



## **Department of Distance Education**

### **Punjabi University, Patiala**

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**Class : B.A. II (History)**

**Semester : 4**

**Paper : History of Punjab : 1469-1799 A.D. Unit : I**

**Medium : English**

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#### ***Lesson No.***

- 1.1 : Main Sources of Punjab History**
- 1.2 : Guru Nanak Dev : His Teachings**
- 1.3 : Evolution of Sikhism 1539-1606 (from Guru Angad Dev to Guru Arjan Dev)**
- 1.4 : Transformation of Sikhism : Guru Hargobind Sahib**
- 1.5 : Guru Tegh Bahadur (1664-1675 A.D.)**
- 1.6 : Guru Gobind Singh, Creation of the Khalsa, His Achievements and Personality**

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**LESSON NO. 1.1**

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**MAIN SOURCES OF PUNJAB HISTORY**

Since eleventh century A.D. the Punjab had been a historical unit of India. It did not have its own separate and independent history. The writers on the subject never bothered to give importance to the history of this province separately. The history of the period of our study is mainly a history of the ten Sikh Gurus, Sikh-Mughal and Sikh-Afghan relations after the Guru period culminating into the rise and development of Sikh Misals. For the study of this important period of history, the student is required to have an analytical eye. No study in detail or depth is possible without adequate source materials.

**Difficulties and Problems in Reconstructing the History of Punjab**

There is a crisis as far **as** the authentic sources of the history of the Punjab are concerned. The regular accounts of the different events are many time not available. The reliable and trustworthy historical material is scanty. A student of the history of the Punjab has to face many problems and difficulties in reconstructing its history. The main problems are given below :

People of Punjab lacked interest in recording the different facts of history. They were more concerned with the imaginary other world, than the real one.

In the medieval period, Punjab was a part of the Mughal Empire. The scholars never attached any importance towards giving a separate and independent identity to the history of the Punjab.

Most of the historians of the medieval period were the Mohammedans. The views of these Persian writers were always biased. They never attached any importance to the rise of Sikhism in this part of the country. They were fanatic and recorded the anti-Muslim views of the Sikh Gurus. Different events of the history have been distorted according to their own whims. They hated Sikhism and the Sikh Gurus.

At the same time, the accounts of the Sikh writers are also not reliable. The life history of the great religious men have been gradually mixed up with legends and myths in such a manner that the real facts have become obscure and beyond recovery. The devotees and admirers of the Sikh Gurus have presented them as great religious and spiritual leaders then the worldly and historical personalities. But here, in almost every instance, the materials that one possesses are scanty when reliable.

In 1581, the pontification became hereditary. The family feuds of the Gurus became rampant. Prithia tried to kill Hargobind, Ram Rai opposed Guru Har Rai and Dhirmal did not spare Guru Tegh Bahadur. The opponents of Gurugadi always tried to defame the Gurus by writing false stories. The followers of these dissidents mixed up fables and myths with the religious scriptures of the Sikh Gurus.

The Sikh Gurus had led the violent attacks upon the empty rituals, fanaticism, prejudices and practices of Hinduism. The dominance of the priestly class was also challenged. The Brahmans and other priests became enemies of Sikh Gurus. They either did not write anything about the Sikh movement or concealed the facts.

The Sikh Gurus were religious and spiritual leaders. Their writings are more concerned with moral and spiritual uplift of the human beings. A few historical references in their writings are only accidental.

Emperor Aurangzeb was a fanatic ruler. He wanted India to be a Islamic country. In 1669, he officially banned the writing of history. Later on, he also ordered not to write any historical event unofficially. So whatever was written during that period could be published only after his death.

After the death of Aurangzeb, the Punjab became a centre of confusion, chaos, anarchy, lawlessness and disturbances. The continuous invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah Abdali led to the spread of uncertainty. The peace and tranquility was seldom witnessed. The constant struggle, rifts and dissension had weakened the stability. The persecutions by the Muslim officials was unbearable. The Sikh remained busy in the struggle for independence against the Mughals and the Afghans. The labour of many scholars had gone waste during this period of turmoils. So the coming generations were deprived of valuable historical materials.

Therefore, a student of the history of the Punjab is naturally beset with the task of reconstructing its history from the different and varied sources that are available to him. One requires a balanced and detached judgement to find out truth from the mass of untruth of the partial and biased material. In spite of these difficulties, the available material can be studied under the following heads :

### **Religious Literature**

There is a vast religious literature of the Sikh in *Gurumukhi* available to us. It is both of historical and semi-historical importance. A part of it is more prone to mythology and requires a discerning and

analytical eye to bring out the factual material.

### **The Adi Granth**

The Adi Granth is the most important and sacred book of the Sikhs. It is also known as 'Guru Granth Sahib' or 'Adi Sri Guru Granth Sahib'. It was compiled in 1604. It was written in verse in Gurugumkhi script. It contained 974 hymns of Guru Nanak, 63 of Guru Angad, 869 of Guru Amar Das, 638 of Guru Ram Das, 2312 of Guru Arjan Dev, more than 920 hymns of 15 Bhaktas both Hindus and Muslims and songs of 4 minstrels. Later on 115 hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur were also added. It consists of 1430 pages. It was not written with historical point of view. It contains only prayer to Almighty and the devotional songs. It has truth, harmony and wisdom. It does not give any biographical sketches of the Gurus nor does it refer to the miracles performed by them. The hymns of Gurus refer their beliefs and doctrines. The hymns of Bhaktas represent three schools of thought. Vaishnavism of Ramanand, Krishna cult of Surdas and Sufism of Farid. Though it is thoroughly a religious condition of the people of the time. The Babar-Vani of Guru Nanak describes the violent attack of Babar upon the Punjab and the general massacre of the innocent people. The Guru also refers to the policy of high handedness of the Lodhis. He also makes reference to the social and religious customs, practices and usages of the time. The position of women in society was highly degrading. Muslims were exploiting Hindus of the time and the Brahmans were exploiting the other casts. The conquered Hindus were the dumb-driven cattle and they were passing their day in pitiable plight. So it can be concluded that it is priceless treasure of historical data of the 16th and 17th century. It may be called the Bible of the Sikhs and is admittedly the greatest authority on Sikhism. Its main interest, no doubt, is religious but references to historical incidents are found here and there and having regard to the paucity of records on the history of the Gurus, these must certainly be regarded as invaluable.

### **The Vars of Bhai Gurdas**

Bhai Gurdas Bhalla (1551-1639 A.D.) was a talented and prolific writer. He was thoroughly holy and a brilliant scholar of the Sikh-religion and history. Since his childhood, he was devoted to Sikh religion and attended *Sangats*. He learnt Gurbani by heart and used to chant it in his sweet and melodious voice. Guru Amar Das sent him to Agra for preaching Sikhism. He learnt *Brijbhasha*, *Sanskrit* and many *ragas* there. At the time of the construction of the city of Amritsar, Guru Ram Das entrusted him with the work of looking after the work of this new development. Guru Arjan dictated him the *Bani* of the *Adi Granth* and Bhai Gurdas was writing that in the modified form. Bhai Gurdas composed thirty nine *Vars*

and 56 *Kabits* or couplets. He was asked by Guru Arjan to get his Vars and Kabits inserted in "The Adi Granth." But Bhai Gurdas declined the offer saying that he had not attained that degree of perfection in devotion to God. Though his writings have not been included in 'Adi Granth' yet his Vars are traditionally regarded as '*The Key*' to the 'Guru Granth Sahib'. In Var I, he gives an account of the religious aspect Of Guru Nanak's life. In Kabit No. 345 he tells us that Guru Nanak obtained divine light about his mission in life on Kartik full moon day. He collected the matter about Guru Nanak from the contemporaries then living like Baba Budha. He was contemporary of the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Sikh Gurus. He gives vivid account of the travels of Guru Nanak. He refers to Mardana, Daulat Khan Lodhi and others, but does not give any references to Bhai Balla anywhere.

### **The Janam Sakhis**

The events connected with the birth, life and previous life of Guru Nanak are called the Janam Sakhis. They are not biographies but hagiographies which means literature of lives and legends of saints. The different events concerning the life of Guru Nanak, in many cases, have not been given in chronological order. About a dozen Janam Sakhis are available. None of these Janam Sakhis was written or dictated either by Guru Nanak or Guru Angad. The script used for all these important Janam Sakhis is Gurumukhi, but the language may be either Punjabi or the composite dialect called *Sadhukkari* or *Sant Bhasha*. Most of these Janam Sakhis are supposed to be written in the 17th and 18th centuries. Some of the important Janam Sakhis are as under :

### **Puratan Janam Sakhi**

*Puratan Janam Sakhi* means the old Janam Sakhi. There are three Janam Sakhis in this group. The first Puratan Janam Sakhi is considered to be written in 1635 A.D, during the time of Guru Hargobind, Mr. H.T. Colebrook discovered it and took the book to England and donated it to the Indian Office Library in 1815 A.D. While examining the Gurmukhi Manuscripts, a reputed German Scholar, Dr. Trumpp discovered it in 1872, so, it is also known as Wilayatwali Sakhi or the Janam Sakhi from overseas.

A well-known Professor Bhai Gurmukh Singh of Oriental College, Lahore found a copy of it in the town of Hafizabad and thus it came to be known as *Hafizabad Wali Janam Sakhi*. It was prepared in 1733 A.D. Macauliffe gave it regular form and some times it described as Macauliffe Wali Janam Sakhi. Some copies of this book were in existence at Lahore, Bahawalpur, Shikarpur, Ferozepore, Burdwan and Burhanpur. The author of these Janam Sakhis is not known but according to Macauliffe and Kahan Singh one Sewa Dass wrote it, so it also known as Sewa

Dass Wali Janam Sakhi.

Another Manuscript was acquired by the Indian Office Library in 1907 and is listed in its catalogue as M.S.S. Punjabi B 40. It gives reference of Guru Nanak's life at Sultanpur but differs afterwards.

Puratan Janam Sakhi is considered as the most reliable source for the life of Guru Nanak. The language of this Janam Sakhi resembles with *Pothohari* form of Punjabi. Its language is simple. The name of Bhai Bala has not been found even once in this book. The common expression of Guru Gobind Singh 'Wahe Guru-Ji-Ki Fateh' is found in it. In 1929, Bhai Vir Singh compiled a Janam Sakhi based upon its material. Macauliffe also got sufficient material for his work from it.

#### **Janam Sakhi of Bhai Bala**

Bhai Bala, a resident of Talwandi, the home town of Guru Nanak is considered to be a close associate and companion of the Great Guru. During the time of Guru Angad, one Paira Mokha of Sultanpur wrote it out at the dictation of Bhai Bala. At that time the horoscope of Guru Nanak was also said to be consulted. Then it was read out to Guru Angad. Dr. Trilochan Singh accepts the authenticity of this Janam Sakhi but it has been commented upon on the following grounds.

Bhai Bala's Janam Sakhi is not written in the archaic language of Guru Angad. Moreover a very close associate of Guru Nanak had to ask Bala that whose disciple he was. In this book the use of the word Wahe-Guru shows that it was never written before the time of Guru Ram Das. Bhai Gurdas and Bhai Mani Singh prepared the separate lists of the eminent Sikhs but the name of Bhai Bala found its place nowhere. At many places, the disparaging stories about Guru Nanak have been given. A story about Devlut masand shows that it was written sometimes after Guru Amar Das.

But it will not be justified to ignore Bhai Bala's name altogether as a genuine person. Though his name has been mentioned only in Mehmasa of Bhai Sarup Das Bhalla. Dr. Trilochan Singh is of the opinion that the book was corrupted by *Minas*, *Handalis*, and other from time to time. He accepts its authenticity. The family of Bhai Bala still lives at Nankana Sahib and his *Samadhi* is found at Khadur Sahib.

#### **Meharban's Janam Sakhi**

Its writer Meharban was the son of Prithi Chand, the elder brother of Guru Arjan Dev. After the pontification of Guru Arjan Dev, they became his dead enemies. The Sikhs began to call them Minas. It was written sometime in the first half of the 17th century. Its language is basically Braj with an admixture of the words of Persian, Multani and Western Punjabi. It

comprises of six volumes i.e. *Pothi Sach Khand*, *Pothi Harji*, *Pothi Chatarbhuji*, *Kesho-Pad Pothi*, *Abhai Pad Pothi* and *Prem Pad Pothi*. The first three volumes were found at Dam-Dama Sahib in 1940. It is in discourse. Historically it is important because it gives accurate dates, names of persons and only a few miraculous stories.

#### **The Gian Ratnawali or Bhai Mani Singh's Janam Sakhi**

Bhai Mani Singh was a close associate of Guru Gobind Singh. He was a pious and popular Sikh. He remained with the tenth Guru at Nader till his death in 1708. Afterwards he shifted to Amritsar and led the Sikhs. He was a recognised leader and a granthi of Harmandir. On the request of some of the Sikhs he compiled *Gian Ratnawali* based upon the Var I of Bhai Gurdas. It is said, the work was completed between 1675-1700 and was shown to Guru Gobind Singh for his approval. But is believed that some parts of the book were written some years after the death of its writer as his name is referred in the third person at some place. However, it is important as it gives the date of birth of Guru Nanak in the month of Baisakh.

#### **Mehma Prakash**

Two different versions of Mehma Prakash written by different person are available. First 'Mehma Prakash Vartik' is comprised of twenty Sakhis on the life of Guru Nanak and written by Kirpal Chand Bhalla in 1741. Second version 'Mehma Prakash Kavita' consists of 65 Sakhis and was completed in 1776 by Sarup Das Bhalla, a descendant of Guru Amar Das and a resident of Goindwal. First Part of this book deals with the life of Guru Nanak and the remaining part with the lives of other Gurus. It is also known as *Vairowal Wali Janam Sakhi*.

#### **The Dasam Granth**

Guru Gobind was a brilliant poet; and a versatile scholar, he was a great linguist. He kept fifty two poets of highest eminence in his Court. The Great Guru prepared numerous manuscripts. *The Dasam Granth* or '*Dasam Padshah Ka Granth*' is a miscellananeous collection and only a part forms the Guru's own work, the rest being written by a number of Hindu poets, whom the Guru kept in his service. In December 1704, the Guru lost most of his manuscripts while crossing river Sarsa. On reaching Damdama Sahib, the Guru started the work of collection. This book was compiled in one volume by Bhai Mani Singh. It is a collection of eighteen books. It appears, as if one tenth of the total account of eighteen books has been given in "The Dasam Granth." Khushwant Singh writes, "It would therefore, seem that the Granth in question form only one tenth of the total and the word Dasam refers to one tenth and not to the tenth Guru. The book, moreover, serves as an excellent index to the part played in Guru

Gobind Singh's life and activities by Hindu theology mythology, philosophy, history and literature. The Granth contains *Jap Sahib* or morning prayers, *Akal Ustuti* or Praise of Undying one, *Chandi Charitra* or exploits of Chandi, the goddess over demons, *Chaupayan* or twenty four war like incarnations of God, *Swayyas* or religious hymns in praise of God, *Shaster Nam Mala* or descriptions of weapons of War. *Triya Charitar* or wiles of women, *Zafar Nama* or the epistle of Victory. The most important part of the Granth is *Bachittar Natak* or the wonderful drama of Guru's own autobiography. In it, the Guru gives an account of his family, his mission of reformation and his wars with the hill rajas and the Imperial forces. It has fourteen chapters. It also gives an account of Bedis, Sodhis and the martyrdom of his father. It gives us a glimpses of the contemporary life as it then existed. We come across fascinating accounts of the spring festival or Holi, marriage, heavy rains, flooded streams, colour blue sky, methods of warfare, weapons used, tactics employed in fighting and account of some of the prominent personalities and places of the period.

### **Hukamnamas**

*Hukamnamas* means orders which were sent by the Gurus to their followers individually or collectively. In these, the Gurus demand material for langer, money for construction, and weapons and horses for warfare. These were accepted with reverence by the Sikhs. Most of these have been destroyed in the turmoil and political upheaval of the 18th century Dr. Ganda Singh compiled a book in which he refers to 89 *Nishans* or seals of the Gurus and *Hukamnamas*. Out of these 34 refer to Guru Gobind Singh, 23 to Guru Tegh Bahadur, 2 to Mata Gujri, 9 to Mata Sundri, 9 to Mata Sahib Deva and one to Guru Arjan, 4 to Guru Hargobind, one each to Guru Har Rai, Guru Harkrishan and Bhai Gurditta and two to Banda Bahadur. These *Hukamnamas* depict the dates and names of prominent Sikhs. These are important sources of reconstructing the social, economics, religious, political and cultural history of the contemporary people of the Guru period.

### **Historical and Semi-History Works in Punjabi and Hindi**

In 18th century many historical and semi-historical works were completed in Punjabi and Hindi but the script of these books in Gurumukhi. These can be mentioned as under :

### **Gursobha**

Its author Senapat was one of the fifty two poets present in the Court of Guru Gobind Singh. He started writing in 1701 and completed it in 1711 A.D. In this he described the life and career of Guru Gobind Singh in

the post Khalsa period. It has vivid description why Guru Gobind Singh wrote *Zafarnama* and is important source regarding Guru's relations with Bahadur Shah.

### **Bansavali Nama**

Kesar Singh Chibber composed *Bansavali Nama* in 1780. It consists of 14 chapters. Out of these ten deal with the Gurus, one each with Banda Singh Bahadur, Baba Ajit Singh, Mata Sundri and Khalsa Panth. The dates given in the books are reliable yet it provides us important information of the post-Guru Gobind Singh period.

### **Guru Bilas**

These are two in number. *Guru Bilas Padshahi Chhevin* deals with some important events of life and career of Guru Hargobind. It is supposed to be completed in 1718 A.D. The other book *Guru Bilas Padshahi Das* was completed by Bhai Sukha Singh in 1797 A.D. It gives useful information about the life and career of Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh. It consists of 21 chapters.

### **Gurpartap Suraj Granth**

It was written in Brajbhasha and comprised of two parts (i) *Nanak Parkash* was written in 1823. It has 130 chapters and deals with the life of Guru Nanak. It appears as if it based, upon Bhai Bala's *Janam Sakhi* (ii) *Suraj Parkash* was completed in 1843 A.D. It is a secondary source which deals with the different events of the lives from Guru Angad to Banda Bahadur.

### **Prachin Panth Prakash**

It is also secondary source which was written by Rattan Singh Bhangu and published in 1841 A.D. It is scattered from Guru Nanak to the 18th century politics. The detailed description of Sikh Afghan and Sikh Maratha relations has been given. The ancestors of Rattan Singh Bhangu took part in the struggle of the 18th century.

### **Panth Prakash and Twarikh Guru Khalsa**

These two books were written by Giani Gian Singh who was descendant of Bhai Mani Singh. *Panth Parkash* is based upon *Prachin Panth Parkash* but definitely an improvement upon it. It is in poetry. *Twarikh Guru Khalsa* consists of five parts. *Jeevan Das Guru* deals with the career and work of the ten Gurus. *Shamsher Khalsa* narrates the achievement of Sikhs under Banda Bahadur and Sikh Afghan Mughal Struggle, *Raj Khalsa* described 12 misals, life of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Anglo-Sikh Wars. Fourth part *Sarkar Khalsa* consist of career of Sikh rulers and Sikh Sardars. In the last, the writer described the Gurudwaras, Sikh movements etc.

**The Bhatt Vahis**

Giani Garja Singh discovered another information. It appears that Bhattas came into contact with Sikhism during the time of Guru Arjan. The Bhattas kept the Vahis in which the different events of the life of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh have been recorded.

**The Historical Works in Persian**

The court language during the medieval period was Persian. Most of the historical works were written in that language. J.S. Grewal writes, "Indeed the number and the character of Persian chronicles written specifically on the Punjab or the Sikhs, made this form of evidence rather exceptionally important for the historians of medieval Punjab." The most important are given as under :

**Tuzak-i-Babari or Babar Nama**

Babar, the founder of the Mughal Empire in India, was a great scholar. He wrote his autobiography in Turkish language which was translated in Persian, English etc. later on. He refers to the social, economic, geographical, religious and political conditions of the Punjab in the 16th century A.D.

**Humayun-nama**

It was written by Gulabadian, a member of the Royal Harem. She recorded the different events of the period of Humayun.

**Akbar-Nama and Ain-i-Akbari**

Abul Fazal was court historian of Akbar. He wrote *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbar-Nama*, recording the different events of Akbar's reign from 1556 to 1602 A.D. In *Akbar-Nama* he gives an account of emperor Akbar's visit to Goindwal on November 24, 1598.

**Tuzuk-i-Jahangir**

It is an autobiography of Jahangir. He records his own impression about Guru Arjan and describes the reasons for ordering his execution.

**Dabistan-i-Mazahib**

For a long time Mohsin-Fani had been considered as the author of *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* but the new researches have proved that it was written by a Mubid Zulfikar Ardistani. The writer was a contemporary of the 5th, 6th and the 7th Sikh Gurus. In the book, he gives an account of the Masand system, martyrdom of Guru Arjan, New policy, battles and death of Guru Hargobind and pontification of Guru Har Rai. He seems to be a friend of the 6th and 7th Sikh Gurus.

**Khulasat-ut-Twarikh**

In 1696, Sujjan Rai Bhandari, a resident of Batala wrote *Khulasat-ut-Twarikh*. It gives a few useful references about the Sikhs and contains valuable topographical details.

**Muntkhib-ul-Lubab**

Khafi-Khan, the writer of this book, described the history of the Mughals upto 1722 A.D. In spite of his biased view, the writer provides very useful information about the events of the beginning of the 18th century. He writes about the treatment of the companions of Banda Bahadur, "Three or four thousand persons were captured and put to the sword which filled that extensive plain with blood as if it had been a dish."

**Jang-Nama :**

Jang-nama of Nur Mohammad was written in 1765 A.D. the writer accompanied Ahmed Shah Abdali in his attack over the Punjab and narrated the events of the times.

**Siar-ul-Mutakhrim :**

Siar-ul-Mutakhrin was written in 1785 by Gulam Hussain. He gives an account of the Sikh Gurus and the 18th century politics.

**Secondary Sources in English**

Towards the end of the 18th century or beginning of the 19th century many European travellers and servants came to the Punjab. They laid down their impression about its history in their books. Among these, the following can be considered as most important :

- (i) Forster's *A Journey from Bengal to England* deals with the conditions of Sikhs in the last years of the 18th century.
- (ii) Franklin's *The Military Memories of George Thomas* gives an account of the military achievements of George Thomas and his relations with the Sikhs of Malwa region in the second half of the 18th century.
- (iii) Malcolm's *Sketch of the Sikhs* contains references about the Sikh religious traditions, usages, culture and history.
- (iv) J.D. Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs* narrates fearlessly the qualities of the Sikhs.

**Miscellaneous Sources****Coins**

Coins are also important sources of the history of the Punjab. Besides the coins of the Mughal Emperors, the coins of Banda Bahadur, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Ahmed Shah Abdali are also available. Some coins have been kept in the Museums at Lahore, Chandigarh and Patiala. Coins depict the names of the rulers, dates, economic condition, traditions etc. N.K. Sinha writes, "Naturally numismatic evidence is very useful even when copious documentary evidence is available. 'Even in the period with which we are concerned, when sovereigns ascended the throne without power and sank into grave without a name, numismatic evidence is of great use.'"

**Historical Paintings**

Many historical painting depicting different aspects of the lives of Guru's and of Gurudwaras are available. At Goindwal the paintings of 22 persons who were incharge of *Manjis* are available. Similarly at Amritsar, Patiala and Chandigarh, New Delhi, Dehra Dun, Anandpur and at many other places many historical paintings can be seen. These paintings throw light on the social, cultural, religious and economic life of people of the times. **Buildings and Monuments**

The historical cities, buildings and monuments are very useful sources of history. The religious cities of Amritsar, Anandpur, Kiratpur, Kartarpur, Paonta, Goindwal, Khadur Sahib etc. reveal history of the Gurus. The buildings and the tanks at places provide useful information to the reader. The forts at Lahore, Anandpur, Amritsar etc. narrate history of the period. So the Gurdwaras, tanks, gardens, forts contains important historical data.

**Seals and Medals**

The Mughals and Afghan rulers were found of bestowing medals to the deserving person. Similarly the royal seals were used in place of signatures of the kings. These seals and medals are also important sources of history.

**Folk Songs, Proverbs and Ardas**

The Folk songs and the proverbs of the Punjab many times reveal the different aspects of history. Some proverbs narrate the character of the Nihang Sikhs, conquest of Durrani and general conditions of the people. *Ardas* (prayer) recited and repeated in the Gurudwara and at other religious functions, reminds the people of their past sacrifices. The different events and the atrocities committed by the Muslim rulers upon the Punjabis are repeated.

So, the sources of the history of the Punjab are large in number but a critical and analytical eye can only discriminate chaff from the grains.

**LESSON NO. 1.2**

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**GURU NANAK DEV : HIS TEACHINGS**

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism was the product of milieu which was preceded by Bhakti Movement. In Punjab, he was one of the important leaders of this movement. He is considered as one of the greatest personalities not only in the history of the Punjab and India rather in the history of the world. He occupies an important place among the greatest religious leaders born at any place in any period in the world. He was born in the Punjab at a time when empty rituals, false customs, and superstitions were in full swing. The character and conduct of the people were at the lowest ebb and religion was reduced to mere sham. Like other Bhaktas, Guru Nanak condemned vigorously the social evils, and showed the path of right religion to the people. Wherever he went, his words had magical effect and people became his disciples. While in other provinces, the movement died out after the death of the Bhaktas in the Punjab but the movement started by Guru Nanak took the permanent shape of Sikh religion.

**Birth and parentage**

Guru Nanak was born in 1469 A.D. at a village called Talwandi. His birth place is now known as Nankana Sahib which is situated in Sheikhpura district in Pakistan. Historians are not unanimous on the date of his birth. Some historians on authority of Janam Sakhi of Bhai Bala are of the opinion that he was born on kartik Purnamashi (Purnima full moon) i.e. October/ November 1469 A.D. Other do not agree with this view and considering Puratan Janam Sakhi as more trustworthy and hold the view that Guru Nanak was bom on Baisakh Sudi 3. 1526 Bikrami i.e. 3rd Baisakh 1526 Bikrami (15th April, 1469). Though his birthday is celebrated on Kartik Purnamashi (on Purnima) yet 3rd Baisakh seems to be more correct as his date of birth. The name of his father was Kalyan Chand Mehta Kalu and the name of his mother was Tripta. Kalyan Chand belonged to a Bedi family of Khatri caste. He was a Patwari of village Talwandi. According to Sikh traditions, many miracles occurred at the time of his birth and the family Purohit (Priest) Hardyal predicted that the child would become a great personality of world fame.

**Early Career and Education**

It is said that he had the signs of great religious person in his boyhood. He was not fond of games like ordinary children. He sang songs

in the praise of God and took great pleasure in the service of saints and religious persons. When he was seven years old he was sent to Pandit Gopal for learning Hindi. It is said that he put many searching questions to the teacher about spiritual knowledge and the teacher was perplexed. He acquired some knowledge of Hindi and arithmetic also. Later on, he learnt Sanskrit from Pt. Brij Lal and Persian from Maulvi Qutab-ud-din. At the age of nine, Guru Nanak refused to wear the sacred thread of cotton (Janeau) saying that instead of cotton thread he would like to wear the sacred and immortal thread of truth, mercy, continence and contentment. So we can understand that there was a great development of his spiritual thoughts right from his boyhood.

**In various occupation**

After initial education, Nanak was put by his father to various 'occupations. At first he was sent out for cattle grazing and then and he was entrusted with the work of cultivation, but he took no interest in either. Later on Mehta Kalu wanted his son to be a trader and he gave him a sum of Rs. twenty asking him to spend the amount in '*Khara Sauda*' (True Bargain). Nanak spent the money on feeding Sadhus, who had been hungry for many days. When Nanak returned home empty handed his father became very angry. But there was a struggle in Guru Nanak's mind and he took no delight in wordly affairs.

**Marriage**

Mehta Kalu thought that Nanak should be married so that his responsibilities would absorb him in wordly affairs. So he was married at the age of 14 to Sulakhni, the daughter of Mool Chand, an inhabitant of Batala. After some time he was blessed with two sons named Sri Chand and Lakhmi Dass. But even the marriage and the marital ties could not divert him from spiritual thoughts. He felt dissatisfied with mundane affairs.

**Joins Service at Sultanpur**

On receiving an invitation from his sister Nanaki the Guru went to Sultanpur. He got a job of store-keeper in the Government provision store, with the help of his brother-in-law, Jai Ram. He performed his duties so efficiently and industriously that the *faujdar* of Sultanpur, Daulat Khan, was impressed with his honesty. He prayed to God daily and gave a part of his salary to the poor in charity. But a short of struggle was still going on within him.

**Receives Enlightenment**

Nanak used to go daily to a nearby stream named Kali Bein for taking bath. According to the Sikh traditions, when once he went at dawn to the stream as usual for taking bath, he disappeared for three days.

He had been the vision of the Almighty God. God ordered him to

spread the true religion in the world and also gave him the following ideal :

“There is only one God, and His name Alone is true. He is the creator, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn and self existent.”

According to Indu Bhushan Banerjee, the Guru was twenty five years old at that time. The first period of his life comes to an end with his receiving the enlightenment. When he reached Sultanpur Lodhi after three days he was entirely changed. For some time he was absorbed in silence and deep meditation. Thereafter he spoke the following memorable words “There is no Hindu no Musalman.” The true meaning of these words was that both the Hindu and the Muslims had forgotten the real principles of their religion and there was a false distinction between them. He taught that every man should consider himself a man first and Hindu or Muslim afterwards. In other words, he propagated the universal brotherhood of mankind. Thus the Guru started his sermons with these important words.

### **SECOND PERIOD - TRAVELS AND PREACHING**

Having received enlightenment, the Guru resigned his job and decided to go on long voyages to show the true path of religion to the people. He travelled to the north, south, east and west. He achieved a great success in his object. A brief account of his travels (Udasis) is as follows :

#### **First Journey or Udasi (1495 A.D. - 1507 A.D.)**

Guru Nanak travelled through the Punjab, the present U.P., C.P., Bengal, Assam, Orissa and visited the famous places of these provinces. During the journey, a Muslim follower, Mardana, accompanied him. He sang his master's song to the accompaniment of a rabab (guitar). After leaving Sultanpur, the Guru reached Lahore first of all. It is said that Saidpur Ahmad Taqi, the spiritual teacher of Sultan Sikander Lodhi was greatly impressed with his words. From Lahore he proceeded to Saidpur (present Eminabad) and stayed there with a carpenter Bhai Lalo. A rich man of Saidpur invited him to a feast (Brahm Bhoj) but he refused to take meal at his house because his income came from dishonest means. He preferred the simple food offered by Lalo because he earned his living by the sweat of the brow. The Guru made Bhai Lalo his disciple and ordered him to propagate the true religion in that area. then he left for Sialkot. The Guru met there, *Faqir Harma*, a Muslim saint who was angry with the citizens for certain reasons and was determined to harm them. The Guru put him on the right path and advised him to treat the people with love and sympathy. As a result a large number of the inhabitants of Sialkot became his disciples. Then he proceeded to Talumba near Multan. A Thug named Sajjan lived there in guise of a saint. He used to murder the travellers at night robbing them of their belongings. He was so much influenced by the

personality and teachings of the Guru that gave up evil deeds and became a disciple of the Guru.

Then the Guru took his way to the east and reached Kurukshetra. Millions of people had assembled there to attend the solar eclipse fair. The Guru condemned the superstitions entertained by Brahmins with regard to the solar eclipse and imparted them the knowledge of the true principles of religion. After leaving Kurukshetra, he proceeded to Hardwar a well known holy place of the Hindus. There he taught the people that it was no use to offer water to sun and the departed souls of ancestors. He laid a special emphasis on devotion to God and good conduct. From Haridwar he went to Delhi. After staying there for a few days, he travelled through Aligarh, Mathura, Bindraban, Kanpur, Lucknow, etc. and imparted his teaching to the inhabitants of these places. There after he reached Kashi and had a long discussion with a well known Brahman Chatur Das. Finally Chatur Das and thousands of inhabitant of Kashi became his followers. The place where the Guru stayed at Kashi is now known as *Guru ka Bagh* or the 'Garden of the Guru.' Then he left for Gorakh Matta, which is known as Nanak Matta these days. He taught the *Jogis*, disciples of Gorakh Nath that it was of no use to leave the world, to smear body with ashes, etc. A man should remember God whole-heartedly and lead a pure life. After leaving Gorakh Matta, the Guru travelled through Patna, Bodh Gaya, Dacca, etc. and propagated his views. Then he reached Kamrup (present Assam). It is said that a conjurer named Nurshahi tried to win him over with her charms. But she did not succeed and fell at the feet of the Guru. From Kamrup, he proceeded towards Orissa and reached Puri, where the well known temple of Jagannath stands. He taught the people that man should worship formless God instead of idols of avatars. After leaving Puri, the Guru travelled through Bhopal, Gwalior, Agra, Gurgaon, Rewari etc. and returned to Punjab. After visiting many places in Punjab, he stayed for sometime at a secluded place situated at small distance from Talwandi. The first Journey (Udasi) took him about 12 year from 1495 A.D. to 1507 A.D.

### **Second Journey or Udasi-travels through the Deccan**

Guru Nanak started his second journey after taking rest for sometime. He travelled through Sirsa, Bikaner, Ajmer, and Mount Abu. He had a discussion with the *Jain Monks* at Abu and they were highly impressed by his talk. Passing through Indore and Ujjain, the Guru entered southern India. He visited many places such as Hyderabad, Bedar, present Madras and Rameshwaram and preached his gospel and finally reached Ceylon. Ceylon was ruled over by king Shivanbh who was a follower of Buddhism. He was

greatly influenced by the personality and teachings of Guru Nanak and become his disciple. Thousands of Ceylonese became his followers. On his return Journey from Ceylon, the Guru visited many places and delivered sermons. After a long journey extending over five years he returned to Talwandi. Trump and many other historians of this school have discredited the authenticity of southern tour. But the modern research especially the manuscript discovered by Gurbakhsh Singh from Dacca makes it quite clear that the Guru did travel through Southern India and Ceylon.

**Third Journey or Udasi : Travels through Northern mountainous areas and his visits to China and Tibet**

In his third journey, the Guru visited the mountainous provinces and sub-mountain tracts situated in northern India. During this journey, Hassu a blacksmith and Shian, a washerman accompanied him. Passing through Jawalamukhi, Kulu, Jammu etc. and spreading his message, he reached Kashmir. There he met a well known Pandit Brahm Das. The Guru defeated Brahm Das and his disciples in a religious debate. Many inhabitants of Kashmir became his followers and he established a *Sangat* there. From Kashmir the Guru proceeded to Kailash mountain and Mansarovar lake. He advised the jogis living over there that instead of talking refuge in the mountains they should try to improve the dismal condition of the people. It is said that the Guru travelled through Tibet and China as well during this Journey. Some Tibetans still consider him as their Guru and worship his idol.

**Fourth Journey or Udasi: Travel through Western Countries**

Guru Nanak visited the holy places of the Muslims in the west during his fourth journey. His old companion Mardana accompanied him on this journey. The Guru reached Mecca and according to the Sikh traditions when he lay down to sleep, he stretched his feet in the direction of Kabba. When the chief Imam (High Priest) Rukun-ud-din objected to it, he requested the Imam in all humility to turn his feet in the direction where God did not exist. It pointed to the omnipresence of God. All the people of Mecca including Rukun-ud-din were highly impressed by the teaching. Then he visited Medina and advised the people to worship God wholeheartedly and give up false superstitions. He visited the grave of Prophet Mohammad there. Then he reached Baghdad. There he met Sheikh Bahlol. The Sheikh was highly influenced by his teaching and became his disciple. He raised a memorial in honour of Guru's visit which exists to this day. On his return journey from Baghdad, the Guru stayed for sometime at Hasan Abdal (present Panja Sahib). He set an arrogant man named Wali Kandhari on the right path there.

**Fifth Journey or Udasi - Travels through the Punjab**

Guru Nanak propagated his message in the Punjab during his fifth and the last journey. During this travel he visited Sheikh Braham the incumbent of Sheikh Farid's shrine at Pakpattan and travelled through Dipalpur, Kanchanpur, Kasur, Patti, Kari Pathana, a place near Amritsar. He made many Pathans his followers. Then he gave his message at Batala and proceeded to Sayyidpur. The Mughal invader, Babur had invaded the place just then and was treating the people harshly. The Guru composed a poem condemning his atrocities. According to the Sikh traditions, the Mughals imprisoned Guru Nanak and his companion Mardana. The Jailor, Mir Khan, informed Babur that the Guru was a great saint. So Babur visited the Guru and was so much impressed by the halo of the Guru's personality that he released not only the Guru but also other prisoners on Guru's recommendation. From Sayyidpur the Guru proceeded to Pasrur, Sialkot and Mithankot in the district of Dera Ghazi Khan. There he had prolonged discussion with a Muslim saint, Mian Mitha whom ultimately, he made his disciple. Thereafter the Guru reached Kartarpur. Now finishing his travels, he decided to stay at a fixed place.

**Third Period - The Period of Consolidation**

During the period under study, Guru Nanak did the following important works :

**Stay at Kartarpur**

The Guru founded a new village named Kartarpur (the town of God) on the bank of Ravi. He spent the last 10 years of his life at this place. He called his wife and sons also at this place. So he presented an ideal domestic life to his disciples.

**Organization of disciples - Sangat and Pangat**

The Guru during his travels, organised Sangats (organization of the disciples at various places). He established a central Sangat at Kartarpur in order to consolidate all sangats and to impart his teachings to a large number of people. The disciples of the Guru assembled in large number at his Sangat and listened to his sermons. People came to Kartarpur *from* far and near to receive directions from the Guru. He started Pangat or Langar system (Community Kitchen).

**Nomination of Successor**

The Guru was determined to appoint his successor in order to continue his teachings. He tested the faithfulness of his sons and disciples in many ways and Bhai Lehna to be the ablest. So he placed five paises (coins) and a coconut before Bhai Lehna and nominated him as his

successor. He also named Bhai Lehna as Angad, i.e. the flesh and the bone of his body. Guru Nanak breathed his last on 22 September, 1539.

### **TEACHINGS OF GURU NANAK**

Guru Nanak's sermons were very simple, and he delivered them in the language of common man. We can understand the main principles of his teachings by studying his compositions, '*Japji Sahib*' and '*Asa Di Wai*'. His principal teachings can be studied under the following heads :

#### **View regarding God**

The Guru had a strong belief in the existence of God. In the preamble of *Japji Sahib* he has given the essence of his views about God as follows :

"There is no more but one God whose name alone is True. He is the creator devoid of fear and enmity, immortal unborn, and self existent. The True-one was in the beginning, the True-one was in the primal age, the true-one is, O'Nanak, the True-one also shall be." We can explain his views regarding God under the following sub heads.'

#### **God is One**

Guru Nanak has laid special emphasis on the fact that God is one. The view prevalent during that period was that Brahama, Vishnu and Shiv are three forms of God Almighty. Braham creates the world; Vishnu sustains and nourishes it and Shiva destroys it. In the minds of the Muslims, the Prophet had occupied a position almost equal to that of God. The Guru did not accept these views and instructed the people that there is only one God. He is greater than Rama, Krishna, Brahama, Vishnu, Mahesh and Mohammad. No body can equal Him.

#### **God is All Powerful**

According to Guru Nanak, God is all powerful. According to His order, a man is born: he takes his form, earns a name, becomes high or low; receives knowledge, enjoys life, experiences troubles; and finally he dies. Nobody can describe. His greatness Crores of people sing the songs of His greatness and thousands of writers have tried to describe Him. He is transcendent because nobody knows His limits. It is only the True one himself who knows how great He is.

#### **God is Immanent and Transcendent**

Prior to Guru Nanak, spiritualists held two different views regarding God. Some held the opinion that God is transcendent, limitless and is beyond the reach of man, whereas other were of the opinion that God is omnipresent. He exists in both men and animals. The Guru unified these

two different views. According to him God is transcendent as well omnipresent. Although He is very High, still He is not beyond the reach of His devotees. He is present at every place. In fact God lives in the heart of His true devotee.

**God is Formless**

According to Guru Nanak, God is formless. He has no form, no colour and no limit, so the Guru was against idol worship.

**Self-Surrender is the only way to please God**

According to Nanak, it is not easy to obtain the mercy of the True Lord. One is required to efface one self completely. A man must surrender himself completely to God's will. The surrender of self to God means the complete destruction of five great enemies which constitute one's ego. These enemies are lust [*Kam*], anger [*Krodh*], greed [*Lobh*], attachment [*Moh*], and pride [*Ahankar*]. Guru Nanak emphasized the doctrine of *Prapti* i.e. the surrender of the human will to the Divine will.

**The Worship of the True Name (Sat Nam)**

Guru Nanak laid a great emphasis on the worship of His True Nam. He often used to say, I have no miracle except the True Nam. The chief duty of man is to stop mind's wanderings and gain control over it and the mind's wanderings can be stopped only through the worship of *Sat Nam* or the True Nam. One can control lust, anger, attachment, pride etc. by repeating True Nam. One's mind becomes purified by the repetition of *Sat Nam*. It gives knowledge, contentment and peace of mind. The Guru writes in *Japji*. "One's body, hands and feet are purified by means of water, as dirty clothes are made clean by means of soap. The evils and dirt of mind are removed by means of worship of *Sat Nam*."

**Importance of the Guru in the Realization of God**

Guru Nanak says that Guru leads one to self surrender and the worship of *Sat Nam*. One cannot attain spiritual knowledge without the Guidance of a True Guru. Elaborating it he says that a Guru or spiritual teacher is like common man in those days considered to be the essentials of religion. To stay for long in water, to fast to do penance with the head upside down, to wander in the world as a pilgrim, were not acts of virtue, but merely bodily acts and exercises. They had nothing to do with soul. Guru's message to his followers was to abide pure amidst the impurities of the world. He led an ideal domestic life during the last 10 years of his life at Kartarpur and set a living example for his followers. In his teachings, there are repeated references to living in the world but not becoming worldly i.e. '*Raj mein Jog Kamayo.*'

**Emphasis on Karma and Good Conduct**

Guru Nanak believed in the philosophy of *Karma*. One cannot achieve salvation without good deeds. Guru Nanak denounced mere reading and the knowledge of religious books. He urged the people to apply the wisdom contained in the holy books in day to day life.

**Denounced Caste System and Sectarianism**

During those days the Hindu society was divided into many castes and sub-castes. The Guru denounced castes in vigorous terms as it was not based on the principle of love. Love of God implied love of whole mankind and thus indirectly implied equality. The caste system of the Hindus, based on the principle of inequality, was greatly denounced by Guru in the following words: "Castes are folly, names are folly." Nanak not only denounced caste, he condemned even the spirit of sectarianism because it was against his basic teaching of love. There is no Hindu and no Musalman, were the words that he uttered after self-realisation.

He wanted the Hindus and the Muslims never to forget that they are the children of one and the same God. The Guru introduced Langar system (common kitchen) to remove distinction between high and the low.

**Supreme Bliss- the Goal of devotee**

The highest goal that he placed before his disciples was to attain the supreme bliss. One finds perfect peace of mind at this stage.

**WAS GURU NANAK A REFORMER OR A REVOLUTIONARY ?**

Historians differ on the question whether Guru Nanak was a reformer or a revolutionary, G.C. Narang, Indu Bhushan Banerjee and Payne have come to the conclusion that Guru Nanak belonged to the great family of Bhakti reformers and that in the fundamentals of his teachings, he differed very little with them. According to Payne, whose views have been elaborated by Indu Bhushan Banerjee as well, Guru Nanak's aim was not to sweep away Hinduism, but to restore it to its ancient purity. Like Luther he came to protest against idolatry, the blind superstitions and the empty rituals which had so long estranged religion from morality and the hearts of men from their Creator. They gave following argument in support of their views :

**AS A REFORMER****(i) No Disrespect to Hindu Avtar and Deities**

Guru Nanak did not mean any disrespect to Hindu *avtars* and deities. He simply wanted to point out his devotees that the Hindu Avtars and goddesses were different from the one supreme God. He showed them their proper position in relation to him.

Guru Nanak writes in Japji, "By hearing the name of God a man can achieve the greatness of Shiva, Brahma and Mahesh." To substantiate, the composition of Bhaktas such as Jai Dev, Rama Nand, Pipa, Sen, Ravidas etc. are given in Adi Granth and these Bhaktas were worshippers of Vishnu, Rama and Krishana.

Similarly, if he attacked the Vedas or the Puranas, he did not question the wisdom or the philosophy contained therein. Rather he wanted the people not to parade the knowledge contained in the scriptures. In fact he wanted to tell them that they should mould their daily life according to the wisdom contained in the Vedas. According to Indu Bhushan Banerjee, "Guru Nanak attacked scripturalism and not the Hindu scriptures."

**(ii) Attacked the Perversions and not the Fundamental of Hindu Religion**

When Guru Nanak denounced pilgrimages and fasts he was attacking the perversions and not the basic beliefs of Hindu religion. If he revolted against the caste system that revolt was not something very revolutionary. Rama Nand and Kabir already denounced it in equally strong terms.

According to Indu Bhushan Banerjee, it seems essential that we should recognize a distinction between caste and caste-pride. The Guru had no mercy for the latter.

**(iii) His Teachings were Identical with those of the Bhakti Reforms**

Some of the great tenets of Nanak were the same as had been or were being advocated by other Hindu religious reforms of the middle ages. The surrender of the human will to the Divine will was simply the repetition of the old doctrine of Prapti (Realization). Emotional worship, belief in theory of *Karma*, indifference towards ritual, flexibility in caste system, adoration of the Guru or *Guru Bhakti*, transmigration of soul, service of God and God's children had all been emphasized earlier by Hindu *Bhaktas*, though not so systematically and emphatically as had done by Nanak. The inclusion of the hymns of most of the Hindu *Bhaktas* such as Nam Dev, Kabir and Ravi Das in the Adi Granth also point out to the similarity of Guru Nanak's message with the teaching of those *Bhaktas* who even up to his day are regarded as the great teachers of Hinduism. The Guru condemned caste system and empty rituals like other *Bhaktas*. Sir Gokal Chand Narang says, "Nanak left the Hindu immensely better than he had found them."

### **AS A REVOLUTIONARY**

There is another group of writers-Macauliffe, Bhai Kahan Singh and Professor Teja Singh- who are of the opinion that Guru Nanak was not a reformer but a revolutionary. He tried to demolish the existing institutions of the society and to construct a new society on its ruins.

#### **Guru Nanak condemned caste system**

Caste system was an essential features of Hinduism since times immemorial. The Guru condemned the system vigorously. He declared openly that the castes and names are meaningless. He introduced Pangat or Langar system and advised his followers to take their meals together at a common kitchen. Earlier, some of the Hindu reformers had condemned caste system but none had taken concrete steps to defy it in such a practical and vigorous manner and on the massive scale, as done by Guru Nanak.

#### **Condemned Asceticism - Basic Feature of the Hindu Religion**

Guru Nanak condemned asceticism. But it should be noted that renunciation, fasts, and penance had always been regarded as the essentials of Hindu religion. He asked his disciples that they should attain salvation without leaving the world or doing penance in forests. His message was : "Abide pure amidst the impurities of the world."

#### **Repudiated Hindu Mythology**

The Guru also questioned the utility of idol worship, pilgrimage to the sacred river, and even the sanctity of the Vedas. The Hindu considered Brahama, Vishnu and Mahesh as different forms of God and looked upon Rama and Krishna *avtars*. The Guru expressed his doubts regarding the worship of the Hindu avtars and divinities. He repudiated idol worship prevailing in the Hindu society and gave a revolutionary lesson that God is formless and it is not proper to worship idols. Guru declared that mere reading and listening to the Puranas and Vedas is of no use. The wisdom contained in these scriptures should be put into practice. He did not consider Sanskrit as a sacred language and gave his message in Punjabi, the language of common folk.

#### **Establishment of Sangat and appointment of Successor**

The Guru established a new institution called *Sangat*. The members of the *Sangat* led a life different from the people in society. The appointment of Guru Angad as his successor is also considered as a revolutionary step.

#### **Conclusion**

It however, becomes very difficult for us to accept either of these two extreme views. We cannot consider Guru Nanak as a revolutionary; because his object was not to demolish the existing society and

reconstruct a new society; on its ruins. But at the same time, we should not consider him as an ordinary reformer. His reform were radical. His teachings differed in many ways from those of Ramanuj, Ramanand and other teachers since he went beyond the narrow limits of idolatory and of regulations with regard to diet and dress. In the light of above, it would be apt to conclude that he was a Radical reformer.

Mutual jealousy was replaced by mutual friendship and understanding. The oppressed low caste began to claim equality. Their status was raised up. They were given the place of respect under the influence of Guru Nanak. They became Sikhs and began to preach Sikhism.

**EVOLUTION OF SIKHISM 1539-1606**

**GURU ANGAD DEV (1539 A.D. TO 1552 A.D.)**

**EARLY LIFE :** Guru Angad whose actual name was Lehna was the second Guru of the Sikhs. He was born on 31st March, 1504 A.D., at *Mattey-di-Sarai* near Muktsar. His father Pheru Mal belonged to Khatri cast and his mother's name was Daya Kaur. Soon after Lehna's birth his father along with family went to Harike and afterwards to Khadur. So, much of Lehna's childhood was spent in Khadur Sahib. Here he was married to Khivi, the daughter of Devi Chand. He was blessed with two sons and two daughters. His sons names were Dattu and Dasu and daughters Amro and Anokhi.

Since his childhood Lehna was of religious temperament. Before becoming the disciple of Guru Nanak, he was a devotee of goddess Durga and used to go on pilgrimages of the sacred place at Jawalamukhi every year. One day he heard Guru Nanak-bani from Bhai Jodha. It influenced him so much that he made up his mind to see Guru Sahib in person. Next year when he set out for pilgrimage to Jawalamukhi he met Guru Nanak. He was very much influenced by the personality and Bani (preachings) of Guru Sahib and became his Sikh.

**Succession to Guruship and its Importance**

In 1539 A.D., before leaving this worldly abode, Guru Nanak decided to nominate Lehna as his successor. He put his sons and Sikhs to a number of tests and trials and Lehna emerged best among them. Guru Sahib was very much influenced by Lehna's fervent service and politeness. By placing five paise coins and coconut before him, he declared him his successor. Guru Nanak changed Lehna's name to 'Angad' meaning thereby "a part of his own body."

Regarding this event, Indu Bhushan Banerjee says that the nomination of Angad was a matter of supreme importance as it placed the movement under the guidance and control of definite and indisputable leadership and gave it a distinctive turn at the very outset of its career. Had Guru Nanak not selected his successor his followers would have scattered and disappeared or merged into Hinduism.

**Works for the Development of Sikh Religion**

Guru Angad remained Guru from 1539-1552 A.D. During these years, he made following efforts for the development of Sikhism.

**Propaganda for Gurmukhi Script :** - The first effort of Guru Angad for the

development of Sikhism was that he propagated Gurumukhi script and made it popular among the Sikhs, Before him. 'Landa' script was prevalent in the Punjab, which had a number of shortcomings. Guru Angad found the Sikh hymns written in Landa were liable to be misread. So while polishing this script, he is said to have invented a new script which was called "Gurumukhi" alphabet, coming out of the mouth of the Guru. But modern scholars do not agree with this view. They say that the script was prevalent even in time of Guru Nanak. To support their theory, they point out that in Rag Assa of Guru Granth Sahib there is a patti or the thirty five verse by Guru Nanak each beginning with a letter of the alphabet. The letters are 35 and are repeatedly used. Whatever the case may be but there is no doubt that Guru Angad played a very important role in modifying this script and popularising it among the Sikhs.

A great importance is attached to the Gurmukhi script in the development of Sikh religion. In this very script, the teaching of Guru Nanak and others were composed. In this way, the Sikhs were acquainted with the real knowledge. Secondly, the spread of Gurmukhi diminished the importance of Sanskrit and consequently the influence of ' Brahmanas on the Hindu society began to disappear. Thirdly the sayings of the Guru being composed in his own language influenced common people to a considerable extent. Fourthly, as Gokal Chand Narang says the new script prompted the people to remember their duties and awakened them to the view of becoming different from the Hindus.

**2. Compilation of 'Bala's Janamsakhi' and Collection of Guru Nanak's Hymns :** Another great work for the development of Sikh religion done by Guru Angad was the compilation of Sakhis dealing with the life of Guru Nanak. He invited Bhai Bala, who had been a companion of Guru Nanak at Khadur Sahib and asked him to narrate the events of Guru Nanak's life. First of all, he wrote on Guru Nank's birth and then about some other events of his life. This Sakhi is called Janam Sakhi. It is also known as Bala wali Janam Sakhi. However, some historians like Macauliffe and Banerjee are of the opinion that Janam Sakhi might not have been written in Guru Angad's time, but the Sikh chronicles give this credit to Guru Angad. Beside Guru Angad also collected the Bani (hymns) of Guru Nanak.

The compilation of Janam Sakhi is considered to be the most important works of Guru Angad. Thus the Sikhs got a holy book which was read by the Sikhs. They were encouraged by the life of Guru Nanak. They

stopped to read Hindu scriptures. Because that Janam Sakhi was written in the prevalent language of the people so it became more popular. After collection the Bani (hymns) of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad put them before his Sikhs in the actual form. The Sikhs began to read Guru's Bani in place of the hymns of the Vedas. Thus Guru Angad took first step towards the compilation of 'Adi Granth' too.

**3. Langar System :** Guru Angad merely did not continue the Langar (community kitchen) system but he also extended and modified it. He deputed his wife Khivi of its management. The expenses were met out of the offerings of Sikhs. Guru Angad never took even a single paisa out of these offerings, nor did he take his meals therefrom. He gained his livelihood by twisting *van (munj)*. In langar, the food was provided free to the poor, disabled, beggars and those who came from distant places to have a darshan of the Guru. All whether rich or poor, had to sit together to take their meals.

Through langer system, the distinction of caste among the Sikhs disappeared and a religious and social uniformity was established. The donations made by the Sikhs were well utilized by this organisation.

**4. Condemnation of Udasi Sect :** After the death of Guru Nanak, his eldest son Baba Sri Chand had found the Udasi sect. Its main principle was that without renunciation of the world (Tyag) none could attain salvation, so many Sikhs were attracted to his principle. Guru Angad faced the situation with courage and patience. He, in forceful words declared that this principle was quite contradictory to the preachings and principles of Guru Nanak and he who believed in renunciation(Tyag) was not a Sikh. The result of this declaration was that the Udasi sect lost its force. Thus on one hand, the Sikhs became more strong and on the other, it escaped from being merged into Hinduism, because Hinduism accepts principle of renunciation.

**5. Discipline in the Sikh Sect :** Guru Angad tried to inculcate discipline among the Sikhs. He punished those who tried to violate the discipline or worked against the common interest of the Sikhs. Guru Angad wanted to keep his followers healthy, so he used to hold wrestling exercise in the evening . In the same way to strengthen the community feeling, he started Sangat system.

**6. Foundation of Goindwal :** Guru Angad was requested by Govind of Khatri clan that near Khadur, a town may be founded. Guru Sahib acceding to his request sent Amar Das to that place to establish a new town. And thus the town of 'Goindwal' was founded. Later on, Guru Amar

Das built '*baoli*' there. Goindwal became a holy place of Sikhs.

**Visit of Humayun to Guru Sahib :** According to Sikh chronicles, after having been defeated at the hands of Sher Shah Suri, Humayun went to Khadur to get Guru's blessings. But the Guru at that time was in trance, and so he could not attend to the Emperor. Humayun flew into rage and drew his sword out. When the Guru opened his eyes, he put Humayun to shame for drawing his sword to kill the saint. Humayun repented and begged his pardon and requested the Guru to bless him. The Guru blessed him and said that after facing difficulties for some years he would regain his lost throne.

**Nomination of his successor :** When Guru Angad felt that his end was approaching, he decided to nominate his successor. Like Guru Nanak he did not find either of his two sons able enough to hold the Guruship. He was very much impressed by the devotion and sincerity of his follower Amar Das. So he vested Guruship upon him and ordered him to settle himself at Goindwal. Guru Angad passed away on March 29, 1552.

Thus Guru Angad did a lot of work for the development of Sikhism. Sir Gokal Chand Narang says that the measure adopted by the second Guru had considerably contributed to the inception of a new community, and had sown the first seed of some kind of organisation among the Sikhs.

#### **GURU AMAR DAS (1552-1574 A.D.)**

**Early life :** Guru Amar Das was born at village Basarke near modern Amritsar. His father's name was Tej Bhan who belonged to Khatri caste and was simply shopkeeper. When Amar Das grew up he began to help his father in his business. He took articles loaded on pony and sold them in different villages. At the age of 24, Amar Das was married to Devi Chand's daughter, Mansa Devi. Two sons (Mohan and Mohri) and two daughters (Dani and Bhani) were born of this wedlock. Before adopting Sikhism, Amar Das was a follower of vaishnava sect and every year he used to go on pilgrimage to Ganga. As he had no real Guru, he remained disappointed. Once he heard Guru Nanak's Bani from Guru Angad's daughter, Bibi Amro. He was so much influenced that he went to Khadur Sahib to see Guru Angad in person. He became a disciple of Guru Angad and began to serve him. Guru Angad was so much impressed by his devotion and service that he appointed Amar Das as his successor.

#### **WORKS FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM**

The period from 1552 to 1574 A.D. of Amar Das's Guruship is of great importance. During these 22 years Guru Amar Das introduced some reforms due to which Sikhism began to assume a new shape. Dr. Indu Bhushan Banerjee suggests that under the Guruship of Amar Das the

distinction between the Hindu and Sikh way of life became more evident. His main works were:

**Construction of a Baoli at Goindwal :** The important work that Amar Das did was the digging of Baoli at Goindwal. This Baoli had 84 footsteps the Sikhs had to work hard to complete it in 1559.

It soon developed into an important place of pilgrimage and the Sikhs began to visit this place in order to get salvation.

**Establishment of the Manji System :** By the time of the pontification of Guru Amar Das, the number of the Sikhs had increased considerably. It was difficult for all of them to come to Goindwal from distant places to hear Guru's message. So Guru Amar Das divided spiritual empire of the Sikhs into 22 bishoprics or '*Manjis*'. A pious and devoted Sikh was appointed incharge of each '*Manji*' to act as a bishop and vice-regent of the Guru in that locality. His duty was to preach the message of the Guru and keep the local body in touch with the centre. The Manjis were further divided into smaller sections called *pirihis*. Some scholars are of opinion that it was by imitating Akbar that Guru Amar Das had divided his spiritual empire into 22 Manjis. But this opinion is not true, because Akbar divided his empire into 15 provinces only. Here this should not be ignored that by dividing his spiritual empire into 22 '*Manjis*' the main idea was to propagate the Sikh religion. Gokal Chand Narang says that the Manji system helped to a great extent in consolidating and propagating Sikhism throughout the country.

**3. Separation of the Udasi Sect from Sikhism :** Guru Amar Das declared that the person having faith in Udasi sect could not be the followers of guru Nanak at one and the same time. Guru Amar Das said that Guru Nanak was against asceticism (*Sanayas* and *Tyag*). That way he did not appoint Baba Sri chand as his successor. He, said that the persons having faith in asceticism had no place in Sikhism. Thus by separating Sikhism from the Udasi sect, the Guru preserved the Sikh religion.

**4. Expansion of the Langar System :** Guru Amar Das expanded Langar system. The offering from his followers which has largely increased in quantity were totally spent on the maintenance of the langar. In Langar, refined flour sugar and butter were used. The langar remained open all the day Guru had ordered that none could see him without taking a meal at the langar. According to Dr. Ganda Singh even Emperor Akbar and the king of Haripur who came to see the Guru had to do the same. It also brought a sense of brotherhood among the Sikhs who ate at the common platform without any distinction and also helped to propagate the Sikh religion to a

great extent.

### **SOCIAL REFORMS**

Guru Amar Das was a great social reformer also.. Besides the spiritual progress of the Sikhs, he did a lot to bring about changes in the social practices followed by the Sikhs.

**Opposition to Castism** . He opposed casteism and untouchability. He declared that the Sikhs who came to him had to sit together in a line (*Pangat*) for taking the meals. Consequently, the feeling of caste-distinction disappeared among the Sikhs.

**Prohibition of Sati System** : Guru Sahib denounced the baneful practice of *Sati*. He told his Sikhs that the burning of a widow on the funeral pyre of her husband did not make her a 'Sati'. That widow is the real 'Sati' who suffers from the pangs of separation of her husband.

**Disapproval of Pardah** : According to Macauliffe, the Guru disapproved the *Pardah* system. He ordered his Sikhs that—their wives should put aside *Pardah* system (covering of the face by woman). He also allowed the ladies to become Sikhs and propagate the religion.

**Prohibition of Intoxicants** : Guru Sahib raised voice against the use of wine and other intoxicants. He said the intoxicants should not be used, because using them a man could neither recognise himself nor others and ultimately forgets God,

**Criticised the prevailing Birth, Marriage and Death Ceremonies** : The guru told his Sikhs that on the above occasions they should not call pandits and should not spend money extravagantly. Guru Sahib composed *Anand* or song of-joy on the eve of his grandson's birth which the Sikhs were to sing on the birth and other happy occasions.

**Change in the celebration of Festivals** : He asked Sikhs to celebrate their festivals in a new way. He told that all Sikhs should get together at Goindwal on the first day of both the *Baisak* and *Magh* and on the occasion of Diwali to celebrate their festivals.

The above changes and reforms introduced by Guru Amar Das struck at the very root of the influence of the priestly class and gradually the Sikhs disassociated themselves from the Hinduism.

**6. Compilation of Guru's Bani and the Propagation of Sikhism** : During the pontification of Amar Das his grandsons Sant Ram (Baba Mohan's son) compiled the teaching of Guru Amar Das and Guru Angad. Later on, it became easy for guru Arjan Dev to compile the *Adi-Granth*.

**Akbar's Visit to Goindwal** : The visit of Akbar to Goindwal was an important event of the pontificate of Guru Amar Das. He was very much

impressed by the personality of the Guru and praised langar system. Akbar offered him some Jagirs but the Guru very politely refused. Upon this refusal, the Emperor is said to have made a grant of several villages, in the name of Guru's daughter Bibi Bhani. It is said that on that very land, later on the city of Amritsar was raised.

Gokal Chand Narang says that the visit of the Emperor enormously increased the fame and prestige of the Guru and his mission became popular in the higher circles of society. Consequently, a number of people became Guru's followers.

**Nomination of Ram Das to Guruship :** Before departing from this world, Guru Amar Das in 1574 A.D. nominated his son-in-law Ram Das (Jetha) as his successor. It is said that Guru's daughter Bibi Bhani and her husband Bhai Jetha served the guru so devotedly that Guru not only nominated Ram Das (Bhai Jetha) as his successor to Guruship but also made Guruship hereditary in his family.

#### **GURU RAM DAS (1574-1581 A.D.)**

**Early Life and Succession of Gurgaddi :** Guru Ram Das (Bhai Jetha) was the fourth Guru of The Sikhs. He was born on 25 September. 1534 A.D. in Chuna Mandi in Lahore. His father Hari Das was a Khatri of Sodhi tribe and his mother's name was Daya Kaur. When Bhai Jetha was a child both his mother and father died and his grandmother nourished him. His childhood passed through, poverty and in young age considerable responsibilities fell on his shoulders.

Bhai Jetha was a man of religious temperament since his childhood. Once he saw a group of Sikhs going to Goindwal, he also accompanied them and after reaching there he became a follower of Guru Amar Das . Guru Amar Das who was so much impressed by his devotion that he gave his daughter Bibi Bhani in marriage to him. Before his death he also appointed him as his successor to 'Gurgaddi. According to Sikh chronicles, one day when Guru Amar Das taking bath sitting on a chowki, one of the four legs gave in and Bibi Bhani placed her hand below it so that Guru might not fall. Her hand was bleeding when Guru noticed it. Impressed by the devotion of her daughter, he asked her to ask for any thing from him- Bibi Bhani requested the Guru to make the Guruship hereditary in her family and Guru acceded to her request. And since then Guruship remained in her family.

#### **Work done for the development of Sikhism**

Guru Ram Das's pontificate lasted from 1574 to 1581 A.D. During this period, he introduced following reforms to develop the Sikh religion :

**Foundations to Ramdaspur or Amritsar :** The most important work the Guru Ram Das did was the laying of the foundation of Chak Guru or Ramdaspur, which is now known as Amritsar. Macauliffe is of the opinion that city of Amritsar was founded on that land which was granted to Bibi Bhani by Akbar. But Foster, Cunningham, Latif and Gokal Chand Narang do not accept this view and opine that the total land on which the city of Amritsar was raised was obtained by Guru Ram Das from Akbar after he had become the Guru. However, there is no doubt that this land was offered by Akbar and Guru Ram Das raised the town of Amritsar there. In 1577 A.D. he started work of the tanks of Amritsar and Santokhsar. To look after the excavation work, the Guru came from Goindwal to this place. After some time, Guru Sahib felt that it was difficult to continue the excavation of both the tanks simultaneously, so the work of excavation of Amritsar tank continued. Small huts were built near the tank for the Guru and the Sikhs. A few extra huts were also built to accommodate the visitors who would come to assist the Guru in that huge work. A new small town Ramdaspur or Chak-Guru grew up around this tank. Later on, after the name of this tank, it was called 'Amritsar'. The Guru also invited men of 52 trades to settle there. These businessmen built their shops near Amritsar tank. This place soon came to be called a Guru Ka Bazar. Since Guru Ram Das expired soon, the entire work could not be completed. It was completed by his son and successor Guru Arjan Dev.

The construction of Amritsar Tank was a great contribution of Ram Das towards the development of Sikhism. It helped the cause of the Guru in two ways. Firstly, Majha being a central place a number of brave Hindus Jats became the followers of the Guru, who later on proved good soldiers. Secondly, Amritsar became a trading centre which in turn became a good source of income for the completion of development works. After some time, it became a holy place (Mecca) of the Sikhs under Guru Arjan.

**Masand System :** Macauliffe says that Guru Ram Das introduced Masand system because he was in need of money to meet the expenses of the excavation of Amritsar and Santokhsar Tanks. So he sent some of faithful Sikhs to the near and distant places to preach Sikhism and also to collect presents. These Sikhs were called *masands*. The word 'masand' has been derived from a Persian word '*masnad*' which means a high place. It appears that this system was fully developed and expanded during the time of Guru Arjan Dev. During the time of Guru Ram Das, the Sikhs used to offer presents at their discretion but later on Guru Arjan Dev ordered them

to pay 1/10th of their income. Guru Arjan Dev framed many rules and regulations regarding Masand system. To begin with the Masand system ensured steady flow of resources to the Guru's treasury and also ensured the solidarity of Sikhism.

**Compromise with the Udasis :** During the time of Guru Ram Das a compromise was reached between the Sikhs and the Udasis. It is said that Guru's politeness and religious temperament influenced the leader of Udasi sect so much that even Baba Sri Chand came there to bow his head before Guru Ram Das. Thus the old enmity between the Udasis and the Sikhs ended, and both began to co-exist peacefully, propagated Sikhism with great zeal. He converted Handal, an inhabitant of Janadiala to Sikhism and appointed him as a peacher in his own area. He sent Bhai Gurdas-a learned Sikh, to Agra to, propagate Sikh religion. He got success in his mission and initiated a number of persons at Agra into Sikhism.

**Friendly relations with Akbar :** The relations of Guru Ram Das with Akbar were cordial. He offered 500 bighas of land to Guru Ram Das . On which the modern city of Amritsar was built. Once the Punjab faced a famine and on the recommendation of the Guru, Akbar is said to have remitted land revenue for one year . In this way, the Guru became more popular with the masses and the zamindars.

**Nomination of the successor :** Guru Ram Das had three sons-Prithi Chand (Prithia), Mahadev and Arjan Mal. Prithi Chand, the eldest son of the Guru, who considered himself to be a rightful successor could not bear this decision. He uttered harsh words for the Guru and later on remained busy to harm the Guru. Guru Ram Dass died on 1st September, 1581 A.D.

#### **GURU ARJAN DEV (1581 A.D.-1606 A.D.)**

**Early Life :** The period of Guru Arjan Dev is very significant in the development of Sikhism. He was the youngest son of Guru Ram Das. He was born on April, 15, 1563 A.D. at Goindwal (District Amritsar). The Guru spent eleven years of his early life at Goindwal with Guru Amar Das and his maternal grandfather. Later on the family shifted to Ramdasapur, present Amritsar. He was very obedient and spent all his time doing service (*Sewa*) at Ramdasapura.

**His early Difficulties :** His elder brother Prithi Chand opposed him and blocked Amritsar with the help of the Masands. The Masands by misguiding the Sikh visitors were extorting that money which they wanted to offer to the Guru for Karsewa. The Guru, however, continued to tolerate the excesses of his brother. About this time, the Guru's cousin Bhai Gurdas came to assist the Guru (before this he was doing missionary work at Agra

since the days of Guru Ram Das). He collected the faithful and cleared their minds of the misunderstanding that had been deliberately caused by Prithi Chand. But Prithi Chand connived with Sulhi Khan, the subedar of Lahore, in order to harm the Guru. Guru Arjan thought it fit to shift with his family from Amritsar to Wadali for some time. But in spite of it, Prithi Chand invited Sulhi Khan to Amritsar in order to loot the town and terrify the Guru. But he returned on seeing the Guru had already left Amritsar.

There after, Prithi Chand again conspired with Sulhi Khan in order to approach the Emperor Akbar against Guru Arjan Dev, complaining that the Holy Granth which was being compiled by the Guru contained unbecoming references both to Hinduism and Islam. This, however had no effect on Akbar.

#### **GURU'S WORK FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF SIKHISM**

##### **Completion of Amritsar, raising of Tarn-Taran and Kartarpur :**

With the death of Sulhi, the opposition to the Guru dwindled appreciably. The Guru now devoted himself the development of Sikhism. He developed Amritsar by completing of Hari-Mandir and founded Tarn-Taran and Kartarpur. The Baoli at Lahore in Dabi Bazar was also constructed about this time. The creation of Tarn-Taran as the centre of Sikh missionary work was very important. This induced the Jats of Majha to embrace Sikhism. Gokal Chand Narang is of the opinion that it was the light that radiated from Amritsar and Tarn-Taran that made the peasantry realise their strength and transformed them from peaceful and toiling husbandmen into brave soldiers. That is why, in Sikh history, we read the adventures of those militant, brave and bold Sikhs who were always ready to fight against their enemies. This again was the reason, the subsequent times, that in the area of Tarn-Tarn, we find robust peasantry. In fact, this area became home of the brave soldiers.

##### **Masand system :**

The word 'Masand' is the distorted form of the Persian word 'Masnad' which means high place. When Guru Arjan Dev succeeded his father, many developmental work were in progress. It is said that Ram Das sent his representatives to collect money from the Sikhs in order to complete the developmental work. During the time of Guru Ram Das, this system was not fully organized. After him Guru Arjan Dev devoted special attention to this system as follows.

- (i) The Guru desired that his Sikhs must deposit one tenth of their income (Daswandh) with the Masands for onward transmission to the Guru.

- (ii) The Masands were ordered not to use the money collected from the devotees for their personal needs.
- (iii) The Masands were considered Guru's representatives and as a result their status rose high. These Masands deposited the money collected from the Sikhs, with the Guru on the eve of Baisakhi festival at Amritsar every year.
- (iv) The Masands in turn appointed their own representatives who collected money in their respective areas. It should be noted here that Masands generally were of high character and spirituality.
- (v) In addition to the collection of offerings as noted above they preached Guru's message in distant places.

**Advantages of Masand System :** The Masand system hold an important place in the history of the Sikhs. This system was responsible for the development of Sikh in the history of the Sikhs. This system was responsible for the development of Sikh religion in many ways. Following are some of the notable advantages of the system :

- (1) The Masands collected money from the followers and passed it on to the Guru for developmental works.
- (2) In addition to the above work, they spread religion in the far off places outside the Punjab.
- (3) This institution proved helpful in maintaining close relationship among the Sikhs and the Guru. the Guru guided his followers through his Masands from Amritsar, as the central place of authority. As a result the Sikhs remained under the control of the Guru.
- (4) The regular income in the form of *Daswandh* for the Guru was a very big and revolutionary step.

**Decline in the system and its end :** This system worked well in the times of 5th, 6th, and 7th Guru, but after that it began to decline, so much so that when Guru Teg Bahadur came to assume Guruship, Masands closed the gate of Darbar Sahib and put many obstacles in his way. As a remedy Guru Gobind singh, put the system to an end.

**Guru Arjan induced the Sikhs towards Trade**

Besides the above achievements, the Guru diverted the attention of the Sikhs towards industry and trade in order to flourish the community, that is why we find many Sikhs trading in horses, and engaged in banking during the time of Guru. Dr. Indu Bhushan Banerjee writes that the guru ordered his Sikhs that they should assist each other and give monetary help whenever needed. In this way, he drew the attention of the Sikhs

towards trade. Since Sikhism is a religion of the householders. Guru wanted his Sikhs to lead a happy life. He, therefore, wanted the Sikhs to take interest in internal and external trade. The Guru sent his followers out side the Punjab so that they could become well-versed in trade.

**Its Importance :** According to Gokal Chand Narang, the step taken by the Guru towards trade in horses, though apparently most ordinary, was productive of manifold good to the rising power of the Sikhs. It proved a very progressive step for the Sikhs. Firstly, the trade in horse dealt an effective blow to caste system. To elucidate it under Hinduism people were not allowed to go to foreign countries by crossing the Indus river but by doing so the Sikhs broke this superstition. Its result was that the Sikhs became men of confidence and high character because in trans-Indus areas, where Muslim fanaticism was rampant and people of other religions had to face a lot of torture in keeping up their religion, only a man of strong character could follow his religion. Secondly, in those days trading in horses was very profitable and Sikhs grew very rich. Thirdly this also made the Sikhs one of the best horse-riders of northern India.

**Social reforms :** Like his predecessors, Guru Arjan Dev also condemned caste system and the difference between the high and the low. He advised the people to abstain from intoxicants. He advocated widow remarriage as was preached by Guru Amar Das. For example, a widow was married to Hema Chaudhry and thus he removed social short comings in order to end the sufferings of the distressed. He started a home for lepers at Tarn-Tarn. Complete treatment was also arranged for these patients. The Guru has also preached that untouchability as against the sanction of Sikh religion. He remarked that those who believed in untouchability can not attain high spiritual bliss.

### **Religious Reform**

#### **Compilation of Adi Granth**

The greatest and best achievement of the Guru Arjan was the compilation of the Adi Granth popularly known as Guru Granth Sahib, according to Macauliffe the Guru felt that there was a due need of consolidation of all the tenets of Sikh religion in the form of holy book in order to lead the Sikhs in their daily life and to prevent futile principles and rituals from creeping into it. Moreover, Prithi Chand the elder brother of the Guru had composed his own Bani and had mixed it with the Bani of Gurus. So the Guru felt the need of collecting the entire Bani in the form of a Granth in order to keep it pure. Pointing to another reason, Dr. Banerjee writes that meditation was necessary in Sikh religion and for this collection of the Verses of Gurus became all the more essential.

Keeping in view the above factors, the Guru started compiling the Adi Granth. He obtained bani of the previous Gurus from Baba Mohan son of Guru Amar Dass. After collecting this material he built a beautiful place at Amritsar which later on was named "Ramsar". The Bani of many Bhakats was also included in this holy book. The details of the hymns of different Gurus and Bhakats can be summed up as under :

1. Sri Guru Nanak Dev 974
2. Sri Guru Angad Dev 63
3. Sri Guru Amar Dass 869
4. Sri Guru Ram Das 638
5. Sri Guru Arjan Dev 2312

(Afterwards 115 hymns of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur were also included). Besides, the Hymns of Hindu and Muslim Bhaktas namely-Bhakt Kabir, Baba Farid, Trilochan, Ravi Das, Dhanna, Nam Dev, Jai Dev, Bhikan, Sian, Pipa Rama Nand, Parma Nand, Sadna and Surdas were also included. The composition of some bards are also included in the Adi Granth, the ballads written by Saatta and Balwand may be mentioned here especially.

**Contents :** The Adi-Granth is an authoritative scripture containing the teachings of Guru Nanak and his successors and other Bhakts whose teachings were identical with the Sikh religion. Its aim is to assist men in finding out the truth and to appreciate those who meditated and attained the truth. The Guru have repeated the same ideas many times because it was style of the day.

#### **The Historical Importance of Sri Guru Granth Sahib**

The compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib is historic event. Firstly, it made the Sikhs feel their independent identity. Khushwant Singh, notes that despite all the honour and devotion, it is not a substance like the idol of Hindu temple. The Sikhs venerate it because it constitutes the preachings of their Gurus.

Macauliffe, in this connection, writes that one line composed by any prophet of the important religions of the world is not available. Whatever they preached is known to us through traditions or others writings, Principles written by Pythagoras, if any, have not reached us. We come to know about socrates through Plato.etc. The founder of Christianity too, did not present his Gospel in writing, regarding it, we have to trust the writings of Mathew,etc. The teachings of Budha and Confucius were collected by their disciples. Prophet Mohammad too did not write the Quran in his own hand. The whole material was collected by his Caliphs and devotees. But Guru Granth Sahib is the only holy book in which the writings of the religious leaders are in fact in the original form without

any adulteration.

Now coming to another feature of if the study of Sri Guru Granth Sahib also reveals the social, moral political and economic life of the period. There are stanzas in the Granth Sahib relating to the political life of the period. For example, the account of Babur's atrocities of Emnabad in particular is found nowhere else.

Similarly we get knowledge regarding the living conditions of the people and their means of livelihood. Likewise we find some information about the economic life of the people. Thus it may be concluded that the Adi Granth is an important historical document.

From the above work it can be deduced that in reality. Guru Arjan Dev's reforms and other works had the same goal as Guru Nanak had, that is, to create an ideal man in every field of life.

#### **Self Check Exercise**

- (1) (i) Guru Angad's actual name was .....
- (ii) Guru Angad remained Guru From 1539 to .....A.D.
- (iii) Guru Amar Das born at vaillage .....
- (2) (i) What was the name of Guru Angad's wife ?
- (ii) Who was the founder of Manji system ?
- (iii) Who laid the foundation of Guru Ramdaspur or Chakk- Guru ?
- (iv) Who was the Successor of Guru Ram Das ?
- (3) Mark ( ) the correct statement :
  - (i) Humayun went to Khadur Sahib to get the blessings of :
    - (a) Guru Amar Das (b) Guru Angad.
  - (ii) Who built the Boali at Goindwal ?
    - (a) Guru Angad (b) Guru Amar Das.

#### **Key to Answers**

- (1) (i) Lehna (ii) 1552 (iii) Basarke
- (2) (i) Khivi (ii) Amar Das (iii) Ram Das (iv) Guru Arjan Dev
- (3) (i) b. (ii) b.

#### **Check up your position**

- Excellent : Above 6 correct answers. Good 5-6 correct answers.  
 Satisfactory : 4 correct answers. Unsatisfactory Below 4 correct answers.

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**LESSON NO. 1.4**

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**TRANSFORMATION OF SIKHISM : GURU HARGOBIND SAHIB  
(1606 A.D. 1644 A.D.)**

**His Organisation Changes:**

According to Macauliffe the dying message which Guru Arjan gave for his son was, "Let him sit fully armed on the throne and maintain an army to the best of his ability." Guru Hargobind fully realised, at the time of his pontification that if Sikhism was to survive, the Sikhs, the saints had to be converted into saint soldiers. According to some Sikh records Guru Hargobind delivered a fiery speech at the time of his pontification in which he demanded youth, arms and horses from his followers instead of money.

He asked the Sikhs not to fear any body though their number was small. He quoted that a small spark of fire could burn the whole jungle to ashes. According to Sikh chroniclers, the Guru rained instructions like clouds in Sawan and the Sikhs flourished under it like thirsty rice fields. He wanted that the Sikhs should lead a pious and righteous life and worship the 'Name' on the one hand and on the other they should be ready to defend their hearths and homes against the Mughal tyrants by the use of arms.

Bhai Budha, the veteran Sikh, clothed Guru Hargobind in new raiment and applied Tialk on his forehead as mark of succession of Guruship. According to the usual custom, he placed before him a 'Seli' (a woollen cord worn as necklace or twisted round the head by the former Gurus) and a turban to wear them. But Guru Hargobind putting them aside, said to the head- priest Bhai Budha "My Seli shall be a sword belt and I shall wear my turban with a royal aigrette."

**Adoption of Miri and Piri :** Trumpp has rightly pointed out that Guru Arjan Dev's martyrdom : brought about a complete transformation of Sikhism. Beginning towards this policy can be traced right from the Guru Hargobind's succession ceremony when the Guru asked for the double swords belt in place of *seli*, a woollen

cord; and accordingly he was to retain two swords- Miri (emblem of temporal power), and Piri(emblem of spiritual power). He vowed to lead his Sikhs both in temporal and religious affairs, and that his dress would include all the emblems of Kingship.

Guru put on the military uniform after the swearing in ceremony was over. He gave out a lavish dinner to the local citizens and disciples. Thus Guru was a genius, who planned to combine sound mind in a sound body. He gave his disciples military training and the preaching of the religion simultaneously in order to prepare his Sikhs for self defence. Guru spent major part of his day in hunting and outdoor activities. According to Dabistan-i-Mazahib, the changed ends also changed the activities of the Guru and his Sikhs. And by virtue of the changes brought about in their activities, the diet also underwent some changes. For example, Guru not only allowed his Sikhs to take meat, he rather encouraged them in this direction.

**Expansion of the New Policy :** Most important step in giving practical shape to the new policy was that he ordered his Sikhs to send “Daswandh” in the form of weapons, horses etc. instead of cash. His other steps were :

**National Awakening :** The people were assigned the duty of awaking the slumbering nation. Besides, the war ballads and the recitation of Asa-Di-Var were sung in Harmandir Sahib both in the morning and evening. He appointed Natha and Abdulla Mal to recite stories of adventure and bravery. At night time the Sikhs used to sing the hymns from the holy Granth with the raised voices with alighted torches and beating of the drum and walked around Harmandir. This added to the religious fervour of the Sikhs.

**Raising of Army :** Now many people came to Guru to serve under him. Out of them, Guru employed 50 youngmen as his bodyguards, another 500 joined them afterwards from Majha, Doaba and Malwa. They promised him their heads in return for boarding, Lodging and religious instructions. He provided them with horses and weapons and gave them military training. In all he made five battalions, and each battalion had a commander. Subsequently number went on increasing. It should also be noted that some deserters and adventures also swelled the ranks. Soon guru had a stable of 800 horses and the strength of his bodyguards increased to

300. Besides, 60 gunners were always at his back and call. According to Dabistan-i-Mazahib in all, a contingent of 500 volunteers were always prepared to lay down their lives for the Guru. In addition, a Pathan contingent was also raised and put under Painsa Khan. When all got worried about the huge expenditure of the above army, Guru Hargobind Sahib, quoting Guru Arjan, said, "It is God who provides food to all the creatures."

**Guru's Life according to the New Policy :** The innovations necessitated many changes in Guru's daily life also. His day began with morning rituals. There after he delivered religious instruction in Harmandir Sahib. After taking rest for sometime he went out for hunting with his hounds, tigers and hawks etc.

**Construction of the Akal Takhat :** He erected 'Akal Takhat' in front of Harmandir. There he dispensed justice, received gifts, checked the accounts and issued orders to his followers. Thus he made a rare and no less pleasant combination of spiritual and temporal (wordly) matters. He was himself the law maker and the dispenser of justice. Thus, it may be inferred that he trained his Sikhs to be self-reliant.

**Fortification of Amritsar :** For defending his disciples, he undertook the fortification of Amritsar after consolidating his new policy. A protection wall was raised around Amritsar and therein a fort Lohgarh was also built. Weapons were stored in this fort. Training in the methods of war as also other war preparations continued.

**Justification of New Policy :** The New Policy led to serious doubts and vague misgivings in the mind of his mother, Baba Budha, Bhai Gurdas and the other Sikhs. They could not understand his ways but nonetheless they had absolute faith in his uprightness. When some masands feared a war as a result of his New Policy, Guru gave them a valiant advice of being brave enough to punish the tyrants.

However, some historians have also misinterpreted his military activities. They opine that politics and power distracted him from spiritual activities. But on the contrary, I.B. Banerjee is of the opinion that his father's martyrdom compelled him to take up arms. Likewise late Dr. Ganda Singh and Principal Teja Singh also hold that his new policy was not opposed to the spiritual progress of the Sikhs. If

we analyse the events of his life, it becomes lucidity clear that he never gave up spiritualism. He preached religion from the day he was freed from Gwalior fort (where he was jailed) till the death of Jahangir. When Guru had a peaceful time with Jahangir, he went round many places to establish centres for the propagation of Sikhism. Nothing could deter him from resorting to sword as he had irresistible desire to fight against tyranny. The sword was only a means to that final end. On the other hand, previous Gurus also had expressed similar views. For example Guru Nanak had provoked people to rise against tyranny. It was he who had made a beginning in this direction. As a result the Sikhs had become sturdy enough to fight any torture of the Government. Now Guru Hargobind preached them to die, than to be tortured and thus self-defence became religious practice with the Sikhs.

To conclude, it is wrong to say that Guru Hargobind adopted a New Policy. In fact, his policy was to create strong bodies to protect strong minds. He worked under the same policy as had been preached by Guru Nanak-The First Master.

### **IMPRISONMENT OF GURU HARGOBIND**

**Causes :** while Guru Arjan's martyrdom had proved a turning point in the history of Sikhism. Guru Hargobind's New Policy added to Jahangir's anger. He could not reconcile with the New Policy of Guru Hargobind. And his sovereign status was more intolerable to him than the popularity of Guru Arjan Dev. He was aware with the latest activities of the Guru and wanted to uproot this infant church of the Sikhs. Another factor that provoked this hostility to the Guru was the fanaticism of those Muslims who had been bitter about the liberal religious policy of Akbar. As Jahangir wanted to make amends, he became popular with the Sunnis. Since the Guru was known as the most popular non-Muslim leader of India, therefore, he was chosen to bear the brunt.

According to one version Chandu after Guru Arjan's martyrdom had tried unsuccessfully to bring round Guru Hargobind to marry his daughter. This made him to poison Jahangir against the Guru. When Jahangir fell ill, he conspired with an astrologer to tell Jahangir that he could be cured of his illness if he lodged the most religious man in jail to do penance. This was a direct hint upon the Guru. Jahangir imprisoned Guru Hargobind in the fort of Gwalior.

However, Cunningham has given two different reasons. Firstly, the Guru had not paid that money to the soldiers which he received from Jahangir (this view is based on such accounts that the Guru had acted as a commander of Jahangir's force in the Punjab for some time). Secondly, it was the non-payment of the fine imposed on his father. Both reasons are invalid. Guru had never been an employee of Jahangir. And the 'fine' theory is unhistorical and untenable in history. Mohsin Fani's account seems more reliable because, he says that Jahangir did not like Hargobind's policy of armed defence. So on the pretext of extorting the fine from the Guru, he imprisoned him in the fort of Gwalior.

**Period of Imprisonment :** Historians have held different views about Guru's period of imprisonment. Traditional history puts it as forty days. Mohsin Fani says that he remained in prison for 12 years. I.B. Banerjee says that Guru, at the most, remained in Gwalior fort for five years. But Dr. Ganda Singh and principal Teja Singh say that it can't be more than two years. Guru Hargobind's children were born between 1613 and 1621. Before this time, he might have been busy in erecting Akal Takhat, Lohgarh fort and preparing the Sikhs for a fight. It is difficult to agree that Guru could be jailed after 1621, because, according to Mohsin Fani himself, Guru had friendly relation with Jahangir in his later life. So, it is difficult to ascertain the exact period of Guru's imprisonment in view of the different versions of the historians, but it is certain that the period of confinement was not very long not even 5 years.

A distinct feature of the Guru's imprisonment was that he made Jahangir to introduce some jail reforms especially in the diet provided to the prisoners. However, the Guru was allowed to receive his meals from outside.

**Release :** According to Macauliffe Guru was released from jail due to two reasons. Firstly, Jahangir was haunted by nightmares and secondly Wazir Khan had convinced him of Guru's innocence. Dr. Narang maintains that Mian Mir's intercession on behalf of the Guru also had a desired result. Ultimately, Jahangir reviewed his previous acts and released the Guru. After that Guru maintained cordial relation with the Emperor. As a consequence it is said that Chandu was handed over to the Sikhs for due punishment. Mohsin

Fani says that Emperor Jahangir offered Guru Hargobind Sahib, a Mansab of 700 horses and asked him to exercise supervisory control over the Punjab but it is not agreed to by the Sikh sources.

### **GURU'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPREAD OF SIKHISM**

His peaceful relation with Jahangir helped the Guru to go to Pilibhit, Doaba and Kashmir for the propagation of the Sikh religion. From Amritsar he went to Kartarpur. After a stay of seven months at Kartarpur, he went to the town of Hargobindpur and thereafter he came back to Amritsar. Soon after he decided to go to Pilibhit because a preacher, namely, Almasi who had been working for the spread of Sikhism in Pilibhit since the time of Guru Amar Das was now being troubled by the Sidhas and Gorkh Nathas. Guru went in person there and set everything right. Then the Guru returned to the Punjab. At this time a problem arose in Kashmir. Many people who had been tortured at the hands of the government went to the Guru. Guru put a full stop to the increasing conversion to Islam in Kashmir by himself going over there. In Kashmir he appointed Bhai Sewadas as the Chief preacher. Thereafter he had useful discussion with Shah-Dula in Gujrat and with Samrath Ramdas in Srinagar (a village near Hardwar). However his work of preaching was suspended for sometime, after the death of Jahangir in 1627.

### **SIKH-MUGHAL WARS (1631 A.D. TO 1634 A.D.)**

**Causes :** Due to Dara's (Shah Jahan's son) friendship with the Guru, good relation prevailed between the Sikhs and the Mughal Government, because Dara exercised good influence on his father. But religious fanaticism of the Muslims soon resulted in Mughal Sikh confrontation and cause for which were; Firstly, the main cause for these wars the adoption of New Policy by Guru Hargobind Sahib. Secondly, Kaulan, the daughter of Qazi Rustam Khan was a devotee of the Guru. The Qazi did not like the ways of his daughter and began to ill-treat her. Mian Mir's disciple Shah Abdulla helped her to reach the Guru, where Guru made separate arrangement for her stay. Qazi filed a complaint with Jahangir which was not heeded to as Jahangir had very cordial relation with the Guru. When Shah Jahan became the Emperor, it was revived. Thirdly, Miharban (Prithi's son) and Karam Chand (son of Chandu) also engaged themselves in provoking Shah Jahan. Fourthly, Shah

Jahan was Sunni and followed the policy of religious intolerance. He ordered a mosque in place of the Baoli in Lahore that had been constructed by Guru Arjan Dev. The Sikhs could not tolerate it.

**Battle of Amritsar (1631) :** Thus, while the Mughal-Sikh relations were becoming progressively strained the immediate cause of the war was provided by Shah Jahan. The narration goes that Shah Jahan went on a hunting expedition to Gumtala (at the site of present district courts of Amritsar). Emperor's hawk, came to Guru's camp. Sikhs got hold of the hawk and refused to give it back, when emperor's soldiers came to recover it. On this Mukhlis Khan was ordered by the Emperor to march against the Sikh with a force of 7000 soldiers, But the Mughals were defeated in the Battle of Wadali near Amritsar. After this, second Mughal force of 15,000 was sent under Mukhlis Khan which again met with no better fate.

**Battle of Hargobindpur :** After the battle of Amritsar Guru Hargobind left Amritsar. He shifted to Hargobindpur near Kartarpur and began to live there. But the revenue officer of that place Bhagwan Das, was not on good terms with the Sikhs. He confiscated the land of Guru. At this, the Sikh murdered him. To avenge upon the Sikhs, his son, Rattan Chand, appealed to the Faujdar of Jalandhar. The Faujdar himself came to help Rattan Chand but could not succeed and was slain in the battlefield.

**Battle of Lahira (1631 A.D.) :** The immediate cause of this battle was that Mughal had waylaid two horses brought by Bakht Mal and Tara Chand for the Guru. Bhai Bidhi Chand was sent to bring back these horses which he recovered very tactfully. As a consequence a strong force of 22,000 was despatched under the leadership of Lalla Beg, Qamar Beg, Abdulla Khan, Salim Khan etc. But this force was routed completely. *Panth Parkash* puts its date in December 1631 A.D.

**Battle of Kartarpur (1634 A.D.) :** Painsa Khan who had been for quite a good time, a faithful servant of the Guru got annoyed with him and conspired with the enemies of the Guru. The Emperor sent Mughal troops under the command of Painsa Khan. He was killed and the Mughal forces were completely routed.

**Significance of the Sikh-Mughal Battles :**

Sikhs victories in the above battles gave a great confidence to them. Mughals military weakness became obvious. At the same

time, it was also established that the guru, though of peaceful disposition, was a remarkable general when forced to fight. A similar view is also expressed by Mohsin Fani that Guru Hargobind was a great general.

#### **THE LAST TEN YEARS OF THE GURU (1635 A.D. To 1644 A.D.)**

After these battles Guru devoted himself to the propagation of Sikh religion. Luckily, the Raja of Kahlur donated some land to him. There he established the town of Kiratpur and for the remaining ten years, he preached Sikhism from there. He sent Bhai Bidhi Chand to Bengal and Bhai Gurdas to Kabul. He also entrusted the work of preaching the Sikh religion in various parts of the country. It seems Baba Gurditta with Guru's concurrence appointed Phul, Almast, Gonda etc. as head preachers in various parts of the country. It is noteworthy that Baba Gurditta discharged his duties excellently till his death in 1638 A.D. Guru chose Har Rai, the younger son of Baba Gurditta, to succeed him because he did not consider any of his sons worthy of becoming the Guru. It may be pointed out that the Guru had five sons. Baba Gurditta, Ani Rai and Baba Atal had died during the time of the Guru. Of the two, then alive Suraj Mal was too wordly, while Tegh Bahadur was too unwordly. So Har Rai was nominated by him as his successor.

#### **ESTIMATE OF GURU HARGOBIND**

Historians have not properly understood the work of Guru Hargobind and try to belittle his position by saying that Guru Hargobind left the path of spiritualism which had been followed by his predecessors. They argue that he did not contribute, even a single hymn to the holy Granth and faltered in his religious duties, and instead, engaged himself in wars, etc. But this view is not correct. Indu Bhushan Banerjee, after making a thorough objective study of Guru Hargobind's life, says that Guru Hargobind is a much misunderstood man. On the contrary, he adds that he was a Guru, teacher and a protector of his disciples. His policy of Miri and Piri is also commendable when we analyse the circumstances in which he followed his new policy and the hint of which was given by Guru Arjan in his parting message. In fact he was convinced that if the pious followers of Guru Nanak were to flourish, they must learn to bear arms in self-defence.

But it should not be misconstrued that he gave up the old

path followed by the first five Gurus. He continued their work and did take some steps in this directions. As studied earlier, he sent his representatives on preaching mission to Bengal and Kabul and also assigned the work of preaching to his son Gurditta.

He had a lovable personality . He was not only loved by his devotees but also by the Rajas who styled him *Bandhi Chhor Baba*. We can well imagine the love of his followers from the following incident. Two Sikhs in spite of Guru Har Rai's instruction threw themselves on the burning pyre of Guru Hargobind. That apart, even the most exalted Muslim saint of the time, Mian Mir held the Guru in great esteem.

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**LESSON NO. 1.5**

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**GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1664 A.D. TO 1675 A.D.)**

**Introduction :** Two events of the history of the Sikhs in the 17th century are very important. They not only deteriorated the Sikh-Mughal relations but also gave distinct turn to the history of the Sikhs. Out of these , the first took place in 1606 A.D. When Jahangir executed Guru Arjan Dev on a false ground of his having been seditious. Though it was an insignificant event for the Mughal Emperor, but it was undoubtedly a turning point in the history of the Sikhs. It had a marked effect on the Sikhs. The Sikhs, hitherto a band of Bhakats, started bearing arms under the direction of Guru Hargobind. This policy was not abjured by Guru Har Rai (1644 A.D. to 1661 A.D.) He maintained 2200 cavaliers for self-defence. After Guru Harkrishan's brief pontificate (1661 A.D. to 1664 A.D.) the second event took place in 1675 A.D. when Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed by Aurangzeb on account of his refusal to embrace Islam, The result was that the Sikhs under the able and active guidance of Guru Gobind Singh began to pursue the policy of Guru Hargobind with redoubled vigour and enthusiasm. In pursuance of the policy, in 1699 the guru administered 'Amrit' to the Sikhs in order to consolidate them into a nation, surcharged with the spirit of, extirpation of the tyrants and upholding the virtuous.

**Birth, Childhood and Education**

Guru Tegh Bahadur was born at Amritsar in April, 1621 A.D. He was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. He received his early education under the supervision of his father. Apart from learning Gurmukhi and Hindi scriptures, he received military training as well.

At the age of 13, he took part in battle of Kartarpur, fought between the Mughals and the Sikhs. This event clearly establishes that he was not a man of retiring disposition though it appears so from the study of his hymns. His part in the said war was so eminent that Guru Hargobind was pleased to confer on him the title of 'Tegh Bahadur' (expert in the use of sword) by which he grew famous in history.

However with the passage of time, he developed ascetic's attitude and absorbed himself in the meditation of 'Nam'. Finding a change in the nature of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Hargobind did not nominate him as his successor.

### **Assumption of the Guruship**

Guru Harkishan died on March 30, 1664 A.D. at a very young age of eight years. Guru Harkishan, on the eve of his death, due to his illness, could not mention clearly the name of his successor. So many claimants to Guruship appeared because he had only uttered Baba Bakala. This fact also encouraged the pretenders to raise their claims to the Guruship. According to a scholar, twenty-two Sodhis (as Guruship had become hereditary in Sodhi dynasty) set up their gaddis at Bakala and each began to vouchsafe the legitimacy of his claim. One of them was Dhir Mal who adopted all means, fair and foul to see his project through. But Makhan Shah Lubana by discovering the true Guru, foiled his efforts. Dhir Mal also conspired to kill the Guru but he did not succeed. While the false claimants were exposed, the Sikh's reverence for the Guru increased.

### **His Difficulties and the Foundation of Anandpur**

After becoming Guru, Tegh Bahadur did not deem it fit to stay at Bakala any longer. He left for Amritsar to pay a visit to Har-Mandir, but Masands shut up the doors of the temple and did not allow Guru Tegh Bahadur to enter the precincts of the temple. They feared if Guru Tegh Bahadur assumed the charge of the temple, they would not be able to appropriate the money offered by the devotees. Guru Tegh Bahadur, however, did not wish to clash with the priests, so he went to Kiratpur without paying his homage. The event in itself represents many things; firstly, Masands had grown irresponsible and greedy. Secondly, the rival claimants did not stop their conspiracy against the Guru even after he had been declared by the Sikhs their legitimate Guru. Thirdly, the sincere Sikhs began to feel seriously about the ignoble attitude of the masands and this was why that Guru Gobind Singh ultimately took the momentous step of abolishing the Masand system.

Even at Kiratpur, Guru Tegh Bahadur did not have peace. Dhir Mal and his accomplices went on troubling the Guru. The Guru thereupon purchased a piece of land from the Raja of Kahlur for Rupees two thousand and two hundred, and in 1665 A.D. founded a

new city which he named Anandpur and proceeded on preaching tours to various places. He visited Kurukshetra, Benaras and Patna. When Guru proceeded from Anandpur to Patna, Aurangzeb had completed seven years of his rule, Aurangzeb had killed Dara and Murad. He had imprisoned Shah Jahan. He adopted an orthodox religious policy which aimed at converting land of *Dar-ul-harb* into *Dar-ul-Islam* (land of Islam). He prohibited the construction of new temples. There was no freedom of worship for the non-Muslims, particularly Hindus. Obviously the Punjab could not escape the effects of this policy and large number of Hindus were forced to embrace Islam.

Guru Tegh Bahadur considered all this negation of the rights of man in the world of God. He made up his mind to educate the masses so that they should live in a society, where there would be none to frighten anybody and none to be frightened.

#### **Religious Tours of Guru Tegh Bahadur**

The Guru visited many places in the Malwa and Bangar regions of the Punjab. He visited Ghanauli, Ropar, Dhantori etc, in the Bangar. Wherever the Guru went, he attended to the needs of people. Apart from his efforts to purge the people of superstitions and their accretion to non-essential things in religion, he encouraged them to sink wells, baolis and Nallahs, nurture cows, rare good breed of buffaloes and start free kitchen. Besides the Guru made efforts to develop aversion among the people for grave-worship and use of intoxicants. No wonder the teaching of the Guru caused so much awakening among the people, that they began to re-think and re-appraise the established customs and systems in the right perspective.

This development created suspicion in governmental circles with regard to the motive of the Guru. Sensing the changes in the political mood of the government, the state official reported against the Guru.

Almost all the western scholars such as Forester, Malcolm, and Cunningham agree that it was the mis-reporting of Guru's enemies that Aurangzeb passed an order for Guru's arrest.

According to Latif the Guru was actually brought to Delhi where he was imprisoned in the house of the Raja of Jaipur. The Raja interceded on his behalf with the Emperor, and assured the

emperor that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a peaceful person and aspired for no political power and had resolved upon visiting the holy places on a pilgrimage.

### **Religious Tours outside the Punjab**

Immediately after this, Guru made up his mind to move away from the Punjab, Delhi and Agra. Two reasons prompted him to do so. Firstly, he anticipated fresh troubles from the rival claimants. Secondly, the anti non-Muslims policy of the Emperor demanded that he should have contacted the Sikhs of far flung areas to ensure that their moral fibre did not suffer any set back. Accordingly, he set out on his missionary tours to re-invigorate the faith of disciples and acquaint the people in general with his ideology.

The Guru after staying for some time at Agra, proceeded to Etawah, then to Kanpur and Fatehpur. In January, 1666 A.D. the Guru alongwith his entourage-reached Allahabad. Mata Gujri was also with him. From Allahabad the Guru reached Patna. On the way there fell the stream Karmnash. It was so named because the people, engrossed in superstitions, believed that any one who had a dip in it was sentenced to misfortune. As the Guru was always ready to expose the futility of such beliefs, had a dip and when nothing unfortunate happened, the people were surprised and disowned the long held superstition.

Towards the end of May, 1666, the Guru reached Patna. Here his followers made an excellent arrangement for the stay of Guru Tegh Bahadur and his family. Having spent the early months of the rainy season at Patna during which he organised the missionary work in Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and other neighbouring areas, the Guru started his future journey, leaving his wife at Patna.

From Patna the Guru proceeded to Monghyr and then to Dacca, a great centre of Sikh missionary activities. It was there that the Guru received the welcome news of birth of his son on December 26, 1666. He wrote letter of thanks to the Sangat of Patna for looking after his child.

### **MEETING WITH RAJA RAM SINGH AND GURU'S TOUR OF ASSAM**

After Dacca, the Guru decided to have a tour of Assam. There were two causes, firstly he wished to spread the tenants of Sikhism; and second was the request of Raja Ram Singh to take up the said tour. Since Assam was far-flung territory from the seat of Mughal

rule, it had never remained under the complete control of the Mughals. Aurangzeb, true to his imperial instincts, appointed there a very strong, capable and brave Governor named Mir Jamula. As long he lived, none mustered courage to rise in revolt, but after his death in 1663 A.D. the situation underwent a change. The Ahom, an important tribe of the Assamese, expanding their territory, cleared Assam of the Mughals. In 1667 A.D. the Ahoms captured Guhati and this naturally enraged Aurangzeb, who immediately resolved to despatch a strong contingent to oust them. To accomplish the task, which was of course very difficult, due to following two reasons: Firstly, the climate of Assam was not congenial for the soldiers to keep fit, and secondly the Assamese were feared because of their powers in black magic.

To ward off the evil spirits and to keep up the morale of the soldiers Raja Ram Singh who had great reverence for the home of Nanak and regarded the Guru a rich repository of spiritual power requested the Guru to accompany him to Assam. The Guru agreed and both of them proceeded to Assam. This happened in the middle of December 1668 A.D. The Guru camped at Dhubri, while Raja Ram Singh camped at Rangati, the Mughal outpost near the frontier of Assam. Soon after good sense prevailed on the contending parties and before any battle could take place, a settlement was arrived at by the good offices of the Guru Tegh Bahadur. According to it, the old boundary was maintained.

In token of complete harmony, guru invited the soldiers of both armies to join together and filling their shields with earth raised a mound at dhubri in memory of Guru Nanak. At the foot of hills at Dhubri, there stands a Sikhs temple on the bank of Brahmaputra.

### **Guru Return's to Punjab**

In the meanwhile he received the news of the persecution of the Hindus at the hands of Aarangzeb who was wedded to the policy of converting the whole population of India to Islam. To compel the Hindus to fall in the line with his wishes, Aurangzeb gave up the liberal policy of Akbar. He levied *Jazia* and pilgrimage taxes on the Hindus in order to tell them that they were inferior subjects. They were also disallowed the freedom of worship. In these circumstances the Guru decided to come back to Anandpur. It seems almost sure that he did not want to stay away from his people when they were

suffering as a result of Aurangzeb's policy and he must have felt that his place was with them. All the available evidence show that the Guru was in great hurry to reach Anandpur and that was the reason why from Benaras onward the Guru took the shorter route. Even he did not take his family along with him. His family joined him at Anandpur some time after.

### **EXECUTION OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR**

**Causes :** During all his religious tours the Guru identified himself with the masses and their sorrows and sufferings and did whatever he could do to provide relief to them. He felt that only those minds which were strong in moral fibre and spirit could become uncoquerable and they alone could realise the higher destiny. Thus, they were capable of struggling against the dehumanisation of the Indian society by the then Government. Accordingly, the Guru exhorted the people to hold up spiritual and ethical values, sink differences based upon caste and birth distinctions and shed off all type of fear. The Guru's motto was 'frighten and fear none'. The obvious effect of this ideology of guru was that the Guru became very popular among the people including many well off Muslims.

The Guru's programme as discussed above could not be tolerated by Aurangzeb because it went contrary to his policies. Aurangzeb wanted to follow **Sunnis** fanaticism against the Hindus and other non-Muslims, to achieve his objects, he was using all means. But the Guru was preaching that one should not go against one's conscious and fear none whatever might happen.

Under the circumstances, the clash was inevitable. Mughal spies and officers getting a clue from the mood of the emperor to report him the distorted versions of the activities of the Guru. the result was that Aurangzeb became doubly sure of the dangerous implication of the Guru's propaganda.

There was another factor also which led to the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Marathas had already risen in revolt against the Mughal Government. The *Jats* of Bharatpur were also up in arms and were harassing the Government. Aurangzeb had just subdued *Satnamis*. Now he did not want that an organised body should throw a challenge and this was the reason why he did not want that the Sikhs, hithero peaceful should rise in the revolt in the Punjab.

Keeping in mind the above, it is obvious, that Aurangzeb's wrath must have fallen on the Guru, who was the acknowledged leader of the majority of the people in Punjab.

But immediate cause of the Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur was that he, in response to the appeal of the Brahmins of Kashmir, made up his mind to face the challenge of Aurangzeb. The events preceded as under: In 1671, Sher Afghan was appointed to govern Kashmir. When the Firmans of Aurangzeb were disobeyed, made tyranny was let loose on the Brahmins of Kashmir to such an extent that (as the tradition goes) Sher Afghan Khan sent to the Emperor bundles of sacred threads (Janeau) of Brahmins he had either converted or killed. It should be noted here that Aurangzeb was keen to convert Kashmir into a land of Islam. Brahmins finding themselves helpless decided to wait upon the Guru and request him to save them. Accordingly they under the leadership of a Kashmiri scholar named Kirpa Ram reached Anandpur. The Guru listened to their woeful tale and directed the pandits to go to the Emperor and tell him that if the Guru was converted, his example was sure to be followed by the entire Hindu population. The Brahmins conveyed the words of the Guru to the Emperor and he at once agreed to the suggestion because he was fully aware of the fact that people generally followed their religious leader. Accordingly, the Emperor summoned the Guru to his presence to prevail upon him to embrace Islam.

Thus Guru Tegh Bahadur's sympathetic response to the appeal of the Brahmins and his readiness for supreme sacrifice in their cause was a thing unique in history. He was neither a Brahmin himself nor did he subscribe to their way of life which prescribed the wearing of sacred thread and putting distinctive marks on the forehead **Janeau** and **Tilak**. These had no place in Sikhism. The founder of Sikhism had not only refused to accept them himself in his early days and had also discarded them for his followers. But their forcible removal by Muslim fanatics and conversion of the Brahmins to Islam against their will were acts of great high handedness and abuse of political power. Thus the Guru protested against it through his sympathy with the helpless people. He was not against any one accepting Islam with a willing heart. It was

entirely the private concern. But if any one forcibly dragged him into it, it deserved according to Sikh ethics, to be protested against and remedied. Emperor Aurangzeb, however, took it in a different light. He had already no sympathy for Sikhism. Now Guru's sympathy with the idolatrous Brahmins added fresh fuel to the fire already smouldering in his mind.

According to the account given in the Bhatvahis the following were the circumstances under which the Guru was arrested and martyred. Aurangzeb issued order to the Governor of Lahore to have the Guru arrested, fettered and detained in prison. The Governor passed on the order to the faujdar of Sarhind, Dilawar Khan who in turn asked the circle kotwal of Ropar Nur Muthammad Mirza, in which jurisdiction lay Anandpur to arrest the Guru. The order was kept secret and when the Guru, accompanied by only a few Sikhs left Anandpur on July 11, 1675 and arrived at the village of Malikpur Ranghran near Ropar on his way to cross the river Sutlej for his onward journey, he was arrested by Mirza Nur Muhammad who later sent him to Sirhind where he seems to have been detained in prison for some three and a half months. After this he was sent to Delhi in an iron cage on receipt of parwana from the Imperial headquarters. He was executed on November 11, 1675 in Chandni Chowk obviously, he fell victim to the fanaticism of Aurangzeb.

The Guru's martyrdom was a unique event in the history of the Punjab as well as in the history of the Sikh religion. It focused the attention of the people of the people in the cause for which the Guru courted death, and since the cause was for the downtrodden and affected section of the people, he became extremely popular. Sikhs felt justly proud of the stand taken by their Guru.

**WAS THE EXECUTION OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR POLITICALLY  
MOTIVATED OR WAS IT ON ACCOUNT OF RELIGION?**

Cunningham and Trumpp state that the Guru was executed on account of his anti-state activities. Both the learned scholars have based their conclusion on the statement of Gulam Hussain in his book "Siar-ul-Mutakhrin. Gulam Hussain says, "Guru accompanied a contemporary Musalman, Hafiz Adam who was a faqir, belonging to the order of Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi, had gathered around him a great band of followers. Both of them made forcible exaction from the people in the Punjab. Guru Tegh Bahadur took money from the

Hindus and Hafiz Adam from Musalmans. The royal news writer wrote to the emperor that two faqirs, one Hindu and the other Muslim had taken to that practice. It would not be a surprise if with the increase of their influence they created troubles." Basing their conclusions on the above quoted statement, Trumpp and Pincot etc. opine that the Guru was executed on account of his political or anti-state activities. But we cannot give any credence to Gulam Hussain's note on account of following reasons. Firstly, the author is grossly misinformed as he gives Gwalior as the place of the execution of the Guru: secondly, the above book was produced one hundred years after the death of Guru and thirdly, the author seems to be prejudiced and has fabricated the story to justify Aurangzeb's action against the Guru. fourthly, the forcible exactions by the guru and Hafiz Adam are contrary to the facts. Guru Tegh Bahadur never did so. The reasons being: firstly, he was essentially a man of peaceful disposition, and secondly, he had no truck with Hafiz Adam who was probably exiled by Shah Jahan in 1642 with the order not to return to the east of river Attock and he had left for Mecca and Medina where he died in 1643 A.D.

Thus, we can conclude that the Guru was not executed for his anti-state activities. On the contrary, he was martyred because he had espoused the cause of religious freedom.

#### **IMPORTANCE OF GURU'S MARTYRDOM**

**1. Feeling of Revenge :** The Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur was an event of far reaching importance. It had a deep impact on the Sikhs and the Hindus alike. Gokal Chand Narang remarks that in his death the Guru surpassed anything that he had done in his life. Now he was known throughout India: was highly revered by the Rajput princes, and was actually worshiped by the peasantry of the Punjab, the whole Punjab began to burn with indignation and revenge.

**2. Birth of Khalsa :** To refer to the background, the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, a notable effect on Guru Hargobind, who ushered in a new policy of ordering his followers to bear arms. But the policy was not pursued with enthusiasm by Guru Har Rai and Guru Har Krishan. However the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur made it clear to the Sikhs that militarist outlook would have to be made a

part and parcel of the daily life of the Sikhs. Consequently, Guru Gobind Singh on the Baisakhi day of 1699 A.D. inaugurated a new order known as Khalsa, wherein it was made obligatory for every member to wear five symbols, known as viz, loose underwear, bracelets, swords, hair and comb. The Sikhs were exhorted by the Guru to lead active and fearless life.

**3. Protection of Hindu Religion :** The Guru's sacrifice was in the words of Guru Gobind Singh, for the protection of sacred thread-Jeneau and tilak, although the Guru regarded both those things as non-essential. The real reason was that the Guru did not like Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution and made sacrifice to arouse the people to resist the onslaughts of the ruling Mughals. The Guru's martyrdom awakened the dormant energies of the Hindus and they started opposing Islam instead of adopting it.

**4. Desire to become Sovereign became deep-rooted :** Guru Gobind Singh through propaganda and example brought home to the people that freedom was their birth-right and to ensure the acquisition of the political power is not something to be scorned. No doubt, Guru Gobind Singh did not establish any independent rule, but he did sow the seeds, working further Banda Bahadur sprouted it, the Misls manured the sapling of freedom with their sweat and blood and Ranjit Singh established an independent rule.

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**LESSON NO. 1.6**

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**Guru Gobind Singh : Creation of the Khalsa, His Achievements  
and Personality**

**Early Career of Guru Gobind Singh**

Guru Gobind Singh was born on 26th December, 1666 at Patna. He was the son of the 9th Guru Tegh Bahadur. His mother's name was Mata Gujri. At the time of his Birth his father had gone on a tour to Assam and as such maternal uncle Kirpal looked after him.

Since his birth, the Guru spent first six years of his life in Patna. Right from his childhood the Guru divided his playmates into two warring groups, and always the group headed by his friends and himself acted as the judge. Thus from the very childhood the Guru had developed the qualities of courage and bravery.

Guru Tegh Bahadur called back his family from Patna in 1673 A.D. thus young Gobind came to Anandpur Sahib. At Anandpur proper arrangements were made for his education. A Rajput, Bajar Singh trained the Guru in the manipulation of various arms. Pir Muhammad taught him Persian and Bhai Gurbaksh Singh taught him Gurmukhi. In addition, Guru also acquired proficiency in Hindi and Sanskrit.

In November, 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur was martyred under the order of Aurangzeb. Guru Gobind Singh then ascended to Guru Gaddi. As he had been roused by the martyrdom of his father, he decided to strike at the Mughal tyranny by infusing a new life in the down-trodden people.

**Two Periods of Guru Gobind Singh's Life :** Dr. Banerjee divided the career of Guru Gobind Singh from the time of his installation of the Gaddi to his death into the following two periods :

1. The Pre-Khalsa period 1675 A.D. to 1699 A.D.
2. The Post-Khalsa period 1699 A.D. to 1708 A.D.

**Pre-Khalsa Period (1675-1699 A.D.)**

**Guru's activities and achievements during this period were :-**

**Organisation of the Army at Anandpur :** In 1675 A.D., when Guru Gobind Singh ascended Gur Gaddi at Anandpur he was a mere child of 9 years at that time. But luckily at this time his guide was Kirpal ji, with whose help the Guru made efforts by creating

self-confidence, enthusiasm and determination among the oppressed people. To check Mughal tyranny, it was essential that the Guru should have a military might, and for this, he began with the task of establishing an army. The Guru sent directive in all directions that the Sikhs should adopt themselves in the art of wielding weapons and should send weapons to Anandpur also. The Sikhs enthusiastically carried out this order of the Guru and the latter was able to raise a big army. He also collected many types of weapons in his armoury. Kartar Singh mentions that the news of Guru's fondness for warlike pastimes soon spread all around. Persons whose fathers and grand-fathers had fought Guru Hargobind's battles flocked to the Darbar of the Guru. The Guru also got prepared a big drum, named *Ranjit Nagara*. This drum was beaten whenever the Guru went with his Sikhs on hunting.

The Guru remained in Anandpur for eight years. During this time he made his organisation stronger. According to Sir Lepel Griffin, the Guru organised the scattered Sikh people into a formidable confederacy even before he had completed thirty years. Till then he had devoted himself to learning and preparing for the self-imposed duties.

He became a keen sportsman and skilled in all feats of arms. The Guru also inspired his followers, propagated the ideal of non-oppression and fearlessness.

**Jealousy of Bhim Chand and other Hill Chiefs :** The Hill Chiefs were jealous of the Guru. Among them Bhim Chand, the ruler of Bilaspur, in whose territory Anandpur was situated, had become utterly hostile to the Guru. There were many reasons for this hostility. Firstly, Bhim Chand was against the military preparations of Guru Gobind Singh. Raja Bhim Chand visited Anandpur. The Guru gave him a big welcome and showed him the gifts which had been offered by his disciple, Raja Ratan Rai of Assam. Bhim Chand was wonder-struck to see all these things. He made up his mind to take by hook or crook, at least one of those presents, namely a white elephant. Raja Bhim Chand asked the Guru to loan the white elephant to him. But the Guru declined, because he knew his dishonest intentions.

**Shifting to Paonta Sahib :-** Being his subject, Guru Gobind Singh did not want to create any animosity with Bhim Chand. Further, the Mughal Emperor was also opposed to the Guru.

Therefore the Guru thought it proper to shift to a safer place for some time. At this time coincidentally Medni Parkash, the ruler of Nahan, invited the Guru to spend some time in his territory. Medni Parkash had invited the Guru due to the following reason : Firstly Medni Parkash was not on good terms with Fateh Shah, the ruler of Sirmur and now he had got alarmed on account of the proposed marriage of Fateh Shah's daughter with Bhim Chand's son. Secondly, Ram Rai and Fateh Shah had been growing better. Both were increasing their influence in the hilly areas. To counter the growing influence of Fateh Shah, Bhim Chand and Ram Rai, he (Medni Parkash) preferred to seek the support and friendship of the Guru. It seems that Medni Parkash had thought that the only person who could counter the religious influence of Ram Rai was Guru Gobind Singh.

In 1685 A.D., the Guru proceeded to Nahan . There he constructed a fort at Paonta, a beautiful spot on the bank of river Jamuna. It would be proper now to discuss the important activities of the Guru at Paonta Sahib. He got all the Sanskrit epics translated into Punjabi. Ram Chandra's killing of Ravana and Krishna's destruction of Kansa were the favourite sagas of the Guru. Through such stories, the Guru created a deep impression upon his followers. The people were now convinced that they must rise to counter the tyranny. After this psychological revolution the Guru shifted his attention towards the Physical strengthening of the people. By doing so, he gradually converted his followers into an accomplished army.

On account of these activities of the Guru the Hill chiefs, Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur in particular, started feeling jealous of him.

#### **Battle of Bhangani**

**Causes :** Military activities of the Guru and his organised army frightened the Hill chiefs and Aurangzeb. Gulam Hussain, the author of '*Styar-ul-Mutakhrin*' writes that Guru Gobind Singh had established army units which were being headed by experienced generals. At this Hill Chiefs urged Aurangzeb for strict military action against the Guru. Explaining it further, Cunningham writes that the suspicion of the Hill Chiefs and Aurangzeb got confirmed when the Guru admitted into his army 500 Pathans who had been dismissed from the Mughal army. Aurangzeb considered it an outright rebellion. Being far away in Deccan, Aurangzeb personally

could not take part in the battle against the Guru. But he assured every help to the Hill chiefs against the Guru.

The Hill Chiefs felt that the rising power of the Guru could be a menace to their Kingdom. The result was that Bhim Chand in alliance with Fateh Shah and some other Hill Chiefs raised a big army against the Guru. The battle was fought in 1688 at Bhangani, a small village near Paonta. Pir Budhu Shah of Sadhaura sided with the Guru in this battle. As the battle started, many Pathans of Guru's army, defected and for a while it looked that the field would remain with the Hill chiefs. However, they were defeated. The Guru gained a unique victory. He has given a pictographic account of this battle in his '*Bachitra Natak*.'

**Significance of the Battle of Bhangani :** This battle stands as a very significant mile-stone in the career of Guru Gobind Singh. After this victory to the Guru, a panic spread in the camp of the hill chiefs. The Sikhs exploited situation to the best of their advantage and strengthened their organisation. Dr. Ganda Singh and Principal Teja Singh opine that though this battle did not erase the existence of the hill chiefs but it is undeniable that he victory added enormously to the prestige of the Sikh army. Now hill chiefs, particularly Raja Bhim Chand, fell in sphere of influence of the Guru. Again, it was the first battle of the Guru and a victory in it further confirmed the faith of the Guru in the righteousness of his policy.

#### **Battle of Nadaun (1690 A.D.)**

**Causes :** After the battle of Bhangani the Guru leaving Paonta Sahib came back to Anandpur. Here he thought of constructing forts for which purpose he had selected a few suitable sites. He constructed four forts namely Anandgarh, Lohgarh. Keshgarh and Fatehgarh. The Guru posted the best of his army that could handle various types of artillery in these forts. Seeing the increasing fame of the Guru Bhim Chand, the Raja of Bilaspur, thought it proper to adopt a policy of friendship instead of hostility. As time passed, friendship flowered into a powerful alliance. Besides Bhim Chand, many other Hill chiefs also joined this alliance.

**Immediate Cause of the battle :** Inspired by this alliance, the Hill chiefs raised a rebellion against the Mughal Emperor by

stopping to pay annual tribute. At this, the Mughal governor of Sirhind sent a strong army under Alif Khan against the hill chiefs. The hill chiefs also made full preparations to counter the imperial forces. The Guru also reached the battlefield with 500 troops to help the Hill Chiefs. A fierce battle was fought at Nadaun at a distance of 20 miles from Kangra. Guru Gobind Singh and hill chiefs fought bravely. Alif Khan fled the field and the battle came to an end. But many hill chief including Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur concluded peace with the Mughals. However, Guru and a few hill chiefs did not submit.

The Mughal Government sent many expeditions against the Guru but the Guru emerged victorious in all engagement. During this period Aurangzeb had been busy in Deccan. When he came to know about the debacle of the Mughal forces at the hands of the Guru, he immediately despatched Prince Muazzam, who reached Lahore. He sent a big army under the command of Mirza Beg against the enemy. In the beginning, Mirza got some success but ultimately he failed to crush the power of the Guru. Another reason of Mirza Beg's failure was the presence of Bhai Nand Lal in the court of Muazzam. He restrained the latter taking any strong step against the Guru. It is desirable to note here that Bhai Nand Lal was a great devotee of Guru Gobind Singh.

### **The Creation of the Khalsa**

In 1699 A.D. Guru Gobind Singh organised the Khalsa which stands as one of his most impressive achievement.

### **Causes**

**Decadence of the Masands :** Guru Gobind Singh was greatly pained to hear doleful stories of the extortionate practices and high-handed behaviour of the Masands. He was also grieved to notice the nefarious way in which they were undermining the discipline and cohesion. On the one hand, the Guru gave severe punishment to the degraded Masands, and on the other, to liberate his disciples from the influence of these Masands, he created the Khalsa. No place was given to the Masands in the new organisation.

**Oppressive attitude of Aurangzeb :** Aurangzeb was a fanatic Sunni and wanted to paint the religious map of India with the sole colour of Islam. He had demolished the temples of the Hindus, and had erected mosques on their places. He had imposed restrictions

on the religious customs and traditions of the Hindus. Further, the Hindus were declared ineligible for all important jobs in the Empire and were subjected to various other oppressions as well. In 1675 A.D., Guru Tegh Bahadur was martyred simply because he refused to embrace Islam. In order to counter the Mughal tyranny as also to protect the Hindu religion, Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa.

**Caste system of the Hindus** : Hindus were divided into many caste and sub-castes. The people of high castes, and Brahmins in particular hated the lower castes and perpetrated many social atrocities on them. A contemporary historian writes, "Pitiable plight of the Hindu masses, useless squabbles in the name of religion, religious tyranny of Aurangzeb, superstition and ignorance, all convinced the Guru that time had come when a prophet should rise and put a stop to these things." The circumstances at that time made him believe that he was the man who could save the people from degeneration. To pull the people out of this degeneration, the Guru created religious enlightenment and thus broke the shackles of doubts and superstitions. He endeavoured to create such a nation that could infuse new life in the weak, and organise the Sikhs into a strong nation of equals.

#### **Birth of the Khalsa**

Guru Gobind Singh called a grand assembly of his disciples at Anandpur in 1699 A.D., on the day of Baisakhi. In this assembly, 80,000 disciples assembled from different parts of India. When all had been seated at their places, the Guru brandished his sword in his hand and declared. "Is there any among you ready to play down his life in the name of religion?" When the Guru repeated these words third time, Daya Ram a resident of Lahore, got up and proceeded towards the Guru to offer his head. The Guru conducted him into a nearby tent and asked him to sit quietly. The Guru came out with his sword dripping with blood and asked for another head. This time Dharam Das, a resident of Delhi offered himself. In the same way he was taken into the same tent. As before, the Guru came out with his sword smeared with blood. In this way one or the other of his disciples went on offering head till Guru had collected five. The Guru now, introduced these five men back to the grand assembly and gave them the title of '*Panj Pyare*' (Five beloved ones).

Through special ceremony, the Guru initiated these *Panj Pyare* as his disciples. The Guru put water and sugar crystals (*patashe*) in

an iron vessel and stirred the same with *Khanda* (Double-edged.) As the Guru stirred the syrup, he went on chanting the hymns *Japji, Jaap Sahib, Sawayyas, Chaupai and Anand*. The syrup thus sanctified was called *khande ka Pahul* (nectar). The Guru administered it among his *Panj Payare*. The selected five of the Guru were termed the Khalsa (Purified ones) and they were to be named as Singhs (Lions). They started observing the discipline, as laid down by the Guru.

After the ceremony of initiation was over, the Guru addressed the assembly of his disciples and asked them to do the following duties to follow one path and embrace one faith, to end all caste distinctions from themselves and mix with each other freely, no body should assume the air of superiority, not to worship idols, and cemeteries and to believe in One God (Supreme Being) as enunciated by Guru Nanak.

The result of this speech was that a large number of Guru's devotees who had assembled there got themselves initiated into the new faith. Ghulam Mahayudin, contemporary writes. "Although many refused to be initiated from the same vessel yet 20,000 of them came forward and took a vow to follow the path as laid down by the Guru.

The Guru also enjoined upon his followers to adhere to the following code of conduct. Five articles popularly known as 5Ks-Kes or hair; Kirpan or sword; Kangha or wooden comb; Kara or iron bangle; and Kuchha or a underwear up to the knees were declared must for every Sikh. He also asked them to obtain from three things viz, (1) not to show any disrespect to their hair; (2) not to eat Halal or animal killed after the Muslim fashion. The Sikhs were to chant daily the hymns of *Japji, Jaap Sahib, Sawayyas, Chaupai and Anand*. They were asked to believe in one Immortal God only. The result of these injunctions was that nation of saint-soldiers came into being.

**The Significance of The Creation of the Khalsa :**

**Increase in the ranks of the Sikhs :** After *Panj Pyare* thousands of people got themselves initiated into the Khalsa. These people were spirited with feelings of courage, bravery and sacrifice. The new faith was above caste system and possessed spotless character. All this gave rise to laudable specimens of humanity.

**Establishment of a Casteless and Non-Superstitious Society**

Guru Gobind Singh brought about unity among the Sikhs by creating the Khalsa. G.C. Narang opines that the abolition of caste prejudices, equality of privileges with one another and with the Guru, common worship, common place of pilgrimage, common baptism for all classes, and common appearance, were the means, besides common leadership and the community of aspirations which Gobind Singh employed to bring about unity among his followers. He adds further that by this unity, the Guru had bound them together into a compact mass before they were hurled against the great Mughals. The low caste got a new place in the society. Before the creation of the Khalsa, the Brahmins looked down upon the low castes, but by initiating them into the Khalsa, the Guru assured them equality with Brahmins and *Kshatriyas*. This resulted in mass awakening. Elucidating this point further, Ibbetson writes, that the low castes, who were looked down upon by the high castes and who had never used arms now not only developed the qualities of bravery under the leadership of the Guru but also got ready to sacrifice themselves of the suffering mankind.

Teja Singh and Ganda Singh write, "The sweepers, the barbers and confectioners, who had not even touched a sword and whose whole generations had lived as grovelling slaves of the so called higher classes, became, under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh, doughty warriors who never shrank from fear.

**Sikh Religion became a Separate Identity :** With the establishment of Khalsa, the Sikh religion became distinct from Hinduism. Under the regulations of the Khalsa, the Sikhs had to bear 5 *ks*. They were not allowed to smoke and were to discard idolatry even the mode of salutation was different one. All these features made them look quite different from the Hindus. In fact the establishment of Sikhism that had started with Nanak got into fruition with the creation of the Khalsa.

**Khalsa became a sect of Saint Soldiers:** By creation the *Khalsa* Guru Gobind Singh brought into being the sect of the saint soldiers. Now the functions of the Sikhs were not limited to the spiritual alone, but they also spread over the military field. The Guru told his Sikhs that there was no harm in wielding the sword to destroy the tyrants. In this way, the Guru created a class of Sikh soldiers. Thus

militarism became an important aspect of the Sikh religion and the task of saving the humanity was entrusted to it.

However, Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar opines the other way. He says that the Guru converted the spiritual unity of the Sikhs into a means of wordly success. But this view is not sound. Other historians like Indubhushan Banerjee after studying thoroughly Guru's life and works have reached the conclusion that Guru Gobind Singh had no political aim in the creation of the Khalsa, nor did he impress upon his Sikhs to take to wordly affairs alone. On the contrary, while handing over the sword to his followers, the Guru exhorted them to consider their houses as forests and remain saints at heart. He also asked them to foster love, mercy and forbearance, and not to indulge in lust, wrath and covetousness. Rather he asked them to lead a chaste life. In the end, we can conclude that there was no difference, whatsoever, between the teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. The tenth Master gave a sword into the hands of his followers and inspired them to put an armed defence against tyranny.

### **BATTLES**

**Causes:** With the birth of the Khalsa, the jealousy of the hill Rajas further increased. Firstly, they felt insecure because of the increasing power of the Guru. They feared that the Guru might dispossess them of their states by using his warrior disciples against them. So they decided to crush his forces and push him out of their territory. Secondly, the teachings of the Guru were highly critical of the conservative faith of these rulers. Thirdly, the Guru after the creation of Khalsa, started sending his followers to far off places with the aim of conveying his message to the devotees and to baptise them into the new order. His followers started coming to the Guru in large numbers. This growing influence and respect of Guru Gobind Singh alarmed the hill Rajas.

**The First Battle of Anandpur (1701 A.D.) :** Anandpur, the headquarters of the Guru was situated in the state of Bilaspur. Its rulers Raja Bhim Chand was greatly worried by the increasing power of Guru Gobind Singh. He was determined to turn the Guru out of Anandpur. So he wrote to Guru either to vacate the whole land which was occupied by the Guru's father and on which the town of

Anandpur was built, or to pay rent. Guru wrote back, "My father Guru Tegh Bahadur, has paid the price of land, when it was acquired by him." He further told the Raja since the rent of the land had never been paid before, it would never be paid. Raja Bhim Chand now called other hill chiefs to his aid and invaded Anandpur. A small band of the Guru's disciples fought valiantly and defeated the forces of the invaders. At this, the hill chiefs sought the help of the Mughal ruler. As a result, the forces of the hill chiefs and the Mughals attacked the Guru. But even then they faced defeat. In disgust they were compelled to make a truce with the Guru. Thereafter there was no fighting between the hill Rajas and the Guru for about two years.

**The Second Battle of Anandpur (1704) :** As the Khalsa continued to increase its powers and territories at the cost of the hill chiefs they were alarmed, but considering themselves weak and insecure, the hill chiefs tried to unite in a powerful confederation. Raja Bhim Chand of Bilaspur, Ghumand Chand of Kangra and the Rajas of Kulu, Mandi, Nurpur, Guler and Srinagar joined the confederation. They also requested the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb for help. The Emperor readily agreed to render them help. He was at that time in Deccan. From there he wrote to Wazir Khan, the faujdar of Sirhind, to take strong action against the Guru. The combined armies besieged the town of Anandpur. The Guru, with a small band of his gallant Sikhs, fought heroically and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy. But all the passages of Anandpur were completely blocked by the enemy. The provisions stored in Anandpur could not last long and after a few days there was no ration left with the besieged Sikhs. But in spite to these hazards, the Sikhs fought on stubbornly. They would come out of the town in small parties at night and attack the ration store of the enemy. Thus they could snatch away some rations. But even such daring feats could be of no avail. In a few days even the reserved rations were consumed. The Sikhs now had to face great hardship. Many of them died of starvation. Even the precious white elephant of the Guru also died of hunger. Thus it was naturally not possible for the starving Sikhs under the conditions to continue their fight against the mighty forces of the enemy. At this time forty Sikhs deserted the Guru and

went away. Though Guru put up the fight with depleted numbers yet after sometimes he deemed it proper to vacate Anandpur provided the enemy ensured the safe departure of the Sikhs, which was readily agreed by the Mughals. The town was occupied by the enemy after the departure of Guru Gobind Singh. But shamelessly violating their promise the Mughal armies chased the Guru and his followers with their full pressure. As a result, there was a confusion among the parties of the Sikhs, Guru's younger sons Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh and Guru's mother Mata Gujri were separated from the main party, while crossing the flooded river Sirsa. An old servant of the Guru, named Gangu betraying his master handed over the children and the old mother of the Guru to the nearest Mughal Officer, the Kotwal of Morinda, who gave them over to Wazir Khan the Governor of Sirhind. They were called to the court of the Governor and were asked to embrace Islam. On their refusal, little children, age 7 and 9 years were bricked alive in a wall. Their old grandmother also died when she heard the news of the brutal murder of her grandsons.

**The Battle of Chamkaur (1705 A.D.) :** After crossing the river Sirsa, the Guru went to the village of Chamkaur. There was a small fort like enclosure in this village. The Guru and his party stayed in this enclosure. But the enemy forces soon reached and besieged the fortress. At that time there were only forty Sikhs with the Guru but they fought the Mughal army of thousands with unique courage. It is said that the Guru shot the largest number of arrows in this battle. Two elder sons of the Guru, Ajit Singh and Jhujar Singh, and thirty five other Sikhs fell fighting bravely. The Guru was left only five Sikhs. Those five requested the Guru to abandon the fortress. It is noteworthy that in spite of the strict vigilance of the besieging forces the Guru was able to conduct a safe escape. According to Dr. Banerjee from the point of view of gallantry and courage the battle of Chamkaur has no parallel in history.

**In the Forests of Machhiwara :** From Chamkaur the Guru reached the jungle of Machhiwara, where he passed some days in the most forlorn condition. He was without any companion. His cloths were torn out, and feet chequered with blisters. With great difficulty he reached the town of Machhiwara. Here he stayed with two masands named Gulaba and Punjaba. They served the Guru with

great devotion. But later they were so much terrified of the wrath of the Mughals that they refused to keep the Guru in their house any longer. At this critical time two Pathans, Gani Khan and Nabi Khan helped the Guru. They had sold horses to the Guru a number of times and had been influenced by the greatness and piety of the Guru. They saved the Guru from being captured by the Mughal forces. When they came to know that the spies were in search of the Guru they made him sit in a palanquin which they carried on their own shoulders. When some Mughal soldiers and the spies made enquiries about the person in the palanquin the Pathans told that he was the Pir of Uchh (In district Multan).

**Guru in Dina, writes Zafarnama to Aurangzeb :** After facing many hardship the Guru managed to reach Dina, here he stayed with a devotee carpenter named Sarsa. Here three brothers Shamira, Lakhmira and Bakhat Mall served the Guru with devotion. Thence the Guru wrote *hukamnamas* to different places. He again collected sizeable army here. He also planned to acquaint the emperor Aurangzeb of the whole situation. It was from here the Guru wrote to Aurangzeb the famous Persian, epistle called *Zafarnama* (Proclamation of Victory). In that epistle, the Guru blamed Aurangzeb for his irreligious acts and justified his own conduct, particularly the use of the sword against the tyrant.

**The Battle of Khidrana (Muktsar), 1706 :** The Guru did not find safe in Dina so he went to Kotkapura and later reached Khidrana. Now he was in much better position than that of Chamkaur. Quite a large number of Sikhs had reached in his presence and he was well equipped to defend himself. A fierce battle was fought between the royal armies and Sikhs in the year 1706 in which Sikhs emerged victorious. It was in this battle that those forty Sikhs who had deserted the Guru in the second battle of Anandpur fought notably. All of them attained martyrdom while fighting against the heavy odds. The Guru having been profoundly impressed by their bravery, faith and devotion, forgave them and tore the paper which had been signed by them while disowning the Guru, rather as a mark of appreciation he bestowed upon them, the title of '*Muktas*,' that is the 'liberated ones' The pond of Khidrana was also renamed Mukatsar in commemoration of these Mukats.

**Guru Sahib in Damdama Sahib (Talwandi Sabo) :** In spite of

victory in the above battle, the Guru did not deem himself safe at Khidrana and proceeded further and settled at Talwandi Sabo. Since then this place is known as "Damdama Sahib". Here lived a devotee of the Guru, Bhai Dalla, who had plenty of influence in the region. The Guru stayed here for about a year and during this period, he preached his faith in the Malwa tract. He brought a large number of inhabitants of this part in the fold of Sikhism. In addition the Guru called scholars and the Sikhs of literary tastes to his court. He gave final shape to his literary works, also.

The Guru had acquired the mastery over many languages. He had a perfect knowledge of Arabic, and was quite at home in Persian and Sanskrit. He has made free use of Sanskrit in his verses. His knowledge of *Brij Bhasha*, *Punjabi* and *Bihari* was of notably high standard.

The selection of most picturesque words for describing particular situation is a distinct quality of the Guru's work.

**As a Statesman :** The Guru understood the political and religious crisis of his time like an experienced statesman of high calibre. His estimate of the contemporary conditions was perfectly right. He visualized that his countrymen were facing two types of tyranny from their Muslim ruler, who were not willing to allow the public even the basic rights, like freedom of religion and safety of life and property etc. It was due to this long subjugation and political supremacy of the Muslims that Hindus had lost courage and strength of opposing the tyrant rulers and even expressing before them their legitimate grievances. The second problem was of religious tyranny in Hindu society. Brahmins were the spokesmen of the religion. The faith preached by them was replete with futile rituals and superstitions. But people had to follow the Brahmins in their religious belief. Thus the Brahmins were exploiting the simple people in the name of religion. Again the society was divided in to high and low caste Hindus, and thus the idea of national unity had no existence whatsoever. The Guru decided to face these crisis with the following ends and means in view. Firstly, he wanted to create religious awakening. So he got prepared the translation of the famous epics of Ramayana, the Mahabharata and some of the Purans. In addition to these he composed a number of literary works. He created a new spirit in his followers through these writings and

prepared them to stand up against the injustice and tyranny of the rulers. Secondly, he started imparting military training to his Sikhs. Then he created the Khalsa and put an end to the rituals and superstitions. These steps also bespeak of his subtle statesmanship.

**At s soldier and a General :** Guru Gobind Singh was a soldier and general of very high standard. He was an excellent rider, marksman with a gun or an arrow, and a hunter par excellence. He was physically strong and brave at heart. He never lost heart even in highly critical situations. He had such an attractive personality that people were automatically drawn towards him. He was an extremely disciplined person. He fought many battles against the hill chiefs and Mughals. Each of these battles provides a proof of his having been excellent soldier. He guided his small band of Sikhs in such a way in the battle of Chamkaur which convinced the enemy that the Guru has a large army. Even though his soliders had been completely ruined in the battle of Chamkaur yet he raised a large army in short period and gained victory in the battle of Mukatsar. As military leader he had great affection for his soldiers, and the soldiers had unlimited faith in him.

From the above narrative it can be said that Guru Gobind Singh was a saint-soldier. He never used arms to inflict injury on any body or to grab property or throne. Rather he fought to defend the weak and helpless and crush the tyrant. It is for these qualities that the Guru is regarded a distinct personality as a saint soldier.

**As a Religious Leader :** Though an excellent statesman, general and soldier he was nevertheless a great religious leader of the Sikhs. like other Sikh Gurus. In the opinion of Dr. Banerjee, we just remember that the Guru was in the first place, a religious leader, whatever else he might have been. It is not correct to accept or profess that he remained busy in political and martial activities, forgetting his obligations as a religious guide. If his career is examined carefully, we come to realise that even his martial activities were directed to acquire a definite religious goal.

Similarly the Guru always imparted religious instructions to his Sikhs alongwith military training. He always advised them to repeat the name of God, keep their conduct upright and protect themselves against lust, anger, greed attachment and egoism. Like other Gurus, he composed a large amount of religious poetry. He gave final form

to Adi-Granth. He sacrificed his all for the sake of religion, and left to the world the most exalted example of spotless, pure and holy life.

**As a lover of Democracy :** Guru Gobind Singh was a great supporter of democracy. He wanted to create a democratic atmosphere. All through his life he made constructive efforts to put an end to the difference between the high and the low in his court. The so called low caste people had same status as those of the high caste.

His remarkable devotion for democratic order becomes clear from an anecdote of his life. After baptizing the *Panj Payaras* he stood in front of them with folded hands and begged them to baptize him too. A contemporary poet said about this incident. "Vahu, Vahu Gobind Singh Ape gur Chela" (Hail Guru Gobind Singh who became the disciple of his own disciples). Again he gave a right status to the *Khalsa*. the like of which has never given by any other religious leader to his followers. He described the *Khalsa* as his ownself. The Guru considered that the public alone was the source and inspiration of all constructive schemes. That is why he declared "I am what the Khalsa has made me."

**As a National Builder :** He was a great nation builder. He completed the job of nation building which had commenced with Guru Nanak. He wanted to create nation by uniting different communities and sects. He had done some spade work in this direction. His successors made continuous efforts to give a practical shape to the programme of Guru Nanak. But major part of nation building was accomplished by Guru Gobind Singh. He was a great philosopher. He introduced an entirely new initiation into his new faith thus bringing about a psychological revolution among his followers. His following steps, with a view to create unity among them were :-

- (i) He asked the Sikhs to wear five articles each beginning with the letter "K", **kes** (long hair), **Kirpan** (the sword), **Kangha** (the comb), **Kara** (the steel bracelet) and **Kachha** (the long underwear). Thus he gave a sort of uniform (dress) to his Sikhs, due to which they considered themselves the soldiers of the same army.
- (ii) The name of each Sikh was required to have the suffix **Singh** (a

lion), the uniformity in names also went a long way to create unity.

- (iii) Every Sikh was required to accept the *Granth Sahib* as his guru and to have faith in no other gods, goddesses or scriptures. The Guru wanted to give a new life and status to the people which God had determined for men. to quote him.

“I want to create that ability in me through the grace of God, by which I may be able to pick the gems fallen in mud.”.

The Guru determined for his Sikhs a lofty ideals namely that they should pray for the well-being of the whole universe. and defend the noble people and crush the evil ones. Had there been no such high ideal before the Sikhs, they might have been dominated over by the narrow desire of-wishing and doing the well being of their own community alone. He created appropriate literature to keep this ideal alive for all time to come. According to Dr. Ganda Singh, the one great quality of his literature is, that it is the literature which builds up a high moral, and it creates faith in one immortal God and helps in getting rid of superstitions.

The teaching of Guru Gobind Singh and the birth of the Khalsa worked wonders in lifting the downtrodden communities. The Guru's magic influence turned the humble and meek Hindus into great warriors and valiant soldiers. Those who were considered untouchable and low caste in Hindu society, became leaders of the high castes. Subsequently they played an important role in changing the life of the lacs of people.

The Guru Gobind Singh created a new community which was democratically organised and had its ideal the well-being of all.

#### **Self Check Exercise**

- (1) Mark (✓) the correct statements :
- (i) Guru Tegh Bahadur was the son of :  
(a) Guru Hargobind Singh (b) Guru Harkrishan (c) Guru Har Rai
  - (ii) Guru Tegh Bahadur became Guru in :  
(a) 1666 A.D. (b) 1675 A.D. (c) 1664 A.D.
  - (iii) Guru Tegh Bahadur was born in :  
(a) 1640 A.D. (b) 1616 A.D. (c) 1621 A.D.
  - (iv) Anandpur was founded by :  
(a) Guru Gobind Singh (b) Guru Tegh Bahadur  
(c) Guru Hargobind

- (v) Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed in :  
(a) 1666 A.D. (b) 1616 A.D. (c) 1675 A.D.
2. Fill in the Blanks :
- (i) Cunningham and Trumpp state that Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed on account of his ..... activities.
- (ii) Gulam Hussain wrote Book .....
- (iii) Guru Tegh Bahadur went to Assam on the request of Raja .....
- (iv) In response to the appeal of Brahmins of .....the Guru made up his mind to face the challenge of Aurangzeb.
- (v) Execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur led to the creation of.....

#### Key to Answers

- (1) (i) a, (ii) c, (iii) c, (iv) b, (v) c.
- (2) (i) Anti-State (ii) Siar-ul-Mutakhrin, (iii) Ram Singh  
(iv) Kashmir, (v) Khalsa.

#### Check up your position

- Excellent : Above 6 correct answers. Good 5-6 correct answers.
- Satisfactory : 4 correct answers Unsatisfactory Below 4 correct answers.