

Current Sikh Issues - Sikh historical Perspective

Chapter 4-2

There can be no denying the fact that Sikhs are more in violation than observance of the Divine teachings of Sikh religion. Sikh religion has been commented by the eminent scholars of world religions and history to be a

religion of the present space age, capable to solve the problems of the modern age. Sikhs must find out its solution and that how to overcome their short comings, without any further delay, and to become and act as true Sikhs.

The alarming situation is that most of the basic and fundamental requirements of Sikh religion are being totally violated by the Sikhs in their Sikh homeland itself and the Sikh institutions-religious, educational and political are unable to tackle these problems with any success, while most of the Sikh leaders seem to be unmindful to it.

It is in Punjab, the Sikh homeland, that the Sikhs and particularly the younger Sikh generation are even not keeping them in Sikh form with keshas and turbans and rather clean shaving them and thereby losing their Sikh identity itself, what to say of taking the Sikh initiation of Amrit, observing Sikh code of conduct and living in Sikh way of life, while Sikh leaders, both religious and political are acting as mere dummy spectators.

It is in Punjab, the Sikh home land that intoxicants particularly the alcoholic drinks, forbidden in Sikh religion, have the maximum consumption in Sikhs and the state is getting the maximum income from it, which is reported to be 20 billion Rs. this year, even when the political party which is in power in the state portrays it to be representing the Sikhs.

It is in Punjab the Sikh homeland that maximum number of Sikhs are becoming the followers of derawad, which is totally anti Sikh, as Guru Granth Sahib is only the eternal Sikh Guru and Divine teachings contained therein are only to be followed by Sikhs without any other guide or guidance. Even the Sikh leaders go to these deras to get votes in elections, flourishing the derawad.

It is in Punjab, the Sikh home land that the female infanticide, totally forbidden in Sikh religion, is reported to be the maximum, which has brought the ratio of new born girls to be much less than the national average.

It is in Punjab, the Sikh homeland where Sikhs get political power that their leaders are openly accused of selfish vested interests, corrupt practices, favouritism and factionalism, which are forbidden in Sikh religion and rather Sikh religion advocates selfless service to mankind, and earning by honest means and out of it to share with the needy as well.

In Punjab for all these and other glaring violations in Sikhs, the Sikh leaders, religious and political have to share the responsibility. Sikhs and particularly the Sikh youth are drifting away from Sikh initiation, Sikh code of conduct and Sikh identity, to which SGPC has to share the responsibility in Punjab, being the prime institution of Sikh religion for the management of Sikh

historical Gurdawaras and preaching of Sikh religion, having vast financial and other resources, besides other Sikh Gurdawara managements and organisations.

Sgpc should take along with Sikhs of all the political groups to tackle this urgent Sikh problem, to which they all are interested. Akali Dal, which dominates this prime Sikh institution and proclaims to represent the Sikhs is also duty bound to preach Sikh religion. A very committed Sikh movement with honesty of purpose in this regard is the need of the day, to be led by Sgpc, which is already belated. The previous result oriented Sikh movements- Singh Sabha movement and Akali movement of the later 19th and earlier 20th centuries should be taken as a guide as to the selfless service, sacrifice and commitment of Sikhs and Sikh leaders.

A meeting may be called through Jathedar Akal Takhat of all the Sikh leaders of all the groups and Sikh intellectuals and other Sikhs known for such commitment to discuss and decide the course of action, keeping it above the party factions, as to ensure their participation in this cause, rising above the narrow political and egoistic party factions.

A unit may be made of a Sgpc constituency to be placed under the charge of the member elected from there to spread this movement, the preachers to be arranged by Sgpc. The persons who portray them to be Sikh saints and are now available in abundance in each area and other such Sikh preachers to be persuaded to work in this movement in their areas continuously till Sikhs are brought back to Sikh code of conduct, besides other Sikh leaders of that area, to which ever Sikh party they belong.

Jathedars of Akal Takhat and other Takhats in Punjab to effectively supervise this movement in their areas by continuously remaining in those areas till the aim is achieved. The Sikh Gurdawaras managements and organisations through out the world should also take united coordinated efforts in this regard in their areas.

All the Sikh schools and colleges to be made Sikh oriented to serve the purpose for which those were set up and the teachers in such Sikh educational institutions to be committed Sikhs to become the role models for the Sikh students, to ensure the Sikh religious education and that Sikh students follow Sikh code of conduct. The management of Sikh schools and colleges to be persuaded to adopt such line of action. A central committee

of those managements to be set up for this purpose. Uniform syllabus for the study of Sikh religion and history

in Sikh schools is to be set up and books to be published and supplied. Such books are also to be supplied for Sunday Gurdawara schools in foreign countries which must be set up in all the Gurdawaras to teach Sikh religion and history, besides Punjabi language. Such Sunday Gurudwaras schools may be set up in Punjab and other parts in India.

New Sikh schools should be also set up where ever needed, in which Sikh form and identity of Sikh students should be ensured. Such schemes need to be materialised and not to remain as mere slogans. Sgpc should reserve substantial funds for Sikh education. Sikh NRI's may provide the substantial contribution if they are given the impression of the honesty of purpose in this regard. It will become easy to tackle this problem in Sikh students if such reformation is brought in Sikh educational institutions. However the parents should discharge their duty to

always impress upon their children to remain in Sikh form, both internally and externally and to impart them the knowledge of Sikh religion, Sikh history and punjabi language.

Sikhs face another serious problem, requiring the urgent Sikh attention as well. It is the misrepresentation of Sikhs and Sikh religion, even in the syllabus of school education and in the books published by Ncert, not sparing the Divine Sikh Gurus even. It is under a systematic planning to dilute the Sikh identity and to misrepresent them as a sect of Hindus and Sikh religion to be a part of Hinduism. Some of the fundamentalists

Hindus are indulging in a false propoganda in this regard. Some writings do exist since long to misrepresent the Sikhs and Sikh religion from its very start and some are still not at the surface. Sgpc should also lead in this matter to solve this problem, with coordination of other Sikh organisations and Sikh scholars.

This problem is to be tackled by Sikh scholars. A committee of competent Sikh scholars of commitment needs to be formed, who should first identify the misrepresentations made against Sikhs and Sikh religion and then clarify it to be a falsification. Unanimous clarifications should be made in the scholarly manner and published to negate the misrepresentations.

Legal action where ever possible may also be taken against the persons at fault. Competent Sikh lawyers who are committed to Sikh religion should be engaged for this purpose and in other cases relating to any matter of Sikh religion.

The other problem for Sikh is that they have no world Sikh leadership, though they are now spread over throughout the world. Sikhs must have a world Sikh leadership of honesty, integrity, capability with commitment to the Sikh cause. It may be able to solve their local disputes. which are now bringing disrepute to them due to the intersee fights in Gurdawaras, leading to the wastage of their finances in the local courts. It may unitedly solve their problems as to the recognition of their articles of faith in all the countries. It may promote the uniform preaching of Sikh religion in Sikhs and in the world at large. Some eminent world scholars of religions have already commented that the message of love and peace of Sikh religion needs to be conveyed to the world. It will also solve the problem of the mistaken identity of Sikhs, which they are now facing.

These Sikh problems be given the priority to deal with urgently and unitedly by the Sikhs, with honesty of purpose and the commitment, it deserves. Sgpc should take the initiative in these > matters, uniting the Sikhs, rising above the petty party factionalism, with the coordination of Sikh Gurdawaras management committee of Delhi and of two Sikh Takhts-Hazur Sahib Nander and Patna Sahib, besides all other Sikh organisations. Similarly Sikh Gurdawara managements in each country should take the initiative with the coordination of other Sikh organisations and personalities, committed to Sikh cause.

The Sikh concept of Guru Granth and Guru Panth needs to be revived so as to enable the Sikhs to take the decisions on Sikh issues, which should be binding on all the Sikhs world over for which the involvement of all the Sikhs is a must.