

CHAPTER X

SIKHS IN REPUBLIC OF INDIA – 1947 TO 2010

Sikhs Suffered the Most in Pre and Post Independence of India

Sikhs made much more sacrifices than all other Indians in the Independence movement of India. They suffered the most in the post independence period as well. India got freedom on August 15, 1947. It was partitioned on the basis of the two nation theory, creating a separate country, Pakistan for Muslims with the Muslim majority areas. Sikh leaders had been opposing the partition of India up to the end, though congress leaders had agreed to the creation of Pakistan much earlier. Sikhs did not want the bifurcation of their homeland Punjab, as it would divide the Sikhs hearth and home and their fertile lands and other immovable properties between Pakistan and India. However Punjab was partitioned. West Punjab went to Pakistan while East Punjab remained in India. The vast areas included in Pakistan out of Punjab had a large Sikh population in several millions besides vast tracts of land with canal irrigation facilities and other immovable properties owned by Sikhs, worth millions of millions. There was no indication or provision in the Act of Indian Independence that Sikhs of those areas which formed part of Pakistan, would have to migrate to Punjab which formed part of India. If it was to be so done, then it could have been adjusted in the British regime peacefully. No one thought of the circumstances which would lead to the forced migration of Sikhs and Hindus from Pakistan to India and of Muslims to Pakistan from India amidst bloodshed. However it did happen.

In fact both of the Punjabs in Pakistan and India were engulfed in bloodshed just after the day of the announcement of freedom, in the process of the migration of Muslims to the Pakistan area from Indian side and of non Muslim, to the Indian side from Pakistan areas by force. The governments of both the countries were mere spectators to the bloodshed and in fact appeared to be the instigators also. It appeared that the government of Pakistan was interested in ousting the Sikhs and Hindus from the areas which were to be in Islamic country, while the Government of India was equally interested in ousting the muslims from East Punjab to make room for the

refugees coming from Pakistan and to free the border areas from the Muslims adjoining Pakistan. The main sufferers were the Sikhs who had to leave their vast tracts of canal irrigated lands and other immovable properties. About four million Sikhs had to migrate from Pakistan in mere clothes on their back, leaving behind all of their wealthy possessions. Hundreds of thousands of Sikhs were killed mercilessly without any fault of theirs. Sikhs had suffered the most during the Indian freedom movement in its pre and post eras but they got nothing in return. It was a blunder on the part of the leaders of Sikhs and those of both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim league, who were playing the leading role in the Indian freedom movement who did not envisage such a horrible situation, and were trying to settle it amicably. Sikhs suffered still more in the post freedom India. Muslims had declared direct action in August 1946 whereby violence started in Bengal and then in Punjab. Most of the Sikhs were the victims in west Punjab at the hands of the Muslims. In March 1947, there was so much rioting that thousands of Sikhs were killed and ousted from west Punjab, which was to become a part of Pakistan and these riots continued for several months till all the Sikhs and Hindus were evacuated from west Punjab which had become a part of Pakistan. Francis Hoodie, Governor of West Punjab wrote to Jinnah on September 5, 1947 as to the desirability of evicting Sikhs from Lyallpur :

"I am telling every one that I do not care how the Sikhs got across the border; the great thing is to get rid of them as soon as possible. There is still little sign of three lakh Sikhs in Lyallpur moving but in the end they will have to go."

(G.D. Khosla, *Stern Reckoning*, p. 314)

Press officer of Lord Mountbatten was with him when he visited a Sikh village in the Rawalpindi district, totally destroyed by Muslims :

"Picking our way through the rubble we could see that the devastation was as thorough as any produced by fierce bomb raids in the war. This particular communal orgy involved the destruction of Sikhs and their livelihood by Muslims who were proving difficult to track down. The Muslims in the area seemed to be quite pleased with themselves."

(Campbell Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten*, p. 79)

Such was the situation every where else. The police force was overwhelming, that was made up of Muslims and they facilitated crimes against Sikhs, instead of defending them. It was also in the minds of the Muslims that they could have the best tracts of the irrigated lands if Sikhs were evacuated. That could be made possible by ruthless violence upon Sikhs. The politicians of the Muslim league had publicly instigated the Muslims of Punjab to be part of Pakistan and that non-muslims should be thrown out of Pakistan if it was to be an Islamic state. Chaudhry Rehmat Ali, who first gave the idea of Pakistan, openly declared :

"Nor must we keep Hindu or Sikh minorities in our lands, even if they themselves were willing to remain with or without any special safeguards. For they will never be of us. Indeed, while in

ordinary times they will retard our National reconstruction, in times of crises, they will betray us and bring about our restruction."

(Rehmat Ali, *The Millat and its Mission, Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus*, p. 8)

According to Khushwant Singh :

"By contrast, what took place in 1946 and 1947 can only be described as a general massacre. No one was exempted on grounds of age or sex. In the past rioting had been the monopoly of the *gunda* (thug). The killings of 1946-47 were masterminded by politicians and executed by gangs drawn from all sections of society, armed with modern weapons such as stenguns and hand-grenades. The explanation was invariably the same. The antagonists accused each other of starting the riot and exonerated themselves by pleading that they had acted only in retaliation."

(Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 263)

Hundreds of thousands of Sikhs were mercilessly killed. The remaining migrated to east Punjab, mostly without any possession leaving behind everything, movable or immovable. Over four million Sikhs were thus displaced from their homes and lands to live in refugee camps, in east Punjab under the worst type of humiliation. A little less, Muslims who faced the same fate while migrating to west Punjab. The Sikhs left behind 67 lac acres of the best canal irrigated agricultural land including a small portion of Hindus, while Muslims left behind in east Punjab only 47 lac acres of lands and that too of comparatively inferior quality. In terms of standard areas, these lands were of 4,000,000 units and 25,00,000 units respectively. Sikhs thus got far less lands in the east Punjab than they held in west Punjab. They had to resettle afresh, having once become homeless and landless.

The sacrifices made by Sikhs in the pre and post Indian freedom movement in every respect in the number of deaths, in the number imprisoned and other sufferings were much more than the rest of the Indian people, as established by the statistical information. The editorial of the leading English daily newspaper of India, *Statesman* dated January 3, 1947, recorded :

"Sikhs had to suffer the greatest sacrifices in the Indian freedom struggle. A major part of Sikh nation was uprooted, causing a great loss at its economy and parting with its important religious places. At least forty percent of this great and courageous small nation suffered a lot in one way or the other to get the freedom of India."

Hindus in India were already indeed indebted to Sikhs for saving their skin from Mughal rulers and Afghan invaders. Hindu society had submitted to those tyrants and was converting to Islam by force. It was the Sikhs who challenged them and remained in armed struggle with those tyrants for over a century at the risk of the supreme sacrifices of hundreds of thousands of them and ultimately wiped them out establishing a sovereign Sikh state. Sikhs restored the rule of law, justice and secularism.

Sikhs could never expect such a condition in the republic of India, in their own country, wherein they had played a major part in uprooting the Mughals and Afghans

and in ousting the British. They could never expect that they would have to face the harsh and hostile attitude and mistrust of the Indian government and its leaders to the extent of becoming the victims of betrayal, discrimination and persecution. To an outsider it would appear to be unbelievable, but it is a historical fact.

It is very astonishing that an official confidential letter dated October 10, 1947 was issued by the government to all the Deputy Commissioners of Punjab, only about two months after achieving independence :

"Sikhs as a community are lawless people and are thus a menace to the law abiding Hindus in the province and special means should be taken against them. The motives which activate the Sikhs on course of lawless massacre desire for women and loot."

(Kapur Singh ICS, *Sachi Sakhi*, p. 265)

The author of this book, Kapur Singh ICS, was Deputy Commissioner at that time and he himself received this letter. He protested to the government against the false allegations made in the letter and had to face suspension and dismissal from service. No explanation was provided by the government that under what circumstances that official communication was made, which on the face of it was defamatory to Sikhs besides sowing the seeds of communalism and factionalism between Sikhs and Hindus. Hindus had been considering the Sikhs to be their defenders, not offenders. The government of India created a rift between them to create a Hindu vote bank for Congress which was the ruling party.

Even Mahatma Gandhi started maligning the Sikhs in his prayer meetings openly sending a wrong and derogatory message against the Sikhs, for whom he always had words of praise earlier despite the Sikhs having suffered the most as victims of partition violence. Dr. Gopal Singh, the known supporter of congress leaders, from whom he got the high offices of Governor, Ambassador and member Rajya Sabha, could not even restrain himself in accusing Gandhi in this regard. Says he, in his book, *A History of the Sikh People* at pp. 717-18.

Pandit Nehru told a deputation of Punjab Hindus on September 20, 1947 that :

"Master Tara Singh met me yesterday. He protested voluntarily against any idea of Khalistan and said that Sikhs being a small section of the people of India would not pick any quarrel with them. They wished to remain citizens of India and live with Hindus as brothers" (Durga Das, *India from Curzon to Nehru*, p. 269)

But Gandhi describes against the Sikhs as they entered this country as refugees were in total contradiction to the sympathy and support he had given them earlier in 1946 after the cabinet mission statement of may 16. It was a cruel and malicious maligning of a whole people in distress. He advised the Sikhs (and Hindus) not to retaliate and to die at the hands of their Muslim brethrens. They would not only save Hinduism and Islam but also serve India and save the world (*Mahatma*, Vol. VII, p. 371, record of a prayer meeting April 7, 1947) They should resist Pakistan being forced

on them with the incomparable weapon of Satyagraha. (*Ibid*, p. 374) Years ago, I had said at Nankana Sahib : 'Sikhs have given proof of their martial valour but the consummation of Guru Gobind Singh's ideal will be reached only when they substitute kirpans as the sword of the spirit and non violence.' The Mahatma did not offer this advice when Kashmir was attacked a little later. Moreover, this was the time when Sikhs were being butchered in Rawalpindi etc. and no retaliation on their part had yet started and instead of offering the advice to the Muslims, he advised the Sikhs to suffer as best as they could."

And he further said :

"The Sikhs brandished their swords and frightened the Muslim residents to vacate their houses (in Delhi). Sikhs are driven to drinking. They sold Kababs in the Chandni Chowk where even Muslims did not want the annoyance of Hindus."

(November 19, *Mahatma*, p. 194).

But he defended Sardar Patel who had criticized the Muslim leagues' vandalism and said if Nehru would not agree with him he would sack him (*ibid.*, p. 252). And when he went to his last fast on January 12, 1948 and criticized the Hindus also for having joined hands with Sikhs in the uprooting of Muslims in Delhi, Sardar Patel after listening to his complaint got up without a word, shouting that Gandhi Ji is determined to blacken Hindus before the world.

If this is his attitude, I have no use of him.

(*India Wins Freedom*, p. 27)

And

"on June 28, 1947 he abjured the Sikhs in a prayer meeting to shed their drinking habit and luxurious habits of Sikh women." Certainly the moral norms of Sikhs were no worse than those of others, including the Mahatama's own Ahsram (*Freedom at Midnight*, Vikas, pp. 66-69). As for the drinking habit of Sikh men, were they the only one in the country at this time to indulge in this habit ? And then where was the occasion and how was it relevant to the issue of partition ?"

Concluded he

"Gandhi was murdered by a Hindu fanatic (on Jan 30, 1948) but he had created against the Sikhs a kind of public opinion throughout the world, which they have still to live down."

What was the motivation of M.K. Gandhi, it can be only known to him. It is certain by his offensive to Sikhs and derogatory as well.

Dr. Gopal Singh has given the version of the talk which he himself had with Gandhi at page 719;

"Even when the present writer waited upon Gandhi Ji (in June 1947) to seek his help for a Punjabi speaking state being carved out of what was soon going to be east Punjab, his first sharp reaction

was – "But you are then asking for Sikh state". When told that no single community would be in majority in that state (the Muslims, had not yet migrated to Pakistan), he immediately calmed down and said , "If this be so, bring me a blue print I shall speak to others." But his offer was never taken up by the Sikhs with seriousness because he had changed his mind soon after the riots and the wholesale immigration of the minorities from the two Punjabs."

How could a Punjabi speaking state, within India, with the majority of Sikhs, be a Sikh state ? The population of Sikhs in India was only two percent and that of Hindus over eighty percent, but no one called it a Hindu state.

Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India also publically asserted in his press statement that the organization of Punjab on a linguistic basis, would be creating a Sikh state and dividing the country again. During his life time he kept resisting the formation of a Punjabi speaking state. The sole ground was that Sikhs will be in a majority in that state, which was to be a part of the Indian Republic, just like other states, which all had been reorganized on linguistic basis. If in a state, Sikhs would form a majority then how was it to be against the national interests ?

Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, in her book *My Truth* at page 117, has recorded :

"The policy of the Congress enunciated in 1949 by Jawaharlal, Vallabh bhai and Pattabhai Sitaramayya had not been to concede reorganization of North India, whatever the merits of such proposal might be."

The obvious reason was that Sikhs would form majority in the reorganized Punjab on a linguistic basis.

There is no explanation worth the name, why all these top leaders of the congress and of the government of Indian republic were allergic to just a majority of Sikhs in any state of India and why derogatory remarks were made and official communications were issued to defame the Sikhs without any basis. It is also not understandable why these leaders who were outwardly boasting of being the most secular were inwardly so communal. In secularism, there can be no scope of Hindu or any other communal thought and no relevance of the majority or minority of any community for the reorganization of the states on linguistic basis in any state. It is also still unexplainable that when the Sikhs had themselves not negotiated for a Sikh separate state, with British and the Muslim league and rather opted to stay in Indian republic, then what could be the danger from them if they had formed a majority in a state within India ? It appears that the congress leaders who had made promises to the Sikhs during freedom movement to set up an autonomous state in their homeland Punjab, were now not ready to implement those agreements and so started the hostilities against Sikhs. They entered into dangerous policies to communalise politics and to create differences between Sikhs and Hindus with the object of creating a Hindu vote bank for themselves and to ensure that the power politics of Punjab remain under their domain. Uptil the achievement of freedom there was no rift between Hindus and Sikhs and they trusted and were in full co-operation with each other. There was no opposition from the Hindus as to the

provinces and agreements between the congress leaders and Sikhs to set up an autonomous state in Punjab with constitutional guarantees within the Republic of India. It was the political game of the congress leaders to refuse the implementation of such agreements and then to deny the reorganization of Punjab on a linguistic basis, creating a fear in Hindu minds, that such a state with majority as Sikhs could be a separate Sikh state and division of the country again would be a risk to the seniority of Hindus.

Pre Independence Agreements with Sikhs not implemented

Sikh leaders reminded the congress leaders who were holding power in the government of India to implement the agreements, promises and assurances given to them during the independence movement to create an autonomous state in their homeland Punjab and to enact constitutional provisions to have a self-determined political status and other constitutional guarantees but they refused it outrightly. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who proposed the resolutions in the congress in this regard and gave press statements in this respect was the Prime Minister and congress had overwhelming majority in the constituent assembly but still these political agreements were not honoured. Nehru had even gone to the extent of flatly refusing to implement these solemn promises and agreements stating that times and circumstances have now changed. It was the glaring betrayal of Sikhs. These promises and political declarations were not gracious but these were in the form of a political contract. The Sikhs were to support the Indian freedom movement in alliance with the congress and after the achievement of freedom, the Sikhs were to be given an autonomous status of their homeland Punjab with a self determined political set up. MK Gandhi, the undisputed leader of congress even went to gurdwara Sis Ganj Delhi to assure the Sikhs that congress would never betray them for these agreements and promises. Sikhs fulfilled their part of the contract to such an extent as to have made more sacrifices than the entire Indian people and not to have talks with the British government and Muslim league who had offered them an independent Sikh state and political power, on the ground that congress leaders have made agreements and promises with them for the autonomous state and constitutional guarantees. Sikh leaders had shown such a blind faith in congress leaders as not even to ask for the iron clad guarantees and insertion of these agreements in the Independence Act. The betrayal of the congress in such circumstances remains unpardonable.

The Sikh leaders realized that the government of India and its leaders, instead of the formation of an autonomous state and making constitutional safeguards and special considerations, were now desiring the Sikhs to abandon their separate identity themselves though they had suffered so much and remained in armed conflict against the Mughals and Afghans for about a century, establishing their own rule by uprooting them. Perhaps these Indian leaders, in their zeal to end the separate Sikh Identity, had not visualized the disastrous consequences of their treacherous thought as being totally

ignorant and unmindful of the past history of the Sikhs, as otherwise they would not have taken the courage to treat them in such a casual manner over their separate identity issue, which was and has ever remained much more dear to them than anything else. Perhaps they forgot that it was the spirit of their separate identity that energized them to uproot and turned out of India the mighty Mughals and Afghans, to whom the Hindu society had surrendered objectly and those crusaders might have been ruling India uptill now. Perhaps they intentionally forgot that it was the separate Identity of Sikhs that blocked the Hindu conversion to Islam as otherwise the entire Hindu society would have been converted to Islam by now. Perhaps they did not make effort to go through the commentaries of their own scholars like Pandit Daulat Ram Arya and that of the Sufi Muslim poet Budan Shah that if the separate Sikh identity had not been there on the scene, every Hindu would have been a circumcised Muslim as the Hindu society was on its death bed and was not able to revive itself without the cover of a separate Sikh identity. Perhaps they recollected not their own recent past actions and utterances in praise of the separate Sikh identity to get its support for their independence movement, by openly giving them the promises and had pledged for their homeland with a constitution of their own choice to maintain and develop their separate Sikh identity, and enjoy the glow of independence.

Naturally the betrayal of these Indian leaders just after getting freedom shocked the Sikhs and Sikh leaders which created distrust instead of trust between them. So much so that, instead of giving constitutional guarantees to Sikhs as earlier pledged, the constitutional provisions were violated against the Sikhs. Instead of providing autonomous homeland to them, they were denied the recognition of the Punjab state on linguistic basis thereby, making it a solitary exemption without any reason whatsoever, when all other states of whole of India were reorganized on linguistic bases. Rather congress leaders headed by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made no secret of allaying that such a linguistic organization in Punjab would amount to creation of a separate Sikh state and division of the country, though it was to obviously be a state of the Indian union, and without any extra special autonomous powers than to any other Indian state.

Assurance given to Sikhs not Incorporated in Constitution of India

Congress leaders totally ignored Sikh interests while drafting the constitution of India. They flatly refused to implement the assurances given to Sikhs and constitutional guarantee for Sikh interests to provide them an autonomous state in North India and that no constitution would be enacted which would be unacceptable to the Sikhs. Hukam Singh and Bhupinder Singh Mann, two representatives of Sikhs in the constituent Assembly, tried hard to convince the Congress national leaders that the assurances and pledges made to Sikhs in 1929 to 1946 and then in 1947 in congress resolutions and public statements of these leaders should be honoured and not dishonestly breached, but to no effect. V.B. Patel even had the check to deny the very

existence of such pledges and promises, besides making altogether false allegation of the constituent Sikh voice against partition, since the Sikh leaders were the only bold and the proud to be politicians who raised a hue and cry up to the last moment against partition of the country and formation of Pakistan, which Patel, Nehru and other congress leaders had conceded long ago. Patel had even given the statement in April 1947 that Sikhs would be provided a Sikh state to satisfy their aspirations, within India just after getting freedom. Jawaharlal Nehru also acted in this very tone that constitution cannot be safeguarded without implementing the pledges given to Sikhs. And he did not deny the promises made to Sikhs continuously uptill independence, but quite soon thereafter, he gave the reason for non-implementation that the "Times have changed now." There was no difficulty for these congress leaders to honestly implement their solemn pledges as they were in absolute majority in the Constituent Assembly, but they opted to betray the Sikhs. Dr. Ambedkar who introduced the draft constitution in constituent assembly had rightly observed that :

"The minorities have loyally accepted the rule of majority which is basically a communal majority. It is for the majority to realize its duties not to discriminate against minorities."

The loud assertions of MK Gandhi that congress would never betray any minority stood openly violated when the communal majority betrayed the minorities, though he had solemnly pledged it before *Guru Granth Sahib* in gurdwara Sis Ganj that congress would never betray the Sikhs to implement the pledges made to them. It all stood falsified as Sikhs were betrayed.

Sikhs Refused to Accept Constitution

Both of the Sikh representatives refused to accept the constitution as it contained nothing to implement the pledges repeatedly made to Sikhs in pre-independence era rather it contained Anti Sikh provisions. Hukam Singh concluded, while recording the Sikh sentiments :

"Naturally under these circumstances as I have stated, the Sikhs feel utterly disappointed and frustrated. They feel that they have been discriminated against. Let it not be misunderstood that the Sikh community has agreed to this constitution. I wish to record an emphatic protest here. My community can not subscribe its assent to this historic document."

After the roll call for individual members to sign the constitution, when Hukam Singh and Bhupinder Singh Mann (Sikh representatives in the constituent assembly) were called, they refused to sign the constitution stating :

"The Sikhs do not accept this constitution and the Sikhs reject this constitution."
(*Constitution Assembly Debates*, Vol. II, pp. 721-723)

Akali Dal Rejected Constitution of India 1950

On January 8, 1950, Akali Dal, passed the resolution rejecting the constitution of India, as it failed to provide any provisions to implement any of the promises and pledges made to Sikhs and rather it contained Anti Sikh provisions; as it monopolized most of the powers for the centre to the prejudice of the states; it reserved enormous authority for the executive and legislature to the prejudice of the judiciary; it made personal freedom illusory by introducing too many restrictions and limitations; as it gave dictatorial powers to the president in times of emergency; it did not guarantee anything for the poor and neglected them. Akali Dal called upon the Sikhs to boycott the Republic day celebrations. The constitution did not proclaim 'secularism' in the preamble, though the Indian congress leaders and framers of the constitution always talked more of secularism, than anything else. It was a federal structure only on the face of it but beneath it, the union form of Centre obviously visualized turning the states to be mere municipal corporations in times to come. It was nothing less than betrayal of Sikhs and in many other respects, dishonestly.

In the constitution of India, no provision was inserted to meet any of the political agreement items or pledges made to the Sikhs by the congress leaders. The agreement that no constitution of India would be adopted which would be unacceptable to Sikhs was openly flouted as Sikh representatives in the constituent assembly had raised a hue and cry against the constitution that it was not acceptable to Sikhs. They refused to sign the constitution draft that Sikhs could not accept it as it had violated all the pledges and promises made to Sikhs. Still the government and congress leaders paid no heed to it even when Akali Dal rejected it. It shows that the congress leaders were deceptive from the very inception and they played a political fraud on Sikhs.

A Hindu journalist J.L. Sawhney, editor *Hindustan Times* in his book *The Lid off* at page 202, remarked :

"The way Congress humiliated and betrayed the Sikhs was unpardonable fraud committed with preplanned intention."

Such a political fraud can never be tolerated in a civilized and democratic World. It degrades political trust and values, shaking the foundation of political contracts and systems. No political set up can survive without mutual trust, good faith and honest intentions. The World today is based upon the political agreements, contracts and settlement of credibility with the international forums and organizations for the resolution of intense conflicts and disputes. If the credibility in this sphere is shaken and deceptive motives are attached in executing political agreements and pledge, and are not honoured in future, not only the party committing fraud is defamed but it defames the whole political system and its sanctity also. Such a political fraud never settles matters, rather complicates it. Sikhs have not felt satisfied and are frustrated by the fraud committed upon them. Their demand for the autonomous state has not

been diluted in more than half a century but, for some sections, it has become enlarged to fight for a sovereign state even after decades. Government itself has propagated a danger to the unity and integrity of the country. Deceptions and betrayals give rise to such situations.

Sikh leaders also did not play their cards well, though the British government had made Sikhs a third party, besides Congress and Muslim league in the freedom negotiations. The British did want the Sikhs to have political feet of their own on which they could walk into the current World history. Still Sikh leaders did not avail of the opportunity and were caught in the net of clever congress leaders, thus disappointing the British and causing immense harm to the Sikh cause. They could easily get the Sikh state from Nankana Sahib to Karnal district and could have got the population exchanged under British Government supervision, instead of it having been done under bloodshed of the highest extant, practically affecting half of the Sikh nation, if they did not depend upon the offers of congress leaders. The blind faith in the leaders of the other party and sentimentalism have no place in politics. Sikh leaders totally lacked political wisdom, experience and capability which was needed at that time to tackle the crucially political and intricate situation of the freedom of a country. They should have taken right decisions of far reaching effects, and particularly interacted with the shrewd highly educated and experienced political manoeuvres of Congress and Muslim league. Master Tara Singh himself admitted in his autobiography at page 197:

"The reason for our not pressing the demand for a Sikhs state was our ignorance of history and World politics. But for the ignorance, we might have obtained a Sikh state, particularly when the Britishers sympathized with us."

The crafty Indian Congress leaders took undue advantage of their ignorance and exploited them and committed political fraud upon them, for which the victim was the entire Sikhs nation. The Sikh leaders should have started a peaceful agitation to get the pledges and promises made to them implemented, just when refused instead of waiting for the agitation for reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis, repeating their ignorance again.

There is no explanation from the leaders of Congress and the Indian Government as to what service they had done to the nation and the country, by refusing the implementation of the promises made to Sikhs to set up autonomous Sikh state in Punjab with constitutional guarantees offered to them. Instead they created distrust that brought prolonged agitations against the Government who refused such a state. After all, that state was to remain a part of India. What national interest has been served by committing the fraud on Sikhs? Instead, slogans are raised about the danger to the unity and integrity of the country from Sikhs, who opted for India at the time of crisis when they could get an independent Sikh state out of India. Would such a fraud of denial be not deemed anti national in the annals of history as it was used only as a cheap political game to divide Sikhs and Hindus, who still stood united and in trust of each other, as earlier.

Reorganisation of Punjab on Linguistic basis

Government of India took a policy decision in August 1948 to reorganize all the Indian states on linguistic basis :

"The principle that a child should be instructed in the early stage of his education through the medium of his mother tongue has been accepted by the government All educationists agree that any departure from this principle is bound to be harmful to the child and, therefore, in the interest of the country."

The Punjab Government led by Congress Chief Minister Bhim Sen Sachar demarcated the Punjabi and Hindi speaking areas in Punjab vide its decision dated October 1949, called 'Sachar formula' providing that :

1. Punjab has been demarcated in two linguistic zones – Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking.
2. Punjabi speaking zone consists of Jalandhar Division, minus Kangra Distt. plus Ropar and Kharar Tehsil of Ambala distt. and all portions of Hissar distt., east of Ferozepur and Patiala lying to the north of Ghaggar river.
3. Hindi zone consists of Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal and Kangra distt. plus Jagadhari and Naraingarh Tehsils and Ambala distt. and all portions of Hissar distt. lying to the south of Ghaggar river.
4. Simla distt. and Ambala Tehsil of Ambala distt. to be bi-lingual.
5. The main language or the mother tongue in the Punjabi speaking zone would be Punjabi in Gurmukhi script, while in Hindi region to be Hindi in Devnagri script. Punjabi was to be the medium of instruction in Punjabi speaking zone in all schools upto matriculation stage, while Hindi to be in Hindi speaking zone. Hindi was to be taught as compulsory subject from the first class of primary up to the matriculation. For girls, it was up to the middle level in Punjabi speaking zone, while in Hindi speaking zone, it was to be vice-versa.
6. Parents and guardians were given the option to choose the medium of instruction in the two zones. It was not applicable to unaided recognized schools which were required to provide for the teaching of Punjabi or Hindi as a second language.

PEPSU language Formula

Such a formula was adopted in Patiala and east Punjab states union, called PEPSU, dividing the state in two zones of Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking. The option to parents and guardians was however not provided which was provided in 'Sachar formula'. PEPSU was later on, emerged in Punjab.

Districts of Patiala, Faridkot, Kapurthala, Nabha and Sangrur excepting its Jind Tehsil which were Sikh states before amalgamating in PEPSU, were in Punjabi speaking zone, while Narnaul district and Jind Tehsil of Sangrur district were included in Hindi speaking zone.

The Punjabi speaking areas in both Punjab and PEPSU were thus demarcated by

their state governments without any objection from anybody as was done in the Hindi speaking areas. In accordance with the decision of government of India to reorganize the state on linguistic basis, Punjab state was to be reorganized though the Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking areas had already been demarcated. There could be no reason whatsoever to exclude Punjab state from such a reorganization neither any reason was set forth in this regard. It was a glaring discrimination and violation of the constitution and unheard of impropriety which was openly done by Government of India. On merits, Punjab state was at the top for such reorganization, having already demarcated its Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking areas. The motivation for this discrimination was that Indian Government could not tolerate any stake in Republic of India with Sikh majority as in the Punjabi speaking areas where Sikhs were in majority. They would be about 60% in the reorganized Punjab which was to be a state of India, but still the congress leaders and Indian Government would not allow the formation of such a state. To what extent they mistrusted the Sikhs and discriminated against them !

Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, openly stated later on that the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis was like creating a Sikh state, amounting to the division of the country once again. These congress leaders and the government misled the Hindus to oppose the reorganization of Punjab on a linguistic basis who had earlier experienced the Sikhs as their defenders and not offenders, with the motivation to create a Hindu vote bank for the congress to prolong their political power. They did create a rift between Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab, caring little for future consequences. So much so that they instigated the Hindus to deny Punjabi as their mother tongue in 1961 census, though earlier in 1921 and 1941 census 998.8 and 965.5 respectively out of 1,000 of Punjabi speaking zone had recorded Punjabi as their mother tongue. All the Hindus in these areas speak Punjabi language uptill now. The press being under their control succeeded in creating communalism in Punjab with the easily available help from Arya Samaj and Hindu fundamentalists.

In her book *My Truth* at page 117, Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru gave an eyewitness account so revealed :

"The congress found itself in dilemma; to concede the Akali demand would mean abandoning a position to which it was firmly committed and letting down its Hindu supporters in Punjabi Suba. The merits were no consideration as the policy of the Congress enunciated in 1949 by Jawaharlal, Vallabhbai and Pattabhi Sitaramayya had been not to concede reorganization of North India, whatever the merits of such a proposal might be."

These congress leaders who had made the agreements and pledges with Sikh leaders uptill 1947 for Sikh autonomous state in their homeland Punjab with the constitutional guarantees and not to enact the constitution unacceptable to Sikhs, just after two years in 1949, decided not to concede the reorganization of Punjab, ignoring its merits altogether. It is the height of deception and fraud committed on Sikhs who

had so much trust in them, not even to demand the guarantees for agreement from them.

What could have been the effect of the friendly advice on these leaders by persons of the stature of Arthur Moor in 1950 itself, a close associate of MK Gandhi and known well-wisher of India :

"We must learn by our mistakes. It is bad enough that we have today two nations in Indian sub continent. Let us not do anything that might lead to the creation of third. Let it be said in fairness to the war like Master Tara Singh that he is not demanding an independent Sikh National State. His greater concern is much the same. As that of those, who are clamouring for linguistic province, namely a redistribution of boundaries as to provide the Sikhs with a viable province in which there should be Punjab. It is distressing to find that responsible Hindu owned papers appear to have forgotten everything and learnt nothing. The Birla press urges the government not to repeat with Sikhs the mistakes made with Muslims at a time, when the Muslims too had not thought of demanding an independent state and had not formulated the disastrous two nation theory. It is idle to deny that Sikhs have distinctive physical characteristics and aptitudes. It should be obvious that harmonious India will not be possible, unless we have a contented and loyal Sikh community."

(Sangat Singh, *The Sikhs in History*, p. 339)

Akali Dal, the political representative party of Sikhs, passed the resolution on February 26, 1950 for the formation of Punjabi speaking state, and condemned the decision of the Indian Govt. for excluding Punjab from its reorganization on linguistic basis. It was termed to be a grave discrimination against Sikhs and Punjabis as a whole, which would never be tolerated. A clear message was given to the Indian Govt. that Punjab will be reorganized on linguistic basis at any cost. Thus the Sikhs came into direct conflict with the central Government of India, meeting the challenge and injustice of the Government in a peaceful and democratic manner.

Akali Dal mobilised its support for the reorganisation of Punjab called 'Punjabi Suba'. Sikhs overwhelmingly supported this demand and they were otherwise also supporters of this party considering it to be politically representing the Sikhs. Some congressite Sikhs in very small numbers and majority of Hindus did not involve themselves in this political struggle under the influence of congress leaders and their government in Centre and in Punjab. It gave the image of the agitation as discrimination against Sikhs by India government. Akali Dal launched its peaceful agitation to get Punjab reorganized on a linguistic basis. The demand was so justified that nothing could be convincingly said against it. Some secular parties also gave verbal assurances in support of it but nothing actionably. Sikhs courted arrests in thousands and thousands but to no effect on the Indian government as its leaders were determined not to concede it whatever merits it might have. The congress party lost its prestige and support in Sikhs. It was labeled by the Sikhs to be Anti Sikh. It lost its base in the Rural area, mostly occupied by Sikhs, who are mainly agriculturists.

In April 1955, Akali Dal intensified its struggle. Government imposed a ban on the slogan of "Punjabi Suba Zindabad" (long live Punjabi Suba), generally raised by the

Akalis in support of their demand. The ban was violated by the agitating Sikhs. Master Tara Singh and other Akali leaders were arrested on May 10, 1955 for violating the prohibitory orders. Akali workers started courting arrests voluntarily after seeking blessing from Akal Takhat in large numbers daily. Some secular parties like Parja Socialist party Communists, Zimindara league and Janta congress extended their support to the Akali agitation at a convention held at Delhi on June 7, 1955, though those parties had no solid following in Punjab. The Government could not stop the Sikh agitation and rather got the reports that Sikhs throughout Punjab were now ready for any kind of sacrifices.

Punjab government, under instructions from Central Government committed the blunder of sending security forces in the complex of Harimandar Sahib in the zeal to curb the agitation which was being conducted from Akal Takhat. It used tear gas shells to disperse Sikh volunteers in the Parikarma of Harimandar Sahib, which also fell in the holy sarovar (tank). It was taken by the Sikhs to be a sacrilege of the holiest Sikh shrine. The political agitation took the shape of religious confrontation between the Sikhs and the Government which knew that it would become uncontrollable. Chief Minister Bhim Sen Sachar rushed to Harimandar Sahib and submitted his apology and on behalf of the government to the Sikh Panth for hurting the religious sentiments of Sikhs with the assurance that such a sacrilege would never be committed in future and the police would never enter the Harimandar Sahib Complex again. Master Tara Singh was released on September 15, 1955 to cool down the situation. Sachar was replaced by Partap Singh Kairon as Chief Minister. More than 12,000 Sikhs had courted arrest during this period.

In the last days of September 1955, states reorganization commission, consisting of KM Panikar, HN Kangru and Fazal Ali submitted its report, recommending the merger of Punjab, PEPSU and Himachal Pradesh under the pressure of Indian government particularly the Prime Minister Nehru who had gone to the extent of briefing the members of SRC, equating the demand of Punjabi speaking state to a separate Sikh state. The report continued no logic or reasoning worth consideration.

Master Tara Singh, Akali leader, criticized the SRC report as a decree of Sikh annihilation, manipulated by the Anti Sikh Indian government. An all parties Sikh conference was held in its consideration, which outrightly reported it to be the manipulation of the worst type of communalism by Hindu fundamentalist majority. It reiterated its determination to get the Punjabi speaking state at all costs. Prime Minister Nehru, Home Minister Pandit Pant and the cabinet minister Maulana Azad met the Sikh deputation on October 29, 1955 to find out some amicable solution.

Regional Formulae 1956

Central government of India was adamant not to concede the formation of Punjabi speaking state outrightly. A via media was agreed upon in March 1956 to form the

regional councils of the Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking zones, consisting of the legislators of those zones and to invest statutory powers on these councils on all subjects, except law and order, finance and taxation. The official language of these zones to be Punjabi in Gurmukhi script in Punjabi speaking zones and Hindi in Hindi speaking zones. The Sachar and Pepsu Formulae to be applicable in the respective zones. The discrimination in Hindu and Sikh scheduled castes to be removed on all India basis. Government to enact All India Gurdwaras Act. Akali Dal to shun its political activity. On September 30, 1956, Jawaharlal Nehru Prime Minister, embraced Master Tara Singh saying :

"Tara Singh's honour was his own. Thereafter Hukam Singh Akali MP was made Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha, who later on became Speaker of Lok Sabha."

Regional formulae not seriously implemented

The congressite Arya Samajis and other fundamentalist Hindus openly rejected the Regional formula. The youth Akali were also not satisfied with it, being too short of Punjabi speaking state. It caused the division in Hindu and Sikh legislatures. Fourteen congress legislators including Jagat Narain and Suraj Bhan resigned from Punjab congress. Akali leaders under Gian Singh Rarewala, Ex Chief Minister of erstwhile PEPSU and Punjab Akali legislatures under Giani Kartar Singh joined congress party. Both of these Akali leaders were made cabinet ministers in Punjab as Akalis were sharing the power with congress. However regional formulae was not seriously implemented. Gurdial Singh Dhillon, Speaker, Punjab assembly even equated the regional councils to the ordinary committees of the legislative assembly. Regional councils were not set up till November 1957 and no statutory powers were invested in them as required. Chief Minister Kairon and Central Government were more for their failure than success as they conceded to this formulae under political compulsion and did not want to annoy the Hindu communalistic forces.

Save Hindi Agitation

Arya Samajists with collaboration of Hindu communalists who had been used by the Congress to communalise Punjab politics earlier against Sikhs, to oppose the reorganization of Punjab on a linguistic basis were finding it difficult to reconcile the settlement between Akalis and the government. They started an agitation under the slogan of 'Save Hindi' to frustrate the regional formula with the blessings of top congress leaders. No strictness was shown to curb it and nip the evil in the bud; rather it got the official patronage.

Akali Dal to revive political activity

In January 1959, Master Tara Singh announced the decision of Akali Dal to revive its political activity as the regional formula had not been implemented and it was a

mere deception and that Sikh interests were not safe in congress hands. Indian government now wanted Master Tara Singh to be ousted from Akali Dal and SGPC, which was under his control as the two Ex-Akali leaders of influence were in Punjab cabinet. The nominee of Master Tara Singh, named Kirpal Singh Chaksherawal as President of SGPC. No confidence motion was passed against him under the open support of Congress government Master Tara Singh termed it to be interference by the government in the religious affairs of Sikhs and threatened to hold a fast unto death from April 16, 1959. Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister was afraid of such a situation at that time. He invited Master Tara Singh for talks on April 11, 1959. The result was "Nehru-Tara Singh pact" vide which it was decided that the government will never interfere in the religious affairs of Sikhs and that the advice and recommendation of SGPC would be binding for any amendment of Sikh Gurdwara Act. Master Tara Singh's Akali Dal won 136 seats out of 140 of SGPC in the 1960 elections, leaving only 4 seats for the congress sponsored party. Thus Master Tara Singh got the hold over SGPC again. Master Tara Singh along with all SGPC members and one hundred thousands Sikhs took oath at Akal Takhat on January 24, 1960 to suffer any sacrifices needed to establish Punjabi speaking state.

1959 Sikh Gurdwara Anti-Sikh Act amendment made Sehajdhari Sikhs votes

The Congress government in Punjab under guidance of Indian Government amended the Sikh Gurdwaras Act to include Hindus under the fake name of *Sehajdhari* Sikhs as voters for SGPC. Its motive was to ensure the ousting of Master Tara Singh from SGPC and consequently Akali Dal and Sikh politics, as the congress leaders and governments could not tolerate the revival of Akali Dal in politics. There is no class in Sikhism as *Sehajdhari*, *Kesdhari*, or *Amritdhari* Sikhs. One is Sikh or not. The initiation procedure of Amrit of double-edged sword to become a Sikh was prescribed by Guru Gobind Singh, who also declared that there could be no exemption to it and to the five emblems of Sikhism—uncut hair, steel bracelet, kirpan, comb and without long underwear (called 5 k's). Still the clean shaven Hindus without initiation and adhering to Sikh code of conduct not known in Sikhism were infiltrated as Sikhs to become SGPC voters, whose function was to manage Sikh gurdwaras. It was a clear unmasked dishonesty in legislation by the government to oust the Sikhs from gurdwaras' management and a grave discrimination and interference in their religious affairs.

Sikhs had ousted the Mahants though they were not clean shaven, but playing into the hands of the Brahmanical cult, from gurdwara managements after a prolonged struggle with their supreme sacrifice. British government had yielded to the Sikhs and enacted the Sikh Gurdwaras Act 1925 to manage their gurdwaras in which only Sikhs were the voters of SGPC, meaning the initiated and adhering to Sikh code of conduct, and for any violation as to it would be a disqualification. How ridiculous it is that the

so called *Sehajdhari* Sikhs, not even having been initiated and neither subject to Sikh code of conduct, violating cent percent as to it, were to be eligible as voter for SGPC. Why these congress leaders and their governments were totally blind to this aspect in the zeal to have control over Sikh gurdwaras? How did these persons with political experience, entirely ignored Sikh history that Sikhs never allowed any outsider to interfere in their religious affairs? This amendment could never be availed of by the congress and neither would ever be possible. SGPC always remained under control of Akali Dal. However, this anti Sikh amendment was repealed in 2003 prior to 2004 SGPC election. Akali leaders have to share the blame for not having done it earlier.

Punjabi Suba Morcha (Agitation)

On January 24, 1960, Akali Dal passed the resolution directing all its members to leave the congress forthwith, who had joined the congress legislature party to share power in Punjab at the time of settlement for regional formula, holding that Sikh interests are not safe in congress. Master Tara Singh himself resigned from Presidentship of the SGPC in order to restart the effective agitation for Punjabi speaking state.

Master Tara Singh convened the Punjabi Suba conference on May 22, 1960 inviting the leaders of other political parties. The call was given for peaceful march at Delhi on June 12, 1960. He was arrested on May 24, 1960. The Akali Jathas of Sikh volunteers began courting arrests daily. Sant Fateh Singh, vice president of Akali Dal, the second in command of the party took over as leader of the morcha (peaceful agitation) after the arrest of Master Tara Singh. The agitation was named as 'Punjabi Suba Morcha' and intensified.

Sant Fateh Singh declared his fast unto death from December 18, 1960 if Punjabi Suba is not conceded by them. He started his fast as declared, as there was no response from the government. Prime minister Nehru invited him for talks on January 7, 1961, but he refused until Punjabi speaking state was conceded.

Master Tara Singh was released from Jail on January 4, 1961 to hold the talks. He went to Bhavnagar, where the talks were held between him and Nehru. After the talks, Nehru gave a press statement that the "state of Punjab is broadly a Punjabi speaking state with Punjabi as the dominant language which should be encouraged in every way, and the government has no discrimination or distrust against Sikhs." Master Tara Singh sent a telegram to Sant Fateh Singh to break his fast unto death, as it fulfilled the requirement of his vow. Sant broke his fast and saved his skin; however, Sikhs did not like these actions of the Akali leaders. Master Tara Singh lost his prestige that he conducted himself in this manner without the achievement of a Punjabi speaking state. His explanation that it was only to create a good atmosphere for meaningful negotiations, though his struggle for Punjabi Suba will remain continue till achieved, had no satisfaction for Sikhs.

Having noticed the Sikh attitude against Master Tara Singh and the Government itself wanted to let him down in Sikh esteem, Nehru invited Sant Fateh Singh directly

for talks as leader of the agitation. The talks took place between both of them on February 8, 1961, March 1, 1961 and May 8, 1961. Nothing came out of these talks as the motivation of Nehru was to make the Akali leaders themselves abandon their demand as he was adamant not to concede to it.

Master Tara Singh declared going on a fast unto death himself on May 28, 1961 to regain the confidence of Sikhs, with effect from August 15, 1961, the independence day of India. He began his fast as declared. On September 30, 1961 Maharaja Yadwindra Singh of Patiala and Malik Hardit Singh, who were close to Master Tara Singh met him to convey the message of Nehru, to end the fast as principle of reorganization of states on linguistic basics would be made applicable to Punjab and a high powered commission would be set up by the Indian government to enquire into and redress the grievances of Sikhs, whatsoever. Master Tara Singh broke his fast on October 1, 1961. Akali Dal working committee approved the proposals.

Master Tara Singh had a meeting with Prime Minister Nehru for action on the proposals. The Indian government appointed a high powered Commission consisting of SR Dass, retired Chief Justice of India as Chairman, CP Rama Swami Aiyar and MC Chagla as members to go in to the charges of discrimination against Sikhs. Master Tara Singh did not approve the personnels of the Commission as he doubted their integrity as they were under the influence of the government and not to the terms of Commission reference. So Akali Dal boycotted the Commission.

Master Tara Singh and Sant Fateh Singh were accused by the Sikhs not to have honoured their vows and breaking their fasts without achieving the aim of formation of Punjabi speaking state. Their cases in that regard were examined by Jathedar Akal Takhat assisted by other four high priests. They heard both the leaders on November 29, 1961 and both of them were held guilty and punishments in accordance with Sikh traditions were imposed upon them. Both of them had undergone the punishments in obedience to the dictum.

Master Tara Singh lost his undisputed leadership of Sikhs for over three decades. It became easy for the government to create rifts between the Sikh leadership with a remote control. Most of the Akali leaders sided with Sant Fateh Singh, who became the President of the main Akali Dal. Master Tara Singh floated his own Akali Dal, but leadership once lost was difficult to be revived.

Sant Fateh Singh raised the slogan of Punjabi speaking state purely on linguistic basis as if earlier it was on communal basis. He had no experience of Sikh politics as only a few years before Master Tara Singh brought him from Rajasthan Budha Johar gurdwara, where he was preaching Sikhism. Neither had he any formal education. His friend Sant Chanan Singh also accompanied him from Rajasthan who also faced these problems. However, he was made President SGPC, while Sant Fateh Singh became President of Akali Dal. The Sikh politics and religious affairs remained in the hands of these two sants for about a decade. The Sikhs were desirous of a highly educated leadership not ignorant of History and world Politics, but they got a leadership which

was uneducated and ignorant of History and politics as compared to the previous leadership; the gear having been put into reverse.

Sant Fateh Singh suspended the Sikh agitation in 1962 due to the Chinese attack on India. He also presented a cheque of Rs. 50,000 on behalf of SGPC for National Defence Fund to Nehru, the Prime Minister. Such a gesture could have no effect on the adamant Nehru not to concede to the reorganization of Punjab. The agitation was again revived by the Akalis who also were equally adamant to get the reorganization of Punjab. Nehru did not bend in his lifetime to Sikhs till he died in 1964.

Lal Bahadur Shastri succeeded Nehru as Prime Minister in May 1964. He did not like an anti Sikh reputation like his predecessor. Chief Minister Punjab, Partap Singh Kairon also had resigned due to the adverse report against him by SR Dass Commission on charges enquired by him. On June 21, 1964, Kairon said that a Punjabi speaking state could only be formed on his dead body. Kairon was assassinated in 1965.

Lal Bahadur Shastri invited Sant Fateh Singh for talks on August 8, 1965, but it yielded no result. On August 16, 1965 Sant Fateh Singh announced from Akal Takhat, in the presence of about 25,000 Sikhs that he would undergo fast unto death from September 10, 1965 inside Akal Takhat complex, and that in case he survived over 15 days, then to self immolate himself on the 16th day. One hundred Sikhs volunteered to the fast and self immolation after Sant Fateh Singh. However Indo-Pakistan war started in early September. Sant Fateh Singh announced on September 9 that he had postponed his fast and self immolation due to the war and advised the Sikhs to help India in the war. Sant saved his skin on a reasonable ground.

On September 26, 1965 after the war was over, Indian government formed a Parliamentary Consultative Committee with Hukam Singh, speaker of Lok Sabha as its Chairman, for the consideration of the formation of Punjabi speaking state and to the reorganization of Punjab on a linguistic basis. The recommendation of the committee was a foregone conclusion, the Chairman of which was the originator of the demand of Punjabi speaking state as Akali leader.

Reorganisation of Punjab Conceded and Its After Effects (9th March, 1966)

On January 20, 1966 Lal Bahadur Shastri died. Indira Gandhi succeeded him as Prime Minister. The Parliamentary committee gave a unanimous report for the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis. Indira Gandhi played a political game in pre-empting the parliamentary committee report by getting the resolution of the congress working committee dated March 9, 1966 conceding to the demand of a Punjabi speaking state and reorganization of Punjab on a linguistic basis. RSS and Jan Saugh, the Hindu fundamentalist organizations though immediately rejected to but later on also endorsed the formation of Punjabi speaking state, who were very allergic to it earlier.

Sikhs had to continue their struggle for 16 years (1950-1966) for the formation of a Punjabi speaking state. Over fifty thousand of Sikhs had gone to Jails and hundreds suffered supreme sacrifices besides other sufferings against the injustice and discrimination against them. The relations between Sikhs and the Government of India, and even between Sikhs and Hindus became bitter day by day besides the condition of law and order in the state having worsened. The trust of Sikhs in the congress leaders and the Government was lost. What congress leaders have done to Republic of India is such a futile exercise and political blunder.

Commission to demarcate Punjab and Hindi Speaking Areas which stood already Demarcated

Indian government appointed a Commission with justice JC Shah of Supreme Court as Chairman and S. Dutt and M.M. Philip, retired civil servants, to demarcate the boundaries of the Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking areas. It was to take into consideration the 1961 census which was altogether false as Hindus had been misled by congress leaders and the government and communalistic Arya Samajis to record their mother tongue as Hindi instead of Punjabi, while taking Tehsil instead of Village as a unit, which was also wrong.

In fact Punjabi state had stood already demarcated into Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking zones in 1949 under Sachar formulae and PEPSU formulae by the state Government and was functioning as such since then for the purposes of languages in the school mediums. These zones were later on given the statutory recognition in 1956 at the time of the regional formulae, when these zones were set up as regional councils with statutory powers for each of the Hindi speaking and Punjabi speaking zone. There could be no reason at all for any further demarcation of Punjabi and Hindi speaking areas. The Commission appointed for demarcation was bound to accept these Punjabi and Hindi speaking zones, but it misused its powers and judicial discretion under government pressure. The Commission went to the extent of giving some of the undisputed Punjabi speaking areas to Haryana and Himachal Pradesh illegally and arbitrarily which were parts of the Punjabi speaking zone. Kharar Tehsil and Chandigarh capital of Punjab were also given to Haryana which were obviously the Punjabi speaking areas of the Punjabi speaking zone. The central government made Chandigarh its Union Territory, as centrally administered, while capital of both Punjab and Haryana to be retained there and gave the Kharar Tehsil to Punjab.

Several Punjabi speaking areas were excluded from Punjab. The report of the Commission was on the face of it unreliable government of India should not have appointed any such Commission for the demarcation of the Punjabi and Hindi speaking areas, which stood already demarcated by the state government and functioning as such for over 15 years without any objection, whatsoever. If Commission were to be appointed, the Commission should have relied upon the demarcation of such areas

without any further enquiry. Neither the government nor the Commission discharged its duty with honesty of purpose.

Punjab Capital Chandigarh made Union Territory–Unlawful and Unjust

Punjab capital Chandigarh was built by the Punjab state, as the capital of united Punjab. Lahore had gone to Pakistan after the partition of Punjab in 1947 at the time of Indian Independence. Dozens of Punjab villages, which were part of Kharar Tehsil in Ropar District were acquired by Punjab state to build up this capital. These villages were in the Punjabi speaking zone as Punjab was demarcated in Hindi speaking and Punjabi speaking zones in 1949 itself. At the time of the reorganization of Punjab in 1966, Shah Commission, which was appointed to demarcate again the Punjabi speaking and Hindi speaking areas, included Kharar Tehsil in Hindi speaking areas which was altogether wrong as it was already in the Punjabi speaking zone. Government of India did not accept the recommendations of Shah Commission in this regard and included Kharar Tehsil in Punjab to be Punjabi speaking areas. However, Chandigarh capital was made as Union Territory depriving Punjab of its capital.

Punjab state and its people raised a hue and cry against the illegal usurpation of their capital Chandigarh. Peaceful agitations and morchas were organized by Akali Dal, the Sikh political representative party. Twice, Sant Fateh Singh held fasts unto death and self immolation threats on this issue when he was president of the Akali Dal, but his life was saved on assurances by the government of India to hand over Chandigarh to Punjab. However Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister later disclosed the conditions to it that 14 villages of Abohar and Fazilka, the best cotton zone areas, be given to Haryana in lieu thereof. It was not acceptable to Punjab. In 1985 Punjab settlement called Rajiv-Longowal accord, Chandigarh was to be handed over to Punjab by January 26, 1986 but at the last hour, the central government refused to do it. There was no remedy as the accord had no legal sanctity, as Longowal had no authority to represent Punjab. The matter is still lingering on, in spite of the fact that twice there had been Akali governments who during power, could not successfully take up this matter with government of India, but resorted to agitation for it when out of power.

Punjab is the only exception in the reorganization of states' history whose capital Chandigarh has been turned into a union territory directly under the control of union government. There was no logic in depriving Punjab of its capital Chandigarh which is a part of Punjabi speaking areas and for which thousands of Punjabis have been deprived of their lands by acquisition to build the capital. Haryana state can have no legal right to it as it was to be given only Hindi speaking areas while Chandigarh is in the area of Punjabi speaking zone. The condition of Indira Gandhi Prime Minister to Punjab to give its 114 villages of the best cotton areas smacked of ill intention. In fact she had never reconciled to the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis but

it had to be done due to the political compulsions and, therefore so many hindrances were created. All the illegalities were committed to usurp the rights of Punjab as to its capital Chandigarh and equally as to its river waters, Dams and Power houses etc.

Illegal provisions in Reorganisation Act-1956

Illegal and unconstitutional provisions were inserted in Punjab Reorganization Act 1956, just like the sections 78 to 80 to take control of the Punjab River waters, River head works and Dams etc. These are the subjects of state list, over which state government and state legislature have the exclusive jurisdiction as enumerated in schedule 7 of the constitution in the state list, read with Article 246 of the constitution. Union of India and Parliament having the exclusive jurisdiction over the union list as enumerated therein. These provisions were later on exploited to distribute Punjab river waters to other states which were non Riparian and had no legal claim to the Punjab River waters. Control of Punjab's Bhakra Dam was taken under control of the govt. besides that of Nangal Hydel channel power houses and River headworks. The common links between the newly created state of Haryana and Punjab were created just as the Governor, High Court and some state corporations. The Medical and educational institutions of Punjab at Chandigarh as P.G.I. and Punjab University were also taken under control of the government of India. Punjab state was thus divested of its control over such prime institutions and state resources. There was no justification in this respect when Punjab state had been reorganized on a linguistic basis, as to the common links and of the control over the Punjab state institutions and resources, being altogether unlawful and unjust. It had never been so done in any other state at the time of reorganization. Several Punjabi speaking areas were not included in the newly organized Punjab on linguistic basis, which stood already demarcated in the Punjabi speaking zone.

Infact, the reorganization of Punjab had to be done under the compelling political considerations when Parliamentary committee recommended it. The Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Home Minister Gulzari Lal Nanda did their best to get an adverse report of the Parliament Committee but could not succeed. So they acted half-heartedly and did everything possible to create hurdles in the smooth functioning of Punjab state and to take as much as possible out of the state and its control to make it dependant on the whims of the Indian government without caring for the just, legal and constitutional aspects. Circumstances were created for further continuous confrontation with Punjab state and its people particularly the Sikhs. History will record it to be anti-National Act under garb of nationalism.

Disclosures of Hukam Singh Speaker

Hukam Singh, Speaker of Lok Sabha, who was the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee to consider the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis has disclosed

that Mrs. Indra Gandhi approached the Prime Minister to influence him against the reorganisation failing which she played the deceitful political game to pre-empt the report of his committee in his own words :

"After denying the fundamental linguistic right for many years, Prime Minister Shastri appointed a Parliamentary Committee in October 1965, under my chairmanship, to prepare a report on the Punjabi Suba issue. This was done in accordance with the fresh promises made to the Sikhs during the September 1965 war with Pakistan. The intention of the government was to use me against my community, secure an adverse report and then reject the demand, even after 18 years of deliberate frustrating delays. When the report was nearly ready, Mrs Indira Gandhi went to Mr. Chavan and said she had heard that Sardar Hukam Singh was going to give a report in favour of Punjabi Suba, and that he should be stopped...Lal Bahadur Shastri continued the policy of Jawaharlal Nehru and was dead against the demand of Punjabi Suba, as was Nehru. So, when he was urged by Mrs. Gandhi to stop Hukam Singh, he did not waste any time. Mr. Shastri called Mr. Gulzari Lal Nanda, then Home Minister to his residence, and conveyed to him the concern about the feared report. Every effort was made by Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Shastri and Mr. Nanda to stop me from making my report. But when nothing succeeded, the Congress forestalled the Parliamentary Committee Report by agreeing to reorganize Punjab by a vague resolution dated 9 March, while the committee report was signed on 15 March, 1966, a week later. It was a deliberate attempt to by-pass this committee, and undermine its importance."

The Parliamentary committee had come to these conclusions :

- i) The present state of Punjab be reorganized on linguistic basis.
- ii) The Punjabi region specified in the First Schedule to the Punjabi Regional Committee Order, 1957 should form a unilingual Punjabi state.

The Government by-passed the Committee and forestalled its report. The subsequent reference to the Shah Commission was loaded heavily against Punjab. Making the 1961 Census as the basis, and the tehsil (instead of village) as the unit was a deliberate design to punish the Sikhs. The language returns in the 1961 Census were on communal lines when Punjabi-speaking Hindus falsely declared Hindi as their language. Therefore, the demarcation had to be on communal rather than on a linguistic basis. Consequently merit was again ignored and justice denied. Naturally, tensions between the two communities increased. If Punjabi Suba had been demarcated simply on a linguistic basis and not on false returns of 1961, there would not have been any extremist movement. Tension between Hindus and Sikhs is bound to continue unless the communal section of Hindus see wisdom and retrace their steps by acknowledging Punjabi as their mother tongue."

(Betrayal of the Sikhs by Hukam Singh quoted in Hindu Sikh Conflict : Causes and cure (Transasiatic India Times, London 1983, pages 21-22)

Disclosure of Indra Gandhi

The eminent scholar, Khushwant Singh, staunch supporter of Indira Gandhi having been appointed a member of Rajya Sabha by her, conceded to her duplicity :

"In her dealings with the Punjab and the Sikhs, Mrs. Gandhi practised a kind of duplicity more becoming of a small-time politician than a farsighted statesman. While appearing to concede the Suba, she first deprived it of its capital, Chandigarh and then made its transfer to the Punjab,

conditional on the Punjab giving up Fazilka and Abohar, which were with predominantly Punjabi speaking, to Haryana, even though they were not contiguous to it. This was revealed by Hukam Singh in an article he wrote, just before his death and which was published by the *Indian Express* in its issue of 11 April, 1983. Mrs. Gandhi brazenly confirmed the allegation of duplicity and justified it on the grounds of retaining support of the Hindus. In her memoirs *My Truth* she writes : "I went to Y.B. Chavan and said I had heard that Sardar Hukam Singh (Speaker of the Lok Sabha) was going to give a report in favour of the Punjabi Suba and that he should be stopped... I was very bothered and I went round seeing everybody. To concede the Akali demand would mean abandoning a position to which it (the Congress) was firmly committed and letting down its Hindu supporters in the projected Punjabi Suba, not to do so would precipitate a Sikh agitation which would certainly be violent."

(Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, pp. 304-05)

Says further Khushwant Singh at page 306 :

"The decision of the Indian National Congress (to reorganize Punjab on the linguistic basis) was accepted by all the political parties of India save the Bhartiya Jan Sangh which condemned the Congress resolution as 'a blow to the forces of unity and integration of the country.....' the decision to bifurcate the old state was supported not only by the Sikhs but also by the Hindi speaking populace of Haryana and Himachal. The only elements out of step with the march of events were the Punjabi Hindus. It soon dawned upon them that by denying their mother-tongue, they were cutting their own roots in the Punjab and, as a Punjabi-speaking people, would become alien elements in Hindi-speaking Haryana and Himachal Pradesh."

These disclosures establish beyond any doubt that the top congress leaders treated a rift between Hindus and Sikhs, by communalizing politics in order to get a Hindu vote Bank and making them anti-reorganization of Punjab on Linguistic basis and to even disown their Punjabi language. In the 1961 census, when Parliamentary report came out against their wishes, they forestalled it as it had concluded that Punjabi region specified in the first schedule to Punjabi regional committee order 1957 should form a unilingual Punjab state as it would settle the matter ending the communalist politics, which would offend their strategy to keep it alive. So the dirty political game was played under the leadership of Indira Gandhi to create future problems for Punjab by appointing the Commission to dispute the settled issues and making arbitrary and unjust hurdles to the peaceful governance in Punjab, with the motivation of keeping alive the communalization of politics and confrontation with the Sikhs.

Even B.J.P. leader, L.K. Advani, Ex-Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India in his book *My country-My life* at page 425 accused the Congress Party to misrepresent the demand for Punjabi speaking, wrote this :

"Guided by its myopic vision the Congress party tried to take electoral advantage of the situation. It misrepresented the Akali Dal's demand for Punjabi Suba as a demand, actually for a Sikh majority state. This made many Punjabi speaking Hindus to declare Hindi as their mother tongue in the census of 1951 and 1961. This in turn, gave a pretext to certain divisive elements in the state to allege that the centre had hatched a conspiracy to destroy the religion, language and culture

of Sikhs. Massive albeit peaceful demonstration were held during this period to press for the Akali demand. This situation had the potential to create a serious rift between Hindus and Sikhs of Punjab."

And at page, 426

"Finally in September 1966, the Indira Gandhi government accepted the demand for a separate Punjabi Suba by trifurcating the original province into Haryana in the south and Himachal Pradesh in the north. Nevertheless her party remained unreconciled to the domination of the Akali Dal, which had always enjoyed the support of a majority of Sikhs in the politics of Punjab. Being habituated to 'one party' rule both at the centre and in the states, it tried to under cut the Akali influence in Punjab, often by resorting to undemocratic and potentially dangerous means. The situation in Punjab worsened due to Indira Gandhi's authoritarian tendencies. A large number of Akali Dal leaders, including Prakash Singh Badal, whose government had been wrongfully dismissed in 1971, were imprisoned during the emergency."

Sikhs protest against Reorganisation Act

Sant Fateh Singh, President Akali Dal, commented :

"Central government wants the Sikhs to continue the agitational approach and not to join the main stream. Chandigarh and Punjabi speaking areas left over would at no cost be allowed to remain out of Punjab."

Master Tara Singh commented :

"The central government's intention to enslave the Sikhs is obvious."

Kapur Singh ICS, Akali MP commented :

"Mischievous provisions of Punjab reorganization act are encroachments of the rights of the state which would lead to anti unity and integrity of the country reflecting Anti Sikh policies of central government, unacceptable to Sikhs."

On the whole Sikhs dubbed Shah Commission anti judicial, anti secular and partial, influenced by the central government to act as anti Sikh force while the congress leaders and their government to be anti Sikh causing grave discriminations and excesses to Sikhs compelling them for an agitational approach.

On November 10, 1966, Sant Fateh Singh called all political parties conference for the consideration of the ill-effects of the reorganization process. All the parties extended support to him to launch an agitation for inclusion of Chandigath in Punjab and left over Punjabi speaking areas, abolishing the common links and taking over the control of river waters, Dams and Power houses from the Indian government, and to letting the Sikhs live with respect, honour and dignity as equal citizens. The new reorganized Punjab came in effect from November 1, 1966

On December 5, 1966, Sant Fateh Singh announced his decision to observe December 12 as protest day and that he would undergo fast unto death from Dec. 17 and then immolate himself on December 27, 1966 at Akal Takhat if his demands for transferring Chandigarh and Punjabi speaking areas to Punjab are not accepted by the government Sant started his fast as declared. On December, 27, Hukum Singh, Speaker Lok Sabha, came to Amritsar only one hour before the immolation time and met the Sant alone. Sant Fateh Singh cancelled his immolation plan that he had been assured of the acceptance of his demands, saving his life this time also in the nick of time. However the government did not concede to any of the demands.

Sant Fateh Singh again on November 24, 1969, announced his plan on self immolation of February 1, 1970 at 3 p.m. by starting his fast unto death on 26 January 1970 if Chandigarh was not transferred to Punjab. He undertook the fast as declared. On Jan 29, 1970 Mrs. Indira Gandhi Prime Minister announced the decision of Indira government to transfer Chandigarh to Punjab in lieu of 114 Punjab villages of Fazilka Tehsil in Ferozepur Distt. (the best cotton zone) to Haryana with corridor of one furlong as those villages had no continuity to Haryana, without any intervention of the Punjabi speaking area. Sant Fateh Singh broke his fast that Chandigarh was given to Punjab on the appeal of all parties' action committee made by Dr. Baldev Parkash, a Jan Sangh cabinet Minister in the Akali Ministry headed by justice Gurnam Singh; thus saving his life this time as well. Later on Akali Dal rejected this decision of Indian government refusing to give any of the villages to Haryana, consequently Chandigarh to still remain Union Territory.

In 1967 general elections, the first in the reorganized Punjab, Akali Dal for the first time formed the ministry by forming a united front in coalition of some other parties under the Chief Ministership of Justice Gurnam Singh. Its downfall was brought within eight months by Lachhman Singh Gill, a cabinet minister by forming his group of 20 rebel Akali legislators and becoming Chief Minister with the outside support of congress. After 6 months, congress withdrew the support and again elections were held in 1969. In February, 1969 Justice Gurnam Singh again formed the Akali ministry. On March 28, 1970 he was dislodged due to his differences with Sant Fateh Singh. He was succeeded by Parkash Singh Badal. His ministry was dissolved by the centre without any reason after one year, imposing president rule. In 1972 elections congress got the majority and remained in power for five years. The Akalis were manipulated out of power in Punjab though Sikhs were over 60% there.

Anandpur Sahib Resolution–1973

On October 16, 1973 Akali Dal working committee in its meeting at Anandpur Sahib, passed a resolution called Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Vide this resolution the main demands of Akal Dal were :

- i) Autonomy and more fiscal power to Punjab state; only defence, foreign affairs,

currency and communications to be retained with the centre. All other subjects to be with the state.

- ii) Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab and all the left over Punjabi speaking areas to be given to Punjab forthwith.
- iii) River waters, Dams, Power houses and other Irrigation and power projects including Bhakra projects to be given under the control and management of Punjab state.
- iv) No exploitation of Punjab resources : General house of Akali Dal approved this resolution in its meeting on August 28, 1977 at Ludhiana.

This resolution of Akali Dal containing Sikh demands was propagated to be anti National and against the integrity and unity of India by the congress leaders to create a Hindu vote Bank by misleading the Hindus, though Punjab was to remain part of the Union of India in accordance with its clear terms. In fact these demands related to Punjab state and effected all its residents. Hindus should have come forward to participate in the struggle against Indian government to achieve these demands. But the false propoganda of congress leaders misled the Hindus and most Hindus were made to believe that these were the demands of Sikhs only. The agitations to achieve these demands and earlier to the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis appeared to be made by Sikhs alone, though Hindus also had the same rights as Sikhs in Punjab and the same interests but they have been befooled by congress leaders to incite communalism so as to establish Hindu vote Bank.

Akali Dal Agitation against Emergency–1975-1977

On June 25, 1975, Mrs. Indira Gandhi imposed internal emergency in India, after she was unseated and disqualified in the election petition by Allahabad High Court and she had not resigned as Prime Minister. She got arrested, all the main political leaders of India who pressed for her resignation to save democracy including Jai Parkash Narain and her own party leaders like Chandra Shekhar. Akali Dal launched agitation against her undemocratic and unjust conduct. It continued throughout the emergency period of 19 months (1975-1977). All the Akali leaders courted arrests. Daily Sikh jathas would court arrests. In spite of the best efforts of Indira Gandhi, Sikhs did not discontinue the agitation. So she got personally aggrieved against the Sikhs particularly when no other political party could continue the agitation for such a long period. She made offers to bargain with Sikhs as to their demands to stop their agitation but they gave preference to the democratic values and the democracy to be established in India.

Akali Government in Punjab And a Minister in Indian Government (1977-1980)

Emergency was lifted by Indira Gandhi on January 17, 1977, and she declared

the holding of general elections in India. In the elections, Indira Gandhi herself and her congress party was badly defeated. Janta Party won the elections in Parliament which formed government with Morarji Desai as Prime Minister. The Akali leader Surjit Singh Barnala became Agriculture Minister of India. In Punjab also Akali Dal won the elections defeating congress. Parkash Singh Badal became Chief Minister in the Akali government However Akali Dal could not get any of its demands conceded though Anandpur Sahib resolution was the charter of their election manifesto, though in Punjab and in Indian government there was coalition between Akali Dal and Janta Party. It was the political failure of the Akali leaders in that regard not to have achieved its political aim to the least and to have ruled empty handed. Even such a friendly govt. to Akalis at the centre did not concede to any of their demands which were justified. Due to internal disputes in Janta Party it could not continue its government In 1980 in re-election, Indira Gandhi again became Prime Minister.

Punjab River Waters Distributed to Other States in Violation of Legal and Constitutional Provisions : Economy of Sikhs Ruined

Punjab, 'the literal meaning land of five rivers' was divided into Pakistan and India at the time of Indian independence in 1947. Two rivers Jehlam and Chenab were in the territories which went to Pakistan while the other three rivers, Ravi, Beas and Satluj remained in the Punjab territories which remained in India. In the united Punjab, all these five river waters were exclusively utilized in the lands of that state. After the bifurcation of Punjab, the waters of Jehlum and Chenab were used for the lands of west Punjab in Pakistan, while the waters of other three rivers Ravi, Beas and Satluj were exclusively used for the land of east Punjab in India, which were the Riparian states, for these river waters. The dispute over these river waters between Pakistan and India was resolved with the intervention of World bank as per Indus water Treaty 1960, on Riparian basis to be exclusively for the territories in which they flowed.

However, in 1955 government of India in a meeting of Deputy Secretaries level, illegally gave 8 MAF of Punjab river waters to Rajasthan out of the imaginary surplus waters, after meeting the needs of Punjab first and that it could be reviewed from time to time.

In 1976, Indira Gandhi Prime Minister vide her award of March 25, 1976, distributed the Punjab River waters allocating "8.60 MAF to Rajasthan; 3.5 MAF to Haryana; 0.20 MAF to Delhi and 3.50 MAF to Punjab" holding 15.8 MAF to be surplus which was actually not so. It was so done illegally under section 78 of Punjab Reorganization Act 1966 in which Rajasthan was not a party even.

In 1981, Indira Gandhi Prime Minister again made the distribution of Punjab river waters termed to be surplus and to have increased to 17.17 MAF from 15.8 MAF." 8.60 MAF to Rajasthan; 3.50 MAF to Haryana, 0.20 MAF to Delhi; 0.65 MAF to J&K and

4.22 MAF to Punjab." This time, J&K was also added in the list. It was also got signed from the chief ministers of Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab to term it as an agreement. Signatures of Punjab Chief Minister were obtained under the threat to "sign or resign" as he was hesitant to agree to such a distribution of Punjab river waters to other states without any consideration and being unlawful and unjust and Prime Minister having no jurisdiction into the matter.

The illegal and unjust usurpations of Punjab river waters in violation of the provisions of the constitution of India might be the solitary instance in Republic of India. In no other state has government of India intervened in such matters. Rather the river waters of a state are utilized by that state only on the basis of Riparian laws throughout India without any distribution to any other state while in case of any dispute as to inter state River waters, intervention of union govt. has been made legal but not as to the river waters, not interstate.

In constitution of India, river water enumerated in the state list in the 7th schedule of entry 17 to which only the state and state legislature have been given the exclusive jurisdiction under article 246 of the constitution. Though jurisdiction of Union government and of Parliament is exclusive for the subjects in union, but both the Parliament and state legislatures have the concurrent jurisdiction in the subjects of the concurrent list. India, being the union of states, as laid down in article 1 of the constitution in the very beginning, the division of powers had to be prescribed between the Union government and Parliament and States and state legislatures. If this division is not followed or is violated, there can never be a smooth functioning of the Indian Republic and the relations between state and union government are bound to become strained endangering the unity and integrity of India.

In the case of Punjab, river waters such a division of powers as provided by the Indian constitution has been openly violated. The union government and its Prime Minister distributed the Punjab river waters which are not interstate rivers to Rajasthan, Haryana, J&k and Delhi none of which is a Riparian state, as none of the Punjab rivers flows through any territory of these states.

In 1955, the distribution was made in the proceedings of the meeting of Deputy Secretaries held at the office of the irrigation department of government of India, that 8 MAF of Punjab river waters may be spared for Rajasthan but the needs of Punjab will be first met and this arrangement may be reviewed from time to time. The proceeding was even kept secret for sometime. No decision was taken at the level of Punjab council of Ministers and of the Punjab legislature. No formal agreement was made as needed under article 299 of the Indian Constitution. It was obviously illegal and unconstitutional distribution of Punjab river waters to be of no binding effect on Punjab and its people.

In 1976, Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, herself without any authority or jurisdiction, made the distribution of Punjab river waters to Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi, obviously in violation of the constitution of India. It was illegal and of no binding

effect on Punjab and its people. The case filed in the Supreme Court against this distribution to be void and unconstitutional and of no binding effect by the Punjab government was withdrawn by putting pressure on congress chief minister Darbara Singh by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

In 1981, another illegal distribution was made of Punjab river waters, including J&K in the list of states as well. It was got signed by the Chief Ministers of Punjab, Rajasthan and Haryana. The Punjab Chief Minister Darbara Singh was threatened to sign or resign. He was not ready to quit the post, so put his signatures under such a naked undue influence and illicit political pressure exhibiting his cowardness. Here also, there was no decision by Punjab council of ministers, no decision by the Punjab legislature and no formal agreement as envisaged in article 299 of the constitution. Thus it was also void and unconstitutional. There was no consideration. An agreement without consideration and under undue influence was void under law. Punjab River waters were given to the states of Bikaner which is now part of Rajasthan like Patiala and other princely states before 1947 in the united Punjab, but on payment of revenue and under terms and conditions of the Punjab state. But all these distributions of 1955, 1976 and 1981 were free of any cost. The canals to be constructed in Punjab territories were to waste the last tracts of Punjab lands and thus making the remaining Punjab a desert.

In no other state in India any such distribution of waters was ever done by union government or the Prime Minister. When Madras was reorganized, the rivers Krishna, Godawari and Mahananda, which flowed in Madras, did not flow in Tamil Nadu, the new organized state. So it was held to become non Riparian and not entitled to these river waters. The same position was of Haryana which became non-Riparian at the reorganization of Punjab, but Haryana was held to be the claimant of entire river waters. Even Rajasthan gave the application to be made a party but it was rejected that Rajasthan was not a Riparian state. But the Punjab river waters were given to Rajasthan. Why this exclusive exemption of Punjab to distribute its river waters to non-Riparian states having no legal claim. Moreover, Punjab river waters are not even sufficient for Punjab lands which might become deserts and unfit for agriculture, particularly due to the future of non availability of underground waters in Punjab but it was of no consideration for government of India.

In Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966, illegal provisions were added to have control over the Punjab river waters, Punjab Dams, Headwork and Power houses (S.78-80), in violation of the constitution, as Punjab river waters, headworks, Dams and power houses are in the state list with exclusive jurisdiction of the state and state legislature, and Parliament having no jurisdiction to these matters. Any action taken under such unconstitutional provisions would obviously be illegal and of no binding effect. In 1985, in the so-called Rajiv Longowal accord (Punjab settlement), provisions were added to deal with Punjab river waters and to appoint a tribunal to adjudicate over these matters for which 5.14 was added to Inter state river waters disputes act 1956 and Punjab river

waters related clauses of the accord were referred to the Eradi-Tribunal. All this is on the face of it unconstitutional and illegal. The Accord or settlement whatever it may be called was without any jurisdiction as Harcharand Singh Longowal had no legal awareness to represent Punjab state. Punjab river water could not be under jurisdiction of Union government and Parliament. Inter state river waters disputes act could not be made applicable to the Punjab river waters. Thus every unlawful attempt has been made to usurp illegally Punjab river waters.

In June 2004, Supreme Court, on the petition of Haryana state, directed the government of India to get the SYL canal to take the Punjab rivers waters to Haryana. Government of India in compliance of the direction authorized the central PWD to take up this assignment. Punjab legislature in July 2004 passed the bill for the termination of the agreement of 1981 and all other agreements to Punjab river waters. Consent to it was given on the very next day by justice (Retd.) Verma, Governor of Punjab. So it has become the act of Punjab legislature "Punjab Termination of agreements act 2004" knocking down the very basis on which Supreme Court gave the directions. Government of India had made the Presidential reference to Supreme court for advice as to the constitutionality of the Punjab act and its effect on the provision of S.78 of Punjab re-organisation act and of S.14 of the Inter state river disputes act and on the directions of Supreme court. Its final outcome had to be awaited. But ultimately Government. of India had to finalise the solution, that created and complicated the issue.

The distribution of Punjab river waters to other states was based on the ground, that it was surplus, which was incorrect. The total flow of the waters of all the three rivers; Satluj, Beas and Ravi is 32.5 MAF, while the need for Punjab lands is 55.2 MAF. By this distribution, several canals in Punjab remain closed and cannot supply the river waters for the irrigation of the lands for which these were constructed. In Punjab, total available water resources are 31.3 lakh hectare water, which consists of 14.5 Lakh hectare meter from surface canals, while 16.8 lakh hectare meter from ground water discharge. Punjab meets its excessive demand of 12.4 Lakh hectare meter through over exploitation of underground water resources. Out of the total irrigated area of 42.4 lakh hectares of Punjab, 75 percent is irrigated by the tubewells, which has resulted in the intolerable fall in underground water table. The cost of pumping out the water has reached its highest levels, not to be afforded by the land owners. It has forced them to switchover from centrifugal to the submersible pumps. The tubewells in Punjab are touching the number of a million, which consume 35% of the total power supply, which is not possible for the state government.

The water table if goes further down with this speed, will make it impossible to pump out the underground water. It would not be even fit for agriculture at that lower level as it contains saline and other harmful chemical mixtures. It will even cause a great problem for the availability of the drinking water. The produce has already gone down. Punjab which once supplied 90% of food grains in the food basket of India has

now come down to 45%. If the waters to other states are not stopped, bulk of the Punjab lands would become deserts, not fit for agriculture. The economy of people of Punjab is already at the ruin point, who are mainly dependant on agriculture. Sikhs own the bulk of lands in Punjab and agriculture is their only avocation. The distribution of Punjab river waters to other states, thus ultimately ruins the economy of Sikhs. It can never be in the national interest to ruin their economy.

Peaceful Punjab Turned Violent

Excesses Against Sikhs (1980-1985)

Sikhs were feeling already agitated and aggrieved at the injustice meted out to them in every sphere by the Congress Indian government and their peaceful agitations were not given any consideration to redress the just and genuine grievances of Sikhs and of Punjab. In April 1978, the Nirankaris, headed by Gurbachan Singh, whom Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, had exploited against the Sikhs committed violence against the Sikhs at Amritsar in which 13 Sikhs were killed. The accused Nirankaris were prosecuted by the then Akali government in that murder case. They got their case transferred to Haryana state. They were acquitted in 1980. By that time, congress government came in Punjab and Indira Gandhi again became Prime Minister of India who had been defeated in 1977. They put pressure upon Punjab Congress Chief Minister Darbara Singh not to file appeal against acquittal. In that case the Sikhs felt that even in judicial process in such heinous crimes interference has been made by the congress government in Punjab and at the centre.

Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh was murdered at his house at Delhi. Other Nirankari leaders in Punjab were also murdered one after the other. In Punjab, the atmosphere became somewhat violent. The Punjab Police and security forces, under orders of the government committed excesses on the Sikh youth arbitrarily killing innocent youth in fake encounters and falsely persenting them and torturing them unlawfully. Some of the victims in revenge committed violence against some of the police officials responsible for the crimes against them, when they were not made liable by the government to take action against them for their criminal excesses. Some secret agencies of the government were responsible for the escalation of violence in Punjab by underhand means with ulterior motives.

Indian Express, a leading daily English Newspaper of India, published an article on April 7, 1978 of a Hindu journalist Satpal Bagi, stating :

"The genesis of the real trouble between Nirankari and Akali goes back to the years when Mrs. Indira Gandhi headed the union government She wanted to weaken the Akali Dal but found that Akali Dal could not be brought to heal. She thought of an elaborate plan to strengthen the Nirankari seat not only in Punjab but throughout the country and abroad and also official patronage was extended to Nirankaris during Mrs. Gandhi's regime. The Nirankaris were known to be receiving financial help from secret government funds, not open to audit and scrutiny by Parliament."

The violence in Punjab started from the Nirankaris contempt against Sikhism and Sikh Gurus and to let down the Sikhs which Sikhs could never tolerate. The Nirankaris had the instigation and financial support of Indian government to come into conflict with Sikhs. After the open armed assault on Sikhs on April 13, 1978 on Baisakhi day in Amritsar, killing 13 unarmed innocent Sikhs, the conflict widened.

On August 6, 1978, Akal Takhat, Jathedar issued the *Hukamnama* for the social boycott of the Nirankaris by all Sikhs. After the acquittal of the accused Nirankaris including Gurbachan Singh, their chief and refusing to file appeal against their acquittal by the government in such a heinous crime against Sikhs, the circumstances were created to deal this matter by some of the affected Sikhs themselves. It resulted in the murders of Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh and some others of their leading leaders responsible for the excesses against Sikhs to finish this anti Sikh movement in Punjab, sponsored by the Indian government against Sikhs.

On September 9, 1981, Jagat Narain Editor of Hind Samachar, whose writings were considered to be anti Sikh was murdered. Police wanted to arrest Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, head of Damdami Taksal, a religious Sikh Sant preaching Sikhism and administering *Amrit* of double-edged sword to initiate the Sikhs in Sikhism for adherence to Sikh code of conduct, besides prohibiting the Sikhs from intoxicants like liquor and tobacco that is forbidden in Sikhism, for which he commanded respect and following of Sikhs. He was brought into more prominence in political circles as well by this act of the government on September 10, 1981 when police raided Chando Kalan village in state of Haryana where he had gone for preaching of Sikhism. The sant could not be apprehended by the police but it burnt his van containing Sikh scriptures most valuable for Sikhs, besides committing excesses on the inhabitants of that village which proved counter productive, being totally unjustified, improper and illegal. It caused a great provocation to Sikhs and sympathy for the Sant. On September 20, 1981 Sant Jarnail Singh gave his arrest at his headquarters, Mehta Chowk in Amritsar distt. after addressing a very huge Sikh congregation which was also addressed by other prominent Sikh leaders accusing the government for his false implication in a criminal case. The great Sikh, saint Sant Jarnail Singh had cautioned the Sikhs to maintain peace but still the police opened fire on peaceful Sikhs killing eleven Sikhs, which further provoked the Sikhs.

On September 27, 1981, Akali Dal executive committee decided to launch the civil disobedience movement from October 18, 1981 if Sant Jarnail Singh was not released. On October 15 Sant Jarnail Singh was released as not required in that murder case, showing that he was innocent. He got the sympathy of Sikhs to have been arrested in that case, to falsely involve him being a well known Sikh saint and preacher. It gave the impression to Sikhs that the government could go to any extent to harass and attempt to involve a Sikh Sant of his stature in a murder case.

During the congress rule in Punjab headed by Darbara Singh as Chief Minister from 1980-1983, Sikh youth were arbitrarily arrested, tortured, prosecuted in false cases and

killed in fake police encounters. The police excesses, without any accountability, created a sense of revenge in them against the guilty police officials. Thus some guilty police officials were also killed. In the ranks of Sikh youth infiltration was made by government agencies. The local criminal elements were encouraged to commit crimes. Smugglers and drug operating groups were given open hand to smuggle and trade in arms and ammunition which created further violence in Punjab. Sikh youth and particularly Sant Jarnail Singh and his followers were accused for every crime committed in Punjab by whomsoever. In fact Indira Gandhi was involved in creating the justification and circumstances for anti Sikh action, like operation Blue star, to portray the Sikhs as extremists and criminals and thirsty for Hindu blood and to oust them from Punjab, so that no one should sympathize with the Sikhs in case of onslaught on them, while provoking the Sikhs at the same time.

Asian Games

At the time of Asian Games in Delhi in November 1982, Sikhs were denied access on the ground that they might create disturbance. Bhajan Lal, Chief Minister Haryana, under instructions from Union government and Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, issued blank orders to security forces to stop the Sikhs from going to Delhi from Punjab in the Haryana state territory. The Haryana police ill-treated and harassed the Sikhs without any distinction, disallowing them to go to Delhi and turning them back. Even the well known former central government Minister Swaran Singh, Congress (I) MP Amarjit Kaur, and senior Civil and Defence Sikh officers were not spared. It was the most unwise step which naturally provoked the Sikhs.

In October 1983, Congress government of Punjab was dismissed when several Hindus were killed by taking them out of the bus on a main road. Union government's plan was to impose President Rule to further spread the violence and then to deal with Sikhs in operation Blue Star to make Indira Gandhi the protector of Hindus after portraying them as the victims of Sikhs under deceitful plans.

The esteemed journal *Guardian* from London, in its issue of June 8, 1984, commented :

"Ever since the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi returned to power in 1980, New Delhi has kept alive a crisis in Punjab to achieve three questionable objects : to oust the Akali led coalition state government of 1977-80; to prevent a legitimate constitutional settlement of Punjab's territorial river waters and other political and economic disputes with the centre, and finally to forge a psychological wedge between Hindus and Sikhs. The congress party's obsession with power its dwindling standards of political behaviour and its aversion to losing elections is what led it to become the midwife of extremism and terrorism in Punjab."

Mark Tully and Satish Jacob, the BBC correspondents had remarked after their journalistic investigations :

"There was a series of what the Indian police calls encounters a euphemism of cold blooded murder by the police. Darbara Singh admitted as such to us."

(Tully and Jacob, *op.cit.*, p. 105)

And

"Darbara Singh further told them unhesitatingly that encounters did take place. I had told my senior police officers; you kill the killers and I will take the responsibility."

And

"The Police killings sparked off revenge attacks against them by Bhindranwale's men."

Bhindranwala spoke to the correspondent of *Sunday* as recorded on page 29 of May 15-21, 1983 :

"The govt. has taken our rights. We are asking for them back and say we are extremists."

The *Surya* magazine in its September 1984, issue gave the tale of 'third agency'- a super intelligence agency operating from the Prime Minister office :

"We focus on Pre-Blue Star Punjab. The third agency's assignment was to aid and abet the murders and killings in Punjab. The third agency kept the supply of lethal weapons flowing into the Golden Temple. The third agency allowed 47 Railway stations to be blown up. The third agency incited violence in Punjab. And for their gallant roles, senior officers of the third agency have been rewarded with police medals and Prize foreign postings."

M K Dhar, the Joint Director Intelligence Bureau of India, stated in his book, *The Open Secrets* at page 281, thus :

"Indira Gandhi (Prime Minister) had succeeded in caging her blundering political troubleshooter but she did not have any strategic idea to get out of the hell fire of Sikh militancy started by her son's creation. The hellish fire finally consumed her."

And at page 284

"Indira had the vision as well as the strength. But her infallible faith in the eternal continuity of her dynasty had blinded the vision that she inherited from Jawaharlal. She and Sanjay had tinkered with the system and had done nothing to arrest the inexorable slide."

He also pointed out that Indian Government leaders never wanted peace in Punjab and preferred war.

LK Advani, Ex Home Minister and deputy Prime Minister of India in his book, *My Country My Life* at page 428 has accused the congress for its role in appeasing militancy that :

"The instability caused by the fall of the Janta Party Government in July 1979 was used by Pakistan

to foment militancy in Punjab. After Indira Gandhi's return to power in early 1980, the country witnessed a worsening policy of appeasement of militancy and worse still of using the militants both in the faction fight within the Congress as well as in its political battle against the Akali Dal.

And at page 437

"In the nearly two decade long history of militancy in Punjab, there were many occasions when timely and decisive action by Indira Gandhi's Government could have averted the need for operation Blue Star in June 1984. Most of its tragic consequences too, could have been avoided."

Sikh Dharam Yudh Morcha

Righteous Peaceful agitation (July 1982–May 1984)

Sikhs were very agitated over the high handedness of Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, for unlawfully and without any authority distributing the Punjab river waters to other states. She came forward with another provocative action against the Sikhs and Punjab state on April 8, 1982 when she came to Punjab to inaugurate the 'Satluj-Yamuna link' canal for taking the Punjab river waters to Haryana illegally in which a long tract of land of Punjab and Sikh farmers was to be wasted. Sikhs objected to it that no such canal would be allowed to be constructed in Punjab area with fertile agricultural land of Sikhs. Akali Dal started the peaceful agitation on April 24, 1982 against the digging of such a canal as Punjab river waters would never be allowed to be taken to Haryana which were insufficient even for Punjab lands as otherwise the Punjab lands would become barren and unfit for agriculture causing irreparable loss to Sikhs, who were the main owners of these lands and were cultivating it for agriculture. The central government did not concede to this just demand as if they were anxious to destroy the economy of Sikhs by making their lands worthless. However that canal could never be constructed.

The Punjab congress government did not desist from committing the unjust and criminal excesses against the Sikh youth from its police force and security forces which were rather being accelerated. On July 19, 1982 Bhai Amrik Singh, President Sikh Students Federation and Bhai Thara Singh of Damdami Taksal, close associates of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, head of Damdami Taksal, were arrested on flimsy and false grounds, perhaps to bring the Sant into action, by instigating him to take some drastic step and then to accuse him for that step. It was already in the knowledge of Sant Jarnail Singh that police was arresting innocent Sikh youth, torturing them and murdering them in false police encounters, for which he was feeling very disturbed to find out remedial action. The strategy of the government worked. Sant Jarnail Singh came out with agitation against the government for the release of all the Sikhs illegally detained on false charges and from the stoppage of police excesses, torture of Sikh youth and their killing in false police encounters. This agitation was given the name of *Dharam*

Yudh Morcha by him. He started the *Dharam Yudh Morcha* from the precincts of Akal Takhat, Amritsar with the courting of arrests of Sikhs Jathas daily. He shifted his headquarters from Chowk Mehta to Amritsar Golden Temple complex. Sant Jarnail Singh had the great following and respected as an orthodox Sikh saint in Sikh masses.

Akalis take over *Dharam Yudh Morcha* from August 4, 1982

On August 4, 1982, Akali Dal took over *Dharam Yudh Morcha* from Sant Jarnail Singh. Sant Harchand Singh, President Akali Dal became the leader of the Morcha. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala was also to stay in Harimandar Sahib complex to give his blessings to the Sikh volunteers who were to daily court arrest. Besides the demands for which it was started, the political demands of Akali Dal as contained in Anandpur Sahib resolution were also added. Strategy of the government failed to weaken the Akali Dal and rather it got strength from Sant Jarnail Singh. However within a year, a rift between both the Sants became visible in which there was also the hand of the secret agencies. Sant Jarnail Singh shifted to Akal Takhat to avoid the intense fight for the acceptance of all the demands of the Morcha, in case any settlement arrived at with the Indian government His following in Sikhs increased, due to his honesty of purpose. The Akali leaders were also successful in mobilizing Sikh support for the Morcha, giving it different political shapes of the peaceful agitation, to which they got full response of Sikhs. Over three hundred thirty thousands Sikhs gave their arrests.

Dharam Yudh Morcha continued from August 4, 1982 to May 31, 1984 with the arrest of over 350,000 persons from Manji Sahib in Harimandar Sahib complex. The daily Jathas courted arrest with the blessings of both the Sants and other Sikh leaders. But very soon, the conspicuous absence of Sant Jarnail Singh from the scene after the relations between these sants became strained. However, both the Sants remained confined to Harimandar Sahib complex throughout the Morcha. Sant Jarnail Singh moved on to Akal Takhat building from December 16, 1983 from Guru Nanak Niwas, when some Babbar Khalsa activists occupied some rooms there allotted to him. To avoid the internal fight, he stayed there till operation Blue Star with his personal armed guards of his *Jatha*. During the day he would hold Darbars at Langar building. He was wounded in the Blue Star Operation but kept sticking to his vow to defend Harimandar Sahib up to his last while Sant Harchand Singh had no such desire and came out when arrested by the Army alongwith President SGPC, Gurcharan Singh Tohra. Secret agencies of the government also played their role to bring both the saints and their associates with daggers drawn against each other as always happens in such conflicts, to divide and rule. The end of *Dharam Yudh Morcha* was brought by the government with the Army attack on Harimandar Sahib.

Dharam Yudh Morcha, was for the acceptance of certain just and lawful demands of Sikhs, and at some for the Punjab as a whole. This Morcha was ended by the unlawful and unjust army attack on Harimandar Sahib complex wherein some leaders were martyred while some were arrested. The arrested were released within a year. It has

not been explained by the Akali leaders why the peaceful and democratic and just agitation was not restarted as none of the demands got accepted, particularly when more than 350,000 persons were arrested in the Morcha, besides several having lost their lives. The Akalis also formed the governments thereafter in Punjab but still none of these demands was got accepted. People got no explanation. No doubt a demand of Khalistan did come up after the Blue Star Operation from a section of Sikhs but Akalis were not the participants for that demand. They still assert their demands as contained in Anandpur Sahib resolution which was the charter for Dharam Yudh Morcha. As to the question of the strategy for the acceptance of their demands of this chapter, Akali leaders are silent though so many years have lapsed.

Meetings between government and Akali leaders 1981-84

The deceptive meetings between Akali leaders and government of India were carried on from October 16, 1981 to May 26, 1984 covering the prolonged period of the peaceful agitation, in which Sikhs had been continuously courting arrests for the acceptance of their demands. In all 15 meetings were held, out of which 9 meetings were secret. In addition to it, 10 Tripartite meetings by inviting the leaders of other National parties were held between January 24, 1983 to February 15, 1984. Several times settlement was arrived at with the consent of the parties but Indira Gandhi backed out of it at the eleventh hour when she was to announce the settlement. She was smart enough to deceive all the participants and to keep the disputes boiling till the preplanned operation Blue Star action, with the army attack on Harimandar Sahib complex in the beginning of June 84, with the glaring misuse of army and its war tanks to end the peaceful agitation of Sikhs and falsely blaming them not agreeing to any settlement.

Even a staunch well-wisher of Indira Gandhi, Khushwant Singh, the eminent scholar and historian, who had been nominated by her as member Rajya Sabha, revealed that she continued playing games with Akalis for talks without any intention to enter into any settlement with them while preparing the army for attack on Harimandar Sahib. Says he :

"Non-governmental sources maintain that on five occasions the terms of a settlement were finalized and it was not the Akalis but Mrs. Gandhi who resiled from her commitment.... on November 2, 1982, it was agreed that the settlement would be announced the next day in Parliament. The announcement made the following day was at variance with what had been agreed to by the Akali leaders and they promptly denounced it as a betrayal of trust... A fortnight later (18 November) another settlement was arrived at the house of P.C. Alexander, Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. Once again, Mrs. Gandhi changed her mind at the last minute.... On June 30, 1983 the opposition parties and Akali leaders evolved a consensus without including the government's representatives in their discussions. Mrs. Gandhi rejected the consensus.... In February 1984, on the eve of the tripartite talks (between the government, the Akalis and leaders of the opposition parties) and when it appeared that all parties were ready to append their signatures to a

memorandum of settlement, anti Sikh riots were engineered in the towns of Haryana, forcing the Akalis to abandon negotiations.... Harkishan Singh Surjit, (the CPM leader who was actively involved in talks by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi) was categorical in laying the blame for the impasse on the government... It did not suit Mrs. Gandhi to agree to any settlement which might be construed as a concession made to Sikhs at the expense of Hindus. She had her eyes firmly fixed on her party's in electoral prospects."

(A History of the Sikhs, Vol. II, pp. 352-356)

And at page 358

"Many months earlier the army had been instructed to keep itself in readiness to move into the Golden Temple, whenever ordered to do so. A replica of the Golden Temple complex had been prepared at Chakrata (near Mussoorie) to familiarize besiegers with its layout, entrances and fortified positions.... 'On 30 May, Mrs. Gandhi spent over an hour with him (Giani Zail Singh, President of India) briefing him on the fresh proposals for a settlement with the Akalis. If she had given an inkling of what she had in mind, he could at least have warned her of the Hazards of undertaking a military operation when large number of pilgrims would be spending several days and nights in the temple complex to participate in services in memory of their martyred Guru."

What does Harkishen Singh Surjit, the senior CPM leader and well known supporter of Indira Gandhi say :

"Mrs. Gandhi created Bhindranwale. She wanted to build him up as an alternative leadership to the Akalis so that he was amenable to her. No other explanation can be there. Three days after he is appointed, P.S. Bhinder (Commissioner of Police) issued a statement that there are no criminals hidden in the Temple nor are there arms. In March 1984, Rajiv Gandhi goes to Chandigarh and praises Bhindranwale."

(The Punjab Crises: Challenge and Response, pp. 338-39, referred in A History of the Sikhs, Vol. II, p. 356)

It is obvious from these truthful disclosures from sources who were considered to be pro Indira Gandhi and not biased against her that she played a big fraud for over 2 years on the Akalis to engage them in talks to arrive at a settlement which she never intended while activating the army in exercises at secret places for attack on Harimandar Sahib complex. She herself frustrated the settlement arrived at with the Akalis, while putting the blame upon them, coming to no compromise.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi even defrauded the President of India, Giani Zail Singh, when she briefed him on the fresh proposals for settlement with Akalis on May 30, 1984 while she had already sent the army to Amritsar to seige Harimandar Sahib complex and the entire Punjab for the attack on the Harimandar Sahib complex with the simultaneous attacks on other 37 historical Sikh Gurdwaras in Punjab. It was the total violation of the democratic system in which Prime Minister has to brief the President periodically with the true facts. Here the Prime Minister gave altogether a false briefing to the President as to the false proposal of settlement with Akalis, while having already ordered the Army Chief for the attacks on Sikhs and Sikh shrines, throughout Punjab and stopping the peaceful Sikh agitation with violence upon them, illegally using the

armed forces for internal state affairs and attacks with the war tanks, which are exclusively meant for external aggressions. She was fraudulent in deceiving the Sikhs, deceiving the President of India, deceiving the citizens of Indian Republic and in even deceiving the army chief who had to lay down his life to follow her.

Fraudulent and deceptive were the grounds for the army attack on Harimandar Sahib complex for flushing out the terrorists and extremists led by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala. The Sant and his associates present in the complex had not been declared public offenders in any criminal cases to arrest them. Could there be any justification to attack with war tanks the holiest of the holy places of Sikhs to arrest some criminals if it be, admitted that some criminals were present in the complex? Could the Government not apprehend those persons in some other secret manner? Such are some questions still awaiting the reply besides the arbitrary killings of the innocent Sikh pilgrims, present there in thousands in connection with the martyrdom day of the fifth Sikh Guru and the demolishing of the Akal Takhat? Was this all not possible without the Army attack?

The esteemed journal *Surya* had accused Indira Gandhi, stating at page 42 of its May 1985 edition:

"Mrs Gandhi had decided that she was to take a new role in her life. The role of the protector of Hindus, as she had planned that there shall be a conflict between the Hindus and Sikhs in which the grand strategy was that the Hindus shall be first left unprotected, let them be killed for a while, let them become angry, so angry that they seek revenge. The Hindus and Sikhs will then go at each other's throat. And then I will tell the Hindus "Look I can protect you."

A detailed report was published in September 1984, that she had some super intelligence agency called Third Agency, under her direct supervision to create trouble in Punjab, giving the names of the officers of that Agency. No action was taken against these reports by Prime Minister, amounting to conceding it.

The legitimacy and peaceful nature of the *Dharam Yudh Morcha* had been widely accepted. Commented S.M. Sathantha in *Hindu Sikh Conflict in Punjab, Causes and Cure* London 1983, page 15:

"Over 100,000 Sikh volunteers have been arrested. This high number of arrests is undoubtedly a national record and so had been the peaceful nature of the *Satyagrahas*, (protests) of this magnitude has been handled by the Sikhs, with extreme tolerance."

The eminent journalist Pran Chopra, remarked in *Wall Street Journal*, September 26, 1983:

"The Akali Dal (the Sikh organization) is in the hands of moderate and sensible leadership but giving any one a fair change of power is unthinkable politics of Mrs. Gandhi. Many Hindus in Punjab, privately concede that there is not much wrong with the Sikh demands. But every time the ball goes to congress court it is kicked out one way or the other because Mrs Gandhi considers it a good electoral calculation."

The eminent journalist, Kuldip Nayar, remarked in *India Abroad New York*, on June 29, 1984 in his article :

"When the agitation began, it was led by reasonable men seeking a reasonable settlement of reasonable demands. At least three times there were prospects of agreement but each time Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sabotaged the agreements."

In the editorial of the leading newspaper of USA. *New York Times*, dated June 8, 1984, it was remarked :

"There was a non violent Sikh protest movement but it was eclipsed when the Prime Minister rebuffed its demands. Since the Indian Independence in 1947, Sikhs have pleaded for greater autonomy and for specific recognition of their religion in the constitution."

The peaceful Sikh agitation was planned to be crushed by the Army attack on Sikhs and Sikh shrines instead of finding reasonable and just solution by Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, and the government without taking its consequences into consideration to be counter productive and anti national.

Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala

Who was this Sant Jarnail Singh ? Did he belong to any terrorist and extremist organization ? Was he not a religious man as head of a Sikh religious institution, Damdami Taksal ? Was he not devoted to the preaching of Sikhism and imparting Amrit of double-edged sword to the Sikh youth ?

Was he not working to ensure the observation of Sikh code of conduct among the youth and successfully directing Sikhs to abstain from liquor and other drugs and intoxicants ? As such, was he not doing a great service to Sikhs and Sikhism ?

What does Khushwant Singh, his staunch critic, say about him:

"To start with, his message was simple: return to the spartan traditions of the Khalsa Panth initiated by Guru Gobind Singh and renounce the evils of modernism. He toured villages, exhorting people to give up drinking, taking drugs, smoking and dishonouring emblems of the faith, (unshorn hair and beards) by cutting them. Those who agreed to do so he baptized (or re-baptized) in the presence of large congregations. His strongest supporters at the time were women and children who had suffered at the hands of their drunken or doped fathers, husbands or brothers. Bhindranwala's *amrit parchar* was a resounding success. Adults in their thousands took oath in public to abjure liquor, tobacco and drugs and were baptized."

(*A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 329)

These words of the eminent scholar and critic of the Sant portray him as a great Sikh saint, devoted to his duty with honesty of purpose.

And on page 332

"Among the earliest to discover Bhindranwale's potential as a pawn in the game of party politics

was Giani Zail Singh, his arch rival Darbara Singh, and through them Mrs. Gandhi's politically ambitious son Sanjay Gandhi.... According to Kuldip Nayar, Sanjay Gandhi Mrs. Gandhi's younger son was actively engaged in political manoeuvring, had approved of Zail Singh's choice of Bhindranwale as the more aggressive of the two sants, suggested to him to be put up against Akalis."

It shows how the congress leaders headed by Indira Gandhi, of course, though never without her approval, were making strategies to put up Sant Jarnail Singh as the alternative to Akalis, but it was without seeking consent of the Sant. It was their own political dishonesty to weaken the Akali Dal in such conspiracies to which the Sant never came in their net and rather became the supporter of Akali Dal in *Dharam Yudh Morcha*. Sant Jarnail Singh was made a misunderstood person by repeatedly propagating false allegations against him by the Hindu press to start with. He was alleged to be involved in the conspiracy of the murder of Gurbachan Singh, the Nirankari leader by the press known for communal approach. The Punjab government declared his innocence in that case of murder of April 29, 1980. Again in the murder case of Lala Jagat Narain, proprietor of Hind Samachar, on September 9, 1981 he was propagated to be involved in the conspiracy and he offered his arrest. He was released within a month declaring his innocence.

In December 1981, Jathedar Santokh Singh of Delhi was murdered. The Sant attended his last rites at Delhi with his bodyguards. Also present were Giani Zail Singh, Home Minister, Buta Singh another Cabinet Minister of Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi as the Jathedar was aligned with them. Sant Jarnail Singh toured the whole of India upto Bombay with his aides who were armed with weapons. In his process of missionary work of preaching the Sikh religion, neither the Punjab Government nor the Government of India or of any other state alleged the Sant to be the leader of any terrorist and extremist group or involved in any criminal case.

In the words of Khushwant Singh :

"It was not till after the middle of the following year that the central Government realized that it could not manipulate Bhindranwale and instructed Darbara Singh, Chief Minister of the Punjab, to take decisive action against him."

(*A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, p. 336)

This is how from June 1982 onwards, Sant Jarnail Singh became the target of government to eliminate him. What does M K Dhar, former joint director, Intelligence Bureau, India states in his book *Open Secrets* at page 273 :

"The suggestion was to record the conversation of the Union Home Minister (Giani Zail Singh) with an emissary of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the priest turned fundamentalists militant leader of Punjab. The Punjab wool ball that was designed and architected by Sanjay Gandhi and Zail Singh, had started rolling out of Indira Gandhi's closet. I would like to make some detailed comments on this part of India's shameful history a little later.

I did not give any commitment to the personal aide of Indira Gandhi and accepted the tape recorder.

I had solid reasons not to go by his advice. The emissary of the Damdami Taksal priest was my professional friend and he had alerted me about the apparently damage controlling effort of the veteran Sikh politician. He had recruited the fiery Sikh priest for Sanjay (son of Indira Gandhi) who later crafted out the Frankenstein out of a minor fundamentalist priest, owing allegiance to the Taksal variety of pure Sikhism—said to be Wahabism of Sikh religion."

And at Page 281

"His (Giani Zail Singh's) hunger for the hot seat in Chandigarh had made him oblivious to the fact that the Jinn of Sikh separatism had burst out of the battle crafted by him and his one time mentor Sanjay. The leaders of Indira Congress had opened India's big fault line in Punjab."

And at page 279

"They (Zail Singh and Sanjay Gandhi) expected him (Bhindranwala) to decimate the Akali brand of fundamentalists and bring back Indira Congress to power in the border state. They were in direct contact with the priest from Damdami Taksal, the fountain-head of Sikh fundamentalism."

Dr. Ranbir Singh Sandhu, a professor in University in Ohio state, had transcribed forty four speeches and three conversations from several sets of audio and video tapes of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala from January 1983 to May 1984, which he had delivered while in Harimandar Sahib complex during the *Dhram Yudh Morcha* in his book *Struggle for Justice*. Those speeches certainly portray the thinking and actions of the Sant for his correct assessment and belie the false and exaggerated misrepresentations of the Sant. He was not wanted in any criminal case up to the middle of June 1982 and thereafter he remained confined to the Harimandar Sahib complex wherein he was not accused in any case till the Operation Blue Star. His misrepresentation as a terrorist and extremist leader based upon his speeches by taking them totally out of the context. His explanations were not given any consideration. What does Prof. Ranbir Singh Sandhu say after elaborate understanding of his speeches and conversations :

In order to mislead the Indian public and to facilitate the passage of draconian law's restricting Sikh right to life and liberty, the Indian government blamed Sant Bhindranwala for every crime committed in Punjab. At the same time, the level of crime in the state was grossly exaggerated to justify government oppression as necessary for control of separation and the preservation of unity and integrity. Punjab had a crime rate significantly below the Indian National figures. "Bhindranwala commented on this that if some one's dog or cat dies, they say Bhindranwala gets its done. At whatever place, whatever untoward incident occurs, whether any other places his name in that connection or the names of Harimandar Sahib and Nanak Niwas are always included."

(Sant's speech in early 1982 in Karnal, p. XXVII, *Struggle for Justice*)

And

"Six Hindu Bus passengers were killed at Dhilwan village on October 5, 1983. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala reacted to it and condemned the act outrightly denying the Sikh involvement and then twice in his speeches of October 16 and October 20, 1983.

(p. XXXVII)

"It is extremely unfortunate that instead of investigating the complaints of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, that innocent Sikhs were being tortured and killed, newsmen regarded him and the victims he referred to as convicted criminals."

(p. XVI)

And

"Harry Reasoner of CBS News USA, met Sant Bhindranwala in May 1984. About his conversation with the Sant, be reported.

"A Sikh is never an oppressor, but only defends himself and his people. "I have never said, initiated any attack with my tongue or my pen or with my sword. I only answer back or retaliate," he said to actions initiated by the enemies of Sikhs. A Sikh should never initiate a conflict but must respond.

Sant Bhindranwala's instructions were that so long as the army was outside the complex they should not fire back. They were to fight only if the surrounding army physically entered Harimandar Sahib complex. The Sikh reaction to oppression must be totally defensive."

(Allegation by government of India, page 1, *Struggle for Justice*)

And

As to the accusation of hit list, the Sant stated :

"Indira Gandhi has accused me of keeping hit lists, I have not made any such hit list. She should get the CBI to check this out. If I have signed for the purpose of any body being killed, standing here in the presence of Hazoor (*Guru Granth Sahib*) I declare that I shall cut off my head and place it before the congregation."

(Bhindranwala's Speech, October 16, 1983, *op.cit.*, p. III)

And

"As to killing of Hindus Sant Bhindranwala took Longowal to task for attributing to him something that he could never even dream of killing members of a certain community. He explained in one of his speeches attended by many Hindus and on many other occasions that he had no hatred for Hindus and quoted instances of his going out of the way to help some members of that community. He explained that he did not support killing of innocent persons or destruction of temples. Sikhs had been building temples for Hindus and not destroying them. Sant emphasized the need to stay peaceful and to avoid confrontation."

(p. iii, Sant's Speeches of 19th April, 1984, of early 1982, of 20th September 1983, of 16th October 1984, of 18th May, 1983)

And

On Separatism, Sant Bhindranwala stated :

"How can a nation which has sacrificed so much for the freedom of the country want it fragmented but I shall definitely say that we are not in favour of Khalistan nor are we against it. It is Indira Gandhi's business. She should tell us whether she wants to keep us in Hindustan or not. We like to live together. We like to live in India, but as equal citizens. We have to live in freedom."

(p. VI, Speeches of Sant on 27th March 1983, 11th May 1983, 19th July 1983)

And
As to Weapons

"Keeping weapons is part of the Sikh faith and has been for centuries. The ideal life style of a Sikh is that of Saint soldier. Sant Bhindranwala often reminded the Sikhs that they should possess and carry arms, in line with principles of their faith and quoted Shri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's instructions and explained that a Sikh does not keep weapons for offence, for hurting others or for personal gain. They are only for defence against oppression. That being armed, there is no greater sin for a Sikh than attacking an unarmed person, killing an innocent person, looting the shop, harming the innocent or wishing to insult anyone's daughter or sister. Also being armed, there is no sin greater than not seeking justice. Sikhs are never to seek conflict or confrontation, but when all the other means of redress fail, it is right to use weapons to defensively fight oppression, as per the teachings of Shri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib."

(p. viii, Speeches of Bhindranwala, on 27th March 1983, 14th May 1983, 20th October 1983)

And
35 Hindus for one Sikh

"The reference to 35 Hindus to each Sikh is picked out of context and distorts its implication. It was not at all exhorted for every Sikh to take 35 Hindus. Sant Bhindranwala consistently maintained that Hindu-Sikh unity was an article of faith. In the statement quoted by Khushwant Singh, he was simply telling the Sikhs not to be afraid merely because they were only two percent (against 35 Hindus one Sikh in population). He reminded them that at the 10th Guru's time one Sikh had been asked to be ready to fight *Sava Lakh*. On several occasions, the Sant used a similar expression in response to a treat by Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, that the Sikhs of Punjab think about what may happen to Sikhs living in other states. For example Sant responded : Bibi, if this in what you think and this is your attitude towards the turban and beard, we also have counted that they are only twenty to each one of us. He explained that this exchange between him and Mrs Gandhi was entirely rhetorically adding, "She did not send some one with a sword, nor did jarnail Singh send any body out with a sword."

(p. xviv, Speech of Sant on October 1983)

And
Mode of disinformation

"A *Times of India* article revealed that often and wittingly journalists fall prey to the government disinformation which surely manages to plant stories. The confusion gets compounded when government agencies also resort to feeding information on letter heads of militant organizations. The Governor had sought the journalists' co-operation in tackling militants. When a group of journalists including myself had called on Governor, he told us, "we have drawn up a plan for disinformation to be issued on the militants letter heads. We hope, that you will co-operate."

(p. xivi, Dinesh Kumar, 'Dispatches from the Edge', *The Times of India*, New Delhi, August 11, 1991)

And
No case against Bhindranwala, a senior officer says :

"*India Today* reported in December 1983 that a senior officer in Chandigarh confessed, it is really

shocking that we have so bitter against Bhindranwala while we keep blaming him for all sort of things. The fact is that when the government was in the training of army units in the planned invasion of Darbar Sahib, the only charges against Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala were that his speeches were objectionable."

(p. iv, *India Today*, 31 December, 1983, p. 36)

It is obvious from the speeches and such utterances of Sant Jarnail Singh that he was vocal without mincing words unlike politicians. By no stretch of imagination these utterances make him a terrorist or an extremist. The government made a mountain of a mole hill by misrepresenting his words out of the context to portray him a horror for Hindus misusing its resources of media and communication. He had no media to contradict it and his explanations remained in his speeches only never to be brought to the notice of the people, against whom he was posed to be a threat. His orthodox Sikh posture and straight forward talks with honesty of purpose were exploited to the maximum. His determination to stick to the demands of *Dharam Yudh Morcha* and his growing popularity in Sikhs cautioned the Akali Politics to contain him, encouraging the government to make them at daggers drawn through its secret agencies to facilitate operation Blue Star.

If Sant Jarnail Singh had accepted the blessings of Indira Gandhi and her party to challenge and frustrate the Akali Dal politically for which he was considered to have the potential, then he would have been portrayed by her and her government and party to be a great Sikh saint and Sikh leader of honesty and integrity. As he refused to play the role of a traitor to his people, he was then portrayed to be a horror for Hindus, leader of extremists and terrorists with the false propaganda by media of press and television under the state control besides the secret agencies of the state, using his honest and straight forward speeches and press statements totally out of context and then to physically liquidate him. It would be welcome by Hindus. It would erase the fear that he may not come forward to lead the Sikhs when Sikhs and Sikh shrines are attacked by the army for which he had the potential, honesty and integrity and Sikh confidence. Such an attack on Sikhs was compulsion for Indira Gandhi and her party to create and solidify the Hindu vote bank. The other side of the drastic consequences of such an action was given no consideration and that such persons are more dangerous while dead than alive.

The secret agencies of the government through their infiltrators succeeded in making Sant Jarnail Singh and Sant Harchand Singh Longowal at daggers drawn without which the government could not dare to attack Harimandar Sahib complex. But still it was to be ensured that no one should sympathise with Sikhs on such a totally unjustified venture. To achieve this aim Indira Gandhi sent a deceitful message to Akalis that if they agitate against article 25 of the constitution which clubs Sikhs with Hindus just like Jains and Buddhists, then it would be amended, clarifying the separate identity of Sikhs. It was done in February 1984 when the talks between Akalis and government were still going on. Sant Harchand Singh called the meeting of senior Akali leaders

in which it was decided to burn publicly article 25 of the constitution. Coming into this trap as well, without realizing its consequences, Parkash Singh Badal burnt the Article 25 of the constitution at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib, Delhi while Gurcharan Singh Tohra at Chandigarh. It caused natural resentment in all the national leaders of India and to Hindus generally, making successful the deceitful strategy of Indira Gandhi, who condemned it the most. She still kept inviting Akalis for talks till operation Blue Star.

The decks were now cleared for operation Blue Star. Through the unheard of conspiracies and deceitful means, such a situation was created wherein Akalis would not resist the army outside Harimandar Sahib complex to arrest Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala and his armed guards, who were expected to surrender or even physically liquidated as considered to be a threat to security of Akali leaders. Hindus would welcome their elimination, having been made horror for them as if they were thirsty for Hindu blood, and the national leaders of other parts will not sympathise with them. For all of them, the Army welcome was only for this limited purpose. The Akali leaders could never be the collaborators and even other citizens of Republic of India as to the massacre of thousands of Sikhs in Harimandar Sahib complex and demolition of Akal Takhat with war tanks of the army. Even army was exploited to play into the hands of the wicked politicians. Indira Gandhi and her advisors had the intention of a bigger attack than the mere arrest and liquidation of Sant Jarnail Singh and his aides, which the operation itself manifests, not realizing the danger to her life, instead of prolonging her rule by intensifying the Hindu vote Bank.

Persecution of Sikhs

- Preparation-Modus operandi-Motivation for 'Blue Star Operation' (June 1984)
- Planning and preparation of Operation Blue Star-1982-84

Indian Government and its secret agencies, particularly, the third agency directly under the supervision of Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi were engaged in planning and preparation of operation Blue Star. The army assault on Sikhs and their historical religious places to demoralize and silence them under the threat of gun, little knowing that Sikhism was born under the shadow of gun and the Sikhs had been made the Saint Soldiers by Guru Gobind Singh to protect the saints and uproot the wicked. The first century of the brave Sikhs, after their tenth master Guru Gobind Singh, was involved in the direct armed conflict with the Mughals and Afghan invaders, uprooting them by their force of gun and establishing their own rule, a sovereign Sikh state saving the Hindu culture, Hinduism and India from the clutches of those Muslim forces, before whose sword the rest of the Indians had submitted. It was thus a very dangerous and drastic step of Indian Government and its leader Indira Gandhi. These Indian leaders were not conscious of the British tactful and statesmanship like policy and plans under

which they pacified and satisfied the aspiration of Sikhs, just after annexing Punjab, as to avoid any conflict with them and rather yielding to their religious psyche at every conflict with them. These Indian leaders forgot that their such like extreme confrontation with Sikhs, who had opted to stay in India, on their solemn pledges and assurances to provide them their homeland with autonomous power and constitutional guarantee as to their special rights, ignoring the offers of British and Pakistanis of their Sikh state out of India, may cause a danger to the stability, integrity and unity of their country in the name of a slogan with which they were exploiting the Indian people to consolidate their political power though their own actions and schemes were counter productive to it.

Modus Operandi of Plans and Preparations

The modus operandi of the plans and preparations was deceitful and unlawful by using the secret agencies of government and the armed forces as well. The agents of the government agencies were to be infiltrated in Sikh political parties and in the ranks of Sikh militants as to hijack their organizations, to create division in their ranks, to support the militants through their agents, to encourage violence and disturbance in Punjab, so as to defame them as extremists, terrorists and criminals and to give them a bad name to eliminate them and to create horror in the minds of Hindu brains. And as if Sikhs could become their killers, and only congress and Indira Gandhi could save them; they got some arms and ammunition piled up at Akal Takhat, intentionally to make a ground for its army attack to apprehend the armed criminals. It was further to exhibit to the international world that Sikhs and particularly their youth was lawless and not law abiding. They were murderers, extremists and terrorists, not sparing even the peace loving Hindu population and even the police officials, who had to maintain law and order. Propaganda was made through embassies and other media tactics, so as not to sympathise with Sikhs at the time of their armed assault. Special strategies were organised to give training to armed forces at secluded places with the model of Golden Temple complex for the army attack. While on the other hand tactics were used to condemn the political leaders of Sikhs to be anti national and the militant youth to be creating rebellion and heinous crimes with the aid of a foreign power so as to make others to be biased against them. At the same time, they held meetings with Akali leaders to give them the impression that government of India was willing to find out a peaceful solution to the Punjab problem and Sikh demands, and prolonging the such like meetings throughout the period of *Dharam Yudh Morcha* of Sikhs. They tried to make them realize that Sant Jarnail Singh and his followers and other Sikh militants were engaged in violence and were a hurdle in finding out the agreed solution. As such, they created division in the Sikh leaders and even deceived and defrauded the Hindus whose vote bank was being sought to be created for congress by ensuring their interests and safety in Punjab by communalizing and criminalizing the political atmosphere.

Motivation of the Planning and Preparations

The motivation of these plannings and preparations was unlawful and undesirable, not to provide any appreciation to any democratic rule and rather unbecoming of a duly elected government by the people of a country, to be of the people, by the people and for the people. As such a government should be always straight forward and truthful to its policies and the means to achieve it and not to be doubtful, doing something else by under hand means and projecting it to be something else contrary to it in the design to defraud their own subjects to get their votes by cheap and immoral techniques and cheatings with glaring misuse of its secret agencies, propaganda and media through TV, Radio and Press set up with the taxes paid by the citizens of the country. The first motivation was to teach a lesson to Sikhs for continuing their morcha, a peaceful agitation during the entire period of internal emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi to silence her opponents by sending them behind the bars for this period of 19 months in 1975-1977. Akali Dal had raised the just and democratic voice that she should step down as Prime Minister when she had been dislodged from the membership of Parliament. She was disqualified for 6 years in violation of the basic election laws. They had refused to submit to her undemocratic policies in spite of her best efforts to have a compromise with them to accept their demands and in case of abandoning that agitation. A true and selfless statesman would have certainly appreciated their commitment to the democratic values in a democratic country, which India was being loudly asserted to be by the leaders of Indian Government.

Second motivation was to end the peaceful democratic agitation of Sikhs—*Dharam Yudh Morcha* by misusing the armed forces which successfully continued for over 20 months from August 4, 1982 to May 31, 1984, with the courting of arrests of 350000 Sikhs. It is strange in Indian history that a totally justified and based upon the assurances and pledges of the Indian leaders of this very congress party to the formation of Sikh homeland with full autonomy and constitutional safe guards for the rights of the Sikhs, was being denied and the Indian government was adamant not to accept it, though there was no logic, reason or any convincing arguement to deny it. So the only choice of gun rather than pen and force rather than reason was to be applied though fraudulently. Third motivation was to first terrorise the Hindu minds with the horror of Sikhs militancy and then to become its protector, that only congress government and Mrs. Indira Gandhi particularly could save the Hindus from Sikhs who were otherwise thirsty for their blood. It was totally false exploitation as admittedly the Sikhs never tried to harm Hindus inspite of the aggressions and assaults on them by Hindu congress leaders with the misuse of Indian Army and its war tanks on Sikhs and their historical religious places. There are more than 12,000 (twelve thousands) villages in Punjab where Hindus are in a very thin minority and if Sikhs had that desire to finish them, they could be provided no protection to them by any government and its armed forces. But no such single instance ever occurred in any village. Still the government media horrified the Hindus. Sikhs rather gave protection to Hindus if any needed at

any place. However, government and congress leaders were able to achieve their aim by defending the Hindus to create their vote bank to prolong their rule by communalising and criminalizing politics.

"Operation Blue Star" Execution (June 1984)

The most communal and criminal attack by Indian army and its war tanks against Sikhs and Sikh religious historical places, under the directions of Indian Government and Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi in June, 1984 was named as operation Blue Star, wherein the Akal Takhat Amritsar was mostly demolished, the entire complex of Harimandar Sahib was bombarded, destroying the historical records, documents, manuscripts of Sikhs in Sikh reference library. Thousands of innocent Sikhs were killed. Simultaneous army raids were made on forty other historical Sikh gurdwaras throughout Punjab, the home land of Sikhs, damaging these religious places, and arresting and torturing thousands of innocent Sikhs without any reason, or justification for any fault on the part of Sikhs. It was the black spot not only on Indian government but on Republic of India itself which can never be washed out. It exposed the communalism of the Indian congress leaders and its government which was so far being kept hidden in the garb of secularism, besides the autocracy in the garb of democracy of which India was boasting to be the biggest secular democracy in the World. This operation was an onslaught of such a magnitude against Sikhs and Sikh religion, that they can never forget or forgive. It was such a fraudulent and deceitful action that Sikhs were defamed as terrorists, separatists and criminals through the communication media, Television and News papers at the cost of state exchequer to justify the attack on them and negate the sympathy for them by Indian people and international world. It was based upon such a falsehood as to the slogan of danger to the unity and integrity of India to attract the support of the Indian people. That it made it dangerous itself and as such most anti national by misusing the army for attack on its own citizens of Indian republic, which is meant for wars against foreign countries defend the borders of the country. It was so anti Indian that the people who always refused their sovereign state out of India, were made to think about it, having been made insecure in India.

Punjab under Army

Curfew was imposed throughout Punjab from June 1, 1984. Army was put everywhere as if the state was under martial law. Civil administration was made ineffective. Army was authorized to strictly enforce the curfew. The army units paraded in all the big towns as if to overawe the people. Amritsar became like an army cantonment.

On June 1, 1984 CPRF fired shots at the Golden Temple complex continuously for over 7 hours without any provocation from the complex. A dozen Sikhs in the Golden Temple complex were killed while several dozens injured with the firing of CRPF who were all pilgrims.

Journalists turned out of Punjab

On June 2, 1984, Army took over from CRPF the entire area of the vicinity of Golden Temple complex. No journalist was allowed to enter that area. In fact all the pressmen and journalists were prohibited from entering Punjab particularly the foreign journalists, who were all driven out of Punjab, what to say of Amritsar. The purpose was to ensure that the army assault on Sikhs and their gurdwaras in Punjab should not be reported to the outside world and to avoid correct reporting of the aggressive events and the ugly scenes at the hands of the Indian Army on the citizens of the Republic of India which could be appreciated no where and was to be condemned by one and all if it came to the notice of the world. It was itself an indication of the unfair game. If it had been fair, it would be open to the pressmen to themselves see to it and report it truthfully. It was itself evident that the allegation of the government were false, as otherwise there could be no point in blocking its correct reporting. The civil administration was not allowed to discharge its duty by not coming near by.

On June 3, it was the martyrdom day of Guru Arjan Dev, the exponent of peace, who had constructed the Harimandar Sahib and installed *Guru Granth Sahib* in it. A very large number of pilgrims always come there to pay their obsequence to the great Guru in memory of his martyrdom for the basic human right of freedom of religion. Due to the Curfew, most of the pilgrims in thousands had to stay in that complex. It shows that this day was chosen for the army attack to cause the maximum casualties to Sikhs. In all other forty historical gurdwaras, which were simultaneously attacked by the army, large number of Sikhs visit those gurdwaras in the memory of this martyrdom. It was very well known to the government and the army and as such the malafide intention was obvious. The army started the firing from its artillery in the Harimandar Sahib complex from the early morning and continued throughout the day causing large number of casualties of innocent pilgrims, without any provocation or response from inside.

Army enters Harimandar Sahib Complex

On June 4, Indian Army entered Harimandar Sahib Complex and indiscriminately fired the shots from its automatic weapons, killing whosoever came in the range. It faced counter firing from inside as Sikhs had made it clear previously that they would defend the attack in their holy place if army entered the complex. The navy divers of army were sent to the holy tank to enter Harimandar Sahib from the back. They were all shot at by some of the Sikh youths who had taken up position on the roof of the side rooms. The commandoes were sent to Akal Takhat side. They were also shot at. A fierce fight took place with large casualties on both the sides.

Army tanks in Harimandar Sahib Complex

On 5th June at night Army tanks entered Harimandar Sahib from the entrance

towards SGPC office. Several armoured war tanks were taken inside the complex in the *Parikarma* and indiscriminate firing was done from the tanks causing a large number of casualties of Sikhs. Akal Takhat was practically demolished. *Darshani Deorhi*—the main entrance was also bombarded causing holes in the roof and in the walls, with which several rooms and the costly materials lying there were burnt. Poisonous gases were also used by the army in the Akal Takhat which are even forbidden in wars. The army took control of the entire complex by killing the Sikhs who were fighting to defend their sacred shrine. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, Bhai Amrik Singh and General Subheg Singh were amongst those killed. The army was in control of Akal Takhat and all other areas of Harimadar Sahib complex by 10 am on June 6, 1984.

Army Attacks Sikh Sarais and SGPC Office

On June 5, 1984 Army did indiscriminate firing on the adjoining buildings—Guru Ram Dass Sarai, Teja Singh Samundri hall – where SGPC offices are located, and the other areas to that side. In Guru Ram Dass Sarai over one thousand Sikhs had collected, who were mostly the Sikh pilgrims and members of *Jathas* who had come to get themselves arrested in peaceful *Dharam Yudh Morcha*. A grenade was thrown on them and then they were fired at indiscriminately from their automatic weapons. Over eight hundred of them died on the spot. The army had killed several others without any provocation. There was no resistance to the army from any side. None of them had any weapon. So provocative and insulting was the behaviour of the army that if some one made a request for drinking water, they would taunt that "you people were saying no water to Haryana, no water to Rajasthan, why now water to you." Dozens died thirsty, but still the inhumanitarian attitude of army to the citizens of Republic of India continued.

So many persons were found lying dead with fire arm shots and with their hands tied behind their backs with their turbans. It obviously established that they were first caught or surrendered, sitting or standing there without any weapon and their hands were tied, and then they were shot at. The murder of peace loving persons was evident as they had shown no resistance to the army. There are reports that several persons were made to stand in rows and then shot at including children and women. Such barbarous crimes were not even committed by the tyrant Mughals and Afghans with whom Indians were at daggers drawn.

The army men robbed (looted) the houses of employees of SGPC in the Golden Temple complex, such as of Granthis, Ragis, Clerks, Guides Inspectors when they surrendered themselves before the army. Nothing was left in their houses. The heavy furniture which could not be removed was destroyed in those very houses. They were not the persons to put any resistance to the army. Even 500 kg of Desi ghee meant for *Karah Parshad* was taken away by them.

Army Sets Fire to Sikh Reference Library (June 7)

After having taken control of the entire Harimandar Sahib complex on June 6 the army took away the records and manuscripts from Sikh reference Library under the direction of the Government and put on fire the library on June 7, falsely alleging that it caught fire in the cross firing. Similarly the SGPC office, Guru Ram Dass Sarai and some other buildings to that side were set on fire by the army falsely alleging that these buildings caught fire in the cross firing though admittedly there was no one in these areas to resist the army. Such a fraud was committed in this respect. The records of SGPC and Akali Dal were also taken away from the office building.

Firing in Harimandar Sahib

The army also fired shots in the sanctum sanctorium of Harimandar Sahib whereby a Ragi died and window glass panes were broken causing several bullet marks on the inside walls. A shot even had pierced through the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the hand written old version of the Sikh rule times.

Bombardment of *Darshani Deorhi*

In *Darshani Deorhi*, the room to the right of it was bombarded with tanks. It contained Rumalas, Sheets, Chandnis, Manji Sahib, costly carpets, Palkis—one of gold and the other of silver. All these precious articles were burnt to ashes by the fire as that room was set on fire by the bombs. On the second storey of *Darshani Deori*, there is *Toshakhana*—the Treasury Room—wherein the entire jewellery and other items which are very costly and rare are kept. That room was also hit by the bombardment caused by tanks of the army. A very costly 'Chandni' embroidered with Gold, Diamonds and Pearls was burnt to ashes along with the wooden and glass box in which it was contained. Many other costly items of jewellery were smothered with the smoke. This 'Chandni' had been presented by Nizam of Hyderabad to Maharaja Ranjit Singh who further presented it to Harimandar Sahib that such a costly and impressive chandni—the canopy—should be in the Guru's house and not with him. Its loss can never be compensated.

Bombardment of Akal Takhat

The entire building of Akal Takhat and the strong foundation was shaken and practically demolished by the very heavy bombardment of the Akal Takhat. Its uppermost storey was entirely blown up. It had to be rebuilt after its demolition, though Indian government repaired it at the cost of millions as it was afraid of the sentiments of Sikhs if they saw it in a damaged condition. Sikhs also were not ready to accept the repairs done by the government. In this building there were rare hand written *Guru Granth Sahib*, Rumalas, Chandnis, Manji Sahib and other costly articles lying in the

store, which were all burnt to ashes when store room caught fire from the bombardment. The very revered historical weapons (*Shastars*) gold plated palki, the wooden almirah in which these weapons were kept, the wooden parts of weapons, the points of golden arrows were all burnt. The weapons were destroyed, while some came under the debris of the fallen roof and walls. Thus causing irreparable damage to these historical items.

Sikh Museum Looted and Fired at

In the Sikh Museum, which is on the second storey of the front *Deorhi*—the entrance towards clock tower, there were signs of bombardment. It had the marks of firing on the inner walls also. More than one hundred paintings of historical Sikh events were missing, besides the costly historical 'Mala' of 'Monga' presented by Maharaja Dalip Singh, forty albums containing paintings and photographs, a very rare 'Quran Sharif' in a diameter of one inch only, a very rare scripture of Sikh daily prayer (*Nitnem*) in a diameter of half inch, a rare *janamsakhi* of stone prints of several Sikh historical *Hukamnamas*, the Sikh historical keys presented to Sikhs of historical Sikh shrines by the British administration to oust the Mahants from Sikh gurdwaras and other historical articles of importance lying in the Sikh museum which is impossible to reconstruct. It is obvious that these articles of the historical Sikh significance were taken away deliberately on the directions of the government by the army after the entire complex came under Army control.

Sikh Records Taken Away

— Sikh reference library Bombed

In the Sikh reference library there were old records relating to Sikh religion, Sikh history, Sikh movements, SGPC and Akali Dal; four hundred hand written old copies of *Guru Granth Sahib*; *Janamsakhis* of Sikh Gurus; *Hukamnamas*; typed copies of five hundred books rarely available; twelve hundred files of the news papers of the last Sixty years; several hand written books not available in the market, eighteen albums of historical paintings; twenty five hundred copies of *Guru Granth Sahib*, besides thousands of other books and manuscripts. The almirahs in which the records and documents had been contained were over Rs. two and half millions. These records, books and other documents cannot be reconstructed. The library was set on fire by the army itself on June 7, when it was under its occupation. The reason was to take some of the important records and documents to Delhi and the others to be burnt to ashes to deprive the Sikhs from all the material contained in the library being of a great importance to Sikhs. Such a fraud is even not expected at the time of wars between the countries and neither the taking away of the records and documents of nation or destroying such records by the country who wins.

It is the statement of the then jathedar Akal Takhat, Giani Kirpal Singh in his book *Operation Blue Star, An Eye Witness Account*, at page 67 that :

- i) The Indian cabinet minister Buta Singh had informed him that he had seen one hundred and twenty five bundles of the records and documents, which army had taken to Delhi from the Sikh Reference Library.
- ii) A military officer had told him that some such record is lying in the cantonment at Amritsar or which was shown to the two representatives sent by him.
- iii) A Sikh scholar Tarlochan Singh had informed him that one army officer known to him told him that he had sent the records and documents from Sikh Reference library to Delhi under his supervision.

Jathedar Akal Takhat has stated that he told these facts to some Akali leaders, but they could do nothing in the circumstances prevailing to get back the records. The Akali leaders at the time of Rajiv Longowal accord should have received the records and documents before the accord was signed. The Barnala government should have got back these records if it was omitted at the time of accord, as it was friendly with Indian government Parkash Singh Badal government remained for 5 years and had alliance with BJP which was ruling at the centre. It should have got it but nothing was done. It is a great aspersion on the Akali leaders. The Sikh leaders should have taken effective steps in this regard. They should now get the records and documents of the Sikh reference library back at whatever cost it might be.

The facts given in this chapter are based on the eye witness accounts given by the persons who were present during Operation Blue Star in Harimandar Sahib for the discharge of their duties, mainly several granthis as recorded by jathedar Akal Takhat Giani Kirpal Singh in his book *Operation Blue Star*.

Motivation of Blue Star Operation

These facts and circumstances leave no doubt about the motivation of operation Blue Star on the part of the government of India and particularly its head Mrs Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister. It was to hurt the psyche of Sikhs to create Hindu vote Bank by communalizing and criminalizing politics; to demoralize the Sikhs by the army attack on them and their religious places of such magnitude; to get the old records of Sikhs to be forged, if need be, to give them a new twist in accordance with government strategy and deprive the Sikhs of their old records; to eliminate the Sikh youth and to take them away from their Sikh code of conduct; to demolish the Akal Takhat as the symbol of Sikh political power to take revenge against the Sikhs for their agitation against Mrs Indira Gandhi during emergency; to finish the Sikh *Dharam Yudh Morcha* in which more than three hundred thousand people had got arrested and many were ready for further arrests. The force used and the deceitful means adopted could never be simply to arrest a few criminals as was falsely alleged.

The American scholar, Dr. Cynthia Mahmood, after investigations rightly concluded :

"When it (the state of India) attacked the Golden Temple complex at Amritsar in 1984 containing the holiest shrine of Sikhs, the ostensible aim was to rid the sacred buildings of the militants who had taken up shelter inside. But the level of force used in the attack was utterly incommensurate with this limited evidently attainable aim. Seventy thousands troops in conjunction with the use of tanks and chemical gas killed not only a few dozen militants, but also hundreds, possibly, thousands of innocent pilgrims, the day of the attack being a Sikh holy day. The Akal Takhat, the seat of temporal authority of Sikhs was reduced to rubble and the Sikh Reference Library with rare collection of books, manuscripts and artefacts bearing on all aspects of Sikh history were all burned to ground. Thirty seven other shrines were attacked across Punjab on the same day. The only possible reason for this applying level of state force against its own citizens must be that the attempt was not merely to flush out "as they say a handful of militants but to destroy the fulcrum of a possible mass resistance against the state. "

(Jeffrey A. Saluka, *Dynamics of Terror in Punjab and Kashmir*, p. 77)

An eminent scholar admirer of Mrs Indira Gandhi, to have been nominated member of Rajya Sabha by her and staunch critic of Akalis and so called Sikh militants, Khushwant Singh, condemned strongly her fatal miscalculation and totally unjustified Operation Blue Star against Sikhs in his book *A History of the Sikhs*. At page 373, he states :

"A determined body of commandos in plain clothes could have overpowered them (Sant Jarnail Singh and his aides) with minimum loss of life. The Akal Takhat could have been cordoned off, deprived of drinking water and rations and its inmates gassed into submission. But the government for reasons best known to it first let leaders of the ruling party help Bhindranwale to build himself into a leader, allowed its police and paramilitary forces to turn a blind eye to the smuggling of arms into the temple and then ordered its army to storm it with tanks and heavy guns. Sikhs could be forgiven if they come to the conclusion that Mrs. Gandhi's Government meant to give their community a bloody punch on the nose. They were not likely to forget or forgive anyone who had anything to do with Operation Blue Star.

Sikhs Acted in Self Defence

A false propaganda to justify operation Blue Star was made by the government that Sikhs had caused serious casualties to the army in large numbers. It is a misconception on the face of it and can in no way provide any justification for the attack on the Sikh holy shrines, Harimandar Sahib and Akal Takhat with war tanks. The Sikhs who resisted the armed attack on their holy gurdwaras acted in self defence of their person and property after the army entered Harimandar Sahib complex and killed hundreds of Sikhs and was to bombard it with the war tanks. They had declared it earlier in clear terms that they would resist the army attack on Harimandar Sahib complex laying down their lives as the Indian army had no justification at all to bombard their sacred shrines and kill thousands of Sikhs there mercilessly who were unarmed genuine pilgrims. The situation for their counter attack only arose when the army entered the complex, firing indiscriminately killing the pilgrims and damaging the holy shrines with their deadly weapons.

Some persons hold the views that the conspiracy of the Indian government to attack the Akal Takhat to demolish it, being considered as the symbol of Sikh sovereignty, could have been avoided if Sant Jarnail Singh and his other followers had surrendered to the police or the army just before the army attack, declaring that they may be tried for the crimes falsely alleged against them. If such a situation had arisen, then perhaps it could fail the conspiracy of army attack as then the govt. of India could have no justification for the attack. Its only groaning was to arrest the sant and his followers from Akal Takhat and Harimandar Sahib complex under the false allegations of criminals, extremists and terrorists and, after their surrender there could remain no excuse to enter and attack these holiest Sikh shrines. However great agencies had infiltrated already to ensure that the Sant and his other followers should not take such a step which would fail their planned conspiracies and schemes at the eleventh hour. The Sant had declared his resolve to resist the army attack till his last breath, which he did by becoming a martyr. His line of thinking was that government had no right to enter and attack the holiest of the holy Sikh shrine on such made up frivolous allegations and if it did then his followers would defend it and become martyrs. In such a situation their surrender could never be expected which they believed to be not in accordance with Sikh spirit. The government's only problem was to arrest them, it could have been successfully executed without the army attack and the killing of thousands of innocent Sikhs but its plans were to operate the Blue Star Operations for which army rehearsals were taking place for over last six months.

Sikh Resentment Against Operation

All the Sikhs exhibited a great resentment over operation Blue Star that it had hurt their psyche. Dr. Ganda Singh, an eminent Sikh historian, Dr. Sadhu Singh Hamdard, the renowned Sikh journalist, and several other distinguished Sikhs who had been granted awards like Padam Shri etc. for their meritorious achievements in their fields, returned their awards to the government of India in protest against operation Blue Star.

Simranjit Singh Mann, a senior IPS officer posted as Deputy Inspector General of Police resigned from his post in protest against operation Blue Star. Harinder Singh Khalsa a senior IFS officer working at embassy Oslo, Norway, resigned his post in protest against operation Blue Star. Several other Sikh officers resigned their posts in protest against operation Blue Star. Sikhs in every walk of life exhibited their anger and protest against operation Blue Star. Capt. Amrinder Singh, a congressite and also as Member Parliament resigned from the Congress and also as Member Parliament.

The main Akali leaders were arrested and sent behind bars to avoid conflict against government.

Sikh Soldiers Rebellion

On June 7, 1984, on hearing the shocking news of the army attack on Golden Temple complex and Akal Takhat, thousands of Sikh soldiers of Indian army rebelled and left their army barracks with their weapons and ammunition to reach Amritsar to defend their sacred shrines and came into conflict with their own army men. None of them caused any physical harm to their Hindu army men or the general Hindu public, though they were armed with deadly weapons and were in a position to cause any such harm to any extent. Still the Indian government got killed several of them and arrested others and sentenced them and dismissed them from the army caring little for the emotional and religious trauma caused to their psyche by the drastic action of the government itself.

Thousands of Sikhs from near and as well far off places of their villages marched towards Amritsar to oust the army from their sacred shrines but it was under curfew which was strictly enforced throughout Punjab and so they could not reach their destination. Hundreds of them were shot dead and thousands arrested by the army.

All the Sikhs irrespective of their party affiliations throughout the World felt utmost resentment over operation Blue Star, as it had hurt their religions' psyche. Open demonstrations by Sikhs were held world over to condemn the army attack on Sikhs and Sikh shrines.

At page 46 of *Army Action in Punjab* it is remarked :

"The whole of Punjab, especially the Golden Temple complex was turned into a mousetrap murderous, from where people could neither escape nor could they seek the succour of any kind."

At page 49 it was recorded :

"The operation Blue Star will go down in the history as one of the biggest massacre of unarmed civilians by the organized military force of a nation."

The Indian army attacked forty other historical Sikh gurdwaras throughout Punjab at the same time of the attack on Harimandar Sahib complex and Akal Takhat without any justification whatsoever. The buildings of those gurdwaras were damaged, and the innocent pilgrims present there were killed or arrested without any charges against them. No criminal was there to be arrested from there, according to the government version. No explanation was given as to the reason for the attack on these Sikh religious places. Such a politically bankrupt operation could never be defended by any statesman of vision, committed to the unity and integrity of the country, which stood shaken by it.

Regarding the ambitions of Mrs Indira Gandhi, who was anxious to prolong her rule to communalize politics and create a Hindu vote bank by defrauding them from such army attack on Sikhs, BBC London commented on that very fateful day that she had signed her own death warrant by executing the Blue Star operation. The prophecy

came true when she was assassinated within five months by her two Sikhs body guards. Later on the chief of the army staff general Vaidya was also assassinated by two Sikh assailants who pleaded guilty, calling for death sentence such horrible, consequences. It was remarked, in the *Christian Science Monitor*, June 8, 1984, the well known journal :

"For five days, Punjab has been cut off from the rest of the World. There is a 24 hour curfew. All telephone and telex lines cut. No foreigners are permitted. All journalists were expelled. There are no newspapers, no trains, no buses. Orders to shoot at sight were widely carried out. The whole of Punjab with its 5000 villages and 50 major cities, was turned into a contonment camp."

The *New York Times*, the leading daily of USA remarked :

"One of the darkest chapters in India's half century of independence."

Pope John Paul II remarked :

"The sad fact is that the place where so many people met a tragic death in a temple, where men gather to pray."

New York Times Nov. 1, 1984, the leading newspaper of USA, commented also :

"Proclaiming the primacy of National union even over a religious shrine, Mrs. Gandhi ordered a bloody assault last June and loosed the demons that apparently claimed her life."

Amrit Wilson, *New Statesman*, November 16, 1984, remarked :

"Over a thousands pilgrims including children and old people, quite unconnected with the separatist were locked into a courtyard and attacked with grenades and machine guns. Those left alive were then prevented from leaving the building, many wounded were left to bleed to death. Some 3000 dead including many who were only unconscious, were piled high in trucks and removed."

CKC, Ready remarked in *Army Action in Punjab : Prelude and Aftermath*, 1984, page 46-48 :

"The customarily honour and courtesy shown to dead soldiers of the enemy was not shown to our dead countrymen, since those killing them were our own soldiers. Because the govt. had decided to exterminate these victims physically, they ceased to exist as persons deserving any honour of human dignity. We lack even the civility of the British imperialists, who after the Jalianwala bloodbath instituted the Hunter Commission to make a thorough enquiry into the events. The govt. after the operation, on the other hand, did everything in its power to cover up the excesses of the army action. The most disturbing thing about the entire operation was that a whole mass of men, women and children were ordered to be killed merely on the suspicion that some terrorists were operating from the Golden Temple and other Gurdwaras. There had been no judicial verdict of guilt against definite individuals who had been taking shelter in the Golden Temple."

Even against the prime target of the attack, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala, no criminal case had been registered and he did not figure as accused in any police case.

In the book *Army Action in Punjab*, it has been stated :

"The whole of Punjab and especially the Golden Temple complex, was turned into a murderous mousetrap from where people could neither escape nor could they seek succor of any kind. The way the dead bodies were disposed off adds to the suspicions regarding the number and nature of casualties. The bodies of the victims of military operation in Punjab were unceremoniously destroyed without any attempt to identify them and had them over to their relatives."

It was later on discovered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the prime investigating agency of India in the investigations under Supreme Court orders that for a long period the thousands of dead bodied had been cremated (mainly of Sikh youth) as unidentified by the police in Amritsar district alone. The journalistic enquiries established many dead bodies to have been found from the Punjab canals, to have been thrown there after killing by police.

The *Guardian*, London in its issue dated June 14, 1984 reported.

"An unknown number of people were shot at point blank range by troops who first tied their hands behind their backs."

The *London Times*, in its issue of June 14, 1984 reported :

"Doctors performing post mortem examination came across numerous dead bodies of Sikhs whose hands were tied behind their backs. Many arrested Sikhs had their hands tied with their own turbans and were killed with a single shot fired to the foreheads."

These two London journals, known for their credibility, clearly establish the fact that Sikhs were first apprehended and their hands were tied behind their backs and then shot at, which is nothing but murder by the security forces of unarmed innocent Sikhs, for which no action was taken by the government against those guilty officials.

The eminent journalist Arun Shourie, has given the account of an eye witness in his book *Punjab Story* at page 12-13 :

"Soldiers lost their temper and began firing wildly (in Golden Temple Complex) killing between 30 to 35 people including women, children and aged people. I saw about 35 or 36 young Sikhs lined up with their hands raised above their heads and a Major (an army officer) was about to order them to be shot. Later these men were found to have been shot."

These were also the cold blooded murders of the innocent unarmed youth, women, children and aged people, nothing to do with the terrorism. No guilty official was made to account for such heinous crimes.

Amrit Wilson an eminent journalist reported in *New Statesman* dated November 16, 1984 :

"In another part, over a thousand pilgrims including children and old people quite unconnected

with the separatists were locked into a courtyard and attacked with grenades and machine guns and those left alive were prevented from leaving the building. Many wounded were left to bleed to death. When they begged for water, Army officials denied them the same. Eventually some of the wounded were taken to hospital, but the uninjured were kept in detention and some three thousand dead including many who were only unconscious, were piled high in trucks and removed."

It is the height of tortures, brutalities and cold blooded murders of thousands of innocent Sikhs, who were present as pilgrims in their highest of the high Sikh shrine, but no action was taken against the guilty persons. It obviously shows that it was altogether a false pretext to attack Harimandar Sahib complex to arrest a few criminals; rather it was to massacre the maximum number of Sikhs, for which the date of the martyrdom day of the fifth Sikh Guru was chosen when thousands of pilgrims visit this historical Golden Temple and other Sikh gurdwaras to pay their obeisance to the great Guru, and to demolish the Akal Takhat—a symbol of Sikh political power—with the war tanks of Indian Army, without realizing its consequences, being Anti-national and endangering the unity and integrity of the country.

Operation Wood Rose

After the completion of the operation Blue Star, the second operation Wood Rose under the direction of the Indian government and its Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was started by the Army from June 8, 1984 in a secret manner whereby the Sikh youth from the villages were to be abducted and eliminated and unaccounted for with false propaganda that they had crossed the Pakistan border to receive training in Pakistan camps to take revenge for operation Blue Star. In the execution of this operation, hundreds of Sikh youth were eliminated while thousands were arrested and tortured to create terror in their minds. Some of the Sikh youth actually crossed the border to save themselves from getting executed by the Indian Army with no fault on their part. The Sikhs were humiliated and harassed on a large scale while Sikh youth eliminated. This operation was executed in secrecy as there could be nothing at all to defend it.

It could not be prolonged as the resentment of Sikhs over operation Blue Star openly brought to the surface the desire of Sikhs for an independent Sikh state that these operations have proved counter productive causing separatist tendencies in Sikh minds and considering the Indian government to be the enemy of Sikhs. The rebellion of the Sikh army against Blue Star operation was a clear message to the government

The operation of this unlawful patterns has been depicted by an independent journalist Merry Ann Weaver in the *Christian Science Monitor*, dated October 15, 1984 at page 11-12 :

"The army moves in during the early evening, cordons a village and announces over loud speakers that every one must come out. All the males between ages 15 to 35 are thrashed and blind folded, then taken away. Thousands have disappeared in Punjab since the army operation began. The government has provided no list of names. Families do not know if sons and husbands are arrested, undergrounded or dead."

It surpasses the high handedness and brutalities committed during the autocratic rule of the tyrant Mughals. These were committed in the country which boasts of being the biggest democracy in the world, using its army against its innocent citizens, which is meant for external aggression.

Altogether false propaganda was spread against Sikhs to the armed forces, portraying them to be dangerous persons to motivate them against Sikhs. In the special gazette *Baat Cheet* June 1984, No. 153, it was circulated to the armed forces by Indian army headquarters.

"Any knowledge of the Amritdhari Sikhs who are dangerous people and pledged to commit murders, arson and acts of terrorism should immediately be brought to the notice of the authorities. These people might appear harmless from outside, but they are basically committed to terrorism. In the interest of all of us their identity and whereabouts must always be disclosed."

Rightly observed Lloyd Rudolph in *India and Punjab—a Fragile Peace*, at page 42 :

"What brought the country to overt civil war was Mrs. Gandhi's increasing propensity to speak as of being a terrorist and being a Sikh were one and the same."

What a mischievous and entirely false projection of Sikhs ! And all of that was propagated by the crafty Indian government and its agencies in order to defame them and to continue the immoral policy of persecution against innocent Sikhs for over the next decade who were citizens of the Indian Republic and still expecting from them not to raise any voice against it. These unlawful and disastrous operations against the citizens of a century amounting to genocide can be nothing but anti national and dangerous to the unity and integrity of a country.

Says Khushwant Singh, the well known scholar and supporter of Mrs Indira Gandhi :

"Since the army was ordered to stamp out terrorism it went about doing so in another operation it named 'Woodrose'. Village after village was surrounded, the houses of Sikhs (never Hindus) were searched for arms, Sikh young men taken for questioning, beaten up and tortured. Criticism of the behaviour of the army was construed as an act of sedition. Amongst people charged and declared absconders and arrested were retired army officers.... Sikhs came to be treated as suspects, harassed and discriminated against. The government was armed with laws which enabled the police and minor civil servants to arrest people without warrants and hold them in detention without trial; those detained were deprived of their right to be represented by counsel, move writs of habeas-corpus and were presumed to be guilty unless they proved their innocence."

(A History of the Sikhs, Vol. II, p. 368)

As to the effects of these operations, says Khushwant Singh :

"Far from stamping out terrorism and the feeling of separatism, operations Blue Star and Woodrose engendered feelings of alienation and induced hundreds of young Sikh men and women to turn into terrorists. Many of those who were able to elude the army dragnet crossed the border into

Pakistan and made it a base for their operations.... The illusion that Operation Blue Star had brought the Sikhs to heel and that they would be amenable to compromise with the government was soon dispelled. Sullen resentment produced a sense of unity in the community....

The army action widened the gulf between the Hindus who had welcomed it and the Sikhs, who had not, and gave the movement for Khalistan its first martyr in Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. India had to pay a very heavy price for the miscalculation the heaviest being the assassination of the miscalculator, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi."

(*A History of the Sikhs*, Vol. II, pp. 375, 378)

Khushwant Singh was considered to be close to Indira Gandhi; who nominated him as member, Rajya Sabha (Member Parliament), so his criticism of Indira Gandhi and disclosures and disapproval of her wrong action is authentic. It is a matter of credit for him that he remained true to such historical factors unlike Dr. Gopal Singh, another scholar and author of *A History of Sikh People* who was influenced by the political patronage of High offices in not giving the proper and correct appreciation of the historical facts, though concerned with his own community. Khushwant Singh himself disapproved of it in his book *A History of the Sikhs* says he at page 368 :

"Virtually the only two 'respectable Sikhs', the government media could find to support the army action, were both aspirants of Governor's post. One was the ever-accommodating Dr. Gopal Singh Dardi and the other Prof. Harbans Singh, Dardi was appointed Lt. Governor of Goa, Daman and Diu. The professor's family was more than adequately compensated by being given the contract to rebuild the Akal Takhat on its own terms."

Operation Blue Star Awakened the Sikhs

Though operation Blue Star and operation Wood Rose caused a great loss of Sikhs in person and property as thousands of Sikhs had been killed and thousands arrested and put behind bars, while Akal Takhat and several other gurdwaras were damaged needing new construction at the cost of millions and millions of Rupees, but these brought a blessing in disguise as well. The Sikhs were awakened and came to know their enemies and as to the danger to their identity itself from their own government They became more determined to maintain their separate identity and being bold instead of being demoralized.

The Sikhs had experienced worst situations against them in autocratic Mughal Rule in which they could not be demoralized as the word demoralization is not in their dictionary. Their Guru Gobind Singh had created in them the high spirits to be in the days of adversity by imparting the Amrit of double-edged sword. So they started turning towards the strict way of Sikh life by taking Amrit and possessing the five symbols, which they were somewhat ignoring.

Sikh youth themselves came to the fold of strict Sikh way of life, having their flowing beards and tying yellow Kesri turbans, an orthodox Sikh colour. In colleges Sikh students formed their own groups and associations to strictly follow the Sikh way

of life. They thus themselves became determined to save their religion from the Indian government's onslaught.

In the overseas countries, where most of the Sikhs had become *patit* by not keeping their hair uncut and did not follow the strict Sikh way of life, they overnight tuned towards Sikh way of life due to the awareness brought by the operation Blue Star. The Sikhs inspired of their community and group affiliations started giving more time to their religion, coming together to face the onslaughts of the Indian government unitedly. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwala became an example to guide them and they felt obliged to him to have brought an awakening in them to lay down their lives for their religion. Thus the Sant had become more dangerous to government of India, while dead than alive. These Sikhs now became very interested in their homeland-Punjab affairs and felt interested in discussing the Sikh problems at home in Sunday congregations. A zeal has developed for their own separate sovereign state – Khalistan – for which they had no interest before the operation Blue Star for its planning and preparation. No body on earth can harm to the least any religion or nation when awakened.

Thus the awakening which Blue Star operation has brought in the Sikhs, has rather brought their religion out of danger. The operation has thus proved totally counter productive.

Central Government got repaired Akal Takhat, Amritsar

Feeling the resentment of the Sikhs over the damage of Akal Takhat building, the central government got it repaired at the cost of several crores of rupees. Before handing it over to the SGPC and opening the complex to the general public, the entire Golden Temple complex was repaired and newly white washed; as otherwise the Sikhs visiting the complex in a damaged and gloomy condition were openly expressing a desire to have their own sovereign Sikh state, Khalistan, staying no longer as part of India, since government had hurt their religious psyche. No Sikh Saint or any other personality of any recognition agreed to the requests of central government to get the repair of Akal Takhat and the complex done, as none was willing to talk with the Indian government which had attacked their holy shrines through their army considering it to be anti Sikh. Buta Singh, a Central Minister persuaded Nihang Santa Singh for this purpose though the entire repairs were being done by the Centre through their own departments and funds.

Repaired Akal Takhat demolished by Sikhs

Still the Sikhs did not accept it. The whole repaired Akal Takhat by Indian govt. was demolished by the Sikhs to reconstruct it themselves through *Karsewa* (voluntary service).

New Akal Takhat constructed by Sikhs

The Sikhs reconstructed the Akal Takhat and its new magnificent bigger building by their own *Karsewa*, exhibiting that Sikhs cannot accept the repairs got done by the government, which had attacked their sacred shrines with its army and otherwise as well that Sikh religious places are constructed by Sikhs themselves.

Sikhs Resent repairs of Akal Takhat

Jathedar Akal Takhat excommunicated Nihang Santa Singh from the Sikh Panth vide the *Hukamnama* dated July 22, 1984 for his anti Panthic activities to collaborate with the Indian government to repair Akal Takhat, as Sikhs had refused the government for such repairs; which could only be undertaken by Sikhs with *Karsewa* by Sikhs.

Jathedar Akal Takhat issued a press statement on July 27, 1984 blaming the Indian government for using the army for the attacks on Sikhs and Sikh Shrines in a barbarous manner against the entire Sikh nation, massacring the Sikhs indiscriminately with inhuman tortures and falsifying the government allegations that it was done to flush out some extremists and criminals. They condemned the repairs of Akal Takhat by government through their stooges like Nihang Santa Singh, who had already been excommunicated from Sikh panth, and the government was responsible for all the violence in Punjab.

Jathedar Akal Takhat issued another press statement on July 31, that repairs of Akal Takhat by government be stopped forthwith as Sikh nation wanted to reconstruct it after its demolition and Santa Singh be turned out of it.

Meeting of Non Sikhs named Sarbat Khalsa

At the instance of the Indian government through its cabinet minister Buta Singh, who was taking an active part in the repairs of the Akal Takhat, a meeting of Sikhs called Sarbat Khalsa was called at Burj Akali Phula Singh, the central place of Nihangs at Amritsar on August 11, 1984. It was an attempt to give authority to Santa Singh Nihang to repair the Akal Takhat. Santa Singh was acting as a stooge of the government through Buta Singh. Jathedar Akal Takhat issued an appeal to Sikhs that no Sikh should attend such a fake meeting, that was given the sacred name Sarbat Khalsa as only the Jathedar Akal Takhat is competent to call the meeting of Sarbat Khalsa. Actually the government intended to hide its illegal and brutal acting by repairing Akal Takhat so that Sikhs may not see the bombardment done on this sacred shrine of Sikhs. Further the government had no right to keep its army in Harimandar Sahib complex and neither to get the repair done through its stooges.

No Sikh of any recognition and neither the Sikhs in general came to attend that meeting on August 11, 1984; rather non Sikhs were brought there mostly from outside Punjab giving them the turbans to tie on their heads. Some Sikhs who attended,

later on appeared before the jathedar Akal Takhat, that they were ignorant of the real facts and were deceived and so they be punished in accordance with Sikh traditions and forgiven. That was so done in each case.

In that fake meeting which was in reality of non Sikhs, SGPC and Akali Dal were criticized. Santa Singh Nihang was appreciated. It was of no importance as the Sikhs were overwhelmingly against the government and Santa Singh to have become its stooge. Infact the Sikhs were considering the government of India and its Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to be the enemy of Sikhs. The government could never afford to keep the Akal Takhat in a demolished condition and the Harimandar Sahib in a damaged state for the fear of Sikh sentiments when they would see it in that condition. The management got the repairs done and kept the army there, prohibiting the entry of the Sikh masses to the complex in spite of the protests of jathedar Akal Takhat and other Sikh leaders whose tempers were extremely high.

World Sikh Conference

Jathedar Akal Takhat called World Sikh meeting, at Amritsar, at Gurdwara Shahidan complex, as Akal Takhat and Harimandar Sahib complex were under the occupation of the Indian Army. It was to be held on September 2, 1984. This meeting was attended by more than two hundred thousands of Sikhs from all over India and abroad as well, in spite of the fact that it had been banned by the government. Every sort of hurdle was created by the government for its failure, but the government failed and the meeting was a great success.

In his inaugural address, jathedar Akal Takhat highlighted the criminal excesses of the Indian government against Sikhs in operation Blue Star attack with the army tanks at Akal Takhat by the Indian army demolishing it and damaging the entire complex, massacring thousands of Sikhs and still being kept under army occupation, doing unauthorized repairs. Then pointing out that the government of India was the enemy of the Sikhs from the very beginning and designs of eliminating Sikh identity and was making the Sikhs weak in religious and political affairs under several conspiracies, besides their economy under the garb of secularism, with a note of caution to the government that whosoever came into conflict with Sikhs got itself wiped out. He gave an ultimatum to the government of India that it should withdraw its armed forces and hand over the Harimandar Sahib complex and Akal Takhat before September 30, failing which Sikhs themselves will turn it out and occupy their holy shrines on October 1, 1984, at whatever cost it may be. The Sikhs present there in hundreds of thousands, representing all the Sikhs, endorsed the ultimatum with a resounding call of 'Bole so nihal, Sat Sri Akal' that they were ready to face the supreme sacrifices.

In one of the resolutions, tributes were paid to all the Sikhs who were martyred by the army in operation Blue Star. The attacks on Sikhs and Sikh gurdwaras by Indian Army under the directions of Indian government were condemned with full force. It was declared that the attack on Harimandar Sahib complex was planned to demolish

Akat Takhat, the symbol of Sikh political power and to destroy the Sikh historical records and Sikh culture and Sikh heritage, under the false allegations to flush out the terrorists. It was a conspiratorial scheme against Sikhs and their religion.

In another resolution, the elimination of Sikh youth under conspiratorial planning of Indian government, the false police encounters and the arbitrary arrests of Sikhs in false cases were strongly condemned. The government was warned not to misuse the Army for the attacks on religious places and for the settlement of the political issues, besides it stressed withdrawal of all the black laws.

Two *Hukamnamas* were issued by jathedar Akal Takhat on September 2, which were appreciated by the world Sikh meeting. Vide the one *Hukamnama*, Giani Zail Singh President of India was held *Tankhahya* – the guilty – and directed him to appear before the Akal Takhat to give his explanation for sending army to attack Harimandar Sahib and the Akal Takhat, and for some other misconduct when he visited the complex on June 8 and wore shoes in the complex and got the shade of umbrella to avoid sun. Sikhs were requested not to have any contacts with him till he got the punishment after appearing before the Akal Takhat.

Vide the second *Hukamnama*, Buta Singh, Central Cabinet Minister was declared *Tankhahya* for taking active part in repairs of Akal Takhat and involving Nihag Santa Singh in it who had been earlier ex-communicated from Sikh panth, besides misleading the Sikhs by calling the meeting of non-Sikhs to be Sarbat Khalsa with the same traditional conditions.

Giani Zail Singh sent his explanation to Jathedar Akal Takhat, in his own hand on September 25 and himself appeared before the Jathedar Akal Takhat to personally explain his position on September 27 and begged apology though he denied the allegation of wearing shoes and the shade of umbrella as that he could never think of doing even in his dream being a committed Sikh. As far sending of army, he had no hand in it, as being only the formal head of the government. He also explained his position to the audience present there. He was acquitted by Akal Takhat jathedar that his explanation was satisfactory.

Buta Singh did not appear before jathedar Akal Takhat and submitted no explanation. He was excommunicated from Sikh panth vide *Hukamnama* dated April 1, 1985 by Jathedar Akal Takhat. Later on after he lost his ministership, he appeared before the Akal Takhat jathedar, pleaded himself guilty and was punished according to Sikh tradition, which he accepted and obeyed.

Harimandar Sahib Complex Handed Over to SGPC

On September 24, 1984, Indira Gandhi Prime Minister, announced that the army would be withdrawn from the Harimandar Sahib complex and it would be handed over to SGPC. On September 28, the Harimandar Sahib complex was handed over to SGPC after repairing the Akal Takhat and getting the entire complex white washed. The protest march fixed for October 1 was cancelled and it was celebrated as the victory

day of Sikhs to have occupied the complex after four months of army occupation. Hundreds of thousands of Sikhs had already gathered there on September 30.

The *Karsewa* of the *Sarovar* was started on October 2, which was completed within the record period of two weeks as hundreds of thousand Sikhs took part in it.

In the beginning of 1985, the government repaired Akal Takhat building was demolished by the Sikhs as not being acceptable to Sikhs. A new magnificent building, bigger in size than the previous one was constructed by the Sikhs with their own *Karsewa* with a sense of pride and dignity.

Indira Gandhi planned further Sikh Massacre

Though it may appear unbelievable, but it is a fact as the persons who made the disclosure certify its authenticity that Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister and her dummy government had planned to start war on November 8, 1984 with Pakistan to make Punjab, from Pakistan border to Beas river as the battlefield to displace and massacre the Sikhs indiscriminately. Then by spreading false news that since Sikhs helping Pakistan, so to massacre the Sikhs throughout India. Congress youth wing of which her son Rajiv Gandhi was the leader was to be made instrumental for the execution of this plan outside Punjab, through criminals. The material for this disastrous action had been collected which, was used to massacre the Sikhs throughout India in accordance with that planning after she was assassinated on October 31, 1984, though the Sikhs had not retaliated to the attacks by army on Sikhs and the Sikh shrines and the demolishing of Akal Takhat and killing thousands of Sikhs in June 84. No harm was done to any of the guilty or to Hindus in general, who welcomed it. There could be no sense in such a deadly and disastrous immoral aggressiveness.

Operation Shanti engineered by Indira Gandhi, November 1984

Records Sangat Singh, an ex-beaurocrat of External Affairs Ministry, in his book *The Sikhs in History* at page 361 :

"Indira drew a diabolical plan, named 'Operation Shanti' to carry out a general massacre of the Sikhs, of genocidal proportions, around November 8, when the Sikhs would assemble in various gurdwaras, for Guru Nanak's birthday celebrations. According to the plan, large scale skirmishes virtually amounting to war, were to take place all along the India-Pakistan borders. And it was to be given out that the armed forces of Pakistan had made considerable advances into the Indian territory. The Sikhs all over Punjab, especially in Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozepur, Kapurthala and Jalandhar districts were to be subjected to massive Aerial bombardment, apart from being slaughtered by army and para military forces. The Sikhs all over India were to be subjected to mass scale massacre, loot, arson, and incendiarism by lumpen elements organized by youth congress (I) activists. Elaborate preparations were made by youth congress (I) network all over India, they were to await a coded signal to start the Mayhem."

And further :

"The plan was discussed with certain army Generals who advised Indira against it. They pointed out that Nazis had used gas chambers to finish off the jews, but had not been able to do so. And her plan to finish off the Sikhs in one go would only dub her name with that of Hitler. But she was unrelenting."

Further at p. 362

"Zia-ul-Haq, President of Pakistan stated at Indira's funeral that it was with great difficulty that he had been able to avert a war with India. His then no: 2, Ghulam Ishaq Khan after demitting the office of President of Pakistan in July 1993, stated that Indira had planned to attack Pakistan but was shot dead sure ten days before the D. day."

Further

"Beant Singh sub Inspector in Indira's security, got the contours of Indira's Sikh genocidal plan from R.K. Dhawan, special assistant to prime minister and decided to act to thwart it. He commissioned Satwant Singh to assist him." What a deceptive name 'Operation Shanti' – peaceful to a worst kind of violence!

No doubt, such disastrous planning after planning against Sikhs in the year 1984, proved costly for Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister, as she had to lay down her own life, and besides the chief of the army staff as well who was also assassinated. Thousands of the armed forces were exploited to take part in ugly conspiracies in this respect at the cost of their lives but no independent investigation by a judge of Supreme Court was over done to find its real cause and as to the other persons involved in these conspiracies to punish them and to set out the measures necessary for it. The avoidance of such like mad plan in the Republic of India would have tarnished its name in the international world. The bygone days of Hitler as the autocratic rules were surpassed in this era of democratic world, but no international organization or nation of any country boasting to be super power and intolerant to violation of fundamental human rights came into motion to take notice of such a horrible plan. Such nonsensical steps must be nipped in the bud.

Sikh Genocide

- Indira Gandhi Assassinated; general Massacre of thousands of Sikhs : 31st October to 4th November, 1984
- Indira Gandhi Assassinated by her two Sikh guards, 31st, October 1984

Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, was shot dead on 31st October, 1984 at her residence by her two Sikh bodyguards, Sub-inspector Beant Singh and Constable

Satwant Singh, by firing the bullets from their revolver and stengun, which had otherwise been provided to them for her defence, obviously to prevent her Sikh genocide plan and to take the revenge and punish her for the Army attack on Harimandar Sahib and Akal Takhat and other historical gurdwaras and getting thousands of innocent Sikhs killed in operation Blue Star, repeating the historical events and traditions of Sikhs, who never left unpunished, whosoever defiled these sacred Sikh shrines, where day and night divine hymns of *Guru Granth Sahib* are recited for the spiritual uplift of humanity and blessings are merged for the entire mankind from God, the Almighty '*Waheguru*'. Even *London Times* and *BBC* which were not aware of Sikh history had predicted just after the army attack of these religious places of Sikhs that Indira Gandhi had signed her own death warrant by ordering the Army attack.

Beant Singh and Satwant Singh Surrender to police

Just after assassinating, Indira Gandhi, Beant Singh and Satwant Singh threw away their weapons and surrendered to the other police officials, who were also present at the place of occurrence, saying that they had done their job and are ready for arrest as they had no grudge against any other person to unnecessarily harm him. They were taken into custody by the police and brought to the security police control room, just nearby in the premises of residence of Indira Gandhi. After awaiting for some time, presumably on the direction of their higher authorities, both of them were shot at in the control room. Beant Singh died at the spot but Satwant Singh survived his serious bodily injuries. He was later on prosecuted and sentenced to death. He was hanged by neck till death to execute the death warrants along with Kehar Singh, another alleged conspirator in the case.

Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister 31.10.89

On 31.10.84 itself, Giani Zail Singh, President of India, being obliged to Indira Gandhi to bring him on that post, repayed the obligation by swearing her son Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister to succeed her, though he was at the lowest rung of political set up, ignoring the claims and merits of the deserving senior members of her cabinet.

Rajiv Gandhi Instigated the massacre of Sikhs in Revenge

After taking over the post of the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, being still politically immature instigated senior congress leaders in his confidence to take 'revenge' on Sikhs and to teach them a lesson for murdering his mother. The conspiracy in this regard was immediately brought into action with the common scheme and strategy, little predicting its consequences. The Chief Ministers of ruling congress party, senior central cabinet ministers and congress leaders became active and anxious to show their worth and loyalty to the new Prime Minister and to repay the obligation of the slain Indira Gandhi to commit genocide of innocent Sikhs with the help of police, civil

administration and security forces to bring them to destructive offensive line against the citizens of Indian republic without any fault on their part, instead of discharging their duties to protect and defend them.

General Massacre of Sikhs throughout India

It was the general massacre of Sikhs, burning them alive and their properties to ashes and not even sparing their religious places from the night of October 31, 1984, right up to 4th November without any obstruction by the forces deployed for law and order maintenance, rather with their connivance and even direct support. The forces of Law and order had become the most lawlessness forces. About twenty thousand innocent Sikhs were reported to have been killed and mostly burnt alive as to leave no trace of their remains. Their shops and homes looted and then burnt to ashes; Hundreds of Sikh religious places were also burnt or badly damaged, but no action was taken against the culprits by law enforcing agencies. Such like heinous crimes were committed against innocent Sikhs in most of the Indian cities and towns and particularly more so in the states ruled by congress party.

In Delhi, Trilok Puri, Sultan Puri, and other colonies were worst affected, though the trail of crime against Sikhs was evidenced throughout the capital. Even the congress Sikhs were not spared. The coca-cola complex of congress (i) Member Parliament and Janak Cinema complex of Tejwant Singh of Skipper group who played into the hands of congress for repairs of Akal Takhat in the recent past against Sikh sentiments, were attacked without showing any sympathy because they were Sikhs after all. Khushwant Singh and others of his wizard, who were openly against the Sikh movement and its cause saved their skins by hiding themselves.

In Fact, no Sikh was safe outside Punjab

In Haryana, havoc was played, with chief minister Bhajan Lal at the helm of affairs. In Bihar, "the whole operation was led and masterminded by leaders of congress (I) and its youth wing while the police stood by" as stated by DMKP leader Roshan Lal Bhatia. In UP, Kanpur, Lucknow, Ghaziabad witnessed the same pattern of Delhi. Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra were also in the same frenzy.

The Pattern of Violence

The Misra Commission proceedings revealed that the "pattern of violence throughout the Hindu belt was the same. The lumpen elements led by local congress (I) leaders and armed with iron rods, crow bars, cans, kerosene, inflammable powder, fire arms, lathis and voter lists marking the Sikh houses, played havoc with the Sikhs and their establishments. Gurdwaras were invariably the first to be attacked and destroyed to break the Sikhs morally. Then their houses and shops were looted and the residences put on fire. The men were beaten to death or roasted alive with the

help of tyres soaked in kerosene and set fire around their necks. Others were shaved off by barbers accompanying the mobs. Their Educational institutions were pillaged."

Sikh Policemen and Soldiers Disarmed

Team of Journalists of *India Today* Nov. 30, 1984 reported;

"There were clear cases of police complicity and active participation in riots in Delhi; worst, the entire Sikh constabulary, some 20% of the force was withdrawn to give full leeway to the Hindu mobs. Even the Sikh soldiers in Delhi cantonment were disarmed or confined to the barracks. The culpability of police was next only to that of congress (i) politicians in Delhi. Local people including Hindus pointed the finger at the local congress (I) leaders; prominent names mentioned were of four congress (I) MP's, (Sajjan Kumar, from outer Delhi, Dharam Dass Shastri and Jagdish Tytler, besides HKL Bhagat, the Congress Minister) mentioned earlier, Braham Yadav, Delhi youth Congress (I) president, all of whom along with small time Congress (I) politicians wanted arrested hoodlums to be released". Security men pointed out that "if each theater of violence is studied carefully, it is easy to pin point the outlying villages or suburban colonies from where the marauding hordes came. They are not just their vote banks, they are also their rally banks, providing the bulk of manpower for the various Congress (I) rallies in the capital."

The total number of killings of Sikhs in India in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi murder could be in between 12,000-20,000 according to intelligence resources.

Sikh Genocidal Plan preparation–Handy for Rajiv

The Sikh genocidal plan preparation contemplated by Indira Gandhi as "Operation Shanti" proved handy for Rajiv Gandhi to advance that plan for ten days to commit the heinous crimes against Sikhs outside Punjab throughout India. The killing of Indira Gandhi, however saved Punjab and Pakistan war. It gives credence to the Sikh genocidal plan under the 'Operation Shanti' engineered by Indira Gandhi as otherwise the planned violence against Sikhs on the same pattern, throughout the country could never be possible abruptly just after her assassination for 3 to 4 days. The weapons of offence, inflammable powder, earmarking of the houses of Sikhs etc. to commit such heinous crimes used in very large and heavy quantity could never be made available in such a short time, unless collected earlier. Rajiv Gandhi would certainly be a partner in this conspiracy, which was to be operated through Youth Congress headed by him. Were they not aware that such criminal conspiratorial designs would endanger the unity and integrity of the country and they would be proved traitors of the country ?

'Blood for Blood', Slogans at Prime Minister's house

During these four days the dead body of Indira Gandhi was kept at her house for paying homage to it by her followers and other leaders and dignitaries before its cremation. It was televised without any break. The slogan of 'Blood for Blood' was

openly raised, thereby instigating the general public against the Sikhs. No one there condemned the heinous crimes being committed against humanity. The government was functioning but no steps were taken to prevent the general genocide of Sikhs; its functionaries rather abetted it and directly supported it.

Rajiv Gandhi Retorted–‘Fall of A Big Tree Shakes the Earth’

Rajiv Gandhi, the immature politician occupying the highest post of Prime Minister, could not hide his inner feelings and instead of hanging his head in shame, retorted that "Whenever a big tree falls, the earth is shaken", thus openly justifying the horrible and heinous crimes against Sikhs; rather shaking the earth himself which could not have shaken had he been not the Prime Minister. Giani Zail Singh had also committed a great blunder to appoint him as Prime Minister in this charged atmosphere. Rajiv had his personal grievance as to the murder of his mother, though she had herself invited her demise by committing the greatest blunder of her life by ordering the Army attack on Sikhs and their historical Gurdwaras.

No Action Against the Culprits–No judicial Enquiry

No action was taken by the government against the culprits of the worst type of heinous crimes. None was seriously apprehended, arrested or prosecuted or got sentenced. Even the judicial enquiry was not raised by the government. Infact no such action could be expected from the government which was itself responsible to get all this done through Ministers and Congress leaders, police and security forces and the administrations. 'Prime Minister at whose instance these heinous crimes against Sikhs were committed was rather to shield the criminals. Any action expected from him and his regime would be hoping against hope.'

People's Organization held Investigations

'Peoples' Union of Democratic Rights (PUDR) and Peoples Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL) formed by impartial people of caliber, retired Judges and jurists and retired civil administrators held the investigation and enquiries in the ugly incidents and heinous crimes and submitted their reports.

Senior Congress Ministers, Leaders, Administrators, Police Officers found Guilty–Their Names Published.

In the detailed report called *Who are Guilty*, the senior members of Congress party, ministers, administrators and senior officers were found guilty and directly responsible for all these heinous crimes, their planning to execution, against innocent Sikhs. It was stated in the report that :

"The attacks on members of Sikh community were the outcome of well organized plan, marked

by both acts of commission and omission by important politicians of the congress (i) at the top by the authorities in the administration. The attack on Sikhs followed a common pattern in all colonies and were master minded by some powerful organized groups. There was also a definite pattern discernible in the choice of victims as they largely belonged to the age group of 20 to 50 years."

"It was a continuous spree of arson rape and murders. At least four women of 14-50 years were gangraped. Later seven cases of rape were officially reported by J.P. Narain hospital."

And

"The happenings in Trilok Puri, between October 31 and November 2, were a gruesome picture of the intensity of butchery. Within forty eight hours at least 400 Sikhs namely youngmen were burnt alive with the connivance of local public machinery and active participation of an organized group of miscreants led by congress (I) counsellor."

Lt. governor of Delhi and other officials privy of crime

It is alleged that the worst situation of Trilok Puri was brought to the notice of Lt. Governor of Delhi on that very day. Instead of directing the army and security forces to reach there to control the situation, he replied that the situation in the capital was fully under control, though the officers at the top were not even ready to diffuse the continuing criminal worst situation.

Death toll in Delhi in thousands never seen such worst situation earlier

Another credible report of Delhi's heinous crime states :

"Delhi has never seen a worse situation than what happened during 31st October to 3rd November 1984. There is not a single Sikh family in Delhi, which has not been affected. The roads are littered with cars, scooters, buses and trucks lying burnt. Thousands of houses, shops, factories have been looted and burnt. Most of the persons attacked were burnt to death. Traces of their remains are also not there. Hundreds of women have become widows. The death toll is in thousands."

Preplanned crime against Sikhs in other cities of India

The same tragic and shameful heinous crime against Sikhs on the same pattern was committed in all other main towns and cities of India, being deliberately preplanned and organized in the same manner.

Report of Citizens' Commission—worst Carnage with political and Police instigation

A Citizens Commission, the chairman of which was Retd. Chief Justice of India, Justice SM Sikri, also held the enquiry and investigation into these heinous crimes and submitted its report. It was stated therein that :

"It was the worst carnage across the country after the partition of India. There was an incredible and abysmal failure of the administration and the police, instigation by dubious political elements, the equivocal role of information media and the inertia, apathy and indifference of the official machinery, and it is evident that a certain paralysis of decision-making had gripped the authorities."

Security of Sikhs and their religion in danger in India

These uncalled for worst carnage and heinous crimes against the Sikhs as to their person and property and against their religious places and killing thousands and thousands of Sikhs certainly put the Sikhs in doubt as to their safety and security in India and as to the danger to their religion and their separate identity. They were put to thinking to have their own independent sovereign Sikh state – Khalistan. This thought had been created by the Army attack on their holiest shrine, Harimandar Sahib, and now strengthened by the general massacre of Sikhs in India.

Nayantara Sehgal cousin of Indira Gandhi, reported in the *World Sikh News* dated September 18, 1986 :

"I am talking about the first three days of November 1984, when areas in and around Delhi were turned into slaughter houses and more than two thousand Sikhs were butchered like goats. It was instigated and blessed by politicians and workers of the ruling party and carried out by squads of their own loyal constituents from resettlement colonies."

In the *Truth about Delhi Violence*, it has been stated at page x-xii:

"We have shown in this report that several meetings were held all over Delhi, central, outer and trans-Yamuna areas by the congress leaders in the late hours of the 31st October (1984) to give the final touches, as it were to the plan already prepared with meticulous care, with an eye to every minute detail that nothing is left out to successfully exterminate the Sikhs. It was as if those brigades were going to attack an enemy territory. From the collection of kerosene and incendiary material for dousing the men before they were burnt to the collection of killers both from villages outside the areas of attack as well as from among the more amenable neighbours; from fixing the hour of attack to be launched simultaneously everywhere in Delhi in the forenoon between 9 and 11 am on November 1, 1984.

Gurdwaras were first to be attacked in every area of Delhi according to the plans. Once these places of worship were in ashes, the Sikh houses were to be looted and set ablaze then the men were to be first humiliated by cutting off their hair and shaving off their beard and finally they were to be delivered to flames alive later; their women were to be molested and raped and some were to be killed."

In the report of the Citizens Commission, under the leadership of Justice Sikri, an ex-Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India, it has been recorded at page 7 :

"While Delhi was numbed by shock and sorrow, a wild frenzy of terror, murder, loot and arson seized large sections of the city. Its Prime target was a minority community (Sikhs). In large parts of the country the violence spread in varying degree of intensity, shaking faith in our secularism

not only on the part of the afflicted community but also other minorities. The administration appeared to have been totally paralyzed for three critical days, while the hordes of hooligans bent on loot, raping, murder and arson, held free way. The men were dragged out, beaten badly and burnt alive. The women were stripped and many dishonoured."

Khushwant Singh, Member Parliament, the eminent scholar and supporter of Indira Gandhi, stated in the *Chicago Tribune* dated November 6, 1984 :

"The violent Hindu backlash against Sikhs, unprecedented in its savagery appears to have convinced many Sikhs the need for a separate homeland. What happened last week was genocide. We are like the Jews in Nazi Germany."

It was the anti-national act of the government of India and its leaders of Congress (I) endangering the unity and integrity of the country. Even the admirer of Congress (I) having been appointed as member Rajya Sabha by Congress (I) government, Khushwant Singh, could not hide his feelings that the violence against Sikhs appears to have convinced many Sikhs of the need for a separate homeland. It becomes the natural feeling of the people who were massacred indiscriminately and whose religious places were burnt and whose business places and the residential places were put to ashes without any fault on their part. If two Sikh body guards of Indira Gandhi, shot her to death on what so ever motivation it might be, how any other Sikh could be punished who was altogether ignorant about it and not a privy to the crime. The feeling of insecurity among the Sikhs, in India is obviously Anti-National. L.K. Advani, is vocal to accuse the Congress to defame all the Sikhs as terrorists and to view them with suspicion by the Congress government after assassination of Indira Gandhi, terming it to be cynical exploitation for electoral gains. In his book *My country My Life*, the ex-home minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India remarked at page 432 that :

"An unfortunate fall out of the terrorism in Punjab for considerable time after Indira Gandhi's assassination was that Sikhs continued to be viewed with suspicion by the government machinery in many states in India. The Congress party did little to curb it."

And at page 433 :

"The Congress party launched a minister and systematic campaign following Indira Gandhi's assassination to defame the entire community as terrorists and to make Sikhs feel as second class citizens."

And

"Indeed the Congress party's cynical exploitation of a national tragedy for its narrow electoral gains had begun within hours of Indira Gandhi's assassination. The government made the most brazenly partisan use of Doordarshan, the government owned national television broadcaster, which was at the time only TV Channel in the country. Even as Delhi had been taken over by goons indulging in targeted killing of innocent Sikhs, Doordarshan was showing Congress workers raising provocative slogans near the Prime Minister's residence."

And at page 435 :

"For a full decade, the perpetrators of 1984 carnage had remained immune to the law."

Even after more than two decades they are immune to the law without any effective prosecution and punishment having taken place for the crimes against humanity as they did it under the instigation and protection of the government.

Complete Alienation of Sikhs

The Indian Congress leaders and the Indian government completely alienated the Sikhs. First the promises and assurances given to Sikhs for a Sikh autonomous state and constitutional guarantees made in pre independence era were not implemented, then Sikhs were openly discriminated and now openly persecuted. Jawaharlal Nehru was the main spokesman of the Congress to give such promises. He became Prime Minister of India but refused their implementation. He openly gave the press statement that even reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis amounted to creating a separate Sikh state and division of the country again. During his life time he never agreed to even reorganize Punjab on linguistic basis, inspite of the prolonged peaceful agitation of Sikhs. He is responsible to start the alienation of Sikhs.

Indira Gandhi, his daughter went to the extent of Army assault on Sikhs and Sikh historical Gurdwaras including Harimandar Sahib and demolition of Akal Takhat besides the massacre of thousands of innocent Sikhs. She passed illegal awards to give Punjab river waters to the non riparian states, which had no right over it. She was responsible for creating violence in Punjab and killing of the Sikh youth and excesses on Sikhs. Indira Gandhi had to lay down her own life due to the glaring excesses. She created total Sikh alienation.

Rajiv Gandhi, her son and her successor as Prime Minister got thousands of innocent Sikhs killed, their houses and shops burnt to ashes, not sparing even the Sikh Gurdwaras, directly on inception to office as his mother had been shot at by her two Sikh body guards. It happened throughout India and mostly in the states ruled by the Congress party. Could there be any valid ground for such a massacre and genocide of Sikhs with the direct involvement of police and security forces ? It created insecurity to Sikhs in India.

No Indian National leader or party came out openly to support the Sikhs and their just cause and to denounce their massacre and genocide committed in June and November 1984 blaming the Congress government and its leaders. No one came forth out of the National leaders to enlighten the Indian masses against the high handedness of the worst type of heinous crimes committed against its own people and the total false misrepresentation dishonestly made against Sikhs, though one of their motivations was to create the Hindu vote bank for congress. Why no other national party or leader took the courage in this regard ? Might be due to the fear of loss of Hindu votes that

could have discarded and rejected the congress; But congress succeeded in befooling the Hindu vote bank. However if the political dishonesty and fraud being committed on Hindu votes by the congress leaders by sacrificing Sikhs had been bodily unfolded by the other National leaders, the Hindu voter would have opposed the congress on the basis of integrity and unity of the country that they themselves have endangered it the most. The parliamentary elections were sought to be won at the cost of Sikhs and the sympathy wave of the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Congress got a record 85% of the seats in Parliament. Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister by communalizing and criminalizing politics and befooling the Hindu voter.

There was complete alienation of Sikhs from Indian government. Anandpur Sahib resolution of Akalis was misrepresented to be anti-national. Sikhs were openly propagated to be anti-national and dangerous to unity and integrity of India.

Rajiv-Longowal Accord (1985)

Akali Government in Punjab (1985-87)

In June 1984, all the main Akali leaders had been arrested after the operation Blue Star. In early 1985, they were released one by one. Sikhs had lost faith in them for not giving their sacrifices at the time of operation Blue Star, as did Sant Jarnail Singh and his followers fighting against the army when it attacked Harimandar Sahib complex and demolished Akal Takhat. There was a general thinking in a section of Sikhs particularly the followers and admirers of Sant Jarnail Singh that perhaps the Sikh leaders of Akali Dal were party to the attack on Akal Takhat to eliminate the sant, who was a danger to their politics as most of the Sikhs considered him to be honest to the Sikh cause as compared to Akali leaders. The militant Sikhs openly denounced the Akali leaders for their sense of traitorship and betrayal to Sikhs. The Akali leaders had become irrelevant to pursue the Sikh cause. They were even facing danger to their own security.

In May 1985, Baba Joginder Singh, father of Sant Jarnail Singh formed United Akali Dal, so that Sikhs should have one political party of all the shades of Sikh leaders. Baba Joginder Singh had acquired the importance among Sikhs, being the father of Sant Jarnail Singh, though previous to the operation Blue Star, he was not a known figure in Sikh politics. His United Akali Dal comprised nine member committee including the three of four top leaders of the traditional Akali Dal. Simranjit Singh Mann was appointed the President of this Akali Dal, who was in jail in the case of conspiracy to murder Indira Gandhi, having been arrested on November 27, 1984. He had resigned in protest at the time of operation Blue Star from his IPS Cadre when he was holding the post of Deputy Inspector General police. Baba Joginder Singh, himself became the working President in the absence of the President. All the top Akali leaders went to Baba Joginder Singh at his village Rode, after their release one by one. Initially they did not dispute the United Akali Dal.

On May 27 1985, the traditional Akali Dal became active to breaching the unity

of Akali Dals. These Akali leaders also became vocal against Indian Government sensing the feelings of Sikhs. Sant Harchand Singh Longowal, president of Akali Dal publicly declared that he would not go to central government for any talks and compromise by crossing the thousands of dead bodies of Sikhs for which Indian government was directly responsible. The other United Akali Dal had the support of Sikh Students Federation, admirers of Sant Jarnail Singh and the Sikh militants who were vocal that no compromise with the Indian government, short of Khalistan would be acceptable to Sikhs. However the division and divergent views in both Akali Dals were apparent and leaders of traditional Akali Dal were suspected for their high talk temporarily.

It was a great surprise for Sikhs when Sant Harchand Singh Longowal had written a secret letter to the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on July 16, 1985 to find out a solution to Punjab problem, as a secret compromise had been settled with Indian Government through the politician, Governor of Punjab, Arjun Singh, ex union cabinet minister of Congress thus availing the services of dubious second degree Akali leaders such as Balwant Singh and Surjit Singh Barnala, a confident of Longowal, with the underhand condition, that Barnala would be made chief minister, while Balwant Singh to be the senior minister next to him. This deal was thus motivated by the selfish desires of these two Akali leaders, according to thinking of most of the Sikhs.

On July 23, 1985, Sant Harchand Singh Longowal held a secret meeting with Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister at Delhi. The only other two Akali leaders present were, Surjit Singh Barnala and Balwant Singh. Rajiv Longowal accord was put in writing and signed by both of them.

Terms of Rajiv Longowal accord

According to Rajiv-Longowal accord :

- (i) Chandigarh was to be transferred to Punjab on January 26, 1986 in lieu of the equivalent area from Punjab to Haryana as determined by a Commission.
- (ii) Satluj-Yamuna Link Canal (SYL) to be completed in the Punjab territory to take the river waters to Haryana.
- (iii) The allocation of the river waters was to be done by a Commission.
- (iv) Hindi speaking areas from Punjab to Haryana and Punjabi speaking areas from Haryana to Punjab were to be transferred as decided by a Commission.

Some other clauses were added, which are not significant enough to be mentioned here. This accord was obviously thought by most of Sikhs to be detrimental to Sikh interests. The terms of this accord were short of even the Anandpur Sahib resolution passed by Akali Dal in 1973 and since then Sikhs had been agitating particularly in the recent past from 1982-1984 in Dharam Yudh Morcha, wherein about three hundred fifty thousands (350,000) Sikhs had courted arrest while several hundred Sikhs killed at the command of Akali Dal leaders and its president and Morcha dictator Harchand

Singh Longowal. These Akali leaders had taken the oaths at Akal Takhat never to compromise with anything short of Anandpur Sahib resolution. These leaders of Akali Dal had made the declarations that no area would be given in lieu of Chandigarh as it was a part of Punjabi speaking area and the capital of Punjab to which Punjab was entitled as matter of right. These Akali leaders had made the declarations that SYL will never be allowed to be dug in Punjab territory and Haryana was not entitled to even a drop of water from Punjab rivers. Akali Dal had started the agitation in 1982 itself against the digging of SYL Canal.

There was no settlement infact on any subject whatsoever. The matters were left to be decided by the Commissions, which was never done. The main demand of autonomy and the cofederal status for Punjab, only giving four subjects of defence, foreign affairs, currency and communication to centre were not even touched upon. The other demands of Anandpur Sahib resolution were not even referred to. Even this resolution had become irrelevant in view of the new situation after 1984 became the demand for the security of Sikhs who were made to feel insecure in India. This accord was thus taken by most of the Sikhs to be a fraud upon Sikhs.

In the eye of law, this accord had no legal status. Longowal had no right and jurisdiction to enter into such an accord as he neither represented all the Sikhs nor state of Punjab. Longowal committed the blunder to enter into such accord for which he had no authority. He rather was caught in the net of central government with other two junior Akali leaders who had been motivated by their selfish vested interest to get political power in Punjab. The other two leaders of Akali Dal high command, Parkash Singh Badal ex Chief Minister and Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President SGPC, openly declared that Longowal had never taken them into confidence for the accord and that neither any other member of the executive committee of Akali Dal was consulted. They criticized Longowal and the accord to have been neither discussed or sanctioned by Akali Dal. All other Sikhs and Sikh organizations rejected the accord. Sant Longowal was declared a traitor of Sikh Panth by some Sikhs and was punished.

Sant Harchand Singh Longowal was shot at and assassinated within one month of the accord for entering into such an accord secretly and against the Sikh interests.

Elections to the Punjab assembly were announced. Parkash Singh Badal and Gurcharan Singh Tohra accepted the accord, though they had earlier rejected it to contest the elections as they could not tolerate to remain out of power and give it to the second rank leaders. Other Akali leaders also accepted the accord for this very purpose, as if they were ignorant about it. It exhibits just how the lust of power of political leaders makes them unreliable toward their conscience and principles. Elections to the Punjab assembly were held on Sept. 25, 1985. It was a friendly election with congress by Akali Dal. According to hidden condition of accord, Akali Dal was to win the majority of seats and Surjit Singh Barnala government was to be formed and it was so done.

Baba Joginder Singh Akali Dal was manipulated by Indian Government not to

contest the elections, otherwise his Akali Dal would have won the elections as Sikhs at that time were against the other Akali Dal leaders. Such manipulations against leaders of no experience and education are easy.

Akali Government in Punjab

Surjit Singh Barnala became the Chief Minister of Punjab on September 29, 1985 and Balwant Singh next to him as finance minister. It was obviously the puppet government of the centre, ruled by congress. What could be expected from this Akali government to achieve any Sikh aim? The Indian government did not even honour the accord whatsoever it was. Chandigarh was not transferred to Punjab on January 26, 1986 though Akali government kept its false hopes upto the last. Similarly the river waters and territorial disputes remained unsettled. Akali govt. should have resigned on January 26, 1986 when the first condition of accord was breached, but it was never done. The Akali leaders were more interested in retaining power instead of resolving any Sikh issues. Their agreement was fraudulent from the very beginning at the cost of Sikh interests. What concern could be the breach of the accord. Indian government already knew that these Akalis can sacrifice the Sikh demands to get power.

Akali government in Punjab though remained under the patronage of the central government to be always ready to follow its orders, but it failed to achieve anything for the Sikhs to whom it was claiming to represent. The Sikh problems were not paid any attention. The Anandpur Sahib resolution which was not even referred to for getting any of its demands conceded. The elimination of Sikh youth at the hands of police and security forces could not be checked. The false encounters by the police for killing Sikhs, the tortures and obvious crimes against Sikh youth, the false arrests and prosecutions of Sikhs continued with the same vigour as in the President's rule, though it was the government of Sikhs, and was boasting to be the representative political party of Sikhs. Rather the DGP announced the Bullet for Bullet revenge openly against Sikhs, violating all the legal norms. Efforts were made to construct SYL canal in Punjab territory to take Punjab river waters to Haryana, though the first conditions of the accord remained unimplemented. Commissions after commissions were appointed but without any decision and solution of any problem.

Commission Appointed; Recommendations not Implemented October 1985

Chief Minister Surjit Singh Barnala appointed a Commission, headed by Retd. Justice Ajit Singh Bains to probe into the arrests made by the police in Punjab during the past 4 years and then to report as to the false implication of Sikhs, who were to be released. The Commission reported to the Chief Minister cases of over 2000 detainees to be released as being falsely involved or without any tangible evidence. It also found 99% of the police encounters to be bogus, and out of 379 detainees held

in Jodhpur, most were found innocent pilgrims, including women, children and SGPC employees. However, Surjit Singh Barnala proved to be a very weak chief minister and under pressure of Rajiv Gandhi Prime Minister, instead of releasing these persons forthwith, set up a police committee to screen the Bains Commission's recommendation, which was highly undesirable and as such lost Sikh sympathy and Sikh youth co-operation.

Commissions under Rajiv-Longowal accord

Fraud upon Sikhs

1. Mathew Commission to define Hindi speaking areas in lieu of Chandigarh

In October 1985, the Commission headed by Justice Mathew was appointed to decide areas to be given to Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh. Justice Mathew, did not abide by the census, wherein Kandu Khera village was Punjabi speaking and ordered the enumeration of that village a fresh census under the central government's strategy but still it was held to be Punjabi speaking. Barnala government did something appreciable in this regard, not to work out the Haryana mischief with the caution of its ministers. However Mathew commission gave up its efforts for giving any tangible awards for not facilitating transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab. So on January 26, 1986, Chandigarh was not transferred to Punjab under the conspiratorial designs of central government. Akali government should have resigned under central excess, but they opted to face further humiliation.

2. Justice Venkataramiah Commission Futile. April 1986.

On April 2, 1986, another commission headed by justice E.S. Venkataramiah was appointed by central government to locate contiguous Hindi speaking areas for Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh as if Justice Mathew had not given a proper award. Chandigarh has total area of 28,500 acres, the share of Haryana is 40% as compared to that of Punjab but Venkataramiah suggested arbitrarily that 70,000 acres of land should be given to Haryana by Punjab. He pointed to Punjab offer of 45,000 acres of Hindi speaking areas around Manimajra, but held that another Commission should be appointed to locate 25,000 acres. Why could he not do it himself, abdicating his duty like Mathew, under the strategy of Indian government ?

3. Justice D.A. Desai Commission did nothing. June 1986

On June 20, 1986, another third Commission headed by Justice D.A. Desai was appointed by central government to do the work left by the previous commission. Punjab government decided to boycott it as its reference terms were not specific and so it also went the way of its predecessors. Thus three judges of Supreme court had made the judicial working a laughing stock, not having shown their capability to give this small affair award and to be not being above approach by the central government consequently down- grading the judiciary and the confidence of people in them, as

earlier people would welcome and cooperate with the commissions headed by judges having trust in them.

4. Justice V. Balakrishna Eradi Commission on River waters. Jan 1986

On January 24, 1986, central government appointed a Commission headed by justice V. Balakrishna Eradi, a sitting judge of the Supreme Court on River waters. The judge who gave his award in January 1987 after one year, which was released in May 1987 on the eve of Haryana elections as a political gimmick. He held that Punjab drew 5.406 MAF, Haryana 1.620 MAF and Rajasthan 6.095 MAF on July 1, 1985.

He reduced Punjab's share from 5.405 to 5.0 MAF preserving Punjab's pre-partition allocation, Punjab was made entitled to 7.3 MAF. He enhanced Haryana's share from 1.62 MAF to 3.83 MAF with additional water of 3.29 MAF already available to it through Yamuna, thus raising it to 7.2 MAF. He put Rajasthan share at 8.60 MAF increasing it from 6.83. Justice Eradi totally ignored the riparian states rights under well accepted National and International principles. He raised 4.613 MAF of additional water, wrongly bringing the total available water from 17.17 to 21.78 which is not at all available, being seasonal and of rainwater in only rainy season. This award solved no problem of Punjab; it being rather anti Punjab.

Ranga Nath Mishra Commission on Delhi Riots

A Commission presided over by Ranga Nath Mishra, a sitting Supreme Court judge was appointed on April 26, 1985 to enquire into organized violence in Delhi and extended to Bokaro and Kanpur and cities in Bihar. Citizens' Justice Committee produced 6,000 affidavits of eye witness accounts but, later on, it boycotted the Commission on March 31, 1986 accusing it to be a one sided investigation, particularly when its request to summon the nine senior police officers was not even granted. Justice Mishra placed the main responsibility of Delhi violence and at other places as well on the police, besides anti social elements and Congress (I) workers. The riots were organized as the pattern was the same at all the places. But he did not make any report as to the allegation implicating individuals and rather suggested formation of a committee and of two persons – one judicial and one administrator – to look into individual cases to direct their prosecutions. This Commission also abdicated its responsibility to decide these matters concerning the congress(i) Ministers, Parliamentary and higher ups in the organizations, whose name had been clearly mentioned by the enquiry reports of PUDR, PUCL and other volunteer organizations.

These Commissions headed by judges of Supreme Court of India left behind a very unpleasant impression not only upon Sikh minds but other reasonable minds as well lowering their confidence as to their fearless and impartial functioning and the urge to finalise the matters unbiased and unprejudicial.

Violence against Sikhs in Akali rule

Central government appointed SS Ray, a congress leader, as Governor of Punjab, while J.F. Riberio had been posted as the Director General Police. He had direct contact with the Prime Minister and as such influenced Chief Minister Surjit Singh Barnala. Though he was already under the obligation of the Prime Minister to get his post, 'Bullet for Bullet' state policy was openly declared by Riberio. Sikh youth were now to be eliminated in the name of controlling terrorism. A & B lists of two categories were prepared by the police to kill them as if there was no rule of law to arrest and prosecute them in the lower courts. This policy was illegal and unconstitutional on the face of it. The due process of law was totally violated as the function of the police was to apprehend the accused and send them for trial. It was for the courts to hold them guilty and award the punishments as sanctioned by law. Riberio boasted in June 1987 that police had killed or captured 3318 Sikh youth as terrorists in the last 14 months, while in President's Rule, in one month, such number was 404. Akali govt. could not stop the naked repression and oppression of Sikhs and elimination of Sikh youth in false police encounters and arrests and prosecution of innocent Sikhs, though it was claiming to represent the Sikhs, what to say of solving Sikh problems. The Akali Chief Minister could not check and control the violence and the crimes committed under the directions and conspiracies of secret Indian intelligence agencies while accusing and blaming the Sikh militants falsely. The Akali government could not negate the communal clashes, committed in various towns of Punjab through Hindu militant organizations such as Shiv Sena, under the blessings of the central government and to expose the secret hand behind it. Chief Minister Surjit Singh Barnala and his ministers did not want to annoy the central government to prolong their regime and as such tolerated its uncalled for interference and obeyed its illegal directions.

They failed to get any clause of Rajiv-Longowal accord implemented from central government despite its being the very basis of their coming into power, little realizing that they were being alienated from other Akali leaders and the Sikhs generally to enable the central government to dismiss their government anytime without any protest from Sikhs. That very thing happened at the time suitable to central government.

Surjit Singh Barnala sent Security Forces in Harimandar Sahib

On 29.4.1986, panthic committee declared formation of 'Khalistan' from Akal Takhat, Amritsar. They disappeared from that complex just after making the declaration. Director General Police Punjab, Julio Riberio was already present at Amritsar and he came to know of it. He informed Surjit Singh Barnala about it. But still under the pressure of Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister, he was sent to Amritsar from Delhi, where he was present to attend the National Development Council meeting along with Arun Singh, Minister of state Home and Arjun Singh congress (I) vice president and top officials of Home Ministry and Major General, National Security Guards, to send

the security forces into Harimandar Sahib complex. On April 30, 1986, the security forces entered the Golden Temple complex for "Operation Search" to flush out those militants though there was no such militant to be apprehended in the complex.

Akali Dal was bifurcated, as Parkash Singh Badal and Gurcharan Singh Tohra resigned from Akali Dal working committee headed by Surjit Singh Barnala, while Capt. Amrinder Singh, Sukhjinder Singh and Sucha Singh resigned from the cabinet as a protest against the Chief Minister for having sent the security forces in Golden Temple complex. 28 Akali legislators under the leadership of Parkash Singh Badal formed a separate Akali group in the Punjab assembly while 4 MPs out of 7 formed a separate group in Parliament. The strategy of central government worked to divide the Akalis and to get the Golden Temple complex raided by security forces under Akali regime who had always been staunch opponents of the entry of security forces, in their sacred historical complex. Surjit Singh Barnala had committed the blunder under pressure of Rajiv Gandhi to send the security forces into Harimandar Sahib complex to apprehend the so called Sikh militants though none was present there to the knowledge of police itself. He got the Akali party bifurcated to remain in power at the mercy of the central government, besides losing the Sikh sympathy support, whatever it was.

He was held guilty by the Akal Takhat and punished on May 17, 1986 for committing such a sacrilege of Golden Temple complex and he had to undergo that punishment to dust shoes of the pilgrims, wash utensils, to hold Akhand Path etc. He appeared before Akal Takhat again for getting punishment for its defiance in not dissolving his Akali Dal, for after his dismissal as chief minister on May 12, 1987. During the regime of his chief ministership, he remained reluctant to appear before Akal Takhat to defy the directions of Akal Takhat to dissolve his Akali Dal, obviously to avoid the displeasure of his mentors at Delhi, the ruling congress government and its Prime Minister, though he had been ex-communicated from panth for his defiance of Akal Takhat directions.

Akali Government Dismissed; President Rule Imposed. May 12, 1987

Though Akali government remained under the obedience, cooperation and patronage of central government without coming into conflict with it for their anti Sikh policies and no solution of any of the problems of Sikhs and of Punjab, yet it was dismissed on May 12, 1987 at the time of elections to Haryana assembly by the central government imposing President Rule to easily carry out the further planned violence against Sikhs. Punjab state was kept under President's Rule continuously for about five years till 1992, unknown in a democratic set up.

What happened with Sikhs suffice to refer to the American journalist and scholar Joyce Pettigrew who after investigation remarked :

"Illegal detentions, disappointed false encounters (a fictitious armed engagement as a cover up for police killing a detainee) became daily events. Such disappearances and illegal detention continue to occur."

And

"Extra legal groups operating on behalf of the (Indian) state engaged in the abduction of the following categories of persons; political, who defend families whose human rights have been violated; Journalists, who write about such violations and human rights workers, who record their complaints. However the largest body of those held comes from a wide range of persons uninvolved with political activity. Once abducted, they were detained in unofficial interrogation centers which include schools, houses, forest bungalows, owned by PWD and a variety of official buildings belonging to CIA of Punjab police, the CRPF and BSF informants and more recently some written reports have suggested additionally that Hindu temples provide facilities of cremations of political prisoners."

(*The Anthropology of State Terror*, pp. 205, 207, Philladelphia University of Pennsylvania Press)

The Akali leaders dared not to raise any voice against the continuous persecution of Sikhs (whom they claimed to represent) by the security forces, under the direct directions of Indian government with which they had made a compromise and accord with so fast a speed, just after their release, propagating that it was to restore peace in Punjab and end violence against Sikhs. Why had these leaders not restarted their *Dharam Yudh Morcha* which was stopped by the army attack on them and their religious places by government of India as not a single demand of the Morcha was conceded, though more than three hundred and fifty thousand of Sikhs went behind bars at their call and they had propagated that all the Sikh demands had been met in the accord? What were the actual political compulsions for the accord and the friendly elections with congress and its government who were always proffered to be the real danger to Sikhs and the benefits arrived therefrom to any Sikh cause? These questions of genuinty still remain unanswered to Sikhs.

Khalistan Movement

— Khalistan Declaration April 1986

Sikhs had been getting the sense of being unsafe and insecure about their religion in Indian republic by the continuous injustice, discrimination and excesses of the Indian government upon them without conceding any of their just demands and problems by Indian government, in spite of their peaceful agitation. "The events of June 1984, of attacking the Sikhs and their historical religious places by Indian Army and its war tanks thereby demolishing their Akal Takhat and murdering thousands of innocent Sikhs, without any justification whatsoever in 'operations Blue Star' and killing their youth arbitrarily by torturing them confirmed to some extent their conviction for their own separate Sikh state, called Khalistan. The further ugly events of October/November, 1984 just after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, by her two Sikh

bodyguards wherein thousands of innocent Sikhs were mercilessly massacred, their houses and business establishments looted and set on fire and their religious places put to ashes throughout India and that too under the directions of the Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi and his government and Congress party without any fault whatsoever on their part could leave no doubt among the Sikhs of their fate in India, and therefore the desire to get a separate sovereign Sikh state. The Sikhs in general had not thought of their separate state earlier to these holocausts upon them in 1984 but after these events of open violence against Sikhs and their shrines, there was no need for any talk or persuasion with the Sikhs to get their own separate Sikh state, the sense of alienation in them having been confirmed by the Indian government itself.

On April 29, 1986, the Panthic committee earlier elected in a Sarbat Khalsa, consisting of five members – Bhai Gurbachan Singh Manochahal, Wassan Singh Zaffarwal, Dhanna Singh, Aroor Singh and Gurdev Singh – declared from Akal Takhat, Amritsar, the formation of independent Khalistan, a sovereign Sikh state, mostly comprising the area of Punjab state. The document of the declaration was as under :

Document of the declaration of Khalistan

Victory be in the Name of one God, Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar.

Five member Panthic committee, the Panth Khalsa formed by Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji on Baisakhi day of 1699 A.D. once again as per the saying of *Dhartey Krars* (be a brave and glorious warrior) and as per Guru's ordained dictims '*Raj Karega Khalsa*' (The Khalsa shall rule) through the five member Panthic committee nominated by the Sarbat Khalsa on 26th Janaury, 1986, fulfills the most cherished dream of the Sikhs by this declaring of Khalistan.

On this auspicious day from the holy Akal Takhat Sahib, it is on behalf of the five member Panthic committee hereby declared before all the state governments and notified to them that from today onward the Khalsa Panth shall have its own home, the Khalistan, wherein will ever remain high in the air the Flags, Towers and posts of Sikhs and wherein the writ of Khalsa will run Supreme. Herein the entire control of the government and administration shall vest in those who pray for the welfare of all and earn their livelihood by the sweat of labour.

The slogan of Khalistan which had been moving the hearts of Sikhs and the Sikh youth for several years and the founding of which had been mentioned by Sant Baba Jarnail Singh Ji Khalsa Bhindranwala on June 3, 1984 at the time of the military attack on Sri Darbar Sahib and Sri Akal Takhat Sahib by the Hindu government of India. The Sangat had ratified this idea with great joy and thrill at the time of Sarbat Khalsa convened on April 13, 1986. The Sikh Sangats repeat their commitment to the dictum, *the Khalsa shall Rule* in their daily prayers but it is today that by unbounded grace of the Guru, the commitment to Khalistan is being realized. The five members panthic committee constituted by Sarbat Khalsa convened by Damdami Taksal today hereby declare the formation of Khalistan.

This Panthic committee had no concern with Akali Dals.

Panthic Committee and Sarbat Khalsa Challenged

The Panthic committee had been claimed to have been selected by Sarbat Khalsa in a meeting held on January 26, 1986 at Akal Takhat. The then jathedar Akal Takhat, Giani Kirpal Singh had declared it not to be a meeting of Sarbat Khalsa, alleging that such a meeting can only be called by Jathedar Akal Takhat, which he never called and that it was not attended by any recognized Sikh institution or any elected Sikh representative (religious or political) and none was invited even. He termed this meeting by some members of Damdami Taksal and Sikh Students Federation who acted against the Sikh traditions and violated all the Sikh norms. Similar stand was taken by Akali Dal and SGPC that such a meeting of some persons could never be called meeting of Sarbat Khalsa and the decisions taken by them could never be binding upon all Sikhs. All these traditional Sikh political and religious parties and the jathedars of other Takhats outrightly rejected the decision taken at this meeting. They rather blamed the Indian government for exploiting a few Sikhs to create disunity in Sikhs for this situation.

The resolution adopted at this meeting could never be acceptable to these representative traditional parties of Sikhs. These parties were declared to have been dismissed. Jathedar Akal Takhat and Jathedars of other Sikh Takhats were removed by the resolution from their posts. Instead, a five member Panthic committee was selected to take over all these Sikh institutions and new jathedar Akal Takhat was appointed. The traditional Sikh parties and leaders alleged that such decisions by some persons whosoever they might be could not be termed as of Sikh Takhats and could not be legal or proper to dissolve other parties or in accordance with Sikh traditions. No one could have the right to dissolve a political party of Sikhs having its own constitution or membership and office bearers as Shiromani Akali Dal. No one could dissolve SGPC, a statutory institution under Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 to have been duly elected by Sikhs under the provision of that act. No one could dismiss the duly elected office bearers of these parties. No one could dismiss Jathedar Akal Takhat or other jathedars and granthis and officials duly appointed under the provisions of Sikh Gurdwaras Act and has all these decisions declared at the meeting were illegal, improper and against Sikh dictums and so to be remained ineffective. It was alleged that the meeting could pass any resolutions to be binding upon them and not on others who were not present there.

Akal Takhat Jathedar at the request of Akali Dal and SGPC called a meeting of Sarbat Khalsa to consider the situation which had given altogether a new turn for Sikhs. Such a meeting was held at Anandpur Sahib to avoid the conflict between two Sikh factions at Akal Takhat Amritsar. It took place on February 16, 1986 which was well represented. About ten hundred thousands of Sikhs (one million) are claimed to have attended it. The holding of the meeting at Akal Takhat, Amritsar on January 26, 1986 was declared to be not representative of Sikhs and the resolution passed therein were

all rejected. The holding of the meeting itself was denounced in that manner and held to be against Sikh traditions and the resolutions to be null and void. Sikhs were requested to keep their unity and morale. It was also decided that all the Sikhs must take *Amrit* of double-edged sword and faith in Sikh code of conduct and the entire Sikh nation to be brought in strict Sikh code of conduct before Baisakhi of 1999, the completion of three hundred years of the creation of Khalsa at Anandpur Sahib.

The Akali Dal, the SGPC, the Jathedars of Akal Takhat and other Takhats, the granthis of Akal Takhat and Harimandar Sahib functioned as usual without any disturbance. But two factors in Sikhs became obvious. One committed to the struggle for an independent Sikh state and the other only to federal structure within India as declared in Anandpur Sahib resolution of Akali Dal. It was the first one called panthic committee for Sikh representation who declared Khalistan on April 29, 1986.

Independence of Khalistan

On October 7, 1987 the Panthic committee declared the formal independence of Khalistan, severing all its ties with Indian constitution. National council of Khalistan was appointed under the presidentship of Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh of USA who had resigned from Boston based Harvard medical school of repute. Government of India was asked to communicate with council of Khalistan on the matters relating to Khalistan. It was also asked to withdraw its security forces from Khalistan territory and to vacate its occupation forthwith.

Accords and Settlements with Akalis Became Irrelevant

The accords or settlements with Akalis made or to be made by Indian government were more irrelevant as now the issue of Sikhs took a definite turn to Khalistan under the dictum of militants. The militant Sikhs intensified their movement for establishing Khalistan. The government and their security forces and agencies carried on their pursuits of Sikh youth terming them as terrorist by arbitrarily arresting, torturing and killing them using all the unfair and under hand means, not sparing even the innocent Sikhs as to create a terror in Sikh minds, while keeping Punjab under President's rule continuously for this purpose.

Sikhs generally supported the Sikh youth termed as militants who raised the demand for a separate Sikh state and had the sympathy for them, for which the government was responsible for committing heinous crimes against Sikhs and creating a sense of insecurity in them in India. In the 1989 Parliamentary elections, ten seats of the Parliament were won by the United Akali Dal headed by Simranjit Singh Mann. The security deposits of the traditional Akali Dal candidates were confiscated. Simranjit Singh Mann, who was still in jail in the conspiracy case of murder of Indira Gandhi was elected with record number of votes over three hundred thousands than his rivals. Both the father and widow of Beant Singh who shot dead Indira Gandhi were elected

from two Parliamentary constituencies. Atinder Pal Singh, another accused in Indira Gandhi murder conspiracy case was also elected. The relatives of the so called Sikh militants who were killed or had suffered in this Sikh struggle were elected from other seats.

No doubt Sikhs had the grievances starting from the refusal of the Indian government and its congress leaders to implement the pledges and assurances given to Sikhs during the Indian freedom movement to form semi autonomous state in Punjab, with constitutional guarantees, the refusal to reorganize Punjab on linguistic basis; the refusal to give all the Punjab river waters to Punjab only, and the refusal to give Chandigarh, its capital to Punjab and then other Punjabi speaking areas at the time of the reorganization of Punjab, the refusal to give the federal structure to Punjab and leading to the Army attack on Sikhs and Sikh shrines with army war tanks and demolishing the Akal Takhat, Amritsar and killing thousands of innocent Sikhs in the operation called Blue Star in June 1984, followed by the operation Woodrose to eliminate the Sikh youths arbitrarily and then after assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, to the general massacre of Sikhs throughout India, burning to ashes the Sikh gurdwaras and Sikh residential and business places and continuing the criminal excesses and brutalities against Sikhs, causing insecurity in their minds to be in India, and still blaming them to be the aggressors.

But the movement of Khalistan was not an organized movement by any political party of Sikhs as Akali Dal. Leaders were rather its opponents to the last. Neither it was a movement in a peaceful and democratic manner to internationalise it on some political platform. The peaceful movement by Akali Dal was on the other hand, for its demands as contained in Anandpur Sahib resolution as to the federal structure only, and the state of Punjab to remain part of the Indian Republic. This movement came out of the violence on Sikhs and Sikh shrines by the government through its army security forces and police and so had the tinge of violence though in defence, which was exploited to be of terrorists and extremists by the media under government influence. Indian government, in fact was responsible for fuelling this movement by its acts of omission and commissions and to create the sense of insecurity in the minds of Sikhs, by terrorizing the Sikhs, by general massacre of Sikhs amounting to genocide and by demolishing their sacred religious places and their humiliation in every respect. The Indian govt. and its then leaders of the ruling congress party in a wrong notion, intended to defame the Sikhs by such allegations of separateness endangering the unity and integrity of the country to avoid the sympathy of other Indians for Sikhs for the ruthless army attacks on Sikhs and Sikh shrines, and the general massacre of Sikhs throughout India besides the cheap politics to create its Hindu vote Bank which was being attracted to the fundamentalist Hindu parties. This was the main reason for prolonging the violence in Punjab for over a decade and putting into the Hindu mind that Sikhs were perhaps thirsty for their blood and wanted to create Khalistan on altogether false assertions though not a single case of riot took place between Hindus

and Sikhs throughout Punjab, where Sikhs are in a dominant position in over twelve thousand villages. To the concept of Khalistan created in the Sikh mind by making them feel insecure in India, government of India and the then Congress leaders particularly Indira Gandhi Prime Minister and her son and successor Rajiv Gandhi were responsible for the 1984 violence against Sikhs, and they have to share the responsibility. It can never fade away fully unless Sikhs are made to feel totally secure in India and satisfied.

M.K. Dhar, additional Director Intelligence Bureau has concluded that Government of India did not want peace in Punjab. At page 336, he stated in his work *Open Secrets* :

"Pressured by one scandal after another and a simmering revolt in the party, the Prime Minister was tempted to give war a better chance over peace. War is a spectacular event that catches common man's imagination. Violence around thrills them as long as violent acts do not touch their homes. Peace is a tortuous process, mostly misunderstood and often misinterpreted as weak-kneed attitude of the Government Rajiv required something spectacular peace of the grave and not peace of the souls."

At page 337

"It was as clear as day light that the peace initiative was jinxed. Rajiv's political colleagues and bureaucratic hierarchy was not in favour of ushering peace, as it would have frozen the flow of illegal dough to their pockets."

This intelligence officer of the high cadre had direct knowledge, as he remained posted at Punjab.

At page 333 he gave the details of the peace process initiated by him as to the Punjab problem and sabotaged.

"Satish Sharma, Buta Singh (Home Minister) and Sushil Muni were not enough to spoil the broth. The Punjab Governor, Sidharath Shankar Ray was keen on trying his Calcutta day's naxal elimination experiments. A section of the state police and administration too opposed to the idea of loving a lucrative means of earning extra bucks at the cost of human misery. Some of these elements connived with a section of senior Delhi politicians and stiffly opposed the idea of negotiation with a nephew of Bhindranwala. To top the woes of the government, a section of officers in the intelligence Bureau too opposed the operation, simply because it was being accomplished by a non-coterie adventurer and not by them. This group of intelligence Bureau officials was alligned to the action plan of Home Minister Buta Singh, Governor Ray and the Police chief KPS Gill. The IB itself was divided from within. In fact Rajiv Gandhi's control on the divergent elements was minimal."

Police Excesses and No Accountability

The security forces of India and Punjab police became more and more aggressive against the Sikh youth and committed heinous crimes against them. They would arrest the Sikh youth with the help of their 'cats' and agents infiltrated in the Sikh militant organization, torture them and murder them in some cases showing the police

encounters mostly false, while some cases disposing of their dead bodies in the rivers or canals or even cremating as unidentified. These heinous crimes were done without any accountability, as the higher police officers and the government instigated it. The police officers were awarded with monetary grants and police medals in appreciation for their services in committing the crimes in the name of saving unity and integrity of India. The crimes were committed by the security agencies even on innocent Sikhs. Several Sikhs were falsely involved in criminal cases for providing shelter and support to the so called Sikh militants and kept behind bars to demoralize the Sikhs.

Some of the Sikh youths themselves punished some of the guilty police officials and killed them to take revenge for carrying the heinous crimes against them, when the state never took any action against the guilty. Such violence went on increasing on both sides as the government and its leaders wanted to prolong it under their political strategies to defame the Sikhs and particularly Sikh youth as extremists, terrorists and criminals to be thirsty for Hindu blood, so as to create the justification and lack of sympathy for Sikhs for the attack on Sikhs and Sikh shrines which had already been planned. Some of the so called Sikh youth militants had crossed over to Pakistan, which gave further propaganda material to the government that Sikhs wanted to disintegrate the country with the help of some foreign hand. The state policies and terror of security forces, instead of solving law and order situation, worsened it. It provided continuous and grave provocation to Sikhs, not to sit at ease.

Several militant Sikh organizations were formed. Three panthic committees headed by Gurbachan Singh Manochahal, Dr. Sohan Singh and Wassan Singh Zaffarwal individually came into existence with their militant outfits headed by their Generals, just like Bhindranwala Tigers Force, Khalisatn Commando Force, Khalisatn Liberation Army etc. under the command of their area commanders. The aim of each of these forces was creation of Khalistan, an independent Sikh state, but the intense rivalry and bitterness amongst these organizations was much more than the mutual confidence and co-operation, though they were fighting for the same aim which was not understandable to Sikhs. Government had infiltrated in these organizations by sending in them the criminal elements, and at higher levels the perssonnel of its secret agencies. It was difficult to identify anyone as everyone had to remain underground and the remote control of government agencies made them unpopular and rather offensive against the Sikhs themselves by their actions. Such infiltrators were naturally immune to the dangers and onslaught of security forces and they would rather help those forces to lay their hands on the genuine Sikhs participating in the struggle with honesty of purpose, so as they may be tortured and killed.

Police formed its groups to move in the guise of terrorists to commit criminal acts, to defame the Sikh militants and only ex-criminals could do such a dirty job. Under cover operations were planned by the police as 'cats' to commit crimes at state expense to detain the Sikh militants. They were ultimately eliminated by the police so that dead men tell no tales. The unaccounted police excesses of heinous crimes upon Sikhs and

innocent youth as well made the easy availability for recruitment to Sikh militant outfits to react against it. The defenders of law were acting as offenders of law under the investigation of government whose duty was to enforce law than to violate it. There were two prominent Director Generals of Punjab police – Julio Riberio and KPS Gill – in their period. They have admitted in their books of the dirty police methods which furthered violence.

Confessions of Punjab DGP's

The police and security forces indulged in such excesses and dirty underhand means that it intensified the violence. It is obvious from the writings of the two super cops, favourites of the Indian government, who had been chosen to the posts as Director Generals of police, as experts to deal with militancy, and making them supreme over the civil administration in violation of all the rules and regulations of democratic norms. In the words of Julio Riberio and KPS Gill, "roping in of criminals by the police for the under cover jobs and to commit crimes to attribute to militants and involvement of congress government in spreading violence in Punjab is clearly made out."

In his book, *Bullet for Bullet* at p. 349 Julio Riberio admits :

"In Punjab there were some persons with criminal propensities who were known to police officers at various levels. They were approached and a few of them agreed to form groups which would move in the guise of terrorists and confront the real terrorists and militants in their dens. The criminals roped in by the police for under cover jobs could keep in identifying them. We also threw ourselves open to very serious criticism because of their unsanctioned activities. It was decided to substitute these groups of ex-criminals with police volunteers. Even with these groups ex-criminals had to be associated for obvious reasons.

And at page 353

"There was another undercover operation planned by SSP Amritsar, Izhar Alam and his companions, which was nick named 'CATS'. They were kept at police expense in safe houses and compensated handsomely with money and other incentives. A practice which the police began to adopt and which I found unpalatable way to requisiting cars of ordinary citizens for the purpose of anti terrorists operations. Izhar Alam at Amritsar and Sumedh Singh Saini at Ludhiana (SSP's), were the worst offenders in this respect. Frequently people travelling by cars were ordered by the police to get down and hand over the keys of the vehicles. I received numerous complaints. I forbade them to requisit cars in this manner. Instead I bought a dozen cars from secret funds and placed them at the disposal of these two young officers. These were unusual methods and I was certainly troubled and worried at their use."

The bulk of the crimes and violence in Punjab were committed by these under cover groups of criminals sponsored by the police at state expense in the guise of terrorists for which the so called Sikh militants were blamed and rather the entire Sikh nation was defamed. Most of them were later on liquidated by the police itself so that

dead men can tell no tales as to the spread of violence and crime at state expense through state agencies. Some were protected by police in faked names, while declaring them dead in police encounters.

The other Director General Police of Punjab, infamous KPS Gill, who was easily utilized by the Indian government for the worst type of human rights violations and criminal excesses on Sikhs in the name of eliminating terrorism, thereby making him the most ill-reputed in his own community, has admitted the state encouragement for Punjab violence and that it were the brave Sikhs who restored peace in Punjab. On the other hand Indian government and congress leaders openly propagated the Sikhs and Anandpur Sahib resolution of Akali Dal containing its federal political stand to be anti national to get the Hindu votes and communalise the politics, knowing it to be altogether false besides falsely blaming them for violence in Punjab. In his book :

Punjab-The Knights of Falsehood at page 96, KPS Gill stated :

"Certainly, what has been happening over the preceding years was unforgivable, but it was not only condoned, there is evidence to suggest that at least on occasion, it was even encouraged by those who held the power of the state captive to their own petti ambitions."

At Page 92

"A great arsenal had been build up within the Akal Takhat, for months. Trucks engaged in *Kar Sewa*, supposedly bringing in supplies of daily langar, had been smuggling in guns and ammunition. The police never attempted to search these vehicles entering the Golden Temple apparently on instructions from above."

At page 71

"The dubious role of the Congress (I) in the emergence of militancy had been substantially documented in the media and in the existing literature on Punjab, it need not concern us here. The role of the entire Punjab leadership in this context, irrespective of party affiliation, was a betrayal of Punjab trust."

There appears no need of any other evidence or testimony in the light of these disclosures and statements of these two super cops of Indian government who headed the police department in Punjab with supremacy in the long period of so called terrorism era to tackle it, to establish that Punjab violence was primarily the creation of the state, headed by congress through its secret agencies and the under cover criminal groups in the guise of terrorists with the nefarious designs to communalize and criminalize politics for the cheap ambition to prolong its rule by its leaders, making Sikhs and Punjab its victims while befooling the Hindus to create their Hindu vote bank. Sikhs rather kept Punjab and Hindus outside the communal riots, protecting the life and property of Hindus, throughout Punjab in all the villages where no state protection could be made available to them. It totally falsifies the propaganda and impression sought to be created by the government and congress leaders that perhaps Sikhs were

thirsty for Hindu blood from which government saved them. KPS Gill has admitted this fact at page 70 of his book :

"The state has been impressively free of major incidents of the communal rioting and it is notable that even when terrorism achieved its apogee, not a single incident of communal rioting was noted in all of Punjab."

KPS Gill also admitted that it were only the Sikhs who defeated terrorism in Punjab, at page 105 of his book :

"And who defeated them ? No great Brahmanical conspiracy, no cynical political combine; ought to crush the freedom and identity of Sikhs; No armies of militant Hindus; it was overwhelming the Sikhs themselves who fought the terrorists and who eventually prevailed over them. Throughout the era of the ascendancy of terror virtually every hardcore terrorists had a political pattern."

It would have been better if the names of such political patrons of terrorists had been disclosed and the necessary action had been taken against them instead of their so called sympathizers and supporters of no significance. According to the general common sense, only the politicians of the ruling party could dare to take such a risk upon whom the police could not lay its hands or the other politicians who would be conniving with the ruling party or police officers itself. Congress (I) government was in power in that era and the finger of KPS Gill could be in that direction. The compulsion for not disclosure of their names publicly could be understandable due to these persons being in power or their allies. Still the government of India and of Punjab and their leaders utilised all their resources, not only in India but in foreign countries as well to label and misrepresent the Sikhs as terrorists and militants and actually defamed them to avoid any outside sympathy for them and their cause, about whom their super cop clarifies that actually they had fought terrorism and violence in Punjab and defeated it and restored peace which had been made violent under the strategies of the government and the dubious role of congress (I), the ruling party.

The other super cop has clarified that undercover terrorist groups of criminals and police officials formed by the senior police officers committed various types of crimes and misdeeds at the cost of the state exchequer, throughout Punjab, while blaming the so called Sikh terrorists and militants for those crimes. There was hardly any transparency in any of these matters. False information was divulged to people of Punjab and outsiders as well. Political underhand motivations and hidden means were the cause of such a great turmoil, having been made the law and order problem suppressing the real issues, which exploited the innocent masses with their emotions.

What does Kirpal Singh Dhillon, another DGP Punjab and joint Director, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) say in his book *Identity and Survival : Sikh Militancy in India 1978-1993*

"During my brief period in Punjab, I understood and experienced how the entire gaunt of operations starting from police, government and intelligence worked in the state. The police was extremely ruthless and they failed to understand that repressive measures will increase emergency and militant mindset among the community."

What more evidence is needed to establish that the ruthless repressive police measures compelled the people to revolt in Punjab which were not only defended but instigated by the congress government in power at that time. What accountability to such crimes committed could ever be expected ?

What does Malloy Krishna Dhar, a formerly joint Director, Intelligence Bureau who remained posted at the Punjab desk say ? He stated in his book *Open Secrets* at page 333 :

"Briefly returning to the Punjab police and administration, I must comment that the top command and various links in between firmly believed that brutal suppression was the duly remedy to contain acts of terrorism. In the process they indulged in planned and unplanned killing of innocent youths. They detained the villagers informally and extorted money for releasing them. Even women were not spared."

The police acted for earning their daily bread and much more. But the politicians did not behave like statesmen. They too believed in living from hour to hour. They did not plan for long term measures that could heal the wounds permanently."

And

"I have a feeling that in a country where constitutional liberty is the essence of democracy, all such state actions should be tampered with human rights considerations and constitutional guarantees. Some politicians and big bureaucrats treat the country as their private chattel. Has there been a human rights accounting in Punjab ? No, there in lay the wide gap between proclaimed democracy and the constitutional liberty."

At page 384

"The application of unconventional force by the police/paramilitary formations and some messianic intelligence operatives of IB had succeeded in sending shivers of panic amongst the civilian population. They reacted in a frenetic manner with violence. The state forces responded with equal ferocity in questionable acts of plunder, extortion, human torture and murder of innocent people. At points of time, it had become difficult to differentiate between state action and terrorist's action. These were not violent response to violent acts by the terrorists. These were the organized acts of state repression that alienated the people and eroded their faith in the rule of law as enshrined in the constitution."

It is not my intention to count every incident of excesses committed by the state machineries including the central intelligence machineries. The nation should have gone into these misdeeds which allowed a section of the citizens to be tortured and killed by state machineries in a planned manner. In action by the conscience keepers

of the nation had allowed a few dozen officers to walk away with fat material booty and prestigious honours. It was a shameful chapter. All that I can say that the people of Punjab and the Indian at large deserved a human rights accounting after peace was restored. Is it too late to reopen the grave wounds which finally aggravated the hidden fault lines."

Director General Police, Punjab, SS Virk, in February 2006, in his press conference in which Ex DGP, KPS Gill was also present, disclosed that 300 ex-terrorists were living under fake names under the protection of police, who had been declared as dead in police encounters as they had become police cats to help the police to kill other so called terrorists. Some of them were even employed in police department under the false names and identities. Such an illegal procedure based on falsehood was sought to be justified in the name of security of those terrorists turned police cats. When hue and cry was raised over this issue by some legislators in Punjab assembly, then the Chief Minister disclosed that not only 300 but over two thousand such police cats were living in Punjab under the state protections. No explanation that who else were actually killed in their places and under what law all this unconventional falsehood and illegality was sanctioned and crimes committed were pardoned and that too at state expense.

Police or the executive have not been empowered under any law in force in India or even anywhere else in the democratic regimes in the World to condone the crimes committed by any offender as it is the courts only who are to take the cognizance of the offences and to deal with the offenders in accordance with the law applicable. There is no legality or morality to declare a living person as dead falsely on any reason whatsoever. It is rather a serious crime in itself. No justification to keep such a number of persons on fake names and identities; rather it may create a serious problem to maintain law and order. Police can provide the safety cover and security if so needed genuinely, instead of fake names and identities by naming any person to be dead, falsely while being alive. It is more than sufficient to exhibit the police and state strategies and conspiracies to create the police cats to help the police in the process of killing and eliminating others without any accountability in case they might be accused of committing some offences, and to adopt the unconventional and illegal means by a state agency based on falsehood, which ultimately proves counter productive.

Comments of Journalists and Other Investigators

The excesses and high handedness of the security forces in Punjab is depicted in the report of two man Swiss team, who had been sent for the analytical study of the situation.

"The government bodies, including Punjab police, para military units and armed forces systematically violate the human rights that are internationally recognized, no less than also the international covenant of civil and political rights. During house searches, the woman, other relatives and children are systematically beaten up, maltreated, sexually abused and even raped.

The civil and judicial authority has been reduced virtually to naught and were completely powerless, there being growing sense of psychological insecurity among the Sikhs, who ran the risk of discrimination in treatment everywhere in the country.

As to the mode of raids, it stated :

"The security personnels disguised themselves as militants, knocked at the peoples houses, committed atrocities on them, resorted to extortions for private gains. Then there were depredations of former militants, mentioned as cats by the people and some groups like those of Hindus raised as fake Sikhs by Surinder Kumar Billa of Amritsar, who operate with the blessings of security forces and cause anathema against the militants. They were criminals, pure and simple."

Such a criminal conduct by the law enforcement agencies under the investigation of government can never be pardonable. It not only defamed them but also brought disrepute to the Republic of India itself in the international World totally undermining its image, whatever it was, besides endangering the unity and integrity of the country in the name of which it was sought to be justified to befool the Hindu vote bank.

Justice V.M. Tarkunde, the eminent retired judge and senior member of Supreme Court Bar association, had recorded in "*Oppression in Punjab, Report to the Nation*, New Delhi, Citizens for Democracy, 1985 :

"In the name of curbing terrorism, unabashed state terrorism has been unleashed on the Sikhs branding them as criminals, arbitrary arrests and Mc Carthy style witch hunt sadistic torture, shooting down of young men in false encounters are common occurrences; even village women are not spared; they are being harassed and beaten up, dishonoured and taken away to police stations or to unknown destinations."

Even *New York Times*, took notice of these serious criminal excesses, and in its paper, published from New York, USA, September 16, 1985 commented :

"The new report titled *Oppression in Punjab* contains a foreward by judge V.M. Tarkunde, which accuses the government of 'Inhuman barbarities against the people of Punjab.' I assert that clearly innocent people have been arrested by the police in the state, had carried out sadistic torture ruthless killings, fake encounters, calculated ill-treatment of women and children."

Amnesty International, the renowned Human Rights Organization, in its report of 1985 specifically stated about Punjab :

"Amnesty International was concerned about the detention of prisoners of conscience and about large number of political detainees. It was also concerned about allegations of torture in several cases reportedly resulting in death in custody. On June 14, 1984, Amnesty International telexed the Prime Minister, asking whether the 6500 people reportedly arrested would be charged with specific criminal offences or released. The govt. reply did not answer any of the specific queries put by Amnesty International in its communication of 14th and 27th June 1984."

Government of India did not permit any Human Rights Organization to enter India

and Punjab for many years to verify for itself the government's criminal excesses on Sikhs, which obviously implied that it wanted to hide the realities. Still Amnesty International made investigations.

Amnesty International in its report *India-torture, Rape and Death in custody 1985-91*, while dealing with Punjab, at page 29-31, pointed out that :

"Thousands of people have been arrested by the police and security forces in Punjab since 1983. People have been arrested often on mere suspicion that they are linked to armed Sikh groups or have information about them. Prisoners have been kept detained for months and years, without trial under the provisions of special legislation suspending normal legal safe guards. Torture is wide spread. Parents, brothers or sisters of suspects have also been detained and tortured arbitrarily in order to extract information about their relations, whereabouts or activities. Those tortured include young people and the elderly."

As to the methods of tortures :

"The most common methods of torture reported include hanging people from the ceiling and beating them or using them as a human swing; forcing their legs wide apart causing pelvic injury; rolling iron or wooden bars across the thighs, beating the genitals and inserting chilly powder in to the rectum and other sensitive parts of the body. Some torture victims claim they had been given electric shocks."

As to truly barbarous of the worst kind

and further :

"The use of torture in Punjab has been officially confirmed and judicial investigation was conducted in February 1989 by justice SS Sodhi in Amritsar Jail. He found that many detainees had been tortured by police when kept in illegal detention preceding formal arrest. Even when medical reports have confirmed the use of torture, there had been often no further action."

In this report at pages 161-166, details of twenty persons have been given who have been done to death in police custody for which no action was taken against the police officials responsible for those glaring cases of murders. It obviously shows that these crimes of tortures and murders were committed under the direction of higher authorities.

The eminent and credible, International Human rights organization 'Asia Watch' in its report of 1991, *Punjab in Crises* had recorded :

"The Asia watch delegation investigated extra judicial killings by government forces that occurred primarily in 1989-1990 the frequency with which these killings were reported to take place and the consistency of the eye witnesses testimony indicate that they were not aberrations but rather the product of a deliberate policy known to high ranking security personnel and members of the civil administration in Punjab and New Delhi. Moreover there is credible evidence to indicate that in some cases the police have recruited actually and trained extra judicial forces to carry out many of those killings."

As to the encounter killings :

"As with encounter killings in every disappearance case, Asia Watch investigated; the victim was first detained in the custody of the police or the para military forces although that detention was subsequently denied by authorities."

As to torture :

"Throughout Punjab, torture is practised systematically in police stations in prisons, and in the detention camps used by the para military forces. In virtually every case Asia Watch investigated, persons taken into custody were tortured; methods of torture include :

Putting the victims legs far apart so as to cause great pain and internal pelvic injury rotating a heavy wooden or metal roller over the victim's thighs to increase the weight, in some cases, the roller is placed behind the victim's knees and the legs forced back over it, crushing them against the roller. Electric shock applied to victim's genitals, head, ears and legs; prolonged beatings with canes and leather straps; tying the victim's hands behind the back and suspending him or her from the ceiling by the arms; rape, threats of rape or molestation."

No action against guilty officials to our knowledge, no member of the security forces in Punjab has been convicted of any human rights violation committed in the state indeed, government's failure to prosecute the perpetrators of the killings of the Sikhs in 1984, provides the most graphic example of the unwillingness of the authorities to hold members of security forces accountable for grave human rights abuses. By failing to prosecute members of its security forces responsible for abuses of human rights or even to acknowledge that such abuses have taken place, the Indian government has effectively condoned these practices."

Such extra judicial killings false encounters in human tortures without any accountability and rather having been condoned by the government had taken place in the country on the members of a minority community on innocent persons mostly, though the government boasts of being the biggest democratic and secular regime in the world, no doubt, it violates all the laws and the constitution and the basic human rights.

These reports after verification and investigations by the organizations, National and International, headed by persons of high repute having no interests in Sikhs and neither any bias against the Indian government and its security forces including the police, are more than sufficient to portray the realization of the worst kind of ill-treatment, torture and murder of Sikhs besides implicating the innocent Sikhs in false cases. The most unfortunate aspect is that the Sikhs were falsely misrepresented to be extremists and criminals as if thirsty for the blood of Hindus and the police officials and such false propaganda was done through the state media and state exchequers throughout the world to tarnish the Sikh image. The victims were portrayed to be aggressors. Sikhs were propagated to be anti national, though the policies, the plannings of the dubious actions of the government and its leaders were actually anti-national, causing danger to unity and integrity of India.

Suffice it to quote the eminent justice V.M. Tarkunde, "In the name of curbing terrorism, unabashed state terrorism has been unleashed on Sikhs branding them as criminals" And to refer the case of Maneka Gandhi, widow of the late Sanjay Gandhi son of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, whose parents were Sikhs and who contested the 1985 election against the Congress candidate, openly slogans were raised that she was the daughter of a Sikh and so is anti national. *Beti ek Sardar ki, Quom ke Gaddar ki.*" Thus labeling all the Sikhs as anti-national. Such a false and misleading label has been negated by the favourite cop of the Indian government KPS Gill, Director General of Police, Punjab of those days stating that "It were the Sikhs alone who fought the terrorists and who eventually prevailed upon them" and blaming the congress (I) that "the dubious role of the congress (I) in the emergence of militancy has been substantially documented in the media and in the existing literature of Punjab. And that "every hard core terrorist had a political patron." And that "even when terrorism achieved its apogee, not a single case of communal rioting was noted in all of Punjab."

Democratic Rights of Sikhs Crushed

— President Rule-Human Rights violation of Sikhs 1983-85 and 1987-1992

— Presidents' Rule in Punjab

From 1983-85 and then from 1987 to 1992, for an extraordinary period, unknown in a democratic set up, Punjab was kept under President's Rule, the direct rule of the central government of India through the Governor appointed by it of its own choice and suitability to be replaced whenever desired. The constitution of India was nakedly violated against the Sikhs in this respect. It was amended after every six months to extend the Presidents' Rule.

Sikhs were Deprived of Their Basic Democratic Rights

The Sikhs in Punjab were openly deprived of their basic democratic rights to elect their own representatives and form their government in violation of the constitution of India. The only hidden ground of Presidents, rule for such a long period was to avoid the government with domination of Sikhs in Punjab. The entire Sikh population of Punjab was deadly against the Indian government ruled by congress and they would not have allowed the congress party to enter the villages, what to say of voting them. So the elections itself were abandoned, which is the end of democracy itself. The reason given to negate this democratic right was ridiculous that the law and order situation was not satisfactory. It was to be the duty of the elected representatives of the people to set right the law and order problem if any. The elected government would have been in a better position to tackle the law and order situation rather than the hostile rule of the central government. Moreover, the law and order situation remained worsened

in Presidents Rule, which was bound to be, particularly when the central government was itself interested in disturbing the Punjab atmosphere of peace, as motive of the President Rule was oppression and repression of Sikhs.

In fact, the motive of the prolonged Presidents' Rule in Punjab was to cause oppression and repression of Sikhs, which could not be possible in the regime of a government elected by the people themselves. It actually was so done. Sikh youth were eliminated in false police encounters and otherwise, without giving any account. The Sikhs were involved in false cases under the black laws of 'terrorists and disruptive activities acts and other cases of such like legislation, under which the accused could not be released on bail; proof of innocence was on the part of the accused; rather of guilty on prosecution. These black laws in the criminal jurisprudence could not be so exploited in the rule of representative government of the people. The atmosphere of Punjab was disturbed and violence encouraged under the conspiracies of secret government agencies, which could not be so done in the rule of an elected government. Sikhs were terrorised and misrepresented to be terrorists; falsely blaming them, under conspiracies of the secret agencies, which was not possible in the democratic regime. 'Bullet for Bullet' was the policy of the government and police and security forces were encouraged to be investigators, prosecutors, judges and executioners, to arrest a person, hold him guilty and shoot him to have been killed in a police encounter, and if already in authorized police custody, to have escaped from custody or in that process killed in encounter with police. This could never be permitted by an elected government directly responsible to people. Such were the cruel, dishonest and unbelievable real motives for the continuation of Presidents' Rule in a democratic republic.

Human Rights International Bodies – not to Visit Punjab

It was due to the fear of the uncovering of such violations of all the basic human rights in Punjab, that the international bodies of repute of Human rights were not allowed to enter Punjab, otherwise what could be the reason of denial. Rather these organizations should have been invited to see for themselves that everything had been in the normal process and the allegations against Indian government could be rebutted.

Still, these organizations with whatever sources could be at their command, found the worst type of state excesses and human rights' violations in Punjab against the Sikhs and they made their reports condemning the violation of basic human rights of Sikhs at the hands of government. Such violations could not take place in the rule of elected representatives of the people.

American Congressmen Condemned Violation

The open and grave violence of the basic human rights of Sikhs was to such an extent that it attracted the notice of world democracies that congressmen of United States of America several times discussed and condemned. The violations in their house

at Washington, D.C. recommending to their government to take up the case with government of India as the democratic regime of America is based upon the human freedom and liberty, unable to tolerate the basic human rights violations in any part of the World. It also several times recommended to its American government to cut or stop the aid and grants to India till it improved and stopped such violations.

American Congressmen Advocated Self Determination for Sikhs

Several American congressmen, who were seized on the Human rights violations, having the freedom of humanity in their conscience, further deeply studied the problem and then advocated in the congress houses debates and outside, that Sikhs must be given the right of self determination to form their independent state. Violation of the fundamental human rights of Sikhs in Punjab was even challenged by some British Parliamentarians which echoed in the British Parliament. Some Canadian Parliamentarians also denounced the violations in their Parliament, just because it was the international issue for world democracies. But still its continuance was not stopped in India taking the deceptive shelter of the self invited violence in Punjab through the secret government agencies and misrepresenting the Sikhs to be terrorists and extremists through Indian embassies and the media abroad and depicting the unity and integrity of India to be in danger.

1991 Elections in Punjab Cancelled

In December 1990, all the Akali Dals were united and Simranjit Singh Mann was elected President. He took a delegation of Akali Dal to Chandra Shekhar, Prime Minister of India and submitted the memorandum of Akali demands, pressing for a plebiscite for self determination. Chandra Shekhar did nothing on to the Akali demands. His government had the support of the congress party from outside. He could not do anything, being dependant upon congress. However, he ordered the elections in Punjab as the general elections in India were to take place in May 1991. The elections in Punjab were to be held after one month of the elections in other parts of India. Thus a choice was still given to the newly elected government to cancel the elections if it so desired. The same thing happened. Congress got the majority in Parliament and its leader Narsimha Rao became Prime Minister. The first thing he did was to get the Punjab elections postponed only two days before it was to take place in June, by the election commission. Thereafter Punjab elections were cancelled. Congress had boycotted these elections as it had no chance of winning these elections because of its excesses in Punjab on Sikhs. This was a political joke with Sikhs and Punjab as a whole as to the parliamentary elections.

In these elections, the interesting point was that the so called militant outfits had also given the call to Sikhs to boycott the elections, going to the extent of threatening the voters and candidates not to take part in the elections. Twenty eight candidates

were even murdered to defy these directions. The election campaign was slow and secretive. The holding of elections actually was itself doubtful from the very beginning of its announcement in these circumstances. The congress was determined, not to let the Sikhs exercise their democratic right, to form the representative government in Punjab and rather to prolong the president's rule to retain the state under its rule in order to commit further excesses on Sikhs. It did succeed in this nefarious design to erode the democratic process, though it repeatedly boasted of being one of the biggest democracies in the world.

The Akali leaders, at the time of the elections again revived their separate Akali Dals to contest the elections against each other, though a few months before they had united in one Akali Dal, exhibiting their lust for power and insincerity to the unity of Sikhs. At that time majority of Sikhs supported the Akali Dal, headed by Simranjit Singh Mann.

This is not the only instance of the imposition of President rule, though this period exceeding five years continuously is unheard of in any democratic country of the world and is the total negation of the democratic set up; more so with the election process joke on people of Punjab by cancelling the elections only one day before the actual date of elections to avoid Sikhs coming into power in Punjab in a democratic manner. Earlier, President's rule had been imposed in Punjab several times after dismissing Akali government without any valid reason, whatsoever. No Akali government was allowed to remain in office for full term before this President's rule for five years. Rather Akalis formed the government in Punjab in four terms of five years each which could remain in office for 20 years, but their government were allowed to remain in office for less than eight years only. These were dismissed in between and President's rules were imposed before the next elections could be held. No election was permitted to be held while the Akali government may be in office to minimize their chances of winning in the elections. Punjab was kept under Presidents' Rule for over eight years.

Congress Government in Punjab : Police Rule (1992-1996)

— Akalis Boycotted Elections

In 1992, elections to Punjab legislative assembly were held. These elections were boycotted by the Akali Dals. So congress won the elections, though in most of the rural areas only 10% of the voters cast their votes. Congress formed the government in Punjab with Beant Singh as Chief Minister. It was practically a police state in this term for five years. Central government had directed the chief minister not to interfere in the police administration, head of which was KPS Gill. Central government had given the clearance to finish the so called militants in Punjab by using whatever means the police desired. The congress regime for five years had been ensured in Punjab. Police used all of its dirty means with immunity to eliminate the Sikh youth in the garb of terrorists and militants, besides their cats and infiltrators, so that 'dead man can tell

no tales' as to clear out Punjab from militancy. Police declared within two years that all the so called terrorists and militants have been eliminated. The people of Punjab could not understand that why it was not so done in the very beginning and rather prolonged for more than a decade. People inferred that the police was in the know of their hideouts. So excessive and heinous crimes were committed by the police on the innocent persons even, that the magistracy who has the supervisory authority over police could not tolerate.

PCS (executive) comprising the executive magistracy and civil administrators submitted a memorandum to the chief minister dated August 28, 1993 that "Police has made them dummy spectators, instead of supervisory authority and obstructing them in their normal functioning; that police instead of protecting the people was harassing them to extort money. That in many cases police had become a party to the crime giving the impression to the public that there was nexus between police and militants; that police had made fortune in extraordinary high awards under the cloak of apprehending the so called terrorists. That police interference in property disputes in defiance of court orders siding with one party or the other, that no list of seized weapons was ever published so that arms may be recycled etc. It was suggested that powers of magistrates under various acts including police act, Police rules, crPC etc. should not be encroached upon by the police; that any police compliance without orders of magistrates by police officers should be viewed seriously and strict action be taken against the delinquent police officers." The Chief Minister and state government did nothing to look into these grievances of magistracy against police as they had been much helpless and irrelevant. The central government was immune to so far as the police functioning was concerned, the consequences of which was to turn Punjab into a police state with every type of immunity for their excesses.

In Punjab the highest administrative posts of Chief Secretary and Home Secretary were made irrelevant so far as police deptt. was concerned and rather Director General Police who was to work under them was given superiority and supremacy in a way crippling the civil administration. It can be judged from the remarks of the seniormost IAS officer, S.P. Bagla of the rank of Chief Secretary, in his interview with the English daily *The Tribune* dated June 11, 1995.

"Since 1985, I can not recall any Chief Secretary really having regained the position as the head of administration. There was a parallel man, (DG Police) all the time who was above the Chief Secretary or the Home Secretary or the District Administration or even the Chief Minister."

The police was even made immune from any action against the strictures passed by higher judiciary to which they were afraid of earlier, making it accountable to none resulting in its deterioration and worsening the law and order situation, which could only be controlled by an honest regime of integrity with due respect to well established rules and procedures of administration and compliance of statutory laws and the democratic set up of values and not by their violation.

Chief Minister Punjab Beant Singh while replying to a question of the communist leader Vimla Dang, stated that there were 9394 detainees under TADA at the end of 1989; 10619 at the end of 1990; 14255 at the end of 1991 and 13516 on February 29, 1992. Government of India had given false number of such detainees to the amnesty International, to be only 1218 on June 15, 1991. Atleast, in the assembly, correct information could be obtained but nothing more. These number of cases under TADA returns were alarming as being obviously the result of police excesses without accountability. Police had become known in Punjab for implication of innocent persons in false cases and torturing and killing the suspects, showing false encounters in some cases, while disoffering their bodies; in other cases by throwing the dead bodies in canals or rivers and cremating at cremation grounds, showing them to be unidentified which was proved when CBI investigated some cases under the orders of Supreme Court. Several cases of disappearances were of lawyers and journalists.

The extent of the false cases without any fear and accountability could be judged by the involvement of Justice Ajit Singh Bains in a false case, who was a retired judge of Punjab High Court and President of Human Rights organization of Punjab, on altogether trumped up false charges. He was arrested when he was on his way to his house from golf club Chandigarh, while shown to have been arrested at Anandpur Sahib attributing altogether false utterances to him. He was kept in jail for several months. No doubt police could never do it without the instructions from the govt. The plight of the ordinary people could be well Judged from this case of a person of the highest stature. The message of govt. was clear for officials of Human right organizations and who would expose the govt. and police for their excesses. Most of the cases under TADA were against the innocent persons for having obliged the police suspects named militants in one way or the other or their suspected sympathizers while the real suspects were often tortured and eliminated by police itself.

Disappearances–Unclaimed Cremations

In Punjab, alarming disappearances and unclaimed cremations of the dead bodies of Sikhs mostly Sikh youth in thousands came to surface. The police parties took them from their houses in the presence of witnesses but totally denied it whenever the matter was taken to any court. However those persons never came back. Some of the journalists after conducting investigations in some cases did raise their voices but it went unheard. In *The Pioneer* of March 26 and 27, 1992, its correspondent Navin Grewal reported :

"Punjab's irrigation canals have become a dumping ground for the bodies of suspected militants and their sympathizers killed in custody by the police. Evidence of this surfaced when a dozen odd bodies, some with hands and feet tied together were fished out of Sirhind canal after water in flow of the canal stopped to facilitate repairs work. In a distance of almost eight miles on Kotla branch on Nabha-Malerkotla road, seven bodied were pulled out from the canal. Investigation of a stretch of Bhatinda canal revealed the recovery of five bodies. They were Sikh youth aged about 30 years with beards and long hair with hands of one of them tied at the back."

Correspondent of *The Telegraph*, Manimoy Das Gupta, investigated another tributary of Sirhind canal and reported :

"Seven bodies had been spotted by villagers in a seven kilometer stretch."

Akali Dal, Human Rights wing and Akali Dal (Amritsar) filed a writ petition in Punjab and Haryana High court for directions for probe into cremation of thousands of unclaimed bodies from 1992-1995 in Amritsar district as two thousand families in that district were still awaiting for their disappeared sons. In the petition, 1992 records of cremations of municipal crematorium were cited: at Amritsar 300; at Patti 400; at Tarn Taran 700 unclaimed bodies were cremated.

The number of missing Sikhs in Punjab as per estimates of Pioneer of Feb. 4, 1995, and of 'Asian Age' of Feb. 8, 1995 range between 30,000 and 60,000. This is also the estimate of the human rights groups. Activists of Akali Dal Human Rights Wing, Jaswant Singh Khalra, reported that 25,000 unclaimed bodies had been cremated in Amritsar District at different cremation grounds. He produced the material and evidence collected by him in support thereof to the Canadian parliamentarians at Ottawa. On his going back to India he was taken away by the police from his house on September 6, 1995 and was made to disappear and actually killed. He had been threatened by the police earlier to abstain from such disclosures or otherwise he might be added in the list of disappearance to make it, 25001. It was actually done so.

No action was taken against the culprits by the police higher authorities and the government in Punjab and Delhi. The case was however taken to the Supreme Court of India, which did take the action, to depute Central Bureau of Investigation, the CBI to investigate into the case and also as to the allegations of Mr. Khalra. The CBI in its interim report submitted to the Supreme Court held Jaswant Singh Khalra to have been abducted by the police, mentioning the names of the guilty police officials for the crime, against whom Supreme Court directed the state government to proceed for the crime committed and awarded interim compensation of Rs. ten lakhs to the family of Mr. Khalra. The CBI also reported that about 1000 unclaimed bodies had proved to have been cremated by the police in Amritsar District and further investigation is going on. Supreme Court directed CBI to further complete its investigation and submit report remarking that such genocide was shocking in a democracy.

The other notable disappearances were of ex-Akhal Takhat Jathedar, Gurdev Singh Kaunke, a respectable religious and political personality amongst Sikhs, against whom there was no case. He had been taken by police from his house in the presence of several persons of the village, but never returned. Police denied his ever having been in their custody. International Human Rights Organization enquired into the matter. Its report was published in *Indian Express* of January 17, that :

"On the morning of December 25, 1992, a police party led by Jagraon SHO Gurmit Singh picked up the jathedar from Kaonka village in the presence of about 200 persons. He was brutally tortured

by Jagroan police in the presence of SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna and killed on the night of January. 1993. His body was thrown in Satluj River near Kanian village under Sidhwan bet police station. It was never found."

No action was taken against the culprits.

The disappearances of five lawyers have been reported, who were conducting the cases of some Sikh militants or were sympathetic to them :

- i) Kulwant Singh Saini, Member, Distt. Bar Association, Ropar.
- ii) Sukhwinder Singh Bhatti, Member, Distt. Bar Association, Sangrur.
- iii) Dharambir Singh Member, Distt. Bar Association, Amritsar.
- iv) Jagwinder Singh Advocate, Member, Distt. Bar Association, Kapurthala.
- v) Ranbir Singh Mansahia, Member, Distt. Bar Association, Bhatinda.

The case of Kulwant Singh Saini, Advocate was taken to Supreme Court, who referred to CBI for investigation, which found the police officials guilty for the crime. Supreme Court directed those police officials to be prosecuted for the murder.

The case of Jagwinder Singh, Advocate was also taken to Supreme Court which sent it to CBI for investigation. Police officials were found guilty by CBI. Supreme Court directed the prosecution of the guilty police officials and also granted 10 Lac rupees (one million) as compensation by the state to his mother.

Thirty eight Sikh lawyers of Punjab filed a petition in the Supreme Court for protection, that Punjab police had no care for Rule of law and had abducted and killed many lawyers, citing the instance of the above mentioned lawyers' disappearances. They asserted that there was lawlessness in Punjab state at the hands of police and even the lawyers were afraid of bringing the matter before the courts.

Two journalists, Ram Singh Billing of *Daily Ajit* and Sukhpal Singh Patti of *Daily Aj Di Awaj* were reported to have been picked up by police and made to disappear.

The government awarded prizes and medals to police officials in appreciation of heinous crimes committed by them. Chief Minister, Punjab, Beant Singh of congress disclosed in the Punjab assembly while answering a question that from January 1991 to December 1992, i.e. for two years 41684, Punjab police officials were given monetary awards and 68 received medals for their role in the fight against militancy i.e. for committing heinous crimes.

Supreme Court of India passed strictures on September 16, 1994 against the Punjab police headed by KPS Gill :

"An erranhigh handed and unchecked police force, expressing distress in the state police."

But still no improvement was made in its functioning. *Hindustan Times* editorial of September 19, 1994 warned the government :

"It is time for the centre to note the grave implications of Supreme Court damning indictment of

the Punjab police and initiate steps to ensure that the latter is not allowed to violate the law as it has chosen to with impunity.

Such a journalistic approach could have no effect on the government which itself was a party to the lawlessness of the law enforcing agencies, for which it had been providing the monetary awards and medals of appreciation. How could it be possible for the police and security forces to spread lawlessness of the worst types without the blessings of the government for such a long period ?

Ashok Mitra, former west Bengal Finance Minister denounced the extra terrorist operations of the Punjab police in *The Pioneer* May 3, 1995 :

"Summary killings of young people without leave of the judiciary, on the alleged ground of militancy, was introduced into the country as an art form by the police and para military personnels in West Bengal in 1970's where the Punjab police and the Punjab government have however scored over their counterparts in West Bengal of the 1970's was through their decision to widen the scope of jurisdiction of their police operations in the fight against terrorism, beyond the borders of their own state. The notion that they can kill people in cold blood only in Punjab was they decided plainly. If suspects are hiding in Maharashtra, or Manipur or Bengal, the Punjab police unflinching in their determination, would dispatch commandos to those spots and take care of the fugitives."

Could such unlawful activities be done by police without the approval of the government under whose control and supervision it was functioning ?

What to say of police force, Governor Surinder Nath, ex-police Director General, known for his dubious activities in Jammu and Kashmir, was posted in Punjab to give supremacy to police over the civil administration and to directly get such violent acts done through security forces, to which no one even could imagine except the Devil. In *Hitavada*, November 6, 1994, the journalistic investigation revealed :

"Mr. Surinder Nath played an all important role to give strength to the hitherto lesser known (Central Industrial security Force) CISF and it is being alleged that some of its men were used to kill innocent persons, including family members of police personnel as well as Teachers, Doctors, Engineers Media men and Political personalities"

The secrecies and underhand designs, conspiratorial, came to surface just after the death of Surinder Nath on July 9, 1994 in an air crash which wiped out his nine other family members tragically.

International Reaction

The reaction to the criminal excesses, violation of human rights and Sikh genocide policy of the Indian government was of such a magnitude that it attracted the notice of International big powers. It became the subject of discussion in US House of Representatives, the most powerful democracy of world, committed to freedom, liberty and basic human rights.

In July 1993, US state dept. withdrew the tributes to the record of human rights paid earlier to the Indian army with operation against terrorists.

On August 15, 1993, Peter Green and 120 other US congressmen introduced a resolution in the house of representatives asking for plebescite to allow the Sikh nation the right of self determination, which was not safe in India.

On Nov. 17, 1993, Garry A Candit and 23 other US congressmen sent a letter to President Clinton of USA requesting for the US diplomatic role in the "Khalistan crisis" and United States to play the role of an honest broker between the Sikh nation and Indian government.

On December 27, 1993, President Clinton in his reply to congressmen expressed the need to end police abuses in the context of "Human rights violation of Sikhs in Punjab" and his desire for a peaceful solution that protects the Sikhs rights.

The objections to the financial aid given to India by USA were made every time by several congressmen in their discussion in the House, till India improved and stopped violation of human rights with particular reference to Sikhs. The grants and aids were also curtailed by the house at some occasions on this ground.

The parliamentarians of England and Canada also raised their voice in their houses in debates against the violation of human rights in India with particular reference to Sikhs. The International communication and most of intelligence with all the modern resources at their command, kept themselves and their government in touch of any violations of human rights and democratic values, which can not be kept secret and hidden. The Sikh case had been therefore internationalized. Moreover, Sikhs are themselves spread over throughout the World having interests in their affairs in their country of origin.

Chief Minister Punjab Beant Singh Assassinated

On August 31, 1995, Congress Chief Minister of Punjab, Beant Singh was assassinated by a bomb blast in his car, just in front of Punjab secretariat building which took the lives of several other persons also including his security guards and staff personnels. Babar Khalsa International, a militant Sikh organization claimed the responsibility for the murder alleging that he had been punished for the elimination of Sikh youth through police and other security forces and his other anti Sikh actions beyond toleration.

Harcharan Singh Brar, who was Irrigation Minister, succeeded as Chief Minister of Punjab. He got the ill-reputed Director General Police, KPS Gill transferred from Punjab and tried to bring the police under civil administration. However, Punjab situation remained the same without any solution of problem of Sikhs and Punjab.

Boycott of Elections by Akalis : A political Blunder

All these criminal excesses and atrocities, false cases against Sikhs and false police

encounters and disappearance and cremation of the dead bodies of Sikhs as unidentified could be avoided, if the Akali Dals unitedly had contested the elections. They were bound to win the elections with overwhelming majority and form their government eliminating the chances of their humiliation and harassment and of the Sikhs in this period. The congress could be kept out of power in Punjab for decades if the Akalis could provide honest administration and development of Punjab besides raising the morale of Sikhs which congress had been trying to bring down by committing every type of excesses upon them and besides taking legal action against the police officials for committing the heinous crimes against Sikhs in the garb of eliminating the militancy. It was a political blunder of the Akali leaders to boycott the elections at a time when the resentment of Sikhs against congress was at the highest due to the anti Sikh policies of congress amounting to even genocide of Sikhs. To offer the power to congress without any contest was not understandable. It was rather betrayal of Sikhs by Akali leaders who always posed themselves to be the political representatives of Sikhs. It is a different matter that some of the Akali leaders might have wanted to hand over the power in Punjab to congress to eliminate the so called Sikh militants and their supporters and sympathizers and thereafter take over the power. It amounted to the worst type of political dishonesty against their own people by playing the role of traitors against Sikhs for which history might not ever forgive them.

The call of boycott of elections by Sikhs by the so called militants proved bad for them. The congress regime eliminated them one by one with all the underhand means and their supporters and sympathizers as well. In fact the boycott of the elections by Akalis was under the manipulations and strategies of congress government to bring back the congress in power in Punjab, to which they succeeded, which was otherwise not possible.

Akali Dal Wins 1997 Elections

— Akali Government in Punjab : 1997-2002

Akali Dal headed by Parkash Singh Badal won the 1996 parliamentary elections in Punjab with overwhelming majority, defeating the Congress. In 1997 assembly elections, Akali Dal along with its alliance partner BJP, won 3/4th assembly seats and Akali Dal alone got about 2/3rd seats. Congress was totally routed in these elections in Punjab as the Sikhs had revengefully rejected it for causing undue injustice and excesses on Sikhs for over two decades. Parkash Singh Badal became the Akali Chief Minister of Punjab.

The abnormal situation of violence was ended in Punjab. There were unplanned excesses on Sikhs by police and security forces without any accountability. The functioning of police was brought under the control and supervision of civil administration. The Sikhs outside Punjab also did not feel so insecure as was during Congress rule. In the regime of Akali government peaceful atmosphere in Punjab was restored.

The Akali government however failed to get its political demands accepted as contained in its Anandpur Sahib resolution. It did not even take any initiative in that regard, though its alliance partner BJP had control over the Central government because BJP was allergic to the political policies of Akalis. It was committed to the unitary form, rather than the federal structure and more so to Hindu India slogan of RSS being its political wing.

Akali government did not also implement its election manifesto promises as to the appointment of judicial commissions to investigate the causes and responsibility of fueling violence in Punjab and on to fixing the liability of police and security forces for committing heinous crimes of tortures and killing of Sikh youth and their false prosecution and detaining them in jails for long periods and to take the action against the guilty police officials for the crimes committed over a decade. It rather gave financial assistance to the guilty police officials who were being prosecuted under the orders of Supreme Court of India and Punjab and Haryana High Court on the basis of the evidence collected in investigations and enquiries by the CBI, the prime police investigating agency of Indian government.

Upon the denial of the Akali government, to appoint judicial commission in accordance with its election assurances, 'people's commission' consisting of three retired High Court judges was set up by Justice Kuldip Singh, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India and President of World Sikh Council, Human Rights organizations and some other political parties to enquire into the heinous crimes of tortures, murders and cremation of the dead bodies as unidentified, mostly of Sikhs but it was not even allowed to function in Punjab by the Akali government. No action was taken by Akali government to release the accused mostly Sikh youth being kept behind bars under acts like TADA, black laws, even though the Akali Dal had been professing throughout before coming to power that they had been falsely involved in those cases and should be immediately released by the then government.

Before coming to power in the centre as alliance partner of BJP; Akali Dal had sent a memorandum to Home Minister of India duly signed by all Akali MP's (Members of Parliament) and President SGPC :

"To expand the investigation sphere of CBI into the cremation of dead bodies of thousands of Sikhs as unidentified throughout Punjab. To appoint a judicial commission to be presided over by a judge of Supreme Court into the matter of cremation of unidentified dead bodies, fixing the responsibility of the police officers thereto; to prosecute the police officials, responsible for abduction, tortures, murders and cremation of the dead bodies as unidentified, as the CBI has found 984 unidentified bodies cremated only at Tarn Taran cremation ground, while still enquiring such cremations at Patti and Amritsar, though such cremations had taken place at Majitha, Faridkot, Ferozepur, Jalandhar, Gurdaspur, Batala, Jagraon, Ludhiana, Patiala and rather throughout Punjab."

Akali government provided no satisfactory explanation as why it had not taken the desired actions after coming into power, while it kept demanding such actions from

the previous government and had made it a part of its election manifesto, resulting in losing its support from the Sikh electorate, its main vote Bank.

The Akali government in the beginning made loud claims that the congress ministers in the previous government were corrupt and it would appoint a judicial commission to enquire into their corrupt practices and take strict action against them, but it took no action whatsoever in this regard. Rather the Akali ministers, including the Chief Minister and his family members were openly attacked again and again by other political parties to be indulging in serious corrupt practices. The corruption in the administration could not be checked and controlled by Akali government which spread and further accelerated.

The financial position of Punjab, which was earlier very sound, worsened in Akali regime, though previous congress government was equally responsible for it.

Akali Dal Defeated in 2002 Elections : Congress formed Government

The Akali dal had to bear the consequences for failure on all these aspects, having not come up to the expectations of its electorate and fulfilling the election promises and assurances made to them. In the general elections to Punjab Assembly held on February 13, 2002, the Akali Dal was defeated, having secured only 41 seats as compared to its 75 seats, while its alliance partner BJP secured only 3 seats as compared to its 18 seats. Congress won 62 seats as compared to its earlier 14 seats. Capt. Amrinder Singh, President Punjab Congress was elected the leader of Congress legislative party, who took over as Punjab Chief Minister on February 27 2002.

Akali Dal leaders and particularly Parkash Singh Badal who remained as chief minister Punjab for 5 years were responsible for defeat of the Akali Dal for their actions of commission and omission for not carrying their vote bank with them and rather pushing their vote Bank to the Congress party. Parkash Singh Badal and his party had also to suffer for the political blunder of unceremoniously removing Gurcharan Singh Tohra from presidentship of SGPC and Bhai Ranjit Singh from jathedar Akal Takhat in a vindictive spirit and undue hasteness, giving the impression to Sikhs unnecessarily that they had no true regards for these highest Sikh institutions and could denigrate these institutions for their selfish egoistic motivations. The good statesmen never create divisions in their party ranks and vote Bank and rather unite the other divergent factions in their vote bank with honesty of purpose to attain their political goal. History will record that had these Akali leaders at the top been shrewd and intelligent and honest and of integrity to the Sikh cause without selfish and egoistic motives, the Akali party could rule in Punjab for decades as the Sikhs had had their sentiments hurt by congress due to the undue excesses and injustices committed upon them by congress regimes at centre and in Punjab. Without any solution of their problem to their satisfaction, made it very difficult for them to re-embrace them.

Congress government completed its term of five years. It look no initiative with the central government to solve any Punjab issue, though, their ruling party was the

Congress for about three years. It rather kept itself more involved in the local confrontations with Akali Dal leaders exploiting their alleged corrupt practices in the earlier regime with the political motivations to weaken that party to get the corruption cases filed against their leaders, but not touching any of the congress leaders through some move ill-reputed more in this regard. The administrative corruption could not be checked, which was going on as before. So this slogan of anti corruption could not yield any political voting support to the congress. The indulgence in Sikh religious functions by the congress to attract Sikh votes proved to the loss of its Hindu vote bank, which was attracted to BJP. The personal insulting allegations between the Chief Minister and the previous Akali Chief Minister were more visible in this period rather than the cooperation required to solve the Punjab problems and even the game for political power in between the congress leaders, to which chief minister was able to retain the power.

The Punjab termination of agreements act 2004 was enacted to claim the Punjab river waters exclusively for Punjab, but a provision in it was made in section 5 of the act that the flow of existing water to other states will continue. What is the sense of the termination of water agreements and to assert the exclusive claim on Riparian basis as to be a state subject if the Punjab river waters are still going to other states on the basis of their unlawful and unjust distributions. Akali Dal MLA's even did not object to it as they should have put forth the amendment to delete this section. Still the government of India made a presidential reference to the Supreme Court to decide as to its legality to which it will give its verdict. But ultimately government of India had to solve this problem, which it created by the illegal distribution of Punjab river waters to other states, having no claim over it. In fact it is not on the basis of the termination of agreements act that Punjab is entitled to the exclusive right over Punjab rivers but it is on the basis of Riparian laws and it being a state subject for the exclusive state jurisdiction. In 2007 elections in Punjab, congress was defeated as it could not come to the expectation of people of Punjab.

2007 Elections : Congress defeated

In the 2007 elections to Punjab assembly held in February 2007, Congress was defeated. Parkash Singh Badal became the Chief Minister with Akali Dal and BJP alliance. Akali Dal got only 49 seats while BJP 19 seats. Congress bagged only 44 seats and 5 independents. The results were surprising, particularly as Akali Dal lost its traditional victorious seats in Malwa, wherein it had always had its hold. Sikh votes in that area shifted to Congress in considerable numbers, though Hindu votes in majority were attracted to BJP. The Akali Dal, thus could not get the seats to have the majority of its own as in 1997 elections. The loss of its Sikh vote bank to Akali Dal was a matter of great concern to them as Hindu vote bank was of BJP. The Akali Dal will have to pursue the Sikh agenda, as declared by it, to consolidate its Sikh vote bank.

In the Governor's address in Punjab assembly in March 2007, which reflects the

policies to be pursued by the government, it has been stressed that Punjab is the exclusive owner of Punjab river waters on the basis of Riparian laws, besides the Punjab Capital Chandigarh to be exclusively of Punjab, and the leftover Punjabi speaking areas to be given to Punjab. These are the demands of Punjab and of the Akali Dal, since long, but not fulfilled so far. It is yet to be seen that what practical steps are taken by the Akali government to get these genuine demands conceded or these prove to be the empty slogans. Akali Dal must have realized from the recent election results that they have lost its Sikh vote bank in the Malwa, in the majority of assembly seats, which were its traditional victory zone. So far to regain it, they will have to be more sincere to respect the Sikh sentiments and exhibit the honesty of purpose to its declarations to Punjab demands, besides providing honest administration.

Akali leaders allege that one Dera head's support to Congress has resulted in their defeat in several constituencies in Malwa belt. If it is true, then are they not themselves responsible for creating such a situation? SGPC is under their control having very huge financial resources whose duty is to preach Sikh religion. Why could it not obey the dictums of Sikh Gurus and *Guru Granth Sahib* to restrain them from seeking the blessings of the Deras and obeying its edicts which have no recognition in Sikh religion? It is in the original constitution of Akali Dal as to its aim to preach Sikh religion. Why has it abandoned its obligations in this regard? How can they expect the Sikh vote bank, if they never think of preaching Sikh religion to the Sikhs even, who are drifting away from the Sikh code of conduct and Sikh way of life in their own constituencies; and rather some of their own leaders and their children as well? If they do not still see this writing on the wall, then their Sikh vote bank is bound to shrink and shrink further.

The political comments that, indeed BJP has been victorious in these elections, while Congress and Akali Dal defeated, are not without any basis as the traditional vote bank of both of these parties, had been reduced. If such a state of affairs continues, there is a risk of losing its Sikh peasant vote bank for Akali Dal to be gained by BJP or Congress. Only the Sikh vote bank is of Akali Dal and they get Hindu votes only being in alliance with BJP. If BJP makes its inroad in the rural areas of Punjab in Sikhs, then Akali Dal's position of being the ruling party or the main opposition party may be endangered. RSS, the political wing of which is BJP is openly propagating the Sikhs to be sect of Hindus. This is the last opportunity for Akali Dal to regain its losing vote bank of Sikhs to remain the ruling party in Punjab, for which it will have to bring back the code of conduct and Sikh way of life in Sikhs, from which they are drifting away though no effective preaching by SGPC. It will have to pursue their demands of Anandpur Sahib resolution with honesty of purpose. Akali Ministers and other office holders will have to exhibit the high standard of honesty and integrity. Only future will tell, how the wind blows.

No Indian Government solved Problem of Sikhs and Punjab

India remained under Congress rule continuously from 1947-1977; under the Prime Ministership of Jawaharlal Nehru from 1947-64; Lal Bahadur Shastri, 1964-66 and Indira Gandhi, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru from 1966-1977. Excepting Lal Bahadur Shastri, who formed Parliamentary Committee for reorganization of Punjab, both Jawaharlal Nehru and his daughter Indira Gandhi created the problems of Sikhs and of Punjab. In his long regime of about 17 years, Jawaharlal Nehru, first betrayed the Sikhs, when he refused to implement the promise and assurances given to Sikhs in Independence movement to get their support particularly when he himself had given those assurances under his statements and congress resolution moved by him for Sikh homeland autonomous within India and constitutional safe guards.

Then he committed the worst type of discrimination against the Sikhs and Punjab refusing to reorganize Punjab on linguistic basis openly stating that it would amount to separate Sikh state and division of the country, though Punjab was to be a state with in Indian Republic government like other states. During his lengthy regime, he did not concede to such a just demand. Thus he is responsible for the creation of Sikh problems and of Punjab as well instead of finding out any solution.

Indira Gandhi created the worst type of discriminations against Sikhs and Punjab at the tune of reorganization of Punjab in 1966, usurping their lawful rights and making capital of Punjab, Chandigarh as Union Territory. Thereafter she without any authority divided the waters of Punjab rivers between other states to worsen the economy of Sikhs who are mainly dependant on agriculture for which Punjab river waters were not sufficient enough for land of Sikhs in Punjab. She committed the persecution and genocide of Sikhs in 1984, attacking them and their main historical religious places by the Indian Army and its war tanks and murdering thousands of innocent Sikhs. What could be expected from her to solve the problem of Sikhs and Punjab ?

Her Son Rajiv Gandhi, who succeeded her as Prime Minister when she was assassinated by her two Sikh bodyguards committed Sikhs persecution and genocide in October/November 1984, getting murdered mercilessly thousands of Sikhs throughout India, burning most of them and their houses and their religious places alienating them from Indian Republic which made them seek their separate sovereign Sikh state, feeling insecure in India. What could be expected from him as for solving the problems of Sikhs and Punjab ?

The only first opposition government was formed at centre in 1977, when Congress was defeated, in which Akali Dal was also a partner. But Morarji Desai, the old Congressite was himself anti-Sikh and an old associate of Jawaharlal Nehru, who became the Prime Minister in that Janta Party government. He also had no desire to solve the problem of Sikhs and Punjab. So nothing was done during the three years period of his rule, though an honest solution could have been found out at that stage.

From 1980-89 again congress remained in power. In 1989, opposition formed the govt. with V.P.Singh as Prime Minister, defeating Congress government.

Congress Party Defeated, Solved not Sikh Problems

V.P. Singh becomes Prime Minister, December 1989

In 1989 parliamentary elections, Congress party was defeated. Leader of Janta Party V.P. Singh became Prime Minister of India on December 6, 1989. He along with some of his other ministers visited Harimandar Sahib Amritsar, moving without security in that complex and even driving in an open jeep in Amritsar, as Sikhs were not against him and his other cabinet ministers, the congress being considered the enemy of Sikhs alone by the glaring acts of omission and commission of its leaders against the Sikhs, the Sikh militants also having exhibited that they were not against Hindus in general. Simranjit Singh Mann, leader of Akali Group in Parliament, extended Akali MP's support to V.P. Singh government, who voted in favour of the motion, reposing confidence in that government Akali Dal headed by Simranjit Singh passed a resolution as to its demand of an autonomous Sikh Region, in north India comprising Punjab and other adjoining Punjabi speaking areas with right to frame its own constitution, while Defence, Foreign affairs, Currency and Communication to remain with Indian govt. as in Anandpur Sahib resolution. However, V.P. Singh government still did nothing to solve the Punjab problem to accede to the Sikh demands up to that extent even. Neither did it restore the democratic rights of Sikhs and Punjabis to end President's rule and get elections conducted in Punjab.

Akali Dal M.P. Jagdev Singh Khudian was murdered on December 28, 1989 and his dead body was dumped in the canal, which was recovered later on. Allegations were openly made that government agencies were involved in it. Enquiry Commission was appointed, presided over by a judge of Punjab High Court, who rejected the police version of suicide. But still no case of murder was registered and no culprit was brought to book. Disgusted, Simranjit Singh Mann declared on April 13, 1990 at Talwandi Sabo on Baisakhi that Sikhs would have to make a move to 'United Nations for plebiscite in Punjab to find as to whether Sikhs wanted to live in India. V.P. Singh government had to quit in October 1990. His repentance that one thing he would regret all his life for his mistakes was not to hold elections in Punjab. Could it be of any value beyond crocodile tears ?

No Solution of Sikh Problem October 1990

Chandra Shekhar becomes Prime Minister

Chandra Shekhar became Prime Minister after the fall of V.P. Singh government in October 1990, who led a section of Janta Party, but with the support of Congress which obviously undermined his openness and independence to take his own decisions,

being not in majority in Parliament. He brought changes in Punjab administration by replacing the Governor, Chief Secretary and Director General Police KPS Gill, who had earned a bad name for the police excesses and eliminating Sikh youth by the police and security forces. He offered to talk to any one with an open mind, including the militants and discuss all matters including Khalistan.

On December 26, 1990 at Fatehgarh Sahib, all the three Akali Dals led by Simranjit Singh Mann, Parkash Singh Badal and Tota Singh, successor of Surjit Singh Barnala decided to unite under the presidentship of Simranjit Singh Mann, who was authorized to have a meeting with Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar to represent the Sikh demand for self determination. On December 28, 1990, Akali Dal delegation met Chandra Shekhar under the leadership of Simranjit Singh Mann and presented the memorandum of Sikh demands for determination and safeguard of Sikh interests (religious and political). He did nothing to solve the Sikh problems or Punjab affairs and neither he was in a position to do so. Rather army was concentrated in Punjab during his short tenure.

He got elections declared to the Punjab Assembly and for Parliament in Punjab but that too, leaving a chance to the newly elected government to cancel the elections if it so desired, as about one month after the elections in other parts, the elections in Punjab were to take place. It actually happened so. The elections to Punjab were postponed by the election commission on request from Narsimha Rao, who became Prime Minister, as Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated earlier and that too only one day prior to the actual date of election on June 21, 1990 and then these were cancelled. What a political joke was played on Punjab and particularly with Sikhs who were hopeful of winning the elections ! Congress had boycotted the elections, which could not take the courage to enter the Punjab villages due to the naked aggression, oppression and suppression of Sikhs by its government.

Narsimha Rao becomes Prime Minister-June 1991

In June 1991, Narsimha Rao became the Prime Minister of India, who was the Home Minister in 1984 in Indira Gandhi's cabinet when Sikhs and their religious places were attacked by the Army in June and then Sikh youths were eliminated after Blue Star Operation in Operation Woodrose, while in November, a general genocide of Sikhs throughout India was brought into action mercilessly. Who was to share the main responsibility for those heinous crimes ? During his Prime Ministership, a better treatment for the Sikhs was to be hoped against hope. He exhibited his trend of mind; to get the Punjab elections postponed just on the eve of taking over as Prime Minister and then to get those cancelled to prolong Presidents rule for oppression and suppression of Sikhs, to appoint Surinder Nath, an ex DGP as Governor of Punjab to make it a police state, and to bring back KPS Gill as Director General of Police, who was ill-reputed for Police excesses on Sikhs. The armed security forces were inducted in Punjab in so large numbers as to make it an army cantonment.

The government agencies including the armed forces, besides para military units and Punjab Police ruthlessly violated the human rights of Sikhs, committed heinous crimes against Sikhs and particularly the Sikh youth in Punjab. The tortures and murders of Sikhs and disposing their dead bodies in rivers and canals and cremations as unidentified disappearances of innocent persons, including some Sikh lawyers and journalists in Punjab were done without any accountability and rather under the instigation of the government. It was all done during the period Narsimha Rao remained the Prime Minister in the name of tackling the terrorists which had been held by Supreme Court of India to be the worst kind of genocide. Any attempt for solution for problems of Sikhs and of Punjab in this regime was impossible.

Congress was defeated in 1996 Parliamentary Elections

Congress party was defeated in the 1996 parliamentary elections. No single party got the majority. Bhartiya Janta Party, who won the largest seats formed government with A.B. Vajpayee as Prime Minister. His government remained only for about two weeks as he resigned, being unable to seek a vote of confidence. He did visit Golden Temple complex after taking over as Prime Minister, issuing the statement there, that Operation Blue Star was unfortunate. He had no time to do anything of substance to solve Sikh problem.

Janta Dal-United Front formed Government

Deve Gowda, Janta Dal leader formed the government with the support of United Front and was supported by Congress party as Prime Minister replacing A.B. Vajpayee. He also visited Golden Temple Amritsar with some of his cabinet colleagues and termed Operation Blue Star to be most unfortunate. No initiative had been taken by him to the solution of Sikh Problem and Punjab demands.

Inder Kumar Gujral becomes Prime Minister

— No initiative to solve Punjab problems

In April 1997, congress withdrew support from United Front govt., resulting in the fall of Deve Gowda government however Inder Kumar Gujral, a cabinet minister in Deve Gowda government formed the government of United Front as Prime Minister with the outside support of Congress. Though Gujral belonged to Punjab and had a soft corner for it and was elected from Punjab in 1989 as Member Parliament with the support of Akali Dal, but still he could not take any initiative for the solution of the problems of Sikhs and Punjab. His government was in minority. He could only provide some financial help to Punjab and some of its projects but nothing on political side. Congress withdrew its support from his government which fell in December 1997, resulting the dismissal of Parliament for its re-election in February. 1998.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee of BJP becomes Prime Minister

— No effort to solve problems of Sikhs and of Punjab

In the election of Parliament in 1998, no party got the majority in Parliament to independently form the government. BJP with the coalition of some regional parties was able to form the government with A.B. Vajpayee as Prime Minister. This government remained in office for about one year and Akali Dal as alliance partner of BJP also joined the coalition with Sukhbir Singh Badal son of Parkash Singh Badal in the cabinet. No effort was made by Akali Dal, who was ruling in Punjab with BJP as partner to find solution to the problems of Sikhs and of Punjab. No confidence motion was passed against Vajpayee government within about one year. Fresh elections were ordered by President of India, dissolving the Parliament as no other party came forth to form the government.

A.B. Vajpayee Again became Prime Minister

— Problems of Sikhs and Punjab not Touched

In the elections held in 1999, the Democratic National Alliance with BJP as the main party and some regional parties got majority by a narrow margin. A.B. Vajpayee of BJP again took over as the Prime Minister. That government completed the full term of five years. Akali Dal was a coalition partner in the Central Government but the Central government did not even touch any of the problems of Sikhs and Punjab for their solution but the Akali Dal and its President and the Chief Minister of Punjab took no initiative for getting any of the demands conceded, which were incorporated in their Anandpur Sahib resolution, though it was a partner in the central government and though the Akali Dal had sent about 350,000 Sikhs in jails and had sacrificed the lives of thousands of Sikhs in the agitation for the acceptance of their demands in *Dharam Yudh Morcha*.

It is thus obvious that no political party or Prime Minister, whosoever ruled at the centre for the last more than half a century took any initiative to solve the Sikh problems.

Manmohan Singh becomes Prime Minister (2004)

In the general elections held in April and May 2004, the BJP and its National Democratic Alliance was defeated. Congress and its United Progressive Alliance supported by Communist parties, formed the government with Dr. Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister, the first Sikh to head the Indian government. He enjoys a high reputation for honesty and integrity and is one of the top economists. He is a Sikh, belonging to Punjab. The President of India was a Muslim and reputed scientists of integrity. Even in their regime for the last about three years, no initiative has been taken

to solve the Punjab problems. Punjab legislative assembly passed the termination of agreement act 2004, to terminate all the agreements as to Punjab river waters that only Punjab has exclusive right over it which has been sent to Supreme Court as Presidential reference for its decision as to its legality. Indian government seems to be in no mood to get solved the Punjab problems, that these are lawful, just and constitutional.

In Article 1 part 1 of the Constitution of India itself, it has been laid down that, 'India is a union of states.' The states thus have to be recognized as such. It requires the federal structure and the states to enjoy more powers in all the subjects; the defence, foreign affairs, currency and communication and many other subjects of national interests only to be under the domain of government of India, which is sufficient to keep the country viable and united and to deal with the international affairs. India contains diverse communities, religions and languages in different regions and states which need the independence to grow in their spheres and to keep the unity of the people. However, there has been an inherent misconception in the minds of the ruling parties and their leaders, that perhaps unitary form of government makes the central government to be more powerful than the federal structure. So in their zeal to this aspect, attempts are made to curtail the powers of states and rather to make them like municipal corporations to the displeasure and dissatisfaction of the states, consequently, making the regional parties in the states more powerful and the national parties to be weak. It is obvious that in the last decade, regional parties became the balancing powers to rule India and no national party got the majority and rather had to seek alliances with regional parties of secular outlooks as National Democratic Alliance and Congress had to form the alliances with the regional parties as the United Progressive Alliance to form the government at the centre and to contest the Parliamentary elections.

It is obvious from the democracies of the world that only that country in which states were vested with more powers became powerful. In USA the most powerful country in the World, the states have their own constitutions and even flags and more power to enact their laws without any distinctions on any ground whatsoever which resulted in the unity of people. Indian polity have to learn such lessons to make India a true bigger world secular democracy.

The division of powers between the union and the states will have to be complied with, without any interference from the government of India in the state list. Constitution of India has enumerated the subjects of state list on the 7th schedule. Article 246 of the constitution provides the exclusive jurisdiction of the states on the subjects included in the state list while that of the Union in the union list. Still provisions were added in the Punjab reorganization act 1966 for the control of some subjects of the state list. Just as river waters, head works and dams in violation of the provisions of the Constitution of India. Punjab river waters were distributed to other states, which are not riparian states and have no legal right to these waters over which Punjab has the exclusive rights. Such unconstitutional interventions in state subjects make the

constitutional division of powers between states, and union a hostility. If Indian republic has to be kept as the union of states such intervention will have to be negated.

Instead of developing the federal setups and granting more powers to states, the parties or the states which raised their voice in this respect were propagated to be anti national. The Anandpur Sahib resolution, 1973 of Akali Dal only demands the federal set up and more powers for the states and more subjects to be under the state domain and for Punjab particularly, to meet the aspirations of the people with in the Indian Republic, but it was falsely propagated to be a demand of separate Sikh state and anti national, without a single provision in support of this propaganda. How could it be the creation of a Sikh state when Punjab state was to be the part of Indian Republic with the main subjects of defence, foreign affairs, treasury and communications with the Indian government ? Would not the false propaganda against this resolution be anti-national and against the unity and integrity of India ? Instead, this resolution, as such a propaganda, puts the idea of a Sikh state in the minds of Sikhs and rather connects with it.

The wrong notions have to be shunned just as that if in a state Sikhs form a majority with a semi autonomous state and federal structure in India, it becomes a separate Sikh state, and that if the Indian states are given more powers and the federal structure, then it would weaken the centre and create disunity among the people. Rather the unity in the people will be the outcome of the satisfaction of the aspirations of the people as to their regional, religious, cultural and linguistic aspects without any discriminations and distinctions. The onslaught on the minorities, be it be Muslims, Sikhs or Christians with the cheap political motivations to create Hindu vote banks can never bring the unity among the people of republic of India. It will rather be dangerous to the unity and integrity of India itself. The protection of the rights of minorities in all respects to provide security and satisfaction to them is a must for the development of the true democratic and secular Indian republic. The Sikhs and the Punjab, if to be kept in Indian republic, as they so desire and till now are satisfied with federal structure and sense of equality and security in India.

Why Hostility against Sikhs

The hostile attitude of the government of India and its leaders for the last half a century against Sikhs, reflects the Machiavellian and Chankya politics which sanctions the deceitful and fraudulent means against minorities in the name of unity of state. Such a politics of underhand means provides unlawful guidelines to crush the minorities. As to political field :

- i) The minority should not be allowed to become majority in any state in the country;
- ii) If it so becomes, the minority should not be allowed to form a government and function it smoothly in that state.

- iii) If it forms the government, that government should be of the puppets of the central government from the minority.

As to religious field :

- i) Assimilation or elimination. First efforts should be made to assimilate the minority religion propagating that it is part of majority religions; if not successful, then efforts should be made to eliminate that religion by whatsoever means, it may be.

Refusal to implement the promises and pledges made to Sikhs for autonomous state as their homeland during the freedom movement though being deceitful from the very beginning and refusal to reorganize Punjab on linguistic basis, being unexplainable political discrimination; were based on the ground that Sikhs would become majority in the newly created Punjab and so violate the Machiavellian politics.

When Punjab had to be reorganized on linguistic basis under political compulsions, the hindrances created at the time of reorganization in all respects were to ensure that Punjab state was not smoothly functioning. Every norm of democratic set up was violated to ensure that Akali Dal, the political representative party of Sikhs, should not form and continue the government in Punjab for the statutory period of five years. President rule was imposed in Punjab for over eight years, unheard of in any democracy in the world, for the purpose of blocking the minority to form a government to advance the Machiavellian politics.

Whenever it appeared that people in Punjab, majority being of Sikhs, would vote to power the Akali Dal, then every effort was made to bring puppets of the central government to form the government even on the basis of friendly election, so that they may remain inactive for the demands of Sikhs and Punjab and the Machiavellian policies not violated.

As to religion :

Government of India and its leaders, besides the fundamentalist Hindus, in underhand conspiracies, falsely propagated that Sikh religion is part of Hinduism and Sikhs are a sect of Hindus which could be helpful to assimilate Sikh religion, though they had been so active to betray, to discriminate and to persecute the Sikhs as if they were their bitter enemies. If they really felt Sikhs to be a sect of Hindus, then what was the reason to betray the Sikhs, refusing to implement the pledges made for Sikh autonomous state in Punjab; to refuse reorganisation of Punjab on linguistic basis; to create hurdles in forming their democratic elected government in Punjab. Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India himself gave the press statement that reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis is the creation of a Sikh state and the division of the country again. How could it be if Sikhs are a part of Hindus. It was the false propaganda to assimilate Sikh religion in accordance with Machiavellian and Chankya underhand politics. The religion of Hinduism and Sikhism are contradictory on the main aspects.

Sikhs are a separate nation even having had their empire, with all the ingredients of a nation. It has been so endorsed by the eminent scholars of religion and historians of the world.

It is not a new propaganda against Sikhism and Sikhs. Even the undisputed leader of secular congress, MK Gandhi had made utterances and writings at several times of Sikhs being a part of Hindus, but changed the tone when Sikhs objected to it, under political compulsions. After the freedom of India this thought was made the state policy of Indian government to finish the Sikh identity by under hand Machiavellian politics, as the secularism and democratic principles of Indian republic stood in the way to openly admit it. There is no place for such autocratic deceitful means of the bygone days in the democratic and secular set ups of today which can only bring disrepute to the administration besides defaming the democratic and secularism garb of state even if applied in a hidden way. It is bound to bring failure and condemnation.

The result of such cheap and deceitful politics created permanent conflict and mistrust between Sikhs and government of India. Sikhs could never reconcile to such a situation. Sikhs could never tolerate any attack on their status of separate identity, separate religion and separate nation by whatsoever means it may be. Sikhs had already faced the challenge to their separate identity by tyrant Mughals and Afghan invaders and wiped them out establishing the sovereign Sikh state; besides saving the Hinduism and Hindus who had yielded to the tyrants, which they had forgotten, perhaps.

Sikh Political Aspirations

— Akali Dal Policy Declarations

After India achieved independence Akali Dal passed its first resolution on January 26, 1950 for the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis and continued its struggle for that purpose for 16 years, when it was conceded. In May 1965, the Akali Dal led by Master Tara Singh (as the main Akali Dal was led by Sant Fateh Singh) passed the political policy resolution to secure self determined political status for Sikhs in Republic of India. On July 20, 1966 Akali Dal (Master Tara Singh) passed the political policy resolution for autonomous state for Sikhs with in India.

In 1973, the main Akali Dal passed the Anandpur Sahib resolution to restrict the interference of Indian government only to four subjects i.e. foreign relations, defence, currency and general communications, and the rest to be totally under Punjab state. The struggle for the acceptance of this political status is still going on, besides the inclusion of Chandigarh and all Punjabi speaking areas and no exploitation of Punjab river waters etc.

On April 22, 1994, Akali Dal leaders submitted the memorandum to General Secretary of United Nation for independent Sikh state to enable the Sikhs to enjoy full freedom and exercise their economic, social and cultural rights in accordance with its declarations. It was signed by all the three main leaders of Sikhs – Gurcharan Singh

Tohra, President SGPC; Parkash Singh Badal, President Akali Dal and Simranjit Singh Mann President of another Akali Dal.

In May 1995, all the Akali Dals (as several Akali Dals had sprung up) and their leaders formed an Akali Dal (excepting the Akali Dal headed by Parkash Singh Badal) at Akal Takhat, naming it, Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) and issued the political policy declaration, called as Amritsar Declaration, for the creation of 'confederation' of Sikh homeland Punjab failing which to announce their demand for a separate and independent Sikh state and launch a struggle for it. It was signed by all the Sikh leaders including Simranjit Singh Mann and Gurcharan Singh Tohra President SGPC, excluding Parkash Singh Badal. After sometime, only Simranjit Singh Mann remained the leader of this Akali Dal. It is still continuing so, while the others again revived their Akali Dals mainly to contest the forthcoming 1997 elections.

On April 29, 1986, declaration of Khalistan was made from Akal Takhat by the Panthic committee, alleged to have been elected by the Sarbat Khalsa earlier at Akal Takhat. Two other such panthic committees were formed. They declared their struggle for Khalistan, independent Sikh state, as Sikhs being insecure in India by the violation committed upon them nakedly in 1984 June and November which being continued by government of India through Army and other security forces.

On October 7, 1987, Panthic Committee declared the formal independence of Khalistan, severing all its ties with Indian constitution and government of India. An international committee headed by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh of USA was formed, called Council of Khalistan, so that government of India should communicate with it on the matters relating to Khalistan.

It is obvious that besides the issue of Khalistan by its supporters, the Akali Dals and their leaders have been so far demanding virtually an autonomous Sikh state within India, as federal structure to give the four subjects to the jurisdiction of Indian government i.e. of defence, currency, foreign affairs and communications. The remaining all matters to remain with Punjab government alone and seek all the Punjabi speaking areas, Chandigarh and river waters and Dams etc. exclusively with little differences in the language of their political declarations. Amritsar Declaration gave warning to Indian government, that in case of denial of confederation status, the struggle for independent Sikh state, Khalistan, would be launched.

On December 27, 1990, Simranjit Singh Mann was elected as President by amalgamating all the Akali Dals. Gurcharan Singh Tohra proposed his name, while Parkash Singh Badal seconded it. He was authorized to present the Sikh demand for self determined political status for Sikhs to Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar, who had invited the Sikh leaders for talks on their demands. He presented the Sikh demands for self determination to Prime Minister on December 30, 1990. But Chandra Shekhar depended on the support of the congress in Parliament, so he could do nothing. Elections to Punjab assembly were announced to be held in June 1991. The Akali leaders again revived their Akali Dals to contest the election, though the elections were

later on cancelled. Sikh leaders always exhibited their concern for power mostly instead of the acceptance of their political demands, consequently the failure to attain their Sikh aim.

Master Tara Singh Akali Dal demanded Self Determination by Sikhs (1965)

In May 1965, Akali Dal (Master Tara Singh) decided vide its resolution, drafted by Kapur Singh, ex-ICS officer, and proposed by Justice Gurnam Singh, a retired judge of Punjab and Haryana High Court, that :

"Sikhs had decided to throw in their lot with majority community in 1947. On the explicit understanding of being accorded the constitutional status of co-sharers in the India sovereignty along with majority community. This solemn understanding now stands totally repudiated. Sikhs have been systematically reduced to sub-political status in their homeland, and to an insignificant position in their motherland-India. Sikhs are in a position to establish before an international tribunal uninfluenced by the present Indian rulers that the law judicial process and executing action of Union of India is consistently and heavily weighted against the Sikhs and is administered with the bandaged eyes against the Sikh citizens. There is left no alternative for the Sikhs in the interest of self preservation than to frame their political demand of securing a self determined political status within the Republic of Union of India."

Chief Khalsa Diwan Resolution

On August 1, 1965, Chief Khalsa Diwan extended its support to the above Akali Dal resolution, as given below :

"Unless the present rulers and the majority community show a change of heart and consider the Sikhs to be the co-sharer in the Indian sovereignty and not second rate citizens to be humiliated at every step, the Sikhs cannot and will not live a life of peace."

Master Akali Dal resolution of July 20, 1966 for Autonomous Sikh state :

"Sikhs resolve and proclaim their determination to resist through all legitimate means all such attempts to devalue and liquidate the Sikh people in free India and consequently demand that the following steps should be taken forthwith by the rulers of India to assure and enable the Sikhs to live as respectable and equal citizens of the union of India. With particular concern to : the Sikh areas deliberately and intentionally cut off and not included in the new Punjab to be set up i.e. the areas of Gurdaspur district including Dalhousie and Ambala district including Chandigarh, Kalka and Ambala Sadar and the entire Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur district. The area of Nalagarh, called Dosh; the Tehsil of Sirsa; the sub tehsil and Tohana, and Gulha and Ratia blocks of Tehsil Hissar; Shahbad block of district Karnal and the contiguous portions of Ganganagar district and Rajasthan must now be included immediately in the new proposed Punjab, so as to bring all the contiguous Sikh areas into an administrative unit, to be the Sikh homeland, where in the Sikh interests are of special importance with in the union of India. And secondly, such a Punjab should be granted autonomous constitutional status on the analogy of Jammu and Kashmir as was

envisaged in the constitution act of India in year 1950. And after having carefully viewed the findings, the reports and judgements of judicial and quasi judicial tribunals and forums that have dealt with matters and cases involving important Sikh interests, it comes to the conclusion that the entire judicial machinery and judicial process of the independent India under the influence of certain sections of political Hindus, is prejudicial and has been perverted against the Sikh people in India in relation to their just and legal rights."

Anandpur Sahib Resolution (1973)

The Shiromani Akali Dal passed the resolution in 1973 at Anandpur Sahib, known to be Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

Political Goal

The political goal of the Panth without doubt is enshrined in the commandments of the tenth Lord, in the pages of Sikh history and in the very hearts of Khalsa Panth, the intimate objective of which is the pre-eminence of the Khalsa.' The fundamental policy of Shiromani Akali Dal is to seek the realization of this birthright of the Khalsa through creation of congenial environment and a political set up.

For attainment of the Aim :

1. The Shiromani Akali Dal is determined to strive by all possible means to :

- (a) Have all those Punjabi speaking areas, deliberately kept out of Punjab such as, Dalhousie in Gurdarpur distt., Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Sadar etc. in Ambala distt., the entire Una tehsil in Hoshiarpur distt., Tohana sub tehsil and Ratia blocks of Sirsa tehsil of Hissar distt., the Desh area of Nalagarh, Shahbad and Gulha blocks of Karnal distt., and six tehsils of Ganganagar district in Rajasthan, merged with Punjab to constitute single administrative unit, where the interests of Sikhs and Sikhism are specifically protected.
- (b) In this new Punjab and in other states, the centre's interference would be restricted to Defence, Foreign relations, Currency and general Communications. All other departments would be in the jurisdiction of Punjab (and other states) which would be fully entitled to frame own laws on these subjects for administration. For the above departments of the centre, Punjab and other states contribute in proportion to representation in Parliament.

2. The Sikhs and other religious minorities living out of Punjab should be adequately protected against any kind of discrimination.

3. The Shiromani Akali Dal would endeavour to have the Indian constitution recast on real federal principles with equal representation at the centre for all states.

There were some other clauses of this resolution, not of much political importance. This resolution was approved by Akali Dal general house on August 8, 1978.

Original Version of Anandpur Sahib Resolution

There is another version of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, which was drafted by Kapur Singh ICS. Its hand-written draft has been printed by Gurtej Singh, ex-IAS officer, in his book, *Chakravyuh : Web of Sikhs and Indian Secularism*. It is alleged to be the original and real Anandpur Sahib resolution passed by the executive committee of Akali Dal in 1973. This resolution is as under :

Anandpur Sahib Resolution :

Whereas, the Sikhs of India are a historically recognized political nation, ever since the inauguration of the Order of the Khalsa in the concluding year of the 17th century and

Whereas, this status of the Sikh nation has been internationally recognized and accepted by major powers of Europe and Asia to wit France, England, Italy, Russia, China, Tibet, Persia, Afghanistan, Nepal and Company Bahadur Fort William Calcutta, till the middle of the 19th century, and again by the outgoing British and the Hindu Congress and the Muslim league of India in the middle of the 20th century and

Whereas, the brute majority of India in 1950, have imposed a constitutional arrangement in India, which denudes the Sikhs of their political identity and cultural particularity thus liquidating the Sikhs politically and exposing them to spiritual death and cultural decay leading inevitably to submergence and dissolution to the saltish sea waters of inchoate Hinduism, and

Whereas, the Sikhs have been thus shackled and imprisoned in cynical repudiation of solemn commitments and public promises earlier made to the Sikhs, while the Sikh representatives in the constituent assembly in 1950 refused to become a consenting party to these constitutional arrangements and declined to affix their signatures to the official copy of the Constitution Act, the Shiromani Akali Dal in the name and on behalf of Sikhs,

Proclaims that the Sikhs are determined by all legitimate means to extricate and free themselves from this degrading and death-dealing situation, so as to ensure firmly their honourable survival and salvage their inherent dignity in India, and their birthright to influence meaningfully the mainstream of world-history. The Sikhs, therefore:

Demand firstly that an autonomous region in the North of India should be set up forthwith wherein the Sikh interests are constitutionally recognized as of primary and special importance as the fundamental state policy.

Secondly, that this autonomous region, should include the present Indian Punjab, Karnal and Ambala districts of Haryana, inclusive of Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka, Dalhousie, Nalagarh, Sirsa, Guhla, Rattia areas of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and Kangra distt. of Himachal Pradesh and the Ganganagar district of Rajasthan thus bringing the main contiguous Sikh populations and traditional Sikh habitats within this autonomous Sikh region as an integral part of the Union of India and

Thirdly this Sikh autonomous region may be declared entitled to frame its own internal constitution on the basis of having all powers to and for itself except Foreign Relations, Defence, Currency and General Communications to remain as subjects within the jurisdiction of the Federal Indian Government.

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It was passed on October 16, 1973 by the executive committee of Akali Dal at Anandpur Sahib. S. Kapur Singh was Member Parliament of Akali Dal earlier and at that time MLA Punjab of Akali Dal. He was member of India Civil Services (I.C.S) for several years. He was a great scholar and author of several books of repute, a forceful speaker and parliamentarian. He was honoured with the status of National Professor of Sikhism.

Akali Dal leaders's demand for an Independent Sikh state in memorandum to General Secretary United Nations, April 22, 1994

The following memorandum was submitted and it was signed by Simranjit Singh Mann, Parkash Singh Badal (President Akali Dal) and Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President SGPC :

"The Sikh nation, represented by Shiromani Akali Dal and Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee are convinced that Indian union is incapable of holding independent elections in state of Punjab and recently fostered a quisling regime which could barely get eight percent of the votes. In this hour of crisis, the Sikh Nation appeals, through you, to the Nations of the World to satisfy the quest and yearning of the Sikh people by allowing the peoples' will to manifest in an appropriate manner :

"Demilitarization and Decolonization of Punjab is crucial and indispensable to the Sikh people to enjoy full freedom and exercise their economic, social and cultural rights in accordance with the UN declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and people and seeks an independent sovereign state to break the shackles of Apartheid, Slavery, Colonialism and a retrograde poll system and structure."

Akali Dal (Amritsar) Declaration

All Akali Dals united (except the Akali Dal, headed by Parkash Singh Badal) had formed one Akali Dal at Akal Takhat, Amritsar and issued the declaration called :

"Amritsar Declaration" May 1995

"The Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) while professing and staying within the democratic sphere and based upon the principles that the Holy *Guru Granth Sahib* provides direction to the Sikh community and to its Punjabi culture. The Sikh *quom* (nation) announces its decision to remain its struggle for the creation and demand of a separate Sikh area (*Khetar*), where in the Sikhs can experience the glow of freedom.

"Only with the creation of such a separate area (state) can the desires of the Sikh *quom* of the Punjabis be fulfilled. Before partition, the then congress government had promised the creation of such an area, but so far this promise has never been fulfilled."

"Such a separate autonomous areas will only safeguard the interests of the minority

communities. In this present day history there is turmoil in south east Asia and in the western world. Efforts are on to form a new society based on certain principles."

"In this changing world it has become but natural that changes take place, so that a society free from all evils is created on certain principles. In this new area for the Sikhs, opportunities will be provided to all social, religious and political organizations to freely profess and propagate their views and ideas which had never been provided before."

"In the new homeland Sikhs and Punjabis would be able to freely propagate their religion and culture and thereby will also enrich the rich cultural heritage of the World."

"The Shiromani Akali Dal is of the view that Hindustan is a subcontinent comprising of diverse cultures, where every culture has its own separate identity and rich cultural heritage."

"There is need for reorganizing this subcontinent by bringing about changes in the constitution and making it more broad based and confederal. Only with a strong confederal base can every culture progress and spread its influence world wide."

"If Hindustan government does not accept this demand for the creation of a confederation, then the Shiromani Akali Dal will be left with no option but to announce their demand for a separate and independent Sikh state. The party will then launch a struggle for this state."

It was signed by the leaders of all Akali Dals by merging their Akali Dals in one Akali Dal (Amritsar) including SGPC president Gurcharan Singh Tohra excepting Parkash Singh Badal.

It is very clear from the political declarations by the parties, representing the Sikhs that Sikhs have not budged an inch from their demand of autonomous Sikh state and self determined political status promised to them by Indian congress leaders. Their struggle is going on for the fulfillment of this demand with several ups and downs in political sphere. The Indian government enhanced the worst type of violation against Sikhs and various conspiracies to suppress them to abandon this demand by Sikhs. But instead it got escalated to the demand of independent Sikh state (*Khalistan*) by a section of Sikhs. The Government of India and its leaders had never been honest with Sikhs. There could be no justification to refuse to implement the understanding of autonomous Sikh state, with Sikhs, who were betrayed. The government of India is solely responsible for creating the situation of continuous confrontation with Sikhs and then to falsely blame the Sikhs as to the unity and integrity of the country which it endangered itself. Indian government is still continuing the blunder not to solve the Sikh problem to the satisfaction of Sikhs, which history will so record. The Indian leaders should be aware of the Sikh history that in spite of several ups and downs, Sikhs established their empire by ousting mighty Mughals and Afghans after struggle of a century.

The Sikh political declarations made after 1947 were affected by the attitude of the Indian government from time to time. The more the hostility towards Sikhs by the government, the more the hard has been reaction of Sikhs. The uncalled for persecution

of Sikhs and army attacks on their holy shrines, gave them the impression of insecurity in India, and thus further gave rise to the demand of a separate Sikh state. However, the demand of the main political party of Sikhs in Punjab, Shiromani Akali Dal which got the overall votes of Sikhs in Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in 1996 elections and in Punjab Legislative Assembly in 1997 is still for an independent Sikh state based on Anandpur Sahib resolution. The Akali government remained in power for full term of five years. The party got the largest number of seats in 2002 election, though Congress won to form the government. It demands the setting up of the federal structure in Punjab with only foreign affairs, defence, communication and currency with the Union government, the rest of all to be only in domain of Punjab state, alongwith the Chandigarh capital and the Punjabi speaking areas left over at the time of the reorganization, and the exclusive right over Punjab rivers, Dams and all other resources. It is more or less the same set up as autonomous state in Sikh homeland Punjab, as promised to the Sikh leaders by the Indian congress leaders during Indian independence movement. Most probably at this time the acceptance of this demand and the charter as contained in Anandpur Sahib resolution may satisfy the overwhelming majority of Sikhs in Punjab as they support the Akali Dal which still relies upon such a political set up for Sikhs in Punjab. It depends upon the leadership of the Indian government if it has a statesmanship of vision and wisdom, not to continue with the same policy of indecisiveness to prolong the disputes as these remained in force earlier, otherwise the things may take any turn in future to exhort the hardlines to any extent, including a separate Sikh state depending upon the circumstances then existing.

Though the agitations of the Akali Dals were peaceful but the movement for *Khalistan* started in 1986 by the Panthic committee got the image of violence, for which the main hand behind violence was no doubt of the government and its secret agencies to give it the shape of Sikhs as being terrorists and extremists to defame the movement, and then crush it with state violence and oppression. The present times are of democratic norms and people are free to internationalise their grievances and demands in a peaceful manner with logic and reason. Contrarily the government against which a peaceful and democratic movement is launched for the excesses and illegality, conspires to make it violent through state violence against it and to defuse it at the international level by its infiltration through secret agencies. The Sikh movement has itself experienced such moves in the recent past. The Sikhs must be now convinced and clear that they must remain peaceful and in the democratic manner, if they still have to agitate for their just demands. Their leaders must not be ignorant of world history and international forums, and to convince others as to the justification of their genuine and just cause besides being highly reputed and regarded for honesty and integrity. Besides the political aims and their attainment by Sikhs and Sikh leaders as expressed in their declarations, serious attention must be paid to the preaching of Sikh religion amongst Sikhs themselves and particularly the younger Sikh generation to strictly adhere to the Sikh code of conduct from which they are drifting away. No Sikh

demands would be accepted if Sikhs themselves do not become and act as true Sikhs. Rather they will themselves feel disinterested in it, if not adhering to Sikh code of conduct and Sikh way of life. The Sikh vote bank of the Sikh political parties would itself shrink, making these parties politically irrelevant. The minorities can only survive if they strictly observe their way of life, higher moral values and ethics.

Sikh Leadership

The main political representative party of Sikhs in the last over half a century had been Shiromani Akali Dal. SGPC was also controlled by the Akali Dal in this period as mainly its candidates got elected to it. The leaders of Akali Dal led by Master Tara Singh did not merge their party in congress and maintained its separate entity, in spite of the efforts of government of India and the congress leaders to get it dissolved. They also refused to get the high political offices for this purpose. Akali Dal remained in confrontation with the government of India and kept itself involved in the struggle in a peaceful and democratic manner against the refusal to reorganize Punjab on linguistic basis, and its leaders courted arrests and went to jails. Even after the reorganization of Punjab in 1966, Akali Dal remained in confrontation against the Indian government and led the agitations for getting Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab, and the left over Punjabi speaking areas, and the Punjab river waters etc., and its leaders went to jails for all these demands.

However, the Akali leaders did not start struggle for the implementation of the agreement and assurances given to them by the congress leaders in the pre-independence era for the semi autonomous state in their homeland Punjab and the constitutional guarantee for their self determined political status within Indian Republic. After the government of India and congress leaders refused their implementation, they involved the Sikhs in the agitations for the reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis merely.

After the reorganization of Punjab in 1966, Akali leaders did pass the resolutions to get back the capital of Punjab, the left over Punjabi speaking areas and the river waters, the head works and Dams, and when they did not get those, the Sikhs involved themselves in agitations and courting arrests. But when in power no initiatives were ever taken to get their demands conceded, even when they were the partners in government of India, at least thrice, (1977-80, 1985-87, 1997-2002). It gave wrong signal to the ruling parties at the centre, that perhaps they were not serious to it.

Similarly no effective steps were taken for the federal structure and more power of the state, as emphasized in their Anandpur Sahib resolution when there were Akali governments in Punjab and their partnership in the central government, though when out of power agitations were resorted to for that purpose. Even the notifications for the acquisition of land for SYL Canal had been issued and money got deposited from Haryana in that respect in 1978 in the regime of Akali government But when out of

power, agitations were held that not a drop of water of Punjab rivers would be allowed to go out of state. The river waters of Punjab going to Rajasthan were not touched while in power. No legislation was located to undo and terminate the river water agreements though Akali Dal was in majority in Punjab legislature in 1977-80, 1985-87 and 1997-2002 so as to utilize the entire waters of Punjab rivers in Punjab. It gave the wrong impression as to their honesty of purpose that perhaps they made such empty slogans to attract Sikh voters.

The Akali leaders could not repose confidence successfully in their Sikh vote bank for not coming up to their electoral declarations and manifestoes. When voted to power, most of them earned disrepute by their corrupt practices and insincerity to the Sikh agenda besides the party factionalism, the narrow egoistic tendencies and the favoritism for their kith and kin. It resulted in break of their vote bank and their defeat in the very next election each time. If the Sikh leaders had maintained the reputation of honesty, integrity and commitment to the Sikh cause and taken united effective steps to get the Sikh demands accepted, when in power, no other party could shake their vote bank and they could retain the power for decades continuously, particularly when their only other rival party, congress, had offended the Sikhs to such an extent as to consider it their enemy. No other person could dare even to make any other rival Akali Dal. Such shortcomings gave a wrong message to government of India, that there was no need to concede the Sikh demands.

It does not mean that there was no Sikh leader without such short comings. They were very few to be easily excluded and pushed to corner. The government secret agencies also played their role in such a situation, so that the leadership of honesty and commitment could be avoided to avert the real confrontation with government. Master Tara Singh himself had admitted in his autobiography that the Sikh leadership, at the time of Indian independence, was ignorant of world politics and history; otherwise Sikh political power could be obtained, particularly when the British were sympathetic to Sikhs. Even then no lesson was learnt from it to bring in active Sikh politics. The persons who might be aware of world politics and history besides enjoying the high reputation for honesty, integrity and capability, there was no dearth of such persons with commitment to the Sikh cause. Rather such persons had been avoided with the fear of the top Sikh leadership as to lose their grip in Sikh politics in their presence. And aims and objectives of original Akali Dal even still stand diluted, portraying it as a party of Punjabis instead of Sikhs.

In over the last two decades the democratic set up of Sikh leadership has been disturbed. The same is the president of Akali Dal for such a long period of over two decades continuously with the powers to nominate the members of the parliamentary affairs committee, the members of the executive committee and office bearers of the party, the district Presidents of the party, besides the candidates for Assembly and Parliament and that of SGPC. That very President became the Chief Minister if the party was voted to power with the authority to select all the political state offices. The same

person remained President of SGPC for over two decades, to be nominated by the President of the party, though formally elected annually by SGPC members. Such a situation creates the personal loyalty ignoring the merits. If some one raises the voice of dissidence, though bonafide, it may be for the constructive approach for the party and for Sikhs to whom the party represents, he is to be easily removed from the political scene. If the dissidents created a new party, named it as Akali Dal, as Sikhs give recognition to this name and consider it to represent them, they also followed the same defect of ignoring the democratic set up and so failed to provide the alternative to Sikhs to represent them.

It is of utmost necessity for a minority to remain united to face the challenges put against it under one political party with its leaders, known for their honesty, integrity and capability and commitment to its cause. The doctrine of 'one person, one post' and the real democratic set up has to be adopted. The past Sikh leadership had exhibited the spirit of selfless service to Sikhs and rather to humanity, rising above vested interests and narrow egoistic tendencies, with their supreme sacrifices and excellent heroism, whatever the need of the time required. They remained in a prolonged struggle of over a century with Mughals and Afghan invaders, till they wiped them out and established their independent and sovereign state, exhibiting their unity and honesty of purpose. They successfully negated the conspiracies of the British and those of the agents of the Brahmanical cult, with the Mahants occupying Sikh gurdwaras, and ousted them to take over the management of gurdwaras from them with their supreme sacrifices in the most peaceful struggle in Akali movement. They set up Sikh gurdwaras and Sikh educational institutions in Singh Sabha movement.

It is imperative for the leaders of a religious minority to fully understand and live up to the basic dictums of their religion, to achieve its aims (political and religious), as the contradiction to which may defame their religion itself. The basic dictums of Sikh religion is to follow truthful living, have unity of thought, utterance and actions and offer selfless service not to Sikhs only but rather to whole humanity at large rising above vested interests and avoiding narrow egoistic tendencies so as to be understood and acted upon by the Sikh leadership. In Sikhism the divine declaration that "Truth is above everything, but higher still is truthful living" can never be overlooked by the persons who portray themselves as the representatives in religion and politics of Sikhs. The courage, determination and commitment to the Sikh cause with honesty of purpose has to automatically flow from Sikh way of life in Sikh code of conduct. The corrupt practices, selfish motivations and egoistic tendencies have no place in Sikh way of life. If any Sikh leader (political and religious) violates such Sikh dictums, it will defame Sikh religion itself.

In fact in Sikhism, religion and politics are inseparable. The higher value, to be inculcated from the teachings of Sikh religion, have to be activated in socio-political affairs throughout one's span of life. Politics is not a game of scoundrels for Sikhs and Sikh leaders. It can only be so done so if Sikh leaders have the full understanding of

Sikh religion and its higher moral and ethical values and they practically act upon it and live up to it. Sikh history further provides the right direction and inspiration and tells the Sikh leaders how to maintain these higher values, the same way as they have been doing when coming into conflict with tyrant Mughals and Afghans who were though totally devoid of these values. It is in the manifesto of Akali Dal itself when it was originally formed to preach Sikh religion, besides practically adhering to its higher values and code of conduct. The present day leaders should not ignore it. It is an aspersion on them if Sikh youth is drifting away from Sikh code of conduct.

The most urgent agenda before the Sikhs today is that they must have their world Sikh representative leadership of honesty, integrity and capability with commitment to Sikh cause without selfish egoistic tendencies or any vested interests so as to be able to face the challenges before them in all the spheres (Religious, Political, Educational and Economic) successfully. It is the time of pen and not of sword. It is the time of international forums and not of merely local slogans and stages. The Sikh leadership must be well aware of world politics and history to stand in the international world, the ignorance of which had already been proving detrimental to their cause. So their thought and intelligent action is the need of the day than mere empty slogans. Besides the political agenda for Sikh political power, serious thought and action is needed for the religious mission to bring all the Sikhs in Sikh code of conduct and to educate the Sikh youth as to Sikh religion and history having been spread throughout the world and to bring the higher values of Sikhism to the notice of the world.

A world Sikh representative body should be set up by all the Sikhs world over which should take decisions as to the panthic Sikh affairs. It should hold its meetings at Akal Takhat to discuss and decide the Sikh issues in accordance with the dictums of Sikh religion under the divine guidance of *Guru Granth Sahib*. Akal Takhat jathedar should be nominated by this supreme panthic body to act as its spokesman and to ensure the implementation of the decisions taken by it to be acceptable to all the Sikhs. The organizations elected by the Sikhs, just as SGPC, Delhi Gurdwara Management Committee, the management committee of Takhats Patna Sahib, Hazur Sahib and other such traditional institutions elected by the Sikhs should send their representatives for this supreme panthic body as fixed. The countries outside India should be divided in 6 or 7 zones according to the Sikh population therein and the gurdwara management committees of each zone, elected by Sikhs should nominate their representatives. Such a world Sikh representative body is the need of the day.

It will facilitate solution of the Sikh problems world over as a united force and the preaching of Sikh religion throughout the world besides bringing the Sikh youth to follow the Sikh code of conduct, from which they are drifting away. It should comprise the Sikhs known for their honesty, integrity, capability and sincerity to Sikh cause, being able to infuse the confidence of all the Sikhs rising above the petty party factions and vested interests. In fact at present Sikhs have no representative party of their own. The Akali Dal which had become the Sikh representative party has now

become virtually a regional political party of Punjab with Hindus and Muslims as its members and its office holders have to give it a secular outlook to contest the legislative and parliamentary election to fulfill the requirements of election laws. There is thus the urgent need of the representative party of Sikhs alone to be the world Sikh representative body to be elected or selected by Sikhs only.