

**GURU GOBIND SINGH'S MARCH FROM
ANANDPUR SAHIB TO DAMDAMA SAHIB:
AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ORAL
TRADITION**

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CHAPTER – 1

HISTORICAL MILIEU

The Sikh Guru's built several towns for the welfare of humanity and for promoting Sikhism and had never shown any interest in any physical pursuits. Guru founded many new cities/towns and tried their best to make them physically, economically and religiously prosperous. Guru Nanak Dev's birth place was Rai bhoede Talwandi. After the Udasis Guru Nanak spent seventeen years of his life in Kartarpur District Sialkot. Guru Angad Dev made Khadur Sahib the centre point besides Kartarpur. Other Sikh Gurus founded Goindwal Sahib, Chack Guru Ramdas (Sri Amritsar Sahib) Taran Taran, Kartarpur and Sri Hargobindpur. In 1635, Guru Hargobind purchased land for Kiratpur Sahib from Raja Tara Chand. Then for the next thirty years Guru Har Rai, Guru Har Krishan and Guru Teg Bahadur till 1665 made Kiratpur the hub of Sikh activities.

The Ninth Guru, Teg Bahadur settled at Bakala again, but 'he was not allowed to abide in peace, for the old jealousy and enmity of Sodhis had been revived'. He visited Kiratpur on May 7, 1765. There he learnt that Raja Dip Chand of Kahlur had died and his *Shrad* ceremony was to take place on May 13, 1665. The Rani Dowager Champa invited Guru Teg Bahadur, his relatives and disciples to attend the function. The Guru arrived at Bilaspur accompanied by Mata Nanaki, Mata Hariji wife of Suraj Mal, Mata Sulakhni, Deep Chand and Nand Chand sons of Suraj Mal, Diwan Dargaha Mal, Jetha, Dyal Das and several others. The Rani gave a warm and respectful welcome to the Guru and his companions. Guru Teg Bahadur told her that he wished to found a village for his own residence in the Rani's territory. She at once offered him land in the Villages of Lodipur, Mianpur and Shahode. The Guru stayed in Rani's palace for three days and then returned to Kiratpur. The Guru chose the site in Makhawal village and paid the registration fee of about rupees five hundred. The Ownership stone was laid by Gurdita Randhawa's son of Baba Budha in June, 1665 and the area named was Chak Nanaki after the Guru's mother. It was situated thirteen kilometers from Kiratpur below the Naina Devi hill. Then the Guru returned to Bakala.¹

¹ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of The Sikhs*, Vol. I, Munshiram Manoharlal Publisher Pvt. Ltd., 1984, pp. 192-193.

The settlement served as a nucleus for the town of Anandpur (Heaven of Bless) which later on grew up around Chakk Nanaki. According to the oral tradition, when Guru Gobind Singh reached Chakk Nanaki from Patna, he worshipped Guru Amar Das's *Anand Bani* in the happiness of meeting Guru Teg Bahadur and entered the town of Chakk Nanaki. To see Guru Gobind Singh's love and devotion, Guru Teg Bahadur gave a new name Anandpur to Chakk Nanaki.²

Guru Teg Bahadur set up his home at Anandpur, where a large number of devotees used to visit him. Now the Guru had a considerable source and a large number of Sikh followers to carry on his missionary work. His opponents were unable to cause any harassment directly. Dhir Mal instigated Ram Rai to poison the ears of the emperor against the Guru.³

But even in Anandpur, his Kinsmen did not leave him alone and he decided to leave the Punjab until the atmosphere became more congenial. So, Guru Teg Bahadur, made up his mind to go for a pilgrimage to the East. He was desirous of meeting the Sikhs living outside Punjab and he wanted to connect the Sikhs with the new centers of Sikhism, Kiratpur and Anandpur. So, Guru Teg Bahadur left Anandpur with his wife and his mother and travelled east-wards toward Uttar Pradesh. He travelled via Agra, Allahabad, Benaras, Gaya and arrived at Patna.⁴ Towards the end of May, 1666, during the rainy months June to September, when communication are rendered difficulties by floods in rivers were spent at Patna.⁵ His wife, being in an advanced stage of pregnancy, could not go any further. The Guru made arrangements for her confinement and asked the local Sikhs to help Kirpal Chand and Dyal Das in looking after his family and he himself with Mati Das and Sati Das proceeded-on tours to visit further to East Bengal and to Assam.⁶

At this time Guru Gobind Singh was born. Guru Gobind Singh was born on Saturday December 22, 1666 (Posh Sudhi 7, 1723 BK). Guru Teg Bahadur was at

² Sadhu Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 79 years. (Personal interview on 10 December, 2017).

³ Saroop Das Bhalla, *Mehima Parkash*, Vol. II, (ed.), Gobind Lamba, Punjab Language Department, Patiala, 1971, p. 665.

⁴ Khuswant Singh, *History of The Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 71, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Sri Guru Panth Parkash*, pp.123-124.

⁵ Fauja Singh and Gurcharn Singh Talib, *Guru Teg Bahadur: Martyr and teacher*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1975, p. 47.

⁶ Khushwant Singh, *History of Sikhs*, Vol. I, pp. 71-72, see also Surjit Singh Chawla, *Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur*, New Delhi, 1991, p. 33 and see also Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battle of Guru Gobind Singh*, New Delhi, 1990, p. 24.

Deccan when he heard the news of Guru Gobind's birth. According to the Sikh tradition, he himself suggested that the child was to be named Guru Gobind Singh. Around the Middle of 1668, Guru Teg Bahadur completed his visit and set out for the homeward journey. Most probably, he reached Patna and spent time with his family.⁷

But Guru Teg Bahadur did not spend much time with his infant son Guru Gobind Singh, due to an urgent message asking him to return to the Punjab. He found the Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab in a state of nervous agitation. Emperor Aurangzeb had embarked on a policy of religious persecution. So, he left his family in Patna and returned to his homeland.⁸ Guru Gobind Singh spent the first five and a half years of his life at Patna.⁹ Guru Gobind Singh had remained there under the care of his mother, grandmother and his maternal uncle Kirpal in the absence of his father, Guru Teg Bahadur.¹⁰ The early schooling of Gobind, therefore took place at Patna. The language of the area had a great impact on him. His poetic compositions are mainly written in the literary language of the area. He studied not only the Bihari language but also Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. At the age of four and five, Guru Gobind Singh, led a group of young children and used to play on the banks of the Ganges. Sometimes, as a sport, two parties were formed and battles were fought. The courage, bravery and martial tendencies of the child manifested itself in his various movements¹¹.

At first the family was stationed in Patna but later on the Guru asked his people to bring his family and the party advanced towards Punjab. So, under the supervision of Kirpal Chand, Guru Teg Bahadur's mother Nanaki, Guru Gobind Singh and his Mata Gujri reached Lakhanpur¹² (Ambala District) passing through Paryag, Ayodhiya, Lukhnow, Haridwar, Mathura and Brindaban. When Guru Gobind Singh reached Lakhanpur. Guru Teg Bahadur sent a message that the family should stay at Lakhanpur until he called them to Anandpur. Here the Guru's family stayed with

⁷ Giani Gain Singh, *Sri Guru Panth Parkash*, p. 1206, see also J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *A Biographical study of Guru Gobind Singh*, Chandigarh, 1967, p. 30. See also Fauja Singh and Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Guru Teg Bahadur: Martyr and teacher*, p. 50.

⁸ Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 72 see also Pro. Balvir Singh *Guru Teg Bahadur Ji*, Jalandur, 1976, p. 60.

⁹ J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *A Biographical study of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 33.

¹⁰ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 25.

¹¹ Surinder Singh Kohli, *The Life and Ideals of Guru Gobind Singh (Based on original source)*, Mushiram Manohar Lal Publisher, Pvt. Ltd., 1986, pp. 5-6.

¹² Lakhanpur is at a distance of four miles from Ambala Cantt. The native place of Lal Chand, the Father of Mata Gujri wife of Guru Teg Bahadur. There Guru Gobind Singh stayed for about six months.

Jetha Masand at Lakhanpur, Guru Gobind Singh enjoyed himself in various type of military exercises of horse-riding, using of weapons as the Sikhs of this area presented him. So, when Guru Gobind Singh received message from Guru Teg Bahadur, he proceeded to Anandpur along with the other members of the family.¹³ The whole party did so. They stayed for some time at Kiratpur on their way to Makhowal (Anandpur). They were given a rousing welcome at Anandpur “There were great rejoicings on all the sides. For days there was a regular fair (*mela*) in city. People came from every direction as do the clouds in *Sawan*, the rainy month of India”.¹⁴

Guru Teg Bahadur took keen interest in Gobind's education. He appointed Bazar Singh Rajput and others to teach him riding and military art. Qazi Pir Muhammed was appointed to teach him Persian.¹⁵ Gurmukhi teaching was particularly necessary because Gobind had till then lived out of the Punjab and the job was entrusted to Sahib Chand.¹⁶ He was also given good education in Sanskrit and Persian. Gobind displayed a keen interest in horse riding and hunting. He would often accompany his uncle and others in the hunting expeditions. After the daily routine work, he played with his playmates the same games as he had played at Patna. He would divide his mates into two groups and with himself as the head of one, engage them in mock-battles.¹⁷

Anandpur was a paradise on earth for Guru Gobind Singh. This was the happiest time of his life. All that one could desire was this. The greatest blessing was the affection of his father, Guru Teg Bahadur. The mornings and evenings he spent in meditation and in receiving instruction and the rest of the time of the day in hunting and the other manly sports. At night, before he went to bed in the apartments set aside for him, numerous attendants sang hymns for him from the sacred book. But those idyllically happy and peaceful days were a prelude to the mighty events and upheavals of which Anandpur itself was to become the epicentre.¹⁸

Guru Gobind Singh's first marriage was with mata Jito, it took place on 15 Jeth Sambat 1730 (1673). She was the daughter of a reputable Sikh of Lahore and the

¹³ Kirpal Singh, *Early life of Guru Gobind Singh*, The Punjab Past and Present, Vol-XXXI Part-I, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2000, p. 28.

¹⁴ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, New Delhi 1990, p. 25.

¹⁵ Khazan Singh, *History of Sikh Religion*, Department of Language Punjab, 1970, p. 167.

¹⁶ J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *Guru Gobind Singh (A Biographical Study)* Punjab University, Chandigarh, 1967, p. 38.

¹⁷ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 26.

¹⁸ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, Sterling Publication, Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 1979, p. 14.

marriage was celebrated at the village named Lahore, which was newly founded by Guru Teg Bahadur, about ten miles from Anandpur.¹⁹

The blissful life at the city of eternal bliss was cut short rather abruptly. We have already seen that Aurangzeb had vowed to convert or exterminate the non-Muslim population of his empire. His orders had gone round to all his deputies and Viceroys in the different provinces that no pains, means or efforts were to be spared in furthering the cause of Aurangzeb of Islam. As stated already, on coming to the throne, Aurangzeb had started a relentless campaign to convert his Hindu subjects to Islam. We have already referred to the order issued by him in 1669 A.D, calling upon all his governors to demolish the temples and schools of the non-believers. He had ordered all local officials, Qazis and Mullas to make it so unbearable for the Hindus that they should be forced to throw off the sacred thread and embrace Islam. To help them in this religious task, he had appointed moving military columns. These bodies of special troops went about turning the country and enforcing the imperial orders, particularly in the Punjab.²⁰ Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had sent a new governor to Kashmir in 1671 to replace a governor who was liberal and conciliatory in his treatment of the Hindus. The new provincial ruler, Iftikhar Khan better known as Sher Afghan, was committed to full implementation of the imperial policy in respect to the destruction of temples and forcible conversion of the Hindus. His activities took Kashmir back to the dark days of Sultan Sikhandar (1323-1466) who was a cruel persecutor and iconoclast. The Kashmir Brahmins were offered by Sher Afghan a choice between Islam and death.

Macauliffe explains why the 'experiment of conversion was first tried in Kashmir' if the Kashmiri Pandits, who had a reputation for education, were converted, the inhabitants of Hindustan, it was thought, would readily follow their example. Moreover, 'Peshawar and Kabul, Muhammadan countries' were near and if the 'Kashmiris offered any resistance to their conversion, the Muhammadans might declare a religious war and overpower and destroy them'. It was also believed by the emperor without foundation as it turned out that the Kashmiri Brahmins might be tempted by the promises of money and government appointments, 'because the beggary and meanness of the inhabitants of that country was proverbial'.

¹⁹ Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, *Mahan Kosh*, Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, 2006, p. 525, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, Bhasha Vibhag, Punjab, p. 784.

²⁰ Kartar Singh M.A., *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, Lahore Book Shop, Ludhiana, 1969, pp. 28-29.

The Kashmiri Pandits asked for and received six-month time to consider whether they should embrace Islam or die for their religion.²¹ The helpless Pandits repaired to their temples and prayed constantly before their gods. But all prayers of these *gods* 'own people' proved of no avail. The allotted periods of respite were about to end. The Pandits had heard of the Guru's name and fame. Some had even seen and heard him. They met at the temple of Amarnath to consider the matter in the light of the above said advice. After prolonged deliberation, they decided to take refuge at the Guru's feet. Having arrived at this decision, they soon reached Anandpur.²² The leader of the deputation Kirpa Ram, a Kashmiri Datt Brahmin from Mattan (Near Pehalgam) had long resided at the durbar of Guru Teg Bahadur and was fully conversant with his teachings as well as his reaction about the Mughal Government's changed policies towards the non-Muslims schools, temples and modes of worship, it was he, therefore, who had led the leading fellow Brahmins to the Guru, from what he had seen and known of Guru Teg Bahadur, he had convinced his companions that the Guru was an ideal embodiment of supreme courage and determination, completely detached from the allurements of life and capable of taking the boldest stand against tyranny and aggression and as such the only person to whom they could appeal in this dark hour for succour and rescue.²³ Guru Teg Bahadur²⁴ patiently heard to the supplicant Brahmins and consoled them by saying, "Guru Nanak will protect you". Guru Teg Bahadur felt that their cause needed a sacrifice which would ashamed the Mughal ruler.²⁵

As Guru Teg Bahadur sat pondering over the request that had been made to him, Guru Gobind Singh happened to come along with his playmates. Seeing his father in such a thoughtful mood he stopped and asked why he looked so deeply preoccupied.

"Dharma is at stake," said the Guru. "The oppression of the rulers has reached its limit. Some truly worthy person should come forward to lay down his life to rid the

²¹ Anil Chandra Banerjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, New Delhi, 1978, pp. 174-175.

²² Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 30.

²³ Fauja Singh and Gurbachan Singh Talib *Guru Teg Bahadur* (Martyr and Teacher) Punjabi University, Patiala, 1975, p. 91.

²⁴ The place where Kashmiri Pandit's pleaded Guru Teg Bahadur, Gurudwara Thada Sahib is situated, also nearby is Gurudwara Bhora Sahib. Notice Board, Gurudwara Bhora Sahib, Anandpur sahib, District Ropar.

²⁵ Ganda Singh, *The Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur*, Punjab Past and Present, Vol. XI April, 1976, p. 89.

earth of the burden of tyranny”. “None could be worthier than yourself for such a noble act,” remarked Guru Gobind Singh in his innocent manner. Guru Teg Bahadur was pleased to hear this brave answer and received such spontaneous confirmation from his young son, then barely nine, of his wish to sacrifice his life to vindicate human dignity and freedom.²⁶ The Brahmans were then instructed to go away and tell the authorities that they would have no objection to changing their creed if, Guru Teg Bahadur was converted, they would all voluntarily accept Islam.²⁷

The Pandits went back and told this to the Governor who conveyed that to Aurangzeb at Hassan Abdul situated close to the borders of Kashmir.²⁸

The imperial news writers had sent to the court-colored reports of Guru Teg Bahadur's travels.²⁹ So the emperor's mind was already prejudiced against Guru Teg Bahadur. He hated the word *Sache Patshah* used by the Sikhs for the Guru. It implied, that the Guru was a true king and the emperor was a false king. He also detested the word of Bahadur in the Guru's name as this term was reserved for nobility of the Mughal court only. He ordered his deputies to summon him to the capital and force him to accept Islam or death.³⁰ He knew no other course. He issued a *firman* to the governor of Lahore to arrest the Guru and keep him in prison until he was called at Delhi.

The Governor of Lahore passed on a copy of the imperial *firman* to Abdul Aziz Dilawar Khan, faujdar of Sirhind, with instructions to execute the orders in such a way as not to arouse any serious alarm in the region and to treat it as most confidential. The faujdar instructed Nur Muhammad Khan Mirza, the Kotwal of Rupar, in whose Jurisdiction Anandpur was situated, to arrest the Guru quietly and immediately send him to Sirhind. The order was kept secret for some time. Obviously the Kotwal was waiting for a suitable opportunity. He did not like to carry out the orders at Anandpur, where a large number of Sikhs were always present. But he had employed scouts to inform him of the Guru's daily activities and programme. It was reported to him that the Guru had decided to go on a tour about middle of July, 1675.

²⁶ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 16.

²⁷ Fauja Singh, Gurbachan Singh Talib, *Guru Teg Bahaduar* (Martyr and Teacher), p. 92 see also Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 16.

²⁸ Hari Ram Gupta, *Guru Teg Bahadur A Biographical Study*, Edited by Gurbachan Singh Talib, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1976, pp. 17-20.

²⁹ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 17.

³⁰ Hari Ram Gupta, *Guru Teg Bahadar A Biographical Study*, (ed.) Gurbachan Singh Talib, pp. 17-20.

The Guru accompanied by three devoted Sikhs, Mati Das, Sati Das and Diyal Das, left Anandpur on 12th day of Sawan 1732 (July 11, 1675)³¹

The Guru along with his three companions was arrested at village Malikpur and they all were brought to Ropar. They were put in the lockup at Basi Pathana and information was conveyed to Delhi. After three months, on receiving the order from Delhi they were sent to Delhi, in November, 1675.³²

Sayyid Muhammed Latif writes: The Emperor had many religious disputations with Guru Teg Bahadur and asked him to show miracles, if he was a true Guru, or to embrace Islamism.³³ The Guru replied that showing miracle was to interfere in the work of God, which was wholly improper. As for embracing Islam he considered his own religion as good as Islam and therefore, the change of religion was not necessary.³⁴ As Guru Teg Bahadur was locked up in iron cage and for quite some time, the efforts continued to convert the Guru to Islam. The Guru suffered in the iron cage for a long time and when every effort to induce him to accept Islam or perform some miracle, ultimately it is said to have been proposed to subject the Guru to some barbarous tortures.³⁵

After that, the emperor ordered that the Guru be put to the severest tortures. After five day's persecution, on 10th November, the most heinous and most horrible scene was enacted before the eyes of the Guru who was kept in the iron cage. Aurangzeb thought that the sight of such ghastly deeds might force the Guru to change his mind for embracing Islam.³⁶

As orders for the execution of Guru Teg Bahadur were received in the beginning of November 1675. His tormentors had given evidence of their cruel intention by tying Bhai Mati Das, one of his devoted followers, between two pillars and splitting his body into two by sawing it from head downwards. Bhai Dyal Das was thrown into a cauldron of boiling water and Sati Das burnt alive wrapped in cotton wool. Guru Teg Bahadur was himself beheaded in public in Chandni Chowk in the afternoon of November 11, 1675. This was an earthshaking event in the History of

³¹ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 211.

³² Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian*, (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, Amritsar, 2005, no. 29, pp. 85-86.

³³ Sayyid Muhammad Latif, *History of The Punjab*, New Delhi, 1964, p. 260.

³⁴ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 214.

³⁵ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Jullundur, 1960, p. 249.

³⁶ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 24.

India. Thus did Guru Gobind Singh write about it in the Bachitra Natak:

He protected their *tilak* and *janeu*;
In this *Kali* age, he performed a grand deed;
He made the supreme sacrifice for the sake of the men of faith.
He gave his head,
but uttered not a groan.
This martyrdom he endured to uphold righteousness.
He gave his head, but displayed not his charisma.
Men of God will be ashamed
To perform Tricks like charlatans.
Casting of his bodily vesture to the suzerain of Delhi,
He departed to Realms Divine.
A deed like Teg Bahadur's none had dared before.
At the departure of Teg Bahadur.
The world was enwrapped in mourning,
Laments of grief Filled
The Land of the mortals;
In the sphere of the gods rang
shouts adoration.³⁷

After Guru Teg Bahadur's execution, his head and body were left exposed in the street to serve as a lesson to those who would resist the imperial decrees or the Islamic injunctions.³⁸ But before his body could be quartered and exposed to public view, it was stolen under cover of darkness by one of his devotees³⁹ called Jaita,⁴⁰ a

³⁷ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 17.

³⁸ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, Ludhiana, p. 34.

³⁹ Khushwant Singh, *A History of The Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 74.

⁴⁰ Jaita was Ranghreta Sikh who was general of Guru's army. He carried out Guru's body from Delhi. Along the fort of Anandgarh his following generation is still there at the place where Gurdwara Tap Asthaan is situated. He remained as a devotee here for 29 years. This Gurdwara has been taken care of by their family. Notice Board Gurdwara Tap Asthaan Sahib, Anandpur sahib, District Ropar.

‘Ranghreta Sikh’, succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the guard and taking possession of the Guru’s head. He hurried with it to Anandpur. There he presented it to the Guru's son, Guru Gobind Singh. The latter was deeply touched with the dauntless courage and devotion of the Ranghreta. Flinging his arms round Bhai Jaita’s neck, he declared, “Ranghretas are the Guru’s own sons. Here, through you I embrace them all”, Guru Gobind Singh cremated the head with due Sikhs rites. A Gurdwara, called *Sis Ganj*.⁴¹ Anandpur, marks the Site.⁴² And the headless body was hidden in a loaded cart by a Lubana merchant, Lakki Das and carried off to his home. Since open cremation would have amounted to a crime against the state, the Lubana Sikh set fire to his house, burning with it the body of the martyred Guru. The spot is now the site of Gurdwara Rakab Ganj in New Delhi. The place where the Guru was executed is commemorated by another of the Sikhs holy shrines in the Indian capital, Gurdwara Sis Ganj.⁴³ According to some of the Sikh chronicles, Guru Teg Bahadur before his execution sent a messenger to Anandpur that Guru Gobind Singh should be made his successor.⁴⁴

On Baisakhi day, March 29, 1676, a formal ceremony was held in which Guru Gobind Singh was installed as the next Guru. The Sikhs came in large number from all parts of the country to join the gathering and to participate in the ceremonies. Guru

⁴¹ After the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur Bhai Jaita brought back Guru's head to Kiratpur where Gurdwara Bibangarh is situated, the grandmother of Guru Gobind Singh Mata Nanaki and Mata Gujri gave their blessings to bhai jaita and Guru Gobind Singh called him “Ranghrete Guru Ke Bete” afterward Guru Gobind Singh and Sikh devotees cremated Guru Teg Bahadur's head. Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib is situated here. The inner part of the Gurdwara was constructed under supervision of Guru Gobind Singh. At the time of the evacuation of Anandpur in December 1705 Guru Gobind Singh, who especially entrusted it to the care of Gurbakhsh Udasi. The renovation and enlargement of the monument were carried out under the supervision of Baba Sewa of Anandgarh during the early 1970's. The original pavement in the front compound with old Nanakshahi bricks arranged in geometrical patterns is still intact. The two-storey building with a pinnacled dome provides a four-matricide covered circumambulatory passage supported on exquisitely designed marble columns around the inner sanctum where the Guru Granth Sahib is seated. After cremation of Guru Teg Bahadur's head, Guru Gobind Singh addressed Sikh sangat and advised them to accept the wish of God and get ready to stand firm for the fight against cruelty of the Mughals. Gurdwara Akal Bunga is situated here. Gurdwara Akal Bunga is opposite Gurdwara Sis Ganj with in the same compound, it is a small shrine housed in an old building said to have been built by a *pujari, priest*, Maan Singh in 1889 it comprises of a pentagonal room on either side of a masonry pedestal on which the Guru Granth Sahib is seated behind glass panels. The pedestal marks the spot sitting where during the obsequies (*Bhog*) of his father, Guru Gobind Singh delivered a sermon to his followers. Notice board Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, see also Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 32.

⁴² Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 37.

⁴³ Harban Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 18.

⁴⁴ The place where Guru Gobind Singh received Gurgaddi, there is a situated Gurdwara Damdma Sahib, Notice Board Gurdwara Bhora Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

Gobind Singh spent his early year of his pontification under the tender care of his mother and grandmother. His maternal uncle Kirpal, supervised the affairs of the Panth and was said to be the most important man in the Sikh church till Guru Gobind Singh grew to manhood and took the affairs completely in his own hands.⁴⁵

The Martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur against Aurangzeb's intolerable religious policy had affected the young Guru Gobind Singh deeply because the basic aim of Aurangzeb's religious policy was to convert India into *Dar-ul-Islam*. Guru Gobind Singh established his headquarter at Anandpur near the Shivalik hills. He wanted to strengthen the Sikh community against the Mughal oppression to depict the relations between Guru Gobind Singh and emperor Aurangzeb.⁴⁶

As after the martyrdom of his father, Guru Gobind Singh began to consolidate his position as the spiritual head of the community. The Sikhs came from all the directions to meet their new spiritual guide and brought splendid gifts for him. The Guru asked the Sikhs through his Hukmname to bring in future war-materials for him. Within a couple of years, the Guru raised a contingent of brave and selfless Sikhs. There was no shortage of arms and ammunition, horses and swords. Such activities in the house of Guru Nanak, raised great fear in the minds of the hill chiefs, who became antagonistic to the Guru. This resulted in several skirmishes here and there.⁴⁷ These activities of the Guru scared Bhim Chand, the Rajput ruler of the Bilaspur state (Then Called Kahlur), in whose territory there was the city of Anandpur. He thought if the Guru became too powerful, he might challenge his authority as well. So, he started in dealings in petty interests against him.⁴⁸ According to the Sikh chronicles, Guru Gobind Singh had two wives Viz. Mata Jito, Mata Sundri. When Guru Gobind Singh entered eleven years of his life, he was married to a girl named Jito.⁴⁹ Mata Jito was the daughter of Harjas Subhikhi, a Khatri of Lahore. In those days, early marriage was the rule. As going to Lahore two years after Guru Teg Bahadur's execution implied imprisonment or death for the Guru, he founded a village called Guru ka Lahore for the bride's party, twelve kilometers to the north east of Anandpur, where marriage was

⁴⁵ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 27.

⁴⁶ G.S Nayar, *The Sikh in Fernet*, Chandigarh, 1992, p. 34.

⁴⁷ Surinder Singh Kohli, *The Life and Ideals of Guru Gobind Singh* (Based on original Source), Mushiram Manohar Lal Publisher Pvt. Ltd., 1986, pp. 5-6, see also Hukmname, Ed. by Ganda Singh Punjabi University, Patiala, No. 37,38,44,57,60,61.

⁴⁸ Dr. Gopal Singh, *The Prophet of Hope (The life of Guru Gobind Singh)*, New Delhi, p. 22.

⁴⁹ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 28.

performed in 1677. This village still exists under the same name.⁵⁰ At the age of seventeen Guru Gobind was married to Sundari, daughter of Bhikhia, a resident of Lahore. Unmindful of the custom, he refused to go to Lahore for the wedding. He founded instead a small town near Anandpur and called it Lahore. His disciples and followers thronged the place Bhikhia came with his family and the nuptial ceremonies were performed amidst much jubilation.⁵¹

Guru Gobind Singh had four sons. The eldest Ajit Singh,⁵² by Mata Sundri born on the fourth day of bright half of Magh, Sambat 1744 (1688A.D). Three sons were born to Mata Jito ji as follows:

1. Zorawar Singh born on 21st Chet, Sambat 1747 (1691 A.D).
2. Jujhar Singh, born on 6th Maghar, Sambat 1753 (1696 A.D).
3. Fateh Singh, born on 4th Phagan, Sambat 1755 (1699 A.D).⁵³

Gurdwara Guru Ke Mahal is situated at the place where three Sahibzadas took birth, which is residential quarters of Guru Teg Bahadur.⁵⁴

The sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur had proved that a tremendous preparation was essential to protect the Sikh faith. The preparation included collection of arms, practice of archery, martial exercise, musket-shooting, hunting, collection of troops. Guru Gobind Singh appealed to his devotees to present weapons, horses as gifts. A special kind of drum, named '*Ranjit Nagara*' was also made by Guru Gobind Singh. It was used only at time of hunting expedition Guru Gobind Singh, following in his predecessor foot-steps and used to rise in the end of the night and would perform his devotions.⁵⁵ The Hill Raja objected to this practice, because in those days only kings or chief could beat a drum in their territory.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 226, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru - Khalsa*, Vol.I, p. 784.

⁵¹ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 26.

⁵² Baba Ajit Singh, the eldest son of the Guru was born to Mata Sundri at Panota S.S. Kohali, *The life and Ideals of Guru Gobind Singh* (Based on the arranged sources), p. 6.

⁵³ Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, Vol. I Satvic Books, 1914, pp. 168-169.

⁵⁴ Notice board, Gurudara Guru Ke Mahal, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

⁵⁵ M.A. McAuliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. V, New Delhi, 1963, p. 135, see also Dalbir Singh, Dhillon, *Battle of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 33, See also Giani Gain Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 771.

⁵⁶ Kartar Singh, M.A., *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 56.

Gradually, the popularity of the Guru increased and people started reaching at Makhawal in large number along with the innumerable gifts. In 1680, Raja Rattan Rai of Assam, a devotee of the Sikh Guru, came to visit him. Among other presents offered to the Guru, there was an elephant called Prasadi, a five in one weapon, revolver rifle, lance dagger and club, five horses with golden trappings, a water vessel of great value and several other costly and beautiful jewels and raiments.⁵⁷

The possession of an elephant was another symbol of sovereignty and it considerably enhanced Gobind's prestige. About the same time a Sikh from Kabul, named Duni Chand, brought as his offering a costly tent to be used by Guru Gobind Singh for holding a durbar. It was made of the finest silk fabrics having numerous pictures carved on it in threads of gold and strings of pearls hanging all around. The flooring was covered with lovely Persian carpet. All this touched the pride of Bhim Chand. He could not tolerate a sovereign state springing up within his sate.⁵⁸

When Bhim Chand, the Raja of the hill state of Kahlur, heard of the elephant presented to the Guru and he resolved to take possession of it. He pretended his wish to borrow the animal to grace the occasion of the marriage of his son with the daughter of Fateh Shah, Raja of Sri Nagar. The Guru knew that, if Bhim Chand once got possession of the elephant, he would never return it and the elephant was accordingly refused.⁵⁹

The relations between the Raja of Sirmur and Garhwal were not amicably. Fateh Shah, the chief of Garhwal married his daughter to the son of Bhim Chand the chief of Kahlur. This marriage increased the power of the hill chief of Garhwal and this led to the confusion of Medni Parkash the ruler of the Sirmur (Nahun). He wanted to use Guru's weapons against Fateh Shah. For self-defense and enlargement of power, Medni Parkash, invited the Guru to stay with him.⁶⁰ So, Guru Gobind Singh received an invitation from Raja Medni Parkash of Sirmur to stay with him for some time.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Daulat Rai, *Sahibe Kamal Guru Gobind Singh*, translated by Prof. Surinderjit Singh Amritsar, p. 85, see also Dalbir Singh, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 34, see also Koer Singh *Gurbilas Patishahi*, 10 (Ed. Shamsher Singh Ashok) Punjabi university, Patiala, 1968, p. 72.

⁵⁸ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 227.

⁵⁹ M.A. Mcauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, (A Symposium), Calcutta, 1958, pp. 40-41.

⁶⁰ Dalbir Singh, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 34.

⁶¹ Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Pathahi das* (Ed. Gurcharan Singh Jaggi) Language Department, Patiala, 1989, p. 85.

Guru Gobind Singh accepted his invitation and visited him in 1685. Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Nahan for some days and later on lived at a beautiful and attractive land scape on the bank of Jamuna, later on renamed it as Paonta. There, “The Guru devoted himself to the task of preparing himself and his followers for the coming struggle against the tyranny and the oppression”. Here at Paonta, Guru Gobind Singh built a fort on the land provided by Medni Parkash. Once, the Guru and Raja Medni Parkash were on hunting excursion, Raja explained to the Guru that Raja of Srinagar had often quarreled with him over the ground on which they were then standing. We would therefore, be very pleased when a fortress was constructed on the spot for protection against all enemies. It is said that at that spot the Guru constructed a fort and it was named Paonta. Paonta is situated on the Banks of river Jamuna, twenty-six miles north east of Nahan. There is a beautiful Gurdwara recently reconstructed at the ruins of the fort, and it still exists. Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Paonta for about three years. Here, the Guru composed poetry also. So, Paonta became the centre of literary activities of the Guru. As many as fifty-two poets stayed here with the Guru. Some of the works written in Sanskrit were translated into Braj language also.

For the last four generations, the relations between the ruler of Sirmur and Garhwal was continuously becoming bitter. They felt afraid of each other and a compromise between Fateh Shah and Medni Parkash occurred with the efforts of Guru Gobind, Medni Parkash felt very happy at this because the bitter enemies were converted into friends. Guru Gobind Singh, Medni Parkash and Fateh Shah became so friendly that they undertook many hunting expeditions jointly. Though, Guru Gobind became friendly with the Hill Rajas, the enmity between Bhim Chand and Guru Gobind was increasing day by day. Bhim Chand started feeling jealous of this triangular friendship.⁶²

At Poanta, Guru composed poetry. In this way, Poanta became the centre of spiritual and cultural regeneration. Several Sanskrit and Persian classics were translated by various poets, who had gathered at Paonta and enjoyed the munificence of the great Guru. Sometimes, poetical symposiums were held and Guru himself had distributed the awards. Guru Gobind Singh's compositions are preserved in the Dasam

⁶² Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 34-35, see also Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 50, see also Puran Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, Chandigarh, 1966, p. 31.

Granth. The book of the Tenth Master, as distinguished from the *Adi Granth* which is the scriptural text. Two of these, the *Japji Sahib* and *Sudha Sawwaiye* are among the daily prayers of the Sikhs.

The number of court poets of Guru Gobind Singh has been fixed at fifty-two. Most of them were present at Paonta and helped in rendering the classical literature into Braj Bhasha, especially from Sanskrit. The poets whose renderings from Sanskrit are available are Alam, Amrit Rai, Sainapat, Hans Ram, Kuvresh, Tehkan Mangal and Lakhan.⁶³

Hearing of his Sojourn at Paonta, his devotees flocked to the place from far and near. Anandpur was, so to say, reproduced at Paonta Sahib. Religious gatherings were held in the morning and evening, exploits of heroes were sung by the bards and feats of valour and physical strength and skills were exhibited by the Sikhs and during the day. Much attention was paid to literary creation.⁶⁴

Though, Guru Gobind Singh spent most of his time in poetry writing at Paonta, he was also aware of his enemy Bhim Chand. Taking this into consideration, Guru Gobind Singh ordered his troops to remain alert and ready at every moment. A fort was also built by the Guru at Paonta to strengthen his security. According to the Sikh chronicles, the Guru enrolled five hundred Pathans in his army at the recommendation of Pir Budhu Shah, one of the greatest admirers of the Guru. The leaders of these Pathan-soldiers were Bhikhan Khan, Nijabat Khan, Hayat Khan, Kale Khan and Jawahar Khan all were the terminated soldiers of Aurangzeb's army.⁶⁵

Soon after, Raja Fateh Shah invited the Guru to his daughter's wedding with Bhim Chand's son. The Guru felt that his presence at the same place as Bhim Chand might spoil the marriage festivities. So he sent Diwan Nand Chand with costly marriage gifts for the princess. Raja Fateh Shah received him most ceremoniously and offered him suitable quarters within the city.⁶⁶

As Fateh Shah began to accept the gift of Guru Gobind Singh but, Bhim Chand suggested him to reject these presents sent by Guru because they belonged to

⁶³ S.S. Kohali, *The Life and Ideals of Guru Gobind Singh*, (Based on original Sources), Munshiram Manoharlal, Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., 1986, p. 6, see also Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 33.

⁶⁴ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 67-68.

⁶⁵ Khazan Singh, *History of the Sikh Religion*, p. 172, see also Dalbir Singh, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 35.

⁶⁶ Kartar Sing, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 72.

his enemy. Fateh Shah was forced to reject the gifts because there was a danger of insult for him. Diwan Nand Chand returned after seeing such adverse circumstances.⁶⁷

Raja Bhim Chand now decided to play a ruse upon the Guru. He sent the following messages to the latter, “you know that my son's marriage party has to proceed to Srinagar. You also know that the most convenient route from Bilaspur to that place passes by Paonta. The marriage party is quite large by itself, will be accompanied by a large army. It may happen that some dispute might arise between your army and mine at Paonta and it might lead to an open conflict. Or my army, getting out of restraint, might loot your camp and the city. In order to avoid these mishaps, it will be advisable for you and your army to get aside from the route at that time. If my advice is not heeded, the responsibility for what might happen will rest on your shoulders. You have been warned.”⁶⁸ As for this purpose Bhim Chand sent his minister but he was told by the Guru that Bhim Chand may go through Paonta without his army. Hill Rajas consider marriage party without the company of army as an insult and, therefore, it was decided to send the bridegroom through Paonta while the others through another route. This further annoyed Bhim Chand.⁶⁹

When the bridegroom and party reached Srinagar, they told Raja Fateh Shah how they had come via Paonta whereas the rest would be coming by the longer route. Raja Fateh Shah was sorry, no doubt, at this, but he felt that what the Guru had done was perfectly legitimate, wise and within the accepted rules of policy. He, therefore, did not feel annoyed. That he did not consider the Guru to have acted wrongly, is shown by his acceptance and public announcement of the Guru's gifts to his daughter.⁷⁰

The situation became tense. Fateh Shah was forced to yield. The Guru says that Raja Fateh Shah got angry with him and the battle was thrust upon him without reason. Bhim Chand planned to plunder the party and kill all the Sikhs. Nand Chand got the hint. He took possession of his gifts and fled away. Bhim Chand said the Sikhs had robbed them of both *khat* of dowry presents and *pat* or honour. This was an insult

⁶⁷ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 37.

⁶⁸ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 72-73, see also Koer Singh, *Gurblias Patshahi Dasvi*, pp. 85-87, see also Sukha Singh, *Gurbilas Patshahi Dasvi*, pp. 101-103.

⁶⁹ Giani Gain Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p.14-21, see also Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 35.

⁷⁰ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 74.

not only to him but to all the Rajas present there. The Guru was an enemy of their religion as he was opposed to idol worship. He persuaded Fateh Shah to lead an assault on the Guru in the company of all the Rajas. The bride and bridegroom under a suitable escort were sent straight to kahlur. All other got ready for the battle. It also appeared likely that the Delhi Government had incited the Hill Rajas to crush the Guru.⁷¹

Raja Kirpal of Katoch added fuel to the fire by saying, "Your anger is justified. An enemy's friend is always on enemy. If Raja Fateh Shah is a friend of an enemy of yours, how can he call himself a friend of yours? Why have relations or ties with him? You should tell him that he should lead an attack on the Guru, when you decide to take the field; otherwise, you would refuse to accept his daughter for your son." Raja Bhim Chand accepted this advice. He sent a message to Fateh Shah accordingly. The letter remonstrated "How can I show enmity against the holy person that the guru is? He is my friend. He has done me a very good turn. He has effected (brought) reconciliation between me and Raja Medni Parkash. He wants peace with all. Tell the Raja to have patience. I shall act as a mediator and remove all misunderstandings between him and the Guru," but Bhim Chand did not relish this advice. He ordered his men to prepare for departure. Horses began to be saddled. Raja Fateh Shah's courage failed him. He thought, "If Bhim Chand were to leave my daughter here now, it would be a matter of extreme dis honor and shame for me. He will, also become a sworn enemy of mine. My friendship with the Guru will prove very costly for me."⁷²

After the marriage was over, Bhim Chand held a conference with Fateh Chand and some other Hill Rajas present there, such as Kirpal of Katoch, Gopal of Guler, Hari Chand of Handur and the Raja of Jaswal. They all decided to attack the Guru on their way back home.⁷³

The Hill Rajas attacked Guru Gobind Singh with their individual armies. When Guru Gobind Singh came to know about the war-preparation of Hill Rajas. Guru Gobind Singh chose to check Fateh Shah on the banks of the Giri at Bhangani,

⁷¹ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, pp. 235-236.

⁷² Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 74.

⁷³ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of Punjab*, Vol. I, pp. 265-266.

six miles to the North-East of Paonta. Having correctly anticipated the route that the Garhwal troops would follow.⁷⁴

As stated above, the Guru had on the recommendations of his friend and admirer Sayyid Budhu Shah, taken in employ five hundred Pathan Soldiers who had been dismissed by Aurangzeb and whom no one had the guts to engage because of the fear of the emperor's wrath. They were under five officers, namely, Haiyat Khan, Kale Khan, Najabat Khan, Bhikhan Khan and Umre Khan.⁷⁵ They joined the Hill Raja's army without pay with a promise that they would be permitted to plunder the riches of the Guru. The Udasi⁷⁶ also fled hearing of the approaching war. Only one of them, Mahant Kirpal, remained with the Guru. Budhu Shah was immediately informed of the misconduct of the Pathans, who to wipe away this disgrace, placed himself, his brother, his four sons and seven hundred disciples at the Guru's disposal.⁷⁷ Meanwhile his five stalwart-cousins of Guru Guru Gobind Singh named Sangu Shah, Jit Mal, Gopal Chand, Ganga Ram, Mahri Chand, each led a section of troops. The battle raged fiercely as the two armies faced each other.⁷⁸

In October 1688, a severe and bloody battle was fought, there in which many brave soldiers were killed on both the sides including brave Sangu Shah, a cousin of the Guru and Sayyad Budhu Shah lost two of his sons.⁷⁹ Following this, Guru Gobind Singh himself jumped into the battle field and killed Raja Hari Chand along with many others. Consequently, Guru Gobind Singh came out victorious and Hill Rajas suffered a lot at the hands of the Guru. With the beat of drum, the Guru celebrated his victory and returned to Paonta from the battle field of Bhangani which was illuminated. After this victory, Guru Gobind Singh highly praised the death of his two sacrificed cousins, Sango Shah and Jit Mal, two sons of Pir Budhu Shah and other

⁷⁴ J.S. Grewal and S.S. Bal, *Guru Gobind Singh (A Biographical Study)*, Chandigarh, 1967, pp. 78-79, see also Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 36-37.

⁷⁵ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 75-76.

⁷⁶ Five Hundred Udasi Sadhus, who had been fattening themselves on the rich food served in the Guru's kitchen, were deeply dismayed on hearing the news of the impending battle. They feared that the guru might ask them to take the field. So, all of them except Mahant Kirpal of hehar ran away during the night. When, in the morning, the Guru saw the Udasi's camp deserted by all except Mahant Kirpal, he smiled and said, "It is well and all right. The root of the Udasi Sikhs has been saved." Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 76.

⁷⁷ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, p. 266.

⁷⁸ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 36.

⁷⁹ Dr. Gopal Singh, *The Prophet of Hope, (The life of Guru Gobind Singh)*, Delhi, 1967, p. 26, see also Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 177.

valiant Sikh soldiers and generals and Pir Budhu Shah were granted a robe of honor.⁸⁰

While at Paonta, Guru Gobind Singh had a very touching meeting with Baba Ram Rai, son of Guru Har Rai, Nanak VII, who lived in Dehra Dun on the other side of the Jamuna. He had garbled a verse from the holy Granth to please Emperor Aurangzeb and was, for this sin, debarred from his succession to Guru ship. He thus fell out of the mainstream of Sikh History. But he was a gifted man credited with miraculous powers. He had a considerable following of his own and had a large estate in the Dehra Valley given him by the Mughal Emperor who was one of his admirers. When Baba Ram Rai heard of his uncle, Guru Gobind Singh, being so close to where he lived, he became desirous of seeing him. He sent a messenger to Paonta and a day was fixed for both of them to meet on the bank of the Jamuna. Baba Ram Rai, who was meeting the Guru for the first time, greeted him with reverence and both had a long and cordial converse. The *masands* of Baba Ram Rai who had accompanied him felt embittered to see this scene of family reconciliation.

Guru Gobind Singh was still at Paonta. When Baba Ram Rai died on September 4, 1687. He made a trip to Dehra Dun to condole with his widow, Punjab Kaur. She complained of high-handedness and corruption of her husband's *masands*.⁸¹ To collect the offerings of his followers from his villages and other places, Ram Rai had appointed *masands*. He failed to control them. Guru Gobind Singh was then living at Paonta not far from Dehra Dun. He had two meetings with Guru Gobind Singh in 1686 and sought his help. He said, "My *masands* are getting too powerful and headstrong. When I am gone, to protect my family and property from being ruined at their hands." A little later Ram Rai was in a trance. The *masands* declared him dead. Ram Rai's wife, Punjab Kaur, protested that it often happened before and he was alive. The *masands* cremated him and seized his property. This occurred on September 4, 1687. Punjab Kaur appealed to Guru Gobind Singh for help.⁸² The Guru invited the *masands* to meet him. He charged them with dishonesty and frivolity and punished them according to their crime.⁸³

⁸⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 835, see also Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 37, see also Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 237.

⁸¹ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 37-38.

⁸² Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 233.

⁸³ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 38.

The victory at Bhangani encouraged Guru Gobind Singh to leave the mountains and to return to his ancestral home in Anandpur Sahib⁸⁴. He dispersed his camp at Paonta in October 1688. He attended Kapal Mochan fair held at Bilaspur thirteen kilometers north of Jagadhari on the full moon day in Kartik (28 October, 1688). From there, the Guru came to Sadhauara to console Pir Budhu Shah's wife, the death of her sons. He pitched his tents at Laharpur, where he stayed for thirteen days. Here, Budhu Shah met him a number of times and the Raja of Nahan also called on him. The Guru had sent his troops in advance to Anandpur, and he remained behind with a small bodyguard hunting and sporting in the jungles.

From Laharpur, the Guru proceeded via Naraingarh, Laha and Bhurewala to Raepur Rani, twenty-two kilometers from Sadhaura. Here, he was warmly received by the Rani who was acting as regent for her minor son. She offered the Guru Rupees eleven hundred and a horse and entertained him for two days. It was here, that the Ranghars of Toda village stole Guru's camels in the night and passed them on their relatives at Laha where under influence of the author's ancestors they were restored to the Guru. Two Gurdwaras were built at Raipur, one outside the fort where Guru Gobind Singh had pitched his tent, and the other inside the fort where the Guru dined as the Rani's guest. The Guru returned to Anandpur by way of Ropar and Kiratpur.⁸⁵

Anandpur had been depopulated in Guru Gobind Singh's absence and had to be rehabilitated. With his arrival, the Sikhs started pouring in and many of them settled there. The town once again throbbed with the inspiration that had made it the centre of a vital spiritual rebirth before the Guru's departure for Paonta. The old tempo of life was revived and the currents arising from it was spread out to wider areas in the country.⁸⁶

For some time, there was peace. The Guru felt that in order to live in peace, he had to prepare for war. The Guru, therefore, again started his organizational work. "In addition to preparing his people's bodies, mind and heart for the coming encounter with the organized might of the foe and acquiring military stores and equipment, he

⁸⁴ Madanjit Kaur, *Guru Gobind Singh, (Historical and Ideological Perspective)*, Unistar, 2007, pp. 6-7.

⁸⁵ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, pp. 238-239, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p. 1295.

⁸⁶ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 38-39.

erected four strong fort at Anandpur, Anandgarh,⁸⁷ Fatehgarh,⁸⁸ Holgarh,⁸⁹ Lohgarh⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Qilla Anandgarh Sahib is situated on another spur, about eight hundred meters south-east of Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib. It is a newly constructed building, though marks of the old original structure are also traceable. The present building complex was raised during the 1970's by Sant Seva Singh (a.d.1982) whose successors are now managing and further developing it. Earlier, during the 1930s, Kartar Singh Kakas Valia had got a fort- like building constructed which is still intact on top of the hillock. The present Gurdwara, separated from this building by a spacious terrace paved with slabs of streaked marble, is a 15-metre square hall with an 8x3 meter porch in front. The 6-metre square sanctum within the hall has above it a lotus domed topped with a gilded pinnacle and *Khanda* as a finial. The entire wall surface has a facing of streaked marble. This building was completed in 1970. The water level of an old *baoli* a stepped well 4-metre in diameter, is approached through a covered passage. The *baoli* has a 135 marble steps. At the lower level on the eastern flank of the main building is a spacious hall of the Guru ka Langer constructed in 1972, and 300 rooms for pilgrims and administrators. This holy place is one of the five forts of Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji. After victory of Bhagani's war, Guru ji fought many wars against Mughals and Pahari Rajas from 1689-1705. You can visit, "the Bauli Sahib" in the fort. Due to the request of Sikhs and also due to success of Mughals and Pahari Rajas, Guru ji left the fort and proceeded towards Chamkaur Sahib. Harbans Singh, *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p. 131, see also Notice board Gurdwara Anandgarh sahib, District Ropar.

⁸⁸ Qilla Fatehgarh Sahib, situated on the northern outskirts of the town Anandpur, marks the site of another fortress bearing this name. The present building was constructed during the late 1980's under the supervision of successors of Sant Seva Singh of Qila Fatehgarh Sahib. The Gurdwara is a two-strayed domed building. In front of it, is an old well which once served the need of the Fategarh Fort. Harbans Singh, *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p. 131, see also Notice board Gurdwara Fategarh sahib, District Ropar.

⁸⁹ Quilla Holgarh Sahib stand on the site of Holgarh Fort, one and half kilometres northwest of the town across the Charan Ganga rivulet. It was here that Guru Gobind Singh introduced in the spring of 1701, the celebration of *hola* on the day following the Hindu festival of colour-throwing, *holi*. Unlike the playful sprinklings of colours as is done during *holi*, the Guru made *Hola* an occasion for the Sikhs to demonstrate skills -at-arms in simulated battle. *Hola* or *Hola Mahalla*, became thereafter an annual tourney of warlike sports in Anandpur as long as the Guru stayed there. The observance of *Hola Mahalla* was revived after the Sikhs had established their rule in Punjab. It is now the biggest festival of Anandpur. The *Mahalla* or Takht Sahib on the concluding day of the week-long festival ends with Holgarh, where sports like fencing, spear-throwing and tent pegging are held. The present building, a three storeyed octagonal, domed edifice, was constructed under the supervision of Sant Seva Singh and was completed in 1970. The sanctum is in the middle of the marbled ground floor. Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji placed Diwanas on 'HOLA' at this place. Bhai Nand Lal Ji met Guru Ji at this place. Now this place is run by Baba Amrik Singh Ji from Patiala. Harbans Singh, *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, pp. 131-132, see also Notice board Gurdwara Holgarh sahib, district Ropar.

⁹⁰ Qilla Lohgarh Sahib, one and a half-kilometer of southwest of Takht Sri Kesgarh Sahib, marks the site of the fort of the name constructed by Guru Gobind Singh to protect the reversible flank. It was here that Bhai Bachittar Singh faced and turned back a drunken elephant which the hill chiefs, during the siege of Anandpur in 1700, had sent to batter down the gate of this fort. The present building, octagonal in shape and three-storied high with a dome on top, was constructed during the late 1980's. This fort was second most safe fort amongst the five forts of Guru Gobind Singh. The factory of making weapons was placed here by Guru Gobind Singh. To cease the fort Pahari Rajas sent a drunk elephant by covering his head with swords and plates of iron in 1700, but Bhai Bachhitar Singh with the blessings of Guru ji wounded him with the help of Nagin spear. The wounded elephant went back by making loss of his own army. At the end, Bhai Bachhitar Singh won. Harbans Singh, *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p. 131, see also Notice board Gurdwara Lohgarh sahib, District Ropar.

and Taragarh.⁹¹ It would be rash to conclude that he had anti-Mughal projects in view. Anandpur,⁹² which he had made his headquarters was situated in potentially hostile territory: Bhim Chand's attitude might change at any time. The political atmosphere of the hill region fostered conflict even on trivial issues. It was obviously necessary for a body of outsiders like the Sikhs to put themselves in a strong position.⁹³

After his severe repulse at Bhangani, Raja Bhim Chand thought it better to secure peace with the Guru; for he was too afraid of maintaining open hostility with one Guru who had completely routed the combined hill armies. A messenger was dispatched to sound the Guru. The Guru had enmity with no one. He wanted to be a friend of all. His doors were open to all. His arms were ever in readiness to lift the fallen; they were ever open to receive the repenting sinner; his soul ever yearned to console and soothe the inflicted. The messenger was told, that all aggression in the past had been on the Raja's side, that at the Guru's *darbar* people met their deserts, and that if the raja really intended peace, he need to have no fears on account of the Guru. Soon Raja Bhim Chand came and asked forgiveness for the past. The Guru assured him of his friendship and help if he would behave well.

About a year, passed in peace. Guru Gobind Singh utilized this interval in creating literature in installing a new life and spirit in his followers and in perfecting his plans for the creation of nation of Saint-warriors. But the peace was broken after about a year. He had to engage in a fight once again in 1747 BK (1690 A.D.).⁹⁴

⁹¹ Quilla Taragarh Sahib, Taragarh is a village five kilometres east of Anandpur (31-14N, 76-31E) in Ropar district of the Punjab, is sacred to Guru Gobind Singh, who constructed a fortress here after his return from Paonta in 160. He also had a *baoli* (open well with steps leading to down to water level) dug to ensure supply of water for the garrison. The Taragarh Fort on of a chain of defensive fortification of Anandpur, is no longer in existence. The commemorative shrine, Gurdwara Qila Taragarh, stood about 250m east of the Village, and was under the control of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Near the old *baoli* on the bank of small stream, stands the *samadhi* or cenotaph of Bhai Kanhaiya, a dedicated Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh's time who served water and gave help to soldiers wounded in battle, without distinction of friend or foe. This holy place is one of the five forts of Guru Gobind Singh. This place was made constricted keeping in consideration the attacks of Rajas of Bilaspur. Near about 500 saints meditated here along with Bhai Ghanaiya ji. First attack was held in 17th century on this place. Guru Gobind Singh himself went to this place to feed those 500 saints. Harbans Singh, *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p. 310, see also Notice board Gurdwara Taragarh sahib, District Ropar.

⁹² Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battle of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 38.

⁹³ Anil Chandra Banerjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 202, see also Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 39.

⁹⁴ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 85-86.

The Hill Rajas stopped paying the annual tribute to the Mughal Government.⁹⁵ As these hill states about which we have been talking, had been brought under control by Akbar and latter on by Todar Mal who annexed the fertile tracts but left the bare hills as tributary states. Although these states continued to be treated liberally, yet all of them had to keep a prince each at the Mughal court as a hostage for their good conduct and pay their regular tributes every year. This state of affairs continued till the time of Aurangzeb under whom the situation changed. The Emperor was kept busy in the Deccan for a pretty long time, during which great administrative irregularities commenced in the north which weakened the central hold on this part of the country. So, these hill states also seem to have been encouraged by the situation and they started refusing to pay the annual tribute.⁹⁶ Much time passed in the way. Mian Khan came (from Delhi) to Jammu (for collected revenue) he sent Alif Khan to Nadaun, who developed enmity towards Bhim Chand (the Chief of Khalur) Bhim Chand called me for assistance and himself went to face (the enemy). Alif Khan prepared a wooden fort on the hill of Navras.⁹⁷ Thirty-two kilometers south-east of Kangra town, the submission and support of the Raja of Kangra and Bijharwal and turned against Bhim Chand. Despite the deflection of these two chiefs Bhim Chand had several allies among the Rajas; yet he (says the Guru) ‘called me to assist him in the struggle and I joined his side’. The guru not only provided military aid: he personally took part in the fighting at Naduan. Alif Khan, in the first instance, addressed himself to Raja Kirpal of Kangara. The latter submitted readily and also perhaps persuaded Raja Dyal of Bijharwal to pay tribute to Alif Khan. Kirpal then suggested to Alif Khan that Raja Bhim Chand of Kahlur was the greatest of all the allied hill chief. Was he the first to pay tribute, All the rest would follow his example, and then there would be no necessity for warfare. Acting on this suggestion Alif Khan sent an envoy to Bhim Chand, But the latter refuse to pay tribute and prepared for war. After a hard battle the allies were successful and Alif Khan took to flight leaving behind all his baggage. The Guru stayed here for eight days and visited various places of the place. Meanwhile Bhim Chand made peace with Kirpal Chand of Kangra without consulting the Guru and agreed to pay tribute to the Mughal court. The Guru

⁹⁵ Anil Chandra Banarjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 202.

⁹⁶ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 271.

⁹⁷ Surinder Singh Kohli, *The life and Ideals of Guru Gobind Singh*, Based on the original source, p. 24, see also Gaini Gain Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p. 1027.

left for Anandpur in disgust.⁹⁸ On the return journey from Nadaun the Guru's followers plundered a village called Alsum which was situated within Bhim Chand's territory. After arrival at Anandpur, the Guru found himself in an uncertain position. There appeared to be no immediate danger either from the Raja or from his new Mughal friends under the Faujdar at Kangara, for the rules of Jaswan and Guler, whose territories lay on the north and north-west of Anandpur, were his allies. But the conduct of Bhim Chand and his allies among the chiefs after Nadaun was a clear testimony to the vacillating character of the Hill Rajas and the Guru could not depend upon them for the security of Anandpur. So he took measures to strengthen the ranks of his fighters; new recruits were attracted and with a view to improving discipline and generating an emotional fervor, stress was laid on "good moral behavior"⁹⁹.

As the battle of Nadaun had been fought and won by the Guru and the hill chiefs together but the victory was regarded by all as being that of the Guru. The Guru informs us that after the battle of Nadaun many days past during which he was again engaged in hunting out the apostate's states. So, after the defeat of Alif Khan, Dilawar Khan,¹⁰⁰ Governor of Lahore, decided to defeat and suppress the Guru and the hill Chiefs. He sent his son, Rustam Khan to do this. Rustam Khan decided to deal first with the Guru, before turning his attention to the hill chiefs.¹⁰¹ He arrived at night opposite Anandpur and encamped in the bed of a dry nullah. By chance it rained heavily and the rivulet was flooded. Many of his men and most of his baggage were carried off¹⁰² and the enemy troops crossed the Sutlej just before midnight. A Guru's scout ran to inform him of the fact. Alam, a deorhidar woke the Guru up, and immediately a sound of alarm was made. Everybody stirred up and took up his arms with a fiery zeal. The enemy troops seem to have already been tired by the day's march and were almost numbed with the coldness of the water. They were unprepared when the Sikhs suddenly discharged volleys of shots. Drums beat, bugles blew,

⁹⁸ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 239, see also Indubhusan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1980, p. 80.

⁹⁹ Anil Chandra Banerjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 202-203.

¹⁰⁰ Dilawar Khan one of the Mughal officers was sent from Delhi to take action against Guru Guru Gobind Singh and some recalcitrant hill Rajas. Macauliffe has also written that when Aurangzeb was busy in the Deccan Dilawar Khan availing himself of the disturbed conditions in the Punjab, built up his political power and got jealous of the guru's reputation. Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 42.

¹⁰¹ Indubhusan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. II, p. 84. see also Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 87.

¹⁰² Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p. 240.

soldiers thundered and the guns roared. It was a dreadful appearance “and the enemies fled with their weapons unused.”¹⁰³

The enemies fled away and none of them wore the arms. They left battlefield though they pretended to be the valiant heroes. They left on galloping horses and could not use the weapons. They did not shout loudly like valiant heroes and felt ashamed on seeing ladies. On their way they plundered the village Barwa and halted at Bhallan.¹⁰⁴

When Rustam Khan met his father, Dilawar Khan, his head hung in shame on this. Dilawar Khan also became furious. This time Dilawar Khan gave order to Hussain Khan, his commander of Dilwar Khan’s forces, to smash the power of the Guru and avenger defeat on him. Thus, Hussain khan along with his large army proceeded towards Anandpur plundering Awan and Dhadwal on the way.¹⁰⁵ When he proceeded towards Anandpur with a large army at the beginning of year 1696, several hill chiefs submitted to him. Among them was Raja Ajmer Chand of Bilaspur, whose father, Raja Bhim Chand, along with Guru Gobind Singh had measured swords with Alif Khan.

Hussain Khan diverted from his progress towards Anandpur by his involvement with Raja Gopal of Guler. The latter could not produce the heavy tribute levied upon him and prepared himself for an armed conflict. He was aided by his ally Raja Ram Singh of Jaswan. Sangatia and seven other Sikhs who had come as an embassy of peace to the court of the Guler chief also took part in the battle. Hussain Khan was supported by the Rajas of Kangra and Bilaspur. In the, fierce action (February 20, 1696) that ensued, both Hussain khan and Kirpal Chand of Kangra were slain, and the Raja of Guler and his allies won a decisive victory. Sangatia and his seven Sikhs fell fighting the Mughals in this bloody battle. The Raja of Guler celebrated the triumph by presenting offerings to the Guru and rendering him gratitude for his help.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 275.

¹⁰⁴ S.S. Kohali, *Life and Ideas of Guru Gobind Singh*, (Based on the original source), p. 26, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru- Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 858.

¹⁰⁵ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 43.

¹⁰⁶ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 41, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, *Guru Kian Sakhian*, ed. by Giani Garja Singh, 1986, pp. 104-105

When Dilawar Khan heard this, he was greatly enraged and the fire of revenge raged in his heart.¹⁰⁷ So, Dilawar Khan in a bid to do something immediately to retrieve the Mughal reputation on the hills, hurriedly sent Jujhar Singh and Chandel Rai towards Jaswan. The Rajput commanders of the *faujdar* moved to the strategic place of Bhallan in that state and captured it from the Jaswan contingent. But before they could go farther, Gaj Singh of Jaswan was on them and in spite of the spirited fight that Jujhar Singh and Chandan Rai gave, he won an easy victory.¹⁰⁸

The news of the repeated failures of the expeditions against the Guru reached Aurangzeb in Deccan. At this Aurangzeb became very angry and sent one of his own sons, prince Muazim, afterwards known as Bahadur Shah, for the restoration of orders in the Hills.¹⁰⁹ This was in 1696 A.D. The prince himself took up his position at Lahore. He sent Mirja Beg with a strong force to chastise the Guru and the hill chiefs. The latter were severely punished, but the Guru was left alone.¹¹⁰

Through the interaction of Bhai Nand Lal,¹¹¹ who was a secretary to the prince. On the other hand, Bhai Nand Lal, introduced him to be friendly with the

¹⁰⁷ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 43

¹⁰⁸ J.S. Grewal, S.S. Bal, *Guru Gobind Singh (A Biographical study)*, p. 99

¹⁰⁹ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Vol. I, p. 277, see also Indubhusan Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol. II, p. 90.

¹¹⁰ Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 88.

¹¹¹ Nand Lal Bhai (c.1633-1713), poet famous of the Sikh tradition and favorite disciple of Guru Gobind Singh. His poetry, all in Persian except for *Joti Bigas*, which is in Punjabi, forms part of the approved Sikh canon and can be recited along with scriptural verse at Sikh religious *divans*. Nand Lal adopted pen-name of “*Goya*”, though at places he has also subscribed himself as “Lal”, was a scholar, learned in the traditional disciplines of the time, and his image in Sikh history is that of a man loved and venerated. He is stated to have been born in 1633. By Mughal times, like the Kayasthas had gained proficiency in Persian, which at that time was the language of official business. His father, Munshi Chhaju Mall, who was an official in the secretariat of Prince Dara Shukoh, Shah Jahan’s eldest son, accompanied him on an expedition to Ghazni in 1639 and was assigned to an army unit stationed there at the end of the operation. He summoned his family, from India to join him in Ghazni where his son Nand Lal spent his childhood and early youth.

His father died in 1652, Nand Lal was left to struggle in life for himself. Some minor post was offered to him in Ghazni, but he decided to return to India. Multan was the ancestral family seat and it was here that Nand Lal settled amid a number of Hindu families like his own that had offered service under the Mughals. That quarter of the town had come to be known as Aghas, an honorific employed for Hindus who had acquired the trappings of Muslims culture.

After the Guru evacuated Anandpur in the winter of 1705, Bhai Nand Lal went to his original home at Multan where he occupied himself with the preaching the Guru’s word and teaching Arabic and Persian. For the latter purpose he opened a regular school which was in existence until the occupation of the Punjab by the British in 1849. Among his writings may be mentioned *Zindagi Namah*, *Ganj Namah*, *Joti Bigas*, *Rahitnama*, *Tankhahnama*, *Dasturul-Insha*, *Arz-ul-Alfaz*, *Diwan-i-Goya* and the *Rubaiyat*. Nand Lal died in Multan in AD 1713. Harbans Singh, *Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. III, p. 195.

Guru. According, the prince sends Nand Lal with suitable present and begged for his spiritual intercession on his behalf. The Guru promised him all aid and assured him of his accession to the throne after Aurangzeb. The Guru replied, "Both Guru Nanak and Babur's families have been set up by God. The former should be regarded as kings of religion and the latter as kings of the state"¹¹².

The Sikh Guru's built several towns for the welfare of humanity and for promoting Sikhism. Subsequently, these established towns became the centre of Sikh activities. By the time of Guru Teg Bahadur, Chak Nanaki religious centre had been established. Most of the hill chiefs and Mughal Emperor turned against him to see the proliferation of Sikhs. On the request of Kashmiri Pandits, Guru Teg Bahadur suffered martyrdom at the hands of Aurangzeb, on account of the latter's intolerant religious policy and this incident ushered a new critical phase in Sikh history spreading over the whole, pontification of Guru Gobind Singh. Gradually, Mughal emperor and hill chiefs turned against Guru Gobind Singh. So, Guru Gobind Singh began to perform various functions to unite the Sikhs. As by this time, Guru Gobind Singh had understood manner in which his enemies could treat him in future. He himself came to center-stage and began to take each and every action. So, Guru Gobind Singh began to perform various functions to unite the Sikhs.

¹¹² Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battle of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 44.

CHAPTER – 2

ANANDPUR SAHIB: SOJOURN AND FINAL EVACUATION

Guru Gobind Singh was trying to build the nation for 23 years. He prepared himself to create a new nation. The Guru ordered that the hair (kase) be kept while sitting on the throne. During these 23 years, Guru Gobind Singh continuously tried to organize the hill chiefs, but he had seen that the organization of the world could be done without the help of hill chiefs. Guru Gobind Singh mentioned his motive of coming in *Bachitr Natak* in *Dharam Chalawan*, *Sant Ubaran*, *Dusht Dokhian Ko*, *Mool Uparan*.

The Guru realized that it is the time to give a concrete base to the organization. He realized that there should be an organization that should generate the excitement to fight for one motive and also take care of them in a series. According to Cunningham, “After the sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur, it was in the heart of Guru Gobind Singh that there is a present need to empower”. This nation would fight against the hill chiefs and would achieve victory. Only an artistic hand was needed to produce image of a living nation. Cunningham somewhere else says, “Guru Gobind Singh explained the reasons of sacrifice of Guru Teg Bahadur and it had readily mummified Aurangzeb and time had given the opportunity to the Guru to think more about this matter. The Guru made up his mind to remove the problem of people and with this thought the Guru decided to instill a new spirit in nation. He thought of giving a concrete shape to the principle of Guru Nanak Dev. The Guru understood perseverance and the values to be instilled bravely, courage and he understood that it was the ripe time when the masses should be awakened. According to Benarjee, “After the prince Muzim’s silence, the Guru contemplated over making his house attuned and thought of bringing about reincarnation”. Sikh associates wrote that of the reason for the creation of *Khalsa* was that the Guru realized that the *Kalyug* had reached the stage where victory is bound to take place. Only on the scheduled day retaliation had to be taught even in self-defense. Only on the day the brick was answered. There is a *Khalsa* policy to stop the misery of saint and prevent it. The Guru created religious awareness to arouse the nation. Although, Guru Nanak stated the task of breaking the barriers of divisive caste-caste. But C.H. Pen writes, it was

Guru Gobind Singh who captured the caste giant from the very horns and controlled it. The axe was pointed at the very root of the caste and he decided to create a nation that was deliberately and truly one where all doubts and superstitions would be dispelled. The Guru decided to become such a nation that is the creation of the Khalsa.¹

According to the local tradition, there was another important cause for the creation of *Khalsa* and that was, at that time, the *masand*² system had deteriorated. *Masands* had become corrupt. They began to think that the glory of the Guru's house was due to them. So, they stopped sending presents to the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh also established a new organization to eliminate them and to punish these *masands*. The *Hukamnamas* were sent to them, saying that Guru was so happy with them and they have been called to Anandpur Sahib for the prize. When all the *masands* reached Anandpur, the Guru setup a *Diwan* in which the *masand's* deeds were told to the *Sangat*. The Guru punished them in a very unusual way. All the corrupt *masands* were thrown into the well and set on fire. This well is still intact. It is just a few blocks from the Gurdwara Bhora Sahib³.

Giani Gian Singh also mentions about the strict actions taken by Guru Gobind Singh against the corrupt *masands* and one of the *masand* Tabat Malik cried in front of Mata Ji and looked like a woman with the long hairs when he humbled himself with much grief for this rescue, Mata ji recommended that he be released from the Guru only when his mahant would wear bangles. Malik *masand* was thus released. The Mahant was wearing ladies cloth.⁴

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, there had also been a citation about Guru Gobind Singh's reaction and his stern actions against the corrupt *masands*. According to the author, the *masands*, who were trivially guilty, were let

¹ Satbir Singh, *Sada Ithias*, Vol. I, Jullundur, p.367-368.

² Masand were in early Sikhism, local community leaders who looked after the *Sangats* in their discourses and linked them to their spiritual mentor, the Guru. They led Sikhs, preached the word of the Guru and transmitted to him their offerings; escorting occasionally batches of them to his presence. The first such masands were appointed by Guru Arjan. The word masand is from Persian, masand meaning a throne as a cushion to recline. But as time passed, they became neglectful of their religious office and looked to personal aggrandizement. Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the last of the Gurus, had to charge them with corruption and oppression. Those found guilty were punished. Guru Gobind Singh abolished the institution of masands. Harbans Singh, *the Encyclopedia of Sikhism* Vol.III, p.230.

³ Sangat Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 57 years (Personal Interview on 10 December, 2017).

⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p.896.

loose after mediocre punishment. The *masands*, whose deeds were extremely immoral and were not pardonable, had hot oil poured upon their heads and were dispatched to the domains of death. Further, the writer has mentioned that the future offering through the *masands* was terminated and the commands were issued to all the Sikhs to transmit the tithe, *challiba* and the vows of charity-submission direct to Anandpur Sahib, as the Guru proclaimed, “No offering coming through *masands* would be accepted. If my Sikhs observe a *masand* coming from one side and from the other side a wild elephant, then my Sikh may encounter the wild elephant, but never face the *masand*.”⁵

Thus, both the writers, Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have written about the same strict measures taken by Guru Gobind Singh against the corrupt *Masands*, as have been found in the local anecdote.

According to the local tradition, Guru Gobind Singh sent *Hukamnama* to *Sangat* that all the Sikhs should reach Anandpur Sahib. On the day of Baisakhi, on April 13, 1699, many Sikhs reached Anandpur Sahib from near and far. A huge *Diwan* was installed at Keshgarh Sahib.⁶ A small tent was also setup and Guru Gobind Singh came to the platform with a sword in his hands and he said that, “*My sword needs a head*”. There is someone who will sacrifice his life for the Guru. There was complete silence in the *Pandal*. Guru Gobind Singh asked again. When the above word was repeated for the third time, Bhai Daya Ram⁷ offered his head. The Guru took

⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.129-130, no. 58.

⁶ Takhat Sri Keshgarh Sahib is the principal shrine at Anandpur Sahib. It is one of the five Takht of Sikhs which was founded by The Guru Gobind Singh. Resplendent in white marble glory, the shrine stands on a hillock and marks the site of the Keshgarh Fort where the historic Baisakhi congregation of 1699 had taken place. The present complex was constructed during 1936-44. Under the prevision of Sant Hari Singh Kahanpuri. This complex is collectively known as Dashmesh Niwas. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p.130, see also Gurmukh Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 81 years (Personal Interview on 10 December, 2017).

⁷ Daya Singh, Bhai, one of the Panj Pyare as the five-beloved celebrated in the Sikh tradition was the son of Bhai Suddha, a Sobti Khatri of Lahore, and Mai Diali. His original name was Daya Ram. Bhai Suddha was a devotee Sikh of Guru Teg Bahadur and had visited Anandpur more than once to seek his blessings. In 1977, he travelled to Anandpur along with his family including his young son, Daya Ram, to pay obeisance to Guru Gobind Singh. This time he settled there permanently. He also received training in the use of weapons. In this historic *divan* in the Keshgarh fort at Anandpur on March 30, 1699, he was the first to rise at the Guru's call and offered his head, followed by four others in succession. He took part in the battles of Anandpur, and was one of the three Sikhs who followed Guru Gobind Singh out of Chamkaur Sahib on the night of 7-8 December 1705. He was Guru Gobind Singh's emissary sent from the village of Dina in the state of Punjab to deliver his letter which became famous as *Zafarnama*, the letter of victory, to Emperor Aurangzeb then camping at Ahmadnagar. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol.I, p. 540.

him to the tent. There then, he instead of Bhai Daya Ram's head, cut off a male goat's head. Then, the Guru came to the stage with his blood-soaked sword. The *Sangat* present there, thought that Daya Ram seemed to have been killed. The Guru demanded another head. This time Bhai Dharm Das⁸ offered his head. Guru Gobind Singh took him to the tent and the other male goat's head was cut off. In the same way, Guru Gobind Singh came to the stage three more times with his blood-soaked sword and demanded head for the third time. Bhai Mohkam Chand⁹ offered his head to the Guru for the third time, Bhai Himmat Singh¹⁰ offered his head for the fourth time and for the fifth time, Bhai Sahib Chand¹¹ presented his head¹².

Giani Gian Singh has written about the same incidents that had taken place during Baisakhi. He writes that the Guru had asked for heads five times and five Sikhs respectively, Dharam Singh, Mohkam Singh, Himmat Singh, Sahib Singh and Daya Singh, fulfilled the Guru's desire.¹³ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also mentioned in his work, that five Sikhs obeyed and offered their heads to accomplish the Guru's wish.¹⁴ Giani Thakur Singh has also gives a brief account about the incidents that had

⁸ Dharam Singh Bhai (1666-1708), one of the Panj Pyare or the five beloveds of the forerunners of *Khalsa*, came of farming stock. He was the son of Bhai Sant Ram and Mai Subha, of Hastinapur, as a young man, he fell into the company of a Sikh who introduced him to the teaching of the Gurus. He left home at the age of thirty in quest of further instructions. At the Sikh shrine of Nanak, dedicated to Guru Nanak, he was advised to go to Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur, where he arrived in 1678. A few months later came the historic Baisakhi congregation at which five Sikhs responding to the five successive calls of Guru Gobind Singh offered one after the other to lay down their heads. He was in Guru Gobind Singh's train when Anandpur and thereafter Chamkaur Sahib was evacuated. He accompanied Bhai Daya Singh to the South to deliver Guru Gobind Singh's letter, the *Zaffarnama*, to Emperor Aurangzeb. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol.I, p.573.

⁹ Mohkam Singh, Bhai, born Mohkam Chand, one of the panj Pyare or the Five beloved of the honoured memory in the Sikh tradition, was the son of Tirath Chand, a cloth printer of Dvaraha in Gujarat. About the year 1685, he came to Anandpur, then the seat of Guru Gobind Singh. He practiced many arts and took part in Sikh's battles with the surrounding hill chiefs and imperial troops. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol.III, p.129.

¹⁰ Himmat Singh one of the Panj pyare, as the five-beloved celebrated in Sikh History, was born in 1668 at Jagannath in a low caste family of water suppliers. He came to Anandpur at the young age of 17 and attached himself to the service of Guru Gobind Singh. Himmat Singh proved to be a brave warrior and while at Anandpur, he took part in these battles. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, p.271.

¹¹ Sahib Singh Bhai one of the Panj Pyare or the five beloveds of the revered memory in the Sikh tradition was born as the son of Bhai Guru Narayana, barber of a Bider in Karnataka and his wife was Ankamma. Sahib Chand as Sahib Singh was called before he underwent the rites of the *Khalsa*, travelled to Anandpur at the young age of 16, and attached himself permanently to Guru Gobind Singh. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. IV, p.19.

¹² Partap Singh Foji, an old person of village Kalkota, District Ropar, age 77 years (Personal Interview on 10 December, 2017).

¹³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 880.

¹⁴Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.130, no.59.

happened on Baisakhi day in *Sammatt* 1756 and mentioned that they held the diwan.¹⁵ Thus, all the three authors, Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Giani Thakur Singh have supported and written about the same incidents that had taken place on Baisakhi day as has been found in oral lore.

According to another tradition, while the Guru brought back five Sikhs in beautiful costumes, they wore the same color of turban and the whole *Sangat* was shocked to see this, because they had thought that all the five Sikhs had sacrificed their lives for the Guru. Then, the Guru introduced his five beloveds to the *Sangat*. The Guru put some clean water in an iron bowl in front of *Sangat* and mixed it with the help of two-edged sword that is called *Khanda*. The Guru then proceeded to hold the ceremony of baptism, while the nectar was being prepared; five *banies* were recited (*Japji Sahib, Jap Sahib, Anand Sahib, Chaupai sahib and 10 Sawea*). The nectar was getting ready. Some drops of nectar dropped from the iron bowl. Two sparrows came up and they drank those drops and started fighting each other.¹⁶ Mata Jito put some sugar crystals in the bowl of iron due to which the nectar was filled with sweetness. The Guru said to Mata, that she did such a good deed by adding sweetness to the nectar, otherwise the *Khalsa* would have become very bitter or angry.¹⁷ The *Amrit* or nectar of immortality was now ready. The Guru gave the nectar to the five beloveds and said *Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*. They were given the Surname of *Singh*, meaning lion and were ever to wear the five emblems (Kakar) of the *Khalsa*, they are *Kesh* (Long Hair), *Kangha* (Comb), *Kara* (A Steel Bracelet), *Kachha* (Short breeches worn by Soldiers of that time) and *Kirpan* (A Sword). Then, the Guru had nectar from the five beloveds. Being baptized by his own disciples, the Guru's name became Guru Gobind Singh from Gobind Das. The Guru merged into *Khalsa*. He addressed his five beloveds and told them, "You are soldier of God from today onwards and you have been born again in the house of the Guru. You are the members of *Khalsa*. Your birth place is Anandpur Sahib. Your four classes are now merged in one and now you are all brothers and all equal from today. Your Slogan will be *Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh* from today". Every Sikh who will take *Amrit* will add Singh to his name. Guru Gobind Singh told them not to use

¹⁵ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 213.

¹⁶ Jagir Singh, *Sewadar Gurdwara Guru Ka Bag* of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 75 years (Personal Interview on 11 December, 2017).

¹⁷ Geba Singh, an Old Person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 81 years (Personal Interview on 11 December, 2017).

tobacco. The Guru further remarked that whenever any five baptized Sikhs would be together, they would be able to give *Amrit* to others.¹⁸ Guru Gobind Singh also taught them not to discriminate against anyone on the basis of caste and to always read *Gurbani*. The Guru further told his beloveds not to have any relation with Mina¹⁹ Masand and Ram Rai.²⁰ You are my five beloveds.²¹

Giani Gian Singh, in his work has also thrown light upon the events that had happened on the Baisakhi day.²²

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish also mentioned about the events that had taken place when Guru Gobind Singh performed the ceremony of preparing nectar for his five beloveds. The author has narrated the same events that had happened as have been found in the oral tradition. But, according to him, it was Mata Sahib Kaur who brought *Sugar* crystal instead of Mata Jito.²³ Giani Thakur Singh has also mentioned about the same course of events in his respective work as have been found in oral tradition.²⁴ Tara Singh Narotam writes that, in *Sammatt* 1756, on the day of Baisakhi nectar was given to five Singhs in Keshgarh Sahib.

ਇਹ ਬਿਧ ਪਾਚੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੇ, ਖੰਡੇ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਧੰਨ॥

ਵਹਰ ਵੇਖ ਉਹ ਗਯਾਨ ਦੇ, ਆਪ ਅਪਨੇ ਸਮ ਸੈ ਕੀਨ ²⁵.

¹⁸ Nokha Singh, an Old Person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 72 years (Personal Interview on 11 December, 2017).

¹⁹ Mina, meaning hypocritical, secretive, mean-natured, deceitful, is an epithet applied in the Sikh tradition to Prithi Chand (1558-1618), the eldest son of Guru Ram Das, and such of his descendants as had not joined the main body of the Sikhs. Prithi Chand, despite his high caste, had the epithet of Mina attached to his name because of his envious nature. He was ambitious of securing for himself the office of the Guru which, being the eldest son of his father, he claimed as his natural right. When Guru Ram Das named his youngest son, Arjan Dev, to be his spiritual successor. Prithi Chand was deeply embittered and turned hostile towards the Guru whom he tried to harm in several ways. Guru Gobind Singh had forbidden his *Khalsa* to have anything to do with the Minas. Harbans Singh, *The encyclopedia of Sikhism*. Vol. IV, p. 88.

²⁰ Ram Rai (1646-1687), the elder son of Guru Har Rai, Nanak VII, was born to Mata Sulakkhani at Kiratpur on 11 March 1646. Brought up under the loving care of his parents amid an atmosphere of peace and tranquility that reigned over Kiratpur, their resort in the Sivaliks, Ram Rai grew up into a robust young man, well versed in the sacred lore and in the use of arms. Ram Rai continued to enjoy imperial patronage he was granted a *jaagir* in the Garhwal plateau to which he shifted from Delhi establishing a *dera* or missionary center in the *dun* (valley), wherefrom the place came to be known as Dehra Dun. He preached the gospel of Guru Nanak, but the Sikhs by and large shunned him and his followers, collectively dubbed as Ram Raias. Ram Raias still form a dissident sect of the Udasi Sikhs Ibid, p. 461.

²¹ Jagdev Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 72 years (Personal Interview on 11 December, 2017).

²² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp.881-883.

²³ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.130-131, no. 59-60.

²⁴ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, pp.213-214.

²⁵ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.143.

The word *Khalsa* has been taken from Arabic term *Khalish* which means pious sacred, pure and noble, but the Guru had used it especially in a symbolic and technical sense. The creation of the *Khalsa* was aimed at making a union (group) of such persons who follow a life of saints according to Sikh ideals, who are selfless servants of this worldly life, who are the saviors of the innocent people, helpful and encouraging to people with their help to release people from sorrows and woes, to set the guilty right so that people may lead a life of peace and comfort. Ideologically, the creation of the *Khalsa* aimed at a well-balanced combination of the ideals of *Bhakti* and *Shakti*, of moral and spiritual excellence and militant valor heroism of the highest orders. By creating *Khalsa*, the Guru struck at the root of all sorts of prejudices which had crept into the society. The creation of *Khalsa* brought a remarkable transformation of the Sikh Society.²⁶

The differences between Guru Gobind Singh and the Hill Rajas were sharpened by the creation of the *Khalsa*. The emphasis on the abolition of caste was a fresh challenge to the social exclusiveness of the hill society. Guru Gobind Singh once said: ‘Let the four Hindu Castes, who have different rules for their guidance, abandon them all, adopt the one form of adoration and become brothers. Let no one dream himself to be superior to another.’ There would be no place in the Sikh Society for caste. On greater immediate importance was the Guru’s insistence on the development of soldierly qualities. “Blest is his life”, he said, “in this world who repeated the God’s name with his mouth and meditated over war in his heart. Whoever desired to abide in the *Khalsa* should not fear the clash of arms, and be ever ready for the combat and the defense of his faith.” Under the Guru’s orders, the *Khalsa* would visit Anandpur fully armed, particularly on the occasion of the Baisakhi, the Diwali and the Holi.²⁷ During these years, Guru Gobind Singh had nothing more to do with the surrounding Hill Raja’s than to invite them once to embrace the *Khalsa* faith. This invitation they had summarily declined for fear of their Mughal overlords and especially owing to their age-old caste scruples. However, the Guru bore them no grudge and continued to live on terms of amity with them. But they were inwardly burning with envy and waiting for the opportunity, when they could restart their offensive and extinguish forever the menace, they thought was

²⁶ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.57-58.

²⁷ Anil Chander Banerjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, pp. 206-207.

developing at Anandpur.²⁸ According to the local tradition, two of them, Balia Chand and Alam Chand, once, finding the Guru hunting in the valley with only a few attendants, made an assault. The Sikhs fought back courageously and badly mauled the attackers. Balia Chand was killed and Alam Chand lost one of his arms.

Hearing of the defeat of Balia Chand and Alam Chand, King Bhim Chand of Kahlor, together with the other kings, wrote a letter to Aurangzeb against the Guru. It was also written by them in the letter that Guru Gobind Singh asked them to be baptized, but they refused. Aurangzeb sent forces against the Guru under the command of Dina Bheg and Painda Khan. At the time of the war, the entire body of Painda Khan was covered with iron. So, he said where Guru Gobind Singh is come out. When Guru Gobind Singh came to him, he attacked with arrows. Some part of the earpiece of Painda Khan was not covered with iron. The Guru immediately noticed this and targeted his ear. Painda Khan was killed on the spot by the Guru's arrows. Dina Bheg was also injured. This caused a stir in the royal army and the army had to go back.²⁹

The same incident has been mentioned by Giani Gian Singh, in his work, he writes that Wajir Khan, *Subedar* of Sirhind on the application of hill chiefs got permission of the Emperor to prepare ten thousand troops to support hill chiefs against Guru Gobind Singh. Wajir Khan ordered Dina Beg and Painda Khan Pathan that along with the hill chiefs. Guru Gobind Singh should be captured and to be brought to him. All the hill chiefs gladly took their troops and joined huge army. Hearing all this, Guru Gobind Singh also made the required preparations for the war. Giani Gian Singh has further written, when the army reached near Anandpur Sahib and the Guru came to know, he got *Ranjit Nagara* played. Upon hearing this, all the Singhs of Guru Gobind Singh got quickly alerted in their camps and got ready for the war. Five thousand troops under Painda Khan Pathan, who were leading the army from the front, were badly defeated by the Singhs under Guru Gobind Singh. Painda Khan Pathan could not bear this. Impatient Painda Khan on his horse came forward and started calling the Guru, "*Hindu Ka Pir, Hindu ka Pir*". The Guru also came forward without any fear and this further made Painda Khan angry and he again started saying, "*Pir Ji, I am listening stories about your bravery since long and I*

²⁸ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.57.

²⁹ Balwinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurudwara Mata Ajit Kaur of village Agampur, District Ropar, age 53 years (Personal Interview on 11 December, 2017).

always wanted to have a close fight with you and today. So, you are welcome to attack me first”. On this, Guru Gobind Singh replied him, “Painda Khan you attack first, otherwise you would be regretful”. Painda Khan said to the Guru, “I am not so weak who so as to attack first”. Then, the Guru said Okay! Then arrows will be shot from both sides. Painda Khan left an arrow that touched the Guru's Turban and went away. Then, he hit the second arrow that went blank. In turn, the Guru left an arrow that crossed Painda Khan's head and he fell from the horse, then the Guru came down and cut his head with sword and tied that to the spear. That was very difficult battle. Sahibzada Ajit Singh, along with many Singhs destroyed the Turkish army. The hill chiefs also fled away. Dena Bheng was also injured. He wondered that they had come there for hill chiefs, who had fled themselves, so why should Mughals die, so they also turned back.³⁰

As per the another oral tradition, one day Guru Gobind Singh was sitting at Takht in Shri Keshgarh Sahib. A *masand* named Gurdas came, stayed there for a while and went back. The Guru called him back and asked him why had he gone back? Then, Gurdas answered that he was *masand* of Ram Rai. Ram Rai had expired and he had some misunderstanding with his wife, so he came here but here, he had come to know that the Guru had kept *masands* in well as punishment and that is why he was afraid and thought of going back.³¹

Giani Gian Singh has also thrown light on the similar incident as had been found in oral tradition. The author has written that once, the Guru was sitting in Keshgarh Sahib. Two horse riders came there and then they soon returned. The Guru called back them and asked them the reason of their leaving so soon. The Guru came to know that one of them was Grandson of Bhai Belo³² who was *masand* of Ram Rai earlier. There, he had misunderstanding with Punjab Kaur, his wife. He told the Guru that he had come there and he had heard that the Guru burns *masands* in boiled oil.

³⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, pp. 914-916.

³¹ Fotu Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 75 years (Personal Interview on 11 December, 2017).

³² Bahlo Bhai (1553-1643), a Sidhu Jatt of the village of Phaphre, in present-day Bathinda district of the Punjab, and a prominent Sikh of his time. In 1583, he visited Amritsar at the invitation of Guru Arjan. Bahlo was converted the moment he saw the Guru. He cast away the symbols of his former faith and received the rites of initiation at the hands of Guru Arjan. Bhai Bahlo's descendants continue to live in Phaphre. Bhai Bahlo was a considerable poet. At least eight old manuscripts containing verse attributed to him are still extant. Most of them are transcriptions made in 1850 by one Panjab Singh, a descendant of Bhai Bahlo.
Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. I, p. 253.

That is why, he was afraid to stay there. The Guru was pleased with him and he allowed him to stay there.³³

There is another oral tradition which narrates that one day in Anandpur Sahib, Mata Jito had foreseen some future problems in a dream and when she discussed that with Guru Gobind Singh, the Guru remarked that the order of *Akal Purakh* is unavoidable. Upon hearing this, Mata Jito became sad. Holi days were approaching at that time. The Guru was asked by the people the meaning of holi and then the Guru told that there is Holi for the other people but there would be *Hola-Mohalla*³⁴ for Sikhs. The Guru declared this and made it an occasion for Sikhs to demonstrate their martial skills and style of warfare. At that time, many Sikhs gathered nearby the fort of Holgarh at Anandpur Sahib, and on the day of *Hola-Mohalla*, the Guru asked for color, did some horse riding, practiced in the ground. In the present date, this fair is celebrated with full excitement and the *Sangat* reaches Anandpur Sahib just one day in advance. Anandpur Sahib is decorated. The *Diwans* are arranged. Even in present times, twenty days before *Hola Mohalla* the weapons are worshipped.³⁵

Giani Gian Singh has also discussed the events that had taken place when Guru Gobind Singh started the festival of *Hola Mohalla*. According to him, when in the month of *Magh*, holidays were coming closer, the Guru ordered Diwan Nand Chand and Cashier Mati Ram to arrange mosaic with colors and call upon the *Sangat*. The *Shabads* were sung by *Raagi's* in *Basant Raag*. First, five beloveds of the Guru sprinkled *Gulal* and *Saffron* on the Guru. Then they sprinkled *Gulal* on each other.

³³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 899.

³⁴ Hola Mahalla or simply Hola, a Sikh festival takes place on the first of the lunar month of Chet which usually falls in March. This follows the Hindu festival of Holi. The name Hola is the masculine form of the feminine-sounding Hola. *Mahalla*, derived from the Arabic root *hal* (alighting, descending), is a Punjabi word signifying an organized procession in the form of an army column accompanied by war-drums and standard-bearers and proceeding to a given spot or moving in state from one *gurdwara* to another. The custom originated in the time of Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) who held first such march at Anandpur on Chet *vadi*1, 1757 Bk/22 February 1701. Unlike Holi during which people playfully sprinkle color, dry or mixed in water, on each other, the Guru made it an occasion for the Sikhs to demonstrate their martial skills in simulated battles. This was probably done forestalling a grimmer struggle against the imperial power following the battle of Nirmohgarh in 1700. Hola Mahalla became an annual tourney held in the open ground near Holgarh Fort across the rivulet Charan Ganga, northwest of the town of Anandpur Sahib. The festival has now lost much of its military significance, but Sikhs in large numbers still assemble at Anandpur Sahib on this day and an impressive and colorful procession is taken out in which the Nihangs in their traditional panoply form the vanguard, parading their skill in the use of arms as also at horsemanship's and tent-pegging.
Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, p. 282.

³⁵ Daljeet Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 79 years (Personal Interview on 12 December, 2017).

When they were playing with colours, the Guru went to *Dohra* of Guru Teg Bahadur. The Diwans were held at *Dohra* Sahib. There was a *Mahant*, who had painted his body completely black, so that no one could recognize him. When other Singhs asked him about the black color on his body, he replied, that just as a beautiful temple temporarily hangs a black object to avoid evil eye, in the same manner, I have become that black object to ward-off evil eye. Which is very beautiful and pious and which has been created by Guru Gobind Singh to protect all. Upon hearing this, Guru Gobind Singh was very happy and he blessed that Mahant by saying that “you wished for the *Sangat*, Shri Guru Nanak Dev will do good to you”. *Holla Mohalla* was celebrated continuously for five days in the same manner. On the sixth day, final ceremonies were held in Lohgarh Fort and *Prasad* was distributed among all who were present there and participated. The religious *Ragis* were presented and seen off with *Siropas* as a gesture of respect³⁶.

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, in his work has also mentioned about the ceremonies that took place when Guru Gobind Singh had started the festival of *Holla Mohalla*. He wrote in the same year as in the last year, there was great merrymaking near fort Holgarh. Forming various groups, the Khalsa started to celebrate Holi from *Phagun Sudi* still the Purnima (24th February to 3rd march 1702 C E os). There was a great jubilation outside the fort Anandgarh and near the fort Holgarh. The sprinkler held in the auspicious hands of the Guru was looking very propitious. Next day, in the late afternoon, to receive the articulation of the Guru, all the Sikhs gathered outside the fort Anandgarh. The priest standing there rendered supplication commencing, “praying at the faculty blessedness prevails all over”. Thereafter, the Khalsa came toward the fort of Holgarh. Five flags bearers lead, with five beloveds once following, who had unsheathed swords in their hands. The drumming Singhs trailed them all. The drum beats were reverberating in the whole atmosphere. On the command of Guru ji, the Singhs displayed the martial art of arms. Then they were addressed, “my Sikho, get ready, now we have to go back”, The priest stood up and presented supplication. All the Khalsas riding their horses moved towards charan ganga to cross this rivulet and to go to the fort Holgarh.³⁷

³⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p. 891.

³⁷Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra,pp. 155-157, no.73

Another author, Giani Thakur Singh in some different way, in his work, has also discussed the events related to the initiation of the festival of *Holla Mohalla* by Guru Gobind Singh. He wrote that, the Guru did not like the way people were playing *Holi* and he found it improper. The writer further mentioned that the Guru called upon Sikh *Sangat* and initiated the ceremony of *Holla Mohalla* in which instead of playing *Holi* in an improper manner, he started the ritual of recitation of *Shabad Kirtan* followed by the distribution of *Prasad*. And from then, *Holla Mohalla* has been celebrated in the month of *Faghn Chetra*.³⁸

As per the tradition, after the successful celebration of *Holla Mohalla*, Mata Jito, once again expressed her fears for the coming future which she could foresee. She told the Guru, that she would not be able to bear the bad times that are approaching in the near future. After sometime, Mata Jito passed away and she was cremated. The place of her cremation is now known as Gurdawara Agampur Sahib³⁹. Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have mentioned similar views about the above tradition.⁴⁰

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, when Guru Gobind Singh returned to Anandpur Sahib after staying at Basoli, in the same year, on Thursday *poh* six (December 5, 1700 CE os), Mata Jito Kaur breathed her last. The Guru arranged her cremation, which was conducted near the town of Agampura. Next day on Friday, *poh* seven, the path of Sri Granth Sahib in the memory of Mata Jito Kaur, was commenced, which was completed on the seventeenth in the afternoon of Saturday, *poh* twenty-two.⁴¹

An oral anecdote has been told by Ram Krishan Gopal, who is the fifth generation of Bhagat Singh of village Agampur, the same place where Mata Jito was cremated. According to Ram Krishan Gopal, when Mata Jito passed away, Guru Gobind Singh tried to buy land for her cremation from Rajputs (his ancestors). But Rajputs gave twelve *Ghuma* land to the Guru. Ram Krishan further remarks that where Mata Jito was cremated, the area of cremation has been called "*Angeetha*", and this place since then, has been worshipped by mountain people and his ancestors.

³⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 230.

³⁹ Naib Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 49years (Personal Interview on 12 December, 2017).

⁴⁰ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 220, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.159.

⁴¹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.152-153, No. 72.

While giving land to Guru Gobind Singh, family of Rajputs humbly requested to the Guru to bless them with a child as at that time they had no child. With the blessings of the Guru their family could be extended. Guru Gobind Singh had also given a sword to his ancestral great grandfather, Bhagat Singh Rajput and asked him not to urinate while wearing this sword. Once, Bhagat Singh had mistakenly urinated while wearing the sword and at that moment sword was broke into two parts. When Bhagat Singh went to Blacksmith for its repair, blacksmith joined the duplicate parts and when Bhagat Singh held that sword he immediately realized that the parts were not real one. So, he returned those back to him, but Bhagat Singh kept safe the head of the sword which according to Ram Krishan is still in the possession of fifth generation of Bhagat Singh Rajput and this generation is now living in Agampur, Anandpur Sahib in the present times.⁴²

The Hill Rajas nursed their mortification and continued plotting against the Guru. Ajmer Chand, who had succeeded his father, Bhim Chand as the Raja of Bilaspur, was chosen as their envoy to the Emperor to seek again his assistance, and costly presents were collected to be offered to him on their behalf. But, before Ajmer Chand could start on his journey, Bhup Chand of Handur, an impetuous youth, insisted on launching an attack. He said it was no use waiting until help arrived from Delhi or Lahore. Each day wasted means, further accretions to the Guru's following and the consequent additional strength to him. If they all acted unitedly, they could still beat the Sikhs. He concluded his address by saying: "A reed is a frail support, but a handful of reeds bound together are not easily broken. If we all join together, the Sikhs will be powerless to offer us resistance".

Bhup Chand had spoken with such passion, that proposal for dispatching an envoy to the Imperial court was given up and preparations for another attack on Anandpur were started. The Rajas of Jammu, Nurpur, Mandi, Kulu, Keonthal, Guler, Chamba, Sringer, Dadhwal and others came with their forces and, making a rapid march reached the outskirts of Anandpur. Their plan this time was to invade the town and insulate it from contact with the outside world.⁴³

⁴² Ram Krishan Gopal, Fifth Generation of Bhagat Singh of village Agampur, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 60 years (Personal Interview on 08 March, 2020).

⁴³ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 59.

As per another oral tradition, Ajmer Chand sent a letter to the Guru before attacking and asked him to pay rent of Anandpur Sahib and to keep paying even in times to come. If he could not meet these demands then he would have to leave Anandpur Sahib. The Guru sent a reply to the letter and wrote that that Guru Teg Bahadur had paid full value of Anandpur Sahib. When the Guru refused to give rent to hill chiefs, they attacked Anandpur Sahib. When Sikhs of Majha and Malwa region came to know about this attack, they at once, came forward for the Guru's help. After a tough fight and strong competition, the hill chiefs went back. Many Sikhs sacrificed their lives. Sikhs from miles away came there to the Guru. After this battle was over, the Guru started ammunition factories and Singhs were given training to use weapons. This step of Guru Gobind Singh further frightened the hill chiefs.⁴⁴

Giani Gian Singh has also discussed the same event that had happened in the oral tradition. According to him, first of all, Hill Chief Bir Singh told that it was very sad, that they were Rajputs, the owners of the land, devotees of the Guru, who should be afraid of them were terrifying them. Upon hearing this, Ajmer Chand son of Raja Bheem Chand, Himmat Singh Handuri, Karam Parkash, Madan Palku Nadh Wale, Bir Singh got united and kept their armies with them. Before starting the war, they wrote a letter to Guru Gobind Singh, that he was living in their area and creating trouble for them. They continued that if the Guru wanted to live there then he had to live under them and he had to remain quiet. Otherwise he would be forced to leave Anandpur Sahib. After reading the letter, Guru Gobind Singh replied, that they should have known this that the Guru and his people did not trouble people. If all of them wanted to be with them then they would have to be Singhs by taking *Amrit*.⁴⁵

As per another oral tradition, the Sikhs who sacrificed their lives in the first battle of Anandpur Sahib, were cremated by Guru Gobind Singh himself at his own Garden at Anandpur Sahib. The place is known as “Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh” and “Gurdwara Shaheedi Bagh”. It has also been added that during that time, three Sikhs, Kesar Singh, Sohan Singh and Mohan Singh used to take care of the flowers in that Garden and Mata Jito used to come daily in the Garden to prepare garland of flowers for Guru Gobind Singh. This Garden stretches upto three miles. The place where martyred Sikhs were cremated came to be known as “*Angeetha Sahib*”. There is an

⁴⁴ Bhupinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Qilla Taragarh Sahib of village Gangawal, District Ropar, age 42 years (Personal Interview on 23 September, 2019).

⁴⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 916-918.

old *Bodhdh* (tree) which remained green all the times with the grace of Guru Gobind Singh⁴⁶.

In the first battle of Anandpur Sahib, Hill Rajas could not swallow such a bad defeat at the hands of Guru Gobind Singh and his brave Sikhs. So, in order to take revenge, hill chiefs planned to siege Anandpur Sahib. After some time, they were successful in besieging the Fort of Lohgarh. The same situation continued approximately for two months. But still, Hill Rajas could not stop the activities of Sikhs. Lastly, hill chiefs decided to send a drunken elephant with an iron pole tied upon it, to attack on the Fort's door. When Guru Gobind Singh came to know of this, he appointed Duni Chand (a Singh of the Guru) to stop that elephant. But when Duni Chand came to know about this he started speaking against the Guru and in fear of an elephant, Duni Chand climbed the wall of Lohgarh Fort and jumped into the darkness. Due to this, his leg was broken and after that he died. Now, Guru Gobind Singh sent Bachittar Singh (one of Bhai Mani Singh's ten sons)⁴⁷ to stop an elephant. Bachittar Singh was very happy that the Guru had chosen him for the task. Bachittar Singh was successful in sending an elephant back as he stroked it with *Nagani Barchaa*⁴⁸ and injured it. An elephant fled back in fear and crushed his own army on the way under his feet. Local tradition also reiterates that during the same course of events, Bhai Uday Singh separated the head of Hill Raja, Kesari Chand and brought it to the Guru's feet.⁴⁹

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Giani Gian Singh also, in their work have narrated a detailed story regarding the attack by the Hill Rajas on Lohgarh Fort. The authors have written almost the same account of the events taking place as had been found in the oral tradition.⁵⁰

According to the local tradition, when Bhai Uday Singh, a brave Sikh, presented Hill Raja Kesari Chand's head to Guru Gobind Singh, other hill chiefs were

⁴⁶ Notice Board, Gurdwara Shahid Bagh, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

⁴⁷ Bhai Mani Ram was from a devoted Sikh family of Pramara Rajputs, According to Seva Singh, Shahid Bilas (Bhai Mani Singh), the third of the twelve sons of Naik Mai Das and his wife, Madhari Bai of Alipur village in Muzaffargarh district. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. III, p.343.

⁴⁸ Nagni Barchha is a dorned in the Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib. *Katar*, Saif, Gun, *Karpabarcha*, a Muzzle loading Musket carts are well located. In the morning and evening after the ardaas, these weapons are shown to the *Sangat*.

⁴⁹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Qilla Lohgarh Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

⁵⁰ Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.145-147, no. 67-68, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 924-926.

terrified by his death. So, when all the efforts of Hill Rajas proved to be unsuccessful and all their weapons failed against the Guru, they turned it the other way. They brought a cow to the Guru and started swearing that they would not disturb him again and requested him to leave the Lohgarh Fort for some time and then come back, because it had become a matter of pride for them as they were not able to show their faces to public after such a bad defeat. Some Sikhs agreed upon the humble request of Hill Rajas and convinced the Guru to leave the Fort for some time. Thus, at the request of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh left the Lohgarh Fort and was accompanied by some Sikhs and moved to some distance from Anandpur Sahib to Nirmohgarh.⁵¹ There the Guru along with his Sikhs reached *Garhi* (a temporary fortress). But here, at Nirmohgarh, hill chiefs attacked Guru Gobind Singh and his Sikhs, once again and did not keep any promise, which they had made earlier. Guru Gobind Singh with his Sikhs retaliated well with their arrows. But after some time, Hill Rajas established cannon on a short distance from *Garhi*, so that they could attack the Guru from time to time. They finally called a Gunner to kill Guru Gobind Singh. Once again, war was started from the side of the hill chiefs. The Gunner opened the fire on the Guru, but the bullet hit another Singh who was standing behind him and when the gunner was preparing for another shot, the Guru shot an arrow and killed that gunner. The Guru's second arrow struck the brother of gunner, who was assisting him. There in the memory of the Guru, a Gurdwara has been located in the valley and now one Gurdwara has also been constructed below the valley was under the care of Nihang Singh.⁵²

Giani Gian Singh, has discussed the same events in his work, regarding the Guru's visit to Nirmohgarh.⁵³ According to Giani Thakur Singh, after the battle with hill chiefs at Anandpur Sahib. The Guru left Anandpur and came to Nirmohgarh and he added some new information to the local tradition about Nirmohgarh, the Guru stayed for two months and two days.⁵⁴ Tara Singh Narotam have supported similar views with Giani Thakur Singh, but he is remained silent about the duration of Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Nirmohgarh.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Nirmohgarh Sahib, Gurdwara situated on top of a small hill four kilometers south of Kiratpuris dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of Sikhism*, Vol. III, p. 231.

⁵² Karnail Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Nirangarh of District Ropar, age 50 years (Personal Interview on 29 September, 2019).

⁵³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p. 896.

⁵⁴ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 217.

⁵⁵ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirat Sangrah*, pp. 155-156.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Raja Ajmer Chand alongwith collaborating Rajas, raided the Hamlet of Nirmohgarh. The Guru told Bhai Daya Singh and other prominent Sikhs that they have broken the religious undertaking. They must be taught a lesson for their misdoings. Till the first quarter of the day a pitched battle was ensured. A short hit the forehead of Diwan and his companions Bhai Mathra Singh, Soorat Singh, Deva Singh, Anoop Singh and Saroop Singh also achieved martyrdom in the fighting. Observing Sahib Singh's martyrdom, the Guru conveyed to Bachittar Singh, "get ready, I am going in to get the body of brave Singh". Listening to this, many Sikhs accompanied the Guru. Both sides were entangled in heavy fighting. The Guru brought back the body of Diwan Sahib Singh, later it was cremated on the slopes of the hill of Nirmohgarh. Here, the informer let the Guru know that the Governor of Sirhind had sent a contingent of Turks under the command of Sardar Rustam Khan. Rustam Khan arrived with his army. The Guru was sitting and listening and combing his hair. Nasir Khan the younger brother of Rustam Khan threw a shell and the attendant Ram Singh was instantly killed. The Guru drew his arrow and shot it with such a force that Rustam Khan, standing next to the artilleryman was killed. The second arrow was shot by Bhai Uday Singh with such intensity that Rustam Khan's brother, Nasir Khan was annihilated. Next day, Raja Ajmer Chand surrounded Nirmohgarh from the four sides. Till in the late afternoon pitched battles were fought Bhai Jeeta Singh, Neeta Singh achieved martyrdom.⁵⁶

According to another oral tradition from Nirmohgarh, Guru Gobind Singh went to Basoli⁵⁷ as he was invited by the King of Basoli, a village about twenty kilometers South West of Kiratpur. There are three places which are famous and related to Guru Gobind Singh. One is a square seat under a tree, where the Guru used to sit; second, the palace of King of Basoli, which the Guru visited many times and third place is upon the hill where Guru Gobind Singh stayed for some time. There is located a Gurdwara Guru Chounki Jhira Sahib.⁵⁸

As per the tradition, as on the receipt of invitation from the King of Basoli, the Guru ordered his troops to march towards Basoli. He placed himself with the pick of the army at the rear of the column. As the Guru had expected, the allied armies of the

⁵⁶Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian*(tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.150-151, no. 70.

⁵⁷ Basoli, village about twentykilometers southwest of Kiratpur (31-11'N, 76-35'E) in Ropar District of the Punjab.

⁵⁸ Naib Singh, an old person of village Basoli, District Ropar, age 74 years (Personal Interview on 14 March, 2020).

Hill Rajas, were soon on him. But they could not do much harm. This battle was fought at Jatoli village. At that time, the name of this village was Mantoli. The *Khalsa* army was successful in crossing the Sutlej with their baggage. The hill chiefs were overjoyed at having, as they thought, got rid of the Guru.⁵⁹

Another oral tradition has told that after reaching Basoli, when it was known that hill chiefs had run away, then the Guru sent some Sikhs to the battle place to take the dead bodies of the sacrificed Sikhs and they were cremated by the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh had passed many days in Basoli, *Dewaans* were arranged here and the *Sangats* used to come from faraway places to visit and the Guru's vision.⁶⁰ The king of Basoli Silahi Chand, on the behalf of his wife, sent his ministers to the Guru. He requested the Guru to come towards that side with them.⁶¹

Giani Thakur Singh has told about Guru Gobind Singh's visit and stay in Basoli in his respective work. Giani Thakur Singh has written that Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Basoli for fifteen days and at that place there is a Gurdwara in the South nine miles from Anandpur Sahib.⁶² Giani Gian Singh has also mentioned that the hill chiefs and Mughals both attacked the Guru. It was very difficult battle. The hill chief expressed that if the Guru was to stay on the other side, they had no option but to turn back and the Guru settled in his home. Hearing this, the king Dharmpal of Basoli who was aware of the glory of the Guru happily accepted this impact of the Guru and said that he would take the Guru to his village for ten days. On the receipt of invitation from the Raja Basoli, the Guru got ready for Basoli. At that time, Turks attacked the Guru's camp there was very a difficult battle. When the Guru crossed Sutlej then hill chief turned back. The Guru stayed at the house of the king of Basoli. They served him with great love and respect.⁶³

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, acquiescing to the request of Raja Silahi Chand, the Guru abandoning the place of Nirmohgarh, along with the Sikh army came to the other bank of the river Satiludhor. Raja Ajmer Chand came to know that by crossing over the rivulet, the Guru has gone to Raja Silahi Chand, he thought

⁵⁹ Bheja Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi of Village Jatoli, District Ropar, age 51years (Personal Interview on 14 March, 2020).

⁶⁰ Jarnail Singh, an old person of village Basoli, District Ropar, age 84 years (Personal Interview on 14 March, 2020).

⁶¹Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian*(tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.150-151, no. 70.

⁶² Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 217.

⁶³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 937-947.

that they should be checked. Kahluri Raja taking with along him the army of the Turks came forward and raided the Sikh contingent. The Guru was aware of the base intentions of Kahluri Raja and had divided the Sikh army into two parts and went across the rivulet. Bhai Uday Singh and the other intrepid soldiers showered so much fire and arrows. In these skirmishes, Bhai Kesar Singh, Gokal Singh achieved martyrdom. The Guru arrived at the town of Raja Silahi Chand where the resident of the place welcomed them enthusiastically. Raja arranged for the stay of the family of the Guru in his domestic chambers. The Guru's Darbar started to be conducted every day.⁶⁴

According to another oral tradition, Guru Gobind Singh while staying at Basoli had visited Bibor, a forest area nearby, for hunting. The Guru had gone there with some of his Singhs and *Ranjit Nagara* was played by them on the way. When the King of Bibor had come to know that Guru Gobind Singh has come to his area for hunting, he without any further delay came and met the Guru. He presented many gifts to the Guru and showed much respect to him. When Guru Gobind Singh and his Singhs were preparing to go back to Basoli, then the king of Bibor humbly requested the Guru to stay in Bibor for some time. On seeing his love and reverence, the Guru accepted his request and decided to stay in Bibor. Then, Guru Gobind Singh sent a horseman to Basoli to inform the other Sikhs, who were staying in Basoli to come to Bibor the next morning. When King of Basoli came to know about this, he himself went to Bibor and asked the Guru why he had left Basoli. Guru Gobind Singh replied, 'we were very happy with you, just as you expressed your love, in the same way King of Bibor has expressed his love to us. So, we stayed here'.⁶⁵

Sangats come from faraway places to see and meet Guru Gobind Singh in Bibor. Many gifts are also presented by *Sangats* to the Guru. Here Guru Gobind Singh recited Chaupai Sahib. Here, once Singhs told the Guru that this is the best time and they were free then from wars. But, Guru Gobind Singh announced that the war is not over. Here some Sikhs from the *Sangat* complained to the Guru that when they are coming to see him for his *darshan*, on the way some people of Kalmot looted them and snatched the presents which they were to offer to him. Upon hearing this, Guru Gobind Singh assured them that the gifts they wanted to present to him would reach

⁶⁴Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian*(tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.151-152,no. 71.

⁶⁵ Malkit Singh, an old person of Village Bibor, District Ropar, age 72 years (Personal Interview on 14 March, 2020).

him and he would get them back on his own. One Sikh from the *Sangat* requested the Guru, 'Maharaj allow us to get back those presents'. The Guru replied to him that they would all go the next day. Next morning, Guru Gobind Singh reached Kalmot with some of his Singhs.⁶⁶

Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Thakur Singh and Giani Gian Singh, all the three writers have discussed the above written oral tradition about Guru Gobind Singh's visit and his stay in Bibor, in their respective works.

Tara Singh Narotam has written that King of Bibor did a great service to the Guru. According to him, the Guru completed the story of *Krishna Avtar* at Bibor.⁶⁷ Giani Thakur Singh has given the information about the location of Bibor. He has written that this town is twelve kilometers behind Anandpur Sahib on the banks of river Sutlej. Further, he has stated that Guru Gobind Singh stayed here for two months and seventeen days due to love and respect given to him by King of Bibor. According to him, here only Guru Gobind Singh wrote *Akal Ustat*. The Guru also lived in a cave for some time here and Guru Gobind Singh recited *Chupai Sahib*, which had been inscribed on stone and the place is called *Gufa Guru Ki*.⁶⁸ Giani Gian Singh has also narrated similar events related to the Guru's stay at Bibor as have been mentioned in the oral tradition.⁶⁹

It has been known through another oral tradition that when Guru Gobind Singh reached Kalmot with his Singhs, he sat under a tree and his Singhs surrounded the village of Kalmot to make an attack on them who had looted the *Sangat* and snatched the gifts which were to be presented to the Guru. When people there in Kalmot, came to know about this, they went to hide in a Fort at Kalmot. Singhs wanted to attack the Fort immediately but Guru Gobind Singh ordered them to do that the next day. *Prasada* (food) was made and distributed under the same tree where he seated. Next day, early in the morning, Singhs surrounded the Fort. As a result, people inside the Fort became nervous and they started climbing Fort's wall in fear. They

⁶⁶ Jagdev Singh, an old person of village Bibor, District Ropar, age 69 years (Personal Interview on 14 March, 2020).

⁶⁷ Tara Singh, Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, p.156.

⁶⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 218.

⁶⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, p.940.

begged for forgiveness. At last, they came out and apologized to Guru Gobind Singh and promised him that they would not repeat such a mischief in future⁷⁰.

Giani Gian Singh, in his work has written about the events that had happened at Kalmot. He has narrated similar course of events but in some different way. According to him, Singhs surrounded the Fort and Gujjars of Kalmot fought from inside the Fort for some time. But in the end, Singhs had broken the wall of the Fort from one side and went into the Fort and killed many Gujjars. The remaining came to the Guru and returned all the stuff that they had looted from *Sangat* and they promised to the Guru that they would not do such things in future.⁷¹

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has presented a different view about kalmot. He wrote that after the arrival of Guru in Basoli. One day on receiving the order of the Guru, Bhai Uday Singh and other Khalsa got ready and went out for hunting. The flag-bearer Maan Sing, riding his colt, just outside Basoli a cub leapt out of the bushes. Bhai Uday Singh, on his horse gave a chase and shot it dead. Getting hurt the lion somersaulted and sprinted toward the village of Kalmot and the Singh followed it. It fell flat after a short distance. The Rangars and Gujjars, the resident of Kalmot came out of their houses. Khalsa and the people of the village started altercation and the situation went out of hand. In the end they started to fight and Bhai Jeewan Singh was fatally hurt. His martyrdom and the content of the leader called for a war drum to beat. From the other side, the residents of the village Rangars and Gujjars gave some fight but could not face the Khalsa. At the end they ran away and saved their lives. The Sikhs along with the body of Bhai Jeewan Singh went toward the village of Basoli. Next day he was cremated.⁷²

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, both the writers have written briefly about the events that had happened at Kalmot. According to Giani Thakur Singh, Rangars and Gujjars looted the Sangat who came to pay homage to the Guru from different regions like Majha, Doaba. The Sangat came and complained to the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh fought himself in Kalmot not to suffer the loss of Singhs and people here came to the shelter of the Guru and from that day *Sangat* could pass from Kalmot fearlessly. Giani Thakur Singh has also written that Kalmot is very a

⁷⁰ Sharbann Singh, an old person of village Kalmot, District Ropar, age 75years (Personal Interview on 15 March, 2020).

⁷¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, p. 940.

⁷² Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian*(tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 152, no. 71.

beautiful place on hills.⁷³ Tara Singh Narotam has described the event differently. According to him, when Sangat complained to the Guru, the Sangat was robbed in the village of Kalmot, the Guru allowed his Singhs to plunder the village of Kalmot. But, after fighting for some time, the villagers surrendered before the Guru and the fight was stopped and they promised to him that they would not indulge in such activities in future.⁷⁴

According to the lore, when Guru Gobind Singh was returning from Kalmot, some of his Singhs requested him to return to Anandpur Sahib. They humbly told the Guru that 'we should now go back to Anandpur Sahib, it has been a long time and Anandpur Sahib is our house'. The Guru agreed to the request of his *Khalsa* and sent a Singh to Bibor to get back the luggage to proceed towards Anandpur Sahib. In the absence of Guru Gobind Singh, Anandpur Sahib always seemed to be deserted. But, once again when Guru Gobind Singh reached to Anandpur Sahib, *Sangats* started coming again. There was once again bustle all around. *Diwans* were arranged and *Kirtans* began to be held on daily basis.⁷⁵

Once, *Sangat* from village Rohtas came to Anandpur Sahib. According to the oral tradition there was a man called Ramu, who had brought his daughter Sahib Devan to get her married to Guru Gobind Singh. When he placed his request before the Guru, the latter replied that he had vowed celibacy for the rest of his life. Hearing the Guru's reply, Sahib Devan's father once again requested the Guru by saying that the horoscope of Sahib Devan which at her birth time clearly mentioned that the girl's fate is to be the queen of king. Further, he said that they could think of no other king expect the Guru and therefore, requested him to accept her, otherwise no one would marry her, because, the elder and younger people of community already call her *Mata* (Mother). After hearing this Guru Gobind Singh accepted Sahib Devan as his wife but he made it clear that it would be marriage without any physical relationship, but wife would be conceded the rights of wife. Thus, Sahib Devan was sent to Mata Gujri.⁷⁶

Giani Gian Singh has also written about Guru Gobind Singh's return to Anandpur Sahib and the events that had taken place in related to the Guru's marriage

⁷³ Giani Thakur Singh, *Shri Gurdware Darshan*, p.218.

⁷⁴ Tara Singh Narotam, *Shri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, p.157.

⁷⁵ Gopal Singh, an old person of village Kalmot, District Ropar, age 69 years (Personal Interview on 15 March, 2020).

⁷⁶ Geba Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 78 years (Personal Interview on 13 March, 2018).

with Sahib Devan. According to author, Bhai Daya Singh requested the Guru to return to Anandpur Sahib from Kalmot. Guru Gobind Singh accepted the request and returned to Anandpur Sahib once again with his Singhs. Here, *Sangats* started coming from faraway places. At that time Mata Jito had died and Guru Gobind Singh performed all her last rites and it was followed by the distribution of food (*langar*). Here only, a Harijan, resident of Rohtas brought his daughter to get her married to Guru Gobind Singh. He made a humble request to Guru Gobind Singh. But the Guru refused by saying that he could not marry his daughter because he had vowed celibacy for the rest of his life. But Harijan requested again to the Guru that he had made up in his mind to hand-over his daughter to the Guru. Now, keep the vow of celibacy as you want to say. After his repeated requests, Guru Gobind Singh ordered him to send his daughter Sahib Devan to Mata Gujri's palace and on the third day the Guru married her and *laavans* (marriage songs) were sung by *Raghis*.⁷⁷

According to another folklore, it had been a long time, since Mata Sahib Devan had come to the Guru's house. At that time, the younger *Sahibzada* (son) was five years old. When Mata Sahib Devan saw him playing with other children, she wished to have a son in her lap. She requested and expressed her wish to Guru Gobind Singh. Hearing this, the Guru said to Sahib Devan, that her intention was right but they had vowed celibacy, but he would fulfill her desire. The Guru said, 'you want one son, be the mother of *Khalsa* from today, the whole *Khalsa* will call me as *Dharma* father and you as *Dharma* mother'. After receiving this name, Mata Sahib Devan was very happy.⁷⁸

Giani Gian Singh has also written about the same occurrence of events as known through oral tradition. According to him, once the Guru was pleased with the service of Mata Sahib Devan and he asked her to express any desire. Mata Sahib Devan expressed her wish to have a son of her own. But as the Guru had vowed celibacy, he said to her that 'from now onwards the whole *Khalsa panth* is your son'. Mata Sahib Devan was very happy and thankful to hear this honour bestowed on her by Guru Gobind Singh.⁷⁹ Tara Singh Narotam has also written about Guru Gobind Singh's return to Anandpur Sahib from Kalmot. He has also mentioned the events of the Guru's third marriage to Sahib Devan following the request of her father. He has

⁷⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp.940-941.

⁷⁸ Nirmal Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bibor Sahib of District Ropar, age 74 years (Personal Interview on 08 March, 2020).

⁷⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p.942.

also corroborated that the Guru declared the whole *Khalsa panth* as son of Mata Sahib Devan.⁸⁰

According to another tradition, once the troops of Ajmer Chand attacked Anandpur Sahib. At that time, the Guru was present at this place, where the Gurdwara Manji Sahib is situated. This is where the Sahibzadas learnt swordsmanship and here also the Guru used to organize sports for Sahibzadas. In the battle with Ajmer Chand's army Bhai Mann Singh fell wounded and *Nishan Sahib* also collapsed. Seeing this, the Guru torn a little piece from his turban and flagged it on Nishan Sahib. He said that the blue mark of the *Khalsa* would never be broken. Seeing this, Sahibzada Fateh Singh did likewise. After this incident, a *Dumala* ceremony began, which became a new *Panth* of *Nihangs*. Now, at present, this Gurudwara is known as Dumala Sahib.⁸¹

As per tradition, once a Sikh named Lal Singh came to Guru Gobind Singh's *Diwan*. There he offered a *Dhaal* (shield) to the Guru and claimed that no bullet can cross this *Dhaal*. Guru Gobind Singh accepted that and declared that 'we will examine it tomorrow'. After that, Lal Singh went home in a hurry because he knew, he had lied to the Guru. He was worried that the truth would come out when the Guru would examine that *Dhaal*. Due to fear, Lal Singh prayed to Guru Teg Bahadur to take care of him and his words. After praying to Guru Teg Bahadur, he went to the place where *Dhaal* was to be examined. Every Sikh present there, was sure that Lal Singh would prove to be a liar and he would be ashamed when his claims regarding *Dhaal* would be proved false. Guru Gobind Singh himself, called Lal Singh and ordered him to hold that *Dhaal* and stand in front of the Guru. Lal Singh, in fear held that *Dhaal* fearfully. Guru Gobind Singh aimed at *Dhaal*, but he did not shoot. On asking by the Singhs the reason for that, the Guru taught the importance of prayer to them by saying that Lal Singh had prayed to Guru Teg Bahadur to keep his words, so how could he shoot, as Guru Teg Bahadur had kept their hand on *Dhaal*. Thus, by this way Guru Gobind Singh explained the true importance of true *Ardas* (prayer). Lal Singh bowed to the feet of the Guru and he was very happy.⁸²

⁸⁰ Tara Singh Narotam, *Shri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, p.141.

⁸¹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Dumala Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

⁸² Baldev Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bohra Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 08 March, 2020).

Giani Gian Singh has also written about the event as has been found in oral tradition, stated above. But there is a difference in the course of events as written by Giani Gian Singh and as known in the oral tradition. According to Giani Gian Singh, once Lal Singh came to the Guru's *Diwan* with a *Dhaal* to present him. The Guru after seeing the *Dhaal* said 'our gun would make a hole in this *Dhaal*'. But Lal Singh claimed and told the Guru that if he hit it there would never be a hole. When Lal Singh started arguing with Guru Gobind Singh, the latter realized that he was lying and he will have to feel guilty. But, at last, the Guru agreed, and told him that to check this *Dhaal* a Sikh would shoot tomorrow. After listening to this, Lal Singh went to his home in fear because he knew from inside that his claim was going to be proved wrong. Thus, he made an *Ardas* (prayer) that he would offer *Prasad* of rupees five and he would offer it to *Sacheypatshah*, if the bullet could not cross the *Dhaal* the next day. Next day, at first Guru Gobind Singh asked Alam Singh to shoot at *Dhaal*, when Alam Singh's shots could not make a hole in the *Dhaal*, the Guru in anger snatched the Gun from his hands and he himself fired many times on the *Dhaal*. But, the *Dhaal* was intact and Guru Gobind Singh was shocked to see this. Lal Singh picked *Dhaal* and bowed before the Guru and offered him *Prasad*. The Guru said, 'Dhan Sikhi and the company of blessed'.⁸³

According to the local tradition, once, people were coming to Anandpur Sahib for *darshan* of Guru Gobind Singh. But they were troubled by some robbers on the way to the Village, Bajrood. When people expressed their agony to the Guru, he sent Sahibzada Ajit Singh with Bhai Uday Singh with a number of other Sikhs to Bajrood to punish the robbers. Bajrood is seven to eight Kilometers away from Anandpur Sahib. There is also a Gurdwara in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh.⁸⁴ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has agreed with the above stated oral tradition. He has narrated the same story in his work.⁸⁵

Giani Gian Singh has also mentioned about the above written incident that had taken place in village Bajrood. The author writes that, once *Sangat* came to Guru Gobind Singh and narrated the events that had taken place during their journey. *Sangat* told the Guru that across the Sutlej River, Ranghars and Gujjars of village

⁸³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p.949.

⁸⁴ Kaka Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Dhumala Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 62 years (Personal Interview on 10 January, 2020).

⁸⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian*(tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.133, no. 72.

Bajrood had robbed them and wounded some of the people in the *Sangat*. When Guru Gobind Singh listened to this, he suddenly stood up and went to surround the village of Bajrood. When people of Bajrood came to know that they had been surrounded by the Guru and his Singhs, they fired bullets for some time. But, when Singhs entered the village with much noise and robbed and plundered on the way, then Ranghars ran away from the village in fear. The ladies of the village pleaded with Guru Gobind Singh and requested him to stop the war, but he had taught a tough lesson to Ranghars to not to give any trouble to *Sangat* again⁸⁶.

As per tradition, when the Guru came to Anandpur Sahib from Basoli, all the mothers sent their sons to take part in the Guru's army. Joining the army of hill chiefs had stopped because the soldiers were dying and their families had no support from hill chiefs that is why they started opposing hill chiefs. Bheem Chand had known all this. After discussion with all his ministers, he sent a letter to Guru Gobind Singh which was full of regret. When the Guru read the letter, Singhs told him, that this Chief would not leave the habit of cheating, but now when he had sent the letter so he should be forgiven once, but if he would do any mischief again, he should never be spared. After hearing this, the Guru responded to the letter sent by Bheem Chand, 'your appeal is accepted'. After getting forgiveness, king thought that he had got the Guru in his hands. He was not able to fight directly, that's why he had cheated on the Guru by making a fake promise. Bheem Chand sent a Brahmin to the Guru's service, so that while living there, the Brahmin could send information to him.⁸⁷ For the several months, that Brahmin lived with loyalty to Bheem Chand in the shelter of the Guru. All the Sikhs were happy with his reconciliation tips. But, on the other hand, he sent all the report about what is going on at that place to Bheem Chand.⁸⁸

According to local tradition, in Anandpur Sahib, Parshuram Brahmin, who was a resident of Jijo city, prayed to the Guru that, 'Jabar Khan has taken my wife away and has kept her in his kingdom. Please help me'. The Guru ordered Sahibzada Ajit Singh to carry one hundred horse riders with him and get Brahmin's wife back to him and present Jabar Khan in the Guru's Darbar. At this place, Parshuram's wife was brought back and Jabar Khan was presented to the Guru. Through the Guru's order, he

⁸⁶ Giani Gain Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol.I, p. 899.

⁸⁷ Kala Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Keshgarh Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 68 years (Personal Interview on 10 January, 2020).

⁸⁸ Joga Singh of Sewadar Gurdwara Manji Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 69 years (Personal Interview on 10 January, 2020).

was killed with arrows. The Gurdwara at this place is known as Gurdwara Ajit Singh, which has been constructed in the memory of this event.⁸⁹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, in his work, has also written about the same course of events as have been found in the local tradition. But he has differed in the name of the Brahmin as Devaki Das and not as Parshuram.⁹⁰

The Hill Rajas realized the futility of continuing hostility against Guru Gobind Singh. They made peace with him and invited him to attend a fair at Riwalsar,⁹¹ a holy place of Hindus and Buddhists. It is famous for a couple of floating islands and lies sixteen kilometers from Mandi. The Guru visited this place in the company of his mother Gujri, his wives Sundari and Sahib Devan, all of his four sons, and a body of chosen Sikhs. Many Hill Rajas who had collected there received him warmly. Guru Gobind Singh also paid a visit to Mandi, there Raja Sid Sen (1684-1772) offered him a cordial reception. The Raja asked Guru for a boon that his capital Mandi should never be conquered by an enemy. The Guru got a small earthen vessel (*handi*) and threw it into the river Beas on the banks of which stands the town of Mandi. The Vessel did not break. The Guru observed:

“Jaise bachi meri handi, Waise bachegi teri Mandi,

Mandi ko jab lootenge, To asmaan se gole chutenge”

(As my earthen vessel is safe, so will your Mandi be safe. When Mandi is plundered, heavenly balls will be fired.)⁹²

Though outwardly at peace Bheem Chand of Kahlur and Bhup Chand of Handur always thought of some means to destroy the Guru. Once when two officers of the Imperial Army, Saida Beg and Alif Khan, were going from Lahore to Delhi, Bheem Chand promised them large sums of money and bought them to attack the Guru. The Guru was at this time camped near Chamkaur and only a small contingent was with him. The Sikhs however, were determined to defeat themselves.

Just when the battle was at its height one of the Generals, Saida Bag, hearing favourable account of the Guru was won over to his side and at a critical moment joined the Sikhs with as many men as he could persuade to join him. This breakup

⁸⁹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Ajit Singh of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

⁹⁰ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 131, no. 75.

⁹¹ Riwalsar; A great fair is held at Riwalsar every year on the first week of *Baisakh*.

⁹² Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, p.286.

was noticed by Alif Khan who seeing no chance of success beat a retreat. The Sikhs pushed the fleeing troops to a distance and then returned to Anandpur Sahib.⁹³

Anandpur Sahib faced another attack on December 2, 1703. Ajmer Chand came with ten thousand men, picked from the armies of several of the hill chieftains. There were not more than eight hundred Sikhs to defend the town. They saw their best chance in coming out and making a sudden charger. This onslaught had the effect of creating confusion in the ranks of the opponents. Ajmer Chand was the first to flee the field. The other Rajas made a bid to check the rout and stood firmly behind their men. The battle raged furiously for some time, but the hillmen were eventually forced to withdraw. Alam Singh and Udey Singh added further lustre to their names as warriors by their deeds of chivalry. "The divine man won the victory and the rajas made their surrender", sang poet Sainapat.

Anandpur Sahib was so much the focus of attention that still another host came to reduce it to submission. This was the Mughal force dispatched under Imperial orders, with Said Khan as the commander. Most of the Sikhs had gone to their homes to meet their families after long periods of absence and there were only about five hundred men left with Guru. Yet they jumped into the thick of the battle and fought with their customary tenacity. Two faithful Muslims, Maimum Khan and Said Beg battled on the Guru's side. The latter was killed when the action was at its fiercest. Riding his famous blue-colored charger, the Guru made dash through the ranks and reached where the Mughal commander Said Khan was. He had heard many marvelous stories about the Guru from his sister who was the wife of Pir Buddhu Shah, and instantly recognized him. All intent of war vanished from his heart and dismounting his horse, he touched the Guru's stirrups to pay him homage. He could fight the Guru no longer and withdrew from the contest. This was the end of his career as a soldier, and he spent the rest of his life in prayer.⁹⁴

It is said that the Imperial forces once again tried to crush the army of the Guru. This time the Imperial forces were led by Ramjan Khan. He along with his soldiers made great rush at Sikhs. Though, in battle-field Ramjan Khan was badly wounded yet he was unable to capture the city of Anandpur Sahib. It is said that the joint forces of the Hill Rajas and the imperialists tried to plunder the city of Anandpur

⁹³ Sundar Singh M.A., *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, Amritsar, 1935, pp. 44-45.

⁹⁴ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.63-64.

Sahib, but in vain. The Sikh chronicles have affirmed this that once again the Guru's enemies left battlefield without defeating the Guru's force. This victory had brought fame and popularity for the Guru. The disciples of the Guru gathered in a large number at his *Darbar* and in a short time he had an assumed great wealth and power. All this was a challenge for the hill chiefs.⁹⁵

Finding themselves in a desperate position the Hill Rajas again approached the Mughal Government for aid. They were more earnest and insistent this time. According to the Sikh tradition the Raja of Kahlur himself went to Deccan to present his case against the Guru, before the Emperor personally; he is said to have been accompanied by some other hill Rajas. This tradition has some support in several Persian Chronicles. The Emperor might have heard complaints against the Guru from the Hill Rajas or received reports from his own officers; it is probable that he issued orders to take step against the Guru. As a matter of official routine the task of implementing these orders fell upon the Faujdar of Sirhind, Wazir Khan. Emboldened by the prospect of strong Mughal support, Hill Rajas not only arranged full mobilization of their own resources but also enlisted the Gujjars and Ranghars, 'who were not at ancient enmity with the Sikhs' to fight against them⁹⁶.

Anandpur Sahib was celebrating with usual Sikh ceremony the festival of Diwali for which a large number of Guru Gobind Singh's followers had come from outside. When the news arrived of a mighty host marching upon them, their spirits rose at the prospect of striving for the Guru's cause and if fortune favoured, of winning the martyrdom pleased their hearts. Many of them decided not to return home and stayed on in anticipation of the approaching contest. The Hill Rajas who had long been contriving a combined campaign on this large scale, gleefully joined the Mughal force along with their troops. The Subedar of Lahore met them at Ropar. The allied army came, under the command of Wazir Khan of Sirhind eager for war and revenge. Their battle cries resounded like thunder through the valley, striking terror even into the stony hills around⁹⁷.

The hill chiefs who now took sides against the Guru were Ajmer Chand of Kahlur, Ghummand Chand of Kangra, Bir Singh of Jaswal and the Raja of Kullu,

⁹⁵ Dalbir Singh, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 71.

⁹⁶ Anil Chandra Banerjee, *Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.208-209.

⁹⁷ Harbans Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, p.65.

Kaintal, Mandi, Jammu, Nurpur, Chamba, Guler, Srinagar, Bisharwal, Darawali and Daudhwal. Ranghars and Gujjars, the old enemies of the Guru also joined the invading army. The Mughal forces of Delhi and Sirhind were brought into the field by Wazir Khan; Zabardast Khan of Lahore also came at the head of an equally large and formidable army. They wanted to crush the power of the Guru by the instruction of the Emperor. The decrees were issued under the royal seal to all defenders to crush this rising infidel power.

Nawab Mohammad Khan of Malerkotla, Usman Khan of Qasur, Shams Khan of Bijwara, Naib Khan of Jalandhar and host of petty Chiefs from Multan, Bahawalpur and the centers of Gakhar influence in the country now comprising the district of Rawalpindi, Attack and Hazara, also started for joining in the, Jihad-holy war against the Guru. All the combined forces proceeded towards Anandpur Sahib from Ropar on May 20, 1704.⁹⁸

In the exigency, the Guru invited help from his Sikhs. He issued several letters.⁹⁹ The battle continued with fearful violence. The guns were fired in such abundance that their smoke obscured the sky and their loud reports deafened the ear. The Guru seeing these, ordered his two generals, Udey Singh and Daya Singh to go to the front. They proceeded enbloc and cut down the enemy with great vehemence. The Subedars were astonished to see this unwanted destruction of their armies and rallied fourth their men with encouraging words and promises of great rewards. The two armies were now engaged at close quarters and battle continued with great fierceness till the evening. On muster being taken it was found that nine hundred soldiers of the allied army lay dead on the field, the loss of lives on the Guru's side was comparatively much less. With the dawn of the day the Guru's drums were beaten and the Sikhs marched out to give battle. The Guru himself mounted a charger and led the attack that day¹⁰⁰.

Guru Gobind Singh divided his army into six contingents, each roughly consisting of five hundred men. They were placed in five forts, while a detachment of five hundred men was kept in reserve. Anadgarh was in the Guru's personal charge. Fatehgarh was entrusted to Uday Singh, Holgarh was in command of Mohkam Singh, the Guru's eldest son Ajit Singh controlled Keshgarh Sahib. His other son Jujhar

⁹⁸ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.72.

⁹⁹ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, pp.288-289.

¹⁰⁰ Sundar Singh, M.A., *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, pp.50-51.

Singh held Lohgarh. Ajit Singh won a great victory on the very first day by killing Jagatullah, leader of Ranghars and Gujjars.¹⁰¹

Bhai Kanhaiya¹⁰² was serving water to the thirsty in the battle of Anandpur Sahib. They had a drunk he carried the water. There were *seven boulies*. Three *boulies* have already been discovered. The bucket and *dol* have also been excavated. There is Gurudwara Sahib in the memory of Bhai Kanhaiya at Taragarh. The bucket and *dol* are now having been placed there. The place where he meditated is also there in the Gurudwara Sahib. Bhai Kanhaiya, also served water to the soldiers of enemy when he carried out water from some deep well or place. Some Sikhs complained to the Guru when they saw all this. When the Guru asked Bhai Kanhaiya about this, he replied that, 'He sees the Guru in every person that is why he offers water to them'. Then the Guru gave a small box of medicine to him and said to do dressing of the wounded persons.¹⁰³

Giani Gian Singh has also mentioned about Bhai Kanhaiya in his work. According to him, in the Guru's army there was a Sikh named Kanhaiya and he had been doing the duty of serving water from Guru Teg Bahadur's time. He was getting glory with the Guru's blessings. But he did not give up his duty of serving water. He served water to horses and Singhs with his *Mashakts*. Once, some Hindu Turk asked for water, he also gave it to him. One day, when he did not reach to serve water on time, Singhs made request to the Guru in anger. When he came back in front of the Guru, on asking, he replied that he sees the Guru in everyone. The Guru laughed and said that 'Bhai Kanhaiya is true Saint and *Braham Giani*'. After saying this, the Guru gifted him his own handkerchief and all other blessings and asked him to go to east to

¹⁰¹ Hari Ram Gupta, *History of the Sikhs*, Vol. I, pp.289.

¹⁰² Bhai Kanhaiya was a resident of village Sodra in the District of Gujranwala (Pakistan). He was a devout, peace-loving Sikh, with tender and compassionate heart. Because of his love for peace and service, and his tender-hearted, is position, he was averse to becoming a soldier and engaging in bloodshed. Therefore, he had not joined the Guru's army of Saint-soldiers by taking *Amrit*. But he was far from being a coward or drone. He learnt the art of rendering first-aid to the wounded. He also gathered around him a band of persons eager to engage in such service, and organized them into an ambulance corps. Whenever fighting took place, he would take his ambulance band into the battle field, and go about serving water and giving other help to the wounded, dressing their wounds, and carrying them to his camps for further service and treatment "His followers, called Sewapanthis, form an orthodox and honorable sub-sect o Sikhs who live by honest labour and accept no alms or offerings of any description. The Sewapanthis are also called Adanshahis from Adanshah, a rich banker who devoted his wealth and his leisure to the propagation of their doctrines." Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopedia of a Sikhism*, Vol. I, p.200.

¹⁰³ Dev Singh, an old person of village Taragarh, District Ropar, age 72 years (Personal Interview on 23 September, 2019).

expand Sikhism and your sect will run. After being blessed, Bhai Kanhiya moved to east.¹⁰⁴

The Sikhs fought so bravely that the allied armies decided not to take any further risks but to besiege the city and cut off all the supplies. The siege began in the summer of 1704. The allied forces had now completely besieged Anandpur and all the supplies were cut off. The siege was organised in such a perfect manner that all ingress and egress for both goods and persons were completely stopped and after a few days the Sikhs began to feel the desperateness of their position. The price of food grain rose to one rupee per seer and at this price also grains were not always available.¹⁰⁵

Soon, the effects of the siege began to be felt inside the fort. The disciples began to starve and, with them, starved the Master, his four sons, his wife, mother of Khalsa and his own aged mother. The *Parshadi* elephant, which Bhim Chand had coveted, the blue steed and many other noble able precious animals; died lingering deaths for want of food. Sometimes, the Sikhs would make night sorties and take supplies from the enemies camp, but such supplies could not last long. Anandpur Sahib presented a deserted appearance; for most of the inhabitants had left. Provision became excessively scarce and dear. The disciples bore hunger and hardship for a long time.¹⁰⁶

When Mughals surrounded the fort of Anandpur Sahib, there was shortage of food. Sikhs passed away the time by eating leaves of trees. Then they asked Mata Gujari to convince the Guru to change the place. When the Guru did not agree with them, then forty Sikhs of Majha region, whose head was Maha Singh they wrote *Bedawa* and gave it to the Guru that we are not your Sikhs and you are not our the Guru and they left the fort.¹⁰⁷

According to Giani Gian Singh when Sikhs saw that Guru Gobind Singh is not ready to leave Anandpur Sahib, Sikhs requested Mata Gujri to convince the Guru to leave Anandpur Sahib and settle all the disputes. After considering Sikhs request, Mata went to the Guru and said to him that ‘Sikhs are in trouble and we should leave

¹⁰⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 944.

¹⁰⁵ Dalbir Singh Dhillon, *Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, p. 73.

¹⁰⁶ Kartar Singh M.A., *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, p.183.

¹⁰⁷ Gurmukh Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 86 years (Personal Interview on 08 March, 2020).

this place and go to Malwa, where Sikhs worship them. If you will not leave this place, all these Sikhs are ready to leave you'. Mata went to Mahal after saying this. After that many Sikhs prayed with joined hands, 'oh! our true Lord, it is very difficult to fight with hunger and to live here'. The Guru spoke in anger after hearing this, 'whoever wants to leave can leave by giving *Bedawa* like this, neither we all are your Sikhs and nor you are our Guru'. On hearing this, many Singhs left after a long fight with hunger and war. Who were left with the Guru, the Guru again asked them to leave after giving *Bedawa*. But the Guru's Singhs joined their hands and told that he was the Guru even since the day they had been baptized. Now where could they go with that body? The Guru was pleased and said that they had kept alive the root of Sikhism. *Khalsa* Panth would be very large. After giving this blessing, the Guru put three letters (*Bedawa* and two vows by Turks) in his pocket.¹⁰⁸

After getting the *Bedawa* of forty Sikhs, the remaining Sikhs, got Mata to their side as they convinced her that hill chiefs had taken oath of holy books *Geeta* and *Kuran*, that they would settle the matter once the Guru left the Fort. But the Guru knew about their (Hill Rajas) trap. So, Guru Gobind Singh decided to fight the battle from the fort. But after the fierce fighting and repeated requests of the Sikhs and the Mata, the Guru had gone into deep thoughts and then made up his mind to leave the Fort and in one December night, they left the fort in midnight and crossed the Sarsa river.¹⁰⁹

Giani Gian Singh has written that the most patient Sikhs were there with the Guru but the hunger was still the same. At last, when it became unbearable, Sikhs explained their troubles to Mata. Mata replied that the Guru does not obey her but she was with them. She assured that she would do as they would ask her to do. Sikhs requested Mata to leave the fort with the family and they would follow them. When the carts were ready to move with the family and Mata, the Singhs too joined them for their safety. The Guru told them that they were ready to move without his order, if they had stayed for two days more, they would have felt the comforts but now they would face problems and troubles. After that, the Guru ordered the Singhs, to take out arrows and arms and those were to be placed on mule. After playing *Ranjit Nagara* on 15 Maghar, 1761 Bikrami they did *Ardaas* and all the carts of Ladies were moved

¹⁰⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 976.

¹⁰⁹ Major Singh, an old person of village Holgarh, District Ropar, age 84 years (Personal Interview on 23 September, 2019).

with an order to Sikhs to move to Paunta through the place of Sirmore. He gave a letter to Sham Singh to go to King Narvesh. Guru Gobind Singh himself distributed *Prasad* at Ninth Guru's place, giving the responsibility to a Sikh Gurbachan Singh to move in the evening with five hundred Sikhs and elder Sahibzaadas out of Anandpur Sahib. At that time, his elder sons were watching Anandpur Sahib again and again. Bhai Singh asked why they were watching it again and again, they replied 'it is the place where we have spent seventeen years' and Bhai Singh replied that 'it is a matter of few days and then we will return here'.¹¹⁰

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish Anandpur was blockaded from all sides. The Guru established tough security upon all the far and near forts including Taragarh and Aghamgarh. Six months passed since the siege was laid. Raja Ajmer Chand further fortified the cordon. The langar community Kitchen started to face the pinch of shortage. In the afternoon an informer brought the news that the army summoned by Raja Ajmer Chand from Sirhind was on its way and they had already arrived at Roper. The remaining Sikhs from all the other forts had by now gathered at the fort of Anandpur Sahib. After consulting them all, the Guru decided to abandon the Fort at midnight. The Guru taking Bhai Uday Singh and the other prominent Singhs came to Gurdwara Sisganj. After presenting supplication here and complimenting, Bhai Gurbaksh Dass Udasi, left Sisganj and came back to the fort Anandgarh. Then he sent Mata Gujri with two young sons alongwith a male and a female servant towards Kiratpur. Next he called and gave Aurangzeb's letter to Mohkam Singh for safekeeping. A number of people followed Mata Gujri. After that, when the night had gone one and half 'pehar', the Guru taking Bhai Uday Singh and the other Singhs came out and followed the people coming from Anandgarh.¹¹¹

To conclude it that Guru Gobind Singh sat on *Gurgaddi* as the tenth Guru in the most adverse and exigent circumstances to protect and shelter Sikh community. Under those pressing conditions the Guru united the Sikhs and infused a new spirit into them and in this way *Khalsa Panth* was created. On the other side, hill chiefs could not put up with the rising glory of Guru Gobind Singh which resulted in many fierce battles that the Guru and his Singhs had to fight. The Mughals also supported hill chiefs in these battles against the Guru. The military strategy of Guru Gobind

¹¹⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1005.

¹¹¹Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.164-165,no. 78.

Singh was basically of a defensive character. He had never any political ambition of any kind. So, to understand the situation the Guru Gobind Singh left the fort of Anandpur Sahib at last. But it had not all ended here. Thus, this chapter revolves around Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Anandpur Sahib and the events that had happened there. These events and incidents have been found in lore and anecdotes which are supported by the available literature. By this way, the importance of oral evidence becomes more relevant and they have proved to be more authentic. As, oral and local traditions can play a vital role in the reconstruction of past and research on various aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's life and personality would have remained incomplete without the oral evidence.

CHAPTER – 3

FROM ANANDPUR SAHIB TO DINA

Guru Gobind Singh moved from Anandpur Sahib on horses and go-cart. It was night of *Poh* (December) and it was raining also. When the Guru reached Sahi Tibbi¹ from Anandpur Sahib through Kiratpur, the Mughals and hill chiefs came to know that there were only few Sikhs with the Guru, they attacked him and forgot all their vows of cows and Quran. Guru Gobind Singh ordered Bhai Udey Singh² and fifty Sikhs to stay there to face the enemy. Bhai Udey Singh fought with courage and tried to stop the force there and he did not go forward and got martyred. On the otherside, the Guru reached on the bank of Sarsa river³ from there. But the Mughals kept following Guru Gobind Singh very fast⁴.

According to Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, as soon as Guru Gobind Singh reached Nirmohgarh from Kiratpur, shooting started all of a sudden. When they were near the enemy's military, Sahibzada Ajit Singh stayed there to face them. He bravely stopped the enemy there. The Guru moved forward with the mob but when he came to know that Ajit Singh alone was fighting with the Mughals, then the Guru sent Bhai Udey Singh with some Sikhs to get back Sahibzada Ajit Singh. Bhai Udey Singh reached there and sent Ajit Singh towards the Guru. But Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has differed with Giani Gian Singh about the place of fighting. According to him, the fighting place was Sahi Tibbi instead of Nirmohgarh.⁵

According to the another oral tradition, when the Guru Gobind Singh reached Sarsa river from Sahi Tibbi, there was flood in Sarsa river and Mughals were following them. The Guru ordered to just cross the river. It was very cold due to rain and *Poh's* night (December). The Guru ordered Bhai Jeewan Singh Rangreta Sikh to

¹ Sahi Tibbi is three kilometres from Chamkaur Sahib in Ropar District of Punjab.

² Udey Singh was one of the four sons of the renowned Sikh martyr Bhai Mani Singh resident of village Alipur District. Multan. Bhai Bachiter Singh and Bhai Udey Singh, were two of the four sons who had joined the band of dedicated Sikhs in the army of the Guru.

³ Sarsa river rises in the Shiwalik foothills of the southern Himachal Pradesh. It flows in the western part of Solan District. Then enters into Punjab near Diwari village. Sarsa joins the river Sutlej at the eastern part of Roopnagar District of Punjab. It joins the Sutlej River near Taraf village.

⁴ Jaill Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Sahi Tibbi, District Ropar, age 58 years (Personal interview on 18 March, 2018).

⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru -Khalsa*, Vol. I, p.1006, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 164, no. 78.

stay there to stop the enemy. So, that all of other could cross the river. Bhai Jeewan Singh stayed there and the Guru, Mata Gujari, four Sahibzadas, two wives of the Guru and some Sikhs could cross the river. A lot of precious things and literature were drenched in the river. Bhai Jeewan Singh fought bravely with the enemy. But next day, in the morning he sacrificed his life for the sake of the Guru⁶. Guru Gobind Singh moved to Ropar after crossing the river Sarsa. But Mughal army attacked the Guru and Singhs at Malakpur Ranga. The Guru and Singhs faced them bravely. But, Mata Gujri, Sahibzadas Joravar Singh and Fateh Singh got separated from the Guru. Gangu⁷ took them to his village Khedi. The Guru sent Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Devan towards Delhi with Bhai Mani Singh. Bhai Bachitar Singh who had fought with an elephant at Anandpur Sahib became wounded. Now, there is a Gurdwara Pariwar Vichora Sahib that is located here, where the Guru was separated from his family. Then the Guru reached bricks kiln factory (Bhatha) passing through Tibba, Ghanola and Cambe⁸. There is a Gurdwara Bhatha Sahib is located in the memory of the Guru. When the Pathan Nihang Khan of Kotla Nihang Khan⁹ came to know about the Guru's arrival in the bricks factory, he himself came there and took the Guru to his house.¹⁰

As per the tradition, the Guru stayed in Nihang Khan's house at Kotla Nihang Khan. Sahibzada Ajit Singh came over there with wounded Bhai Bachiter Singh. The Guru had got the cot of Bhai Bachiter Singh placed in his room. The Guru stayed in *Garhi* for the whole day with the Singhs. At night, the Guru asked them to move for Chamkaur. As the Mughals were in search of them, it was full of danger to stay in Nihang Khan's house. The condition of Bhai Bachiter Singh was serious. That's why he was left in Nihang Khan's house, who died next day. The Guru was pleased with Nihang Khan's service and gave a sword, a dhall (Scabbard) and small knife to him. All these have been kept today in Gurdwara Bhatha Sahib. Nihang Khan asked his son Alam Khan to guide the Guru to move towards Chamkaur.¹¹

⁶ Bhola Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Priwar Vichoda Sahib, Village Majri, District Roopnagar, age 57 years (Personal interview on 13 March, 2018).

⁷ Gangu, a Brahmin was a server is at Anandpur sahib who had control over the kitchen of Guru Gobind Singh.

⁸ In these villages, now the Gurdwaras are located in the memory of the Guru.

⁹ Kotala Nihang Khan three kilometres from Ropar District of Punjab.

¹⁰ Jodh Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhatha Sahib, Town Kotla Nihang Khan District Ropar, age 51 years. (Personal interview on 13 March, 2018).

¹¹ Sukhdev Singh, an old person of Town Kotla Nihang Khan, District Ropar, age 81 years. (Personal interview on 13 March, 2018).

The information given in the oral tradition has also been confirmed by Swaroop Singh Kaushisk. But he is silent about Gurdwara Bhatha Sahib.¹²

According to Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Uday Singh fought bravely against the Turks and sacrificed his life. Muslims thought that the Guru had been killed. They took his head and presented it to Wazir Khan. When they matched the face with the Guru's picture, it did not match and they attacked the army of the Guru. As the Guru was staying on the bank of the river, there was tough fighting. Many people from both the sides were killed there. There was a lot of confusion and mess. Mata's chariot was left there. Mata with younger Sahibzadas and some Sikhs crossed the river. Many Sikhs were killed. When the Sikhs requested the Guru, the Guru put his horse into the river. Then it was the Guru said, (ਸਰਸੇ ਨਾਲੇ, ਕਾਲੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਾਲੇ, ਤੂੰ ਫਿਰ ਕਦੇ ਨਾ ਚੜੇਗਾ). According to this, this river never got flooded. Some Sikhs, Mata and two younger Sahibzadas crossed the river. But Turks were following them and many Sikhs were killed while fighting against the Turks. After crossing the river, Mata Gujri hid under some bushes along with the two younger Sahibzadas, with one go cart with them loaded with jewels. Only Brahman Gangu was with them, who was the cook of the Guru. When it was night, Gangu took them to his village Dukhedi. He spread Mata's cot on the terrace and served food. On the other side, Bhai Manni Singh took the Mata towards Delhi in the house of Jawahar Singh Arora.¹³

As per the tradition, the Guru moved to Brahmin Mazra¹⁴ from Kotla Nihang Khan. There is a Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi in the memory of the Guru. At present times Jod Mela (joint fair) is arranged on fifth day of *Poh* (December).¹⁵ After that, the Guru reached Boor Mazra¹⁶ and the Guru and Singhs and two elder Sahibzadas took water from a well here. There is a Gurdwara Sahib in the Guru's memory at that place. Then the Guru moved towards Chamkaur from there.¹⁷

Tara Singh Nirotam and Giani Thakur Singh have given similar version related to Boor Mazra. They do not mentioned Brahmin Mazra. They have written

¹² Sarrop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 165-166, no. 78,79.

¹³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru- Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1007-1008.

¹⁴ Brahmin Mazra village ten kilometres away from Roopnagar District in Punjab.

¹⁵ Davinder Singh, an old person of Village Brahmin Mazra, District Roopnagar, age 68 years. (Personal interview on 14 March, 2018).

¹⁶ Boor Mazra village twelve kilometres from Roopnagar District in Punjab.

¹⁷ Chet Singh, an old person of village Boor Mazra, District Roopnagar, age 71 years. (Personal interview on 14 March, 2018).

that the Guru with all the Singhs drank water there. There, one Rangad informed the enemy about it that the Guru was moving towards Chamkaur.¹⁸

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushishk has only written that from Kotla Nihang Khan, they all (Guru and Singhs) went towards Boor Mazra and just before the day ended, they arrived at the town of Chamkaur.¹⁹

Giani Gian Singh has written that, when the Guru moved to Ropar after crossing Sarsa river, the Ropar Pathans started surrounding them. But Singhs fought with courage and came to Boor Mazra and Brahmin Mazra.²⁰

As per the tradition, the Guru moved towards Chamkaur²¹ along with forty Sikhs and two elder Sahibzadas from Boor Mazra. At that place where the Guru stayed Gurdwara Damdama Sahib was constructed. There was a *Haveli* of two brothers, Jagt Singh and Roop Chand. Both were the Guru's devotees. When the Guru asked Jagt Singh to let him stay in his Haveli to fight against the Mughals, he refused as he was scared of the Mughals. But Roop Chand opened the door of *Haveli* for the Guru. The Guru entered the *Haveli* with two elder Sahibzadas and forty Sikhs. The *Haveli* got changed into the *Garhi*. Guru Gobind Singh posted Sikhs everywhere around the *Garhi*. The Guru and two Sahibzadas rested for some time. He knew that the Mughals were following and could attack anytime. The Mughals started surrounding the *Garhi* early in the Morning.²²

According to Giani Gian Singh, Guru Gobind Singh reached Chamkaur crossing Boor Mazra and Brahmin Mazra. There were only forty Sikhs with the Guru. There the Guru saw a *kachhi Garhi*. The Guru sent invitation to the owner of the *Garhi*. But the owner replied that he had nothing in his hand to present to the Guru, so he could not face the Guru. Bhai Daya Singh gave him five gold coins, which he respectfully offered to the Guru and paid obeisance. But when Bhai Daya Singh asked him about the *kachhi Garhi*, he replied that, it was his house, so I could not give it to him. Many people were present there at that time. One jatt, named Greebu who was half owner of that *kachhi Garhi* was also there. Greebu told the Guru that he was the

¹⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 163, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, pp. 222-223.

¹⁹ Bhai Saroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 167, no. 79.

²⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru- Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1008.

²¹ Chamkaur Sahib sixteen kilometers away from Roopnagar District in Punjab.

²² Notice Board, Gurdwara Katalgarh Sahib, District Roopnagar.

half owner. The Guru could enter the *Garhi* by his side. Then the Guru along with the Sikhs, Greebu and two Sahibzadas entered the *Garhi*. Sikhs were given duty in batch of eight on each corners. Then the Guru told his Sikhs that if they had not left the fort of Anandpur Sahib and had followed his order, the need of fighting here would not have arisen. But now they have to fight. Sikhs spent that night in these talks. The Guru and two Sahibzadas took rest.²³

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaiushish has also mentioned the events when Guru Gobind Singh reached Chamkaur. He has given some different version. According to him, Guru Gobind Singh arrived at the town of Chamkaur from Boor Mazra. Bhai Mokam Singh was sent forward and the owner of the fortress, Chaudhri Budhi Chand Raut was called. Travelling from the fortress, he came to the Guru and requested, “Maharaj! please come to my house along with the Sikhs.” The Guru then, went and took residence at his *Haveli*. Bhai Budhi Chand served the Guru whole-heartedly and treated the injured Sikhs. Here an enemy informer went and informed the police at Ropar that a few Sikhs have come and are staying in *Haveli* of Budhi Chand. After getting the information, Nahar Khan Maleria accompanied the Turk Troops and, came and surrounded the town of Chamkaur²⁴.

As per the tradition, when the Mughal army attacked the *Garhi*, Nawab of Maler Kotla Sher Muhammad Khan was at the front of the army along with his three brothers (Nahar Khan, Gulsher Khan and Khawaza Khizar Khan). The Guru did kill the two brothers with his arrows. There were forty Sikhs with two Sahabzadas along with the Guru in the *Garhi*. At first, the Sikhs fought from inside the *Garhi*. Then the Singhs in fives came out of the *Garhi* and confronted the Mughals according to the order issued by the Guru and Singhs sacrificed their lives in the company of five-five Sikhs. Sahibzada Ajit Singh asked the Guru to let him go in the battle field. The Guru was very pleased and bound him with weapons and with five Sikhs, let him go for the fight in the battle field. Sahibzada Ajit Singh sacrificed his life along with the five Sikhs while fighting against enemy. To see this, Sahibzada Jhujhar Singh too asked permission for participating into the war. The Guru adorned him with the weapons and sent Sahibzada with five Sikhs to the war. Sahibzada Jhujhar Singh fought bravely and sacrificed his life. The Guru watched all this happening while sitting on

²³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru- Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1008-1009.

²⁴ Bhai Saroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 167, no. 79.

the terrace, where thirty-five Sikhs and two elders Sahibzadas had attained martyrdom. A present Gurdwara Katlgarh Sahib is situated. There a fair to commemorate the memory is celebrated with great pomp and show every year on 6th, 7th, 8th day of *Poh* (December). Now there is a Gurdwara Garhi Sahib at the place of *Garhi*²⁵.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have given a similar version about the above tradition. They have written that the Guru reached near Chamkaur, four miles away in south from Boor Majra. Enemies were following them. Firstly, the Guru and Singhs stayed in a garden and then from that place, they all moved to a muddy fort and Sikhs in eights sat down with bows and arrows to safeguard the fort. Ten thousand people were killed of the royal army and on the other side, two Sahibzadas and thirty-five Sikhs had sacrificed their lives.²⁶

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish's version, after looking the place properly, the Guru got ready for the fight. On all the four sides of the fortress surveying along with the walls, four persons were deputed at each side. The Turk army, coming from outside, immediately launched the offensive. On the command of the Guru, Sikhs from inside the fortress shot arrows with such intensity that the raiding army faced the frenzy of the committed soldiers of the Guru. The Guru himself also shot arrows. Nahar Khan Maleria was an adept commander. Holding the bow, he came forward swiftly. On seeing him, the Guru shot such an arrow that he fell flat on ground there. The Turk army was disarrayed. Looking at the retreating troops, a Pathan came towards the door. In a fury he attacked many times. At the end, after killing both the Sikhs at the gate he got himself killed. On the other side, Bhai Sher Singh and Bhai Nanhu Singh were at the door. By sunset, both the Sahibzadas and other thirty-eight Sikhs had attained martyrdom by coming out of the fortress. Only Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh were left behind.²⁷

Giani Gian Singh has further written that next morning the Mughals surrounded the *Garhi*. On the Mughals side there were Nahar Khan, Haibat Khan, Ismille Khan, Usman Khan, Sultan Khan, Wazid Khan, Gulbeg Khan, Dilawar Khan.

²⁵ Gurmukh Singh, Sewadar Gurdwara Katlgarh Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar, age 60 years. (Personal interview on 14 March, 2018).

²⁶ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 165, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 223.

²⁷ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 167-168, no. 79-80.

It was two side war. The Guru's Sikhs fought bravely. Chief Kehluri asked the village people about the Guru's army and they replied that they were just forty-fifty Sikhs, he had heard that the army had reached there at night. He was shocked on hearing it that how they could be so strong that his army could not defeat forty fifty Sikhs. The Guru was killing army of enemy through the window with bows and arrows. When the Guru heard the voice of Pathans then one arrow had shot Nahar Khan. They both started shooting arrows towards the Guru. But none of the arrows could touch the Guru. Gulshar Khan was wounded by the Guru's arrow. In the evening, the Sikhs thought that the Mughals could cause a lot of destruction if they would enter the Garhi. After taking permission from the Guru, Singhs jumped into the battle field. They sacrificed their lives after killing many of the enemy's side. When Himmat Singh sacrificed his life, then Ajit Singh went into the battle field with the Guru's permission. Seeing his elder brother's martyrdom, Jhujhar Singh also attained martyrdom in the battle field with the Guru's permission.²⁸

As per tradition, now it was evening time. The war continued till next morning. At the end of this day only five Sikhs were left with the Guru. Mughals were determental to destroy everything next morning. As they had come very near the Garhi. The Guru told the five Sikhs, 'Tomorrow, we would sacrifice our lives in the battle field.' The Sikhs had gone into deep discussion and after hearing all this said to the Guru, "the sacrifice of your life in front of us". "How can we see this?".²⁹

Bhai Daya Singh requested the Guru to leave the Garhi and told him that, "You can establish an army again, we would face the enemy tomorrow, we would not let the Khalsa down." The Guru refused their request by saying that, "The World would make a joke of it that after sacrifice of Singhs and Sahibzadas, the Guru saved his life.' Once again, all Singhs started thinking deeply and then they made a plan. They all went to the Guru and asked that, "Guruji, you had said that wherever five Singhs would take a decision, everyone would obey five Singh's order. That's why Khalsa is now ordering you to leave this *Garhi* and go to some safe place." It was difficult for the Guru. But he could not reject this. So, the Guru started making preparation to leave the *Garhi* and told Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh too to leave with him. Bhai Sant Singh was standing on one side of

²⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1009-1016.

²⁹ Joginder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Garhi Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar, age 58 years (Personal interview on 16 March, 2018), see also Notice Board, Gurdwara katalgarh sahib, District Roopnagar.

the *Garhi*. Sangat Singh³⁰ whose features matched the Guru ordered him to sit at that place where the Guru used to sit. The Guru put his wrosis (Kalgi) on his forehead. The Guru did ardas along with the three Singhs and made preparation to leave the fort and told the Singhs if they got separated, they should follow the stars so that they could meet anywhere. When they left the *Garhi*, the Guru did not find it easy to go silently. So, he clapped for three times and said around loudly, “the Guru is leaving the *Garhi*, if someone can stop him, he can come.” It was dark night. There was already a mess going on in Mughal camp at that time. They started clashing each other. The Guru succeeded in leaving the *Garhi*. Next morning the enemy made a furious attack on the *Garhi*. The two Singhs Sant Singh and Sangat Singh who were left there, fought bravely and attained martyrdom. The place where the Guru used to sit in the *Garhi*, and where Bhai Sangat Singh sat there is now Gurdwara Shaheed Burj Sahib is situated. There is also a historical well, from where the Guru, two Sahabzadas and Singhs drank water.

When the Mughals entered the *Garhi* next morning, they believed Sangat Singh to be the Guru and cut off his head and head was carried to Delhi. But later on, they realised that it was recognized not as the Guru’s head and they were mistaken. So, it was ordered again to find out Guru Gobind Singh.³¹

Giani Gian Singh in his work has given some different account of this event. He has written, when it was night, the Guru was left only with seven-eight Singhs, at that time, Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh requested the Guru to leave the fort. Then the Guru gave his dress to Bhai Sangat Singh and make him sit on his place. The Guru ordered Ram Singh, Kehar Singh Deva to shoot the enemies with guns continuously but slowly and Jeewan Singh and Katha Singh were ordered to play Nagara. The Guru took Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Maan Singh with him. The Guru thought it is not good to leave secretly, so he spoke loudly, “Sikh’s Guru is moving away.” There was mess in the army.³²

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have also mentioned the event in their respective works. According to them, five Singhs requested the Guru to leave the

³⁰ Baba Sangat Singh belonged to village Katta Sabhor, Distt. Ropar. Here now Gurdwara Sahid Baba Sangat Singh is located and his Samadhi is also there. There is Gurdwara Sahib, tradition is prevailing that the ashes which were of the Singhs died in Chamkaur Sahib’s battle, were at this place.

³¹ Gurpal Singh, an old person of Chamkaur Sahib, Distt. Roop Nagar, age 68 year (Personal interview on 16 March, 2018) and see also Notice Board, Gurdwara Shahid Burj Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar.

³² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1017-1019

fort. Accepting the request, the Guru gave his dress to Bhai Sant Singh and gave his place to him. Bhai Sant Singh sacrificed his life after fighting bravely.³³

Bhai Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, in his work has also written about the events leading to Guru Gobind Singh' leaving Chamkaur. According to him, Bhai Sant Singh went along with Sangat Singh with the Guru's crest tucked on his Turban. As his face resembled the Guru's, then the Guru expounded, "Bhai Sikho, we have to go to Malwa to perform some other tasks." Then he got ready to come out of the fortress and waited for the arrival of Gani Khan and Nabi Khan. Whereas Gani Khan and Nabi Khan were the devotees of the Guru, they were the prominent commanders in the Mughal army. They were the residents of Machhiwara. There abode was towards the west of the fortress. The Guru was to go from this side after abandoning the fortress, towards Machhiwara. They were waiting for him. Gani Khan came forward and through the peephole, he called, "The Guru, we have arrived" and then gave new blue attire to the Guru. After putting on that and disguising as a commander, the Guru jee got ready. Through one peephole, holding a spear the Guru came out of the fortress. Gani Khan and Nabi Khan bent down their heads to pay obeisance. Both the brothers, taking the Guru with them, took the way from Chamkaur to Machhiwara.³⁴

According to the oral tradition, when Guru Gobind Singh left the fort of Chamkaur with Daya Singh, Dharam Singh and Maan Singh, they got separated from the Guru later on. The Guru reached a lonely barren place. Five kilometers away from Chamkaur. There, Gujjar Alfu and Ghammu were searching for their lost buffaloes. They recognized the Guru and started shouting. The Guru made them quiet them by giving coin and started moving away. But they again started making noise and the Guru stopped them. There was water logging on the path which the Guru was following. The Guru's *Juttis* (footwear) were left there and the Guru was now bare feet. The Guru stayed under a Jand tree for some time. A Gurudwara was constructed at that place. At present Gurudwara Jand Sahib, commemorates the brave journey of the Guru, which is two and half kilometres away from Sirhind canal.³⁵

³³ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 165, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 223.

³⁴ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 168-169, no. 80

³⁵ Hardev Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar, age 61 years (Personal interview on 14 March, 2018).

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have mentioned in their respective works that when the Guru was moving in full moon night, one person made noise that the Guru was going. The Guru gave him five coins and asked him to keep quiet. When the Guru moved a short distance, he again started shouting. The Guru kept quietened him by slapping him.³⁶

Giani Gian Singh has also written about the same incident. According to him, when the Guru reached Kidi village, Alfu and Gammu were feeding cattles. They started making noise after recognising the Guru. The Guru tried to keep them quiet by giving them five coins but they did not stop shouting. Then, the Guru killed Alfu with sword. When the Guru moved away two miles, it was morning time and he sat under a Jand tree seeing. At present there is a Gurdwara Jand Sahib. The Guru's footwear got stuck there in Chamkaur.³⁷

As per another tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached Behlolpur³⁸ moving from that place. The Guru called one known from village but he refused to help the Guru due to fear of the Mughals. He left the Guru in deep forest. Machhiwara was a few miles away from that place. There is a Gurdwara in memory of the Guru in Behlolpur village. The Guru stayed there in deep forest for the whole day and started moving in the night. Now, there is a Gurdwara Jhar Sahib is located, which is nearest to Choodwan village.³⁹

According to Giani Gian Singh, the three Sikhs who left the fort with the Guru were separated. When the Guru reached Behlolpur he sat under a tree of Jand, due to fatigue and he slept there. When it was evening, the Guru thought of leaving that place, but his bad condition and thorns in feet did not allow him to move further. That's why the Guru stayed there under the tree. The Guru was thirsty and hungry. But he was satisfied in Akal Purkh's wish. The Guru sang:

ਮਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲ ਮੁਰੀਦਾ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ॥

ਤੁਧ ਬਿਨ ਰੋਗ ਰਜਾਈਆ ਦਾ ਉਦਣ ਨਾਗ ਨਿਵਾਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਣਾ

³⁶ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sengreh*, p. 168, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 224.

³⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru- Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1018-1019.

³⁸ Behlolpur village, eleven kilometers from Machhiwara and forty-nine kilometres away from Ludhiana District.

³⁹ Ajeb Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jhar Sahib, village Behlolpur, District Ludhiana, age 58 years (Personal interview on 15 March, 2018).

ਮੂਲ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ ਖੰਜਰ ਪਿਆਲਾ, ਬਿੰਗ ਕਸਾਈਆ ਦਾ ਸਹਿਣਾ । ।
ਯਾਰੜੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੱਥਰ ਚੰਗਾ ਭੱਠ ਖੇੜਿਆ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ । ।

Reciting these words, it was morning and the Guru started moving towards Malwa.⁴⁰

Tara Singh Nirotam has written that Jhar Sahib is three miles away from Jand Sahib in south where Guru Gobind Singh had consumed milk of akk leaves (tree).⁴¹ Giani Thakur Singh has also mentioned in his work that the Guru moved three miles in south along the bank of Satluj. There is a Gurdwara Jhar Sahib. This is half miles away from the village Behlolpur.⁴²

As per tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached Sehjo Mazra⁴³ passing through Povat. These villages are quite near to each other. There is a Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru. Here the Guru rested for some time and then moved to Machhiwara.⁴⁴

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have also written that Guru Gobind Singh stayed in Povat and he had come there from Behlolpur village. This place is nine and half miles away from south. Giani Thakur Singh has also written that here the Guru did comb his hair and place turban. There is Gurdwara named Manji Sahib at this place. This is village of Ranghads.

As per Sikh tradition, at the time of leaving Chamkaur, the Guru carried on his body his usual steel arms and musket on his shoulders in order to retaliate if any individual or group attacked him on the way. He was also carrying with him some memorable arms of his father Guru Teg Bahadur. As from Chamkaur, Guru Gobind Singh started his journey in the direction of the Malwa region. But he was too exhausted to proceed very far. When Guru Gobind Singh reached Machiwara he felt extremely tired and rested near a Persian well located in the midst of a thick jungle. He quenched his thirst by drinking water from the earthen vase of that well and fell asleep on the bored damp ground in the garden.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh- Guru- Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1018-1019.

⁴¹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 186.

⁴² Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 224.

⁴³ Sehjo Mazra village forty-two kilometres away from Ludhiana District and five kilometres from Macchiwara.

⁴⁴ Dev Singh, old person of village Sehjo Mazra, District Ludhiana, age 81 years (Personal interview on 13 March, 2018).

⁴⁵ Gurdeep Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 82 years (Personal interview on 15 June, 2019).

As per the version of Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh, the Guru reached near Machhiwara moving from Povat village. He drank water from a well and then he slept stretching cloth on the earth.⁴⁶

According to the Sikh tradition, when the dawn broke, the cool golden rays of the Sun started traversing through the wilderness and started fondling and gently touching the Guru's face. He was affectionately woken up by those tender soft rays of the Sun, the thoughts of the compassionate the Guru went straight away to his two beloved Sikhs Bhai Sant Singh and Bhai Sangat Singh, as per the need of the hour whom he had left behind in the Garhi at Chamkaur. He seriously thought, that they must have by then obtained martyrdom inside the Garhi while fighting against the foe and he poetically expressed his aggrieved feeling through the following words:

ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲ ਮੁਰੀਦਾ ਦਾ ਕਹਿਣਾ ॥
ਤੁਧ ਬਿਨ ਰੋਗ ਰਜਾਈਆ ਦਾ ਉਦਣ ਨਾਗ ਨਿਵਾਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਣਾ
ਮੂਲ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ ਖੰਜਰ ਪਿਆਲਾ, ਬਿੰਗ ਕਸਾਈਆ ਦਾ ਸਹਿਣਾ ।।
ਯਾਰੜੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੱਥਰ ਚੰਗਾ ਭੱਠ ਖੇੜਿਆ ਦਾ ਰਹਿਣਾ ।।

But Giani Gian Singh's version was somewhat different. According to him, the above song was sung by Guru Gobind Singh in Behlolpur⁴⁷ village and not in Machhiwara Jungle.⁴⁸

Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh, who had got separated from the Guru at Chamkaur, even since then they had been fervently looking for him, pursuing in the same direction. They had reached a place that was in close proximity of he Guru and having heard him sing the heart rending divine song (Quated on previous page), they soon prostrated at his holy feet. They found the Guru laying on the bored ground with blood trickling down from the soles of his feet and legs badly bruised all over. They were unable to bear the physical plight of their beloved Guru, they informed him that Turk Army was chasing him hard and they might be able to come anytime and that place. But the Guru expressed his inability to move because of the blisters.⁴⁹ Gurdwara Charn Kaval Sahib was constructed at this

⁴⁶ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Gru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 169 see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p 224.

⁴⁷ Behlolpur Village is between Machhiwara and Chamkaur Sahib. Guru Gobind Singh reached Machhiwara from Chamkaur Sahib passing through Behlolpur.

⁴⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 997.

⁴⁹ Geja Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 85 years (Personal interview on 15 June, 2019).

site to commemorate the Guru's travel travails. It is there at that place even in the present times.⁵⁰

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have also described the meeting of three Sikhs Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharm Singh and Bhai Maan Singh with the Guru. They have written that, when three Sikhs found the Guru, the Guru's feet were wounded, they brought the Guru to Gulaba's Garden.⁵¹

Giani Gian Singh has also mentioned about Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Machhiwara and his meeting with three separate Singhs, when the Guru reached Machhiwara, he was very tired to move forward. So, he rested in a garden. Bhai Maan Singh and Dharam Singh has reached the garden in search of the Guru. The relative of the Gulaba informed that a Sikh like them has been in the garden since morning. Maan Singh went into the garden and was so relieved to find the Guru there. He happily called Daya Singh. The Guru was also pleased to see them. Bhai Daya Singh asked the Guru that it is not safe stay to be there for long time, as enemy would be there within anytime. The Guru's feet were wounded. Maan Singh took him to a well and served the Guru. Here Nabi Khan and Ganni Khan two Pathan brothers, who have brought horses many times for the Guru to Anandpur Sahib, recognized the Guru and saluted him.⁵²

According to another lore when Gulaba Masand came to know of the Guru's presence in his Garden, his sense of wonderment and happiness knew no bounds. He rushed to the garden and happily served the Guru. His brother Panjaba brought hot milk for the Guru and his Singhs. They took the Guru inside and made a bed for him and made him lie on the bed. The two brothers stood as guards the whole day. At night Gulaba took them (Guru and Singhs) to his house and locked them in the upper

⁵⁰ Gurdwara Charn Kaval Sahib marks the site of the garden where Guru Gobind Singh stopped first and where Bhai Maan Singh, Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh found him asleep after an arduous journey through the thorny forest. The central building of this shrine has a square hall on the ground floor with a square sanctum in the centre where Guru Granth Sahib is seated. The domed pavilion over the sanctum on the second floor contains a large portrait of Guru Gobind Singh in a sleeping posture. There are also decorative domed pavilions on this floor, square at the corners and rectangular at mid-points of the walls. A rectangular *Sarovar*, west of the Gurdwara. The Gurdwara is controlled by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee through a local committee which also manages it. A big fair is held in the third week of December Every year to commemorate Guru Gobind Singh's stay in Machiwara. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol. III, pp. 5-6.

⁵¹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Gru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 169, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 224.

⁵² Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1019-1020.

storey known as chubara,⁵³ that place has been commemorated by building Gurudwara Chubara Sahib at that place.⁵⁴

According to another folk lore, prevalent in the sikh tradition, after having spent some days in the jungle, the Guru was in his undergarments and his thighs were swollen badly bruised, having crossed the thorny bushes, there were wounds all over and those were badly bleeding. The Guru's undergarments had got badly stuck to his body because the dried blood had made the clothes cling to his body. On seeing this, Gulaba Masand made a suggestion to the Guru, asking him to remove his undergarments with the help of hot water. He was himself feeling very hesistate in helping the Guru remove his undergarments. The Guru affectionately called him and helped him in getting over his hesitation. The Guru fondly told him that in the relationship of father and son there is no room for hesitation. This kindness made him lose his awkwardness and he helped the Guru in removing his clothes and assisted him in taking a hot water bath.⁵⁵

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Nirotam and Giani Gian Singh have presented in their respective works, somewhat similar account of Gulaba's meeting with the Guru and his Singhs. They have written that Gulaba served the Guru a lot and his Singhs and Guru's stayed at the terrace of Gulaba's house. Here the Guru saw Maan Singh's high Turban, he blessed him by telling him, "This is now your Panth will work".⁵⁶

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Guru Gobind Singh along with Ghanni Khan and Nabi Khan has reached the pent house of Bhai Jeevan Singh in Machhiwara. With the permission of the Guru, both Nabi Khan and Ghanni Khan has returned to Ropar. The Guru spent a whole day at the pent house of Bhai Jeevan Singh. When it was full dark, Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Daharm Singh, Bhai Maan Singh and Bhai Ram Singh had come from Nirban and had the *Darshan* of the Guru⁵⁷

⁵³ Nirmal Singh of Sewadar *Gurdwara Chubara Sahib*, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 61 years. (Personal interview on 16 June, 2019).

⁵⁴ Gurudwara Chubara Sahib is inside the Town on the site where the house of Gulaba Masand once stood Chubara means a room on the first floor. It was in a first-floor room in Gulaba's house that Guru Gobind Singh had put up. The present building comprises of a square half with the sanctum in the centre for administration, the shrine is affiliated to Gurudwara Charn Kaval Sahib. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol. III, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁵ Sukha Singh, an old person of Village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 82 years. (Personal interview on 16 June, 2019).

⁵⁶ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 225 see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Gru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 169, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1026.

⁵⁷ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 170, no. 81.

A sister of Gulaba and Punjaba named Hardevi, lived in Machiwara. Earlier, she used to accompany her brothers to visit the Guru at Anandpur Sahib and once she had gifted a hand-made cotton dress, that was made by her. But gradually the age caught up with her and she was rendered incapable of going to Anandpur Sahib. But at that time, when she learnt about the Guru's arrival, she came with her son Nihala to pay obeisance to the Guru and had again brought a cotton dress which was made by her.⁵⁸

According to lore Gani Khan and Nabi Khan were two sturdy Rohila Khan brothers who lived at a short distance from Gulaba's house. Earlier, they had been at the Guru's service in Anandpur Sahib, then later on they took up the profession of horse trading. They used to bring excellent horses to the Guru and he had been very kind and considerate towards them. When they heard about the Guru's arrival, they came to meet the Guru at Gulabha's house. Their hearts were aggrieved to see the Guru's condition and tears trickled down their eyes. They also informed the Guru that the Mughals were tracking him and requested him to move to their house. They were of the view that staying at a follow Hindu or Sikh's house. Guru's whereabouts were easier to be tracked. On the contrary Muslim's house would be safe from suspicions and preying eyes.⁵⁹

When the Guru heard this a meaningful smile played on the Guru's face. Bhai Daya Singh wanted to comprehend the meaning of the Guru's smile. The Guru gave a very plausible explanation. He recalled the decision of leaving Chamkaur. When five Sikhs, whose collected decision became the wisdom of the Guru and their command was not to be overlooked. Remembering that, the Guru had conceded and left Chamkaur. But at this time, a very pertinent question faced him. How long would this game of hide and seek go on? He was a valiant soldier and a fighter; he would have preferred to die in the battle field than to cool his heels in hiding. All the persons there they were shocked to hear this. They prostrated at his feet and requested him to go in hiding. They reminded him that the objective of leaving Chamkaur, when he had been convinced by others to leave had not been achieved.

⁵⁸ Ajaib Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Charan Kamal Sahib, Village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 73 years (Personal interview on 16 June, 2019).

⁵⁹ Major Singh Sewadar of Gurdwara Uch Da Pir, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 65 year. (Personal interview on 16 June 2019).

The Guru was able to spend only one night at Gulaba's place, when finally, the Mughal forces in the look out of the Guru reached there. Gulaba was terribly frightened. He gifted the Guru a long cotton bed sheet (chadar) and some money. The Guru very candidly asked him if he was sending him away because of his fear.⁶⁰ Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh also have corroborated this version. They have narrated that next day he made an offering of five rupees to the Guru. The Guru was wise enough to understand that he was terribly scared of the Turks.⁶¹

Giani Gian Singh has also mentioned in his work about Gulaba's gift of money and cloth (sheet) to the Guru Gobind Singh after the stay of one day at his place. According to him, as Wazir Khan ordered the Guru. A strong army of five thousand soldiers of the Mughals were moving towards Machhiwara and when Gulaba Masand came to know this, he was scared and presented some coins and one piece of cloth to the Guru and said 'Army is in search of you'. 'If someone finds you here, you would be caught and I would be killed'. It is better for you to move to Malwa. The Guru replied that he would do what Gulaba wanted him to do. He asked Gulaba to call mother of Nihala Khatri Gurdei. He also asked him to convey the message to her to bring more hand-made clothes for the Guru. Then Gulaba went and called her. She came with her son Nihala and brought the clothes and presented those to the Guru.⁶²

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish writes something different about this. According to him, in the same village, there used to live a Brahmin woman and a Khatri lady. They used to weave clothes with their own hands and take the same to Anandpur Sahib every year. Satguru sent Bhai Jeevan Singh and called them in his presence. Both the women placed five rupees each on the cloth and presented the same to the Guru and paid their obeisance to the Guru by bowing their heads.⁶³

So, at that time, as per the consensus it was agreed that the Guru would move to the house the Pathan brothers. It would not be easy and feasible for the Mughals to locate him. It was during this short stay at a relatively calm and secure place that the

⁶⁰ Gang Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 87 years (Personal interview on 16 June, 2019).

⁶¹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Gru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 169, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 225.

⁶² Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1020-1025.

⁶³ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 170-171, no. 82.

Guru decide to write a letter to the emperor Aurangzeb. He wanted to bring to him knowledge the misbehaviour of his generals and the false oaths taken by his deceitful servile flatterers. He asked for a pen and paper and the letter was penned in Persian verse. He asked one of the two brothers to call Sayyad Anayat Ali whose residence was only at a distance of two mile. Sayyad Anayat Ali came up the following day, he was a very compassionate man. When the Guru narrated his travails to him and he came to know how the Guru was betrayed, his loving heart burst into tears. He was inconsolable. The Guru tried to console him and wanted him to sit next to the Guru, but he was angry and annoyed that he resorted to use of foul language for those who had behaved in such a petty and selfish manner after having taken oaths on the sacred Kuran.⁶⁴

The Guru had noticed two Pathan brothers Nabi Khan and Gani Khan, they were dressed in loose blue garments as the Muslims priests (Haajis) normally wear. The Guru devised a strategy to wear the similar dyed clothes. He had already received as presents two sets of white clothes and a long sheet. These were gifted to him by Hardevi and Gulaba Masand respectively. He asked the two Pathans brothers to get these clothes dyed in blue and then convert the clothes and sheet in robes akin to the loose garments worn by Haajis (a sect of Muslim Pirs). He and his three Sikhs would dress themselves in these deep blues dyed loose garments and let their long dresses hang loosely down their shoulders.⁶⁵

The Guru sent his Sikhs to get the cloth dyed but the dyer (Lalari) informed them that the process would take five days. The Guru's Singh conveyed to the dyer the Guru's message that the colour has already ready. The dyer was surprised to see the colour. The work was precipitated and the indigo-coloured clothes were ready. The Matt, where Guru's clothes were dyed, is still there to commemorate that act of dying.⁶⁶

Guru Gobind Singh then told Sayyad Inayat Ali about the letter that he had written to Aurangzeb and he also confided in him the proposal of moving out as a Muslim Pir, seated on a Charpoy. This decision was again ratified by consensus. The

⁶⁴ Partap Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 92 years. (Personal interview on 21 June, 2019).

⁶⁵ Gian Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 89 years (Personal interview on 21 June, 2019).

⁶⁶ Jang Singh, an *old person* of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 92 years (Personal interview on 21 June, 2019).

Pathan brothers would be escorting the Guru and *Uch da Pir*. This strategy was considered to be justified, looking into the gravity of situation.⁶⁷

After that Guru Gobind Singh gave that letter to Sayyad Inayat Ali, so that it would remain safe in his custody till the time the Guru attained success in his plans and in the eventuality of his being captured, that letter was to be delivered to the Aurangzeb. The Guru assigned another duty to Sayyad Inayat Ali, that was to have free moment and interaction with the Mughal and to gather information about their next plans. The Guru wanted him to get an idea that in which direction would the force be advancing. That would enable the Guru to chalk out his strategy.⁶⁸

As per the chalk out strategy Guru Gobind Singh got disguised Gani Khan, Nabi Khan, Mani Singh and Dharam Singh were the palanquin (Charpoy) bearers. Daya Singh waved a *Chaur* over him, whenever they were accosted by anyone, they replied that they were bearing their *Uch da Pir*, who was the spiritual chief of the saints of Uch. The Pir had comeback from a pilgrimage. He was on the move to bless his disciple. It was evening when they started moving towards Samrala. They had hardly covered one and half mile when they moving military stopped them and they were questioned, explanation was given, it was further conveyed to the commander, who ordered the party to be detained until satisfactory in investigation dispelled the doubts.⁶⁹ Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Nirotam and Giani Thakur Singh have supported this oral tradition.⁷⁰

On the following day, they were again brought before the commander. Nabi Khan and Gani Khan reiterated their early anecdote that they were the bearers of the Uch da Pir. But commander, as per the strictness and vigilance of the army was not fully convinced and they were again kept under strict vigil. By then the news had spread like wildfire. It reached the surrounding military campus that some bearded persons, looking like Sikhs dressed in blue attire had been detained. Their detention or release would be depended on the further verification and antecedents. Sayyad Inayat Ali, who was stationed with a disciple soldier in one of the camps, also heard

⁶⁷ Babu Singh, *Sewadar of Gurdwara Uch Da Pir*, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 69 years (Personal interview on 21 June, 2019).

⁶⁸ Suba Singh, *Sewadar of Gurdwara Uch Da Pir*, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 71 years (Personal interview on 21 June, 2019).

⁶⁹ Gurjant Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 78 years (Personal Interview on 21, June 2019).

⁷⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 997-998, See also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, p. 248, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 225.

this news. He informed the camp in-charge that he earlier had a meeting with the suspected person, that person was not Guru Gobind Singh, he was actually Uch da Pir and frightened them by saying that it was a Sin to hold such a pious person.⁷¹

The message was passed on to the military commander Daler Khan. He sent a special messenger to make enquiry from *Uch da Pir* whether he happened to know any Sayyad. The *Uch da Pir* replied in the affirmative that he did know Sayyad Inayat Ali of Noorpur village, he got an opportunity to meet him recently. He further informed the commander that he (Sayyad Inayat Ali) was staying in a military camp in Machhiwara and the commander could easily contact him and ascertain the affects from them. The commander dispatched a fast horse rider to bring Sayyad Inayat Ali. It had grown dark and it happened to be an extremely cold night. But the commander did not want to displease the Pir any further. Sayyad Inayat Ali sent the horse rider back because it was a cold night and Sayyad Inayat Ali could come in the morning only. After the departure of the horse rider, the soldiers and the camp incharge were relieved of any worry and went off to sleep. They thought that the detainees were safe in their custody.⁷²

Humanity and compassion can be seen everywhere. One officer, felt that they would be in currying sin by keeping the *Pir* hungry, thus he was thoughtful enough to serve food to the Pir and his companions during the night. One Singh informed them that *Pir ji* is on Roza and he generally ate a little. The Singhs partook the food by doing *Karad Bhet* (touching the food with little sword) and thereafter took some food for the Guru. This was an alternate gesture, because the preparation of langer was not possible under these circumstances. On seeing the sword, all soldiers doubted. They asked the reason behind it and Gani Khan informed them that this is a tradition of Kahaba.⁷³

As per the need of the moment, a horse rider was dispatched again the next morning to the camp and he reverentially requested the Sayyad Inayat Ali to come along with him to meet the commander. The commander was also very respectful towards him and he addressed him very politely. First of all, he praised him for being

⁷¹ Dyan Singh, an old Person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age, 84 years (Personal interview on 22 June, 2019).

⁷² Hardev Singh, an old person, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 77 years (Personal interview on 22 June, 2019).

⁷³ Notice Board, Gurdwara Kirpan Bhet, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana.

very well known, knowledgeable religious person, and he was aware that he was known among the devout as a Sayyad Pir. Then he shared his problem that the previous night. They had detained the person along with the accompanying him suspecting them to be Guru Gobind Singh and his Sikhs. It was in the hands of Pir to dispel their doubts, if he happened to know them.⁷⁴ It was a matter of faith for them. The commander then took him to the house where all of them had been detained. *Uch da Pir* (disguised Guru Gobind Singh) has been confined there. On seeing the Pir, the Sayyad Inayat Ali bowed and addressed him with the Muslim greeting *Islam-al-lekan*. His word was trusted. He assured the commander that he was indeed *Uch da Pir* not Guru Gobind Singh. He further continued them that detaining such a pious person meant that a grave sin had been committed. The only way to washing off that sin was to apologise to the holy man profusely.⁷⁵

Giani Gian Singh has also written about Guru Gobind Singh's disguising himself as *Uch Da Pir*. The writer's narrative is quite similar to the local anecdote. According to him, the cloth which was given to Guru Gobind Singh, he sent that cloth to get it dyed into blue colour for himself and for his Sikhs. The Guru sent one of his Sikh to the dyer for the same. The Sikh came back and told the Guru, that dyer had expressed his helplessness because it would take five days to colour in blue because it had been only two days since the colour was prepared. The Guru replied to the Sikh that go back to the dyer and tell him that colour is ready. When the Sikh went back to the dyer and told him the same, the dyer was shocked to see the colour was ready. Then the Guru asked everyone to wear blue clothes and let his hair kept loose on his back. *Tasbian* were brought by Nabi Khan. The Guru sat on a coat. Nabi Khan, Gani Khan, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh picked up the bed. Bhai Daya Singh held the head of *Chaur Sahib*. In the journey, when some soldiers asked, Nabi Khan replied that he is *Uch da Pir*. The soldiers informed his head Daler Khan, he asked them to have *Darshan* of the holy man. When the Guru reached his tent, he did salaam. Umran asked let them give consent as a Pir and offered him meal. Gani Khan replied with the Guru's order that Pir is on Roza, his companions would take food. For consent Kazi Pir Muhammad, Sloh Wale, Sayyad Inayat Khan, Ali Noorpuria,

⁷⁴ Gurmukh Singh, *Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib*, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 73 years (Personal interview on 22 June, 2019).

⁷⁵ Nazar Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 87 years (Personal interview on 22 June, 2019).

Sayyad Hassan Ali, Mothu Majra were called. They too admitted that he was a Pir and said in his praise, “This is a good Pir, who has not cursed you”. On the other hand, dinner was ready then to obey the Guru before eating, Maan Singh *Kard bhet* in the meal. After that all three Singhs and two Pathan brothers took it. Bhai Maan Singh took some meal in his handkerchief and took it for the Guru. The Guru said that give it to me, when i would ask you. After that the Guru moved on. The Guru spent one night at that place.⁷⁶

Tara Singh Nirotam and Giani Thakur Singh also write similar account in their respective work. They narrated a brief account as have been found in oral evidence regarding *Uch the Pir* episode and the interrogation by the soldiers and Kirpan Bhet episode that happened at Lall Kalan village⁷⁷.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, at Gulaba Masand’s house Qazi Chirag Shah Ajneria, Sayyad Anayat Ali Noorpuria, Qazi Pir Muhammad of Sloh, Subegh Shah Halwaria and Sayyad Hassan Ali Mothu arrived and had the *darshan* of the Guru at Machhiwara. The Guru asked the tailor to get one piece dyed into blue colour and to tailor it into a Patka (Headwear). One *Chola* (loose Shirt) and a *Chadar* (the Sheet) wearing which one deems like a commander. After spending the night there, next day masquerading as *Pir Uchh Shareef* (Pious) and pronouncing, *Shri Waheguru* and he took position on the couch-bed before day break early in the morning, acquiescing in the situation, Bhai Daya Singh and the other four Sikhs bade good bye. The Guru told them, “You as well in this Guise, go ahead and reach at the house of Bhai Kirpal Das in the town of Heran. We will just follow you”. Then he addressed Qazi Chirag Shah, “Get out couch-bed lifted from here and take it towards the village Ajner”. Qazi Chirag Shah holding a whisk of peacock- feathers, followed the couch. The Satguru along with all the five of them, just before the day break, departed from Machhiwara. On the way passing through the village Kirri Pathana, Ghungrali, Manpur and arrived outside the town of Ajner and encamped in the Mausollan of Hajee Chirag Shah. On the day the Guru passing Malikpur, Lallan and Katana entered the town of Rampur. There to meet one spy Karm Baksh came from the post at the crossroads. He was a disciple of Hajee Chirag Shah. Acquiescing in the advice of Hajee Chirag Shah, he brought Satguru from Rampur to the village of

⁷⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1023-1024.

⁷⁷ Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.170, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan* p. 225.

Doraha. The in-charge of the post put up *Pir* in a tent. *Pir* welcomed him raising the right arm in which rosary was held.

The in-charge of the post asked Hajee jee, “Why does not *Pir* ji speak?” he replied, “He does not indulge in conversation with anybody.” Later, When the food was ready, the in-charge of the post ate alongwith five of them. Early next morning Hajee Chirag Shah took leave of the in-charge⁷⁸.

As the tradition, the Pathan brothers and two Sikhs lifted the Charpoy carrying the *Pir* and marched out of Machhiwara. They managed to cross the area of Military patrols, unnoticed. But at a spot, which was earlier decided by them, Sayyad Inayat Ali joint them. All of them moved towards Ghulal village. Here they took a short break and gave themselves some rest. At this particular, a Gurudwara was constructed and it has been named Manji Sahib. It was at Ghulal that Sayyad Inayat Ali returned the letter to Guru Gobind Singh that he had given (Addressed to Aurangzeb) to Sayyad Inayat Ali for keeping it safe in his own custody. Thereafter, the Guru asked Sayyad Inayat Ali to return to the place he had come from.⁷⁹ Jhanda Singh, another follower of the Guru, used to visit the Guru at Anandpur Sahib and present him weapons. The Guru had called him at Ghulal village. He was unable to recognise the Guru in his disguise. But after a while when he did recognise him, he gifted him two swords and twenty-two arrows. At Ghulal village, a Gurudwara named Patshahi Dasvi has been constructed.⁸⁰

Giani Gian Singh has also written about the above episode in his work, but he has stated that the above episode happened at Ghungrali village not at Ghulal (he had differed in the name of the place). Giani Gian Singh has differed from the oral lore and he has named Nathu Mistri instead of Jhanda Singh, who had met the Guru and presented weapons to him at this place.⁸¹ According to the local tradition, where the Guru moved to Lall Klan⁸² as *Uch Da Pir*, there is a Gurudwara Gurusar Sahib in this

⁷⁸ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.168-171, no. 81-82.

⁷⁹ Sukhdev Singh, Sewadar of Gurudwara Manji Sahib, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 73 years (Personal Interview on 23 June, 2019)

⁸⁰ Sri Chand Singh, an old person of village Ghulal, District Ludhiana, age 85 years (Personal interview on 23 June, 2019).

⁸¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1024.

⁸² Lal Klan village thirty kilometres away from Ludhiana.

village. There was again an enquiry about the Guru, but no one doubted. There is an old tree of berries under the shade of the tree, the Guru spent some time.⁸³

Tara Singh and Giani Thakur Singh in their respective works have written about the Kirpan Bhet episode that had happened at Lall Kalan village.⁸⁴

According to Giani Gian Singh, Guru Gobind Singh moved towards the direction where Kirpan Bhet Gurdwara is located and reached Lall Klan village as *Uch Da Pir*. According to him, here the Guru spent some time under a tree near a Pond. There at that place the Guru ate the food carried out by the Sikh which was shown as Parshad and distributed among all.⁸⁵

According to another anecdote, the Guru reached Katani,⁸⁶ passing through Kuba from Lall Klan. Here, one lady from Katani recognized the Guru. She sent ghee food to the Guru through her son. The Guru converted the material which was sent by the lady into Parshad. There is a Gurdwara Degsar Sahib at this place and Prashad is openly distributed here on many occasions.⁸⁷

Giani Gian Singh has written that the Guru spent one night in Rampur Katani moving from Lal Kalan. From there, the Guru sent Nabi Khan and Gani Khan back by giving a Hukamnama to them. Now the Guru's bed was carried by the local people and was taken village to village⁸⁸. According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, the Guru came here from Lall Kalan. There is a Gurdwara on the base line of Doraha to Ropar⁸⁹.

As per local tradition, moving from Katani, on his cot, the Guru reached Rampur (five kilometers away from Katani) next morning. Under one tree of Reru, the Guru asked the people to place his cot, so that people could rest. Here Gurdwara

⁸³ Anokha Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib, village Lall Klan, District Ludhiana, age 52 years (Personal interview on 23 June, 2019), see also Notice Board Gurdwara Sri Gurusar Sahib, village Lall Kalan, District Ludhiana.

⁸⁴ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 186, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 226.

⁸⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1024.

⁸⁶ Katani village twenty-four kilometres away from Ludhiana District.

⁸⁷ Ajaib Singh, Sewadar of Gurdawara Degsar Sahib, village Katani, District Ludhiana, age 64 years (Personal interview on 10 September, 2019).

⁸⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1024.

⁸⁹ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, P205, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 169.

Reru Sahib is situated⁹⁰. But, Giani Gian Singh has stated that Rampur and Katani happened to be one village of Rampur Katani⁹¹.

As per oral tradition, after having some rest at Rampur, the Guru moved towards Kanech⁹². On reaching there, the Guru asked his coat to be placed. Then he called a Sikh Fathu and told him that he wanted to travel more so he needed a horse. But Fathu was trying to refuse because of the fear of the Mughals. When the Guru insisted again then he presented him a younger horse. But the Guru had asked him to present the elder one. When the Guru asked him about this. He told a lie that his son in-law had already taken that. The Guru was so angry with him and told him, “Neither you would be there nor your horse.” When that Sikh came back home both he and his horse were killed by a snake. There was a person present here who offered his mare to the Guru. The Guru blessed him with a lot of horses and mares. There is a Gurdwara in memory of the Guru at this place. Moving from this place, after covering some way the Guru asked one sikh to fetch some water from well. The Sikh replied that the water is impure. The Guru told him that it is not impure and water of that well have become sweet since that day. Now there is a motor pump on that well and, ‘sweet water’ has been written on it⁹³.

Tara Singh Nirotam, Giani Gian Singh and Giani Thakur Singh give a similar account of what had happened at Kanech in their respective works. They have supported the oral tradition⁹⁴.

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish in his work has also mentioned about the incident that had happened at Kanech, from Doraha the Guru had reached outside the village of Kanech. People of this place had chosen to be the disciple of Hajee Chirag Shah. The Guru called Chaudhary Fateh Chand. Hajee told Chaudhary, “Your colt is required for Pir. Chaudhary recognised the Guru and told that his cot has already gone out and was not at home”. The Guru said, “Chaudhary, Perceive the deeds of God”. When Chaudhary reached home, he found his colt lying dead. It was bitten by a snake. After learning about this misfortune, he repented a lot, he came back, begged

⁹⁰ Bachittar Singh, an old person of village Rampur, District Ludhiana, age 80 years (Personal interview on 10 September, 2019).

⁹¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1024.

⁹² Kanech village fifteen kilometres away from Ludhiana District.

⁹³ Jodh Singh, an old person of village Kanech, District Ludhiana, age 78 years (Personal interview on 10 September, 2019).

⁹⁴ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 168, see also, Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, vol. I, p. 1024, see also, Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 225.

Pardon from the Pir Jee. There was one Mirzada, a bard, named Khuda Baksh. He said, “Shah jee, my horse is available for Pir Jee”. The Guru declared, “Bhai Mirzada, your plea has been accepted in the celestial court, only you will mount this colt”. Sitting nearby Hajee Chirag Shah was asked to pay him five coins. The Guru said, Mirzada, take these five coins to your house. You will never face any adversity⁹⁵.

As per tradition, the Guru reached Sahnewal⁹⁶ from Kanech. The Guru was on cot and he rested there. Gurdwara Damdama Sahib is situated at this place. The Guru at this place called Panchayat of the village, but they did not come. The Guru moved from this place saying that no group discussion would ever take place there again. But, when the ladies of this village learnt about this, all of them followed the Guru. They asked for his forgiveness of the Guru. The Guru spared them and moved ahead. There is one Gurdwara Ghera Sahib situated one and half kilometer away from Sahnewal.⁹⁷

After that Guru Gobind Singh reached Nandpur.⁹⁸ Here the Guru stayed under the shade of trees groves for some time. People there served the Guru with milk and since then on tenth (dasvi) of every month people present milk to Gurdwara Sahib there. The Guru said that he felt the air of Anandpur Sahib in Nandpur.⁹⁹

From there, the Guru reached Tibba village which is five miles from Nandpur. There was scarcity of water. On the request of people, the Guru with the help of Singhs prepared one small Pond. There is a Gurdwara called Somasar at that place. This Gurdwara is outside the village.¹⁰⁰

As per local tradition, then moving from Tibba, the Guru reached Alamgeer.¹⁰¹ Now, Gurdwara Manji Sahib situated is that place. Here Bhai Nodha Singh offered one horse to the Guru for riding. The Guru came here as *Uch Da Pir*. The Guru moved ahead on this horse. The Guru sending Nabi Khan and Gani Khan back from that place. Here, people of Almgeer requested the Guru for water. The Guru created

⁹⁵ Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.172-173, no. 82.

⁹⁶ Sahnewal town, fifteen kilometres away from Ludhiana.

⁹⁷ Jugraj Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Ghera Sahib, village Sahnewal, District Ludhiana, age 57years (Personal interview on 10 September, 2019).

⁹⁸ Nandpur, twelve kilometres away from Sahnewal.

⁹⁹ Makhan Singh, an old person, village Nandpur, District Ludhiana, age 73 years (Personal interview on 10 September, 2019).

¹⁰⁰ Dalip Singh, an old person of village Tibba, District Ludhiana, age 60 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2019).

¹⁰¹ Alamgeer is ten kilometres away from Ludhiana District of Punjab.

one well (small Pond) by shooting one arrow. These days, there is a pond around that place. The pond is called Teersar sahib. It has been said that there was one lady who came to the Guru and said, “I have leprosy, I have taken a lot of medicine but have not got any relief.” The Guru replied, ‘who ever would take bath here with great devotion would be free of disease’. That woman was got recovered after taking bath in that pond. On 14th, 15th, 16th of Poh, there is a great fair held at Gurdwara Manji Sahib.¹⁰²

Giani Gian Singh has also written about the time when the Guru reached Alamgeer from Jodhpur and Guru had left the cot there and started riding horse as the horse was presented to him by the elder brother of Mani Singh. The Guru sent Nabi Khan and Gani Khan back from Katani. The local people carried the Guru’s cot to Alamgeer by taking turns.¹⁰³

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Nirotam in their works have also agreed to the oral lore that the Guru had reached Alamgeer from Kanech and there he had taken a horse from Zimidar Bhai Nodha. Thus, the Guru left the cot at that place and started riding a horse there after.¹⁰⁴

According to Bhai Sawroop Singh Kaushish, the Guru started from Kanech during the first *pehar* of the day and he encamped outside the village of Alamgeer. All the men and women of Alamgeer swarmed to have *Darshan*. But one named Keerat Singh, did not turn up. He had been told by Bhai Daya Singh that the Guru would be following them within a day or two and when he himself would call you, only then he might go. Bhai Daya Singh and the four Sikhs in disguise had spent their night at the house of Bhai Keerat Singh and early in the morning they had left. Thereafter, the Guru arrived at Alamgeer. Through one of his own disciples, he called Keerat Singh. He along with his family, was taking milk with him to go and have the Guru’s *Darshan*. After pacifying them, the Guru got ready to move further.¹⁰⁵

As per tradition, the Guru reached Jodh Ratan¹⁰⁶ from Alamgeer. Here the Guru rested under one tree *Dalbergia* (Talhian). There is a Gurdawara Tahla sahib that

¹⁰² Neb Singh, an old person of village Alamgeer, District Ludhiana, age 65 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2019), see also, Notice Board, Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Alamgeer District Ludhiana.

¹⁰³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1024-1025.

¹⁰⁴ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 227, See also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 170.

¹⁰⁵ Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 173, no. 83.

¹⁰⁶ Jodh Ratan village is eighteen kilometres away from Ludhiana District.

stands in the memory of the Guru. There is a *Tootan wala Khu* (well). The Guru had taken water to drink from that well¹⁰⁷. Giani Thakur Singh in his work has mentioned about the above oral tradition¹⁰⁸. But, Tara Singh Nirotam only writes the Guru came here from Alamgeer¹⁰⁹. Giani Gian Singh has given a brief description about Jodh Gram. He only has written that the Guru reached Seloani pass through Jodh Ratan¹¹⁰.

As per tradition the Guru reached village Mohi¹¹¹ from Jodh Ratan. There is a Gurdwara in memory of the Guru. One gold ring became so tight in the Guru's finger, that he got it cut taking the help of a blacksmith. The Guru gave his ring to him and the Guru asked him for any wish, he wished that his son would be married. The Guru blessed his son with two marriages¹¹².

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Nirotam have supported the oral tradition in their respective works. They have also mentioned about this blacksmith episode¹¹³.

Giani Gian Singh has only written that the Guru reached Seloani passing through Mohi. He is silent about blacksmith's episode in his work.¹¹⁴

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish writes that from Alamgeer, travelling steadily by the sunset, the Guru and his Singhs arrived at the town of Mohi. After spending a night there, next morning on Sunday, they travelled towards the town of Hayer¹¹⁵.

As per tradition, the Guru reached Hayer¹¹⁶ from Mohi. Mahant Kirpal Das who had fought in Bhagani's war was settled at that place. He had set up a very large camp in Udasiya, he was very happy to hear about the Guru's visit and served him a lot. But when he heard about Mughals who were following the Guru. He asked the Guru to go to Jattpure. Because if the Mughals got this news about his welcome, they would hang me. On seeing the fear of Mahant, the Guru prepared to move forward and said, "Your death would be at their hands". When the Guru left, he was killed at

¹⁰⁷ Santpal Singh, an old person of village Jodh Ratan, District Ludhiana, age 68 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2019).

¹⁰⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 227.

¹⁰⁹ Tara Singh Nirotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 171.

¹¹⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1025.

¹¹¹ Mohi village twenty-four kilometres away from Ludhiana District of Punjab.

¹¹² Nek Singh, an old person of village Mohi, District Ludhiana, age 69 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2019).

¹¹³ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 227, See also, Tara Singh Nirotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 188.

¹¹⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1025.

¹¹⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 173, no. 83.

¹¹⁶ Hayer, forty-six kilometres away from Ludhiana District.

the hands of Mughals. Now, there is a Gurdwara Sahib. There one Monk had gifted five paise to the Guru¹¹⁷.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh and Giani Gian Singh have corroborated with the above tradition. They have also mentioned the Guru's and Mahant Kirpal Das's conversation in their work. But they have written somewhat differently. According to them when the Guru was about to leave, one Monk presented five paise to the Guru. The Guru asked him to keep the treasure hidden and not to open his fist and to keep this as secret. This treasure and langar would be expanded and you should keep on¹¹⁸. But Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has given very different account about the meeting to the Guru and Mahant Kirpal Das. According to him the Guru has arrived at Hayer at the place of his devotee, Kirpal das, in the village of Hayer. The Guru encamped outside the village. Mahant paid obeisance and took his seat nearby. He had seen everything at Paonta and Anandpur Sahib and felt aggrieved over the current scene. He spoke, "Oh you the saviour of the world, what type of wonders are you displaying here?" The Guru, pacified him, "Sant jee! These are all the commands of the supreme Maharaj." Mahant requested, "Maharaj please come and with your presence, honour my house." The Guru looked toward Hajee Chirag Shah and thereafter, they went along with the Mahant to his place. Mahant Kirpal Das arranged the stay of the Guru in a solitary room. Next day on morning, they got ready to move on. On the command of the Guru, Hajee Chiragh Shah called the five-leading personalities of the town and told them that they would pick up and take the Guru's charpai up to the next destination. He asked them to be prepared. Mahant Kirpal Das walked in front of the charpai, led the way. He accompanied the Guru for a mile and a quarter. Then the Guru bid good-bye and Mahant came back at his seminary¹¹⁹.

As per tradition, the Guru reached two kilometres away from Hayer. There is a Gurdwara Manji Sahib in the memory of the Guru. Here one lady served a lot and got blessings for her sons¹²⁰. After that the Guru reached *Juhu* of Raikot¹²¹. Where there

¹¹⁷ Najar Singh, an old person of village Hayer, District Ludhiana, age 73 years (Personal interview on 26 March, 2019).

¹¹⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.188, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 229, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1024-1025.

¹¹⁹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 173-174, no. 83.

¹²⁰ Dilbag Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib, village Rajoana, District Ludhiana, age 61 years (Personal interview on 26 March, 2019).

¹²¹ Raikot, forty-four kilometres away from Ludhiana District.

one person was named Noora of Rai Kalla¹²², he was feeding cattle outside the village. The Guru sat under the tree of Dalbergia. When Noora saw that there was a monk sitting under Dalbergia (Tahlian) he came and asked about some service. The Guru asked him to take a Gaga Sagar (Name of one utensil) and milk a buffalo. He felt sorry and said that none of his buffaloes were milking. The Guru replied that the buffalo you would take in your hand would start giving milk. In this way Noora sucked milk and gave it to the Guru. There were one hundred holes in this jug and the cowherd was surprised to see this. But, when the milk was poured in it, no milk dripped out. After that he went back and also explained this incident to his boss Rai Kalla. Rai Kalla alongwith some people came to the Guru and requested him to come to his home. But the Guru found it proper, to spend night there. Now, there is a Gurdwara named Manji Sahib, where there is Tahlia¹²³.

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also written about the above tradition in his work¹²⁴.

As per tradition, the next day Rai Kalla made arrangements for the Guru and came to Lama Jatpure¹²⁵ a safe village of estate. Rai Kalla served the Guru a lot. Here, the Guru asked Rai Kalla to send some person to Sirhind to know about Mata Gujri and the two younger Sahibzadas. Rai Kalla sent Noora to Sirhind to get some news. Noora's sister was married near Sirhind. Rai Kalla told the Guru that Sirhind is far away. It would take a few days to reach there. After some days, one Sikh climbed up the tree and saw Noora. Noora went back and sat down near the Guru's feet. On asking, he replied that they committed so an evil deed. The two younger Sahibzadas became martyrs by being incarcerated into the wall and when Mata heard about this, she could not bear it and she died in grief. Noora narrated that Gangu Brahmin had taken Mataji and Sahibzadas with him and then informed the Ranghads of Morinda. They took Mataji and Sahibzadas to Sirhind. Wazir Khan of Sirhind tried his level best to tempt the Sahibzadas. But they rejected all offers. When Sahibzadas refused to toe the line. He ordered to kill them. Mohammad Khan of Malerkotla stated that it was a sin. Wazir Khan martyred the two Sahibzadas at the behest of Sucha Nand.

¹²² Rai Kalla feudatory chief of Raikot in Ludhiana District of Punjab.

¹²³ Teja Singh, an old person of Raikot, District Ludhiana, age 85years (Personal interview on 26 March, 2019).

¹²⁴ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.174, no. 83.

¹²⁵ Lama Jatpure, these are two villages, but these are near to each other. This is why these are called Lama jattapura.

Hearing this, the Guru kept digging the Kai (Grass) with an arrow and while listening all this the Guru pulled out one root of Kai (Grass) with arrow and told that the Mughals have been uprooted. They would be finished. Rai Kalla replied to this talk, that he was also a Turk but he was Guru's devotee. Then the Guru gave him a sword and Gangsagar (Jug) and blessed that till the time when you would respect these, your territory would remain. But after some time, after the death of Rai Kalla, his grandson did not worship the sword which was given by the Guru, but he used to wear it and he died with that sword. Now, at this place Gurdwara Sahib is built in the memory of the Guru¹²⁶.

Giani Gian Singh has agreed with the above oral tradition. He has narrated all the statements in his work. As, Guru's meeting with Rai Kalla, sending Noora to get news of Sahibzadas and the Mata Gujri, the Guru's pledge to pull out the roots of Turk. But he has written that incident has taken place in Seloani village and not at a lame Jatpure¹²⁷.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have also written in their respective works that the Guru had reached Lame Jattpure from Hayer. Rai Kalla came there with the Guru. Here, when the Guru pledged to pull out the roots of Turks, Rai Kalla requested being a Turk, "Please, save me." The Guru gave a Khanda to Rai Kalla and said that until you worship it, you would be prosperous. Tara Singh Narotam has also written that after the Rai's death his son, at the behest of the Muslims refused to worship that sword. He started wearing it and using it for hunting. He was killed with that sword¹²⁸.

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also written about Guru's meeting with Rai Kalla at Jatpura in his work. The writer has agreed with the oral tradition about the Guru's asking Rai Kalla to send someone to Sirhind to get to know about Mata Gujri and two Sahibzadas and the Guru's giving his sword to Rai Kalla.¹²⁹

As per the local lore, from Lame Jatpure the Guru reached Bassian village.¹³⁰ Rai Kalla was also with the Guru and here the Guru played chess with Rai Kalla.

¹²⁶ Jassa Singh, an old person of village of Lame Jatpure, District Ludhiana, age 82 years. (Personal interview on 26 March, 2019).

¹²⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1025-1027.

¹²⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, P. 190, see also Giani Gian Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Drshan*, pp. 229-230.

¹²⁹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bhindra, pp. 175-177, no. 84, 85.

¹³⁰ Bassian village forty-five kilometres away from Ludhiana District in Punjab.

There is a Gudwara Shatranj Sahib that has been built in the Guru's memory¹³¹.

One day, the Guru came to Seloani¹³² from Lame Jatpure. Here the Guru sat under a tree of Berries. There is a Gurdwara Beri Sahib is built in the memory of the Guru.¹³³

According to Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh, Rai Kalla met the Guru in Seloani village. The Guru came here from Mohi. From here the Guru sent one of his men to get news from Sirhind and the Guru got the news of the martyrdom of Mata and two Sahibzadas and pulled out the root of a grass with an arrow and announced that Turks would now be finished.¹³⁴ As Giani Gian Singh has also described this episode that had happened at Seloani not Lame Jattpure.¹³⁵

As per tradition, the Guru went to Kamalpura¹³⁶ from Lame Jattpure. There is a Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru.¹³⁷

As per the tradition, the Guru asked Rai Kalla to go back to Raikot and he himself moved forward and reached Manuke. It is four kilometres away from Lame Jatpure. At that time, it was a jungle and not a village. It is mentioned that a man Lal Singh lived there. The Guru asked him to convert this into the habitation of a village. After sometime he made that place worth living and gave it a name one of his grandparent's Manu as Manuka. There is at this place a Gurdwara Patshahi Dashvi in the memory of the Guru.¹³⁸

As per tradition, from Manuka the Guru came to Mehteana. There was a small pond (Dhab) here. The Guru took five baths (Panj Ishnanna) and rested here for some time. There is a Gurdwara Patshahi Dashvi in the memory of the Guru. In the front of the Gurdwara are statues of the Sikh warriors like, Sham Singh Attariwala, Maharaja

¹³¹ Jella Singh, an old person of village Bassian, District Ludhiana, age 65 years. (Personal interview on 14 March, 2019).

¹³² Seloani, forty-five kilometres away from Ludhiana district.

¹³³ Naamdaan Singh, an old person of village, Seloani, District Ludhiana, age 78 years (Personal interview on 14 March, 2019).

¹³⁴ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, Vol. I, p. 188, see also, Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 229-230.

¹³⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1025-1027.

¹³⁶ Kamalpura village, forty-four kilometres from Ludhiana District.

¹³⁷ Ranjeet Singh, an old person of village Kamalpur, District Ludhiana, age 74 years (Personal interview on 14 March, 2019).

¹³⁸ Har Singh, an old person of village Manuke, District Ludhiana, age 80 years. (Personal interview on 14 March, 2019).

Ranjeet Singh, Akali Fula Singh.¹³⁹

The Guru reached Chakkar¹⁴⁰ from Mehteana. Sixth Guru Hargobind had also come here. Guru Gobind Singh rested there for some time at that place. There a Gurdwara has been built in the memory of Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh.¹⁴¹

According to Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh, the Guru came to Chakkar from Lame Jattpure and rested there for some time¹⁴².

As per tradition, the Guru reached Takhtupura¹⁴³ moving from Chakkar. Here, the Guru stayed for some time and rested. Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Hargobind had also come there. There are three Gurdwaras in the memory of three Gurus. There is one sarovar (Pond) in between the three Gurdwaras. This is called Nanksar sarovar. On Gurpurab and Maghi, there huge fairs are held at this place.¹⁴⁴

Giani Thakur Singh has written that the Guru spent an afternoon there. Vaisakhi festival is celebrated at this place¹⁴⁵. Tara Singh Narotam has written that, the Guru had come there for the Darshan of Guru Nanak Dev's place (visions)¹⁴⁶.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, the Guru reached Takhtupura from Jattpure and encamped at the bank of a large waterhole. Next day, when one and quarter *pehar* had gone past, Bhai Daya Singh Prohit brought Bhai Desa Singh and his younger brother Bhai Hardit Singh, the Tarkhan (carpenter) Sikhs from the village of Dina. All the three Sikhs they could put down their bullock chariot bowing their heads, paid obeisance to the Guru. At the sunset, Satguru got ready to move further and, after saying good bye, sent back Hajee Chiragh Shah and all five of them. Riding the bullock-chariot, along with Bhai Daya Singh and other Sikhs, they said good-bye

¹³⁹ Suba Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Patshahi Dashvi, village Mehteana, District Moga, age 58 years (Personal interview on 14 March, 2019).

¹⁴⁰ Chakkar village, thirty-four kilometers away from District Moga.

¹⁴¹ Lali Singh, an old person of village Chakkar, District Moga, age 69 years (Personal interview on 16 April, 2019).

¹⁴² Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, pp. 230, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 172.

¹⁴³ Takhtupura village, thirty-six kilometres from away from Moga District.

¹⁴⁴ Shamsheer Singh, an old person of village Takhatpura, District Moga, age 70 years (Personal interview on 16 April, 2019).

¹⁴⁵ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 230.

¹⁴⁶ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 189.

to Takhat Rampura.¹⁴⁷

As per the tradition, the Guru reached Madhey ke¹⁴⁸ from Takhtupura and rested under the berry tree. The Guru had incurred injury on his finger during the battle of Chamkaur and the wound had not healed as yet because his old bandage was sticking out and dirty. There was a blacksmith whose name was Hikmat. He worked as a *vaid* (doctor). He softened the old bandage and did the dressing of the wound again. The Guru gave him two coins and blessed him. That's why there is a Gurdwara Paka Sahib situated here and from here the Guru moved towards Dina.¹⁴⁹

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Gian Singh, have only written that the Guru came there from Takhtupura. But both the writers have remained silent about the above tradition.¹⁵⁰

But Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has mentioned the same incident as has been found in local lore. But he gave different name to the man who had bandaged the Guru's finger. According to him, the name of the person was Umerdin not Hikmat as told in the anecdotes.¹⁵¹

From Madhey Ke the Guru reached Dina. Dina village is fifteen kilometres south of Nihal Singh wala, present day in Moga District of Punjab. At present, Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib stands here in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh. This Gurdwara is being managed by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Besides the daily services and observance of major Sikh anniversaries of Guru Gobind Singh, a religious fair is held every year on the occasion of *Maghi*, the first of the Bikrami month of Magh, corresponding with January 13th-14th.¹⁵²

According to the local tradition, when the Guru reached Dina, Lakhmir, Samir and Takhtmal¹⁵³ made a request to the Guru to bless their homes. But the Guru

¹⁴⁷ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.177, no. 85.

¹⁴⁸ Madhey ke village, thirty-nine kilometres away from Moga District of Punjab.

¹⁴⁹ Rana Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Paka Sahib, village Madhey ke, District Moga, age 53 years. (Personal interview on 20 April, 2019).

¹⁵⁰ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.189, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 230.

¹⁵¹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 177, no. 85.

¹⁵² Notice Board, Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, see also Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol.1, Punjabi University Patiala, 1996 p. 584.

¹⁵³ Chaudhary Samir, Lakhmir and Takhtmal were the grandsons of the local chief Rai Jodh, who fought from the side of Guru Hargobind in the battle of Mahraj in December, 1634. They had

expressed his desire to stay at Bhai Deshu's house, who was by profession a carpenter. Bhai Deshu had a deep desire to meet Guru Gobind Singh and had arranged a bed for the Guru on the first floor. When the Guru reached Deshu's house, he gave a hearty welcome to the Guru and served him with great love, reverence and devotion. When people learnt about the Guru's stay at Dina, the Sangat started pouring in, to have a glimpse (Darshan) of the Guru and to seek his blessings. They came to offer their service and along with that they brought clothes, horses and arms. Bhai Deshu and the other devotees and took the divine nectar (Amrit) from the lotus hands of the Guru and they became Sikhs.¹⁵⁴

The information provided by the oral tradition has been corroborated by Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish in their work that Guru stayed at Bhai Deshu's house.¹⁵⁵

As per the local tradition, Bhai Lakhmir, Samir and Takhatmal were devoted to the Guru and were always ready to serve. The Guru was aware that the Mughal forces were still stirring to chase him and he did not want to jeopardize his followers' lives. On the contrary Samir calmed the fears of the Guru on their account. They were mentally prepared that if the need arose, they would give a tough fight to the Mughals fighting from the side of the Guru. One day Samir and his brother received a very strongly worded letter from Wazir Khan. He had asked them to make the Guru surrender at once to the royal custody. They were threatened with dire consequences of putting them behind the bars and other tough measures would be taken against them and penalties would be inflicted on them. He was courageous enough to refuse him and was determined to safeguard the Guru even at the expense of his own life¹⁵⁶. Impressed by this loving reverence and devoted servility, the Guru blessed them with the title of Lohgarh. The duration of the stay of the Guru was three months and thirteen days.¹⁵⁷ Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have given almost the same account about the meeting of Bhai Lakhmir, Samir and Takhatmal and their

started living in Dina leaving Kangar. Dina and Kangar are near each other. Both the villages were inhabited by their forefathers, sometimes the villages were called joint as Dina Kangar

¹⁵⁴ Nahar Singh, sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 78 years (Personal interview on 20 March, 2016).

¹⁵⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twariikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1028, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.177, no. 85, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 178, no. 85.

¹⁵⁶ Gurdev Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 85 years. (Personal interview on 22 March, 2016).

¹⁵⁷ Notice Board, Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga.

affectionate and warm welcome.¹⁵⁸ They have been remained silent about the letter of Wazir Khan. Similar information has been given by Giani Gian Singh's work as found in the local tradition.¹⁵⁹

According to another anecdote, once Dyal Chand¹⁶⁰ with his son Baba Gundar came to Dina and had brought a very nice dress and a horse for the Guru as a gift. The Guru asked the Samir don that dress and go around the area with the horse and blessed him that he would lord that area. As Samir was shy and reserved, the Guru had blessed him with the area but had not made him a sovereign ruler.¹⁶¹ Giani Gian Singh agreed the anecdote as presented in the local tradition.¹⁶²

As per another oral tradition, Bhai Rupa along with his two sons Param Chand and Dharam Chand came to pay their obeisance to the Guru. Bhai Rupa's father Bhai Sidhu had in his own times served Guru Hargobind, who had initiated the establishment of Bhai Rupa's village that was named after the name of Bhai Sidhu's son¹⁶³. Bhai Param Chand and Bhai Dharam Chand had brought the gift of a new set of clothes, a beautiful horse with a nice saddle and weapons of Guru Hargobind and other essential accessories for the Guru. The Two brothers were so over-whelmed that they expressed their desire to be baptized, which desire was fulfilled by the Guru giving them divine nectar (Amrit) with his own lotus hands and they were named as Bhai Param Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh.¹⁶⁴

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Param Singh and Dharam Singh, who were Tarkhan Singhs (Carpenter) gifted the beautiful clothes, along with five rupees that had been placed on those clothes. Both of them reverentially informed. The Guru that those clothes had been woven by their mother with her own hands and they had got the turban dyed in blue color through a dyer. They affectionately requested the Guru to wear this on your head and please bless us. The Guru looked at those Sikhs. His smile conveyed all, he touched the clothes softly with his head and

¹⁵⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, pp. 230, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 172.

¹⁵⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1032-1033.

¹⁶⁰ Dyal Chand was a family member of Bhai Rupa.

¹⁶¹ Jaswant Singh, an old person of village Dina in District Moga, age 70 years (Personal interview on 22 March, 2016).

¹⁶² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1029-1030.

¹⁶³ Malkeet Singh, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 70 years (Personal interview on 22 March, 2016).

¹⁶⁴ Santosh Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 71 years. (Personal interview on 25 March, 2016).

addressed them to tell that those clothes would be worn by him when they would move along further.¹⁶⁵

Giani Gian Singh and Giani Thakur Singh have described and narrated almost the same narrative that has been found in the oral tradition.¹⁶⁶

The local tradition has given another anecdote. Once Chaudhary Lakhmir and Samir took *Prasad* from the Guru. The Guru asked them to sit there and partake the *Prasad*. Samir had a desire of shaving the *Prasad* with the members of his family also. So, he carried the *Prasad* home and asked everyone to share it. But his uncle, somehow opposed the Guru, he did not let others have the *Prasad* and be blessed. Infact, he was foolish enough to bury the *Prasad* in the dug-out ground. Next day when Samir came to see the Guru, farsighted as he was, specifically asked him about the *Prasad*. He truthfully narrated the entire episode and also shared with him that one of his daughters had taken a grain of *Prasad* that had fallen on the ground¹⁶⁷. The Guru told him that his foolish uncle had deprived him of divine blessings. He further told him, that the land where the *Prasad* was buried will become very fertile and produce abundant crops¹⁶⁸. The Guru also blessed the daughter of Dhaliwal and their in laws, who would always flourish in life.¹⁶⁹

The above oral tradition has been mentioned in the same manner in the work of Giani Gian Singh.¹⁷⁰ But Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have given somewhat varied account. According to them, one day, Maharaj blessed Lakhmir with a ‘Sheet *Prasad*’ and asked him to bury that in the ground and assured him that there would be plenty of crops.¹⁷¹

One day Dayalpuri Mahant, who was a disciple of Sitapuri, ascetic saint of Dina, came to pay obeisance to the Guru. After expressing grief and regret over the cruelties inflicted by the Governor of Sirhind, he pleaded with the Guru to save him and his countless followers living in Sirhind. From the curse which the Guru had spelt

¹⁶⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 179, no. 86.

¹⁶⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1029, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 235.

¹⁶⁷ Naib Singh, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 80 years. (Personal interview on 25 March, 2016).

¹⁶⁸ Dhaliwal their caste.

¹⁶⁹ The people of the village have faith in the blessing of the Guru even today.

¹⁷⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1030.

¹⁷¹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 179, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 230.

about that town. The Guru was impressed by his humility and suggested to him to go back to Sirhind. The Guru had asked him to blow a conch-shell from his house top. The areas up to which that sound would be heard, would be blessed. The Mahant acted as per the Guru's advice and thus succeeded in saving himself and his followers¹⁷². Giani Gian Singh has agreed the above oral tradition.¹⁷³

According to the tradition the Guru went to Mana Burj¹⁷⁴ living in Dina. Here is a Pond (Dhab). The Guru stayed there for some time. At present there is a Gurdwara that has been built at this place in the memory of the Guru.¹⁷⁵

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have agreed to the above written lore.¹⁷⁶

One day, from Dina the Guru went to Bhadaur.¹⁷⁷ At this place there is a Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru. There are some relics such as arrows, Tega (double-edged) and sword of the Guru till now.¹⁷⁸

According to Tara Singh Narotam, the Guru came here to go for hunting from Dina. Here the Guru killed a female snake and said, "She is the daughter of king Bhadar Sain, who became snake by curse of some saint."¹⁷⁹

Giani Thakur Singh has written that the Guru came here from Mana Burj and stayed till the afternoon.¹⁸⁰

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, the Guru reached the village of Bhadaur after staying at Madhey ke and encamped at the seminary of Bhai Charan Das who was son of Diwan Sahib Singh Chibbar and on the command of the Guru had come to Bhadaur along with his congregation of the village. The Sikhi was prevalent in Bhadaur since the time of sixth Guru. The leading Sikh of the place Bhai

¹⁷² Vakeel Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 55 years (Personal interview on 25 August, 2018).

¹⁷³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1031.

¹⁷⁴ Mana Burj, the village of Dyalpura village which is known as Rajgarh. This village is seven kilometres away from Barnala District.

¹⁷⁵ Teg Singh, an old person of village Mana Burj, District. Moga, age 71 years. (Personal interview on 25 August, 2018).

¹⁷⁶ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 199, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 231.

¹⁷⁷ Bhadaur town is twenty-six kilometres away from Barnala.

¹⁷⁸ Baltej Singh, an old person of village Bhadaur, District Barnala, age 63 years (Personal interview on 25 August, 2018).

¹⁷⁹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 189.

¹⁸⁰ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 231.

Asa Singh with due respect, brought the Guru to the town. After staying that night at the town of Bhadaur, the Guru on Thursday *Poh, 21 Samvat 1762* (20th December 1705 C E OS) started his onward march¹⁸¹.

As per another anecdote, the Guru went to Patt Heera Singh wala village while living in Dina. There is a Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru. It is said that Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Hargobind had also visited that place. This place is thirteen kilometres to north of Dina¹⁸².

According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Nirotam, the Guru came here from Dyalpura Bhai ka. The Guru had made plan here to move ahead. Because Suba of Sirhind had followed the Guru. This news reached this village. The Guru was in the look out of a good place for war, the Guru left that place with the idea of stopping¹⁸³.

According to the local tradition and folk-lore the two elders Sahibzadas had attained martyrdom in the battle of Chamkaur Sahib and the younger two Sahibzadas were incarcerated in a brick wall. But the Guru's courage was intact and he did not budge from his routine. The Guru was not ruffled and as a brave. The Guru started the recruitment of new soldiers at Dina, because he knew that the Mughals were in the look out of an opportunity and they would surely attack anytime¹⁸⁴. The Guru went for hunting in Dyalpura Bhai ka near Dina. There were many thick trees. The Guru spent his day time in Dyalpura Bhai ka and the Guru wore blue colour dress. The Sikh devotees humbly requested the Guru to change to white colored dress. The Guru said that time had not yet come to change the dress as the Mughals are always chasing and following them. Bhai Daya Singh¹⁸⁵ expressed his views that Aurangzeb was the actual enemy. He deserved to be taught a lesson with the pen (Kalam) instead of sword. When Guru Gobind Singh saw that the Sikhs were in favour of this, he penned a letter to Aurangzeb. In that letter he mentioned atrocities committed by him, not keeping the vow and breaking the trust and he especially mentioned the ill-treatment

¹⁸¹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 177, no. 85.

¹⁸² Deesh Singh, an old person of village Patto, District Moga, age 64 years (Personal interview on 27 August, 2018).

¹⁸³ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 231, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 190.

¹⁸⁴ Partap Singh, Granthi of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 70 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2016).

¹⁸⁵ Bhai Daya Singh is the first of Panj Piara.

meted out to the Sikhs. This letter is popular in the history as Zaffarnama¹⁸⁶. Gurudwara Zaffarnama has been built at Dyalpura Bhai Ka to commemorate the historical event of penning the letter to Aurangzeb. From Dina, Guru Gobind Singh sent Zaffarnama to Aurangzeb through Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh¹⁸⁷ to Aurangzeb¹⁸⁸. However, Tara Singh Nirotam and Giani Thakur Singh have differed with others as far as the place of writing the Zaffarnama was concerned. They have mentioned that it was written at Dina instead of Dyalpura Bhai ka. They have further mentioned that the Guru Gobind Singh had gone to Dyalpura Bhai Ka for some time. In the meanwhile, Aurangzeb had gone to Deccan to take part in the struggle between the Marathas and the Mughals¹⁸⁹.

Similarly, Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have also accepted the above tradition. But they do not agree with the statement that Zaffarnama was written at Dyalpura Bhai ka as has been mentioned in the oral tradition. They have supported others by saying that it was written at Dina¹⁹⁰.

The Governor of Sirhind came to know that Guru Gobind Singh had chosen a place to take rest for a short while, he was prompt enough to send his army to invade Dina and to attack the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh from his knowledge of battle skills know very well that Dina was not an appropriate place to be used as a battle field. He apprehended loss of people and animals at this place. So, the Guru took the decision to leave Dina to look out for suitable battle field¹⁹¹.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Bhai Desa Singh came to the Guru and requested him by addressing him as ‘*Sache Patshah*’ and then informed him that he had gathered information from Chaudhary Samir Chand that Governor of Sirhind along with his army is marching towards Dina to attack him. But the Sikhs left the decision to the Guru. Chaudhary Samir Chand had also come to prostrate at the lotus feet of the Guru. He shared the detail of the information about the moving

¹⁸⁶ Gurmukh Singh, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 80 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2016).

¹⁸⁷ Bhai Dharam Singh is one of the Panj Piare.

¹⁸⁸ Notice Borad, Gurudwara Zaffarnama Sahib, Village Dyalpura Bhai ka, District Moga.

¹⁸⁹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 171, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 237.

¹⁹⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1032 see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 178, no. 85.

¹⁹¹ Mela Singh, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 75 years (Personal interview on 25 March, 2016).

forward of the army of Sirhind. After discussing with Maan Singh and those present, Satguru took the decision of leaving Dina on the second day of the month of 'Poh' (25th December, 1705 C E OS)¹⁹².

In the present chapter, an attempt has been made to trace Guru Gobind Singh's stride from Anandpur Sahib to Dina. This has been done in the light of oral tradition, which has been shared orally or through folk lore handed down from generation to generation. Existing literature regarding Guru's march from Anandpur Sahib to Dina has also been examined, which at many times have testified lore and anecdotes, as it plays vital role in shedding light on the past. Thus, oral tradition has always proved very useful in a deep-rooted understanding of historical events as it makes the reader have a better understanding of the past. As has been pointed earlier, at some points, there have been found marked differences between oral tradition and available literature. For example, according to oral tradition, Zaffarnama was written by Guru Gobind Singh in Dyalpura Bhai ka and was sent to Aurangzeb from Dina. But, according to some writers it was written in and sent from Dina only. But, still the significance of oral tradition cannot be ignored as it is often best used to fill the gaps in the existing literature by recounting of the true incidents by living person which could have been passed to them from the earlier generations.

¹⁹² Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp.178-179, no. 86.

CHAPTER – 4

FROM DINA TO MUKTSAR

Guru Gobind Singh had stayed in Dina for quite some time. During his stay at Dina, he had received information from his trusted confidants that the Governor of Sirhind had arranged and prepared a massive army of thousands of the Mughal soldiers for taking Guru Gobind Singh as captive. He realised the crucial impending confrontation that seemed to be imminent, but he did not want Shamir brother's life to be jeopardized, so the Guru resolved to leave Dina after having stayed. He blessed Lakhmir, Samir and Takhatmal and left Dina to find a suitable place from where he could give tough fight to the Mughals.

From Dina, the Guru reached a dense growth of trees and asked a farmer there, "Bhai what is the name of this place?" He said that its name is *Rukhala*.¹ Then the Guru suddenly replied that the name of the village is Rakhwala not a Rukhala. The Guru stayed there for some time. A short distance away the members of Jalal² village came to see the Guru and they brought two horses, milk, one little sword (dagger) and four arrows. The Guru accepted everything because of their devotion. The members lodged their complaint in front of the Guru that the people of Kesar village often attacked them and they also sought the Guru's blessings for their victory. The Guru assured them that as long as they would remain steadfast in their belief in Sikh faith, no one would be able to harm them. The people of Jalal village lived happily thereafter.³

Later on, when the Khalsa forces came to this tract of land on a conquering spree, they rested in that village. But, under the leadership of Chaudhary Jalal's son all the villagers attacked the groups of the Sikhs and they killed two Sikhs and two horses were stolen. With day break, the Khalsa forces ransacked the whole village of Jalal and got their two stolen horses back. The people of the village realized their mistake, the Guru had advised them to keep a low profile and they had attacked the Sikhs. They went and apologised to the Sikh forces and made an offering for *Karah*

¹ This village is few miles away from Dina.

² Jalal village is four miles from Dina.

³ Depa Singh an old person of village Rukhwala, District Moga, age 86 years (Personal Interview on 13 January, 2021).

Prasad and erected a Gurdwara at the site where the Guru was seated and named the Gurdwara as Gurusar and built a new village called Gurusar⁴.

Tara Singh Narotam has also written about the events happened at Rukhala village. The writer has given a brief account of the incidents that has happened his account has corroborated found in the oral tradition⁵. Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratten Sakhi Pothi have given a similar account of Rakhwala village. They have written that the Guru reached the village of trees which is at a distance of one and half kos (miles) from Dina. The people of the village rendered a lot of service. The Guru named that village 'Rakhwala'. The Chaudhary of Jalal village came to see the Guru and presented a little sword which was very valuable and two pots of milk⁶.

Giani Thakur Singh has also given similar account of Guru Gobind Singh's visit to Rakhwala village from Dina as have been found in the oral tradition and the works of other authors⁷.

According to another oral tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached village Bhagta Bhai Ka⁸ passing through Rakhwala. There a popular (Peepal) tree was seen and the Guru encamped there the Guru glanced around and then saw a well. The Guru found some people there and asked them, "Bhai, which village is this, whose well is it"? Then he was informed that this village is Bhagta Bhai Ka and this well belonged to Bhai Bhagta and he was grandson of Bhai Bahlo.⁹ The Guru told them, "The money was given to the kings and servants have been named. The same thing is happening here". Everyone was surprised to hear this and requested the Guru to elaborate as they could not understand. After this request was made, the Guru narrated the story Bhai Sikho, a dewan named Ramu used to live in Lahore. Once Bhai Ramu came to Bhagta as his daughter's mind had been gripped by an evil spirit. Because he had heard about Bhai Bhagta's powers to get rid of evil spirits. Ramu then went to

⁴ Notice Board, Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib, village Gurusar, District Moga.

⁵ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 256.

⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 103, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, Bhai Veer Singh Sahit Sadan, New Delhi, 2018, p. 38, No. 38.

⁷ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 232.

⁸ Bhagta Bhai Ka, village twenty kilometres east to Jaito in Bathinda district of Punjab was found during the latter half of the seventeenth century by Bhai Bhagta grandson of Bhai Bahilo. Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, p. 327.

⁹ Bhai Bahlo, a Sidhu Jatt of the village of Phaphre, in present days in Bathinda District. In 1583, he visited Amritsar at the invitation of Guru Arjan Dev. Bhai Bahlo was converted the moment he saw the Guru. He dedicated the labour of his hands to the excavation of the holy tank and the construction of the Harimandar Sahib, then he proceeded towards Amritsar.

Bhai Bhagta and with the power used by Bhai Bhagtu his daughter was completely freed from the evil spirit. Bhai Ramu wanted to show his gratitude and wanted to do some service to Bhai Bhagta. On being asked by Bhai Ramu, Bhai Bhagta replied that, “We have to dig a well in our village. But we are unable to find bricks from anywhere”. Then Bhai Ramu said that, ‘I can provide you bricks, but your village is faraway’. On this Bhai Bhagta replied that you just give us bricks, i will be able to get them delivered to my village. Bhai Ramu made bricks and gave them to Bhai Bhagta. One of the servants of Bhai Ramu was curious to know as to how they would carry the bricks to the village. As he found that Bhai Bhagta ordered his good spirited demons to deliver all the bricks to the village Bhagta. In one night, the demons delivered all the bricks. The servant told Ramu that bricks were covered and were being lifted. But, the one who was picking did not appear and the well at the village Bhagta was made up finally with those bricks. These demons worked under the command of Guru Arjan Dev, then under Bhai Bahlo whenever they shortly appeared let the name of Bhai Bahlo’s ghost be used. Because of this the Guru has mentioned that the work was done by someone else and the credit was being given to someone else. This well is still present in the village Bhagta Bhai ka¹⁰.

Hearing these words, Bhai Bhagta’s five sons, Tara, Bhara, Mehra, Bhakt, Gurdas became followers of the Guru and bowed to the Guru’s feet and begged “True king, our body, mind and money all are devoted to you”. Following their request, the Guru stayed in their house at night and had food (*Parsada*). In the memory of Guru Gobind Singh the Gurdwara is Mahal Sahib stand at this place. A wall of that house is still inside the Gurdwara today. People worship it with a lot of devotion¹¹. Bhai Maan Singh asked about the three sons of Bhai Bahlo. The elder brother Bhai Gurdas with folded hands shared that their ancestors were blessed by Guru Arjun Dev Ji and Guruji had uttered the words, “Bhai Bahlo Sab to Pehlo”. Bhai Bahlo reached the higher stage of inner satisfaction. He meditated strongly and did not have any interest in the worldly things. He was respected a lot. One day people came to Bhai Bahlo for Darshans. Bhai Bahlo had only one son called Bhai Nannu, who had further three sons. When people came Bhai Bahlo asked them to bring a utensil from his house. When people went to his house for utensil, the wife of Bhai Nannu was giving bath to

¹⁰ Notice Board, Bhootan wala Khu, village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda.

¹¹ Joga Singh, an old person of village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 71 years (Personal Interview on 21 February, 2020).

her children and replied that she could not give the utensil. Bhai Bahlo felt that she had become proud and arrogant. He cursed her causing the death of her children. Bhai Nannu understood that he had lost his children because of the fault of his wife. Then he served his father a lot, for a long time. One day Bhai Bahlo was very pleased with his son Bhai Nannu and told “I am very happy with you my son, you have served me a lot and if you have any desire you can ask it from me”. Then Bhai Nannu requested him that if he was so pleased so he could bless him with a son. Bhai Bahilo blessed him with a son and asked him to name him as Bhagtu. As per his blessings Bhai Nannu was blessed with a son who was named Bhagtu¹².

According to another tradition, after narrating the whole story, when Guru Gobind Singh closed his eyes, demons came together and requested him for their salvation. They together prayed to the Guru that Guru Arjan Dev had subjected us to Bhai Bahlo and it had been a long time. They requested him to release them. They further told the Guru that while even when they would be set free, they would still come as and when required. Thus, Guru Gobind Singh freed them all and next morning when five sons of Bhai Bhagtu close to the feet of the Guru, the latter told them about the release of demons and assured them that they were free but they would still obey him as and when required. After that, the Guru came back to the tree, which was close to the well. Even in the present times, this well is known as *the Ghost Well*. The residents here regard it as a monument to their elders and are putting in their efforts to preserve that, as it is a priceless heritage. The visitors from far away came to visit the well. There is also a building around the well to safeguard it¹³. *Sri Akhand Path Sahib* is organized every month on February 18-19 in the memory of Bhai Bhagta and a Jodh Mehla is organised. At that time a Sikh from Bhagta village brought his son along with him a Bhugnian (parched grams) to the Guru. The Guru asked him what is the name of his son. He replied that he has not been named him as yet. On the request of Sikh, Guru Gobind Singh named his son Bhugnia who later took Amrit and became Bhugnia Singh¹⁴.

¹² Gurdial Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Mahal Sahib, village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 60 years (Personal Interview on 21 February, 2020).

¹³ Gurmukh Singh, Sewadar of Bhootan Wala Khu, village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 64 years (Personal Interview on 21 February, 2020).

¹⁴ Jella Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhootan Wala Khu, village Bhagta Bhai Ka, Bathinda, age 55 years (Personal Interview on 21 February, 2020).

Giani Gian Singh in his work has supported the above written oral tradition. He has mentioned the Guru's meeting with Bhai Bhagta's sons. He narrates the whole story as had been found in the oral tradition. But the writer remained silent about the episode of Bhugnia Singh¹⁵.

Tara Singh Narotam does not agree with this above written oral tradition. He has written Guru Hargobind¹⁶ had gone to pay homage to Bhagta at the time when the well was being prepared¹⁷.

Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi has agreed the ghost well tradition and has also written that Guru Gobind Singh gave name Bhugnia to a sikh child and also gave nectar to the child. The little child expressed his desire to go with the Guruji. On this, his father that, "you are very young. When you would grow up then I would give you to Guru Sahib" and he bowed down with two and half rupees and came back home¹⁸.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, passing through Rupala village, Guru Gobind Singh reached and encamped at the village Bhagta. The residents of this village, Gurdas of Bhai Bahlo, along with his three sons, Bhai Sukha, Chandar Bhan and Asa Ram came and had Guru Jee's *Darshan*. The Guru sermonised them to earn their livelihood with sweat of their brow and getting up at ambrosial nor, to observe godly name, benevolence and piety. After spending the night there, the Guru took leave of Bhai Gurdas and other Sikhs and prepared to leave for his onward journey¹⁹.

According to another oral tradition, during his stay in village Bhagta, Guru Gobind Singh also went to a village called Kotha Guru²⁰. Kotha Guru was founded in 1569 by Baba Chand Singh, the elder brother of Guru Arjun Dev. Earlier, the name of the village was 'Kotha Prithi Chand'. Traditions prevailed that the town was named 'Kotha Guru' by Guru Gobind Singh. In Kotha Guru, once the Guru asked a child to go ahead. As the child was dumb. So, he could not speak. But with the blessings of the Guru and he began to speak. Gurdwara Gungsar Sahib is situated here in the memory of this event. Even today, those children are blessed at this place, who are

¹⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 842.

¹⁶ Guru Hargobind is sixth Guru of Sikhs.

¹⁷ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 101.

¹⁸ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 39-41, no. 41.

¹⁹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, Amritsar, 2005, p. 179, no.86.

²⁰ Kotha Guru, famous village of Punjab thirty-four kilometres away from Bathinda.

otherwise unable to speak²¹. From Kotha Guru, the Guru went to village Maluka²² and stayed there for one night. Early in the morning, a monk came to pay a visit to the Guru but he was stopped by the guard who told him that it was not proper time to visit. But the monk (Sadhu) was adamant to meet and see Guru Gobind Singh. When he tried to enter forcibly, the guard hurt him with his sword to stop him. The monk was injured badly and still he wanted to meet the Guru. Then the Guru was informed that a monk wanted to meet him and he had been badly injured and he might die anytime. Thus, the Guru allowed the injured monk to come immediately and he came and bowed before the Guru as he entered in. After looking at his situation, the Guru told him that he could still be alive, but there was one condition for that. But the monk refused the Guru's offer and told that he just wanted to die at the Guru's feet and he died. Outside of Maluka, the Gurdwara Taruana Sahib is situated in the memory of this incident²³.

Tara Singh Narotam in his work has only written about the Guru's visit to the village of Kotha Maluka. He has also mentioned that there a crazy Sadhu came to see the Guru. The Guard stopped him but when the Sadhu did not stop, he was killed by the guard. According to him Kotha Maluka is the same village not a different²⁴. According to Gian Gian Singh, Guru Gobind Singh reached Maluka passing through Jaito. The author has also written about the incident of the death of monk as had been found in the oral tradition²⁵. Malwa Desh Rattan Sakhi Pothi has also corroborated with the oral tradition. But it has also written, when the Sadhu was killed by the Guard. The Brars²⁶ questioned how a dewana Sadhu got killed in the Guru's presence²⁷.

Giani Thakur Singh has also written about Guru Gobind Singh's visit to village Maluka. He has written that Maluka village is five kilometres from Jaito. The

²¹ Notice Board Gurdwara Gungsar Sahib, Kotha Guru, District Bathinda, see also Nirbhai Singh an old person of village Kotha Guru, District Bathinda, age 79 years (Personal Interview on 21 February, 2020).

²² Maluka village in Bathinda District of the Punjab, Eighteen kilometres east of Jaito District Bathinda.

²³ Teja Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Taruana Sahib, village Maluka, District Bathinda, age 71 years (Personal Interview on 22 February, 2020).

²⁴ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 175.

²⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1039.

²⁶ Brar is a surname originating from Punjab, People with this surname include.

²⁷ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 48, No. 48.

writer has narrated the same story regarding the crazy monk and his death as had been found in the oral tradition and supported by other authors²⁸.

According to the oral tradition, from Maluka the Guru returned to village Bhagta. The Guru stayed here for three days. One day, the Guru went from the village Bhagta to a forest for hunting, this forest was called Gandhu ki Theh. At some distance from the Gandhu forest was a dune. There was a Partridge sitting on a tree nearby talking. Upon hearing his voice, the Guru addressed partridge as 'Kanya' (half blind) you have not left me as yet. Then Sikhs asked the Guru, whom was he talking to. The Guru told the whole conversation, the partridge who was speaking was the owner of this land and the greed of the land had never left his mind. It kept coming up again and again. The Partridge was sitting on the tree and was surrounded by the Singhs. It flew down to the west and in a while, the Singhs picked it up and brought it to the Guru's feet. The Guru said, "Look this is blind and I am stuck in it". The Sikhs begged the Guru that there was good luck for the partridge have seen the Guru. They requested the Guru to release it at that time. The partridge calmed down and was released. The Guru gave those who would come there with blessings, if they would bow down humbly and their sorrows would go away. Here, in the memory of the Guru, the sons of Bhai Bhagat erected a raw dome as a shrine. Its name is Gurdwara Tittar Sahib (Later, the King of Faridkot built a small Gurdwara)²⁹.

Giani Gian Singh has supported the oral tradition. He has also mentioned that, when the Guru lived in the village of Bhagta, he came to Gandhu ki Theh. There was a partridge talking, Guru Sahib released him by listening to his request. Then the Guru returned to Bhagta village³⁰.

As per another tradition, after staying one more night in Bhagta Bhai Ka village he reached Dod³¹ village. The Guru spent a night here. There are two Gurdwaras in the memory of the Guru. There is one Gurdwara inside the village called 'Har Sar Sahib' and the other one is outside the village called 'Dholsar Sahib'. The villagers served milk to Guru Gobind Singh. According to another tradition, Guru

²⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 234.

²⁹ Notice Board, Gandu ki Theh, District Bathinda.

³⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1038.

³¹ Dod village thirteen kilometres from Jaito in Bathinda District of Punjab, 2236005.

Hargobind, the sixth Guru had also come there. Bhai Khushal³² Singh, a sikh of Guru Sahib served the Guru a lot. So, the Guru gave him his footwear (Jutti). Bhai Sukhmandar Singh gave the service of this holy footwear (Jutti) and coins to the sixth generations. The moonlight days are still celebrated at the place³³. Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh do not write anything similar to what had been found through the oral tradition. They have only written about the Guru's visit and the service done to him by the people of Dod village³⁴.

Guru Gobind Singh walked from Dod to Lambhwali³⁵ village. According to the tradition, this village had been blessed by Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Hargobind and last by Guru Gobind Singh. Here, three Gurdwara commemorate memory of three Gurus. Here Guru Nanak and Guru Hargobind has taught the Sangat to recite the name of true lord³⁶. Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, all the three authors are silent about the above oral tradition in their respective works. They have written that Guru Sahib left Jaito and stopped at village Lambhwali and then went to Maluka. Giani Thakur Singh, Tara Singh Narotam have written that Guruji came there from Kotha Maluka.³⁷

As per another anecdote, the Guru reached another village called Wander³⁸ passing through village Bhagta, Kotha Guru ka, Maluka, Dod and Lambhwali. Singhs who accompanied the Guru started laughing at the name of the village. The Guru told them, "Do not laugh, this is a village of landlords and the Wander is their surname". The Guru encamped at Wander village. The Castle where the Guru's horse was tied, that Castle later became green and became a large tree of Jand which still exists. When the people of the village came to know about the Guru's arrival, they took food

³² When Guru Gobind Singh reached Kotkapura. Wazir Khan, the subedar of Sirhind was pursuing the Guru with his army. So, the Guru asked Chaudhary Kapura to let him stay in the fort to fight against the Mughals. Instead of giving the fort, Chaudhary Kapura used several excuses and told that if he gave the fort, the Mughals would kill him. Then the Guru went away and Baba Sahib Singh joined the Guru along with his descendants. His son Bhai Khushal Singh requested the Guru to let him perform the service, then the Guru happily gave his pair of holy feet. The bottom of which was 10.5 inches in length and it was embroidered with a gold-coloured thread. After that, according to the circumstances of Bhai Sahib Singh, Baba Khushal Singh came to the village Dod. A locality in Kotkapura is still known as Baba Khushal Singh ji.

³³ Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, village Dod, District Faridkot.

³⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1034, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 232, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 174.

³⁵ Lambhwali village Eleven kilometres from Jaito, Bathinda District of Punjab.

³⁶ Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, village Lambhwali, District Faridkot.

³⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1039, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 168, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 235.

³⁸ Wander village twenty-two kilometres away from Kotkapura.

and water for the Guru and Singhs and brought grass and grain for the horses. When the Guru asked the people about their wellbeing, the Sangat said that some evil-minded people around us do not allow us to settle down peacefully. The Guru was pleased with the service of the Sangat and promised them that whoever would come, here would be defeated. The name of the village is 'Ajitgarh'. There is a Gurudwara Manji Sahib in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh.³⁹ Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh both the writers have narrated similar account of Wander village in their respective works. Similar event has also been written in Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothi⁴⁰.

Giani Gian Singh has also mentioned Guru Gobind Singh's visit to Wander village, which according to the author was two kilometres from Dod village. The writer further stated that the people of Wander village offered great service to the Guru. Then the Guru moved to Bargarhi village which was three kilometres from Wander village⁴¹.

As per the tradition, walking from Wander village, Guru Gobind Singh reached Bargarhi village fifteen kilometres away from Kotkapura and he stayed there for three days. The village was occupied by Nanda, cousin of Chaudhary Kapura of Kotkapura. When the Guru reached Bargarhi village, Nanda was going to fight against Chaudhary Kapura, but when he came to know about the Guru's visit, he stopped the fight right there and came to see the Guru. The Guru asked him where he was going. Nanda told the Guru that he was going to have a war. But when he got to know about him (the Guru), he came to see the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh was so pleased with him. Then he spoke some gracious words for Nanda. The Guru told him to not to go himself in the war and advised him to send his soldiers only. The Guru said him to wait for two days and he would be victorious. Nanda accepted the words of the Guru and he did a great service to the Guru and went home. Next morning, Chaudhary Kapura brought his soldiers to wage a war. But Nanda kept the words of the Guru in his mind and he himself did not go for war and instead he sent his soldiers. The war had started. Nanda's wife did not know anything about his meeting with Guru Gobind Singh. So, she started taunting her husband asking him why he was

³⁹ Notice Board, Gurudwara Manji Sahib, village Wander, District Faridkot.

⁴⁰ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 174-175, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 232, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 41.

⁴¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1034.

not going to the battle field himself. She told him that people were making fun of him and calling him a coward. Nanda could not tolerate his insult and he forgot the words of the Guru and went to the battlefield. So, he was killed. A landlord approached the Guru and told that Nanda Choudhary of the village had been killed. The Guru told he was not dead then the landlord repeated again that he was dead. The Guru repeated this word thrice but landlord remained firm on his argument that Nanda was dead. After that, the Guru opened his hand and said, “Bhai, had you once obeyed our word and said that Nanda did not die, his life would have returned”. Here, in the memory of the Guru, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi has been constructed⁴².

According to the tradition, the Sikhs who accompanied Guru Gobind Singh to village Bargarhi complained to him that people are fake and arrogant, as they do not believe in anyone. To this, the Guru replied that the Guru’s feet have fallen to that place, all the people living here would become nice and blessed. While blessing them the Guru uttered, “Guru ke Lal, Satgur kre Nihal”⁴³. According to Giani Thakur Singh and Giani Gian Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, in the village Bargarhi, Bhai Nanda, the cousin of Chaudhary Kapura of Kotkapura, offered much service to the Guru. The Guru was pleased and gave him blessing of goodness⁴⁴.

Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothe has also supported oral evidence regarding the Guru’s visit and his stay at Bargarhi village. It has also recorded the conversation between the Guru and his Sikhs regarding the nature and behaviour of people of the village Bargarhi⁴⁵.

According to the local tradition, from village Bargarhi, Guru Gobind Singh reached Behbal Kalan⁴⁶. Walking from Behbal Kalan village he reached Doda tal village, two kilometres away. There was one pond, where the Guru sat for rest after having five baths. There was an oak tree on which the soul of Saheed Mian Khan lived. He bowed to the Guru’s feet. The Guru asked him, “How are you, Hussain Mian Khan?” The soul of Mian Khan replied to the Guru that by listening to your voice and seeing you, my wish has been fulfilled and suddenly his soul disappeared.

⁴² Lachman Singh, an old person of village Bargarhi, District Faridkot, age 58 years (Personal Interview on 1 March, 2020).

⁴³ Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, village Bargarhi, District Faridkot.

⁴⁴ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 233, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru Khalsa*, pp. 1034-1305, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 175.

⁴⁵ Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh (ed.), *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothe*, p. 42, No. 43.

⁴⁶ Behbal Kalan twelve kilometres away from Kotkapura.

When the Sikhs asked the Guru about him. Then the Guru told them that he was a very brave martyr. But for some reason, his soul could not get salvation (Mukti). But now it has attained salvation. At this place, there is an eight-corner pond and it has been said that bathing in the pond (Srovar) would cure every disease. This tradition has been still prevalent today. The festival of Punya (Full Moon) and Masya (New Moon) is also celebrated here with great enthusiasm⁴⁷.

Giani Gian Singh in his work has also narrated a similar account of the Guru's meeting with the soul of a martyr soldier as had been popular by oral tradition. Similar events had also been mentioned in *Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothi*⁴⁸.

According to the local tradition, later that evening, the Guru returned to village Behbal Kalan and camped on a hill. Here at this place, the Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib has been built. Sangats came to see and meet the Guru. At this place, many Brars from village Bargarhi came to meet Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru offered them a job to fight with the Mughals. In reply they told the Guru that they would stand with him if the need arose and assured their support to him⁴⁹. There has also been a mention in *Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothi* about Guru Gobind Singh's visit to village Behbal Kalan and village Sarawan, nearby and the same work has also recorded the conversation between Brar of village Bargarhi and Guru Gobind Singh⁵⁰.

As per tradition, with the presence of the Guru in the village Behbal Kalan, the number of Sikhs increased considerably. As the Guru encamped on a hill outside the village. There was another village Srawan nearby the village Behbal Kalan. The chiefs of both the villages requested humbly to Guru Gobind Singh to send his Singhs to different houses to get served with food and water as it was difficult for them to arrange whole stuff at one place. So, the Guru agreed and accepted the request. One Singh called Milagar Singh was sent to the home of a very poor man called Bhai Ganga Singh in the village Behbal Kalan. There was no food at his home. Next morning, when all the Singhs came back, the Guru asked them about what they had dinner and what they had brought with themselves. In reply to the Guru's question

⁴⁷ Notice Board Gurdwara Guru-ki-Dhab, village Guru ki Dhab, District Bathinda, see also Nokha Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guru-ki-Dhab, District Bathinda, age 68 years (Personal Interview on 3 March, 2020).

⁴⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1039, see also *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 43.

⁴⁹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, village Behbal Kalan, District Faridkot.

⁵⁰ *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 42-43, No. 43.

some said *Kheer Prasad*, *Karah Prasad* some said *Dal Prasada* but Milagar Singh remained silent. When asked by the Guru, he replied that the food he had eaten last night, he had never had it before. All the village people present there were surprised to listen to this. One landlord present there told Guru Gobind Singh that where Milagar Singh had gone to have food that house was of very poor man and he could have nothing to serve. The Guru wanted to meet that man and he was called. On being asked by the Guru, Bhai Ganga Singh that poor man told the Guru that he was very poor and he could just offer only boiled dried nuts. The Guru was very pleased to listen and he blessed Milagar Singh for his patience and uttered the word as, “Dhan teri Sikhi” and for him.

ਸਤੀ ਦੇ ਸੰਤੋਖੀ ਖਾਇ
ਤਿਸ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਏ,

At the Tibbi Sahib’s place the Guru started planning for his last war. Here the Guru wrote Chandi di Var and gave himself practice of war. At this place fifty Sikhs took the holy nectar and were sworn by Khalsas⁵¹.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have agreed with the above oral tradition. But they have given a brief description. They only write, two miles away from Bargarhi, the Guru reached Behbal Kalan. The Sikhs from that place took Sikhs who had accompanied the Guru to their places for food. Some of them were offered *Prashada*, some *Kheer*. But one Sikh was very poor. He just had dry nuts and offered to the Sikhs. The Guru was very much pleased with the forbearance and patience of his Sikh⁵². Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothi, have also explained the above oral tradition. They have told that one Sikh Milagar Singh went to a poor Sikh’s house. The host offered him dry nuts but when Milagar Singh returned, he praised the host in front of the Guru that he was offered delicious food. But according to them this incident had not happened in Behbal Kalan⁵³. But Giani Gian Singh has mentioned about a different incident that has happened at the village Behbal Kalan. He has written that when the Guru and Singhs reached the village and

⁵¹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, village Behbal Kalan, District Faridkot, see also Gurdial Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, village Behbal Kalan, District Faridkot, age 75 years (Personal Interview on 8 March, 2020).

⁵² Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 135, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 233.

⁵³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1035-36, see also Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 44-45, No. 45.

the chief of the village was unable to make arrangements of food and other stuff for all of them, then the Guru asked his Sikhs to go in a group of five to different houses to have food. Some people of the village told the Guru that they could not take Sikhs to their homes without the prior consent of their wives. At this some other men who were present there laughed at these men and taunted them and questioned them whether they were Sikhs of the Guru or of their wives. So, there started an argument. But in the end, those who took the Sikhs to their home with prior permission of their wives could attend to the Guru's Sikhs. Well, as their wives prepared food happily. But those, who had made fun of them could not offer food to the Guru's Sikhs as their wives refused to serve and asked them to do all the work themselves⁵⁴.

According to another oral tradition, the Guru had got the information that Mughal army was closely following him and he realised that he would have to swiftly find a safe place for himself and his Sikhs. That is how the Guru went to Srawan village that was at distance of three kilometres from Behbal Kalan. After a short stay at that place, he moved to Kotkapura. In Srawan village, Gurdwara Sahib has been built in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh⁵⁵.

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have only written ਸਰਾਵੀਂ ਆਏ ਤੇ ਇੱਥੇ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ ਤੀਰ ਚਲਾਏ।⁵⁶

According to the local tradition, Guru Gobind Singh was occupied looking for a suitable place for his safety. Such a place where he would be equipped and in a position to defend himself well and thus he reached Kotkapura⁵⁷ along with an impressive number of Sikhs.⁵⁸ According to another traditions, Guru Gobind Singh camped outside the town. Langar was prepared at this place for the Sikhs. At that place a Gurdwara *Chula Sahib* was built because the fire was made in a chula to prepare the Langar (community meal)⁵⁹. Giani Gian Singh has supported the evidence mentioned in the oral tradition.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1035.

⁵⁵ Notice Board, Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib, village Sarawi, District Faridkot.

⁵⁶ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p.233 and Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 174.

⁵⁷ Kotkapura town stayed at Faridkot District of Punjab.

⁵⁸ Dalip Singh, an old person of village Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 85 years (Personal Interview on 13 July, 2016).

⁵⁹ Bibi Paramjit Kaur, Sewadar of Gurdwara Chula Sahib, Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 55 years (Personal Interview on 13 July, 2016).

⁶⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1018.

As per another oral tradition, a massive number of people of Kotkapura came when they learnt about the Guru's presence at their midst. Chaudhary Kapura⁶¹, who was the founder of the town and also an agent of the Mughals army came to pay his obeisance and gifted a horse and one hundred rupees to the Guru with all reverence and humility.⁶²

After asking about his wellbeing, the Guru addressed Kapura to tell him that he wore arms, it was time for him to show to the Guru how much courage and patience he could demonstrate. The Guru then questioned him if he had any keen desire to take part in any big battle. The Guru brought his point home by telling him that such great battles are instrumental in blessing great various with a high status. Chaudhary Kapura replied with wisdom that it was in the hands of the Guru to make brave soldiers act cowardly and to lead cowards to fight with courage and bravery. Then the Guru again questioned him, which animals were hunted by him. To that question Chaudhary Kapura replied he hunted dogs and eagles, who do not allow even the big birds to escape. There after Chaudhary Kapura went home and sent essential ingredients for langers.⁶³ Giani Gian Singh in his work has also written the same narrative concerning Guru Gobind Singh meeting and having conversation with Chaudhary Kapura, as described in the local tradition⁶⁴. The same anecdote has been presented in Malwa Desh Rattan di Sakhi Pothi. The Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi went on to describe that the Guru reached Kotkapura and sent Bhai Dyal Singh to call Kapura and on meeting the Guru. Kapura gifted the Guru a good horse and this gestures of his pleased the Guru and the Guru blessed him⁶⁵.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, late in the afternoon the Guru left Sarawan and kept on blessing the villages on the way and thereafter he reached Kotkapura. There, Chaudhary Kapura reverentially prostrated and gifted a beautiful

⁶¹ Chaudhary Kapura was just nine-year-old at the time of his accession. He turned out to be a brave and able ruler. In 1661 A.D. he founded the present town of Kotkapura. Chaudhuri Kapura came under the Sikh influence when he was just a young lad. Chaudhuri Kapura along with other members of his family received the Sikh baptism of *Amrit* from the Guru's Sacred hands.

⁶² Dalip Singh, an old person of village Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 85years (Personal Interview on 13 July, 2016).

⁶³ Malkeet Singh, an old person of village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 73 years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016) and also Gurmukh Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Chulla Sahib, village Bhana, District Faridkot, age 67years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

⁶⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 894.

⁶⁵ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 46, No. 47.

horse, a pair of shields and a sword and five gold coins to Guru Gobind Singh⁶⁶.

According to another local tradition, Chaudhary Kapura came again to meet the Guru following day, with his loose clothes and his followers raising dust. The Milagar Singh, who was standing in attendance, serving the Guru. He told Chaudhary Kapura to conduct himself respectfully and not to raise dust in all the direction. This angered Chaudhary Kapura but he did not retaliate. He sat down after prostrating at the lotus feet of the Guru. The Guru at that time was sitting on a Cot and an attendant was very dutifully waving a flywhisk over his head.⁶⁷ On another Cot, sparking clean arms were placed with incense burning in their midst along with the offering of followers and another attendant was waving flywhisk over them, as reverentially as the first attendant. Chaudhary Kapura was surprised and baffled. With a smile playing on his face, he enquired from the Guru, “Guru ji! there is no doubt it is a traditional practice to waive the flywhisk over your head. But what is the revelence of treating the arms in the similar manner and of burning an incense and offering followers to them”? Then the Guru patiently clarified to dispel the doubts of the Chaudhary Kapura that it was the way to shows respect to the arms. A flywhisk is waved to save the weapons from the flies lest they should pollute them. He went on the explain that even God worship weapons because they save them from giants and monsters. It is the arms alone which make the kings capable and strong to rule not only on earth but to have sway over heavens above. All great and insignificant persons rely on their arms. Only a person who carry his arms can be called brave in the true sense of the word.⁶⁸ Gurdwara Sahib *Patshahi Dasvi* has been built there in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh. Some weapons of Guru Gobind Singh have been preserved and displayed in this Gurudwara. Jodh Mela (fair) on Masya is held here. A Sarovar was made with eight corners at this place. It is a prevalent belief that, many mental and physical ailments get cured, if a person takes bath in this pond (Sarover), for eight Masya.⁶⁹

The information given in the above oral tradition is also confirmed in Giani

⁶⁶ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhiann* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p.180, no. 88.

⁶⁷ Naib Singh, an old person of village Mehmuna, District Faridkot, age 86 years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

⁶⁸ Mewa Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Sahib Patsahi Dasvi, Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

⁶⁹ Notice Board, *Gurdwara Sahib Patsahi Dasvi*, Kotkapura, District Faridkot.

Gian Singh's work.⁷⁰ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi has also mentioned of same events as narrated in the oral tradition concerning Chaudhary Kapura's conversation with Guru Gobind Singh regarding the worship of weapons⁷¹.

According to another tradition, Guru Gobind Singh had got the information that a large Mughal force of Sirhind was marching towards their area, while chasing him. Having been thus equipped with this knowledge, the Guru was searching for an appropriate place from where he could strongly and successfully defend himself. It occurred to the Guru that the fort of Kotkapura assistance of Chaudhary Kapura would be that suitable place for taking the onslaught of the Mughals. The Guru put forward this proposal to Chaudhary Kapura asking him to let him use his fortress for self-defense against the imminent arrival of the inimical Mughals. Guru Gobind Singh offered futuristic blessing to Chaudhary Kapura by assuring him. When the Mughals would be defeated, he could expand his sovereign and live peacefully. But Chaudhary Kapura refused and did not concede to the wish of the Guru and instead voiced apprehensions and misgivings by stating that the Mughals formed a very powerful force to reckon with and both the Guru and Chaudhary Kapura could not be any match for the powerful enemies. He further added that undoubtedly the Guru was fearless and he had fought against the Mughals undauntedly. But the consequence of this fearlessness resulted in the loss of lakhs of lives. In spite of a brave and courageous fight, the Guru had ultimately to leave Anandpur Sahib. He finally concluded that the Guru's present proposal would lead to Chaudhary Kapura's destructions at the hands of the Mughals. The Guru was very unhappy and disgusted with these views of Chaudhary Kapura. He told Chaudhary Kapura that he had shown his slavish mentality and desire which had clearly reflected his lack of courage and his fearful stance. The Guru further told him that a frightened person is bound to be doomed. He has himself closed doors on his good luck. Now he could not escape being caught by the Mughals and ultimately being killed by them. The Guru on the other hand had desired to expand his sovereignty but he had been unfortunate, referring to the loss of Anandpur Sahib, the Guru did not like his sarcasm and he assured him that town would prosper in future but sadly, Chaudhary Kapura would not be able to salvage his town. On hearing this outburst of the Guru, Chaudhary Kapura went to his fortress lest the Guru should occupy it. He realized the Guru's urgency but he could

⁷⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1017-19.

⁷¹ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 46, No. 46.

not overcome the fear of the Mughals. The fear proved to be fatal for him. It was his misfortune not to concede to the Guru's wish. He knows that the Guru's word would not be false and that made him very restless. The Guru's prophecy proved to be true in no time and Chaudhary Kapura met a tragic fate at the hands of Nawab Isa Khan⁷². The Guru started moving from this place to Dhilwan Kalan⁷³.

Giani Gian Singh in his work has given the description of Guru Gobind Singh's meeting with Chaudhary Kapura and their dialogue about the fortress, which the Guru wanted to use, he has almost given the same details of the incidents that had been described in the folk lore⁷⁴.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, as Satguru Jee was busy discussing about the fortress with Chaudhary Kapura, a messenger Desa Singh sent by Lakhmir Chand reached the spot. He shared the information with folded hands that the Governor of Sirhind along with of five thousand soldiers, travelling day and night, in the process of pursuing him. The Guru looked at Prohit Daya Singh and announced that they would reach Dhilam town tonight. He asked his Singhs to be prepared and further informed that they would be staying with Sodhi Kaul Jee. Bhai Mann Singh and ten Singhs swiftly mounted the horses. They left Kotkapura, before the sunset, they reached at the house of Sodhi Kanwal Nain in the town of Dhilwan.⁷⁵

Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, all of them in their respective works have given similar information about Guru Gobind Singh's meeting with Chaudhary Kapura. They also stated that the Guru's expression of his desire to use the fortress but Kapura did not want the fortress to be used in the fight off against the Mughals.⁷⁶

From Kotkapura the Guru moved to Dhilwan Kalan⁷⁷ that is in the District Faridkot of Punjab. It is at a distance of five kilometres south east of Kotkapura. As

⁷² Isa Khan, the owner of the fort and village of the same name Kapur Singh's great rival and enemy. He was the Chief of Manj Rajputs, also descendants of Jaisal, the Rajput founder of Jaisalmer. Originally, the country around Faridkot was under their control.

⁷³ Dalip Singh an old person of village Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 85 years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

⁷⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1004.

⁷⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 180, no. 88.

⁷⁶ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 46, No. 46. Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 230, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Shri Guru Tirath Sangreh*, p. 30.

⁷⁷ Sewa Singh, Sewadar of Gurudwara Chulla Sahib, Kotkapura, District Faridkot age 70 years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

per the local tradition when the Guru reached Dhilwan Kalan, he saw thick growth of trees and a water body. He tied his horse. When Sodhi Kaul⁷⁸ came to know about the Guru's arrival he came to meet the Guru, he expressed grief and regret over the destruction of Anandpur Sahib and martyrdom of the four Sahibzadas. He enquired of the Guru, from where was he coming? the Guru replied that he was coming after destroying (uprooted) Chaudhary Kapura. Sodhi Kaul shared that Chaudhary Kapura was his follower and this the roots of Kapura were in his belly. The Guru said that these roots would be plucked out of Sodhi's belly. Sodhi Kaul realised that the Guru's words like Lord Rama's arrows. Once they had been shot, they would hit the target. Thus, knowing the inevitability of Kapura's destruction, he did not put forth his point and went home.⁷⁹

The information given in the oral tradition about the Guru's meeting with Sodhi Kaul has been also confirmed by Giani Gain Singh, Bhai Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam in their respective works. Giani Gian Singh has added that Sodhi Kaul pleaded with the Guru salvage Chaudhary Kapura. In his response to Sodhi Kaul the Guru replied that Chaudhary Kapura's sons could be spared, but as far as Kapura was concerned, it was not possible to spare him.⁸⁰

Bhai Saroop Singh Kaushish has added more detailing to this anecdote. He has written that Sodhi Kaul's name was Sodhi Kanwal Nain. He was the son of Sodhi Harjee who was Guru's cousin. When after Kotkapura, the Guru reached Dhilam. Sodhi Kanwal Nain affectionally welcome the Guru. He be mourned the loss of the thousands of the Sikhs and mourned over Guru Gobind Singh's personal loss and tragedy, his mother and four Sahibzadas. But the Guru remained unruffled and equanimous. Guru ji expounded that he with a spirit of resignation accepted the will of the creator.⁸¹

The oral tradition further described that the Guru asked Sodhi Kaul to serve water to the Sikhs. Sodhi Kaul informed the Guru that the water of that place was not

⁷⁸ At this place Sodhi Kaul had settled. Sodhi Kaul was the grandson of Sodhi Prithi Chand, who was elder brother of Guru Arjun Dev. Prithi Chand proved to be one of the deadliest enemies of the Mughals. But Sodhi Kaul changed the family trend. When Guru Gobind Singh came to Dhilwan Kalan, he welcomed the Guru and served with great devotion.

⁷⁹ Naib Singh, Granthi of Gurudwara Godavari Sahib, Village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 70years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

⁸⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa* Vol.I, p.1032 see also, Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.230 and Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p.275.

⁸¹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 188, no. 88.

worth drinking, he would fetch water from a far of place. The Guru blessed that the water of that place would be like the water of Godavari River.⁸² Thus, the Sarovar built at that place has been named Gurdwara Godavari Sahib. As per another tradition, people believe that the water has been blessed so much that by taking bath five times in this Sarovar, every wish would get fulfilled. So much so that even the tree where the Guru tied his horse is also blooming at that place.⁸³

As per the local tradition, the Guru was taking bath in evening, Sodhi Kaul arrived there and he noticed that the Guru's blue clothes were in damaged condition, he went home and brought white clothes for the Guru. He politely pleaded with the Guru to stop wearing blue clothes.⁸⁴ The Guru agreed to his pleadings and switch over to white dress.⁸⁵ After that the Guru sat near the fire and he started tearing the blue clothes and threw the pieces in the fire⁸⁶ and he recited the following words: -

"ਨੀਲ ਬਸਤ੍ਰ ਲੇ ਕਪੜੇ ਫਾੜੇ ਤੁਰਕ ਪਠਾਣੀ ਅਮਲ ਗਿਆ।"⁸⁷

(It implied that the blue clothes, had been torn and the practice of the Pathans and Turks had come to an end).

When the last strip was about to burn of that blue cloth. Bhai Maan Singh, who was standing next to the Guru, humbly requested the Guru to give him the last piece of cloth. Guru Gobind Singh gave him that last piece and blessed him that in future Nihang's would wear blue colour dress. Bhai Maan Singh had tied that piece of

⁸² Godavari River is a sacred river in central India, Nanded. The Godavari River has been regarded as a special place of pilgrims for many thousand years in Central India. Dip in the holy Godavari River is considered sacred in Central India similar to holy dip in Ganga River in Northern India by Hindu.

⁸³ Notice Board, Gurdwara Godavari Sahib, Village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot.

⁸⁴ When two Pathan brother Nabhi Khan and Gani Khan helped the Guru in Macchiwara. They knew that the imperial army was in pursuit and the Guru and his supporters would not be spared. So, they dressed him in the blue garb of a Mohammedan Fakir. They informed all those who inquired that they were escorting " *Uchh Da Pir*".

⁸⁵ Mewa Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 15 July, 2016).

⁸⁶ Dev Singh, Granthi of Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, Village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 60 years (Personal Interview on 20 August, 2016).

⁸⁷ Sodhi Kaul enquired as to why that change in Guru Nanak's Bani had been made when the precedence of Ram Rai's excommunication from Guru ship for Changing one word of Gurbani from *Mussalman* to *be-eman* before Aurangzeb was there. The Guru replied to Sodhi Kaul. Kaul je the world knows about the intention of Ram Rai. He wanted to gain the good-will of the Emperor. I have not done so to please anyone, nor have I made or suggested any written amendment. It had also become necessary to do so for the reason that the Mughals had ruled over the country and they have tried to destroy Hindu and Sikh religion. They have gone beyond all limits. After the martyrdom of my whole family, I have uprooted the Mughal rule from the country and protected Hindu and Sikh Dharma.

cloth on his head.⁸⁸

The above oral tradition is similarly recorded in the works of Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam.⁸⁹ But Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has given slightly different version. According to his narration the Guru Gobind Singh and his Singhs got ready in the morning for their onward journey. Guru Gobind Singh asked Bhai Mann Singh to give him those garments that were presented Bhai Parm Singh and Dhram Singh in village Dina, Maan Singh as per the wishes of the Guru hand over those garments to Satguru Jee. The Guru took off the garments of *Uch Shareef ka Pir*, he reverentially pronounced Sri Waheguru, wore beautiful turban. After having change the clothes, gave the attire, with full respect to Sodhi Kanwal Nain. He instructed him to keep those clothes carefully and blessed him that he would never face any shortage or dearth.⁹⁰

As per another tradition that Sodhi Kaul sought the blessings of the Guru and wanted to have some clothes as symbol of love. The Guru blessed him with a *big and small Dastar* (Turban), *Chola* (attire) and *Juraba* (Socks). Sodhi Kaul was fortunate in already having Guru Nanak Dev's attire. There is a Gurdwara named Bastar Sahib built at Dhilwan kalan. These presents given by the Guru have been preserved there.⁹¹

As per the oral tradition, Kapura had realized his mistake. He knows that he was afraid but that had made him a coward and he had incurred his displeasure of the Guru. When he came to know that the Guru was stationed at Dhilwan Kalan, he came to prostrate at the feet of the Guru, with his heart laden with his sense of mistake. He tried to give his meek explanation. How he felt mentally weak and he was mortally afraid of the Mughals so he was not in a position to obey the Guru's orders. He knew that the Guru was displeased, he was depressed as well and sought the Guru's forgiveness. As the Guru was compassionate Kapura's situation and his heart melted and accepted his request. The Guru gave him a *double-edged sword* and a *shield* (*Khanda and Dhal*). The Guru blessed his progeny that they would rule till they worship *Khanda and Dhal*. These *Khanda* and *Dhal* have been reverentially preserved

⁸⁸ Notice board, Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, but as per another tradition Nihang Tradition was started at Anandpur Sahib.

⁸⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1034, see also Tara Singh Nirotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 177, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 235.

⁹⁰ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 181, no. 88-89.

⁹¹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot.

in the fort of Faridkot.⁹²

Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, in their respective works, have given similar account of the Guru's blessing to Chaudhary Kapura, as have been known by oral tradition⁹³.

At Dhilwan Kalan, the news was brought to the Guru that the large Mughal forces were resolutely moving in that direction to pursue the Guru. Chaudhary Kapura was with the Guru at that time. Chaudhary Kapura was familiar with the domain, so he advised that Sandy mound moved of Khidrana would be an ideal place for battle. The area had vast stretches of sandy desert. This mound had a pond of water closely otherwise for miles together. There was no source of drinking water. So, encamping at mound Khidrana would give them an upper hand over the enemy's force. The Guru found the suggestion worth a trail. So, along with the Sikhs army, the Guru moved towards Khidrana.⁹⁴ Giani Gian Singh has corroborated with the above oral tradition.⁹⁵

As per tradition, walking through the Dhilwan Kalan village, the Guru came to Jaito again passing through Guru ki Dhab. Khana Brar was also with the Guru. The Guru asked Khana that Khana! Which village is this then Khana replied that these are four huts of Jaito. Then the Guru said, this village would be very popular⁹⁶. In jaito, where the Guru first encamped, there has been built a Gurdwara, Tibbi Sahib. The Guru then visited the place where Gurdwara Gangsar Sahib is located these days. There was a small pit of water. The Guru named this water sentimentally as Ganga's. Therefore, the name of this Gurdwara became Sri Gangsar Sahib. The people of this place here served the Guru a lot. The village became very popular with the name given by the Guru. This village has also become very popular due to the Jaito morcha.⁹⁷ Maghi and Baisakhi festivals are celebrated at Gurdwara Gangsar Sahib and Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib. Every year, a Jodh fair is celebrated in the memory of the

⁹² Santokh Singh, an old Person of village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 20 August, 2016).

⁹³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1043, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 177, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 236.

⁹⁴ Gurmukh Singh, an old person of village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 84 years (Personal Interview on 20 August, 2016).

⁹⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, p. 1043.

⁹⁶ Jaito is a historical town in Bathinda District of Punjab.

⁹⁷ Jaito morcha is the name given to the Akali agitation that took place in February 1924 for the restoration to the throne of Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, a Sikh princely state in the Punjab.

martyrs of the Jaito morcha.⁹⁸

According to Giani Gian Singh when the Guru arrived near the pakka village on the Gurusar Dhab, he was informed that from the province of Sirhind the army had been sent to this place. Hearing this, the Guru asked Bhai Dan Singh Brar, “You are the cultivator of this country and tell me about a fort from where we can take a position and fight”. He folded his hands and said, “Maharaj! the fort for war is in Kotkapura”. The Guru heard this, the Khalsa marched from there and landed on the edge of small tank in village Jaito, now named Gurusar and asked ‘Chaudhary Khana! What village is this?’ Then Khana said that these are just four slums belonging to Jaito. There is no village. The Guru prophesised that this would be a large village of warriors.⁹⁹

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has given a different description about the incident at Jaito village. After pronouncing *Waheguru* as such in the morning just as the sun rose, the Guru took leave from Kamal Nain and stood up on a raised-ground outside the town of Jaito. A rabbit sprung out of the hedge and tried to run away. The Guru said, “Bhai Sikho, it was a masand agent in his earlier life. Go, catch it and do not let it go.” “Observe, it is blind of one eye”. He was masand at the time of ninth Guru. His name was Hariya. Bhai Maan Singh asked, “Why has he been embodied as a rabbit?”

The Guru replied, Bhai Sikho, when ninth Guru had moved the town from the town of Bakala to Chak Nanki, he came for Darshan. One day when the rice pudding was ready before the offering, he took some in a bowl and started to eat stealthily. Bhai Chaupat Rai happened to see him and said, ‘Why are you eating quietly like a rabbit?’ He replied, “Sir I was misguided. Kindly forgive me”, when Guru ji learned about the incidence. He pronounced, ‘A Sikh’s assertion never goes wasted. It must be fulfilled’. Hariya requested to be pardoned for his felony. He stood up and with folded handed, ‘Maharaj! Who would pardon me and when?’ the Guru said Bhai Sikha, ‘during the tenth incarnation, you would be emancipated. You will be embodied of a rabbit at that time’. Today bowing to and silently accepting the

⁹⁸ Dalbir Singh, an old person of village Jaito, Distt. Bathinda, age 60 years (Personal Interview on 20 August, 2016).

⁹⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1089-1039.

command of the Guru, we have emancipated him.¹⁰⁰

According to Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, the Guru shot arrows at the dune at Jaito. Then the Guru asked Khana about the name of the village. Then Khana replied, 'What village? There are just four slums in Jaito'. The Guru said, 'no way Khanna, is a big village'. Then the Guru encamped at Jaito. While riding and hunting at Jaito, the Guru landed in between the village of Kotha Prithi Chand and Maluka and camped at that place.¹⁰¹

According to the local tradition, at Jaito Guru Gobind Singh received the news that Mughal army was pursuing him. Thus, the Guru and other Singhs proceeded from Jaito. Dan Singh Brar¹⁰² was also with the Guru. Then the Guru and Singhs came to Suniar village. There was a Sikh living in this village, who had a number of buffaloes. When he heard of the Guru's arrival, he brought pitchers full of milk and served milk to the Guru and all the Singhs and requested them to stay here. Upon his request the Guru spent the night there and they left early in the morning. There is a Gurdwara in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh.¹⁰³

Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi has given a similar account as have been popular in the oral tradition that the Guru stayed at Suniar village and offered milk of buffaloes and served Guru Gobind Singh and his Singhs. But he has also described that in this village the Guru met Chaudhary Kapura and forgave him for his mistake and the Guru had given him a sword named as *Khanda*. But, according to the prevailing oral traditions Chaudhary Kapura had met the Guru in the village of Dhilwan.¹⁰⁴

Giani Gian Singh has corroborated with the oral tradition and he has written that the Guru arriving at Jaito from Dhilwan Kalan village, Guru Gobind Singh encamped at Suniar village. There, was a well-known person who had a number of buffaloes and he kept all his milk and offered that to the Guru and thus performed a great service.¹⁰⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also written about the whole

¹⁰⁰ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 182, no. 82.

¹⁰¹ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 48, no. 47.

¹⁰² Dan Singh, Brar jatt of the village of Mehima Sarja in the present days, Bathinda District of Punjab. He and his son joined the contingent of Brars raised by Guru Gobind Singh.

¹⁰³ Joginder Singh an old person of village Suniara, District Faridkot, age 68 years (Personal Interview on 22 August, 2016).

¹⁰⁴ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 49, No. 49.

¹⁰⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1034-1035.

course of events that had happened at village Sunair. The author has written that the Guru arrived at the village of Suniar, here Bhai Hamir Singh, the younger brother of Chaudhary Kapura of Kot Kapura, had reached. On arrival, he presented to the Guru, a letter written by Chaudhary Kapura and it was mentioned in that letter, “the Mughal army is following the Guru briskly. The Mughal informers were scattered over all the places. It is better, if you, kindly abandon this place and go to the territory of Rai Dalla. Our sister, Kapuro, has been married into the family of Rai Dalla; she has visited Anandpur Sahib many times for your Darshan along with our mother” Satguru replied, “Hamir Singh, whatever is happening is transpiring through the command of Akal Purkh. We depend exclusively on his support.” After explaining as such, he gave a shield and spear to Hamir Singh and asked to worship them with incense at both the times of day and thus, no evil would come to him.¹⁰⁶

As per the local tradition, the Guru reached Rameana.¹⁰⁷ A Zamindar was gathering *delle* (Tenti). He presented some Delle (Tenti) to Guru Gobind Singh to taste and eat. But the Guru instantaneously threw all the Delle and told the Zamindar to throw all the Delle away as they were sour in taste. The Zamindar threw some but kept one fourth part to himself. The Guru repeatedly told him to throw all, but he did not obey the Guru. The Zamindar humbly shared with the Guru that he is very poor and his family is starving and he would give these Delle to them to appease their hunger. Then the Guru confided in the poor Zamindar that it is his wish to free that land of famine forever. But that Zamindar had not obeyed the Guru by keeping one fourth part of Delle with him. This short-sighted act as gesture of the Zamindar had caused a hurdle in the way of freeing that land of the famine. In the present scenario the land would have plenty of food storage but it would face famine once in a while. At that time, many Singhs, who had once written *Bedawa* and had deserted Guru Gobind Singh in Anandpur Sahib, came to meet the Guru here along with their chiefs. They all pleaded to the Guru with folded hands to stop fighting with the Mughals. They went to the extent of telling the Guru that if the fighting did not stop, many Sikhs are ready to write the *Bedawa* and leave and on the other hand, if the fighting is stopped many more Sikhs are prepared to be become his Singhs again.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 183, no. 89.

¹⁰⁷ Rameana ten kilometres from Jaito, in Bathinda District of Punjab.

¹⁰⁸ Dilbagh Singh, an old person of village Rameana, District Bathinda, age 74 years (Personal Interview on 25 June, 2018).

At this place also a Gurudwara has been built in the memory of the Guru.

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam both writers have agreed to the above written oral tradition. They have given almost similar account of the Guru's meeting with Zamindar of Rameana village, who was carrying Delle and also about the meeting of those Sikhs with the Guru who had earlier left him at Anandpur Sahib after writing *Bedawa*. They have also written, that the chiefs told the Guru, if the Guru did not end the war, the Sikhs who was not written *Bedawa* at Anandpur Sahib at that time would write it at this place. The Sikh of Majha had written the *Bedawa* and the Guru put it into his pocket but they again came back by Mata Bhago.¹⁰⁹

The same course of events has been mentioned in Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, but there is no mention of the Guru's meeting with the Sikhs who had written *Bedawa* at Anandpur Sahib.¹¹⁰

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has written, Guru Gobind Singh came to Rameana from Suniar village and stayed at the residence of Bhai Gudha Singh Waring. Early next morning, the Guru prepared to move further from the town of Rameana. The writer has remained silent about the Delle's episode. But he has also mentioned about the Guru's meeting with Bhai Bhag Singh and the other Sikhs. They had told the Guru that, "We all are the people of Majha, can settle things for you with the Emperor so that you can lead the rest of your life peacefully and we would remain at your service." Guru Gobind Singh looked at them and responded Anandpur Sahib was under siege for many months, all of never approached me. Why have you come now? Are not you feeling ashamed? After listening to all the reprimand of the Guru, Bhag Singh Jhabaliya pleaded, "Ghareeb Niwaj, if you are feeling like that then we cannot adhere to your Sikhi. We would rather go back". Guru ji again said, "Bhag (Ram) Singh! We have not invited you. If you have come, you can give me in writing that the country of Majha is not retaining Sikhi". The Guru offered paper and opened ink for the Sikhs. First of all, Bhag Singh Jhabaliya wrote down. On his instance, the four Singhs held pen in their hand one by one and put their signatures on the paper. Rest of the thirty-five just hung their heads and did not put their initials. They all went into serious thought wondering what to do. At that same time, an informer Sikh came

¹⁰⁹ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 237-238, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 178-179.

¹¹⁰ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 50-51, no. 50.

and told, “Maharaja, Turk army is getting very close now. You must leave this place now”. The Guru asked Maan Singh and other Sikhs, “Mount the horses and get ready to leave this place”. After Guru Gobind Singh left that place, Mata Bhag Kaur asked the Sikhs, what would your wives say that you are the Sikhs who have come back after having Guru’s darshan and left him once again. People will curse you. Come, gird up your loins. The Guru is epitome of pardon (forgiveness). He would forgive you. Bhag Singh and all the forty Sikhs girded up their loins. They exclaimed with the invocation of Sat Sri Akal, mounted their horses and immediately got ready and came to the side where the Guru was facing the enemy at Khidrana Lake. Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has mentioned the entire conversation which has been mentioned in the above oral tradition. But he writes that incident has taken place at Rupeana village not Rameana.¹¹¹

Giani Gian Singh has also written about the same incidents that had happened at village Rameana and he has provided full description of the conversation between Zamindar of the village and Sikhs, who had come from Anandpur Sahib. Thus, he has narrated the whole story as had been known through the oral tradition.¹¹²

According to the other tradition, walking from the village of Rameana, the Guru reached village Mallan.¹¹³ There was the information that the imperial army was pursuing him. When Guru Gobind Singh reached Mallan, there was a Chaudhary Jugraj Warring, who was grazing his cattle. Singhs who were accompanying the Guru, told him not to disclose about their taking that route, if at all Mughal army would ask him. Chaudhary Jugraj agreed and told that he will not say anything about the Guru and his Singhs. But when the Mughals arrived their after sometime, Chaudhary Jugraj in fear disclosed to them that Guru Gobind Singh and his Singhs have taken that route. When the Guru came to know about Chaudhary Jugraj revealing the former’s route to the Mughal army, he uttered that he may die of stomach bloating. After sometime the Guru’s words became true and Chaudhary died of stomach bloating. It has also been said that whenever someone died in Chaudhary Jugraj’s family. The causes of death became stomach bloating. In this village, where the Guru stayed for some time, there a Gurdwara Aramsar Sahib has been built in

¹¹¹ Bha Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 186-187, no. 90-91.

¹¹² Giani Gian Singh *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1044-1045.

¹¹³ Mallan village is fifteen kilometres away from Jaito.

village Mallan in the memory of the Guru. From village Mallan, the Guru reached Gurhi Sangar.¹¹⁴

Giani Gian Singh has agreed with the above written oral tradition. He has described the same course of events in his work. But according to him, this incident of Chaudhary Jugraj had happened at village Rameana as Chaudhary belonged to this village.¹¹⁵

In Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and in Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish's work, similar account has been given of the incident of Chaudhary Jugraj, as had been known through the oral tradition. But, like Giani Gian Singh, in these works too, the place where the episode of Chaudhary Jugraj happened has been mentioned as village Rameana.¹¹⁶ According to the local tradition, from village Mallan the Guru reached Gurhi Sangar¹¹⁷. The people of the village served the Guru and his Singhs with Jaggery (Gurh) due to which this village got the named of Gurhi Sangar. A Gurdwara was erected here in the memory of the Guru.¹¹⁸

As per the tradition, walking from the Gurhi Sanghar, Guru Gobind Singh reached village Kaoni fifteen kilometres away from Khidrane di Dhab. Here, the Guru spent one night. The Sangat served the Guru with great enthusiasm. A Tambu Sahib Gurdwara has been erected here in memory of the Guru. From village Kaoni, the Guru walked towards Khidrane di Dhab, passing through village Doda and Bhullar.¹¹⁹ As per the tradition when Guru Gobind Singh was on his way to Khidrane di Dhab, Dan Singh Brar and his son accompanied the Guru. Both the horses were escorting, the Guru's horse. Suddenly, Dan Singh's son came forward and tried to make Guru Gobind Singh beware about the Mughal army coming after him. But the Guru ignored and continued at the same speed. Dan Singh's son once again told, "Guru ji a little faster," but Guru Gobind Singh did not listen. After this Dan Singh's son whipping Guru Gobind Singh's horse while saying, "Guru ji speed it up". But the Guru got angry over this. Because he could not tolerate Dan Singh's son whipped Jan Bhai

¹¹⁴ Iqbal Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Aaramsar Sahib, village Mallan, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years (Personal Interview on 25 June, 2018).

¹¹⁵ Giani Gian Singh *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1044-1045.

¹¹⁶ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 51, no. 50, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 183, no. 89-90.

¹¹⁷ Gurhi Sangar village eighteen kilometres away from Sri Muktsar Sahib District.

¹¹⁸ Dalip Singh, an old person of village Gurhi Sanghar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years (Personal Interview on 25 June, 2018).

¹¹⁹ Gurmail Singh person of village Kaoni, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 42years (Personal Interview on 25 June 2018).

(name of Guru Gobind Singh's horse) Dan Singh asked the Guru to forgive his son then the Guru told that he was blessed.¹²⁰

There has been a similar account given in the Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi as well as by Giani Gian Singh regarding the conversation that happened between Dan Singh and his son and Guru Gobind Singh while they were marching towards Khidrane di Dhab on their horses.¹²¹

As per another tradition, when Guru Gobind Singh was marching towards Khidrane di Dhab with his Singhs, on the way some Singhs got thirsty. Khana Brar whom Kapura had sent with the Guru, had water in his drum. The Singhs asked for water. He replied them first, for which the latter paid the price.¹²² The same course of events has been given in Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and by Giani Gian Singh in his work.

ਸਿਖਾ ਕਰਿਆ, ਮੂਲ ਹੀ ਦੇਹਿ ।
ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਰੁਪਈਆ ਲਉ ।
ਸਿਖਾ ਕਰਿਆ ਰੁਪਈਆ ਹੀ ਲੈ
ਫੇਰ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਭਈ ਕਟੋਰੇ ਕੀ ਮੁਹਰ ਲਉ ।
ਪਠਾਨਚੀ ਨੇ ਕਿਹਾ, ਮੁਹਰ ਹੀ ਲੈ ।
ਮੇਹਰ ਲਈ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਕਟੋਰਾ ਦੀਆ
ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਜਾਹ ਵੇ ਖਾਨਾਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਪਤਲਾ ਹੋਇ ਗਿਆ ¹²³

When the Guru reached Khidrana di Dhab¹²⁴ he stayed at that place. In the shelter of the sandy mounds, the Guru watched his Sikh soldiers facing their enemies bravely and the Guru also shot arrows on the enemy. Later, they had found a pool of water and dense forest also. So, they decided to stay there at the suggestion of Dan Singh. Here, the Guru also discussed about the future plans for battle. The Sikhs had

¹²⁰ Jagdev Singh, an old person of village Doda, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 25 June, 2018).

¹²¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1046 see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 52-53.

¹²² Sawan Singh, an old person of village Bhullar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 60 years (Personal Interview on 25 June, 2018).

¹²³ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 53, no. 52, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1047.

¹²⁴ Khidrana (At presently Sri Muktsar Sahib) is 20 miles away from Kotkapura and there is a holy tank known as Muktsar. Earlier this holy tank was known as *Khidrana Di Dhab*. A Saint named Khidrana lived here. On the name of that Saint this place was known as *Khidrana Di Dhab*. At that time the rain water accumulated in this holy tank; it was utilized by the people of the nearby areas.

gathered there.¹²⁵

Malwa was mainly inhabited by Brars. They were devout followers of Guru Gobind Singh. They served the Guru and helped him a lot during the battle¹²⁶. The Mughal army attacked him on the 21th day of Visakh, in the year 1705. Once again, the Guru fought brilliantly against the enemy.¹²⁷ The Sikhs decided to face the Mughal foe in the eastern part of Khidrana. The Guru along with some Sikhs devised a strategy. He decided to fight the Mughals from the Tibbi (Mound). The Sikhs had put their dresses on the trees and the bushes. It appeared to be a *tambu* (tent), it was ploy to way lay the Mughals. So, that they would stop behind after seeing the so called *tambus* (tents) there. Gurdwara Tambu Sahib has been built at this place.¹²⁸ Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Thakur Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have all corroborated the evidence mentioned in the oral tradition.¹²⁹

When the Mughals army approach the close quarters, the Sikhs gave them a tough fight as many as twenty to fifty Mughals dropped dead. Wazir Khan had inferred that the Guru along with the Sikhs was there, so he took decision of moving behind. But the determined Sikhs again gave them a tough fight and a great number of Mughal soldiers were killed on the spot. A Sikh brought the heartening news that the Sikhs of Majha¹³⁰ were fighting against the enemy, these were those Sikhs who had earlier left the Guru at the time of the battle of Anandpur Sahib. The Guru had positioned himself at the Tibbi and he shot the arrows infect his arrows being shot swiftly like a rain. A single arrow would target five Mughals in one stroke. Most of the Mughal Sardars fell prey to the swift arrows of the Guru.¹³¹ Soon, the Mughals came to know the actual fact that only a few Sikhs were fighting. But the timely

¹²⁵ Gurmail Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 82 years (Personal Interview on 24 July, 2017).

¹²⁶ Gang Singh, an old Person of Village Marr Malu, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 22 July, 2017).

¹²⁷ Bhai Gurjant Singh, Granthi of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, District Shri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years (Personal Interview on 24 July, 2017).

¹²⁸ Notice Board, Gurdawara Tambu Sahib, Shri Muktsar Sahib.

¹²⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1047, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 56, no. 53, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 238-239, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 180.

¹³⁰ The Majha Sikhs who had deserted the Guru at Anandpur and had disowned him, were, in their turn, disowned by their people, on their return home. Their wives told them to wear female attire and stay at home, while the women would go and fight for the Guru. So public hatred as well as self-mortification, led them to seek reconciliation with the Guru. With this view forty penitent souls went to Malwa to have an audience with the Guru and prayed for forgiveness under the leadership of Mai Bhago.

¹³¹ Sukhdev Singh, old person of village Bura Gujjar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 80 years.

attacks of Majha Sikhs and the Guru made them nervous. They were virtually so frightened that they froze, nobody was ready to move forward. The valour could be judged from the fact that a single Sikh killed eleven Mughals.¹³² So, it was impossible for Wazir Khan to gauge, how many Sikhs were involved in the fight. The difficult weather made the matter worse for the Mughals. The tough weather disappointed them as well. They were thirsty, there was no other source of water to quench their thirst. The determined Sikhs did not let them come near the pool of water.¹³³ Frustrated, Wazir Khan asked Guru Gobind Singh's devotee Chaudhary Kapura about some alternative source of water but he informed him that there was no other source of water in the forest. Chaudhary Kapura advised Wazir Khan to go back, with the absence of a source of potable water. Wazir Khan had two missions, first of all to bury his dead soldiers and secondly to look for the dead body of the Guru. He had realised that it was not sensible to face the gravity of battle in a waterless place, that was so far away from the headquarters. The only consideration that was holding him was to impress the Mughal Emperor with his dare devilish bravery. Chaudhary Kapura told him that the Guru was nowhere near and if he waited to bury his dead, he would lose more lives, in fact his remaining soldiers would all be killed by the Sikhs. So, his final advice was to forget about the dead and to salvage the remaining soldiers. The two Mughal Sardars Samash Khan and Akbar Ali also approved this suggestion. After getting the approval of his sardars, he allowed his remaining army of Mughals to retreat.¹³⁴ Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have given similar information as given in the above oral tradition. They have also corroborated with the above statement.¹³⁵

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, all Sikhs invoked the lord by loud by pronouncing of Sat Sri Akal, mounted their horses and immediately got ready and came to that side where the Guru was facing the enemy at Khidrana Lake, they started waiting on the east side, the side from which the Turk army was coming. At the other direction the Guru took his position on a hillock on the bank of the lake. An informer from the side of Governor Sirhind came and started watching the Guru from

¹³² Gurmukh Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 82 years (Personal Interview on 24 July, 2017).

¹³³ Gurmail Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Shahid Ganj Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years (Personal Interview on 25 July, 2017).

¹³⁴ Santokh Singh, old person of Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 83 years.

¹³⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1048-1050, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 56, no. 56.

behind a bush. The Guru became aware of him and finished him with a shot of an arrow. In the meantime, Subedar Sirhind arrived in the vicinity of the lake. The Sikhs showered arrows with great intensity and the proceeding Turk army was forced halt their onward march. None of the soldiers of the enemy dared to come forward. For two hours, arrows and the gunshots cascaded and made the atmosphere appear over cast with black clouds. When the supply of gunshots and the arrows started dwindling, the Singhs shot out shouting ovations of Sat Sri Akal, brandishing the swords in their hands. From both the sides the steel struck steel savagely and it was one to one fierce fighting. The Sikhs' fighting was so brisk that, the enemy pitiaibly cried Allah. When Suba Sirhind observed that, there were many Sikhs fighting at the front, he ordered his troops to retreat.¹³⁶

After the battle, the Guru came down from the Tibbi where the Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib is located and was going to mount his horse, the stirrup snapped. So, the Gurdwara is constructed in the memory of the incident, *Tutti Rakab* is there till now.¹³⁷

As per tradition, when the Guru reached the battle field and first of all he spotted Mata Bhag Kaur.¹³⁸ She was lying wounded in the battle field. She was the head of forty Sikhs, who were write the *Bedawa* at Anandpur Sahib. They came back to the Guru at such an appropriate time of the battle of the Khidrana. The Guru washed her wounds on the bank of a pond. She paid her respect to the Guru and told him about the martyrdom of forty Sikhs. Their sacrifice was great indeed. The Guru blessed them as *five thousand, seven thousand*. Gurdwara Mata Bhag Kaur is located in the front of Gurdwara Tambu Sahib.¹³⁹

Among the dead Sikhs, Bhai Maha Singh was still alive and breathing his last.

¹³⁶ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Skahian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 186, no. 91.

¹³⁷ Notes Board, Gurdwara Rakaabsar, Sri Muksar Sahib.

¹³⁸ Mata Bhag Kaur was the granddaughter of Bhai Lagha's brother Parro Shah of Village Chabbal. (Bhai Lagha was in *Karseva* during the construction of Shri Harmandar Sahib, in Guru Hargobind Sahib's army. He fought against the Mughals. Mata Bhag Kaur had deep devotional relation with the *Guru Ghar*. She was also expert in using weapons like her father. She was married to Bhai Nadhan Singh of village Patti. In her leadership, forty Sikhs who had given letter of desertion to Guru, also joined in the battle against the Mughals on 21 visakh, 1705, they sacrificed their lives and the Guru blessed them with *Mukti*. Mata Bhag Kaur also was wounded. There were 22 wounds on her body Mata Bhag Kaur's husband and brothers also got martyrdom. Gurdwara Mata Bhag Kaur is located nearby Gurdwara Tambu Sahib. Mata Bhag Kaur joined the Guru in the journey towards the south. After the Guru's departure, she remained busy working for the betterment of Sikhism and left in ripe old age).

¹³⁹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Mata Bhag Kaur, Sri Muksar Sahib.

The Guru appreciated his bravery and wanted to bless him with a boon. Maha Singh wanted from the Guru to cancel the deed of renunciation and the Guru acted accordingly. The Guru took their signed paper *Bedawa* out of his pocket and tore that into pieces. All of them had earned salvation and they had become *Mukte*. The place came to be known as Muktsar¹⁴⁰ (pool of Salvation) and the Guru blessed the place that anyone who would bath at that holy place would be bless with the good deeds of sixty-eight pilgrim. Such a person would go to *Sach Khand*. Gurdwara Darbar Sahib is located here in the memory of those forty Sikhs who earned martyrdom fighting against the Muhgal. The Gurdwara built at this place also known as Tutti Gandhi Sahib¹⁴¹. This oral tradition is similarly recorded in the works of Giani Gian Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, Tara Singh Narortam and Giani Thakur Singh¹⁴²

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish the sun had set there and, here, the Guru was taking Bhai Mann Singh along, they reached at the bank of Ishar Sar-tall, the tank. He commanded, “Mann Singh go and fetch the body of Hoye Singh”. He was the first one to achieve martyrdom. The Guru cleaned his face with his own scarf and said, “My one Sikh is equivalent to a lakh and quarter.” Similarly, other Sikhs were carried and brought to the Guru. The Guru honoured them with Sardaris, the honorific of commands of ten thousand, twenty thousand, fifty thousand.

From among those forty Sikhs, three, Bhai Rai Singh, Sundar Singh and Mahan Singh, were about to breathe their last. The Guru, at their last moments of life, cleaned their faces and put water in their mouth. Apart from these three, the fourth one, Mata Bhag Kaur was injured too and was lying in the jungle under a wild-caper tree. A bullet had hit her in her left shoulder and, under the strain of pain she was reciting ‘Sri Waheguru’. Mann Singh and the other Sikhs were brought her to the Guru. The Guru said, “My Daughter! What do you desire?” She responded, “Through your benevolence, I am fine, I have got just one would, rest, all is fine”. The Guru looked towards Rai Singh and all the three Sikhs and asked, “What do you aspire for?” Out of them, Rai Singh spoke, “Sustainer of the poor, if you have become

¹⁴⁰ Present time named as Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁴¹ Gurjant Singh, Granthi of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years (Personal Interview on 22 July, 2017), see also Notice Board, Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁴² Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1047, see also Malwa Desh Ratta Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 56, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 238-239, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.180.

compassionate to us, then, kindly tear off our *Bedawa* and bless us with the bounties of Sikhi”. The Guru pronounced three times, “Grand is Sikhi, grand is Sikhi, grand is Sikhi,” took out the paper of *Bedawa* and tore it off into small pieces. Guru jee stayed there during early hours of the night and kept them involved in conversation. First Bhai Sundar Singh Jhabaliya’s and then the souls of other two relinquished the bodies. The Guru endowed them the honorific of *chali mukte*, the forty martyrs¹⁴³.

As per the oral tradition, the cremation of these forty *muktas* were done by the Guru with his own hands. As per the Sikh tradition the Guru himself recited the chanting of *Sohla*. The Gurdwara Shahid Ganj Sahib has been built at this particular place to commemorate the martyrdom of these brave hearts, near the place of cremation. Diwaan was raised, *Parshad* was prepared and distributed among the Sangat. The Guru then addressed the Sangat, first of all he praised these forty Sikhs for their heroic martyrdom and for having fought for the cause of righteousness. Then he assured the Sangat that such brave hearts would get a lofty place in the kingdom of heaven.¹⁴⁴ The description of the oral tradition has been corroborated by Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish.¹⁴⁵

After the cremation of forty *muktas* Guru Gobind Singh came back to Tibbi Sahib. According to the local tradition, next day early in the morning, the Guru was brushing his teeth with *Dattan* and there was a utensil of water in his hand. Noordin, who was sent by Wazir Khan with the Guru in the disguise of a Sikh soldier, so that he might attack the Guru, finding the Guru alone he attacked with his sword from the back side. But the Guru swiftly defended himself and attacked Noordin. Before dying he requested the Guru to bless him with *Mukti* but the Guru did not accept his request because he had attacked from behind. This is considered a cowardly act and an act of betrayal. The Guru told, ‘that anyone who would come here in future, would kick your grave five times with shoes’. So, the above tradition is still going on.¹⁴⁶

This was the last campaign to be undertaken by a Mughal official against Guru

¹⁴³ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 185-186, no. 91, 92.

¹⁴⁴ Notice Board, Gurdwara Shahid Ganj Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁴⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1047, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 55, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 238-239, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 188, no. 92.

¹⁴⁶ Notice Board, Gurdwara Dattansar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

Gobind Singh. During this period, the Guru had visited many villages.¹⁴⁷

After the battle of Muktsar, the Guru reached Jand Sahib¹⁴⁸. The berry tree under which the Guru sat is still blossoming today. The Guru stayed here for one night. In the morning, the Guru asked Singhs to find one bird but it flew away. The Guru told Singhs that the bird might be blind of one eye, go and find it. Singhs tried to find it, Singhs could not find it. Singhs came back to the Guru feeling upset that they could not find one-eyed bird. Then Guru ji moved towards Bajidpur. Here is a Gurdwara in memory of Guru Gobind Singh named as Jand Sahib.¹⁴⁹

As walking from Jand Sahib, the Guru Sahib reached Bajidpur¹⁵⁰. There is a Gurdwara Jamanisar Bajidpur nowadays. This Gurdwara is also known as Titarsar because there was a partridge and the Guru sent Sikhs to chase that partridge and ordered them to get that partridge killed by a Baz. Bhai Dan Singh, who accompanied the Guru asked the reason for this. Then the Guru told him that this partridge was Jatt in his previous Birth and Baaz was Banya. Jatt asked for a loan. And in the previous birth, Jatt had taken a loan from Banya. But he did not return. Now, by having death at the hands of Baaz this partridge would repay his debt of the previous birth. The name of this place became famous by Tittarsr. After staying for one-night, the Guru returned to Muktsar. Now Basant Panchami Day is celebrated with great enthusiasm in Bajidpur, in Gurdwara Jamnisar. Every month on the days of Masya, about ten thousand sangat takes bath in the holy tank.¹⁵¹

Giani Gian Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh all have given somewhat similar account regarding the above written tradition, but they have not mentioned about the Guru's visit to Jand Sahib.¹⁵²

After the battle of Muktsar once the Guru asked the Singhs, if there was any other source of water nearby. Then the Sikhs took the Guru to a nearby Nage di Sra. There lived an old monk opposite the water source. The monk asked his people who were the persons who had come opposite the water source. They told the monk that

¹⁴⁷ Gurjant Singh, an old person of Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 89 years (Personal Interview on 23 July, 2017).

¹⁴⁸ Jand Sahib is ten kilometres from sadik in Faridkot District.

¹⁴⁹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Jand Sahib, village Jand Sahib, District Faridkot.

¹⁵⁰ Bajidpur village seven kilometres of Ferozepur cantonment was created by Guru Gobind Singh who passed through that place in 1706 after the battle of Muktsar.

¹⁵¹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Tittar Sahib, village Bajidpur, District Ferozepur.

¹⁵² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1054, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 182-182, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 241-242, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 62-63.

the Guru had come who had fought against the Mughals. The monk further asked about the age of the Guru, when he came to know about the Guru's age, he said that this age was too young to be called a Guru. In the evening, when *Rehraas Sahib* was being recited, the monk visited with some of his people. After recitation of *Rehraas Sahib* and *Ardaas*, all sat there and something happened to the monk and he suddenly fell down at the feet of the Guru and wished for salvation. The Guru told him that he was the first one who had to a wish for salvation. You have prayed a lot, lets pray to God so that his ego could be overcome and he could get mental satisfaction. The Guru spent one night over there. There is also a Gurdwara built in the memory of the Guru at this place.¹⁵³

The monk episode has also been mentioned in *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi* as had been known through the oral tradition.¹⁵⁴ Giani Gian Singh has also corroborated with the above written oral tradition and *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*.¹⁵⁵ The Guru went to Hari-K-Kalan¹⁵⁶ from Nage di Sra. People of Hari-K-Kalan showed respect to Guru Gobind Singh. They gifted a *lungi* and blanket to the Guru. The Guru tied the *lungi* on his waist and took the blanket on the right shoulder. At night, the Guru asked the people of Hari-K-Kalan that they had to be on duty that night to guard him while he would be sleeping. They told the Guru not to have any tension and to sleep comfortable. People of village, instead of going themselves sent their servants. During the midnight, when the Guru asked if there is someone awake, servants replied that they are awake. On listening to this the Guru is impressed. Thus, he blessed them and went back to Muktsar next day. There is a Gurdwara at this place named Patshahi Dasvi in memory of Guru Gobind Singh.¹⁵⁷

Tara Singh Narotam has written the same course of events and agreed with the oral tradition. But according to him, this episode, had taken place at Tahlian Fattu Sammu¹⁵⁸. Giani Gian Singh has also written that Jodh Singh of Hari-k-Kalan due to his inflated ego could not give much respect to the Guru, but the workers who were duty for the Guru at night they had gifted *Lungi* and blanket. The Guru promised to

¹⁵³ Gurmeet Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, village Nage di Srah, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years (Personal Interview on 01 January, 2022).

¹⁵⁴ *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 57, no. 56.

¹⁵⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1051-1052.

¹⁵⁶ Hari-k-Kalan six kilometres away from Nage di Sra.

¹⁵⁷ Gurmeet Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, village Hari-K-Kalan, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 45 years (Personal Interview on 01 January, 2022).

¹⁵⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 181.

get land for them by giving a horse. The Guru took land from both the villages and gave to the servants who are famous as till date Fattu and Sammu Dia Talhian¹⁵⁹.

From Hari-k-Kalan, the Guru came back to Muktsar. The Guru stopped on the bank of a pond at this place where now, Gurdwara TarnTaran Dukh Niwaran Sahib is located. Sikhs asked the reason for stopping there. The Guru told them that many Rishis (sage) Munis had meditated at this place. A Gurdwara would be constructed here and this pond would become a holy sarover. Any Sikh male or female who would take a dip in this sarover, his or her mental and physical disease would be cured. Even today, every Sunday Diwans are held here. After some time, Guru Gobind Singh left Muktsar and came to Talwandi Sabo, also known as Damdama Sahib, passing through many villages and towns.¹⁶⁰

When Guru Gobind Singh was present at Muktsar a devotee of the Guru named Langer Singh was there who had performed excellent *Langar Sewa* in the battle of Khidrana. He was from village Harike near Muktsar. Baba Langer Singh,¹⁶¹ identified various sites in order to raise commemorative shrines connected with the battle of Khidrana and people started paying their homage to such places. There-after, the death of Baba Langer Singh, the Sikh leaders took care to those places with great zeal and devotion.¹⁶² Hari Singh Nalwa of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army, Maharaja Mohinder Singh of Patitala, Raja Wazir Singh of Faridkot, Sant Gurmukh Singh, Sant Sadhu Singh, Maharaja Heera Singh of Nabha and Sodhi Maan Singh of Mann Singh Wala started giving financial aid to these places. At present, these Gurdwaras are being managed by the *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee*. Beside the daily services and observance of Major Sikh anniversaries of Guru Gobind Singh, a religious fair is held every year on the occasion of *Maghi* the first *Bikrami* Month of *Magh* usually corresponding to 13th-14th January. It is also necessary to know that all

¹⁵⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1057.

¹⁶⁰ Notice board, Gurdwara Tarn Taran Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁶¹ Baba Langer Singh, an eighteenth-century Nirmala saint was the son of Bhai Parshada Singh and Mai Valtahi, a devotee Sikh couple, contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) and living at Kotkapura now in Muktsar district of the Punjab. Langer Singh, after his education at Anadhpur under Bhai Kesar Singh, a former student of Bhai Karm Singh, was one of the five Sikhs sent by Guru Gobind Singh to Varanasi to study Sanskrit. He settled down at Harike Kalan, a village eighteen kilometers east of Muktsar, where he established a *dera* to teach Sikh texts and tenets. The famous *Maghi* fair of Muktsar owes its origin to his initiative. Baba Langer Singh died after a brief illness at Amritsar where he had gone on pilgrimage. His *smadh* is at Hari-k-Kalan, his place of residence still houses a Nirmala School.

¹⁶² Sewa Singh, an old person of Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 90 years (Personal Interview on 23 July, 2017).

the incidents related to Guru Gobind Singh took place during the month of *Vaisakh*, but due to hot weather religious fairs are celebrated in the month of *Magh* (winter season)¹⁶³.

The present chapter has thrown light upon Guru Gobind Singh's travel from Dina to Muktsar, based upon the information, as have been known through oral tradition. Thus, it has provided a full-fledged account of events that had happened during this journey in the life of Guru Gobind Singh. An in-depth study of existing literature had also been carried out to find out the similarities and differences regarding the happening of all the events and their timings.

¹⁶³ Lachman Singh, an old person of village Mann Singh Wala, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 75 years (Personal Interview on 23 July, 2017).

CHAPTER – 5

FROM MUKTSAR TO DAMDAMA SAHIB

The battle of Muktsar was the last battle which Guru Gobind Singh fought against the Mughals. After the battle, the Guru stayed here and also visited neighbouring villages during his stay. After that, the Guru moved towards Talwandi Sabo. The Guru started his journey from Khidrana and reached near a waterhole outside the town of Rupana¹. Hearing the news of the arrival of the Guru, the devotees started paying homage to the Guru. Bhai Zora Singh, with very humbly requested the Guru to kindly come and stay in the village. Responding to the affection and devotion of the Sikh, the Guru came and stayed in the centre of the village. Next morning, the Guru along with Bhai Maan Singh and the other Sikhs went to the bank of the waterhole. There, a fat crow was sitting on the tree. The Guru shot arrow. The Singhs asked the mystery of it. The Guru said that he was a Chaudhary of village named Hari Chand. He had a bad intentions about a girl of his own village and he harassed her. After that, the girl committed suicide and cursed him and now he has been released from his birth. A Gurdwara named Patshahi Dasvi is located in this village².

Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, Giani Thakur Singh all the writers have supported the oral tradition and have given almost a similar account of this incident regarding the crow which had been learnt through oral evidence. Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has mentioned that the girl's name was Sumitra. He has further written that the Guru told Zora Singh, that he had just emancipated (the crow) him that day. Zora Singh asked, "Why have you granted emancipation to such a devilish person?" He should be punished for his misdeeds. The Guru said, "Bhai Sikho on hearing the news of the death of Bibi Sumitra, he was very scared. He came to the Sikh congregation and begged for pardon. This is the reason, Zora Singh! Why he has been released". After having explained thus, the Guru took leave of the inhabitants of village Rupana³.

¹ Rupana is seven kilometers away from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

² Malkeet Singh, an old person of village Rupana, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 64 years (Personal Interview on 20 September, 2021).

³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p.1055, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 182, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 189-190, no. 93, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 24, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 64-65.

As per the tradition, the Guru reached village Bhundar⁴ from village Rupana. There was an old man named Bhundar. The village got its name from that old person. He was so pleased to see the Guru and served milk to the Guru. A Gurdwara Sahib in the memory of the Guru is located at this place. A Wann tree is there at this place, the Guru had tied his horse to this tree. The festival of Vaisakhi is celebrated here with joy every year⁵.

Giani Gian Singh however has differed with the above written oral tradition. He has written that Guru Gobind Singh went to the village Bhundar from village Theri. The author has further mentioned that Bhundar had *masand* of Sodhi Meharban. At that place the Guru had met the grandson of Bhundar who brought rupees five and a pack of cloth to offer to the Guru. He served milk to all the Sikhs and the Guru as well. After a small conversation with him the Guru moved to Haripur⁶.

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has narrated a different story. He has written that passing through many places on the way, the Guru encamped at a village Bhundar and a house in this village was haunted by an evil spirit. Upon hearing the news of arrival of the Guru, the owner of this house, went to the house of Bhai Auliya Singh and had a darshan of Guru. Bhai Auliya Singh was a man of benevolence. He requested the Guru, “Ghareeb Niwaz, there is inhabitation of evil-spirits in the house of this seeker of your Darshan. Kindly help him out.” In reply the Guru said, Auliya Singh, Bhagat Kabir has pronounced, “The household which never serves a saintly entity, nor recites the celestial name, that house ever gets haunted by living or dead evil-spirits.” Acquiescing to the request of Bhai Auliya Singh, next day the Guru went to house of that devotee and had meal there. At the end, the supplication was presented and a voice came from inside the house, “Maharaj! We are leaving. Through your benevolence; we have been emancipated as well.” That man adopted Sikhi⁷.

In Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi too, there has been a mention of Guru Gobind Singh’s visit to village Bhundar and his meeting with the person called Bhundar (after whose name the village got its name). Further, it has been written that Bhundar expressed his respect for the Guru and offered him rupees five and a piece of

⁴ Bhundar twenty-five kilometre away from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

⁵ Dalip Singh, an old person of Village Bhundar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 67 years (Personal Interview on 20 September, 2021).

⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1056.

⁷ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 190, no. 94.

cloth. He also served milk to the Guru and his Singhs. There has also been a mention of conversation between Guru Gobind Singh and the person called Bhundar⁸.

According to another oral tradition, moving from Bhundar, the Guru went to Gurusar⁹. There one Sodhi family served the Guru a lot. A Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru has been built at this place¹⁰. According to Giani Thakur Singh, this Gurdwara is five miles away from Rupana in the southern direction. The Guru came here walking from Rupana and stayed for the afternoon¹¹.

Giani Gian Singh has written that Guru Gobind Singh moved from Akal Jharani to Gurusar with the Brar Sikhs and Sodhi's served meals to the Guru. The same information has been given in the Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi.¹²

As per tradition, the Guru reached Theri¹³ from Gurusar. There was a monk, who was egoistic because of his power. The Guru humbled his ego. A Gurdwara Sahib in the memory of the Guru is there at this place¹⁴.

According to Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, four miles away from Rupana the Guru reached Theri. There lived a monk in the Turk's Mosque. The Guru showed respect by bowing arrow before him and asked him about his wellbeing and said, "It is a nice place." The Monk replied that he is all right. On seeing all this, Khalsa asked from the Guru, "What is all this?" Guruji you have said, "Goar Madi Math Bhool na Maane." You have respected a Turk's Goar. So, give me salary. The Guru smiled, and answered that it was for him to teach and examine the Khalsa. The Guru gave him salary of Rupees twenty-five and asked him to prepare *Parshad*. That monk had asked the Guru several times to show some miracles. And once again he desired so the Guru deprived him of his magic powers. In those days he ate food from Delhi and would come back to his place in just one minute. Now, when the Guru asked him to go to Lahore and Delhi, he replied in a sad manner that he now has no place to go. The Guru said you wanted me to show miracle, so this miracle has

⁸ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 67-68.

⁹ Gurusar twenty kilometre away from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁰ Sardool Singh, an old person of village Gurusar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 80 years (Personal Interview on 5 October, 2018).

¹¹ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 242.

¹² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1056, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 68.

¹³ Theri village, thirty kilometres from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁴ Jagroop Singh, an old person of Village Theri, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 63 years (Personal Interview on 5 October, 2018).

been shown for you. The Guru spent one night over there. The tree to which the Guru tied his horse is still worshipped¹⁵.

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have written briefly about the above tradition in their respective works. According to them this place is four miles away from Gurusar. Here one Turk monk scared people with his magic powers and mantras staying on a Muslim tomb. Khalsa ji prepared a nectar of Rupees Two hundred fifty and did ardaas for the Guru¹⁶.

The Guru moved to Chatteana village¹⁷ from Theri. There lived a spiritual guide (pir) named Wehmi. He eagerly wanted to see the Guru. When he met the Guru, he prayed to him to make him a Sikh. The Guru asked Sikhs to prepare nectar. The pir was baptized and he was renamed as Ajmer Singh. Bhai Ajmer Singh moved along with the Guru. As per another tradition, Brar Sikhs asked for salaries in Chatteana village from the Guru. Bhai Daan Singh tried to make them understand but all in vain. They insisted on getting paid. At that time, many Sikhs reached there for the Guru's Darshan. One Sikh offered a mule in front of Guru which was loaded with precious coins and rupees and he requested the Guru to kindly accept all these. The Guru gave salaries to all the Brars only. Bhai Daan Singh was left. The Guru asked about his salary. But he said that he already had a lot with the Guru's blessings and he wanted to be blessed with Sikhism only. The Guru was so pleased to hear that and replied that you had kept Malwa's dignity as Maha Singh had kept of Majha. The Guru then told Daan Singh to partake nectar and support long hair. Daan Singh after pouring Nectar became Sikh. The coins and rupees left after distributing the salaries were buried under the land. After the Guru moved from Chatteana, some people tried to take out the rupees and coins but they failed. There is a Gurdwara called Guptsar Sahib and every year in month of June there is a fair. Bhai Daan Singh requested the Guru to come to his place¹⁸.

Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have agreed with the oral tradition as it has been mentioned in both the works that the Guru reached Chatteana from Jangirana. Here people requested the Guru for rain as there was a

¹⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1055, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 66.

¹⁶ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 242-243, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 182.

¹⁷ Chatteana twenty-six kilometre from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

¹⁸ Kaka Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guptsar sahib of village Chatteana, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years (Personal Interview on 5 October, 2018).

prolonged period of abnormal low rainfall which had led to shortage of water in the area. So, the Guru aimed an arrow in the air and there was a thunderstorm. According to them, the Guru met with a monk here named Wehmi. One Sikh presented a mule to the Guru which was loaded with precious coins and the Guru gave salaries according to eight annas to the horse riders and four annas to the other soldiers, out of this. One soldier named Daan Singh was left and the Guru asked him for salary, but he refused and politely replied Sikhi is his salary. Then the Guru told him that he had kept Malwa's dignity as Maha Singh had kept Majha's. Then the Guru asked him to be a Sikh by taking Nectar and told him to not to blow *hukka*. Daan Sikh replied that he has acidity problem if he does not blow *hukka*. Daan Singh asked the Guru about the tradition of keeping hair. The Guru replied that the true Sikh never goes on a false path and if this happens, we pull him back by hairs. Daan Singh's beard was so long and he asked the Guru, 'you can pull me by my beard'. The Guru smiled and replied that people of Malwa are innocent and sober. Sikhism would be determined here. Daan Sikh after partaking the Nectar became a Sikh¹⁹.

According to Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, this village is three miles away from Sahib Chand. After moving from Sahib Chand, the Guru came here and stayed here for three days. And to all the greedy people who were with the Guru and who were thinking of getting salaries to go back home, the Guru called them tauntingly and gave them money. The Guru distributed the money in full plates. The bundles of money and precious things were before them. Some regretted about their mistakes before the Guru and some of them took the money and went away. Here, a Muslim pir became the Guru's Sikh. Then the Guru went to Baajak²⁰.

As per another tradition, the Guru went to Sahib Chand²¹ village from Chatteana. The Guru reached this village in the morning. The Guru stayed outside the village under the tree of Peepal. Here the Guru freshened up. The people of the village served the Guru with Lassi (butter milk). A Gurdwara named Mukh Majan Sahib has been built in the memory of the Guru²².

¹⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1058-1059, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 69-71.

²⁰ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 244-245, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 184.

²¹ Sahib Chand twenty-four kilometers from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

²² Nirmal Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Mukh Majan Sahib of village Sahib Chand, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 52 years (Personal Interview on 5 October, 2018).

According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, the Guru came here from Bhai ka kot. The Guru stayed here for some time and moved further from here²³. Tara Singh Narotam has written that the Guru moved to Chatteana from here. Giani Gian Singh has agreed with the above oral tradition²⁴.

As per the tradition, the Guru came to Kot Bhai²⁵ from Sahib Chand. The people of Kot Bhai served the Guru warm heartedly. There were two brothers who had Bansal surname named Ghummi and Rangi. They served the Guru a lot and took the Guru to their house. They requested the Guru for Nectar. They were given the names as Bhai Ghummi Singh and Bhai Rangi Singh. Their generations are now living in Kot Bhai. Their offspring are Sikhs. A Gurdwara Gurusar is there in Kot Bhai where the Guru had stayed. There is a place called fort Palang Sahib (bed). There is a bed. There is a tree also. It is also mentioned that the Guru tied his horse along the tree. The Guru rested over this bed for some time. Sangats bow their heads in respect to this bed till date²⁶.

According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, six miles away from Jangirana, this village Bhai da Kot has been established here by Bhai Bhagtu. That is why this village had got its name as Bhai da Kot. The Guru stayed here for three days. Aggarwal banias became Sikhs after hearing the Guru. Their offspring generations are now living in this village²⁷.

Giani Gian Singh has written that Bhai Bhagtu was son of Bhai Sewa Singh and Rangi and Ghummi were sons of Bhai Bhagtu. Rangi and Ghummi invited the Guru to their place but the Guru asked them to become Sikhs first. Both brothers happily partook a nectar and changed their names from Rangi and Ghummi to Rangi Singh and Bhangi Singh²⁸.

The similar account has been written in Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi. According to the Guru stayed at Bhai ka Kot. There (Bania's) Hindus served the Guru with great respect and love. Two of them became Sikhs and they were called Rangi

²³ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 244, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 184.

²⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1061.

²⁵ Bhai ka Kot, thirty-four kilometre away from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

²⁶ Hari Singh, an old person of village Kot Bhai, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years (Personal Interview on 5 October, 2018).

²⁷ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 244, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 185.

²⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1061.

Singh and Ghummi Singh. Further it has been written that the Guru went for hunting and came back to this place, rested here for some time under a Waan tree. The tree is still there. The Guru stayed here for twenty days²⁹.

As per the local tradition, Bhai Daan Singh Brar requested the Guru to come to his village. The Guru accepted his invitation and followed him. The Guru stayed at a very amazing place called Lakhi Jungle³⁰. When people heard about the Guru, they came to meet him. They served the Guru with great love and affection. This place also became a literary centre called as Paunta Sahib.

Here, Soma Singh, son of Mehma Singh used to bring milk for the Guru, every day. He always took milk of a brown buffalo for the Guru. One day, to test the Guru he brought milk by exchanging it and bringing the milk of a black buffalo that day. He just wanted to test the Guru and his miraculous qualities. When he reached there to offer milk to the Guru, the Guru at once told him that he had brought black buffalo's milk that day. Soma Singh was shocked to hear this. Out of fear he told a lie and told the Guru that his wife had exchanged the milk. But later on, he apologised and spoke the truth. The Guru blessed him with a son. After brushing his teeth, there usually the Guru buried the four pieces of dattan in the soil of the land. There is tree of Flai. Here, the Guru established the third poet-court. The Guru sang Shabad in Majh Raag. Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Har Rai, Guru Hargobind also had visited this place during their journeys. Guru Nanak Dev had blessed the place with eight Lakh paths of *Japji Sahib* and uttered that a person who would do *Japji Sahib* path here on Poornmashi (full moon day) would get his desired wish³¹. A Gurdwara has been established here in the memory of Guru.

According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, the Guru had stayed in Lakhi Jungle five miles away from Mehma. Here, a diwan was arranged and shabad was recited in Majh Raag. Both the writers have remained silent about the incident of Soma Singh and his offering milk to the Guru³².

Giani Gian Singh has corroborated the oral tradition and he has written about

²⁹ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p.74.

³⁰ Lakhi Jungle fifteen kilometres from Bathinda.

³¹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Lakhisar sahib, village Lakhi Jungle, District Bathinda, see also Pyara Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lakhisar Sahib, village Lakhi Jungle, District Bathinda, age 55 years. (Personal Interview on 6 October, 2018).

³² Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 252, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 180.

the stay and visit of the Guru to Lakhi Jungle. The writers have also written about the service of Sangat and bringing of the milk for the Guru by Soma Singh³³.

Similar account has been narrated in *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*. It has been written that the Guru was pleased with Daan Singh and moved towards his village. Due to evening time the Guru stayed two miles away from Mehma in the Lakhi Jungle. Here *Langars* were arranged, Soma Singh used to take milk of a brown buffalo. All the people from the village came to have *Darshan* of the Guru³⁴.

As per another tradition, the Guru asked Bhai Daan Singh to move towards his village from Lakhi Jungle. When the Guru reached Mehma Sarga³⁵ village of Daan Singh. Bhai Daan Singh prepared Langar for them and took it with him. The Guru also went to Bhai Daan Singh's house. A Gurdwara Gurusar is there at the place where the Guru had stayed. Bhai Daan Singh's family partook the Nectar at this place. The Guru moved to Abloo from this place³⁶.

Giani Gian Singh has given a similar account in his work as had been known through oral tradition. According to him, Daan Singh took the Guru to his house and served him a lot with great joy. The author has also written that, Sangat of Jaito met the Guru when he moved from that place. Langar was prepared and was also distributed among the Sangat³⁷.

Tara Singh Narotam, in his work has also written about the visit of Guru Gobind Singh from Lakhi Jungle to Mehma village³⁸.

According to another tradition, Daan Singh told the Guru that village Mehma was named after his grandfather Mehma Swaye. He further shared with the Guru that he wanted to own a village on his own father's name Abloo. But another grandson of Baba Mehma did not allow them to own a village. The Guru kept quiet for some time and then moved away. Then, there was a group of trees, the Guru stopped there. The Guru shot an arrow and asked Daan Singh to own a village up to the place where that arrow had landed. Bhai Daan Singh got the village Abloo established up to the point where at that place arrow had dropped. Gurdwara Teersar Sahib is located at in that

³³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1060-61.

³⁴ *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p.70-71.

³⁵ Mehma Sarga, twenty-four kilometers away from Bathinda.

³⁶ Jagdeep Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guptsar Sahib, village Mehma Sarga, District Bathinda, age 45 years. (Personal Interview on 7 October, 2018).

³⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1060.

³⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 190.

village³⁹.

The Guru returned to Lakhi Jungle from that place. After staying there for one night, the Guru came to village Bhokhdi⁴⁰. There was an old lady in village Bhokhdi. Her sons had died in some war. People of her tribe bowed before the enemies and ran from their place. But she stayed back and faced the enemies with courage. Then the village had got its name Bhokhdi⁴¹.

Tara Singh Narotam has written that, this village is five miles away in the west from Mehma village. A Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru was built here. According to him, after that the Guru moved to Damdama Sahib⁴².

As per tradition, from Bhokhdi, the Guru went back to Lakhi Jungle. The Guru stayed there for some time and then he came to Gidharbaha.⁴³ Sangat came from far and wide for the Guru's Darshan and served him a lot. People of that village complained to the Guru that there are many vultures that bothered them. The Guru asked people to catch two vultures one male and one female and bring to him. The Guru married them and they never bothered the people of that village. From this incident, village got its name as Gidharbaha. Its previous name was Karmgarh. Here is a Gurdwara named Gurdwara Senior Sahib. *Jand* trees are also there at this place. It is believed that these trees have been at this place even since the Guru's time.⁴⁴

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, passing through many towns, the Guru and his companions reached and encamped at the bank of a waterhole outside the village of Gidharbaha. Hearing the news of the Guru's arrival, the congregation flocked to the place. Bhai Kirat Singh, a resident of the village requested the Guru, "Maharaj! Kindly visit the village." The Guru accepted his request and went to his *Haveli*. As the day began, Guru's Darbar commenced. In the late afternoon, the Guru got ready to move forward⁴⁵.

³⁹ Mangal Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Teersar Sahib, District Bathinda, age 49 years. (Personal Interview on 7 October, 2018).

⁴⁰ Bhokhdi village eleven kilometers from Bathinda.

⁴¹ Pal Singh, an old person of village Bhokhdi, District Bathinda, age 64 years. (Personal Interview on 8 October, 2018).

⁴² Tara Singh Nirtoam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.190.

⁴³ Gidharbaha village thirty-seven kilometers from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

⁴⁴ Didar Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Senior Sahib, Gidharbaha, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 48 years. (Personal Interview on 8 October, 2018).

⁴⁵ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 191, no. 95.

According to the oral tradition, the Guru moved to Rohila⁴⁶ village from Gidharbaha. One brave soldier, who belonged to the family of Barbers of this village had sacrificed his life in some war. This village got its name from his name as Rohila. There is a tomb of Rohila in this village. When the Guru visited this place, the Guru stayed here under a tree. This whole area was barren before the arrival of the Guru⁴⁷.

Giani Thakur Singh has also mentioned in his work about village Rohila. According to him, village Rohila is two miles away from Bambhiha. The author has also written that, village Rohila was located in the barren land, that is why it got its name as Rohila⁴⁸.

According to Tara Singh Narotam, village Rohila is one and half miles away from Bambhiha. It is near Atre wale Chakk⁴⁹.

According to Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, the Guru camped at Rohila village after coming from Kot Bhai. It supports the oral evidence. The Guru camped here for nine days⁵⁰.

As per another oral tradition, while staying at Rohila the Guru went to Kaal Jharani⁵¹ village. People at large came for the Guru's darshan. There was a baby crow on the Falah tree. The Guru ordered the Singh to break the neck of every baby crow who came with an opened mouth. Dharam Singh did the same. When Singhs asked the Guru about this, the Guru replied that he was a cook. He had spoken to Sikhs with anger and arrogance. The Sikhs frequently complained that, he spoke like a crow. That's why he was born as a crow. Now he has been released. The Guru killed a dangerous snake in this village, who earlier was a masand. He was very arrogant and was born as a snake. A Gurdwara Kitaar Sahib is located at this place⁵².

Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, have given a similar view about Kaal Jharani. All of them have supported the oral tradition. They have narrated

⁴⁶ Rohila village twenty kilometers away from Bathinda.

⁴⁷ Chotu Singh, an old person of village Rohila, District Bathinda, age 70 years. (Personal Interview on 8 October, 2018).

⁴⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 244.

⁴⁹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.184.

⁵⁰ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 65.

⁵¹ Kaal Zharaani village thirty kilometers away from Bathinda.

⁵² Jagdev Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Kitarsar Sahib, village Kaal Zharaani, District Bathinda, age 47 years (Personal Interview on 8 October, 2018).

the whole story as per the local tradition. According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, the name of cook was Chatar Das and the name of snake (masand) was Isher Chand⁵³.

As per tradition, the Guru went to Jangi Rana⁵⁴ village from Rohila. A Gurdwara in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh is located at this place⁵⁵.

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have agreed with the oral tradition. They have written that Jangi Rana is at the distance of two miles from Rohila in the northern direction. The Guru came here from Rohila and had water to drink⁵⁶.

As per the oral tradition, the Guru came to Bambhiha from Jangi Rana. A Gurdwara, Patshahi Dasvi has been built here in the Guru's memory. People came from far and wide for the Guru's *darshan*⁵⁷. According to Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh, the Guru came to Bambhiha from Kal Jharani and stayed here for nine days⁵⁸.

According to Giani Gian Singh, the Guru moved from Kaal Jharani, after a few miles, Sodhis of the Guru Sarai met the Guru. So, the Guru stopped there and had *langar* there. The Guru stayed there till afternoon and at night he reached Bambhiha, which is two miles away from the place where the Guru had stopped. Here, Sikhs served the Guru a lot, the Guru got pleased with their warm and kind service and he stayed there for nine days. People from far and wide came to meet the Guru here. Many people adopted Sikhi here. Here, the followers from Punjab region, after being, aware of the victory won over Muktsar by the Guru, came to this place and asked the Guru about the increase in the troubles of present time and warfare of future and requested the village to be secured from all these concerns⁵⁹.

According to the local tradition, the Guru reached Bajak⁶⁰ from Bambhiha.

⁵³ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 183, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1056, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 242, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 68, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 191-192, no. 95.

⁵⁴ Jangirana village, twenty-eight kilometres away from Bathinda.

⁵⁵ Iqbal Singh, an old person of village Jangi Rana, District Bathinda, age 61 years (Personal Interview on 9 October, 2018).

⁵⁶ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 244, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 184.

⁵⁷ Dyan Singh, an old person of village Bambhiha, District Bathinda, age 63 years (Personal Interview on 9 October, 2018).

⁵⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 183, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 244.

⁵⁹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1056-1057.

⁶⁰ Bajak village, thirty-five kilometers from Bathinda.

People felt very happy at the Guru's arrival. People brought milk in pots for the Guru and the Sikhs. The Guru and all Sikhs had milk. But, one Sikh did not take milk. When he was asked the reason, he replied that these people were Brars. They squeeze all the milk their cows and their calves die of hunger. The Guru asked them to swear not to repeat this again. The Guru blessed this village never to have shortage of milk. Even in the present times they do not have to take milk from anywhere, as milk is there in full capacity. A Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi is located in the memory of the Guru at this place⁶¹.

As per another tradition and as has been mentioned in the previous chapter, in a village called Maluka, one Deewana Saint was forcefully go for Guru's Darshan and was killed by a Sikh guard of the Guru. The family of Deewana came to Bambiha with fifty more Deewanas take revenge from the Guru. But twenty-five Deewane went back as they refused to fight against the Guru. And the remaining, one by one went back, except the two, named as Sukhu and Budhu. They had one drum and Sarangi. They had hidden these instruments in bushes and had gone for *Darshans* of the Guru. They bowed before the Guru and sat there. The Guru asked about their instruments and asked them to get the same back. They took back their instruments and recited, the Shabad, "*Kacha Kotha Vich Wasda Jaani, Sda na Maape, Nit Nahi Jawaani, Chalna Agge Kyo Gumaani*". Next day after having rest, when Guru Gobind Singh was about to move to the next destination, Sukhu and Budhu requested him to wear blue coloured dress and to sit on a bed. As he had done in Machiwara. They both humbly asked the Guru to let them both, carry his bed towards the next destination. The Guru fulfilled their desire and wore blue colored dress and he sat on the bed, which was carried by both the brothers from the front and by the other Sikh at the back. On the way, the Guru, kept his hands over the heads of Sukhu and Budhu and was gently caressing them. After reaching a place, the Guru got down from the cot that was carried on their shoulders and their wish was fulfilled. As the Guru got down from the bed Sukhu started moving around the bed fastly and he fell down at the Guru's feet. The Guru asked Sikhs to help Sukhu in taking bath. After taking bath he was normal and he asked the Guru why did he let him take bath. The Guru gave him a four-sided coin and asked him to worship it and his faith would turn to double. The place where the Guru got down from the bed a Gurdwara Sahib in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh has been built there, this

⁶¹ Jodh Singh, an old person of village Bajak, District Bathinda, age 71 years (Personal Interview on 9 October, 2018).

Gurdwara is named as Kot Guru.⁶²

Giani Gian Singh has corroborated the oral tradition. He has written that the oral tradition Sukhu, Budhu episode is exactly the same as have been popular in the oral tradition. The author has written that they had come there to take revenge over the death of Deewana Sadhu but got blessed at this place by impressing the Guru. The writer has added that, the name of village is Jassi where the Guru got down from the bed⁶³.

Giani Thakur Singh, also supported the oral tradition about the incident that had happened related to the people of the village Baajak. The author has written that Baajak is eight miles away in the south from Bhai ka Kot⁶⁴.

According to Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, people of village Baajak brought milk in the pots. All the Sikhs with the Guru drank that milk. One Sikh refused by giving an excuse that he only drank buffalo's milk and not cow's milk. Then one Sikh told him that this is of buffalo's milk, and then he as drank the milk. Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi has agreed with the Sukhu and Budhu episode as described in the above tradition. As per tradition, they came for Deewana's revenge but returned with lots of blessings⁶⁵.

Tara Singh Narotam has given a brief account regarding village Baajak. Here, the Guru had listened to the song, '*Kacha Kotha vich vasda Jani, Sda ni Mape nit ni Jawani*' from Sukhu and Budhu. Then they wanted to represent the getup of Machiwara. The bed was carried by Sukhu and Budhu and the two Sikhs and reached Jassi. But he remained silent about the milk episode⁶⁶.

According to another oral tradition, in this long journey, from Kot Guru, the next halt of the Guru was as Jassi Bhagwali⁶⁷ (Bhagsar). The Guru bathed in a pond here, fully clad in clothes and riding the horse. When he bathed, his clothes and horse turned white in colour. The Guru's turban and the horse's head did not change colour and remained of the same colour, because these did not get soaked in water. The Sikhs asked the Guru to explain his marvel. The Guru explained that the place was holy. Lord

⁶² Kot Guru village, twenty-four kilometres away from Bathinda.

⁶³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1061-1062.

⁶⁴ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 245.

⁶⁵ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 74-75.

⁶⁶ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp.184-185.

⁶⁷ Jassi Bhagwali village, twenty-five kilometres away from Bathinda.

Ram had come here after the battle against Luv and Kush. The Guru further informed the Sikhs that who's ever would take bath at this place with a true heart, all his sins would be washed away. After listening to the Guru, the Sikhs started the tradition of taking bath in that pond. They again asked the Guru that his dry clothes and the head of the horse did not turn into white. The Guru gave them satisfactory explanation that these two things were symbolic of reappearance.

One more thing was famous about this place that was Guru Nanak Dev had also visited this place and Ramanand had also lived⁶⁸. Then the Guru clarified that there were two Ramanands. One lived at Kashi who was Guru's Bhagat and other was disciple of Narad Muni. At that time the Guru was sitting under the flaa. When the Sikhs saw dust in the air from far away. The Sikhs thought that they might be Mughals again. Then, the Guru clarified that they were Lubaane Sikhs and not a Mughal. They bowed before the Guru and presented one-twenty-kilogram Jaggery (Gud) and with the Guru's order, it was distributed among all the Sikhs and horses. The Guru said⁶⁹,

ਜੱਸੀ, ਆਏ ਚਲੇ, ਗੁੜ ਖਾਇ ਚਲੇ ।

The Guru stayed at this place for ten days and the people served him with full faith. Then, after ten days, with the Guru's order, the Sikhs got ready to leave the place. All the men, women and children, bowed before the Guru. Baba Sufna Singh Chaudhary was also present⁷⁰. He asked the Guru that there is no other tree except Jand (Spunge) and it is eaten very quickly by termites. The resistance of their houses is not more than one year. The Guru replied that this termite would not be able to spoil wood of Jand if you have faith in God. So, the wood of this area has never been spoilt by termite even till date. Baba Sufna Singh Chaudhary presented five horses, five rupees to the Guru. Gurdwara Bagsar Sahib is located at this place in the memory of the Guru⁷¹.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh both the writers have written about the Guru's stay at village Jassi and this village was five miles away from village

⁶⁸ Jajvir Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Sri Bagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali, District Bathinda, age 45 years (Personal Interview on 13 October, 2018), see also Notice board, Gurdwara Sri Bhagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali, District Bathinda.

⁶⁹ Zora Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali, District Bathinda, age 48 years and literature. (Personal Interview on 13 October, 2018).

⁷⁰ Pal Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali District Bathinda (Personal Interview on 14 October, 2018).

⁷¹ Hakam Singh, an old person of village Jassi Bhagewali, District Bathinda, age 74 years (Personal Interview on 14 October, 2018).

Baajak. Further, both the writers have written about the Guru's bathing episode in the pond, and the Guru's clothes turning to white in colour. According to them, this is the reason that this place has been called as Bhagsar. Both writers have also written about Jaggery langer, as have been described in the oral tradition⁷².

Thus, Giani Gian Singh has told the same story about the Guru's bathing in pond and jaggery episode, but he too remained silent about the termite eating the wood episode as have been known through the oral evidence.⁷³

Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have also given similar account and they are also silent about Baba Sufna Singh's request to the Guru regarding the termites eating the wood⁷⁴.

As per another anecdote, the Guru moved to village Pakke from village Jassi Bagnsar. Here the Guru had tied his horse with the Jand tree which is still there at the place. Two Gurdwaras have been built in this village. These two Gurdwaras have been named as Jandsar Sahib. One is situated in the village and one is outside the village. An old person named Charat Singh lived in this village, he had fought in a war once that was led by Guru Hargobind. Then, he started serving the wounded and sick people. He also came for the Guru's *Darshan*. He was pleased on meetings Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru encamped in a *haveli* at pakka village. The carpenter of the village cut the wood of a Jand tree and made a few wooden pegs and tethered the horses to them. The people of the village served the Guru with great devotion⁷⁵.

According to Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Thakur Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, the Guru moved from village Jassi and reached village Pakk Kalan which is two miles away from village Jassi Bhagsar Wali. Here, the Guru stayed for three days. But all the writers are silent about Charat Singh episode⁷⁶.

As per tradition, the Guru came to Chak Hira Singh Wala from village Pakka. A Gurdwara in the Guru's memory is located here. The Guru stayed there for some time

⁷² Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 185-186, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, and p. 246.

⁷³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1062-1063.

⁷⁴ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp.77-78, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra. p. 195, no. 96.

⁷⁵ Sukhjinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib, village Pakk Kalan, District Bathinda, age 45 years (Personal Interview on 16 October, 2018).

⁷⁶ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 246, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangerh*, p. 1063, see also, Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1063, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 78.

and blessed the people. Then he moved towards Talwandi Sabo from this place⁷⁷.

The Guru reached near the Talwandi Sabo from Kotha Hira Singh Wala⁷⁸. Dalla came forward accompanied by four hundred men advance to receive and welcome the Guru. He prostrated at the lotus feet of the Guru. There after he invited the Guru to come and stay in the town of Sabo ki Talwandi. The Guru dismounted his horse and all of them sat on the ground waiting for the rest of the Sikhs to arrive along with the paraphernalia.

In the mean while the Ranghar horsemen riding in the rear also reached. The Guru started moving forwards the town. Dalla made earnest efforts to persuade the Guru to stay inside the fortress. The Guru preferred to pitch his camp outside the town. There was a sacred place where Guru Teg Bahadur had preached daily. Many sacred relics included heavily two swords, one muzzle loading gun, a seal and an old copy of Guru Granth Sahib have been preserved at this place in a domed cubicle behind the sanctum sanctorum. The other relic, is a mirror that the Sangat of Delhi had presented to Guru Gobind Singh. Of the two swords belong to Guru Gobind Singh and the heavier double edged belonged to Baba Deep Singh. The muzzle-loader is also believed to be of Guru Gobind Singh. This place was known as Manji Sahib.

The Ranghar horsemen had pitched their camp close to the Guru's tent and the Khalsa soldiers had setup their tents close to the fortress. Dalla had made arrangements of the preparation of meals inside the fortress. But the Ranghars horseman were self-sufficient. They had ample supply of dry provisions and they were in a position to cook their meals near their tents as and when they desired. These arrangements had got approved by the Guru⁷⁹.

Guru Gobind Singh, ever sense he left Anandpur Sahib was on the move for one and quarters years. At the Talwandi Sabo, he un-tied his waistband for the first time and heaved a sigh of relief. That is how Talwandi Sabo acquired the name of Damdama Sahib⁸⁰.

According to Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh, from village Pakka

⁷⁷ Beg Singh, an old person of village Chak Hira Singh wala, District Bathinda, age 64 years (Personal Interview on 16 October, 2018).

⁷⁸ Talwandi Sabo twenty-nine kilometres away from Bathinda. Now its name is Damdama Sahib.

⁷⁹ Balkar Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Likhansar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 50 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

⁸⁰ Tek Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Burj Baba Singh, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 49 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

the Guru reached Talwandi Sabo. A devotee Sikh of the Guru lived at this place, he was Bhai Dalla. When he heard about the Guru's arrival, he along with four hundred men came forward to receive the Guru. He made arrangements for the Guru, near the fort. He lovingly offered the Guru to relax there because he realised that the Guru must be extremely tired after such a long-drawn-out battle. The Guru gladly accepted his proposal, he had a long stay there of nine months and Eleven days. Here, the Guru untied his waist cloth and the place acquired the name of Damdama⁸¹.

Similar account has been given in Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi. This account pertains to Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Damdama. According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, the Guru had himself given the name of Damdama to this place because after a long period of struggle and was fare, he had heaved a sigh of relief⁸².

Giani Gian Singh has also described about Guru Gobind Singh's meeting with Dalla and his stay at this place. Giani Gian Singh has more or less reiterated the account known through the oral tradition. He has added another detail that Dalla had presented hundred coins, and a horse and a *Dosala* (Cloth) to Guru Gobind Singh⁸³.

As per tradition, at Talwandi Sabo, some mechanics had arrived from Lahore. They had displayed number of Guns of different design before the Guru, all these which they had brought with them. The Guru handled a couple of Guns and he liked a double-barrelled gun. He wanted to test by aiming at someone. He deputed Dalla on this task of bringing two of his stalwarts for this trial. Dalla himself got confused and nervous could not give any reply. Some of his followers quietly and stealthily slipped away fearing that the Guru may not choose them as a target. At that time, the Guru sent someone to his two Sikhs who were standing far off and were tying their turbans. They got the message that the Guru was looking for a target and he had asked one of his bodyguards to come. Both of them tell so jubilant and excited and ran fast to outdo or outshine each other. Each one of the two wanted to render his service. It was an intriguing situation indeed. To resolve the issue the Guru asked both of them in one line to stand side by side and let the bullet go over their heads. They were untouched by

⁸¹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 188, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, pp. 246-247.

⁸² Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 193, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 195-196, no. 98.

⁸³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1063.

the bullet. The Guru was pleased with such brave hearts and he blessed them profusely. He told Dalla that he wanted brave Sikhs like them. Dalla felt small and he humbly bowed in front of the Guru⁸⁴.

Giani Gian Singh has reiterated the same incident about the Guru's testing of the bravery by the Sikhs with Guns. The writer has given the same account as have been available through the oral tradition⁸⁵.

According to the local tradition life was coming back to normally and a peaceful atmosphere prevailed in Talwandi Sabo. The Guru now wanted to enquire about the wellbeing of Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan. They had got separated from the Guru at Sarsa River and ever since then they had been living in Delhi. Two trust worthy Sikhs are despatched to fetch them from Delhi without divulging to them about their four sons and Mata Gujri. As Talwandi Sabo a large congregation is becoming a normal feature, these are held regularly in the morning and in the evening. One such congregation is going on when Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan reached Talwandi Sabo from Delhi, in the company of those two Sikhs. With bent faces and teary eyes, they fell at the Guru's feet. The Guru consoled them and placed his hands over their heads to bless them. They sat beside the Guru, their anxious eyes are searching for their sons but they could not find them. All eyes are focused on them with love, reverence and sympathy. Mata Sundari could not take it any further and with folded hands asked the Guru about the four sons and Mata Gujri. The Guru was aware of the emotional upheaval of Mata Sundari but he is quite for a few moments. Then he stretched his hands towards all the Sikhs attending the congregation:

“ਇਨ ਪੁਤਰਨ ਕੇ ਸੀਸ ਪੈ ਵਾਰ ਦੀਏ ਪੁਤ ਚਾਰ ।
ਚਾਰ ਮੁਏ ਤੇ ਕਿਆ ਹੁਆ ਜੀਵਤ ਕਈ ਹਜਾਰ”।

[Sacrificed the four sons for the sake of all these Sikhs, who are like my own sons. What, if four have been lost, when thousands of them are alive.]

They are also informed them about the martyrdom of Mata Gujri. An appeal was made to them to accept this loss with the spirit of resignation and bow down to the Divine will.

⁸⁴ Dalip Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 53 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

⁸⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1064.

The Guru specifically addressed Mata Sundri and consoled her with these words:

“You should not feel so aggrieved as your sons were so brave.” During their stay, Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan did not want to reside in Dalla’s fortress as he had wished, instead they prefer to be close to the Guru. So, as per the wishes of the Guru, a separate tent was put up for them close to his tent and the two mothers stayed. Dalla sent them along with the meals of the Guru’s meals. After a few days the kitchen inside the fortress was closed and *Guru Ka Langar* was arranged close to the Guru’s camp. Gurdwara Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan are located at the place where the tent of the two mothers had been put up⁸⁶.

Tara Singh Narotam, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and Giani Thakur Singh writers have given similar account and course of events regarding Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan’s arrival and their stay at Talwandi Sabo after coming from Delhi⁸⁷. And similar account has been given by Giani Gian Singh in his work. The writer added that Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan reached Talwandi along with Mani Singh and the maternal uncle Kirpal Chand. Rest of the story written by the writers is the same as had been known through the oral tradition and the written by the other authors⁸⁸.

But Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has written somewhat different account about these events. According to him, it was Dalla’s wife, Bibi Kapuro who asked Guru Gobind Singh about the where about of Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan. She insisted to call both the mothers to Talwandi Sabo. The Guru fulfilled her desire and next day Dalla dispatched a camel with rider to Delhi⁸⁹.

As per the oral tradition, one day Dalla invited Guru Gobind Singh along with his Sikhs to his house for the meals (langar). The meals were prepared for Khulase Sikhs and Bibeki Sikhs. After a meal, Dalla presented a horse, dushala along with one hundred and one rupees to the Guru. Both the mothers were gifted ropes along with twenty-five rupees each⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ Dilbag Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda, age 71 years (Personal Interview on 13 October, 2018).

⁸⁷ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangeh*, p. 187, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 247, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 64

⁸⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 165-166.

⁸⁹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 196-197, no. 99.

⁹⁰ Natha Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 70 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Giani Gian Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have supported the oral tradition and have given similar description in their respective works⁹¹.

According to another anecdote, Guru Teg Bahadur had started a *Sarovar* at Talwandi Sabo. Guru Gobind Singh got this work completed. It has been named *Gurusar*. At this place, Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib is located. It is a matter of common belief that whosoever would take a dip in the holy *Sarovar* with pure heart and full faith, he would be cured of all diseases. The place where Guru Teg Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh used to sit to supervise the work of the digging the Sarovar, now a Gurdwara Manji Sahib Patshahi Nauvi and Dasvi is located⁹².

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also described in his work about Guru Teg Bahadur's visit to Sabo ki Talwandi. The author has given the same sequence of events about Guru Teg Bahadur initiating the digging of the Sorovar and Guru Gobind Singh taking up the completion of work. Guru Teg Bahadur had started the work at the request of the people. The writer has also given a similar account as have been popular in the oral tradition⁹³.

After the arrival of Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Devan, more and more people came to offer their condolences to them, soon the peaceful atmosphere of the place got transferred into an at atmosphere where there was preponderance of grief and gloom.

Guru Gobind Singh wanted to uplift the people from the pool of sorrow. He intentionally told the congregation to have a glimpse of the spiritual light of Guru Nanak. Some devotees sitting there pointed towards the Guru and asserted that he himself was the tenth Guru Nanak, so where in the need or necessity of voicing the desire to see Guru Nanak⁹⁴. The Guru told them with confidence that as Sikh congregation they were also the image of the Guru. Their idea was correct because he (Guru) had in himself the spiritual light of Gurbani which Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Guru Nanak had complied with the assistance of Bhai Gurdas. He wanted Sangat to see

⁹¹ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 196-197, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1066, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 68.

⁹² Atr Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib Patshahi nauvi, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 56 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

⁹³ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 198, no. 99.

⁹⁴ Manjinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Likhsar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 48 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

it, read it and reflect over it so that they could grasp what is written there, he desired it so that the souls of the martyrs might rest in peace and those who were left behind might find consolation by reading the *Gurbani*. The Guru shared with the Sangat that the sacred Granth was in the possession of or in safe custody of Sodhi Dhir Mal of Kartarpur. He wanted it to be brought from there reverentially. The Sikhs were always eager to serve the Guru. Some Sikhs of Doaba and some of Malwa were ready to go and fulfil the Guru's wish. They travelled for a few days and they reached their destination Kartarpur. They did not waste any time, reached Sodhis place straight away and respectfully conveyed the Guru's wish. But unfortunately, Sodhis did not concede to the Guru's wish. They misinterpreted the Guru's wish. They thought that Guru Gobind Singh had lost everything, now wanted to take away the scripture by making some false excuse. Sodhi Dhir Mal was the son of Baba Gurditta who was the eldest son of Guru Hargobind. That means he was grandson of Hargobind.⁹⁵

As ill luck would have it Dhir Mal died even where the Sikhs were still at Kartarpur. Now the volume was in possession of Dhir Mal's grandson. The Sikhs gave repeated assurances that the volume would be returned to them in the same condition, the Sodhis did not budge. They were very caustic in their remarks. They told them that if Guru Gobind Singh regarded himself to be the Guru, he should be compiling his own Granth as Guru Arjan Dev had compiled. So even though the Sikhs tried hard they came back empty-handed and reported the matter to the Guru. The Guru reflects over what the Sodhis had said, he had faced a complicated question⁹⁶. After having it a deep thought he announced the inspired decision to re-write the holy Granth. A secluded tent was set up and arrangements of pen ink and paper was made. The Guru after finishing the morning routine, would enter the tent in the early hours of the morning and would dictate the Bani to Bhai Mani Singh, while seated in the same tent. The inspired strenuous practise continued for three months, until the entire Granth was completed from beginning to the end. This was possible through the spiritual, inspirational and intuitional power of the divine Guru. The Guru was greatly pleased, he arranged an *Akhand Path*, of the entire Granth. During his stay at Talwandi Sabo the great Guru daily explained the Guru's Bani to the Sangat (congregation) through his discourses.

⁹⁵ Gurmeet Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 47 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

⁹⁶ Brinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib Patshahi Dasvi, village Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 53 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

Gurdwara Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib is located at the place where Sri Guru Gobind Singh compiled the Granth Sahib and held his daily assemblies⁹⁷.

Giani Thakur Singh has written the similar anecdote in his work about the Guru's wish to see and read the Gurbani, which earlier the fifth Guru Arjan Dev had compiled. The author has given the same details about the rest of the events as described in the oral tradition. He has added one detail that Guru Gobind Singh had completed Guru Granth Sahib with the Bani of ninth Guru on the blank pages which were left by Guru Arjan Dev. The compiled Granth was given the name 'Beed of Damdama' and Baba Deep Singh made it possible to send the above-mentioned Beed to Patna⁹⁸.

Tara Singh Narotam⁹⁹ and Giani Gian Singh¹⁰⁰ have corroborated the above-mentioned details that happened at Talwandi Sabo and Kartarpur regarding Guru Gobind Singh's compilation of Guru Granth Sahib. Both writers have supported the oral tradition in their respective works.

As per the local tradition, there is a Gurdwara Likhnsar Sahib, situated at that place, there is also a pool as well which happened to be a Sarovar that time. Bhai Mani Singh made use of a *kalam* to write the Guru Granth Sahib dictated by Guru Gobind Singh. After having accomplished the pious task, the Guru throw all the Kalams and ink in the Sarovar. Bhai Dalla asked the Guru the reason of having done that. The Guru replied that whosoever would write thirty-five words of *Gurbani* here would be blessed with a sharp mind and memory. This place has been blessed by the Guru and made so pious by writing the entire Granth. This place is called 'Guru ki Kashi' and the above-mentioned belief has been persisting even now¹⁰¹.

The information provided about the Gurdwara Likhnsar Sahib has been supported in the works of Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Thakur Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and Giani Gian Singh¹⁰².

⁹⁷ Bhal Singh, an old person of village Kot Shamir, District Bathinda, age 71 years (Personal Interview on 20 October, 2018).

⁹⁸ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, pp. 247-248, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p.187.

⁹⁹ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth sangreh*, p. 199.

¹⁰⁰ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1084.

¹⁰¹ Notice Board, Gurdwara Likhansar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, see also Randhir Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda, age 73 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹⁰² Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 173, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 249, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 103, see also Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1080.

According to the oral tradition, at Talwandi Sabo, one devoted Sikh Dalla was the recipient of a letter from a Governor of Sirhind. The Governor had expressed his unhappiness and had raised objections to the freedom that the Guru was enjoying in his deed and works. The Guru was freely moving about in the Malwa and the Governor of Sirhind wanted to capture him. He conveyed threat through Dalla. The letter had first of all made Dalla aware of the serious lapse and it had bluntly asked for the Guru's surrender otherwise the army would come marching and there would be huge loss of lives and property. He went to the extent of threatening him that he along with the Guru would be captured. Dalla sent a courageous reply that his life and death was integrally bound with that of the Guru. He was ready to fight against them. The Guru was immensely pleased with his boldness and blessed him profusely¹⁰³.

Giani Gian Singh, in his work has also written about Dallas receiving a letter from Governor of Sirhind. As per this author, Guru Gobind Singh had sent one of his sikhs to Dalla's court to ascertain his reply. The writer has further added that Wazir Khan had tried to entice Dalla. But Dalla was a committed and devoted Sikh, he turned down all his offers from the emperor. When the Sikh informed the Guru about Dalla's response, the Guru was very happy, in the meanwhile Wazir Khan had heard about Dalla's reply and then it sent to Aurangzeb¹⁰⁴.

As per the local tradition, the Sikhs who came to Talwandi Sabo from west Punjab told the Guru that they had been looted on their way by the Subedar of Lahore. Similarly, two more groups were robbed of the present that they were bringing for the Guru, this act of robbery was also brought into the Guru's knowledge. According to the same tradition, the Guru lost his cool when he heard all this. He told the Sangat that no one present in the Sangat was brave and courageous enough to come and announce that he had looted the Subedar. The Guru advised them to read "Chandi Ka Path" and to equip themselves with weapons. He further declared and thundered that whoever would embrace baptism of the double-edged sword, would become a fully grown Singh, complete in every aspect and he would achieve wholesome victory.

Guru Gobind Singh wanted to train the Sikhs and prepare them in a war-like spirit. He arranged a mock fight between the Brar Sikhs and the others. Brar Sikhs

¹⁰³ Sri Chand Singh, an old person of village Deon, District Bathinda, age 69 years (Personal Interview on 20 October, 2018).

¹⁰⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1079.

were carrying the lathis on one side and the rest of the Sikhs on the other side. The Brars were asked to be attacked and others were asked to defend. Consequently, the persons were injured on both the sides. The Guru was a spectator who stood at a distance. He told the Sangat to be always prepared for self-defence. He was happy with the exhibited monk fight. Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib is situated at this place¹⁰⁵.

The above oral tradition has been similarly recorded in the works of Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi¹⁰⁶.

As per the local tradition, the Guru wanted to test their patience as well. Once the Guru made the arrangement of a very large quantity of pudding. It was prepared and kept in front of them and instructed them to grab and snatch and eat as much as they desired. Most of the Sikhs, pounced on it, there were others who did not want to get caught in a scuffle and they were contended to have as much as they would get after the distribution. The Guru was observing it all and told them that his Khalsa would be of both the types, those who would be satisfied with their due share and others who believe in grabbing and snatching from the others but both the categories have the love of Sikhism in their hearts¹⁰⁷.

Giani Gain Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have corroborated the above oral tradition¹⁰⁸.

According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, the Guru held a trail to test the patience of his Sikhs, he allowed them to plunder and loot, this way he categorised the Sikhs in three categories Sikh, Singh, Nirmala¹⁰⁹.

As per tradition, the people (Sangat) use to bring lot of presents for the Guru at Talwandi Sabo. The Guru asked Dalla to disburse salaries to the Sikhs and to take his own share. Dalla requested the Guru for rain, as the area had not got sufficient rain since long. But the Guru told him to take your salary but rain was not in my hands. But Dalla did not take his salary that day. It continued for three days. The Guru asking him

¹⁰⁵ Gang Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 73 years. (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹⁰⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1077-1078, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 83-84.

¹⁰⁷ Davinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 58 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹⁰⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1078, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 87.

¹⁰⁹ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 248, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 88.

to take his salary but Dalla insisting for rain. Then finally the Guru asked Dalla to get the ponds cleaned as the rain would be imminent. The orders to clean the ponds, trickled down to them and the ponds were cleaned. There were heavy downpour and the entire area was overflowing with rain. Then people requested the Guru to make the rain stop and the rain was stopped.¹¹⁰

Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi has agreed with the above tradition¹¹¹.

Giani Gian Singh has also corroborated the above oral traditions in his work. But he has given a different version and written that the Guru asked Dalla to take salary but he insisted on having rain. Then the Guru gave him one footwear (Jutti) and asked him to hit towards the sky seven times, then the rain would be there. Again, when he would hit the sky with the Jutti, the rain would be stopped¹¹².

According to the local tradition, after the torrential rain, there was the breaking out of Malaria in the entire Malwa region. Most of the people were suffering from high fever. They were helpless and worried, they went to the Guru for some remedial measures. The remedy suggestion by the Guru was religious and spiritual in intent. He explained to them that heat has adverse impact on the naked heads. The solution to save themselves would be baptised as Sikhs and cover their heads with Turban and to recite Gurbani regularly. God wards off all evils and his name is the best cure and remedy in every situation. Many persons followed the Guru's advice and accepted to be baptised with double-edged sword. Others, who came from far off places acted as per as the Guru's instructions.¹¹³

Giani Gian Singh has also supported the above written oral tradition. He has given the same description about the people falling ill due to malaria and the Guru's advised to them to cover their heads and embrace Sikhism.¹¹⁴

As per another tradition, Dalla was extremely devoted to the Guru. He had assigned the duty to himself to stand as a guard outside the Guru's resting place. At Talwandi Sabo, one-night he came and as he was accustomed to do. The Guru was

¹¹⁰ Lal Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 68 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹¹¹ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 86.

¹¹² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1078.

¹¹³ Bhinda Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Takht Sri Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 58 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹¹⁴ Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1078-1079.

aware of his commitment and repeatedly asked him to take rest, but he did not budge from his self-imposed duty. The Guru was pleased with his commitment and wanted to grant him a boon. On hearing this, he expressed his wish to get a small place equivalent to that of a Peehri (small chair) near the resting place. The Guru asked him to embrace baptism of the double-edged sword. Dalla gave a beautiful reply that he daily partakes the Guru's leftover food that had been converted into Prasad with the touch of a sword. Though his reply pleased the Guru, yet he made it clear that his embracing baptism and becoming a full-fledged Singh would give the Guru immense pleasure.

Dalla agreed for the Guru's happiness was uppermost for him and he was always keen on obeying the Guru's command. He was baptised by the Guru and renamed Dalla Singh. The Guru gave him a beautiful and heavy sword with a shield, two golden bracelets studded with gems, two turbans, two tunics and two pajamas, which continued to be respected and preserved by Dalla's family and his descendants still cherish these relics, bestowed on Dalla by the Guru¹¹⁵.

Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, have corroborated the above-mentioned anecdote. But Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi has added that the Guru had given him a robe as well¹¹⁶.

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also agreed with the oral tradition but he is remained silent about the above-mentioned relics¹¹⁷.

As per anecdote, One day Dayal Das, grandson of Bhai Bhagatu¹¹⁸ came to Talwandi Sabo to visit the Guru. He offered some money as a gift to the Guru. The Guru asked him to partake nectar and become a full-fledged Singh. He replied that he had inhibited Sikhism long time back. His forefathers were Sikhs. The Guru's before blessed them. So he did not adopt any another Sikhism. He requested the Guru to let things remain as they were and to bless them. The Guru clarified that he himself would be giving nectar and that he had refused to accept. But the Guru was confident that he would take nectar one day. Dyal Das moved away from that place. This action and

¹¹⁵ Gurlabh Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 73 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹¹⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1078.

¹¹⁷ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, p. 200, no. 100.

¹¹⁸ Bhai Bhagtu, son of Bhai Adam was a venerable Sikh of the days of Guru Ramdas. His grandson Dayal Das son of Bhai Gaurag of Bhuchho village.

gesture of his enraged the Guru.¹¹⁹

Bhai Bhagtu had two sons Bhai Goad and Bhai Jeevan Singh. Dyal Das was son of Bhai Goad. Bhai Jeevan Singh was residence of Chak Fateh Singh Wala¹²⁰ and he had two wives. The two wives had two sons each. They had become full-fledged Singhs. The name of the four brothers were Bhai Ram Singh, Bhai Fateh Singh, Bhai Bakhtu Singh and Bhai Takhtu Singh¹²¹.

Bhai Ram Singh was a devotee of the Guru and served him a lot when he was at Talwandi Sabo. One day, the Guru assured Ram Singh that he would come to his village once. Bhai Ram Singh told the Guru that his village was situated in a desert like place and one feels very hot there. But the Guru was not deterred. He asked him to go back and assured him of his coming. Ram Singh went back. He started preparing for the Guru's rest under a thick shade peepal trees, he watered the surrounded land and kept cold water pots, all these things had the effect of making the resting place very pleasant. After some days the Guru came with his two wives. The Guru was very happy to see such a good arrangement. He complimented Bhai Ram Singh on his effort because the place had become cool and there was no heat trapped there. It reminded the Guru of his days in Paunta, on the bank of the river Jamuna. Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan were accommodated at Bhai Ram Singh's house, where the preparation of food had taken place and it was served to all. Ram Singh took meal for the Guru daily himself. In the evening, arrangements would be made for the Guru's Darshan because Sangat would come. Bhai Dayal Das also came but the Guru did not take notice of him and ignored him completely. Ram Singh was aware that Dyal Das not obeyed the Guru, so the Guru was annoyed with him. Ram Singh advised Dyal Das that he should try to appease the Guru as the Guru was angry with him. He should prepare *Prasad* for the Guru and the Sangat and apologize to the Guru. Bhai Dayal Das accepted the advice of Ram Singh.¹²²

At night the Guru moved towards Bhai Ram Singh's house to take rest. The Guru had a meeting with Ram Singh's stepmother named Desa. She was the Guru's

¹¹⁹ Mithu Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 73 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹²⁰ Chak Fateh Singh Wala village twenty kilometres away from Bathinda District.

¹²¹ Bheg Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 69 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹²² Bhola Singh, an old person of village Chak Fateh Singh Wala, District Bathinda, age 71 years (Personal Interview on 15 October, 2018).

devotee, she had hand-woven *khes* (Blanket) as a gift for the Guru. The Guru had rest at Bhai Ram Singh's terrace (Chubara). Bhai Ram Singh gifted a horse, rupees one hundred to the Guru and the clothes to both the Matas. Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi is located at this place. There is another Gurdwara Sri Burj Sahib where some relics of the Guru namely *Keshki*, *Manji* (cot), *jutti* (footwear) and *Khadawan* of Mata Sahib Kaur and *Pajami* and *Gaghra* of Mata Desa have been preserved¹²³.

Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have corroborated the above oral tradition. They have narrated the whole story about Dyal Das's conversation with the Guru and the Guru's stay at Bhai Ram Singh's house at Chak village. But in both sources, there is also mention of some other incident that had taken place that they have written that the Guru's left-over meal was eaten by Bhai Ram Singh. Here the two ladies presented two plates in front of Mata Sundari and Mata Sahib Devan. The lady who took the plate for Mata Sundari took the leftover meal. But the lady who took plate for Mata Sahib Devan put the leftover meal in front of dogs. Mata Sahib Devan got angry and she mentioned the whole incident to the Guru and when the Guru asked the lady, she said, "Her (Mata Sahib Kaur) surname is not Kunala." The Guru replied to her that, after the creation of Khalsa, he had taken the vow to lead a life of celibacy¹²⁴.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have only written that Ram Singh, son of Jeevan Singh, grandson of Bhai Bhagtu took the Guru at Chak Gram and there the Guru stayed outside the village¹²⁵.

As per the local tradition, the Guru came to Bhucho from Chak Fateh Singh wala¹²⁶, at this place Dyal Das also arrived, who had earlier refused to accept baptism. The horse of the Guru was thirsty. A pond was there but its water was dirty. The horse was left near the pond, but the horse did not drink dirty water. The Guru explained that the horse did not want to drink water because the water smelt of a masand in the village. Someone informed Dayal Das. He came there and pleaded with the Guru to rest at his place. But the Guru did not accept his offer and told him that he had decide to

¹²³ Brian Singh, an old person of village Chak Fateh Singh wala, age 68 years (Personal Interview on 15 October, 2018).

¹²⁴ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1072-1073, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 66-67.

¹²⁵ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 179, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 250.

¹²⁶ Bhucho village, seventeen kilometres away from Bathinda.

stay at Bhagu¹²⁷.

Giani Gian Singh has agreed with the above statement¹²⁸.

As per Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, the Guru reached Bhucho village early in the morning. Dyal Singh paid his obeisance and requested the Guru to stay there and Prasad was ready and requested the Guru to baptised him by giving nectar. The Guru told him that he had decided to go further towards Bhagu Gram¹²⁹.

As per local tradition, the Guru arrived at Bhagu¹³⁰ from Bhucho village. Dyal Das was determined and he followed the Guru with his Prasad (Karah Prasad) and offered it to the Guru. The Guru relented, gave him permission to distribute it and to be baptised. The Guru was happily with his faith and blessed him with nectar and he was given a new name Dyal Singh instead of Dyal Das. Prasad was distributed among the Sikhs. The Guru made the announcement that the meals that day would be from Dyal Singh. To honour the Guru's word, Dyal Singh sold his gold ring and got the meal prepared for the Sikhs. A Gurdwara in the memory of the Guru was built at this place¹³¹.

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam are silent about the above incident as had been popular in the oral tradition. They have only written that the Guru had come to this place from Damdama Sahib¹³².

According to Giani Gian Singh, there lived a monk Godriya in Bhai Dyal Das's house. He asked him to put all the Prasad in Go-cart and to follow the Guru. The Guru stayed in Bhagu village. Dyal Das reached there and requested the Guru many times for the distribution of Prasad, but the Guru did not answer. But when Bhai Godriya requested the Guru. The Guru told, if Bhai Dyal Das would take nectar, then the Prasad would be distributed. This time, Dyal Das accepted the offer of the Guru. Dyal Das took Amrit and Prasad was distributed and named as Dyal Singh. A few Sikhs did not get Prasad. When they asked the Guru. He asked them to ask Bhai Dyal Singh. Thus,

¹²⁷ Mukand Singh, an old person of village Bhucho, District Bathinda, age 61 years (Personal Interview on 15 October, 2018).

¹²⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1072-1073.

¹²⁹ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 87.

¹³⁰ Bhagu village, eleven kilometres away from Bathinda.

¹³¹ Manjeet Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda, age 67 years (Personal Interview on 15 October, 2018).

¹³² Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 252, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 190.

Dyal Singh sold his gold ring to distribute the Prasad among them¹³³.

According to Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, Dyal Singh took Prasad from that place on go- cart. It was distributed. He presented one horse and one shawl (Dosalla) and hundred rupees to the Guru. Fifteen Sikhs said that they did not get Prasad. The Guru asked to them to take it from Dyal Singh. Dyal Singh took off his ring and asked them to prepare Prasad by getting the money by selling that ring¹³⁴.

As per local tradition, from Bhagu, the Guru reached the place where Gurdwara Lawerisar is situated. When the Guru reached there, the people were feeding their buffalos. They offered buffalo's milk to the Guru and Sikhs. The Guru said that the pond of Laweri is filled up with the buffalo's milk. From this statement this place got its name as Lawerisar. This place is four kilometres at a distance of from Chakk Fateh Singh wala¹³⁵.

According to Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, one day the Guru came here playing hunting and stood on the dunes and gave statement that at this place Guru Nanak won Sidh Mandli. Then people said that that's why one buffalo saved his son from two wolves. From that day it is called "Laweri wala Tibba"¹³⁶.

According to the local tradition, after that Guru reached Bathinda¹³⁷ from Laweri Sahib, where Gurdwara Hazi Ratan¹³⁸ is situated. Many people came at that place to see the Guru. They requested the Guru that he was sitting at that lonely place, they requested him to come with them to the fort.¹³⁹ The Guru went into the fort and told the people, "Do you have any problems?" People told the Guru that they are very sad because, there lived a giant monster who destroyed their eatables. They requested the Guru to help them get rid of it. The Guru called that monster and asked him to explain his misdeeds. He replied that oh lord, "I have been hungry for many years

¹³³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1073-1074.

¹³⁴ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 86-87.

¹³⁵ Baj Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda (Personal Interview on 20 October, 2018).

¹³⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1072, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, pp. 250-251, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 189.

¹³⁷ Bathinda, thirty-one kilometers away from Talwandi Sabo.

¹³⁸ Baba Hazi Ratan visited Macca as an Ambassador of Raja Bhog. While returning to India, he decided to settle down at Bathinda and meditate.

¹³⁹ Qila Mubark is a historical monument in Bathinda in Punjab. Its great fort. It is said to have been constructed by Raja Viny Pal and fifty-five kilometer away from Sri Muktsar Sahib.

kindly help me to get rid of this hunger. I would leave this fort forever.” The Guru saw with his internal eye that in the village Natt Bazar there is a common ox for ten villages. So, to get that ox released, the Guru sent Singhs to bring that ox. When the Singhs reached there and asked about the ox, people made fun of it and asked he was sitting on the dune. Bhai Milagar Singh called him and told him that the Guru has called you. The ox came out of the dune and started walking in front of them. He was brought before the Guru. The Guru ordered Bhai Milagar Sahib to kill him. In this way, the Guru satisfied the monster’s hunger and asked him to go to the place where he was needed. People were very happy and told the Guru that there was famine. The Guru asked that he would remove famine. Here Guru stayed for nine days. A Gurudwara was built in the fort in the memory of the Guru¹⁴⁰.

According to Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam, the Guru reached Bathinda from Bhai-ka-chak. Here, the Guru made arrangements for his stay for seven days. Here people requested the Guru that there was a monster who did not let their eatables remain safe. The Guru released him and led him to Sirhind. A Gurdwara is situated at this place. Tara Singh Narotam has also written that when the Guru had sent the monster to Sirhind, he asked from the Guru, “Where to stay?” the Guru told him stay in Mosorpur for some time then to move to Sirhind¹⁴¹.

According to Giani Gian Singh, Dalla took the Guru to Bathinda to show him the fort where one girl used to come and say that she was the Earth of Malwa. She asked the Guru that there lived a monster. The food would be prepared for all, he would just eat it. The Guru asked her not to worry, the Guru were there to solve all this. She then just pays obeisance and went away. Next morning people requested the Guru that this fort which was built by taking the life of the king’s minister. Now a monster lived there, they requested him to leave. The Guru told that he needed an elephant for his sacrifice and then they replied that they did not have any elephant in their place. But there was one ox. If you can hypnotise it, so you can kill it. The Guru sent five Sikhs. They showed the Guru’s stick and brought the ox with them. Bhai Milagar Singh cut its head by the sword from its body at once. The Guru ordered the monster to leave that place. He requested that he was thrown away to Goendwal and he came here by the

¹⁴⁰ Notice Board, Gurdwara Hazi Ratan and Qila Mubarak, District Bathinda.

¹⁴¹ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 251, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 189-190.

order of Guru Amar Das. The Guru asked him to leave for Sirhind. No one would get after you. It would become a forest place as Malwa Region.¹⁴²

According to Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, the Guru reached Bathinda from Bhagu. One pandit with the Guru, told the Guru that it was the order of the King Vinaypal, who came there. They should make the sacrifice of an elephant. The Guru said, “Where is an elephant?” The pandit said, “Elephant is nowhere, bring an ox and make his sacrifice”. The Guru sent his Singhs, called an ox. The Guru asked Bhai Godriya who was with the Guru from Bhucho to remove ox’s head from body. The monster said, “I am hungry”. The Guru replied in the afternoon, go and stay at Masorpur and then moved to Sirhind¹⁴³.

As per the local tradition, from Bathinda the Guru returned to Talwandi Sabo. The atmosphere of the place was very sacred and religious. Diwans were set up for Sangat, Kirtan was performed. One day, the Guru reached Kot Shameer¹⁴⁴ people served the Guru a lot. *Karah Prasad* was given to all. Chaudhary Dalla was accompanying the Guru. The place was under his rule. The people were very respectful towards him and touched his feet. He was very embarrassed to receive the honour in the presence of the Guru. He tried to stop the people from touching his feet. Trying to explain that the Guru is great, that’s why please give respect and presents only to the Guru. But the Guru made him feel comfortable by telling him that. This was Dalla’s kingdom and people were true to him. Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi is situated at this place¹⁴⁵.

The above tradition has been similarly recorded in the Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi and Giani Gian Singh’s work¹⁴⁶.

Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have remained silent about the above incidents known through oral tradition. They have written that the Guru had

¹⁴² Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1074-1075.

¹⁴³ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 89-90.

¹⁴⁴ Kot Shameer village, thirteen kilometres away from Bathinda.

¹⁴⁵ Atar Singh, an old person of village Kot Shameer, District Bathinda, age 69 years (Personal Interview on 15 October, 2018).

¹⁴⁶ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 90-91, see also, Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1076.

come there from Damdama Sahib¹⁴⁷.

As per tradition, the Guru reached Bhagi Wander¹⁴⁸ from Kot Shameer. Here the Guru stayed under a tree of *Jand*. That is the reason that a Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib is located at this place. The Jand tree to which the Guru had tied his horse, had got three times rotten. Now, still it is the same. Guru Gobind Singh's court poet, Pandit Bihari Lal Diwana was born in this village. But his connection is with both the villages, Bhagi Wander and Kot Shamir. Then the Guru came back to Talwandi Sabo¹⁴⁹.

Giani Thakur Singh and Tara Singh Narotam have only written that the Guru came to Bhagi Wander from Damdama Sahib.¹⁵⁰

According to Giani Gian Singh, the Guru came to Bhagi Wander from Damdama Sahib before visiting Kot Shameer. People served the Guru a lot. Next day, Dewana Sadha's Mahant Bihari took the Guru three miles away from his village. He served the Guru a lot. The Guru became so happy on seeing their Dhamal. Then Bihari sang his Kavishri. Next day Dewana recited 'Heer-Ranjha and Poorn Bhagat' with the Dhad Sarangi. The Guru stayed at that place for three days. When they were to leave, the Mahant presented a beautiful horse to the Guru. The Guru presented him a Turban (Saropa Dastar) in his honour¹⁵¹.

As per tradition, the Guru went for hunting while living in Talwandi Sabo. Surprisingly he could not find any animal. The Guru said that some Sikhs had not combed his hairs that day, that is why he (Guru) could not find any animal. The one Sikh confessed that in a hurry he did not comb his hairs. The Guru asked that Sikh to comb his hair and tie his turban properly. Then he tied his turban and the Guru did a lot of hunting that day. When the Sikhs had gathered, the Guru guided them properly. He told that whenever we have to step out, we must have a proper bath, dress up cleanly and offer our prayers before leaving the place. Then the individual would be able to fulfil his missions¹⁵².

¹⁴⁷ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, pp. 188-189, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 250.

¹⁴⁸ Bhaghi Wander village, twenty-four kilometres away from Bathinda.

¹⁴⁹ Veer Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib, village Bhagi Wander, District Bathinda, age 73 years (Personal Interview on 15 October, 2018).

¹⁵⁰ Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdwara Darshan*, p. 250, see also Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 188.

¹⁵¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1071, 1072.

¹⁵² Najar Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 80 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, have corroborated the above-mentioned episode¹⁵³.

When the Guru came back to Talwandi Sabo one Sikh presented of a port of sweet curd with a lot of love and devotion. The Guru asked his name and whereabouts. He told the Guru that he is Dalpot, he is son of Bheem Chand and he is a resident of Mour village. The Guru was extremely pleased with him. The Guru presented him a Siropa (a piece of cloth gifted as honour) and a turban and asked him to spread Sikhism. If he did that it would enhance his own honour. Dalpot returned home after this. He is not aware that the turban is the Guru's blessings¹⁵⁴. On hearing a good song from a singer, he gifted him the turban.

Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have agreed with the above tradition¹⁵⁵.

According to Giani Gian Singh, one Sikh presented a big Box of Ghee to the Guru. He gave his introduction as Dalpot, son of Bheem Chand and resident of Mour village. The Guru honoured him by presenting a Turban but he was not aware of its value in the form of blessings and out of his folly and ignorance. He further gifted it to a singer. When he came to the Guru he was admonished for his folly. The Guru told him that he had enriched him with a Turban but he had gifted it to someone, hence he has proved to be a fool. He prostrated in front of the Guru and asked for his forgiveness. The Guru blessed that his grandson son would be owner of Dal¹⁵⁶.

According to another oral tradition, One day the Guru went to a village named Tahla Singh, which at a distance of three kilometres from Mour for hunting. Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi is located here in the memory of the Guru¹⁵⁷.

According to Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh, the Guru had come here from Damdama Sahib¹⁵⁸.

As per local tradition, one day the Guru was holding Sangat, two Sikhs Ram and Tirloka came and brought along with them a cart loaded of provisions for the

¹⁵³ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p. 1070, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 89.

¹⁵⁴ Gurlal Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 62 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹⁵⁵ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 87-88.

¹⁵⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1070-1071.

¹⁵⁷ Bakhtaur Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 74 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹⁵⁸ Tara Singh Narotam, *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, p. 190, see also Giani Thakur Singh, *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, p. 252.

Guru's kitchen. The Guru enquired whether they had brought the provisions from their homes or purchased it. They informed the Guru that most of it was from their homes but some had been contributed by their relatives. Then somebody from the Sangat told the Guru that they had arranged the cremation of the Mata Gujri and two younger Sahibzadas of the Guru¹⁵⁹.

The Guru was immensely pleased with them and blessed them a lot. The Guru asked them for their wish. They told the Guru that ever since they had come to this side of the country, they had not felt settled. They did not have self-owned land as the other farmers had for the purpose of cultivation. The Guru blessed them and assured them that they would have vast tracts of lands. There after they took Amrit and were given the name of Ram Singh and Tirloka Singh. They stayed for seven days and at the time of their departure, the Guru gave them two turbans to honour them. Later on, the descendants by Bhai Ram Singh and Triloka Singh, became the rulers of *riyasat* of Nabha and Patiala respectively.¹⁶⁰

Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, Giani Gian Singh and Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have supported the oral tradition.¹⁶¹

As per oral tradition, at Talwandi Sabo, once the Guru was seated on a high mound and he was surrounded by many Sikhs including Dalla. The Guru, a visionary looked around and praised the tall wheat stalks that could be seen growing there. Dalla Singh and other Sikhs were very prompt in correcting the Guru in their own way. They told him that it is not wheat but Kai (a kind of grass) that was growing. They further added if that had been wheat, the Mughal would have taken revenue from them. They told the Guru that this not so fertile land produced only *moth* and *bajra*. Similarly on another occasion, the Guru again viewed from the same mound and he exclaimed with joy having sighted the crops of sugarcane. Again, the mortal Sikhs corrected the Guru that it is not sugarcane but long grass.

There after the Guru told them, if they had not changed his words, the same crops that is grown in Sirhind would have been growing here. He further told them that

¹⁵⁹ Another tradition cremating of the two elder's sons of Guru Gobind at Chamkaur Sahib by Bibi Sharn Kaur.

¹⁶⁰ Balraj Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Likhnsar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 53 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

¹⁶¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, p.1082, see also Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, p. 87, see also Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra pp. 200-201, no. 100.

the Mughal ruler was being destroyed and Khalsa Raj would be established. In that glorious period, the land would yield large quantities of wheat.¹⁶² Gurdwara Nivas Asthan Patshahi Dasvi was built at Talwandi Sabo.

Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh carried the *Zaffarnama*. Bhai Daya Singh had to wait for a very long period to find an apt moment to meet the emperor. After a few months he could make use of the opportunity to hand over the *Zaffarnama* to the emperor. The emperor Aurangzeb was ninety-one years old at that time. He read the entire *Zaffarnama*. He had a deep effect on his mind as it did not only spell out the truth but also threw light on the fearless aspect of the Guru's personality. He could recall all the sins committed in his whole life. His entire body shuddered with a sense of remorse and regret. The emperor's peace of mind was completely disturbed. He wrote a letter to Guru Gobind Singh expressing his limitation in not being able to come to the North. It was due to his old age that he could not come. He made request to the Guru to make it possible to meet him in Ahmadnagar. He assured him that justice would be done. He wrote a separate letter to his sons in which he had expressed his remorse and regret.

The emperor shrewdly held Bhai Daya Singh back and he manage to coerce or coax him to procure a letter of recommendation for the Guru. The content of the letter had voiced the fact that emperor was feeling sorry over what had happened and was keen on having a meeting with him at Ahmadnagar. He also managed to pen a letter to his minister in Delhi asking him to withdraw all orders passed against the Guru. Two special messengers were despatched to deliver these letters, the one carrying the letter for the minister was to go to Delhi and the other carrying the letter for the Guru had to go Talwandi Sabo. On getting these letters the Guru decided to meet the emperor.

When the people came to know about this, they requested the Guru, to stay at Talwandi Sabo. People came there very often to meet the Guru and have his Darshan. The Guru asked some of his Sikhs to go with him to Deccan, but they were not willing to go to such a far-off place. The Guru had stayed at Talwandi Sabo for nine months and some days. In the morning, after offering his prayer to God, the Guru left Talwandi

¹⁶² Hardev Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 68 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

Sabo for Deccan¹⁶³ along with some of his Sikhs and Mata Sundari and Sahib Devan and after covering some distance both the Matas were sent to Delhi.

The Guru blessed Damdama Sahib with his presence. It has, now been declared as the fifth 'Takhat' or the seat of earthly authority of the Sikhs. It is now under the control of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and is considered to be a very important place of Sikh pilgrimage.

According to Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish at Sabo ki Talwandi the Guru had spent five months. They did not get any news of Daya Singh and Dharam Singh. They had gone to the Deccan to deliver the *Zaffarnama*. One day Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Desa brought the letter from Daya Singh and delivered it into the hands of the Guru at Sabo ki Talwandi. They requested, "Maharaj! Taking Jetha Singh along with us, we tried to contact Aurangzeb but could not succeed". The Guru wrote and gave five edicts to them and said, "Go, you will definitely successful". Bhai Dharam Singh and Desa Singh, with the permission of the Guru, disguising themselves as Ahdiyas and mounting on the camels, commenced their journey from Sabo ki Talwandi to go to Ahmednagar. Both the Sikhs arrived at Ahmednagar. They handed over the letter of Guru in the hands of Daya Singh. Bhai Daya Singh first touched it with his head to pay obeisance and then read it out. It was written in there, "If you abide by these five edicts mentioned here in by me, then you would get an access to the Emperor". Thereafter, along with Bhai Daya Singh, Dharam Singh, Jetha Singh, Shiv Singh and Desa Singh proceeded according to the Guru's instructions and met Emperor Aurangzeb. He placed the Guru's letter in his hands. The Emperor heard this through his scribe, with great concentration. After listening to the *Zaffarnama*, the Emperor, in dismay shook his head several times and said, "People at Delhi, all this time, had kept me in the Dark, otherwise such a godly person would have not been meted out such treatment". The scribe said, "Guru Gobind Singh, the worshipper of Nanak, has asked for an interview with you. Kindly direct what reply should be given to him?" The Emperor said to the scribe, "I do want to meet such a pious person so that I can help him. But my health is not in good shape. It is not feasible to leave for Delhi at this time. With utmost care he should be invited to Ahmednagar. He should be sent a proclamation written on the holy Quran, as desired by him, so that he can come and meet me at Ahmadnagar. The

¹⁶³ Ranjodh Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 76 years (Personal Interview on 13 September, 2018).

Emperor got the proclamation written on the holy Quran and despatched his Royal Kazi, the priest toward the direction of Delhi. Thereafter both Bhai Daya Singh and Dharam Singh travelled towards the place of the Guru. There, Guru was waiting for the return of Bhai Daya Singh and Dharam Singh thinking, “considerable time has lapsed, why have not they returned?” One day the Guru was imbued in deep meditation of the creator. Coming out of meditation, he said to Rai Dalla Singh, “celestial summons for Aurangzeb are arriving. Our meeting with him won’t be possible. Now we must move on. Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh are coming back after meeting the Emperor. We have to meet them on their way”. Hearing the news of Guru’s intention of leaving for Deccan, the devotees thronged from all the four directions of Sabo ki Talwandi. Three days before leaving for Deccan. The Guru addressed Bhai Mani Singh, “We have to perform Akhand Path”. The Guru asked Bhai Mani Singh to parkash to place of Sri Granth Sahib on a platform. This place was given the name of Damdama Sahib. On the third day, the priest reciting Granth Sahib completed the *path* and pudding was distributed amongst in the congregation. The Guru looked towards Bhai Mani Singh and propounded, “We have to depart from Sabo ki Talwandi, so get ready”. One and half *pehar* after sunrise, they arrived at the place of the ninth Guru, got the parshad prepared and distributed. Then Mata Sunder Saroop Kaur and Mata Sahib Kaur climbed up a bullock cart and five Sikhs, on the horse-back were to accompany them and five prominent Sikhs got ready to remain in the service of the Guru¹⁶⁴.

In Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi, it has been only written that the Guru got ready to move to South. Sarbat Khalsa came from far and wide, as Bhai Rupe and Bhai Dharam Singh, Budhu Sudhu Dewane, Abey Ram Sodhi from Kothe, Dan Singh and his son from Amritsar, Gurbaksh Singh Ramdasa, Bhai Ram Singh and Bhai Dyal Singh from Chakka. Ram Singh, Tirlok Singh from phul and Bhai Ghodriya from Bhucho, they requested the Guru to kindly stay there in Malwa. The Guru said, “There is no place like Damdama anywhere. But we have to go.” Dyal Singh, Bhai Mani Singh, Gurbaksh Singh and Bhai Santokh Singh were there to accompany the Guru. The Guru did Ardas at the place of ninth Guru and moved for south after living for nine months and nine days at Damdama Sahib¹⁶⁵.

According to Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Daya Singh with five Sikhs started

¹⁶⁴ Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, *Guru Kian Saakhian* (tr.) Pritpal Singh Bindra, pp. 200-206, no. 101.

¹⁶⁵ Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi (ed.) Bhai Sahib Bhai Veer Singh, pp. 118-119.

towards south taking *Zaffarnama* which was written by the Guru to give it to Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb agreed on reading it that his other partners had hurt the Guru a lot and had cheated upon him. Hill chiefs had become his enemy because of two reasons, first for opposing ideal worship and secondly because of getting up a separate religion. All of them had attacked the Guru together from which the Guru had suffered a lot of loss. The writing from Rai Dalla was presented to him at that time. When he read it, he was sure that now it would cause a lot of harm against the Guru. That's why he found it better to agree with the Guru. He wrote to the Guru that now he had come to know that he was true Sikh of Guru Nanak and of God. All of his partners had caused him harm. He promised to punish them himself when he would come to Delhi, but right then he asked the Guru come and meet him. The Guru made plan of moving to south after hearing this.

On hearing this, many Sikhs from far and wide came for the Guru's Darshan. As the names of the Sikhs have been mentioned in *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi's* work. Some Sikhs told the Guru that not only Malwa but the entire Punjab was with him. They felt that it was not safe to move to South alone and to meet Aurangzeb. We would all come with you. The Guru told that and one could come according to his will. Many Sikhs were ready but some were afraid. According to the writer next day Mata Sundari and Sahib Kaur were asked to move to Delhi and they were assured that they would be called to the place, where the Guru would stay. After that, next day, after nine months nine days and a Pehar (hour) living in Damdama, the Guru left Talwandi Sabo for south and they at stayed Kewal village seven miles away¹⁶⁶.

The present chapter has thrown light upon the journey of Guru Gobind Singh from Muktsar to Damdama Sahib. To trace this journey and to record the events that had occurred throughout, both the existing literature and the oral evidences, as well as folklores have been used with an objective approach. To conclude, Guru Gobind Singh left Muktsar and reached village Chatteana passing through Rupana, Bhundar and Gurusar. From here, Guru reached Jassi Bhagsar Wali, passing through Lakhi Jungle, Giddarbaha, Jangirana and Rohila Bibia. After that, Guru reached Sabo ki Talwandi passing through Pakka and Chak Hira Singh Wala, where the Guru breathed a sigh of relief after a long span of struggle. This place thus, came to be known as Damdama Sahib. The Guru had stayed here for nine months and some days. Thus, in writing

¹⁶⁶ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Vol. I, pp. 1085-1089.

down the Guru's expedition, oral evidences and folklores have proved to be a vital source, not only to fill in the gaps in the existing literature but also to testify and support the same.

CHAPTER – VI

CONCLUSION

The tenth Guru Gobind Singh was a martial saint and a visionary. His difficult life was the life of sacrifice, dedication, commitment and service of humanity. Born at Patna to the ninth Guru Teg Bahadur, he was called to Anandpur Sahib. His education and training were under the guidance of his noble father, who sacrificed his life for the cause of humanity. Govind Singh sat on the religious throne (Gadhi) at a very tender age of ten years. He grew up facing the hostility of hill chiefs on the one side and the looming dread of the Mughal forces on the other side. Under those trying conditions, he initiated Khalsa Panth, a religious sect of Warriors, who were courageous, valiant and bold enough to lay down their lives for the cause of humanity and their Guru. He not only created these warriors by baptizing them, making the taste nectar (amrit) to make them immortal, pure (Khalsa) and fearless (nirbhaya). He prepared them for warfare where 'one' would be able to compete and defeat Swa lakh (1^{1/4} lakh), what a challenge it was for the Guru to create such warriors using five *Kakar*: Comb (Kangha), long hair (Kesh), iron or steel bracelet (Kara), long underwear (Kachera) and knife with a curved blade (Kirpan). He not only initiated Khalsa Panth, he also gave Granth Sahib the lofty place of a *bir* and proclaimed it to be 'Guru Granth Sahib'. The scripture was given the solemn stature of a life long spiritual teacher.

This thesis has covered the trials, tribulations and glory of the historical march of the sacred honorable tenth Guru from Anandpur Sahib to Damdama Sahib. It is a journey of love and leadership. It is a journey where jealousy and devotion move side by side. A heart-rending journey where betrayed and protection vie with each other. There are men who live in awe of the Mughals, there are those who valiantly lay down their lives at the call of the Guru. He touched so many lives, blessed so many living beings, converted so many places into Gurdwaras and there were people who could not, unfortunate by avail of the Guru's compassion kindness and magnanimity.

The basis of the thesis is the oral tradition. But the study of the other historians have also been discussed simultaneously. They corroborate the conventional legacy very often but at certain places, the sequence of the events or the names of the places

are different. Their versions give legitimacy to the folk lore.

The Sikh Gurus have built several towns for the welfare of humanity and for promoting Sikhism. Later Guru Teg Bahadur purchased the land in Makhawal village from Rani Champa and paid the registration fees of about Rupees five hundred and that area was named Chak Nanaki. Thereafter Chak Nanaki became the nucleus of the religious activities. After that Chak Nanaki came to be known as Anandpur Sahib. Soon thereafter, Guru Gobind Singh the tenth master of the Sikhs was born at Patna December 22, 1666 A.D. Gobind Singh spent the first five and a half years of his life at Patna. Later on, Guru Teg Bahadur asked his family to be brought to Punjab. Guru Teg Bahadur took keen interest in Gobind Singh's education. Gobind Singh displayed a keen interest in horse riding and hunting. On the other hand, Aurangzeb had started a relentless campaign to convert his Hindu subjects to Islam. The Kashmiri Brahmins were offered by Sher Afghan, a difficult choice between Islam and death. The Kashmiri Pandits asked for and received six-month time period to consider whether they should embrace Islam or die for their religion. The Pandits had heard of the Guru Teg Bahadur's name and fame and they reached Anandpur Sahib. The leader of the deputation Kirpa Ram, was a Kashmiri Datt Brahmin. Guru Teg Bahadur patiently heard the supplicant Brahmins and felt that their cause needed a sacrifice which would put the Mughal ruler to shame. Gobind Singh in his innocent manner addressed his father, "None could be worthier than yourself for such a noble act". The Brahmins were then instructed to go away and tell the authorities that they would have no objection to changing their creed if, Guru Teg Bahadur could be converted. The Pandits went back and told this to the Governor who further conveyed that to Aurangzeb.

Emperor's mind was already prejudiced against Guru Teg Bahadur. This bold message infuriated him further. He ordered his deputies to summon him to the capital and force him to accept Islam or to choose death. The Guru along with the three companions Mati Das, Sati Das and Dayal Das was arrested at village Malikpur and was then sent to Delhi, in November, 1675. The efforts to convert the Guru to Islam persisted Guru Teg Bahadur attained martyrdom at the hands of Aurangzeb, on account of the latter's intolerant religious policy and this incident ushered a new critical phase in the Sikh history. According to some of the Sikh chronicles, Guru Teg Bahadur before his martyrdom sent a messenger to Anandpur Sahib that Gobind

Singh should be made his successor.

On Baisakhi day, March 29, 1676, a formal ceremony was held in which Singh came the next Guru. Gradually, Mughal emperor and hill chiefs turned against Guru Gobind Singh because the Guru had started performing various functions to unite the Sikhs. So, Guru Gobind Singh received an invitation from Raja Medni Parkash of Sirmur to stay with him for some time.

Guru Gobind Singh accepted his invitation and visited him. Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Nahan for some days and lived on the bank of Jamuna, he later on renamed it as Paonta. So, Paonta became the centre of literary activities of the Guru. The hill Rajas attacked Guru Gobind Singh with their separate armies. When the Guru came to know about the war-preparation of the hill Rajas, he chose to check Fateh Shah on the banks of the Giri at Bhangani, six miles to the North-East of Paonta. In October 1688, a severe and bloody battle was fought. The result of the battle was very encouraging, Guru Gobind Singh came out victorious and returned to Paonta from the battle field of Bhangani. But the Guru did not want to stay at Paonta for a very long time. So, he ordered his followers to go back to Anandpur Sahib. The Guru therefore, again started his organizational work. He built a chain of forts: Anandgarh, Fatehgarh, Holgarh, Lohgarh and Taragarh. But the peace was broken after about a year. He had to engage in a fight once again in 1747 BK (1690 A.D.), Because the hill chiefs had stopped paying the annual tribute to the Mughal government. So, the Mughal army was sent under the command of Alif Khan to teach the hill chief a lesson. The allies of hill chiefs requested the Guru to assist them. The Guru did not only provide military aid but he also personally took part in the battle of Nadaun. As the battle of Nadaun had been fought and won by the Guru and the hill chiefs together, but the victory was regarded by all as being that of the Guru. But the hill chiefs without consulting the Guru agreed to pay tribute to the Mughal Court, so the Governor of Lahore, decided to defeat the Guru. He sent his son, Rustam Khan to do this, the Mughal soldiers had to flee with their weapons unused. The Guru was again victorious. After that, Dilawar Khan gave orders to Hussain Khan to smash the power of the Guru but Hussain Khan and his allies won a decisive victory. So, Dilawar Khan in a bid to do something immediately and hurriedly sent Jujhar Singh and Chandel Rai towards Jaswan. But before they could go farther, Gaj Singh of Jaswan fought against Jujhar Singh and Chandel Rai and he won an easy victory. The news of the repeated failures of the

expeditions against the Guru reached Aurangzeb who was at that time in Deccan. Aurangzeb became very angry and sent one of his own sons, prince Muazim, afterwards known as Bahadur shah, for the restoration of order in the hills. In 1696 A.D. the prince himself took up his position at Lahore. He sent Mirza Beg with a strong force to chastise the Guru, through the interaction of Bhai Nand Lal, who was a secretary to the prince. On the other hand, Bhai Nand Lal, considered himself to be friendly with the Guru. The prince sent Nand Lal on his behalf. The Guru promised him all aid and assured him of his accession to the throne after Aurangzeb.

Under those pressing conditions the Guru united the Sikhs and infused a new spirit into them and in this way *Khalsa Panth* was created. At that time, *masands* had become corrupt. Guru Gobind Singh had also established a new organization to eliminate them and to punish these *masands*. All the corrupt *masand's* were thrown into the well and set on fire. Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have given the similar information as popular in oral tradition.

According to the local tradition, Guru Gobind Singh sent *Hukamnama* to the *Sangat* that all the Sikhs should reach Anandpur Sahib. On the day of Baisakhi, on April 13, 1699, many Sikhs reached Anandpur Sahib. A huge *Diwan* installed at Keshgarh Sahib. The Guru came to the platform with a sword and said, *My Sword needs a head*. Bhai Daya Ram, Bhai Dharm Das, Bhai Mohkam Chand, Bhai Himmat Singh and Bhai Sahib Chand offered to present their head turn by turn. All the three authors, Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Giani Thakur Singh have supported the oral evidence. Then, the Guru introduced his five beloveds to the *Sangat*. The *Amrit* (nectar) of immortality was now ready. The Guru gave the nectar to the five beloved and said *Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*. They were given the Surname of *Singh*, meaning lion and were ever to wear the five emblems (Kakar) of the *Khalsa*, they are *Kesh* (Long Hair) *Kangha* (Comb) *Kara* (A Steel Bracelet) *Kachha* (Start Breeches worn by Soldiers of that time) and *Kirpan* (A Sword). Then, the Guru had nectar from the five beloveds. Being baptized by his own disciples. The Guru merged into *Khalsa*. Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have also thrown light on the events that had taken place on the Baisakhi day.

The differences between Guru Gobind Singh and the hill rajas had become more pronounced after the creation of the *Khalsa* and they wrote a letter to Aurangzeb

against the Guru. Aurangzeb sent forces against the Guru under the command of Dina Bheg and Painda Khan. In the battle field, Painda Khan died on the spot through the arrows which were shot by Guru Gobind Singh. Dina Bheg was also injured. The same incident has been mentioned by Giani Gian Singh.

At that time the festival of Holi was approaching. The Guru announced that there would be Holi for the other people but there would be Hola Mahalla for the Sikhs. Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish had discussed the events that had led to the start of the Hola Mahalla celebration by the Guru, Giani Thakur Singh has given a slightly different account. On the other hand, hill chiefs could not tolerate the rising glory of Guru Gobind Singh which resulted in many fierce battles that the Guru and his Sikhs had to fight against the hill chiefs. The Mughals also supported the hill chiefs in these battles against the Guru. As per another oral tradition, Ajmer Chand sent a letter to the Guru before attacking him and asked him to pay rent of Anandpur Sahib and to continue paying in future as well. When the Guru refused to pay rent to the hill chiefs, they attacked on Anandpur Sahib. After a fierce fight and strong resistance, the hill chiefs went back. Giani Gian Singh also had corroborated the same events, in his work.

As per another oral tradition, the Sikhs who sacrificed their lives in the first battle of Anandpur Sahib, were cremated by Guru Gobind Singh himself at his own Garden at Anandpur Sahib. Now the place is known as “Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh” and “Gurdwara Shaheedi Bagh”. So, in order to take revenge, the hill chiefs planned to siege Anandpur Sahib. The hill chiefs decided to send a drunken elephant with an iron pole tied upon it, to attack on the Fort’s door. Guru Gobind Singh very intelligently defeated the purpose of the hill chiefs, by first sending Duni Chand and later on Bachittar Singh to make the elephant retreat. He foiled the attempt by using Nagani Barchaa. Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Giani Gian Singh have also, narrated a detailed story regarding the attack by the hill rajas on Lohgarh Fort.

As per another oral tradition, the Hindu and Muslim hill chiefs acted very cleverly. They swore in the name of their Scriptures and convinced the Guru, these followers tried to persuade him to leave Lohgarh fort for a short while. He was prevailed upon by the followers and moved some distance from Anandpur Sahib to Nirmohgarh. But these false promises were broken by the hill rajas and the Mughals and the Guru and his men were attacked several times.

Giani Gian Singh has corroborated the above account, Giani Thakur Singh has added something new and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has given somewhat different information.

From Nirmohgarh, Guru Gobind Singh went to Basoli as he was invited by the King of Basoli, there were three places which were famous and connected with Guru Gobind Singh. The folk lore has described that Guru Gobind Singh while staying at Basoli had visited Bibor, after the humble request of the king of Bibor. Here Guru Gobind Singh recited *Chaupai Sahib*. Some Sikhs from the *Sangat* complained to the Guru when they were coming to see him for his *darshan*, on the way some people of Kalmot had looted them. Next morning, Guru Gobind Singh reached Kalmot with his Singhs, when people there Kalmot, came to know about that, they went into hiding in a Fort at Kalmot. As a result, people inside the Fort became nervous and they asked for forgiveness.

According to the lore, when Guru Gobind Singh was returning from Kalmot, some of his Singhs requested him to return to Anandpur Sahib. The Guru agreed to the request of his *Khalsa* and Guru Gobind Singh reached Anandpur Sahib. Though, outwardly Bheem Chand of Kahlur and Bhup Chand of Handur had always thought of some means to destroy the Guru. Thereafter Anandpur Sahib faced another attack on December 2, 1704 A.D. But the Guru's enemies left the battlefield without defeating the Guru's valiant forces. The hill rajas again approached the Mughal Government for aid. All the combined forces proceeded towards Anandpur Sahib from Ropar on December 20, 1704 A.D. When Mughals surrounded the fort of Anandpur Sahib, there was shortage of food. The Sikhs managed to satiate their hunger by eating leaves of trees. Then they asked Mata Gujri to convince the Guru to change the place. When the Guru did not agree with them, then forty Sikhs of Majha region under the leadership of Maha Singh, wrote *Bedawa* and left the fort. Giani Gian Singh has given different version about the above mentioned occurrence.

After getting the *Bedawa* of forty Sikhs, the remaining Sikhs, got the approval of the Mata Gujri as they convinced her that hill chiefs and Mughals had taken oath over the holy books *Geeta* and *Kuran*, that they would settle the matter once the Guru would leave the Fort. But the Guru had got the hiking of their (hill rajas) trap. So, Guru Gobind Singh decided to fight the battle station within the fort. On the humble request of Mata Gujri and Singhs, the Guru had gone into a deep reverie and then

made up his mind to leave the Fort and on one cold December night, they left the fort, at midnight and crossed the Sarsa river. Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have given more detailed explanation about the above tradition.

The Mughals and the hill chiefs came to know that there were only a few Sikhs with the Guru, they attacked him. The Guru reached the bank of Sarsa river from Sahi Tibbi, the river was flooded and the Mughals were chasing them. The Guru ordered all of them to just cross the river. The Guru, Mata Gujri, four Sahibzadas, two wives of the Guru and some Sikhs could cross the river. Guru Gobind Singh moved to Ropar after having crossed the river Sarsa. But Mughal army attacked the Guru and Sikhs at Malakpur Ranga. The Guru and Singhs faced them bravely. But, Mata Gujri, Sahibzada Joravar Singh and Fateh Singh got separated from the Guru. Then the Guru reached the bricks kiln factory (Bhatha) passing through Tibba, Ghanola and Cambe. When the Pathan Nihang khan of Kotla came to know about the Guru's arrival in the bricks kiln factory, he himself came to fetch the Guru to his house.

As per tradition, the Guru stayed at Nihang Khan's house. At night, the Guru asked them to move to Chamkaur. As Mughals were in search of them, it was very dangerous to stay in Nihang Khan's house. The information given in the oral tradition has also been confirmed by Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish and Giani Gian Singh.

As per tradition, the Guru reached Chamkaur passing through Brahman Majra and Boor Majra along with forty Sikhs and two elders Sahibzadas. There was a *Haveli* of two brothers, Jagt Singh and Roop Chand. Both were Guru's ardent followers. When the Guru asked Jagat Singh to allow him to stay in his *Haveli* to fight against the Mughals, he refused because of being afraid of the Mughals. But Roop Chand opened the door of *Haveli* for the Guru. The *Haveli* changed into the *Garhi*. Then Guru Gobind Singh positioned the Sikhs everywhere around the *Garhi*. The Mughal started surrounding the *Garhi* early in the morning.

When the Mughal army attacked the *Garhi*, at first, Sikhs fought from inside the *Garhi*. Then the Sikhs came out of the *Garhi* in fives and confronted the Mughals according to the sequence decided by the Guru and Singhs sacrificed their lives. On seeing this, Sahibzadas Jhujhar Singh and Ajit Singh sought Guru's permission to take part in the war. They fought bravely and sacrificed their lives.

In the end only, five Sikhs were left with the Guru. Mughals had come very

near to the Garhi. Bhai Daya Singh requested the Guru to leave the Garhi. The Guru did not concede to his request. All of them told him, "Guruji, you had decided where even five Sikhs would take a decision, everyone would obey five Singh's order". They reminded him to Khalsa's order to move to a safe place. The Guru could not reject this. So, the Guru started making preparation of leaving the *Garhi* and told Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh too to leave with him. The Guru did not want to go quietly. So, he clapped three times and said around loudly, "the Guru is leaving the *Garhi*".

According to the oral tradition, when Guru Gobind Singh left the *Garhi* of Chamkaur with Daya Singh, Dharam Singh and Maan Singh, got separated from the Guru later on. As per the Sikh tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached Machhiwara passing through Behlolpur, Poat and Sehjo Majra. He felt extremely tired and fell asleep on the dugout damp ground in the garden. Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh found the Guru in the garden.

According to another lore, when Gulaba masand heard of the Guru's presence in his Garden, he came running to serve him. At night Gulaba took them (Guru and Singhs) to his house.

According to the lore, Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan two Rohila Pathan brothers, heard about the Guru, and they came to meet the Guru in Gulaba's house. They also informed the Guru about the Mughal forces following him and requested him to shift to their house and the Guru obliged by accepting his invitation.

Here, the Guru thought of writing a letter to Emperor Aurangzeb to inform him about the behaviour of his Generals and the false oaths taken by his religious and treacherous minions and he asked one of the two Pathan brothers to call Sayyad Inayat Ali.

The Guru had seen Nabi Khan's and Ghani Khan's, dressed in blue clothes as *hajis* generally do. The Guru planned to wear similarly dyed clothes and discussed with him the proposal to move out of that place, along with the Sikhs, disguised as a Muslim Pir, seated on a *Charpoy* as decided by the common consent. The Pathan brothers were to escort the Guru as *Uch Da Pir*.

After that Guru Gobind Singh gave letter to Sayyad Inayat Ali to keep that in safe custody, till he (Guru) had succeeded in his plan and if by chance he got

captured, then Sayyad Inayat Ali was asked to give that letter to the Emperor Aurangzeb.

As per the plan, Guru Gobind Singh was seated on the charpoy and was lifted and carried by Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, Mani Singh and Dharam Singh. Moreover, Daya Singh was waving a *Chaur* over him. When they were questioned, the Pathan brothers told the leader that they were carrying their *Pir* and moving out of *Machhiwara*. Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have supported this anecdote and have given a brief account as had been found in the oral evidence regarding *Uch da Pir* episode.

But at a predetermined place, Sayyad Inayat Ali also met them. As the whole party reached Ghulal village. The letter that Guru had given to Sayyat Inayat Ali for safe custody was returned to the Guru by him. As per local tradition, then, he reached Alamgeer passing through Lall Kalan, Kubba, Katani, Rampur, Kanech, Sahnawal, Nandpur, Tibba. The Guru had come here as *Uch da Pir*. Here Bhai Nodha Singh offered one horse to the Guru for riding. The Guru moved ahead on this horse. The Guru sent Nabi Khan and Ganni Khan back from this place.

After that the Guru reached *Juhu* of Raikot passing through Hayer, Jodh Ratan, Mohi and Rameana.

Rai Kalla Chaudhary of Raikot came to know about the Guru's arrival. He made arrangements for the Guru and came to Lame Jattpure. The Guru asked Rai Kalla to obtain information about Mata Gujri and the two younger Sahibzadas from Sirhind. Thereafter Noora was sent to Sirhind to get some news. The Guru further visited many villages like Bassian, Seloani and Kamalpura with Rai Kalla. After some days, Noora came back with the news of martyrdom of two younger Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri as well. The Guru retained his composure while listening to the news, the Guru kept digging the Kai (Grass) with an arrow and the Guru pulled out one root of Kai (Grass) with an arrow and told that the Mughals have been uprooted. Rai Kalla replied to this by saying that he was also a Mughal (Khan) but he was the Guru's devotee. Then the Guru gave him sword and Gangsagar (Jug) and blessed that till the time, when he would respect these, his territory would remain.

From Lame Jattpure, the Guru reached Dina passing through Madhe Ke, Manuke, Mahiteana, Chakar and Takhtupura. According to the local tradition, when

the Guru reached Dina, Lakhmir, Samir and Takhtmal requested the Guru to stay at their home, but the Guru expressed his wish to stay at Bhai Deshu's house who was a carpenter by profession.

One day, Wazir Khan sent a strongly-worded letter to Samir and his brother and reprimanded them for the having provided shelter to the Guru. He wanted them to immediately surrender the Guru to the royal custody, otherwise all of them would be arrested. But Samir stayed firm like a rock. He sent a message of refusal. Impressed by their respect and service, the Guru blessed them with the title of Lohgarh. All the historians (under study) have more or less corroborated this account.

From Dina, Guru Gobind Singh spent his day time in Dyalpura Bhai ka. Further, Bhai Daya Singh had mentioned that as Aurangzeb was the real enemy, the Guru asked if Aurangzeb should be taught a lesson with a pen or a sword? The decision was that he should be taught a lesson with the help of Pen (Kalam). The Guru wrote a letter to Aurangzeb. The letter is known as *Zaffarnama* in history.

When the Guru was at Dina, *Zaffarnama* was sent by Guru Gobind Singh through Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh to Aurangzeb. As Nwab Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sirhind came to know that Guru Gobind Singh had taken shelter at Dina, he sent his army to attack the Sikhs. The Guru realised that place was not suitable for the battle ground as people would suffer. So the Guru decided to leave Dina in search of a suitable place.

As per another tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached Bargarhi village passing through Rakhwala, Bhagta Bhai ka, Doad, Lambwali and Wander. The village was occupied by Nanda, cousin of Chaudhary Kapura of Kotkapura. When the Guru reached Bargarhi village, Nanda was on the verge of fighting against Kapura, but when he came to know about the Guru's visit, he came to see the Guru. The Guru asked him where he was going. Nanda shared with the Guru that he was going to have a war. The Guru forbade him from getting engaged in any warfare. The Guru asked him, to wait for two days and he would be victorious. Thereafter Nanda accepted the words of the Guru. Next morning, Chaudhary Kapura came with his soldiers to wage a war. But Nanda kept the word given to the Guru and he did not go out to fight. The war had started. Nanda's wife was not aware of anything. So, she started cursing her husband asking him why he was not going to the battle field himself. Nanda could not

tolerate this insult and unfortunately, he forgot the words of the Guru and went to the battlefield himself. So unfortunately, he was killed.

Giani Thakur Singh, Giani Gian Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothe and Tara Singh Narotam have all corroborated this oral tradition.

According to the local tradition, from village Bargarhi, Guru Gobind Singh reached Behbal Kalan. and camped on a hill. As per the tradition, with the presence of the Guru in the village Behbal Kalan, the number of Sikhs increased considerably. The Guru encamped on a hill outside the village. There was another village Srawan nearby village. The chiefs of both the villages humbly requested Guru Gobind Singh to send his Sikhs to the different houses to be served food and water as it was difficult for them to arrange the entire stuff at one place. So, the Guru agreed and accepted the reasonable request. One Singh named Milagar Singh was sent to the home of a very poor man called Bhai Ganga Singh in the village Behbal Kallan. There was no food at his home. Next morning, when all the Sikhs came back, the Guru asked them about what food item they had partaken in dinner. Some said *Kheer Prasad*, *Karah Prasad* some said *Dal Prasada* but Milagar Singh remained silent. When asked by the Guru, he replied that the food he had eaten last night, he had never had it before. All the village people present there were surprised to hear that. One landlord presents there told Guru Gobind Singh that the place and house where Milagar Singh had gone to have food belonged to a was very poor person. The Guru wanted to meet that man and he was called. When the Guru asked that man, Bhai Ganga Singh, that poor man shared with the Guru that he was very poor and he could just offer only boiled dried nuts. The Guru was very pleased to know that and he blessed Milagar Singh for his patience and truth. Giani Gian Singh has written different version about this anecdote.

According to another oral tradition, the Guru had received the news that Mughal army was chasing him. Guru Gobind Singh was busy in searching a place for his safety. He was looking for a place where he could defend himself effectively and thus, he reached Kotkapura along with a large number of Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh camped outside the town. When they heard about the Guru's arrival in their midst. Chaudhary Kapura, who was the founder of the town and also an agent of the Mughals army came to pay his respect.

According to another tradition, Guru Gobind Singh had come to know that a

large Mughal force of Sirhind was pursuing him and was on its way towards the area. The Guru this with Chaudhary Kapura and asked him to allow the use of the fortress in self-defense against the approaching enemy's force. But Chaudhary Kapura did not concede to the Guru's wish.

From Kotkapura, the Guru reached Dhilwan Kalan. When Sodhi Kaul came to know about the Guru's arrival he reached there and welcomed the Guru.

All the writers have corroborated the account of Guru's meeting with Sodhi Kaul, as described in oral tradition.

At night, when the Guru was taking bath, Sodhi Kaul observed that the blue clothes of the Guru, were totally damaged and tattered, then he went to his home and brought a white coloured dress for the Guru and requested him very politely to wear the white dress. The Guru agreed and wore the white dress

With the only exception of Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, the others historians have approved of the oral tradition.

As per another oral tradition, when Kapura realized his mistake and he reached Dhilwan Kalan, to pay his respect to the Guru. He sought the Guru's forgiveness the heart of the kind hearted Guru melted and he blessed with him a *double-edged sword* and a *shield (Khanda and Dhal)*. He was fortunate to receive the blessings of the Guru.

At Dhilwan Kalan, some Sikhs brought the news that the large Mughal forces were approaching them. Choudhary Kapura advised the Guru that the sandy mound of Khidrana was the most suitable place for the battle and the Guru moved towards Khidrana. Giani Gian Singh corroborated the above oral tradition.

When the Guru was passing through Guru ki Dhab, Jaito, Sunier village he reached Rameana, many Sikhs who had once written Bedawa and had left Guru Gobind Singh in Anandpur Sahib, came to this place to meet the Guru with their chiefs. All of them requested the Guru with folded hands to stop fighting the Mughals. They told the Guru if he would not stop fighting against the Mughals, many other Sikhs are ready to write Bedawa to him and they would leave him.

With the exception of Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish all writers have agreed to the oral tradition.

Thereafter the Guru reached Khidrana di Dhab passing through Mallan, Gurhi Sanghar, Kaoni. Later, he found a pool of water and dense forest also. So, the Guru along with his Sikhs decided to stay there. In the shelter of the sandy mounds (Tibbi), the Guru watched his Sikh soliders facing their enemies bravely and the Guru also shot arrows at the enemy. The Mugal army attacked him on 21 Visakh, 1705 A.D.

After the battle, the Guru descended from the Tibbi. When the Guru reached the battle field he found Mata Bhag Kaur lying wounded. She was the leader of the forty Sikhs who had deserted Guru Gobind Singh during the battle of Anandpur Sahib. She paid her respect to the Guru and told him about the martyrdom of forty Sikhs.

Among the dead Sikhs, Bhai Maha Singh was still alive. The Guru praised the bravery of Maha Singh and wanted to grant him a boon. Maha Singh requested the Guru for the cancellation of the deed of renunciation, he and some of his companions had signed before leaving the Anandpur. The Guru accepted his request and he took out the *Bedawa* form his pocket and tore it into pieces. The Guru named the forty Sikhs, the forty *Mukte*. Khidrana came to be known after them as Muktsar (pool of Salvation).

With the exception of Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish, the other writers have corroborated the oral tradition.

Thereafter, the bodies of forty *muktas* were cremated by Guru Gobind Singh himself. During this period, the Guru visited many villages Jand Sahib, Bajidpur, Nage di Sran and Harike Kalan.

The battle of Muktsar was the last battle of Guru Gobind Singh. After that, the Guru moved towards Talwandi Sabo. The Guru came to Chatteana passing through Rupana, Bhondur, Gurusar and Theri. There lived a spiritual guide (pir) named Wehmi. When he met the Guru, he prayed to the Guru to make him a Sikh by pouring the nectar. After that the pir was baptized and he was renamed as Ajmer Singh. The Sikhs asked for salaries in Chatteana village from the Guru. The Guru gave salaries to all the Brars. Bhai Daan Singh was left at last. The Guru asked about his salary. But he requested the Guru to blessed him with Sikhism only, the Guru was so pleased to hear that and replied that you have kept Malwa's dignity as Maha Singh kept of Majha. Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Malwa Desh

Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have corroborated with the oral tradition.

From Sahib Chand, the Guru came to Bhai Kot. There were two brothers named Ghummi and Ranghi having Bansal as their surname. They requested the Guru for nectar. After being baptized they were given the names as Bhai Ghummi Singh and Bhai Ranghi Singh. Their next generations have been now living in Bhai ka Kot.

Bhai Daan Singh Brar requested the Guru to come to his village. The Guru accepted his invitation and moved towards to his village passing through Lakhi jungle (forest) and he reached Mehma Sarga.

Daan Singh told the Guru that the name of Mehma Sarja village was after the name of his grandfather Mehma Sarja. But he wanted to own a village on his real father's name Abloo. The Guru shot an arrow and asked Daan Singh to own a village till the place where that arrow would land. Bhai Daan Singh got the village Abloo established at the place where the arrow had landed.

From here, the Guru went to Jassi Bhagwali passing through Bhokhdi, Gidharbaha, Rohilla, Kal Jharani, Jangi Rana, Bambhiha and Kot Guru. The Guru took bath there in a pond along with his clothes and horse. When the Guru took bath, the clothes which had got wet became white and the horse also became white. The Guru's turban remained of the same colour as it did not get wet. The Sikhs were curious about this miracle. The Guru explained that was a holy place Lord (Shri). Ram Chandar had come here. One more thing was famous about that place that Guru Nanak Dev had also visited that place. From there the Guru had reached near Talwandi Sabo passing through Pakka, Chak Hira Singh Wala. Dalla came forward at this place with four hundred men to welcome the Guru.

At Talwandi Sabo, Guru Gobind Singh un-tied his waistband after a period of almost one and a quarter year and heaved a sigh of relief. That is why Talwandi Sabo is known as Damdama Sahib.

A similar account has been given in the Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi pothi, Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Thakur Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have described Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Damdama Sahib. Several days had passed in peaceful atmosphere at Talwandi Sabo. Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Devan were brought from Delhi. Mata Sundri enquired from the Guru about the four sons and their Mata as well. The Guru informed them about the martyrdom of Mata Gujri and

the martyrdom of the four sons as well.

Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Gian Singh and Giani Thakur Singh had given similar account about the above folk lore.

At this place, the Guru announced his decision to re-write the holy Granth and dictated the bani to Bhai Mani Singh. In this three month the whole scripture was completed.

At Talwandi Sabo, Dalla had recently received a letter from the Governor of Sirhind. He wanted to capture the Guru. So, the letter to Dalla was a warning and he demanded the Guru's surrender. Otherwise, the army would come marching towards him. Dalla replied to the Governor informing him that his life and death were bound with the Guru. He was prepared to fight against them. The Guru was greatly pleased with the boldness of Dalla's reply and blessed him. Giani Gian Singh, in his work has also written about Dalla receiving a letter from the Governor of Sirhind.

From Talwandi Sabo, Guru Gobind Singh visited many villages named Bhocho, Bhagu, Bathinda, Chak Fateh Singh Wala, Laverisar, Bhagi Wander and Kot Shamir.

On the other side, Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh, carried the *Zaffarnama*. It was Bhai Daya Singh who had to look for a suitable opportunity to meet the emperor. It was after a few months that he could avail the opportunity to meet the Emperor and deliver of *Zaffarnama* to him. The Emperor Aurangzeb was then ninety-one years old. He read the whole of *Zaffarnama*. *Zaffarnama* had a deep effect on his mind and he wrote a letter to Guru Gobind Singh, showing his inability to come to the North due to old age and requested the Guru to make it convenient to meet him in Ahmadnagar.

He had also written a letter to his minister in Delhi, instructing him to withdraw all orders issued against the Guru. The Emperor had shrewdly retained Bhai Daya Singh and got a letter of recommendation from him in the name of the Guru to the effect that the emperor was feeling sorry at what had happened and was anxious to have a meeting with the Guru at Ahmadnagar. These letters were sent through two special messengers who delivered the letter meant for the minister in Delhi and then the other letters to be delivered to the Guru at Talwandi Sabo. It was on receipt of these letters that the Guru made up his mind to meet the emperor. The Guru stayed

there for nine months and some days. In the morning time, after the prayer the Guru left Talwandi Sabo for Deccan in October 1706 A.D, along with some Sikhs and Mata Sundri and Sahib Devan. But Mata Sundri and Sahib Devan were asked to move to Delhi and they would be called to the place, where the Guru would stay. Giani Gian Singh has agreed with the oral tradition but Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also expressed some different details regarding Aurangzeb's meeting with Daya Singh regarding *Zaffarnama*.

All these events and incidents regarding Guru Gobind Singh's march have been found in the oral tradition and anecdotes which have been supported by the available literature. In this way, the importance of the oral evidence became more relevant and they have proved to be more authentic. The oral and local traditions have played a vital role in the reconstruction of the past and the research on the various aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's life and personality would have remained incomplete without the oral evidence, as the oral evidence or tradition, lore or anecdotes fill the gaps which have been left by the available literature.

**GURU GOBIND SINGH'S MARCH FROM
ANANDPUR SAHIB TO DAMDAMA SAHIB:
AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ORAL
TRADITION**

A

THESIS

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CHAPTER – VI

CONCLUSION

The tenth Guru Gobind Singh was a martial saint and a visionary. His difficult life was the life of sacrifice, dedication, commitment and service of humanity. Born at Patna to the ninth Guru Teg Bahadur, he was called to Anandpur Sahib. His education and training were under the guidance of his noble father, who sacrificed his life for the cause of humanity. Govind Singh sat on the religious throne (Gadhi) at a very tender age of ten years. He grew up facing the hostility of hill chiefs on the one side and the looming dread of the Mughal forces on the other side. Under those trying conditions, he initiated Khalsa Panth, a religious sect of Warriors, who were courageous, valiant and bold enough to lay down their lives for the cause of humanity and their Guru. He not only created these warriors by baptizing them, making the taste nectar (amrit) to make them immortal, pure (Khalsa) and fearless (nirbhaya). He prepared them for warfare where 'one' would be able to compete and defeat Swa lakh (1^{1/4} lakh), what a challenge it was for the Guru to create such warriors using five *Kakar*: Comb (Kangha), long hair (Kesh), iron or steel bracelet (Kara), long underwear (Kachera) and knife with a curved blade (Kirpan). He not only initiated Khalsa Panth, he also gave Granth Sahib the lofty place of a *bir* and proclaimed it to be 'Guru Granth Sahib'. The scripture was given the solemn stature of a life long spiritual teacher.

This thesis has covered the trials, tribulations and glory of the historical march of the sacred honorable tenth Guru from Anandpur Sahib to Damdama Sahib. It is a journey of love and leadership. It is a journey where jealousy and devotion move side by side. A heart-rending journey where betrayed and protection vie with each other. There are men who live in awe of the Mughals, there are those who valiantly lay down their lives at the call of the Guru. He touched so many lives, blessed so many living beings, converted so many places into Gurdwaras and there were people who could not, unfortunate by avail of the Guru's compassion kindness and magnanimity.

The basis of the thesis is the oral tradition. But the study of the other historians have also been discussed simultaneously. They corroborate the conventional legacy very often but at certain places, the sequence of the events or the names of the places

are different. Their versions give legitimacy to the folk lore.

The Sikh Gurus have built several towns for the welfare of humanity and for promoting Sikhism. Later Guru Teg Bahadur purchased the land in Makhawal village from Rani Champa and paid the registration fees of about Rupees five hundred and that area was named Chak Nanaki. Thereafter Chak Nanaki became the nucleus of the religious activities. After that Chak Nanaki came to be known as Anandpur Sahib. Soon thereafter, Guru Gobind Singh the tenth master of the Sikhs was born at Patna December 22, 1666 A.D. Gobind Singh spent the first five and a half years of his life at Patna. Later on, Guru Teg Bahadur asked his family to be brought to Punjab. Guru Teg Bahadur took keen interest in Gobind Singh's education. Gobind Singh displayed a keen interest in horse riding and hunting. On the other hand, Aurangzeb had started a relentless campaign to convert his Hindu subjects to Islam. The Kashmiri Brahmins were offered by Sher Afghan, a difficult choice between Islam and death. The Kashmiri Pandits asked for and received six-month time period to consider whether they should embrace Islam or die for their religion. The Pandits had heard of the Guru Teg Bahadur's name and fame and they reached Anandpur Sahib. The leader of the deputation Kirpa Ram, was a Kashmiri Datt Brahmin. Guru Teg Bahadur patiently heard the supplicant Brahmins and felt that their cause needed a sacrifice which would put the Mughal ruler to shame. Gobind Singh in his innocent manner addressed his father, "None could be worthier than yourself for such a noble act". The Brahmins were then instructed to go away and tell the authorities that they would have no objection to changing their creed if, Guru Teg Bahadur could be converted. The Pandits went back and told this to the Governor who further conveyed that to Aurangzeb.

Emperor's mind was already prejudiced against Guru Teg Bahadur. This bold message infuriated him further. He ordered his deputies to summon him to the capital and force him to accept Islam or to choose death. The Guru along with the three companions Mati Das, Sati Das and Dayal Das was arrested at village Malikpur and was then sent to Delhi, in November, 1675. The efforts to convert the Guru to Islam persisted Guru Teg Bahadur attained martyrdom at the hands of Aurangzeb, on account of the latter's intolerant religious policy and this incident ushered a new critical phase in the Sikh history. According to some of the Sikh chronicles, Guru Teg Bahadur before his martyrdom sent a messenger to Anandpur Sahib that Gobind

Singh should be made his successor.

On Baisakhi day, March 29, 1676, a formal ceremony was held in which Singh came the next Guru. Gradually, Mughal emperor and hill chiefs turned against Guru Gobind Singh because the Guru had started performing various functions to unite the Sikhs. So, Guru Gobind Singh received an invitation from Raja Medni Parkash of Sirmur to stay with him for some time.

Guru Gobind Singh accepted his invitation and visited him. Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Nahan for some days and lived on the bank of Jamuna, he later on renamed it as Paonta. So, Paonta became the centre of literary activities of the Guru. The hill Rajas attacked Guru Gobind Singh with their separate armies. When the Guru came to know about the war-preparation of the hill Rajas, he chose to check Fateh Shah on the banks of the Giri at Bhangani, six miles to the North-East of Paonta. In October 1688, a severe and bloody battle was fought. The result of the battle was very encouraging, Guru Gobind Singh came out victorious and returned to Paonta from the battle field of Bhangani. But the Guru did not want to stay at Paonta for a very long time. So, he ordered his followers to go back to Anandpur Sahib. The Guru therefore, again started his organizational work. He built a chain of forts: Anandgarh, Fatehgarh, Holgarh, Lohgarh and Taragarh. But the peace was broken after about a year. He had to engage in a fight once again in 1747 BK (1690 A.D.), Because the hill chiefs had stopped paying the annual tribute to the Mughal government. So, the Mughal army was sent under the command of Alif Khan to teach the hill chief a lesson. The allies of hill chiefs requested the Guru to assist them. The Guru did not only provide military aid but he also personally took part in the battle of Nadaun. As the battle of Nadaun had been fought and won by the Guru and the hill chiefs together, but the victory was regarded by all as being that of the Guru. But the hill chiefs without consulting the Guru agreed to pay tribute to the Mughal Court, so the Governor of Lahore, decided to defeat the Guru. He sent his son, Rustam Khan to do this, the Mughal soldiers had to flee with their weapons unused. The Guru was again victorious. After that, Dilawar Khan gave orders to Hussain Khan to smash the power of the Guru but Hussain Khan and his allies won a decisive victory. So, Dilawar Khan in a bid to do something immediately and hurriedly sent Jujhar Singh and Chandel Rai towards Jaswan. But before they could go farther, Gaj Singh of Jaswan fought against Jujhar Singh and Chandel Rai and he won an easy victory. The news of the repeated failures of the

expeditions against the Guru reached Aurangzeb who was at that time in Deccan. Aurangzeb became very angry and sent one of his own sons, prince Muazim, afterwards known as Bahadur shah, for the restoration of order in the hills. In 1696 A.D. the prince himself took up his position at Lahore. He sent Mirza Beg with a strong force to chastise the Guru, through the interaction of Bhai Nand Lal, who was a secretary to the prince. On the other hand, Bhai Nand Lal, considered himself to be friendly with the Guru. The prince sent Nand Lal on his behalf. The Guru promised him all aid and assured him of his accession to the throne after Aurangzeb.

Under those pressing conditions the Guru united the Sikhs and infused a new spirit into them and in this way *Khalsa Panth* was created. At that time, *masands* had become corrupt. Guru Gobind Singh had also established a new organization to eliminate them and to punish these *masands*. All the corrupt *masand's* were thrown into the well and set on fire. Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have given the similar information as popular in oral tradition.

According to the local tradition, Guru Gobind Singh sent *Hukamnama* to the *Sangat* that all the Sikhs should reach Anandpur Sahib. On the day of Baisakhi, on April 13, 1699, many Sikhs reached Anandpur Sahib. A huge *Diwan* installed at Keshgarh Sahib. The Guru came to the platform with a sword and said, *My Sword needs a head*. Bhai Daya Ram, Bhai Dharm Das, Bhai Mohkam Chand, Bhai Himmat Singh and Bhai Sahib Chand offered to present their head turn by turn. All the three authors, Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Giani Thakur Singh have supported the oral evidence. Then, the Guru introduced his five beloveds to the *Sangat*. The *Amrit* (nectar) of immortality was now ready. The Guru gave the nectar to the five beloved and said *Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*. They were given the Surname of *Singh*, meaning lion and were ever to wear the five emblems (Kakar) of the *Khalsa*, they are *Kesh* (Long Hair) *Kangha* (Comb) *Kara* (A Steel Bracelet) *Kachha* (Start Breeches worn by Soldiers of that time) and *Kirpan* (A Sword). Then, the Guru had nectar from the five beloveds. Being baptized by his own disciples. The Guru merged into *Khalsa*. Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have also thrown light on the events that had taken place on the Baisakhi day.

The differences between Guru Gobind Singh and the hill rajas had become more pronounced after the creation of the *Khalsa* and they wrote a letter to Aurangzeb

against the Guru. Aurangzeb sent forces against the Guru under the command of Dina Bheg and Painda Khan. In the battle field, Painda Khan died on the spot through the arrows which were shot by Guru Gobind Singh. Dina Bheg was also injured. The same incident has been mentioned by Giani Gian Singh.

At that time the festival of Holi was approaching. The Guru announced that there would be Holi for the other people but there would be Hola Mahalla for the Sikhs. Giani Gian Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish had discussed the events that had led to the start of the Hola Mahalla celebration by the Guru, Giani Thakur Singh has given a slightly different account. On the other hand, hill chiefs could not tolerate the rising glory of Guru Gobind Singh which resulted in many fierce battles that the Guru and his Sikhs had to fight against the hill chiefs. The Mughals also supported the hill chiefs in these battles against the Guru. As per another oral tradition, Ajmer Chand sent a letter to the Guru before attacking him and asked him to pay rent of Anandpur Sahib and to continue paying in future as well. When the Guru refused to pay rent to the hill chiefs, they attacked on Anandpur Sahib. After a fierce fight and strong resistance, the hill chiefs went back. Giani Gian Singh also had corroborated the same events, in his work.

As per another oral tradition, the Sikhs who sacrificed their lives in the first battle of Anandpur Sahib, were cremated by Guru Gobind Singh himself at his own Garden at Anandpur Sahib. Now the place is known as “Gurdwara Guru Ka Bagh” and “Gurdwara Shaheedi Bagh”. So, in order to take revenge, the hill chiefs planned to siege Anandpur Sahib. The hill chiefs decided to send a drunken elephant with an iron pole tied upon it, to attack on the Fort’s door. Guru Gobind Singh very intelligently defeated the purpose of the hill chiefs, by first sending Duni Chand and later on Bachittar Singh to make the elephant retreat. He foiled the attempt by using Nagani Barchaa. Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish and Giani Gian Singh have also, narrated a detailed story regarding the attack by the hill rajas on Lohgarh Fort.

As per another oral tradition, the Hindu and Muslim hill chiefs acted very cleverly. They swore in the name of their Scriptures and convinced the Guru, these followers tried to persuade him to leave Lohgarh fort for a short while. He was prevailed upon by the followers and moved some distance from Anandpur Sahib to Nirmohgarh. But these false promises were broken by the hill rajas and the Mughals and the Guru and his men were attacked several times.

Giani Gian Singh has corroborated the above account, Giani Thakur Singh has added something new and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has given somewhat different information.

From Nirmohgarh, Guru Gobind Singh went to Basoli as he was invited by the King of Basoli, there were three places which were famous and connected with Guru Gobind Singh. The folk lore has described that Guru Gobind Singh while staying at Basoli had visited Bibor, after the humble request of the king of Bibor. Here Guru Gobind Singh recited *Chaupai Sahib*. Some Sikhs from the *Sangat* complained to the Guru when they were coming to see him for his *darshan*, on the way some people of Kalmot had looted them. Next morning, Guru Gobind Singh reached Kalmot with his Singhs, when people there Kalmot, came to know about that, they went into hiding in a Fort at Kalmot. As a result, people inside the Fort became nervous and they asked for forgiveness.

According to the lore, when Guru Gobind Singh was returning from Kalmot, some of his Singhs requested him to return to Anandpur Sahib. The Guru agreed to the request of his *Khalsa* and Guru Gobind Singh reached Anandpur Sahib. Though, outwardly Bheem Chand of Kahlur and Bhup Chand of Handur had always thought of some means to destroy the Guru. Thereafter Anandpur Sahib faced another attack on December 2, 1704 A.D. But the Guru's enemies left the battlefield without defeating the Guru's valiant forces. The hill rajas again approached the Mughal Government for aid. All the combined forces proceeded towards Anandpur Sahib from Ropar on December 20, 1704 A.D. When Mughals surrounded the fort of Anandpur Sahib, there was shortage of food. The Sikhs managed to satiate their hunger by eating leaves of trees. Then they asked Mata Gujri to convince the Guru to change the place. When the Guru did not agree with them, then forty Sikhs of Majha region under the leadership of Maha Singh, wrote *Bedawa* and left the fort. Giani Gian Singh has given different version about the above mentioned occurrence.

After getting the *Bedawa* of forty Sikhs, the remaining Sikhs, got the approval of the Mata Gujri as they convinced her that hill chiefs and Mughals had taken oath over the holy books *Geeta* and *Kuran*, that they would settle the matter once the Guru would leave the Fort. But the Guru had got the hiking of their (hill rajas) trap. So, Guru Gobind Singh decided to fight the battle station within the fort. On the humble request of Mata Gujri and Singhs, the Guru had gone into a deep reverie and then

made up his mind to leave the Fort and on one cold December night, they left the fort, at midnight and crossed the Sarsa river. Giani Gian Singh, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have given more detailed explanation about the above tradition.

The Mughals and the hill chiefs came to know that there were only a few Sikhs with the Guru, they attacked him. The Guru reached the bank of Sarsa river from Sahi Tibbi, the river was flooded and the Mughals were chasing them. The Guru ordered all of them to just cross the river. The Guru, Mata Gujri, four Sahibzadas, two wives of the Guru and some Sikhs could cross the river. Guru Gobind Singh moved to Ropar after having crossed the river Sarsa. But Mughal army attacked the Guru and Sikhs at Malakpur Ranga. The Guru and Singhs faced them bravely. But, Mata Gujri, Sahibzada Joravar Singh and Fateh Singh got separated from the Guru. Then the Guru reached the bricks kiln factory (Bhatha) passing through Tibba, Ghanola and Cambe. When the Pathan Nihang khan of Kotla came to know about the Guru's arrival in the bricks kiln factory, he himself came to fetch the Guru to his house.

As per tradition, the Guru stayed at Nihang Khan's house. At night, the Guru asked them to move to Chamkaur. As Mughals were in search of them, it was very dangerous to stay in Nihang Khan's house. The information given in the oral tradition has also been confirmed by Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish and Giani Gian Singh.

As per tradition, the Guru reached Chamkaur passing through Brahman Majra and Boor Majra along with forty Sikhs and two elders Sahibzadas. There was a *Haveli* of two brothers, Jagt Singh and Roop Chand. Both were Guru's ardent followers. When the Guru asked Jagat Singh to allow him to stay in his *Haveli* to fight against the Mughals, he refused because of being afraid of the Mughals. But Roop Chand opened the door of *Haveli* for the Guru. The *Haveli* changed into the *Garhi*. Then Guru Gobind Singh positioned the Sikhs everywhere around the *Garhi*. The Mughal started surrounding the *Garhi* early in the morning.

When the Mughal army attacked the *Garhi*, at first, Sikhs fought from inside the *Garhi*. Then the Sikhs came out of the *Garhi* in fives and confronted the Mughals according to the sequence decided by the Guru and Singhs sacrificed their lives. On seeing this, Sahibzadas Jhujhar Singh and Ajit Singh sought Guru's permission to take part in the war. They fought bravely and sacrificed their lives.

In the end only, five Sikhs were left with the Guru. Mughals had come very

near to the Garhi. Bhai Daya Singh requested the Guru to leave the Garhi. The Guru did not concede to his request. All of them told him, "Guruji, you had decided where even five Sikhs would take a decision, everyone would obey five Singh's order". They reminded him to Khalsa's order to move to a safe place. The Guru could not reject this. So, the Guru started making preparation of leaving the *Garhi* and told Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh too to leave with him. The Guru did not want to go quietly. So, he clapped three times and said around loudly, "the Guru is leaving the *Garhi*'.

According to the oral tradition, when Guru Gobind Singh left the *Garhi* of Chamkaur with Daya Singh, Dharam Singh and Maan Singh, got separated from the Guru later on. As per the Sikh tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached Machhiwara passing through Behlolpur, Poat and Sehjo Majra. He felt extremely tired and fell asleep on the dugout damp ground in the garden. Bhai Daya Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh and Bhai Maan Singh found the Guru in the garden.

According to another lore, when Gulaba masand heard of the Guru's presence in his Garden, he came running to serve him. At night Gulaba took them (Guru and Singhs) to his house.

According to the lore, Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan two Rohila Pathan brothers, heard about the Guru, and they came to meet the Guru in Gulaba's house. They also informed the Guru about the Mughal forces following him and requested him to shift to their house and the Guru obliged by accepting his invitation.

Here, the Guru thought of writing a letter to Emperor Aurangzeb to inform him about the behaviour of his Generals and the false oaths taken by his religious and treacherous minions and he asked one of the two Pathan brothers to call Sayyad Inayat Ali.

The Guru had seen Nabi Khan's and Ghani Khan's, dressed in blue clothes as *hajis* generally do. The Guru planned to wear similarly dyed clothes and discussed with him the proposal to move out of that place, along with the Sikhs, disguised as a Muslim Pir, seated on a *Charpoy* as decided by the common consent. The Pathan brothers were to escort the Guru as *Uch Da Pir*.

After that Guru Gobind Singh gave letter to Sayyad Inayat Ali to keep that in safe custody, till he (Guru) had succeeded in his plan and if by chance he got

captured, then Sayyad Inayat Ali was asked to give that letter to the Emperor Aurangzeb.

As per the plan, Guru Gobind Singh was seated on the charpoy and was lifted and carried by Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, Mani Singh and Dharam Singh. Moreover, Daya Singh was waving a *Chaur* over him. When they were questioned, the Pathan brothers told the leader that they were carrying their *Pir* and moving out of *Machhiwara*. Giani Gian Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Giani Thakur Singh have supported this anecdote and have given a brief account as had been found in the oral evidence regarding *Uch da Pir* episode.

But at a predetermined place, Sayyad Inayat Ali also met them. As the whole party reached Ghulal village. The letter that Guru had given to Sayyat Inayat Ali for safe custody was returned to the Guru by him. As per local tradition, then, he reached Alamgeer passing through Lall Kalan, Kubba, Katani, Rampur, Kanech, Sahnawal, Nandpur, Tibba. The Guru had come here as *Uch da Pir*. Here Bhai Nodha Singh offered one horse to the Guru for riding. The Guru moved ahead on this horse. The Guru sent Nabi Khan and Ganni Khan back from this place.

After that the Guru reached *Juhu* of Raikot passing through Hayer, Jodh Ratan, Mohi and Rameana.

Rai Kalla Chaudhary of Raikot came to know about the Guru's arrival. He made arrangements for the Guru and came to Lame Jattpure. The Guru asked Rai Kalla to obtain information about Mata Gujri and the two younger Sahibzadas from Sirhind. Thereafter Noora was sent to Sirhind to get some news. The Guru further visited many villages like Bassian, Seloani and Kamalpura with Rai Kalla. After some days, Noora came back with the news of martyrdom of two younger Sahibzadas and Mata Gujri as well. The Guru retained his composure while listening to the news, the Guru kept digging the Kai (Grass) with an arrow and the Guru pulled out one root of Kai (Grass) with an arrow and told that the Mughals have been uprooted. Rai Kalla replied to this by saying that he was also a Mughal (Khan) but he was the Guru's devotee. Then the Guru gave him sword and Gangsagar (Jug) and blessed that till the time, when he would respect these, his territory would remain.

From Lame Jattpure, the Guru reached Dina passing through Madhe Ke, Manuke, Mahiteana, Chakar and Takhtupura. According to the local tradition, when

the Guru reached Dina, Lakhmir, Samir and Takhtmal requested the Guru to stay at their home, but the Guru expressed his wish to stay at Bhai Deshu's house who was a carpenter by profession.

One day, Wazir Khan sent a strongly-worded letter to Samir and his brother and reprimanded them for the having provided shelter to the Guru. He wanted them to immediately surrender the Guru to the royal custody, otherwise all of them would be arrested. But Samir stayed firm like a rock. He sent a message of refusal. Impressed by their respect and service, the Guru blessed them with the title of Lohgarh. All the historians (under study) have more or less corroborated this account.

From Dina, Guru Gobind Singh spent his day time in Dyalpura Bhai ka. Further, Bhai Daya Singh had mentioned that as Aurangzeb was the real enemy, the Guru asked if Aurangzeb should be taught a lesson with a pen or a sword? The decision was that he should be taught a lesson with the help of Pen (Kalam). The Guru wrote a letter to Aurangzeb. The letter is known as *Zaffarnama* in history.

When the Guru was at Dina, *Zaffarnama* was sent by Guru Gobind Singh through Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh to Aurangzeb. As Nwab Wazir Khan, the Governor of Sirhind came to know that Guru Gobind Singh had taken shelter at Dina, he sent his army to attack the Sikhs. The Guru realised that place was not suitable for the battle ground as people would suffer. So the Guru decided to leave Dina in search of a suitable place.

As per another tradition, Guru Gobind Singh reached Bargarhi village passing through Rakhwala, Bhagta Bhai ka, Doad, Lambwali and Wander. The village was occupied by Nanda, cousin of Chaudhary Kapura of Kotkapura. When the Guru reached Bargarhi village, Nanda was on the verge of fighting against Kapura, but when he came to know about the Guru's visit, he came to see the Guru. The Guru asked him where he was going. Nanda shared with the Guru that he was going to have a war. The Guru forbade him from getting engaged in any warfare. The Guru asked him, to wait for two days and he would be victorious. Thereafter Nanda accepted the words of the Guru. Next morning, Chaudhary Kapura came with his soldiers to wage a war. But Nanda kept the word given to the Guru and he did not go out to fight. The war had started. Nanda's wife was not aware of anything. So, she started cursing her husband asking him why he was not going to the battle field himself. Nanda could not

tolerate this insult and unfortunately, he forgot the words of the Guru and went to the battlefield himself. So unfortunately, he was killed.

Giani Thakur Singh, Giani Gian Singh, Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothe and Tara Singh Narotam have all corroborated this oral tradition.

According to the local tradition, from village Bargarhi, Guru Gobind Singh reached Behbal Kalan. and camped on a hill. As per the tradition, with the presence of the Guru in the village Behbal Kalan, the number of Sikhs increased considerably. The Guru encamped on a hill outside the village. There was another village Srawan nearby village. The chiefs of both the villages humbly requested Guru Gobind Singh to send his Sikhs to the different houses to be served food and water as it was difficult for them to arrange the entire stuff at one place. So, the Guru agreed and accepted the reasonable request. One Singh named Milagar Singh was sent to the home of a very poor man called Bhai Ganga Singh in the village Behbal Kallan. There was no food at his home. Next morning, when all the Sikhs came back, the Guru asked them about what food item they had partaken in dinner. Some said *Kheer Prasad*, *Karah Prasad* some said *Dal Prasada* but Milagar Singh remained silent. When asked by the Guru, he replied that the food he had eaten last night, he had never had it before. All the village people present there were surprised to hear that. One landlord presents there told Guru Gobind Singh that the place and house where Milagar Singh had gone to have food belonged to a was very poor person. The Guru wanted to meet that man and he was called. When the Guru asked that man, Bhai Ganga Singh, that poor man shared with the Guru that he was very poor and he could just offer only boiled dried nuts. The Guru was very pleased to know that and he blessed Milagar Singh for his patience and truth. Giani Gian Singh has written different version about this anecdote.

According to another oral tradition, the Guru had received the news that Mughal army was chasing him. Guru Gobind Singh was busy in searching a place for his safety. He was looking for a place where he could defend himself effectively and thus, he reached Kotkapura along with a large number of Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh camped outside the town. When they heard about the Guru's arrival in their midst. Chaudhary Kapura, who was the founder of the town and also an agent of the Mughals army came to pay his respect.

According to another tradition, Guru Gobind Singh had come to know that a

large Mughal force of Sirhind was pursuing him and was on its way towards the area. The Guru this with Chaudhary Kapura and asked him to allow the use of the fortress in self-defense against the approaching enemy's force. But Chaudhary Kapura did not concede to the Guru's wish.

From Kotkapura, the Guru reached Dhilwan Kalan. When Sodhi Kaul came to know about the Guru's arrival he reached there and welcomed the Guru.

All the writers have corroborated the account of Guru's meeting with Sodhi Kaul, as described in oral tradition.

At night, when the Guru was taking bath, Sodhi Kaul observed that the blue clothes of the Guru, were totally damaged and tattered, then he went to his home and brought a white coloured dress for the Guru and requested him very politely to wear the white dress. The Guru agreed and wore the white dress

With the only exception of Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish, the others historians have approved of the oral tradition.

As per another oral tradition, when Kapura realized his mistake and he reached Dhilwan Kalan, to pay his respect to the Guru. He sought the Guru's forgiveness the heart of the kind hearted Guru melted and he blessed with him a *double-edged sword* and a *shield (Khanda and Dhal)*. He was fortunate to receive the blessings of the Guru.

At Dhilwan Kalan, some Sikhs brought the news that the large Mughal forces were approaching them. Choudhary Kapura advised the Guru that the sandy mound of Khidrana was the most suitable place for the battle and the Guru moved towards Khidrana. Giani Gian Singh corroborated the above oral tradition.

When the Guru was passing through Guru ki Dhab, Jaito, Sunier village he reached Rameana, many Sikhs who had once written Bedawa and had left Guru Gobind Singh in Anandpur Sahib, came to this place to meet the Guru with their chiefs. All of them requested the Guru with folded hands to stop fighting the Mughals. They told the Guru if he would not stop fighting against the Mughals, many other Sikhs are ready to write Bedawa to him and they would leave him.

With the exception of Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish all writers have agreed to the oral tradition.

Thereafter the Guru reached Khidrana di Dhab passing through Mallan, Gurhi Sanghar, Kaoni. Later, he found a pool of water and dense forest also. So, the Guru along with his Sikhs decided to stay there. In the shelter of the sandy mounds (Tibbi), the Guru watched his Sikh soliders facing their enemies bravely and the Guru also shot arrows at the enemy. The Mugal army attacked him on 21 Visakh, 1705 A.D.

After the battle, the Guru descended from the Tibbi. When the Guru reached the battle field he found Mata Bhag Kaur lying wounded. She was the leader of the forty Sikhs who had deserted Guru Gobind Singh during the battle of Anandpur Sahib. She paid her respect to the Guru and told him about the martyrdom of forty Sikhs.

Among the dead Sikhs, Bhai Maha Singh was still alive. The Guru praised the bravery of Maha Singh and wanted to grant him a boon. Maha Singh requested the Guru for the cancellation of the deed of renunciation, he and some of his companions had signed before leaving the Anandpur. The Guru accepted his request and he took out the *Bedawa* form his pocket and tore it into pieces. The Guru named the forty Sikhs, the forty *Mukte*. Khidrana came to be known after them as Muktsar (pool of Salvation).

With the exception of Bhai Swaroop Singh kaushish, the other writers have corroborated the oral tradition.

Thereafter, the bodies of forty *muktas* were cremated by Guru Gobind Singh himself. During this period, the Guru visited many villages Jand Sahib, Bajidpur, Nage di Sran and Harike Kalan.

The battle of Muktsar was the last battle of Guru Gobind Singh. After that, the Guru moved towards Talwandi Sabo. The Guru came to Chatteana passing through Rupana, Bhondur, Gurusar and Theri. There lived a spiritual guide (pir) named Wehmi. When he met the Guru, he prayed to the Guru to make him a Sikh by pouring the nectar. After that the pir was baptized and he was renamed as Ajmer Singh. The Sikhs asked for salaries in Chatteana village from the Guru. The Guru gave salaries to all the Brars. Bhai Daan Singh was left at last. The Guru asked about his salary. But he requested the Guru to blessed him with Sikhism only, the Guru was so pleased to hear that and replied that you have kept Malwa's dignity as Maha Singh kept of Majha. Giani Gian Singh, Giani Thakur Singh, Tara Singh Narotam and Malwa Desh

Ratan di Sakhi Pothi have corroborated with the oral tradition.

From Sahib Chand, the Guru came to Bhai Kot. There were two brothers named Ghummi and Ranghi having Bansal as their surname. They requested the Guru for nectar. After being baptized they were given the names as Bhai Ghummi Singh and Bhai Ranghi Singh. Their next generations have been now living in Bhai ka Kot.

Bhai Daan Singh Brar requested the Guru to come to his village. The Guru accepted his invitation and moved towards to his village passing through Lakhi jungle (forest) and he reached Mehma Sarga.

Daan Singh told the Guru that the name of Mehma Sarja village was after the name of his grandfather Mehma Sarja. But he wanted to own a village on his real father's name Abloo. The Guru shot an arrow and asked Daan Singh to own a village till the place where that arrow would land. Bhai Daan Singh got the village Abloo established at the place where the arrow had landed.

From here, the Guru went to Jassi Bhagwali passing through Bhokhdi, Gidharbaha, Rohilla, Kal Jharani, Jangi Rana, Bambhiha and Kot Guru. The Guru took bath there in a pond along with his clothes and horse. When the Guru took bath, the clothes which had got wet became white and the horse also became white. The Guru's turban remained of the same colour as it did not get wet. The Sikhs were curious about this miracle. The Guru explained that was a holy place Lord (Shri). Ram Chandar had come here. One more thing was famous about that place that Guru Nanak Dev had also visited that place. From there the Guru had reached near Talwandi Sabo passing through Pakka, Chak Hira Singh Wala. Dalla came forward at this place with four hundred men to welcome the Guru.

At Talwandi Sabo, Guru Gobind Singh un-tied his waistband after a period of almost one and a quarter year and heaved a sigh of relief. That is why Talwandi Sabo is known as Damdama Sahib.

A similar account has been given in the Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi pothi, Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Thakur Singh and Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish have described Guru Gobind Singh's stay at Damdama Sahib. Several days had passed in peaceful atmosphere at Talwandi Sabo. Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Devan were brought from Delhi. Mata Sundri enquired from the Guru about the four sons and their Mata as well. The Guru informed them about the martyrdom of Mata Gujri and

the martyrdom of the four sons as well.

Tara Singh Narotam, Giani Gian Singh and Giani Thakur Singh had given similar account about the above folk lore.

At this place, the Guru announced his decision to re-write the holy Granth and dictated the bani to Bhai Mani Singh. In this three month the whole scripture was completed.

At Talwandi Sabo, Dalla had recently received a letter from the Governor of Sirhind. He wanted to capture the Guru. So, the letter to Dalla was a warning and he demanded the Guru's surrender. Otherwise, the army would come marching towards him. Dalla replied to the Governor informing him that his life and death were bound with the Guru. He was prepared to fight against them. The Guru was greatly pleased with the boldness of Dalla's reply and blessed him. Giani Gian Singh, in his work has also written about Dalla receiving a letter from the Governor of Sirhind.

From Talwandi Sabo, Guru Gobind Singh visited many villages named Bhocho, Bhagu, Bathinda, Chak Fateh Singh Wala, Laverisar, Bhagi Wander and Kot Shamir.

On the other side, Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh, carried the *Zaffarnama*. It was Bhai Daya Singh who had to look for a suitable opportunity to meet the emperor. It was after a few months that he could avail the opportunity to meet the Emperor and deliver of *Zaffarnama* to him. The Emperor Aurangzeb was then ninety-one years old. He read the whole of *Zaffarnama*. *Zaffarnama* had a deep effect on his mind and he wrote a letter to Guru Gobind Singh, showing his inability to come to the North due to old age and requested the Guru to make it convenient to meet him in Ahmadnagar.

He had also written a letter to his minister in Delhi, instructing him to withdraw all orders issued against the Guru. The Emperor had shrewdly retained Bhai Daya Singh and got a letter of recommendation from him in the name of the Guru to the effect that the emperor was feeling sorry at what had happened and was anxious to have a meeting with the Guru at Ahmadnagar. These letters were sent through two special messengers who delivered the letter meant for the minister in Delhi and then the other letters to be delivered to the Guru at Talwandi Sabo. It was on receipt of these letters that the Guru made up his mind to meet the emperor. The Guru stayed

there for nine months and some days. In the morning time, after the prayer the Guru left Talwandi Sabo for Deccan in October 1706 A.D, along with some Sikhs and Mata Sundri and Sahib Devan. But Mata Sundri and Sahib Devan were asked to move to Delhi and they would be called to the place, where the Guru would stay. Giani Gian Singh has agreed with the oral tradition but Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish has also expressed some different details regarding Aurangzeb's meeting with Daya Singh regarding *Zaffarnama*.

All these events and incidents regarding Guru Gobind Singh's march have been found in the oral tradition and anecdotes which have been supported by the available literature. In this way, the importance of the oral evidence became more relevant and they have proved to be more authentic. The oral and local traditions have played a vital role in the reconstruction of the past and the research on the various aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's life and personality would have remained incomplete without the oral evidence, as the oral evidence or tradition, lore or anecdotes fill the gaps which have been left by the available literature.

**GURU GOBIND SINGH'S MARCH FROM
ANANDPUR SAHIB TO DAMDAMA SAHIB:
AN HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ORAL
TRADITION**

**An
ABSTRACT OF THESIS
Submitted to the
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES of the
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA
In Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
HISTORY**

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**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & PUNJAB HISTORICAL STUDIES
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2022

ABSTRACT

The proposed research work is mainly based on oral evidence. These sources cannot be neglected because these are very authentic sources of information. The oral evidence evolves in a community and comes down in time scale from generation to generation. Without historical examination of oral evidence, we cannot know about the beliefs and practices of the people. The light of oral sources and their perspective has been compared with the written sources: - *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*, Tara Singh Narotam's work- *Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, Giani Thakur Singh's work- *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish's work- *Gurukian Saakhian* and Giani Gian Singh's work- *Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa* to get a holistic picture of the Guru Gobind Singh's march from Anandpur Sahib to Damdama Sahib. To enhance the quality of research, these places were visited and people living there were interviewed to have an in-depth probe about the customs, traditions and history related to Guru Gobind Singh's march.

In this research work, discuss about the Guru Teg Bahadur's establishment of Anandpur Sahib and his martyrdom and the pre-Khalsa period of Guru Gobind Singh and also touched the aspect of creation of Khalsa, the Guru's struggle against the Mughals and hill chiefs and Final Evacuation of Anandpur Sahib. After leaving Anandpur Sahib, the Guru visited towns, villages and cities of Malwa region and reached Damdama Sahib. During his journey, the full-fledged account of events happened in the life of Guru Gobind Singh. An in-depth study of existence literature and oral tradition has also been done to find out similarities and differences regarding the happening of all the events.

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ਸਾਰ

ਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਵਤ ਖੇਜ ਕਾਰਜ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ 'ਤੇ ਆਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਣਿਕ ਸਰੋਤ ਹਨ। ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਬੂਤ ਇਕ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਕਸਿਤ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ-ਦਰ-ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਪੈਮਾਨੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮੌਖਿਕ ਸਬੂਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਜਾਂਚ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣ ਸਕਦੇ। ਇਸ ਖੇਜ ਕਾਰਜ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਰਥਿਕ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੋਂ ਦਮਦਮਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਤੱਕ ਦੀ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਲਵਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਰਟਨ ਦੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਪੇਥੀ, ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਰੋਤਮ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੀਰਥ ਸੰਗ੍ਰਹਿ, ਗਿਆਨੀ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ, ਭਾਈ ਸ੍ਰੋਤ੍ਰਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਕੇਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀਆਂ ਸਾਖੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਤਵਾਰੀਖ ਗੁਰੂ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਤੁਲਨਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਇਸ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਰਵੇਖਣ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਤਰਵੀਜ਼ ਹੈ। ਖੇਜ ਦੀ ਗੁਣਵਤਾ ਨੂੰ ਵਧਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਥਾਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਦੌਰਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਅਤੇ ਉਥੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਰਿਵਾਜਾਂ, ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਡੂੰਘਾਈ ਨਾਲ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਚਰਚਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ।

ਇਸ ਖੇਜ ਕਾਰਜ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਸਾਉਣ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਪੂਰਵ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਕਾਲ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪੰਥ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ, ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਖੇ ਨਿਵਾਸ, ਪਹਾੜੀ ਰਾਜਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਗਲਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਲੜਾਈਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਸਥਾਰਪੂਰਵਕ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਚਰਚਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਆਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਛੱਡਣ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਮਾਲਵਾ ਇਲਾਕੇ ਵੱਲ ਵੱਧਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ, ਨਗਰਾਂ, ਕਸਬਿਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਦਮਦਮਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਹੁੰਚੇ। ਇਸ ਯਾਤਰਾ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਵਾਪਰੀਆਂ ਇਤਿਹਾਸਿਕ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਵਰਣਨ ਇਸ ਖੇਜ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਮੰਨਣਯੋਗ ਲਿਖਤੀ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਦਾ ਤੁਲਨਾਤਮਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਸਮਾਨਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਅਸਮਾਨਤਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੱਭਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕੀਤੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ।

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Interviews- with the old person of the different Villages and granthis of the different Gurdwara from knowledge of Local Tradition and History:

- Ajaib Singh, Sewadar of Degsar Sahib, villageKatani, District Ludhiana. age 64 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Charan Kamal Sahib, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 73 years.
- Ajob Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jhar Sahib, villageBehlolpur, District Ludhiana, age 58 years.
- Ajib Singh, an old person of villageJassiBhagwali, District Bathinda, age 66 years
- Anokha Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib, villageLall Klan, District Ludhiana, age 52 years.
- Atar Singh, an old person of villageKotShameer, District Bathinda, age 69 years.
- Atr Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib Patshahinauvi, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 56 years.
- Babu Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Uch Da Pir, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 69 years.
- Bachittar Singh, an old person of village Rampur, District Ludhiana, age 80 years.
- Baj Singh, an old person of villageBhagu, District Bathinda.
- Bakhtaur Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 74 years.

- Baldev Singh, Sewadar Gurdwara, Bohra Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 70 years.
- Balkar Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Likhansar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 50 years.
- Balraj Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Likhansar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 53 years.
- Baltej Singh, an old person of village Bhadaur, District Barnala, age 63 years.
- Balwinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Mata Ajit Kaur of Agampur, District Ropar, age 53 years.
- Beg Singh, an old person of village Chak Hira Singh wala, District Bathinda, age 64 years.
- Bhal Singh, an old person of village Kot Shamir, District Bathinda, age 71 years.
- Bheg Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 69 years.
- Bheja Singh, Sewadar Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi of village Jatoli, District Ropar, age 51 years.
- Bhinda Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Takht Sri Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 58 years.
- Bhola Singh, an old person of village Chak Fateh Singh Wala, District Bathinda, age 71 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Priwar Vichoda Sahib, village Majri, District Roopnagar, age 57 years.
- Bhupinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Qilla Taragarh Sahib of village Gangawal, District Ropar, age 42 years.
- Brian Singh an old person of village Chak Fateh Singh wala, age 68 years.
- Brinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib Patshahi Dasvi, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 53 years.
- Chet Singh, an old person of village Boor Mazra, District Roopnagar, age 71 years.

- Chotu Singh, an old person of village Rohila, District Bathinda, age 70 years.
- Dalbir Singh, an old person of village Jaito, District Bathinda, age 60 years.
- Dalip Singh, an old person of village Bhundar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 67 years.
- _____, an old person of village Gurhi Sanghar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years.
- _____, an old person of village Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 85 years.
- _____, an old person of village Tibba, District Ludhiana, age 60 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 53 years.
- Daljeet Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 79 years.
- Davinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 58 years.
- Deesh Singh, an old person of village Patto, District Moga, age 64 years.
- Depa Singh, an old person of village Rukhwala, District Moga, age 86 years.
- Dev Singh, old person of village Sehjo Mazra, District Ludhiana, age 81 years.
- _____, an old person of village Taragarh, District Ropar, age 72 years.
- _____, Granthi of Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, village Dhillwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 60 years.
- Didar Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Senior Sahib, Gidharbaha, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 48 years.
- Dilbag Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda, age 71 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib, village Rajoana, District Ludhiana, age 61 years.
- Dyan Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 84 years.
- Fotu Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 75 years.

- Gang Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 87 years.
- _____, an old person of village Marr Malu, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 70 years.
- _____, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 73 years.
- Geba Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 78 years.
- _____, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 81 years.
- Geja Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 85 years.
- Gian Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 89 years.
- Gopal Singh, an old person of village Kalmot, District Ropar, age 69 years.
- Gopal, Ram Krishan, Fifth Generation of Bhagat Singh of village Agampur, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 60 years.
- Gurdeep Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 82 years.
- Gurdev Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 85 years.
- Gurdial Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Mahal Sahib, village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 60 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, village Behbal Kalan, District Faridkot, age 75 years.
- Gurjant Singh, an old person, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age, 78 years.
- _____, an old person of Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 89 years.
- _____, Granthi of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years
- Gurjant Singh, Bhai, Granthi of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Shri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years.

- Gurlabh Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 73 years.
- Gurlal Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 62 years.
- Gurmail Singh, an old person of villageKaoni, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 82 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 82 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Shahid Ganj Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years.
- Gurmeet Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 47 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara PatshahiDasvi, village Hari-K-Kalan, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 45 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara PatshahiDasvi, villageNage di Srah, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years.
- Gurmukh Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 81 years.
- _____, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 86 years.
- _____, an old person ofvillageDhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 84 years.
- _____, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 80 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Bhuta Wala Khu,villageBhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 64 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Chulla Sahib, villageBhana, District Faridkot, age 67 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 82 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Katlgarh Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar, age 60 years.

- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib, village Machhiwara Ludhiana, age 73 years.
- Hakam Singh, an old person of village Jassi Bhagewali, District Bathinda, age 74 years.
- Har Singh, an old person of village Manuke, District Ludhiana, age 80 years.
- Hardev Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 68 years.
- _____, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 77 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar, age 61 years.
- Hari Singh, an old person of village Bhai ka Kot, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 65 years.
- Iqbal Singh, an old person, village Jangi Rana, District Bathinda, age 61 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Aaramsar Sahib, village Mallan, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years.
- Jagdeep Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guptsar Sahib, village Mehma Sarga, District Bathinda, age 45 years.
- Jagdev Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 72 years.
- _____, an old person of village Bibor, District Ropar, age 69 years.
- _____, an old person of village Doda, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 70 years.
- _____, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 69 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Kitarsar Sahib, village Kaal Zharaani, District Bathinda, age 47 years.
- Jagir Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guru Ka Bag of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 75 years.

- Jagroop Singh, an old person of village Theri, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 63 years.
- Jail Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Sahi Tibbi, District Ropar, age 58 years.
- Jajvir Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Sri Bagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali, District Bathinda, age 45 years
- Jang Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 92 years.
- Jarnail Singh, an old person of village Basoli, District Ropar, age 84 years.
- Jassa Singh, an old person of village, Lane Jatpur, District Ludhiana, age 82 years.
- Jaswant Singh, an old person of village Dina in District Moga, age 70 years.
- Jella Singh, an old person of village Bassian, District, Ludhiana age 65 years.
- Jella Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhoota Wala Khuh, village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 55 years.
- Jodh Singh, an old person of village Bajak, District Bathinda, age 71 years.
- _____, an old person of village Knech, District Ludhiana, age 78 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhatha Sahib, Town Kotla Nihang Khan, District Ropar, age 51 years.
- Joga Singh, an old person of village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda, age 71 years.
- _____, Sewadar Gurdwara Manji Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 69 years.
- Joginder Singh, an old person of village Suniara, District Faridkot, age 68 years.
- Joginder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Garhi Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar, age 58 years.
- Jugraj Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Ghera Sahib, village Sahnewal, District Ludhiana, age 57 years.

- Kaka Singh, Sewadar, Gurdwara Dhumala Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 62 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guptsar sahib of village Chatteana, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 50 years.
- Kala Singh, Sewadar Gurdwara Keshgarh Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 68 years.
- Karnail Singh, Sewadar Gurdwara Nirnagarh of District Ropar, age 50 years.
- Lachman Singh, an old person of village Mann Singh Wala, Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 75 years.
- Lal Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 68 years.
- Lali Singh, an old person of village Chakkar, District Moga, age 69 years.
- Major Singh, an old person of village Holgarh, District Ropar, age 84 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Uch Da Pir, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 65 years.
- Makhan Singh, an old person, village Nandpur, District Ludhiana, age 73 years
- Malkeet Singh, an old person of village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 73 years.
- Malkeet Singh, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 70 years.
- _____, an old person of village Rupana, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 64 years.
- Malkit Singh, an old person of village Bibor, District Ropar, age 72 years.
- Mangal Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Teersar Sahib, District Bathinda, age 49 years.
- Manjeet Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda, age 67 years.
- Manjinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Likhsar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 48 years.
- Mela Singh, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 75 years.

- Mewa Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 70 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Dasvi, Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 70 years.
- Mithu Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 73 years.
- Mukand Singh, an old person of village Bhucho, District Bathinda, age 61 years.
- Naamdaan Singh, an old person of village Siloani, District Ludhiana, age 78 years.
- Nahar Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 78 years.
- Naib Singh, an old person of village Basoli, District Ropar, age 74 years.
- _____, an old person of village Dina, District Moga, age 80 years.
- _____, an old person of village Mehmuana, District Faridkot, age 86 years.
- _____, Granthi of Gurdwara Godavari Sahib, village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 70 years
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 49 years.
- Najar Singh, an old person, village Hayar, District Ludhiana, age 73 years.
- _____, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 80 years.
- Natha Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 70 years.
- Nazar Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 87 years.
- Neb Singh, an old person of village Alamgir, District Ludhiana, age 65 years.
- Nek Singh, an old person of village Mohi, District Ludhiana, age 69 years.
- Nirbhai Singh, an old person of village Kotha Guru, District Bathinda, age 79 years.

- Nirmal Singh, Sewadar Gurdwara Bibor Sahib of District Ropar, age 74 years.
- _____, Sewadar Gurdwara Chubara Sahib, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 61 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara MukhMajan Sahib of village Sahib Chand, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 52 years.
- Nokha Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 72 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Guru-ki-Dhab, District Bathinda, age 68 years.
- Pal Singh, an old person of village Bhokhdi, District Bathinda, age 64 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali, District Bathinda.
- Paramjit Kaur Bibi, Sewadar of Gurdwara Chula Sahib, Kotkapura, District Faridkot, age 55 years.
- Partap Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 92 years.
- Partap Singh Fauji, an old person of village Kalkota, District Ropar, age 77 years.
- _____, Granthi of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 70 years.
- Pyara Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lakhisar Sahib, village Lakhi Jungle, District Bathinda, age 55 years.
- Rana Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Paka Sahib, village Madheyke, District Moga, age 53 years.
- Randhir Singh, an old person of village Bhagu, District Bathinda, age 73 years.
- Ranjodh Singh, an old person of Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 76 years.
- Ranjeet Singh, an old person of village Kamalpur, District Ludhiana, age, 74 years.
- Sadhu Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 79 years.

- Sangat Singh, an old person of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar, age 57 years.
- Santokh Singh, an old person of village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot, age 70 years.
- _____, old person of Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 83 years.
- Santosh Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 71 years.
- Santpal Singh, an old person of village Ratan, District Ludhiana, age 68 years.
- Sardool Singh an old person of village Gurusar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 80 years.
- Sawan Singh, an old person of village Bhullar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 60 years.
- Sewa Singh, an old person of Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 90 years.
- Shamsheer Singh, an old person of village Takhatpura, District Moga, age 70 years.
- Sharbann Singh, an old person of village Kalmot, District Ropar, age 75 years.
- Sri Chand Singh, an old person of village Deon, District Bathinda, age 69 years.
- _____, an old person of village Ghulal District Ludhiana, age 85 years.
- Suba Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Mehndiana, District Moga, age 58 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Uch Da Pir, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 71 years.
- Sukha Singh, an old person of village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 82 years.
- Sukhdev Singh, an old Person of village Bura Gujjar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib, age 80 years.
- _____, an old person of town Kotla Nihang Khan, District Ropar, age 81 years.

- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Manji Sahib, village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana, age 73 years
- Sukhjinder Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib, village Pakk Kalan, District Bathinda, age 45 years.
- Teg Singh, an old person of village Mana Burj, District Moga, age 71 years.
- Teja Singh, an old person of Raikot, District Ludhiana, age 85 years.
- _____, Sewadar of Gurdwara Taruana Sahib, village Maluka, District Bathinda, age 71 years.
- Tek Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Burj Baba Singh, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda, age 49 years.
- Vakeel Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, village Dina, District Moga, age 55 years.
- Veer Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Jandsar Sahib, village Bhagi Wander, District Bathinda, age 73 years.
- Zora Singh, Sewadar of Gurdwara Bhagsar Sahib, village Jassi Bhagwali, District Bathinda, age 48 years.
- **Notice Board:** I have also collected the information from the notice board of the Gurdwaras for my research material.
- Notice Board, Bhootawala Khu, Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Ajit Singh of Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Baba Bir Singh Baba Dheer Singh, Village Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda.
- Notice board, Gurdwara Bastar Sahib, Village Dhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot,
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Bhora Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Biban Garh, Kiratpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Chulla Sahib, Kotkapura, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

- Notice Board, Gurdwara Dattansar Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.
- Notice Board, GurdwaraDhalsar Sahib, VillageDod, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Dumala Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gandu ki Theh, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Godavari Sahib, VillageDhilwan Kalan, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Godavari Sahib PatshahiDasvi, VillageDhilwan, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Gungsar Sahib, Kotha Guru, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, GurdwaraGupatsar Sahib, VillageShatteana, District Muktsar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Guru-ki-Dhab, Village Guru ki Dhab, District Bathinda
- Notice Board, GurdwaraGurusar, VillageChakkar, District Ludhiana.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib, VillageGurusar, District Moga.
- Notice Board, GurdwaraGurusar Sahib, VillageRupana, District Muktsar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Gurusar Sahib, VillageSarawi, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Hazi Ratan and Qila Mubarak, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Jand Sahib, VillageJand Sahib, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Katal Garh Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, DistrictRoopnagar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara katalgarh sahib, District, Roopnagar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Kirpan Bhet, Village Machhiwara, District Ludhiana.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara LakhisarSahib, VillageLakhiJangal, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Likhansar Sahib, Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Lohgarh Sahib, Village Dina, District Moga.

- Notice Board, Gurdwara Manji Sahib Alamgir, District Ludhiana.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Village Wander, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Mata Bhag Kaur, District Sri Muktsar Sahib.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Mata Sahib kaur, Mata Sundar Kaur, Village Talwandi sabo, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Mehalsar Sahib, Village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Parivaar Vichora Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Bargarhi, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Bhagta Bhai Ka, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Dod, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Kot Guru, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Lambhwali, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Patshahi Dasvi, Village Pakk Kalan, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Qilla Lohgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Quilla Sri Anadgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Quilla Sri Holgarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Quilla Taragarh Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Rakaabsar, District Sri Muktsar Sahib.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Dasvi, Kotkapura, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Sahidi Bagh, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Senior Sahib, Village Giddharbaha, District Muktsar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Shahid Bagh, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.

- Notice Board, Gurdwara Shahid Burj Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, DistrictRoopnagar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Shahid Ganj Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.
- Notice board, Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib, Anandpur Sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice board, Gurdwara Sri Bhagsar Sahib, VillageJassiBhagwali, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Sri Darbar Sahib, VillageRakhwala, District Moga.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Sri Garhisar Sahib, Chamkaur Sahib, District Roopnagar.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Sri Gurusar Sahib, VillageLallklan, District Ludhiana.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib, Village Talwandi Sabo, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, GurdawaraTambu Sahib, Shri Muktsar Sahib.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Tap Asthaan Sahib, Anandpur sahib, District Ropar.
- Notice board, Gurdwara Tarn Taran Sahib, Sri Muktsar Sahib.
- Notice Board, GurdwaraTibbi Sahib, District Muktsar.
- Notice Board, GurdwaraTibbi Sahib PatshahiDasvi, VillageBehbal Kalan, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Tibbi Sahib, VillageBehbal Kalan, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Tilla Sahib, VillageKot Shamir, District Bathinda.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Tittar Sahib, VillageBazidpur, DistrictFerozpur.
- Notice Board, GurdwaraVandar, VillageAjitgarh Sahib, District Faridkot.
- Notice Board, Gurdwara Zaffarnama Sahib, VillageDyalpura Bhai ka, DistrictMoga.

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- Kirpal Singh, *Early life of Guru Gobind Singh*, The Punjab Past and Present, Vol.XXXI Part-I, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2000.

APPENDICES



Gurdwara Tutti Gandhi Sahib, Sri Muktasar Sahib



Gurdwara Rakabsar Sahib, Sri Muktasar Sahib



Gurdwara Takhat Shri Kesgarh Sahib, Sri Anandpur Sahib



Gurdwara Takhat Shri Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo



MATT WHERE GURU GOBIND SINGH'S CLOTH DYIED



(STIRRUP) RAKAB OF GURU GOBIND SINGH'S HORSE



SOCKS (JURABA) OF GURU GOBIND SINGH



ROBE (CHOLA) OF GURU GOBIND SINGH



QATAR OF GURU GOBIND SINGH



TURBANS OF GURU GOBIND SINGH



FOOTWEAR (JUTTI) OF GUIRU GOBIND SINGH

TO WHOM MAY IT BE CONCERN

It is certify that Gurvinderpal Kaur is doing Ph.D on the topic of “*Guru Gobind Singh’s March from Anandpur Sahib to Damdama Sahib: An Historical Analysis of the Oral Tradition*” under my supervision. She had submitted her thesis on 15-9-2022. During the research her following article is being published following proceedings.

- “Guru Gobind Singh’s visit to Dhilwan Kalan: A Historical Survey of the Oral Tradition” in proceeding of *Punjab History conference* (49thsession), 17-19March, 2017, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, (ISBN- 978-81-302-0473-4)
- “Guru Gobind Singh’s visit to Dina: A Historical Survey of the Oral Tradition” in proceeding of *South Asian History Conference*(4th session), 07-09 October, 2016. Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala.(ISBN-978-81-302-0470-3).
- “Guru Gobind Singh’s visit to Muktsar: A Historical Survey of the Oral Tradition” in proceeding of *South Asian History Conference*(5th session), 10-12November, 2017. Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala. (ISBN-978-81-302-0518-3).

Dr. Balraj Singh
Assistant Professor
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SOUTH ASIAN HISTORY CONFERENCE

(4TH SESSION)

OCTOBER 7-9, 2016

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GURU GOBIND SINGH'S VISIT TO DINA: A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE ORAL TRADITION

*Gurvinderpal Kaur**

The research paper is mainly based on oral evidence. The evidence of oral history will be cross examined with that traced from written sources regarding Guru Gobind Singh's visit to Dina. Generally oral evidences are ignored in the historical writings. Oral evidence evolves in a community and comes down in time scale from generation to generation. So they are not considered as an authentic source of information. But without historical examination of oral evidence, we cannot know about the beliefs and practices of the people, which are not described in literary texts. In this research paper, an attempt will be made to critically examine the oral tradition related to the life of Guru Gobind Singh and his visit to Dina.

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth master of Sikhs, was born at Patna on December 22, 1666 A.D. (*Posh Sudhi 7, 1723 BK*). He succeeded to Guruship in 1675 A.D. after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur. Thus after Guru Teg Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh had to carry on his mission in an environment of religious fanaticism.¹ After becoming the Guru, Guru Gobind Singh established his headquarters at Anandpur near the Shivalik hills. He created the Khalsa on the day of Baisakhi in 1699 and provided a new institution to his devotees.²

The creation of Khalsa came to the hill chiefs as a bolt. The growing military strength of the Guru and the increasing number of his followers unnecessarily scared the hill chiefs. Meanwhile the hill chiefs approached the Guru for peace and friendship. The Guru who was also anxious to live in peace accepted the offer and thus for some time the hostilities were called off. The peace between the Guru and the hill chiefs could not continue for long.³

In 1702 A.D. the joint forces of Mughals and Hill Rajas surrounded the fort of Anandpur.⁴ But there was no hope of success of these forces against Guru Gobind Singh. After making every effort they compromised with the Sikhs and the Guru; Hindus by taking oath of the cow and the Muslims took oath of Quran that if the Guru left Anandpur for a while and returned later they would not harm the Guru and his Sikhs. However both the hill Rajas and the Mughals did not keep their promises. They pursued the Guru and his Sikhs and attacked them at several places and harmed them as much as they could. In 1704 A.D., the Guru returned back to Anandpur after suffering the loss of lives of some Sikhs. In December 1704 A.D., he left Anandpur permanently and reached Dina (Moga) in Malwa area, passing through Chamkaur Sahib, Ropar and the forests of Macchiwara.⁵

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SOUTH ASIAN HISTORY CONFERENCE

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* Research Scholar, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

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GURU GOBIND SINGH'S VISIT TO DHILWAN KALAN : A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE ORAL TRADITION

*Gurvinderpal Kaur **

The research paper is mainly based on oral evidence. The evidence of oral history will be crossly examined with that traced from written sources regarding Guru Gobind Singh's visit to Dhilwan Kalan. Generally oral evidences are ignored in the historical writings. Oral evidence evolves in a community and comes down in time scale from generation to generation. So they are not considered as an authentic source of information. But without historical examination of oral evidence, we cannot know about the beliefs and practices of the people, which are not described in literary texts. In this research paper, an attempt will be made to critically examine the oral tradition related to the life of Guru Gobind Singh and his visit to Dhilwan Kalan.

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth master of Sikhs, was born at Patna on December 22, 1666 A.D. (*Posh Sudhi 7, 1723 BK*). He succeeded to Guruship in 1675 A.D. after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur. Thus after Guru Teg Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh had to carry on his mission in an environment of religious fanaticism.¹ After becoming the Guru, Guru Gobind Singh established his headquarters at Anandpur near the Shivalik hills. He created the Khalsa on the day of Baisakhi in 1699 and provided a new institution to his devotees.²

The creation of Khalsa came to the hill chiefs as a bolt. The growing military strength of the Guru and the increasing number of his followers unnecessarily scared the hill chiefs. Meanwhile the hill chiefs approached the Guru for peace and friendship. The Guru who was also anxious to live in peace accepted the offer and thus for some time the hostilities were called off. The peace between the Guru and the hill chiefs could not continue for long.³

In 1702 A.D. the joint forces of Mughals and Hill Rajas surrounded the fort of Anandpur.⁴ But there was no hope of success of these forces against Guru Gobind Singh. After making every effort they compromised with the Sikhs and the Guru; Hindus by taking oath of the cow and the Muslims took oath of Quran that if the Guru left Anandpur for a while and returned later they would not harm the Guru and his Sikhs. However both the hill Rajas and the Mughals did not keep their promises. They pursued the Guru and his Sikhs and attacked them at several places and harmed them as much

* Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

- 1 Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, Vol.I, Language Department, Punjab, 1970, pp.956-60; See also Kartar Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh and the Mughals*, Chandigarh, 1967, pp.19-30.
- 2 I.B. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Vol.II, Calcutta, 1980, pp.66-67; see also S.S. Hans, *A Reconstruction of Sikh History from Sikh Literature*, Jalandhar, 1988, p.230.
- 3 Harpreet Kaur, *Guru Gobind Singh's Relations with Aurangzeb. The Panjab Past and Present*. Vol. XIII-I, April, 1984, Serial No.35 edited by Ganda Singh, Department Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, pp.27-28; see also Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol. II, Punjabi University, Patiala 1996, p.381.
- 4 Sainapat, *Shri Gur Sobha (1711)* ed. by Ganda Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1967, p.66.

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Dated: 30-09-22

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DECLARATION

I, Gurvinderpal Kaur, certify that the work embodied in this Ph.D. Thesis is my own bonafede work carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Balraj Singh from February, 2016 to September, 2022 at Department of History & Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala. The matter embodied in this Ph.D thesis has not been submitted for the award of any other Degree/diploma. I declare that I have faithfully acknowledged, given credit to and referred to the research workers wherever their works have been cited in the text and the body of the Thesis. I further certify that I have not willfully lifted up some other's work, para, text, data, results etc. reported in the journals, books, magazines, reports, dissertations and thesis and cited as my own work. I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated or falsified any idea data/fact/source in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the university.

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PREFACE

The proposed research work is mainly based on oral traditions. These sources cannot be neglected because these are very authentic sources of information. The oral evidence evolves in a community and comes down in time scale from generation to generation. Without historical examination of oral evidence, we cannot know about the beliefs and practices of the people.

In this research work, an attempt has been made to critically examine the oral traditions developed regarding Guru Gobind Singh's march from Anandpur Sahib to Damdama sahib, by covering villages and towns of Malwa region of Punjab. At those places, Gurdwaras have been constructed in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh. To enhance the quality of research these places were visited and people living there were interviewed to have an in-depth probe about the customs, traditions and stories related to Guru Gobind Singh's march. The light of the oral sources and their prospective has been compared with the written sources- Giani Gian Singh's work-*Twarikh-Guru-Khalsa*, Giani Thakur Singh's work- *Sri Gurdware Darshan*, Tara Singh Narotam's work-*Sri Guru Tirth Sangreh*, Bhai Swaroop Singh Kaushish's work-*Guru Kian Saakhian* and *Malwa Desh Ratan di Sakhi Pothi*, to draw the objective conclusions properly.

This study has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter is 'Historical Milieu' based on establishment of Anandpur Sahib and Guru Teg Bahadur suffered martyrdom at the hands of Aurangzeb on account of the latter's enrolment religious policy and pre-Khalsa period of Guru Gobind Singh.

The second chapter is 'Anandpur Sahib: Sojourn and Final Evacuation'. In this chapter, discussed about the Mughals and hill chiefs pressing conditions upon the Guru and the Sikhs, then the Guru united the Sikhs and infused a new spirit into them. In this way Khalsa Panth was created. Hill chiefs and Mughals could not put up with the rising glory of Guru Gobind Singh which resulted in many furious battles that the Guru and the Singhs had to fight. So, understanding the situation, the Guru Gobind Singh left the Anandpur Sahib at last.

'From Anandpur Sahib to Dina' is the third chapter. An attempt has been made to trace the Guru Gobind's stride Anandpur Sahib to Dina passing through

several towns, villages and cities. Various events had happened at those places has been described in this chapter.

The fourth chapter is 'From Dina to Muktsar'. It provides a full-fledged account of events happened during his march. Muktsar is the last battle of Guru Gobind Singh which fought against the Mughals. The Guru also visited neighbouring villages during his stay and after that, the Guru moved to Talwandi Sabo.

The fifth chapter is 'From Muktsar to Damdama Sahib'. In this chapter a vivid description has been given about Guru Gobind Singh's march from Muktsar to Damdama sahib. The Guru breathed a sigh of relief after a long span of struggle. This place thus, came to be known as Damdama Sahib. Guru stayed here for nine months and some days.

Conclusion has been written in the last. It conscientiously sketches the whole thesis and its findings.

This work is based on oral traditions, Primary and Secondary resources. While working on this topic, a number of individuals and institutions have been extended their help to me needs to be acknowledged.

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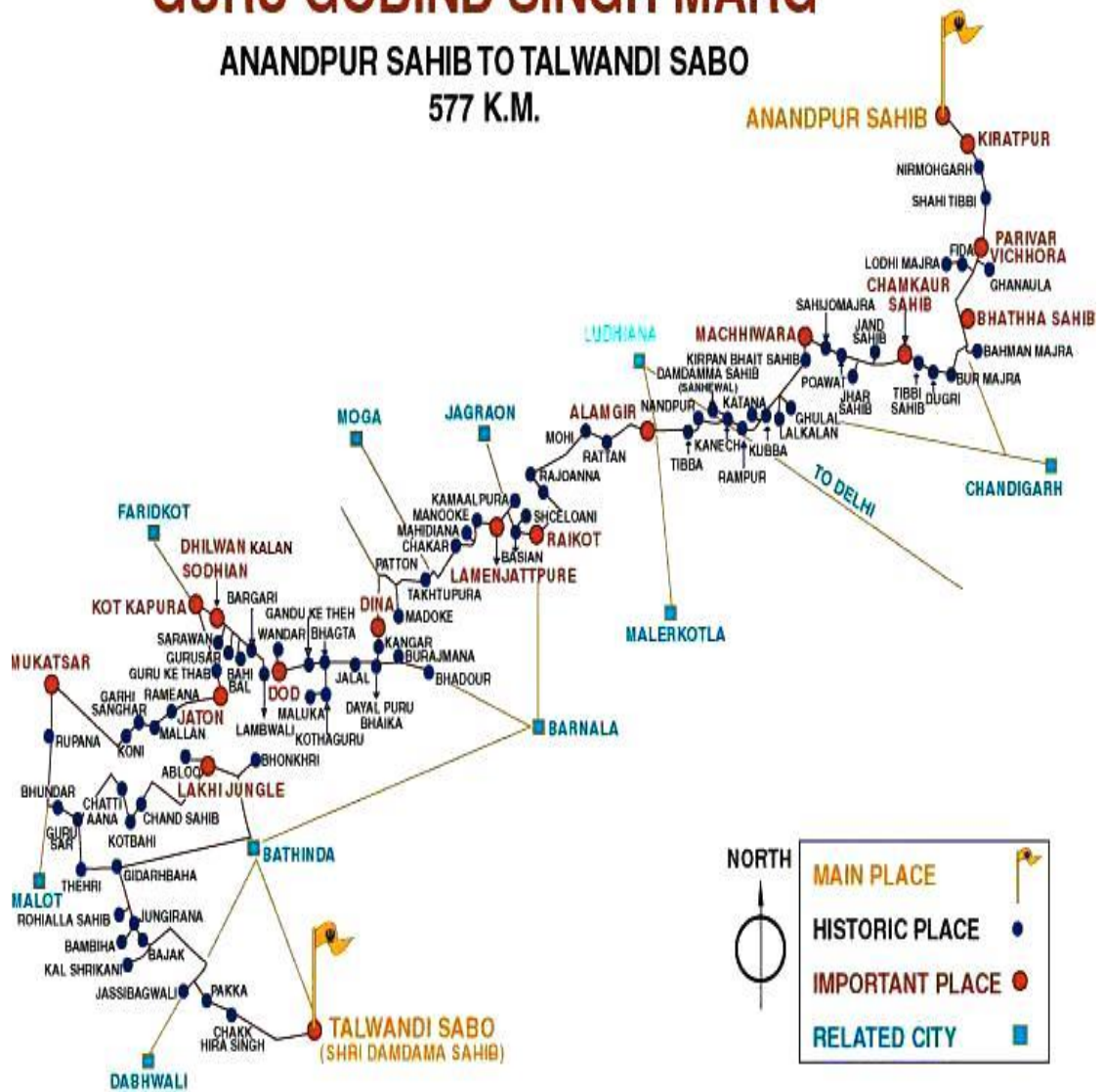
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