhî sat kê dhâb(u).*

*Thânast jag, bharist hoey, dûbata iv jag(u).*

*Kal(i) mahe' Râm nâm(u) sâr(u).*

*Akhi ta mîteh nâk pakreh thaggan kao sansâr(u). Rahao.*

*Ânt seti nâk(u) pakrreh sũjhatay tin(i) lo.*

*Magar pâchhai kachh na sujhai eh(u) padm(u) alo.2.*

*Khatriâ ta dharm(u) chhodiâ malechh bhâkhia gahi.*

*Srist(i) sabh ik varn hoí dharm ki gat(i) rahi.3.  
Ast sâj saji(i) purân sodheh kareh beyd abhias(u).  
Bin(u) nâm her(i) key mukat(i) nâhî kahai Nânak dâs.\**

(Page 662)

Guru Nanak Dev ji is impressing upon the people that meditation Lord's name is the only superior work deed in a man's life. All other ritualistic actions are not worship but acts of impressing people. Closing eyes or nose and sitting in still postures does not enamour the Lord nor can it build moral character. These acts are polluting the concept of religion and the society. Through these deceitful acts and false statements, you claim the visions of heavenly abode but can't spot your own utensil lying behind you. The slavery of the Muslim rulers have brought down your conscience so much that you call Persian as dirty language (being used by Muslims), you yourself have now accepted it for your livelihood and forgotten your own religion. You claim to search and research *Vedas* but have ignored the essence of them, that is *Naam*. Without *Naam*, vices and evil traits can not be got rid of; says Guru Nanak.

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\* *Dhanaasree, First Mehl, Third House*  
*One universal creator God.*  
*By the grace of the true Guru :*

No, no, this is not the time, when people know the way to Yoga and Truth. The holy places of worship in the world are polluted, and so the world is drowning.1. In this Dark Age of Kali Yuga, the Lord's Name is the most sublime. Some people try to deceive the world by closing their eyes and holding their nostrils closed.1.Pause. They close off their nostrils with their fingers, and claim to see the three worlds.

But they cannot even see what is behind them. What a strange lotus pose this is ! 2. The Kshatriyas have abandoned their religion, and have adopted a foreign language. The whole world has been reduced to the same social status; the state of righteousness and Dharma has been lost.3. They analyze eight chapters of (Panini's) grammar and the Puraanas. They study the *Vedas*, but without the Lord's Name, no one is liberated; so says Nanak, the Lord's slave.4.1.6.8.

(Page 662)

The holymen and religious leaders of today are no different than the Pandit described above. These people have adopted the Sikh externalities and have initiated many false hoods in the name of religion and are leading a luxurious life under its cover. Barring a few, most of our preachers and self appointed saints are duping the people and collecting money/wealth from them through deceitful means. Somebody claims to have seen Guru Sahib in his dream. Some devotees claim that the holyman they are attached and hold belief in, had fifteen visions of the Timeless Lord. Some claim to be aware of the worlds here and hereafter, while others have prophecy the dooms day. These people are no better than to be called 'Sikh Pandas'. Many are assuring their devotees of helping them spiritually in winning their litigation cases. Most of them are meddling with the accepted code of conduct of the Sikhs and the Gurbani, and are promoting their clientele. They love to see their followers bowing before them. Such Sikh Pandas have surely modernised their approach. Their externalities consists of round, small, neatly tied turban, long white robe, a rosary in one hand and an axe/spear/stainless steel arrow/a staff in the other hand, wooden slippers or embroidered footwear. With half closed intoxicated eyes, they adopt a very deliberate gait. Their paid henchmen start the process of bowing before them and keep shouting their praises in order to motivate common men to do the same. This is just a method of collecting money. Some fakers even claim that they are averse to such offerings but when probed would reveal that they say these things just to establish an impression among the masses. What good can a rupees twenty, fifty or hundred bill do for their luxurious life style? They go for cheques



of big amounts. Each one may have a bank balance running in lakhs, yet claim that the holy Babaji or Gianiji do not touch money.

With Gurbani available to the Sikhs, no Sikh should have fallen in their trap. However it was not to be, because a common man is not getting to know the correct and true meanings of Gurbani. It is the duty of all the Sikhs to remember the advise of the Guru given in this hymn and keep themselves away from the imposters and cheaters.

## BHAI MANJH JI

The name of Bhai Manjh is counted amongst those faithful Sikhs who had renounced all worldly reputation and comforts to accept Sikh religion without caring for what people would say. He had self denied his mind, body and wealth over his Guru. For a follower of the Muslim cult of *Sakhi Sarvar* and the headman of the village to accept Sikh religion is evidence enough that the preaching of Sikh religion was at its height and very effective too.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, where as the *Pirs and Faquirs* played a significant role of bringing people of, Punjab into the fold of Islam, the cult of '*Sakhi Sarvars*' had a big role to play. Though most of the Jat inhabitants of Punjab looked like Hindus; they had leaned heavily towards Islam, under the influence of *Sakhi Sarvars*. Before adoption of Islam, one was made a disciple of *Sakhi Sarvar*. These *Sarvarias* were also called *Sultanias* because the founder of this cult was named Sultan Sayed Ahmed. He was believed to be born in 1253 AD. His father used to live in Baghdad. In 1230 AD, he shifted to village Sialkot which was located 12 miles to the East of Multan. Many *Pirkhanas* opened up shortly in many places. The Sultanis would assemble in their *Pirkhana* every Thursday and would cook a very large size pan cake (Rot) by heating the ground and baking it on this heated ground. They would then plaster the 'Rot' with jaggery and offer it to their 'Pir'. The priest of the '*Pirkhana*' would read from 'Darud' (a holy book of Islam). He would keep a small piece of the 'Rot' (pan cake) with him while the rest was distributed amongst the followers.

When 'Sultan' died in 1291 AD, he was buried at a place called 'Nigaha' which was located about 22 miles West of Dera Ghazi Khan. The grave of his wife Bibi Bai is also located there. There were *Pirkhanas* at many other places too. Village Dhaukal (Wazirabad), Village Bundala (near Tarn Taran) were a few other places of note. For the people of *Doaba* (Area between Rivers Sutlej and Beas) to go to 'Nigaha', they had to pass through Goindwal.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji managed to bring about the people of this area towards Sikh ideology during his missionary tours and visits. Guru ji would impress upon the people that there is only one *Akal Purakh* (the Timeless Lord) who bestows people with all the good things and the unpleasanties. He alone is the sustainer of the mankind. Emulets given by a person or making offerings of huge pancakes or even sleeping on the ground does not please the Lord nor one can become entitled to His grace. Guru Sahib's utterance in their respect is as under -

*Nânak pîthâ puccâ sâjiâ  
dhariâ ân(i) maujood(u) .  
Bajhauh sat(i)gur âpney  
baitha jhak(u) darûd.\**

(GGS, Page 1096)

In the above lines of the hymn, Sat(i)guru ji explains that devout Muslims have the wheat grinded, cook the food and keep it ready to make offerings to their *Pir*

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\* O Nanak, he grinds the corn, cooks it and places it before himself. But without his True Guru, he sits and waits for his food to be blessed.

when children and aged in the house are waiting to be fed. Unless the priest or Quazi does not read *Darud*, the offerings are not accepted. The family members can only eat thereafter. But those who have received the sermons of the Guru, they are ever in state of ecstasy without hearing any 'Darud' from any Quazi or priest. Their food/offerings are believed to have been accepted by the singing of His praises. They need not look around for any body's approval.

Bhai Manjh whose actual name was 'Teertha' was a leading preacher and promoter of the 'Sultanias'. He had even established a *Pirkhana* in his house. According to Gyani Gian Singh, Teertha, a Manjh (a member of Manjake Rajput clan of Doaba) used to go on pilgrimage to *Nigaha* every year. Bhai Mani Singh writes that he was a headman of the village; who was virtually the owner of the village. The fame of his riches had spread far and wide.

Bhai Gurdas ji also makes a mention of Bhai Manjh (Teertha) in his 11<sup>th</sup> Ode and introduces him as a Punnu (Jat) and one who had been accepted in the grace of Lord. 'Manjh Punnu Parwan' are his words.

Bhai Manjh was a resident of Village Kang Mai of Distt. Hoshiarpur. He was a devout Sultania who would make offerings of a huge pancake (Rot) on every Thursday at the *Pirkhana* in his house. He would often set out on preaching mission along with other followers, and visit *Nigaha* every year. Many a time this group would have over 500 followers.

In 1585 when Bhai Manjh was going back home after a visit to Nigaha he stayed at Amritsar for a few days. He saw the Sikh life, under the patronage of Guru Arjan Dev ji at Amritsar. He listened to his discourses which impressed him so much that he virtually fell in love with the whole setup. He had never experienced such an ecstasy, blooming spirits, service, meditation and holy congregation. He requested Satguru ji for blessing him with his discipleship (Sikhi). Satguru Arjan Dev ji said, "Oh my man, one can't support a religion on another religion.\* Go and get rid of all those things which are contrary to the philosophy of Guru Nanak; only then shall you be able to successfully discharge its duties. In Sikh religion, one attaches oneself with the Timeless Lord (Akal Purukhu). One may have to live with the wrath of the people while treading the righteous path. If you can sacrifice so much, only then you will be able to

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\* Many of our Gurudawara Management organisation and its members are often heard saying to the Sikhs that they may indulge in rituals and infructuous rites but should always visit Gurudawaras. They are apparently are scared of the reaction's of some Sikhs and Sehajdhari Sikhs (Non Sikhs who are gradually adopting Sikh religion). The rituals and a Sikh are poles apart and are not related even distantly. Many self styled, self appointed 'Sants' of the 'deras' profess—"Go to the places of pilgrimage, observe full moon (Puranmashi) and fasts (specially Karva Chauth, observe pious and impious days, worship idols, have faith in gods and goddesses; celebrate Rakhi, Dushehra, Diwali, Holi and even Janam Ashtami, offer meals in the name of ancestors (Shradh) and so on, but must come to Gurudawara to be called a 'Sikh'. How are they imposing 'Sikhi' over the 'Sikhi' of the Guru; God only knows? We can be called Sikhs of Guru Nanak – Guru Gobind Singh only if we follow their sermons and counselling in totality, even in the face of untold difficulties or vehement opposition from the people in general, as was accepted by Bhai Manjh. Satguru ji says -

He alone is a Sikh, a friend, a relative and a sibling, who walks in the Way of the Guru's Will. One who walks according to his own will, O Sibling of Destiny, suffers separation from the Lord, and shall be punished. Without the True Guru, paece is never obtained, O Siblings of Destiny; again and again, he regrets and repents.1. (Page 601)

survive on the path of Sikhism.

Bhai Manjh came back to his village. The first thing he did was to raise down the structure of *Pirkhana* and gave up worship of 'Sakhi Sarvoars'. As the luck would have it, his cattle started dying'. But Bhai ji remained unmoved and reposing his total faith on the Lord, the Formless one, he kept busy in his work, The people complained against him and he was removed from the post of headman but he remained unshaken. Instead he started preaching that worships of graves or crematories does not bring about spiritual progress. The food of the soul is provided by reflection on Guru's *Shabad*, adopting it in life and ever singing praises of His glory and meditating on *Naam*. He also went through some financial crisis but did not lose faith on Supreme Lord. He also took to serving mankind that gave him great feeling of inner peace and happiness. \*\*

Such an intense affection grew in the mind of Bhai Manjh that he took steps to take care of his property and left home to stay at the court of Guru Arjan Dev ji. He got himself deeply involved in the service of the house of Guru. Thus he started earning the favour of the Lord. He took charge of bringing fire wood for the Common Kitchan (Langar). After the morning choirs and listening to the Kirtan, sermons and meditation, he would pick up

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\*\* Even today many historically important *Gurudwaras* have established crematories in their buildings or compounds which are worshipped. Many members of the managing body of the Gurudawara are not even aware of *Gurmat* or Sikh philosophy. A few who understand are still involved in the forbidden acts. When apprised of the misnorm, they show adamancy that the practice may first be stopped in so and so Gurudawara and then we too will stop. What can be more foolish than spreading falsehood by obstinacy? Such administrators should take a leaf out of Bhai 'Manjh's book.



his axe and go to the jungle to bring firewood. He was least remorseful of losing his false wealth since he was now blessed with true wealth and he would often tell this to the people. Bhai ji used to bring firewood from the jungle near Sultanwind.

One day he was returning to Amritsar with the firewood load on his head when a storm raged. Conscious of the load he was carrying and its value, he was carefully manoeuvring the dust kicked up by the storm that due to a gust of wind, he fell into a well. The well was not very deep and even the water was shallow. Bhai ji kept the wooden logs on his head, lest they get wet. Standing in the water, he kept on singing Gurbani loudly. Perchance a farmer happened to pass by that way. He heard the sound of Gurbani, came near the well and saw Bhai Manjh in the well. He ran to the town to get a rope and a few men for help. He informed Guru ji. Guru Arjan Dev ji himself, along with some Sikhs, ran towards the well. Dropping the rope in the well they wanted to take him out. Bhai Manjh said, "Please get the the firewood out first so that *Langar* (Meal) can be cooked. It was done so. Then Bhai ji himself came out. Guru ji said, "You have successfully passed the test of a Sikh." Bhai Manjh replied, "O benevolent Guru, please don't let me falter from the high pedestal of Sikhism. May I ever live with it". Feeling happy at his request Guru ji said -

*Manjh piârâ gurû ko, gurû Manjh piârâ  
Manjh gurû ka bohithâ jag langhan hârâ.\**

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\* Manjh is dear to Guru so is Guru to Manjh.

Manjh is a ship of the Guru for the world to sail across.

What Guru ji implied was that those who will keep faith like Bhai Manjh and serve like him, follow Gurus teachings, will be rid of the egocentricity. He will swim across the ocean of mamon (Maya). It is the ego of a man which is a stumbling block in the path of his emancipation. Guru ji was convinced that Bhai Manjh has well grasped the Sikh ideology and has passed the test. He sent him home as an authentic and authorised preacher of Sikh philosophy. Bhai Manjh ji established a *Sangat* in his house, started *Langar* and earning his wages by doing physical work. He would also carry out effective preaching of Guru's gospel. Where as he used to do missionary work for *Sakhi Sarvars*, he would now set out with *Sangat* on missionary tours of Sikhism in areas around Hoshiarpur.

## BABA GURBAKSH SINGH JI

(Leeleh Village)

In December 1764, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India for the seventh time. This time, he was coming to Delhi to help Ruhela Najib because he was besieged there. Jawahar Singh of Bharatpur state had sought help from the Sikhs and Marathas against Najib-u-Daula to avenge the death of his father. Malhar Rao, the leader of Marathas played a game of wait and watch, where as Jassa Singh Ahluwalia the leader of Dal Khalsa was at the service of Jawahar Singh at the head of a strong garrison of 15,000 Sikhs. Finding himself caught in the pincer of Jawahar Singh and the Sikhs, Najib-u-Daula had sent a request for help to Abdali. Abdali had also learnt that the Sikhs have rooted out the Durrani from the Punjab. They had occupied Sirhind. Kabali Mal had accepted victory of the Khalsa army at Lahore. Jahan Khan and Sirbuland Khan had received a crushing defeat at the hands of the Khalsa at Sialkot and Rohtas. Considering all these developments, Abdali took Mir Nasir Khan, the Balauch ruler of Kalat along with him and proclaimed *Jihad* (a holy war) against the Sikhs and invaded India for the seventh time.

At this time, the Sikh leaders were engaged on different missions. The Central Punjab was nearly denuded of the Sikhs. The leaders of Bhangi misl were engaged in an expedition in *Sandal Bar* area of Punjab. Only Sardar Charhat Singh was at Sialkot. When he heard the news of Abdali's arrival at Lahore, he launched a surprise attack on his camp. The action was so swift and precise that the enemy was caught totally off guard. They

suffered heavy losses. Thus Charhat Singh lay himself aside for a more opportune time after a successful skirmish with Abdali forces.

Abdali learnt that Singhs have proceeded towards Amritsar. He set out in their pursuit. There were only 30 Sikhs guarding Darbar Sahib at Amritsar. These Sikhs were under the command of Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh, a *Nihang Singh* of Village Leeleh (Amritsar). He was administered *Khande Ki Pahul* by Bhai Mani Singh ji. He was a staunch Sikh, very devoted to the Sikh Code of Conduct. He was always at the forefront of battles.

As soon as the news of Abdali's invasion on Amritsar reached the Sikhs at Amritsar, Nihang Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh ji along with his thirty companions commenced their arrangements to defend the Darbar Sahib Complex. They were all praying for success or martyrdom. Some one was wearing white, some one Kesari (Yellowish orange) while others were in blue dress.

They all wore their arms and armaments. They recited path of six steps (Pauris) of *Anand Sahib*, took invocatory order from Sri Guru Granth Sahib for guidance. *Karhah Parshad* was distributed. All these preparations were done like a marriage ceremony.

After completion of all preparations, they all alighted from Sri Akal Bunga (Takht) and went to Sri Darbar Sahib for Gurus blessings. They went around the sanctum sanctorum four times, said supplicatory prayer and were ready to face the challenge.

Shortly, Abdali forces reached on the outskirts of Sri Darbar Sahib. They were 36,000 strong while Sikhs were only 30 in number. Whichever side they attacked, Singhs

massacred the Durani raiders. They kept on fighting against all odds and each faced the enemy ahead of his companion and fell martyr. Nihang Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh was encouraging all to fight in the front. Many Singhs fell but others kept pressing on.

The Durrannies were wearing armour on their body. They had weapons capable of causing damage at long range. The Sikhs had swords and lances only. They also had the determination to safeguard their holiest of the holy places at the cost of their lives.

The determined and brave efforts of the Singhs made the Durrannies realise that they have made an error of judgement in gauging the fighting capabilities of the Sikhs. When a large number of Sikhs had attained martyrdom, Baba Gurbakhsh Singh took his sword and joined the fray. He kept attacking and killing the enemies. He even dropped his shield, in order to fight his enemy without hiding his face behind it and facing the enemy squarely. The Durrannies were now fighting from a distance and were not daring to come near.

Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh ji who was now fighting in the thick of the battle field was getting wounded by arrows, lances and attack of swords. He had received number of wounds through which blood was flowing out rapidly. Excessive lose of blood though made him weak yet he kept on advancing on the enemy. Very soon, he was surrounded by the enemy soldiers. He fell on his knees, still wielding his sword. His aged and badly mauld body could bear no more injuries and he dropped dead-his hands still clutching his sword.

Quazi Noor Mohammed who had come with Abdali saw this skirmish with his own eyes. He writes the

following commentary on this episode -

“When the King and the Royal Army reached (Guru) *Chak* (Amritsar), no Kafir (meaning Sikh) could be seen. A handful of men had taken position in the fortress (Akal Bunga), who spilled their blood in the battle field and sacrificed themselves over their Guru. When these men saw the Royal Army, they all came out of *Bunga*. They were only thirty in number. They were just not scared or even puzzled. They had no fear of death. They engaged the *Ghazies* (Abdali Soldiers) in battle and died fighting”.

This is how Quazi Noor Mohammad describes what he saw. Only thirty Singhs confronted the might of Abdali force numbering 36,000. With no fear of death in their mind or in their eyes, they laid their lives over their Guru. The Khalsa Panth shall ever be on ascendancy because of the sacrifices of brave martyrs like Bhai Gurbakhsh Singh ji. Those who came to finish them got finished themselves. They got killed themselves. The names of the martyrs become eternal unlike ordinary mortals.

## DONKEY IN A LION'S SKIN

Behold ! the court of *Satguru ji, Sahibe-Kamal Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji* is in progress. The emperor of the Sikhs is adoring the divine throne. The minstrels (Ragi) have just finished singing of *Gurbani* hymns in their melodious voice. This has been followed by a brief discourse by the scholars on the lofty ideals and philosophy of *Gurmat*. All those present in the congregation have been advised to understand the true shape of the religion and adopt it practically in their lives.

Look! a band of 10-15 Sikhs are coming from outside to join the congregation. Many small children, old people and young men are following this group laughingly and cracking jokes. These Sikhs also had a donkey which was tied outside before they entered the holy assembly. One of the Sikhs in leading file had a lion's skin on his shoulder and was holding its one end.

When all had paid their respect to the Guru ji by bowing their heads in his front, Guru ji asked the leading Singh why all others were smiling.

There ! a Sikh is replying to the Gurus query while all those sitting in the assembly are listening with rapt attention. The Sikh is saying, "Gurudev ! for the last three days, people coming from the Western routes of the town had reported the presence of a lion in the close proximity of the town. People were very scared of going in that direction. A single person or two would just take a look at the lion and run back home. The news about the presence of the lion had spread in the town and every one was talking about it.

While all were listening to the storey with rapt attention, *Kalghidhar Patishah* was smiling and looking at the 'reaction' of the Sikhs sitting in the holy assembly.

"We dug up the mountain and found a dead rat" said the Singh who was narrating the tale. A potter of the town was going outside the town with some of his donkeys. When the lion saw these donkeys, he started braying. When the potter saw the lion braying, it did not take him long to arrive at the truth. He at once realised that the lion infact was one of his donkeys who had been covered with lion's skin by some one. He went and nabbed this "brave Lion". He removed the lion's skin off the donkey, that we have brought before you. Removing the lions skin proved the true identity of the donkey."

The whole assembly started laughing. The Sikh who had brought the skin with him was spreading it with his hands for other Sikhs to see.

"Oh Singhs !" said the Satguru ji, "All of you are laughing on the disclosure of the identity of the lion-like donkey; but tell me who among you is the brother of this lion-like donkey? Don't try to hide." No one came forward to accept his relationship with the donkey in lion's skin.

"There are many amongst us who have adopted the external form of Singhs but their dealings and code of conduct is most unlike Sikhs. The externalities can't help you reach the ultimate truth, the aim of all the religions. Any Sikh who has kept himself bereft of Guru's counsel for the mind but has adopted garb of a Singh externally, has done so just to show that he is religious. The externalities would have value once lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride are brought under control and the

mind adopts virtues of sacrifice, kindness, humility, service and meditation. It is essential that we also inculcate traits of courage, bravery and fearlessness like a lion. One should be prepared to struggle for good of others. If our character is not pure and clean, we are bereft of morality, our mind has not adopted the life style enunciated by the Guru, then our external display is nothing more than a show of being religious”.

The exhibitionists actually cause bad name to the religion. Religions have not been damaged so much by the reactionaries or by the non believers as by the people totally devoid of high and pure ideals and morals that are essential in all races of the mankind. Such people are ever engaged in vices and nefarious activities.

Guru ji even disclosed that he himself had planned the entire gambit in order to bring home the true sermon of the *Gurmat*.

Where as we should take direction of how pleasure and good intentions can be combined in our missionary work, we should also safeguard our religion getting tied down by the externalities. This too is an important aspect of *Gurmat*. Unity, discipline and similarity is very essential in *Khalsa Panth*. Without inner discipline, outer display of religious symbols is nothing more than exhibitionism. This ultimately would become an article of disrepute and disrespect for the *Khalsa* instead of providing him with high spirits.

## REFUTING SATURN GOD

Hindu society believes that there are different gods and goddesses who can be invoked to meet their different needs instead of one Almighty—the Omnipotent. For beauty, ‘Ashwani Kumar’ (Son of a mare) is worshipped. For long life, ‘Markandey’ is worshipped; goddess Saraswati for knowledge; Indira for escaping from fear; and to keep ailments away, god ‘Shani’ (Saturn)\* is worshipped.

Since he was born to ‘Chhaya’ the queen of Suraj, he was named ‘Chhanichhar’. In Sanskrit, the word ‘Shanai-char’ means who swims slowly.’ For staying in one solar house the whole year, he was named ‘Shanaich-char’ (Chhanichhar).

All gods and goddesses have different likings of offerings. Some is enamoured by wine and meat while others enjoy pounded grains. Some deity seeks offerings of puffed sugar cakes and the others on rice cooked in milk (kheer). But to please god Shani, offerings of mustard oil, iron and ‘Dal Urd’ are made.

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\***Saturn god.** A King named Suraj (Sun) had eight sons. The youngest of the eight named ‘Shani’ (Saturn) was from his second queen. He was black, ugly and lazy. The marriages of the princesses were solemnised through the rite of ‘Swaiamber’. Seven elder sons of Raja Sun got married but no one approved Shani for marriage. In order to show him fair coloured, his mother applied Vermillion on his body. Even then no girl accepted him in marriage. When King Suraj died his wife burnt herself alive on the same pyre. Lazy Shani would not even earn his living. Whatever grams was made available to him by his brothers, he would live on it. His sisters-in-law had named him eater of seven types of grams (Satnaja). Inplace of ‘ghee’ (clarified butter) he would get oil, instead of gold/silver ornaments, he would receive ornaments of iron or bronze and tattered clothes to wear. That was the way he lived. ‘Even after his death’ same articles are being offered before his idol.



In order to ascertain that the Sikhs have well grasped the principles of Sikhism, Guru Gobind Singh ji asked a 'Vedva' (Those Brahmins who accept alms on Saturdays) to come to his court the next Saturday in order to collect alms. *Vedva* thought that since he is going to Guru Darbar and Guru's influence has spread far and wide, he is likely to receive handsome alms. Therefore he took a few donkeys with him to carry the load of alms that he was expecting to receive. So he reached before the door of Guru early in the morning of Saturday.

In the jam packed court of Guru Gobind Singh ji where a large number of Sikhs were also sitting who had come from far and wide for the audience of the Guru, Diwan Nand Chand was asked to give alms to the 'Pandit'. Accordingly, Diwan Nand Chand loaded all the items on the donkeys of 'Vedva'. Guru ji also remarked, "Pandit ji ! the evil vision and spell of god 'Shani' should get dispelled now."

Sikhs sitting in the holy congregation kept watching the developments. Some lazy and not too bright sikhs did not feel anything, but many Sikhs who were well conversant with philosophy of Sikhism quietly got up from their seats and rushed behind the 'Vedva'. They caught up with him in the fields outside. They asked the Brahmin where he was taking the goods. Pandit ji said that these were the alms given in the name of god Shani that has been given by Guru Gobind Singh to ward off his evil spell. Only Brahmin can digest these items.

The Sikhs got everything unloaded there itself and remarked, "Pandit ji, we know how to digest all these items. You run away now. You can befool Hindus but not to Sikhs. Go away and don't come this way again."

*Vedva* ran away. Sikhs took those items to the *Langar*. They grounded 'Urd Ki Dal', fried doughnuts of it in mustard oil and distributed them to the Sikhs in *Langar*. They made large rings of the iron and each Sikh wore one in his hand. When Satguru ji saw *Karas* (iron bracelet) in the arm of each Sikh, he asked the Sikhs why had they done like that. The episode was narrated in the court of the Guru. Satguru ji felt immensely pleased at the alertness of the Sikhs. Later on, he included the 'Kara' amongst the five symbols of Sikhism. Even today, it motivates us to keep away from superstitions and other doubts. Unfortunately our condition has deteriorated immensely today. Many amongst us who call ourselves Sikhs are strongly placing their faith in goddesses like Vaishno Devi, Naina Devi and gods like Shani (Saturn) and Mangal (Mars).

It has happened due to inadequacy of learned preachers who could explain meaning of Gurbani. When we do not know what direction is provided by Gurbani, falling in to the trap of self willed decisions is natural. How useful it would have been had the Gurudawaras explained the meanings of various hymns instead of holding continuous recitation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Only then could they have given clear meanings of Sikh ideology.

There are some Sikhs who indulge in organising and holding '*Jagratas*' (night long singing of praises of the gods/goddesses). They are very particular in bringing boiled grams to Gurudawaras as offerings to their Guru which is absolute self will and not approved in Sikh code of Conduct.

## SAINT SOLDIER BHAI TARA SINGH (Village Vâñ)

'Dal' and 'Vâñ' are two famous villages near the Western border of India with Pakistan. Both are so near that people often addressed 'Dal' as 'Vâñ' and 'Vâñ' as 'Dal'. Of the three brothers namely Mahi, Jaita and Gurdas, the youngest Gurdas received the boon of 'Amrit' and became a fulfilled Sikh of the Guru. In the time of Guru Gobind Singh, he served him in the battle field, and during the period of Banda Singh Bahadur, he helped reorganise 'Singhs' into bands of effective strength. He was blessed with five sons. The eldest was named Tara Singh who was born in 1702 AD. He was baptised under the aegis of Bhai Mani Singh and he took up the responsibility of serving the Sikh soldiers. He was an expert horseman, archer and swordsman beside being of good moral character. He would fight in the forefront during various campaigns of Baba Banda Singh. He had raised a fence around his Village 'Vâñ' with the help of acacia trees (keekar) which grew so thick and high that no horse could jump over it. He had also dug up a big pit near the houses. As the 'winter set in, some logs of wood would be placed in the pit and set fire to. Tired Sikhs would often come there and enjoyed the warmth of the fire to rid themselves of fatigue and cold. They would even be served food, rest for the night and be on their journey early in the morning. This village 'Vâñ' was the resting place of the Sikhs. Bhai Tara Singh enjoyed so much authority and influence that all Hindus and Sikhs revered him. During the period of Abdus Samad Khan, this fence was a shelter for the Sikhs. Admiring his services and devotion, three sons of Bhai Jatha of this

village received baptism and were named as Amar Singh, Amin Singh and Koer Singh. Koer Singh not only became his good friend but also started staying with Tara Singh. Desu, son of Bihari, another landlord of this village too had received 'Khande di Pahul' (Amrit) along with Gurdas Singh at the hands of Guru Gobind Singh ji. His only son Wadhawa Singh too saw the life style of Tara Singh and decided to associate himself closely with him.

In 1726 when Chaudhari Sahib Rai of Naushehra heard the news of Zakaria Khan becoming the Governor of Lahore, he started troubling the Sikhs. He believed that by adopting this policy, the new rulers and military commanders of Lahore will support all his bad deeds. Sahib Rai started grazing his two mares in the fields of Mali Singh and Gurbakhsh Singh of village Bharhaney. These two Sikhs made very humble request to him to desist from ruining their fields that they have prepared with their blood and sweat but he always turned a deaf ear to these requests. One day he let lose his mares in newly sprouted wheat fields. When the Sikhs requested him to control his mares, Sahib Rai flew into rage and said, "I have been very considerate towards you that I have not got you killed. Now I shall tie up these mares with the ropes made of your long hair."

His words pierced the hearts of the two Sikhs. They went over to Baghel Singh and Amar Singh of the neighbouring village Bhusa and narrated the whole incident. At that time, they snatched away the mares of Sahib Rai and sold them to Sardar Ala Singh of village Gharal near the famous village *Valtoha*. They purchased grains out of that money and donated it to the *Langar* of Bhai Tara Singh.

Sikhs realised that the matter is likely to take a turn for the worst. So they came over to the shelter of Tara Singh in Village 'Vân'. They knew that whatever safety that can be assured, it would only be available there. If a confrontation takes place, this would be the place most favourable to them.

Chaudhari Sahib Rai too reached village 'Vân' and told Tara Singh to hand over the thieves to him. Tara Singh said, "You yourself exercise tyranny and have now come to find thieves here? There is no thief here. Sardar Baghel Singh is a philanthropic person. The Sikhs of the Guru are never plunderers. In fact you are a highway dacoit who graze his cattle in the fields of Sikhs. Your empty threats cannot scare us. If you want your good, then leave my premises at once.

In utter rage, Chaudhari Sahib Rai said a few words against the Sikh grandeur which they could not bear to hear. Some young Sikhs started teaching him a lesson there itself. After receiving a sound beating at the hands of the Sikhs, Chaudhari Sahib Rai went to Zaafar Beg of 'Patti'. He narrated the whole episode and said, "Where we go for collection of revenue, we are told that Tara Singh has taken the dues from us." He told the military Commander that if Tara Singh was caught, peace would reign in Majha area and the new ruler Zakaria Khan too will be pleased.

The Faujdar felt it was a God sent opportunity. He reached Village 'Vân' alongwith two horsemen before the break of dawn. Sardar Baghel Singh had just stepped out of the fenced enclosure. He had a small metallic pitcher like utensil in his one hand and the lance in the other. He was going out for morning ablutions. When he saw the horseman, he said loudly, "Oh fools where are

you going, raiding a Sikh Camp? Why don't you have a confrontation with 'this' army first?" Sardar Baghel Singh said 'Sat Sri Akal' loudly. Sahib Rai recognised the voice and told his soldiers, "He is the cause of all the troubles." It did not take long for Baghel Singh to realise what the matter was.

Remembering the famous and confident saying of the Tenth Master '*Sava lakh se ek laraon*', the lone Sikh took the field. He balanced his lance in his hand and ensuring protection of the *acacia* trees at the back, he started attacking the horseman. The horseman could not advance; and if they retreat, they would lose their life. The infantry men started firing haphazardly. Baghel Singh was hit in the thigh with one bullet but he kept injuring every one who came in front of his lance. When they heard the stacato of the gun fire, the Sikhs came out of the fortified fence. They too let lose a volley of fire. A pitched battle raged for nearly two hours. They could not survive the onslaught of Sikh sword for long.

S. Baghel Singh fell martyr in this skirmish. Ten Hindu-Muslim soldiers and two nephews of Faujdar Jafer Beg died. Many were wounded. At last the Faujdar found safety in his retreat. He came over to 'Mari Kamboki'. He took help from the headman in retrieving dead bodies of his nephews and reached Lahore. Zakaria Khan was the Governor of Lahore at that time. Zaafar Beg placed the corpses of his nephews before him and started wailing.

Zakaria Khan popularly known as Khan Bahadur was a sworn enemy of the Sikhs. He flew into rage when he heard the whole episode from Zaafer Beg. He ordered Moman Khan, one of his general to take army of appropriate strength, attack 'Vân' and bring Tara Singh

or his head. Momin Khan took two thousand strong force after taking a vow of annihilating the Sikhs. A Sikh from Lahore hastily reached 'Vân' and informed Tara Singh about the impending attack by Momin Khan. Bhai Tara Singh asked the Singhs to get ready and told them that though we are only fifty in number, yet we will confront than even if they are 2000.

These words of Bhai Tara Singh filled all the Sikhs with a new exuberance to meet the challenge of the enemy. They dug up field works outside their camp and started waiting for the Mughal army. Momin Khan had only a force of 2000 strong but few other plunderers of various Chaudharies enroute joined his force for easy plunder. They assembled a couple of miles short of village 'Vân'. Their plan was to raid 'Vân' in the early hours of the day when presumably the Sikhs would still be asleep. When nearly three hours of night till remained, Momin Khan came close to the camp. The Sikhs very silently waited for the enemy to fall into their trap. Momin Khan thought he has surprised the Sikhs. He courageously advanced with his army. His misconception soon disappeared when he faced a volley of fire from nearly fifty two guns. The leading files of his army fell to the ground. Momin Khan retreated quickly, re-organised his force and attacked again. Both sides were well into the thick of battle by the time day had dawned.

Fierce battle was raging. Sikhs routed Momin Khan's army. He too felt perturbed. He saw for himself that which ever direction Tara Singh proceeded, many of his soldiers fell dead on the ground. Momin Khan ordered Taki Beg to face Tara Singh. Taki Beg was a renowned warrior. He had armoured himself from top to

bottom.

Taki Beg advanced towards Tara Singh under the cover of arrows. When Tara Singh saw him, he turned his steed towards him. Both came in front of each other shouting 'Ya Ali', Taki Beg showered arrows on Tara Singh. He was a known marksman. Tara Singh however took all the arrows on his shield. Protecting himself against the onslaught of arrows, he moved his horse towards Taki Beg. Bhai Tara Singh hit Taki Beg's face with his lance. He received a deep wound and started bleeding profusely. He was writhing in pain. He quickly pulled back his elephant and retreated to save his life. When Momin Khan saw him coming, he remarked, "Khan Sahib ! are you chewing the beetle leaf."

In sheer rage, Taki Beg said, "Yes, Tara Singh is distributing them ahead. If you have any pride or manhood left in you, go and get it." As the wound was very deep, Taki Beg fell unconscious and died shortly afterward. Momin Khan was beside himself with rage. He challenged the manhood of Murid Khan, his nephew who was a young and brave man. Shouting war cry he jumped into the fray and started raining arrows after challenging the Sikhs.

He was keen to fight one to one with Tara Singh. But how could he escape from the onslaught of Sikhs on his route? When S. Bhim Singh saw his enemy advancing towards his Commander, he manoeuvred his horse in front of him and roared like a lion, "Attention Murid Khan! Your end has arrived. Remember Allah and be prepared to depart for the world hereafter.

S. Bhim Singh attacked twice and killed the 'mahout' of Murid Khan. Cutting mahout, Bhim Singh's sword



severed his elephants ear and broke his tusk into two. The elephant ran back in pain. S. Bhim Singh was a swift and agile young man. He climbed up the back of the elephant by holding its tail and severed the head of Murid Khan.

Momin Khan could not bear the death of his nephew. He ordered the entire army to attack the Sikhs. Thousands pounced upon a handful of Sikhs. There were no challenges. The sword was being wielded ferociously. Corpse lay strewn in the battle field. Each Sikh was surrounded by a hundred or more moghul soldiers. Bhai Tara Singh and all his associates died a heroic death. Momin Khan lost about 300 men beside Taki Beg, Murid Khan, Daya Ram and Mansa Ram. Very large number were wounded. Momin Khan recovered the bodies of some of his men and also took heads of a few dead Sikhs and stayed the night at Mari Kamboki. Next day, he set out for Lahore.

This battle took place in February 1726. The martyrdom of Bhai Tara Singh filled the Sikhs with a new spirit and exhuberance. They started raising swords against the Mughal reign at various places.

## BHAI BOTA SINGH GARJA SINGH

The Vaisakhi of 1699 opened up a flood gate of saint-soldiers, righteous warriors, holymen and martyrs. Many Sikhs lamented why they had not offered their heads when Guru ji had asked for them in order to select the five beloved ones. Well ! those five have earned a unique place for themselves in the history of mankind. But those who lost opportunity then received it later as Guru ji had ordained and assured them when he had said, "This is just the beginning. No one has lost any opportunity. Believe me, I shall always be needing your heads to keep aloft the flag of righteousness. One must remain alert as these five had done by their total surrender to the house of Guru Nanak and has made their lives a success. As they have learnt the ideals of a nation, society/man kind and individual lives and live them practically, similarly you too would be able to derive complete benefit by sacrificing your wealth, body, mind and soul for a just cause of righteousness as propagated by the Guru."

We are of firm belief that the opportunities of offering our heads shall never be lost for us. We must remain alert so as to live or die for the community, according to the need and time; and sacrifice every drop of our blood for eternal blooming of the flower of '*Dharm*' and righteousness.

Baba Bota Singh and Garja Singh were two brave warriors who were alert when the opportunity came their way. They enlightened the path of the nation with their great deeds.

This episode dates back to the time immediately after the first invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739 when



Mohammad Shah Rangeela adored the throne of Delhi. Nadir Shah stayed at Delhi for five months after conquering it. During this period, the Sikhs avenged their reverses suffered due to activities of Hindus and Muslim informers. When Nadir Shah was retreating from India, the Sikhs raided his caravan and plundered his loot that he was carrying to Afghanistan.

General Gordan describes the state of affairs on page 58 of his book—“The Sikhs on the following way.

After seeing off Nadir Shah from Punjab, Zakir Khan returned to his headquarter at Lahore. After attending to more important state business, he decided to deal with Sikhs with an aim of annihilating them. He let loose patrolling parties all over the state. He placed rewards on the heads of each Sikh. He also ordered filling up the sacred tank at Amritsar.

Under these difficult conditions, in order to reorganise their resources, Singhs dispersed towards the deserts of Rajasthan and in the forests and mountains of present day Himachal Pardesh. Zakaria Khan then proclaimed that all Sikhs have been done to death. The aim was to discourage the *Sehajdhari* Hindus from becoming complete Sikhs.

As and when the Sikhs got opportunity, they would come to Amritsar to pay their respect at their most sanctum place beside a dip in the pool of nectar (Amrit Sarovar). When Zakaria Khan had prohibited Sikhs from coming into the city of Amritsar, the Sikhs out of pride and self respect and to maintain their claim over their most sacred shrine started coming for their obeisance and sacred bath even during the day.

In similar sentiments two Sikhs named Bhai Garja

Singh and Bhai Bota Singh left Rajasthan for Amritsar. In those days, Sikhs used to travel at night and hide/rest during the day.

One evening when they were preparing to leave the forest in the vicinity of Taran Tarn, two Muslims happened to pass by and saw both Sikhs behind the bushes and started talking—

First Muslim—“ I think these are Sikhs behind the bushes.”

Second Muslim—“No ! they are not the ones who would hide. They always come face to face to settle the score.

First Muslim—“From their dress and bearing, they seem to be Sikhs.”

Second Muslim—“The Governor of Lahore has proclaimed that all Sikhs have been killed and none is left in the Punjab. Let us see who they are.”

First Muslim—“If they happen to be Sikhs, it will be difficult for us to escape. Let us leave it at that.”

Scared, the two Muslims left the place but their conversation had been heard by both Sikhs. They pondered over the information gathered, that all Sikhs have been liquidated from the Punjab will cause much harm to the society. We must try to disprove their proclamation. Both decided to capture the Octroi Post of Noor Din on the main highway passing near Tarn Taran. Once captured, they started taking octroi of one anna from a bullock cart and one paisa from a donkey. They would also announce that ‘Khalsa’ has taken over this place. Khalsa can’t be liquidated. Very soon, the news spread that Sikhs have established their Kingdom on

National Highway. No patrolling party would go that way. When no one came to dislodge them both wrote a letter to the Governor of Lahore and sent it through a traveller. Giani Gian Singh has described it as under-

*Chithî sunoh Khânû Kota. Âma gadhâ paisâ khotâ.*

*Eh(u) jagât leyt Singh Botâ. Hath mein râkhat sotâ motâ.*

*Mera kahîn sunehâ jae. Bhâbhî Khano nuñ samjhae.*

As soon as Zakaria Khan received the news, he sent a band of two hundred soldiers. It surrounded the Octroi Post. The Sikhs challenged them to one to one fight if they consider themselves brave. When twelve soldiers got killed, the Singhs asked them to send two men at a time against one of them. This was primarily a ploy to cause insult to them. When 20 soldiers had been killed, the Mughal soldiers attacked enmasse. Both Sikhs killed many more before receiving martyrdom. This episode will ever help the Sikhs to take guidance from and appreciate how farsighted and intelligent were our ancestors.

Though many Sikhs state that the roots of Sikhism are in the center of the Earth, but are not prepared to take on the mantle of a cause universally beneficial to the Sikhs as well as the society. When our ancestors preached that the Sikhs can't be vanquished, they would even sacrifice their lives to uphold their dignity and glory. Such episodes can surely help us do good for the Sikh nation.

