

The Gurdwara Act of 1925: Great Panthic Achievement - The Other Perspective; Marginalization of the Sri Akal Takhat Institution

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By Nanaksdas Dr. Kuldip Singh (former Professor Surgery P.G.I. Chandigarh)

Not only the scholars but the whole Panth* believes that the Gurdwara Act of 1925 was an achievement of the Panth following the untold sacrifices made by men, women and children during the prolonged struggle of liberating the Gurdwaras from the *Mahants* during 1920-25. FACTS SPEAK OTHERWISE.

How did the movement of 1920 begin?

(* Panth: Sikh Community.)

Sikhs had felt deeply hurt when the Government-appointed Sarbrah of Sri Akal Takht, Aroor Singh, had not only bestowed a *siropa* on General Dyer, but also admitted him into the Khalsa, giving him exemption from keeping *keshas* and allowing him to smoke. The matters precipitated, when Darbar Sahib and Akal Takht *pujaris* refused to accept *parshad* offered by neophyte Khalsas from the so-called lower castes of Ramdasias, Mazhabis, Ranghretas and others. The Government replaced Aroor Singh. The *sangat* appointed their own *jathedar* and the first *hukamnama* was issued from Akal Takht for holding the first *Sarbat Khalsa* of the 20th century on November 15, 1920. The Government pre-empted the Sikhs' move by announcing a committee of 36 Sikhs to manage Darbar Sahib Complex gurdwaras on November 13. **The Sarbat Khalsa held on the 15th-16th November 1920 unanimously elected a committee of 175 members including all the 36 government nominees. This Committee was to manage all gurdwaras of the Punjab and also those located in other parts of India. Members were elected to represent not only all areas of Punjab but also the Sikh states, and Sikh bodies outside Punjab including those in Burma, Malaya, China and America. The inaugural meeting of this "Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee" was held under the supervision of Panj Piaras on December 12, 1920. The Panj Piaras scrutinized the credentials of each member regarding observation of *Rehat Maryada* on the upper story of Akal Takht, and all those who confessed to shortcomings, were given religious punishment. After this, all the 175 members came down reciting *Gurbani*, and were presented to the *sangat*. Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia apologized in utter humility and asked for forgiveness if he had hurt the feelings of anyone. He was unanimously elected President of the S.G.P.C. Akali Dal was formed on the 14th December, 1920 by the S.G.P.C., and it started organizing *Akali Jathas* in all districts.**

The above developments completely unnerved the British Government who saw a danger in the resurgence of the Sikh fervour and unity. Soon they instigated not only the *mahants* but also the Hindus. **The first skirmish with the *mahants* occurred at Taran Taran on 25th January, 1921 killing two Sikhs, and the second one at Nankana Sahib on 20th February, 1921 resulted in 130 *shahidis*.** Repression of Sikhs commenced with full force from 15th March, 1921 and in October, 1921. The keys of Toshakhana were taken over by

the Government. The movement for liberation of Gurdwaras was declared subversive. The Government was forced to return the keys on 12th January, 1922 with release of all the arrested. Sikhs felt triumphant, but soon another wave of suppression commenced when black turban became a symbol of sedition. The Gurdwaras were declared the private property of *mahants*, and this resulted in the famous guru-ka-Bagh Morcha of August – November 1922. Repression was further escalated with the S.G.P.C. and Akali Dal being declared unlawful. **The Gangsar-Jaito Morcha was the big event of 1923-1924 leading to at least 100 killed on 21-02-1924 during firing at Jaito.**

The unity displayed by the Panth completely disturbed not only the Government but the Muslims of the Punjab. Sir Fazli Hussain, a prominent Muslim leader of Punjab met the Governor and conveyed his misgivings that if this escalating struggle of the Sikhs is not stopped immediately, it might lead to a struggle for formation of a Sikh State like the *Raaj* of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He implored the Governor that he should consult the Govt. at Delhi and convey their feelings that this movement must be brought to an end as soon as possible. Urgent consultations were held between the Governor of Punjab, Govt. of India and the British Govt. through the Secretary of State as to how to stop this struggle of the Sikhs. More and more repression was resulting in the escalating Sikh fervour and every Sikh man, woman and child was ready to die for the cause of the Panth. **The plan of the Govt. was how to break up the unity of the Panth in a way that on the one hand the unity is broken for all time to come and on the other hand the Sikhs consider it as their great victory following their movement.**

The intelligence agencies of the East India Company and the British Govt. had learnt that the real Sikhs of the Guru who were ready to die for the call of the Guru were the illiterate and low caste Sikhs soldiers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who were Eveready to die for the Sarkar Khalsa. The clever Maharaja Ranjit Singh had utilized their services for founding his big empire. Including Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh Sardars and nobles had all the vices, which were present in the rich of the society i.e. women, alcohol and running down one another for one's personal gains. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had married more than 20 women, was addicted to opium and alcohol. Twelve of his Ranis had committed Sati at his cremation which practice was strictly banned by the Sikh Gurus. After the annexation of Punjab, the British Govt. wanted to utilize the services of these poor devoted Sikhs for the crown. Simultaneously they started planning and thinking how to abolish these people coming under a single Sikh Flag in future. In the Gurdwara Reform Movement, the Sikhs had organized themselves successfully under the Akal Takht.

The Gurdwara Act 1925 was drafted in a way that it would permanently divide the Sikhs for fighting the elections to the SGPC. The Govt. conveyed to the Sikhs through their scholars and *Sardars* that they should stop their movement and accept this peaceful offer of the Govt. that the Govt. would themselves liberate the Gurdwaras from the *mahants* and hand them over to an elected SGPC. They conveyed to them that the Govt. of India would organize holding these elections under their own expense. The Govt. would make the voter lists, hold the elections under their guidance and arrangements and the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar would preside over the first legally constituted SGPC and hold the elections of its President and office bearers and their subsequent annual election. Any amendment require to the Gurdwara Act would be passed by the Central Assembly at New

Delhi. They abolished the institution of the *Jathedar* of the Akal Takht. The President and the Executive of the SGPC would appoint the high priest of Akal Takht. **The Govt. utilized the services of the Sikh Scholars, the most prominent of whom was S. Jodh Singh of Khalsa College Amritsar who later on became the first Vice-Chancellor of the Punjabi University before retirement. The scholars approached all the Sikhs in the jails of Punjab and brain washed them that they should accept the offer of the Govt. and stop any further bloodshed. The only individual Sikh who understood the Govt. plan was S. Teja Singh Samundri who was reported to have died all of a sudden in the night (most likely eliminated).** The Govt. through its Sikh henchmen propagated to the Sikhs about the great victory won by the Panth. *S. Sohan Singh Josh writes in his “Gurdwara Reform Movement” – 1968, that during the first elections of the SGPC held in 1926, the Sikh parties contesting these SGPC elections utilized all those nefarious methods, which the various political parties are using for winning the Assembly and Parliament seats in the sixties. S. Sohan Singh Josh wrote his book on “Gurdwara Reform Movement” after going through the archives of the Govt. of India at New Delhi for two years.*

Thus the passing and acceptance of Gurdwara Act 1925 was not an achievement of the great sacrifices made by the Sikhs during the previous five years. On the other hand it was a direct frontal blow to the Sikh polity. The Govt. very cleverly ensured that they have abolished the institution of the Akal Takht and now the Sikhs would not be able to come on a single platform. *It seems that the Govt. wanted further that the Sikhs should forget their political aspirations for all time to come. The Govt. started cultivating the Sikh scholars and ultimately enticed Prof. Teja Singh of Khalsa College Amritsar for their **second big blow**.* The British Principal of Khalsa College of Amritsar frequently remarked about the intellect of Prof. Teja Singh about his command of the English language and his knowledge of Sikhi. These remarks were common knowledge.

The Sikhs themselves provided the opportunity, when the SGPC formed a Rahau-Riti-sub-Committee of 25 important personalities of the Panth on 4th October 1931. The list of the members of the RR Committee:

1. Giani Thakar Singh Ji, Amritsar;
2. Giani Sher Singh Ji;
3. Bhai Budh Singh Ji;
4. Akali Kaur Singh Ji;
5. Sant Sangat Singh Ji, Kamalia;
6. Bhai Kahan Singh Ji, Nabha;
7. Sant Gulab Singh Ji, Gholian;
8. Bhai Labh Singh Ji, Granthi Sri Harimandir Sahib;
9. Bhai Hazura Singh Ji, Hazoor Sahib (or his nominee);
10. Pandit Basant Singh Ji, Patiala;
11. Bhai Vir Singh Ji, Amritsar;
12. Giani Hira Singh Ji ‘Dard’;
13. Bawa Harkishan Singh Ji, Principal Guru Nanak Khalsa College Gujranwala;
14. Bhai Trilochan Singh Ji (Sur Singh, Distt. Lahore);
15. Giani Hamir Singh Ji, Amritsar;
16. Pandit Kartar Singh Ji Dakha, Distt. Ludhiana;
17. Jathedar Sahib, Sri Akal Takht Sahib;
18. Jathedar Sahib, Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib;
19. Jathedar Sahib, Takht Sri Patna Sahib;
20. Professor Ganga Singh Ji;
21. Professor Jodh Singh Ji;
22. Sant Maan Singh Ji, Kankhal.
23. Jathedar Teja Singh Ji;
24. Bhai Randhir Singh Ji;
25. Prof. Teja Singh Ji (Convenor).

In addition, some meetings were attended by S. Dharam Anant Singh Ji Principal Sikh Missionary College S. Bhag Singh Vakeel Gurdaspur, S. Vasawa Singh Ji Secretary SGPC and Master Tara Singh Ji President Akali Dal. The draft proposal of RR Committee was presented for publication for views of the Panth and fifty individuals and twenty-one

organizations sent their comments to the SGPC. It is strange that the final recommendations of the **Rahau-Reet-Committee** were printed under the headings of **Sikh Rehat Maryada**. Under the following headings:

1. Definition of a Sikh
2. Life pattern of a Sikh
3. Gurudwaras
4. Kirtan
5. Correct Ritual of Hukumnama
6. Sadharan Paath
7. Akhand Paath
8. Ritual of commencement of Sadharan/Akhand Paath
9. Bhog of Paath
10. Karah-Parshad
11. Gurbani Di Katha
12. Life according to Gurmat: details.
13. Religious ceremony at birth and 'naam' sanskar
14. Anand Marriage
15. Ceremonies at death
16. Misc. rituals and rites including Amrit sanskar, religious punishment and ritual of Gurmatta

It is to be noted that the project was commenced by constituting a "Rahau-Reeti" subcommittee with all the important personalities and scholars and leaders of the Panth but the resulting final document was given the name of SIKH REHAT MARYADA. It was approved by Resolution No. 97 of 3-2-1945 and has been printed in lacs ever since and is available free from every Gurdwara. Fall out of the widely circulated Sikh Rehat Maryada by the Dharam Prachar Committee of the SGPC.

We can understand the minds of the stalwarts of the Committee if we consider some of the important events in which they were associated.

- 1. Bhai Vir Singh Ji:** He was the brain behind the organization of Chief Khalsa Diwan. This organization of the Panth was primarily meant for the educational uplift of the Sikhs through the good offices of the British Govt. and they were whole-heartedly supporting the govt. of the day. **Bhai Vir Singh Ji is stated to be among the group of Sikhs who made the Jathedar/Sarbrah of the Akal Takht honouring and bestowing a Siropa to General Dyer** soon after the Jalianwala Bagh Episode. (Memoirs of Sadhu Singh Hamdard, "*Yaad Bani Itihas*" 2004, page 124.
- 2. Bhai Jodh Singh Ji:** He brought round the large number of members of the SGPC who were in jail in 1925 to accept the Sikh Gurdwara Act and take part in the elections to be conducted under the aegis of the Central Govt. at Delhi.
- 3. Principal Teja Singh,** Convener of the "*Rahau Reet*" Committee. We can understand working of his mind by going through his paper entitled "*Modern Difficulties of Sikhism*" published by him in his book "*Essays in Sikhism*" (1944) now published by Languages Department Punjab. He writes ... "The main point at issue is whether politics should or should not be included in the scope of its work. In order to make this difficulty of the Sikhs organization clear it is necessary to throw some light on its relation with the State. Guru Gobind Singh at a time of peace had exhorted his Sikhs

to recognize the house of Babar as supreme in worldly power, just as they recognized the house of Guru Nanak as supreme in religion. (Vichitra Natak, XIII. 9). Yet, owing to certain unfortunate developments in history, the constitution of the Panth does not contemplate the acceptance of superiority of any earthly power outside its pale. During the last 300 years, during which their institutions have grown and developed, the Sikhs have seldom had any chance to work in co-operation with any government other than their own. Either they have been in conflict with the ruling powers or they have been ruling themselves. It is only since 1849 that they have had occasion to serve under a friendly government. But then they had no political status of their own, nor have they been fully self-conscious. It is only quite recently that they have witnessed the growth of their institutions to their full stature, and with it has come the old conflict. *The Sikhs must boldly face the fact that their organization, if revived strictly on its original lines, must clash with the government of the land, or, for that matter, with any other organization that is not Sikh.*

.... This is responsible for the present split between the Sikh masses, who following the old spirit, are uncompromising, and their more intelligent leaders, who see reason in making compromise for the Panth, when necessary, even when the letter of the *Gurmattas* stands in their way. **The best way out of the difficulty would be to modify the constitution in the light of the present circumstances, to confine the *Gurmatta* only to those matters which are strictly religious and to separate from them the political matters, ...** In Sikhism, however, a peculiar arrangement was made by which no differences were to be allowed in doctrine or its interpretation. The Guru was always one, and always alive. This was not possible physically. **It was designed that with the change of the Guru the spirit should not change. ‘The spirit was the same, and so was the method, the Master merely changed his body’ (*Var Satta*).** As long as the Gurus were personally present they did not allow any change in the doctrine, nor did they allow any new centres to be formed within the pale of Sikhism. Whenever anybody tried to found a schism, he and his followers were thrown out. That was the fate of the *Minas, Dhirmalias, Ramraiya*s, etc. After the death of Guru Gobind Singh the whole Sikh community, as a collective unit, was invested with the authority of the Guru, and was to guide itself in the light of the Word incorporated in the Holy Granth. ... If after Guru Gobind Singh, the Sikhs had instituted a central assembly to exercise the right of personal guidance in the name of the Guru, there would have been no differences in interpretation, and no sects would have been formed round those interpretations.” (Abstracted from the article by Prin. Teja Singh published in *Abstracts of Sikh Studies*. Vol VI - 3).

It is not understandable that the collective wisdom of all the authoritative minds of the Panth listed in the subcommittee failed to unite the Panth and create a central authority of the Panth. All that they produced was a manual of rituals. Now every Sikh feels that he is a Sikh because he accepts the *Rehat-Maryada* being propagated by SGPC and he/she is free to follow any political party or group which is best for his/her personal promotion in the world.

Pandit Nehru and the Congress Party were quick to realize that now they can easily induce Sikhs to join the Congress Party. During the elections of 1946, the Congress Party openly announced that the Sikhs are welcome to stand on the Congress symbol as members of the

Congress Party and the Congress Party would give them the monetary help for the same. Before the 1946 elections, they were several factions of the Akali Dal but it was only in 1946 that the Sikhs boldly thought that now they could join any political group to further their personal promotion.

In the eyes of the world today, the Sikhs are members of a separate religious group with their own specific rituals. Their behaviour pattern is similar to other religious groups and in no way superior in spite of their unique history of the Guru period and even upto 1849. The Newspapers and Magazines are daily reporting the rising crime rate amongst the Sikhs. We can easily conclude that the political power at Delhi successfully derailed the Sikh Panth in 1925. Panth is crying for the needful correction but no Sikh intellectual group or any sikh poltician is concerned with the rapid downhill course of the *Nirmal Panth* created by Guru Nanak.The above outlined facts therefore, clearly indicate that in long run 1925 Gurudwara act marginalized the institution of Sri Akal Takhat as envisioned by the sikh gurus in SGGS.

AS this article needed debate. So it was put no various sikh Internet Groups. Various comment came as Follows

Jasbir Singh Mann wrote

"Review of 1925 Gurudwara Act in Details shows that Akal Takhat has been very clearly treated as a Gurudwara in 1925 Act (See chapter VIII Section 85 under 85 (1) (i) and Schudle I -serial number Entry #27)." Therefore will like forum members to give their opinion on the issue whether sikhs should accept the status of Akal takhat as any other historical Gurudwara as mentioned in 1925 Act (formed by British and followed by SGPC and Indian Government since then) or try to regain its status as an institutute of MIRI PIRI (Temporal and Spiritual) as laid down by Guru Hargobind Singh Ji ?

Comment #1

Dated 5/19/06 IHRO Internet Groups

Dear Dr. Mann ji,

It is a very enlightening presentation by Dr. Kuldeep Singh ji. We Sikhs have a serious dilemma in compromising the religious and political institutions consistent with the democratic principals, based on Magna Carta, under which we all live. There is no religious, political and intellectual guidance in Sikh community to establish new rules, consistent with our current geo-political-religious environment. Hence we feel lost and always on the defensive. It should not have to be the case but unfortunately, it is the case. In light of this changed environment, we Sikhs take a refuge in the institution of Gurudawaras, which has been equally corrupted now. We need a revival of a true religious authority completely

separated from politics (Just like the institution of Pope). Although there may be a need of a Political party safeguarding the interests of Sikhs across the world, but I cannot imagine that it can happen easily given the history of Sikhs, since right after the time of Guru Gobind Singh ji. Undoubtedly, these politicians will be vulnerable to the external exploitation.

Kuldeep Singh USA

Comment #2

Dr.Balkar Singh Pbi. University Patiala 5/20/06

Dear Dr. Mann, Gurdwara act can not fit in sikh spirit & becomes 'sap de moonh korh kirli' for the Panth in particular. More we are plunging into the Indian political system, there will be no going back from the ills you are worried about. With Badal, politician becomes a sikh role model. What else you want to know? Tragedy is that we are becoming part of all this. Waiting for somebody else to act is intellectual dishonesty.

Balkar Singh

Comment #3

Jagpal singh Tiwana ,Darmouth, Canada on 5/22/06

I beg to differ with Dr. Kuldeep Singh ji about his observation that the 1925 Act has marginalised the institution of Sri Akal Takhat.

The position of Akal Takhat Jathedar has evolved to meet the needs of the time and it has guided and served the community very well till 1984.

The first Jathedar of Akal Takhat appointed by the Sangat in the 20th century was Jathedar Teja Singh Bhuchar. He called meetings of Sikh leaders at Akal Takhat which brought into being two historical institutions, SGPC and SAD. They are still in existence. Bhuchar was also elected secretary of the new Akali Dal. This further added strength to his position and standing in the community. This institution of AT was already there, 1925 act only gave it recognition.

Jathedar Bhuchar provided solid leadership to the community. He led a jatha to Taran Taran Gurdwara to oust the priests forcefully. He succeeded in his mission after some clashes with the government agents. He appointed a committee of 15 members to look after the Gurdwara management. He also led jathas to take control of Gurdwara Panja Sahib and a Gurdwara in Pashawar. Since such actions were contrary to law, he was arrested and put in jail for quite for sometime.

Next was Teja Singh Akarpuri appointed Jathedar Akal Takhat in October 1921. In 1923, he was arrested when he was leading the very

first Jatha in the Jaito Morcha .He was kept behind bars till 1926. Next year in 1927 he got elected as member of SGPC and was also appointed as Jathedar of Akal Takhat for the second time and remained in this position till 1931.

In 1925, Jathedar Didar Singh was the Akal Takhat jathedar. Akali leaders had come into agreement with the government and the agitation was withdrawn. Sikhs started coming out of jails, but some in Nabha Jail refused to leave the prison and adopted quite an unreasonable attitude. Jathedar Didar Singh went to Nabha and advised them to come out, "since you have come here at the orders of Akal Takhat, I now in the capacity of Akal Takhat jathedar order you to leave the jails and get out". This had the desired effect and they agreed to obey his order. Such was the position of the Akal Takhat jathedar in the Sikh world.

Sikh Rahit Maryada.

Teja Singh Akarpuri, Jathedar Akal Takhat was one of the first Sikh leaders who felt the need of a prescribed Rahit for the Sikhs. It was on his suggestion that a committee of 28 Sikh scholars was appointed to work on the draft of Sikh Rahit Maryada on 15 March 1927. The committee with Prof. Teja Singh as its convenor prepared a draft which was thoroughly discussed, amended and changed according to the wishes of the members at various meetings of the committee. All meetings were held at Akal Takhat. In all meetings Jathedar of Akal Takhat always participated. Even Jathedars of Kesgarh and Patna were also invited. From 1931 to 1934 Jathedar of Akal Takhat Gurmukh Singh Musafir attended the meetings and then from 1935 till the SRM was finally passed in 1945, Mohan Singh Nagoke, Jathedar Akal Takhat played a very important role. He also served as President of SGPC from 1944 to 1948 which put him in much better position to bring the Sikh scholars to an agreement on SRM.

Jathedar Mohan Singh Nagoke was widely respected for his character, integrity and sacrifices. He served as the Jathedar Akal Takhat for 17 years(1935-52), maximum time any Jathedar held this office. His personality added much power and prestige to this august office. Many historic decisions were taken in his time. In 1936 when Govt. banned the wearing of vaddi Kirpan by Sikhs, Jathedar Mohan Singh led the first jatha of 100 Sikhs in this morcha against the ban. The ban was withdrawn by the govt.

Ragmala issue

Should Ragmala be read while reciting the whole of Guru Granth sahib at Akhand Paths? The issue had split the community apart since the beginning of the 20th century. There were well established scholars and religious leaders on both sides. In favor of Ragmala were Bhai Vir Singh, Bhai Jodh Singh, Sant Gurbachan Singh Bhinderanwale, Akali Kaur Singh and some

Sants. Those opposing Ragnama were Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, Bhai Randhir Singh Narangwal, Giani Gurdit Singh, Piara Singh Padam and others

In 1945 Jathedar Mohan Singh called a meeting of Sikh religious leaders and scholars at Akal Takhat to resolve the issue. The anti-Ragnama group carried their point with his support. But to keep unity in the panth, Jathedar issued instructions that reading of Ragnama was optional, though he stopped its reading at Akal Takhat. This practice is still in force. Baba Gurbachan Singh Bhinderanwala was staunch supporter of Ragnama. SGPC sent Giani Lal Singh to Bhinderanwala to find out if he would abide by the decree of Akal Takhat Jathedar. Baba Gurbachan Singh gave in writing that he would honor the decree of Akal Takhat. During Mohan Singh's time as Jathedar, Ardas was amended to include that Sikhs should have unhindered access to Nankana Sahib and other holy shrines which were left in Pakistan after partition of Punjab in 1947. Jathedar punished Master Tara Singh :

Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh were the most powerful and well recognized leaders of the Sikhs in early 60's. They were punished by ATJ Jathedar Achar Singh in 1961 for violating Sikh traditions. They both received the verdict of Jathedars with folded hands and bowed heads in utter humility. Achhar Singh read the punishment from a written paper. Tara Singh had to clean Sangat's shoes and Langar dishes.

Then there is the historic edict of the Akal Takhat Jathedar, Sadhu Singh Bhaura, against the Sant Nirankaris in June 1978. Nirankaris had killed 13 Sikhs on the Baisakhi day of 1978. This edict was widely welcomed by Sikhs all over the world.

It is true that Akal Takhat Jathedars became controversial and lost respect after the turbulent developments of 1984. This was a very critical period for the entire Sikh world. Akal Takhat Jathedars and Sikh leaders lost credibility and respect. That, however, does not mean that the institution of Akal Takhat Jathedar is beyond repair and redemption. Sikhs need a strong central authority to resolve so many contentious issues that keep dogging and dividing the community. There should be a procedure to elect a non-partisan person as Jathedar of Akal Takhat. He should be a man of high integrity and character, deeply knowledgeable about Sikh religion, history and its traditions and could not be easily removed from his position. He should be able to communicate in English.

**Jagpal S Tiwana
Darmouth, Canada**

Comment #4

DR. Jasdev Singh from U.K. on GLZ Internet group May 22, 2006

Dear Jasbir Singh ji

with apologies for the long response

This is an issue quite close to my heart. When I first raised the issue of world heritage status and its danger to the sovereignty of Sri Akal Takht with some people in India, one of the key supporters of the heritage status looked at me puzzled and said, 'Why do you have such medieval ideas.'

In that sentence lies the answer. It isn't the Gurdwara Act that marginalized Sri Akal Takht. If anything, it may have unintentionally maintained what prestige and status the Akal Takht had for a future generation to redeem. The marginalization had begun long before with the Singh Sabha movement and the Chief Khalsa Dewan.

The Singh Sabha movement was mainly an urbanite movement, which like the Hindu revivalist movements, and Arya Samaj, was the interpretation of Sikhi by a Sikh mind taught by the Macauliffian education system. 'English in mind, Indian in colour'. The Singh Sabha movement and particularly the Chief Khalsa Dewan had already incorporated three principle facets of modern western thought that had come to India. (modern in the sense of modernity)

1. the duality of religion and secular as different spheres.
2. religion as a revelation with a set of ethics and codes for the human race, thus rituals, baptismal service and belief in God described and imagined in the human attributes, God being superhuman.
3. rationalism as a basis of knowledge and analysis.

In this, this Sikh intelligentsia had lost the context of a Sikh basis of knowledge and did not develop a Sikh critique of looking at the world. Sikhi became a superficial 'religion' with practices and was called 'Sikhism'.

It was the non urbanite Sikhs from villages, also called 'uneducated' and 'illiterate' who thought in context of Sri Akal Takht and had a Sikh perspective on looking at the world. Interestingly, if one is an expert in Gurmukhi, he/ she is illiterate. Education was and continues to be what the western system taught. Consequently, Sikhi was already marginalized into the backwater of 'irrelevant' knowledge in the minds of Sikh intelligentsia, since one was only educated if the person had studied English (in their context)

At the time of the Gurdwara Act, this group of Sikhs led the Panth. They were well meaning people who were skillful organizers and administrators. They had unfortunately subconsciously accepted their Guru to be 'western intellectual thought'.

I don't think these Sikhs were deliberately conniving or misleading the Panth, they genuinely believed in their achievements and were 'rationalists'. In the duality of religion and secular, they accepted the public domain to be the prerogative of secular philosophies and religion as something walled off in Gurdwaras and the personal domain. Tradition and Sikh philosophy created a difficulty, because the concept of secular does not exist in eastern philosophies and particularly Sikhi. Secular is manmati philosophy.

Interestingly, these Sikhs also tried to have Sri Akal Takht mentioned in the Gurdawara Act. Whether out of fear or out of compassion for this folly, the British persuaded them to leave it out. Instead the Gurdwara Act mentions a Gurdwara known as Akal Takht. By keeping Sri Akal Takht out of the Gurdwara Act, the British, intentionally or unintentionally, maintained its historically evolved position. Although the Sikhs didn't quite comprehend what had happened.

At transfer of power, the biggest negligence by the Akali dal and Sikh leaders was the failure to bring the issue of Sri Akal Takht's sovereignty on the table. I don't think it even occurred to them. I

think they thought that the Gurdwara Act protects the Takht as an institution in the hands of the Sikhs. That seemed to be the extent of their thoughts.

Today this body of Sikhs is not only dominant but also becoming the larger body of the Panth as an increasing number of Sikhs are educated in western education and then approach Sikhi as a 'faith' or 'religion' from their educational background.. In their context, the concept of a temporal throne of Sikhi seems not only irrelevant but 'medieval'. In medieval Europe there was no distinction between 'religious' and 'secular'.

Thus by calling Sikhi a 'faith' or a 'religion' the Takht can only have a 'religious' relevance. The most incredible explanation in this line of thought was given by a Sikh who considers himself to be quite a divine light in himself. He said that the Akal Takht was built as a place of rest for Sri Guru Granth Sahib when the Guru is brought back from Sri Harimandir Sahib.

I believe that had the Gurdwara Act not been in place and had the British not taken Sri Akal Takht out of the Act, we would have seen our 'intelligentsia' reduce the Takht to a ceremonial religious place by now, a mere place of rest for Sri Guru Granth Sahib.. They would have registered Sri Harimandir Sahib and the Takht as a friendly society under the Indian Act of registration of charities for 'religious' places.

The Gurdwara Act was not only able to occupy the energy of our misguided 'intelligentsia' it kept the Takht out of legal entanglement.

I believe that the Guru overlooks and saves many of the institutions of the Sikhs through the periods of our own stupidities. We have been saved from the worst ignominy of our 'intelligentsia'. Today we are fortunate because

the Sri Akal Takht, the institution of miri piri has no legal status in the sovereign domain of India. ie it is not understood in any legal form. Hence it gives the Sikhs the scope to redefine the Takht and demand extra territorial status for it.

By redefining the Takht, we will begin to reinterpret Sikhi in context of the place of the Takht and its centrality in the Sikh worldview. We will have to reconcile that it is a temporal seat of sovereignty and hence power, therefore it is a paradox in the narrow and abstract sphere of 'religion' or faith. In other words, Sikhi may begin to claim the public domain as it had was meant to.

To understand the Takht one has to understand the English. They are one of the most intelligent races in this world. Having convinced every other part of the world to be a republic with a secular constitution, they refused to remove the institution of the Monarchy and the Church of England as the State Church to date. The Monarch is the Governor of the Church. When I pointed this out to the person who suggested that my obsession with Akal Takht was medieval, the person looked puzzled, unable to comprehend the subtlety of the British. The English to date have not accepted the division of the religious and the secular in the real paradigm of sovereignty. The British government is secular but British sovereignty isn't secular.

To put everything in context, we have to revisit the issue of heritage status and the Takht. The real reason why India has not taken up the issue of heritage again is because of a letter from the United Kingdom government to UNESCO. The letter says.

The Sikhs in UK are concerned about the effect of heritage status on the sovereignty of Sri Akal

Takht Sahib.

It was inevitable that the Indians were going to run, once this sentence was brought into the international sphere by a member state of the UN. Within three days of this letter, the Indian government withdrew the application altogether. Before this, the Indian government had merely said to UNESCO that it will suspend the application for the coming session. I think they thought they will be able to twist the SGPC to reconsider. And that was a great possibility as the recent remarks of SGPC on reconsidering heritage status reveal.

But once sovereignty became an official issue, the Indian government knew that the game was up. Today even of the SGPC requests heritage status, I don't think the Indians will risk it because of this letter from UK. The English know exactly what they did on 1925 and what the Takht actually stands for. After all they make the rules of the game of politics in our world, even if power is with the Americans.

I had not thought in my dreams that the British government would have mentioned sovereignty in their letter to UNESCO.

Coming back to the question you ask. I think on a superficial reading of history, we can conclude that the Gurdwara Act marginalized the Takht. But if you consider history in all its context, the mediocre mind of Sikh intelligentsia, then as now, the pity of the English who must have decided to save us from our own folly when they suggested we keep the Takht out of Gurdwara Act, I think, paradoxically the Gurdwara Act has saved the Takht from the most dangerous step that could have occurred, the complete annihilation of its sovereignty within Indian sovereignty and reducing it to a mere 'friendly society' or a religious institution.

I pray the Guru will inspire another generation of sharp minded Sikhs to see through the glass mirrors of political legal language and see politics and reality behind the official language.

To day the Takht is safe precisely because of the Gurdwara Act. Tohra understood this. He was aware that the SGPC has no legal jurisdiction over the Takht or to appoint the Jathedar. He admitted this to me. He also knew, as he said to me, the Sikhs are too stupid to even recognize this fact. He knew that in fact no one and no institution has any legal jurisdiction over the Takht. Because it exists as a sovereign institution de-facto precisely because of the Gurdwara Act.

The Takht has no legal entity within India, but it is recognized de facto by India. As long as the Jathedar refuses to go into an Indian court, the Takht, in fact is asserting its sovereign status and refusing to acknowledge the sovereign jurisdiction of Indian constitution. No other institution within Indian territory can do this. Even the acharya of Kanshi had to go to court.

Let us hope someone will understand what I am saying here and work out the way ahead. The English saved us from our own folly through limiting the scope of the Gurdwara act, let us pray that we can save the Takht from the Sikh intelligentsia before it hits the final nail through its mediocrity.

**Jasdev Singh
UK**

Comment #5

Nirmal singh GLZ on 5/22/06

jasdev singh" jasdevok@yahoo.com on Mon May 22, 2006:

I believe that the Guru overlooks and saves many of the institutions of the Sikhs through the periods of our own stupidities. We have been saved from the worst ignominy of our 'intelligentsia'. Today we are fortunate because the Sri Akal Takht, the institution of miri piri has no legal status in the sovereign domain of India. ie it is not understood in any legal form. Hence it gives the Sikhs the scope to redefine the Takht and demand extra territorial status for it.

By redefining the Takht, we will begin to reinterpret Sikhi in context of the place of the Takht and its centrality in the Sikh worldview. We will have to reconcile that it is a temporal seat of sovereignty and hence power, therefore it is a paradox in the narrow and abstract sphere of 'religion' or faith. In other words, Sikhi may begin to claim the public domain as it had was meant to.

Bravo Jasdev ji. You are really moving the discussion where it should be - to institution of miri piri that is so central to Sikh thought but has really not been expounded.

Earlier this year on Feb 14 & 15th we were at Amritsar on our way to Pakistan for a Conference. Advocate Jaswinder Singh was good enough to ask us to join a meeting convened by the SGPC on the 15th at Teja Singh Samundri hall to consider the plans about the three centenaries this year. I was asked to address the meeting and one of my suggestions among several others was that we should declare 2006 as the year of miri piri so that the theme gets to be discussed, debated and hopefully brings it clarity.

Your context brings up a very important dimension to the concept when you say that 'Today we are fortunate because the Sri Akal Takht, the institution of miri piri has no legal status in the sovereign domain of India ie it is not understood in any legal form. ---- By redefining the Takht, we will begin to reinterpret Sikhi in context of the place of the Takht and its centrality in the Sikh worldview. We will have to reconcile that it is a temporal seat of sovereignty and hence power, therefore it is a paradox in the narrow and abstract sphere of 'religion' or faith. In other words, Sikhi may begin to claim the public domain as it had was meant to.'

Understanding of miri piri is germane to all this and more that is important for a wholistic Sikh worldview to find expression.

**Respectfully,
Nirmal Singh USA**

Comment #6

Prof.Kashmir Singh. Prof.Dept.Law GNDU 5/25/06

Respected Dr. Mann

SGA 1925 was certainly an achievement of the Sikh Panth though not an absolute one. It brought hundreds of Sikh shrines under the permanent and effective control of the Sikhs. One can visualise that had the Act not been there, majority of the Gurdwaras would have been under the private occupation and control of mahants or other mighty people having separate maryada of each one of them and allowing selective *darshan* of holy places just like that of the Kartarpuri Beer of the SGGS. Scrapping of the Act will result in utter chaos. It will make free for all to grab the Gurdwara property primarily by the politicians and others. Thus the Act cannot be dubbed as the useless peice of legislation.

While passing the Act, the Govt.'s manouvres succeeded to scuttle the Sikh unity. Facotionalism started when some leaders in the Lahore jail okayed the draft bill and others opposed it. Though election system introduced by the Act breeds corruption, factionalism and other maladies, but the Sikhs have also failed to follow the fair and just rules of the game. The human failing and weaknesses cannot be attributed to the Act. Besides, we are not able to suggest a better alternative,

The Act did not deal with Akal Takhat in detail. The framers refrained to touch it deeming itas a sacred matter as distinguished from the managerial one. If the Sikhs remain vigilant and keep the institutions and their functionaries clean and effective, the Act cannot come in the way. The finest people in the community should be selected and appointed to the top posts and should be authorized to scrutinize the candidates for various posts and even to reject those who are not suitable and non-deserving.

It is not appropriate to doubt the integrity and sincerity of every player connected with the Act and Reht Maryada; no doubt there may be some black sheep amongst them.

Reht Maryada has at least stadardised some aspects of Sikhi. Regulating each and every aspect may not be necessary and desirable as it may lead to disobedience and opposition. Things were not very smooth and clear which we can say is disturbed by the 2 listed events.

We must criticise the negative portions of the existing system but should also suggest the alternatives as replacement.

S. Jasdev Singh, the sharp minded Sikh, is unnecessarily eulogizing the past and present British Govt. for keeping Akal Takhat (AT) out of the purview of the Sikh Gurdawaras Act (SGA) and preventing the grant of heritage status to Shri Darbar Sahib by UNESCO. As regard the later,J.S. has got some evidence of british hand in the form of U.K. govt's letter but in the case of former, he is simply beating about the bush. Akal Takhat is certainly within the purview of the Act at present. Originally,in 1925, only two Takhts (Akal Takhat & Keshgarh Sahib) were brought under the management & control of the SGPC (S. 85); AT was listed in the Schedule to the Act as one of the institution to be managed under the Act; Head Ministers of Takht including AT were made *ex-officio* member of the SGPC. Chapter 11 of the Act deals with the dismissal etc. of the Ministers.

There is hardly any evidence, even of any attempt by the British govt. to keep AT aloof from the Act. Even the Punjab Legislative Council debates do not give such impression. Thus, the English did not contribute anything either to keep Akal Takht out of the Act or saving Akal Takht from the Sikhs themselves as asserted by J.S. Again, the Britishers can not know better than the Sikhs about the status & importance of Akal Takht.

The Act has not marginalized the institution of Akal Takhat. The Act can neither be dubbed as the source of all evils and problems of the Sikhs including the down grading of Akal Takhat nor can it be termed as panacea for all ills. We can not say that Akal Takhat was at

the highest pedestal when the Act came into force, so the Act can not be blamed for lowering its status.

Traditions & conventions about the supremacy & sovereignty of the AT are to be developed by the Sikhs themselves & the Act cannot come in the way. Akal Takhat being the supreme authority of the Sikhs, its spokesman (Jathedar) must be a independent, impartial and upright Sikh. This office should not be under the SGPC as at present. The Sikhs all over the world should be consulted in his appointment etc. Though Indian Govt. is not likely to agree easily, efforts should be made to obtain the status of Vatican City State for the Akal TAKHAT.

Comment # 7

Dear Dr Jasbir Singh Mann:

Thank you for remembering me kindly and asking my opinion regarding any legal immunity provided to Jathedar Akal Takht from appearing in courts.

Regarding this, there is no legal immunity. He would be liable to be tried in courts if he commits any criminal act like any other citizen of India. Of course, his edicts concerning the Panth can not be challenged in courts, so far as these remain within parameters of Sikh Maryada (to be specifically defined yet by the Panth). Rather, no Sikh should go to court seeking for such things to maintain the sanctity of the only institution of Akal on this earth.

Prof Manjit Singh, as Akal Takht Jathedar, had issued a legal notice against an IHRO activist, threading legal proceedings against him. I, on his behalf, replied the notice with request not to go to court, otherwise, "we would be compelled to stand against him (Jathedar) in court. Good sense prevailed, he dropped the idea. Similarly no Sikh, not to talk of Joginder Singh of Spokesman, should go to court against Jathedar on religious issues pertaining to him. It is a religious and moral duty of a Sikh to maintain the prestige of institution and its Jathedar.

We in IHRO had strongly opposed the Chandigarh group of certain persons who had issued summons against Jathedar to appear before them. It was madness, I feel.

Your question- "Did 1925 Gurdwara Act marginalized Institution of Sri Akal Takht"? – I do not fully agree with it. It seems as if it affects the institution. It needs to be debated further. My personal view is that it does not marginalize the institution. We will talk a little further, some other day.

With great regards,
Dsgill IHRO Groups

Comment #8

Subject: (learning-zone): Did the Gurdwara Act marginalize the institution of Sri Akal Takhat ?

Respected Gursikhs : Gur Fateh .Many of you, while actively participating in the discussions have already cleared up many points. My concern is a bit different. My feeling is that we need to start thinking about organizing a structure for assisting, aiding and advising the INSTITUTION of the Takhat so that many ISSUES that are pending since long, are duly settled and Sikh world is saved from the utter confusion that is ongoing. We all know that the AIM and OBJECT of the INSTITUTION was and is to PROMOTE FAIRNES and JUSTICE for the Humanity as also to OPPOSE UNFAIRNESS and INJUSTICE. The present system is unable to bear even a minor scrutiny. As such there is need to THINK OVER to bring in some REFORMS. Some of the Basics are available in your posts and as under :

:

J.S,Tiwana on May 21,06 wrote:

. " Akal Takhat Jathedars and Sikh Leaders have lost credibility and respect .That however does not mean that the institution of Akal Takhat Jathedar is beyond repair and redemption. SIKHS NEED a strong CENTRAL AUTHORITY to resolve so many contentious issues that keep dogging and dividing the community. There should be a procedure to elect a non-partisan person as Jathedar of Akal Takhat..He should be a man of HIGH INTEGRITY and character, deeply knowledgeable about Sikh religion, history and its traditions and could not be easily removed from his position, He should be able to communicate in English. "

On May 25, 06 Dr. J.S Maan forwarded the opinion of retd., Justice Kashmir Singh's opinion :

" Akal Takhat being the supreme Authority of the Sikhs , its spokesman(jathedar) must be an INDEPENDENT, IMPARTIAL and UPRIGHT Sikh. This office should not be under SGPC, as at present.The Sikhs all over the world should be consulted for his APPOINTMENTtct.Though the Indian Govt. is nit likely to agree, efforts should be made to obtain the statusof Vatican for A.T.

The Act (1925) did not deal with A.T, in detail. The framers refranbed to touch it as a SACRED MATTER, as distinguished from the MANAGORIAL one. If the Sikhs remain VIGILANT and keep the institutions and functionaries CLEAN, the Act cannot come in their way. The FINEST people in the community should be SELECTED and appointed to the TOP POST and should be authorized to scrutinize the CANDIDATES for various posts. And even to reject those who are NOT SUITABLE and non-serving. "

In a forwarded message , S Jasdev Singh Rai of U.K. (a famous legal luminary) :

"We need to get more invigorated set of INTELLECTUALS, THINKERS and GURSIKHS to take Hold of Sikh AFFAIRS "

Now how to go about it is the BIG QUESTION. On my part I have been doing my bit about it.In my post dated April 13,06 I made a proposal and elicited a debate about it, The same was supplemented by posts dated April 22,06 and still another of May 15, 06.. : The last para of April 13,06 post is relevant which runs:

The Sikh intellectuals all over, need to get together for framing an international Organization for framing the structure of a representative body of 100 or 125 persons whose basic qualification may not be less than a post graduate and who may have written at least 5 books on religion,history or any other subject. From among themselves they could choose one to function as sewadar of the Takhat. For DEVISING a SOUND SYSTEM of running Sikh AFFAIRS by a CENTRAL BODY of intellectuals, let there be a DEBATE among the intellectuals. There is a GREAT NEED to set OUR HOUSE in order.

Many thanks for the kind attention.

USGILL Chicago

Comment # 9

Jagpal Tiwana 5/27/06 wrote

Jasbir ji,

I am in total agreement to the realistic view Dr. Kashmir Singh has taken of Aka Takhat

>>>The Act has not marginalized the institution of AkalTakhat. The Act can neither be dubbed as the source of all evils and problems of the Sikhs including the down grading of Akal Takhat nor can it be termed as panacea for all ills. We can not say that Akal Takhat was at the highest pedestal when the Act came into force, so the Act

can not be blamed for lowering its status.<<<

It all depends on Sikhs how they respect Akal Takhat Jathedar and his words. If ATJ is a pious man of integrity and character, has deep knowledge of Sikh scriptures, history and traditions, is independent of SGPC bosses, we have a great institution and a powerful leader to guide us. As I stated in my previous missive, ATJ commanded good respect and provided solid leadership to the community before the 1984 developments.

Moreover, we should not forget India is a sovereign country. if any Takhat's Hukamnama clashes with its laws, its laws will prevail. This was so obvious when GOI took military action against terrorists hidden in AT. We protested and protested, but had to accept it. We also tried to have Pakistan Gurdwaras under SGPC, but no Pak. insisted that it is a sovereign country and it has the right and power to form PSGPC.

>>>Though Indian Govt. is not likely to agree easily, efforts should be made to obtain the status of Vatican City State for the Akal Takhat."<<

I think ALL India Gurdwara Act is the solution. We can define there what else we want. But Act must be passed by Indian parliament which is a sovereign body.

Best regards

Jagpal Singh Tiwana
Dartmouth, Canada

Comment # 10

Balreet kaur 5/28/06

very well said veer Gurmit Singh ji.

On this basis Patna sahib and Hazoor sahib have NO BASIS for being called Takhats. For as long as they have existed they are under control of Anti Sikh Forces and just used to create animosity. Practically why should a place be called Takhat when it is just the BIRTHPLACE and JYOTI jyot place of GURU JI....in that case ALL birth Places of all GURUS and their Jyoti jyot smaan places should be TAKHATS ?? Ridiculous.

About the other ... KESHGARRH Sahib it is still possible to call Takhat because there Guru Ji established the KHALSA, Gave the Punj Gurgadhee by becoming aape GUR CHELA...and re-compiled the Sri guru garanth sahib jee .KESH are an integral part of Khalsa Rehit..thus KESHGARRH is important.

Damdama Sahib has no claim to any takhathood..this was imposed on the Sikhs by the twin malwaiyee sants..fateh singh and channan singh regardeless of much oppostion by the majha sikhs.

BK

On 27/05/06, **Gurmit Singh** <gurmitsingh@exemail.com.au> wrote:
Respectable Sikh Cyber Mates,
Waheguru jee ka Khalsa Waheguru jee kee Fateh

As per guidelines explained in the Sikh Reht Maryada, where Guru Granth Sahib is installed together with other essential logistics, that place/premises is a "Gurduara Sahib". However, Amritsar being a Sikh Centre representing the concept of "Piri Miri" Sikh Nation is satisfied with the terms: "Darbaar Sahib and Akaal Takht Sahib". On several occasions Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer has been sharing his views that Sikhs have only one Takht i.e. Akaal Takht Sahib established by Guru Hargobind Sahib. Other Gurduaras at Patna Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, Dumdma Sahib, Hazur Sahib could be considered as Regional Centres and there is no need to describe those as Four Takhts. As opined by Veer AD SMangat jee then all other Gurduaras from Nankana Sahib to Assam, Bidar, Bangla Sahib, Sis Ganj Sahib plus others should also be declared as Takhts, which does not sound good.

All such outstanding issues could be considered by a Committee, if SGPC is keen to resolve these matters but their priorities seem to be different - how to collect Goluck and Gold and create problems for Sikhs to fight themselves.

With best wishes,
Gurmit Singh (Sydney)

-----Original Message-----

From: IHRO@yahoogroups.com [mailto:IHRO@yahoogroups.com] **On Behalf Of** Adsm

Sent: Saturday, 27 May 2006 3:01 AM

To: IHRO@yahoogroups.com; anz_sikhs@yahoogroups.com; sikhgroups@gmail.com; kartarpur@yahoogroups.com

Subject: Re: [IHRO.IN] IS Akal Takhat A Gurudwara or Institute of Miri Piri?

WJKF ,

It is requested that Dr. Mann would have expressed his own concept in this respect as he has lot of study on this issue . The first issue is what is the definition of a Takhat ? What is the status of 5 Takhts in Sikh philosophy in the present concept ? Why the Harmandar Sahib is more revered to us than other shrines ? Do we feel that Harmandar sahib and Damdamma Sahib has same status ? Why four Takhts are related with the 10th Master and only one with 6th Guru sahib . Why Nankana sahib was not regarded as a Takhat ? Goindwal had been hub of Sikh developments and big boards were launched on all Highways in Punjab about 10 years back as "Goindwal Sikhi Da Dhura". Why the sikhs did not give importance to this place ? Who were the people who wanted to get this place declared as "Sikhi da Dhura" ?

adsmangat

jasbirmann@aol.com wrote:

"Review of 1925 Gurudwara Act in Details shows that Akal Takhat has been very clearly treated as a Gurudwara in 1925 Act (See chapter VIII Section 85 under 85 (1) (i) and Schudle I -serial number Entry #27)."

Therefore will like forum members to give their opinion on the issue whether sikhs should accept the status of Akal takhat as any other historical Gurudwara as mentioned in 1925 Act (formed by British and followed by SGPC and Indian Government since then) or try to regain its status as an institutute of MIRI PIRI (Temporal and Spiritual) as laid down by Guru Hargobind Singh Ji ?

Jasbir Singh Mann M.D

Comment # 11

WJKF ,

Can there be any bigger organisation than sgpc who has a college of 50 lakh voters ? We can thrust upon to give tickets to at least 50 scholars for experiment purpose as scholars can also never sit together to decide any matter . The criteria of writing books looks strange . KA has written 10 books but excommunicated on account of his theology .Dr Piar Singh and Dr.Pashaura Singh was summoned on Akal takhat for some explanations and that too on the instance of local Indian scholars . Still some are not satisfied even . Can we find 125 scholars who are Gursikhs and Amritdhari as well ? The sikh theologians like Giani Lal Singh who wrote 70 Books on sikhism and like Shamsheer Singh Ashok whose research was unchallenged but were not taught in any universities will be debarred from inclusion . Do we want some confrontation with the traditional Sikhs who has spent their whole life in preaching sikhi ?

Instead we can suggest some Code and protocol for Jathedra/Pardhans like :

- 1.He should not come out of the pocket of any Political Leader .**
- 2.He should not join any political function .**
- 3.They should come on foreign tours with religious motive only and not on inauguration of Gurdwaras and blessing newly wed couples .**
- 4.They should spend most of the time in their seats and have atleast weekly Darbars of people to listen their doubts and demands .**
- 5.They should have an approved agenda before them when conducting any public meetings .They should avoid issuing of any statements away from their seats to the media and public .**
- 6.They must have working knowledge of as many languages as possible and English may be one of them .**
- 7.The attending of sgpc meetings by Political leaders should be stopped as they influence and choke the members views in Generak House meetings by their presence .**
- 8.All meetings should be held at their proper offices instead of changing the venues .**
- 9. The nominees for sgpc elections should be selected by a panel in which 50% should be SIKH Amritdhari intellectuals/scholars (not Missionaries) .**

adsmangat

Comment # 12

WKJF,

The Respected member has made a long story to come to a conclusion which has already been explained on GLZ that only scholars cannot solve this question of religious nature . It is not the question of AT only as mentioned by the Member but the question of upholding the integrity of AT which some people are dragging down .Some are calling it a Gurdwara and some are calling it a shrine . Some understand that whether the 1925 Act Marginalised the AT or not .These are the

questions being asked by the so called scholars from whom we expect to uphold the integrity of AT and JAT .

The scholars cannot go beyond the status of Deans and VCs where as the AT and JAT carries a spiritual theological understanding .As said by the worthy Member the scholars will think 10 times his own interest first and put "A kana in the Tind" .The President of India is a Supreme Commander of Indian Forces but without any fighting capability .How ever he is guided by a Cabinet and Parliamnet in the interest of the country as a whole .But some times the incidents like Bluestar happen and no body takes the responsibility .

We want to make some body responsible for all evils and odds happening in the religious arena .We want to make the AT independent of all Political convulsions and undulation , may any Tom dick Harry control the state .We want the AT to be controlled by only the laws of Almighty and not by the Land Courts .No body could dare challenge the verdicts and prestige of AT in the courts of Sub-Judicial Magisterates class-II who simutaneously hear scooter challans .

We have to make some frame work in order to bring such aspects effective .The apathy is, no body hears the sound of a "Tuuti among Nagaras" unless you have some tail of Dr./Bhai Sahib Bhai/Retd IAS/Retd General/Retd Judge etc who all are alliend with some political Bosses .

avnindersingh

Comment # 13

Dr.Gurnam kaur Punjabi university Patiala June 6, 2006

Dear Dr.Mann “.Akal Tkhat is a seat of MIRI PIRI established by Guru Hargobind Sahib and it should retain its original status.The Sikh community should try for that.”