

**OPPOSITION TO THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT BY
THE BRITISH LOYALIST SECTIONS (1857-1947)**

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SUPERVISOR
Nazer Singh
DR. NAZER SINGH

**(Retired) Professor of History
Department of Distance Education
Punjabi University Patiala**

SUBMITTED BY
Ramandeep Kaur
RAMANDEEP KAUR



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis entitled "**Opposition to the Namdhari Movement by the British Loyalist Sections (1857-1947)**" embodies the work carried out by **Ramandeep Kaur** herself under my supervision and that is worthy of consideration for the award of the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

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Place: Patiala

Nazir Singh

Dr. Nazar Singh
(Retired) Professor of History
Department of Distance Education,
Punjabi University, Patiala.

CHAPTER – 1

INTRODUCTION

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in the year 1839. There followed a period of disunity, lawlessness, confusion, insecurity and violence around the throne of Lahore State. Taking advantage of the prevailing situation, the British had already made inroads in Punjab but the Company annexed it in March 1849. The British were alerted and by the year of 1857, they succeeded disarming the entire Punjabi population, many of the Sikhs dignitaries who had taken part in the fighting against the British were languishing in prisons; many other were living under humiliating conditions. The *Khalsa* army was disbanded and a large number of erstwhile soldiers had been driven to plough. In other words, the British had completely crushed the forces of opposition, yet in some areas of Punjab they still had to face opposition during the revolt of 1857. The British, however, never hesitated to inflict serious punishment on those who sided with the revolt. Many of them were hanged.

In the process of consolidation of imperial gains, Christian missionaries were encouraged by the state government who along with the state helped introduced some social reforms in the form of schools and hospitals. Even under the British imperial rule, there were many social evils and cultural inequalities. As a result of all this, socio-religious movements came into existence, such as – Nirankari movement, Namdhari movement, Singh Sabha movement, Akali movement or Gurdwara reform movement between 1854-1920. The Namdharis - Sikhs proved to be a puritan Sikh sect. More strictly speaking they claimed to adhere to the puritanical faith of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh and the baptised Sikhs.¹ Namdhari movement was started by Baba Balak Singh, caste Arora, started a new Sect of Sikhs at Hazro, in the Rawalpindi District. They were named *Jagiasi* or *Abhiasi* and made large numbers of converts in the neighbourhood during their founder's life time. Baba Balak Singh was born in 1841 BK/AD 1785 to father Dial Singh and Mata Bhag Bhari at village *Chhoi* in Attock in District Rawalpindi.² He was a preacher of Sikhism of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh. He was always absorbed in *naam-bani* under the divine influence of Guru Gobind Singh.³ He was a man of religious nature. He was

¹ Khushwant Singh, *A History of Sikhs, Vol. 2: 1839-1998*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi 1999, p. 135.

² Harbans Singh, *Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol I, Punjabi University. Patiala, 1996, p. 265.

³ Interview, Swarn Singh Virk, Kariwala, Sirsa (Haryana), 14 October, 2020.

extremely influenced by Bhagat Jawahar Mal of Rawalpindi. He soon attracted followers from among inhabitants of Hazro and from among the garrison in the fort.⁴ Namdharis way of life and worship comprise several rites and rituals whose origin may be traced to the Vedas, which make them distinct from the orthodox Sikhs.⁵ During the time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Hindu and Sikhs celebrate the same festivals and fair. There caste prejudices and social customs were also same. They also shared the same social superstitions. Infact the rituals and customs practiced by the majority of the Sikhs were not altogether different from the rituals and customs of Brahmanical orthodoxy.⁶ Majority of these Khatri and Arora traders had become Sikhs right from the time of Guru Nanak Dev Ji onwards and were known for their Strictly puritarian living.⁷ Baba Balak Singh was to propagate and accelerate the peoples which were with the coming of British regime of new elite Sikh was lapsing back fast toward the type of unsikh way of life from which the Sikh Gurus wished the society to the rid of completely.⁸ Baba Balak Singh exhorted his followers to return to the simple religious massage of Sikh Gurus and in accordance with his massage he taught a strict doctrine of salvation through the meditation on *naam*.⁹ He asked his followers that they should offer Prasad of rupee one and four *annas* in the name of God. He instructed his followers to take bath twice a day and to keep one small symbol of sword in the *pagri*; to earn livelihood by their own efforts and to eat food cooked only by the *Gursikh*.¹⁰

Baba Balak Singh's followers were referred as *Jagiasis* and *Abhiasis*. His insistence on the importance of repeating Gods Name gave his followers their title.¹¹ The alternative name, Kuka, resulted from the ecstatic cries of Baba Ram Singh followers during worship.¹² They chanted hymns and danced into the state of frenzy and emitted loud shrieks or Kook hence the name Kukas for them.¹³ The name of

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Namdharis- *A Sikh Movement*, Satyug; Historical Source Issues, New Delhi, 2002, p. 118.

⁶ Joginder Singh, *Sikhs Resurgence*, National Book Organization, New Delhi, 1997, p. 4.

⁷ M.L. Ahluwalia, *Land Mark in Sikh History: A Fully Researched and Documented History 1699-1947*. Ashoka International Publishers, New Delhi, 1996, p.258.

⁸ Ibid, p.258.

⁹ W.H. Mcleod, *The Kukas: A Miienarian Sect of Punjab, Social and Political Movement: Reading on Punjab*, (eds. Harish K. Puri and Paramjit S Judge), rawat Publication, Jaipur 2000, p.28.

¹⁰ Dr. Kuldeep Singh, *Sutantar Bharat Vich Namdhari Sikhhan Da Sarthak Yogdaan*, Aarna Press, Patiala, 2019, p.23.

¹¹ *Namdharis- A Sikh Movement*, Satyug; Historical Source Issues, New Delhi, 2002, p. 118.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Joginder Singh, *Sikhs Resurgence*, p.8.

Namdharis was given by Baba Ram Singh himself because he enjoined upon his followers to practice *naam*.¹⁴

Amongst his more favourite disciples were three Khan Singh who was the head of the Sect at Hazro; Lal Singh was residence of village Bhaine Sahib in Ludhiana. On the death of their founder which occurred some six months ago, the members of the Sect appear to have unanimously elected Ram Singh successor. Though, the sect seems to have failed in the neighbourhood of Hazro since Balak Singh's death. It has thriven in a most remarkable manner in the districts adjoining the home of his more energetic successor. Namdhari's leader Baba Ram Singh was a spare man, 5 feet 10 inches; fairish complexion pitted with small pox; hazel eyes; long nose and face; grizzled beard and moustaches; by caste a carpenter Sikh.¹⁵ He was did read and writes *Gurmukhi* and has worked on occasion as a mason. Baba Ram Singh Was a staunch follower of Sikhism and had unshakeable faith in the spiritual leadership of the Sikh Guru.¹⁶ Baba Ram Singh comes of a poor family being the son of a poor carpenter named Jassa Singh. In his early youth he assisted Jassa Singh but in the year 1837 he took services, under the Government of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in Nao Nihal Singh's regiment. By the unshakeable faith in Sikh *Gurbani* and his religious spotless character all soldiers in his regiment were impressed and called him Bhai Ram Singh. His regiment was began to called the Saint's Regiment or in simple Punjabi *Sant Sipahian Di* Regiment.¹⁷ After the annexation of Punjab, Ram Singh quitted the Maharaja's army and resumed, at Bhaine, his occupation of Carpenter. After many years in the Rawal-Pindi district, where Baba Ram Singh had made acquaintance of Balak Singh of Hazro, a *faqeer*, under whose spiritual instruction he placed himself. Balak Singh initiated him into the tents of new sect and urged him to preach in the Ludhiana District about the years 1858, and assumed the title of '*Bhai*' or head of the brotherhood in 1860¹⁸. He was going about the country with 200 men, whom he drilled at night with sticks instead of muskets; that the boasted of 500 followers, and obeyed no Hakim. They purposed going with a lot of women, who

¹⁴ Bhagat Singh, *The Kuka Movement*, The Punjab Past and Present , Vol. VII-I, Punjabi University, Patiala, April 1993, p. 149.

¹⁵ File no. 451, *Memoranda Regarding of Guru Ram Singh*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 2.

¹⁶ Bhagat Singh, p. 149.

¹⁷ Yogindra Bali, Kalika Bali, *The Warriors in White: Glimpses of Kookas History*, Haranand Publication, New Delhi, 1995, p. 73.

¹⁸ Secret, *Kuka Sakhis*, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 4.

were also of their party. It is very difficult to establish a permanent centre of propagation at Hazro since it had limited Sikh population. Similarly Amritsar was under the influence of the *Singh Sabhaties* during the late 19th century. In the wake of these realities Baba Ram Singh succeeded in the Ludhiana area. Baba Ram Singh commenced proselytizing in the Ludhiana district about the year 1858, and assumed the title *Bhai* in 1860.

After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh their followed a decade of lawlessness war of succession. Baba Ram Singh was eyewitness to all these happenings.¹⁹ He could not tolerate this continuously worsening situation and became a service critic of all round deterioration in the standards of public behaviour.²⁰ So in 1845, on the eve of the battle of Mudki, he left soldiering in order to meditate upon God's name. However in T.H. Thornton's report it was alleged that had quitted the Sikh army in 1846 i.e. in the taking of Lahore.²¹ Baba Ram Singh engaged himself in agriculture on his return from army. He did open his grocery shop in the village. A few sincere admirers and old comrades of the army service days, gathered around him, and shed bitter tears over the political thralldom of motherland.²²

After careful consideration, a comprehensive programme was chalked out by Baba Ram Singh. The long and contemplated first step was taken in the year 1857 on the *Bhaisakhi* day.²³ Baba Ram Singh in believed the political freedom as the part of religion. The organisation of the Namdharis became considerably strong. Namdharis future claims that Baba Ram Singh began to convert the people in the fold of Sikhism and organised a congregation on the day of *Baisakhi* of 1857. He baptizes to five Sikhs and also unfurled the flag of the '*Sant Khalsa*' which was triangular in shape and white in colour. Kahan Singh Nihang of village Chak Malerlkotla state, Labh Singh Ragi of Amritsar, Atma Singh of Ala Muhar village, District Sialkot, Bhai Naina Singh Wariyah, Amritsar district and Sudh Singh of village Durgapur, district Jalandar were the first to be initiated.²⁴ Afterward several people from the *Sangat* took

¹⁹ Balbir Singh, *The Impact of the Namdhari Movement*, The Punjab Past and Present, Vol.XIII-I, Punjabi University, Patiala 1979, p. 189.

²⁰ Fauja Singh Bajwa, *Kuka Movement: An Important- Phase in Punjab's Role in India's Struggle for Freedom*, Motilal Bannarsidas, Delhi 1965, p. 173.

²¹ Moti Lal Bhargava, *Satguru Ram Singh, Namdhari Ithihas* Parkashan Sabha, Sri Bhaini Sahib, 1993, p.6.

²² Sardar Nahar Singh, *A Short Account of the Kukas or Namdharis*, Namdhari Sangat, Namdhari Dharmsala, Delhi, p.3.

²³ Fauja Singh Bajwa, *Satyug: 300th Bhaisakhi-Khalsa Issue*, New Delhi 1999, p.5.

²⁴ Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Namdhari Movement*, p.16

Amrit. He revived The *Khalsa* tradition and the initiated his followers through baptism of sword, *Khande-di-Pahul*, neglected long since.²⁵ The Movement of boycott, and non-co-operation, which was started by Mahatma Gandhi in his own time, was preached by Baba Ram Singh fifty years ago. Namdharis leader's non-co-operation movement contained the following basics; boycott of Government services, boycott of educational institution opened by the British, boycott of law courts of Britishers, boycott of foreign made goods and to refuse to obey that the laws and orders, which were against your soul.²⁶ It was after six years, that the British officers came to Know of the existence of his movement. By that time, the number of Namdharis has considerably increased throughout Punjab, and other places in India.

Namdharis Guru takes a revolutionary step in the favour of women. The leading features of the doctrines he teaches was as follows abolishes all distinctions of caste among Sikhs advocates indiscriminate intermarriage of all classes, enjoins the marriage of widow all of which he was performed himself. He never takes arms himself and prohibits his followers from doing so. Enjoins abstinence from liquor and drugs, but advocates much too free intercourse between the sexes; men and women have together at his meetings so and thousands of women and young girls have joined his sect. Whoever makes money by the marriage of his daughter is a rascal. Whoever commitment of infanticide or exchanges his daughter is equally so. Children should be educated in the precepts of the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Baba Ram Singh tried to remove great social evil of society was costly marriage system. He had introduced a new, simplest and cheapest marriage ceremony. It was started on 2nd, June, 1863. This was the first innovatory step of Baba Ram Singh which was taken in the village of Khotte.²⁷ It was known as *Anand Karaj*. All kinds of marriage feasts, dowry, and parties were abolished.²⁸ The practice of the *Ananad reeti* was as follow; the *Ananad reeti* was started with the recitation the path of *Asa-di-Var* in the presence of *Guru Granth Sahib*. *Havan* was also performed by *Vedi*'s. Five *Granthi* was recited the *Gurubani* and other two *Singhs* performed *Ahuti* in *Havan*. The *Amrit* was prepared and gave to bride and groom and then the path of *lavan* recited and bride and groom

²⁵ Joginder Singh, *Popular Sikh Movement: A Study of Contending Responses of the Namdhari and Singh Sabha Movements to the colonial Rule*, Satyug: Basant Issue, New Delhi 2005, p. 107.

²⁶ Satyug, Basant Ank, *Baba Ram Singh Ji*, February 1927, p.10.

²⁷ Wariam, Jagdish Singh, *Ananad Karaj Reet atte Namdhari*, June 1997, p.21.

²⁸ Swarn Singh Sanahi, *Social Milieu in Punjab and the Kuka Movement*, Punjab History Conference, Seventh Session, October, 8-12, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 154.

round four rounds of the *Havan*. In while the interview, Harjit Singh said that because the old ceremonies done according to the ritual of the *Vedi*. The Namdhari Sikhs believes that the marriages of the Sikh gurus were performed according to the ritual of *Vedi*. That is way they followed the *Vedi* ceremony.²⁹ Finally the path of *Anand Sahib* and *Ardaas* was performed and *Karah Parsaad* was distributed in the *sangat*. According to the writer Jagdish singh in *variyaam* six couples's marriages was performed that day. All couples were belonged to different castes. Bhai Fateh Singh's son Shri Beer Singh district Jalandhur married with Bibi Bishan Kaur daughter of Bhai Jogga Singh district Ferozepur. Famous Suba of Village Khotte Baba Samund Singh's daughter married in village Farri district Ferozepur. Sant Budh Singh's daughter Prem Kaur married in district Jalandhur. Sant Fateh singh daughter married in the village of Nihalewala. Sant Kala Singh's daughter married in Ferozepur district village Dohddhar. Bhai Sunder Singh's daughter married in District Amritsar³⁰. This radical step of Namdharis was opposed by Bhrahmin, Bedis, *Mahants*. Many false reports were registered in the police station of village Bagha Purana district Ferozepur. On 4th June report was registered in village Bagha Purana district Ferozepur that "for two or three days, Ram Singh with five hundred followers had assembled at his village, and were behaving in a very extraordinary manner. They talked seditions, said that country would soon be theirs, and they would speedily have 1, 25, 000 armed men to back them and were altogether comporting themselves in a very extraordinary manner."³¹ Police Sergeant of Government reached at on the spot of Khotte and started investigation. The information was sent to Deputy Commissioner of Forozepur. The ritual of *Anand* marriage was started by Baba Ram Singh. Due to Brahamans and Mahants became his opponents because his own shopkeping was closed. That is why Baba Ram Singh kept under arrest by British government.³² Baba Ram Singh was arrested and removed from one police station to the other. He was brought to Bhaini Sahib at last.³³ Namdharis were forced to disintegrate their congregation and back to their own home.

²⁹ Interview, Harjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

³⁰ Wariam, June, 1997, p.22.

³¹ File no. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, Bhai Ganda Singh Collection , Bhain Kahan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 1.

³² Interview, Namdhari Scholar Surinder Kaur Kharal, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

³³ The Tribune, 26 January, 1950, p. 11.

He exhorted his disciples to be cleanly and truth telling. It was well that every man carry his staff; and they all do; the Guru *Granth Sahib* was their only accepted inspired volume. All Namdharis's may be known by the tie of their *pugrees*, 'Seedhi Pug' by a watchword, and by a knuckled of knots made in a white woollen cord to represent beads and which were worn by all the community. Baba Ram Singh was advised his followers to keep Five K's (*kakars*) instead of *Kirpan*, as it had been disallowed by government, heavy *lathi* was introduced.³⁴ The *Gurumantur* or mystic word he taught them was simply "*Wahe Guru*" which they were to repeat constantly with their lip, but teeth closed. He then gave them some unexceptional advice as to their mode of life. They were perfectly orderly and quiet. Meanwhile, Baba Ram Singh strongly denounced the beliefs and practices being advocated by contemporary *babas* and *gurus*. He exhorted his followers to regard Guru Gobind Singh's *granth* as the only true one. The *Bedis* and the *Mahants* were imposters as no one could be guru except Guru Gobind Singh. The *devidwars*, *Shivdwaras* and *thakurdwaras* were means of exhortation used by the Brahmans and never to be forgiven by him.³⁵ There was a special emphasis laid on the administration of guru mantra. That is, the secret word '*Wahe guru*' whispered, by the guru, into the ear of the new extant. This was considered important in so far as it established a personal contact between the teacher and the disciple and possessed great potentialities for working psychological change in the heart of the recipient of the guru-mantra.³⁶ The Namdharis had firm faith in all the incarnations of God.³⁷ Further they looked up, their leader Ram Singh as a reincarnation of Guru Gobind Singh.

Namdharis had greatly emphasised on the *Nam* and *Bani*. *Nam* (mystical emblem of the *Kukas*) and *Bani* (word of God) have a close affinity to one another. Consider or ponder of power of *Nam*. By the power of *Nam* several thousand Sikhs have taken to reading the *Bani*. By reading the *Bani* the beauties of the "Name of the God are discussed. In short *Nam* and *Bani* are priceless treasures. Perform *bhajan* and *Bani*, and pray to the Guru, who is capable of removing all difficulties. Explaining the importance of *Guru Granth Sahib* Baba Ram Singh message his followers that *O' Khalsa!* The *Guru Sahib* has been graciously pleased to confer upon you this *Nam* and

³⁴ Joginder Singh, *Popular Sikh Movement*, p. 107.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Fauja Singh Bajwa, pp.20-21.

³⁷ S.S. Matharu, *Namdharis*, satyug: Basant Number, New Delhi, 1994. p. 142.

Bani; therefore be firm in reciting the *Nam* and *Bani* day and night, whether moving or working. Always strive to step forwards, never backwards. All who recite the name of God will inherit exaltation, joy, perpetual happiness and prosperity.³⁸ Baba Ram Singh also had instructed his followers in between, when ever free from work or while walking, every Namdhari is required to recite the name *Shabbad* with the help of rosary in hand.³⁹

From the reports which were submitted by many officers, it appears that Ram Singh is endeavouring to affect a reform in the Sikh religion, and some of his doctrines and precepts are not only harmless but also beneficial.⁴⁰ Baba Ram Singh issued many *Hukamnamas* which had personal, social, religious and political implications.⁴¹ They were required to follow very strict Code of Conduct in their daily life such as get up early hours of the morning, complete the daily ablutions, like full bath called *Sankesh-ashnan* vis daily washing of hair.⁴² Baba Ram Singh revived the practice of performing *Akhand Path*, *Havan* and *Chandi da Path*.⁴³ Baba Ram Singh emphasis on reading the *Nam* and *Bani* also invigorated the practice to *Akhand Path*. The ceremony of the *Akhand Path* should be performed in this manner: first purify the place with mud wash, not with cow dung. The floor cloth or carpet should be washed as well as coverings band stool of the *Granth*. The readers are washing and clean their clothes. After passing urine, he must wash his hands and feet and gargle his mouth three or four times. A lamp of *ghi* to be retained burning all the time the *Akhand Path* ceremony continues; concluding with the *Havan*. The person performing the *Havan* must not speak, but he should keep reciting the *Japji Sahib* dropping the *akhand ahuti* on the fire at the end of each verse. Each time of dropping the incense should make use of word “*Shri Wahe Guru*”.⁴⁴ All should keep silent after each *Bhog*, the *Bhogoti* should be recited. Another unique belief and practice was the ceremony of performing the *Chandi Da Path*. *Chandi Da Path* was prevalent prayer in the honour of goddess

³⁸ Home Judicial Department, B, Proceedings October, 1881, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p.2.

³⁹ M.L. Ahluwalia, p.261.

⁴⁰ File no. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p.14.

⁴¹ Satyug: Basant Number, New Delhi 1994, p.27.

⁴² M.L. Ahluwalia, p.261.

⁴³ Kuldip Singh, *Understanding the Kuka Movement*, p.11.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p.4.

Durga. According to M.M. Ahluwalia, Namdharis believe that *Chandi Da Path* practice was started by Guru Gobind Singh to get prepared the Sikhs for the struggle against the oppressors to instil warlike temper. The Namdharis were accustomed to meet together, read the *Granth* and *Chandi Path* so this the assembly generally lasts some two or three days, and the following ceremonies were observed :- two or three days mounds of wood are collected and set fire to, then ghee, *halwa*, fruits etc were thrown on it, to make the wood burn more slowly. The assembled Kukas sit round whilst one reads the *Ganth Sahib* and other repeat *Shaloks*.

Simultaneously, Baba Ram Singh paid attention to the organizational set up. He organised twenty two Kuka territorial units and each District Unit had been active in politics without reliance upon any other Kuka organization.⁴⁵ It was *Suba* system. Baba Ram Singh was first to establish eleven *Suba* after that he organised twenty two *Suba* but all of *Subas* were arrested by the British government. After this the British government asked to Baba Ram Singh “what will you do now” then Baba Ram Singh replied that “I will produce Ram Singh in every house. Whatever you wish, now this movement will not stop.”⁴⁶

The word *Suba* in Punjabi strictly means just a province but in context of the Namdharis, it was a political and administrative system.⁴⁷ The purpose of the *Suba* System was many folds. It was a communications set up to propagate the doctrine of Kuka Movement and also administer the religious, spiritual, social affairs of the Kukas.⁴⁸ Some of active centres under the *Suba* system were came out the district of Amritsar, Lahore, Sailkot, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Ambala and Karnal. They were also active in Malerkotla, Nabha, and Patiala.⁴⁹ These *Subas* were continually contacted with Baba Ram Singh side by side with a secret and private communication system. The trustable messengers carried coded message to *Subas* to the Namdhari headquarters of Bhaini Sahib or where Namdhari Guru Baba Ram Singh was frequently used to visit. Under the *Subas* there were *naib-subad*, *Jathedars*, and local *sangat*. *Naib-subas* and *Jathedars* were given smaller areas to operate in

⁴⁵ Dr. Nazer Singh, *Baba Ram Singh Namdhari Movement: its Historian and Historiography*, Twentyfirst Century publication, Patiala, 2018, p.35.

⁴⁶ Interview, Harjit Sing, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

⁴⁷ Yogendra Bali, Kalika Bali, *The Warriors in White*, p. 54.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Joginder Singh, *A short History of Namdhari Sikhs of Punjab*, pp, 96-97.

and were required to organize and supervise the missionary work of their respective places.⁵⁰ According to historian Joginder Singh the Namdhari guru had assigned to these *subas* the task of a) propagating the Namdhari mission, administering *bhajan* and *amrit* and making arrangements for performing paths b) settling the local disputes with utmost impartiality c) collecting *daswand* d) ensuring peace in their respective areas and e) bringing cases of disobedience and self styled persons to the notice of guru.⁵¹

During period of Baba Ram Singh the Namdharis took step against the tombs and graves. They were took action against tombs and graves in different areas such as Ferozepur, Gurdaspur Lahore, Amritsar and Ludhiana. Some Namdharis were arrested and fined by Government in this case. On 7th July, 1866, a case was prosecuted at Ludhaiana. The defendants were each sentenced to three month and imprisonment and fine of five rupees each.⁵² Some tombs were destroyed in the village of Choote Sarroshoo in Ferozepur and Chuhar Bhainee in September by Wariam Singh, Fateh Singh and Jaimel Singh. The three Kukas found guilty were sentenced to three months' imprisonment, with the fine of Rs. 20/- each.⁵³ One more incident was happened in December in the village of *Budok* in Gujrawala district. The group of three Namdharis were arrested for laying down of graves at *Choowindah*. The information reported at Moreede Police Station in Lahore by Rattan Singh, a Brahmin of *Sheikwan* on 24th December. Kukas had destroyed two places sacred to Hanuman and Lakshman, worshiped by the Hindus of the village. For this Dewa Singh was convicted by sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment, two months to be solitary, and to pay a fine of Rs. 25/-.⁵⁴ In the report of Major Perkin, January 1867, described that a group of twenty two Namdharis had destroyed a religious places of worship at the village of *Chuppar*. Afer few weeks of this incident the Deputy Inspector of Police at Dehlon reported that twenty seven graves had been destroyed at village of *Khuttree Kosehi*.⁵⁵ The accused were sentenced to six months

⁵⁰ Fauja Singh Bajwa, p. 34.

⁵¹ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 2010, p.70.

⁵² T.H. Thornton, Secretary to Government Punjab, dated 2nd February, 1867: Nahar Singh, *Gooroo Ram Singh and the Sikhs: Documents 1863-71*, p.35.

⁵³ Ibid, p.34.

⁵⁴ Inspector General of Police, dated January 1868, ibid, p. 70.

⁵⁵ Kuldip Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh and his Movement*, Chandigarh, 2012, p. 30.

imprisonment and fine of Rs. 10/-each.⁵⁶ Some more cases were reported in the Police station of Amritsar district against the Namdharis. Their mood at this time was reflected in the popular song current among them, which opened with the following verse:⁵⁷

1. *Murhee musseetan dhake* - thrown down tombs and Musjids and made all level
Kardeo maidan
2. *Pehle maro pir bunnoe* - First annihilate peer Bunnoe, after do the same for
Phir maro sultana sultana
3. *Oomput subhee Mohamedee* - All the followers of the prophet will disappear
Khap jai maidan at once
4. *Soonut join a karsukka* - Thembling Turks will in future be able to
Kumbun turkana circumcise
5. *Bhainee, satgooroo jages* - The true Gooroo has in Bhainee the rest of the
Aur jhutt jahana world is full of life.

The Namdharis have no respect for tombs, temples or shrines. They are also iconoclasts. They reverence the temple of the *Darbar Sahib* at Amritsar as being the depository of the *Granth* and perhaps owing to the city being the capital and centre of the Sikh religion. The *Pujaris*, *Brahmins*, and other spiritual persons who live by the votive offerings they receive from orthodox Hindus, were naturally the bitterest enemies of the new sect, as its spread of its tenets would deprive them their marriage fees and other gains and exactions⁵⁸

Namdharis established diplomatic relations with some states including Kashmir, Nepal and Russia. The recruitment started in the summer of 1869 and up to end of 1870 nearly 250 Kukas were serving in the Kashmir, army as a separate regiment. It was very too serious a matter for the government to overlook. The government of Punjab reported the secretary, Government of India, that the Inspector General of Police had been instructed to keep movements of these men under watch.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Inspector General of Police, Punjab, dated 20th January, 1868, *Gooroo Ram Singh and the Sikhs*, Pp. 70-71.

⁵⁷ T.H. Tronton, Secretary to the Government Punjab, dated 2nd February 1867, *ibid*, p.31.

⁵⁸ Bhai Nahar Singh, *Rebels Against the British Rule*, atlantic Publishers & distributors, 1989, New Delhi, p.30.

⁵⁹ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, p. 83.

Police officers were collected information about the relation of Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir with Namdharis. Demi-official letter dated 5 October 1871 it was reported that:

In November reports were received that Maharaja of Kashmir was raising Kuka Regiment. Maharaja of Kashmir got up two Kuka companies, comprising two hundred men, with the intention of making them the nucleus of a regular Kuka regiment, just in the same way as he has regular regiments of Battis and Dogrus. His order to those whom, he sent to the Punjab to recruit were to get men of fine physique and good family; his idea being that, by men of good family. He could, through their influence, get their relatives in like manner to enlist for his service. In 1868 Sardar Hira Singh, a Jagirdar of Sudowrah, in the Saharnpur district (North-West Province), and one of Guru Ram Singh's *Subas*, went by direction of Guru Ram Singh to Jammu to the Maharaja who gave him leave to enlist a regiment of Kukas and appointed him to command it. Hira Singh then returned to Baba Ram Singh at Bhaine, and obtained permission to take 175 Kukas with him at once to Jammu. These men were formed into two companies, and were four months at Jammu learning their drill. They were then sent to garrison the Fort of *Nowshera*, where they remained three months, and from whence they were sent to Kashmir. After the 1871 made private enquires regarding the Kukas and ascertained that, on the recommendation of the Vedanta, between two hundred men this sect was entertained in the Maharaja Service. The men of this sect were dismissed. The intelligence has been received of the murder of butchers by men of this sect; Maharaja has commended the foresight of Dewan Kirpa Ram, and has ordered all Kukas to be dismissed who are now employed in Mozufferabad.⁶⁰

In the police report of the Jhelum District, 30th September 1871 it was mentioned that:

“several Kukas have been passing through during the week. All stated that they had been in the Maharaja of Kashmir's service and were discharged. They had come from Muzufferabad Fort, and passing through Abbotabad and Hazara, had come through Pindi, and were proceeding down country in search

⁶⁰ Home Judicial Department, January 13, 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 2.

of employment. They say all Kukas are being turned out by the Maharaja just now.⁶¹

End result of information was that under the influence of British Resident and such other pressures, all the Kukas were dismissed from the service in the last part of 1871.

They also established good relation with Jang Bahadur of Nepal. The Sikhs contact with Rana Jung Bahadur started as early as 1850, when he declared war on Tibet and defeated the Tibetans.⁶² The latter were made to surrender all the Sikhs prisoners of the Lahore darbar; who on reaching Kathmandu, started training the forces of Rana with the arrival of Rani Jindan Kaur at Kathmandu the contacts of Kukas increased with the Nepalese authorities.⁶³ Rana Jung Bahadur held the Ram Singh with great reverence and regard. Maharaja of Nepal send a letter to Namdharis leader Baba Ram Singh wrote him to send his Namdharis followers in his army regiment. He replied the letter of Mahraja and asked that he would not despatch any men in his regiment after it but Baba Ram Singh sent gifts for Maharaja. It was a pair of mules and a couple of buffaloes⁶⁴ gifted by Namdhari Guru and Maharaja of Nepal also sent valuable gifts for the Baba Ram Singh like one gold necklace, one *doshala*, one horse, two *Khukhris* and some money. The British Government took keen interest in all the activities of Nepal and Namdharis recruitment in Nepal army. British realised that Rana was not showing undue encouragement to Kukas who were just seeking jobs in the Nepali army.⁶⁵ Under the pressure of British Government Rana Jang Bahadur also dismissed the Namdharis in his regiment like the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir.

The impact of Baba Balak Singh's personality on his followers was remarkable. According to popular belief the *Guru Granth Sahib* is now considered to be the eleventh Guru, but Balak Singh of Hazro, in the Rawalpindi district, who initiated Ram Singh and was the founder of the Kuka sect, is also looked on by some as the eleventh Guru. Ram Singh claims to be the twelfth Guru, and is recognised as

⁶¹ Ibid, p.1.

⁶² Moti Lal Bhargava, *Satguru Ram Singh*, p. 14

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ File no. 22, home Department Proceedings, Judicial Dewpartment, Kuka Report 1869, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 15-A.

⁶⁵ Joginder singh, *Nmadhari Guru Ram Singh*, p. 87.

such by the Kukas.⁶⁶ It is impossible to say definitely what they mean. Possibly they mean that the *Sakhis* treated them of 12th Gurus, or that there is 12th Guru in contradiction to the general belief of the Sikhs those there only ten Gurus. The Granth Sahib is now considered by the Sikhs to be the eleventh Guru; but the Kukas believe reckon Balak Singh as the eleventh Guru and Ram Singh as the twelfth Guru. His disciples actually believed him to be Guru Gobind Singh, risen from the dead again, and that could foresee and foretell everything, and that he actually had foretold the fall of the Sikh Raj.⁶⁷ Through, the sect seems to have failed in the neighbourhood of Hazro since Baba Balak Singh's death; it had thriven in the most remarkable manner in the district adjoining to the home of his more energetic successor.⁶⁸ He was known as Ram Singh *Mahant* after words as Guru Ram Singh, then as *Satguru* and now as *Sache Padhshah* or *Akal Purakh*.⁶⁹

Namdharis were established their own strong postal system. The Namdharis have a private post system of their own going about with letters and messages. The post was entrusted either with a letter or verbal message; this man goes in great haste to a certain stage, where he was relieved by another, who takes from him either the letter or verbal message; their strict order was not to exchange a syllable with any individual whilst conveying news.⁷⁰ Confidential orders are circulated much in the Scottish bygone days. A Kuka on the arrival at his village of another of the same sect with a despatch at once leaves off whatever work he may be engaged upon; if in the midst of a repeat, not another morsel is eaten; he asks no questions, but, talking the message, starts off a run and conveys it to the next relief or to its destination. Important communications are sent verbally, and are not committed to writing.⁷¹

The influence of Baba Ram Singh spread a good deal among the people of Punjab. The British Government felt compelled to take some action against him. After a few days the *Gurdwara* at Bhaini Sahib was searched. Sir Henry Davls, the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab himself present with the police when the search was carried out. The British Government suspected the manufacturing of guns. When the

⁶⁶ Secret, January 1882, Nos. 558-599, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p.2.

⁶⁷ File no. 451, *Memoranda Regarding of Guru Ram Singh*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p.10.

⁶⁸ W.H. McLeod, p. 28.

⁶⁹ "Rise of the Kuka Movement", Satyug: Historical Source Issue, New Delhi, 2002, p.99.

⁷⁰ Foreign Department, 1868, Political-A, proceedings, September, Nos. 383-385, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p.383.

⁷¹ Bhai Nahar Singh, *Rebels Against the British Rule*, Atlantic Publishers & distributors, New Delhi, 1989, p.29.

search afforded them no clue, Sir Henry Davls asked Baba Ram Singh where they manufactured the guns; he showed the Whiteman his rosary with its one hundred and eight balls and said, “This is a gun turned out from our factory. It has one hundred and eight cannon balls. They never miss fire.”⁷² The police attuned disappointed. Baba Ram Singh was from that day not allowed to leave Bhaini Sahib. He broke this restriction at least four times when he made two attempts to go Amritsar and once to visit Anandpur. Every time he was arrested and brought back to Bahini sahib.

Surveillance over Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was removed in 1866. During the period of 1866 to 1872, he went different places to preach his doctrines and hold many assemblies and congregation at various Sikh *Gurdwara* and different religious place. In these travelling much time he was opposed by the Christian missionaries under the British Government. He was also strongly opposed by the *Mahants* of the *Gurdawaras* of Amritsar and Anandpur Sahib. Namdharis also started the non-cooperation against the British regime and introduced the *Swadeshi* operation. He was adopted the *Swadeshi* by completely boycott of the British goods and services. Namdhari Guru Ram Singh advised his followers that all Namdharis would Boycott the British goods, services, education, postal system, courts, railway, hospitals and especially of foreign made clothe imported by the British traders.⁷³ Baba Ram Singh not only meant that he launched a movement of civil disobedience against the British regime but he also set up a comparable government within the British administration.⁷⁴ Baba Ram Singh did a complete boycott of government goods. Which were included government jobs, transport, post system, not drinking government hand pumps water, which symbolized made Bhaini Sahib well. Baba Ram Singh ordered that should not eat the flour from government flour machine so he installed has own grinding machine. They boycott the government transport so they used to their own cart.⁷⁵

The popularity of Baba Ram Singh was spreading all over the Punjab. British Government was wanted only in one solid reason to suppress the Namdhari movement completely. Unfortunately Namdharis followers were gave a solid chance to British in 1872. An unfortunate incident occurred at Raikot Amritsar and

⁷² The Tribune, 26 January, 1950. Ambala Cantt, p. 11.

⁷³ Gurudwara Gazzatte, *Rebels Against the British Raj*, March 1971, p. 8.

⁷⁴ Harcharan Singh Sobti, *Baba Ram Singh: The Rebel*, Satyug: Basant Number, New Delhi, 1994, p.188.

⁷⁵ Interview' Harjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib. 13 March, 2020.

Malerkotla in 1872. After the annexation of the Punjab the Governor General in 1849 modified the former orders and declared that for the future “no one should be allowed to interfere with the practice, by his neighbour; of customs which that neighbour’s religion permits”.⁷⁶ The Board of Administration ruled that the prohibition which had formerly been maintained solely out of deference to a Sikh sovereign, must now be removed and that in every large town a spot for shambles and butchers shop should be appointed, but that particular care should be taken not to select the neighbourhood of any Hindu religious buildings and on no account should be exposed for sale in shops within the towns although slaughtered outside, and that Muslims should be severely punished for ostentatiously parading for what they would offend their Hindu neighbours.⁷⁷

These orders were carried out in Amritsar by Mr. C.B. Saunders in 1849, which selected a shop at a distance from the city and caused an enclosure to be erected there and forbade the sale of the flesh of kine in the city in shops or in an open manner. From that day to this day same system has been continued. It is certain that the beef has been brought openly and carelessly into the city to the disgust of the Hindu Community. On the April last the first signs of till the 24th of that month, when one Dewa Singh, a Sikh took a beef bone into the temple and placed it in front of the *Granth*. This at once in a blaze the feelings which had for some time been smouldering and consequently crowds of Sikhs and Hindus began to assemble. An agitation was set on foot, having for its objects the complete suppression of kine killing in or about the holy city; several affrays took place on slight pretexts between the Hindus and Muslims of the city.⁷⁸

The outbreak of the revolt of 1857 was started by the Hindustani spays who were offended by the British. The British orders which forbade the wearing of caste-makers, beards or turbans were looked upon by them as infringements of their religious rights. After ruthlessly suppression of this revolt of 1857, made the strategy and tactics employed by the Hindustani rebels redundant. The only workable strategy and tactics in Punjab were arousing sentimental and emotional appeals to the Sikhs and Hindus. Inadvertently, the British provided an opportunity of Namdhari Guru

⁷⁶ File no. 490, *Political Papers of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p.2.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 3.

Ram Singh. The British policy of lifting prohibition of cow-killing offended the religious sentiments of the Sikhs and Hindus. As early as 1849, the Board of Administration issued the following bye-laws;

- Cow will be slaughtered at a particular place outside the town.
- No shop will be opened in the town for the open sale of beef.

The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar allowed the opening of slaughter outside the city in accordance with the above bye-laws. The opening of a cow-slaughter house at Amritsar gave a signal for opening of many more such slaughter houses in different town throughout Punjab. Since, the starting of a slaughter house at Amritsar, the Muslim butchers started the sale of beef openly in the streets of the city. By the year 1871, the tension gave way to communal quarrels, open fights and riots. The Divisional Commissioner had to intervene and tried to pacify the Hindus and the Sikhs of the City who were offended over cow-killing. Meanwhile, the Muslims floated rumour that four more shops will be opened in the city for the sale of beef and that one of these will be adjacent to the complex to the Golden Temple. When a meat shop opened, the Hindu and the Sikhs were emotionally disturbed to see that kites and crow dropping bones in the holy tank or nearby places.

A few Namdharis living in the city in a meeting decided to scarifies themselves for the purpose of stopping cow-killing in the sacred city. On the night of the 14th June, eight Namdharis attacked the butchers inside the slaughter house. Three butchers were killed on the spot and three badly wounded. The innocent victims were arrested by Police. When Baba Ram Singh knows about the reality, he ordered the real culprits to confess his guilt before the magistrate. On their own confession, four Namdharis were hanged on 15th September 1871. After some time, Namdharis were again attacked on Butchers at Raikot in the Ludhiana District, on the 15th July, 1871.⁷⁹ Four butchers were killed and seven badly injured. The report was that seven Kukas have been arrested in Patiala territory; they have been traced from Raikot. The Maharaja of Patiala was to give every assistance.⁸⁰ In 1872 this incident was again happened at Malerkotla. On the 13th January, 1872 there was a meetings of Kukas at Bhaine Sahib on *Maghi* fair. The group of 150 of these after working themselves up into a state of religious frenzy but started these atones off under the leadership Heera Singh of territory of Patiala.⁸¹ Baba Ram Singh informed the police of their intention to do some mischief, say that they had no control over him. But some zealot Namdharis followers

⁷⁹ Dr. Bhagat Singh, *The Kuka Movement*, Proceedings The Punjab Past and Present, April, 1973, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 151.

⁸⁰ File No. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p.8.

⁸¹ E. D. Maclagan, *Census of India, 1891*, Volume XIX, Part I, p. 66.

planned to make an attack on the Haveli of Baden Singh, Sirdar of Maludh to get arms from his fort. In the battle two Namdharis were killed and four were wounded and from Beden Singh sided were also two killed and two injured. After the attack of Maluud Namdharis were pressed on to Malerkotla. They were attacked on Malerkotla on the morning of 7.am of 15th January, 1872. About one hundred Namdhris and two women were entered in the Malerkotla. Obviously main objective for attack was collected the guns from Nawab of Malerkotla. But the police force of Ludhiana and Patiala already reached at Malerkotla.⁸² But in the battle both the parties were heavily suffered. The Namdharis over-powered on their way Niaz Ali , the Naib Nazim of Amargarh of Patiala state, where to the number of sixty eight they surrendered to the Patiala authorities. At Maludh and Malerkotla had ten men killed and injured seventeen, while their own loss had been nine killed and thirty eight wounded.⁸³ Mr. Cowan, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana reached Malerkotla and without formal trial he got forty nine Namdharis blown up with guns in the afternoon of 17th.⁸⁴ This barbaric incident happened in the parade ground of Malerkotla in the presence of Patiala, Nabha, and Malerkotla troops. According to Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal These states sent his cannons against the Namdharis. The number of cannons was nine and out of this seven cannons were used for martyred the Namdharis Sikhs. Two cannons reserved so that if the Namdharis attacked, it should be useful at that time.⁸⁵

The Government found that the followers of Baba Ram Singh were becoming stronger day by day and making the Malerkotla riots an excuse ordered the deportation of Baba Ram Singh with his seventeen Subas, Baba Roor Singh, Man Singh, Bhagwan singh, Surmukh Singh, Giani Singh, Raja Singh, Jamiat Singh, Burma Singh, Hukma Singh, Malook Singh, Nirain Singh, Jota Singh, Khusal Singh, Khazan Singh, Sumund Singh, Gopal Singh and Phara Singh. Baba Ram Singh with his prominent subas deported to Allahabad under the regulation III. of 1818.⁸⁶ They remained under detention in the Allahabad Fort for two months. From there Baba Ram Singh was transferred to Burma. His seventeen Subas were sent to different places: one was kept in Chunnar Fort, another in Eden and Arabia and another in Moulmein (Burma) and so on. A few of them were released afterward. On the day of aforesaid arrests the area around the Gurdwara at Bhaini Sahib was dug twelve feet deep with a view to getting out any hidden weapons. Nearly whole of the Gurdwara property was confiscated. A police picket was placed on the Gurdwara gate. This picket continued for fifty years.

⁸² Gurbaksh Singh, *Namdhari Lehar*, Satyug, Basant Number, 12 Magh, 1927, p.56.

⁸³ Punjab District Gazetteers, Ludhiana, Chandigarh, p.103.

⁸⁴ Dr Bhagat Singh, *The Kuka Movement*, p. 152.

⁸⁵ Interview, Namdhari Scholar Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

⁸⁶ Home Judicial Progs. February 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 27.

Baba Ram Singh never returned to India. The Namdharis still believe that he was still living and will come back. The District Magistrate of Ludhiana declared on the behalf of the Government that Baba Ram Singh had passed away in 1885.⁸⁷ But Namdharis followers still now believes that Baba Ram Singh had not passed away because Baba Ram Singh said that “I cannot drown in water and I cannot burn in fire, so I will defiantly come back one day.” Namdharis believes that he will come back one day. The British Government said that he was died but they did not provide any evidence about it. A year and a half after the date he writes another letter in which they write that Baba ji should be removed from the Rangoon and shifted elsewhere there are many followers of Baba ji who come there and this is a cause to the government. These two things do not match.⁸⁸ The Guru was kept in Rangoon for some years. None could see him there without permission. Despite these restrictions, many Namdharis made successful attempts to see him at a heavy cost, both physical and financial. Many were arrested for making these attempts. Some of them were sentenced to seven years rigorous imprisonment, some to transportation and some to be hanged. A few letters written in Punjabi by Guru Ram Singh from Rangoon are still carefully preserved in the Library of Sat Guru Partap Singh, while many were seized by British Government. Baba Ram Singh in his letters preached his followers to maintain non-violence. One of letters stated that:

“All the Sikh should practice non-violence to such an extent that even if somebody were to cast aspersions on them they should pay no heed to it. Even if someone among them murdered, they should remain peaceful. God is always on the sides of those who are patient and forgiving. To forgive is an important principle of life.”⁸⁹

The proposed work topic is “Opposition to the Namdhari Movement by the British Loyalist sections (1857-1947). On Namdhari Movement many Namdhari and non Namdharis historians and scholars did their work. Our work is based on the opposition sections who had played a significant role to crush the Movement. This attempt is research deeply and widely on the opposition sections. This research work is divided in seven chapters include introduction. My first chapter is Introduction which is based on origin, growth and development of the Namdhari movement in the time period of Baba Ram Singh. My second chapter is British loyalists and their social and cultural identification. In this chapter highlight the social and cultural back grounds of the British loyalists. Third chapter is Namdhari reaction towards the British policy: their intervention in Amritsar and Malerkotla. In this chapter an analysis the policy of British and describe the butchers attack of Amritsar and

⁸⁷ The Tribune, Ambala Cantt, 26 January 1950, p. 11.

⁸⁸ Interview, Surjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib, See Appendix.

⁸⁹ The Tribune, Ambala Cantt, 26 January 1950, p. 11.

Malerkotla. Fourth chapter is role of *Mahants*, *Surbrah* of Golden Temple, *Zamidars* and *Jagirdars* against the Namdharis. In this chapter we try to highlight the role of these all loyalists that also gave fully support to the British regime against the Namdhari Movement. Fifth chapter is role of the princely states: Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala and Faridkot. These princely states played a great role against the Namdharis. All these states were gave all rendered help to suppress the Movement. Sixth chapter is impact of opposition upon the Namdhari Movement. In this chapter I have described the growth and development of Namdharis after the Baba Ram Singh. This chapter is based on the time period of Baba Hari Singh and Baba Partap Singh. All activities of Namdharis gurus had described how they develop the Namdhari sect. Seventh chapter is conclusion. Which summarise the finding and interpretation of the research work.

RESEARCH OF METHODOLOGY

The present study is based upon primary and secondary sources to evaluate the topic “Opposition to the Namdhari Movement by the British loyalist sections (1857-1947)”. For this proposed work material is collected from Archival sources such as Home-Political Department Files from National Archive of India, New Delhi, Punjab State Archive of Patiala and State Archive of Chandigarh. For collecting the relevant material this researcher also make a visit to the Teen Murati Library, New Delhi. Many Kukas files are collected from the Ganda Singh Collection in Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library Punjabi University Patiala and many Confidential Reports of Native States, Punjab Government collected from Punjab State Archive of Patiala. Many Newspapers *Akali te Pardesi*, *Khalsa Akhbaar*, Lahore are collected from the library of Punjabi University Patiala and State Archive of Patiala. We also visited The Tribune office Chandigarh for collecting the information from the news paper The Tribune. Much important and relevant material is collected from the Religious centre of Namdhari sect Shri Bhaini Sahib. The Times (England) news paper and *Kuka Akhbaar* collection from the Satguru Partap Singh Library, Shri Bhaini Sahib. Namdharis Journals *Wariyam* and *Satyug* weekly and monthly were collected from the Satguru Partap Singh Library, Shri Bhaini Sahib and Central University of Bathinda. Proceedings of The Past and Presents and Punjab History Conferences, Sikh Reviews and other journals such as *Spokesman*, *Phulwari*, *Singh Sabha Patrika* have also been collected for the research work. For many Census Reports and Gazetteers Punjab University Chandigarh Library was also visited for the same purpose. I have also used interview method. I interviewed a famous Namdharis historian such as Swarn Singh Virk and Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal .

However these received sources are explored and strictly analyzed and examined for the purpose of understanding the appropriate outlook of the Namdhari movement. Our effort was to collect reliable data from the reliable and valid sources and the information collected would be authentic. An attempt would be made to establish objective and causal relationship among the various facts related to this movement. The secondary sources are in the form of available literature in Hindi and Punjabi other than books written in English by various authors engaged in research.

This research work is divided into the seven chapters to highlight the origin, growth and development of the Namdhari movement from 1857 to 1947 A.D.

INTRODUCTION:-

This chapter deals with the origin, growth and development of the Namdhari Movement. Namdhari Movement was started by Baba Balak Singh. He was a spiritual leader outside the Malwa. His teachings were based on Guru Granth Sahib and Sikh Gurus. The followers of this sect have been initially known as *Jagiasi* and *Abhiasi*. His successors Baba Ram Singh who adopted Sikh tradition and tried to revive Sikh Gurus teaching by recreate the *Sant Khalsa* in 1857. In this chapter I have described the Baba Ram Singh's efforts to develop this Movement. Namdhari Guru took a remarkable step against the social evil like dowry system, *Pardha* system, female infanticide, girl barter system etc. He started *Anand* marriage system to remove all these types of evils. He promoted the marriage without dowry, parties and any kind of feast and inter caste marriage system. He started own postal system. Baba Ram Singh also took a strong step against the British Government. He was boycotting the all British Government goods and services. He asked his followers to completely boycott the Government post, railway, education institutions, and courts. Namdharis were firmly advised boycott the Britisher mills made clothes and other goods. Even before the Indian National Congress they promoted the *Khaddr*. Namdharis were challenged the British regime when they promoted the disobedience. Namdhari Guru had also started *Suba* System. It was a most revolutionary step. They established twenty two Subas in different states of India. Namdharis also tried to establish his relation with the Maharaja of Kashmir as well as Nepal. Maharaja Kashmir and Nepal established Kukas regiment in their army. But under the influence of the British regime they disbanded the Kukas regiments from his army. The influence of Baba Ram Singh spread a good deal among the people of Punjab. The British Government felt compelled to take some strong action against him.

British Government was waiting of proper time and chance to suppress the Namdhari Movement. Unfortunate incident occurred at Raikot, Amritsar and Maleerkotla in 1872 and a butcher took a serious turn. As a result of this trouble according to sources sixty eight Namdharis were blown away by the cannon without ant trial. The British Government found that followers of Baba Ram Singh were getting stronger day by day. They can't tolerate the popularity of the Namdharis. To the British administration it appeared that the Namdhari Movement its leader had caused a big danger for his regime. So by making the Malerkotla riot an excuse it ordered the deportation of Namdhari Guru with his prominent *Subas* to Allahabad under the regulation III of 1818. This chapter describes the all these fact about Namdharis growth, development and achievements.

BRITISH LOYALISTS AND THEIR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION:- This chapter is analysis of the political and Social background of the British loyalist sections. British loyalist played a significant role to suppress the Namdhari Movement. These loyalist sections were Maharajas of Princely states: Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala and Faridkot and head of the religious centres such as *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple, *Mahants*, *Lamberdar*, *Zagirdar* and *Chownkidars* of villages also played strong role to destroy the Namdhari sect. In this chapter we will try to discuss the background of loyalists sections. These loyalists played a remarkable role against the Namdhari movement. By this chapter we may be making an intensive study of the social cultural life of the loyalist sections of British. The various aspects of society such as social life and manners, customs, ceremonies, religious beliefs and education have been described. First in this chapter we will described the social and cultural background of the priests of the religious Gurudwaras. In this chapter we will also made an attempt to highlight the other loyalist section, which was the Maharaja of the Princely States of the Punjab. These princely states were Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. In this work we try to describe their life style, education, mode of entertainment, their marriage life etc. Maharajas of these states were bound with British government after the Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809. So they were always ready to show their loyalty toward the British Empire.

NAMDHARI REACTION TOWARDS THE BRITISH POLICY: THEIR INTERVENTION IN AMRITSAR AND MALERKOTLA:- This chapter makes analysis the policy of British Government towards the Namdharis. The British policy

of lifting prohibition of cow-killing offended the religious sentiments of the Sikhs and Hindus. Though the British resident had proclaimed, on behalf of Governor General, on March 24, 1847, that the Board of Administration had issued the following by-laws; "The kine are not to be killed at Amritsar, Cow will be slaughtered at a particular place outside the town. No shop will be opened in the town for the open sale of beef." After annexation of the Punjab, the position was altogether changed and the same British Government permitted the kine killing on 5th May 1849; and opened a slaughter house near the Golden Temple of Amritsar which sacrilege both the holy tank and the temple. The opening of a cow-slaughter house at Amritsar gave a signal for opening of many more such slaughter houses in different town throughout Punjab. Since, the starting of a slaughter house at Amritsar, the Muslim butchers started the sale of beef openly in the streets of the city. By the year 1871, the tension gave way to communal quarrels, open fights and riots. Namdharis could not tolerate this policy of Government. A few Namdharis living in the city in a meeting decided to scarifies themselves for the purpose of stopping cow-killing in the sacred city. We also describe the intervention of Namdharis in Amritsar and Malerkotla. A group of Namdharis attacked in Amritsar on the butchers house, killed four butcher and several wounded. After one month similar attack was made on Slaughter house at Raikot in Ludhiana district. In this attack two persons were killed and seven injured. Consequence of this attack was that under the influence of British Government the Kukas regiment were dismissed in Kasmir and Nepal army. In this chapter we describe the whole attack of Malerkotla by the Namdharis. They were firstly attacked on chief of Maludh Baden Singh. In this scuffle two men were killed from both side and Chief was wounded. Because Namdharis were to get arms from the fort of chief and proceed to Malerkotla. The information about the Malerkotla attack was conveyed to Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana. They were prepared for fight. At Maludh and Malerkotla had ten men killed and injured seventeen, while their own loss had been nine killed and thirty eight wounded. Mr. Cowan, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana reached Malerkotla and without formal trial he got forty nine Namdharis blown up with guns in the afternoon of 17th. This barbaric incident happened in the parade ground of Malerkotla in the presence of Patiala, Nabha, and Malerkotla troops.

ROLE OF MAHANTS, SARBRAH OF GOLDEN TEMPLE, ZAMIDARS AND JAGIRDAR AGAINST THE NAMDHARIS: - This chapter evaluate the role head of religious centres such as *Mahants*, *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple and *Zamidars* and

Jagirdars against the Namdhari Movement. The *Zamindars* were responsible for peace and order in their areas. There were informers who were giving daily news to their supervisors of all actions in their particular Districts. The *Zamindars* and the *Chaukidars* were the actual police functionaries in every big village. They were answerable for the obstacle and detections of crime and safety of life and property of the village in their areas. The *Lamberdars* were significant links among the Government and people. The *Zamindars* were answerable for reporting the crime which was to happen in their territory. This conduct experiment worked well and they were to inform about the movement or arrival of bad character and suspicious person in the village. The occurrence of any sudden and practically all the police responsibilities and duties attached in order to get prevention and detection of crime were discharged by these *Chaukidars* and *Lamberdars*. In 1861 the Lieutenant-Governor gave his approval to selected *Zamindars* who would be responsible for the suppression of crime in isolated rural areas. They were sent all information about the activities of the Namdharis. Many official records are available which show that the opposition of the Namdharis by the Village *Lamberdar*, *Jagirdar* and *Chownkidars*.

The Golden Temple was a central institution of Sikh Faith. British had desired for political control over the temple and had manifested it both before and after the annexation of the Punjab in March 1849. Two agencies helped the British in establishing their control over the temple. These were the first, the human agency of the *Sarbrah* (Temple Manager) of the Golden Temple. The authority of the British helped the *Sarbrah* to manage the Temple and sometimes British official themselves made decisions about details of the Temple's operation. From the annexation of the Punjab the great political importance of the *Darbar Sahib* has been acknowledged by the Local and the Supreme Governments, and it has been considered of paramount importance that the Government should retain some active control over the appointment and operations of the Committee of management, and should be assured that the Manager and Trustee were persons of intelligence, integrity and loyalty. The British after 1857 period understood that the Sikhs could be co-opted and turned into loyal supporter of the British Empire. The Golden Temple was seen as helpful in this operation co-option by leading the Sikh loyalty to the British. The Sikhs became a community of the loyalists as loyalty to the British was well rewarded. The priests enjoyed *Jagirs* and some other official funds. It was virtually collaboration between

the Sikhs and the British, and this collaboration provided a positive side to the British policy of control over the Golden Temple. These British loyalist sections played a significant role as an opposition of the Namdhari movement. When in the middle of January 1872 an outbreak of Namdharis sect occurred in Ludhiana District, they gave full support to the British in capturing the Namdharis. Many *Lamberdars* and *Zamindars* gave all their information about Namdharis activities in their areas to the British. This chapter is an attempt to highlight the opposition of Namdhari movement by the *Zamindars*, *Jagirdars*, *Lambardar*, religious class-*Mahants*, *Pujaris* and *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple. In this chapter we shall discuss the statements of *Lambardars* and *Zamindars* and about *Mahants*, *Pujaris* and *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple and their given information to British about Namdharis activities in different areas. These were the main agencies which were the loyalist to the British dominance and they were opposed to the Namdhari movement. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari activities and often harassed and humiliated them. These selfish people were enjoying special concession as a reward of their loyal services like great *Khillats* and *Jagirs* from British Government. Such a British policy was due to British patronage for them through the *Jagirs* and some official funds for such sections. They stood by British because they wanted to save their material and social positions. British government had adopted the strategy to maintain their hegemony. For this purpose they resorted to suppression, class distinction and encouragement to their own loyalists by creating opposition against the new or Namdhari rebels. In fact the British adopted this policy towards the Namdhari Movement too.

ROLE OF THE PRINCELY STATES: PATIALA, NABHA, JIND, MALERKOTLA, KAPURTHALA, FARIDKOT:- The British influence on the *Phulkian* states was visible during the British Government for because these were seeking protection against the rising power of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. There is no doubt that Ranjit Singh was very moderate towards the Phulkian Rajas and he was never hesitant to solve their intricate problems whenever such situations occurred. But, in due course, with the rising power of Ranjit Singh, they become suspicious of his designs and hence sought British protection. The leaders of the Cis-Satluj states send a deputation to the British Residence in Delhi, Mr. Seton and presented their memorandum to the British Resident on 1 April, 1809. They pledged their loyalty to every succeeding power in Delhi and formally sought protection of the British. The

proposal was readily accepted by the Government and he was instructed to issue a proclamation to the Cis- Satluj chiefs defining their future relations with the British power. Ochterlony issued a proclamation to all the Cis-Satluj states on May 2, 1809, on the lines suggested by the Government. Meanwhile, on April 25, 1809, Ranjit Singh concluded the Treaty of Amritsar, according to which he undertook to abstain from committing any encroachments on the possession or rights of Cis-Satluj states. Thus the Cis-Satluj states came under the protection of the British Government. By the treaty of 1809 with the British, as soon as the Cis Satluj states were free from the fear of Ranjit Singh, they tried to demolish and rob each other. This chapter throw light upon the British Government had adopted illegal manner to suppress this Movement. Its incidents were complex and full of barbarity. This Government did always keep an eye on Namdharis activities or when they went to attend any fair. The Kukas were punished with death from the cannon's mouth. There had been no order issued in the State but this punishment was more suitable for setting example to others. Baba Ram Singh the leader of Kuka sect was deported at once from Punjab and then sent to Allahabad. In this incident or endeavour all Native States were sided with British. All the princely states Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala, Faridkot were under the protection of British Government. These States had signed the treaty to go under the Protection of British. According to proclamation, the Rajas of the Sates always stood for cooperation with British and gave rendered help in any bad situations. All Chiefs were given full support if any disturbance or revolt occurred in their States. So Chiefs of the all States had received full support in suppressing the Kuka Movement. They were helped with Calvary, Infantry and arms. Maharaja Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla gave all possible help to capture the Kuka Prisoners. This Incident finally happened in parade ground of Malerlotla. All Native officers were present when Kukas were being blown away. Letters of thanks were sent to all Native Chiefs for rendering help in this whole case. British Government also distributed the rewards to Native Chiefs. Namdhari Sect was continued under leader ship of Baba Hari Singh, he was a brother of Baba Ram Singh. Many restrictions were opposed on Namdhari Sect for many years. Police guards were appointed on the Gate of Bhaini Sahib. No one could enter or out without the Permission of British regime. Obviously Chiefs of Native States had played a great but negative role in this regard.

IMPACT OF OPPOSITION UPON THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT:- This chapter describes the growth and development of Namdhari Movement after the deportation of Baba Ram Singh. A police picket was placed on the *Gurdwara* of Bhaini Sahib Gate. This picket continued for full fifty years. The Time period of Baba Hari Singh was very hard. Police took keen observation on all the activities of the Namdharis. Many restrictions on the Namdharis such as assemblies of more than five Namdharis were banned; they didn't hold their any religious meetings. Every one of them was under the police surveillance. No Namdhari could leave the station without information of the police. From 1872-1921 every Namdhari was treated as a rebel. In spite of the all hardships, Baba Hari Singh made all possible attempts for growth and development of the Namdhari Sect. He continued the movement in the absence of the Baba Ram Singh. In this chapter we also discussed the time period of Baba Partap Singh. The battle of independence started by Baba Ram Singh and continued by Baba Partap Singh till the country achieved its independence. In the chapter tried to highlight the relation of Namdharis with Akalis which was underwent a change time to time. Also it throws light upon the involvement of Namdharis in Gurudwara Reform Movement. Every year the annual conference of Namdharis was held at Bhaini Sahib. Baba Partap Singh had supported the Congress Party. Many distinguished personalities of India like Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr. P Sataramayya, Mr. K.M. Munshi, Master Tara Singh and others have visited at Bhaini sahib on different occasions. The Namdhari *Darbar* also accepted the Nehru Scheme with the reservation that complete independence be declared as the ultimate goal of India. In this chapter is tried to evaluate all the steps of Namdharis for development this Sect. Namdharis held a Guru Nanak conference at Bhaini Sahib. All sects of the Sikhs who believed in Guru Nanak and his teachings were convinced at Bhaini Sahib by the Namdhari Darbar.

CONCLUSIUON:-

Seventh chapter is conclusion so it deals with the finding of dissertation. The present work is underline that Namdhari revolt has an important place among the revolts against British Empire in the second half of 19th century. Namdhari movement has a glorious history from political, social and religious point of views. After the revolt of 1857, British did not want the rise of any rebellion which could cause danger to their rule in India. They used all methods to save their government and to suppress

the Namdhari movement. The opposition section did play a remarkable role against the Namdhari Movement. These princely States were bound to help the British Administration after the treaty of 1809. These loyalists gave full support to the British government to crush whatever movement was waged against the British Empire and they felt honourable to call itself as the sons of the British government. They were living a very comfortable and royal life. Government gave them large *Jagirs, Khillats* and honoured with many titles. The incident of Malerkotla was sign of cruelty of the British Empire. Many Britishers had criticized that incident in their writings but at the same time Indian loyalists appreciate that barbaric incident. Although, Namdhari movement was badly suppressed by the British with the help of these loyalists but they continuously grew and develop under the leadership of Baba Hari Sing and Baba Partap Singh also.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

LUKIA SACH- by Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal. This book was published by Unistar in 2020. This book is based on Punjabi translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Punjab. These all documents are based on letter conversation between Maharaja Patiala Mohinder Singh and British Government at the time of Namdhari Movement. These all files are collected from the State Archive of Patiala. Before Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal but Namdhari Writer Bhai Nahar Singh collected the documents related to Kuka Movement from National Archive of India, New Delhi. In this book has mentioned seven files related to documents of Patiala State. These files are-

Mad No:- 1-86/1923:-In this file a documents written by the British Government in 1866 to Maharaja Patiala to suppress the Kuka Movement in its territory.

History 10 R:- In this file documental letters related to Amritsar, Raikot and Ludhiana.

H 92 M Part-1, Part II:- In this file documental letter related to Malerkotla incident.

History 9 R (Arrest of Kukas) in this files letters are related to the statements of arrested Kukas.

History 67 G:- In this file letters are written by British Government to Maharaja of Patiala's Foreign Department in 1879 to collect the information about the during the time period of Malerkotla Incident in Kukas arrestment which officers were appointed.

History of Nabha:- In 1872 at the time of Malerkotla incident British Government write a letter to Maharaja Nabha for giving a help by sending army and cannons after that the letters are written for giving thanks for the help.

This book is about history of Namdhari Movement, attack of Amritsar, Raikot and Malerkotla. She also mentioned the name, caste and residence of sixty eight Namdhari who were blown up with the cannons. She translates the letters which was written to Maharaja of Patiala by the British Government and others persons. She also mentioned the letters of Maharaja Patiala which he written to British Government to suppress the Kuka Movement. In these documents we know about the role of the Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla States, how they help the British Government against Namdhari movement. These States gave full support with their army and cannons. In these book mentioned the letter which is the evidence that British government gave *Khillits*, rewards to the all States and their officer for their rendered help. Also mentioned the letters of thanks which were send to all the Maharajas of the States by the British Administration. This book is based on very valuable information about Namdhari Movement

KOOKIAN DI VITHIA- First edition of this book in Punjabi language appeared in the year 1990 but according to its preface this work was written by Ganda Singh between the years December 1930 and June 1944. It was the based upon the following kind of historical sources:-

1. Unpublished books and their copies
2. Official records written on the papers by the government of Punjab and its dependencies (Lahore, 1872).
3. The Court Misles and
4. List of books dealing with Kukas.

The sources were in the languages like English, Urdu and *Gurmukhi*. The *Gurmukhi* work hear meant Gyani Gyian Singh's famous work entitled as *Sri Guru Panth Parkash* written in 1889 A.D. Likewise there was in Urdu Gopal Das's book *Tareekh Gujranwala* as published from Lahore in the year 1872. The English portion

has included T.D. Forsyth Autobiography and Reminiscences (Landon, 1887). According to this great author Namdhari movement was a pure religious movement and its main aim was to make reforms in Sikh religion. The author throws a light on the origin and development of the Namdhari Lehar. He tells us that Baba Ram Singh did not do such activity that could be against the British government. Baba Ram Singh wished to revive the Sikh religion, but he was not a seditious person. And there was not any political interest under taken by him. The postal system of Namdharis was also their personal need. The attack on slaughter- house was a religious enthusiasm, because they were staunch opposite to cow-killing. Interestingly he tells us that the activities of *Mahants* and British were sharp against the Namdharis.

GOOROO RAM SINGH AND THE KUKA SIKHS- (Amrit Book Co.New Delhi,1965) by Nahar Singh. This book contains the documents relating to Guru Ram Singh and the Namdhari Sikhs from 1863 to 1871. The British administrators called them; "Rebels against the British power in India". The documents in this book give us the story up to these developments in the closing months of 1871. Gradually the clash between them and the Administration became more open, more violent and thus leading to the Malerkotla executions and deportation of Baba Ram Singh to Rangoon and of other leading Namdharis to Moulmein or Aden. The author presents the documents about Baba Balak Singh and Baba Ram Singh, all the activities of Namdharis and British policy against Namdharis. The author has collected these documents from various sources such as government archives, libraries, district records and police records.

KUKAS, THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF THE PUNJAB- (Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1965) by M.M Ahluwalia. It is an interesting book which is based on Namdhari movement. It tells us about its founder Baba Ram Singh. The author assumes this movement was only the religious movement, but instead of this, it was also a political movement. The Namdharis tried to make them politically strong by maintaining contact with Kashmir and Nepal. Ahluwalia describes the British policies toward the Namdhari movement. He discusses Malerkotla barbaric incidence of 1871, in which Namdharis were blown by cannons by Britishers. The author studies the Namdhari literature very carefully. Because after the British rule he got privilege to go through the secret and confidential files of the government of India, in the home, foreign and political departments, which were related directly to this movement.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN PUNJAB- (Punjabi University, Patiala, 1972) edited by Fauja Singh. In this book, the author had discussed the origin of Namdhari movement. This book was an attempt to present a clear knowledge into the numerous other movements. The author described the origin and development of all the movements in Punjab. He also discussed that all movements might be started with the Anglo-Sikh wars 1846-48. The book is about the concerned subject but it gave only brief information about the Namdhari movement. Other characteristics related to Kukas have been completely ignored. The author had described all the movements briefly.

RAJAS OF THE PUNJAB-(New Delhi,1986) by Lepel Griffin. This book was published in two volumes. The author discussed about the history of Sikh Native States. The main aim of author has been to give information about the political relation of the British Government with the princely states of the Punjab. The author threw light on the details of all the Phulkian Sikh States. In this book the policies adopted by British Government towards Sikh Native States has been discussed. The facts, which have been recorded in this book, bear their own witnesses. There is no prejudice of his personal opinion. The policy of the British Government, so far as Sikh States were concerned had been uniformly liberal and enlightened, we are informed.

RE EXPLORING BABA RAM SINGH AND NAMDHARI MOVEMENT - (Punjabi University, Patiala, 2010) by Dr.Navtej Singh. This author made an attempt to collect the work of scholars and historians on Namdhari movement. In this book, 25 articles have been published. The scholars and historians who presented their papers include:- Dr. Jaswinder Singh Historian, Dr. Kirpal Singh Kasei, Dr. G.S. Nayyar, Dr. Nazer Singh, Dr. Navtej Singh himself Dr. K.S. Bajwa and many others. They throw light upon Baba Ram Singh and Namdhari beliefs and practices. This book also gives us important information about British attitude towards the Namdharis and the relationship between Namdharis, Patiala Maharaja, the British and the impact of Namdhari movement. It conveys the role of different princely states which were loyalist to the British and acted against the Namdharis

THE NAMDHARI SIKHS THEIR CHANGING SOCIAL AND CULTUREL LANDSCAPE- (Manohar Publication, New Delhi, 2013) by Joginder Singh. In this book Joginder Singh analyzed the work on demographic, occupational, social and cultural changes among the contemporary Namdhari Sikhs of the Punjab in 2008. The author

collected the data of 1545 Namdhari families of 18 district of Punjab. He had examined the social order of the Namdhari Sikhs of contemporary Punjab in terms of their occupational castes and their caste-wise status in the community. It was noted that a large sections of the Namdhari artisan migration of west Punjab settled in the urban centres of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Goraya, Phagwara and Ludhiana. He discussed about the beliefs and practices of the Namdharis.

CHAPTER - 2

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL IDENTIFICATIONS OF THE LOYALIST SECTIONS

Social and cultural identity is the identity or feelings to a person. It is transfer to a person's intellect of belonging a particular culture and society and related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality, beliefs, values and social practice that has its own separate culture. Social life and culture were noticeable by stagnation and dependence on the past. There was in cause no equality of culture and social patterns all over the states. They differed in their origin, language, beliefs, customs and social structure. Moreover the social and cultural life of loyalist sections who shaped a small portion of total population was in many respects different from the life and culture of lower classes. The present chapter aims at making an intensive study of the social cultural life of the loyalist sections of British. The various aspects of society such as social life and manners, customs, ceremonies, religious beliefs and education have been described or taken in consideration.

The meaning of Gurudwara is a "house of guru." During the time of gurus', the place where guru resided and preached, that place became the sign of memory. Faithful Sikhs considered that place holy, which resonates the statement, "*Jithhai Jaae Behai Maeraa Sathguroo So Thhaan Suhaavaa Raam Raajae*" (Wherever my True Guru goes and sits, that place is beautiful, O Lord King). In old times, all these places were not only called Gurdwaras but also *Dharamsala*. After Guru Granth Sahib got "Guru's throne," wherever Guru Sahib's *Pavitar Saroop* reached, at those places Gurudwaras were established. Likewise all these places are now famous by the names of Gurudwaras.

In old times, wherever Guru Nanak went for preaching, there he continued establishing *Dharamsala*.¹ At that time, religious *Dharamsala* had already been established worldwide. Wherever any saint came or stayed for some time, the congregation felt blessed by serving him. In those times, the Promoters of Sikhism who were journeying, many *Nanakpanthis* had been known by the names of *Udasi* saints. No doubt, their method of propaganda was of Sikhism, but their costumes were

¹ Giani Gurdit Singh, *Sikh Gurdware – Ohna da Parbandh*, Singh Sabha Patrika, 1997, p. 1.

that of saints. These people gave very good inspiration for having non-Sikhs turned into *Sikhi*.² Likewise the respect of this category's saints and seers was made and they started living in each and every abode. Further, these saints made their followers and started giving the management responsibilities to the next generation. Along with the *Udasis*, the *Nirmalay* Sikhs had also been working for the religious cult. He *Udasis* are always celibate.³ Although there were differences in the opinions of *Udasi* and *Nirmalay* Sikhs, but *Nirmalay* unlike *Udasis*, were very close to the *Sikhi* in the matter of living standards and opinions. Because *Udasis* became *Nanakpanthis* through Shri Chand Ji.⁴ On the other hand, *Nirmalay* considered their heritage to be given by the founder of *Khalsa Panth*, Guru Gobind Singh.⁵

By the time of formation of Sikh *Misals* it was the Boards (*takhats*) which had the management of priests and they were considered the kings and leaders (chiefs, *raees*). For instance: *Shahjaadpuriye*, who were the *Mahants* of Takhat Damdama Sahib, but their status was like that of kings. Otherwise, in many places, the main priests and *Mahants* were *Udasis* or *Nirmalays* who were the managers. These *sadhus* worked tirelessly for the publicity of religion at the time of the *Misals*. *Udasi* saints worked very hard in and outside India for the development and maintenance of various Gurudwaras.

Following the times of *Misals*, Maharaja Ranjit Singh ruled Punjab. He was a great king. Maharaja Sahib was very hospitable and respected *Bedis*, *Sodis*, Gurudwaras' priests and *Mahants*. Many priests, *Mahants* and Contractors were good also at his time.⁶ Maharaja gave lands and estates to many Gurudwaras for their care and cost. After this, priests and *Mahants* began the series of obstinacies for their control and they got established. At some places, it got established in the matter of gurus' and their followers, and at others, it also became ancestral thing. The attention of Sikhs from Sikh *Misals* also diverted, especially, towards the establishment of Gurudwaras, and wherever these *Jathedars* went they made lands and estates in the name of Gurudwaras. Especially in Punjab, at the time of the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, many estates were named for the religious places. In order to make his mark in

² Singh Sabha Patrika, 1990, *Sikha Wich Koi Samparda Nhi*, p. 10.

³ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII. A, *Phulkian States Patiala, Jind and Nabha*, 1904, Lahore, 1909, p. 77.

⁴ Giani Gurdit Singh, *Sikh Gurdware – Ohna da Parbandh*, Singh Sabha Patrika, p. 5.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Giani Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhaar – Akali Lehar*, Singh Brothers, 1975, Amritsar, p. 21.

public, these kinds of gifts were also given to the places such as: Temple, Mosque, and the *Dargah* of *Peers* and *Fakirs* by Maharaja Sahib. In Patiala state, Maharaja Karam Singh and Maharaja Narinder Singh contributed especially for building the Gurudwaras.⁷ The kings of Sikh states invested big estates in the *Deras* and other religious places in their respective States.

In 1849, after the inclusion of Punjab Sikh Raj into the British Raj, the Sikh Gurudwaras, indirectly came under the rule (control) of British government. At the time of British government, not only lands and estates remained same but many more places also became loyal towards the government and many facilities were also given. At the times of final decision about lands and *Jagirs Mahants* were made the owners of lands in every case and land revenues were also exempted till the next decision. Due to it, many *Mahants* of *Deras* became richer than the *Jagirdaars*. In the result of it, *Mahants* got married also. The doors of religious sanctuaries were closed and they led very comfortable lives and became the owners of lands. For instance: *Shahjaadpuriye*, who were the *Mahants* of *Takhat Damdama Sahib*, but their status was equal to that of kings. Despite of it, at many famous places, the managers were main priests and *Mahants* were *Udasi Nirmalay*. Maharaja Patiala, by considering the priest of Damdama Sahib as a king, got his sister married to the son of *Shahjaadpuriye Mahant*.⁸ One famous scholar got his daughter married to the incense (*dhoopiya*) man of Amritsar, Naunihal Singh (who worked as incense man in the *Darbar Sahib*).⁹ However in other conditions, the saints who did not get married, they adopted the path of evil doings.

Likewise, gradually, all the historical Gurudwara *Mahants* had their ancestral property. They began to get themselves free from Sikh *sangats*. The right of *sangats* to choose *Mahants* was snatched away by the executives and the finance officers. By the direct or indirect government interference, the priests and *Mahants* became the owners and along with it they had also become corrupt and vicious. After the end of Sikh Raj (1849), Britishers used the priests and *Mahants* of Gurudwaras for their own rights.¹⁰ The British government purpose behind this was simple: they mentioned a

⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Twarikh Raj Khalsa, II, Sikh Riyasta*, Darbar Publication, Amritsar, p. 134.

⁸ Giani Gurdit Singh, *Sikh Gurdware – Ohna da Prbandh*, Singh Sabha Patrika, p. 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Jaspal Singh Kaang, Sukhdev Singh, *Kuka Andolan Samaj-Sabhyacharak Paripekh*, PunjabUniversity, Chandigarh, 2011, p. 24.

positive relationship between the Sikhs and the British.¹¹ The Administrator (*Sarbrah*) of *Darbar Sahib*, Amritsar was appointed by the government. Administrator (*Sarbrah*), in general, was the government man. On the arrival of Deputy Commissioner, the *deepmala* was done. In 1872, Britishers used the priests against Baba Ram Singh, the Namdhari reformer.

After 1849, the government had made the committee of *Amritdhari Singhs* to manage Shri Harmandir Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib. The British were very much aware of the importance of the two centers of the Sikhs.¹² The members of this committee were: Raja Teja Singh, Sardar Shamsheer Singh Sandhwalia, Raja Surat Singh Majithia, Sardar Bhagwan Singh son of Jamadar Khushal Singh, Giani Pardaman Singh Amritsar, General Gulab Singh Bhagewanjia, Sardar Jaimal Singh Khanda, Giani Sardool Singh Mann, Rai Mool Singh, Honorary Magistrate and Sardar Raja Singh Mann. This committee worked for some time. There was no doubt in it that all the members of this committee were *Amritdhari*, had good *Sikhi* characters and they were also serious for the management of Gurudwara. But the government was not very serious about this committee. Due to the lack of this seriousness by the government, the place of the deceased members was never filled. After sometimes, many members of this committee had left the world and many were removed by the government. To fill the vacant seats of these members, one new committee was made. The members of this committee were: Raja Harbans Singh Sheikhpura, Raja Sahib Dayal Kishankot, Sardar Ajit Singh Attari, Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhanvalia, Captain Gulab Singh Attari, Arjun Singh, Rai Kalyan Singh Amritsar, Sardar Attar Singh Badaudh and Sardar Jagat Singh Jind.¹³ One chief member was elected amongst them by this nine member committee, who was gradually called *Sarbrah*. The internal affairs of the Golden Temple continued to remain in the hands of the *Mahants*, *pujaris* and *sarbrah* who was overtaking under the control of the British Deputy Commissioner.¹⁴ But the strategy of government towards this committee was the same as before. The members of this committee got reduced and no other member was appointed in their place. As a result of it, in the

¹¹ Parm Bakhshish Singh, Davinder Verma, R.K. Ghai, Gursharan Singh, *Golden Temple*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala, 1999, p. 88.

¹² Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Akal Takht Sahib*, National Book, Delhi, 1995, p. 43.

¹³ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takht Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, Punjabi University Patiala, 1984, p.88.

¹⁴ Madanjit Kaur, *The Golden Temple Past and Present*, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, 1983, p. 62.

last, only *Sarbrah* was left, who worked only in accordance with the Deputy Commissioner. So he was answerable to Deputy Commissioner only.

About this committee, it is said in the history of Indian National Congress that, "in accordance with trustee of *Amritdhari* Sikhs, one committee was made, whose *Sarbrah* was appointed by the government. Every year, lakhs of rupees went through the hands of this committee and it was done in the matter of – in 1881 this committee was secretly put to an end. Some of the powers came in the hands of *Sarbrah*. The lack of control brought irresponsibility and corruption into existence."¹⁵ According to the speech of Sir Melcom Hailey given in the Legislative Assembly (*Vidhan Sabha*) on Feb.26, 1924, it was said, "Around 1859, with the consent of Sikh caste, the government made one committee for the management of Darbar Sahib. Its chief was nominated by the government. For many years this committee worked very well but after sometimes, it stopped taking interest in the work and once again the management work came in the hands of *Sarbrah*. Then it was the time, when Sikhs did not take interest in their Gurudwaras and their works. This fact was known to the people that no Hindi deity's statues had been taken from the Darbar Sahib in 1905."¹⁶

After the First Anglo-Sikh War, British agent Sir Henry Lawrence was appointed for Punjab, he supervised the management of the Golden Temple. This arrangement remained in force from 1849 to 1859.¹⁷ According to the wording written on the board, people were advised to remove shoes before entering the Darbar Sahib. This writing was written in three languages: Hindi, Punjabi and English, which said:

“The priests of Amritsar having complained of annoyance, this is to make known to all concerned, that by order of the Governor General, British subject are forbidden to enter the temple or its precincts at Amritsar, or indeed any temple with shoes on. Kine are not to be killed at Amritsar, nor are Sikhs to be taken off at the *Bunga* at the corner of the tank and nonperson is to walk round the tank with his shoes on.”¹⁸

That Henry Lawrence wrote in his diary that upon one time, major Mainwering with his two peons (*Chaparasis*), entered Shri Darbar Sahib with the shoes on. He rejected the advice of workers of Amritsar who told him to not to wear

¹⁵ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 88.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 89.

¹⁷ Madanjit Kaur, *The Golden Temple Past and Present*, p. 60.

¹⁸ Nahar Singh, *A Short Account of the Kukas or Namdharis*, Namdhari Dharmshala, Delhi, p. 7.

shoes. When he was told by the *Thanedar* Jaimal Singh of Amritsar and *Kotwal* that it was the order of Governor General to not to wear shoes inside Shri Harmandir Sahib, he became more angry and denied to accept the saying. Second day when *Sardars* read this news in the newspapers, they were amazed because he had contravened the orders of Governor General. Lawrence writes that after this incident the board has been put on in three languages that the mistake would not be repeated.¹⁹

At first, whatever efforts were done by the Britishers, but their direct or indirect aim was to handover the control of Gurudwaras in the hands of people who would not think of the rights of the Sikhs but to work with loyalty for the British government. So indirectly British were controlling the management of the Gurudwaras.²⁰ It had been done by the priests and the *Mahants*. First, Punjab had recently been taken by the British government and secondly, in Punjab, a large number of youngsters were easy to get for the military. That's why the government was alert because the Gurudwaras could be used in public for maintaining the loyalty towards the British government. To complete this aim, government had a suspicious eye on those movements that tried to awake the religious sensibilities of Sikhs.

In 1881, the Lieutenant Governor Lord Egerton wrote a letter to Lord Ripon, in which he hinted that, "to give the permission to let the managers of Sikh Gurudwaras in the hands of committee that are out of the control of the government would be very dangerous. I believe that *Shri Hajoora* would be helpful in maintaining this matter that would let the system run that has been working successfully since 30 years."²¹

The atmosphere was turbulent in Lahore *Darbar* and it also affected the priests and *Mahants* of the Gurudwaras. For these reasons many evils got started in the Gurudwaras and it continued under the British Raj. Britishers did not want to improve the Gurudwaras. They were happy while giving the control of religious places in the hands of the priests and *Mahants*. They were treating them as their personal property.²² Whereas *Jagirdari* was helpful for the British regime, on the other hand *Mahants* were very beneficial for them. On many occasions the British government used them for their own interests or means.

¹⁹ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 89.

²⁰ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 2010, p. 6.

²¹ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 90.

²² Mehar Singh, *Sikh Shrines in India*, Publication Division, New Delhi, 1975, p. 7.

Gurus' did not make any organization of priests or *Mahants* in *Sikhi*. Every good Sikh could do pray recitation and everyone could serve the Gurudwaras. Gurus had strictly prohibited to their Sikhs to have the money from the donation of Gurudwaras.²³ Because the people who depend their lives on eating the income of religious places they become lazy and characterless. But because of the impact of the time, *Mahants* and priesthood got established. Priests by considering the money of pray and donation from the Gurudwaras their own so they started using it for their own works.

Like this, British government tried its every effort to get the management of Sikh religion and Gurudwaras mould according to its own benefits. Moreover, the chief *Khalsa Diwaan* was since 1902 also looked with the suspicious eyes. Chief *Khalsa Diwan* always claimed that its object was only to protect the interests of the Sikhs.²⁴ As a result of it, the priests and *Mahants* were exempted by the Government. *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple was answerable to the government.²⁵ Whatever the government wished, it could have it done by these priests and *sarbrahs*. Likewise, by having the support of the government, the priests had completely forgotten the fear of Sikh *sangats* and became inheritor masters of the sacred shrines.²⁶ The modesty of Gurudwaras was completely lost and they became corrupt and adulterous. Sometimes *Ptits* Sikhs were appointed the *Sarbrah* of Shri Darbar Sahib.²⁷ These priests, for strengthening their own position, started making Hindus happy. They had hoped that along with the help of the government, the help of people should be attained. They could not get help from the Sikhs on the other hand there were only the Hindus who could help them. For making Hindus happy the statues were established in the Darbar Sahib. The way of reciting pray was made in resemblance to the Hindus. Like Hindus, the Sikh society had also been divided into four castes. It was the reason that Akali Movement got started and the priests and *Mahants* were fully helped by the Hindus so the *Akalis* had to pass through very difficult times at that moment. At some occasions, the whole income of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib was sent to the treasures of Municipal committee Amritsar.

Religious awakening began after the dawn of Singh Sabha movement.

²³ Giani Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhaar –Akali Lehar*, p. 22.

²⁴ K.L. Tuteja, *Sikh Politics (1920-40)*, Vishal Publication, Kuruksetra, 1984, p. 11.

²⁵ Parm Bakhshish Singh, Davinder Verma, R.K. Ghai, Gursharan Singh, *Golden Temple*, p. 87,

²⁶ Ruchi Ram Sahni, *Struggle For Reform in Sikh Shrines*, Sikh Itihas Research Board, Amritsar, p. 6.

²⁷ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 91.

Although Singh Sabha could not make any change in the management and modesty of Shri Darbar Sahib and Akal Takhat Sahib, but it started to express the importance of religious places in the public.²⁸ In 1879, the founder of Singh Sabha gathered at Shri Akal Takhat Sahib to do *Ardas* (Prayer) for the success of Singh Sabha movement and a *Hukamnama* was also issued to the Sikh *sangats*. But this sort of proceeding was intolerable to the government. As the result of it, the differences were created amongst the members of Singh Sabha. Baba Khem Singh Bedi, Maharaja Faridkot, Bhai Arjun Singh Bargadiya and Sundar Singh Mijithia and the faithful loyalist of the government collaborated and the servers of *Panth* like the professor Gurmakh Singh and Giani Ditt Singh established their different group. Between these two groups, the group of the loyalist and the faithful ones of the government was more powerful. The result of it was that instead of renewing the status of Shri Akal Takhat Sahib, the position of the priests and the *sarbrahs* became stronger. Shri Akal Takhat was used against professor Gurmukh Singh and *Hukamnama* had also been issued against him.²⁹

When the Viceroy of India came to Amritsar in 1900, he was awarded at Shri Akal Takhat Sahib and he was shown the procedure of *Amrit Sanchar* (also called *Khande di Pahul* and *Amrit Sanchar*), the Sikh ceremony of initiation or baptism, by baptizing one Sikh. On August 11, 1906, the priests of Shri Akal Takhat Sahib, baptized Muslim Sheikh Ahmed Deen of Sialkot and made him Sikh.³⁰ In 1913, the British government prohibited Sikhs to wear the long *Kirpan* (sword). Due to it some of the Sikhs started wearing small sized *Kirpan* as a sign. Some of the Sikhs asked the priests of Akal Takhat that how less the size of the *Kirpan* should be but the priests and the *sarbrahs* of Shri Akal Takhat Sahib did not answer them. For this reason, the question was asked from the priests of Takht Sachkhand Sri Hazur Sahib (Nanded).³¹ Then the priests of Hazur Sahib issued the *Hukamnama* for the size of the *Kirpan*.

Head Karam Singh Rasaaldas and *sarbrah* Naan Singh Advocate's issuing of *Hukamnama* related to *Kirpan* in Gurudwara Takht Sri Hazur Sahib had reflected that Akal Takhat was so fully gripped into the hands of government characterless priests

²⁸ Ibid, p. 92.

²⁹ Harjinder Singh, *Guru Panth Da Hak Maran Wale Siyaasi Pujariya Da Poora Itihaas*, Spokesman, Weekly ank May 2004, Chandigarh, p. 33.

³⁰ Giani Partap Singh, *Gurdwara Sudhaar –Akali Lehar*, p. 65.

³¹ Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Sikh Tawarikh ch Aakal Takht Sahib da Role*, Sikh University Press, Belgium, 2005, p. 153.

that the *sarbrah* and the priests did not think it necessary to direct Sikhs about *Kirpan* and its leanth.

Scoundrel and infamous man Gandha Singh was mad *sarbrah* of Gurudwara '*Babe di Ber*' Sialkot. Sikhs filed the case in the court against Gandha Singh, but the court also took the decision in his favor. Sikhs had full anger against the *sarbrah* and the enthusiasm led to die completely. It was the discourteous, insulting and deadly for the Sikh religion if Gandha Singh continued to become *sarbrah* and was a challenge for the Sikhs. Gandha Singh gathered scoundrels in the Gurudwara for his protection and every innocent man was insulted by these scoundrels. But the Sikhs became so angry that government had to bend down and Gandha Singh was evicted.³²

When in 1918-19, Nushera Nangal's famous honorary magistrate made Arur Singh, the enemy of Sikhs, the *sarbrah* of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib it was unbearable thing for the Sikhs (It was oil the palm over the bucket thing for the Sikhs). Before it, the government did not learn any lesson from the agitations of Gurudwara *Rakaab Ganj* and Gurudwara *Babe di Ber*. Otherwise, after the eviction of the *sarbrah* of *Babe di Ber*, Gandha Singh,³³ the government had never made *Patit* sikh Arur Singh the *sarbarah* of Shri Darbar Sahib. Along with Darbar Sahib, the Gurudwara Shri Tarn Taran Sahib was also under Arur Singh. Because of the debauchery and decline in the status of the Gurudwaras, the Sikhs were already angry and they were making tireless efforts in maintaining *Panthak* management. In opposed to it, the priests and *sarbrahs* were making complaints to the government. One of the groups of the priests said to commissioner while complaining that, " *Shri Hajoor* this is our polite request that today's new Sikhs harass us so much. We are very tired of them. They are doing harm to our prayers. They have started making many new rituals in the Sikh religion. They do preach in the *parkarmas*. They interfere in the *golakhs* (money boxes) of *Aasharams*. *Sarkar!* by having pity over us they should be stopped. They should not enter the Darbar Singh and *Parkarama*. They should keep themselves away from Shri Darbar Sahib."³⁴

This fact makes it clear that the priests had so much faith in the government that it would help them. The result of it was that during the time period when Shri Arur Singh was the *sarbrah*, the environment of Darbar Sahib declined badly. On one

³² Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 95.

³³ Dr. Mohinder Singh, *Akali Lehar*, Singh Brothers, Amritsar, 2005, p. 36.

³⁴ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, Arsee Publication, Delhi 1991, p. 35.

side, the loot of the *granthis* and the priests was continued. On the other side of it, there was no report of the treasure. He had neither written the accounts nor gave it. He did not give anything while leaving also. He was appointed by the government. So it was the responsibility of the government that he would answer the *Panth* accounts, and if he did not answer that, the government might answer. If some discrepancy was found in the government accounts, then the government lieutenants (workers) were punished, but there was no one answerable for the lakhs of rupees. The government did not care about it. The British administration did not want to let this money in the hands of the Sikhs. This thing was not acceptable to the British officers in their reign. Not only it, there was no answer for how much Jewellery was there in the treasure before and after Arur Singh. *Sarbrah* was completely silent. He was slave of the Deputy Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner was the god of the district. He was the protector of the government policy. He did not want that the Gurudwaras were formed. That's why *Sarbrah* did ignore the complaints of the people.³⁵

The member of Punjab Legislative Assembly, Sardar Kartar Singh, while giving speech in the council said of *sarbrah* Arur Singh, "the appointment of the man as the *sarbrah* of Darbar Sahib was done as the reward to the person who had been loyal to the government and the position of *sarbrah* regularly in the hands of scoundrel was the proof of it. Likewise the government has used these positions for its own means and did not care about the rights of Gurudwaras."³⁶

In the *Akali* and *Pardesi* newspaper of Oct 27, 1922, it was written in the editorial note that, "many years were spent in the efforts of, removing Arur Singh, but he knew the way of impressing the government officials."³⁷ During this *sarbrah*, the *Komagata Maru* Sikhs were criticized by Akal Takhat.³⁸ At his time only there were issued the *fatwas* of "non-sikh" for the *Gadhari Babas*. At the time of this *sarbrah*, the priest of Shri Darbar Sahib, by getting angry (frustrated) from the Sikhs who were talking about the improvement, said that, "I will serve tobacco in the *kada prashad*."³⁹ The priest of Tarn Taran Sahib was saying that, "like the shops of the people this Darbar Sahib is also our shop." In arrogance, the son of one priest had said that, "we

³⁵ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morcheya Da Itihas*, p. 37.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ *Akali* and *Pardesi*, 27 October, 1922,

³⁸ Harkishan Singh Surjit, *Bartanvi Samraj Virodhi Lehra Da Sinkhep Itihas*, Azadi Lehar Virsa Sambhaal te Pasar Kendar, Chandigarh, 2005, p. 62.

³⁹ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morcheya Da Itihas*, p. 40.

would insult the women who come to the Darbar Sahib, if someone need that they could send them there, if others feel shame in that do not send them."⁴⁰

Pickpockets were there at the time of *parkarma* in Shri Darbar Sahib, astrologers had look over the hands. The shops were installed of the things of decoration. Scoundrels fixed the time for meeting girls.⁴¹ They made visits in the morning and in the evening. At the occasion of *Masaya*, *Vasakhi*, and *Diwali* different sort of corruption was seen.⁴² The priests themselves stole the money from the donation.

The reverent Sikhs were very upset with the horrible management and the corruption. They complained several times to Arur Singh, but their complaints were of no use. The reason was that Arur Singh was also growing at the power of these priests. He was not asked or talked about in the Sikhs.⁴³ The priests had no care of their religious responsibilities. Sometimes they sent other persons in their own place. All these things were brought in front of Arur Singh by the faithful Sikhs. But no action was taken by him. He had never neglected the evil doings of the priests. Punishing the priests was one thing aside he did not even have the courage to scold them. The condition of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib was declined. In April, 1919, at the day of *vaisakhi* after attacking a number of people in the Jallianwala Bagh with the guns, General Dyer was rewarded for it at Shri Akal Takhat sahib it broke the patience in the Sikhs.⁴⁴ Then, the Sikhs got ready to free Shri Darbar Sahib from the clutches of the priests and the *sarbrahs* by force.

One day, one priest did not serve Akal Takhat Sahib in the morning. On being asked by the Sikhs, in turn he spoke wrong to them. Devotees went to the house of *sarbrah* and told him the matter. He promised them that he would personally come next morning for the duty and would ask the priest to apologies, but he did not turn up next day. Sikhs started passing decisions against the *sarbrah* and the priests in the city and near villages. One *diwaan* was established in front of Akal Takhat against the careless behavior of the *sarbrah* and the priests. But deputy commissioner sent the police to stop the Sikhs from doing *diwaan*. In spite of it Sikhs did it by facing every

⁴⁰ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 98.

⁴¹ Gurdev Singh, *Rozanamcha Morcha Guru Ka Bagh*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2008, p. 7.

⁴² Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morcheya Da Itiyhas*, p. 36

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *shiromani Akali Dal (Ik Itihaas)* 1978, p. 154.

challenge. The Speeches were given against the priests, the *sarbrah* and deputy commissioner in the *diwaan*. The resignation of the *sarbrah* was demanded in the full *diwaan*. The gathering of the Sikhs started becoming larger in number.⁴⁵ Deputy Commissioner, while understanding the point of time decided and announced to send the *sarbrah* on holidays for two months. But the Sikhs stood at their demand of resignation of the *sarbrah*. The decision was passed in the *diwaan* that if the *sarbrah* Arur Singh would not resign till 29 August, 1920 then his pyre procession would be done.

Next day, a big procession was organized in the Jallianwala Bagh. By noticing the helplessness of the situation, the *sarbrah* Arur Singh himself came to the *diwaan* while wearing cloth around his neck he apologized and announced his resignation from the position of *sarbrah*. On March 26, 1921, after some time of this incident, one secret report was sent to the secretariat of Indian government by the officiating chief secretary Mr. S. M. King, in which it was said about this incident, "pyre procession was made of the *sarbrah* of Darbar Sahib and the plans were made to insult him. *Sarbrah* bent down in front of the Sikh agitation and he apologized to Sikhs. Likewise the procession was not done but the improvement committee won."⁴⁶ By replacing Arur Singh, S. Sundar Singh Ramghariya was made the *sarbrah*. This was a huge victory for the radical Sikhs.

British government had completely captured Gurudwaras. *Mahants* and priests were fully devoted to British officers. British government's policy was to ignore works of *Mahants* and to use Gurudwaras for the firmness of British rule. It was not allowed to raise voice against British government in these Gurudwaras. Gurudwaras had become a central place for protection and strength of government. In these Gurudwaras, there used to be prayer for continuing rule of British government. Those who raise voice for the betterment of Gurudwaras were looked down upon by priests and *Mahants*.

Patriots were ordered to oppose British government and to be disloyal to Sikhism. On the other hand, if any British officer came to Gurudwaras, he was pleased and was given *Siropa* (*Siropa* in Sikhism is a word for garment bestowed on someone as a mark of honor. These *Mahants* admired Jallianwalla Bagh mass killing

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 157.

⁴⁶ Sukhdial Singh, *Akal Takhat Sahib (1606-1984) Ik Vishleshnatmak Adhyan*, p. 100.

done by General Dyer. According to them, they eradicated evil before spreading by shooting unarmed people of Punjab who were sitting peacefully. Obviously in the *Mahants* there was fall of humanity, religion and spirituality.

Mister Colwin writes- When Dyer returned to Amritsar, he and Brigadier Major Captain Bridges were called to Darbar Sahib.⁴⁷ How did the Sikh priests respond to him or his arrival?

Priests said, 'Sir, you should become a Sikh as Sir Nicholson had also become a Sikh. General Dyer obliged them for due regards but he objected that being a British officer he could not grow his hair.' *Sarbrah* Arur Singh laughed, 'We will exempt you from growing long hair.' General Dyer objected one more thing, 'But I cannot leave smoking cigarettes.' Arur Singh said, 'I regret, I cannot leave smoking.' But the priests gave concession, 'You can slowly leave smoking.'

General Dyer and Captain Bridges were proffered five *Kakaar/Panj Kakaar*/Five K's (Five K's are five items commanded by Guru Gobind Singh. These are-1.Kesh 2. Kangha 3. Kara 4. Kachera 5. Kirpan) thus they became Sikhs. So the *Mahants* of Gurudwaras gave proof of their loyalty by offering *Siropa* to British officers till 1919.⁴⁸

The assistants of British Empire in India were the greatest kings, landowners and merchants of India. Among these classes were those who helped in the first War of independence of India in 1857 and were offered ranks and concession. They united with British Government for their selfish purposes. British Government appointed their sons and grandsons in army, police and higher rank positions. That is why their lives depended upon the extence British Empire. During the revolt of 1857, kings and landowners of Punjab helped British and saved them from going down. In return they got lands by helping them. These leading rulers of native states were favorably treated by the colonial British.⁴⁹

British historians had mentioned about this assistance again and again. They wrote that the loyal army of Sikhs helped in the maintenance of their rule. If they would not have helped then British could not escape from danger and troubles. Sikhs had determined that for the goodness of Sikhism they should be loyal towards British

⁴⁷ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, p. 14.

⁴⁸ Jagjit Singh, *Temple Spiritually Golden Temple of Amritsar*, Mittal Publication, New Delhi, 51.

⁴⁹ Joginder Singh, *The Namdhari Sikhs: Their Changing Social and Cultural Landscape*, Manohar Publication and Distribution, New Delhi, 2013, p. 24.

Government or authority. British officers helped to run schools and colleges. Sikhs were allotted lands, appointed in army and were given high rank positions. They openly favored Sikhs and kings. That was why Sikhs could not let them be sad. They were completely blind for their personal benefits. They had no other perspective or future than to be loyal and passive towards British government. They could not see that British Government was using them for captivating India and her people.

These Sikh leaders had become so much selfish that they felt happy to call themselves as the 'right arm' or 'good sons' of British regime. They did not feel insulted. Nankana Sahib was the birthplace of Guru Nanak Dev, the first Guru of Sikhs. Therefore it had a special place among other Sikh Gurudwaras.⁵⁰ Its land's worth was about three to four lakh rupees. British Government had captured it with the help of *Mahants* like they had done in case of Darbar Sahib Amritsar and Tarn Taran. Nobody could become a *Mahant* without the permission of lieutenant Governor Punjab or their officers. Before Narayan Das, both its *Mahants* were useless and drunkard, they were the victims of latent illness. Both of them died of this illness after one another in a very less time. Sir Michael O' Dwyer had permitted to appoint them. *Mahants* were wasting lakhs of rupees on land by giving it to British officers as a gift. Nankana Sahib was no more a religious or holly place. It had become a junction for goons, scoundrels and addicts unfortunately. *Mahant* Narayan Das became the *Mahant* of Nankana Sahib during the time of Governor Mc Legan during the coronation ceremony; he had taken resolution in front of British magistrate and Sikh gathering that he would leave bad deeds of his predecessors. And if he would be proved guilty, he would resign. He took his resolution in the written form. But very soon he broke all his promises and started working like other unholy *Mahants*. So much so he had brought a girl to his home and Gurudwara. She had lived with the first *Mahant* also and she had lived with other men also. Two boys and two girls were born out of this relationship. He constructed two houses: one at Ram Street in Lahore and the second was at Nankana.⁵¹

The worst thing was that prostitutes were called in Lahore in August 1917. They danced at Nankana Sahib and they sang dirty songs. The Sikhs were enraged when they came to know about it. Newspapers also condemned this offense of the

⁵⁰ Dr, Mohinder Singh, *Akali Lehar*, p. 45.

⁵¹ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, p. 59

Nankana *Mahant*. It was not enough because Nankana Sahib had become the place of adultery and unholiness.

A retired (E.A.C) officer of *Sindh* came with his daughter to visit a Gurudwara in 1918. He was given shelter in the Gurudwara at night. At one side there was evening prayer of *Rehraas* and on the other side a priest was raping a thirteen years old girl.⁵² *Mahant* was told to punish the priest and to expel him from the Gurudwara but the *Mahant* did not to consider about this issue. In the same year, six women from Jaranwala (Layalpul) on the day of *Poornmashi* to came to visit and worship Nankana Sahib and they stayed in the Gurudwara at night. At night, they were also raped by these priests.⁵³ These are only few samples of the sins of these immoral priests.

In the beginning of October 1920, there was a meeting against these *Mahants*, all the worshiper were disappointed of bad management and the actions of priests. Leaders showed the sins happening inside the Gurudwaras to people and they passed a resolution with the consent of everyone. In it, the *Mahant* Narayan Das was asked to reform his Gurudwara.⁵⁴ But the *Mahant* did not listen to anybody. He had lots of money. The landowners gave assistance who helped in marriages and they had also allowed the dance of prostitutes there. They had good relation with Government. So the *Mahant* stood against Sikhs instead of doing reforms. He started thinking as if the Gurudwara was his own property. He became a puppet of the British Government in order to show his loyalty. He started thinking that there was no one to expel him from Gurudwaras till the British Government was in favor of him.⁵⁵ Therefore he did not care about Sikhs and Sikh communities who tried to improve condition of Gurudwara. He had a good relation with Baba Kartar Singh Bedi and the other Government officers. Baba Kartar Singh decided to hold a meeting of *Sadhus* and *Mahants* at Nankana Sahib. In the meeting which was attended by about sixty men, including Baba Kartar Singh it was decided that the *Mahants* should not recognize the Sikh Committee, but should have one of their own.⁵⁶

Kartar Singh Bedi represents the descendants of Guru Nanak Sahib's younger son Lakhmi Das. He opposed the Gurudwara Reform Movement though he was with

⁵² Nrain Singh, *Akali Morchey ate Jhabar*, p. 131.

⁵³ Prof. Teja Singh, *The Gurdwara Reform Movement and The Sikh Awakening*, 1922, p. 221.

⁵⁴ Dr. Mohinder Singh, *Akali Lehar*, p. 46.

⁵⁵ Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Sikh Tawarikh ch Aakal Takht Sahib da Role*, p. 167.

⁵⁶ Prof. Teja Singh, *The Gurdwara Reform Movement and The Sikh Awakening*, 1922, p. 123.

Mahant Narayan Das. He collected money and started publishing weekly newspapers '*Sant Sevak*' against the radical Akali Movement.⁵⁷ He was the greatest but a conservative Sikh leader in favor of *Mahants*.

After the Nankana Sahib Massacre, Kartar Singh Bedi was dismissed from the cult. Clearly *Mahants*' intentions to kill Akalis were revealed. *Mahants* were preparing to compete against the Akalis and it was openly discussed in the newspapers of Punjab. *Mahant* was favored by all landowners including Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia. He also was loyal to British officers and now after becoming a minister, he was trying to be more trustworthy.⁵⁸ The policy of Government about *Mahants* was actually the policy of Sardar Sundar Singh. More than one hundred and eighty Sikhs were brutally murdered and some of them were burnt alive at Nankana Sahib on 20th February.

Now management of Nankana Sahib was in the hands of Sikhs but after the massacre, there was a feeling of hatred in the hearts of Sikhs for British government.⁵⁹ Because the person (*Mahant* Narayan Das) who was responsible for this massacre was also faithful to Government and he was guarded by colonial Government.

The biggest things were that the unholy *Mahants* were preparing for a long time to kill Sikhs and Government already knew about it. Punjab proper was captured by the British in 1849. Honored and respected Sikhs had never accepted their slavery. Chatar Singh Atari Wala and his son threw weapons. In spite of this, Bhai Maharaj Singh had struggled against British after the Punjab annexation. British improved the financial condition of many Sikhs by appointing them in army during that time. Thus there was less danger of revolution against the colonial regime. In spite of it, revolt had started in Delhi and Lucknow in 1857. It had less impact on Punjab because this, revolt was a personal fight between some kings. Akal Takhat Sahib was under the care of Bhai Parduman Sing during 1857. He had collaborated with British regime.⁶⁰ The deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, Mister Cooper came to Parduman Singh during the revolt in Delhi and he said to him that he should pray for the triumph of Akal Takhat Sahib and British Government. Parduman Singh said to Cooper that only an *Amritdhari* Sikh (a Sikh who has been baptized as a *Khalsa* by taking '*Amrit*'

⁵⁷ Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Sikh Tawarikh ch Aakal Takht Sahib da Role* p. 178.

⁵⁸ Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer, *Aakal Takht Sahib*, p. 51.

⁵⁹ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, p. 73.

⁶⁰ Parm Bakhshish Singh, Davinder Verma, R.K. Ghai, Gursharan Singh, *Golden Temple*, p. 73.

or nectar water. '*Dhari*' means 'Practitioner') could do *Ardaas* (prayer) at Akal Takhat. So, Cooper and the loyal Singh pretended to baptize and prayed that if Delhi would be conquered then he would make all buildings of marble. But when the revolt ended Cooper did not give anything. But there was a Bangla and a '*Chonki*' in the king's living room used in *Rambagh*. Even that were removed from there and replaced at Akal Takhat Sahib. It was not a good thing for Cooper that he replaced the things that were used by Sikh Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

Actually it was disrespect of Akal Takhat Sahib. Once Ranjit Singh had presented his very costly but used '*Channi*' to Akal Takhat Sahib. Akali Phula Singh punished him. But Cooper's present was accepted happily by Parduman Singh, the loyalist.

There was one more shameful act against Sikhism. There was a board at Darbar Sahib Amritsar and it was written on the board that 'No untouchable can enter before 11'o clock.' All Sikh community was disheartened at it. Newspapers related to Sikhism like Khalsa Smachar, Khalsa Advocate etc. wrote about it. But neither the priests reformed nor Government concerned about it. That resulted the poor condition of Gurudwaras. And priests were becoming more powerful and more prideful.

A *Granthi* (a person of Sikh Religion who is a reader of the Guru Granth Sahib, a holy book in Sikhism) named Hari Singh had spoiled the atmosphere of Gurudwara Dumalla Sahib in Lahore. He did not allow passengers to live in Gurudwara. He gave living rooms to butchers and meat sellers. He did not serve even as a *Granthi*, He did not know the *Japji Sahib* and *Rehraas Sahib*. Gurudwara was not hygienic. People were disappointed. Once a meeting was held against this *Mahant*. *Mahant* sent women of his house in the meeting and attacked them to stop the meeting. Sikh propaganda tried to reform this Gurudwara. They captured Gurudwara on September 27, 1920. People nominated a '*Jatha*' (an armed parade of Sikhs) of fourteen members for the management of Gurudwara.

After the massacre of Nankana Sahib, Government was very strict towards Sikhs. Some *Mahants* denied the agreement that they would not work according to *Shiromani* Committee. Hundreds of Sikhs were imprisoned in 1991 and *Mahants* were released and they were assisted.

Mahant Sundar Das also denied from his promises. *Mahant* dismissed a local secretary from the office and tore his papers. At last, *Shiromani Gurudwara*

Parbandhak Committee took responsibility of the office in its hands on August 23, 1921.⁶¹

Mahant Sundar Das's character was not good. He had relations with other women. One of them was Irri. When Irri grew up she went to the home of *Mahant* Sundar Das without marrying him. People of nearby villages did not like him. *Mahant* had relation with Jagdei also; the Sikhs of that area were strictly against him. A *Jatha* came to his home with the permission of Sardar Daan Singh running the Committee on January 31, 1921 so that he should be reformed. He agreed to all conditions in order to preserve his status of *Mahant* that he would work according to *Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak* Committee and he would marry to the lady who was in relation with him. He accepted, compromised and signed in front of other people. After that according to the ceremonies of Sikhism, he got married at Akal Takhat.

He worked accordingly for some time but after that he became dishonest. Gurudwaras had become his personal property and he was opposed to the Committee. The Committee separated him for that reason. In this way, the Gurudwaras like Darbar Sahib Amritsar, Tarn Taran Sahib, Akal Takhat Sahib and many more holy religious institutions were captured by the corrupt and prideful *Mahants*.

These were liberated through Gurudwara Reform Movement. Sikhs had to sacrifice their lives for this movement and they had to face many difficulties. After it these Gurudwaras were under *Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak* Committee which was formed with the object of controlling the Sikh Gurudwaras and religious institutions.⁶² Kings, landowners, and priests of religious places and rich people were puppets in the hands of Government. Obviously the British government was very clever. In the beginning, when Namdhari movement, not directly were they developing then opposed it. However, the rich people of Punjab and priests were asked to openly oppose the Namdhari Movement. All famous priests of Gurudwaras issued a fatwa (a legal pronouncement, by the British) that Kukas were an austere sect within Sikhism so they were not Sikhs and their God believes in Muslim *Kalam*.

Government's policy was that there should be no Sikh *Jathebandi* and Sikhs should be used against Sikhs and they should free themselves from the blames. Actually government used defensive method for its own purposes very successfully

⁶¹ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, p. 156.

⁶² Surjit Singh Bal, *British Policy Towards the Punjab*, New Age Publishers, Calcutta, 1971, p. 34.

and controlled the greatest movement of Independence in Punjab very quickly. Baba Ram Singh started a new ceremony of *Anand Karaj* (that is the Sikh marriage ceremony). According to this ceremony, *Kudmai - Saka thaka*' and the ceremony of *'Milni' 'Muklava'* is very simple and economical, the ceremony of *'Anand Karaj'* had just in 1.25 rupee and taking or giving of dowry was also prohibited.⁶³ It was a revolutionary step in a custom bound social set-up.

The ceremony of *'Anand Karaj'* was inaugurated for the first time in village Khotte district Ferozepur now Faridkot on June 3, 1863.⁶⁴ That is why hundreds of people and Namdhari Singhs from here and there reached to see the ceremony of *Anand Karaj*. First of all there was *Kirtan* of *'Aasa Di Vaar'* after that there were four *laavas* around fire and the *laavas'* are read from Guru Granth Sahib. A new revolutionary step was taken with six inter caste ceremony. It was an important incident in which there was a group marriage with *Anand Karaj* ceremony, without dowry and inter caste marriage. It was according to ceremonies of true Sikhism. Sikhs expressed feeling of gratitude for this *Anand* ceremony.

But Brahmins and priests threatened, 'If this ceremony would continue then they would burn themselves alive and you would be blamed for the murder of Brahmins.' They shouted a lot. Baba Ram Singh said, 'Listen, and burn them in the Havana.' Then they were afraid but they did not sit silently. Brahmins of Khotte village requested government. They collectively decided that the new *'Panth'* (religion) was trying to harm them and this ceremony should be ended. Earlier they were used to call us on marriages but now they had stopped calling us. They had spoiled the country and its social norms.

Brahmins and priests were doing all this because it affected their income.⁶⁵ Brahmins used to take a lot of money from people for their marriage ceremony. Their shop-keeping had closed due to this simple ceremony initiated by Baba Ram Singh. That was why they thought that Namdharis were against Sikh religion. They conspired against Namdharis and joined with British Government. Brahmins trapped people in many false deeds. Baba Ram Singh did many important works like reform

⁶³ M.L. Ahluwalia, *Land Marks in Sikh History*, Ashoka International Publishers, New Delhi, 1996, p. 261.

⁶⁴ File No. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Collections, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 4

⁶⁵ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, p. 54.

in religion and culture.

Birth of a baby girl in Namdhari's Sikh family was not a bad omen. They were not married in their childhood. Neither were they exchanged. They were even not sold. They baptize 'Amrit' to keep cleanliness and read holy book like *Singhs*.⁶⁶ That is why they were free from useless ceremonies of Brahmins. So, Brahmins and priests played an important role to destroy Namdhari Movement. It was written in the reports of Brahmins and watchman of Khotte village that "for two or three days, Ram Singh, with four hundred or five hundred followers had assembled at this village, and were behaving in a very extraordinary manner"⁶⁷ They are publicizing revolution against the British rule. Government got reports about the development of Kuka movement from different districts. Police reached in Khotte village for investigation very quickly. He thought the report of watchman right after inspection. But there were made statements form *Nambardars* of nearby villages that Namdharis are against Sikhs. It was ordered that Baba Ram Singh should not go to any district. Neither Namdharis were allowed for *diwan* (a religious event or gathering).⁶⁸

Baba Ram Singh was under surveillance and he was sent to Bhaini Sahib. British officers of Punjab lessened the restrictions put on Guru Ram Singh to go out of Bhaini in last days of the year 1866. He could guess about the movement and Baba Ram Singh was told that he was allowed to visit Gurudwaras only. During 'Holla Mahalla', he asked permission to go to Anandpur Sahib, British Government permitted him and with this a Deputy Inspector General was asked to reach at Anandpur Sahib and to see the management there. Deputy Inspector Mc Andrew went from Lahore on 10th and March and reached Jalandhar on 12th to discuss the matter of Baba Ram Singh's arrival to Anandpur Sahib with the Police of Commissioner Jalandhar. Police was prepared at Kesgarh Sahib, Officers inquired about all parties regarding this matter.⁶⁹

Mister Mc Andrew and Deputy Commissioner called on the greatest *mahant* of Kesgarh Sahib *mahant* Hari Singh and talked to him. He strictly opposed the Visitation of Namdhari to Takhat Kesgarh Sahib after listening to them. He appealed

⁶⁶ Sant Singh, *The Namdhari Sikhs*, Arsee Publication, Delhi, p. 82.

⁶⁷ File No. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, p. 3.

⁶⁸ Jaspal Kaur Kaang, Sukhdev Singh, *Kuka Andolan Samaj-Sabhyacharak Paripekh*, Punjab University, Chandigarh, , 2011, p. 19.

⁶⁹ Nahar Singh, Kirpal Singh, *Rebels Against the British Rule*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1995,p. 53.

that government should interfere and should not allow Namdhari to come to Takhat Sahib, The officers said that people of all religions like Hindus and Sikhs could go to any religious place, so government could not stop Namdhari to visit the Gurudwara. After the debate, *mahant* suggested that Namdhari would not visit Anandpur without covering their heads and they should not do such thing that would be against Sikh religion.

Deputy Commissioner Mister Perkins talked to Baba Ram Singh. The officer said that *Mahants* and priests of Gurudwara objected when Namdhari did not cover their heads and indulged themselves in the proclamation of '*Jaikara*' (a compound word of 'jai' meaning to proclaim success and 'ka' meaning to do or act). Baba Ram Singh had said that during the '*Parkarma*' (to move around in a circle), Namdharis would read *Shabd* and proclaim *Jaikara*. The officer said that you and your companions would not be allowed to visit and bow head, because for *Mahants* and priests it was against religion. As it could create problem so, Government would blame and your companions. Baba ji did not agree. He expressed strong indignation. Then Baba Ram Singh said that if government, priests and *Mahants* had problem then he would bring only a hundred companions while visiting. And would not read *Shabd* as indignation. Commissioner of Jalandhar Mister Forsyth also came to Anandpur on Nineteenth in the evening, Leaders, *Mahants*, Priests and Commissioners all came and saluted.

Guru Ram Das with almost hundred Namdhari Singh reached at Takhat Kesgarh Sahib on March 20 at 7'o clock. When they were entering the Gurudwara, then a group of forty *Nihangs* (prestigious armed and Sikh order) came and tried to riot against Namdharis.⁷⁰ These *Nihangs* had weapons in their hands, Mister MC Andrew asked them to throw weapons. British officers were more in number than *Nihangs* so they moved back. Nearly hundred *Nihangs* had come to the fair at that time. Officers came to know that *Nihangs* had decided in their *Deras* (abode) that Baba Ram Singh would not be permitted to come. Others were quite but the *Jatha* of forty people was very passionate to stop them.

Namdharis and Sikhs have one religion. Both read *Granth* (holy book) of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. But they were opponents.⁷¹ Government

⁷⁰ Ganda Singh, *Kukian Di Vithia*, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2000, p. 40.

⁷¹ Amar Bharti, *Sikh Itihas te Kuke Tulnatmak Adhyaan*, Nava Hindustan Parkashan, New Delhi, 1966 p. 158.

allowed Ram Singh to come on *Hola Mahalla* (Sikh festival). He went with five thousand Namdhari on March 19. *Akalis, Nihang, Bedi, Sodhi, and Mahants* were opposed to Baba Ram Singh's visit to Anandpur Sahib.⁷² They had no intentions to let Namdhari enter the historic Gurudwara, Thus they put many conditions to let them visit. When Baba Ram Singh and his companions reached at Kesgarh Sahib then Baba Ram Singh donated twenty five rupees there. The priest accepted money. But he rejected his offering of '*Kdaah - Prasad Ardaas*' Baba Ji had requested Brahma Sing Namdhari for it.

The same day Baba Ji wrote a letter to the priests of Kesgarh in *Gurmukhi* language, 'You do not think me as a Sikh of Guru and so you did not do *Ardaas* for me. The *Pujaris* verbally told the Namdhari Guru that there were the following religious differences for their refusal:

1. That he sets himself as a God. 2. That when making a convert, he didn't give him *Amrit* to drink, as was the custom, but he whispered a *muntur* in his ear. 3. That when he made convert, he says to him: '*Junum Guru Huzroo, ur bashee Guru Bhainee*' (Guru's birth place is Hazroo and he is a resident of Bhaini) whereas the Sikhs say: '*Junum Guroo Patna, ur Bashee Guroo Nundpore*' (Guru's birth place is Patna and he is a resident of Anandpur). 4. That whereas the Sikhs entering a place of worship they didn't untie their hair or remove their turbans but the Kukas did it so. That Kukas in exciting themselves to such a degree as to be at times insensible act like Mahomendam *Faqueers*, and could not be Guru Sikhs.⁷³

Guru ji was not egoist,' After reading this letter, reciting to these queries Baba Ram Singh pointed out the shortcoming of the *Pujaris*. He replied that, "if they really acted up to the Sikh religion they would have appreciated his doctrine. That they all were doing contrary to the *Granth* by eating meat, drinking, lying, licentiousness, female infanticide and therefore Kukas did not consider them Sikhs."⁷⁴

These *Mahants*, priests and Bedis all were loyal to government. Government used them to be acting against Namdhari in every way. If those landowners, riches and priests could understand the actual matter, then the condition of Sikh religion

⁷² Surjit Singh Jolly, *Sikh Revivalist Movement (The Nirankari and Namdhari Movement in Punjab in the Nineteenth Century)*, New Delhi, 1988, p.122.

⁷³ Amar Bharti, *Sikh Itihas te Kuke Tulnatmak Adhyaan*, Nava Hindustan Parkashan, New Delhi, 1966 p.155.

⁷⁴ Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Namdhari Movement 1857-1959*, Unistar Publication, Chandigarh, p. 26.

would be in better positions. The history of India's Independence would be different. In spite of this opposition, Baba Ram Singh continued his publicity. He showed to many people the correct path and included them in Namdhari religion. The publicity of Namdharis was increasing. Villages of Muthda, Dhuleta, Rudka, Dhoodket and Chak were impressed by the Namdharis.

But *Mahants* and priests were jealous of them. The condition of the priests of Akal Bunge was also the same. Actually people had started neglecting these priests. Nobody came to bow head before them. Their income was going down. They used money for their own benefits. That was why they had become corrupt and prideful. Namdhari religion or reformation was danger to their comfortable lives.

Namdharis were killed with cannons in 1871. At that time, Landowners, Riches, Bedis, Sodhis, *Mahants* and *Sardaars* had reconciled or signed to work with British Government. They showed their feeling of annoyance against Namdharis. They demanded that Cowan and T.D. Forsyth should be forgiven for their sentence and should be brought out. Bedis and Sodhis of Anandpur said that the sentences given to Namdharis depended on justice. If they would not be punished then they could revolt at any other place. Five hundred people had investigated about this matter.

The Rajas of the Princely States were become operating under the protection of British administration after the treaty of 1809. So they were playing the significant role as the loyalists of the British Colonial Government. The history of the States was closely bound up with the history of British political domination in India. The proud loyalty of successive States and their rulers to the British Crown had been constantly reaffirmed and constantly proved.

Maharaja Narinder Singh sat on the throne in 1846. He was a very wise and able king. He helped British in their fight against the rulers of Lahore, because of which, Major Mackeson and Mister Cust had written in their notebook as: "British got more help from Patiala State as compared to the kings beyond river Sutlej."⁷⁵ In the revolt of 1857, Maharaja Narinder Singh handed over all his royal powers to British without thinking twice. The Patiala State of that time saved British by providing them the necessary help, otherwise that would have been a tough time for them. The people of Malwa region in Punjab considered the Sikh Maharaja as their leader therefore

⁷⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta, Vol. II*, Darbar Publications, Amritsar, p.122.

assisted British during the revolt. The commissioner of Ambala wrote about that king as: “This true and faithful behavior has been very useful to us. There were many rumors among the people against us. But, since the Maharaja took our side, the effect of these rumors has reduced to a great extent. Even if 200 British officers would have tried to clarify those rumors, the impact would not have been the same, as it is seen with the friendship of Maharaja.”⁷⁶ Besides arms and soldiers, Maharaja gave the financial aid of Rs. eight lakhs to British. The Viceroy wrote about the Maharaja as: “Maharaja Sahib Patiala, I am very happy that I have got the chance to thank you for your help as our well-wisher. Your true faithfulness has been proved during the revolt. The Queen is very happy with you and your pride as well as the status will remain the same even in the upcoming generations.”⁷⁷ According to Col. Mohd. Abdul Majid Khan: “The Maharaja was honored with the title of *Farzand-i- Khas-i-Daulat-i-Inglishia, Mansur-i-Zaman, Amir-ul- Umara, Maharaja Dhiraj Rajeshwar Sri Maharaja-i-Rajan, Mahinder Bahadur*. The number of trays of *Khillats* was also increased from 41 to 49.”⁷⁸ It was the title of *Farzand-i- Khas-i-Daulat-i-Inglishia* which might be translated “Beloved Son of the British Empire”.⁷⁹ Maharaja gave the gold bracelets worth Rs. 20 thousand to the Sardars and other employees; and distributed *Khillats*. Maharaja was a very religious minded and he went to Banaras where he donated various things. He donated a significant amount to Gurudwaras Patna Sahib and Anandpur Sahib. He baptized his son Mahinder Singh and also paid visits to Naina Devi and Golden Temple, Amritsar.

During the rebellion, Maharaja Bharpur Singh of Nabha offered his assistance to the British Government with much boldness and open heart. He gave all kinds of help to the government for logistics and soldiers.⁸⁰ This support in turn increased his dignity and enhanced title. He was given the title of Star of India and received many other political rights. Lord Canning held the Court on June 18, 1860, in Ambala where he said, “Raja Sahib Nabha! You, like your elders, have shown a generous amount of activity in helping the British Government.”⁸¹ Sarup Singh, the King of Jind also helped the British and his service was in no way less than the service of

⁷⁶ Lepel H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab, Vol. I*, Nirmal Publication, New Delhi, 1986, p. 214.

⁷⁷ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta*, Vol. II, p. 126.

⁷⁸ Col. Mohd. Abdul Majid Khan, *A Short History of Patiala State*, Patiala, 1910, p. 8.

⁷⁹ File no. H-113 B, “*The Near East and India*” Showing a Character Sketch of Maharaja of Patiala, April 18, 1935, State Archive of Patiala, p. 472.

⁸⁰ Lepel H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab, Vol. II*, Nirmal Publication, New Delhi, 1987, p. 422.

⁸¹ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta*, Vol. II, p. 204.

Maharaja Patiala or Nabha. The Raja of Nabha himself joined the battle of Delhi. Referring to Delhi's victory, General Ilson had praised Raja Sarup Singh and said, "If help from Raja Sahib was not reached then the first logistics for the army was not complete." In the announcement of November 5, 1857, Viceroy referred to the Jind state, by saying, "The support of Maharaja Jind more than once deserves heartfelt thanks. Maharaja Narinder Singh was a visionary king and a philanthropist. The Maharaja was very careful about serving the fakirs. During monsoon, ten thousand saints and fakirs were given good food which would cost over one lakh. Besides that, he was fond of buildings. The residence of a king or a prince was the attraction in the states. It was usually built by the surface of a river and from time to time even non-natural lakes were made to mitigate dirt and heat of summer. On the lines of *Salimar Bagh* of Lahore, Maharaja Narinder Singh built a *Moti Bagh* at the cost of Rs 5 lakh.⁸² The construction of this garden began in 1908 and finished in 1911. He then spent Rs 1 lakh and built a Gurdwara in front of it, and also gave Rs 1 lakh for the administration. Then he built a Diwankhana at a cost of Rs. 5 lakhs. When people were dying of hunger during the famine, he started distributing food and organized community meals. He waived the loans of several *parganas*. Significantly the chief Dera of the Nirmalas was at Patiala. The Dera was called the Dharm Dhaja .The Nirmale Saints' arena was built by Maharaja Narinder Singh at a cost of Rs. 82,000 and was allotted two villages worth Rs. 4,100 per annum under its name.⁸³ During the reign of Maharaja Karam Singh, the soldiers were paid after every 6 months. Maharaja Narinder Singh improved the custom of paying the soldiers every two months.

His reign was memorable or the many works of public utility, charity and reform in all the branches of administration of the State. Common people especially farmers were looted because of corruption; therefore he increased the period of lease to 10 years. Civil and criminal cases were decided verbally in earlier times. So the Maharaja made laws to make regular decisions. He divided the whole Riyast into four districts where subdivision courts were established and a main committee was formed

⁸² Dr. Jagjeevan Mohan Walia, *Patiala Shehar*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala, 1995, p. 31.

⁸³ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII. A, *Phulkian States Patiala, Jind and Nabha*, 1904, Lohore, 1909, p. 75.

above them. Maharaja Narinder Singh was made a K.S.I. in 1861.⁸⁴ He was the first Indian ruler who was nominated to a seat in the viceroy's council and the first recipient of the G.C.S.I.⁸⁵

After the reign of Maharaja Narindra Singh, Maharaja Mahindra Singh also worked a lot. In 1870, the Punjab University was established and the Maharaja donated Rs 56,000 to the University. Maharaja Mahindra Singh received the title of Night Grand Command *Tabaka-e-Ali –Sabarai- Hind*. On 22 December 1870, the Maharaja held a large court at Patiala, in which Sir Lapel Griffen also took part. The Maharaja distributed *Khillats* of Rs 70 each to his loyalists and *Dohshallas* to hundreds of others as the prize. He also donated 12,000 rupees to the orphanage. The Maharaja laid the foundation stone of a special college at Patiala, which was named Mahindra College and he also sanctioned Rs. 60,000 for its expenditure.⁸⁶ The short period of his ruler ship was marked by several events of considerable importance to the state. It was during his reign that the Sirhind canal was sanctioned, though it was not opened till 1882.⁸⁷ The canal was estimated to cost 2 crore 98 lakhs. Half of the money was given by Maharajas of Patiala, Nabha and Jind. The Maharaja was an able and educated king; and was very careful about the welfare of people. He established schools and colleges in the state of Patiala and opened many hospitals.⁸⁸ He introduced Civil Procedure Code for the guidance of his Judicial Courts. He was made a G.C.S.I. IN 1870.⁸⁹ He went to visit Amritsar on the occasion of Diwali in 1778, where he offered Rs 18,000 to Guru Granth Sahib and gave Rs 41000 for *Ardaas*(prayer). When he found out that his employees were taking bribes, he dismissed them. The Maharaja got into the habit of drinking alcohol which affected his ability badly and he died because of his drinking habit.

Maharaja Rajinder Singh was a wise and educated king too. He was so perfect in polo and horse racing that the English players who thought themselves as the founders of the game, were nothing in front of the Maharaja. He was particularly popular in hunting and killing pigs with spade. He gave large permanent grants to

⁸⁴ Lepel H. Griffen, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab, vol. II*, Lahore, 1940, p. 470.

⁸⁵ File no. H.5.B, A Short History of Patiala State, Punjab State Archive of Patiala, p. 53.

⁸⁶ Giani Sohan Singh Sheetal, *PEPSU Da Ithihaas*, Sheetal Publication, Ludhiana, 1952, p.64.

⁸⁷ File no. H. 21. B, His Highness Government, Patiala, The State Patiala, Punjab State Archive of Patiala, p. 10.

⁸⁸ Col. Mohd. Abdul Majid Khan, *A Short History of Patiala State*, p. 9.

⁸⁹ Atma Singh, *Darbar Patiala Atte Sarkar Angreji*, Patiala, 1938, p. 59.

holy places in different parts of India and during famine of 1861 he distributed grains worth about 15 lacs.⁹⁰ He was a great philanthropist and donated one lakh sixty two thousand rupees at the inauguration of the *Khalsa* College.⁹¹ Maharaja Rajinder Singh introduced many improvements and reforms in the state. He created a new department of Excise, adopted severe measures to put a stop to illicit smuggling of opium. He established Lady Dufferin Hospital Patiala and also loved the English language. The Maharaja was fond of playing polo, horseback riding and hunting. Because of this, he went to Lucknow, Calcutta, Bombay and Pune etc. to play with many famous English and local parties and won many awards. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh was also an important king of the state of Patiala. He had made satisfactory progress with his studies at the Aitchison College. He was obtained the English prize in his class and being second in History and Geography.⁹² It was written about His Highness in 1918 that, “tall and handsome, with fine expressive flower of luminous eyes, he suggests the exquisite flower of oriental are gracious and cordial.”⁹³ He was proficient in Philosophy, Vedanta, Politics and in the teachings of Sikhism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and other religions. The philosophers, scientists, religious leaders and founders of other teachings used to sit in his palace. He was a man of great learning and wisdom of his time. The Maharaja used to pay enormous rewards and salaries to the philosophers, poets, astrologers and religious leaders which continued for years. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh was fond of playing Indian style of poker, which was played with three cards. The Maharaja used to invite two or three trusted officers and three or four favorite queens to the poker parties.⁹⁴ The Maharaja was keenly interested in shooting and adventure sports. Cricket was his favorite sport. He captained the Indian cricket team which went to England in 1911.⁹⁵ The Maharaja's efforts led to the establishment of a cricket club in India and he became its first president. After the death of that Maharaja, Maharaja Yadavinder Singh spent Rs. 5 lakhs and built a magnificent stadium in Patiala which is today called Yadavindra

⁹⁰ File no. H.5.B. A Short History of Patiala State, State Archive of Patiala, p. 53.

⁹¹ Col. Mohd. Abdul Majid Khan, *A Short History of Patiala State*, p. 11.

⁹² Confidential Report, Native States, Punjab Government, 1905-1906, Punjab Government Branch Press, Simla, 1906, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p. 1.

⁹³ File no. H-113 B, “The Near East and India” Showing a Character Sketch of Maharaja of Patiala, April 18, 1935, State Archive of Patiala, p. 473.

⁹⁴ Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, Nayiar Publication, Ludhiana, 1995, p. 24.

⁹⁵ File no. H-113 B, “The Near East and India” p. 472.

Stadium.⁹⁶ The old indigenous sports of Punjab are wrestling, *Gatka*, *Kabaddi*, horseback riding, shooting etc. Of these games wrestling has been the most popular. Maharaja Rajinder Singh of Patiala patronized the wrestlers. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's court wrestler was *Rustam-e-Jma-Gama*.⁹⁷ Dr. Ganda Singh wrote, "Maharaja Bhupinder Singh was a great patron of art and literature"⁹⁸. He was the first Maharaja of the state who made Punjabi the official language. During the time period of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh there were 145 primary schools of which 35 were only for girls. There were five Vernacular Middle Schools, 12 Anglo-Vernacular Middle Schools and five High Schools. There were two Middle Schools for girls. The language of the primary schools was Gurmukhi.⁹⁹ The Patiala Gazette, which began to be published in 1910, was published in Punjabi. On his advice, a Punjabi typewriter was invented, which was named as 'Bhupindra Type Writer'. He spent Rs. 71000 to publish '*Gurshabad Ratnakar Mahan Kosh*' written by Bhai Kahn Singh¹⁰⁰ and he made the education free up to primary level. He increased the strength of hostel and teachers in Mahindra College Patiala. The education was provided free of cost in the college at that time. During the reign of Maharaja Yadvinder Singh, a college for girls was opened in Patiala. Primary education and education for girls was made free in the State.

Maharaja Narindra Singh of Patiala built *Moti Bagh Mahal* during his reign. It was a simple and well-off architecture and stood elegantly amidst well-laid down and fruitful orchards. In the heart of the palace there stood a splendid large tank crossed by a hanging bridge famous as *Lachhman Jhula*. He built *Sheesh Mahal* and also *Banasar Bagh*. There was a lake covering six acres of land in the eastern part, where Maharaja used to enjoy the boating. Here, he also discussed the important matters with his advisors inside the *Diwankhana* after his court. Maharaja Narindra Singh patronized literature, music and painting. The walls of *Sheesh Mahal* had paintings related with Hindu mythology, Hindu gods and Sikh gurus; and exquisite work of glass. Also it has wonderful images based on '*Geet Gobind*' and '*Krishan Leela*'. The *Rajindra Mahal* was constructed during the reign of Maharaja Rajindra Singh inside

⁹⁶ Dr. Jagjeevan Mohan Walia, *Patiala Shehar*, p. 35.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 37.

⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 44.

⁹⁹ Confidential Reports on Native States, Punjab Government, 1911-1912, Punjab Government Branch Press, Simla, 1912, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 45.

the Baradari garden. It has been an excellent example of modern architecture and it had a statue of bathing beauty, which was brought from France and was marvelous sample of nude sculpture.¹⁰¹ There were statues of Queen Victoria and Maharaja Rajinder Singh in the gardens of the State. Maharaja Narinder Singh constructed the *Hira Bagh* Palace. But *Moti Bagh* was his royal palace. It was very difficult for an outsider to enter the palace. The guards of the palace of the Empress were not soldiers. At its small gate, only the elderly men older than 50 years of age were stationed, who conveyed messages to the women inside.¹⁰² There were long galleries ahead. Internal messages were received and sent through them. They were not allowed to meet anyone other than the attendant in the room. The palaces were very well decorated. The furniture was European style and it was not found in any palace in all of India or Europe.

Raja Bhagwan Singh of Nabha State like his brother Bharpur Singh was a highly qualified and well-educated king.¹⁰³ He was also well versed in Persian, Urdu and English. Raja Bharpur Singh had two queens and Bhagwan Singh had three queens. After him, Raja Hira Singh became the king of the state. Raja Hira Singh developed the state of Nabha, built many houses and gardens. Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha state had built 'Hira Mahal' for his residence. It's beautiful garden spread over an area of 100 acres. It was then called 'Elgin House'.¹⁰⁴ Only distinguished English Visitors used to stay in it during Hira Singh's time. His highness Raja Ripudaman Singh changed its name to 'Hira Mahal' and shifted his own dwelling to this building. He spent Rs 4 lakhs and made a permanent army cantonment on British lines, opened a modern college up to F.A. He opened an English-style post office and arranged a canal for the fields by spending 15 lakhs. Railway stations were arranged in different states. He built one mansion in the garden with Rs 50,000, another in the *Pucca Bagh* with Rs 2 lakhs. Roads and canals were also fixed. A 24 miles long paved road from Nabha to Malerkotla, 16 miles long road from Khanna to Patiala was constructed.¹⁰⁵ A permanent prison was built for prisoners. He spent a fortune of Rs 2 lakhs for a fortified fort in Bawal, an inn and a market in Amloh, a garden and a station in Phool, a market in Mandi Jaito, 4 different houses for the queens in Dhanula, a goddess

¹⁰¹ Dr. Jagjeevan Mohan Walia, *Patiala Shehar*, p. 67.

¹⁰² Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, p. 77.

¹⁰³ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta, Vol. II*, p. 209.

¹⁰⁴ A. Sharma, "Nabha Past and Present" Article in *The Tribune*, 18 January, 1976.

¹⁰⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta, Vol. II* p. 214.

temple for Hindus, a garden in the name of Tikka Sahib in Bir, a cave for the hermits and a mansion built at Shimla at a cost of Rs 27,000. The king had four queens. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh has the honor of being a patriot and a martyr in the history of India. Maharaja Hira Singh made special arrangements for his upbringing and education. The famous intellect Bhai Kahn Singh was appointed his teacher.¹⁰⁶ There has been a saying in English, “like father, like son”. So Maharaja Ripudaman Singh made this saying come true. In 1906, he became a member of Viceroy’s Legislative Council. In addition, in 1909, he was elected the president of the All India Conference which took place in Lahore. He played an important role in ‘Anand Marriage Bill’. He felt the need to pass this bill because the Sikhs had no other proper way. He paid special attention towards the well-being of his public. He was an ardent follower of Sikhism. So he wanted to have more educated people in his country. He made primary education free in the state. He also gave Rs 2 lakhs to set up the Hindu University. He used to listen to people's sufferings and change his identity to go to his people and find out about their problems or difficulties. He also expressed sympathy with the twentieth century Akali movement.¹⁰⁷

Like the rest of the princely states, Jind state was also sympathetic to the British government. Raja Sarup Singh was one of the eligible kings of Jind state, who was praised by Lapel Griffen by writing, ‘Raja Sarup Singh had greatly helped the British. The king had beautiful facial features. He was very kind and courteous. Although his dominating nature kept his relations bitter with the neighboring kings, the English government had never found a loyal and sincere friend like Sarup Singh.’¹⁰⁸ Raja Raghubir Singh's administration was also very good and efficient. Raja Raghubir Singh made Sangrur his capital. He was very fond of hunting and army activities. He was fond of expanding trade, which led to the construction of Sangrur's markets on the lines of Jaipur. A *Diwankhana* and a marble *Baradari* were erected. A tank named *Bhuteshwar* was built at Sangrur and also a *Shivaji* temple amidst it, like Amritsar. A very beautiful building called *Nagachetvar* was also erected.¹⁰⁹ He built gardens, walls and ponds all around Sangrur, which changed the appearance of the city of Sangrur. In addition to it the circumambulation of Amritsar was incomplete,

¹⁰⁶ Peof. Ravinder Singh Sodhi, *The Shahi Country of Nabha*, S.C.P. Publication, Nabha, p. 25.

¹⁰⁷ Mohinder Singh, *Akali Lehar*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University Patiala, 2015, p. 82.

¹⁰⁸ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta, Vol. II*, p. 284.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* p. 287.

which the king completed by spending countless rupees and placing marble. Raja Raghbir Singh was rewarded with G.C.S.I. award and the title of '*Raja-e-Rajasthan*'. Raja Raghbir Singh was of a strong temperament. In fact, he was a good administrator. He had been the man of excellent judgment and great honesty. He was a keen sportsman and a brave soldier.¹¹⁰ He had three queens. After him, Raja Ranbir Singh sat on the throne and the ceremony took place with a great celebration. Raja Ranbir Singh was fluent in English and Persian and he got married twice.

The Faridkot state was also an important state. Its kings contributed in the development of Faridkot. Bikram Singh was a very talented, intelligent and courteous king. He built inns, gardens, mansions, roads, ponds, markets etc. as well as built forts. The people were given open land to live in Faridkot, which made the town lively. Maharaja Pahara Singh was a very wise king. After that Wazir Singh sat on the throne. While he was twenty two years of age.¹¹¹ Like Maharaja Pahara Singh he also governed the kingdom efficiently. Wazir Singh was the first to bring the land settlements in the state. This is called the settlement of *Lala Moti Ram*.¹¹² Wazir Singh was a very fair and noble king. He listened sympathetically to the grievances of the people, and initiated the custom to redress the written complaints. The king was a servant of *Gurbani*. During his pilgrimage to Gurdwara Lohgarh Deena Sahib, he spent Rs. 10,000 on the foundation stone and the building of Gurdwara Sahib. Apart from this, he visited Haridwar, Allahabad, Calcutta, Patna Sahib and Hazur Sahib. Subsequently, Bikram Singh played a significant role in the improvement in management, royalty and prosperity of the people. He was very interested in the welfare of the people and in religious matters. He was a good scholar of languages such as Punjabi, Sanskrit and Persian. He had a strong and dominating personality. The Maharaja made many improvements to the settlement of the land and related to the royal treasury. He also built many markets and roads. Paved roads from the station to the city and around the city were constructed. In 1875, the Maharaja opened the first bank in Faridkot.¹¹³ In 1896, cattle markets began to appear. He built a mansion and other houses for accommodation in Kotakpura Bagh. He got constructed a decorative palace within the fort and decorated it in a magnificent manner. The

¹¹⁰ Lepel H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab, Vol. II*, p. 379.

¹¹¹ Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab, vol. II*, p. 545.

¹¹² Prof. Harbans Singh, *Faridkot Ryasit Daa Itihas*, People's Forum, Bargari, 2011, p. 50.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p. 56.

Maharaja was fond of decoration. He spent a lot of money and bought the royal goods. He built an inn with the Ferozepur gate, in which he made many rooms for the passengers' comfort. The king was fond of planting gardens. Maharaja Bikram Singh was very interested in educational pursuits because he was a religious minded ruler.¹¹⁴ In 1875, he opened a school and provided financial support during the foundation of Punjab University. He was one of the primary members of the university. He administered the state through his will conspicuous ability and inaugurated various reforms. In 1879 he introduced restriction on the consumption of intoxicating liquors.¹¹⁵ The Maharaja, like his father, was a great lover and servant of the Guru's house. He got built several Gurudwaras. A Gurudwara was erected in the village Gurusar in the memory of Guru Gobind Singh. He gave a *jagir* for the construction of a Gurudwara in the *Lakhi Jungle* village called Mahima Sarja and built a Gurudwara in Srinagar (Kashmir).¹¹⁶ He constructed the building of *Langar* in Amritsar at a cost of Rs. 75,000 and spent Rs. 25,000 to provide electricity to circumambulation of Darbar Sahib.¹¹⁷ Apart from being a devout and servant of the Guru, the Maharaja laid the foundation of the first Sikh organization. He created awareness among the people for religious, educational and social reforms. The first Sikh organization to be formed during the British government in the Punjab was the Singh Sabha. The first Singh Sabha was held at Amritsar in 1893. With his enthusiasm, the Faridkot Singh Sabha was formed, which was also one of the oldest Singh Sabhas in Punjab. He also received the title of *Farzand-i- Saadat- Nashan- Hazrat-i- Kaisar-i-Hind* for valuable services for the British government.¹¹⁸ Maharaja Balvir Singh also proved to be a worthy and sensible king. Maharaja Bikram Singh made special arrangements for the education of Balvir Singh. Maharaja Balvir Singh used to spend a lot his of time in education. From the beginning, his interest was in literature. He was fond of reading history other than the western literature. The king was 29 years old when he sat on the throne. Maharaja was a beautiful handsome man. The height was about six feet. His complexion was white and his eyes were beautiful. His neck was long, which added to his elegance. He wore wonderful clothes. The English suit was especially suited him. But he was a philanthropist by nature. In 1899,

¹¹⁴ Giani Sohan Singh Sheetal, *PEPSU Da Itihaas*, p. 94.

¹¹⁵ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVI A, Faridkot State, 1907, Lahore, 1909, p. 116.

¹¹⁶ *ibid*, p. 18.

¹¹⁷ Prof. Harbans Singh, *Faridkot Ryasit Daa Itihas*, p. 57.

¹¹⁸ Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab, vol. II*, p. 545.

there was a great famine. At that time, the king generously forgave the landlord for money and distributed the food to the people at a cheaper price. He was fond of reading. In his time, the largest and first library was established in the state called 'Balvir Press'.¹¹⁹ He got published several books. The Maharaja was fond of constructing buildings. He built a royal palace and 'Mujang Lahore wali Kothi' outside the fort. He also built *Durbar Ganj*, *Bir Kothi*, Fairy Cottage, two mansions at Kotakpura road, *Pari Mahal* and *Arais Ganj*. He created a new canal which was opened by Sir Charles in 1905. After him, came the Maharaja Brijinder Singh, who won the Gadley Medal for getting the first rank in the English proposal.¹²⁰ He secured first position in the management paper. He was the first prince of Punjab who had passed this diploma. In the college, the Maharaja was famous for his quiet nature. Raja Brijinder Singh continued to make good progress at the Aitchison Chiefs College.¹²¹ He was respected by all because of his goodness and ability. He was very fond of sports. He was a good player of tennis and polo. He was used to take hockey teams from his state and organized matches in Lahore. He did not use alcohol at all. Polygamy was the biggest crime in his eyes, which showed his respect towards women. He was very punctual and woke up at dawn to bathe, did his chores only after the recitation of the Guru Granth Sahib. He was also fond of photography and writing his dairy. His writing was very beautiful. He went to rest at ten o'clock in the night and avoided staying up late at parties. In January 1918, Maharaja received the rank of Major and the title of Maharaja.¹²² Subsequently, Maharaja Harinder Singh became the king of Faridkot. The Maharaja had received education from the Chief's College. He was an intelligent student and all the professors used to appreciate him. He was educated at the Aitchison College, with Mr. E.M. Atkinson, O.B.E., as his private tutor. He took his diploma in 1932 and commenced his administrative training under the guidance of Mr. M.H. Jones.¹²³ The reason for his sweetness, sociability and charm was that he was most popular among all. He earned a good reputation in sports. He was particularly fond of polo and was later considered the most popular player in the game. He was awarded the Watson Albel Singh and Gadley Medal prizes, as he

¹¹⁹ Prof. Harbans Singh, *Faridkot Ryasit Daa Itihas*, p. 68.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 70.

¹²¹ Reports Native States, Punjab Government, 1908-1909, Punjab Government Branch Press, Simla, 1909, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p. 3.

¹²² Giani Sohan Singh Sheetal, *PEPSU Da Itihaas*, p. 96.

¹²³ Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab, vol. II*, p. 546.

stood first in English and Geography etc., in the last college examination. The Maharaja acted prudently in the administration of the princely state. He made special arrangements for modern or western education. Every year new schools were opened, and the number of students increased. He built a stadium in 1955, the beautiful building of which occupies a high place in India. He spent over Rs 4 lakhs in 1934 on the administration of the State and built a magnificent building for the Secretariat. Hospitals, wells, gardens, roads, schools, colleges, etc. were also built for the welfare of the people. Maharaja Harinder Singh was an influential figure. His specialty was to get up early in the morning and saying his morning prayers. He was a true Sikh. Like a gentleman he led his life in accordance with the Sikhism and was an example for other kings.

Kapurthala was also an important state, whose kings made a significant contribution to the development of this kingdom. Raja Nihal Singh was a very kind man. People liked him and he also loved the people. His arrangement was commendable and he was a friend of the British regime. Rana Randhir Singh also had good relations with the British government. Maharaja Randhir Singh, along with other comrades, was given the title of 'Star of India' by the Viceroy.¹²⁴ He had a fondness to travel abroad, but his ambition could not be fulfilled. Maharaja Randhir Singh was a very wise and philanthropist king. After Maharaja Randhir Singh, Raja Kharak Singh became the Maharaja of Kapurthala. The evening of his throne was celebrated with great enthusiasm and several Maharajas and English officers joined the occasion. Raja Randhir Singh spent a large sum of money to build Randhir College and Randhir Safakhana, but he soon died of mental illness. After which Jagatjit Singh was made Maharaja.¹²⁵ Raja Jagatjit Singh was also an expert in English and Persian languages. The king toured one of the country's largest cities and boosted his experience. This king was intelligent and wise. He gave Rs. 1 lakh to Khalsa College Amritsar.

The Malerkotla State was one of the oldest States in the Punjab. The State was surrounded by Nabha and Patiala territories. It was a Muslim Afghan State in the cis-Sutlej group of powers. Their ancestor, Shaikh Sadr-ud-din, received a gift of 58 villages near Ludhiana when he got married the daughter of Sultan Bahlol Lodhi.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Giani Sohan Singh, Sheetal, *PEPSU Da Itihaas*, p. 27.

¹²⁵ Punjab District Gazetteers, Kapurthala, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p.24.

¹²⁶ Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab, vol. II*, Lahore, 1940, p. 580.

The Title of Nawab conferred in 1657 upon Bayazid Khan.¹²⁷ By the Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809 the state comes under the protection of British. For their services toward the British regime the ruler of state Wazir Khan received the title of 'His Highness' and the honor to a salute of nine guns. During the time of revolt 1857, Nawab Mehbod Ali Khan and His Son Sikander Ali Khan helped the British Government with their troops and with other sources.¹²⁸ In 1858 the Viceroy and Governor General Lord Canning held a Durbar to thank all the princely chiefs for their valuable help during the hard time of 1857 revolt. Nawab Sikander Ali Khan also invited in Durbar with other chiefs of the different States. The Nawab took keen interest in improving administration of the State and was very aware for public welfare. He was Started an Anglo-Vernacular School in Malerkotla where was given free education. A bridge was constructed over a channel in which rain water collected outside Malerkotla but it proved a hindrance to the people in crossing from one part of the city to the other.¹²⁹ He had constructed a thirteen miles *pucca* road between the Ludhiana and Malerkotla with the permission of the Deputy Commissioner of the Ludhiana. The Nawab also constructed an impressive *Dewan Khana* for holding the *Diwan* and other ceremonies. He was tried to provide easy justice to the people so he instituted Civil and Criminals Courts and established other department on the Model of British administration. Files of the cases were to be maintained and regular records was kept in Urdu language in State Record Office.

Nawab Ahmed Ali Khan had well administered the state.¹³⁰ He was also well educated and was an active and liberal ruler. He took keen interest in the administration of the State and welfare of his subjects. He executed many administration reforms. He did many land revenue settlements because of his personal interests. He gave a special attention to the development of the education system. He got opened High School and an Intermediate College where was given free education to the State subjects and students from outside. During his time period some new buildings and roads were also constructed. Judicial system of the state was also reformed. Many industries were developed in the Malerkotla State. Two Steel

¹²⁷ Ruling princes and Chiefs, Notables and principals Officials of the Punjab Natives States, The Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, Lahore, 1918, p.no. 8.

¹²⁸ Giani Sohan Singh, Sheetal, *PEPSU Da Itihaas*, p.105.

¹²⁹ Nawab Iftikhar Ali Khan, *History of the Ruling Family of Sheikh Sadruddin Sardar-I-Jahan of Malerkotla (1499A.D. to 1948 A.D.)*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2000, p.22.

¹³⁰ Reports Native States, Punjab Government, 1908-1909, Punjab Government Branch Press, Simla, 1909, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p. 3.

Rolling Mills were established at Malerkotla. Cotton Ginning factories and factories for producing cycle parts were also set up.¹³¹ He had re-organised the police, jails and account department on modern lines.

The kings of these states had all the qualities to govern their kingdoms, but the kings of these states also had many habits that represented the other side of their lives. Their alcoholic and luxurious lives showed their shortcomings. Amusements and recreation had a high place in the social life and were based on traditions. The Native rulers took great interest in sports and their examples were also followed by a people of the states. The chess, chaupar, playing cards and nards or social parties were common with the upper and middle class people. Outdoor diversions such as hunting, animal's fights and wrestling were in privilege of the few. The rulers of Princely states had a little time while taken up attending shooting parties, playing cards, drinking Brandy, celebrating birthday of prince and princesses and other functions arranged for their pleasure. Maharaja Randhir Singh of Kapurthala lived for 75 years. He celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his kingdom and received many honors for his service from the King of England. This service did not belong to his state, but to the British government. The Maharaja was of a superstitious nature. So, he used to order a night earlier that these women would be the first to see him but when he wakes up, because he believed that doing so would bring happiness to his coming 24 hours.¹³² There were astrologers in his kingdom that used to make horoscopes as to who were going to be those women. He lived in the palace named Hermitage. The rulers of the state were also very fond of drinks. Breakfast was served with a bottle of Champaign of Raja Ranbir Singh of Jind. The Wine of Nabha had acquired a great reputation and it became a part of the Punjab folklore "*Nabha dhain band bottlen, tainu peen gey nasiban wale*". Maharaja Hira Singh himself tasted wine before it was bottled. The Raja was very anxious to check drunkenness, he would see that it was the best quality and supplied to the public without adulteration.¹³³ The Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and his women in herm often used wine. The rulers of the states used to have costly food and alcoholic drinks every day. At the time of Ranbir Singh's rise, he was served breakfast with a bottle of champagne. If Ranbir Singh was

¹³¹ Nawab Iftikhar Ali Khan, *History of the Ruling Family of Sheikh Sadruddin Sardar-I-Jahan of Malerkotla (1499A.D. to 1948 A.D.)*, p. 138

¹³² Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, p. 9.

¹³³ Reports Native States, Punjab Government, 1910-1911, Punjab Government Branch Press, Simla, 1911, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p. 6.

in the mood then he would answer the greetings to the people but else he would not care. After that, he would bathe in the French perfume tub and come to the court hall, where his daughters and sons and some people of the princely state welcomed him. Sitting among them, he drank some glasses of brandy which he was very fond of. The Maharaja was also very fond of playing cards and his favorite games were bridges and billiards, in which he lost thousands of rupees every day. By night, he used to drink 25 pegs of brandy, which was his daily routine.¹³⁴ Of the 365 days of the year, he spent 130 days in the field sports and the rest in the ordinary sports. He was very fond of dogs. His famous kennel had dogs from the choicest breeds. In the summer, he built a bungalow on the bank of the canal, which was surrounded by ponds, where he cooked fish and prepared meal himself. The Maharaja used to spend most of his time playing cards, hunting and drinking brandy. The Maharaja had no special time for administrative affairs. Nevertheless, he received the highest rewards from the British government that could be given to the Indian king. He was the '*Nayak* Grand Commander' of the Indian Empire. Being the beloved of the British Government, he was given the honorary rank in army. His greatest competence was that he did not interfere in the administration of the state, and that the state administration was in the hands of prime minister who was loyal to British. Leela Bhawan in Patiala was built by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of the State for his amusement and relaxation. A special room in it, called the 'Love-Chamber' was reserved for the personal use of the Maharaja only.¹³⁵ Its walls were covered with hundreds of lust inciting and rare paintings. The room was decorated in a special Indian style, and its carpets were studded with diamonds and pearls. Fields trails were arranged in both Patiala and the capital of the neighboring states, Nabha, Sangrur and Fridkot. There was acute rivalry amongst the chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Fridkot states over this game and who so ever won the championship of the meet was awarded shields and cups of gold and silver animal's used in hunting were elephant, hounds, trained cheetahs, falcons, hawks etc. The other popular amusements were wrestling, polo, pigeon flying etc. There was wrestling by professionals and it was patronized by the princes. Polo and cock fighting were also popular.

In 1929, India joined the cricket world for the first time. The Maharajas of Kashmir, Patiala, Kapurthala and other states of North India began to take an interest

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 10.

¹³⁵ Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, p. 13.

in it. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh and his ministers and senior officers of the government did not have time to work as they spent a lot of time hunting and attending birthday parties. Arrangements were made to hunt the preys which continued all day or for two or three weeks. Such hunting was also arranged in the capitals of Patiala and neighboring states of Nabha, Sangrur and Faridkot. Great celebrations were held on these occasions. There were different ways of hunting. The game was openly contested between the states of Nabha, Jind and Faridkot. The winners of the competition were given gold and silver cups and the shields. Many places were reserved for the guests who participated in these competitions and the arrangements for over 1000 guests were made. Alcohol was used in the camp before dinner. On return, there was a grand celebration of music in *Moti Bagh* for the entertainment of the guests, which continued till night. The royal dancers, who numbered about 100, entertained the guests with their dancing skills. Such celebrations were held many times during the year; therefore many administration works were completely abandoned. The government clerks and junior officers, who used it normally, come to the office during the days of hunting and they had no work to do. Maharaja Bhupinder Singh's father Rajinder Singh G.C.S.I. died at an early age of 28 due to alcohol addiction.¹³⁶ Therefore, his advisers were very careful that Bhupinder Singh, like his father and grandfather, should not get addicted to alcohol. He was cared for by an English officer. He was taught by Hindu and Sikh teachers as well. The vicious men of the court continued to seduce him by the temptation of young women, and being a male, he could not escape such an attraction. These women were chosen because of their beauty and young age.

When he died, he had 332 women in his *harem*. Of these, only ten were Maharanis and there were about 50 *Ranis* (queens) and the rest were only concubines and maids.¹³⁷ They were all present for the king's service. There were many differences between the Maharanis and the concubines. Maharanis used to have their lunch, dinner and tea, etc., in gold cups and plates. They were numbered about 100. They were served a good variety of rice, meats, fish and other sweet dishes, while the queens were served food in silverware.¹³⁸ Other women who tried to hold high positions were served food in copper pots. While the Rani's were served in silver

¹³⁶ Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, vol. II, p. 471.

¹³⁷ Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, p. 74.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 75.

plates and cups and the number of dishes was comparatively less on the occasions like birthday of the Maharaja, Maharanis, princes and princesses banquets were held. The banquets were served by Italian, Indian and English waiters and the quantity of food and wine was exquisite. The birth of a son in a rich Family was celebrated and there were great rejoicing. The whole empire, celebrated with rejoicing the birth of a prince. Birthday ceremony was performed every year and on the birthday of the Maharajas the Maharanis and prince and princess, banquets were held and quality of food and wine on such an occasion was exquisite. At the end of the banquet there was usually a musical party where dancing girls from different states were brought to entertain the Maharaja and his guests. The Muslims also had a keen interest for the male child.

The Maharaja used to give wonderful feasts on special occasions like birthdays of the maharanis or princes. Tables were set up for the guests to sit on. The men attending the party were only some special relatives of the Maharaja, his son or queen, while on the women side there were the maharanis and some selected women of the palace. At the time of the feast, Italian and Indian servants served the guests food and wine, which was very valuable. At the end of the parties there were used to be a dance program, where dancers ordered from different states entertained the Maharaja and his guests. Such parties continued until the next morning, and all the guests were intoxicated. Many beautiful women from Europe, Nepal and Cyprus were brought to the palace. They were adorned with precious jewellery and clothing. Their clothes were as beautiful as worn by the princesses of England, Hollywood actresses and the rich families of France.¹³⁹ At the end of the party, the Maharaja used to go to the palace with a group of chosen women.

Customs often represent culture of region. Any culture can be recognized from the customs. The Maharajas wore *Churidar Pyjama* brocade *achken* with decorate in diamonds, coronet in blue sapphires tied over his turban and pearl necklaces.¹⁴⁰ Man is recognized from *Raftar*, *Guftar* and *Dastar*. Turban was a special characteristic of the personality of the people of Punjab. The royal house of Patiala had a particular system of tying turban called *Patiala Shahi* turban.¹⁴¹ The officially and *Darbaris* used to attend the *Darbar* wearing this type of turban. Turban were dyed in multifarious colors and finished in to various design were also especially of Patiala.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII. A, Phulkian States Patiala, Jind and Nabha, 1904, p. 87.

¹⁴¹ Bhupinder Singh Khaira, Lokyan Bhasha Ate Sabhiachaar, Patiala, 1986, p. 242.

Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala used to wear colored turbans in accordance with the season and different functions which he attended for example yellow was the color in spring seasons, red during occasion of marriages, black color while he attended religious ceremonies. A special officer was always in attendance at the palace to tie the turban round the head of the Maharaja.¹⁴² The women of the Native Princes were having dressed in such gorgeous clothes embroidered with pure gold silver wires.¹⁴³ Their jewellery and clothes could match even those worn by princesses of England and cinema stars of Hollywood. The rich people generally wore jewellery made of gold, but the material varied from cheapest bangles made of lac, glass or brass to most valuable gold necklace, thickly studded with pearls and diamonds. Maharaja Ranbir Singh used the sword of the Nadir Shah of Iran and the yellow sapphire which he tied with his arm, but Maharaja Jagatjit Singh had it fitted in his waist belt and it wore during government ceremonies. These items were given to Maharaja Fateh Singh as a gift by Nadir Shah. Jagatjit Singh had the privilege of travelling in a coach made up of gold and silver, which was pulled by horses decorated with diamonds and precious stones. This coach was also presented by Nadir Shah to Singh's forefather Maharaja Fateh Singh. Maharaja Jagatjit Singh reigned for 69 years. He was honored several times by the British Government, but his desire to receive G.C.V.O. from the King of England could not be fulfilled. The death of Jagatjit Singh at an age of 94 was the official mourning for the kings of all states.

Not only in Kapurthala State and India, but even in European countries, especially in France, his memory was flagged. France considered him to be its best friend. Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala was famous in all South American countries. He married a Spanish beauty, from whom he had a son named Ajit Singh. The Maharaja could write and speak Spanish.¹⁴⁴

The ceremony of enthronization was celebrated with great fervor, which cost a lot of money. The kings of all the states and the British officers used to take part in the ceremony. The king on the throne was offered diamonds, jewels, weapons, elephants, horses, etc. Besides this, millions of rupees were spent on weddings. For

¹⁴² Neelam Soni, Thesis: *Social- Cultural Life in The Phulkian States (1901-1947)*, 1995, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 199.

¹⁴³ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII. A, *Phulkian States Patiala, Jind and Nabha*, 1904, p. 87.

¹⁴⁴ Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, p. 123.

example, Maharaja Rajinder Singh spent Rs 20 lakhs on his sister's wedding.¹⁴⁵

The Sikh religious scriptures make no formal references to the social laws or the ruler governing Sikh marriage. From the legal side the Sikh marriage was similar in a broad way to the Hindu marriage. But there was also an *Anand* marriage Act meant for the Sikhs, Passed by the efforts of the Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha. There was bitterness between Raja Hira Singh (1871-1911) of Nabha and Ripudaman Singh (1911-1913) over the latter's marriage as Hira Singh wanted to have it performed by the Brahmans but Ripudaman Singh preferred to perform it through Sikh rites. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh order to give legal sanction to a marriage ceremony among the Sikhs called *Anandi* and introduced the *Anand* marriage bill in the imperial legislative council, which was passed in the law in October 1909.¹⁴⁶ Through *Rahit Maryada* it was prescribed that a Sikh should marry a Sikh and generally it was followed but even then, marriages of Sikhs with the non-Sikhs were very common, most prominently among the rulers. The Maharaja and Rajas of the Phulkian states of Patiala, Jind and Nabha had got married Hindu, Rajput, Muslim, European and English women. Probably it is due to their liberal and secular outlook or due to their polygamous practices for it was a prejudice among high castes against giving a daughter to a man already married.

Maharaja Ranbir Singh of Jind married a Muslim prostitute from Uttar Pardesh.¹⁴⁷ But her children not claim Maharaja Ranbir Singh as their father through the case was refused by the Privy Council of Landon.

The funeral ceremonies or the ceremonies in relation to death were; Antarjali (Pre-obituary), *Antyesti* (Obituary) and *Sradha* (Post-obituary) when a men completed his life circle in this world and was about to enter the next world the ceremonies performed as his departure were called the death ceremonies.

Jarmani Dass had described the death of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala in these words:

“The women who were wearing precious jewels, pearl necklaces, diamond tiaras, emerald bracelets and other precious jewellery store them to pieces. The pearls and diamonds were scattered on the floor like pebbles. They were all wailing and

¹⁴⁵ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta, Vol. II*, p. 152.

¹⁴⁶ Peof. Ravinder Singh Sodhi, *The Shahi Country of Nabha*, p. 26.

¹⁴⁷ Neelam Soni, Thesis: *Social- Cultural Life in The Phulkian States (1901-1947)*, 1995, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala, p.149.

weeping at the departure of their beloved lord and king. They pulled out their hair and were screaming and shouting ‘don’t go away, take us too with you.’¹⁴⁸

Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha had forbidden the loud manifestation of sorrow by women over the death of their relatives. There were various and often elaborate funeral ceremonies but the greatest social evil was the giving of a funeral feast. Sometimes more money was spent upon a funeral than upon a wedding. Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha personally made a speech at Amloh discouraging the extravagance of expenditure on deaths.

The chiefs of the Phulkian states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind were no doubt, Sikhs and had imbibed the true spirit of the admirable teachings of the great Gurus. They were liberal and had given full religious freedom to the followers of all religions of their respective states. The Maharaja of Patiala had contracted matrimonial alliance with the Rajput states, his favorite Maharanis were Vimla Wati, Jashodha Devi and Rupwant Devi. Their Herm was filled with so many women, Indian and European. Bhupinder Singh Maharaja of Patiala married European women, Florence Bryan¹⁴⁹ The Maharaja of Jind had married English women named Dorothy.¹⁵⁰ Where the Raja of Nabha did not lag behind in his love for secularism he married a Hindu women named Sarojani Devi, daughter of Prem Singh of Raipur, district Ludhiana. Polygamy was largely practiced by the rulers of the Phulkian States. But it was Maharaja Bhupinder Singh who was notorious. He had more than 332 women in his Herm. They have been abducted by force or deceit, from their homes.¹⁵¹ In many Cases the husbands and parents of these women had been paid large sums of money from the state revenues to sell their wives or daughters to the Maharaja.¹⁵² Similarly polygamy was also practiced by the rulers of Nabha State. Raja Hira Singh had four wives- Mir Kaur, Parmesher Kaur, Harnam Kaur and Ishar Kaur.¹⁵³ Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha were staggering crude and dramatic in winning the love of fair maids for whom he would develop infatuation and sex attraction. Women were tortured in order

¹⁴⁸ Deewan Jarmani Dass, *Maharaja*, p. 81.

¹⁴⁹ Crown Representative Records, Punjab States, Acc. No. 30, Reel No. 31, National Archive of India, New Delhi.

¹⁵⁰ Jarmani Dass, *op, cit.*, p. 3

¹⁵¹ Foreign Department, Secret-I, June, 1901, Nos. 40-53, p. 137, National Archive of India, New Delhi.

¹⁵² Foreign and Political Department, Secret-Internal, June, 1914, Nos. 23-27, National Archive of India, New Delhi.

¹⁵³ Giani Gian Singh, *Tawarikh Raj Khalsa, Sikh Riyasta, Vol. II*, p. 227.

that they may satisfy the sexual impulses of the Maharaja.¹⁵⁴ For example: Pritam Kaur who was a highly cultured and extremely beautiful girl. She was holding a degree of Bachelor of Arts from Punjab University. She and parents were put in prison as they refused to give their daughter to the Maharaja. Sneaks were hurled through the iron bars which crawled on the body. She began to scream and ask for help. Then the Maharaja, in the guise of Buta Singh, came to her help and showed his sympathy and later married her and brought her to place. But after few months of harmonious married life this innocent educated woman was discarded and thrown into the old fort like many others.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha fell out on account of abduction of a Girl named Ruchi.¹⁵⁶ The Maharajas of the States had a regular agency for procuring women to gratify their moral depravity. So because of debased habits of the Maharajas no women who had the misfortune of being young and beautiful was safe in the princely States.

The rulers of the state liberally patronized the Sikh temple and priest and showed equal respect for Hindu temples and Muslim Mosques. Some of them had also unflinching faith in Hindu Gods and Goddesses. It was said that Maharaja Bhupinder Singh had studied all Agama Sastras and used to do Kali Pooja as a matter of duty¹⁵⁷.

In the Nabha state the rulers used to visit the Mahadev temple at Bawal and distribute large sums of money in offerings and gifts. Religious discussions between the leaned were encouraged and not infrequently the Raja Hira Singh of Nabha himself took part in them.

The Maharajas of Patiala not only gave full religious freedom to the Muslims but also showed great reverence for the Muslim Pirs. It was believed that Maharaja Narinder Singh had brought Pir Baba Rodey Shah from Machhiwara to Patiala and often sought his blessings.¹⁵⁸ After his death a tomb was raised. By the Jind and Nabha states also the grants were given for the maintained of religious places of the

¹⁵⁴ Ibid

¹⁵⁵ Jarmani Dass, op, cit., pp. 185-87.

¹⁵⁶ Neelam Passey, Thesis "Nabha State 1871-1948, A Case Study of Internal Administration and British Paramountcy" Punjabi University, Patiala, 1979, p. 112.

¹⁵⁷ Jarmani Dass, op, cit., pp 34-35.

¹⁵⁸ Neelam Soni, Thesis: *Social- Cultural Life in The Phulkian States (1901-1947)*, 1995, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 316.

three communities. The rulers thus granted freedom of worship and they respected customs, beliefs and practices of all religion. They themselves practiced customs and rituals of all the three religions such as Dushehra and Diwali of Hindus, Gurburb of the Sikhs and Eid of the Muslims. On these occasions royal Darbars were held on the Muharram day. All the *tazias* were brought to the Darbar and everyone received a small purse on similarly on Eid day people received congratulations from the sovereign.¹⁵⁹

Religion is a social phenomenon. Religion is a belief in a divine being and it recognizes a super human power controlling the universe. The Phulkian chiefs were the followers of Sikhism. Religious minded Sikhs in order to restore the purity of the faith of Sikhs Gurus among Sikhism had started the socio-religious reform movement. Through the outbreak of the Namdhari movement had been that the religious nature the principal aim with which that Namdhari Movement was initiated it was political through great weight was attacked to religious and social regeneration. The ruling chiefs did not take kindly to the Namdharis. They saw danger in the political aspiration for the peasantry. Maharaja of Patiala too had opined at the later stage that “Ram Singh’s real motive and ambition was bent upon religious pretext to reign and acquire dominion.”¹⁶⁰

There were many anti- British movements in Punjab, including the Namdhari movement. To suppressing it, the British government used feudal lords and the kings of princely states on the basis of ‘divide and rule’ policy. The kings of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot and Malerkotla played important roles in suppressing the Kuka agitation. These kings suppressed the Namdhari movement. The steps that the Namdhari movement had taken for the independence of the country could become a challenge for the British Government, if the movement was not suppressed with the help of these kings. Because the whole of India could come together in the name of cow slaughtering and leave a big mark on history. Even today, these kings feel proud of themselves that the cannons used for killing Namdharis were sent by them. There are many official letters in which British Government had thanked the kings for their help. L.H Giffin also mentioned in his telegram 29 July 1871 about the rendered help of Maharaja of Patiala thus:

¹⁵⁹ Akhtar Subhan, My Rulers, Vol. I, P. 27-45.

¹⁶⁰ File No. 494, Statement of Mr. Forsyth, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 20.

“I have heard by telegraph of arrest of the seven Kukas in Patiala territory, whither they had been traced from Raikot. Three sword were also found, further particulars will be sent when are received by his honor the Lieutenant-Governor. The Sikhs naturally wish to fix the crime on the obnoxious sect of Kukas, and is as yet no certainty that the right person have been arrested. His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala is giving every assistance in the following case. Seven Kukas traced and arrested by the Patiala police.”¹⁶¹

In the Telegram from E.C. Bayley, C.S.I. Secretary of the Government of India to Secretary of the Punjab had also mentioned about excellent service of Patiala. It reads:

“The Government General in council having been demi-officially informed of the excellent services rendered by the officials of his Highness the Maharaja of Patiala, in tracing and arresting the criminals in the case of murder at Raikot in the Ludhiana District, I am desired to express his gratification in hearing of the loyal assistance which has been thus afforded to the officers of Government.”¹⁶²

According the Government the Namdharis were great rebels. Mr. Cowan’s real purpose was blowing away Namdharis from guns. He felt that the Namdharis were open rebels offering contumacious resistance to constituted authority, and his aim was to prevent the spreading of the disease. It was absolutely necessary that repressive measures should be prompt and stern. He was satisfied that he was to act for best and that this incipient insurrection must be stamped out at once. The native Chiefs were standing with British Government. They were bound to show their loyalty by protecting the Mr. Cowan and Mr. Forsyth with his barbaric act. The chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, jind and Malerkotla States gave all possible help to the British administration.

The letter of Maharaja Patiala dated 15th February 1872 appreciated the barbaric incident of Malerkotla and showed his view against the Namdharis. He mentioned that “Ram Singh’s real motive and ambition was bent, upon religious

¹⁶¹ File No. 451, *Confidential Papers of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 37.

¹⁶² File no. 490, *Reports of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 54.

pretext, to reign and acquire dominion, and he deceitfully implanted this capricious notion in the minds of his ignorant and superstitious followers that their creed was to predominate that everywhere the Government of the country would be very soon in their hands.”¹⁶³

Hira Singh ruler of Nabha State in 1871 gave help to the British Government. That is why he remained fully devoted to the Britishers.¹⁶⁴ Since that time he was governed his State with great energy and ability, while he has given repeated proofs of his unswerving loyalty and friendship to the sovereign powers.¹⁶⁵ In 1872, when an anti-British trouble was raised by the Kukas, he at once dispatched a force to quell the disturbance at the request of the British Deputy Commissioner, and the Governor-General expressed his entire satisfaction with the conduct of Nabha troops.¹⁶⁶

In the letter of the 17th January 1872, to Mr. Forsyth, he had related the circumstances of the arrest prisoners. He had mentioned in letter that sixty eight of them, of whom 29 were wounded, had surrendered to the Naib Nazim of Sherpur and three Native cavalry. In the same letter he remarks that, the Rajahs of Nabha and Jind “despatched artillery, cavalry and infantry to Kotlah.”

The Raja Raghbir Singh of Jind State also rendered prompt assistance to the British Government on the occasion of the Kuka outbreak in 1872. He sent two guns, a troop of horse and two companies of infantry to Malerkotla at the request of the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, and the rising was effectually suppressed.¹⁶⁷ In confidential letter had been described that the Raja of Jind is our honest well wisher. He discouraged the Kukas and his troops in five orders and was considering the matter of employing a through safe British officer to drill his troops. His force would be a real stand by in any rising.¹⁶⁸

During the Nawabship of Ibrahim Khan a Kuka Incident took place. In 1872 Kukas made their surprised attack on Malerkotla from Bhaini Sahib a village in Ludhiana District, on the place of cow-slaughter. Sixty eight Kukas were blown away

¹⁶³ File No. 494, Statement of Mr. Forsyth, p. 20.

¹⁶⁴ Punjab District Gazetteers, Patiala, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1992, p. 66.

¹⁶⁵ History of Nabha State, Punjab State Archive, Patiala

¹⁶⁶ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII, A, *Phulkian States Patiala, Jind and Nabha*, 1904, Lahore, 1909, p. 343.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p.217.

¹⁶⁸ File no. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 45.

from guns in afternoon on the parade ground of the Malerkotla Chief in the presence of the troops of the Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla States. It is very important that in the incident of Malerkotla State of Patiala, Nabha, Jind stood along with the British officers. Native chiefs took a pledge to Britain, at the close of Indian States Committee, over which Sir Harcourt Butler presided; His Highness remained the members that the Princes stood by Britain in 1857 and 1914-“As we stood by you in the past, so we shall stand by you in the future.”¹⁶⁹

Finally we can say that religious centers were under the control of the British government. The *Mahants* and *Sarbrah* of the Gurudwaras were appointed by the British and they were answerable only before the British officers. The British government was happy while giving the control of religious places in the hands of the priests and *Mahants*. They were treating them as their personal property. Whereas *Jagirdari* was helpful to the British regime, on the other hand *Mahants* were very beneficial for them. On many occasions the British government used them for their own interests or means. They turned away from religious life and humanity or became corrupt. The character of these declined drastically due to the religious places became the center of business. It was difficult for common people to go in the Gurdwara because the atmosphere of these was completely spoiled by the *Mahants*. These *Sarbrah* and *Mahants* had become blind in their own personal interests and comfort life that the government had easily used them for its own benefits. The Maharajas of the Princely States also loyalist the British regime. They were bound by the government's patronage in every way. For their valuable services, the government used to give them a variety of titles. They feel good by getting the titles. Maharajas of the States did lots of reforms which were made for the development of the society and lot of work for the administrations. There was much goodness, such as those who did so well for the good of the subjects. These kings were racing to receive the titles on the behalf of the British government and they lived a very royal and comfortable life. At the same time, there were a lot of shortcomings, such as polygamy and drinking alcohol. They used to marry more than one and there were a lot of women in their harem. These loyalists gave full support to the British government to crush whatever movement was waged against the British Empire and they felt honorable to call itself as loyal son of the British government.

¹⁶⁹ File no. H.105 B, Foreign Department, Patiala Government, Article in The Times of India, June 13, 1932, State Archive of Patiala.

CHAPTER - 3

NAMDHARI REACTION TOWARDS THE BRITISH POLICY: THEIR INTERVENTION IN AMRITSAR AND MALERKOTLA

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in the year 1839. There followed a stage of disunity, lawlessness, confusion, anxiety and hostility around the throne of Lahore State. Taking benefit of the current situation, the British had previously made inroads in Punjab but the company annexed it in March 1849. They introduced their own laws and made diverse treaties with the different Indian states. Most of the states came under the rule of British regime. The policy of government ever since the annexation of Punjab has been maintained by the Punjab, for purely political reasons.¹ The British government mainly had no kindness for the Indians in any core of the heart. The British rulers basically had aimed at the development and consolidation of the Empire in India. Almost all the British officials, no matter what their personal ideology, political or religious function they had their loyalty to, and continually worked on the same line through intensity, approach and methods of execution did differ from person to person. Any amendment in the government policy generally resulted in the amends of official's behaviour towards the masses. Regarding the Punjab and the Sikhs, government declared on 6th April 1846, "Convinced that the safety of our government in Indian depends on the satisfaction and protection. We are enabled to give to the natives of that country, and the prosperity we can impart of their commerce and social existence, I am persuaded that next to these, stands the importance of letting it be felt by all the nations of India, that we are not desirous of conquest for my purpose but that of security; and that let their government be what it may, perfect or imperfect, Muslim or Hindu, placed in one race or vested in another, our only desire is to organise them as allies with whom we can meet on equal terms, if they are prepared to maintain the relations of peace and concord." But more rapidly the English became the masters of the five rivers in 1849 than their outlook towards the people of the region had undergone a great change. There is a general belief that the Sikhs shed all their feelings of nostalgia within few years of the annexation and

¹ Ikram Ali Malik, *A book of readings on the history of the Punjab (1799-1947)*, Imami printing press, Pakistan, 1970, p.226.

quickly adapted themselves to the new order of things.² In fact, by and large the people in the Punjab viewed the British Government with doubt and resentment.

Among the other communities of the Punjab, the Hindus were as angry as the Sikhs regarding the activities of the missionaries and the state interfering in their religious beliefs, though in the case of the Sikhs it may be said that their animosity was deeper on account of the loss of political power and privilege they had suffered recently. The Sikhs and the Hindu community sustained to nurture suspect and bitterness towards the British rulers. After the annexation, libellous propaganda of British rulers against Indian religions and the planning of string of slaughter-houses for the provider of beef, a phenomenon strictly prohibited under the *Khalsa* regime, made the Hindus and the Sikhs understand the heavy loss that they had suffered by losing independence. The extremely receptive mind of Namdharis could not support of the new cultural influences which were not only harmful but also dangerous to their culture. After the annexation of Punjab, Sd. Henry M. Lawrence introduced a new law on March 24th, 1847 for Amritsar. These words were noted in Golden Temple.

“The priests of Amritsar having complained annoyances, this is to make known to all concerned that by order of the Government general, British subjects are forbidden to enter the temple, with their shoes on. Kine are not to be killed at Amritsar, nor are the Seikhs to be molested or in any way to be interfered with. Shoes are to be taken off at the Bhoonga at the corner of the tank and no person is to walk round the tank with his shoes on.”³

The above proclamation was issued at a time when Maharaja Dalip Singh was the ruler; Lal Singh and Tej Singh were in favour, and Rani Jindan was the Mother Regent.⁴

The question of cow-slaughter was a major problem between the Hindus and Muslims.⁵ The Board of Administration after annexation, with the approval of Government had been issued the orders on the subject of the kine-killing, an order

² Fauja Singh, *A brief account of freedom movement in Punjab*, Patiala, 1972, p. 2.

³ Dr. Ganda Singh, *kukian di vithia*, Publication Punjabi University Patiala, 2000, p. 64.

⁴ M.M. Ahluwalia, *Kukas the Freedom Fighters of the Punjab*, Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1965, p.75.

⁵ Proceeding of Punjab Past and Present, Dr. Bhagat Singh, *The Kuka Movement*, Vol.VII, April, 1923, p.148.

dated 24th May, 1847, signed by Sir Hanery Lawrence.⁶ As long as name of Maharaja Dalip Singh, the Government out of the deference to the Sikh sovereign, maintained the prohibition against the slaughter of the kine. Which always existed under the Sikhs; but that, as soon as the Punjab was annexed to the British dominions, this prohibition was removed on the principle set forth in the Governor-General proclamation of the 20th May, 1849, that “No one should be allowed to interfere with the practice by his neighbor and of customs, which that neighbor’s religion either enjoins or permits”.⁷ The Board of Administration therefore directed that a spot should be set apart outside every large town for the slaughter for the kine, but at the same time issued strict injunctions against the open sale of beef in shop with in the town. This order in clearer terms encouraged the Muslims to practice cow-killing giving them the shelter of law, throughout Punjab.

It was not possible for the Namdharis to be a loyal subject of the British Government.⁸ Then Muslims were encouraged to practice cow killing .The Nandharis were known for their love and respect for cows.⁹This British policy was totally against the religious practices and sentiments of Hindus and Sikhs. Namdhari Sikhs understood the policy of British Government. Namdharis revolted against British Rule. It was due to the respect for the cow that the Namdharis were more orthodox believers in the blessedness of the animals than the Hindus. The year 1857 was not an ordinary year. It was the year of revolt, struggle and war. Baba Ram Singh was not a silent spectator. He formed “*Sant Khalsa*”, which later developed into great historical Namdhari movement. The Namdhari movement stood for religious revival at a time when Christianity was making serious inroads in the land¹⁰. He therefore issued a special code of discipline for his followers. Religious Baba declared “Gobind Singh’s Guru Granth Sahib (ADI GRANTH) only true one written by divine inspiration and is the only sacred writing extent Guru” obviously he was not in favor of idol worshipping.

Namdhari Movement was started as a religious Movement but it got soon

⁶ File No. 491, *Kuka Movement Annual Report Raikot and Amritsar Murder Cases*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 12.

⁷ File no. 451, *Memoranda Regarding Guru Ram Singh*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p.2.

⁸ Punjab District Gazetteer, Ludhiana District, Chandigarh, 1904.

⁹ Census of Punjab, District Ludhiana, Chandigarh, 1981, p.6.

¹⁰ M.M. Ahluwalia, op. cit., p.3.

converted in a political Movement. According to official reports the policy of Kuka sect was based on self-respect and acquiring possession of territory. They were prohibited drinking Spirits, forbid stealing and lying, but in reality they follow a system which resembles an administrative policy; for they appointed a Subas and assistant *Subas* at the head of the every lakhs of Kukas. They had appointed others as officers on military system, every *Subas* submitted daily reports to Guru Ram Singh. If by adversity of circumstances any number of the sect became indigent, they were helped by contributions by their co-religionists, store house were erected at the village of Bhaini, and arrangements for keeping them well furnished were commenced. The Kukas acknowledge ten Gurus, or spiritual leaders, called *Badshah* (emperor), who have passed away, and some of them having had predicted that an eleventh Guru would be born somewhere near the river Sutlej, when everyone would acknowledge the Supremacy of the *Khalsa*.¹¹ The hope of the Sikhs received when they observed Ram Singh, the founder of the Kuka Sect came forward and they considered that he was the same eleventh Guru who was to come to the world as the last, and they believed that their authority and religion would be extended everywhere. They have many complications extant on this subject, one of their saying being “*Thare Masitan Dhae ke Kro Maidanah*” (demolish the mosques, and level them with the ground). The Kukas pulled down many religious buildings to carry out the meaning of the verse, and there will be found files of many such cases brought against them in several districts, and especially in the district of Ludhiana.¹²

It was not hidden fact to the experienced officers of Government that Kuka sect never wished that the British administration should continually enjoy tranquility which was evident from the way they conducted themselves; they assembled in large numbers at fairs on pretence of celebrating to their festivals and raised religious disputes in such places; they established their private post system. They sung verses as the following:

“*Khalsah ji ka raj hosi, Unke agge rehe na kosee*” (the *Khalsa* wil rule, Before the *Khalsa* no one will remain).¹³ They were spoke ill of the Government intentions at their own places. It was on such consideration that Government always

¹¹ File No. 494, *Statement of Mr. Forsyth*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p.49.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid, p.46.

kept an eye on them when they went to any fairs. The influence of Namdhari sect spread a good deal among the people of Punjab. The British Government felt compelled to take some action against him.¹⁴ Meanwhile, an unfortunate incident occurred at Malerkotla in January 1872. That was perfect chance for British Government for suppress the movement.

The outbreak of the revolt of 1857 was started by the Hindustani spays who were offended by the British. The British orders which forbade the wearing of caste-makers, beards or turbans were looked upon by them as infringements of their religious rights. After ruthlessly suppression of the revolt of 1857, the strategy and tactics employed by the Hindustani rebels became redundant. The only workable strategy and tactics in Punjab were arousing sentimental and emotional appeals of the Sikhs and Hindus. Inadvertently, the British provided an opportunity to Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. The British policy of lifting prohibition of cow-killing offended the religious sentiments of the Sikhs and Hindus. As early as 1849, the Board of Administration had issued the following bye-laws;

- Cow will be slaughtered at a particular place outside the town.
- No shop will be opened in the town for the open sale of beef.

In the English newspaper it have mentioned about kine killing; “The Sikhs are the old ruling faith of the Punjab-a small minority of the entire population, but inheriting, perhaps, the recollections of that ascendancy of which we deprived them some years ago. Before that they placed all Muslims under disabilities, and among other regulations, forbade killing cow, the cow being a sacred animal with the Hindus.”¹⁵ But the British Government removed these restrictions, and the first sign of overt disaffection gave by these Kukas was a murderous attack upon the Mahomedan butchers at Amritsar.¹⁶ The very fact was then of the Kukas desiring to put a stop to this practice.¹⁷

The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar allowed the opening of slaughter houses outside the city in accordance with the above bye-laws. The opening of a cow-slaughter house at Amritsar gave a signal for opening of many more such slaughter

¹⁴ The Tribune, Ambala, 26 January, 1950, p. 11.

¹⁵ The Times, Friday, 1 March, 1872, Satguru Partap Singh Library, Bhaini Sahib.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, June 1872, Progs no. 112, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 5.

houses in different towns throughout Punjab. Since, the starting of a slaughter house at Amritsar, the Muslim butchers had started the sale of beef openly in the streets of the city. By the year 1871, the tension gave way to communal quarrels, open fights and riots. The Divisional Commissioner had to intervene and tried to pacify the Hindus and the Sikhs of the City who were offended over cow-killing. Meanwhile, the Muslims floated rumor that four more shops will be opened in the city for the sale of beef and that one of these will be adjacent to the complex to the Golden Temple. When a meat shop opened, the Hindu and the Sikhs were emotionally disturbed to see that kites and crow dropping bones in the holy tank or nearby places. One of such bones was picked up by Bhai Deva Singh, who placed it before the sacred scriptures in the Golden Temple on 24th April 1871. Bhai Deva Singh's intention was to provoke the Sikhs to stop this obnoxious thing. He was arrested by Sardar Bahadur Mangal Singh Ramgaria; the Custodian Manager of Golden Temple and was sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment and one month's solitary confinement.¹⁸ Bhai Deva Singh's daring act shows the impact of Namdhari Guru's propagation of the Sikh tradition of protecting the poor and helpless people. Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was quite upset over the opening of slaughter house near Chowk Ghanta Ghar, Darbar Sahib. According to Nidhan Singh Alam, the Namdhari Guru formed *Jatha* of ten Namdharis zealots for removing this slaughter houses. The *Jatha* moved towards Amritsar and was pained to see the slaughter house near *Lahori Darwaza*. However, they came across another slaughter house near Darbar Sahib; they lost control over their sentiments and up got their mind to eliminate Muslims butchers.

They could not tolerate this and immediately decided to attack the slaughter house and free the cows¹⁹. They worked out a scheme in the house of Carpenter Lehna Singh; performed *havan* and resolved to stop cow-killing in the holy city of Amritsar.

Between twelve and one o'clock on the night of 15th June a group of Namdharis made a murderous attack on the butchers in the slaughter-house, situated outside the walls of the city of Amritsar. Four men, who were sleeping in the front of their house inside the enclosure, were killed outright, and three others were badly

¹⁸ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 2010, p. 100.

¹⁹ Gurdwara Gazetteer, February, 1973, p.36.

wounded.²⁰ A party of police, under Joomma Khan, Sergeant, was reached soon on the spot. The only traces of the assassins found were a blue turban and a steel disc, such as are worn by the sect of *Nihangs* or *Akalis*; but this only had been effect of misdirecting enquiry.²¹

On the night, 15th July 1871, estimated 15-20 in number, a group of *Namdharis* armed with swords and *Gandasaa* (a short chopper for cutting fodder) had made a sudden attack on the butchers at Raikot, a town about 38 miles from Ludhiana.²² In the butcher's *mohalla*, there were no other habitations near. Two butchers named Ranja and Boota, with their families, live and followed their calling in this place. On the night of the 15th July instant Boota was absent, having gone to Ludhiana to appeal against a recent order of *Tehsildar* of Jugraon fining him Rs. 10/- on the complaint of the municipal committee and the *Mohammandan Lamberdars* of Raikot that he defiled the water laying near his dwelling by throwing into it the bones of the slaughtered animals. Ranja was at his home on the 16th and, in addition to the families of these two owners of the *mohalla*. There were sleeping there on the night named Dassaundi Gujar with his wife and three children (the youngest 20 days old) and Akhoo, *Mohammandan rajput*. Dassaundi had gone with his family to visit Ranja, and was detained for a day by the weakness of his wife, occasioned by recent child birth. Akhoo was passing through Raikot, and put up with Ranja.²³

On the night of the 15th July 1871 Ranja and Mussamat Moorie were sleeping on the roof of the house. Boota's wife and his visitors were scattered about on *Charpoyhe* on the bit of ground between house and water. About 1 P.M. they were all asleep except Massamat Noories, when the gang of men armed with swords appeared in front of the house and commenced to hack at the sleepers down below. Ranja and his two companions on the roof made their escape by jumping of the near wall of the house, Noorie hurting herself in the fall, and ran calling for help towards the town. A *Daffadars* of *Chownkidars* was going in his round outside the wall of the town, and returned at once to the butcher's house, but by the time the murderer had made their

²⁰ Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, February, 1872, *Murder of Butchers at Amritsar*, National Archive of India, New Ddelhi, p.1.

²¹ Ibid.

²² File No. 491, *Kuka Movement Annual Report Raikot and Amritsar Murder Cases*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p.118.

²³ Ibid, p. 63.

escape.²⁴ They were heard to go through their business.

The following is a list of killed and wounded²⁵:-

1. Dassaundi, Gujar, dead.
2. Bassin, Dassaundi's wife, dead.
3. Ranja (child of Dassaundi), 4 years, dying, hacked all over.
4. A child of Dassaundi (20 years old), dying; left arm cut off.
5. Hakku, age 30 year, wounded.
6. One girl, age 8-9 year, wounded.
7. One woman, age 40 year, wounded.
8. Five other persons wounded.

From the list it will be seen that the two butchers whose murder was evidently intended have escaped, the victims being strangers temporarily residing in their house and a part of the family of one and a part of the family of one of the butchers (Boota). The cries of the people attacked were distinctly heard at the police station. The Deputy inspector (a Mohammandan) was absent in the interior; the second officer in charge (also Mohammandan) was suffering from fever. The remaining police, however, turned out and went to the spot, but no one was to be found, excepting a piece of yellow rag, which had apparently formed part of the covering of a sword scabbard.²⁶ A strong wind has been blowing, and it was not possible to light torches and to follow at once on the tracks; moreover there was no tracker at the police station. It was not till day light, or about 5 hours afterward, that the tracks of eight men were taken up followed with difficulty to the village, 3 kilometres from Raikot. At this spot the tracks of two men were lost. They diverged from the other tracks, and efforts were still being made to recover them. The tracks of the remaining six men were then followed up past two villagers in the Patiala territory, who's *Lamberdars* turned carried the tracks beyond their borders to the village of Cheeniwala, in the Patiala territory,²⁷ where they were lost, apparently close to the village.²⁸

When the authorities learnt about this attack and the murder of the butchers, the head of the police department, Mr. Christie, Superintendent of the Police of

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ File no. 491, *Kuka movement annual report Raikot and Amritsar murder cases*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p.63.

²⁶ Ibid, p. 64.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid, p.8.

Jalandhar district was sent to Amritsar for chief conduct of the investigation.²⁹ He used all his third degree methods to rope in many of the innocent citizens of Amritsar. Heera Singh, Ahya and Jai Ram were tortured and made to confess that they had actually committed the crime. All of them were made approvers, and 12 other citizens, namely, Sant Ram, Ram Krishan, Manna Singh, Jawala Singh, Pannaji, Mula, Nihal Singh, Mayya, Surindre Singh, Bhup Singh, Teka and Shoba were sent to the Sessions. Actually none of these were committed to the Sessions on 25th July, 1871 by Mr. Christie.³⁰

Later, when the real culprits came forward to confess the crime, Mr. Christie reported to the authorities that he had been put on the wrong track by an informer Heera Singh, who had come forward to confess the guilt.³¹ He also intimated to the Government that Jai Ram, a respectable broker of the city had admitted that he had instigated these men to commit this crime³². But the real fact was that this Police Officer had got these men and other citizen of Amritsar to confess the crime which they had never committed.

One factor greatly helped the disclosure of this case. When Baba Ram Singh came to know that the lives of innocent people were being endangered for the murder committed by the Kukas, he directed those Kukas to go and surrender themselves to the authorities so that innocent people may not be hanged. The policy enquiry into the other and true case was completed, and the case sent up to the Magistrate of the district and was by him committed to the Session on the 9th August. Four of accused- Behla Singh, Fateh Singh, Hakim Singh and Lehna Singh were sentenced to be hanged.³³ They sent to the gallows singing sacred verse, without any trace of fear and repentance on their faces. They seemed to feel they had performed a duty to wards their faith. Two others- Lal Singh, Lehna Singh to be transported for life. Adhya, Heera Singh and Jai Ram were also sentenced to terms of imprisonment for giving wrong information to the Government. The riot was suppressed though at some cost

²⁹ Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, February, 1872, *Murder of Butchers at Amritsar*, National Archive of India, New Ddelhi, p.1.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Home Judicial Department, proceedings, August, 1874, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 12.

³² Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, February, 1872, p. 1.

³³ Ibid, p.2.

of life.³⁴

Sant Nidhan Singh Alam gives the following description about the heroism of those four Kukas who were sentenced to death;

“The news of death sentence on the four Kukas spread in the street of Amritsar in the most electrical manner. There was praise and appreciation for their bravery on everybody’s lips. The Public was deeply impressed by the way these Kukas had confessed their guilt and saved others from the gallows. From the day of judgement to the day of hanging, these Kukas were allowed to visit the Har Mandir, as well as prepare their own food. 15th September was their day of dating with death. On that fine morning, the four Kukas bathed in the Holy Tank; the ‘*prasad*’ was prepared and distributed. What a beautiful scene it was! The patriots intoxicated with love, were staring off to kiss the gallows. Chanting holy songs and performing ‘*Kirtan*’ the party moved towards the hanging ground. The large assembly of onlookers was amazed. Were these Sikhs for hanging? The crowd thickened. Before death they demanded two things. Firstly, they should not be hanged with leather stings. Secondly, they would themselves put the hanging ropes in their own necks. Both the wishes were granted. After saying their final prayers, the four Kukas embraced death amidst slogans of Sat-Sri-Akal.”³⁵

The police reports, (Mr. Christie’s) enclosed by the Deputy Commissioner, state that “it was rumoured that a body of Kukas, to the number of 100, had since the Amritsar murders, engaged, with the approval of Ram Singh, to scatter themselves in different districts and devote themselves to acts of violence against dealers in kine for purposes of slaughter, and more particularly against these butchers in the vicinity of Hindu cities, town and temples. The necessary precautions were taken to avert any danger to traders and butchers, should there prove to be any foundation for this rumour.”³⁶

As early as 1856, the Government had permitted the establishment of a slaughter house at Raikot near Ludhiana. It was, unfortunately, located outside the city near a Gurudwara, which was associated with the name of the tenth Guru. The birds carried

³⁴ The Times, Friday, 1 March 1872.

³⁵ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, *Kranti Kari Sat Guru*, p. 129.

³⁶ *Report Regarding the Murderous Outrages at Amritsar and Raikot*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p.41.

the bones and bits from the slaughter-house, and perched themselves on the temple walls to scratch those bones. In this way, the purity of the temple was frequently defiled. The temple priests narrated this to some of the Kukas who were on a visit to this Gurdwara. On the 15th July, 1871, one month after the murder of Amritsar butchers, the attack was made on the slaughter-house of Raikot. Two butchers were killed and seven injured. But the real butchers in the eyes of the Kukas had escaped. Now, it became a serious problem for the authorities to protect the butchers. However, a special police protection was given to them. A reward of Rs. 1,000 was offered by the Deputy Commissioner to any person who gave a clue to these murders. The approver was promised pardon.

The Punjab Government was able to trace out the Kukas who had made this attack with the help of Maharaja Patiala. The Nazim of Patiala, with police officials of Government of the Patiala state arrested the following prisoners, all Kukas and several other Kukas, against whom more or less suspicion exists³⁷:

- I. Khzan Singh
- II. Dull Singh
- III. Mangal Singh
- IV. Gurmukh Singh
- V. Mustan Singh
- VI. Gulab Singh

Khzan Singh it appears that that the four above mentioned, with one Rattan Singh Nai, of Nai-wala (Patiala), spent the day of the 15th at his house (Khzan Singh) in Cheeniwala. They left towards evening and were joined by four others at a spot on the road to Raikot. Rattan Singh remained behind (he being lame and obliged to ride a camel), while the party, eight in number, proceeded to the butcher's house at Raikot. They afterward dispersed the four above mentioned with Rattan Singh returning to Khaza Singh's house at Cheeniwala. They subsequently went off to their homes, situated in villages of Patiala state, whence they were hunted up and brought in.³⁸

The statement of Khzan Singh is confirmed by that of Ram Kaur wife of Dull Singh, who prepared food for the party, and who knew them all individually; also, by a full confession on the part of Dull Singh, himself.³⁹

³⁷ File no. 491, p. 50.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid*, p.51

Kukas arrested were undoubtedly the murderers. Their swords have all been found, four of them covered with blood, hair and skin on them. One of their members, Lal Singh has turned approver on an offer of pardon. He came out somewhat reluctantly with details; but his wife, an intelligent woman, in order to save her husband has given a clear account of the affairs. Rattan Singh, Kuka, formerly was residing at Naiwala, in Patiala state but for the last two years he was a *Khana Badosh*. This man took a part in the Amritsar Murders. He afterwards accompanied by four of the Amritsar accomplices' three Kukas of the Amritsar District, came to his former house, and induced the four men of Cheeniwal to join in the attack on the Raikot butcher's.

When Baba Ram Singh was at Raurur a few weeks before the Amritsar attack that one Kuka had murdered another in the Ferozpur District, where upon Ram Singh, in a speech or sermon up-braided the followers for killing each other and asked them if they knew of any enemies of their religion whom they could kill, and that he went on to allude to the defilement of holy place at Amritsar by the presence there of slaughters of cows. Several of his followers cried out "if you order it, we will kill the butchers."⁴⁰ Baba Ram Singh replied "Don't do anything in a hurry; the time has not yet come."⁴¹ These murders are merely the acts of a few of the more fanatical members of the tribe. Some stories told of the seditious language said to be preached by the *subas*. Their declamation and twaddle about the visions of Guru Gobind Singh coming on a white horse with several crores of Kukas are similar to what is occasionally heard in the pulpits of other denominations.

Gulab Singh, who had also been condemned to death for having taken part in the Raikot murders, offered, if his life was spared, to disclose all the facts of the Amritsar case. The offer was accepted, and his statement was taken down at once. He gave the names of ten men (all of the Kuka sect) who were concerned in the latter murder, described all the circumstances of the crime, and some of the perpetrators of it, had, in their flight, concealed their weapons. His statements in all particulars were found to be true. He was brought to Amritsar on the 2nd August. The next day some of the accused were arrested, and two of this number also confessed. The discovery of weapons in places indicated confirmed the truth of Gulab Singh's story and of the

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 39.

⁴¹ Ibid

statements made by two others named Beela Singh and Lehna Singh, who also confessed to their share in crime.⁴² It was considered advisable during the trial to admit the latter to pardon, and to examine him as a witness in order to strengthen the evidence for the prosecution. He was chosen because he had evidently joined in the attack on the butchers under strong moral compulsion, and he had taken any active part in it. These Kukas at Amritsar disguised themselves as *Nihangs* when they committed the murder there. Beela Singh has produced two *gandassas*, with long handles, four buried under water in the spot described they are most murderous weapons; the second one, he states was used by Mehr Singh. Beela Singh has now named all the parties engaged with him in the crime; his statement entirely agrees with that of Gulab Singh.⁴³

The evidence given by the two informers, and confessions made by Beela Singh, satisfactorily establishes the guilt of accused:

- Fateh Singh
- Beela Singh
- Hakim Singh (Patwari)
- Lainah Singh (Tarkhan)
- Lall Singh (Police Constable)
- Laynah Singh (a leading man among the Kukas)

The execution of the sentence of death on 15th August 1871, the three Kukas Mustan Singh, Gurmukh Singh, and Mangal Singh was carried out at Raikot in morning at sunrise. About 200 spectators assembled of whom there were not more than 10 or 13 Namdharis.⁴⁴ Giani Rattan Singh of Mandi village and Giani Rattan Singh of Naiwala village were tried by Sessions Judge of Ludhiana and they were hanged on 26th November, 1871 near the jail.

At the time of death, they maintained the tradition of their fearlessness and the glory of their faith. They put on white dress after bathing and sang the holy verses; one of them Giani Rattan Singh of Mandi, addressed the following words to an English officer:

⁴² Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, February, 1872, p. 2.

⁴³ Home Judicial Proceedings, August, 19, 1871, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 53.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

“I shall again pass 10 months in the womb of a Jat mother and come back to avenge myself. Your justice is just a lie. Your death and downfall is near at hand. We shall be born again, hold the sword in our hands and wage a war which will destroy your rule.”⁴⁵

Ram Singh’s popularity as the leader of the Kuka sect had it was hoped, at least received a check. He was summoned as a witness for defence in the Raikot case, and the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, who was, however, perhaps somewhat over confident, reported as follows after the result of the trial: “The neck of Kukaism is broken. Secession is of hourly occurrence... Ram Singh is distrusted. The Kukas believe that fearing evil consequence to himself, he gave false evidence at the trial”.

One of Ram Singh’s (*subas*, a chief,) Lehna Singh, as already stated, was convicted of the crime of abetment of murder in the Amritsar case, and was sentenced to transportation for life.

Two other *Subas* were under arrest at Ludhiana. On this subject the Punjab Government remarks: “Against one, Giani, evidence sufficient to warrant his commitment to the session as an abettor seems to have been obtained, and proceedings will be taken against him. The second *Suba*, Lakha Singh has been summoned as a witness in the case against Giani; but should there be sufficient evidence to criminate him, he also will be put upon his trial.”

The Governor General in council having been informed of the excellent service rendered by the officials of his highness the Maharaja of Patiala, in tracing and arresting the criminal in the case of murder at Raikot in the Ludhiana District⁴⁶. His Excellency in council desires that suitable rewards may be given to Patiala. The European officers have received the thanks of Government and the Native Officers have been rewarded by promotion to higher grades.⁴⁷

After the occurrences of Amritsar and Raikot, the government came to the finale opinion that these murders had been intentionally and frequently planned. The British government had made up its intellect to execute Namdhari leader Ram Singh. However, it was also alert of the lawful lacuna. It was not possible to find any proof as it would warrant the Namdhari Guru’s hearing in a criminal court. At the same

⁴⁵ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, *Kranti kati Sat-Guru*, p.129.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 43.

⁴⁷ Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, February, 1872, p. 2.

time, J.W. Macnabb, Officiating Commissioner, Ambala Division and Lieutenant, Colonel, G. McAndrew, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Ambala Circle, strongly believed that the Namdhari Guru should be exiled because the Namdhari movement had assumed political character and the Namdhari Guru was no longer a saintly fakir they argued that the revival of *Khalsa* by the Namdhari Guru was antagonistic to the British power⁴⁸. He suggested to the government that the actions of the Namdhari Guru should be taken as Political activity but not of any legal concern. However, Lieutenant Governor was yet unenthusiastic to take the great step of deportation. He re-imposed control on the activities of the Namdhari Guru and holding of fairs by the Namdhari Sikhs.

The letter of Mr. Forsyth dated on 19th January 1872 (paragraph 3) to Secretary, Punjab Government was interesting. The memorandum was as follows:⁴⁹

“Early on 13th January it was reported to the Police Officer (Deputy Inspector) of the neighbouring Police Post of Sanehwal, that about 130 of these men had separated themselves from the rest, had worked themselves into a state of desperation and had expressed their intention of attacking Malerkotla in revenge for the execution a few weeks previously in connection with the murder of butchers at Raikot, of one Gyani Singh, an influential Kuka, much trusted by Ram Singh.”

Meanwhile, imprisonments and hangings did not make the Namdhari zealots to be subservient to the British Empire. On 11 January 1872, was held Maghi Mela at Bhaini Sahib.⁵⁰ A group of about 100 Zealots Namdharis of the Patiala state who had gone to Bhaini Sahib to be present at the *Maghi Mela* held there a small gathering (at which probably 500 persons assembled), had worked themselves in to a state of frenzy. They declared that they would be revenged for the death of Giani Singh who was hanged at Ludhiana in Amritsar and Raikot butcher’s murders.⁵¹ Guru Ram Singh, the leader of Namdharis went up to these men and entreated of them not to create a disturbance; that they would not listen to him; and that Baba Ram Singh then

⁴⁸ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, National book trust, India, 2010, p.102.

⁴⁹ Home Judicial department, June, 1872, p. 85.

⁵⁰ Phulwari, Jild- 6, Ank-2-3, Sardar Gural Singh, Landon, Namdhari Lehar, Poh-Magh, 1986, (1929), p. 323.

⁵¹ Home Judicial Department, 1872, Proceedings-February, Nos. 7 to 20, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p.4.

came to the Deputy Inspector and reported to him that these men were up to mischief and that he had no control over them.⁵² According to the version of Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, Guru Ram Singh told them:⁵³

“If you can stay your hand for a year more I would achieve, without the help of weapons, the object for which you are drawing out your swords. I cannot, however, go against the orders of Guru Tegh Bhadur.”

They were about 250 in number. When they crossed the limit of *Akal Bunga*, Heera Singh took his sword and drew a line upon the ground and cried out in a challenging voice: “Those who want to offer their head for martyrdom should come across this line.”⁵⁴

Some others cried out: “The ship of religion is ready. Let all those who want to embark forward.”⁵⁵

This occurred about 2 p.m. on the 13th January 1872. Guru Ram Singh gave names of Heera Singh and Lehna Singh of the Patiala State as leader of the frenzy Namdharis.⁵⁶ On the afternoon of the 13th January, the group of Namdharis left Bhaini Sahib, they proceeded via Rampur and were in Patiala territory, however without resting at these places, and reached Rubboo, a village in this district about 3 miles from Maludh the border of the Patiala state. The delay at Rubboo was probably caused by a hope that they would be joined by others, or by doubts of the success of an attempt on Kotla. They were about start for Malerkotla, that it would be easy to obtain arms and horses at Maludh. It was certainly not their intention to attack Maludh when they left Bhaini Sahib. The group left Rubboo in the evening, and reached Maludh as it became dark. On the night, about 7 p.m. a group of 200 Namdharis attacked the residence of Sardar Badan Singh at Maludh. Sardar Badan Singh was related to the Maharaja of Patiala, and it was probably in revenge for the assistance rendered by the Maharaja of Patiala in the butcher murder case, that this attack has been made on his relative.

The deposition of Sardar Badan Singh about attack of Maludh, had been

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, p. 157.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 158

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 158

⁵⁶ Phulwari, 1929, p. 323.

enclosed in letter no. 79C, dated on the 14th February from Secretary to Government of India. The memorandum was as follows:⁵⁷

“On the way some suggested an attack on Maludh for the sake mainly it would seem, of getting money, horses, and arms but also partly and apparently from hostility to the Sardar and to the Maharaja of Patiala, his kinsmen, an account of the assistance given by them in the conviction of the Raikot murders.”

The gang of Kukas left Ruboo in the evening and reached Maludh as it became dark. The fort was attacked for the sake of the arms which it was believed to contain, and the subsequent movement on the town was undertaken with the view of securing some defensible position.⁵⁸ Their attack at Maludh was a very poor one; they killed two men of no consequence, slightly wounded the Sardar Badan Singh, and secured three horses, one gun and one sword. In return they left two of their members killed and four wounded prisoners. This zealot Namdharis were at Maludh two killed, four captured. The attack made on Maludh Fort was unsuccessful; a very partial success was followed by a complete repulse, and then the mutineers rushed on Malerkotla.⁵⁹ In the report of L.Cowan, Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, dated camp Melerkotla, 16th January 1872 it was written about Namdharis Sikhs as follow:⁶⁰

“Their offence is not an ordinary one. They have not committed mere murder and *dacoity*; they are open rebels offering contumacious resistance to constituted authority, and, to prevent the spreading the disease, it is absolutely necessary that repressive measures should be prompt and stern”.

The next morning a larger force of Namdharis, proceeded to Malerkotla, capital of the Muslim State, about 30 miles south of Ludhiana. Malerkotla was about nine miles distant from Maludh and they appeared there on the morning of the 15th January 1872. Intimation of the threatened attack had reached the Aahulkars of this small state on the evening of the 14th January, and some patrols were placed round the town during the night, and guards at the gates were strengthened. On the morning of

⁵⁷ Home Judicial Proceeding, June, 1872, Memorandum, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 85.

⁵⁸ The Times, Friday, 1 March, 1872.

⁵⁹ The Times, Monday, 26 February, 1872.

⁶⁰ Home Judicial files, *Progs.457, February, 1872*, National Archives of India, Government of India, p.15.

the 15th January these precautions were discontinued, and Namdharis group about 7 A.M. made a sudden attack. They made for the palace and treasury, but encountered by the Kotwal Ahmed Khan and a few men. The Namdharis failed to get at the treasure, and after taking two horses and few swords retreated, followed by the Malerkotla people who had now assembled armed. A short of running fight was kept up and long shots fired, and many more Namdharis wounded, till both parties reached the village of Rurr in the Patiala State. The Namdharis were carrying most of their wounded with them. On receipt of the first intimation of the attack on the Malerkotla and arrival of the Namdharis in Rurr, the Naib Nazim of Sherpur rode to Rurr accompanied by three sowars. He found the village abandoned, Jatt villagers gone off in alarm with their families, and Namdharis were seated in jungle a little way from the village. The Namdharis at first showed fight, advancing towards the Naib Nazim with drawn sword but this was mere bravado; they gave up their arms, many of the swords were covered with blood, and surrendered. In the letter of Maharaja Patiala it was mentioned that “Naib Nazim of Amargarh arrested with great courage sixty eight Kukas who made disturbance at Maludh and Malerkotla.”⁶¹ Of these 29 were wounded, 7 of them very severely. The Rajas of Nabha and Jind responded with alacrity to his requisition for troops. In less than an hour after receipt of British they despatched artillery, cavalry and infantry to Malerkotla. According to English newspaper; these were the forerunner of the men who, repulsed at the Maludh Fort, made what has been called the ‘rush’ on the unsettled little state of Malerkotla. But what a rush! At a distance of from a mile to two miles from the town Malerkotla these fanatics were inspired for daring deeds and sat down in a field and remained there all night, while preparations were made for them in Kotla, and news of the outbreak sent far and wide.⁶²

The Naib Nazim Niaz Ali arrested the group of Kukas and sent the letter to Nazim Amargarh and then same letter forwarded by Nazim Amargarh to Maharaja Patiala. The description in the letter was as follow:⁶³

He was asked about the state of the battle. Kukas said, “We came to Malaud last night. There we had a riot with the Sardar of Malaud. We

⁶¹ File No. M-92-Part I, Basta No. 2, Head:- History, Punjab State Achieve, Patiala, p. 159.

⁶² The Times, Monday, 26 February, 1872.

⁶³ Foreign Department Patiala, H. 92 M. Part -I, Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach (Punjabi Translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)*, pp. 117-118.

lost a horse from there. Two or three men were also injured. Then we reached Kotla this morning. We told the Kotla butchers not to slaughter the cows. He did not agree that he was healed. Meanwhile, Kotla's army came to an end and a fierce battle took place between us for three or four miles. We snatched their swords and killed them. Ten of fifteen of their men would have been killed and five or six men would have been killed. Now we have to be martyred by making arrests.

They agreed to go with us. Those who were more injured were loaded on beds, those who were less injured were taken on vehicles and those who were healthy were taken away. Of these, twenty nine were injured they were brought on cart. More than a dozen, less than a dozen, many men were shot. Many had wounds of swords. Two or three of them were on the verge of death. One man's hand was cut off before he could reach it. They have a horse that has been wounded by a gunshot. These Kukas are not from one place but different places. They were belong to Sherpur, Aanahadgarh, Sahibgarh, Sidhpur, Sunam, Bhavanigarh, States Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Kotla, district Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Ambala and Sirsa etc. were resident of the areas.”

The attack on Malerkotla, appeared to be a very grave one. The attacks on Maludh and Malerkotla were done by the same people who committed the murders at Amritsar and Raikot. The disturbance was got up by two men, Heera Singh and Lehna Singh, residents of the Patiala State. One of the leaders Lehna Singh was captured at Rurr. Following were the results of Kuka actions⁶⁴:

At Malodh – 2 killed, 4 wounded

At Malerkotla – 7 killed, 5 captured

At Rurr – 68 captured, 29 wounded

Before being arrested, Heera Singh addressed the following words to his followers:⁶⁵

“I have completed the work for which I had been ordered by Guru

⁶⁴ Home Judicial, Memorandum, 16 January, 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, op, cit, p.163.

Tegh Bahadur. I do not want to do anything more. I am now waiting for the consequences. I do not want that anybody who is innocent should suffer with me. Therefore, those who want to go should depart at once. But those who want to offer themselves for martyrdom should remain here.”

Troops were ordered promptly from Delhi. The Native chiefs rendered effective assistance.⁶⁶ The two-third of the whole Namdhari group have been killed, wounded or captured. They were rebels having for their immediate object the acquisition of plunder. It was certain that, had their first attempts been crowned with success, had they succeeded in arming themselves with horses and treasure, they would have been joined by all the abandoned characters in the country, and their extinction would not be affected without much trouble. By the timely preparation at Malerkotla the first efforts were defeated and by the active exertions of the Patiala officials. On the 17th January 1872 the 68 Namdharis were brought from Rurr. Of these two were women, leaving 66 men and 22 of men were wounded.⁶⁷ In his report 17th January 1872, from L. Cowen, Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana to the Commissioner of the Ambala Division wrote about Namdharis prisoners as follow:⁶⁸

“All of them admitted that they were present at the attacks on Maludh and Malerkotla, and gloried in the act; they said they had attacked Maludh for purpose of procuring arms, and Malerkotla because their religion required them to slay the killer of cows”

With the revengeful spirit, Mr. Cowen below up the last batch of the Namdhari prisoners. Among his victims was a child escaped from the guards and made a furious attack on Cowen, seizing him by the beard and endeavouring to strangle him. He was a very powerful child; he had considerable difficulty in releasing Cowan. The child made a most savage attack on some officers of the Native Sates who were standing near Cowan.⁶⁹ These officers drew their sword and cut him down to pieces at the spot.

All statements are proving that Mr. Cowen was against the Kukas and his

⁶⁶ The Times, Friday, January 19, 1872.

⁶⁷ Home Judicial, Memorandum. 1872, p. 5.

⁶⁸ Home Judiciala File, *Home Judicial Progs no. 17, February 1872*, National Archives of India, Government of India, p. 24.

⁶⁹ Home Judicial File, Progs. February 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 24.

main motive was to destroy them in any barbaric way. The following is Mr. Cowan own statement on the subject of Kukas case. In his letter to Mr. Forsyth of the 16th January, he remarked:⁷⁰

“The gang of rebels- for no other name will adequately characterise them- never numbered more than 125. Of these, there were at Maludh 2 killed, 4 captured; at Kotla, 8 killed, 31 wounded. Of those wounded, 25 or 26 escaped at the time, but 68, including 27 wounded, have been captured in the Patiala State, at Rurr, a village twelve miles from this. The entire gang has thus been nearly destroyed. I purpose blowing away from guns, or hanging, the prisoner’s tomorrow morning at day break”.

There had been Mr. Cowan’s another letter of the 17th January, also to Mr. Forsyth. It reads: ⁷¹

“At least two-thirds of the whole gang have been killed, wounded or captured. The remainder are being hunted like vermin, and many more of them will be taken.”

Demi-official letter of instructions dated 17th January 1872, referred to the Mr. Cowen was report of Mr. Forsyth’s letter. Mr. Forsyth had mentioned that:⁷²

“You have done admirably, but for heaven’s sake don’t let the whole thing fall short of perfect success by any hasty act. By dealing with the men now caught as culprits in the Kotlah territory, they can be hanged legally, without the delay of sending the case of the Chief Court, by attending to the from usual in all such cases, sending up the proceedings to me, and, to save time and trouble, I am going out to Kotlah as soon as I have disposed of Ram Singh. But if you hang (yourself) these men, that is the men caught at Maludh, you will fall short perfect success. A delay of 12 hours cannot produce harm, whereas illegal action may cause any trouble. I only wait for Ram Singh to come in tomorrow morning, and I shall be out at once.”

The two women were residents of the Patiala State, and the British had made them over to the officer commanding the Patiala troops for conveyance to Patiala.⁷³ L. Cowen, Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, reached Malerkotla and forty

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 45.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 46.

⁷² *Ibid*, p.41.

⁷³ Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach (Punjabi Translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)*.p.173.

nine of the captured Namdharis were blown away from canons but without trail in afternoon on the Parade Ground of the Malerkotla. It was done in the presence of troops of Patiala, Nabha, Jhind and Malerkotla states.⁷⁴ This he did in spite of earlier caution which had received from T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner of Ambala Division. He also received the second letter from Forsyth but did not bother to restrain himself. In that letter, Forsyth explicitly ordered Cowen to follow legal course. In fact, Cowen was predetermined to execute the Kukas. In his letter to the Commissioner of Ambala Division dated 17 January 1872, Mr. Cowen then proceeds to give further detail of the prisoners and of their defeat and capture; his 10th paragraph closing with these words⁷⁵:

“At least two-thirds of the whole gang have been killed, wounded, or captured. The remainder are being hunted like vermin, and many more of them will be taken, and his letter terminated with the following words: I am in hourly expectation of the arrival of the prisoners from Rurr. I propose to execute at once all who were engaged in the attacks on Maludh and Kotla. I am sensible of the great responsibility. I incur in exercising an authority which is not vested in me, but the case is an exceptional one. These men are not ordinary criminals. They are rebels having their immediate object the acquisition of plunder (sic), and ultimately subversion of order. It is certain that, had their first attempt been crowned with success, had they succeeded in arming themselves and providing themselves with horses and treasure they would have been joined by all the abandoned characters in the country; and their extinction would not have been affected without much trouble. By the timely preparation at Kotla state the first effort of the Kuka Sikhs were defeated, and by the active exertion of the Patiala officials, this miserable attempt at rebellion has been stamped out, but others of their stamp must be deterred (sic) from following so bad an example and that the warning should be effectual, it must be prompt and terrible. I have every confidence that the Government of Punjab will approve of the immediate execution of those prisoners who have been taken red-

⁷⁴ Home Judicial Department, Proceeding, June, 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p.77.

⁷⁵ Home Judicial Memorandum, June 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p.3.

handed.”⁷⁶

Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of Ambala, wrote back to him not to execute the prisoners before he arrived. This letter reached him when the prisoners were executed before he arrived. This latter reached him when 7 of the prisoners were already standing before the guns. He ignored the official letter from Mr. Forsyth, asking him to proceed according to the law. He blew them off. Mr. Cowen records it in the following words:⁷⁷

“I put the note in my pocket and thought no more of it.”

Mr. Cowan also remarked about the conduct of the Kukas in the following words:

“The conduct of these prisoners was most defiant and unruly; they poured forth the most abusive language towards the Government and the chiefs of the native states....Their religion required them to lay the killers of cows.”⁷⁸

Side by side with these executions, the Government of Punjab moved their military units. They feared that Ludhiana might be attacked by the Kukas. The first Gurkha and a wing of the 72 Regiment, as well as a Mule Battery were sent to Khanna. A half battery of Royal Artillery, 12th Bengal Cavalry and 3 Companies of 54th Foot from Jullundur were sent to Ludhiana for the protection of the city.

Next day, Mr. Forsyth also reached Malerkotla. A mock trial was held to decide the fate of the remaining prisoners. The following Prisoners were put on trial;⁷⁹

- I. Albel Singh of Village Balian (Patiala)
- II. Roor Singh of Mulu Majra Balian (Patiala)
- III. Kaisra Singh of Gillan (Nabha)
- IV. Saiwa Singh of Rubbbbbbbon (Ludhiana)
- V. Anoop Singh of Sakrnde (Patiala)
- VI. Sobha Singh of Rubbon Distt, (Ludhiana)
- VII. Warriam Singh of Chuna Bahadur Singh (Ludhiana)
- VIII. Sham Singh of Jogah (Patiala)
- IX. Heera Singh of Pitho Ke (Nabha)

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 4.

⁷⁷ Home Judicial Department, 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 74.

⁷⁸ M.M. Ahluwalia, p. 88.

⁷⁹ File No. M-92-Part I, Basta No. 2, Head- History, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p.325.

- X. Bhagat Singh of Kanjhla(Patiala)
- XI. Hakim Singh of Jhubbal (Amritsar)
- XII. Warriam Singh of Mehraj (Ferozepur)
- XIII. Sobha Singh of Bhaddal (Nabha)
- XIV. Soojan Singh of Rubbon (Ludhiana)
- XV. Bela Singh of Rubbon (Ludhiana)
- XVI. Jowahir Singh of Belean (Patiala)

The prisoners were closely questioned. Kaisra Singh uttered the following words:⁸⁰

“God put into my heart to go with them. No *Suba* spoke to us. I sat near where Heera Singh and Lehna Singh were. They did not advise me to join them in the enterprise..... We came to Kotla by God’s orders to kill the slaughters of kine.”

The report of the superintendent of Police on the attack of Maludh and Malerkotla killed and wounded persons were proceeding to the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana. In his report he mentioned;⁸¹

➤ Attack on Maludh:

Maludh men --- 2 killed, 2 wounded

Kukas--- 2 killed, 4 wounded

➤ Attack on Malerkotla:

Malerkotla men---8 killed, 2 very severely wounded, 4 severely wounded, 9 slightly wounded

Kukas--- 7 killed, 1 very severely wounded, 1 severely wounded

The two Maludh men who have been killed, one was Boota, the Sardar, coachmen, who was wounded in five places, the chief one being across the right temple probably by the *gundassa* and the skull was fractured. The other was Nubbee Bux, a Munshi, who has received five very severe sword wounds, two of which were across the back of the neck, and by which his head was nearly severed from his body.⁸² One those wounded was the young Sirdar himself Buden Singh, who have

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 89.

⁸¹ Home Judicial Department, January, 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p.5

⁸² File No. 491, Kuka Movement Annual Report Raikot and Amritsar Murder Cases, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 31.

received six wounds, three of which were probably sword cuts, one by a *gandassa*, and two by sticks; fortunately they were all slight, but that across his left lower jaw, a sword cut about four inches long, will leave an indelible scar. The other Nehal Singh received three slight sword wounds, one across the right cheek, and two others upon the left hand and wrist.⁸³

Of the dead Kukas, No.1 had an incised wound over the left cheek –bone and fractured skull. No. 2 had an incised wound across the front part of the head and also a fractured skull. The expression of these two bodies was a most fiendish one, and contrasted horribly with the placid faces of the two Maludh ones, which were laying beside them in the same shed; indeed, the scene afforded a striking proof of the fact that the state of the mind, or rather its facial reflection at the moment of death is as lasting as the attitude of the remaining portions of the body.⁸⁴

Of the four wounded, Giani Singh had received a bullet wound on the right arm, a little below, the shoulder joint, causing a very severe and comminute fracture of the bone. Phagwan Singh had a slight contused wound on the back. Thammun Singh had a slight contused wound about half inch long just above the left elbow, and three slight contusions upon the head. Lastly, Meer Singh had a contusion over the left hip, at the slightest touch of which he cried but every vociferously, and out of all protection to the apparently slight injury he had sustained.⁸⁵

The eight Malerkotla men who were killed had all been burned or buried before my arrival, but I was informed that one was the *Kotwal* and the other seven sepoy. The names of who were very severely wounded are Hafiz Ali Shere, Munshi, who received five sword wounds, one across right side of the head, another across left side of face, another across right side of the neck, and another upon the lower hip, but that the worst was that across the left temple, by which the skull was fractured and Gainda, a sepoy who received a sword wound upon the top of the head, which probably caused a fracture, and another slighter one upon the right arm.⁸⁶

The names of the four who were severely wounded were Meer Buksh, Munda, Kara and Sussa, whose thumb and two first fingers of the left hand were cut off, and who was said to have killed the Kukas who named him. The names of the nine who

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ *Confidential Kuka Movement Papers*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 32.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Home Judicial Department, 18 January, 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p.5.

were slightly wounded were; Beera, with four sword wounds, Gunda, three wounds across the fingers of the left hand, Kumma, two wounds, a sword puncture and a contusion, Maiho, several contusions by a Latti or stick, Sardar Shahdul Khan, one sword cut, Gholam Mohomed (who said he killed three Kukas himself), one sword puncture, Khudia, one contusion upon the head, and Deena, having one contused wound.⁸⁷

The bodies of the seven Kukas who had been killed, found laying in pools of blood and heaped together upon the floor of a small room near the Treasury: their attitude were various, but the expression of the face was nearly the same in all, and no less fiendish than their dead comrades at Maludh. They had been terribly hacked about with swords, chiefly about the head, and chests, and most of them had received several wounds; the head of one was nearly severed from the body, and the right arm of another was completely separated half Way above the elbow and was lying beside the corpse. The two wounded Kukas, one was Wazeer Singh who had received a dangerous sword wound, about 5 inches long, over the region of the spleen and another, but slighter one, upon the left shoulder. Of the other wounded persons only the severed right hand was picked up. I found it lying amongst the dead bodies, and satisfied myself that it was not part of either of them, but really a member belonging to another.”⁸⁸

Many files are related to Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla. These states sent his cannons against the Namdharis. The number of cannons was nine and out of this seven cannons were used for martyred the Namdharis Sikhs. Two cannons reserved so that if the Namdharis attacked it should be useful at that time.⁸⁹

Following the list of the 68 Kukas, which were blown away with the cannons by the British Government.

This list of Kukas mentioned in Namdhari writer Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal's book Lukeya Sach. This list stands translated in Punjabi from the Persian File of Patiala State.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Interview, Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal.

⁹⁰ Head- History, Basta No. 2, File No: M- 92 – Part I, See Appendix.

Sr. No.	Name	Father 's Name	Caste	Village	Injured	Police/Tehsil etc.
1	S. Hira Singh	S. Kahn Singh	Zamindar	Sakraudi	Yes	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
2	S. Lehna Singh	S. Mehtab Singh	Zamindar	Sakraudi	Yes	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
3	S. Jai Singh	S. Gandha Ssingh	Zamindar	Bhadalthuha	Yes	Thana Amloh, Ilaka Sarkar Nabha
4	S. Kahn Singh	S. Akrad Singh	Zamindar	Lehra	Yes	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
5	S. Deva Singh	S. Hakumat Singh	Zamindar	Lohgarh	Yes	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
6	S. Narayan Singh	S. Mehtab Singh	Zamindar	Rurr	Yes	Tehsil Sherpur
7	S. Moga Singh	S. Sahib Singh	Zamindar	Mehraaj	Yes	Thana Nathana, Tehsil Moga District Firozpur
8	S. Wariam Singh	S. Amreek Singh	Zamidnar	Mehraaj	Yes	Thana Nathana, Tehsil Moga District Firozpur
9	S. Atar Singh	S. Bhagh Singh	Zamindar	Mehraaj	Yes	Thana Nathana, Tehsil Moga District Firozpur
10	S. Gurmukh Singh	S. Khazan Singh	Zamindar	Pharwahi	Yes	Ilaka Kotla
11	S. Bhoop Singh	S. Khazan Singh	Zamindar	Pharwahi	Yes	Ilaka Kotla
12	S. Khazan Singh	S. Wajir Singh	Zamindar	Malouke	Yes	Ilaka Faridkot
13	S. Wariam Singh	S. Nagahiya Singh	Zamindar	Muuhm	Yes	Thana Bhadaur, Tehsil Anahadgarh (Barnala)
14	Sardarni Inda	W/O s. Nand Singh	Zamindar	Handiaya	Yes	Tehsil Anahadgarh
15	S. Kahn Singh	S. Dhalla Singh	Zamindar	Lehra	Yes	Thana Sunam

16	S. Natha Singh	S. Budh Singh	Zamindar	Barnala	Yes	Ilaka Patiala
17	S. Heera Singh	S. Mehtaab Singh	Zamindar	Rurr	Yes	Tehsil Sherpur
18	S. Wariam Singh	S. Makhan Singh	Zamindar	Barnala	Yes	Tehsil Anahadgarh
19	S. Sujaan Singh	S. Sucha Singh	Zamindar	Raboo	Yes	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
20	S. Utam Singh	S. Mehr Singh	Zamindar	Rurka	Yes	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
21	S. Atar Singh	S. Desa Singh	Zamindar	Machrai	Yes	Tehsil Amloh, Ilaka Nabha
22	S. Jawahar Singh	S. Desa Singh	Zamindar	Machrai	Yes	Tehsil Amloh, Ilaka Nabha
23	S. Basant Singh	S. Sujaan Singh	Khakrob	Sailbrah	Yes	Tehsil Phool
24	S. Nihaal Singh	S. Buta Singh	Zamindar	Lehra	Yes	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
25	S. Gulaab Singh	S. Jamiyat Singh	Zamindar	Mishrawala	Yes	District Amritsar
26	S. Bela Singh	S. Ram Singh	Khakrob	Ruboo	No	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
27	S. Mitt Singh	S. Budh Singh	Khakrob	Sakraudi	No	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
28	S. Jwahaar Singh	S. Udem Singh	Khakrob	Baliyan	No	Tehsil Sherpur
29	S. Khazan Singh	S. Bhagwan Singh	Khakrob	Peer-K- Kot	No	Tehsil Raisar
30	S. Sheda Singh	S. Dya Singh	Zamindar	Ruboo	No	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
31	S. Sobha Singh	S. Dya Singh	Zamindar	Ruboo	No	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
32	S. Wazir Singh	S. Bara Singh	Zamindar	Ruboo	No	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana

33	S. Gurmukh Singh	S. Bahale	Tazaar (Shopkeeper)	Ltala	No	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
34	S. Beer Singh	S. Suheal Singh	Zamindar	Muhmm	No	Thana Bhadaur, Tehsil Anahadgarh
35	S. Bhoop Singh	S. Mehar Singh	Zamindar	Dyalgarh	No	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
36	S. Vasahva Singh	S. Saunda Singh	Zamindar	Dyalgarh	No	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
37	S. Wariam Singh	S. Lehna Singh	Zamindar	Dyalgarh	No	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
38	S. Anoop Singh	S. Mehtaab Singh	Zamindar	Sakraudi	No	Tehsil Bhawanigarh
39	S. Bhoop Singh	S. Bhora Singh	Zamindar	Deeva	No	Tehsil Sahibgarh (Payal)
40	S. Ratan Singh	S. Chattar Singh	Zamindar	Gumti	No	Tehsil Sherpur
41	S. Gurdit Singh	S. Rabbi Singh	Zamindar	Rurr	No	Tehsil Sherpur
42	S. Bishan Singh	S. Mehtaab Singh	Zamindar	Rurr	Yes	Tehsil Sherpur
43	S. Dasauda Singh	S. Beer Singh	Nzaar (Ramgarhiya)	Bilaspur	Yes	Thana Khamano
44	S. Harnaam Singh	S. Jai Singh	Zamindar	Ghanauri	No	Sherpur, Tehsil Amargarh
45	S. Wariam Singh	S. Mahiya Singh	Zamindar	Bhadur Singhwala	No	District Ambala
46	Sardarni Khemo	S. Gursa Singh	Zamindar	Dittupura	Yes	Thana Chunarthal
47	S. Prem Singh	S. Maan Singh	Zamindar	Gagarpur	No	Tehsil Sangrur, Ilaka Jind
48	S. Kahn Singh	S. Hargulal Singh	Ramgarhiya Sikh	Sangowala	No	Tehsil Sahibgarh
49	S. Harnaam Singh	S. Dalel Singh	Zamindar	Mandi	Yes	Thana Nayiwala, Ilaka Jind
50	S. Albeal Singh	S. Sujaan Singh	Zamindar	Baliyan	No	Tehsil Sherpur

51	S. Sadda Singh	S. Mahaan Singh	Ramgarhiya Sikh	Rurr	No	Thana Sherpur
52	S. Harnaam Singh	S. Chdhaat Singh	Ramgarhiya Sikh	Rurr	No	Thana Sherpur
53	S. Bakhsha Singh	S. Tara Singh	Arora	Jandwala	No	Thana Sirsa
54	S. Chdhaat Singh	S. Dhram Singh	Zamindar	Baliyan	No	Tehsil Sherpur
55	S. Arur Singh	S. Buta Singh	Ramgarhiya Sikh	Mallumajara	No	Thana Sherpur
56	S. Kaser Singh	S. Dhyan Singh	Chimba	Gill	No	Thana Phool Ilaka Nabha
57	S. Chdhaat Singh	S. Maagh Singh	Zamindar	Rurrka	No	Thana Dheloh District Ludhiana
58	S. Bhagat Singh	S. Dyal Singh	Zamindar	Khanjla	No	Tehsil Sherpur
59	S. Jevan Singh	S. Dhounkal Singh	Zamindar	Phool	No	Tehsil Sunam
60	S. Sobha Singh	S. Khazan Singh	Zamindar	Bhadalthuha	No	Thana Amloh Ilaka Nabha
61	S. Shaam Singh	S. Beer Singh	Zamindar	Joga	No	Ilaka Bhikhi
62	S. Sadda Singh	S. Roopa Singh	Zamindar	Joga	No	Ilaka Bhikhi
63	S. Mahan Singh	S. Mangal Singh	Zamindar	Chao-Ke	No	Thana Maludh, Ilaka Kot
64	S. Chdhaat Singh	S. Ram Singh	Zamindar	Baliyan	No	Tehsil Sherpur
65	S. Rurr Singh	S. Jassa Singh	Zamindar	Bisanpura	No	Thana Sahibgarh
66	S. Heera Singh	S. Veer Singh	Zamindar	Pitho-Ke	No	Thana Phool Ilaka Nabha
67	S. Chattar Singh	S. Gulab Singh	Zamindar	Gumti	No	Tehsil Sherpur
68	S. Kataar Singh	S. Take Singh	Zamindar	Dhanaula	No	Ilaka Nabha

The barbaric action of Cowen was not only approved but also admired by T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner of Ambala Division. The British officials saw bigger danger in the traditional strategy of the Namdhari Guru and his Followers. The issue of cow-

killing could mobilise the sympathies of Hindus and Sikhs in support of the Kuka Sikhs. L.H. Griffen, officiating Secretary to the Government of Punjab wrote that the Lieutenant Governor felt that:⁹¹

“The real danger of that creed in the form, which it has assumed consists in this, that it appeals strongly to the sympathies of large sections of the Native Community outside the circle of avowed Kukas. The denunciation of kine-killing and even the active measures taken against butchers at Raikot and Amritsar, have enlisted to a certain extent the sympathies of even well-disposed Hindus while the predictions of a restoration of the Khalsa Raj made an appeal to the sympathies of all Sikhs who have not forgotten the traditions of the past. There is evidence, no doubt, to show that no general coalition exists at present between the orthodox Sikhs and the Kukas; but there is also evidence to show that the hostile feelings between these sects is less strong than before, in the recent large accession to the number of the Kukas from the ranks of the Sikhs, and in fact that while a few years ago, no men of good family and position had joined the new creed; there is now a considerable number of petty Sardars and men of family among its avowed adherents.”Griffen had further remarked:⁹²

“There is no evidence further to show with what precise intention, or with what success Kuka emissaries have visited distant parts of Indian or States, on its northern border; but it may be safely presumed that the intention was political and not religious, from the open assertion was political and not religious, from the open assertion of Kukas, that they excepted aid from Nepal and Kashmir, that the troops of the cis-sutlej states would join them in the event of a rising and that ranks of the British army contained numerous members of their creed.”

However, the reaction of contemporary newspaper in Indian was not only qualitatively different from landed Sikh gentry and priests but also civilised in terms of censuring the ruthlessness of the local officials involved in the incident. For instance, *The Hindu Patriots* in its issue on the 29th January 1872 began with in the

⁹¹ Joginder Singh, Namdhari Guru Ram Singh, p.105.

⁹² Ibid, pp. 105-106.

East to unite and came out down with a strong hand any overt act of disaffection, leaving to calmer moments the consideration of the best means of allaying the discontent which may have seized the popular mind.⁹³ But the newspaper censured the acts of the British officials when it said that:⁹⁴

“We are aware that in dealing with the Kukas we are dealing with a fanatical sect, but we cannot afford to ourselves become savages. Strange to say not a voice has been raised or a line written, as far as we have seen, against this wholesale military execution. Surely there must be some error as to forty nine men shot down at once, after the suppression of the rebellion. If not then we say that Mr. Cowen will be called upon the public opinion to give some plain and straightforward account of the matter, and why he was present at the time of execution.”

The Government of India did not inform the Secretary of State about these incidents till the matter was raised in some of the newspaper in India and abroad, particularly in *The Times*. It was only two days after the news being flashed in the columns of *The Times* that Government of India sent the following telegram dated the 7th February, 1872 to the Secretary of State:⁹⁵

“Deputy Commissioner of 17th without formal trial or needful sanction of Commissioner arrived next day early. Tried legally and hanged 16 others. Government of India wholly disapproved these wholesale executions which seemed quite unjustifiable hand has suspended D.C. pending further enquiry. Everything is now quiet.”

The blowing up of Kuka Sikh with guns was not only an arbitrary act against the established legal procedure but also repugnant to humanity and a punishment unfit to be inflicted by civilised men. The Government of India further conceded that it cannot admit that any necessity existed in the present case. Cowen’s manner was so unusual and savage. All who have been unfortunate enough to witness such an execution knew that a more horrible and revolting spectacle can hardly be conceived. Cowan was dismissed from the service and Forsyth was transferred from the Punjab

⁹³ Joginder Singh, p.107.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.107.

⁹⁵ The Times, Wednesday, 7 February, 1872.

to Rajasthan as Commissioner. He was debarred by the Government of India from holding any political assignment in future.

Mr. T.D. Forsyth presented against his censure by the Government of India on 6th July, 1872. He wrote a letter in detail regard to the danger of Kukas sect. His statement is given below:⁹⁶

“On the third May 1872, without any previous warning..I found myself publicly censured, removed from appointment, and proscribed from all future political employ by the Government of India for the share which I took in disposing of the Kukas disturbances in January last.”

In the Forsyth’s explanation letter, he mentioned the ambitions and the methods the Kukas in the bellow following manner:⁹⁷

“Not only was the whole Punjab apportioned into about 70 Subas or provinces through which the Guru’s lieutenants actively itinerated, preaching the speedy restoration of the Khalsa rule, and enlisting all the thaws and sinews of the Sikh race, but emissaries were sent to Kashmir, Kabul and Nepal. The secret postal arrangements were perfect, so that the orders of the Guru reached with astonishing rapidity, the remotest corner of the province, and beyond it whatever Kukas were to be found in our army or in foreign states, and Ram Singh knew that these orders would be obeyed.”

Forsyth also continued his own observation further:⁹⁸

“The facts is in evidence before the Government that through the Kukas were called together to consult, the more ambitious and impatient Subas, Such as Lehna Singh, Hira Singh, who had been to Delhi and found all our troops occupied, the Maharaja of Patiala also there and Ambala vacant, were ‘all for open war’, and thus precipitated events for which Ram Singh was not fully prepared. Whilst he hesitated how to take advantage of the attack on Malodh and

⁹⁶ Home judicial Reports, Progs. 246, August 1872.

⁹⁷ File No. 492, *Copies of Kuka Papers to Mr. Forsyth’s Explanation*, Ganda Singh Rare Collection Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 9.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 9.

Malerkotla, he was seized and deported to Allahabad.”

Mr. Forsyth remarked also below statement:⁹⁹

“When the whole correspondence is published it will be seen that this gang openly declared that they were to be joined by others, that they were to capture the States of Nabha, Jind and Patiala, that some of their brethren had gone to raise the Kuka standards at Amritsar.”

It is clear from the views expressed by Mr. T.D. Forsyth that he was presenting the Kuka danger in order to defend the excessive use of Power in which he had himself indulged. It goes to the great credit of the Government of India, that with great prudence and understanding they were able to see through the game. That was why the censure was not withdrawn in respect of Mr. Forsyth. Mr. Cowen paid with Job as well.

The condition of Mr. Cowen was rather worse. His degradation was real. He felt like a fallen leaf. For a time he was absolutely uncertain even about his pension, which the Government of India recommended for him to the Secretary of State. Mr. Cowen was in great difficulty. Even his wife died due to the anxieties that befell her in the wake of his dismissal. Mr. Cowen was referred to in the Government correspondence as ‘this unfortunate man. He himself wrote a very pathetic letter to the authorities on the way his children had been suffering, and he himself had undergone the period of trial. He referred to his wife’s death with black borders. The letter from Mr. Cowen to E.C. Bayley, C.S.S. is mentioned below:

“It was my intention to have proceeded to Shimla but for the dangerous illness of my wife terminated fatally, an illness due to solely as the medical men who attended her assure me to mutual anxiety and distress at my dismissal.....”

After the Incident of Amritsar and Malerkotla the British Government had made a plan to arrest the Kuka leader Guru Ram Singh and their prominent *Subas*. The telegram of dated 19th January, 1872 which was send from Secretary to Government of Punjab, Delhi to Home Secretary, Calcutta, reads:¹⁰⁰

“All at present known to have been concerned in attack on Kotla have

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 21.

¹⁰⁰ Home Judicial Progs.7, February, 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 7.

been captured and convicted. Fifty were executed yesterday by Cowan, among them Heera Singh and Lehna Singh, *Subas*, sixteen are now to be executed.”

“No direct evidence against Ram Singh in this case sufficient to put him on his trial.”¹⁰¹

In the letter from T.D. Forsyth, Superintendent of Ambala Division to the Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, Delhi was informed that:¹⁰²

“I have considered it absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace in this District, first for the peace of the whole province, to deport Ram Singh, leader of Kuka Sect, at once from the Punjab, and to send him to Allahabad for safety until the pleasure of the Government regarding his final disposal be made known.”

In giving information of the Lieutenant Governor, Punjab, was quoting Delhi to Viceroy of Calcutta as to how Guru Ram Singh as well as his following *Subhas* were arrested and exiled. This information runs as:¹⁰³

“The Lieutenant Governor has directed the arrest of Ram Singh and of his principal and most influential *Subas*. Sahib Singh, Rurr Singh, Lakha Singh, Kahn Singh, Brahma Singh, Jowahir Singh, Malak Singh, Man Singh, Phara Singh and Hukam Singh. The arrest of Ram Singh will be effected as rapidly as possible, the detail of the capture being arranged by General Tytler, in communication with the commissioner of the Division.”

British Government was under the circumstances which were explained by T.D. Forsyth, the Commissioner of the Ambala who had issued warrants under the Regulation III. Of 1818 for the detention in custody in the Allahabad Jail of the *Namdhari* Guru Ram Singh, and his most influential *Subas*.

After the Deportation of Guru Ram Singh, immediate target of the British Government was the Headquarter of Bhaini Sahib. The British authority had appointed Mr. Jackson, Assistant Superintendent of Police for search of Ram Singh’s premises at Bhaini Sahib for arms treasure. Mr. Jackson submitted the report as

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 7.

¹⁰² Home Judicial Progs. 16, February, 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 16.

¹⁰³ Home Judicial Progs. 10, February 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 9.

below:¹⁰⁴

“He made a complete search, digging up the grounds to a considerable depth wherever he thought it likely that arms or treasured might be buried, but that no trace of either has been found.”

“Hardly had the sun risen on the 18 morning when Lieutenant Colonel Baillie as the head of police party and 25 military sowars, reached Bhaini Sahib. Immediately, a cordon was thrown around the Gurudwaras. All the inmates were turned out and guarded at a point outside the village, while the entire place was subjected to the rigours of a merciless search. The only weapons found were 36 axes, 6 *gandasas*(chopper), 2 *khukharis*, *latis*, several quoits, and large number of clubs some papers (the letter were found in the hut occupied by Sahib Singh’s *Suba*).¹⁰⁵ The money, ornaments and salad box were sent off to Ludhiana to be deposited there in the treasury, while Baba Ram Singh’s clothes of everyday use were ordered to be placed in the custody of the Sadar Office of Ludhiana. All other articles were forfeited by the Government.”¹⁰⁶

In the report of Government India, Financial Department, 14th October 1872, justified the barbaric act of Malerkotla. The report mentioned that:¹⁰⁷

“The Kukas disturbance occurred at that places, first in the dependent chief ship of Maludh, the insurgents arrested at that place were tried according to law by the Session Judge, and a report was submitted by that officer to the Sadar Court on the subject, and there was nothing done which was illegal.”

Second disturbance took place in the independent state Malerkotla, and the arrested the Kukas concerned were made in the Patiala territory. Leaving all this cut of questions, Mr. Cowen would himself have been murdered and he not been rescued. The insurgents were to be punished according to the practice of punishing of capital offender’s current in the Riasat, and it was that when the chief for the time being having investigated the guilty considers the criminal to be liable to suffer capital

¹⁰⁴ Home Judicial Progs. 234, February 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 44.

¹⁰⁵ Home Judicial Department, Proceedings, 20 January, 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 8.

¹⁰⁶ Fauja Singh, *Kuka Movement*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1965, p. 120.

¹⁰⁷ File No. 494, Statement of Mr. Forsyth, p. 51.

punishment, he was referred the case to the Agent (cis-sutlej states) at Ambala for confirmation of sentence of death. The letter from Secretary to the Government of India, dated 23rd, September 1870, had mentioned for giving permission for the hanging of the criminal. The agent need not make a report of such cases to the Sadar authorities neither was there an order that a criminal sentenced to death should only be hanged, and not blown from the mouth of a cannon; nor was it directed that the provisions of the Indian Penal Code Act XXV.¹⁰⁸ When the criminal concerned in the affair were arrested, Mr. Cowan acted according to the powers conferred on him by the rules and practice current in the state, which was bound to observe, that was when officials of Riasat where the disturbance occurred and the other states, were all giving opinion that the insurgents should blown from the gun.

According to report the crime of the Kukas was punishable with death, and there had been no order issued in the state not to blow criminals from the cannons mouth; as this kind of punishment was more suitable for setting example to others.¹⁰⁹ British Government was tried proved his barbaric illegal action by gave these type of statements “The actions taken by the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner in the case were confide, and were based on the welfare of the people and the benefit of the administration.”¹¹⁰ The British regime had seen the Kuka disturbance was of the nature of the rebellion of 1857. According to British Government there had been little more delay in checking it the confusion would have been terrible. They understand that the Mr. Forsyth in the suppression of this disturbance was that of a general, and all that he did was not against the rules of the agency. They thought that the members of the Kuka sect were so much terrified that it was hoped that no one would ever raise his head again. Actually British administration considered that Kuka Sect was a big danger for his regime.

This proves that the British Government had adopted the most rigorous strategy towards the Namdharis. They were being treated as worse than outcaste and criminals. After the deportation of Namdhari Guru in 1872, the Bhaini Sahib was searched by British Officer Baillie, Deputy Inspector of Police. The search was continued for two days. All the money, pieces of valuable cloths, and shawls, and items of jewellery, were confiscated. The house was locked and placed in charge of a

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p.52.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

police guard of 20 constables under Deputy Inspector Umrao Ali Shah¹¹¹. In headquarter of Bhaini Sahib were remained three men and two female servants. Jassa Singh, father of Ram Singh, age nearly 90, Budh Singh, (Guru Hari Singh) brother of Ram Singh, Bibi Nanda, daughter of Ram Singh, and her three sons, Wariyam Singh, the manager of the Shop at Bhaini Sahib, Makhan Singh personal attendant of Guru Ram Singh, were remained in Bhaini Sahib. Other Namdhari Sikhs were expelled from the Namdhari headquarter. Mr. Jackson appointed by Mr. Cowan had reached at Bhaini. He has dug up many places to considerable depth in the headquarters of Ram Singh. British authority imposed the ban on Namdharis assemblies. The carrying of axes, iron bond sticks and other weapons were prohibited. This time there were very hardships and humiliations for Namdharis Sikhs. They had been put under surveillance and their activities watched carefully. In spite of the restrictions, the Namdhari Sikhs continued their struggle against the British under the leadership of Guru Hari Singh.

¹¹¹ Home Judicial Progs. 62, February 1872, National Archive of India. New Delhi, p.38.

CHAPTER-4

ROLE OF ZAMINDARS AND JAGIRDARS, MAHANTS, SARBRAH OF GOLDEN TEMPLE AGAINST THE NAMDHARIS

This chapter is an attempt to highlight the opposition of Namdhari movement by the *Zamindars*, *Jagirdars*, *Lambardar*, religious class-*Mahants*, *Pujaris* and *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple. Here we shall discuss the statements of *Lambardars* and *Zamindars* and about *Mahants*, *Pujaris* and *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple and their given information to British about Namdharis activities in different areas. These were the main agencies which were the loyalist to the British dominance and they were opposed to the Namdhari movement. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari activities and often harassed and humiliated them. These selfish people were enjoying special concession as a reward of their loyal services like great *Khillats* and *Jagirs* from British Government. Such a British policy was due to British patronage for them through the *Jagirs* and some official funds for such sections. They stood by British regime because they wanted to save their material and social positions. British government had adopted the strategy to maintain their hegemony. For this purpose they resorted to suppression, class distinction and encouragement to their own loyalists by creating opposition against the new or Namdhari rebels. In fact the British adopted this policy towards the Namdhari Movement too.

The *Zamindars* were responsible for peace and order in their areas. There were informers who were giving daily news to their supervisors of all actions in their particular Districts. All this information was sent to every nearby *Kotwal* who was to passé this information to Maharaja. The *Zamindars* and the *Chaukidars* were the actual police functionaries in every big village. They were answerable for the obstacle and detections of crime and safety of life and property of the village in their areas.

The *Lamberdars* were significant links between the Government and people. They were greatly gripped in their own affairs so much so that they could not find time to take enough interests in the affairs of the state. There was need to have men with leisure, knowledge and zeal to allow them to have curiosity in the native affairs and inform them to police. Sometimes the land grant was given to the *Zamindars* who would become answerable for reporting the crime which was to happen in their

territory. This conduct experiment worked well and they were to inform about the movement or arrival of bad character and suspicious person in the village. The occurrence of any sudden and practically all the police responsibilities and duties attached with prevention and detection of crime were discharged by these Chaukidars and Lamberdars.

Strict discipline was maintained for the improvement of the administration. They could be dismissed if they showed ignorance of their duty. But in spite of all this the system was not completely satisfactory. As the *Chaukidar* was appointed by the *Lamberdar*, so he had become almost his personal servant. There was also no special Act regulating or guide or check the village police and the regular police. Deputy Inspector, Generals, Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, Inspectors, Deputy Inspectors, Sergeants and Constables were also responsible for the police duties in circles, districts, cities and villages. They were enforced through the *Zamindars* and *Chaukidars*. Rules were made for a uniform pay system. They were provided uniforms and arms by the Government.

When the British restructured the administration in Punjab after 1849, the services of the Chaudharis were almost totally dispensed. By the early 1860, however, it was becoming apparent that the British had by no means been completely successful in integrating the provincial and local system of government, and that there was therefore a need for some sort of linkage between the two systems that the *Chaudharis* had provided under Mughal and Sikh rule.¹In 1861 the Lieutenant-Governor gave his approval to selected *Zamindars* who would be responsible for the suppression of crime in isolated rural areas. Within a few years, Honorary Police Chaudharis whose duties had gradually been widened to those of general intermediaries had come to be known officially, as *Zaildars*. In the mid 1860 these *Zaildars* were described as being the channel of communication, or the missing link between a mainly British provincial system of government and an entirely Punjabi local system of government. The British, desired to push their authority deeper into village society through such collaborated services. Finally, in 1872 the Punjab government decided to rationalise the *Zaildari* system. Their duty broadly was to act as representatives of Government. They were to communicate Government notices, reports, crime, assist the *Tahsildars*, to keep an eye

¹ Andrew J. Major, *A thesis, Return to Empire: The Sikh and the British in the Punjab, 1839-1872*, The Australian National University, Canberra, December 1981, p.300.

on the Patwaris and *Lambardars*.²

The Golden Temple was a central institution of Sikh Faith. British had desired for political control over the temple and had manifested it both before and after the annexation of the Punjab in March 1849. Two agencies helped the British in establishing their loyal hold on the temple. The first was the human agency of the *Sarbrah* (Temple Manager) of the Golden Temple. The *Sarbrah* was always a well-known Sikh with suitable pro-British sympathies like Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia, Sardar Jodh Singh, Sardar Parduman Singh and Bhai Makhan Singh. In case of Sardar Jodh Singh (Sarbarah 1849-1862) an official with rank of extra-Assistant Commissioner-was in frequent, direct contact with his British sponsors. The authority of the British helped the Sarbarah to manage the Temple and sometimes British official themselves made decisions about details of the Temple's operation. As Lapel Ggriffin was to write on behalf of the Punjab Government in 1879 thus:

“The Government of India is well aware that Darbar Sahib is a shrine of great political importance; it is, so to speak, the very centre of Sikhism accepted by the whole Sikh nation, princes and people, as the sacred head-quarters of their creed, at which, on important occasion, they assemble, and where the great proportion did receive the initiatory rite of baptism. From the annexation of the Punjab the great political importance of the Darbar Sahib has been acknowledged by the Local and the Supreme Governments, and it has been considered of paramount importance that the Government should retain some active control over the appointment and operations of the Committee of management, and should be assured that the Manager and Trustee were persons of intelligence, integrity and loyalty.”³

The British after 1857 period understood that the Sikhs could be co-opted and turned into loyal supporter of the British Empire. The Golden Temple was seen as helpful in this operation co-option by leading the Sikh loyalty to the British. The Sikhs became a community of the loyalists as loyalty to the British was well rewarded. The priests enjoyed Jagirs and some other official funds. It was virtually collaboration between the Sikhs and the British, and this collaboration provided a positive side to the

² *Ibid*, p.302.

³ Ian J. Kerr, *Handle with great care: "British actions towards the Sikhs and the Golden Temple in the last half of the 19th century"*, p.no.88.

British policy of control over the Golden Temple.⁴

Namdhari movement had emphasized in the beginning to preserve spiritual traditional nature of Sikhism which had lost its earlier glory. The literary meaning of the word 'Namdhari' is the one who recites the name of God in his heart. But here it has got specific meaning related to particular beliefs and practices based on the teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. Further, Sikhs were aware of their martial heritage and political ascendancy. Namdhari movement was in fact originated by the initiative taken up by Bhai Balak Singh son of one Dyal Singh of Hazro in district of Attock now in Pakistan. Baba Ram Singh was one of the three most prominent disciples of Baba Balak Singh and was chosen to succeed him. Baba Ram Singh was born on February 3rd, 1816, at Bhaini Araiyan, a village near Ludhiana region.⁵ He began to convert the people in the fold of Sikhism and organized a *Sangat* on the day Baisakhi of twelfth, April, 1857 A.D. He laid the foundation stone of the new socio-religious order called the *Sant Khalsa*.⁶ Between 1863 and 1868 Baba Ram Singh transformed the Namdhari movement into a disciplined and well-organised sect. It made British to take action against him. The police took surveillance on the tours of Guru Ram Singh. The British took many actions when the government came to know that the Namdharis were struggling to bring back *Khalsa Raj* in Punjab and their existence was against the British rule. The British took the help of Sikh community in spying the activities of Namdharis. Baba Ram Singh's more excitable followers were responsible for a number of public disturbances. There was a spate of desecration of Hindu temples and Muslim tombs by Namdharis between 1866 and 1868.⁷ The Sikhs were distressed by Muslims of Malerkotla a state of Punjab because the latter did not stop cow slaughtering.⁸ On 14 January 1872 a party of more than 100 Namdharis launched an attack on the small town of Malodh in Ludhiana District. Next day they attacked the town of Malerkotla that was the capital of Muslim principality. After incident of Malerkotla in 1872, sixty six Namdharis were blown up by the canons. Further, the British sent in exile Guru Ram Singh and his prominent Namdharis. After the death of Baba Ram Singh in 1885, it was under the command of Baba Hari Singh. Every Namdhari declared a rebel and all were detained in their respective villages. The *Lamberdars* and *Zamindar* of all villages were ordered by the government to maintain

⁴ Nazer Singh, *A critique of Ian J. Kerr's study of British relations with the Golden Temple, 1849-90*, p. 104.

⁵ Karam Singh Historian, *Bahu Mulle Itihasak Lekh*, Singh Brothers Publication, Amritsar, 1991, p, 255.

⁶ Sant Singh, *The Namdhari Sikhs*, Shri Bhaini Sahib, Ludhiana, 2000, p. 77.

⁷ Andrew J. Major, *Op.Cit.*, p.317.

⁸ Tara Singh Anjaan, *Namdhari Sikhs*, A Brief History, Arsee Publishers, 2007, p. 35.

supervision on Namdharis in their respective villages. All *Lamberdars* and *Zamindars* take pledge that “We pledge and give in writing that we will not allow the Kuka of our village, who have been handed over us, to leave the village till the next order is issued. We are responsible for this in every way and if we see any gathering of this community in our village, it is our responsibility to report it. We will report it immediately to the police station. If we not report their collection or any of the Kukas, who have been handed over us, goes anywhere without notice, we will file a bond of Rs. 100 in the exchequer without any excuse.”⁹

These British loyalist sections played a significant role as an opposition of the Namdhari movement. When in the middle of January 1872 an outbreak of Namdharis sect occurred in Ludhiana District, they gave full support to the British in capturing the Namdharis. Many *Lamberdars* and *Zamindars* gave all their information about Namdharis activities in their areas to the British. Lamberdar Arjun Singh and Lamberdar of village of Kot Bhawani Das gave information “There are 27 kukas in my village.¹⁰ The first kuka in my village was made by Guru Ram Singh.” He also informed that Suba Brahma Singh came to his village three or four times. Namdharis came to Sealkot and had religious meetings in which he used to urge people to become Namdhari as the Guru Ram Singh reign would come. *Lamberdar* warned the suba Burma Singh and Namdharis by saying if any disturbance occurred in his village, he would arrest them. *Lamberdar* Mahomd Baksh and Lamberdar Gulab son of Mahomd Sahib Lamberdar of Batala informed “There are three kukas in my village. None of suba stayed in my village. Brahma Singh and Jotha Singh subas used to pass through my village on their way from sealkot district and they generally had 40 or 50 followers with them. When Guru Ram Singh passed from sealkot, he was accompanied by great crowd.”¹¹ Suba Brahma Singh and Jotha Singh were urging all persons to become kukas and telling them to pluck up and destroy the tobacco fields, knock down tombs and “*samads*”. Jehan Khan *Zaildar* of Ferozewala told that there were numerous Kukas at Chuck Hurdu where religious meetings had taken place. This suba made exertions to increase the number of Kukas.

In Reports of R.H. Wall, Major, District Superintendent of Police, Ferozepur

⁹ Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach (Punjabi Translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)*. Foreign Department Patiala, File No. 4. H 92 M-H, p. 430.

¹⁰ File No. 499, *Confidential Kuka Movement Paper*, Report no. 49, E.C.Chard, District Superintendent of Police Gujrawala, Ganda Singh Collection, Punjabi, University, Patiala, p. 28.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.28.

informed that as seen Jowahir singh, *Lamberdar* of Soomed Bhai, Rattan Singh, *Lamberdar* of Nehal singh wala, Dhram Singh, *Lamberdar* of Belashpur, Nrain Singh, *Lamberdar* of Machakey, Buddh Singh, *Lamberdar* of Belaspur all these Namdhari activities testified these information.

Many *Zaildars* and *Lamberdars* of various villages and districts gave statements against the Namdharis who had attacked Maludh and Malerkotla. In the two incidents of Maludh and Malerkotla 11 Namdharis subas were arrested by police. Name of the *subas* were Sahib Singh, Roor Singh, Lukha Singh, Kahan Singh, Burma Singh, Jowahir Sing, Mulluk Singh, Man Singh, Hukam Singh, Pahara Singh, Mangal Singh.¹² Many *Zaildars* and *Lamberdars* gave statement to British against these Namdharis. Sardar Yeajmul Singh *Lamberdar* and *Zaildar* of *thana* station Phillour gave deposition that he knew most of the deported subas. He knew well Sooba Singh too. He succeeded in making many people Kukas at the village and he used also to visit fairs but he was always in trouble. In 1870 he was arrested in riot case as a ring leader. Bholu Singh was a son of Bughhel Singh, *Lamberdar* of Sahnehwal in district Ludhiana. He was Jatt Sikh aged 55. He gave information and deposition about 11 *subas*. He knew these men, by their names and appearances. They had been appointed by Baba Ram Singh to be subas or Lieutenants. Baba Ram Singh had intended ultimately to have 22 such followers. The duties imposed on these subas were to go about preaching Kukaism and making converts. He informed that *suba* Mangal Singh was promised at Patiala. They have tried to be very hard to induce him and his village to turn Kukas, firstly by promises and next by threats. The subas always described the British ruling power as the “*Doosht*” (bitter enemies) and the kuka Guru as an incarnation of deity, specially sent to it. They openly told people that Baba Ram Singh and his Kukas might soon rule the country. Baba Ram Singh used to hold regular *darbars*, at which his subas were invariably present. The subas used regularly to introduce new converts, who received Baba Ram Singh’s blessings, and did “*Bhajjan*”. After this the dedicated followers were used to ask in a little while when the *Khalsa Raj* will occur.¹³

All subas, except Mangal Singh were present at Bhaini Sahib on the 11th and 12th January at the Lohri festival. All then ten of the *subas* at Bhaini Sahib were united and their wished without exception that on Heera Singn and Lehna Singh should be

¹² File No. 499, *Confidential Kuka Movement Paper*, Appendix C, Report by, C. Beedan, Magistrate of District Ludhiana, Ganda Singh Collection, Punjabi, University, Patiala, p.44.

¹³ File no. 499 see op cit, p.44.

active to attack on Maludh. But doubtless Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh and Pahara Singh were most vehement in their exhortation. These were about 180 *Mastanas* in the Mela and 1000 or 1100 Kukas. *Lamberdar* deposition was that he was present at the Lohri *Mela* himself and he knew only one party starting for Maludh and Malerkotla. He heard Sahib Singh applaud Heera Singh's sentiments. His statement was "I am fully aware that Raikot and Amritsar murders were the result of the orders of Ram Singh and his subas. Ram Singh orders were that cow -killing was not to be permitted within the *Khalsa*." ¹⁴

The *Lamberdar* of Bhaini Sahib had deposed that he himself knew all the subas. He had seen the whole of these at Bhaini on the 12th and 13th of January last. He had gone to the *Maghi Mela* as his village is close to Bhaini. Sukhu and Ghamanda *Lamberdars* of Bhaini saw these people there also. To them were known all bad characters and their general business was to preach sedition and make converts to Kukaism so that the Kuka raj might be at hand. He saw all these *subas* except Mangal Singh and Rur Singh and another at the *Maghi Mela*. He heard that they were about to proceed to Malerkotla to fight. On 12th January at the Lohri *Mela* the nine *subas* consulted with Heera Singh and Lehna Singh and arranged that they should go first with a party to Maludh to get arms and then to Malerkotla and fight it. After that they were to attack Patiala, Nabha and lastly they were to attack Ambala. He heard from each of the *subas* mouth, and it did happen various times and places that one day they would have their raj. *Lamberdar* gave the statement that "Of the 11 soobas I consider Lakha Singh, Khan Singh, Jowahir Singh and Pahara Singh the Worst. They all are dangerous and none ought to be released." ¹⁵

Next information and deposition was of Partap Singh, *Lamberdar* of village Jundiwala taken by C.Beadon, Magistrate of Ludhiana on 19th April 1872. He knew four *subas* perfectly; these were Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh, Mangal Singh and Kahan Singh. But he was aware that the others *subas* by repute, that they were subas of Ram Singh and are kukas. It was at the *Maghi Mela* he was present. He saw Lakha Singh, Sahib Singh and Kahan Singh. He had often heard four *subas* acquaintance proclaimed that there would be a kuka raj, and those who had become kukas should be benefitted with *Jagirs* and lands. From these facts he was quite sure that they mean mischief

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.45.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p.46.

(Fussad) He heard them saying that “there are many thousands of kukas, that Ram Singh is an *Avtar*, we shall conquer everything.”¹⁶ *Lamberdar* also gave statement that “I am of the opinion that the present and future release any of the subas lately arrested can but result in harm. These subas one and all are disturber of the public peace.”¹⁷

Nihal Singh Lamberdar of Bholapure gave deposition to C.Beadan, on 19th April 1872. He informed that he knew all the arrested subas. He was on the *Mela* in Bhaini. He saw whole of these subas at the Bhaini except Mangal Singh. These subas were ill-conducted men, who go about converting that if Jats become Kukas, they will soon become the reigning power in the state. Lakha Singh and Sahib Singh had often said such words. He had heard seditious language used by one and all of the subas. Heera and Lehna Singh and others were arrested due to their involvement in the attack on Maludh and Malerkotla. Nihal Singh gave deposition, “of the *subas*, I believe Mangal Singh to be the worst; next in degree are Sahib Singh and Lakha Singh.” These were the faithful and favoured followers of Ram Singh. This happened to be a *Lamberdar* village three or four kilometre from Bhaini Sahib where he often went and come back. This *Mela* is annual thing at Bhaini Sahib. The reason why he had never reported to the authorities, he disclosed “I thought the Government knew as much about them.”

The statement of Daulat Ram, Brahmin *Lamberdar* of Bhaini Sahib, taken by C.Beadan maintains that he knew eight or ten subas. These *subas* were generally preaching sedition. Their advice has been to all to inorder to get them Kukas that those who did not, would suffer, because the Kukas would reign in India. The party of *Mustanas* were leaving in Bhaini. They went off in three detachments; one at early morning of about 100 in number and other that evening, of similar members, and a third the next morning but they were also 100. The leaders of the first gang or *mandali* were Heera Singh and Lehna Singh. Ram Singh himself remonstrated with Heera Singh and Lehna Singh on this occasion. *Lamberdar* Daulat Ram gave deposition that “Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh and Mangal Singh are the most dangerous of the *subas*, because they commit the more sedition but all are more or less to be feared as mischievous.”¹⁸

L.H.Griffin, Secretary the Government of Punjab in his Letter No. 78 C, dated 20th February, 1872, to E.C. Bayley, secretary the Government of India forward the information regarding the Kuka outbreak. Kurm Singh, *Zamindar* of Kungumal, Kotla

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.50.

gave statement against Namdharis. He informed that “In the morning we saw Kukas going to Bhaini on the Lohri festival. I went to Bhaini and next day there was a Kooka meeting. I did not go to the place, but saw Kukas singing here and there like *Mastanas*. The day following Maghi they were ain all 1,000 men and 500 women. At 1 a.m. the same night all Kukas bathed in the Ramsar Tank built by Ram Singh. I also washed at 2 a.m. Dewan was held and lasted till 6 a.m., when ram Singh told the people to go home. Many left then and there, and some preparations to start. Two hundered Kukas who were called dshould be first cut off; because if they attacked any place troop will come at once by rail; some said attack should be first made on Lahore; some said first Maludh, because the Sardar had given his opinion that Kukas should be hung; then Kotla, Nabha, and Patiala; thence to Delhi, where the Gujurs should be got to fight with the British. They shall destroy each other, and we shall get the throne to Delhi. If we die, still it is good, we shall die for religion. These mastanas then came to Ram Singh and went into the house, and i remained outside on the house; but when they came out, they said Bhai Ram Singh says ‘do bhajan’ at present no orders were given; but they said they shall die for religion. They were about 200 men. Al lifted up their arms and said ‘whoever wishes to die may come with us’. They then proceeded to Rampur jumping. I heard their shots Sat Shri Akal. I was present at the dewan. Bhai Ram Singh said nothing at that time. I went home and there heard that Kotla had been attacked. When these *mastanas* left bhaini they had no arms or *gundasas*, but each had an axe. In my opinion they got *gundasas* etc afterward from Maludh.”¹⁹

The next statement of Sahiba, *Zemindar* of Ruboo, who gave statement that, “before the attack at Maludh some 90 Kukas came from Bhaini and stopped at his well: it was at the dead night; they had axes, *gundasas*, and clubs; they remained there the whole day; got vassels from Lehna Singh, Kuka and Nrain Singh Sadhana, prepared food. Dhuma Singh, Khezan Singh joined them. They said ‘*Guru ka bhaini ho gaya, Khalsa paida ho gaya*’. They shall rule the country. They said – we would go for Kotla and hence to Rurr. They stopped at my well, because they knew Lehna Singh of my village. Next day, a watch after sun-rise, we heard of the attacks on Maludh and Kotla. I recognise the Kukas of my village who were among them. I did not speak to them through fear, but the Kukas of my village said ‘Sat Guru had given orders; therefore we shall also accompany the band of Kotla.’ Before the occurrence, Kukas said that at the

¹⁹ Home Judicial 1872, confidential, National Archive of India, New Delhi, pp.59-60.

Lohri there shall be a large gathering.”²⁰

Attar Singh, *Lamberdar* of Rurr, on solemn affirmation that, “On the day of attack at Maludh, at noon, Kukas came to my village. I saw Heera Singh of my village covered with wounds; sent Jamal Singh to the *Thana* on horseback. The Nazim ultimately came on spot, and, having apprehended all the Kukas, took them to the Sherpur Thana. I have known six of my village and Gurmukh Singh of Pharwai engaged in this outbreak. The Kukas often said that if they were killed it was no matter, the words of Guru must come to pass; there are still seven lakhs of Kukas. They had bloody sword, axes and *gundasas*. They made no mention of their further intentions. Before the occurrence the Kukas in the village said that, when the words of Guru have been fulfilled, the carpet would be wrapped up, the present Government shall not exist, and Sat Guru Ram Singh shall reign.”²¹

Jamee, *Lumberdar* of Bhoor, gave his statement on solemn affirmation, “On the day of attack, at one watch after sun rise, saw about 100 Kukas passing along their village; Kotla men were pursuing them; the Kukas had naked swords, *gubdasas* and axes in their hand; they loudly said, ‘that the Khalsa rule had appeared (*Khalsa Pargat ho gaya*), there is little disturbance now at Kotla, but there will be still a greater disturbance, Sat Guru shall sit on the throne of Delhi, and the *Khalsa* shall spread, the *Khalsa* shall rule the country.’ I went with the Kotla men to Rurr, and returned with them. It was rumoured that Kukas, who had gathered at Suggabun and Ruboo would make another attack. The gang came from Kotla. I recognised Gurmukh Singh, Kukas of Pharwai.”²²

Hakumat, *Lamberdar* of Ruboo who also gave statement that, “On the preceding night of the day the Kotla and Maludh were attacked, 90 Kukas came from Bhaini and stopped at the well belonging to sahib Singh and Lehna Singh. They borrowed vessels to cook food from Lehna Singh Narain Singh. They came at the last watch of the night. The following persons of our village found them: Dya Singh, Sogan Singh, Bela Singh, Sarunkhi, Sebah Singh, Dya Singh Ramdona, Maka Singh, Utter Singh, Sahib Singh, Wazzer Singh and Khezan Singh. The gang said they would first go to Kotla, thence to Rurr and Sukrundi, ‘Khalsa has appeared, the country will be ruled them’ they heard this from Sat Guru. They had *gandasas*, axes, and clubs. On being asked, they said,

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 63.

²¹ *Ibid*.

²² *Ibid*.

‘we are going at our pleasure to Kotlah.’ I only recognise the Kukas of my villafe, and none else. No other gang passed through their village. The Kukas of my Village said that Bhaini of Guru shall come to pass in a short time. Five Kukas of their villages are still a large; six have been blown from guns. There were 20 Kukas in this village. We reported the arrival of these Kukas at police office through Chowkedar. Next morning we heard that Maludh and Kotlah had been attacked.’²³

The statement of Bhugwan, taken by Cecil Beadon, was that of a *Chaukidar* of Bhaini. When the *Maghi Mela* at Bhaini was over, and people were beginning to disperse. He had occasion to go to well where Heera Singh and Lehna Singh were with the party of some 150 men. As their moments seemed suspicious he went and told them everything to Surfrac Khan the Deputy Inspector of Police on duty. *Thanedar* went to Ram Singh who told that these were “*Mustanas*” that having eaten their meal they would probably disperse. Heera and Lehna Singh were the leaders. Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh, Pahara Singh, Hukam Singh, Man Singh and Kahan Singh and other subas were present with Ram Singh. Ram Singh and his subas advised to Lehna Singh and Heera Singh, “Go to Kotla (Malerkotla) and Nabha and get arms and horses”²⁴ and Ram Singh specially deputed Lakha Singh to advice Lehna and Heera how to act, and he did cheer them up on their departure. After this the party departed with full sympathy of the subas. I followed the party as far as Rampure, in Patiala then I returned to Bhaine, he concluded.

The statement of Sukhu, *Lambedar* of Bhaini was taken by Magistrate of Ludhiana. He knew whole the subas personally. He has been attending the Ram Singh darbars, and had taken the kuka pledge. He told that I have heard one and all of subas preaching sedition and saying that they would cause destruction to all who did not turn Kukas. Lehna Singh and Heera Singh had come to last *Maghi*. Ram Singh and his subas who were in darbar intended to attack Malerkotla as at present its affairs were without a head; that there they would procure arms and take over Nabha, Patiala, Jhind, Ferozepur and Delhi.²⁵ They asked Ram Singh for help. Lakha Singh assented and promised help. After this Heera Singh and Lehna Singh went out the side of the town, where the gang of *Mastanas* were encamped. He went and informed Surfrac Khan the Deputy Inspector, who had come to Bhaine for the police arrangement at fair. Next morning at

²³ *Ibid*, p. 64.

²⁴ *Ibid* . File no. 499 see op cit, p. 50.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.51.

day light about 100 of *Mastanas* went off. In the afternoon another batch went off the same strength. Lehna Singh and Heera Singh were the leaders of the second batch.²⁶

The next information and deposition was of Ahmed Khan, Raees of Talwandi near Raikot district Ludhiana. He knew that Ram Singh had instructed his subas to go about proselytizing tempting converts with great rewards especially after it became his kingdom and his rule. He had stated "I am of opinion that the subas were only appointed for mischievous purposes. I have heard that they have all been promised provinces when the time comes. There subas are kept in confinement."²⁷

Lamberdar Shahbaz Khan of District Ludhiana also gave information and his depositions to C.Beadon. He stated that Ram Singh's subas were a seditious lot of men. They had been at the bottom of all the recent disturbances. They induced harmless and ignorant men to become Kukas. "I am opinion that it would be very bad policy to let them again be at large. Ram Singh appointed these men to spread his creed and promised them large territorial charges. They in turn held out *Jagirs* and destruction of land and property as threat to those who refuse to listen to their voice of charming."²⁸

There was also deposition of *Lamberdar* Jouja Khan, District Ludhiana which was taken by Magistrate of Ludhiana. He deposed that the conduct of the subas was political and aimed at kingdom. It was not religious. Ram Singh had appointed these men solely to revise his power, and had promised them large rewards whenever he should rule in India. These subas were at the bottom of all strife in Punjab.

The information about subas was given by *Lamberdar* of Mouzah Rangwal, he stated that Ram Singh's subas were very dangerous men. They did nothing but make converts to Kukaism by means of reports to affect that Ram Singh might shortly reign in India, and that, when he did so his disciples would receive their rewards. This sort of doctrine had great effect on the simple minds of Jat Sikhs or peasants of this part of country.

However, a more radical step taken by Namdhari Guru was an introduction of *Anand reeti*.²⁹ The procedure of this reeti was as follow; it began with the recitation of *Asa-di-var*, the Guru Granth Sahib was placed at some distance. Vedi was constructed

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.52.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Namdhari Movement (1857-1959)*, Unistar Publication, Chandigarh, 2012, p.24.

and a *havan* was performed. Five Singhs recited gurbani from the *pothis*; two Singhs were deployed for performing *ahuti*; *amrit*; was prepared and administered to the boy and girls and then *lavan* were recited from Guru Granth Sahib while the couple took four rounds of the haven. In the end, Anand Sahib and *ardas* were performed and *Karah Prasad* was distributed. Some marriages were performed in June 1863.³⁰ No dowry, not even a feast, was allowed on this occasion. According to Namdhari literature, a marriage of six couples was performed. Another significant feature of these marriages was that boys and girls were belonged to different castes. For example, the daughter of a carpenter was married in the family of Arora caste. These marriages without any pomp and show, particularly without dowry, were a new thing for the local people. It was said that the villagers gathered around a place where Anand marriages were performed. Nevertheless, the Namdhari Guru and his followers had to face the opposition of the Brahmins, artisans and match makers who had lost the sources of their income. The Brahmins of village Khotte were so perturbed that they threatened to immolate themselves. When the Namdhari Guru refused to yield to their pressure, they got a false report registered at the Police Station, Bagha Purana, alleging that five hundred Namdhari followers had gathered in the village Khotte and they were making anti-British propaganda. Consequently, the Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepur reached the village Khotte and investigated the matter. The Namdharis were compelled to break up their assembly and were sent back to their respective villages. In the confidential report made by the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Jalandhar, on 8 June, 1863 had mentioned about the military drills by Namdhari sect. According to report:

“The question of their drilling at night, through frequently reported, still seems an open one. Diyal Singh, *Lamberdar* and Wazira, late *Chaunkidar* of Mutadah in Jalandhar (a village entirely converted by Ram Singh), state that the drill often takes place a little away from the village, and that Sergeant Bahal Singh, of the Hoshiarpur Police, with one or two discharged sepoy, instructed them. Bahal frankly admits that.”³¹

According to the report of Major Mc Andrew, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Lahore Bahal Singh admits that “Ram Singh is and has been his Guru for

³⁰ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, *Jug Paltao Satguru*, Namdhari Publication, Jevan Nagar, p. 48.

³¹ File No. 490, *Potitical Records of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 6.

many years; that when on leave he goes to visit him, joins in their ceremonies, one of which is for the whole assembly to stand up in line and repeat some verses in a loud tone before separating for the night, and which might possibly have been taken for drill by the uninitiated.”³²

Under the instruction from Lieutenant Governor, Major Mc Andrew was directed to send trustworthy men from different districts to obtain information. Mr. Green, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Attock, was summoned, and directed to hold a very strict and careful supervision over Huzro, the head quarters of Baba Ram Singh sect, and watch carefully any signs of active correspondence going on either by letter or otherwise.

Mani Ram, Brahmin of Jalandhar provided some information to Captain Elphinstone, Deputy Commissioner of Jalandhar about Namdhari sect. This information was a recorded report of 8th June, 1863. Mani Ram said that, “Mani Ram, Brahmin of Jalandhar, a convert to Ram Singh, but about to give him up again, his doctrines leading to immorality, sates that he has been at several of his meetings, but never saw any drilling, and that the circumstance of their standing up in line to go through some ceremonies before separating must have led to the idea of their drilling. He asserts, however, that Ram Singh is certainly gifted with powers of magic, which people into fits, he sates he has been seen above a thousand people affected in this way. In common with all other Sikhs, doubtiees, Ram Singh wishes their rule back again, but he does not preach this considers him unquestionably a prophet, and believes his preaching to be entirely of a religious nature.”³³

“On 4 June 1863 the *Chaukidar* of village Khotte, in Firozpur, reported at police station, Bagha Purana that for two or three days Ram Singh, with 400-500 followers, has assembled at this village and they were behaving in a very extraordinary manner. They said that country would soon be theirs, and they would speedily have 1,25000 armed men to back them; that they would only take a fifth of the land’s produce from the cultivators; and were altogether comporting themselves in a very extraordinary manner.”³⁴

“A police Sergeant at once reported to the spot, and found the *Chaukidar*’s

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid*, p. 7.

³⁴ File no. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, p.3.

statement to be quite correct. A number of women were also with them, and took part in all proceedings. Soon after his arrival in the meeting gradually broke up. . . Subsequently, on 6 June, the Assistant Superintendent of Police, when making enquires in Khotte about Ram Singh learnt, from the Lamberdars of that and neighbouring villages, that he had been talking seditiously.”³⁵

The Deputy Commissioner, Ferozepur, directed that no more assemblies were to take place and that Baba Ram Singh himself and his followers were to be sent station by station to his home at Bhaini Sahib in Ludhiana district. This order had been carried out, and he was now under strict police surveillance at his home.

The British Government in 1863 deputed its intelligence staff for gauging the nature and extent of the activities of the Namdhari Guru, Guru Ram Singh and his followers. It also directed the Police Superintendents and the Deputy Commissioners of each district to prepare a comprehensive report of the movements of the Namdhari Guru and his followers; the speeches and discourses delivered by them in the religious congregation and the response of the people were under observation. On 15th April 1863, Macanabb, Deputy Commissioner, Sialkot, received intelligence report about the Namdhari Guru Ram Singh. The intelligence reported said that “it was rumoured in that district that an elderly Sikh of Ludhiana, calling himself ‘Bhai’, was going about the country with 200 men, whom he drilled at night with sticks instead of muskets, that he boasted at of 5,000 followers, and obeyed Hakim. They purposed going with a lot of women, who were also of their party, to the Baisakhi fair at Amritsar.”³⁶ Major Mercer, Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, also reported that the followers of the Namdhari Guru were sturdy young men, each with a stout stick but the Commissioner did not corroborate the seditious nature of the speeches and activities of Namdhari Guru and his followers. On the other hand, Lieutenant Hamilton, District Superintendent of Police, Ferozepur, received the report regarding the activities of Namdhari Guru Ram Singh and his followers. In the report gave a physical description of the person who was beginning to cause for the Empire.³⁷ It said:

“In due course, the party arrived at Amritsar (11th April) and it was found that

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 4.

³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2.

³⁷ Yogendra Bali, *Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji and Freedom Movement of India*, Har-Anand Publication, New Delhi, 2010, p. 30.

their leader was Ram Singh. He is a spare man, 5 feet 10 inches, fairish complexion, pitted with small pox, hazel eyes, long nose and face, grizzled beard and moustache, by caste of carpenter Sikh, reads and writes *Gurmukhi*, and has worked on occasion as a mason.”³⁸

The followers of the Namdhari Guru Ram Singh resorted to destruction of tombs and graveyard. In the state of religious frenzy the Namdharis recited the following couplets which reflected their aggressive attitude towards the tombs and graveyards. Some of the popular couplets were as follow:

- a) *Murhee musseetan dhahke, Kurdeo maidaan* {Throw down tombs and musjids, and make all level}
- b) *Pahel maro pir Bunnoe, Phir maro Sultana* {First annihilate (or throw down) peer Bunnoe, after do the same for Sooltana}
- c) *Oomut Subhee Mahandedee, Khap jai maidan* {All the followers of the prophet will disappear atonce}
- d) *Soonut koi Nakarsukka, Kumbun Turkana* {Trembling Truks will not in future be able to circumcise}
- e) *Bhainee, Satgru jags aur jhut jahana* {The true Guru has arisen in Bhainee; the rest of the world is full of lie}³⁹

These five ashloks were recited by the Namdharis as the part of their religious ceremonies. These simple words full with spiritual cleansing and declaration and exhortation of faith. The five sacred Punjabi ashloks were presented in such simplistic and partisan perception by the British agents that they seemed totally shorn of their spiritual and rational significance.⁴⁰

The destruction of tombs took place during 1866. Waryam Singh, Fateh Singh and Jaimal Singh destroyed the tombs lying between the boundaries of the village of Chuhar Bhaini and Choote Barrshoo in Ferozepur on 1st September 1866⁴¹. One of the tombs had been constructed to commemorate Sangoor Sahib who was respected by the local people. These three Namdharis were arrested and produced before the magistrate who sentenced them to three months imprisonment with a fine of twenty

³⁸ File 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*. P. 2.

³⁹ Nahar Singh, Kirpal Singh, *Rebels Against the British Rule*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1995,p.no.33.

⁴⁰ Yogendra Bali, *Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji and Freedom Movement of India*, p. 62.

⁴¹ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, National book trust, New Delhi, 2010, p. 64.

rupees each, or six months more imprisonment in case of non-payment. In 20th October 1866, Mr. Haslett, Assistant District Superintendent of Police Sirsa, was, informed by a *Lamberdar*, named Sobha Singh, that a Namdhari namely Malik Singh tried to damage some tombs in Ferozepur district⁴². But a this *Lamberdar* Sobha Singh further informed the police that such kind of disturbance may take place in Talwandi, Mukatsar or Amritsar. However, neither the damage done to the tomb nor apprehension of disturbance these was ascertained by the police.

Several cases of destruction of tombs reported in Ludhiana district in July 1866. The targets of the Namdharis were small graveyards or burial places. The police could prosecute the defaulters only in two cases of destruction. Similarly, the Namdharis of a village Subhana in Sialkot district destroyed some graveyards. They were let off by Deputy Commissioner after giving them a warning. On 5th January, three Namdharis were apprehended for damaging graves at Chawindah. In Gujranwala district, several cases of destruction were reported. Some of the Namdharis involved in the destruction were put on trial. From Hoshiarpur it was reported that:

“A party of thirteen Kukas led by Soodh Singh, entered the district and destroyed some Hindu deities in a temple at Gunharee. At Noor Jumal a Mohammandan tomb was destroyed, and some of the party were seen astride the images of cow in front of a Hindu temple; these profane riders called upon cow to prove itself a God by walking. The men were sent up for trail and convicted by the Assistant Commissioner as vagrants.” These all attacks were which made by Namdharis in fact against the hypocrisy and superstitions. According to Yogendra Bali, “The British colonial rulers and their stooges had extensively misrepresented them push their well-known policy of divide and rule in their colonil domains all over the world.”⁴³

The question of Namdhari’s drilling at night, though frequently reported seemed an open one. Diyal Singh, Lambardar and Wazira, late Chaunkidar of Mutadah in Jalandhar (a village entirely converted by Ram Singh), stated that drill often taken place a little away from the village, and that sergeant Bahal Singh, of the Hoshiarpur Police, with one or two discharged sepoy, instructed them. Bahal Singh frankly admits: “That Ram Singh is and has been his Guru for many years; that when

⁴² Bhai Nahar Singh, Kirpal Singh, p.n 36.

⁴³ Yogendra Bali, *Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji and Freedom Movement of India*, p. 62.

on leave he goes to visit him, joins in their ceremonies, one of which is for the whole assembly to stand up in line and repeat some verses in a loud tone before separating for the night, and which might possibly have been taken for drill by the uninitiated.”⁴⁴

Again, Gaindah Singh, a Sikh informer, was sent by the Cantonment Magistrate, Jalandhar, to Ram Singh’s village. He reported⁴⁵:

“The Guru himself was absent, but Sahib Singh, his lieutenant, was there. He expressed a desire to become a convert, and joined their party, which at night, amounted to about 50 men. The “dhol” was sounded, and everyone got a stick from Sahib Singh, who then proceeded to drill the party for about two hours, and all shouted “*Akal Akal*”, Gaindah Singh then expressing a desire to see the Guru himself, his disciple told him where to find him and gave him two papers for Ram Singh. These he never delivered, pretended to have lost them, and on return to Jalandhar, made them over to the Cantonment Magistrate. The following were the rough translations of the documents:

No .1. Salutation. The “Sakhi of Guru Govind Singh” I Guru Govind Singh, will be born in a carpenter’s shop, and will be called Ram Singh. My house will be between the Jamna and Sutlej rivers. I will declare my religion. I will defeat the Franghis and put the crown on my own head, and blow the *sankh*. The musicians shall praise me in 1921 (1864). I, the carpenter, will sit on the throne. When I have got one lakh and twenty-five thousands Sikhs with me, I will cut off the heads of the *Franghis*. I will never be conquered in battle, and will shout “*Akal Akal*”. The Christians will desert their wives and fly from the country when they hear the shouts $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs of Khalsas. A great battle will take place on the banks of the Jamna, and blood will flow like the waters of the Ravi, and no Frunghi be left alive. Insurrection will take place in the country in 1922 (1865). The Khalsa will reign, and the Rajah and ryot will live in peace and comfort, and no one shall molest another.”⁴⁶

“Day by day Ram Singh’s rule will be enlarged. God has written this. It is no lie, my brethren. In 1865, the whole country will be ruled by Ram Singh. My followers will worship Wahaguru. God says this will happen.”⁴⁷

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 5.

⁴⁵ File no. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, op. cit., p. 7.

⁴⁶ Bahi Nahar Singh, Kirpal Singh, p. 6.

⁴⁷ File no. 490, *Political Records of kuka Movement*, p. 8.

No. 2 “Salutation. Read the enclosed the above, to all Sikhs. It is the request of Sikhs here. Send news of your where about. We wish to see you here. You have been absent for a long time. Come in this direction quickly. We can’t remain apart from you so long.”⁴⁸

Before the annexation of the Punjab in 1849, the Sikhs *Darbaris*, *Zamindars*, and *Jagirdars* enjoyed hegemony in the state structure. Almost 60 percent of them were Sikhs, while the Sikhs formed less than 10 percent of the total population.⁴⁹ After the annexation, the British rulers introduced radical administrative, economic and cultural changes. The allied class of Sikh Sardars, *Jagirdars* and *Zamindars* had to rearrange their role under the British Government. Lord Dalhousie, the British Governor General (1848-56) created the Board of Administration comprising of three members: Henry Lawrence, John Lawrence and Charles Grenville Mansel. Henry Lawrence was to be allotted in charge of military and political affairs. John Lawrence, was put charge of land Settlement. Charles Grenville Mansel was appointed chief of judicial Department.⁵⁰ After a year, he was replaced by Robert Montgomery. The Board was put straight under the control of Governor General.

To manage their earlier position and status, the Sikhs had to show their loyalty to the British regime. The British rulers took numerous executive methods to hold the allied Sikh aristocracy. The traditional territories of the Sikh *Sardars* and *Jagirdars* were restored to them. In the post-uprising of 1857, the colonial Government made serious efforts to make these *Sardars*, *Jagirdars* and *Zamindars*, the allies of the empire.⁵¹ Two agencies helped the British in established their control over the Punjab. In the first category were those aristocracies who helped the British during Anglo-Sikhs wars. These aristocracies continued to offer loyal services to the British Government. The second class belonged to those nobles who denied admitting the colonial regime and showed confrontation for several time. After some time they realised the worthlessness of their resistance. The revolt of 1857 gave them a chance to show their loyalty credentials. In 1865, Lepel Griffen enumerated 250 families who were considered as having rank, wealth and local influence.⁵² The British Government groomed the landed nobility and awarded them with titles, seals of honour in the

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Joginder Singh, p. 1.

⁵⁰ G. S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Voi. II, Parkash Brothers, Ludhiana, 1973, p.362.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 4

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 5.

ceremony of *Darbars*.

When the kingdom of Lahore was annexed by the British Government, the Sikhs were about to lose their independence completely. It was the black day in the history of the country. Sikhs lost their independent kingdom and had to live at the mercy of the British. After the annexation of the Punjab to the British Empire in 1849, the circumstances favoured the British authorities to interfere in the administration of the Gurdwaras, particularly of the Golden Temple.⁵³ Darbar Sahib was the premier Sikh temple and it would have been in the fitness of things had the visitors and pilgrims taken back good impression about it. But it was sad that quite the reverse was the case. Even Sikh pilgrims take back with them bad impression.⁵⁴ The Management of most Gurdwaras continued to be in the hands of the hereditary *Mahants* and *Sarbrahs* who had acquired vested interests in them. The Britishers comprehended that the Gurdwara were the sources of inspiration and power of the Sikhs and, therefore, the control of the Gurdwaras was essential for the continuance and strengthening of the British regime.⁵⁵ This is evident from the contents of a letter written by Mr. R.E.Egeiton, Lt. Governor of Punjab to Lord Ripington reporting the victory of India on August 8, 1881, which were as follows;

“I think it would be politically dangerous to allow the arrangement of Sikh temples to fall into the hand of committee emancipated from Government control, and trust your Excellency will assist to pass such orders in the case as enable to continue the system which has worked out successfully for more than thirty years.”⁵⁶

The British Government had taken over the control of some of the Gurdwaras like Golden Temple, Akal Takhat, Darbar Sahib, Tarn Taran etc.⁵⁷ Remained under the supervision and control of the government appointed *Sarbrah* and other Gurdwaras were in the hands of government patronised *Mahants*. The *Sarbrah* system of the Gurdwara had inherent potential to deteriorate the Character of the big *Mahants* and *Pujaris* and thereby accentuating the distortion of the Sikh religion and its traditions going on since the founding of the Sikh rule.⁵⁸ The *Sarbrah* of the Golden

⁵³ Gurdwara Reform Movement, p. 18.

⁵⁴ The Khalsa Advocate, Saturday, 28 July, 1917, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Kashmir Singh, *Law of Religious Institutions Sikh Gurudwaras*, Guru nanak Dev University, 1989, p. 119.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ K. L. Tuteja, *Sikh Politics (1920-1940)*, Vishal Publications, Kurukshetra, 1984, p. 29.

⁵⁸ Joginder Singh, *The Sikh Resurgence*, National Book Organisation, New Delhi, 1999, p.75.

Temple who was appointed by the British Government had always worked in the interest of the British rulers.⁵⁹ The condition of Gurdwaras was quite deplorable.

The British took a further important step when they authorized *Mahants* and *Pujaris* to register the land and properties of the Gurdawaras in their names. The hereditary group of priests or *Mahants* had entrenched themselves in these shrines, they were treating them as their personal property.⁶⁰ The large income which collected from the Sikh shrines in the hands of the *Mahants* and *Sarbrahs*. The British Government backed the *Mahants* and their vested interests. In this connection, the control of the Golden Temple needs special mention. They realised that by controlling the Golden Temple they could control over the entire body of the *Khalsa*. A certain degree of neutrality was imposed open the temple through the Head *Granthi* as the *Sarbrah's* appointee. Neither the *Pujaris* nor the committee of *Sarbrahs* had any right to manage its affairs. The main advantage of the new arrangement was the maintenance of the status quo. At the same time, the actual arrangement ensured that these premier institutions of the Sikhs should remain under the influence of the loyalists. But the above mentioned *Mahants* and *Pujaris* had refused to give due respect to the Namdhari Guru whenever he visited the Golden Temple.⁶¹ When Sikh Gurudwaras had come under the control of *Mahants* who considered them as their private properties and did not hesitate to misuse the place of worship.⁶²

Another important section of the society was that of the religious heads Bedis, Sodhis and Brahmin of temples who were annoyed with Ram Singh because he had taken their monopoly of baptizing people into Sikh faith.⁶³ The Sodhis and Bedis were the decedents of the Sikh Gurus. Moreover, they played a significant role in the administrative, political and military affairs of the Sikh state. The Sodhis of Anandpur were too powerful to be ignored by the Sikh chieftains including Maharaja Ranjit Singh. It is said that no military campaign was successful in the Cis-Satluj area without the co-operation of Sodhis of Anandpur.⁶⁴ A British Settlement Officer in Hoshiarpur district gave graphic picture of the lifestyle of the Sodhis of Anandpur

⁵⁹ K. L. Tuteja, p. 30.

⁶⁰ Mehar Singh, *The Sikh Shrines*, Publication Division, New Delhi, 1975, p.7.

⁶¹ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Rram Singh*, p. 7.

⁶² Lt-Col. Gulcharan Singh, *Role of The Sikhs in the Struggle for Indian Independence*, December 1979, Sikh Review, p. 58.

⁶³ Surjit Kaur Jolly, *The Nirankari and Namdhari Movement in Punjab in the Nineteenth Century*, New Delhi, 1988, p.122.

⁶⁴ Joginder singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, p. 7

particularly on the occasion of the holy festival. He wrote thus:

“The Sodhis come on their elephants and caparisoned horses and move through the crowds and the Bari Sarkar on an elephant, with a Chauri (fly-whisk) waving over his head. They receive the obeisance of the people and accept offerings. Some 30,000 people participate. In the evening they move slowly towards the town and are carried back as if in triumph to their respective shrines; and at sunset the crowds melt away, and many of the worshipper move homewards.”⁶⁵

The Namdharis were a self-disciplined communion of people who came under Sikhism. They considered themselves as conservative sections of Sikhs. But the primary authority of the Sikh religion the Akal Takhat did not accept them as Sikh. They did not consider then the Sikhs of the guru⁶⁶. Because :-

- Ram Singh considered himself to be an incarnation of deity.
- At the time of initiation a person in to his sect, he whispered ‘mantra’ in his ear, which was against the Sikh customs.
- The initiated Kukas said, ”Born Guru at Hazro, he resides at Bhaini” where as the Sikh believed that “Born Guru at Patna, he resides at Anandpur”.
- Against the Sikh customs, the Kukas removed his turbans from their heads in Gurudwaras and spread their hair.
- Against the Sikh customs, the Kukas often got so much exhilarated and beyond self-control. They started behaving like Muslims *Fakirs*.⁶⁷
- They have many non-Sikh traditions like the worshipping of (*havan*) which is more similar to Hinduism than Sikhism.
- Namdharis believed that Guru Gobind Singh went in to seclusion after surviving the attempt on his life and passed the Guruship on to other human gurus to this day.

Also many historical quarters believed that Bhai Ram Singh never proclaimed himself to be guru but after his death emotional followers made him in to guru against the teachings of Sikhism/Guru Granth Sahib. Therefore, the Kukas could not become the Sikhs of the Gurus.

The Namdhari Guru resolved to establish *Dharmshalas*. Till the late nineteenth

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ G.S. Chhabra , *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Vol-II, p. 372.

⁶⁷ M.M. Ahluwalia, *The Freedom Fighters of the Punjab*, Allied Publishers, Bombay, 1965, p.

century, the Sikh temples were known as *Dharamsalas*. The founding of *Dharamsalas* by the Namdhari Sikhs implied that the local Sikhs, entire on their own or at the direction of the local officials and Sikh gentry did not allow Namdhari Sikhs to enter into the *Dharamsala*. As noted earlier, the priestly class and the Sikh gentry opposed the Namdhari Sikhs for political as well as religious reasons. Moreover, the *Lamberdars*, *Panchayats* and the *Zaildars* insulted and humiliated the Namdhari Sikhs in their own villages. The Namdhari Sikhs were not allowed to hold their congregation and recite bani publicly⁶⁸. Those who dared to perform *akhand-paths* were awarded *jurmanas* (fine) and put into jails for six months or seven years. When and wherever such hostility ceased, the Namdhari Sikh thought of founding their own *Dharamshalas*.

While he was founding the *Sant Khalsa*, Namdhari Guru Ram Singh undertook extensive tours of villages and towns located in different regions of Punjab. His purpose for undertaking these tours was multiple; reaching straight to the people, understanding their problems and aspirations and disseminating the programme of social reforms. During these tours, he was accompanied by his troupe comprising of 100 to 500 followers. Among these followers were *ragis*, *granthis* and *parcharaks*. Whenever he went, the local Namdhari *sangat* made arrangements for holding religious congregation called *diwans* and *hollas*. He himself held religious discourses and the *ragis* and *granthis* recited gurbani and performed *ki rtan*.

Guru Ram Singh wanted to address a large audience, he chose special occasions like festivals and fairs which were usually held at some historical religious places. Although it is difficult to note down the itinerary of all his movements yet some of his visits to the religious places are noted. He started with visit to Hardwar in 1861 at the time of the *Ardh-Kumbi* festival.⁶⁹ Before reaching this place of pilgrimage, the Namdhari Guru stayed at different villages and towns and displayed his supernatural powers.

In 1862, Baba Ram Singh went to Amritsar, on the occasion of Diwali. Where endless men and women listened to his teachings and found peace. Baba Ram Singh had administred *gurumantar* and *amrit* to several men and women. There was a rumor in the cities and towns that guru had appered. Espacially the *Mahants* and *Pujaris* of

⁶⁸ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, *Jug Paltao Satguru*, Namdhari Publication, Jevan Nagar, p.102.

⁶⁹ Dr. Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Namdhari Movement 1857-1959*, p. 23.

the Gurudwaras and deras were became restless but the virtuous among them would have been happy to see Namdhari guru. The priests of Darbar Sahib and were getting angry inside.⁷⁰ The effect of Namdhari guru's teachings was to deprive the priests of public interests, so it was only natural that their worship, reputation and income should suffer. Therefore, he was ready to spread many unspoken remours against Baba Ram Singh. However, false propaganda does not appear before the truth.

Baba Ram Singh did not want to ignore any chance to visit Sikh historical shrines. He showed a keenest interest in reaching religious congregations which were held on some particular occasions. He chalked out the programme to visit Historical Gurdwara like Amritsar, Ananpur and Mukatsar on the special occasions of Baisakhi, Diwali, Maghi and Holi. Namdhari sect was under strict surveillance. Baba Ram Singh had made a request to British Government to visit the Historical shrines. However, the Government refused to accept his request. In responding to the official action, Baba Ram Singh decided to hold a fair at his own headquarter and sent *Suba* Lakha Singh to Lahore for seeking official permission. British Government allowed to go to the Anandpur fair and said that if allowed to do so, he will meet his followers there and there will be no need for them to come over to see him at Bhaini Sahib. If he did not go to Anandpur Sahib, all his disciples should come and pay him a visit. British Government rather in favour of the request being granted for following reasons: first was: Ram Singh and his two followers, Lakha Singh and Saheb Singh, can be held responsible that there was no queue at Anandpur. They were willing to be responsible, and permission should be granted on this condition. Second was: by allowed him to go to Anandpur we should have one gathering instead of two. Third was: there would be under any circumstances a large police force at Anandpur, who would be able to kept peace and prevent a disturbance should there be fear of any occurring and last was;- If a row did take place, it would give us a hold upon Ram Singh, and a ground for proceeding against him, should it be considered advisable to do so.⁷¹ At the same time, the government and its allies were not prepared to give any opportunity to Namdhari Guru to protect his image among the masses.⁷² Therefore, the government permitted Namdhari Guru to visit Anandpur Sahib on the occasion of *Holla Mohalla* in March 1867 when Lakha Singh, *Zamindar* of Bhaini gave following

⁷⁰ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, op.cit. p. 39.

⁷¹ Bhai Nahar Singh, p. 50.

⁷² Joginder Singh, p. 66.

assurance to the official:

“That he is a man of good character and a well-wisher of the Government, and has never been guilty of any fault. He now wants to go Anandpur Sahib, in the Hoshiarpur district and it is probable that many people will come to pay their respect to him. He shall remain there one day, and then return. He will give no trouble to government, and there shall not be any crime whatever. He therefore, requests permission to go to Anandpur Sahib, and asks that no impediment be put on the way of people coming to salute him, and brings to notice that, if he is not permitted to go to this place, then people will come to his village (Bhaini), and in this case begs that they may not be stopped.”⁷³

The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab directed Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners and Superintendents of Police Lahore, Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur to make essential and excellent arrangements.⁷⁴ Colonel McAndrew, Deputy Inspector General of Police, arrived Hoshiarpur and consulted Mr. Perkins, Deputy Commissioner as to the arrangements to be made with an Inspector, Deputy Inspector and fifty men from Jalandhar, a Deputy Inspector and ten men from Jalandhar, old soldiers, Mohammadens and Rajputs. Sirdar Bahadur Attar, late Commandant of Sehredil Regiment and Kutab Shah, Inspector of Police, Ferozepur and Futehdeen Khan, Inspector, Amritsar District also accompanied him. Colonel Mc Andrew appreciates the good services rendered by the European and Native Officers who aided him on this occasion. He would mention however, the services of Commandant Attar Singh, who was a pensioned officer.⁷⁵ On 17th March, Colonel Mc Andrew encamped at a convenient spot within a short distance of the Keshgarh Sahib.

On 18th March, Mc Andrew and Perkins arrived and proceeded to ascertain the feelings of all the parties on the matter of Baba Ram Singh visit at Anandpur Sahib. They met Hari Singh, *Mahant* of Gurudwara Keshgarh Sahib, who strongly objected to the admission of Kukas to the Gurudwaras. However, they fully explained to Hari Singh;

“That the temple being open to Sikhs and Hindus of every denomination, we could see no cause why, the Kukas should be excluded by us on the part of the

⁷³ File No. 451, Ganda Singh Collection, Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University, Patiala, p. 22.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 25.

⁷⁵ *Ibid*.

government. After a good deal of talking, the *Mahants* objections were reduced and he said that the Kukas should not uncover their heads, shout or do anything contrary to the customs of the shrine, and that if they came and went like other Sikhs he had no objection to urge.”⁷⁶

Moreover, McAndrew and Perkins also told the *Mahant* that there should be no disturbance on the part of *Nihangs* who had gathered over there to frighten the new reformers. He also sent Sardar Attar Singh to him to say that as we agreed to all he required so Government would hold him and his shrine responsible for any disturbance. As the *Mahant* had urged the risk of disturbance on the part of *Nihangs*, who had come in unusual numbers to their own temple of Anandpur. Mr. Perkins explained to *Mahant* Hari Singh that the *Nihangs* must keep quiet, or it would be not be well for him and all seemed satisfactory arranged.⁷⁷

In the official report from T.H. Thornton, Secretary of Government Punjab to T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner and Superintendent, Jalandhar, dated, 27th March, 1867 described that on the morning 19th March Ram Singh arrived there followed by some twenty mounted men and about 2500 people on foot. British officer directed Soodh Singh, one of head *Mahant*, who led the procession on horseback, to dismount and pay his respect to Mr. Perkins, the Deputy Commissioner. Within Ram Singh and Mr. Perkins held a long conversation, the followers of Namdhari sect standing outside. Baba Ram Singh stated his object was to perform the *Darshan* at the shrine Guru Gobind Singh; but that he was ready to do whatever the British officer ordered. Mr. Perkin explained to him the objections made to his followers uncovering the head and shouting. He seemed rather putout at this, and said that if his people recited the ‘*Shabads*’ he could not answer for them, as they lost all command of their actions. He told Namdhai Guru that under these circumstances they could not permit this to be done; it would give offence, was not according to Sikh custom and would hold himself and his followers responsible. Baba Ram Singh was agreed that the *Shabads* should not be recited and he would not take along with self more than hundred with him when he visited the temple.

In the evening Mr. Perkin with Sardar Atar Singh visited Namdharis camp. Baba Ram Singh seated a Shamiana surrounded by his followers, which had been

⁷⁶ Bhai Nahar Singh, p. 55.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.* p. 55.

about five thousand of them. They were flocking in from all quarters; they were quiet and orderly and men and women well-dressed. No any Namdhari follower was in a state of excitement. Mr. Forsyth, Commissioner of Jalandhar Division also arrived on the evening of 19th March. He checked the all arrangements. The presence of Commissioner had the best possible effect; the Sodhis, *Mahants* and head people of the place presented themselves.

The fair at Anandpur (Mahkowal) was attended by Ram Singh and his followers, who visited the shrine at Keshgarh and performed all the usual ceremonies without the slightest disturbance being created. The British officer directed Inspectors Fazl Hossain, Kutab Shah and Sardar Atar Singh to go the temple and see what took place, and to get the people to pass out as quickly as possible. Colonel McAndrew, Mr. Perkins, Deputy Commissioner, and Mr. Hatchell, Assistant District Superintendent, reached Anandpur by the 17th, and made every arrangement for keeping the peace.⁷⁸ In the official report it was mentioned that when Baba Ram Singh was approaching the temple Gurudwara Keshgarh Sahib and as the *Nihangs* in the Gurdwara of Anandpur had made sundry threats of disturbance. 30 *Nihangs* were marching in order, shouting, and armed with heavy clubs and small axes. As they passed the camp Mc Andrew and Deputy Inspector, Mr. Hatchell ordered them to halt and lay down their clubs. He agreed not to visit that shrines. They refused and commenced arguing in an excited state, they meant resistance. Then Mc. Andrew called the guards on duty, who were inside the tenets, and the *Nihangs* immediately founded themselves surrounded by thirty men armed with swords and their clubs were taken from them in very short time. They were returned to their own *Bunga*, where were about two hundred of their brother *Nihangs*. The band disarmed consisted of about fifty *Nihangs* and thirty heavy bludgeons and axes were taken them. The *Nihangs* had consulted together about Baba Ram Singh and the Namdharis visiting the temple. But the police acted with promptitude and the *Nihangs* seeing their opportunity lost, retired sulkily to their Gurdwara and after this no further attempt at disturbance took place.⁷⁹

The last part of the Forsyth report on Baba Ram Singh visits to Anandpur Sahib was an interesting indicator of how the British were by now trying to gather

⁷⁸ Nahar Singh, *Rebels Against the British Rule*, p. 53

⁷⁹ File No. 451, pp. 24-25.

detailed information about the Kukas and their contacts in order to weave a web of intrigue and surveillance against them.⁸⁰

In the last paragraph of report it was mentioned that, “the preservation of peace at Anandpur fair was a matter of no small moment to the whole Punjab and I trust the acknowledgements of the Government may be accorded to Colonel Mc. Andrew, Deputy Inspector General, and Mr. Perkins, Deputy Commissioner, for their exertions and excellent arrangements. Colonel Mc Andrew wanted to bring to the notice of his departmental superiors the good services rendered by the European and Native officers who aided him on the occasion. I would mention, however, the services of commandant Attar Singh, now a pensioned officer, who came at Colonel Mc Andrew’s bidding, and whose influence over Lakha Singh, Kuka, an old soldier in his regiment, helped materially in securing success for the arrangements made by the police.”⁸¹

The religion of the Sikhs and Namdharis sect is one. Both read the Shri Guru Granth Sahib but there was great animosity between them. The Nahungs, Akalis, Bedis and Sodhis were dissatisfied at Baba Ram Singh’s coming to Anandpur Gurdwara to worship. They were always in the habit of refusing admission to Namdharis and it was their intention not to have admitted them on the occasions. They were, however, admitted, but on the following conditions, to which Baba Ram Singh agreed for himself and follows:- Turbans not to be taken off head. The hair of the head should not to be opened. Shouting interdicted. When Baba Ram Singh with his followers visited the Keshgarh Sahib Gurdwara (Anandpur) and worshipped there. He gave as offering twenty five rupees at each place. But the *Pujaris* of the Keshgarh Sahib Gurdwara did not perform as the custom *Ardas* (pray) for him at which Baba Ram Singh was offended. Unlike it, Baba Ram Singh was pleased with the conduct of the *Pujaris* of Guru Teg Bahadur Gurdwara who had prayed for him.

On 20th March, Namdhari Guru wrote a letter in Gurmukhi to the *Pujaris* of Gurdwara Keshgarh Sahib and wanted to know the reasons for their refusal to perform *Ardas* on his behalf in the Gurudwara. He asked them whatever they did consider him as a Sikh of the Guru that they did not pray for him; he at the same time said that he did not care for their prayers; that a Sikh of Guru was one who was not

⁸⁰ Yogendra Bali, p. 98.

⁸¹ File no. 451, p. 25.

proud.⁸² The *Pujaris* verbally told the Namdhari Guru that there were following religious differences for their refusal:

1. That he sets himself a God. 2. That when making a convert, he does not give him Amrit to drink, as is the custom, but he whispers a muntur in his ear. 3. That when he makes convert, he says to him: '*Junum Guru Huzroo, ur bashee Guru Bhainee*' (Guru's birth place is Hazroo and he is a resident of Bhaini) whereas the Sikhs say: '*Junum Guroo Patna, ur Bashee Guroo Nundpore*' (Guru's birth place is Patna and he is a resident of Anandpur). 4. That whereas the Sikhs entering a place of worship they do not untie their hair or remove their turbans, Kukas do it so. That Kukas in exciting themselves to such a degree as to be at times insensible act like Mahomendam Faqueers, and cannot be Guru Sikhs.

Reciting to these queries Baba Ram Singh pointed out the shortcoming of the *Pujaris*. He replied that, "if they really acted up to the Sikh religion they would appreciate his doctrine. That they all doing contrary to the Granth by eating meat, drinking, lying, licentiousness, female infanticide and therefore Kukas do not consider them Sikhs."⁸³

There were great enmity between the *Nihungs* and Namdharis. Namdhari Guru Ram Singh's visit to Anandpur Sahib was a success in terms of scoring a moral victory over the lifestyle of the traditional *Pujaris*. He strongly believed in the spirit of Sikhism rather than emphasis on its form. It was also a success in terms of demonstrating the mass following of the Namdharis comprising of 8,000, of whom about two-thirds were men, and one-third women and children.⁸⁴ Moreover, the Namdhari Guru's spiritual message made an appeal to the then Sodhis too. Partap Singh of Rasauli and his sons Deva Singh, Sodhi Narinder Singh of Kurali and Sodhi Heera Singh expressed their willingness of becoming Namdharis.

Baba Ram Singh's visit to Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, was a great event of the year. He reached Amritsar on 25th October 1867, with his wife and daughter and more than twelve Namdhari Singhs. Before his arrival, about eight hundred Namdharis of his sect had already assembled at Amritsar. Arrangements of his stay were made outside Chatiwind area. Within two days, the number increased his followers to

⁸² Bhai Nahar Singh, p. 59.

⁸³ Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Namdhari Movement 1857-1959*, p. 26.

⁸⁴ Bhai Nahar Singh, p. 60.

twelve hundred. Baba Ram Singh arrived on 25th October at Amritsar and he was informed that he must meet with Commissioner and Police Inspector who made arrangements most successfully as far as crime and police arrangements that the Diwali fair passed of peacefully. Police Inspector, Narian Singh, was placed in charge of his camp, accompanied the Namdhari Guru wherever he went. He was told that he could go when and where he liked along but that, if he wished to visit the Darbar sahib, he could go at half past 5 A.M. with no more than 50 followers⁸⁵. It was on 27th October that the Namdhari Guru went to the temple with about 50 followers but when he reached the premises of Darbar Sahib, the number increased up to between 200 and 300, as his entire sect in Darbar Sahib joined him. He admitted at the temple and other place of worship round the tank, except at the Akal Bunga, where the *Nihungs* sit. The *Pujaris* refused to perform ardas on his behalf till he atoned for his religious lapses. The Namdhari Guru refused to comply with the allegation of the *Pujaris*. On 28th October, he called on the Commissioner; he again visited the Darbar Sahib after playing his homage at Darbar Sahib, and remained in his bunga for some time. In recognising his religious character, *Mahants* of Darbar Sahib gave him a *doshala* (Shawl) and a *pagree* (Turban) from Jhanda Bunga. The Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was admitted at the temple and other place of worships located around the *Sarover*. When a policemen obstructed the march of his followers, Bhai Lakha Singh a close confidant of the Namdhari Guru Ram Singh, lost his temper and abused the policeman. The Namdhari Guru avoided the unpleasant situation and restrained Bhai Lakha Singh.⁸⁶

In the February 1869, the Police Superintendent of Ferozepur district, Turton Smith, reported that several Namdharis were gathering near village Rupana in Ferozepur district.⁸⁷ It was stated that the Lamberdar of Ferozepur district had burnt some spinning wheels, a charpoy, and a plough, part of a cart, etc., and proceeded with the Namdharis in the direction of Tharajwala, a village in Sirsa district. The every movement of these disturbances of the part of the Namdharis was closely watched by Diwan Baksh, Deputy Inspector of Police. After some days, it was reported that the Namdharis had set upon him for observing their movements. The Namdharis attacked Diwan Bakash with his sword and injuring his horse. One Bili

⁸⁵ Nahar Singh, Kirpal Singh, p. 78.

⁸⁶ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*, p. 73.

⁸⁷ Nahar Singh, Kirpal Singh, p.108.

Singh stuck Diwan Baksh with an axe or a stick, and Mana Singh threw a spear at him. A constable who had accompanied the Deputy Inspector was assaulted, his sword broken and taken from him, and his coat cut through with a blow from the blade.⁸⁸ This confrontation took place near Kuraiwala (Sirsa). Diwan Baksh stated that the group of Namdharis was used to most seditious language, and proclaimed the Khalsa reign setting all authority at defiance. Upon the receipt of this report, Mr. Turton Smith, District Superintendent, Police Ferozepur, marched towards Tharajwala at the head of a strong police force.⁸⁹

Turton Smith and Wakefield, Assistant Commissioner, collected a large force of police comprising twenty foot police and fifteen mounted police accompanied by European officers. The police force arrived at Mukatsar at 2 A.M. on 1st March where it was joined by the acting Tehsildar, Alam Shah and Sodhi Mann Singh. They informed the officers that the Namdharis were assembled at Tharajwala. They refused to surrender; Alam Shah had only a few policemen with him and had not deemed it prudent to attempt coercion. At 2 P.M., the party approached Tehajwala. Inspector Kutab Shah and eight policemen, and Ali Mula, Superintendent of Settlements, were found waiting outside the village.⁹⁰ The Inspector had made an attempt through a leading Namdhari Mulak Singh of Phuliwanwala, to induce the Namdharis to surrender. But Maluk Singh declared his inability to persuade the Namdharis to do surrender. He suggested that it was Mastan Singh of Tharajwala who could be useful for this purpose. Mastan Singh had emerged as an independent Namdhari leader and enjoyed the support of a large Number of those Namdahris. It was reported that these Namdharis disposed off their land holding and collected their gold and silver ornaments and cash too. But they put all their belongings at the disposal of Mastan Singh. According to the police report, Mastan Singh was disgusted with Ram Singh's inaction and idea of restoring the Khalsa rule. He himself became aggressive when he demanded that Kutab Shah should surrender his horse as demanded as *Nazarana*. Moreover, he ridiculed the Inspector for his belief that the Englishmen would assist him. Mastan Singh further advised him to desert his falling Government and throw in his lot with the rising Namdhari cause. The Namdharis were so excited that they presented turban to the *Lamberdars* of Tharajwala and requested them to join the

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Kuldip Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh and His Movement*, Chandigarh, 2012, p. 49.

⁹⁰ Dr. Ganda Singh, *Kukian Di Vitheya*, Publication Bureau, Punjabi University, Patiala, 2000, p.57.

movement.⁹¹ However, the presence of European officers and the police had the desired effect on Mastan Singh and other Namdharis. Mr. Wakefield despatched Alam Shah and Man Singh to demand their unconditional surrender. They surrendered before the European officers and were disarmed and arrested. They were taken into custody at the police station of Malaut, in Sirsa district. These 44 prisoners were placed under trial before the Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepur. The Commissioner of Lahore instructed the Deputy Commissioner that these prisoners should be tried for rioting and not for attempting to wage war. The Deputy Commissioner was also instructed that only a few of them should be awarded with severe sentence.

Mastan Singh, Bela Singh and Beli Singh of Tharajwala, Bachittar Singh of Kuraiwala, Harnam Singh Sirsa, Manna Singh of Channu (sirsa), Sarmukh Singh of Bholwala (Mukatsar) was awarded various fines and imprisonments.⁹² The rest of the Namdharis were released without trial. Sodi Man Singh was made an Honorary Magistrate in consideration of his services on this occasion, and pecuniary rewards were distributed to the villagers.

Although the British Government, for administrative reasons, deliberately played down the implication of this incident at Tharajwala yet it indicated that the mission of the Namdhari Guru was not merely socio-religious. His motive to inculcate the material spirit among his followers was clearly perceptible in the activities of Namdharis in villages of Mukatsar, Ferozepur and Sirsa. They were ready to take on the British Empire. Moreover, this incident also shows the British Policy of appeasing the loyalist and punishing the rebels.⁹³

The British Government had brought up a powerful class of its allies by way of synchronising their vested interests with the British. These were the *Mahants* and *Pujaris*. Among the notable families were Majithia, Ahluwalia, Sandhanwalia and Ramgarhia. Powerful religious leaders were Baba Khem Singh Bedi in Rawalpindi, Bedis of Una and Dera Baba Nanak Sodhis of Anandpur, Kartarpur and Guru Harsahai in Ferozepur and Bagarian family in Malwa region or between Patiala and Nabha. Similarly, *Mahants* and *Pujaris* occupied the important historical Gurdwaras and prospered on the landed property attached to these Gurdwaras. They had established their stranglehold over the landed aristocracy as well as priestly classes.

⁹¹ Bhai Nahr Singh, p. 110.

⁹² Dr. Ganda Singh, *Kukian Di Vitheya*, p. 58.

⁹³ Joginder Singh, *Namdhari Guru Ram Singh*,

They enrolled them as the member of Darbars of Lieutenant Governor and Viceroy; made them Extra-Assist Commissioners and Honorary Magistrates. They were rewarded with Jagirs, pensions and letters of appreciations for rendering loyal services to the British. Similarly, the priestly class was also patronised by the British in terms of assigning land squares and *inams*, *Mahants* and *Pujaris* were allowed to register the Gurdwara landed property against their names. Moreover, *Mahants* and *Pujaris* of historical Gurdwara were put under *Sarbrah* who was nominated by the government.

The sage of Malerkotla was arrested in January 1872 A.D. Sixty six Namdharis were blown off by guns. It was Governments lucky chance to destroy the Namdhari movement.⁹⁴ Rajas of the Princely states had given all rendered help to suppress this movement. The *Mahants* of religious Gurdwaras gave full support to the British Government against the Namdharis. They were appreciating the barbaric act of British officers. They wrote a letter to the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab which was signed by Sardar Bakshish Singh Sandhawalia, Sardar Bhagwan Singh, Sardar Dyal Singh Majitha, Sardar Jwahar Singh Zafarwal, Sardar Mangal Singh Ramgarhia, Manager of Durbar Ssahib, Sardar Gulaab Singh Bhangowalia, Sardar Ajit Singh Akal Bunga, Bhai Bhagat Singh Granthi, Bhai Jassa Singh and Bhai Hira Singh Granthi.⁹⁵ The Letter reads:

“We the undersigned Sikhs off all classes of Amritsar, beg unanimously to submit that we have no connection or sympathy whatever with the Kuka Sect, which has recently become notorious. On the contrary we greatly differ from them on the most religious principles. We are happy that the Government has adopted most appropriate and excellent measures for controlling this wicked and misguided sect especially as the measures in question are calculated to deter ill-disposed people from committing mischief in future and in the event of any member of this deproved sect, committing crime sects as happened in the case of murder of the butchers at Amritsar. Moreover the Kukas do not differ from us in religious principles only they may be said our mortal enemies since by their misconduct and evil designs, they injured our honour in estimation of the Government and well

⁹⁴ Davinder Singh Gill, *Doubtful death of Maharaj Ram Singh Namdhari*, The Sikh Review, May 1992, p. 18.

⁹⁵ Home Judicial Files, progs., March 1872, No. 235, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 48.

levelled with dust, the services performed in 1857, through which we were regarded as well wishers and loyal subjects by the Government. But as the proverb says 'Truth is invulnerable'. The Government has found out that we had no share in the proceedings of the sect. As regarding the sect as our enemies, we are thankful to the Government for their action, which have been adopted, where by the desires of hearts have been fulfilled."⁹⁶

Then on May 16, 1872 reply to this letter was made by the Governor of Punjab and its reads:

"Certain misguided and desperate members of that new sect have been guilty of the most serious crime, with the cruelest fanaticism; they have murdered sleeping men, women and children under cover of night. In quest of plunder, they attacked the residence of a most respectable chief, severely wounded his son and the servants, they attempted to seize the town of Malerkotla with the arms and treasures appertaining to the state, for years together during the toleration extended by the British to every form of divine worship they have secretly plotted against it and under pretence of religious meeting have committed to hatch murder, rape and treason.

The reply appreciated the attitude of Sardars who were coming out to condemn the action of Kukas. Sardar Mangal Singh Ramgarhia was given a Khilat at this very Durbar Sahib at Amritsar for organising this command performance of course."⁹⁷

It is normal feature that whenever a reformer of the stature of Baba Ram Singh appears, he has to face the opposition from the priests, *Mahants* and *Jadirdars* and the atrocities by the Government.⁹⁸ Baba Ram Singh knew that the *Mahants* and *Pujaris* were not only in acting against the Namdharis. They had the support of Sikh chiefs, Sardars and leaders of Singh Sabhas, who were being created by the government to defame and oppose the Namdhari movement. These sections were put blame on Namdhari Sect that their Guru was reciting *Kalama*- the Islamic fundamental. The

⁹⁶ Master Tara Singh, *Toppa Garjdiya Gayian ate Kuke Agaah Vadhdei Gaye*, Namdhari Darbar, Bhaini Sahib, p. 10.

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁹⁸ Sant Singh, *The Namdhari Sikhs*, Sri Bhaini Sahib, Ludhiana, 2010, p.89.

Namdhari Guru reiterated that he and his followers believed and worshiped Granth Sahib and Dasam Granth alone. They also obeyed the *hukam* of the ten masters and recite *gurmantar*. They confessed that the Namdharis were those persons who believed that Sikhism was nothing but a belief in *Guru Shabad*. How could these persons be declared *tankhayias*? The Namdharis Guru understood the motives of landed aristocracy, priestly class and later on the Singh Sabhaites.

After the annexation of Punjab, particularly after the revolt of 1857, the British Government began to consolidate the administration of Punjab. The Chief Commissioner Sir John Lawrence maintained the status and *jagirs* of the Chiefs, Sardars, Priests and other social and religious leaders. Most of the Sikhs employed by Maharajas, native chiefs and Sardars were actively loyal. Sardar Atar Singh rendered his loyal services, political suggestions, opinions and information to the British Government.⁹⁹ Sardar Atar Singh was collateral of the ruler of Patiala, and belonged to the village of Bhadaur, in the present day Sangrur district of Punjab. He was born in 1833 as the son of Kharak Singh. From the beginning, he had a bent for learning and gained proficiency in Urdu, Persian, Punjabi and English.¹⁰⁰ His father was belonged to Phulkian family. Bhadaur State was a portion of Ferozepur district and in the Pakhowal tehsil till 1858, when it was attached to Patiala State.¹⁰¹ He was a good scholar and writer. He translated *Rahitnama* of Bhai Nand Lal and Prahlad Rai into English. For study of Sanskrit learning he was honoured by the British with the title of *Mahamahopadhyaya*. He was equally at ease in the world of Arabic-Persians learning for which he earned the title of *Shamass-ul-Ulema*.¹⁰² In 1873 he got published English translation of *Sakhi- A description of Guru Gobind Singh's Religion and Doctrines from Benaras*. Atar Singh also wrote *Travels of Guru Tegh Bagadur and Guru Gobind Singh* which was published from Allahabad in 1876. He also helped Dr. Trumph, V.V. Veresgegin, a Russian Artist and I.P. Minayev, also a Russian traveller.¹⁰³ He was also good scholar so his all rare collection of Persian, Sanskrit, Arabic Punjabi and English books preserved in the library at Bhaduar which was after that shifted to Ludhiana. These all books are about in 2500 in

⁹⁹ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, Arsee Publishers, New Delhi, 2013, p. 11.

¹⁰⁰ Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol.IV, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1962, p. 217.

¹⁰¹ Navtej Singh, *Review-Article, Sardar Atar Singh, The Kukas and the British: Spying for Loyalty*, *The Punjab Past and Present*, Vol. XXXVIII, PART-I, Serial No. 95, April 2017, p.105.

¹⁰² Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol.IV, P. 217.

¹⁰³ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p. 12.

numbers. For his scholarly work he was appointed a member of the Senate of the Punjab University College, Lahore, in 1870 and already in 1869 he had been elected a member of *Anjuman-i-Punjab*.¹⁰⁴ He was also selected a member of Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1869. Sardar Atar Singh's services in the cause of Singh Sabha movement are as noteworthy as his loyalty to the British. He was the founder president of Guru Singh Sabha, Ludhiana, established in 1884. He also took a leading part in the establishment of the *Khalsa Diwan* at Lahore of which he became patron-in-chief. In 1886 he had been nominated as member of General Committee of the Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple) at Amritsar. Atar Singh was most loyal, sincere and well wisher the British especially at the time of the uprising of the Namdhari Movement. He well informed upon all the matters connected with Namdhari Movement. Atar Singh was consulted on the question of official permission of Maharaja Duleep Singh to visit India. He opposed the proposal and his advice was one of the factors which led to the British refusal for the deposed Maharaja to visit the Punjab.¹⁰⁵

The loyalty was in his blood. He was belonged to that family which had traditional loyalty to the British Government in its favour. He called the Namdhari Outbreak as 'Mad Outbreak'. Atar Singh Bhadaur gave all rendered help to British regime against the Namdharis. He had the information of the names of Namdharis visiting their Guru at Rangoon. He also sent specimen of handwriting of Baba Ram Singh to the Government. He supplied day to day account of Namdharis in detail.¹⁰⁶

Atar Singh informed the British Government about the Namdhari danger in his letter to Secretary of Punjab Government, dated 31 January, 1871. He stated that, "After an examination of their creed and acts that their aim is more political than religious and that removal of their leader does not do away with the need of still watching them closely. It is not as though the influence of one man had excited religious favour: the aspiration for rule was amongst them."¹⁰⁷ He also stated in his letter of 3rd March, 1872, to Secretary of Punjab Government, "Amongst the Kukas, their chief's members preaching that these betoken the return and reign of Ram Singh. Hence it is advised that he and his relations be sent out of India, and his house in his

¹⁰⁴ Harbans Singh, *The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism*, Vol.IV, P. 217.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Navtej Singh, *Review-Article, Sardar Atar Singh, The Kukas and the British: Spying for Loyalty*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁷ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, pp. 76-77.

native village demolished.”¹⁰⁸

Atar Singh published the Sakhi book which was teating of the origin of Kuka sect. Another Sakhi, which he was willing to translate for Government but desires to know the nature of a book called Rehatnamah, which was being translated by order. The Rehatnamah was a story current among the Nmdharis which was said to be out of the Rehatnamah. He described the story that, “Guru Gobind Singh having said that he would come again in a new life to reign over the country when a certain papal tree would overpread a babul. This having been accomplished, the Kukas believe Ram Singh to be his incarnation. After much thought and investigation the writer finds that no cause beyond these saying and prophecies has inflated the sect into seditious acts, Ram Singh having educated them into believing him to be the incarnation. In giving a long forecast by Guru Gobind as to the vicissitudes of power in India, the battles to be fought, predominance and then the decline of British, and finally the ascension to the throne of Ram Singh.”

According to popular belief the Guru Granth Sahib is now considered to be the eleventh Guru, but Baba Balak Singh of Hazro, in the Rawalpindi district, who initiated Baba Ram Singh and was the founder of the Namdhari sect¹⁰⁹, is also looked on by some as the eleventh Guru. Baba Ram Singh is recognised as twelfth Guru by the Namdhari followers.

Atar Singh also translated the Rehatnamah for the British Government along with the Karni-namah, a booklet containing an account of what a Sikh has done and will do. He believed that it was not the production, as it claimed to be of Guru Nanak, but that of somebody in the following reign, just as had been done by people in most books of prophecy because of the greater respectability and credence attaching to antiquity. The *Karni-Namah* was interesting and important as containing predictions which guide the Sikhs. Ram Singh applied many of the saying to him, and adopted some of the notions. And indicates how very partial fulfilment had caused Ram Singh to claim that he had come to accomplish all.¹¹⁰

Atar Singh submitted the papers regarding the Namdhari Movement. He was entreated their very attentive perusal. He was to pay special attentions on the activities

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 77.

¹⁰⁹ Secret File, January 1882, No. 558-559, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p.8.

¹¹⁰ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, pp. 83-84.

of the Namdhari. He stated that, "The Namdhari sect was depressed and apprehensive, and had ceased gathering for consultation because of the watch on them, and it was thought that, thus watched, they will soon abandon their designs. If the Government wished to be perfectly acquainted with their proceedings, offers to send trusted men to simulate Kukaism and learn their intentions. He mentioned some Kukas having visited Ram Singh at Rangoon, and thought that the practice should be stopped."¹¹¹ He also advised to British regime that, "To keep a special watch on Kukas village of Sohewa; if Kukas still visit there it indicates a continuance of evil aims, and the need for care." He also suggested that, "A close watch be kept on those of the sect who had sold out their property, as some appear to have gone for service in Nepal and Kshmir which is matter deserving of attention. The mutiny and the Kuka outbreak are instance in point while ignorance and desire for predominance lead to rebellion. Religion is only a cloak for political ambitions; and religious prophecies, skilfully put, mislead the ignorant, who are strongly impressed by them."¹¹² He reported that differences of belief between the Kukas and the orthodox Sikhs, who reject Ram Singh as the incarnation of Guru Gobind Singh, and therefore, disbelieve him; whilst the Kukas affirm their ideas to be the true Sikhism. He also reported that the girls of higher class and caste who was waiting of Ram Singh return back and had to married with him. He mentioned that which Namdharis followers had visited Ram Singh at Rangoon had returned to proclaim that he would certainly come back.

On 3rd June 1874 Atar Singh mentioned in his report that certain Kukas had visited Ram Singh at Rangoon, some of them who had gone to Russia and Jammu. Also there were some rumours in Kuka Circles that Baba Ram Singh in Delhi jail. He also expressed his desire permission print the translation of sixty eight Sakhis. But he criticized Dr. Trumpp's translation of Japji Sahib¹¹³

In the report on 2nd October, 1874 to Sir R.H. Davies, Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, Sardar Atar Singh reported the paper on rise and progress of the Kukas by it he described the antecedents of Ram Singh, and showed how it was easy for him to interpolate passages in the prophetic books favourable to his pretension, and construe others for himself. He also stated that, "As a step towards unity and strength he wished to introduce intertribal marriages social intercourse. Ram Singh proceeded to

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 80.

¹¹² *Ibid*.

¹¹³ Navtej Singh, *Sardar Atar Singh, The Kukas and the British: Spying for Loyalty*, p. 107.

attack on the orthodox Sikh faith to the extent of pulling down sacred buildings and quarrelling with the Brahmans. Points out his other acts and steps toward an outbreak attack on the Malerkotla, the pretext of his follower being that one of their sect had been dishonoured and they were going to suppress kinde-killing. He also sent me to Russia, expecting invasion from that country. Malaud attack was only to secure arms and horses of a crusading spirit. Ram Singh hoped to escape all responsibility; he gave information to the authorities of a Kukas attack on Malerkotla.”¹¹⁴

Atar Singh informed to Sir R.H. Davies, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab on 13th November, 1874, a large body of Kukas have assembled in two villages for the purpose of hearing the Granth read, which was generally done to excite fanaticism and bloodshed¹¹⁵. He advised that such latitude should not be given, and that the gathering should be disappeared. The Kukas have not abandoned for seditious consultation.¹¹⁶

In the report of 15 February, 1875 he mentioned that a fair was recently held in their sacred village Takhatpura of which the Government must have been apprised. The leading Kukas were present on this occasion which would need special watch. He also described about the inter caste marriages in Kukas sect in his report of 23rd May 1875. He mentioned that, “The celebration of two infant marriages amongst Kukas, between families of different sub-divisions, and that the chief Kuka present proposed to encourage such marriages between various castes. They favour also the idea of allowing girls to select husbands for themselves. He also informed that the Kukas had largely assembled at Khote on a marriage occasion. Both the brother and manager of Ram Singh were present, with four Subas. These innovations are with a view to strengthening by spreading their sect, and are significant only because of this object.”¹¹⁷ He also stated that a fracas look place between some Punjab Nirmalas Sikhs and Sikhs of Abchalnagar in Deccan Hyderabad. Also that the who was ‘betrothed’ to Ram Singh had three letters of Ram Singh and she used sing the song with other women to expressive of Guru’s coming and of the English fight; and the Russ (Russia) will fight with Amir (Afganistan) and aided by the Kashmir Maharaja

¹¹⁴ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p. 86.

¹¹⁵ Navtej Singh, p. 108.

¹¹⁶ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p. 88.

¹¹⁷ *ibid*, p. 90.

and the Kukas, will prevail in India, and the Guru will come again.¹¹⁸ He reported that “the Kukas had collected the funds enabled him to reach Rangoon. Also draws attention to need of watching Ram Singh’s brother who promotes and manages seditious conversation. Give particulars of some Kuka movements for foreign assistance, as well as a list of those who have been to Rangoon from time to time. An item of expectations entertained over Dalip Singh coming to India added.”¹¹⁹

On 26th October 1878 he stated informed to Punjab Government that a Kuka brought some recommendatory letter from Rangoon, which was one for the Raja of Nabha, and other for two Sardars of Badrukhan. Budh Singh, brother and successor to Ram Singh was in the secret.¹²⁰ He also mentioned in the report of 1st December 1878 that, “About fifty in all have from time to time been visiting Ram Singh at Rangoon, who gave them letters for many leading Kukas here, containing harsh language against Government, copies of some of which the write submitted to government. Is informed that many of these letters has been forwarded to the Government of India.”¹²¹ Atar Singh gave detail about the halting places of the Kukas who had journeyed to Rangoon. In these letters subject matter are addressed the prominent Kukas. In his letters Ram Singh warns the Kukas to disclose nothing which may lead to the discovery that the sepoy on guard over him are favourably disposed towards him. Amongst the letters in one making mention of a certain women whose house is a rendezvous and halting place for journeying Kukas; it will be seen that in his letters sent to Government.¹²²

Atar Singh informed that Nrain Singh was sent to Kabul and Russia by Ram Singh to meet other Kukas who had gone that way. In the report of 26th September 1879 Mangal Singh the leading Kuka professing to cut himself off from the sect.¹²³ Some letter which show that Budh Singh is displeased with him for ceasing to contribute towards the general fund. Atar Singh believes that this was from disappointment that he was not selected as Ram Singh Successor. He also suggested that Ram Singh be deported to some place in Europe where there would be no chance

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 92.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 93.

¹²⁰ Navtej Singh, p. 109.

¹²¹ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p. 101.

¹²² *Ibid.* 102.

¹²³ Navtej Singh, p. 109.

of communication with him.¹²⁴

In the letter to Private Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, Punjab, on 6th February 1880 Atar Singh mentioned about a translation of the *Karni-Namah*. The prophecy was that of the Khalsa levelling tombs and mosques, of its reign to the terror of the Turk. Having conquered all countries, and all mankind become Sikh, no other religion will remain. At the end is: "The English will go away, having sold the country." The Kukas did demolish tombs and mosques, and went greater lengths on being unchecked.¹²⁵ The letter of February 1880 of Ram Singh sent a copy to Punjab Government by Atar Singh. The letter exhorting the Kukas to secret meeting and prayers for the downfall of the British, and announcing that the time of the Russian invasion was at hand. It states that the people are cruel and therefore old and young must suffer great trouble.¹²⁶ In 1880 the house of a certain Kuka was searched, unsuccessfully, by the Police Superintendent on suspicion of papers from Ram Singh being concealed there. He stated that however, that the Kukas suspects the writer of having informed Government against him. Mentions a person through whom he shall be able to extract valuable information regarding the police suspicion.¹²⁷

On 8th November 1880 Atar Singh submitted to the Lieutenant Governor, Punjab detailed state of affairs of the Kukas; that they believed that their movement were known to government but they started for Rangoon in July from different places so as to meet on the way. Others joined them through Ambala and Calcutta. He also mentioned their names, mode of journey, halting place, disguises and assembly; their replies when interrogated, their halting place in Rangoon; the guards over Ram Singh and he locality, his attendants and other particulars.¹²⁸ "Having near Ram Singh's prison house on pretext of worshipping at an adjacent shrine, they saw him (Baba Ram Singh) walking on top; and on perceiving them he burst into loud talk in the manner of a mad man."¹²⁹ On 30th May 1883 the Secret Police Department enquired about Kuka activities in Amritsar district. That certain Kukas of Patiala had gone to Abchalnagar and that if the Patiala President of Council was trying to reconcile the Kukas with the Orthodox Sikhs. Atar Singh replied that the Native states were lax in

¹²⁴ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p. 104.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.* 105.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 107.

¹²⁸ Navtej Singh, p. 110.

¹²⁹ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p.110

suppression of Kuka activities that a Kuka had gone to Abchnagar and that the priests there were sympathetic to the Kuka and they considered Khalsa and Kukas identical¹³⁰.

By this letter to Private Secretary Lieutenant Governor of Punjab on 30th August 1887, Atar Singh stated that, “A notorious fakir named Harnam Singh, Jat of Rampur in Patiala territory, who preached that Dalip Singh and the Russians will come together to this country and a righteous Government will be established, when no man shall eat flesh or drink liquor. He further said that one Thaman Singh had predicted the advent of Russia, and illuminated his house in honour of it, at a time when nothing was known of Russia. He also gave the suggestion that Fakir Harnam Singh should be watched, as it is such persons and materials that spread excitement and disturbance among the people, the spoken word being soon reduced to writing and circulated, as the case before the outbreak of 1857.”¹³¹

Sardar Atar Singh was most loyal, sincere and well wisher of the British Government. He gave all valuable or important information about all Namdharis activities. He was a most intelligent, highly educated and loyal to government. He was always willing and ready to assist the British Government officers in all matters of the administration. His intelligence and loyalty, and particularly his knowledge of Sikhs character and literature, had made him a valuable referee in matters of general and political interence and importance for the British regime. According to Col. H.C. Moore, “Atar Singh’s loyalty and valuable services had rendered to the British Government not only in instance but on former occasions, in time trouble and danger.”¹³² Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana has mentioned about Atar Singh in the letter of 29th March 1877. He stated that, “Sardar Atar Singh Bhadaur is wonderfully well informed upon all matters connected with the Kukas and their political aspirations. He is one of most sincere well-wisher of our Government, I believe, thoroughly to be trusted.”¹³³ He was awarded with many titles and membership by the British Government.

Namdhari Baba Ram Singh had questioned the authority of the *Mahants* and *Pujaris* for issuing *Hukamnamas* against him and his followers. According to him,

¹³⁰ Navtej Singh, p. 111.

¹³¹ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, p.117

¹³² *Ibid*, p. 42.

¹³³ *Ibid*, p. 44.

they had no moral authority to issue the *Hukamnamas* against him. He argued that issuing *Hukamnamas* against Guru's creation was tantamount to issuing *Hukamnamas* against the Sikh Guru himself. He challenged the *Pujaris* that if they were morally powerful they could vanquish the Namdharis otherwise they should regret over their own actions. He reminded them that they had already done a considerable damage to him and his followers. Now it was the turn of the *Pujaris* and their supporters. He further told them that they should take his word seriously. He asked the *Pujaris* of the *Akal Bunga* to circulate his letter among the rest of the *Pujaris* of other *Takhats*.

He informed the *Pujaris* that he could have challenged their authority earlier too but he thought that they would themselves see the truth. It was due to their ignorance that they disallowed Namdharis to pay their homage in the Gurdwaras and perform ardas or prayer on their behalf. He regretted to know that Namdharis were insulted and beaten up by the *Pujaris* on several occasions. If Namdharis dared to question the *Pujaris*, they told them that they were acting according to the *Hukamnamas* issued by head priest of the *Akal Bunga*. The Namdhari Guru reminded the *Pujaris* that they should not have been acting against the Namdharis in a hurry because it was only the devils acted in that manner. The Namdhari Guru further told to the *Pujaris* that their actual intention was to give bad name to the Namdharis. He understood the motives of the Sikh landed aristocracy, priestly classes and other British supporters who systematically promoted loyalist culture on the one hand and were eliminating Namdharis on the other hand.

Namdhari Guru Ram Singh was not afraid of the rulers and their allies-Sardars and priests who wanted to demolish the Namdharis. He was absolutely clear about the reasons for which the wealthy and priestly classes were opposed to his followers. He noted that right from Guru's period, there had been a contradiction between the wealthy and the people aspiring for spiritual quest. If his contemporary wealthy sections opposed the Namdhari Sikhs, it was not surprise. They were cursed people. Crying foul was their habit.

The Namdharis relations with the Akalis started on the note of contentious issues like position of living Guru. The Akalis and the Singh Sabhaities opposed this assertion. On this issue Namdharis and Akalis clashed on many occasions. Second is that in Sikhism marriages is done in the front of guru granth sahib, but in the Namdhari sect the marriages done in front of *Agni Kund (Havan)*. In Namdhari sect

performed marriages in the front of *Haven* and this ceremony is called the *Vedi* ceremony. Because the old ceremonies done according to the ritual of the *Vedi*. The Namdhari Sikhs believes that the marriages of the Sikh gurus were performed according to the ritual of *Vedi*. That is way they followers the *Vedi* ceremony.¹³⁴ Akalis put the blame that Namdharis did not Show due respect to the Sikhs Sacred Granth (Guru Granth Sahib) because they believed in his living Guru. The British government divided the Sikhs on the basis of the policy of divide and rule. The Akali and Namdhari were separated from each other. It was the trick of the British government. The Akali supported the British government because they did not want the British government to be against him.¹³⁵ Namdhari Sikhs believe that *Dohra* “*Agya bhai akal ki tabhe chalaeyeo panth, sbhh sikhian ko hukam hain guru maneyo granth*” which is written in guru granth sahib. These were written in 1920, completed on 1923 and this is considered to be 1925. It was written under the influence of British government. Parlahad Singh wrote it first and then Giani Gian Singh wrote it again.¹³⁶

Inder Singh Chakarvartey took a serious note of the propaganda of the Khalsa Samachar and asserted that Guru Granth Sahib was not a personal property of any institution or organisation.¹³⁷ This clashe of allegation and counter allegation continued between the Namdharis and Akalis during the 1920-1930. In July 1923 at Tarn Taran occurred incident between Namdharis and Akalis.

The Namdharis were always enthusatics about go to the Tarn Taran on the occasion of Amavas fair. Namdharis went to Tarn Taran on the Chaudas day. Namdharis diwan was held at tarn Taran. Sardar Nidhan Singh Alam, Sant Jawind Singh Khiyala, Sant Kartar Singh Wadhala, Bhai Hira Singh Maskin, Sant Mohan Singh Wadhala, Bhai Inder Singh Chakarwarti, Suba Diyal Singh, Suba Surjan Singh, Sardar Jowala Singh, Jathedar Waltoha and other Namdharis leaders also reached Tarn Taran on the Chaudas day.¹³⁸ The Namdharis *Dewan* was held at Tarn Taran on the amavas the 10th and 11th instant. The Namdharis numbering about 5000 came from all parts of the country. The meetings of the Diwan were held at the maidan near the Thakardwara and the audience consisted of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs

¹³⁴ Interview, Surjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

¹³⁵ Interview, Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, 13 March 2020.

¹³⁶ Interview, Surjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March 2020.

¹³⁷ Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Nmadhari Movement*, p.169.

¹³⁸ The Tribune, 18 July, 1923, p.4.

and others on the both days. At the very first meeting the communiqué of the Shiromni Gurdwara Parbandhak committee prohibiting the holding of meetings and lectures in the Parkarma of Darbar Sahib without the previous permission of the local committee, was condemned and declared intended to place a ban on the Namdharis.¹³⁹ The Namdhari Sahidi Dal passed the following resolutions unanimously in the meeting. Resolved that the S.G.P.C about holding dewans and delivering speeches in *Parkarma* of Darbar Sahib. The *Sahidi Dal* future that objects of the above communiqué is nothing except to put a stop the Namdharis *Diwans* in *Parkarma* forever. Hence the *Sahidi Dal* was not ready to submit to the illegal communiqué.¹⁴⁰ A resolution was therefore passed to assert their longstanding right by standing a *Jatha* to hold a *Diwan* as usual in the *Parkarma*. The *Jathas* of all districts wanted to undertake the services, each wishing to be the first, but the *Shahidi Dal* executive body came to the decision that the *jatha* of the Sialkot district was despatched after receiving specific instructions and taking solemn pledge of remaining non-violent in ill circumstances. Then after four hours another *jatha* followed under the same conditions to relieve first one. The *diwan* in *parkarma* came to close at about 7 p.m. without any outward event. In the evening meeting was held at the Maidan and speeches were delivered by Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam and Sant Mangal Singh. before leaving Tarn Taran on the 12th morning, the Namdharis went in a procession round the parkarma to the Darbar Sahib and after paying their homage to the temple retired in all humility to their Bunga, where procession terminated with due solemnity. When the Namdharis were proceedings to the Darbar Sahib the Akalis gathered together in a very large number obviously apprehending that Namdharis wanted to take procession of the place.

OBJECTION ON THE PEMPHLET

The Namdharis have a Bunga of their own the *Parkarma* of Tarn Taran Sahib and they always preach in the front of the Bungas on the Amavas day. Near the Bunga Bhai Ram Singh Namdhari of Ludhiana started selling a *Gurmukhi* pamphlet entitled “12th incarnation of Satya Guru Ram Singh”. He had been doing so only for a few minutes when some Akalis objected to his selling the pamphlet. As other persons were also selling newspapers and pamphlets on various objects in the *Parkarma*

¹³⁹ The Tribune, 16 August, 1923, p.3.

¹⁴⁰ The Tribune, 14 August, 1923, p.4.

without any let of interferences and Akalis objected to Bhai Ram Singh selling his pamphlet on the ground that they would not allow the name of Guru Ram Singh ji to be mentioned in the *Parkarma*, he refused to desist and comply with the unjustifiable and fanatical demand of the Akalis. Accordingly altercation ensued between Bhai Ram Singh and Akalis. Seeing that argument would not lead to any thing certain Akalis who wore the badges of '*Nirbhai Akali Jatha*' went to Nidhan Singh Alam in the Namdhari Bunga and said "Because under orders to the local Gurdwara Committee no pamphlets can be sold in the Parkarma or with a distance of twelve feet outside. It's you may stop the men from selling the pamphlets."¹⁴¹

Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam enquired if any resolution or proclamation of the Gurdwara Committee prohibiting such sale of pamphlet could be shown to the vendor and that he could be asked to stop the sale only if such a resolution or proclamation was forthcoming. Otherwise he could not be asked not to sell his pamphlet, while several other books and newspapers were being similarly sold. On hearing this Akali Jathedars went away to bring a copy of the alleged proclamation. The Namdharis waited for them for some time but they did not return. Some other Akalis however came with one Bhai Mukand Singh of Amritsar and demanded the stoppage of the sale of pamphlet. Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam said, "I have already requested that we may be furnished with a copy of the instructions, if any issued by local Gurdwara Committee for the Gurdwara of the pilgrims or the restrictions imposed on them, so that we may know the orders we are asked to comply with"¹⁴² he also said that while not desiring to interfere with the administration of the Darbar Sahib, the Namdharis were not bound to obey such instructions and disregarded the feelings of their Panth and that, being responsible men, they should base their demand for stopping the sale of pamphlet on such reasons as would satisfy the vendor. On hearing this Akalis remained silent for some time and looked each other, and ultimately left with the remark, "you ought to stop the sale of the pamphlet; otherwise the consequence will not be good"¹⁴³.

Another Akali *Jatha* came the third time, accompanied by a policeman, who on enquiry said that he had come at the request of the Akalis, but Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam asked them also to produce a copy of the proclamation and reported what has

¹⁴¹ The Tribune, 18 July, 1923, p. 4.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

said before. He also added, “we do not want to do anything even unintentionally which might be a cause of offence to anyone. We therefore, want to know from the proclamation what duties. Positive and negative the local committee has imposed on pilgrims. The head constable also advised the Akalis to furnish proof of the fact that the local committee had prohibited the sale of the tracts. The Akalis said nothing to this, but left with the threat, “this will not good for you.” Which was a clear hint as to what was coming but Mr. Alam did not grasp its full significance at that time.

While these incidents were happened a Namdharis religious *diwan* was going on under the banyan tree. Namdharis started coming to diwans in the form of jathas. Then number soon swelled to four or five thousands and they surrounded forty or fifty Namdharis on the north or south. The Namdharis were absorbed in singing the shabads with their visual devotion and did not notice that they had been besieged. Bhai Nidhan Singh, Bhai Jawind Singh was still at the Bunga. On hearing the recital of the trouble by four or five thousands men, they looked outside and found that forty or fifty Namdharis had been surrounded by thousands of Akalis. Fearing last any untoward consequences might ensue, they came out to advise their men to keep their heads cool and remain non-violent under all contingencies. As soon as Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam joined the besieged Namdharis, the Akalis turned out all such persons from diwan as were neither Akalis nor Namdharis. After this Akalis blew their whistles as a signal for general attack on the Namdharis. The attack was from both sides. Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam words to the Namdharis which were, “*khlasa ji, whatever happens do not lift your hand.*”

The Akalis went on assaulting the unresisting Namdharis from all sides with *lathis*, *kulharis* (Hatchets) and *kirpans*. The callousness, cruelty and brutality with which, the Akalis fell upon their helpless victims. The Namdharis did not move from their seats and continued to sing the song, “*Waheguru*”. Thousands of spectators saw these scenes of terrible and calculated brutality from the roofs of the neighbouring Bungas. They could not bear the sight of the Namdharis being struck with *safajungs*, *lathis*, and *Kirpans* in the most inhuman manner, and being dragged in an unconscious state by their sacred *keshas* and thrown into the tank.

After finishing with the Namdharis outside, thousands of Akalis attacked the Namdharis *Bunga*. They shattered the doors, broke iron bars, and forced their entry into *Bunga*. Scores of Akalis performed the sacred services of beating each Namdharis

in the *Bunga*. Those Akali who could not get entry into the *Bunga* for want of space sent forth a shower of bricks bats towards the Namdharis, the Akalis send disclaim that you are a Namdhari we shall force you to say that you will not hence forth regard 'guru Ram Singh as your guru'. Bhai Nidhan Singh was beaten with wooden rods of a charpoy and also received kirpan thrusts. The Akais addressed, "Art thou the wretch Nidhan Singh Alam wilt regard guru Ram Singh a guru, wilt thou again oppose the Akalis". The brave Namdharis, however were entirely unaffected and until they became unconscious went on saying, "*Dhan Satguru Ram Singh, Dhan Satguru Ram Singh, Tera Bhana Metha Lage*".¹⁴⁴

Bhai Nidhan Singh uttered their following report to the extremely in sluing remarks of the Akalis who were intoxicated with the lust of blood and their insensate fanaticism, "yes, I am that Alam, and a Cleve of Satya Guru Ram Singh ji maharaj. You may cut my body to pieces, but the threats of cowards like you cannot deter me from giving up his job. I cannot give up my religion out of fear of persons like you." On hearing this several Akalis fell upon Mr. Alam, and would have succeeded putting a permanent blot on the *Khalsa Panth* from this abiding shame. He looks him under the protection and inters captured blows of the infuriated Akalis, and thus saved his life. Another reason why he was saved was just at the criminal juncture, the Akalis commanders in charge of the expedition blow their whistles, when was the signal for their retreat from the *Bunga*. Afterwards returned to the *Bunga* broke down the locks of the closed rooms and forcibly carried away utensils, flour, clothes and other property.¹⁴⁵

All these proceedings lasted for about two hours. When on their return of their head *Jathedar* the Akalis gave a report of all their exploits, he expressed his sorrow at the news that Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam was still alive and other persons had been rendered to hospital.

The Akalis activities were not confined to men alone. They treated the women in the *Bunga* in most disgraceful manner. These women were pushed and handled a most rude manner and the most obscene abuse was addressed to them. The operations of the Akalis were most thoroughgoing. Every Namdhari wherever found was beaten to unconsciousness. Namdharis were arrested the Akalis and produced before their

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ *ibid*, p.1.

committee as accused persons for trial. They were given the offer of release on condition that they would refuse to recognise as their Guru Ram Singh as their guru. They contemptuously refused the offer and said they were prepared to die for their religion. When the Akalis heard that the Tehsildar was coming, they released the arrested Namdharis after administering several beatings. So far thirty five wounded Namdharis have been admitted to the Tarn Taran hospital and two with serious injuries have reached Amritsar.

It may also be stated in conclusion, that Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam has told the police that he did not want to make any statement to police or be a party to any legal proceedings against his own brethren meaning the Akalis.

Namdharis, who have set the example of compact non-violent in word and deed by calmly receiving severe beating.¹⁴⁶

Next day at 10 o'clock in the morning the Namdharis wounded in the Akali Namdharis fracas at Tarn Taran on July 13th arrived by railway train and directly marched in a procession to the city. In the front of the procession there were nine beds of wounded Namdharis¹⁴⁷. They were followed by about twenty of the slightly injured Namdharis. Behind these was a well regulated procession of thousands of Namdharis Sikhs almost all had a *lathi* or a *takwa* on their shoulders. None was seen wearing a kirpan. At different places in the city the speakers delivered speeches narrating tragically the events at Tarn Taran and the tale of the alleged cruel doings of the Akalis. They used very strong language against the Akalis and deplored the violent character of the Akalis who according to them has pretended to be non-violent before Mr. Beaty. They reminded the Hindus as to how Akalis have demolished their temple the precincts of the Golden Temple and exhorted them to cut off connections with them. They addressed the Muslims and the Udasis and asked them to stand up in a body against the Akalis to check their growing high handedness. To the government they appealed that they the Akalis should be deprived of their kirpans. The procession was very impressive and created a deep sense of sorrow in the heart of the passerby. The Namdharis were stayed in their *Dharmshalas* near the Sultan Wind gate and were expected to hold a *Diwan* in the Jalliwala Bagh to protest against the Akalis high

¹⁴⁶ The Tribune, 15 July, 1923, p.3.

¹⁴⁷ The Tribune, 19 July, 1923, p.6.

handedness.¹⁴⁸

The fracas between Namdharis and Akalis was a thoroughly regrettable performance so far as the community as a whole was concerned, and it was painful for the S.G.P.C to have referred to it. But the deliberately preventer version being circulated in the press and the problem in an almost indecent style by the Namdhari Parbandhak Dal leaves the committee no alternative except to seek the press again¹⁴⁹. The main issues were:-

Was there a procession of Shri Guru Granth Sahib?

Did Namdharis persist was not standing up to do honour to Shri Guru Granth Sahib as was the duty of a Sikh or not?

Were people on the both sides wounded or not? Or were only the procession aggressive and were the Namdhais retaliatory as they calm?

Was there any official or secant of the temple or any already well recognised *jatha* or even any particular *jatha* specially organised for the purpose who fought the Namdharis?

The Shiromani Committee has made full inquiry and can say with a clear conscience that version given by it will be done out by any impartial intervestigation. As far the Champaign of reviling carried on by Namdharis.¹⁵⁰

Bhai Hari Singh member of the working committee and Bhai Teja Singh *Jathedar* Shri Akal Takhat Sahib were sent to inquire on the spot and report.¹⁵¹ They interviewed both parties as well as the authorities of the Gurdwara and saw the wounded. The conclusion of their inquiry was that the Namdharis were holding meetings in the *parkarma* near their Bunga. A large gathering of Sikhs passing by as usual with the holy volume of Shri Guru Granth Sahib in order to hold a religious meetings in another part of the *parkarma*. It is necessary for a Sikh to stand up to honour when holy Granth is being carried past. According to S.G.P.C inquiry committee the Namdharis kept sitting and even on respected requests refused to stand up. This would have been bad enough anywhere; some Sikhs in the procession resented this so much that they began to make the Namdharis stand up by catching

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ The Tribune, 22 July, 1923, p. 4.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ The Tribune, 15 July, 1923, p. 3.

hold their arms. On this a scuffle ensued, and the Namdharis in the *Bunga* began to throw brickbats upon the procession as a result of which the fight was carried in the *Bunga*. Sardar Mehtab Singh, secretary of local Gurdwara committee, hurried to the place as soon as he received the report and found that the fighting had ceased and people had dispersed.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in his report mentioned that we were extremely regrets that the Namdharis are putting themselves in to an absolutely untenable position by adopting such an irreverent and insolent attitude toward Shri Guru Granth Sahib¹⁵². Akalis were most sensitive in his matter by acts of obtrusive irreverence. This was part of a bigger insidious plan to being about clash the Sikh ranks.

Namdhari Darbar was announced that, a very large number of Namdharis arrived at Amritsar from Bhaini Sahib. They came in small groups. Those who had arrived at Amritsar after having meal at their *Dharmsala* in the Ramgarhian, started in very long in very long procession at about 8 p.m. and reached the Akal Takhat at about 5. They were chanting shabads with frequent shouts of Sat Shri Akal and Dhan Guru Ram Singh. All though on arrived at the Akal Takhat Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam said prayers according to the Namdhari customs, which had hereto for been prohibited and this time too it was objected to by an Akalis on the pulpits.¹⁵³ But Bhai continued another Akali who seemed to be the captain of the Akali volunteer corps, whistled apparently to disturb the prayer by apparently to disturb the prayer by calling in reinforcement, but the call to the utter disappointment of the whistler received no response at all, and not a single Akali turned up. So the prayer was said freely and undisturbed. After paying their homage of the Akal Takhat the procession proceeded to the southern side of the tanks, where they descended the footsteps into the bed and then again saying prayer commenced the salt removal work. They worked eagerly for two hours and cleared the whole of on half of the tank some removing silt by shovels and other carrying it in vessels on their heads and dumping place. After the whole work they reached own *Dharmsala*. All those who had served at the tank left for their home. Another batch numbering over one thousands under leadership Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam proceeded to the Golden Temple in procession to participate in the sacred

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ The Tribune, 6 July, 1923, p.6.

service of “*Karsarowar*”. They entered the premises of the tank on the western side and went round by the southern side passing before the Akal Takhat Sahib reached the Dukh Bunjani Ber on the eastern side, as the southern half part of the tank had been cleared and previous day and the ambrosial water had been removed to that from side. It was the Namdharis who made beginning of the selt removal work in this part. A large number of spectators, attracted by the religious favour, enthusiasm and simplicity of the Namdhais was there watch the scene which presented a picture a picturesque spectacle.

Akali wearing the badge of Jathedarship interfered in the service. He asked to leave the place, but to no effect. When two other Akalis, who were according to their profession member of the Gurdwara Committe and also did wear badges of Jathedars, reached the spot, and demanded of him to walk out.¹⁵⁴ He however, would not yield and was apparently in such a perverse mood as not to listen to them even. After all they look away his badge and removed him by force. The Namdharis after finishing their work retired to their *Dharamshala*.

Namdhari leader Baba Partap Singh has ordered to his followers to do *Sawa Lakh Path* by tearing the apart leave from leave of Guru Granth Sahib on 18th April 1941 at Singh Sabha Gurudwara of Rawalpindi¹⁵⁵. The trouble arose over a resolution moved by Sardar Kapur Singh of Ludhiana, who deplored the mass reading of the sacred volume of Guru Granth Sahib by the Namdhari sect at Bhaini Sahib who, were accused of having distributed separate leaves of the scripture by tearing from bound volumes. This was called *Patra Path*. The Sikh followers of Guru Granth Sahib ji was hurtled by this activity of Namdharis because it was opposite to their religious sentiments. Sikh followers were against this new ritual of *Patra Path* of Namdharis. The news spread in whole part of the world i.e. the Sikhs living in the different areas. They were started opposition against Namdharis. It gave birth to start a revolution. Giani Sher Singh Akali leader urged social and religious boycott against the Namdharis.¹⁵⁶

To stop the ritual of the *Patra Path*, five member’s deputation of Sikhs was organised. These were Sardar Seva Singh Ghungrana (member SGPC), Giyani Diyal Singh, Ragi Mohar Singh, Bhai Kishan Singh and Bhai Sajan Singh. Sant Bhagwan

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ Singh Sabha Patrika, *Patra Path Virodhi supplement*, Amritsar, June, 1974, P.no. 3

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Singh and Sant Jawala Singh had also joined the deputation. Sant Bhagwan Singh and Sant Jawala Singh went to meet the Baba Partap Singh on the topic of *Patra Path*. But Baba Partap Singh answered thus:

“I have done well, I have done it as a Guru and I am not agreeing to take it back. Sikh Panth can do anything; I have no fear from them.”¹⁵⁷

There were many Diwans organised by Sikhs against the Namdharis. They expressed their opposition thoughts. They started agitations and boycotts at many places. Many newspapers gave their views against Namdhari activities. *Sher-E-Punjab*, *Khalsa Advocate*, *Khalsa Samachar*, *Diler Khalsa*, *Fateh*, *Sukh Jiwan* etc all these newspapers wrote many essays against Namdharis.¹⁵⁸

Sardar Seva Singh and Giyani Sher Singh had passed many resolutions in this regard. These resolutions included: “This event was organised for oppose the *Patra Path* of Namdharis. Sikh followers has utter disgraced for this activity of Namdharis and they ordered to Sikh followers to do fully boycott the Namdharis till the Baba Partap Singh did not admit his mistakes.

Giani Kartar Singh M.L.A stressed the need of harmony and said that S. Atma Singh, General Secretary of the Namdharis, had already tendered an apology in Rawalpindi. S. Atma Singh of the Sher-I-Pinjab said that whatever the differences desertion of the Shi Guru Granth Sahib could not be tolerated. He criticised the policy of appeasement pursued by the Akalis.¹⁵⁹

A petition to declare the anamdharis hitherto believed to be an important sect of the Sikhs as “*Patit*” (non-Sikh) has been made in the Sikh Gurdwara judicial commissioner by S. Waryam Singh, *Jathedar* Shromani Akal Dal, Lahore.¹⁶⁰

The petitioner in the course of his petitions states that according to the definitions of a Sikh as embodied in the Gurdwara Act only he can be a Sikh who believes in the Shri Guru Granth Sahib and the ten Gurus. The petitioner prays that Bhai Atma Singh, a Namdhari, be declared as unqualified to be a voter to stand for holding any office.

The reasons advanced by the petitioner for taking such steps are that the

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.no 4.

¹⁵⁸ *Khalsa Advocate*, Amritsar, 12 July, 1941, p.3.

¹⁵⁹ *The Tribune*, 28 October, 1941, p.5.

¹⁶⁰ *The Tribune*, 8 November, 1941, p.5.

Namdharis believe in the fourteen Gurus instead of ten Gurus and that they regard Granth Sahib as ordinary religious book. Future the Namdhari Kukas do not let the Sikh take part in their religious functions. Summons has been issued to the respondent to appear before the commission on 24th November 1941.¹⁶¹

Meanwhile, in the next meeting the General Secretary of Namdhari Darbar Atma Singh has admitted the mistake of Namdharis and he said, “We are very sorry for hurting our brother’s sentiments. We respect the Guru Granth Sahib ji and it is a part of our religious beliefs. We will respect the Sikh Panth’s sentiments in future and this thing will never happen again.” But leader Kapoor Singh was disagreed with some words of the resolution of Namdharis. He said, “There should be ‘mistake’ in the place of ‘thing’ in the resolution. But Atma Singh refused to make any change in the resolution.”¹⁶²

There was organised many conferences in different areas by the Sikh *Panth*. In these conferences was passed many resolutions. These were;

1. First Sarb Hind Kuka Kufar Todh Conference (Mulapur)
2. Second Sarb Hind Kuka Kufar Todh Akali Conference (Dhandhra)
3. Third Sarb Hind Kuka Kufar Todh Conference (Beeja)
4. Fourth Sarb Hind Kuka Kufar Todh Conference (Seakha)

Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo has passed resolution against Namdharis by the head Granthi Lal Singh. He said that Namdharis had hurted our Sikh *Panth* sentiments and they had admitted a crime by doing this. So we should give hard punishment to this type of culprits. No one could become physical Guru in Sikh Panth, and who one wanted to become Guru, he would be culprit of the Sikh *Panth* or Guru Granth Sahib ji.

General Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan had also passed a resolution against the Namdharis. It mentioned:

“It is disrespect of Guru Granth Sahib by tearing the leaves of Granth Sahib and *Patra Path* is wrong ritual.

The right way is to do *path* from Guru Granth Sahib and then in the end to do ardas.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² Singh Sabha Patrika, *Patra Path Virodhi supplement*, p.7.

Patra Path is not the right ritual. Guru Granth Sahib is the *Saroop* of ten Gurus of the Sikhs.”¹⁶³

Due to the agitation, resolution and opposition of the Sikh *Panth* had constantly opposed the Namdharis. They were completely boycotted. However, *Nihangs* of Buddha Dal reached Bhaini Sahib to solve this issue. Namdhari Guru Baba Partap Singh was met with *Nihangs* very respectfully. Baba Partap Singh Said, “We have stopped the *Patra Path* and now we are binding Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji by collecting the *patras* one by one.”¹⁶⁴ Path was started by following old rituals when *Nihangs* saw the Guru Granth Sahib in their complete *saroop* at Bhaini Sahib and they felt satisfied and happy. They were crying out *Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh* and returned from the Bhaini Sahib. In this way the *Patra Path* ritual had been stopped and the whole Sikh *Panth* felt satisfied.

Namdharis had on several occasions, been bitterly opposed by the *Lamberdars, Jagirdars, Zaildars* and priestly class as *Mahants* of the Gurdwara, *Nihangs* and others, attached to the shrines that they did visit, and every occasion the Namdharis had shown the most peaceful and patient bearing, with the exception of some most excitable followers. These were the main agencies which were the loyalist to the British dominance and they were opposed to the Namdhari movement. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari activities and often harassed and humiliated them. The *Lamberdars, Chaunkidar, Jagirdar* and *Zaminars* gave full support to suppress them. They all gave information in the nearest Thana or Kotwali of their village. As the Namdhari movement was spreading, worries of British started increasing. They felt that Sikhs would repeat the revolt of 18th century in the 19th century. After the Sikh gathering in village Khotte, British suddenly became enraged against Namdharis. The deputy commissioner of district Ferozpur issued order to Baba Ram Singh by reaching in Khotte that Kukas will not be able to organise any kind of gathering or religious fair in Ferozpur. A report was prepared against Baba Ram Singh and other Kukas. These reports were prepared on the behalf the informations which was gave to the British by the *Zamindars* and *Chaunkidars*. He was then detained in Bhaini Sahib on the basis of that report. Namdhari fairs and gatherings were completely banned. The boundaries of Bhaini Sahib were under

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.no. 9

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.no. 13.

restrictions from July 1863 to July 1867. British government was looking for an opportunity to hinder the impact of Namdhari movement, which they got in 1872. People had severe anger against the British policy about cow slaughtering, but they were not able to do anything about it. In 1871, Namdhari Sikhs took action against people who were responsible for cow slaughtering in Amritsar and Raikot. As a result of which, many butchers were killed. Namdhari Sikhs were hanged to death for this action. This time also these two agencies gave all possible rendered support to the British regime. The British Government had taken over the control of some of the Gurdwaras like Golden Temple, *Akal Takhat*, Darbar Sahib, Tarn Taran etc. Remained under the supervision and control of the government appointed *Sarbrah* and other Gurdwaras were in the hands of government patronised *Mahants*. The *Sarbrah* system of the Gurdwara had inherent potential to deteriorate the Character of the big *Mahants* and *Pujaris* and thereby accentuating the distortion of the Sikh religion and its traditions going on since the founding of the Sikh rule. The *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple who was appointed by the British Government had always worked in the interest of the British rulers. The condition of Gurdwaras was quite deplorable. These were totally against the Namdhari Sikhs. They don't consider them the Sikhs because of their religious differences. These sections were put blame on Namdhari Sect that their Guru was reciting *Kalama*- the Islamic fundamental. The Namdhari Guru reiterated that he and his followers believed and worshiped Granth Sahib and Dasam Granth alone. They also obeyed the *hukam* of the ten masters and recite *gurmantar*. *Mahants* and *Pujaris* could't allow the Namdhari Sikhs to enter the Gurdwaras. The Namdhari Guru understood the motives of landed aristocracy, priestly class and later on the Singh Sabhaites. So when Namdhari were blown away in the canon mouth by the British. These *Mahants* and Gurdwara managers appreciated the barbaric action of the British government. Sardar Atar Singh was most loyal, sincere and well wisher of the British Government. He gave all valuable or important information about all Namdhari activities. He was a most intelligent, highly educated and loyal to government. He was always willing and ready to assist the British Government officers in all matters of the administration. In the end is that when the crisis of identity faced by the Sikhs after the end of the Sikh rule took such a turn that appeared likely that Sikhism might cease to exist. At that time Baba Ram Singh like a brave warrior, carried aloft the flag of Sikhism and blew a bugle of rebellion against the victorious forces of the time.

CHAPTER – 5

ROLE OF THE PRINCELY STATES: PATIALA, NABHA, JIND, MALERKOTLA, KAPURTHALA AND FARIDKOT

The British influence on the Phulkian states was visible during the British Government for seeking protection against the rising power of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. There is no doubt that Ranjit Singh was very moderate towards the Phulkian Rajas and he was never hesitant to solve their intricate problems whenever such situations occurred. But in due course and with the rising power of Ranjit Singh, they become suspicious of his designs and hence sought British protection. The leaders of the Cis-Satluj states send a deputation to the British Residence in Delhi under Mr. Seton and presented their memorandum to the British Resident on 1 April, 1809.¹ They pledged their loyalty to every succeeding power in Delhi and formally sought protection of the British. The proposal was readily accepted by the Government and he was instructed to issue a proclamation to the Cis- Satluj chiefs defining their future relations with the British power. A treaty had been concluded on the 25th of April, 1809, between Mr. Metcalfe on the part of the British Government and Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The articles of this proclamation were to be as follows:²

1. An assurance of permanent protection against the authority and control of Raja Ranjit Singh.
2. Exemption from all pecuniary tribute.
3. The exercise of the same rights and authority that the rulers had hitherto enjoyed within the limits of their respective possessions.
4. Facility and accommodation to the British troops whenever the Government shall judge necessary, for purpose connected with the general interests of the state, to march into their country.
5. Zealous co-operation with British power on any invasion of their territory.

Ochterlony issued a proclamation to all the Cis-Satluj states on May 2, 1809, on the lines suggested by the British Government. Meanwhile, a treaty had been

¹ Punjab District Gazzetter, Sangrur, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 32.

² K.N. Panikkar, *British Diplomacy in North India*, Associated Publishing House, New Delhi, 1968, p. 104

concluded on the 25th of April, 1809, between Mr. Metcalfe on the part of the British Government and Maharaja Ranjit Singh.³ According to which he undertook to abstain from committing any encroachments on the possession or rights of Cis-Satluj sataes. Thus the Cis-Satluj states came under the protection of the British Government. By the treaty of 1809 with the British, as soon as the Cis Satluj states were free from the fear of Ranjit Singh, they tried to demolish and rob each other. Hence, the British found another proclamation on 22 August 1811 to protect them against each other as well.⁴ This increased their power of interference, patronage, reprimand and even armed intervention, so that these states as time went on, became absolute dependencies of British regime rather than independent rulers in treaty alliance with the British power, of equal rank in law if not in fact.

PATIALA

Patiala, the premier Indian State in the Punjab, was essentially a military State and was the largest and most important of the Sikh State belonging to the group known as Phulkian States. It ranked among the first twelve States in India. Its Rulers had played a very important part in the consolidation of British rule in India.⁵ The Patiala family descended from the second of the sons of Phul and it had been established as a ruling power of the Sutlej since 1753, when the present capital was founded by Sardar Ala Singh, a grandson of Phul.⁶ Ala Singh was certainly one of the most distinguished Sikh Chiefs of his Days. He was the most powerful chief, south of Satluj. He had three sons Sardul Singh, Bummian Singh and Lal Singh who all died during his life time. When Raja Ala Singh died in August 1765, his grandson, Amar Singh became the Raja of Patiala. Raja Amar Singh made Patiala the most Powerful State between the Jamuna and the Satluj. In February 1781, Raja Amar Singh who was only thirty five years of age died, but after his death administration fell into disorder, and in 1812 the British Government temporarily took over the affairs of the State. Raja Sahib Singh, the new Chief of Patiala State was only six years of age. Raja Sahib Singh succeeded Amar Singh and the state was wisely administered during part

³ File No. 1045 A, Ij-i-Khas, Basta No. 69, Punjab State Archive, Patiala, p.1.

⁴ Punjab District Gazetteer, Sangrur, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 32, Punjab State Archive, Patiala.

⁵ File no. H.105 B, Foreign Department, Patiala Government, Article in The Times of India, June 13, 1932, p. 5, State Archive of Patiala.

⁶ Punjab State Agency, List of Ruling Princes, Notables and Principal Officials, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Publication Branch, 1924. p. 30.

of his life-time and during the minority of his son by his wife, Rani Aus Kaur, women of great ability. Rani Aus Kaur was a very ambitious and her relation with her husband became very strained. She turned her arms against Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha and Raja Bhag Singh of Jind.⁷ For this Purpose, she made alliance with Bhai Lal Singh of Kaithal and Sardar Bhanga Singh of Thanesar. Raja Bhag Singh and Raja Jaswant Singh requested Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore to interfere in the matter. Ranjit Singh felt very happy in getting an opportunity of interference and on 26 July 1806, crossed the Satluj with a big force. He did not make sincere efforts to restore friendship between the Patiala Raja and his Wife. He received from both large sums of money to secure his good-will. Moreover, in spite of the heavy expenses incurred by the Patiala State in connection with the visit of Ranjit Singh, the relation between the Raja of Lahore was the signal or a renewal of the conflict between Raja Sahib Singh and Rani Aus Kaur.⁸ So Ranjit Singh and has forced went back to their Kingdom.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was again invited and he reached Patiala in September 1807, with a big force. Both Raja and Rani did their best in order to induce him to espouse the cause of one party or the other. It was mere question of Money and Diamonds; she gave Ranjit Singh brass gun taken by the English during the Satluj campaign. In order to strengthen the ties of friendship with Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala, Maharaja Ranjit Singh arranged a meeting with him at Lakhnaur (Ambala District) on November 1808. He received Raja Sahib Singh with the utmost kindness and swore to remain always his friend. As a token of eternal brotherhood, Ranjit Singh changed his turban with Sahib Singh. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a taken this diplomatic step so that Raja Sahib Singh might not seek the shelter of the British. But Raja Sahib Singh did not believe in the sincerity of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He along with other Cis-Satluj chiefs requested the British Government to give protection to them against the aggressive designs of the Sikh Maharaja. The British Government acceded to their request and according to their treaty with Maharaja Ranjit Singh made on 25th April 1809, Cis-Satluj chiefs were made free from any kind of interference from Lahore Government.⁹ The title of Maharaja was conferred on the

⁷ Punjab District Gazetteer, Patiala, Revenue Department, Punjab Chandigarh, 1992, p. 60.

⁸ Ibid, p. 60.

⁹ Ibid, p. 61.

Ruler of the Patiala State in 1810 by the emperor Akbar II.¹⁰

Under Maharaja Sahib Singh, the State of Patiala was taken under the special protection of the British Government¹¹. It should be seen that from the year 1809, when the Chiefs were taken under British protection, till 1845, their relations with that Government had undergone no change. Protected by the proclamation of 1809 against the ambition of Lahore, and by that of 1811 from one another the Cis-Satluj Chiefs had enjoyed thirty-six years of the absolute peace and security. They were allowed absolute civil, criminal, and fiscal jurisdiction within their respective territories, subject to the general authority of the Governor-General's agent, while the British-Indian Government most scrupulously abstained from any interference with their internal and domestic affairs. Under its strong protection, which asked for no return save good conduct and loyalty, they had greatly prospered.¹² For services rendered during the Gurkha War of 1814, Maharaja Karm Singh was awarded portions of the Hill States of Keonthal and Baghat. At the time of first Sikh War Narinder Singh was a maharaja. He helped the British Government very materially during the war and his assistance was acknowledged by an increase of territory. During the disturbance of 1857-58 no ruler in India showed greater loyalty or rendered more conspicuous services to the British Government than Maharaja Narinder Singh¹³. Maharaja unhesitatingly placed his whole power, resources and influence at the absolute disposal of the English during the darkest and most doubtful days of the mutiny. Patiala supported the British with 8 Guns, 2,156 Cavalry, 2,846 Infantry and 156 officers; while 1858 the drafts included 2 Guns, 2, 930 Infantry and 907 Swords.¹⁴

On the 7th January on the occasion of the assumption by the her Majesty of the title of Empress of India, His Excellency the viceroy, in company with the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, visited Patiala, where he was received with great state, honours and himself installed of Maharaja. The address of His Excellency on the occasion was as follows:-

“That the confidence then reposed by the Phulkian Chiefs in the honesty, the

¹⁰ Punjab State Agency, List of Ruling Princes, Notables and Principal Officials, Calcutta: Government of India, Central Publication Branch, 1924. p. 30.

¹¹ Report on the Administration of Punjab and its Dependencies 1876-77, Government Civil Secretariat Press, Lahore, 1877, State Archive of Patiala p. 3.

¹² Lepel Griffin, Rajas of the Punjab, Nirmal Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, 1986, p. 188.

¹³ Ruling Princes and Chiefs, Notables and Principal officials of the Punjab Native States, The Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, Lahore, 1918, p. 24.

¹⁴ File no. H.5.B., A Short History of Patiala State, p. 3, State Archive of Patiala.

wisdom, and the strength of that Government was not misplaced, satisfactory evidence exists in the fact that at this moment the wealth, the dignity and the power of Patiala are greater than they were at the time of the engagement which guaranteed to this State the protection of the Government in which its Chiefs have so loyally trusted. On their part, meanwhile, all the Maharajas of Patiala, and especially your Highness's father and grandfather, have faithfully and with unswerving and unbroken active loyalty fulfilled their obligation to the Suzerain Power. In the year 1857, his highness Maharaja Narinder Singh placed all his resources and his great personal influence absolutely at the disposal of the Government. His Highness then sent to Delhi a contingent, whose valuable services we still gratefully remember, and the assistance then rendered by the Maharaja has already been acknowledged and rewarded by Her Majesty's Government."¹⁵

Maharaja Narinder Singh was one of the first Indian Prince who received the Knight Grand Commandership of the most Exalted Order of the Star of India in 1861, and about same time he was made a member of the Legislative Council of the Government of India for making laws and regulations. He died on 13 November, 1862, at the age of thirty nine. Mohinder Singh, the only son of the Maharaja, was only 10 years old at the time of his father's death¹⁶. During the time period of Maharaja Mohinder Singh a Kuka incident took place in 1871. The founder of this remarkable movement was Baba Ram Singh, a man of great personal charm and magnetism. The Namdharis while reciting Sikh Mantras and repeating the name, of God/Guru often developed emotions screamed and shouted turbans in their hands and hair streaming in the air, hence called Kukas or the Shouters.¹⁷ The Namdhari Movement had particularly its socio-political character. The Kukas were also believed to have propagated their doctrine among the native princes. The Government kept its sharp eye on the activities of the Namdharis. The Government had the effect of putting a stop to the movement. The Government had been taking with the Patiala, "it was better that this sect did not exist" meaning that it was better that it were put down. In Patiala and Nabha authorities did not really like them. In Jind, they had been firmly systematically discouraged.¹⁸ The Raja of Jind was an honest well wisher of the

¹⁵ Report on the Administration of Punjab and its Dependencies 1876-77, Government Civil Secretariat Press, Lahore, 1877, p. 4.

¹⁶ Giani Sohan Singh Sheetal, PEPSU Da Itihas, Amritsar, p. 63.

¹⁷ Punjab District Gazetteers Ludhiana, Chandigarh, p. 100.

¹⁸ File No. 490, Political Records of Kuka Movement, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 43.

British. He had discouraged the Kukas, and had his troops in five orders and was considering the matter of employing a thorough safe British officer to rill his troop. His force would be a real stand by in rising.¹⁹ The Kukas had strong feelings against cow slaughter. After annexation of Punjab the Governor General in 1849 modified the former orders declared that for future “No one should be allowed to interfere with the practice by his Neighbour; of customs which that neighbour’s religion permits”.²⁰ The Board of Administration ruled that the prohibition which had formerly been maintained solely out of difference to a Sikh sovereign, must now be removed and that in every large town a spot for the shambles and butchers shops should be appointed. But particular care should be taken not to select the neighbourhood of any Hindu religious buildings and the cows should be severely slaughtered outside. These orders were carried out in Amritsar by Mr. C.B Saunders in 1849, who selected the shop at a short distance from the city and caused an enclosure to be erected there and forbade the sale of the flesh of kine in city in shops or in an open manner. From that day to this the same system has continued.²¹ There was open the Slaughter house near the gate of the Golden Temple at Amritsar. In 1871 Ram Singh followers made an attack on the butcher of Amritsar. Three butchers were killed on the spot and three were badly bounded. Baba Ram Singh was ordered the culprits to produce himself before the magistrate and confess their guilt. On their own confession, four Namdharis were hanged on 15th September 1871. Namdharis had again taken attack on butchers of Raikot in the Ludhiana District on 15th July 1871. Four butchers were killed and seven badly injured. The police working in this case was admirable not a single person had been unnecessarily arrested. To the real co-operation of the Patiala, in conjunction with our police and tracers, these took place the arrest of these culprits.²² L.H Giffin also mentioned in his telegram 29 July 1871 about the rendered help of Maharaja of Patiala;

“I have heard by telegraph of arrest of the seven Kukas in Patiala territory, whither they had been traced from Raikot. Three sword were also found, further particulars will be sent when are received by his honour the Lieutenant-Governor. The Sikhs naturally wish to fix the crime on the obnoxious sect of Kukas, and is as yet no certainty that

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 45.

²⁰ File No. 451, Confidential Papers of Kuka Movement, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 2

²¹ Ibid, p. 2.

²² File no. 490, Reports of Kuka Movement, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 40.

the right person have been arrested. His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala is giving every assistance in the following case. Seven Kukas traced and arrested by the Patiala police.”²³

Another letter was send by Mahraja Patiala send to Secretary Punjab Government at Delhi. The letter was as follow:²⁴

“Yesterday at 11 A.M. Syad Niaz Ali my Naib Nazim of Amargarh arrested (with a few men with him) with great courage sixty eight Kukas who made disturbance at Kotla and Malaud, among them there are twenty nine wounded. Heera Singh and Lehna Singh their leaders have also been apprehended.

Seven Namdharis were arrested in Raikot murderer case. Five Namdharis were belonged to Nabha and two to Patiala State. These culprit Namdharis could be arrested with the help of Maharaja of Patiala and Nabha. In this case, three of the above Kukas, named Mustan Singh, Gurmukh Singh, Mangal Singh were hanged at Raikot among the two Hundred spectators. Suitable rewards have ordered to be given at once to the Patiala Thanedars and subordinate officers and men of the police, as well as to any others by whose assistance the Kukas have been arrested.

In the Telegram from E.C. Bayley, C.S.I. Secretary of the Government of India to Secretary of the Punjab had also mentioned about excellent service of Patiala. This telegram had praised the role of Patiala in the following way:

“The Government General in council having been demi-officially informed of the excellent services rendered by the officials of his Highness the Maharaja of Patiala, in tracing and arresting the criminals in the case of murder at Raikot in the Ludhiana District, I am desired to express his gratification in hearing of the loyal assistance which has been thus afforded to the officers of Government.”²⁵

On 13th January 1872, a group of about 200 Kukas attacked the fort of Maludh situated about twenty miles south of Ludhiana. This occurred about 2 p.m. This was a free fight with the Sikh feudal Chiefs of Maludh in which two men of

²³ Ibid, p. 37.

²⁴ Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach, (Punjabi Translation of Urdu-Persion documents relating to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)*, p. 121.

²⁵ File no. 490, p. 54.

Namdharis and two men of Sardar Badan Singh group were killed. The object of the attack was presumably to obtain arms. The Sergeant of police a few hours afterwards reported that they went away from Patiala state and had gone in direction of Rampur. Then immediately warned the Vakils of Patiala and Malerkotla and notified it to the District Superintendent of police about the gross negligence of the Deputy Inspector in not having had this gang followed up and watched.

The next morning a large group of Kukas attacked on the Fort of the large town of Malerkotla. This was the capital of the Mahomadan State, about 30 miles south from Ludhiana. Heera Singh and Lehna Singh were the leader of the group of Namdharis. Ram Singh informed the police of their intention to do some mischief and confessed that he had no control over them. They were armed with axes, sticks, etc, only and were said to have declared that the town of Malerkotla would be the object of attack.²⁶ Intimation had been sent to the Maharaja of Patiala by letter and telegram, informed him that Heera Singh and Lehna Singh were reported leaders, and told him to have them captured and give assistance.²⁷

Mr. Cowan telegraphed both these facts to Jalandhur and to the Lieutenant Governor for troops, and applied for assistance also to the Chief of Nabha, Raja of Jind and Raja of Patiala. On the evening of the 15th February 1872 and the early part of 16th, Mr. Cowan appeared to have been employed in taking evidence against the prisoners captured at Maludh. Mr. Cowan received the intelligence of the bulk of the Kukas having been surrounded at Rurr, and telegraphed to the Government of the Punjab not to send the troops previously asked for. As he got nearer to Malerkotla, he met the troops sent by Rajas of Jind and Nabha a contingent had also been sent by the Maharaja of Patiala. In Mr. Cowan first letter of the 17th they consisted of artillery, cavalry and infantry, their total number, with the addition of Malerkotla troops must have been considerably. Mr Cowan also met the Naib Nazim of Amargarh, and learned from him the particulars of the captured sixty eight Kukas at Rurr and the fact that they had been detained for the night in safe custody at the Patiala fort of Sherpur distant that was about 18 and 19 miles from Malerkotla. Of course Baba Ram Singh and his doctrines were being seen as responsible for what had happened, and he had become the danger to the State, as similar disturbance might be created at any time by

²⁶ E.D. Maclagan, Census of India, 1891, Volume XIX, The Punjab and its Feudatories, Calcutta, 1892, Library of Punjab University, Chandigarh.

²⁷ Home Judicial progs, February, 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 12.

his followers. Baba Ram Singh but was under regulation III, of 1818 for the detention in custody in the Allahabad jail with his most influential Subas.²⁸

Letter of Mr. Cowan

From: L.Cowan, Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana.

To: T.D. Forsyth, Commr. And Supdt., Ambala Division.

Dated: Camp Malerkotla, 16th January 1872.

“The gang of rebels, for no other name will adequately characterise them, never numbered more than 125. Of these there were at Maludh two killed, four captured; at Kotla, eight killed, thirty one wounded. Of those wounded twenty five or twenty six escaped at the time, but sixty eight, including twenty seven wounded, have been captured in the Patiala State at Rurr, a village twelve miles from this. The entire gang has thus been nearly destroyed. I purpose blowing away from guns, or hanging, the prisoners tomorrow at day break”²⁹

Mr .Cowan’s letter to Mr. Forsyth, dated, 17th January 1872.

“I have the honour to report to you that sixty eight rebel Kukas were brought in today from Rurr, of these two were women, leaving sixty six men: twenty two of the men were wounded, most of the slightly.

The conduct of these prisoners was most defiant and unruly; they poured forth the most abusive language towards the Government and the Chiefs of the Native States. All of them admitted that they were present at the attacks on Maludh and Malerkotla. They said that they had attack Maludh for the propose urging arms, and Malerkotla because their religions required them to slay the killer of cows.

The two women were resident of Patiala state, and I made them over to the officer commanding Patiala the troops for conveyance to Patiala; 49 of the rebels were blown away from the guns this afternoon on the parade ground of the Malerkotla Chief in the presence of the troops of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla. The remaining 16 rebels to be executed there tomorrow, but one man escaped from the guard and made a furious attack upon me, seizing me by the beard, and endeavouring to struggle me and he was very powerful man. I had considerable difficulty in

²⁸ Ibid, p. 27.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 15.

releasing myself. He then made attack on some officers of the Native States who were standing near me. These officers drew their sword and cut him down”.³⁰

Thus Mr. Cowan letter showed that the real attitude of British Government. According the Government the Namdharis were great rebels. Mr. Cowan’s real purpose was blowing away Namdharis from guns. He felt that the Namdharis were open rebels offering contumacious resistance to constituted authority, and his aim was to prevent the spreading of the disease. It is absolutely necessary that repressive measures should be prompt and stern. He was satisfied that he was to act for best and that this incipient insurrection must be stamped out at once. The native Chiefs were standing with British Government. They were bound to show their loyalty by protecting the Mr. Cowan and Mr. Forsyth with his barbaric act. The chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, jind and Malerkotla States gave all possible help to the British administration.

Report of Maharaja Patiala;

Latter dated 15th February 1872

From: His Highness the Maharaja Patiala, G.C.S.I.

To the Secretary of the Government of Punjab, L.H. Griffin

It reads:

“In reply to a telegram from you, I promised, in my latter of 20th ultimo, to make inquiries as requested by his honour the Lieutenant Governor, his honour’s information, that from many proofs it is quite certain that Ram Singh’s real motive and ambition was bent, upon religious pretext, to reign and acquire dominion, and he deceitfully implanted this capricious notion in the minds of his ignorant and superstitious followers that their creed was to predominate that everywhere the Government of the country would be very soon in their hands. They had the fullest belief of this absurdity. He never failed to excite their minds and keep them in agitation and earnest expectation to attain their objects.

His followers were full of blind bigotry and zeal and had now increased to enormity and vastness. He therefore had a sanguine hope of success, and excited them to view with the utmost horror and hatred

³⁰ File No. 491, Judicial June 1872, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 121.

the act of cow-killing.”

The report further says:

“In exciting this prejudices, his motive was a under the religious pretext the cartridge prejudice subverted and put in commotion the whole of India in 1857. It was practically an ignitable match. He was to rise up and excite the feelings of the whole Hindu community, including the chieftains, gentry and the troops. He stood up and was sympathised in sport of a common cause of hatred against the rulers of country, anticipating, the some reason, a results from the confusion which would follow, that was in every class and grade of the community. He would be held in respect which he was long in earnest.

The report was happy to notice:

“Had not this appalling punishment been inflicted so promptly and so well as was the case, and had not Ram Singh and his subhas been deported from the province, there was no hope of the disturbance being quelled soon; and without doubt there would have been an endless waste of money and life before tranquillity and confidence would have been restored. If they had more meagre success; the whole sect would have sprung up like friends, who were all anxiously watching the results of this pantomimic attack.”

This report referred to its own mode of investigations thus:

“The above is a brief result of my inquiries, which have been recorded after the most careful observation. There is one reality recorded after the most careful observation. There is one thing more which I think it right to bring to your notice. I have learnt from newspapers that the Government of India has expressed its disapprobation at the manner of Punishments awarded by the local authorities. I believe the object of the Government will be misunderstood by the native public, and the particularly by the benighted sect, who will no doubt attribute it to the supernatural power of their ‘*Satguru*’. This will in a great measure tend to frustrate and invalidate the excellent action and efficient measures adopted in the coercion and eradication by the district authorities and

native nipped in the bud before bringing for the blossoms of further evil, would made them look light and unimportant.

I am of the opinion that misconstruction of the intentions of a Government by the public is always fraught with unpleasant consequences, and I deem it right to inform you of the views I take on the subject.”³¹

The above letter of Maharaja of Patiala was no doubt a remarkable performance to enable the Lt. Governor of Punjab to save his position, and that of his two officers who were mainly responsible for blowing off the Namdharis. Many files are related to Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla. These states sent his cannons against the Namdharis. The number of cannons was nine and out of this seven cannons were used for martyred the Namdharis Sikhs. Two cannons reserved so that if the Namdharis attacked it should be useful at that time.³² These were number of results which had been written by Maharaja Mohinder Singh. Maharaja of Patiala felt that Baba Ram Singh’s real motive was to establish the Khalsa Raj. Namdharis wanted the Government would be in their hands very soon. They had not any feeling about Cow protection upon religious pretext. His real motive under the religious pretext was political manner or mode. Maharaja was appreciating punishments in Malerkotla case as given by Mr. Cowan and Mr. Forsyth had been inflicted so promptly and so well. Maharaja wants Ram Singh and his *subas* deported from province. The Princely sates had always sided with British Government. They had always stood along with the imperialists. In the telegram dated 18th January 1872, he had mentioned about chiefs help of different states.

These had been a phrase from the editorial columns sent was by T.H. Thornton, Secretary to the Punjab Government, East India United Service Club about Maharaja Patiala. That reads:

“The Maharaja of Patiala is ruler of the most important of the Sikh States of the Punjab, and his territories adjoin those of Malerkotla, where the fanatics made their principal attack. He is a young man of enlightened views and generous disposition, and I believe the last

³¹ File No. 494, Statement of Mr. Forsyth, Ganda Singh Referance Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 20.

³² Interview, Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, 13 March, 2020.

person in the life. Under these circumstances, his opinion of the necessity for the executions appears entitled to considerable weight”.³³

NABHA

The Nabha State was existence as a separate and sovereign State from the fall of Sirhind in 1763. Prior to those years its Chiefs had been merely rural notables, whose influence was overshadowed by that of the cadet branch which was rising to regal power under Ala Singh, the founder of the Patiala State. Taloka, the eldest son of Phul, had died after an eventful life in 1687, leaving two sons. Of these the eldest, Gurditta, founded Dhanaula and Sangrur, now the capital of Jind, and the second son Sukhchen became the ancestor of the Jind Family.³⁴ Gurditta's grandson Hamir Singh founded the Town of Nabha. Hamir Singh was the first Raja of Nabha to coin money in his own name. He was exercised all the powers of an independent ruler of some years before his death in 1783. Alarmed at the menace of the growing power of Ranjit Singh, Nabha and other Cis-Satluj States made certain representation to the British Resident at Delhi, which resulted in a definite promise of protection. This enforced retirement of the Ruler of Lahore from his acquisitions south of the Satluj. A proclamation of protection against Lahore was issued in May 1809, which after stating that “the country of the chiefs of Malwa and Sirhind has entered the protection of the British Government,” went on to secure to these Chiefs “the exercise of the same rights and authority within their own possessions which they enjoyed before.”³⁵ Raja Jaswant Singh, who was then on the *gaddi*, was succeeded in 1840 by his son Davinder Singh. After the first Sikh war Devinder Singh was deposed because during the Sikh Wars 1845-46, wherein he did not give adequate help to the British. His eldest son, Raja Bharpur Singh who was then a boy of seven was placed on the throne under the guardianship of his step-grand-mother, Rani Chand Kaur. Raja Davinder Singh was first shifted to Mathura and then Lahore where he died in November, 1865. Raja Bharpur Singh attained his majority a few months after the breaking out of the mutiny of 1857. At this critical time, he acted with utmost loyalty and intelligence. He deputed his forces for the British cause and advanced to Government a loan of two and a half lakhs of rupees. The Raja was suitably rewarded for the services after the

³³ File No. M 92, Part II, Basta NO. 2, Head History, State Archive of Patiala, p. 345.

³⁴ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume, XVII, A, Phulkian States Patiala Jind and Nabha, 1904, Lahore, 1909, p. 342.

³⁵ File no. H.5.B., A Short History of Patiala, p. 27, State Archive of Patiala.

mutiny. He was died issueless on 9 November 1863. Raja Bhagwan Singh, the younger brother of Raja Bharpur Singh was installed as Raja of Nabha on 17th February 1864, in the presence of Maharajas of Patiala, Jind, the Nawab of Malerkotla and a number of Cis-Satluj Chiefs. He ruled only for seven years and died in 1871 without an issue.

Hira Singh was one of the most capable rulers of Nabha State. Before becoming the Raja of Nabha , he was a *Jagirdar* of Badrukhan, a small village near of Sangrur, then falling in Jind State. He was descendent of Phul, common ancestor of Phulkian rulers, and a relative of Raja Bhagwan Singh who died issueless. The claim of Hira Singh was duly recognised and he was installed, as ruler of Nabha State in 1871 with the help of the British Government. That is why he remained fully devoted to the Britishers.³⁶ Since that time he had governed his State with great energy and ability, while he has given repeated proofs of his unswerving loyalty and friendship to the sovereign powers.³⁷ In 1872, when trouble was raised by the Kukas, he at once despatched a force to quell the disturbance at the request of the British Deputy Commissioner, and the Governor-General expressed his entire satisfaction with the conduct of Nabha troops.³⁸ Special official report crime, 17th January 1872, of British Government showed a rendered help of Maharaja of Nabha.

“Kahn Singh *Suba* has just been brought in from Mulloopur by party of Nabha cavalry by orders of Deputy Commissioner. This man was a most influential *Suba* and leading man amongst the Kukas, and attendant and confidential adviser of Ram Singh’s”.³⁹

In the letter of the 17th January 1872, to Mr. Forsyth, he relates the circumstances of the arrest prisoners. Mentioned in latter that sixty eight of them, of whom 29 were wounded, surrendered to the Naib Nazim of Sherpur and three Native cavalry. In the same latter he remarks that, the Rajahs of Nabha and Jind “despatched artillery, cavalry and infantry to Kotlah.” Also made the following remarks: “It is certain that their first attempts had been crowned with success, had they succeeded in arming themselves and proving themselves with horses and treasure, they would have

³⁶ Punjab District Gazetteers, Patiala, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1992, p. 66.

³⁷ History of Nabha State, Punjab State Archive, Patiala

³⁸ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII, A, Phulkian States Patiala, Jind and Nabha, 1904, Lahore 1909, p. 343.

³⁹ Home Judicial Progs., February 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 19.

been joined by all the abandoned characters in the country, and their extinction would not be affected without much trouble. By the timely preparations at Kotlah, the first efforts were defeated, and by the active exertions of the the Patiala officials, this miserable attempt at rebellion has been stamped out”.⁴⁰

Raja Hira Singh also sent a force on the frontier during the Afghan War 1879. In recognition of this the Grad Cross of the Star of India was conferred on the Raja in 1879 and 1893. He was given the title of *Raj-i-Rajgan*. Raja Hira Singh died on 25th December 1911. Raja Ripudaman Singh introduced many reforms in Nabha State. Raja was also anxious to introduce democratic form of Government in Nabha State. He established a Legislative Council for Nabha. By the end of 1922, relations between Nabha and Patiala become much strained. Consequently an inquiry had to be instituted by the British Government. The enquiry was going against Raja Ripudaman Singh. On 9 July 1923, Maharaja was taken to Dehradun with his family like a prisoner. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh Nabha was deposed by the British Government in July 1923. *Jaito Morcha* is an important event in the history of the Sikhs. At that time, Jaito was in Nabha. A large number of Sikhs of Nabha State took part in this *Morcha* and lost their lives. Maharaja Ripudaman Singh was shifted forcibly from Dehradun to Kodaikanal in the distant south. He died there in December 1942. After his death, just a few months before Independence, his son Mohinder Partap Singh was installed as ruler of Nabha. India became free in August 1947 and Maharaja Partap Singh signed the instrument of accessions to India. In 1948, the Punjab State of Nabha merged with the Patiala and East Punjab States Union called by name of PEPSU and November 1956, PEPSU also disappeared from the map and merged with Punjab.⁴¹

JIND

The Jind State was the second in area and the smallest in population of the three Phulkian State. Tilok Singh, the eldest son of Chaudri Phul; had two sons, Gurdit Singh and Sukhchain Singh. Gurdit Singh's descendent founded the Nabha State; Sukchain Singh son was Gajpat Singh. The founder of the Jind State was Gajpat Singh, a grandson of Phul. He took part in the Sikh coalition of 1763 against the Afghan Governor of Sirhind and received a large tract of country as his share of the spoil. One of his daughter's becames the mother of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. In 1772 the title of Raja was conferred upon him by the Emperor Shah Alam. Raja

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 46.

⁴¹ Pujnab State Gazetteers, Patiala, Revenue Department, Patiala, Chandigarh, 1992, p. 72.

Gajpat Singh son, Bhag Singh, assisted Lord Lake in his operations against the Marahattas and was rewarded by the grant of the *pargana* of Bawana and the Gohana State. By the treaty of 1809 with the British, as soon as the Cis- Satluj Sates were from Ranjit Singh. In fact, the intention of British Government was to establish an autonomous and loyal confederacy of the chiefs who would be helpful to them in different times. In 1834 Jind Chief died without issue.⁴² Sarup Singh of Bazipur, a second cousin of the deceased Raja, succeeded to the *gaddi* by order of the British Government, but he was held to be entitled to succeed only to the territory possessed by his great grandfather, Raja Gajpat Singh. Raja Sarup Singh's conduct during the first Sikh War was on the whole satisfactory, and he received in reward a grant of land. When the mutiny broke out in 1857, Sarup Singh was not behind the Maharaja of Patiala in active loyalty. When news reached him at Sangrur of the revolt at Delhi, he at once collected all his troops, and by force marched reached Karnal on the 18th, where he undertook the defence of the city and cantonments.⁴³ His services on that occasion were of a most valuable nature. His salute was raised to 13 guns, and other privileges were conferred upon him. The raja will never fail in his loyalty and devotion to the sovereign of Great Britain. The Raja and his successor were to always pursue the same course of fidelity and devotion to the British Government and the Government will always be ready to uphold the honour and dignity of the Raja and his house. In 1863, the Raja had been nominated at Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India a few months before his death. His son, Raja Raghbir Singh was a worthy successor. The Raja Raghbir Singh rendered prompt assistance to the British Government on the occasion of the Kuka outbreak in 1872. He sent two guns, a troop of horse and two companies of infantry to Malerkotla at the request of the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, and rising was effectually suppressed.⁴⁴ In confidential letter had been described that the Raja of Jind was our honest well wisher. He discouraged the Kukas and his troops in five orders and was considering the matter of employing a through safe British officer to drill his troops. His force would be a real stand by in any rising.⁴⁵ Raja Raghbir Singh was a worthy successor. He died in 1887. Jind ranks third in order of precedence among Native States in the Punjab. His only son Balbir Singh had died but was only a minor. He was put up under regency and full

⁴² Ruling princes and Chiefs, Notables and principals Officials of the Punjab Natives States, The Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, Lahore, 1918, p. 13.

⁴³ The Minor Phulkian Families, Department of Language Punjab, 1970, p. 355.

⁴⁴ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVII,A, Phulkian States Patiala Jind and Nabha, 1904, Lahore, 1909, p. 217.

⁴⁵ File no. 490, Political Records of Kuka Movement, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University, Patila, p. 45.

power were vested him 1899. He ruled the Jind State till independence in 1947. ⁴⁶

MALERKOTLA

The Malerkotla family was Sherwani Afghans and came from Khurasan in the middle of the 15th century. Their ancestor, Shaikh Sadr-ud-din, received a gift of 58 villages near Ludhiana when he married the daughter of Sultan Bahlol Lodhi. ⁴⁷ The Title of Nawab conferred in 1657 upon Bayazid Khan. ⁴⁸ The family subsequently suffered many vicissitudes, being at once time stripped by the Sikhs of all their possession except a few villages in the vicinity of Malerkotla. The relation of the Malerkotla State with the British dated back from 1804. In these years, when General Lake pursued Holkar to the Punjab, Nawab Attaullah Khan joined the British with all his troops and rendered such assistance as he could. In 1809 the treaty of Amritsar was signed between Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the British. So in 1809, the State comes under the British Protection. In 1810 Nawab Attaullah Khan died. In dispute on succession between Rehmat Ali Khan, the eldest son of Attaullah Khan and Wazir Khan the eldest son of Bikkan Khan. The government of India gave its decision in favour of Wazir Khan. Wazir Khan's life was uneventful and was most eager to extend help to British in men and money. He also assisted the British in Gorkha War in 1814. He died in 1821 and succeeded by his son, Amir Khan. He exactly followed his father in governing his territory. He assisted the British in 1839 in the Kabul War popularly known as the First Afghan War. During the first Anglo-Sikh War, he fought on the side of the British at Mudki and Feroze Shah. In recognition of his service, he was awarded the title of Nawab and Jagir of three villages. He helped the British in the second Gorkha War and passed away in 1846. He was succeeded by his son Mehboob Ali Khan better known as Sube Khan. Like other Sikh chiefs, he sided with the British during the mutiny of 1857. ⁴⁹ He rendered a great help to the Britishers during the sepoy Mutiny of 1857. Sir John Lawrence had written letters to all the Punjab Chiefs for help at this juncture. The Nawab was asked to come to Ludhuana with his troops on 14th May, 1857. He died in 1859. His son Sikhander Ali Khan, spent most of his time quarrelling with his relations. Both his sons died young. On this, Sikhander Ali Khan nominated Ibrahim Ali Khan the eldest son of Dilawar Ali

⁴⁶ Punjab District Gazetteers, Sangrur, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 36.

⁴⁷ Lepel H. Griffin, *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, vol. II, Lahore, 1940, p. 580.

⁴⁸ *Ruling princes and Chiefs, Notables and principals Officials of the Punjab Natives States*, The Superintendent, Government Printing, Punjab, Lahore, 1918, p. 8.

⁴⁹ Punjab District Gazetteer, Sangrur, Revenue Department Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 59.

Khan as his heir. The Nawab attended vice regal Durbar in 1869 held in honour of Amir Sher Ali Khan of Kabul. He died in 1871.

During the Nawabship of Ibrahim Khan Kuka Incident took place. In 1872 Kukas made surprised attack on Malerkotla from Bhaini Sahib a village in Ludhiana District, on the place of cow-slaughter. Two hundred Kukas attacked Maludh fort of Buddan Singh. At Maludh two Kukas were killed, four wounded and five captured. Under a plan that was finally adopted by them against Muslims, Malerkotla was to be the first target. They proceeded to Malerkotla, which is nine miles from Maludh, and on the morning of 15th June made a sudden attack on the place of Nawabs. The authorities there had already got information about the designs of the band Mr. Cowan, the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana had warned, through agents, the ruler of Malerkotla, Patiala, Nabha and Jind that the Kukas were out for some mischief in their areas. Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, Mr. Cowan found that the rebel gang of Kukas had been captured a few miles off in the Patiala State. Chiefs of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla with their troops gave loyal and efficient assistances.⁵⁰ He received information that small parties of Kukas were flocking toward Kotla from distant parts, and he learned that the troops of the Malerkotla State had given up the pursuit of the rebels and returned to Malerkotla to protect the town from another expected attack. Mr. Cowan was telegraphed both to Jalandher and to the Lieutenant Governor for troops, and applied for assistance also to the chiefs of Nabha, Patiala and Jind. On the evening of the 15th, and the early part of the 16th, Mr. Cowan appears to have been employed in taking evidence against the prisoners captured at Maludh. Afterwards Mr. Cowan received intelligence about the bulk of the Kukas has been surrounded at Rurr. As he got nearer to Malerkotla, he met the troops sent by Maharaja Patiala, Nabha and Jind. Mr. Cowan's first letter of the 17th they consisted of artillery, cavalry and infantry their total numbers, with the addition of Malerkotla troops have been considerable. Mr. Cowan also met the Naib Nazim of Amargarh, and learned from him the particular of the capture of the sixty eight Kukas at Rurr. The fact that they had been detained for the night in safe custody at the Patiala Fort of Sherpur, distant about eighteen or nineteen miles from Malerkotla. As the contingents from adjoining Native States had arrived, or were lose hand, he felt confident that in the presence of such a force, and with the arrangements.⁵¹ The Native States, such as Malerkotla, was for the head of the State to prepare as case of murder by taking evidence of whiteness, defence of accused, then to pass sentence and forward the case

⁵⁰ Home Judicial Department, February 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 10.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 11.

for sanction of the Commissioner of the Division. After their success they were brought back to Malerkotla. The Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana without waiting for any further inspections from the authorities ordered the prisoners to be blown away from guns. It was at 3 p.m. when the gruesome work started.

On the 17th January 1872, forty nine Kukas, many of whom were wounded were by Mr. Cowan's orders blown away from guns at Malerkotla without a trial. The manner of the execution was indiscriminate severity stand in need of the strongest justification. Mr. T.D. Forsyth sent to letter Mr. Cowan in 17th January 1872;

“My dear Cowan, you have done admirably, but for heaven's sake don't let the whole thing fall short of perfect success by any hasty act. If you hang these men,(caught at Maludh), you will fall short of perfect success. A delay of 12 hours cannot produce harm, whereas illegal action may cause trouble. I only wait for Ram Singh to come in tomorrow morning, and I shall then be out at once”⁵²

The letter dated of 8th April, 1872 Mr. Cowan send to the Secretary of the Government of the Punjab;

“Before the execution of 49 men was over, I received only one letter from Mr. Forsyth, directing men not to execute the captured Kukas but keep them for trial. This latter reached me on the evening of 17th January a little before sunset; I was on what is called the parade ground of the Malerkotla State between a line formed by the sepoy of the Native States and the guns. Forty-two or forty –three of the insurgents had been executed before this letter was delivered to me: the remaining six or seven men were tied to the guns, and a bugler was awaiting the order to sound the ‘fire’. Colonel Perkins with the remarks that it would be impossible to stay the execution of the men already tied to the guns; that such a proceeding would have the worst effect on the people around us”⁵³.

The armies of adjoining Native States were sent back. The Deputy Commissioner also went back to Ludhiana. Under all the circumstances of this case, his Excellency in Council was compelled to direct that Mr. Cowan be removed from Service.⁵⁴ The states officials were dismissed for inefficiency and delinquency and soon after this incident Mr. Heath was appointed as the Superintendent of the State.

⁵² Home judicial Department, January 1872, Nation Achieve of India, New Delhi, p. 74.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 75.

⁵⁴ File No. 494, Statement of Mr. Forsyth, p.no. 39, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University, Patiala.

He controlled the affairs of the state with ability and tact. Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan attended Imperial Darbar held in 1877 on the occasion of the assumption by her Majesty Queen Victoria the title of Emperor of India and was honoured with an additional salute of two guns in 1880.⁵⁵

Mr. Cowan wrote in his letter that the Kuka prisoners were most defiant and unruly. They poured most abusive language towards the Government and Chiefs of the Native States. All of them admitted that they were present at the attacks on Maludh and Malerkotla, and gloried in the act. They said that they attacked Maludh for the purpose of procuring arms and Malerkotla because their religion required them to slay the killer of cows.

The two women were residents of Patiala State. Forty nine Kukas were blown away from guns in afternoon on the parade ground of the Malerkotla Chief in the presence of the troops of the Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla States. Kuka Bishan Sing made a furious attack on Mr. Cowan, seizing him by the beard. He was endeavouring to strangle him. Mr Cowan had considerable difficulty in releasing himself. Some officers of the Native States had standing near Mr. Cowan. These officers drew their swords and cut him down. The Lieutenant Governor reported that he had arranged to send troops to the spot, and had ordered the arrest of Ram Singh and his *Subas*. Ram Singh, Kuka leader with Lakha Singh and Sahib Singh forward to Allahabad under charge of European officer and Gurkha guard.

A Darbar was held by the Commissioner for the distribution of rewards to those who had done good services towards the captured of the Kukas. Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan had three sons but the eldest of them died in 1884. The shock of the death of eldest son and Begum Sahiba affected mental condition of Nawab and he withdraw from the Government of the State in 1885. The Government of India took over the administration and appointed a Superintendent. This arrangement lasted up to 1903. In 1903 Sahibzada Ahmed Ali Khan tool charge of the affairs of the state. Nawab Ibrahim Ali Khan passed away in 1908 and Mohammad Ahmed Ali Khan became the Nawab of Malerkotla in 1911. Nawab also helped the British Government during the Third Afgan War and Second World War.⁵⁶ Ahmed Ali Khan passed away in 1947 and Nawab Iftikhar Ali Khan becomes the Nawab of Malerkotla. The history of the

⁵⁵ Punjab District Gazetteer, Sangrur, Revenue Department Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 40.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 41.

Malerkotla State during First half of twentieth century is a history of unflinching loyalty to the British. The State helped the British with men, money and transport during the Wars. The ruler of Malerkotla ruthlessly suppressed any freedom movement or anti- British movement if at all that happened with state territory.

“Chiefs of Patiala, Jind and Nabha with their troops gave loyal and efficient assistance.”⁵⁷

It is very important that in the incident of Malerkotla States of Patiala, Nabha, Jind was side along with the British officers. Native chiefs take a pledge to Britain, at the close of Indian States Committee, over which Sir Harcourt Butler presided; His Highness remained the members that the Princes stood by Britain in 1857 and 1914- “As we stood by you in the past, so we shall stand by you in the future.”⁵⁸

In 1872 was held a Durbar in Amritsar to commemorate the recovery of his Royal Highness the Prince Wales. All the Chiefs of the Sikh States presented a spontaneous address, expressing their hostility to the Kukas and their tenets. They were heartily approving the measures of repression adopted by the Government.⁵⁹ T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner of Ambala described in his letter of 19th January, 1872 that, the British Government was distributed the following rewards from the Malerkotla coffers to the person prominently mentioned by Mr. Cowan as having distinguished themselves in apprehending the Kukas who were concerned in the attack on the Kotlah Place and Treasury, and I gave instruction to the Nazim of that Principality to make proper provision for the for the family of the Kotwal, Ahmed Ali, and the others who gallantly defend, at the expense, of their lives, the property of their States. Officers and employees of the Maharaja of Patiala were given prizes and commendation and certificates.⁶⁰

Name	Rs.
Niaz Ali, Naib Nazim	1,000
Punjab Singh, a Durbani	300
Jaymul Singh, who gave information	200

⁵⁷ Home Judicial Department, proceeding 1872, National Achieve of India, New Delhi, p. 7.

⁵⁸ File no. H.105 B, Foreign Department, Patiala Government, Artical in The Times of India, June 13, 1932, p. 5, State Archive of Patiala.

⁵⁹ Home Judicial Progs., March 1872, National Archives of India, New Delhi, p. 48.

⁶⁰ Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach (Punjabi Translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)* File No. 3, H. 92 M. Part-I, p. 278

Mustan Ali	.....	.....	.....	100
Utum Singh	.....	.....	.....	50
Ruttum Singh	.....	.....	.....	50
Gulab Singh	.....	.....	.....	50
Partap Singh	.....	.....	.....	50

Letter of thanks on behalf of the Malerkotla State were at the same time addressed by Mr. T.D. Forsyth to the Maharaja Patiala, Rajas of Nabha and Jind and delivered in Durbar of the Vakeels of the Rajas

KAPURTHALA

The Kapurthala State entered in to relation with the British Government the first decade of the nineteenth Century. At that time Fateh Singh Ahluwalia was the chief of the State. He and the Maharaja jointly signed the first treaty, dated 1st January, 1806, entered into by the British Government with the rulers of the Trans-Satluj. In this treaty, both Ranjit Singh and Fateh Singh were styled Sardars. But they were never afterwards regarded as equals. Fateh Singh was of a weak, yielding nature, and shrank from asserting his own dignity. He thus fell by degree under the powerful spell of the Maharaja, who finally treated him as a mere vassal, commanding his services on every military adventure and insisting upon his constant attendance at Lahore. Matters at length became intolerable even to the amiable Fateh Singh, and in 1825 he fled across the Satluj and took refuge at Jagraon,⁶¹ then under British protection, abandoning his estates in both the Doabs to the Maharaja⁶². There was no real cause for this rash step on the part of the Sardar, whose fears were apparently worked upon by the sudden advance of some of Ranjit Singh's regiments towards his border; and the Maharaja was probably surprised and annoyed when he found that his old friend had been driven into the arms of the English, whose settlements up against his Satluj boundary had for some years caused him genuine concern. But the Sardar had been so harried by Ranjit Singh's imperious ways that he felt he must at all hazards secure a guarantee of his possessions trans-Satluj, such as had been accorded by the British to the Phulkian chiefs further south.⁶³ This was, however, impossible,

⁶¹ Giani Sohan Singh Sheetal, PEPSU Da Itihas, Amritsar, p. 22.

⁶² Punjab District Gazetteers, Kapurthala, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 23, Punjab State Archive, Patiala.

without coming to open repute with the Maharaja, and all that could be done was to take his Cis-Satluj estate under British protection and bring about a friendly reconciliation between the chiefs, which resulted in the restoration to the fugitive in 1827 of all he had abandoned. This Cis-Satluj territory was in any case secured to Fateh Singh under the protection the general agreement of 1809.⁶⁴ By Article 4 of the proclamation the Cis –Satluj chiefs were pledge to furnish supplies of grains and under necessaries to British troops when marching through their territory for purposes connected with the general welfare, and by Article 5 they were bound to join the British Army with their, forces, should an enemy approach from any quarter for the purpose of conquering the country.

Raja Randhir Singh succeeded his father in 1852. He was a man of gentle and generous nature. He also possessed a remarkable energy of purpose. He aided the British during the great rebellion of 1857.⁶⁵ The Raja marched in to Jullundur at the head of his men and helped to hold the Doab. The political effect of this active loyalty on the part of the leading Sikh chiefs north of the Satluj was of the utmost value to the British; and Raja's assistance was promptly acknowledged by the bestowal upon him of the title of Raja-i-Rajgan in perpetuity, and by remission of a year's tribute and a permanent reduction in the amount of his tribute payment by Rs 25,000. The Raja however, requested that the hereditary *Jagir* in the Bari Doab which had been resumed on the death of Raja Nihal Singh in 1852, though of less present value, might be restored to him in lieu of the remission of tribute. The request compiled with in 1860 and *jagir* was released to the Raja in perpetuity, the civil and police jurisdiction remaining the hand of the British authorities.⁶⁶ The Raja permitted by the British the right of adoption and other concessions in addition to the territories in the united provinces of Agra and Oudh. The last and most highly prized privilege conferred upon Raja Randhir Singh for his services to the British during the great rebellion of 1857 was that of adoption, granted under a *sanad* of Lord Canning, dated 31 March 1862. In 1864, the Raja received the Insignia of the Grand Commandership in the Order of the Star of India (G.C.S.I) in public Darbar, at the hand of Lord Lawrence. Raja Randhir Singh died in 1870 and cremated at Nasik.

Raja Kharak Singh was a son of Raja Randhir Singh. He was installed on

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 24.

⁶⁵ Ibis,p. 25.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

gaddi on 12 March, 1870. When Kuka incident happened all Native State of Punjab showed his loyalty towards the British. Precautions were at the same time taken by the rulers of Native State against this Kuka Sect. Every Kuka were in the territories of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla and Kapurthala under surveillance. The Raja of Kapurthala received the formal thanks of Government for his conduct aiding to re-establish order. All these and another precaution were taken by Government of British India and Native Princes to guard against "A few fanatics", whose raid was effectually suppressed on the 16th January.⁶⁷ The commenced his rule by administering the state with zeal but on his showing symptoms of mental incapacity, the actual administration was entrusted to a Council of three members. But experiment was not successful, and April 1875 Mr. Lapel Griffin was appointed Superintendent of the State⁶⁸. Raja never recovered normal health and died at *Dharmshala* in 1877.

Maharaja Jagatjit Singh, the last ruler, was born in 1872. From 1875-1890 the administration of state was conducted by the successive British Superintendent due to mental incapacity of Raja Kharak Singh and minority of Raja Jagatjit Singh. He was installed on the *gaddi* and invested with the full ruling powers of administration in November 1890.⁶⁹ In 1911, the ruler of the state Raja Jagatjit Singh received the hereditary title of Maharaja.⁷⁰ On the outbreak of first Great War, his highness rendered valuable services to the British on the lapse of British paramountcy in August 1947, the Kapurthala State acceded to the Indian Union and joined the PEPSU in 1948, he died in 1949.

FARIDKOT

The territory of Faridkot is practically surrounded by the Ferozepure district except on the south where it marches with Patiala. The Faridkot Rajas are sprung from the same stock as the Phulkian Chiefs, having a common ancestor in Brar, more remote by twelve generations than the celebrated Phul. Chaudhari Kapura Singh founded the Faridkot house in the middle of the seventeenth century.⁷¹ His grandson

⁶⁷ File No. 494, Statement of Mr. Forsyth, p. 33, Ganda Singh Reference Library, Punjabi University, Patiala.

⁶⁸ Punjab District Gazetteers, Kapurthala, Revenue Department, Punjab, Chandigarh, 1984, p. 26, Punjab State Archive, Patiala.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 26.

⁷⁰ Confidential Report on Native States, Punjab Government (1911-1912), Shimla: Punjab Government Press, 1912, p. 7, Punjab State Archive, Patiala.

⁷¹ Confidential File, Ruling Princes and Chiefs, Notables and Principal Officials of the Punjab State Native States, Superintendent Government Printing, Lahore, 1918, p. 7, Punjab State Archive, Patiala.

Sardar Hamir Singh, become independent a century later, having added considerably to the family possessions. Maharaja Ranjit Singh seized the state in 1807, the British Government did not approve of these fresh conquests of the Lahore Chief⁷². When the British Government demanded from the Maharaja the restitution of all his conquests on the left bank of the Satlej made during 1808-1809, Faridkot was the place he surrendered most unwillingly.⁷³ It was very claver step of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to have crossed into the Cis-Satluj region. Maharaja Ranjit was wanted maximum advantage from the critical situation created by the French danger. But soon the British attitude changed on this matter because the fear of French invasion was intensified. The Maharaja was completely taken aback by these new developments. Ultimately, he yielded before British pressure. The British who had already issued a proclamation for Cis- Satluj region, Now, Fridkot State also under the protection of British Government on 3 April 1809. All obstacles to the completion of the treaty between Lahore and the British Government were now removed, and it was signed shortly afterwards.⁷⁴ For services rendered during the First Sikh War, the Faridkot Chief, Sardars Pahar Singh, obtained the title of Raja and a grant of territory. Raja Pahara Singh died in 49. His Son Raja Wazir Singh, during the Second Sikh War of 1849, had served on the side of the British. Raja also gave considerable assistance to the British during the Mutiny. He seized several mutineers and made them over to the British authorities. For his services during 1857-58, Raja Wazir Singh received the honorary title of “Burar Bans Raja Sahib Bahadur,” the right to a *Khillat* of eleven pieces, instead of seven as before, and a salute of eleven guns. Raja Bikram Singh succeeded his father at the age of 32. The period of new ruler was 1874-1898. Raja Bikram Singh was one of the founders of the famous Singh Sabha Movement in Punjab and took deep interest in its programmes of religious and social reforms. Raja Bikram Singh ruled for 24 years and died in August 1898 at the age of 56. His successor was his elder son, Balbir Singh. He ruled for seven years. Like his father he took deep interest in education, art and architecture. Raja Balbir Singh after attacks illness died on February 4th, 1906. The succession of Brijinder Singh, the late Raja’s nephew, who had been adopted by him as his heir, was sanctioned by the Government of India and he was formerly installed by the Commissioner at a Darbar held at Faridkot on 15th March. The young Raja being a minor of about ten years of age, the

⁷² Fauja Singh, R.C. Rabra, *The City of Faridkot*, Past and Present, Punjabi University Patiala, 1976, p. 21.

⁷³ Punjab State Gazetteers, Volume XVI A, Faridkot State, 1907, The Civil and Military Gazette press, 1909, p. 10.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 11.

administration of the state is carried on by a Council of Sardar Bahadur Resaldar Partap Singh, Extra Assistant Commissioner, Munshi Abdul Ghafur Khan and Sardar Narain Singh.⁷⁵ His Highness the Raja was youth of eighteen in 1914. Raja personally assumed full powers. He was a successful ruler but his work was cut short by his sudden death in 1918. The successor of Maharaja Brijinder Singh was his elder son Harinder Singh who was just a child of three years at the time of his accession in 1918. On the death of the late Maharaja was set up a temporary Council of Administration.⁷⁶ Council was functioned up till 1934. When Second World War broke out, Raja gave services to British Government by way of men and money. Raja had to faced was the rise of a Parja Mandal Movement and *Akali Morcha* for the reform and control of Gurudwars. India became free on 15th August, 1947, the ruler of Faridkot decided to accede to the PEPSU like other states.

This shows that British Government had adopted illegal manner to suppress this Movement. This incident was complex of barbarity. British Government had always kept an eye on Namdharis activities or when they went to any fair. The Kukas were punished with death from the cannon's mouth. There has been no order issued in the State and as this act of punishment was more suitable for setting example to others. Baba Ram Singh the leader of Kuka sect was deported at once from Punjab and then sent to Allahabad. In this incident all Native States were sided with British. All the princely states Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala, Faridkot were under the protection of British Government. The States were signed the treaty under the Protection of British. According to proclamation, the Rajas of the Sates always cooperation with British and gave or rendered help any bad situations. All Chiefs were given full support if any disturbance or revolt occurred in their States. So Chiefs of the all States were given support in suppressing the Kuka Movement. They were helped with Calvary, Infantry and arms. Maharaja Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla gave all possible help for captured the Kuka Prisoners. This Incident happened in parade ground of Malerlotla. All Native officers were present there when Kukas were blow away. Letters of thanks were sending to all Native Chiefs for the rendered help in whole case. British Government was distributed rewards to Native Chiefs. Namdhari Sect was continued under leader ship of Baba Hari Singh, he was a brother of Baba Ram Singh. Many restrictions were opposed on Namdhari Sect for many

⁷⁵ Confidential Reports on Native States, 1905-1906, shimla 1906, p. 4.

⁷⁶ Confidential Annual Report on Native States, 1918-1919, shimla, 1919, p. 12.

years. Police guards were appointed on the Gate of Bhaini Sahib. No one could enter or leave out without the Permission of British. Against the Namdhari Movement Chiefs of Native States did play a great role.

CHAPTER – 6

IMPACT OF THE OPPOSITION SECTIONS ON THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT

Namdhari revolt has an important place among the revolts against British Empire in the second half of 19th century. Namdhari movement has a glorious history from political, social and religious perspectives. After the revolt of 1857, British did not want the rise of any rebellion which could cause danger to their rule in India. They used all methods to save their government and to suppress the Namdhari movement.

This revolt was very important in political and social spheres. The revolt brought awareness among people when they were on the verge of forgetting the teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. Sikhs were indulged in various bad customs at that time. Religion, legacy of *Gurbani* and Sikh traditions were being neglected. People used to eat meat and drink alcohol. On the other hand, Christian missionaries were actively involved in preaching their religion, the effect of which could be seen on Sikhs as well. The biggest example of which is the conversion of Maharaja Dalip Singh into Christianity.

The founder of Namdhari sect or Kuka Revolt was Baba Ram Singh. He was born on February 3, 1816 in the village Rayian of Ludhiana district.¹ The name of his mother was Sada Kaur and his father's name was Baba Jassa Singh. After the birth of Baba Ram Singh, Baba Jassa Singh shifted to village Bhaini near Rayian. He was enrolled in the regiment of Kunwar Naunihal as a soldier in 1837 when he was 22 years old and served *Khalsa* Army for approximately 8 years.² In 1845, before Anglo-Sikh war, he left army because of increasing hooliganism and betrayal; he threw his weapons in the river Bias. Baba Ram Singh was called *Mastana*. His colleagues asked him “*Mastaneya* why you threw the weapons in river.” Baba ji replied that “today I have thrown it; tomorrow you will also throw it.”³ He spent some time peacefully and religiously in the village. On 12 April, 1857 i.e. *Baisakhi* Day, he baptised five

¹ Gurdeep Singh, *Shri Sarguru Ram Singh te Mahatma Gandhi*, Satyug, Shri Jeewan Nagar, 1 Fagan, 2015, p. 36.

² Satyug, Basant Ank 64, Jild No. 5, 12 Magh, 1927, Shri Bhaini Sahib, P. 55.

³ Interview, Surjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

Sikhs in Bhaini Sahib and established *Sant Khalsa*.⁴ In 1857 Baba Ram Singh prepared the nectar but before preparation the nectar he sent his follower Bhai Rai Singh to Hazur Sahib. He ordered that go Hazur Sahib and stay there some time and from there he brought the entire *guru maryada* by writing. The entire *amrit* was prepared according to the same *guru maryada* and same *maryada* was followed.⁵ Baba Kahan Singh, Labh Singh, Atma Singh, Naib Singh and Bhai Budh Singh were the Sikhs who were baptised. Gradually, this revolt became renowned among the people of Punjab, but became cause of trouble for British government. British tried to restrict the movement in every possible way. They were looking for an occasion when the government could suppress the revolt with full force.

Baba Ram Singh first of all brought religious and social awareness among people before starting the Namdhari revolt. The people who do not respect their religion lose their character. Religion guides and restricts people from following the wrong path. Baba Ram Singh spent several years in going from place to place and preaching the message of *Gurbani* to people, inspiring them to follow the path of religion by leaving meat and drugs. He motivated people to wear simple white clothes. People, by getting inspired from him, started gathering in large numbers.

People started leading a life in accordance with the Sikh ideals because of religious sermons of Baba Ram Singh. The impact of Namdhari revolt could be seen on the lives of large number of people. The political awareness propaganda of Namdhari revolt also started in 1857, but British government took it seriously only in 1863.⁶ The preaching of Ram Singh was considered as dangerous by British and several restrictions were imposed on it from 1863 to 1867.⁷ However, people were taking part in Namdhari revolt instead of these restrictions. As the Namdhari movement was spreading, worries of British started increasing. They felt that Sikhs would repeat the revolt of 18th century in the 19th century. After the Sikh gathering in village Khotte, British suddenly became enraged against Namdharis. The deputy commissioner of district Ferozpur issued order to Baba Ram Singh by reaching in Khotte that Kukas will not be able to organise any kind of gathering or religious fair

⁴ Dr. Jaswant Singh, *Jass, Desh Bhagat Babe*, New Book Company, Jalandhar, 1975, p.56

⁵ Interview, Swarn Singh Virk, Village Kariwala, Sirsa, (Haryana), 14 October, 2020.

⁶ Moti Lal Bhargava, *Satguru Ram Singh*, Namdhari Itihas Parkashan Sabha, Sri Bhaini Sahib. Ludhiana, p. 13.

⁷ Gurdwara Gazette, December, 1966, p. 71.

in Ferozpur.⁸ A report was prepared against Baba Ram Singh and other Kukas. He was then detained in Bhaini Sahib on the basis of that report. Namdhari fairs and gatherings were completely banned.⁹ The boundaries of Bhaini Sahib were under restrictions from July 1863 to July 1867. The real motive of Namdhari movement was to inculcate religious feelings in people and to prepare the masses for war of independence. Here one thing should be remembered that Baba Ram Singh was under custody and he did not have the permission to go out of Bhaini Sahib at that time. However many Sikhs used to come to Bhaini Sahib to meet Baba Ram Singh. Namdhari movement was reaching at its peak in those times. During the imprisonment and even after that, Baba Ram Singh continuously made efforts to unite people. He chose twenty two *Subas* in Punjab and spread Namdhari movement as well as his sermons to people.¹⁰ Baba Ram Singh tried to establish links with Kashmir and Nepal to send British away from India. Even a platoon of Kukas was established in Kashmir which was later disjoined because of impact of British Empire. The secret agencies were activated against Namdharis.

British government was looking for an opportunity to hinder the impact of Namdhari movement, which they got in 1872. People had severe anger against the British policy about cow slaughtering, but they were not able to do anything about it. In 1871, Namdhari Sikhs took action against people who were responsible for cow slaughtering in Amritsar and Raikot.¹¹ As a result of which, many butchers were killed. Namdhari Sikhs were hanged to death for this action. In January 1872, around 200 Namdharis attacked a slaughter house in Malerkotla which was considered as an attack on British Empire by the government and 65 Sikhs were blown with cannons on 17-18 January in response.¹² Baba Ram Singh had no connection with the Malerkotla incident and in fact he had informed the government about it in prior. Even then, he was arrested and imprisoned in Allahabad fort along with his followers. The action against him was taken in accordance with section III of Bengal Regulation

⁸ File No. 490, *Political Records of Kuka Movement*, Ganda Singh Collections, Bhai Khan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala, p. 4.

⁹ E.D. Maclagan, *Census of India, 1891*, Volume XIX, Calcutta, 1892, p. 67.

¹⁰ Joginder Singh, *The Namdhari Sikhs: Their Changing Social and Cultural Landscape*, Manohar Publishers and Distributions, New Delhi, 2003, p. 20.

¹¹ Swaran Singh Sanahi, *Forgery in Amritsar Butcher Murder Case 1871*, Proceedings of Punjab History Conference, Punjabi University Publication, Patiala, p. 212.

¹² Home Judicial Progs. February 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 24.

Act, 1818. After sometime, he was sent to Rangoon with his prominent disciple Naanu Singh.¹³

A document of 19th January 1872 states that as follows:¹⁴

“As per the intention of Maharaja Patiala Sahib, the chief of the court Sardar Deva Singh should be requested to direct the Nazims of the districts that as many Kukas living in the states as may be present at this fair at Bhaini Guru Ram Singh, the Founder of Kuka Sect. Kukas should have been assembled, imprisoned until he convinces the court not to be involved in the riots and handed over the people living in the villages to the *Namberdars*. If they do not allow the Kukas to go out of the villages till the next order, then they will be considered responsible. The police should be instructed not to allow these Kukas to congregate anywhere and if they see any Kukas gathering at any place, they should immediately arrest them and submit a challan to court so that they can be punished as per the law. Those of them who call themselves ‘Suba’ and put some kind of religious oppression on the people of this community should also be imprisoned.”

Namdharis were persecuted and suppressed in whole Punjab after that. They were kept confined to their own villages. They were not allowed to move out of the village without the permission of village *Chaunkidar* and *Namberdar*. They also had to register their incoming and outgoing movements. The prior permission from British officers was required before any event of marriage, death ceremony and Kirtana. It generally took long time to get the permission from British officials because of their strict behaviour towards Namdharis. Fairs, social and religious gatherings were completely banned.¹⁵ The lists of famous Namdharis of all districts were given to all the police stations, where all their movements were noted. They were also asked to submit bails according to section 504-505 of Criminal Procedure Code Act X. Many nationalist Namdharis were imprisoned, fined and their lands were seized in case of failure to deposit the bail amounts.¹⁶ The search was carried out in the *Dera* of Bhaini

¹³ Home Judicial Department, February, 1872, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 27.

¹⁴ Foreign Department Patiala, File No. H 92 M II, Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach (Punjabi Translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)*, p. 371

¹⁵ Interviews Palwinder Singh, Gurnaam Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March 2020.

¹⁶ Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, *Jugg Paltao Satguru*, Namdhari Publication, Shri Jeevan Nagar, Sirsa, p. 223.

Sahib because it was the preaching centre of Namdhari movement. They looked into every nook and corner of *Dera* in order to find some inappropriate material but were not able to find anything. The houses of all the Kukas were searched and no books and illegal weapons of any kind were found except the chains, utensils and food grains etc from anyone's house.¹⁷

A permanent post of police was established outside the main gate of *Dera* which kept an eye on visitors. This post was removed from that place in 1923. All the restrictions were laid by government to curb the rise of any other rebellion by Namdharis. This statement is justified by letter no: 39, dated 1872 which was written by Lapel Griffen. The letter was addressed to Secretary of State for India in response to his query from Governor General.

In the second half of 19th century, Namdhari sect was the only association fighting against British rule in an organised manner. Sikh *Sardars* and nobles instead of participating in the movement, used to transfer secret information about Namdhari revolt to the government. British have called these people 'most loyal subjects of her majesty'. Whereas they have written about Namdharis as: The truth is that it is not possible for a Kuka to be a loyal subject of the British government.

In January 1872, after deportation of Baba Ram Singh, the authority of Namdhari movement went into the hands of his younger brother Baba Budh Singh who later became famous by the name of Baba Hari Singh.¹⁸ In first written command addressed to the followers, he wrote: "The name of Bhai Budh Singh is Hari Singh from now onwards and he will guide the Namdhari followers in future. He is their all in all now." For quite some time, Baba Hari Singh was not granted the permission to go out of Bhaini Sahib. In January 1872, after the deportation of Baba Ram Singh, Colonel Beli searched out the Dera of Bhaini Sahib. All the followers were expelled from the *Dera*. Baba Jassa Singh, Baba Hari Singh, Bibi Nanda with her children, the manager of shop Vareyam Singh and personal servant Makhhan Singh were the only people who were granted permission to stay inside.¹⁹ The followers used to come to Bhaini Sahib instead of the tight security of police for fifty years, but only five of

¹⁷ Foreign department Patiala, File No. H 92 M-II, Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Lukia Sach (Punjabi Translation of Urdu- Persian documents related to Kuka Movement available in Punjab State Archives, Patiala)*, p. 362.

¹⁸ Secret, January 1882, Nos. 558-599, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 4.

¹⁹ Tara Singh Anjaan, *Namdhari Sikhs-A Brief History*, Arsee Publishers, Delhi, 2007, p. 50.

them were allowed to enter.²⁰ After some time, ten people used to get permission to visit Dera complex. Though government had banned Baba Hari Singh to go out, but his followers started visiting him in large numbers. The Namdhari Sikhs used to visit Rangoon to see Baba Ram Singh at that time. The situation of Punjab was written about to him and his written commands were brought back.

In 1898-99, lack of rains caused famine all over India. Free meals were served in the community kitchen of the *Dera* without any break. Many people even from far off places settled in Bhaini Sahib after listening about the community kitchen.²¹ Police send a report about the situation to Deputy Commissioner. When the D.C. visited the place and saw the meals being served, he became surprised and asked where the grains were coming from. Baba Hari Singh replied “This community kitchen belongs to Baba Ram Singh. I don’t know where he sends the grains from.” The D.C. again asked, for how long the free meal will run. Baba Ji said, “Until we have the grains, the community kitchen will run like this only.” The D.C. became very happy after listening to him and said, “My government can donate 1250 acre land to your community kitchen in the Mintgumri district”. Baba said in rage, “How can I accept your offer to exchange my country with the land you are donating. India is our country. Whenever we will take over the land, we will get whole of the country. If you really want to donate land, give the land from your own nation.” The D.C. returned back after hearing this.

The restrictions on Namdharis were intact. Namdharis were not allowed to stay inside the boundaries of their own villages. The policemen sitting outside the gate of Dera would eat food from the *Dera*, and cause troubles for the followers residing in the same place. Baba Hari Singh managed to survive through the bad time with patience and wisdom.²² Suba Khan Singh and Jaimal Singh of Bhaini Sahib had been arrested under the section 353, Indian Penal Code, for abusing and obstructing the police in the discharge of their duty at Bhaini Sahib. Suba Kahn Singh attempted to force his way in to Dera. This man requires to be strictly watched. This man was to collect money and grain for Baba Budh Singh and sent them to Bhaini Sahib periodically.²³ According to British Government report on 17th March the District

²⁰ Interview, Gurnaam Singh and Palwinnder Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

²¹ Sardar Nahar Singh, *A Short Accounts of the Kukas or Namdharis*, Namdhari Dharmshala, Delhi, p. 17.

²² Swarn Singh Virk, “Dyal –Purkh” *Shri Guru Hari Singh Ji*, Viryam, October, 2006, p. 5.

²³ Home Judicial Report, Nos. 568-594, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 8.

Superintendent of Police, Ludhiana, received information to the effect of about 150 Namdharis were assembled for the purpose of holding a secret meeting in the Dhak jungle near village Laton, but only succeeded in arresting thirty nine persons under Section 504, 505, Criminal Procedure Code. The remainder dispersed on the approach of the police and effected their escape.²⁴ Gurdit Singh of Naiwala was an Influential *Suba*. His relative Rattan Singh was hanged for taking part in the butcher murders of 1871, in which Gurdit Singh he was supposed to have been implicated. But as nothing could be proved against him. The Patiala authorities had to content themselves with putting him on security in the sum of 500. He was also directed not to visit Bhaini or to move out of this village without obtaining the consent of the safe authorities.²⁵ Baba Hari Singh was called “the figure of peace”. Baba Ji with his patient and peaceful nature encouraged his fellow men and by using his wisdom, he kept his contacts with Russia, Kabul and Kashmir.²⁶ He kept his contact with Baba Ram Singh in Burma in lieu of the movement against British through messengers from Russia. Till 1879-1881, these contacts could not be broken even both Burmese and Indian government tried hard. Punjab as well as Indian government used to make efforts to restrict the contact and meetings of Namdharis with Baba Ram Singh through Burmese jail officials. However, many of them would contact Baba Ram Singh by hiding themselves from government watchmen. Despite the powers of the government Namdharis were looking for way to oppose the British Government in some way or the others. There were Namdhari relations with foreign countries were already. Now they tried to establish their relations with Russia.²⁷ They can be liberated the India by establishing relation with Russia because British government and Russia were enemies. Kuka Gurbachan Singh was an important link between Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh and Baba Hari Singh. Gurcharan Singh had a sense of hatred for the English regime when he led him to join the Namdhari sect. Baba Ram Singh liked him for his love spirit and intelligence so much. Baba Ram Singh gave the title of the *Mahant*.²⁸ Gurcharan Singh visit to Russia was aimed at handing over the letters of Ram Singh and Hari Singh’s to the Russian government. With the help of which, he wanted to expel the British government from India.²⁹

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 9.

²⁶ Home Judicial Department, January 1872, Nos. 52-63, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 1.

²⁷ Home Judicial Department, B, July 1884, No. 272-274, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 6.

²⁸ Swarn Singh Virk, “Dyal- Purkh” *Shri Guru Hari Singh Ji*, Variyam, October, 2006, p.11.

²⁹ Swarn Singh Virk, *Kukiyan da Kasad- Suba Gurbachan Singhm ‘Chak Ramdas’*, Variyam, Jild No. 31, August, 2006, p.13.

Gurcharan Singh was a son of Atar Singh, Virk Jat, of Chak Ramdas in Sialkot district. He was a 75 years old. He had a light complexion, aquiline features, large eyes, white beard and moustache, height about 5 feet 11 inches.³⁰ He was a man of general appearance, a fine and handsome specimen of a Sikh. He was known *Gurmakhi* and Pashtu. He belonged to well known family of Baba Parana who during the lifetime of Guru Nanak Dev, travelled all over Afganistan, visited Kandhar, Ghazni, Bokhara and Kabul. He established a *dharmsala* in Kabul, which was called after him, *Parana Shib ki dharsala*. When he was a boy he went to Kabul to visit the disciple of his ancestor, Bhai Parana. During the Sikh regime, Gurcharan Singh, while in service as a trooper in Maharaja Ranjit Singh's army, took leave and went to Kabul, and was there at the time of annexation of Punjab by the British. On his return home, he settled down as a *zamindar*. Some twelve years ago, in acknowledgement of his hospitable reception, on an occasion of Guru Ram Singh's visit to Chak Ramdas. About 1867, he became a Kuka, and soon afterwards was made a *Suba* of the Kuka sect. After the deportation of Baba Ram Singh, he travelled about, holding Kuka meetings and making converts. In 1868 he again went to Kabul, and remained there four years, visiting Ghazni and other place. He last left his home in 1878.³¹ In May 1879 he was seen in Samarkand and Katta Kurghan by Gulab Khan, a man who has given a great deal of information to Government. He had brought a letter to the Russians from Baba Ram Singh.

He was treated with great consideration by Russians, and was given dresses of honour and sums of money. Imam Bakhsh, a man who had sent to Turkistan by Sir L. Cvangnari, was denounced by Gurcharan Singh as a British spy, and was imprisoned accordingly. Gurcharan Singh was told by the Russians authorities to return the Punjab and strengthen the friendship established between the Russians and the Kukas.³²

In April 1880 he forwarded from Tash Kurghan a letter addressed by Baba Budh Singh, of Bhaini, to the Russian Governor-General. In October he returned to Peshawar, and, on meeting Gulab Khan, whom he believed to be a Russian agent about to return to Turkistan, he gave him letters to the Russian Governor General and to the

³⁰ Foreign Department, 1881, Government of Punjab, Confidential No. 688, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 27.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid, p.26.

Deputy Governor of Katta Kurghan. These letters were made over by Gulab Khan to the Commissioner of Peshawar. Reference is made in them to letters from Russians to Guru Ram Singh, and to Gurcharan Singh's intention to proceed to Rangoon to obtain the Guru's replies to them.³³ Gurcharan Singh subsequently came down to Lahore, and in disobedience of orders, left without reporting his departure; he then proceeded by a circuitous route to Bhaini Sahib, the head quarter of the Kuka sect, where he obtained an interview with Baba Budh Singh. On return to his village he was arrested by the police and sent to Lahore.³⁴

Gulab Khan had given statement about the activities of Gurcharan Singh. According to Gulab Khan Letters:

“On the 1st May 1879, a Kuka named Gurcharan Singh of village of Chak Ram Das of the Gujranwala (Sailkot) district; a tall man with bearded and about fifty years old, arrived in Katta Kurghan from India. He brought a Hindi letter purporting to be from Baba Ram Singh, the Kuka leader, and signed by several others. This letter began with *salaams* to the Russian Emperor, the Governor General; and other Russian officers, and went on to say that Ram Singh was the spiritual leader of 315,000 Kukas, all brave soldiers: that the tyrannical British Government had imprisoned him in Rangoon, but that his younger brother (Budh Singh) at Ludhiana. The British Government was afraid of losing the Punjab by the Kukas; but the sacred book (Granth Sahib) said that the Russian would go to India and the *Khalsa* would assist them to expel the English, and both then the Russians and the *Khalsa* would rule over all India.”³⁵

“On the 1st October 1879, Gurcharn Singh, Kuka Suba of Baba Ram Singh, told to return to the Punjab and strengthen the friendship between the Russian and the Kukas. He left for Balkh, and is now at Tash Kurghan in Afganistan Turistan.

“On the 9th April 1880, Gurcharan Singh sent another letter to Samarkand by Narain Das, caste Acharj, of Hazru, in the Rawalpindi district. This was from Baba Ram Singh, but in the handwriting of his younger brother Budh Singh, who was in Ludhiana. It stated that Gurcharan Singh had been deputed secretly to the General, but

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Swarn Singh Virk, *Kukiyan da Kasad- Suba Gurbachan Singhm 'Chak Ramdas'*, Variyam, Jild No. 31, August, 2006, p. 16.

³⁵ Foreign Department, 1881, p.28.

that this secret had become known throughout India, so Gurcharan Singh could not return, and all the Englishmen in India had gone with the Kabul expedition.”³⁶

Gurcharan Singh after leaving Peshawar went to Hazru in the Rawal Pindi District, thence through Rawalpindi to his home at Chak Ram Das. On the 19th December he reached Lahore but he was ordered by the Police not to leave permission, but on the 21st December he went away secretly.

A letter, dated 27th October 1880, from Gurcharan Singh to Sayad Khan. Stated that, “Rangoon is the island where Baba Ram Singh is. It is now in the possession of the English Government, who was prayed for their victory. Encouraged by his prayer, they have commenced war with the English Government, which was the reason for the withdrawal of troops from Kabul. After the outbreak of this disturbance in Rangoon, four English officers came over from England to interview the Baba Ram Singh.

Three of them asked him, each separately, what his wishes were, but he did not make any reply. Then fourth officer enquired of him whether he wanted to go to Punjab or wished to remain there. In reply, he said that he had no wish to do either. The last officer then said that the Baba Ram Singh could return to the Punjab if he would abstain from causing disturbances.

The Baba Ram Singh rejoined that someone else had appeared to fight the English, and that he had no power to prevent him. The officers then returned to England.”³⁷

The relation of Maharaja Dalip Singh and Namdharis were mentioned in nineteenth century. At this time, both of them had a strong desire to liberate the country. The efforts of Namdhari leaders started long ago about this. The British government was already afraid so they made every effort to crush the movement. The activities that time were so strict that many British officers feel bad for Namdharis. One Britisher Sir Hanery Cattan had written in his autobiography “I have never seen such a crime in my entire life.”³⁸ But even after all this the Namdhari movement could not be suppressed. It resumed after few years. Maharaja Dalip Singh was still under the influence of the British. He slowly hated the British Government. But he was

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Home Judicial Department, B, Proceedings August, 1882, National Archive of India, New Delhi, p. 17.

³⁸ Dr. Fauja Singh, *Kukian De Maharaja Dalip Singh Naal Sambandh*, Viryam, March 1985, p. 21.

completely hated when the Landon parliament passed the law that after his death his child will not get property. After this Dalip Singh decided in his mind that he would not stay in England. He will go to India to spend his whole life. The British started threatening Maharaja Dalip Singh so that he abandons the thought of going to India. All these things had the opposite effects on Maharaja and his desire to go to India became more intense. Namdharis were very happy to see that he wanted to liberate the country. Namdharis started thinking that the freedom struggle will be easier with the arrival of Maharaja Dalip Singh. Because both had the same motive and both needed each other. The British Government was very clever. The Maharaja had just started saying that he wanted to go to India the government of Punjab and India started announcing that the return of Dalip Singh should be stopped under any circumstances. Otherwise, Maharaja and Namdharis will mess up together. The Lieutenant Governor Atchson of Punjab had written to India government in his letter dated 7 August 1873, "You must have come to know from letters of intelligence of the police that this year there is a unique flaw in the Namdharis, their religious books shows that there will definitely be something wrong this year, because they are to organize the meeting which during the time period of Guru Gobind Singh were held against the rule of Muslims. Due to these reasons, I don't like that Maharaja Dalip Singh set foot on the soil of Punjab."³⁹

Atchson sent two more letters to Indian government. One of them was sent to Commissioner of Jalandhar Colonel Yung. With the opinion of Colonel Yung, the permission to send Dalip Singh to Punjab was equal to the stupidity of top ranking. He cited the biggest reason for this as Kukas was filled with hope. Sardar Atar Singh's letters also described the predictions in the *Sakhis* prevalent in Namdharis. In which it was said that the Dalip Singh will liberate the country by removing the British rule.⁴⁰

On 15 August 1883, Viceroy Lord Ripon wrote a letter from Shimla to the Secretary of state Landon, stating that after taking advice of the Punjab government, "we understand that the Maharaja should not be allowed to descend from Allahabad to Punjab. Ranjit Singh's followers are still alive; the return of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Son will have a very bad effect on them. This year is not particularly good

³⁹ Dr. Fauja Singh, *Kukian De Maharaja Dalip Singh Naal Sambandh*, Viryam, March 1985, p. 22

⁴⁰ Jaswinder Singh, *Loyal Services by Sardar Atar Singh*, Arsee Publishers, New Delhi, 2013, p.142.

because there were predictions in Hindus, especially Muslim and Kukas. According to this year is a very hard mess”⁴¹. This enthusiasm in Namdharis remained for many years after 1883. The journey of Maharaja Dalip Singh to India started before walking he announced that he would adopt the first *Khalsa* religion of his country. This created a new enthusiasm in the whole of Punjab but not only have those people who were stood with the English government for their some personal interests. Hearing this news of Maharaja arrival a group of Namdharis stated toward the Mumbai because Maharaja had to reach there by ship. But this was neither to happen nor could happen. The government was afraid that there would not be any disturbance. When Dalip Singh came to India the atmosphere was like that at that time. Probably nothing like this would happen but they did not want any quarrel, so Dalip Singh was stopped on the way to Aden and after some time Dalip Singh went back from there.

Maharaja Dalip Singh went back from Aden in June 1886 so now he openly said that he will not go back to England. The Maharaja announced that he would not spread his hand to the British government for pension. He had first gone to France. He tried to reach the Indian colony with the help of the French government. Where, he would launch a movement against the British. But he could not succeed in it because France did not want to future annoy England. After some time in France, Dalip Singh reached Moscow with the help of some Russians journal as early 1887. He thought that Russia was an enemy of England and would help him. He would attack on Punjab with the help of Russia and he will remove the British government. The Maharaja had not yet reached Russia that *Chandi Path* had begun by Namdharis. It senses was the preparations for an impending crisis. There was a strong belief in Namdharis that our country will definitely be free this time. *Suba* Bishan Singh had already reached Russia.⁴² The news of his activities used to arrive from time to time. They thought that now Dalip Singh and Bishan Singh will work together and soon India will be free. Many Namdharis were also saying that the soul of Baba Ram Singh is working in Maharaja Dalip Singh. At that time when Dalip Singh was in Moscow, nothing can be said about how much success he had achieved by Namdharis to make direct connect with him.

⁴¹ Dr. Fauja Singh, op.cit. p. 23.

⁴² Tara Singh Anjaan, *Namdhari Sikhs A Brief History*, Arsee Publishers, Delhi, 2007, p. 28

Sardar Gurcharan Singh was a famous Kuka Suba, who made many successful attempts to form alliance with the Russian government.⁴³ Many times it has been said that he met with Dalip Singh, but there is no strong evidence of this. The information about two more efforts were made by Namdharis. One is found from Melcom letters. He was an English Military journal appointed in a city of Iran. In his first telegram sent to the government of India. He recorded about three Kukas Sikhs who stayed in the city of Masaud. According to him, "I have received the news that the Sikhs who had just come in search of Dalip Singh have sent their letter to Maharaja from Moscow by Russian agent. They have said that they have letters of Kashmir and Nepal."⁴⁴ Another letter receives from the journal Maclean about second effort of Namdharis programme. In the month of November and December of 1888, he received some news from centred Asia when he had sent to the government of India at that time. According to his letter, some Kukas Sikhs appealed to Russian authorities to allow them and gave some money them. He can join with Maharaja Dalip Singh. After this he was sent to Bukhara city.

At last, the government found a permanent solution for this. The officials at Burmese jail gave the information that Baba Ram Singh died on 29th November, 1885. The Burmese government informed Punjab government through a letter, but even this letter could not discourage Namdhari followers. Namdhari sect kept on growing and in these tough times, Satguru Pratap Singh was born in the house of Baba Hari Singh from the womb of Mata Jeevan Kaur on 9th march, 1890.⁴⁵ In this way, Baba Hari Singh as well as the Namdharis survived through the toughest times with smiling faces. They developed the sect with immense wisdom and prudence. Baba Hari Singh handled his responsibility wholeheartedly for 34 years. Towards the end of his life, he chose his eldest son Baba Pratap Singh to succeed him and died on 17th May, 1906. The place where his body was cremated, 'Hari Mandir' stands there today. Baba Pratap Singh was 16 years old when he took over the leadership. He did several social reforms in his lifetime. He banned engagement (*kurmayi*) at the time of *Anand Karaj*, the tradition of dowry, making and serving various sweets or other

⁴³ Jaspal Singh Kaang, Sukhdev Singh, *Kuka Andolan Samaj-Sabhyacharak Paripekh*, PunjabUniversity, Chandigarh, 2011, p. 36.

⁴⁴ Dr. Fauja Singh, *Kukian De Maharaja Dalip Singh Naal Sambandh*, Viryam, March 1985, p. 23.

⁴⁵ Sant Singh, *The Namdhari Sikhs*, Shri Bhaini Sahib, Ludhiana, 1999, p.120.

eatables, large gatherings on wedding and other rituals completely.⁴⁶ He encouraged the tradition of mass weddings on the occasion of fairs in the presence of Shri Satguru Ji. Baba Ji made all possible efforts to encourage the use of Punjabi language. He set up the tradition that till the time, the girl and boy do not acquire the knowledge of *Gurmukhi*, their *Anand Karaj* ceremony should not take place. He wanted Punjabi to flourish the same way as the other languages were developing. Baba Pratap Singh had a great predilection and affection towards Punjabi language. He organised a Punjabi Conference for the development of Punjabi language in Bhaini Sahib on 17-18 October.

He published a weekly newspaper 'Satyug' for the growth and progress of Punjabi. Journalism was an apt medium to unfurl the imperialist nature of British and to free the country from their clutches.⁴⁷ Baba Partap Singh therefore felt the need of newspaper, as in the times of Baba Hari Singh, there were many movements against British rule but the history of Namdhari movement could never come to front. Besides this, few government allied organisations like Chief Khalsa Diwan and Singh Sabha etc. ignored the sacrifices made by Namdharis. With the efforts of Baba Pratap Singh, 'Satyug' newspaper was started from 26th May 1920. It was first published from Lahore and had to face opposition from British, but the publication of newspaper was never interrupted. All the movements of Namdharis became known to people through the newspaper. Many volumes of the newspaper were seized by government and security deposit was forfeited many times. The essay written by Sant Nidhan Singh "Baravan Jama Satguru" was published as the main essay in *Basant* volume 1924 (1980 *Bikrami*), which was very long and was based on vast research but Singh Sabha workers became very angry over this essay.⁴⁸ They got this volume seized by government and the amount of Rs. 2000 was also forfeited. Earlier, Satyug newspaper was supposed to get published from Ganga building in Lahore but after bail, it was published from Fazal building. Maharaj Gurdial Singh, Sant Nidhan Singh Aalam, Nirankar Singh Chetan and Sant Mangal Singh Farishta etc. preached many important essays through this newspaper.⁴⁹ The Namdhari history was also spread by newspaper

⁴⁶ Dr. Kuldeep Singh, *Understanding the Namdhari Movement 1857- 1959*, Unistar, Chandigarh, 2012, p. 42.

⁴⁷ Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Satguru Prtap Singh Ji*, Sandeep Publishers, Chandigarh, 1987, p. 45.

⁴⁸ Jaswinder Singh, *Tara Singh Anjaan, Partap Gur Ka Ghat Ghat*, Satguru Partap Singh Avtaar Shtabdi Committee, 1991, p.92.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

and contribution was given to freedom movement. Akalis said that they will not let the volumes of ‘Satyug’ and ‘Kuka Rozana’ newspapers sell in Amritsar, but Jhanda Singh Mastana sold the newspaper in the markets of Lahore and Amritsar. Not only this, he also sold the newspaper inside the premises of Golden Temple as a hawker. British government was panicked by enthusiasm of Namdharis and the growing popularity of their newspaper, and they asked for bailing amount for newspaper. At the end, government seized the bail amount of Rs. 2000.⁵⁰ In this way, publishing of Kuka newspaper ended after a period of 11 years and 6 months because of intolerance of the government. After Kuka newspaper, “Mastana Samachar” started which also came to an end soon.⁵¹ Government considered Satyug as most dangerous among all. Its access to soldiers and other government offices was strictly banned. Besides Satyug newspaper, other newspapers also had restrictions on their reach to soldiers. They were- *Punjab Darpan*, *Pritam*, *Ramghariya Gadget*, *Sher-e-Punjab*, *Updeshak*.⁵² The newspaper Satyug highly criticized the policies of British government and inspired people to be a part of the freedom struggle. Many essays of the newspaper could be found with headings like- “*Khalsa Panth de Buklan Vich Sapp (30 Baisakh, 1995)*”, “*Samachari Vain (16 Saavan, 1998)*”, “*Jaat Di Koharkirli Shateeran Nu Jaffe (7 Falgun, 1987)* etc.⁵³ At that time, writing in the favour of nationalists and freedom fighters was considered as an act against the government but Satyug newspaper always praised the nationalists.

When Shaheed Bhagat Singh was hanged in Lahore, Satyug newspaper gave a sharp critical reaction to this incident. The newspaper in its volume dated 19 Chet, 1987 *Bikrami* wrote ‘*Sardar Bhagat Singh Zindabad, Naukarshahi Murdabad*’ in which he said-

“Finally bureaucracy has given the proof of their degeneracy. On one side, Lord Irwin is dreaming of a peaceful environment by conciliating with Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand he has shown his diplomatic nature by giving the order to hang the soul of 3.2 billion Indians, Bhagat Singh to death. It is true that when the time of destruction comes it infects intellect, power of thinking. At this time, bureaucracy is about to end.

⁵⁰ Sant Taran Singh ‘Vahmi’, *Jas Jiwan*, Vol. II, Namdhari Darbar, Shri Bhaini Sahib, 1991, p. 40.

⁵¹ Jaswinder Singh, Tara Singh Anjaan, *Partap Gur Ka Ghat Ghat*, p. 93.

⁵² Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, Navyug Publication, Delhi. 1992, p.179.

⁵³ Jaswinder Singh, Tara Singh Anjaan, *Partap Gur Ka Ghat Ghat*, p. 95.

The day is very close, when it will fold its bedding and will take breath after reaching in England.”⁵⁴

Such kind of bold writings, praising sacrifice of patriots are attributed to ‘Satyug’ newspaper. These kinds of writings were written by the inspiration from Baba Pratap Singh. On 13th October, 1934, ‘*Guru Nanak Sarb Sampardaye*’ conference was held in Shri Bhaini Sahib, in which all sects of the religion participated.⁵⁵ A representative conference of all sects of the Sikhs, who believe in Guru Nanak Dev ji and his teachings, was convened at Bhaini Sahib by Namdhari *Darbar*. Preparations were made on a large scale and no pain was spread by the conveners to make the conference a big success.⁵⁶ A spacious *Pandal* with a beautiful white gateway was constructed for the purpose. It was tastefully decorated and equipped with loud speakers special arrangements were made for the distinguished visitors, numbering several hundreds and a big city of lamps extended all around the small village of Bhaini Sahib. Over 20,000 men and women joined the conference; several kitchens were running day and night to provide food for everybody. Besides thousands of Namdharis, Akalis, Nirmalas, Udasis, Sewa Panthis, Sehajdharis, almost all different sects who traced their cult from the teachings of Shri Guru Granth Sahib responded to the invitation. Leading member of Chief Khalsa Ddiwan, Siromani Akali Dal, Central Akali Dal, Udasin Mahan Madal, Nirmal Maha Mandal and other responsible bodies were speciality invited.⁵⁷

The president elect was received by number of Darbars, and prominent Sikh leaders outside the village and was taken on foot in a big procession to the *Pandal*. On reaching the *Pandal*, Sant Inder Singh Chakarwari explained the aims and objectives of the conference. The aims and objectives for which the conference was convened attempted to phrase it in his own way. Prof. Jodh Singh, Chief Khasa Diwan, Bhai Nidhan Singh Alam, Sant Kishan Singh of Nirmal Maha Mandal and Sardar Dalip Singh, vice President, Local Gurdwara Committee, Amritsar, took leading part in the discussion. The aims and objective were worded of follow: that the ideas of convening the conference were to unite different sects of the Sikh who believe in *Shri Guru Granth Sahib* and *Dasam Granth*.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 96.

⁵⁵ Jagdish Singh, *Master Tara Singh ate Shri Bhaini Sahib di Sarb Sampardaye Conference*, Viryam, September-August, 1994, p. 17.

⁵⁶ The Tribune, Lahore, 18 October, 1934, p.7.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

The following resolutions were passed:⁵⁸

1. That this conference requests all sects of the Sikhs that the preaching of *Gurbani* should be their foremost duty in their *Jathas* at their own seats.
2. That all preachers, missionaries, musicians, editors and leaders should feel their responsibility and should only do constructive work and not destructive work.
3. That the *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak* Committee, Local Gurdwara Committee and other Sikhs societies be requested they should always take fittest persons from any sect for the post of a *Granthi*, preacher or other responsible office-bearer and they should particularly appoint fit persons of the sect in whose possession that particular Gurdwara was before its being taken over by the *Gurdwara Parbandhak* Committee.

That in order to save the situation from any legal technicalities and achieve unity in the house of the Guru all the pending cases relating to Gurdwara other than historical Gurdawara under section 7, of the Gurdwara Act should be given up.⁵⁹

The first sitting of the subjects committee was over after about 2 ½ hours, when the members attend the open session. Sant Inder Singh Chakarwanti, chairman of the reception committee, read his address wherein he thanked the delegates and the visitors for responding to the invitation and explained the aims and objectives for which the conference convinced. It was the genuine desire of Guru Partap Singh, head of Namdharis that all sects of the Sikhs believing in *Guru Granth Sahib* and Guru Nanak Dev should respect each other and remove all differences, which were demanding the Sikh cause. Party spirit among the followers of the Guru Nanak dev was the chief cause of spilt.⁶⁰

The Bhai Sahab Bhai Arjan Singh, Chief of Bagarian, President of the conference, read his brief address for co-operation among all the sects of the Sikhs was stressed and it was pointed out the unless this was achieved any further progress was out of question. Any discussion on political question was scrupulously avoided.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Satyug, Shri Bhaini Sahib, 7 Maghar, 1991, p. 5.

⁶¹ The Tribune, Lahore, 18 October, 1934, p.7

Master Tara Singh, some other Akalis and Singh Sabha members laid down a condition that they will participate only if prayer in the name of ten gurus will be offered. The head of Namdhari sect, Baba Pratap Singh replied that they too worship ten gurus and therefore their condition will be fulfilled. In this way, the prayers were offered and Master Tara Singh also participated. All of this is mentioned in the book '*Mera Safarnama*' in detail which tells about the image of Baba Pratap Singh in the eyes of Master Tara Singh. One gets to know from the book that Namdharis insisted Master Tara Singh to participate in the conference. '*Mera Safarnama*' includes the lines: "Namdharis insisted me to join the conference in Bhaini Sahib, but I declined my times. However they said that it is a conference of harmony. Because of the thought that the harmony of Akalis should not be affected by my absence in the conference, I decided to attend it as a part of audience and not to participate in any work or activity. Namdharis agreed to my conditions. Therefore I will reach Bhaini Sahib on 12 or 13 October."⁶² Many resolutions were passed in the conference. Master Tara Singh and Namdhari guru Pratap Singh met here only. Master Ji got very impressed by his personality. He writes: "By reaching here, I have been greatly influenced by the towering personality of Baba Pratap Singh. An appropriate thought or answer comes to his mind according to the given situation. I can say that even if he would not have got the leadership, Kukas would have chosen only him as their guru by consensus. He has many qualities that a guru should possess."⁶³ Master Tara Singh wrote a letter to Baba Partap Singh from Hazur Sahib in which he appreciated Namdhari sect and wrote: "A lot of efforts are still required to strengthen this harmony and to end the animosity of many years. I hope that you will continue to make efforts in this regard. You have recognised your duty at appropriate time and have got the leadership in your hands. You will now strive towards completing the task and God will provide the courage and support."⁶⁴ From the above lines, it is clear that 'Guru Nanak *Sarab Sampardaye* Conference' at Bhaini Sahib was of utmost importance. The effect of this conference was clearly visible and the personality of Baba Pratap Singh attracted everyone toward him.

Namdharis accompanied Akalis in many Akali agitations. The British government became panicked by growing association of Namdharis with Akalis and members of Congress. They followed a clever policy to separate both Akalis and

⁶² Jagdish Singh, *Master Tara Singh ate Shri Bhaini Sahib di Sarb Sampardaye Conference*, Viryam, September-August, 1994, p. 18.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 20.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 20.

Namdharis. The government in 1922 removed all restrictions from Bhaini Sahib which were imposed in 1872, but Namdharis sensed their intentions. They started participating in the Akali agitation with more enthusiasm. The most hard and difficult among all strikes was '*Jaito Morcha*' in which Akalis, Namdharis and Congress party jointly participated and offered arrests. This agitation was in favour of Maharaja of Nabha by Akalis, and Namdharis co-operated them greatly. The government wanted to break the association of Namdharis and Akalis by bringing Namdharis to their own side. When the government saw that their association cannot be broken, it sent its people disguised as Namdharis, Nirmale sants and Nihangs; who took out a procession against Akalis. However the trick played by the government did not work out. Namdhari workers participated in the agitation led by Akalis to be a part of group of martyrs (*shaheedi jatha*), who were arrested without any warrant. A Namdhari named Sardar Dharam Singh was among the detainees. According to the book "*Akali Morcheya Da Itihas*" written by Sohan Singh Josh, around 12-13 Nirmale and Namdhari saints participated in *Jaito Morcha*.⁶⁵ The secretary, Namdhari Darbar, Bhaini Sahib passed a resolution in the favour of Akalis participating in Jaito Morcha and congratulated Akalis, which is as follows: "The Namdhari *Darbar* has been shocked to learning the firing at Jaito and strongly protests against the unjustifiable action of the authorities there."⁶⁶ The object of the Akali was clear enough, requiring no explanation. They were proceeding to the *Gangsar* Gurdwara with a view to renewing the *Akhand Path*, there and any restrictions, which the authorities wanted to impose upon them, were tantamount to district interference with their religious liberty.⁶⁷ The Akalis were ready to suffer these greatest harder ships in peacefully disobeying such orders. The government communiqué states that the firing was first commended by the Akalis. But this is not proved by facts, which have come to light so far. If the fire of Akalis, some of them would certainly have been captured by the State authorities after the firing. Nor has any casualty been reported on the side of the state forces. The authorities have wanted to do and what they actually did on the spot. It was perhaps due to this reason that they prohibited the entry in Jaito of some M.L.A. and M.L.C's and ordered the arrest of Dr. Kitchlew and principal Gidwani.⁶⁸ They have gone still further and captured the medical corps attending the Akalis. The

⁶⁵ Jaswinder Singh, Tara Singh Anjaan, *Partap Gur Ka Ghat Ghat*, p. 98.

⁶⁶ The Tribune, Lahore, 28 February, 1924, p.5.

⁶⁷ Sohan Singh Josh, *Akali Morchian Da Itihas*, Arsee Publication, New Delhi, 1991, p. 271.

⁶⁸ The Tribune, Lahore, 28 February, 1924, p.5

Darbar is future less than a through enquiry by an important and independent commission in to affairs would satisfy the public, and congratulations the Akalis on the hero, stand made by them at the movement of their greatest trail. The bereaved families, and fervently prays the almighty father for granting blessings from the souls of those who laid down their lives so bravely. The state rulers are in fact trying to cover their activities by making false stories. Namdhari *Darbar* congratulates the 'Shaheedi Jatha' for its bravery and prays to God for granting peace to their souls."⁶⁹

A Namdhari *Dawan* was held at Bhaini Sahib from 13th to 17th September 1928. Namdharis numbering over five thousands attended the *Dewan* from all parts of the country. A few all resolutions was discussed and passed about *Panthic* matters, but most important then on the agenda was Nehru Scheme as adopted by the Luckhnow Conference.⁷⁰

The Namdharis *Darbar* accepts the Nehru Scheme with the reservation that complete independent be declared the ultimate goal of India. The *Darbar* also declares that no Scheme, which falls short of full self Government, can be acceptable to the Namdhari community.⁷¹

Baba Partap Singh co-operated with the Congress party from the side of Namdhari sect. Baba Ram Singh had introduced Indians to the unique method of fighting against the British rule i.e. non co-operation movement. By following non co-operation, Namdharis boycotted the government completely and started using *Swadeshi* (local) goods. This movement was later used by the Congress party against British government. Mahatma Gandhi fought a long battle for freedom by following the footsteps of Baba Ram Singh. Namdharis also started participating in the freedom struggle with Congress, by the inspiration of Baba Pratap Singh, because this method was adopted by Baba Ram Singh many years earlier. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was very impressed by patriotism and sacrifices of Namdharis. The relations of Pandit Nehru and Namdharis were established in 1929. The annual session of All India Congress in 1929 was held in Lahore on the banks of river Ravi which was presided by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.⁷² British government wanted to thwart this session and

⁶⁹ Jaswinder Singh, Tara Singh Anjaan, *Partap Gur Ka Ghat Ghat*, p. 99.

⁷⁰ The Tribune, Lahore, 23 September, 1928, p. 11.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Kabul Singh, Germany, *The Gurdwara Should Come Forward for the Panthic Cause*, The Spokesman Weekly's Monthly, November, 1995, p. 25.

divide the leaders. Few days before the session, Akali leaders disunited because of differences in opinions. Akali leader Master Tara Singh, poet Sardool Singh and Baba Gurdit Singh of *Kamagatamaru* ship wanted to join hands with Congress for their struggle for freedom, but Baba Kharak Singh stood against Congress and refused to work with the Congress party. A procession of Akalis was planned against the procession of Congress party during the session. During this Lahore session, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected as president of Congress party for the first time and the resolution for *Purna Swaraj* was passed. After the opposition of Baba Kharak Singh, Baba Partap Singh took control of organising the session in his hands. Baba Kharak Singh and his companions not only boycotted the session but held a different conference in Minto Park.⁷³ They also led their own procession against the procession of Congress. At this time, Namdhari sect took responsibility to make the Congress session successful. Namdhari workers made huge contribution to make the procession of Congress successful according to the will of their guru. Unlike all old presidents of the congress Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was riding a horse. It was charger behind him were the Sardar Mangal Singh and other officers of the volunteers corps.⁷⁴ The most striking features were the Sikh cavalry. Dressed in white spotless *Khaddhi* and wearing stylish turban, the Namdharis with their following beards presented a thrilling sight. In the heart of the city the admiring citizens distributed fruits and sweet meals.

Outside the station Congress volunteers formed a guard of honour and presented arms to the president Sardar Mangal Singh. General officer commanding was on a white charger and commanded a body of over hundred mounted volunteers. The president elect also mounted a white charger amidst continued shout of *Jawahar Lal ki jai*.⁷⁵ The procession then formed itself. There were three to four musical bands supplied by the *Anath Ashram* and two other organisations. Next came a large body of leady volunteers all clad neatly in Khaddar Saries led by Miss Zutshi. Mounted volunteers followed by Senapati Mangal Singh. Amongst the leaders who were mounted were Sardar Sardual Singh, Lala Duni Chand of Lahore, the Guru of Namdhari Sikhs and others Pandit Nehru came in the centre. The rear guard was formed by a large body of mounted Sikhs Namdharis and also by a large Sikh *Jatha* on foot with banners bearing hammer sickle as their emblem a large body of Congress

⁷³ Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, Navyug Publication, Delhi. 1992, p. 165.

⁷⁴ The Tribune, Lahore, 27 December, 1929, p. 7.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

volunteers completed in rear. The glory of Namdhari Sikhs dressed in pure white clothes was worth watching. The arrangement of *Langar* was in the chariot of Mata Jiwan Kaur.⁷⁶ It was beyond any doubt that if Satguru would not have sent Namdhari followers to the procession and *Mataji* would not have arranged *Langar*, the procession would have been a failure. The great nationalist Baba Gurditt Singh has written about it as follows: "When the session of All India Congress was held in 1929, I saw that around 75000 Akalis came from villages because of the order of their leader Kharak Singh. He had ordered that whosoever will go to Congress will not be called Sikh. Therefore I did not like what he said. We started proclaiming that the one who will not go to Congress will not be a Sikh. Thousands of Akalis started moving towards the gathering of Congress workers. We got worried about the arrangement of food for them. When we saw the Langer arranged by Namdharis, we asked them to make *chapatis* for few thousand Akalis and we can arrange the rations. They replied that they do not need any ration and even if they bring one lakh Akalis, food will be ready. I had to bow down in front of their kindness, because without the co-operation and *Langar* of Namdharis, not even one Sikh could be seen there. The representatives from all parts of India would have gone back with the conception that either there are no Sikhs in Punjab, or they did not come at the political front because of the British fear. The leadership of Baba Pratap Singh is worth praising who saved Sikhs from bad name."⁷⁷

In those days, 'Kuka Congress Party' was established with the efforts of Maharaja Nihal Singh and Chakravarthy, and by the permission granted by Satguru Pratap Singh. Its motive was to propagate the ideas of Congress party and to sacrifice their self for the sake of freedom movement. Baba Pratap Singh sent Mata Jeon Kaur and Mata Fateh Kaur for the success of this party.⁷⁸ Aalam Singh writes that when both the ladies were introduced to people in rally, they were welcomed with a big round of applaud. Their simple attire made from *Swadeshi* cotton and their acts of bravery for the freedom of country impressed people. They helped Congress in 1937, a time when the party was declared unlawful by government.

The State People's Conference was held on 17 February, 1939 in Ludhiana. During this conference, Baba Pratap Singh helped the party in all possible ways. Indian pelicans Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya accompanied

⁷⁶ Tara Singh Anjaan, *Vad Partap Sunyeo Prabh Tumro*, Satguru Partap Singh Avtaar Stabadi Committee, New Delhi, 1990, p. 54.

⁷⁷ Davinder Singh, *Partap Sada Guru ka Ghat Ghat*, p. 103-104.

⁷⁸ Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, p. 184.

by Dr. Keteblew, Baba Kharak Singh Dhut, Maulana Habibur Rehman Ludhianvi, Pandit Muni Lal Kalia M.L.A Sardar Sohan Singh, M.L.A Sardar Kishan Singh Josh, M.L.A Lala Dev Raj Sethi and other Punjab leaders and Congress workers reached Bhaini Sahib.⁷⁹

The party started from Ludhiana at 2: 30 pm. and reached Bhaini Sahib at about 3 pm large number of villagers, men women and children had gathered on road side to greet Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru car passed under these gates of the crowd raised shouts of “*Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru Zindabaad*” and “*Inqilaab Zindabad*”.⁸⁰ A spectacular sight was witnessed at Bhaini Sahib when Nehru, Dr. Pattabhi and the party reached there. About two hundred Namdharis, all wearing spotless white Khaddar, presented a guard of honour to Pandit Jawar Lal Nehru and Dr. Pattabhi and Guru Partap Singh and Baba Nihal Singh come forward and garlanded the two distinguished congress leaders with garlands made of khaddar yarn.

Pandit Nehru taken in procession Nehru ji and Dr. Pattabhi were taken procession through the Bhaini Sahib village, a large crowd of villagers following them. At the head of procession marched two hundred Namdharis under the command of Sardar Atma Singh. Immediately behind them followed mounted corps of thirty Namdharis under the command of Baba Nihal Singh and Sardar Daya Singh both of whom were carrying drawn swords. Then followed Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru’s car he was sitting along with Guru Partap Singh and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

When the party reached near the Gurdwara Pandit Nehru and other got down from their cars and they were taken inside the Gurdwara by Baba Partap Singh and shown round the place where Baba Ram Singh, the founder of Namdharis sect used to live and pass his spirited orders to his community. Here Partap Singh explained to Nehru or Pattabhi how Guru Ram Singh was deported in 1872 and how the same place was kept under police surveillance for over fifty years up till the year 1921, when the police was withdrawn. Baba Partap Singh then took the party to the Gurdwara *Langar* where free food was supplied daily hundreds of pilgrims who visit the place.

Pandit Nehru, Dr. Pattabhi and others were taken to a large open place where over four thousand people had gathered to have a darshan of the congress leaders.

⁷⁹ The Tribune, Lahore, 18 February, 1939, P.3.P

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Sardar Nidhan Singh Alam, general secretary of the Namdhari Darbar, then presented an address of welcome to Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru and DR. Pattabhi.⁸¹

Replying to address Pandit Nehru said that for many years he had been hearing and reading this history of the Namdharis but he had no opportunity to see the place. This time, however when he come to the conference he learnt that that place was very near to Ludhiana, he thanked to Baba Partap Singh and the Namdharis for their address and for giving him an opportunity of meeting them at their own Gurdwara. Pandit Jawahar Lal said, “The great Hindustan, which was their motherland. During his travellers in different parts of the country, he said, he had met diverse people speaking diverse languages, but behind this diversity he had noticed a peculiar oneness and that was this: that they were all children of the same mother India to whatever parts of the country they might belong”.⁸²

Dr. Pattabhi sitaramayya in berief reply also thankful Baba Partap singh and Namdharis. He said that, “The Namdharis were taking a leading part in the national movement in the Punjab.”⁸³

He honoured Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya by offering them a ride with him in his car. After the conference, Pandit Nehru came to Bhaini Sahib along with other politicians. He was welcomed with flags there. Then Satguru Pratap Singh offered a white rosary to Pandit Nehru at the main entrance as a welcome gesture. He took them to the historical places belonging to Bhaini Sahib; and then showed pictures of Malerkotla and other massacres. Pandit Nehru was filled with tears after watching all that and said:

“If the country understands the path of non co-operation and sacrifice for the sake of the nation shown by Satguru Ram Singh, we can come into list of independent nations of the world. Nobody else can rule our country. The only way to understand this movement is that every Indian should become the part of their common Congress and strengthen the organisation by delegating their service to it. The peaceful movement for independence of the country is as new and powerful, as it was 70 years ago”.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, p. 193.

Mr. K.M. Munshi, Ex Minister of Bombay Congress government, on 2 November 1941, visited Bhaini Sahib, the spiritual headquarters of Namdhari Sikhs. Mr. Munshi who had been specially invited to Bhaini Sahib by the Namdhari Guru Partap Singh, went to Bhaini Sahib. He was accompanied by Maulana Mufti Mehmood, Pt. Muni Lal Kalia, and M.L.A Sardar Inder Singh, general secretary of the Namdhari Darbar and as a group about of thirty congressmen.⁸⁵ Mr. Munshi expressed his gratitude on having been afforded an opportunity to visit the spiritual headquarters of the brave Namdhari Sikhs. Mr. Munshi and the party accorded a welcome by Sardar Inder Singh Chakarwarty, general secretary of Namdhari *Darbar* on the behalf of Guru Partap Singh. He referred to the history of the Namdharis and pointed out the Guru Ram Singh preached to them to practice of truth and non violence long before there was any nationalist movement in the country.

Mr. Munshi said, "He had been greatly impressed by what he had been greatly touched."⁸⁶ He said, to know the history of the Namdharis Sikhs. He was glad to hear that the Namdharis believed in the unity of India. They had many lessons to learn from the life of the Bhaini Sahib."⁸⁷ When he left before leaving Guru Partap Singh offered a rosary to Mr. Munshi.

Namdharis began raised politically by the leaders of various communities. Glowing Tributes by the leaders of the various communities were paid to the sacred memory of the founder of Namdhari Movement Baba Ram Singh at a big social function held on 1 February, 1942 in the Punjab university hall in connection with the birthday celebrations of Guru Ram Singh.⁸⁸ The function was attended by about eight hundred Namdhari who sat on the dais in their characteristics white dress. The guests invited about four hundred citizens among who were present Bhai Parma Nand, Dr. Gopi Chand, Pandit Sunder Lal, R.B. Mukand, Dewan Bahadur S.P., S. Chaman Singh, Muni Lal Kalia, Principal Niranjana Singh, Pt. Thakur Dulta, Lala Ram Chand Manchanda and Mulana Daud Ghaznavi.⁸⁹

Inder Singh Chakarwarty, secretary the Namdhari Darbar, explained the history and significances of the Namdhari movement. He pointed out that the Namdharis were in no way a different sect. He was glad to say that Satguru Ram

⁸⁵ The Tribune, 3 November, 1941, p.5.

⁸⁶ Dr. Karam Singh Kapoor, *Satguru Partap Singh ik Mahan Satguru*, New Delhi, 1971, p. 82.

⁸⁷ The Tribune, 3 November, 1941, p.5

⁸⁸ The Tribune, 2 February, 1942, P. 5.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Singh had infused a unique spirit among them. Pandit Sunder Lal was congratulating the Namdhari on having a 'Guru' who raised them spiritually and politically.

Regarding the Hindu-Sikh unity, Baba Partap Singh said that those who want to preach separatism and thus keep the Hindus and Sikhs away from each other neither understand Hinduism nor Sikhism nor were their worst enemies. The attitude of Namdharis a sect of Sikhs, toward the demand of Akali Sikhs for the redistribution of the boundaries of the Punjab was reflected in a statement issued to the press by the president of Namdhari *Darbar*.

The statement said, "In view of the division of public opinion on the question of dividing India or any of its provinces, several inquiries were made by the public from the Namdhari *Darbar*. The Namdharis were declared in unequivocal terms that it was against the vivisection of India or any of its provinces and was of the opinion that such demands from certain sections of the people were entirely anti-national. The *Darbar* on the contrary was strong supporter of *Akhand Hindustan*".⁹⁰

Sardar Nidhan Singh Alam moved a resolution disapproving the Azad Punjab Scheme. The mover said that it pained him to hear people talk of unity among Hindus and Sikhs who were really one. He declared that five lakh Namdhari under instructions of Baba Partap Singh regarded themselves a part and parcel of Hindus. There could be different religions but the nationality could not be changed. He quoted from historical books, religious scriptures and saying of the Gurus and showed that Sikhs and Hindus had remained the same always, their ancestors being same. Their culture, civilization and their festivals were the same. Some taunted him by saying that the Namdharis had become Hindus. He replied, "Does not matter, but we have not turned Christians. We after all are embracing our own brethren whose ancestors are own ancestors."⁹¹

He condemns the Akalis cry of Azad Punjab which, he said, "was bound to prove harmful to the best interests to Hindu and Sikhs."

Thus Namdharis along with Congress party fought the war for freedom of the country and went to jail many times, suffered many hardships.⁹² The Second World War ended in 1945 and by that time the awareness had arrived in India. But at the

⁹⁰ The Tribune, 12 February, 1943, p.4.

⁹¹ The Tribune, Lahore, 3 May, 1943, p.4.

⁹² Dalip Singh Namdhari, *Kuka Kehar (1857-1947)*, Lokgeet Parkashan, Chandigarh, 2005, p. 162.

same time, the policy of divide and rule of the British was successful in the Indians. Political leaders were divided into three groups. The Muslim League wanted to create a separate country. Similarly, the Sikh leaders wanted to create a separate State. But the Congress was against that British move. British somehow wanted to keep Hindustan under their control for more time. Wavell was immediately sent to India for this purpose.

Lord Wavell convened a meeting of political leaders which was attended by Congress, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and Gobind Vallabh Pant. Amongst Muslims, Jinnah, Liyaqat and Abdul Kayoum participated. From Sikhs, Master Tara Singh and Gyani Kartar Singh Ji reached Shimla.⁹³ In this Wavell conference, even though Congress loudly voiced country's integrity, but Muslim leaders demanded a separate state, along with the Sikhs. At that time Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Abdul Gaffar Khan, Dr. Kitchlew reached Baba Partap Singh's residence. Pandit Ji asked Baba Partap, "India is getting freedom, do you have any demand?"⁹⁴ Baba Ji then answered, "Pandit Ji we are happy that India is liberating. We do not want anything from British and we do not want to bargain a deal with you. We wish our country to develop." Pandit Ji said that what whatsoever is happening is the outcome of your blessings and initiative. Baba Ji happily said, "Pandit Ji, bring a blank paper, I will sign it, and write whatever you want me to write." Pandit Ji happily announced that "Satguru Ji, Congress is all in all to us."⁹⁵

Baba Partap Singh and Namdhari sect always supported the Congress. Congress won in 7 of India's 11 provinces. On that day, Baba Ji and his followers visited many places in Punjab and spread words in favour of Congress. He helped Congress in 1937 elections and during 1952-1957, after independence.

According to The Tribune, "From the very beginning Guru Partap Singh supported the Congress and attended most of the A.I.C sessions. His followers joined openly co-operated with the National Movements."⁹⁶

⁹³ Jaswinder Singh, Tara Singh Anjaan, *Partap Gur Ka Ghat Ghat*, p. 108.

⁹⁴ Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Vad Prtapi Satguru*, p. 32.

⁹⁵ Dalip Singh Namdhari, *Gaatha Sutantarta Sangram Di*, Nmdhari Drbar Publication, Shri Bhaini Sahib, 2002, p.120.

⁹⁶ Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, p. 185.

The editor of "*Vir Bharat*" wrote in the leaflet dated 12-09-1959: "Baba Partap Singh Ji joined Congress after declining the land offers by Government and kept participating in national level debates."⁹⁷

Baba Partap Singh fought for independence throughout his life along with leading a simple lifestyle and also made efforts for the well being of cows and deprived people.

G.S. Chhabra writes about him as: "Maharaja Partap Singh and his sons sacrificed all the modern necessities of life provided by the British government".⁹⁸

Namdhari sect always provided support and encouraged Congress party and other patriotic organizations which were fighting for welfare and independence at that time. Feeling the need for unity, when the Hindu Sikh issue started in the country, Baba Partap Singh Ji convened "*Hindu Sikh Milap Conference*" at Bhaini Sahib in 1943.⁹⁹ It involved Sikhs, Hindu scholars and leaders of the country. Jugal Kishore Birla was made the president of the conference. Press reporters from all over the country reached there. Goswamy Ganesh Dutt, Birla Ji, Sant Nidhan Singh Alam, Inder Singh Chakravarthy spoke about the union of Hindu Muslim and following resolutions were passed: 1) Hindu Sikh union 2) Cow slaughtering 3) *Swadeshi* clothing.¹⁰⁰

At the holy land of Shri Bhaini Sahib, everyone pledged for "We are one" in the conference, even those who were never interested to face each other, they came together. In this way, Baba Partap Singh Ji organised many conferences for national unity and humanism. Bhaini Sahib became safe home for patriots. Babbar Akalis also took shelter there. Baba Partap Singh himself took great care of patriots. Once, an English officer asked Baba Ji to give shelter and food to Ratan Singh. Baba Ji fearlessly responded: "This community kitchen is of our founder Satguru Ram Singh. Anyone can come at the door at any time. It does not matter whether he is a known or unknown, friend or enemy, a bandit or saint, he will not go without having food. Therefore I will bear any punishment awarded to me happily as we have been doing in the past."

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Vol. II, Parkash Brothers Publication, Ludhiana, 1960, p. 398.

⁹⁹ Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Vad Partapi Satguru*, p. 34.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.p. 35.

In the same way, the soldiers of Subhash Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Force were found guilty in court martial. The hearing was held at Red Fort. Colonel Sehgal, Captain Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon and Captain Shah Nawaz were among those Punjabis who were acquitted. Baba Partap Singh sent congratulations letter to Jawaharlal Nehru to Allahabad saying that it was the first step towards freedom. Baba Ji wrote that it was the result of your voice through which you conveyed to the English, "Leave India. Major General Shah Nawaz, Col. Sehgal and Lt. Col. Dhillon of I.N.A. were invited by the Namdharis on 7 January 1946 at the Lahore residence of their head his holiness Guru Partap Singh.¹⁰¹

The three I.N.A. officers and Mrs. Dhillon went to residence of Guru Partap Singh. They were received by his holiness personality. Sardar Kartar Singh of Messrs, Dhian Singh and sons, 'Pathrnwali' garlanded the three officers on the behalf of the Namdharis. his holiness Maharaja Partap Singh who talked with the three I.N.A. officers gave them '*Saropas*' a mark of honour given from the sect of Sikh authority in religion which they thankfully received.¹⁰²

Partap Singh Said, "The country is proud of you and I pray that you may see your mission fulfilled during your life time. May God be with you ever and always."¹⁰³

British government did not leave any chance to suppress Namdhari movement. A police station was installed in Bhaini Sahib for 60 years. They made several efforts to get the support of Baba Pratap Singh on their side. In 1914, the First World War began and British needed soldiers. Baba Pratap Singh had directed Namdharis not to join army. Therefore British came to him and pleaded "Maharaj Ji, we are ready to do anything that you desire, but you please order your followers to join army."¹⁰⁴ However Baba Pratap Singh did not change his stand. G.S. Chhabra writes about his sacrifice as: "Guru Hari Singh died in 1906 and was succeeded by Maharaja Pratap Singh. During the World War in 1914, the British government tried to appease the Kukas by offering land grants and through some other means, but failed."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ The tribune, Lahore, 8 January, 1946, P.5

¹⁰² The Tribune, Lahore, 10 January, 1946, P. 5.

¹⁰³ The tribune, Lahore, 8 January, 1946, P.5.

¹⁰⁴ Tara Singh Anjaan, *Vad Partap Sunyeo Prabh Tumro*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁵ G.S. Chhabra, *Advanced History of the Punjab*, Vol. II, p. 380.

In September 1939, the Second World War started and the Viceroy of India announced to take part in the war without consulting Congress party. Various Congress leaders resigned in protest during that time. The Congress party strongly condemned the government for their decision to involve India into the war. British government again made efforts to get the support of Baba Pratap Singh. However Namdharis remained unaffected by British offers and moved forward with Congress. Baba Hari Singh mentioned about it in his speech in Hari Mandir in 1957 as: "During the Second World War, the Deputy Commissioner came to me and said- 'Maharaj if you issue orders in the favour of joining army, I would buy you lands, properties or anything you ask for.' I replied, 'We have old grudges against you. You have disgraced Bhaini Sahib to huge extent, for which the upcoming generations will never forgive you. You are squandering the wealth of our country on wars, and you expect us to help you in this. I do not care about your offers.'"¹⁰⁶ In this context, the editorial of the Tribune reads:

"The British again tried to appease with vast landed grants but failed." In the end, India became independent from British rule on 15th August, 1947 with the common efforts of all Indians. However British divided India into two parts on the basis of communalism by following the policy of 'divide and rule' while leaving India.¹⁰⁷ When Baba Pratap Singh saw that the partition is irrevocable, he visited West Punjab (now Pakistan) and asked people to cross river Ravi for their best interests. Those who valued the words of Baba Ji, they evacuated themselves safely without any loss of money, lives or dignity. On the contrary, those who did not listen to him had to suffer the loss of partition. The feeling of unity never let Namdharis to be communal; the proof of this was seen during the partition. Namdharis kept themselves away from the scene of robberies and murders at that time. Baba Pratap Singh had strictly ordered that none of his Namdhari Sikhs would involve in killing other people, any robbery or usurping properties with force. None of them would disrespect women. Baba Pratap Singh bought about 500 square acres uninhabited barren land in villages near Sirsa. This land was registered under his name in January 1947.¹⁰⁸ According to his orders, Namdhari Sikhs worked very hard to make this land inhabitable. The recitation of the Guru Granth Sahib for 101 times was organised in

¹⁰⁶ Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, p. 181.

¹⁰⁷ Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Vad Partap Satguru*, Sandip Publication, Chandigarh, 1990, p. 34.

¹⁰⁸ Sant Taran Singh 'Vahmi', *Jas Jiwan*, Vol. IV, Namdhari Darbar, Shri Bhaini Sahib, 1991, p. 5.

this land. The *Chuchar Kothi* village of this area was renamed by Baba Pratap Singh as Jiwan Nagar after the name of his mother, Jiwan Kaur.¹⁰⁹ He and his followers spread the message of peace when India was partitioned. He helped many people who came to him for shelter. M.L.A. Maulavi Abdul Gani confidently said, "Not even a single Muslim could survive, if Namdharis would not have been there."¹¹⁰ Baba Ji provided shelter to the homeless Namdhari families in Jiwan Nagar. He donated the basic necessities like blankets, clothes etc and organised langar for them. Free land for accommodation, pet animals, seeds and other provisions were also provided to Namdhari Sikhs for resettlement. Baba Ji conducted joint farming in all villages for three years. He, with the Government of Punjab, decided that a Namdhari may have come to any village or town, the allotment of land to him should be in Sirsa tehsil. In this way, more area from surrounding villages near Jiwan Nagar was added.¹¹¹ Baba Pratap Singh himself allocated different shares from this land. Cows, buffaloes and bulls were distributed to poor Sikhs by auctioning off from government. During the times of famine, he constructed many wells by spending from his own pocket. He opened Hari Singh College to educate children belonging to the Jiwan Nagar area. A farm was also opened for cow rearing.¹¹² Today, every household of Jiwan Nagar has the facility of electricity, roads, tractors and tube wells for agriculture. The weekly paper of Namdhari called 'Satyug' is published from Jiwan Nagar. Namdhari gurus not only visited different parts of the country to guide people, but also went to Thailand 22 times, Africa 4 times and Singapore once.¹¹³

Baba Ram Singh initiated the tradition of *Anand Karaj* during fairs to save Namdhari sect from undue expenses of weddings, however Baba Partap Singh brought this in practice with few improvements in this tradition. Baba Ram Singh issued an order for Namdharis, in which he asked them to abandon worthless customs like engagement, *Milni* and *Muklawā* ceremonies.¹¹⁴ He opposed the tradition of dowry and said that after wedding, the bride should spend 15 days with her in-laws family so that there should be no useless display from any side. Even today, *Anand Karaj* ceremonies of Namdharis are held in the same place and at the same time, in

¹⁰⁹ Surinder Kaur Kharal, *Vad Partap Satguru*, p. 38.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Interview, Surjit Singh, Bhaini Sahib, 13 March, 2020.

¹¹² Tara Singh Anjaan, *Vad Partap Sunyeo Prabh Tumro*, p. 16.

¹¹³ Preetam Singh Aarsi, *Mahaan Noor, Shri Satguru Partap Singh Ji*, p. 83.

¹¹⁴ M.L. Ahluwalia, *Land Marks in Sikh History*, Ashoka International Publishers, New Delhi, 1996, p. 261.

the form of mass wedding, where the expenses occurred is insignificant. In this way, Namdhari sect attacked social evils. The sect was in favour of women education and women empowerment. Women were allowed to worship freely and to take part in religious ceremonies without veiling their faces. The sect also opposed female child killings; preached against sati and in favour of widow remarriage. The famous book 'The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism' has an essay about Kukas alias Namdhari Sikhs, in which the writer says: "The Namdharis known for their simple living and rigid code of conduct."¹¹⁵

In fact, after the unsuccessful revolt of 1857, Namdhari movement is at the top in fighting against foreign rule. They kept this place with immense sacrifices and by bearing atrocities for 84 years i.e. from the fair in village Khotte on 3rd June, 1863 to 14 August, 1947 till the attainment of freedom. The motive and aim of Namdharis was to free their motherland. They had no intention of taking part in political reign. They were and are even today, above the evil of communism. Namdharis continued their battle of freedom, social reforms and religious preaching against foreign rule starting from 1857. Schools and colleges were opened in Bhaini Sahib, Jiwan Nagar, Delhi and Bangkok to respect mother tongue Punjabi. They promoted Literature by sponsoring Punjabi conferences. Namdharis neither thought of usurping property of Muslims, nor kept bad eye on their women during the tragedy of partition in 1947. They always spread the message: "*Manas ki jaat sabhey ekey pehchanbo*"

¹¹⁵ Harbans Singh, The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Vol. II, Punjabi University Patiala, 1996, p. 535.

CHAPTER – 7

CONCLUSION

Namdhari revolt has an important place among the revolts against British Empire in the second half of 19th century. This movement has a glorious history as it is clear from political, social and religious perspectives. After the revolt of 1857, British did not want the rise of any rebellion which could cause danger to their rule in India. So they used all methods to save their government and to suppress the Namdhari movement up to the 20th century. Baba Ram Singh resurrected the Sikh code of conduct to restore the lost glory of the Sikhs. The Sikhs who were losing their religion after losing their rule also joined them in a series. Baba Ram Singh wanted to awaken the people. He wanted to organise a program by bringing all the powers of the *Khalsa Panth* at one stage, to allow the British Government to give Sikhs their rights. So on 12 April, 1857 i.e. *Baisakhi* Day, he baptised five Sikhs in Bhaini Sahib and established *Sant Khalsa*. Surjit Singh sewak of Bhaini Sahib told that in his interview that “In 1857 Baba Ram Singh prepared the nectar but before preparation the nectar he sent his follower Bhai Rai Singh to Hazur Sahib. He ordered that go Hazur Sahib and stay there some time and from there he brought the entire *guru maryada* by writing. The entire *amrit* was prepared according to the same *guru maryada* and same *maryada* was followed.

The present work is an attempt to highlight the role of the British loyalists section against the Namdhari or Kuka Movement. These loyalists were the *Mahants* and *Sarbrah* of the Sikh religious centres, the *Zamindars* and *Lamberdars* of the villages and the Maharajas of the princely States of the Punjab. These princely States were the Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. These loyalists did play a significant role to suppress the emerging Namdhari Movement. Phulkian States and Malerkotla State played a great role against the Namdharis in comparison to the other two States. Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal also told in her interview that Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla played a great role rather than other two States i.e. Faridkot and Kapurthala. In this thesis work or research work we try to discuss the origin, growth and development of the Namdharis till the 1947. Obviously the research work is an attempt to make analysis the social and cultural identification of the loyalists. We can also discuss the incidents of the Amritsar, Raikot and

Malerkotla. In these incidents butchers were murdered by the Namdharis for the reason of cow-killing near the religious places. In this proposed work we may also highlight the role of the *Lamberdar*, *Zamindars*, religious priests and Maharajas of the Princely States who gave all rendered help to the British government to suppress this Movement. We have also described the growth and development of the Namdharis after the demise of Baba Ram Singh.

These loyalists played a remarkable role against the Namdhari movement. By this work it has been making an intensive study of the social cultural life of the loyalist sections of British. The various aspects of society such as social life and manners, customs, ceremonies, religious beliefs and education have been described. First our chapter has described the social and cultural background of the priests of the religious Gurudwaras. According to Swarn Singh Virk that "During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Sing *Jagirs* were allotted for the maintenance of gurudwaras. But new arrangements were made during the British rule. These Jagis made permanent on the name of *Mahants* and priests. The British government took over the responsibility of appointing *Mahants* and *Sarbrah*." The *Mahants* and the *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple had a great place in society. After the annexation of Punjab (1849), the religious centres of the Punjab were indirectly under the control of the British government. The British regime clearly understood the importance of the Gurudwaras. At first, whatever efforts were done by the Britishers, but their direct or indirect aim was to handover the control of Gurudwaras in the hands of people who would not think of the rights of the Sikhs but to work with loyalty for the British government. So indirectly British were controlling the management of the Gurdwaras. It had been done through the priests and the *Mahants*. The atmosphere was turbulent in Lahore *Darbar* and it also affected the priests and *Mahants* of the Gurudwaras. Due to these reasons many evils got started in the Gurudwaras and it continued towards the British Raj. Britishers did not want to improve the Gurudwaras. They were happy while giving the control of religious places in the hands of the priests and *Mahants*. They were treating them as their personal asset. Whereas *Jagirdari* was helpful for the British regime, on the other hand *Mahants* were very beneficial to them. On many occasions the British government used them for their own interests or means. It has been made an effort to highlight the condition of main Gurdwara Amritsar, Taran Taran, Gurdwara Babe de Ber and Nankana Sahib. We tried to highlight the character

of *Mahant* Ganda Singh of Babe de Ber, because he was not a good person. Also we highlight the character of Nushera Nangal's famous honorary magistrate named Arur Singh, the enemy of Sikhs, the *Sarbrah* of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib as it was unbearable thing for the Sikhs. After the eviction of the *Sarbrah* of Babe di Ber and Ganda Singh, the government had made *Patit* Sikh Arur Singh the *Sarbrah* of Shri Darbar Sahib. Along with *Darbar Sahib*, the Gurudwara Shri Tarn Taran Sahib was also under Arur Singh. Because of the debauchery and decline in the status of the Gurudwaras, the Sikhs were already angry and they were making tireless efforts in maintaining *Panthak* management. In opposed to it, the priests and *Sarbrahs* were making complaints to the government. This fact makes it clear that the priests had so much faith in the government that it would help them. The result of it was that during the time period when Arur Singh was the *sarbrah*, the environment of Darbar Sahib declined badly. On one side, the loot of the *granthis* and the priests was continued. The atmosphere of Tarn Taran and Amritsar became very bad under the control of Arur Singh. On the other side of it, there was no report of the treasure. He had neither written the accounts nor gave it. He did not give anything while leaving also. He was appointed by the government. So it was the responsibility of the government that he would answer the *Panth* accounts, and if he did not answer that, the government might answer. At the time of Arur Singh, the priest of Shri Darbar Sahib, by getting angry (frustrated) from the Sikhs who were talking about the improvement, said that, "I will serve tobacco in the *kada prashad*." The priest of Tarn Taran Sahib was saying that, "like the shops of the people this Darbar Sahib is also our shop." In arrogance, the son of one priest had said that, "we would insult the women who come to the Darbar Sahib, if someone need that they could send them there, if others feel shame in that do not send them." Pickpockets were there at the time of *parkarma* in Shri Darbar Sahib, astrologers had look over the hands. The shops were installed of the things of decoration. Scoundrels fixed the time for meeting girls. They made visits in the morning and in the evening. At the occasion of *Masaya*, *Vasakhi*, and *Diwali* different sort of corruption was seen. The priests themselves stole the money from the donation. The condition of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib was declined. In April, 1919, at the day of *vaisakhi* after attacking a number of people in the Jallianwala Bagh with the guns, General Dyer was rewarded for it at Shri Akal Takhat sahib it broke the patience in the Sikhs. Sikhs started passing decisions against the *sarbrah* and the priests in the city and near villages. One

diwaan was established in front of Akal Takhat against the careless behaviour of the *sarbrah* and the priests. The Speeches were given against the priests, the *sarbrah* and deputy commissioner in the *diwaan*. The resignation of the *sarbrah* was demanded in the full *diwaan*. By noticing the helplessness of the situation, the *sarbrah* Arur Singh himself came to the *diwaan* while wearing cloth around his neck he apologized and announced his resignation from the position of *sarbrah*.

In this work it has been made an attempt to describe the barbaric mascara of Gurdwara Nankana Sahib. Nankana Sahib was then under the control of *Mahant* Nrain Dass, who was a person of very bad and corrupt character. The worst thing was that prostitutes were called in Lahore in August 1917. They danced at Nankana Sahib and they sang dirty songs. The Sikhs were enraged when they came to know about it. Newspapers also condemned this offense of the Nankana *mahant*. It was not enough because Nankana Sahib had become the place of adultery and unholiness. A retired (E.A.C) officer of *Sindh* came with his daughter to visit a Gurudwara in 1918. He was given shelter in the Gurudwara at night. At one side there was evening prayer of *Rehraas* and on the other side a priest was raping a thirteen years old girl. *Mahant* was told to punish the priest and to expel him from the Gurudwara but the *Mahant* did not to consider about this issue. In the same year, six women from Jaranwala (Layalpul) on the day of *Poornmashi* to come to visit and worship Nankana Sahib and they stayed in the Gurudwara at night. At night, they were also raped by these priests. Every priest was appointed by the British government and he was answerable only to the British officers. The condition of Nankana Sahib was very miserable because no woman was safe at the Gurudwara. These are only few samples of the sins of these immoral priests. They had good relation with Government. So the *Mahant* stood against Sikhs instead of doing reforms. He started thinking as if the Gurudwara was his own property. He became a puppet of the British Government in order to show his loyalty. He started thinking that there was no one to expel him from Gurudwaras till the British Government was in favour of him. Therefore he did not care about Sikhs and Sikh communities who tried to improve condition of Gurudwara. The biggest things were that the unholy *Mahants* were preparing for a long time to kill Sikhs and Government already knew about it. Punjab proper was captured by the British in 1849. A *Granthi* (a person of Sikh Religion who is a reader of the Guru Granth Sahib, a holy book in Sikhism) named Hari Singh had spoiled the atmosphere of Gurudwara

Dumalla Sahib in Lahore. He did not allow passengers to live in Gurudwara. He gave living rooms to butchers and meat sellers. He did not serve even as a *Granthi*, He did not know the *Japji Sahib* and *Rehraas Sahib*. Gurudwara was not hygienic. People were disappointed. In this work all these things have been tried to describe. By the direct or indirect government interference, the priests and *Mahants* became the owners and along with it they had also become more corrupt and vicious. After the massacre of Nankana Sahib, Government was very strict towards Sikhs. Some *Mahants* denied the agreement that they would not work according to *Shiromani* Committee. *Mahant* Sundar Das also denied from his promises. *Mahant* Sundar Das's character was not good. He had relations with other women. One of them was Irri. When Irri grew up she went to the home of *Mahant* Sundar Das without marrying him. People of nearby villages did not like him. *Mahant* had relation with Jagdei also; the Sikhs of that area were strictly against him. A *Jatha* came to his home with the permission of Sardar Daan Singh running the Committee on January 31, 1921 so that he should be reformed. He agreed to all conditions in order to preserve his status of *Mahant* that he would work according to *Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak* Committee and he would marry to the lady who was in relation with him. He accepted, compromised and signed in front of other people. After that according to the ceremonies of Sikhism, he got married at Akal Takhat. He worked accordingly for some time but after that he became dishonest. Gurudwaras had become his personal property and he was opposed to the Committee The Committee separated him for that reason In this way, the Gurudwaras like Darbar Sahib Amritsar, Tarn Taran Sahib, Akal Takhat Sahib and many more holy religious institutions were captured by the corrupt and prideful *Mahants*. These were liberated through Gurudwara Reform Movement. Sikhs had to sacrifice their lives for this movement and they had to face many difficulties. After it these Gurudwaras were under *Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak* Committee which was formed with the object of controlling the Sikh Gurdwaras and religious institutions.

Other loyalist section, which was the Maharaja of the Princely States of the Punjab, these princely states were Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. In this work we have been tried to describe their life style, education, mode of entertainment, their marriage life etc. Maharajas of these states were bound with British government after the Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809. So they were always

ready to show their loyalty toward the British Empire. During the time period of the revolt of 1857, they were support the British Administration. All these States had helped the government during this hard time. The British government were honoured the Maharajas with different titles for their rendered support and help. These Maharajas were living very royal and comfortable life. They had built many buildings. Maharaja Narindra Singh of Patiala built *Moti Bagh Mahal* during his reign. In the heart of the place stood splendid large tank crossed by a hanging bridge famous as *Lachhman Jhula*. He built *Sheesh Mahal* and *Banasar Bagh* also. Raja Hira Singh developed the state of Nabha, built many houses and gardens. Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha state had built 'Hira Mahal' for his residence. It was then called 'Elgin House'. The Maharajas were fond of the hunting, playing cards, poker, cricket etc. All the Maharajas of the States were well educated. They had made many efforts to promote the education. Maharaja Mahinder Singh opened the Mahindera College in Patiala State. The college for girls was also opened in Patiala. Primary education and education for girls was made free in the State. The rulers had made many efforts for the social welfare work. They opened the school, colleges and hospitals for the peoples. They had constructed many road and canals in their states. Also they were religious minded rulers. They donated money for the Gurdwars and constructed many Gurdwaras in their own areas.

The kings of these states had all the qualities to govern their kingdoms, but they also had many habits that represented the other side of their lives. Their alcoholic and luxurious lives show their shortcomings. The rulers of Princely states had a little time which was taken up for attending shooting parties, playing cards, drinking Brandy, celebrating birthday of prince and princesses and other functions arranged for their pleasure. The rulers of the states were very fond of drinks and dances. Breakfast was served with a bottle of Champaign to Raja Ranbir Singh of Jind. The Wine of Nabha had acquired a great reputation and became a part of the Punjab folklore "*Nabha dhain band bottlen, tainu peen gey nasiban wale*". The Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and his women in herm often used wine. *Leela Bhawan* in Patiala was built by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of the State for his amusement and relaxation. A special room in it, called the '*Love-Chamber*' was reserved for the personal use of the Maharaja only. The birth of son in a rich Family was celebrated as there were great rejoicing. The whole empire, celebrated with rejoicing the birth of a prince.

Birthday ceremony was performed every year on the birthday of the Maharajas the Maharanis and prince and princess, banquets were held and quality of food and wine on such an occasion was exquisitely. Maharajas of the States lots of reforms were made for the development of the society and lot of work for the administrations. There was much goodness, such as those who did so well for the good of the subjects. These kings were racing to receive the titles on the behalf of the British government and they themselves lived a very royal and comfortable life. At the same time, there were a lot of shortcomings, such as polygamy and drinking alcohol. They used to marry more than one and there were a lot of women in their harem. These loyalists gave full support to the British government to crush whatever movement was waged against the British Empire and they felt honourable to call itself son of the British government.

Baba Ram Singh wanted to end slavery and liberate the country, whereas they had become loyalists of the British and acted as weapon of the British Government against the Namdhari guru. Despite this opposition, Baba Ram Singh continued his work. He was able to attract thousands of followers with his great personality. The success was slowly approaching, but unfortunately the tragedies of Amritsar, Raikot and Malerkotla occurred. So our third chapter is Namdhari reaction toward the British Policy: their intervention in Amritsar and Malerkotla. Cow-killing was a major problem between the Hindus and Muslims. Cow-killing was prohibited in the near of religious places of the Hindus and Sikhs but that, as soon as the Punjab was annexed to the British dominions, this prohibition was removed on the principle set forth in the Governor-General proclamation of the 20th May, 1849, that "No one should be allowed to interfere with the practice by his neighbour and of customs, which that neighbour's religion either enjoins or permits". This policy was totally against the sentiments of the Hindus and Sikhs. Namdharis were famous for their love and respect for cow animals. British government was watching deeply all the activities of the Namdharis. They were tried to get appropriate chance to suppress this movement. Namdharis could not tolerate the cow-killing in the holy city of Amritsar. On the 15th June 1871 a group of Namdharis had made a murderous attack on the butchers in the slaughter-house. After the all inquiry was made four Namdharis were hanged. On the 15th July, 1871, one month after the murder of Amritsar butchers, the attack was made on the slaughter-house of Raikot. Two butchers were killed and seven injured there.

The Namdharis execution of the sentence of death on 15th August 1871, the three Kukas named Mustan Singh, Gurmukh Singh, and Mangal Singh was carried out at Raikot in morning at sunrise. About 200 spectators were assembled there then. Meanwhile, imprisonments and hangings did not make the Namdhari zealots to be subservient to the British Empire. On 11 January 1872, was held *Maghi Mela* at Bhaini Sahib. A group of about hundred Zealots Namdharis of the Patiala state who had gone to Bhaini Sahib to be present at the *Maghi Mela* held there a small gathering (at which probably five hundred persons assembled), had worked themselves in to a state of frenzy. They declared that they would be revenged for the death of Giani Singh who was hanged at Ludhiana in Amritsar and Raikot butcher's murders. Baba Ram Singh, the leader of Namdharis went up to these men and entreated of them not to create a disturbance; but they would not listen to him; and that Baba Ram Singh then came to the Deputy Inspector and reported to him that these men were up to mischief and that he had no control over them. Heera Singh and Lehna Singh of the Patiala State as leader of the frenzy Namdharis, on the afternoon of the 13th January, the group of Namdharis left Bhaini Sahib, they proceeded to Maludh. They reached Maludh as it became dark. On the night, about 7 p.m. a group of two hundred Namdharis attacked the residence of Sardar Badan Singh at Maludh. This zealot Namdharis were at Maludh but two were killed and four captured. The attack made on Maludh Fort was unsuccessful.

The next morning a larger force of Namdharis, proceeded to Malerkotla, capital of the Muslim State, about 30 miles south of Ludhiana. On the morning of the 15th January 1872 these precautions were discontinued, and the Namdhari group about 7 A.M. made a sudden attack. The attack on Malerkotla, appeared to be very grave one. The attacks on Maludh and Malerkotla were done by the same people who had committed the murders at Amritsar and Raikot. The disturbance was got up by only two men, Heera Singh and Lehna Singh, residents of the Patiala State. One of the leaders Lehna Singh was captured at Rurr. Following were the results of Kuka actions at Maludh – two killed, four wounded ,at Malerkotla – seven killed, five captured, at Rurr sixty eight captured, twenty nine wounded. Mr. Cowan Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, reached Malerkotla and forty nine of the captured Namdharis were blown away from canons but without trail in afternoon on the Parade Ground of the Malerkotla. Next day, Mr. Forsyth also reached Malerkotla. A mock trial was held to

decide the fate of the remaining prisoners. The barbaric action of Cowan was not only approved but he was also admired by T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner of Ambala Division. British Government was under the circumstances which were explained by T.D. Forsyth, the Commissioner of the Ambala who had issued warrants under the Regulation III. Of 1818 for the detention in custody in the Allahabad Jail of the Namdhari Guru Ram Singh, and his most influential *Subas*.

The British government got the opportunity which it was waiting for long time. The government made every effort to suppress the Namdhari movement. The Malerkotla incident ignited all the revenge powers of the government. Bhai Hira Singh and fellow Namdharis were martyred in such a brutal manner that the heart trembles in terror. Not only the Indian writers, but also the people of British government wrote a lot about this. Mr. Edward Thomson gives the reference of a famous book, "Colton India and Home Memories" in his book "The Other Side of the Medal" and writes: "On January 14, 1872, almost one hundred crazy Sikhs attacked Malerkotla, a city in Punjab. A fierce battle was fought in which great damage was done to both sides. In the end, nearly sixty six Sikhs, twenty two of whom were wounded went to Patiala to hide themselves, where they were taken under siege. That night they were kept locked in the fort of Sherpur. With that defeat, the Kuka revolt in Punjab ended." Mr Cowan, who was deputy commissioner of Ludhiana in those days, wrote to state employees on January 16: "I am sending the prisoners to Malerkotla." The same evening, after reaching Malerkotla, he sent a report to his fellow officer, the commissioner of that area, saying: "Almost all the rebels have been found and erased. Now there is peace in all the areas." He also wrote that "some of the rebel Kukas should be blown with canons." Mr Forsyth, Commissioner Ambala wrote in response to his report in the afternoon of January 17. "The detainees should be kept in the Sherpur Fort and kept their till special troops are sent to Ludhiana to bring them back."

Mr Cowan writes, "I forgot this written order after putting the letter in pocket as if it had not come and kept waiting for the prisoners. At around 4 o'clock rebel Kukas were brought to Malerkotla. He ordered to blow them with cannons without waiting for an order from the court. These unfortunate Kukas were sixty six in number and were divided into batches of six each to be blown. At 7 pm, when a group of six prisoners had already been tied with guns, Mr Forsyth's order reached that the

prisoners should be sent to Ludhiana as soon as possible so that the litigation of rebellion can be tried against them. Mr. Cowan writes, "After holding this order, the paper was handed over to Mr. Perkins and it was written to the commissioner that after having been tied to the cannons, it is impossible to remove the death sentence of rebel prisoners because such a decision would have a profound effect on our people." Mr Tomson writes that Mr Forsyth repeatedly emphasized the assertion that it is important for the rebels to be produced before the court before being punished. On January 17, I wrote a letter to the government expressing my feeling that I am present at the spot and therefore the culprits will be punished according to the law. There is no need to take special steps at this time, so there is a fear that the suppressed enthusiasm will break out again." On the one hand, he sends a letter to the government, but on the other hand, when Mr. Cowan sends his bravery report to him, Mr. Forsyth gives Mr. Crown a salute. "I commend you for the action you undertook." He sent letter to applaud him but he himself reached Malerkotla for praise of the verdict and ordered the remaining sixteen prisoners to be fired with guns. As the government had cleverly taken some *Zamindars* and *Mahants* under its influence, even at so much insolence no one took the courage to oppose the acts of government. While the British Government removed Mr Cowan from his job to express their hatred for this act, Maharaja Mohindra Singh of Patiala praised him greatly. After that the Viceroy ordered that Mr Cowan be removed from office, but in case of Mr Forsyth, transferring him was considered fit instead of dismissal and shortly after he was sent to Jharkhand, where he was given the title of Sir Knight for his services. Whereas the government did all this to conceal this incident, the advice of Sikh Maharaja of Patiala to the government shows that maharajas and priests not only covered the actions of Mr. Cowan and Forsyth, but also supported them. Of course, if their sympathies were with martyrs, such an incident would never have happened and they were given harsh punishments. Sir Henry Cotton who was in Punjab in those days, strongly criticised the government's policy in his book 'Colton India and Home Memories' and writes, "My personal opinion is that I have never seen such a traumatic event which is worse than hanging, in the whole time in my job." Sir Henry also writes that it is not only my suggestion, but there are many others who agree with me and think that the future will make it very clear that the punishment given by government to those who have shown such a spectacle of stone-heartedness is insignificant. To prove the actions of Mr Cowan wrong, Mr. Forstyh's own opinion

was "As Commissioner and Superintendent of States of India, only I was authorized to execute or release the convicts, not Cowan. I had sent a clear order to Cowan from Ludhiana that he should only legally sue the convicts and not sentence them until I arrive to Malerkotla. But Mr. Cowan not only refused to obey my command by taking the law into his own hands, but ordered his soldiers to blow the culprits with guns." Surprisingly, on the one hand, he argues over Mr. Cowan's authority and writes that he did not have the authority to do so, but on the other hand, by giving this opinion, takes all the responsibility of Cowan: "When I received the news of the incident from Mr. Cowan, I thought it appropriate to take all responsibility for that legal protest, and immediately sent him a written statement confirming the action he had taken in that situation. In "Autobiography and Reminiscences of Sir Douglas", Mr. Tomson states his opinion about the incident: "The tragedy of Malerkotla is one of the special events in the favour of which the Anglo-Indian newspapers wrote detailed articles but despite that, the Indian government had to bow down before the public and admit that his officers could make the mistakes too. Moreover, after 14 years the government wholeheartedly acknowledged the fact that blowing human beings with cannons was a pesky action."

Mr. Tomson also writes that, "It is the policy of this government which was liked by the employees of Punjab Government." The above news stories are those which were written by British government officials themselves about the Malerkotla massacre. The event of the Malerkotla is a tremendous example of the true sacrifice and spirit of Sikhism created by Baba Ram Singh. The marvellous bravery showed by martyrs while they were blown with cannons is not mentioned by the British in their reports, but our Namdhari historians say that it is absolutely wrong that the Namdhari martyrs were tied with guns. Namdhari scholar Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal told in her interview that "they did not tie with guns". Those martyrs considered that death as insult and had told the British government not to tie them with guns. They bravely stood in front of the cannons to die.

When Baba Ram Singh's heart was creating ideas of peace and rights for the Sikhs, fear of English power had grown in the hearts of the people after the rebellion of 1857. The idea of liberating the country could not be born under any circumstances. The kings, Maharajas, *Zamindars* and priests of religious shrines had become puppets of the government. Whenever anybody tried to campaign against the

government, they would all come to the government's loyalty and put all their might to suppress it. In this work we have been described the statements of *Lambardars* and *Zamindars* and about *Mahants*, *Pujaris* and *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple and their given information to British about Namdharis activities in different areas. The *Lamberdars*, *Zamindars* and *Chaunkidars* were significant links between the Government and people. They gave all information to Maharajas of the States and government officers about even any minor incident, which were happening their areas. These were the main agencies which were the loyalist to the British dominance and they were opposed to the Namdhari movement. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari activities and often harassed and humiliated them. These selfish people were enjoying special concession as a reward of their loyal services like great *Khillats* and *Jagirs* from British Indian administration. It has made an attempt to describe all the Statements of these *Lamberdars*, *Zamindars* and *Chaunkidars* which were given by these loyalists to the government officers. These statements were given during the time period of Khotte congregation. It was here that Baba Ram Singh had started a new Sikh marriage ceremony.

In the beginning, when Namdhari movement, not directly were they developing then opposed it. However, the rich people of Punjab and priests were asked to openly oppose the Namdhari movement. The British government divided the Sikhs on the basis of the policy of divide and rule. The Akali and Namdhari were separated from each other. It was the trick of the British government. The Akali supported the British government because they did not want the British government to be against him. All famous priests of Gurudwaras issued a fatwa (a legal pronouncement, by the British) that Kukas were an austere sect within Sikhism so they were not Sikhs and their God believes in Muslim *Kalam*. Because Namdhari Sikhs believe that Dohra “*Agya bhai akal ki tabhe chalaeyeo panth, sbhh sikhian ko hukam hain guru maneyo granth*” which is written in guru Granth Sahib. These were written in 1920, completed on 1923 and this is considered to be a work of 1925. It was written under the influence of British government. Parlahad Singh wrote it first and then Giani Gian Singh wrote it again. Baba Ram Singh started a new ceremony of *Anand Karaj* (that is the Sikh marriage ceremony). Namdhari follower Surjit Singh told in his interview that “In Sikhism marriages is done in the front of Guru Granth Sahib, but in the Namdhari sect the marriages done around of *Agni Kund (Havan)*. In

Namdhari sect performed marriages around of *Haven* and this ceremony is called the *Vedi* ceremony. Because the old ceremonies done according to the ritual of the *Vedi*. The Namdhari Sikhs believes that the marriages of the Sikh gurus were performed according to the ritual of *Vedi*. That is way they followers the *Vedi* ceremony.” The Namdhari historian Swarn Singh Virk said in his interview that all rituals and life inspections of Namdhari Sikhs are based on *Shri Guru Granth sahib*, *Dasam Granth* and *Prem Sumarg* etc. but Namdharis have also incorporated some orthodox elements in them such as *Haven*. Namdharis get up early in the morning, take a Bath and wear white cloth and go to work after their daily routine of *nitname*. The biggest difference between Namdhari Sikhs and Sikhs is to believe in the incarnate guru. According to this ceremony, *Kudmai - Saka thaka*’ and the ceremony of *‘Milni’ ‘Muklava’* is very simple and economical, the ceremony of *‘Anand Karaj’* had just in 1.25 rupee and taking or giving of dowry was also prohibited. It was a revolutionary step in a custom bound social set-up. The ceremony of *‘Anand Karaj* was inaugurated for the first time in village Khotte district Ferozepur now Faridkot on June 3, 1863. That is why hundreds of people and Namdhari *Singhs* from here and there reached to see the ceremony of *Anand Karaj*. It was an important incident in which there was a group marriage with *Anand Karaj* ceremony, without dowry and inter caste marriage. It was according to ceremonies of true Sikhism. Sikhs expressed feeling of gratitude for this *Anand* ceremony. But Brahmins and priests threatened, If this ceremony would continue their shop-keeping had closed due to this simple ceremony initiated by Baba Ram Singh. That was why they thought that Namdharis were against Sikh religion. So, Brahmins and priests played an important role to destroy Namdhari Movement. It was written in the reports of Brahmins and watchman of Khotte village that “for two or three days, Ram Singh, with four hundred or five hundred followers had assembled at this village, and was behaving in a very extraordinary manner.” It was ordered that Baba Ram Singh should not go to any district. Neither Namdharis were allowed for *diwan* (a religious event or gathering). Baba Ram Singh was under surveillance and he was sent to Bhaini Sahib. British officers of Punjab lessened the restrictions put on Guru Ram Singh to go out of Bhaini in last days of the year 1866. During *‘Hola Mahalla’*”, he asked to British government for gave permission to go to Anandpur Sahib. Mister Mc Andrew and Deputy Commissioner called on the greatest *Mahant* of Kesgarh Sahib named Hari Singh and talked to him. He strictly opposed the Visitation of Namdhari to Takhat Kesgarh Sahib. After the debate *Mahant* Hari Singh said that

Namdhari would not visit Anandpur without covering their heads and they should not do such thing that would be against Sikh religion. Baba Ram Singh with almost hundred Namdhari Singh reached at Takhat Kesgarh Sahib. When they were entering the Gurudwara, then a group of forty *Nihangs* (prestigious armed and Sikh order) came and tried to riot against Namdharis. Namdharis and Sikhs have one religion. Both read *Granth* (holy book) of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. But they were opponents. Government allowed Ram Singh to come on *Hola Mahalla* (Sikh festival). *Akalis, Nihang, Bedi, Sodhi, and Mahants* were opposed to Baba Ram Singh's visit to Anandpur Sahib. They had no intentions to let Namdharis enter the historic Gurudwara, Thus they put many conditions to let them visit. When Baba Ram Singh and his companions reached at Kesgarh Sahib then Baba Ram Singh donated twenty five rupees there. The priest accepted money. But he rejected his offering of '*Kdaah - Prasad Ardaas*' Baba Ji had requested Brahma Sing Namdhari for it. Namdharis were killed with cannons in 1871. At that time, Landowners, Riches, Bedis, Sodhis, and *Mahants* had reconciled or signed to work with British Government. They showed their feeling of annoyance against Namdharis. They demanded that Cowan and T.D. Forsyth should be forgiven for their sentence and should be brought out. Bedis and Sodhis of Anandpur said that the sentences given to Namdharis depended on justice. If they would not be punished then they could revolt at any other place. Five hundred people had been investigated about this matter.

This was a revolutionary step. When in 1872, Malerkotla incident was happened at that time also reported many statements against the Namdharis. Other group of loyalists was the priests of the religious centres. After March 1849 British Administration wanted cooperation with the Sikhs. The British were very much aware of the importance of the Golden Temple. The Sikhs became a community of the loyalists as loyalty to the British was well rewarded. The priests enjoyed *Jagirs* and some other official only the funds. It was virtually collaboration between the Sikhs and the British, and this collaboration provided a positive side to the British policy of control over the Golden Temple. The British government's purpose behind this was simple: they mentioned a positive relationship between the Sikhs and the British. The Administrator (*Sarbrah*) of *Darbar Sahib*, Amritsar was appointed by the government. Administrator (*Sarbrah*), in general, was the government man. On many occasions the British government used them for their own interests or means. They

were opposed to the Namdharis movement. Namdharis were the sect of the Sikhs. But even the primary authority of the Sikh religion namely the Akal Takhat did not accept them as Sikh. They did not consider them the Sikhs of the guru because of the some religious differences among them. Therefore, when the Namdhari movement began to propagate, the wise and cautious government became alert. The British government made the affluent people and priest's protest, instead of protesting on its own. Priests of all the Gurdwaras put forth the assertion that Kukas are not Sikhs and their Guru believes in the Muslim *Kalam*. The purpose of the British government was to not allow the Sikhs to assemble against the Sikhs. By using the Sikhs directly against the government, the government itself remained acquitted of Major difference was that Namdharis followed their own living Gurus. Which ritual continues till now a day. But Sikhs do believe in only *Shri Guru Granth Sahib* after Guru Gobind Singh. They were humiliated by the Namdharis when they Came *Darbar Sahib* and *Akal Takhat Sahib*. Priests of the Gurdwaras never gave permission to enter the Namdharis and never performed their *Ardas*. When the Namdharis were blown away by the cannons they had fully supported the British government.

The truth is that the government used this defensive method successfully with great skill. I am convinced that if the affluent, the kings, priests and *Zamindars* would understand the real motive and did not oppose the Namdhari movement, the position of the Sikh *Panth* would have been different today. On the one hand there was opposition and on the other hand, despite thousands of problems, the love for country and want do something. Baba Ram Singh made great efforts to bring the priests and religious leaders together, but the priest community had become a puppet in the hands of British government.

After the Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809, cis-satluj States came under the protection of British Administration. In this work an attempt has been made to discuss the background and history of the princely States. British Government had always kept an eye on Namdharis activities or when they even went to any fair. The Kukas were punished with death from the cannon's mouth. There has been no order issued in the State and as this act of punishment was more suitable for setting example to others. So in this incident all Native States were sided with the British. In this work it has been tried to highlight the role of all the princely states namely Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala, Faridkot which were under the protection of British

Government. The States had signed the treaty and were under the Protection of British. According to proclamation, the Rajas of the States always sought cooperation with British and gave or rendered help in any bad situations. All Chiefs gave full support if any disturbance or revolt occurred in their States. So Chiefs of the all States were in full support in suppressing the Kuka Movement. They were helpful with Cavalry, Infantry and arms. Maharaja Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla gave all possible help to capture the Kuka Prisoners. This Incident happened in parade ground of Malerkotla. All Native officers were present there when the Kukas were blown away. It had also been described by the letters of Maharaja Patiala, which was written by him to the British. In his letter he supported the barbaric incident. Letters of thanks were sent to all Native Chiefs for the rendered help in that whole case. This chapter also deals with the involvement and rendered help of other princely States. British Government had distributed the rewards to Native Chiefs. Namdhari Sect was continued under the leadership of Baba Hari Singh, he was a brother of Baba Ram Singh. Many restrictions were imposed on Namdhari Sect for many years. Police guards were appointed on the Gate of Bhaini Sahib. No one was entered or out without the Permission of British. During the total history of this movement Chiefs of Native States had played a great role. Every Namdhari was ready for the restoration of Sikh power and Baba Ram Singh was working really hard to break the chains of slavery of the country. History has testified that even kings of other nations were sought to ruin the British Empire. The contact with King of Nepal by Kuka Regiment in Kashmir and letters from Russian king are the proof of this. From the very beginning of human history, there have always been the clashes and hatred between eternal and temporal thinking. That is why the kings of the princely states hated Baba Ram Singh and the Namdhari movement. The kings of these states felt proud that they had sent the canons that killed the Namdharis. They sincerely honoured their loyalty to the British Government. Maharaja Mahindra Singh of Patiala made every effort to prove that the Namdhari movement was a misguided movement and he justified the action taken by the government officials.

When the Namdhari movement is seen in context of the present state of Punjab, then there is no doubt that the British gave great importance to the Rajas, Maharajas and *Jagirdars* to use them to suppress Namdhari movement, with the policy of divide and rule. The first letter used to suppress the freedom movement was

written by Maharaja Patiala to the Secretary of the Punjab Government on 15 February 1872. Maharaja Patiala wrote his thoughts on the Namdhari movement and warned the British government that if the government do not act strictly, the uprising would spread like the 1857 uprising. The letter also reveals that the Namdhari movement was not only against the cow slaughterers, but also a strong rebellion against strong British government as it was hidden behind religious sentiment. As one of the causes of the 1857 uprising were cartridges of cow fat, these cartridges enclosed in cow fat were opened by mouth, which led to the rebellion by Mangal Pandey. The Mughal Emperor also participated in the rebellion aggressively in the spirit of these emotions. The uprising had in one way taken away the roots of the English government. But in this uprising, the Sikh kings increasingly helped the British government, with which India became enslaved again. It was the treachery of these states that played a part in suppressing the Namdhari movement. The Namdhari rebellion could once again become a challenge to the British Empire by gathering all of India, if Namdharis were not suppressed with the help of kings. Because in the name of cow protection, the whole of India could come together for a big revolt. Namdhari movement holds an important place in the list of freedom movements which challenged British Empire. The movement became prominent on the day of *Vaisakhi* in 1857, but the British Government became suspected when Mr. Macnabb, Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot, wrote to the Governor of Punjab on 5 April 1863: "A Sikh named Ram Singh is visiting the Sialkot district. He has thousands of servants; he drills his followers with a stick instead of a gun and does not obey the rule of any ruler." The movement came into existence at a time when the cultural and political structure of Punjab had been damaged completely and it had accepted slavery. The Sikhs had forgotten the teachings of their gurus; and they had become the guardians of British Empire instead of fighting against slavery and oppression. The Sikh kingdom was overthrown in 1845-49. British diplomacy occupied Punjab and swords were seized from the Sikhs, which disheartened Sikh *Sardars*. Maharaj Singh, along with his valiant comrades the refused to be enslaved and fought till the last breath. Then the first rebellion for freedom began. There was a wonderful opportunity to take the revenge of wrongdoings of British, but this opportunity could not be used. The leadership was in the hands of kings and feudal lords. They loved their self-interest, not freedom of country. The loyalists of this government rejected all the offers to join the rebellion and supported British, and forced India into the

chains of slavery. After the rebellion, the British officers became more cautious. They mobilized all necessary resources to strengthen their kingdom. Army, police, courts and jails were spread in India. That was it. The C.I.D. Department was made more powerful. In Punjab, the rule of law such as curfew and martial law was established. The letters which were being sent or received were opened and read. It was also announced that the government would not interfere in any religion. These were the circumstances when Baba Ram Singh brought his message to Punjab. Baba Ram Singh ji had been a part of the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He knew the internal situation of the Sikh state. He also saw the discipline and power of the organization. It is for this reason that Baba Ram Singh soon established the Namdharis into a strong organization and discipline. British education and history was much ahead of us. They were well aware that any movement first arises religiously and later becomes political. Therefore, British government observed every movement, be it religious or cultural. It also received reports of fraudulent acts and acted against it, even if there was little doubt. It used every way to crush that movement. Baba Ram Singh appointed states to unite Punjab and developed a policy of self-reliance. The British government did not want any organization to be formed in Punjab. But in front of their eyes Baba Ram Singh's states began to gather people. In two or three years, Lakhs of Namdharis got together. The British government began to see Namdhari states and Sikhs as a great danger to their Empire. The strategy of self-reliance could not be dismissed by the British government in any way. The order for the Namdharis was to wear home-made clothes, boycott British goods, settle their disputes in *Panchayats*, do not go to court, do not send their children to public schools, boycott government post offices. This program of self-reliance was a challenge for the English state. The policy announced that Namdhari Sikhs could live without the British slavery system. The postal arrangements meant that the government should not become familiar with their secret activities. It was an open arrangement not to cooperate with the British government, which Mahatma Gandhi went on to pursue. Therefore, the rulers viewed the works of Namdharis as a parallel government against their own government and treated them as rebels. The British government was dreaming of maintaining its rule in India forever. British spies used to report even small things of the Punjabi people. The secret reports of British officers make it clear that "this movement is political and not religious." Baba Ram Singh is the leader of an organization which is the enemy of the British Raj, in the hope of reviving the *Khalsa*

state. The purpose of the British rulers at this time was not merely to root out the Namdhari movement, but also that no further anti-government movement could emerge in Punjab. Malerkotla massacre is that page of Namdhari history which was written with the blood of martyrs who were martyred with the aim of protecting the country's independence and cow slaughter. This massacre, in fact, is the backbone of history of Namdharis. There is no denying if wealthy people of such community, *Zamindars*, *Mahants* of various shrines and Gurudwaras had not supported British in the bloody drama played for the freedom of the country; the history of Punjab would have been different today.

After the events of January 1872, the British government began to use its old weapon of 'divide and rule'. With which the Indian nation was divided into various part. A class stood on the side of British Empire, which included the kings of princely states, the *Jagirdars*, the *Mahants* of Gurudwaras and the government officers who were at all times exerting their power to suppress and enslave the general public. In the beginning of the 20th century, the Congress assembled Indian nation under one flag and under the leadership of single leader for a common goal. This fulfilled the dream of independence of Baba Ram Singh and his followers. Mahatma Gandhi ji adopted the whole policy from Baba Ram Singh ji and following his steps India got independence in 1947. Sikh word in the present is a symbol of Sikhism. According to Bhai Veer Singh, "The people, whose ten *Avatar* leaders are remembered by the name of Gurus, have Guru Granth Sahib as their religious book is called Sikhs." The word Namdhari is related to the adoption of the '*naam*', meaning the one who adopts '*naam mantra*' by the Guru. But in today's time it means the Namdhari sect. Namdhari is a community of Sikhs. Sikhs of this faith wear white clothes, round turban and keep a rosary of white wool. Maulavi Ghulam, Bheekh Jalandhari themselves went to Namdhari centre in Bhaini Sahib and looking at the environment there, wrote the words "I myself went to Bhaini and saw the method adopted by Kukas. It is nothing but a sect of the real Sikhs and they have re-established the Sikh religion. They follow the path of Guru Gobind Singh. Just like Nanak Shah, Ram Singh includes people from every community and caste to his sect." One of the solid ideologies of the Namdhari movement was to reconnect Sikhs directly with its spiritual heritage, to remove social evils, to adopt virtuous values, to create awareness about their own language and culture and to peacefully unite against British rulers. They kept their

movements a secret. The *Mahants*, priests and kings wrote to the government, if Ram Singh was not deported then there is a lot of danger to your and our states. All the Namdhari *Panth* was declared rebel. Other Sikh leaders also joined the government to take advantage of government facilities and started protesting against the Namdhari Sikhs.

Clearly sixth chapter deals with the development of the Namdhari Movement after the deportation of Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh. Namdhari movement went into the hands of his younger brother Baba Budh Singh who later became famous by the name of Baba Hari Singh. Many restrictions were imposed on the Namdharis. Namdharis were persecuted and suppressed in whole Punjab after that. They were kept confined to their own villages. They were not allowed to move out of the village without the permission of village *Chaunkidar* and *Namberdar*. They also had to register their incoming and outgoing movements. The prior permission from British officers was required before any event of marriage, death ceremony and *Kirtana*. It generally took long time to get the permission from British officials because of their strict behaviour towards Namdharis. Fairs, social and religious gatherings were completely banned. The lists of famous Namdharis of all districts were given to all the police stations, where all their movements were noted. They were also asked to submit bails according to section 504-505 of Criminal Procedure Code Act X. Many nationalist Namdharis were imprisoned, fined and their lands were seized in case of failure to deposit the bail amounts. The search was carried out in the *Dera* of Bhaini Sahib because it was the preaching centre of Namdhari movement. They looked into every nook and corner of *Dera* in order to find some inappropriate material but were not able to find anything. A permanent post of police was established outside the main gate of *Dera* which kept an eye on visitors. This post was removed from that place in 1923. All the restrictions were laid by government to curb the rise of any other rebellion by Namdharis. During this tough time period Baba Hari Singh commanded the followers. The followers used to come to Bhaini Sahib instead of the tight security of police for fifty years, but only five of them were allowed to enter. After some time, ten people used to get permission to visit *Dera* complex. Though government had banned Baba Hari Singh to go out, but his followers started visiting him in large numbers. Namdharis relations with foreign countries were already. Baba Hari Singh was called "the figure of peace". Baba Ji with his patient and peaceful nature

encouraged his fellow men and by using his wisdom, he kept his contacts with Russia, Kabul and Kashmir. He kept his contact with Baba Ram Singh in Burma in lieu of the movement against British through messengers from Russia. Kuka Gurbachan Singh and Bishan Singh was an important link between Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh and Baba Hari Singh. In this work it made an attempt to highlight the relation of Namdharis with Maharaja Dalip Singh. The relation of Maharaja Dalip Singh and Namdharis were mentioned in nineteenth century. At this time, both of them had a strong desire to liberate the country. The efforts of Namdhari leaders started long ago about this. Namdharis were very happy to see that he wanted to liberate the country. Namdharis started thinking that the freedom struggle will be easier with the arrival of Maharaja Dalip Singh. Because both had the same motive and both needed each other. In 1886, Maharaja Dalip Singh tried to return to his country from foreign land, but on October 30, 1889, the Sikh Sardars replied, "You cannot be helped; go to London and apologize." On the other hand, Namdhari Sikhs Gurcharan Singh and Bisan Singh were contacting Russia to help Maharaja Dalip Singh. The news of his activities used to arrive from time to time. They thought that now Dalip Singh and Bishan Singh will work together and soon India will be free. Many Namdharis were also saying that the soul of Baba Ram Singh is working in Maharaja Dalip Singh. When Dalip Singh came to India the atmosphere was like that at that time. Probably nothing like this would happen but they did not want any quarrel, so Dalip Singh was stopped on the way to Aden and after some time Dalip Singh went back from there.

Baba Hari Singh as well as the Namdharis survived through the toughest times with smiling faces. They developed the sect with immense wisdom and prudence. Baba Hari Singh handled his responsibility wholeheartedly for 34 years. Towards the end of his life, he had his choice in his eldest son Baba Pratap Singh to succeed him. He did several social reforms in his lifetime. He banned engagement (*kurmayi*) at the time of *Anand Karaj*, the tradition of dowry, making and serving various sweets or other eatables, large gatherings on wedding and other rituals completely. He encouraged the tradition of mass weddings on the occasion of fairs in the presence of Namdhari Guru. Baba Partap Singh made all possible efforts to encourage the use of Punjabi language. He set up the tradition that till the time, the girl and boy do not acquire the knowledge of *Gurmukhi*, their *Anand Karaj* ceremony should not take place. He wanted Punjabi to flourish the same way as the other languages were

developing. Baba Pratap Singh had a great predilection and affection towards Punjabi language. He organised a Punjabi Conference for the development of Punjabi language in Bhaini Sahib on 17-18 October. He published a weekly newspaper 'Satyug' for the growth and progress of Punjabi. Journalism was an apt medium to unfurl the imperialist nature of the British rule and to free the country from their clutches. With the efforts of Baba Pratap Singh, 'Satyug' newspaper was started from 26th May 1920. It was first published from Lahore and had to face opposition from British, but the publication of newspaper was never interrupted. All the movements of Namdharis became known to people through the newspaper. Many volumes of the newspaper were seized by government and security deposit was forfeited many times. Earlier, Satyug newspaper was supposed to get published from Ganga building in Lahore but after bail, it was published from Fazal building. Maharaj Gurdial Singh, Sant Nidhan Singh Aalam, Nirankar Singh Chetan and Sant Mangal Singh Farishta etc. preached many important essays through this newspaper. The Namdhari history was also spread by newspaper and contribution was given to freedom movement. British government was panicked by enthusiasm of Namdharis and the growing popularity of their newspaper, and they asked for bailing amount for newspaper. At the end, government seized the bail amount of Rs. 2000. In this way, publishing of Kuka newspaper ended after a period of 11 years and 6 months because of intolerance of the government. After Kuka newspaper, "*Mastana Samachar*" started which also came to an end soon. Government considered Satyug as most dangerous among all. Its access to soldiers and other government offices was strictly banned. On 13th October, 1934, '*Guru Nanak Sarb Sampardaye*' conference was held in Shri Bhaini Sahib, in which all sects of the religion participated. A representative conference of all sects of the Sikhs, who believe in Guru Nanak Dev and his teachings, was reached at Bhaini Sahib by Namdhari *Darbar*. Preparations were made on a large scale and no pain was spread by the conveners to make the conference a big success. Besides thousands of Namdharis, Akalis, Nirmalas, Udasis, Sewa Panthis, Sehajdharis, almost all different sects who traced their cult from the teachings of Shri Guru Granth Sahib responded to the invitation. Leading members of Chief khalsa Ddiwan, Siromani Akali Dal, Central Akali Dal, Udasin Mahan Madal, Nirmal Maha Mandal and other responsible bodies were speciality invited. Master Tara Singh, some other Akalis and Singh Sabha members laid down a condition that they will participate only if prayer in the name of ten gurus will be offered. The head of Namdhari sect, Baba Pratap Singh

replied that they too worship ten gurus and therefore their condition will be fulfilled. In this way, the prayers were offered and Master Tara Singh also participated. Namdharis accompanied the Akalis in many Akali agitations. They started participating in the Akali agitation with more enthusiasm. The most hard and difficult among all strikes was '*Jaito Morcha*' in which Akalis, Namdharis and Congress party jointly participated and offered arrests. This agitation was in favour of Maharaja of Nabha by Akalis, and Namdharis co-operated them greatly. In this work we had also described the Namdharis relations with Congress party. Namdharis gave fully support to Jawahar Lal Nehru's all schemes and agitations. The Namdharis *Darbar* accepts the Nehru Scheme with the reservation that complete independent be declared the ultimate goal of India. The *Darbar* also declares that no Scheme, which falls short of full self Government, can be acceptable to the Namdhari community. Baba Partap Singh co-operated with the Congress party from the side of Namdhari sect. Baba Ram Singh had introduced Indians to the unique method of fighting against the British rule i.e. non co-operation movement. Namdharis also started participating in the freedom struggle with Congress, by the inspiration of Baba Pratap Singh, because this method was adopted by Baba Ram Singh many years earlier so Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was very impressed by patriotism and sacrifices of Namdharis. The relations of Pandit Nehru and Namdharis were established in 1929. The annual session of All India Congress in 1929 was held in Lahore. During this Lahore session, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected as president of Congress party for the first time and the resolution for *Purna Swaraj* was passed. Namdhari workers made huge contribution to make the procession of Congress successful according to the will of their guru. Unlike all old presidents of the congress Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was riding a horse. The most striking features were the Sikh cavalry. Dressed in white spotless *Khaddhi* and wearing stylish turban, the Namdharis with their following beards presented a thrilling sight. In those days, 'Kuka Congress Party' was established with the efforts of Maharaja Nihal Singh and Chakravarthy, and by the permission granted by Satguru Pratap Singh. Its motive was to propagate the ideas of Congress party and to sacrifice their self for the sake of freedom movement. The State People's Conference was held on 17 February, 1939 in Ludhiana. During this conference, Baba Pratap Singh helped the party in all possible ways. After the conference, Pandit Nehru came to Bhaini Sahib along with other politicians and then showed pictures of Malerkotla and other massacres. Pandit Jawahar Lal said, "If the country understands the path of non co-

operation and sacrifice for the sake of the nation shown by Satguru Ram Singh, we can come into list of independent nations of the world. Nobody else can rule our country. The only way to understand this movement is that every Indian should become the part of their common Congress and strengthen the organisation by delegating their service to it. The peaceful movement for independence of the country is as new and powerful, as it was 70 years ago”.

Mr. K.M. Munshi, Ex Minister of Bombay Congress government, on 2 November 1941, visited Bhaini Sahib, the spiritual headquarters of Namdhari Sikhs. Mr. Munshi said, “He had been greatly impressed by what he had been greatly touched. He said to know the history of the Namdharis Sikhs. He was glad to hear that the Namdharis believed in the unity of India. They had many lessons to learn from the life of the Bhaini Sahib.” Namdhari sect always provided support and encouraged Congress party and other patriotic organizations which were fighting for welfare and independence at that time. Feeling the need for unity, when the Hindu Sikh issue started in the country, Baba Partap Singh Ji convened "*Hindu Sikh Milap Conference*" at Bhaini Sahib in 1943. At the holy land of Shri Bhaini Sahib, everyone pledged for "We are one" in the conference. In the same way, the soldiers of Subhash Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Force were found guilty in court martial. The hearing was held at Red Fort. Colonel Sehgal, Captain Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon and Captain Shah Nawaz were among those Punjabis who were acquitted. Major General Shah Nawaz, Col. Sehgal and Lt. Col. Dhillon of I.N.A. were invited by the Namdharis on 7 January 1946 at the Lahore residence of their head his holiness Guru Partap Singh. Maharaja Partap Singh who talked with the three I.N.A. officers gave them '*Saropas*'. They had no intention of taking part in political reign. They were and are even today, above the evil of communism. Namdharis continued their battle of freedom, social reforms and religious preaching against foreign rule starting from 1857. Namdharis neither thought of usurping property of Muslims, nor kept bad eye on their women even during the tragedy of partition in 1947. The feeling of unity never let Namdharis to be communal; the proof of this was seen during the partition. Namdharis kept themselves away from the scene of robberies and murders at that time. Baba Pratap Singh had strictly ordered that none of his Namdhari Sikhs would involve in killing other people, any robbery or usurping properties with force. Further none of them would disrespect women. Baba Pratap Singh bought about 500 square acres uninhibited barren land in

villages near Sirsa. This land was registered under his name in January 1947.

According to the secret *Hukamnama* from Rangoon, Baba Budh Singh, the younger brother of Baba Ram Singh, supported the Namdhari Sikhs in the form of Hari Singh. Dayal Singh Majithia passed a resolution on 22 March 1872, at a meeting of the patriarchs of the *Granthis*, *Mahants* and the Sikh *Sardars* in Amritsar that the Kukas destroyed their loyalty to the British in 1857 but they openly opposed the Namdharis. In 1914, the government demolished the wall of the historical Gurdwara Rakabganj in Delhi without any regard for the feelings of Sikhs. Namdhari leader Sant Mangal Singh Fatuhi Chak was the first to raise voice against it. Bhai Randhir Singh, Sardul Singh Kavishar and other Sikhs formed a front. Mangal Singh was also detained. When the entire Sikh community became united, the government had to rebuild the wall. Master Tara Singh said in a 1959 speech about the incident: "I had my first meeting with Baba Pratap Singh in 1914. When the wall of Rakabganj was demolished, then Akali movement was founded. I and Teja Singh Samundri were present in the service of Baba Ji and talked to him in detail. At that time Baba ji gathered all the *Sangat* at Lahore which was in great need and was unmatched." In 1914, a ship was carrying 347 passengers to Canada to earn a better living, but it was repatriated. When the matter became a case of Sikh oppression, the British government sought from its faithful Sikh Sardar to declare that they were not Sikhs. Baba Pratap Singh passed the resolution during a gathering in Hushiyarpur stating that the passengers were Sikhs and expressed sympathy with the families of martyrs. In the Akali *Morchas* too, the Namdhari Sikhs never opposed the Sikhs, but stood for them. Instead of the differences with Sikh religion, they helped Akalis during Nabha agitation. Namdharis also joined the Shaheedi Jathas from Akal Takht Amritsar to Jaito. According to Sohan Singh Josh, Dharam Singh Namdhari and Sant Buddha Singh Namdhari joined the Jaito Morcha. A resolution was passed in favour of the Sikhs participating in Namdhari Darbar Morcha. "The Namdhari Darbar is deeply saddened to hear the tragedy of Jaito and the Darbar sees the political agitation with utmost contempt." In 1920, the weekly *Satyug* of the Namdhari sect began to be published. Where the news and articles promoted Namdhari sect and supported freedom movement, they were also the symbols of association and solidarity with Sikh religion. It expressed sympathy with Baba Gurditt Singh and raised voice against the police outpost. Namdhari Sikhs were invited to join the Sikh League and a special

edition was published on Nankana Sahib Massacre. The Police outpost was lifted from Bhaini Sahib after 57 years on 12 May, 1923 due to increasing political activities. British government wanted to bring Namdharis on its side, but it could not be successful. During the *Guru Nanak Parkash Purab* in 1928 AD, *Guru Nanak Sarab Samprada* Conference was organized at Bhaini Sahib with the orders of renowned leaders Sant Nidhan Singh Alam and Baba Pratap Singh. In the time of Satguru Partap Singh, Sikh traditions, *gurmat* music and hymns from *Guru Granth Sahib* were popular. He organised the recitation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* for six lakhs times and of *Dasam Granth* ten thousand times. His goal for unity was: "Be in harmony with each other in accordance with *Guru Granth Sahib*. If the Akali Singhs are to perform the ceremonies, then the Namdharis should go to them and if the Namdharis have to do so, they too should come, sit together so that People will know that you are incidental." In fact, after the unsuccessful revolt of 1857, Namdhari movement was at the top in fighting against foreign rule. They kept this place with immense sacrifices and by bearing atrocities for 84 years i.e. from the fair in village Khotee on 3rd June, 1863 to 14 August, 1947 till the attainment of freedom. The motive and aim of Namdharis was to free their motherland. They had no intention of taking part in political reign. They were and are even today, above the evil of communism. Namdharis continued their battle of freedom, social reforms and religious preaching against foreign rule starting from 1857. Schools and colleges were opened in Bhaini Sahib, Jiwan Nagar, Delhi and Bangkok to respect mother tongue Punjabi. They promoted Literature by sponsoring Punjabi conferences. Namdharis neither thought of usurping property of Muslims, nor kept bad eye on their women during the tragedy of partition in 1947. They always spread the message: "*Manas ki jaat sabhey ekey pehchanbo*"

But now many changes had taken place in earlier time dowry was not taken in Namdhari sect. But now dowry is being taken due to change the time. There was no ceremony of engagement (Kurmai) before, but now days it is performed. Earlier not much was spent on marriages, but nowadays great functions are performed on weddings. There were many other sects in the Sikh religion, some of which clashed with *Khalsa Panth* to a great extent. But despite some differences, there is unity with the Namdhari sect. To this day, the chiefs of this sector any Namdhari have never uttered a derogatory word against the ten Gurus and Guru Granth Sahib. It has been

seen in Namdhari *Sangat* so far that if *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is kept in the *Diwan* and *Kirtana* is being performed, then the master of the Namdhari throne would bow before *Guru Granth Sahib* and then sit in his place. The heads of other sects also wear turban and do not cut the beard as well as hair, but not all sects are Sikh. The Namdhari sect is a part of Sikhism and Sikhism is the biggest for them. So the Sikhs and Namdharis are not different, they have an intimate relationship.

GLOSSARY

<i>Abhiasi</i>	:	a person seeking spiritual quest.
<i>Adi-Granth</i>	:	(the Guru Granth Sahib), the sacred scripture of the Sikhs recorded by Bhai Gurdas at the instructions of Guru Arjan Dev in 1603-4.
<i>Akali</i>	:	also called <i>Nihang</i> . The militant followers of Guru Gobind Singh who regarded themselves to be the guardians of the faith.
<i>Akal Takhat</i>	:	the highest seat of the religious authority of the Sikhs.
<i>Ahuti</i>	:	pouring ghee in the fire-pit while performing <i>havan</i> .
<i>Akal Purakh</i>	:	the one beyond Time, God.
<i>Amrit</i>	:	nectar of immortality, sweetened initiation water used in <i>amrit sanskar</i> .
<i>Amritdhari</i>	:	a Sikh who has ‘taken amrit’; an initiated member of the Khalsa.
<i>Anand-reeti</i>	:	a Sikh custom (marriage).
<i>Anand-vivah</i>	:	the Sikh marriage ceremony.
<i>Ardasan</i>	:	Namdhari Guru’s letters.
<i>Avtar</i>	:	an incarnation of a deity, usually Vishnu.
<i>Baba</i>	:	‘father’, a term of respect applied to holy man.
<i>Bani</i>	:	word of God-work of the Gurus and other poets included in the Sikh sacred scriptures.
<i>Bhai</i>	:	literally a ‘brother’, also a title of sanctity and respectability among Sikhs.
<i>Bhog</i>	:	mortuary rites; the end of a performance.
<i>Birs</i>	:	Adi-Granth, volumes; tome, “recension”
<i>Chandi da Path</i>	:	reading of <i>Chandi</i> , a composition attributed to Guru Gobind Singh.
<i>Chaukidar</i>	:	guard or watchmen
<i>Dan</i>	:	charity.

<i>Dewan</i>	:	religious meetings of the Sikhs.
<i>Dargah</i>	:	court.
<i>Dastar</i>	:	turban.
<i>Daswandh</i>	:	one-tenth donation of earning.
<i>Dharamsala</i>	:	place of worship for early Sikh Panth (later Gurdwara)
<i>Doshala</i>	:	woollen robe.
<i>Firanghee</i>	:	British.
<i>Faqueer</i>	:	a Muslim ascetic.
<i>Giani</i>	:	a Sikh scholar of theologian.
<i>Granthi</i>	:	custodian of a Gurdwara, the professional reader of Guru Granth Sahib, the functionary in-charge of a Gurdwara.
<i>Gurmantra</i>	:	a mystical formula given by a guru to a disciple.
<i>Gurmaryada</i>	:	the ethical principles and practices in accordance with the teachings of the Guru; the tradition set by the Gurus of the Sikhs.
<i>Guru/Gooroo</i>	:	a spiritual preceptor, either a person or the mystical 'voice' of God.
<i>Guru-sabda</i>	:	from the Guru's mouth.
<i>Gurusikh</i>	:	a 'Sikh of the Guru'; a devout Sikh.
<i>Havan</i>	:	ritual fire ceremony practised by the Namdhari Sikhs, also called a <i>hom</i> .
<i>Halwa</i>	:	a sweet Indian dish.
<i>Holla</i>	:	the festival, celebrated by the Sikhs.
<i>Hukamnamas</i>	:	'a written order'; used generally for the letters of the Gurus to their followers.
<i>Inam</i>	:	literally, a reward: an assignment of revenue distinct from <i>Jagir</i> and <i>dharamarth</i> , and implying the idea of reward.
<i>Ishnan</i>	:	bath.

<i>Jagiasi</i>	:	a person desirous of knowledge and spiritual insight.
<i>Japuji</i>	:	Guru Nanak Dev's composition.
<i>Jathedar</i>	:	the leader of a <i>jatha</i> ; a leader-organizer of the Shiromani Akali Dal.
<i>Khalsa</i>	:	an epithet used for the disciples of Guru Gobind Singh, derived from the Ideas of a direct link between the Sikhs and the Guru; also used for an Individual Sikh as well as for the collective body/the pure one.
<i>Kakkars</i>	:	the names of Sikh emblems begin with the letter "kakka" of the Gurmukhi scripts, they are known as the five <i>Kakkars</i> : <i>kes, kangha, kirpan Kachha, kara</i> .
<i>Kalam</i>	:	Islamic fundamental.
<i>Karah Parsad</i>	:	sacramental food.
<i>Kar Sewa</i>	:	a community-service.
<i>Khanagah</i>	:	a religious establishment, generally of the Sufi recluse.
<i>Khande-di-pahul</i>	:	Khalsa initiation in which water sweetened with soluble sweets is stirred with two edged sword, <i>amrit, pahul</i> .
<i>Khillats</i>	:	any gift of money or goods awarded by the government in return for Services from tributary princes, Khans and tribal leaders.
<i>Khufia</i>	:	secret.
<i>Kirtan</i>	:	devotional singing.
<i>Kirpan</i>	:	a small sword.
<i>Kotwal</i>	:	a senior police officer.
<i>Lamberdar</i>	:	a head of the village.
<i>Langar</i>	:	the kitchen/ refectory attached to every Ggurdwara from which food is served to all regardless of caste or creed; the meal served from such a kitchen.
<i>Lavan</i>	:	circumambulation of Guru Granth Sahib or a sacred fire as part of a marriage ceremony.
<i>Lathis</i>	:	sticks.

<i>Malechh</i>	:	an uncouth barbarian; and outsider with whom no association is desirable, a foreign invader, an untouchable.
<i>Mantra</i>	:	a verse, phrase, or syllable of particular religious import; also used by Hindus
<i>Mahant</i>	:	the head of a religious order or establishment among the Hindus and <i>Udasi</i> Sikhs
<i>Morcha</i>	:	an embrasure; entrenchment for besieging fort; used metaphorically by the Akalis for their non-violent agitations.
<i>Naib-Suba</i>	:	deputy governor.
<i>Nam</i>	:	the divine Name, a summary term expressing the total being a Akal Purakh.
<i>Nazarana</i>	:	the tribute paid by a vassal; also paid by an official on a regular basis or on special occasions.
<i>Nirmala</i>	:	“a pure one”: a sect of Sikhs originated during the time of Guru Gobind Singh.
<i>Nit- nem</i>	:	daily reciting gurbani in the morning and evening.
<i>Pathi</i>	:	scripture reader.
<i>Pir</i>	:	Muslim saints.
<i>Pujari</i>	:	a man who has particular duties and responsibilities in a place where People worship
<i>Rahit</i>	:	Sikh code of practice
<i>Rahitnama</i>	:	a manual of rahet, principles.
<i>Sakhi</i>	:	an anecdote.
<i>Sangat</i>	:	religious groups of Sikhs; a congregation.
<i>Sant</i>	:	a pious person; a renowned teacher of Gurmat; and adherent of the Sant tradition.
<i>Sarbrah</i>	:	manager of golden temple appointed by the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar.
<i>Sahukar</i>	:	the money lender
<i>Sarover</i>	:	sacred tank.

<i>Shalok</i>	:	a verse is one of parts into which a poem or a chapter of the any holy book.
<i>Satguru</i>	:	true spiritual master.
<i>Shaheed</i>	:	martyr.
<i>Siropa</i>	:	literally, from head to foot; a dress of honour.
<i>Smadh</i>	:	the site of a cremation.
<i>Sankesh-ashnan</i>	:	daily washing of hair.
<i>Satyagrah</i>	:	commitment and insistence upon truth force.
<i>Singh Sabha</i>	:	a Sikh reform association
<i>Tankhahia</i>	:	a transgressor against the Rahit.
<i>Tarkhan</i>	:	carpenter.
<i>Thanedar</i>	:	in-charge of a police station.
<i>Tehsil</i>	:	sections of a district.
<i>Udasis</i>	:	adherent of the Udasi Panth (an order of ascetic Sikhs)
<i>Vatta-satta</i>	:	a practice of exchanging girls in marriage.
<i>Waheguru</i>	:	praise to the guru, the modern Sikh name for God.
<i>Zamindar</i>	:	a landlord, proprietor or an occupant of land.
<i>Zaildar</i>	:	a honorary official in the village.
<i>Zat</i>	:	endogamous caste-grouping.

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- Name: Gurnaam Singh (Sewek) age 90 years, Residence Sirsa (Haryana), interview at Bhaini Sahib, 13 March 2020
- Name: Palwinder Singh (Sewek) age 60 years, residence Bhaini Sahib, interview at Bhaini Sahib, 13 March 2020
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HISTORICAL WELL

**THIS WELL WAS DUG IN 1926 AD WITH THE
PERMISSION OF BABA PARTAP SINGH JI AT BHAINI
SAHIB**



HISTORICAL WELL AT BHAINI SAHIB



**BABA PARTAP SINGH WITH THE FIREEDOM FIGHTER AT
LAHORE (1946)**

**IN THE FIRST ROW OF LEFT SIDE MRS. DHILLON GENERAL
SHAH NAWAZ KHAN, CAPT. P.K. SEHGAL, CO. G.S
DHILLON, BABA PARTAP SINGH**



**JAWAHLRAL NEHRU MASTER TARA SINGH JI BABA
PARTAP SINGH JI AND DR. SAIFUDDIN KITCHLEW AT
BHAINI SAHIB (1939)**



HINDU SIKH MILAP CONFERENCE AT BHAINI SAHIB (1943)



A PHTOGRAPH OF GURCHARAN SINGH KUKA

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 عقد یازدهم
 عقد دوازدهم

**OPPOSITION TO THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT BY
THE BRITISH LOYALIST SECTIONS (1857-1947)**

**A
THESIS**

Presented 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**

SUPERVISOR
Nazer Singh
DR. NAZER SINGH

**(Retired) Professor of History
Department of Distance Education
Punjabi University Patiala**

SUBMITTED BY
Ramandeep Kaur
RAMANDEEP KAUR



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA**

2020

CHAPTER – 7

CONCLUSION

Namdhari revolt has an important place among the revolts against British Empire in the second half of 19th century. This movement has a glorious history as it is clear from political, social and religious perspectives. After the revolt of 1857, British did not want the rise of any rebellion which could cause danger to their rule in India. So they used all methods to save their government and to suppress the Namdhari movement up to the 20th century. Baba Ram Singh resurrected the Sikh code of conduct to restore the lost glory of the Sikhs. The Sikhs who were losing their religion after losing their rule also joined them in a series. Baba Ram Singh wanted to awaken the people. He wanted to organise a program by bringing all the powers of the *Khalsa Panth* at one stage, to allow the British Government to give Sikhs their rights. So on 12 April, 1857 i.e. *Baisakhi* Day, he baptised five Sikhs in Bhaini Sahib and established *Sant Khalsa*. Surjit Singh sewak of Bhaini Sahib told that in his interview that “In 1857 Baba Ram Singh prepared the nectar but before preparation the nectar he sent his follower Bhai Rai Singh to Hazur Sahib. He ordered that go Hazur Sahib and stay there some time and from there he brought the entire *guru maryada* by writing. The entire *amrit* was prepared according to the same *guru maryada* and same *maryada* was followed.

The present work is an attempt to highlight the role of the British loyalists section against the Namdhari or Kuka Movement. These loyalists were the *Mahants* and *Sarbrah* of the Sikh religious centres, the *Zamindars* and *Lamberdars* of the villages and the Maharajas of the princely States of the Punjab. These princely States were the Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. These loyalists did play a significant role to suppress the emerging Namdhari Movement. Phulkian States and Malerkotla State played a great role against the Namdharis in comparison to the other two States. Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal also told in her interview that Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla played a great role rather than other two States i.e. Faridkot and Kapurthala. In this thesis work or research work we try to discuss the origin, growth and development of the Namdharis till the 1947. Obviously the research work is an attempt to make analysis the social and cultural identification of the loyalists. We can also discuss the incidents of the Amritsar, Raikot and

Malerkotla. In these incidents butchers were murdered by the Namdharis for the reason of cow-killing near the religious places. In this proposed work we may also highlight the role of the *Lamberdar*, *Zamindars*, religious priests and Maharajas of the Princely States who gave all rendered help to the British government to suppress this Movement. We have also described the growth and development of the Namdharis after the demise of Baba Ram Singh.

These loyalists played a remarkable role against the Namdhari movement. By this work it has been making an intensive study of the social cultural life of the loyalist sections of British. The various aspects of society such as social life and manners, customs, ceremonies, religious beliefs and education have been described. First our chapter has described the social and cultural background of the priests of the religious Gurudwaras. According to Swarn Singh Virk that “During the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Sing *Jagirs* were allotted for the maintenance of gurudwaras. But new arrangements were made during the British rule. These Jagis made permanent on the name of *Mahants* and priests. The British government took over the responsibility of appointing *Mahants* and *Sarbrah*.” The *Mahants* and the *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple had a great place in society. After the annexation of Punjab (1849), the religious centres of the Punjab were indirectly under the control of the British government. The British regime clearly understood the importance of the Gurudwaras. At first, whatever efforts were done by the Britishers, but their direct or indirect aim was to handover the control of Gurudwaras in the hands of people who would not think of the rights of the Sikhs but to work with loyalty for the British government. So indirectly British were controlling the management of the Gurdwaras. It had been done through the priests and the *Mahants*. The atmosphere was turbulent in Lahore *Darbar* and it also affected the priests and *Mahants* of the Gurudwaras. Due to these reasons many evils got started in the Gurudwaras and it continued towards the British Raj. Britishers did not want to improve the Gurudwaras. They were happy while giving the control of religious places in the hands of the priests and *Mahants*. They were treating them as their personal asset. Whereas *Jagirdari* was helpful for the British regime, on the other hand *Mahants* were very beneficial to them. On many occasions the British government used them for their own interests or means. It has been made an effort to highlight the condition of main Gurdwara Amritsar, Taran Taran, Gurdwara Babe de Ber and Nankana Sahib. We tried to highlight the character

of *Mahant* Ganda Singh of Babe de Ber, because he was not a good person. Also we highlight the character of Nushera Nangal's famous honorary magistrate named Arur Singh, the enemy of Sikhs, the *Sarbrah* of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib as it was unbearable thing for the Sikhs. After the eviction of the *Sarbrah* of Babe di Ber and Ganda Singh, the government had made *Patit* Sikh Arur Singh the *Sarbrah* of Shri Darbar Sahib. Along with *Darbar Sahib*, the Gurudwara Shri Tarn Taran Sahib was also under Arur Singh. Because of the debauchery and decline in the status of the Gurudwaras, the Sikhs were already angry and they were making tireless efforts in maintaining *Panthak* management. In opposed to it, the priests and *Sarbrahs* were making complaints to the government. This fact makes it clear that the priests had so much faith in the government that it would help them. The result of it was that during the time period when Arur Singh was the *sarbrah*, the environment of Darbar Sahib declined badly. On one side, the loot of the *granthis* and the priests was continued. The atmosphere of Tarn Taran and Amritsar became very bad under the control of Arur Singh. On the other side of it, there was no report of the treasure. He had neither written the accounts nor gave it. He did not give anything while leaving also. He was appointed by the government. So it was the responsibility of the government that he would answer the *Panth* accounts, and if he did not answer that, the government might answer. At the time of Arur Singh, the priest of Shri Darbar Sahib, by getting angry (frustrated) from the Sikhs who were talking about the improvement, said that, "I will serve tobacco in the *kada prashad*." The priest of Tarn Taran Sahib was saying that, "like the shops of the people this Darbar Sahib is also our shop." In arrogance, the son of one priest had said that, "we would insult the women who come to the Darbar Sahib, if someone need that they could send them there, if others feel shame in that do not send them." Pickpockets were there at the time of *parkarma* in Shri Darbar Sahib, astrologers had look over the hands. The shops were installed of the things of decoration. Scoundrels fixed the time for meeting girls. They made visits in the morning and in the evening. At the occasion of *Masaya*, *Vasakhi*, and *Diwali* different sort of corruption was seen. The priests themselves stole the money from the donation. The condition of Shri Darbar Sahib and Shri Akal Takhat Sahib was declined. In April, 1919, at the day of *vaisakhi* after attacking a number of people in the Jallianwala Bagh with the guns, General Dyer was rewarded for it at Shri Akal Takhat sahib it broke the patience in the Sikhs. Sikhs started passing decisions against the *sarbrah* and the priests in the city and near villages. One

diwaan was established in front of Akal Takhat against the careless behaviour of the *sarbrah* and the priests. The Speeches were given against the priests, the *sarbrah* and deputy commissioner in the *diwaan*. The resignation of the *sarbrah* was demanded in the full *diwaan*. By noticing the helplessness of the situation, the *sarbrah* Arur Singh himself came to the *diwaan* while wearing cloth around his neck he apologized and announced his resignation from the position of *sarbrah*.

In this work it has been made an attempt to describe the barbaric mascara of Gurdwara Nankana Sahib. Nankana Sahib was then under the control of *Mahant* Nrain Dass, who was a person of very bad and corrupt character. The worst thing was that prostitutes were called in Lahore in August 1917. They danced at Nankana Sahib and they sang dirty songs. The Sikhs were enraged when they came to know about it. Newspapers also condemned this offense of the Nankana *mahant*. It was not enough because Nankana Sahib had become the place of adultery and unholiness. A retired (E.A.C) officer of *Sindh* came with his daughter to visit a Gurudwara in 1918. He was given shelter in the Gurudwara at night. At one side there was evening prayer of *Rehraas* and on the other side a priest was raping a thirteen years old girl. *Mahant* was told to punish the priest and to expel him from the Gurudwara but the *Mahant* did not to consider about this issue. In the same year, six women from Jaranwala (Layalpul) on the day of *Poornmashi* to come to visit and worship Nankana Sahib and they stayed in the Gurudwara at night. At night, they were also raped by these priests. Every priest was appointed by the British government and he was answerable only to the British officers. The condition of Nankana Sahib was very miserable because no woman was safe at the Gurudwara. These are only few samples of the sins of these immoral priests. They had good relation with Government. So the *Mahant* stood against Sikhs instead of doing reforms. He started thinking as if the Gurudwara was his own property. He became a puppet of the British Government in order to show his loyalty. He started thinking that there was no one to expel him from Gurudwaras till the British Government was in favour of him. Therefore he did not care about Sikhs and Sikh communities who tried to improve condition of Gurudwara. The biggest things were that the unholy *Mahants* were preparing for a long time to kill Sikhs and Government already knew about it. Punjab proper was captured by the British in 1849. A *Granthi* (a person of Sikh Religion who is a reader of the Guru Granth Sahib, a holy book in Sikhism) named Hari Singh had spoiled the atmosphere of Gurudwara

Dumalla Sahib in Lahore. He did not allow passengers to live in Gurudwara. He gave living rooms to butchers and meat sellers. He did not serve even as a *Granthi*, He did not know the *Japji Sahib* and *Rehraas Sahib*. Gurudwara was not hygienic. People were disappointed. In this work all these things have been tried to describe. By the direct or indirect government interference, the priests and *Mahants* became the owners and along with it they had also become more corrupt and vicious. After the massacre of Nankana Sahib, Government was very strict towards Sikhs. Some *Mahants* denied the agreement that they would not work according to *Shiromani* Committee. *Mahant* Sundar Das also denied from his promises. *Mahant* Sundar Das's character was not good. He had relations with other women. One of them was Irri. When Irri grew up she went to the home of *Mahant* Sundar Das without marrying him. People of nearby villages did not like him. *Mahant* had relation with Jagdei also; the Sikhs of that area were strictly against him. A *Jatha* came to his home with the permission of Sardar Daan Singh running the Committee on January 31, 1921 so that he should be reformed. He agreed to all conditions in order to preserve his status of *Mahant* that he would work according to *Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak* Committee and he would marry to the lady who was in relation with him. He accepted, compromised and signed in front of other people. After that according to the ceremonies of Sikhism, he got married at Akal Takhat. He worked accordingly for some time but after that he became dishonest. Gurudwaras had become his personal property and he was opposed to the Committee The Committee separated him for that reason In this way, the Gurudwaras like Darbar Sahib Amritsar, Tarn Taran Sahib, Akal Takhat Sahib and many more holy religious institutions were captured by the corrupt and prideful *Mahants*. These were liberated through Gurudwara Reform Movement. Sikhs had to sacrifice their lives for this movement and they had to face many difficulties. After it these Gurudwaras were under *Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak* Committee which was formed with the object of controlling the Sikh Gurdwaras and religious institutions.

Other loyalist section, which was the Maharaja of the Princely States of the Punjab, these princely states were Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. In this work we have been tried to describe their life style, education, mode of entertainment, their marriage life etc. Maharajas of these states were bound with British government after the Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809. So they were always

ready to show their loyalty toward the British Empire. During the time period of the revolt of 1857, they were support the British Administration. All these States had helped the government during this hard time. The British government were honoured the Maharajas with different titles for their rendered support and help. These Maharajas were living very royal and comfortable life. They had built many buildings. Maharaja Narindra Singh of Patiala built *Moti Bagh Mahal* during his reign. In the heart of the place stood splendid large tank crossed by a hanging bridge famous as *Lachhman Jhula*. He built *Sheesh Mahal* and *Banasar Bagh* also. Raja Hira Singh developed the state of Nabha, built many houses and gardens. Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha state had built 'Hira Mahal' for his residence. It was then called 'Elgin House'. The Maharajas were fond of the hunting, playing cards, poker, cricket etc. All the Maharajas of the States were well educated. They had made many efforts to promote the education. Maharaja Mahinder Singh opened the Mahindera College in Patiala State. The college for girls was also opened in Patiala. Primary education and education for girls was made free in the State. The rulers had made many efforts for the social welfare work. They opened the school, colleges and hospitals for the peoples. They had constructed many road and canals in their states. Also they were religious minded rulers. They donated money for the Gurdwars and constructed many Gurdwaras in their own areas.

The kings of these states had all the qualities to govern their kingdoms, but they also had many habits that represented the other side of their lives. Their alcoholic and luxurious lives show their shortcomings. The rulers of Princely states had a little time which was taken up for attending shooting parties, playing cards, drinking Brandy, celebrating birthday of prince and princesses and other functions arranged for their pleasure. The rulers of the states were very fond of drinks and dances. Breakfast was served with a bottle of Champaign to Raja Ranbir Singh of Jind. The Wine of Nabha had acquired a great reputation and became a part of the Punjab folklore "*Nabha dhain band bottlen, tainu peen gey nasiban wale*". The Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala and his women in herm often used wine. *Leela Bhawan* in Patiala was built by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of the State for his amusement and relaxation. A special room in it, called the '*Love-Chamber*' was reserved for the personal use of the Maharaja only. The birth of son in a rich Family was celebrated as there were great rejoicing. The whole empire, celebrated with rejoicing the birth of a prince.

Birthday ceremony was performed every year on the birthday of the Maharajas the Maharanis and prince and princess, banquets were held and quality of food and wine on such an occasion was exquisitely. Maharajas of the States lots of reforms were made for the development of the society and lot of work for the administrations. There was much goodness, such as those who did so well for the good of the subjects. These kings were racing to receive the titles on the behalf of the British government and they themselves lived a very royal and comfortable life. At the same time, there were a lot of shortcomings, such as polygamy and drinking alcohol. They used to marry more than one and there were a lot of women in their harem. These loyalists gave full support to the British government to crush whatever movement was waged against the British Empire and they felt honourable to call itself son of the British government.

Baba Ram Singh wanted to end slavery and liberate the country, whereas they had become loyalists of the British and acted as weapon of the British Government against the Namdhari guru. Despite this opposition, Baba Ram Singh continued his work. He was able to attract thousands of followers with his great personality. The success was slowly approaching, but unfortunately the tragedies of Amritsar, Raikot and Malerkotla occurred. So our third chapter is Namdhari reaction toward the British Policy: their intervention in Amritsar and Malerkotla. Cow-killing was a major problem between the Hindus and Muslims. Cow-killing was prohibited in the near of religious places of the Hindus and Sikhs but that, as soon as the Punjab was annexed to the British dominions, this prohibition was removed on the principle set forth in the Governor-General proclamation of the 20th May, 1849, that "No one should be allowed to interfere with the practice by his neighbour and of customs, which that neighbour's religion either enjoins or permits". This policy was totally against the sentiments of the Hindus and Sikhs. Namdharis were famous for their love and respect for cow animals. British government was watching deeply all the activities of the Namdharis. They were tried to get appropriate chance to suppress this movement. Namdharis could not tolerate the cow-killing in the holy city of Amritsar. On the 15th June 1871 a group of Namdharis had made a murderous attack on the butchers in the slaughter-house. After the all inquiry was made four Namdharis were hanged. On the 15th July, 1871, one month after the murder of Amritsar butchers, the attack was made on the slaughter-house of Raikot. Two butchers were killed and seven injured there.

The Namdharis execution of the sentence of death on 15th August 1871, the three Kukas named Mustan Singh, Gurmukh Singh, and Mangal Singh was carried out at Raikot in morning at sunrise. About 200 spectators were assembled there then. Meanwhile, imprisonments and hangings did not make the Namdhari zealots to be subservient to the British Empire. On 11 January 1872, was held *Maghi Mela* at Bhaini Sahib. A group of about hundred Zealots Namdharis of the Patiala state who had gone to Bhaini Sahib to be present at the *Maghi Mela* held there a small gathering (at which probably five hundred persons assembled), had worked themselves in to a state of frenzy. They declared that they would be revenged for the death of Giani Singh who was hanged at Ludhiana in Amritsar and Raikot butcher's murders. Baba Ram Singh, the leader of Namdharis went up to these men and entreated of them not to create a disturbance; but they would not listen to him; and that Baba Ram Singh then came to the Deputy Inspector and reported to him that these men were up to mischief and that he had no control over them. Heera Singh and Lehna Singh of the Patiala State as leader of the frenzy Namdharis, on the afternoon of the 13th January, the group of Namdharis left Bhaini Sahib, they proceeded to Maludh. They reached Maludh as it became dark. On the night, about 7 p.m. a group of two hundred Namdharis attacked the residence of Sardar Badan Singh at Maludh. This zealot Namdharis were at Maludh but two were killed and four captured. The attack made on Maludh Fort was unsuccessful.

The next morning a larger force of Namdharis, proceeded to Malerkotla, capital of the Muslim State, about 30 miles south of Ludhiana. On the morning of the 15th January 1872 these precautions were discontinued, and the Namdhari group about 7 A.M. made a sudden attack. The attack on Malerkotla, appeared to be very grave one. The attacks on Maludh and Malerkotla were done by the same people who had committed the murders at Amritsar and Raikot. The disturbance was got up by only two men, Heera Singh and Lehna Singh, residents of the Patiala State. One of the leaders Lehna Singh was captured at Rurr. Following were the results of Kuka actions at Maludh – two killed, four wounded ,at Malerkotla – seven killed, five captured, at Rurr sixty eight captured, twenty nine wounded. Mr. Cowan Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana, reached Malerkotla and forty nine of the captured Namdharis were blown away from canons but without trail in afternoon on the Parade Ground of the Malerkotla. Next day, Mr. Forsyth also reached Malerkotla. A mock trial was held to

decide the fate of the remaining prisoners. The barbaric action of Cowan was not only approved but he was also admired by T.D. Forsyth, Commissioner of Ambala Division. British Government was under the circumstances which were explained by T.D. Forsyth, the Commissioner of the Ambala who had issued warrants under the Regulation III. Of 1818 for the detention in custody in the Allahabad Jail of the Namdhari Guru Ram Singh, and his most influential *Subas*.

The British government got the opportunity which it was waiting for long time. The government made every effort to suppress the Namdhari movement. The Malerkotla incident ignited all the revenge powers of the government. Bhai Hira Singh and fellow Namdharis were martyred in such a brutal manner that the heart trembles in terror. Not only the Indian writers, but also the people of British government wrote a lot about this. Mr. Edward Thomson gives the reference of a famous book, "Colton India and Home Memories" in his book "The Other Side of the Medal" and writes: "On January 14, 1872, almost one hundred crazy Sikhs attacked Malerkotla, a city in Punjab. A fierce battle was fought in which great damage was done to both sides. In the end, nearly sixty six Sikhs, twenty two of whom were wounded went to Patiala to hide themselves, where they were taken under siege. That night they were kept locked in the fort of Sherpur. With that defeat, the Kuka revolt in Punjab ended." Mr Cowan, who was deputy commissioner of Ludhiana in those days, wrote to state employees on January 16: "I am sending the prisoners to Malerkotla." The same evening, after reaching Malerkotla, he sent a report to his fellow officer, the commissioner of that area, saying: "Almost all the rebels have been found and erased. Now there is peace in all the areas." He also wrote that "some of the rebel Kukas should be blown with canons." Mr Forsyth, Commissioner Ambala wrote in response to his report in the afternoon of January 17. "The detainees should be kept in the Sherpur Fort and kept their till special troops are sent to Ludhiana to bring them back."

Mr Cowan writes, "I forgot this written order after putting the letter in pocket as if it had not come and kept waiting for the prisoners. At around 4 o'clock rebel Kukas were brought to Malerkotla. He ordered to blow them with cannons without waiting for an order from the court. These unfortunate Kukas were sixty six in number and were divided into batches of six each to be blown. At 7 pm, when a group of six prisoners had already been tied with guns, Mr Forsyth's order reached that the

prisoners should be sent to Ludhiana as soon as possible so that the litigation of rebellion can be tried against them. Mr. Cowan writes, "After holding this order, the paper was handed over to Mr. Perkins and it was written to the commissioner that after having been tied to the cannons, it is impossible to remove the death sentence of rebel prisoners because such a decision would have a profound effect on our people." Mr Tomson writes that Mr Forsyth repeatedly emphasized the assertion that it is important for the rebels to be produced before the court before being punished. On January 17, I wrote a letter to the government expressing my feeling that I am present at the spot and therefore the culprits will be punished according to the law. There is no need to take special steps at this time, so there is a fear that the suppressed enthusiasm will break out again." On the one hand, he sends a letter to the government, but on the other hand, when Mr. Cowan sends his bravery report to him, Mr. Forsyth gives Mr. Crown a salute. "I commend you for the action you undertook." He sent letter to applaud him but he himself reached Malerkotla for praise of the verdict and ordered the remaining sixteen prisoners to be fired with guns. As the government had cleverly taken some *Zamindars* and *Mahants* under its influence, even at so much insolence no one took the courage to oppose the acts of government. While the British Government removed Mr Cowan from his job to express their hatred for this act, Maharaja Mohindra Singh of Patiala praised him greatly. After that the Viceroy ordered that Mr Cowan be removed from office, but in case of Mr Forsyth, transferring him was considered fit instead of dismissal and shortly after he was sent to Jharkhand, where he was given the title of Sir Knight for his services. Whereas the government did all this to conceal this incident, the advice of Sikh Maharaja of Patiala to the government shows that maharajas and priests not only covered the actions of Mr. Cowan and Forsyth, but also supported them. Of course, if their sympathies were with martyrs, such an incident would never have happened and they were given harsh punishments. Sir Henry Cotton who was in Punjab in those days, strongly criticised the government's policy in his book 'Colton India and Home Memories' and writes, "My personal opinion is that I have never seen such a traumatic event which is worse than hanging, in the whole time in my job." Sir Henry also writes that it is not only my suggestion, but there are many others who agree with me and think that the future will make it very clear that the punishment given by government to those who have shown such a spectacle of stone-heartedness is insignificant. To prove the actions of Mr Cowan wrong, Mr. Forstyh's own opinion

was "As Commissioner and Superintendent of States of India, only I was authorized to execute or release the convicts, not Cowan. I had sent a clear order to Cowan from Ludhiana that he should only legally sue the convicts and not sentence them until I arrive to Malerkotla. But Mr. Cowan not only refused to obey my command by taking the law into his own hands, but ordered his soldiers to blow the culprits with guns." Surprisingly, on the one hand, he argues over Mr. Cowan's authority and writes that he did not have the authority to do so, but on the other hand, by giving this opinion, takes all the responsibility of Cowan: "When I received the news of the incident from Mr. Cowan, I thought it appropriate to take all responsibility for that legal protest, and immediately sent him a written statement confirming the action he had taken in that situation. In "Autobiography and Reminiscences of Sir Douglas", Mr. Tomson states his opinion about the incident: "The tragedy of Malerkotla is one of the special events in the favour of which the Anglo-Indian newspapers wrote detailed articles but despite that, the Indian government had to bow down before the public and admit that his officers could make the mistakes too. Moreover, after 14 years the government wholeheartedly acknowledged the fact that blowing human beings with cannons was a pesky action."

Mr. Tomson also writes that, "It is the policy of this government which was liked by the employees of Punjab Government." The above news stories are those which were written by British government officials themselves about the Malerkotla massacre. The event of the Malerkotla is a tremendous example of the true sacrifice and spirit of Sikhism created by Baba Ram Singh. The marvellous bravery showed by martyrs while they were blown with cannons is not mentioned by the British in their reports, but our Namdhari historians say that it is absolutely wrong that the Namdhari martyrs were tied with guns. Namdhari scholar Suba Surinder Kaur Kharal told in her interview that "they did not tie with guns". Those martyrs considered that death as insult and had told the British government not to tie them with guns. They bravely stood in front of the cannons to die.

When Baba Ram Singh's heart was creating ideas of peace and rights for the Sikhs, fear of English power had grown in the hearts of the people after the rebellion of 1857. The idea of liberating the country could not be born under any circumstances. The kings, Maharajas, *Zamindars* and priests of religious shrines had become puppets of the government. Whenever anybody tried to campaign against the

government, they would all come to the government's loyalty and put all their might to suppress it. In this work we have been described the statements of *Lambardars* and *Zamindars* and about *Mahants*, *Pujaris* and *Sarbrah* of Golden Temple and their given information to British about Namdharis activities in different areas. The *Lamberdars*, *Zamindars* and *Chaunkidars* were significant links between the Government and people. They gave all information to Maharajas of the States and government officers about even any minor incident, which were happening their areas. These were the main agencies which were the loyalist to the British dominance and they were opposed to the Namdhari movement. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari activities and often harassed and humiliated them. These selfish people were enjoying special concession as a reward of their loyal services like great *Khillats* and *Jagirs* from British Indian administration. It has made an attempt to describe all the Statements of these *Lamberdars*, *Zamindars* and *Chaunkidars* which were given by these loyalists to the government officers. These statements were given during the time period of Khotte congregation. It was here that Baba Ram Singh had started a new Sikh marriage ceremony.

In the beginning, when Namdhari movement, not directly were they developing then opposed it. However, the rich people of Punjab and priests were asked to openly oppose the Namdhari movement. The British government divided the Sikhs on the basis of the policy of divide and rule. The Akali and Namdhari were separated from each other. It was the trick of the British government. The Akali supported the British government because they did not want the British government to be against him. All famous priests of Gurudwaras issued a fatwa (a legal pronouncement, by the British) that Kukas were an austere sect within Sikhism so they were not Sikhs and their God believes in Muslim *Kalam*. Because Namdhari Sikhs believe that Dohra “*Agya bhai akal ki tabhe chalaeyeo panth, sbhh sikhian ko hukam hain guru maneyo granth*” which is written in guru Granth Sahib. These were written in 1920, completed on 1923 and this is considered to be a work of 1925. It was written under the influence of British government. Parlahad Singh wrote it first and then Giani Gian Singh wrote it again. Baba Ram Singh started a new ceremony of *Anand Karaj* (that is the Sikh marriage ceremony). Namdhari follower Surjit Singh told in his interview that “In Sikhism marriages is done in the front of Guru Granth Sahib, but in the Namdhari sect the marriages done around of *Agni Kund (Havan)*. In

Namdhari sect performed marriages around of *Haven* and this ceremony is called the *Vedi* ceremony. Because the old ceremonies done according to the ritual of the *Vedi*. The Namdhari Sikhs believes that the marriages of the Sikh gurus were performed according to the ritual of *Vedi*. That is way they followers the *Vedi* ceremony.” The Namdhari historian Swarn Singh Virk said in his interview that all rituals and life inspections of Namdhari Sikhs are based on *Shri Guru Granth sahib*, *Dasam Granth* and *Prem Sumarg* etc. but Namdharis have also incorporated some orthodox elements in them such as *Haven* .Namdharis get up early in the morning, take a Bath and wear white cloth and go to work after their daily routine of *nitname*. The biggest difference between Namdhari Sikhs and Sikhs is to believe in the incarnate guru. According to this ceremony, *Kudmai - Saka thaka*’ and the ceremony of *‘Milni’ ‘Muklava’* is very simple and economical, the ceremony of *‘Anand Karaj’* had just in 1.25 rupee and taking or giving of dowry was also prohibited. It was a revolutionary step in a custom bound social set-up. The ceremony of *‘Anand Karaj* was inaugurated for the first time in village Khotte district Ferozepur now Faridkot on June 3, 1863. That is why hundreds of people and Namdhari *Singhs* from here and there reached to see the ceremony of *Anand Karaj*. It was an important incident in which there was a group marriage with *Anand Karaj* ceremony, without dowry and inter caste marriage. It was according to ceremonies of true Sikhism. Sikhs expressed feeling of gratitude for this *Anand* ceremony. But Brahmins and priests threatened, If this ceremony would continue their shop-keeping had closed due to this simple ceremony initiated by Baba Ram Singh. That was why they thought that Namdharis were against Sikh religion. So, Brahmins and priests played an important role to destroy Namdhari Movement. It was written in the reports of Brahmins and watchman of Khotte village that “for two or three days, Ram Singh, with four hundred or five hundred followers had assembled at this village, and was behaving in a very extraordinary manner.” It was ordered that Baba Ram Singh should not go to any district. Neither Namdharis were allowed for *diwan* (a religious event or gathering). Baba Ram Singh was under surveillance and he was sent to Bhaini Sahib. British officers of Punjab lessened the restrictions put on Guru Ram Singh to go out of Bhaini in last days of the year 1866. During *‘HOLA Mahalla’*”, he asked to British government for gave permission to go to Anandpur Sahib. Mister Mc Andrew and Deputy Commissioner called on the greatest *Mahant* of Kesgarh Sahib named Hari Singh and talked to him. He strictly opposed the Visitation of Namdhari to Takhat Kesgarh Sahib. After the debate *Mahant* Hari Singh said that

Namdhari would not visit Anandpur without covering their heads and they should not do such thing that would be against Sikh religion. Baba Ram Singh with almost hundred Namdhari Singh reached at Takhat Kesgarh Sahib. When they were entering the Gurudwara, then a group of forty *Nihangs* (prestigious armed and Sikh order) came and tried to riot against Namdharis. Namdharis and Sikhs have one religion. Both read *Granth* (holy book) of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. But they were opponents. Government allowed Ram Singh to come on *Hola Mahalla* (Sikh festival). *Akalis, Nihang, Bedi, Sodhi, and Mahants* were opposed to Baba Ram Singh's visit to Anandpur Sahib. They had no intentions to let Namdharis enter the historic Gurudwara, Thus they put many conditions to let them visit. When Baba Ram Singh and his companions reached at Kesgarh Sahib then Baba Ram Singh donated twenty five rupees there. The priest accepted money. But he rejected his offering of '*Kdaah - Prasad Ardaas*' Baba Ji had requested Brahma Sing Namdhari for it. Namdharis were killed with cannons in 1871. At that time, Landowners, Riches, Bedis, Sodhis, and *Mahants* had reconciled or signed to work with British Government. They showed their feeling of annoyance against Namdharis. They demanded that Cowan and T.D. Forsyth should be forgiven for their sentence and should be brought out. Bedis and Sodhis of Anandpur said that the sentences given to Namdharis depended on justice. If they would not be punished then they could revolt at any other place. Five hundred people had been investigated about this matter.

This was a revolutionary step. When in 1872, Malerkotla incident was happened at that time also reported many statements against the Namdharis. Other group of loyalists was the priests of the religious centres. After March 1849 British Administration wanted cooperation with the Sikhs. The British were very much aware of the importance of the Golden Temple. The Sikhs became a community of the loyalists as loyalty to the British was well rewarded. The priests enjoyed *Jagirs* and some other official only the funds. It was virtually collaboration between the Sikhs and the British, and this collaboration provided a positive side to the British policy of control over the Golden Temple. The British government's purpose behind this was simple: they mentioned a positive relationship between the Sikhs and the British. The Administrator (*Sarbrah*) of *Darbar Sahib*, Amritsar was appointed by the government. Administrator (*Sarbrah*), in general, was the government man. On many occasions the British government used them for their own interests or means. They

were opposed to the Namdharis movement. Namdharis were the sect of the Sikhs. But even the primary authority of the Sikh religion namely the Akal Takhat did not accept them as Sikh. They did not consider them the Sikhs of the guru because of the some religious differences among them. Therefore, when the Namdhari movement began to propagate, the wise and cautious government became alert. The British government made the affluent people and priest's protest, instead of protesting on its own. Priests of all the Gurdwaras put forth the assertion that Kukas are not Sikhs and their Guru believes in the Muslim *Kalam*. The purpose of the British government was to not allow the Sikhs to assemble against the Sikhs. By using the Sikhs directly against the government, the government itself remained acquitted of Major difference was that Namdharis followed their own living Gurus. Which ritual continues till now a day. But Sikhs do believe in only *Shri Guru Granth Sahib* after Guru Gobind Singh. They were humiliated by the Namdharis when they Came *Darbar Sahib* and *Akal Takhat Sahib*. Priests of the Gurdwaras never gave permission to enter the Namdharis and never performed their *Ardas*. When the Namdharis were blown away by the cannons they had fully supported the British government.

The truth is that the government used this defensive method successfully with great skill. I am convinced that if the affluent, the kings, priests and *Zamindars* would understand the real motive and did not oppose the Namdhari movement, the position of the Sikh *Panth* would have been different today. On the one hand there was opposition and on the other hand, despite thousands of problems, the love for country and want do something. Baba Ram Singh made great efforts to bring the priests and religious leaders together, but the priest community had become a puppet in the hands of British government.

After the Anglo-Sikh treaty of 1809, cis-satluj States came under the protection of British Administration. In this work an attempt has been made to discuss the background and history of the princely States. British Government had always kept an eye on Namdharis activities or when they even went to any fair. The Kukas were punished with death from the cannon's mouth. There has been no order issued in the State and as this act of punishment was more suitable for setting example to others. So in this incident all Native States were sided with the British. In this work it has been tried to highlight the role of all the princely states namely Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Kapurthala, Faridkot which were under the protection of British

Government. The States had signed the treaty and were under the Protection of British. According to proclamation, the Rajas of the States always sought cooperation with British and gave or rendered help in any bad situations. All Chiefs gave full support if any disturbance or revolt occurred in their States. So Chiefs of the all States were in full support in suppressing the Kuka Movement. They were helpful with Cavalry, Infantry and arms. Maharaja Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla gave all possible help to capture the Kuka Prisoners. This Incident happened in parade ground of Malerkotla. All Native officers were present there when the Kukas were blown away. It had also been described by the letters of Maharaja Patiala, which was written by him to the British. In his letter he supported the barbaric incident. Letters of thanks were sent to all Native Chiefs for the rendered help in that whole case. This chapter also deals with the involvement and rendered help of other princely States. British Government had distributed the rewards to Native Chiefs. Namdhari Sect was continued under the leadership of Baba Hari Singh, he was a brother of Baba Ram Singh. Many restrictions were imposed on Namdhari Sect for many years. Police guards were appointed on the Gate of Bhaini Sahib. No one was entered or out without the Permission of British. During the total history of this movement Chiefs of Native States had played a great role. Every Namdhari was ready for the restoration of Sikh power and Baba Ram Singh was working really hard to break the chains of slavery of the country. History has testified that even kings of other nations were sought to ruin the British Empire. The contact with King of Nepal by Kuka Regiment in Kashmir and letters from Russian king are the proof of this. From the very beginning of human history, there have always been the clashes and hatred between eternal and temporal thinking. That is why the kings of the princely states hated Baba Ram Singh and the Namdhari movement. The kings of these states felt proud that they had sent the canons that killed the Namdharis. They sincerely honoured their loyalty to the British Government. Maharaja Mahindra Singh of Patiala made every effort to prove that the Namdhari movement was a misguided movement and he justified the action taken by the government officials.

When the Namdhari movement is seen in context of the present state of Punjab, then there is no doubt that the British gave great importance to the Rajas, Maharajas and *Jagirdars* to use them to suppress Namdhari movement, with the policy of divide and rule. The first letter used to suppress the freedom movement was

written by Maharaja Patiala to the Secretary of the Punjab Government on 15 February 1872. Maharaja Patiala wrote his thoughts on the Namdhari movement and warned the British government that if the government do not act strictly, the uprising would spread like the 1857 uprising. The letter also reveals that the Namdhari movement was not only against the cow slaughterers, but also a strong rebellion against strong British government as it was hidden behind religious sentiment. As one of the causes of the 1857 uprising were cartridges of cow fat, these cartridges enclosed in cow fat were opened by mouth, which led to the rebellion by Mangal Pandey. The Mughal Emperor also participated in the rebellion aggressively in the spirit of these emotions. The uprising had in one way taken away the roots of the English government. But in this uprising, the Sikh kings increasingly helped the British government, with which India became enslaved again. It was the treachery of these states that played a part in suppressing the Namdhari movement. The Namdhari rebellion could once again become a challenge to the British Empire by gathering all of India, if Namdharis were not suppressed with the help of kings. Because in the name of cow protection, the whole of India could come together for a big revolt. Namdhari movement holds an important place in the list of freedom movements which challenged British Empire. The movement became prominent on the day of *Vaisakhi* in 1857, but the British Government became suspected when Mr. Macnabb, Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot, wrote to the Governor of Punjab on 5 April 1863: "A Sikh named Ram Singh is visiting the Sialkot district. He has thousands of servants; he drills his followers with a stick instead of a gun and does not obey the rule of any ruler." The movement came into existence at a time when the cultural and political structure of Punjab had been damaged completely and it had accepted slavery. The Sikhs had forgotten the teachings of their gurus; and they had become the guardians of British Empire instead of fighting against slavery and oppression. The Sikh kingdom was overthrown in 1845-49. British diplomacy occupied Punjab and swords were seized from the Sikhs, which disheartened Sikh *Sardars*. Maharaj Singh, along with his valiant comrades the refused to be enslaved and fought till the last breath. Then the first rebellion for freedom began. There was a wonderful opportunity to take the revenge of wrongdoings of British, but this opportunity could not be used. The leadership was in the hands of kings and feudal lords. They loved their self-interest, not freedom of country. The loyalists of this government rejected all the offers to join the rebellion and supported British, and forced India into the

chains of slavery. After the rebellion, the British officers became more cautious. They mobilized all necessary resources to strengthen their kingdom. Army, police, courts and jails were spread in India. That was it. The C.I.D. Department was made more powerful. In Punjab, the rule of law such as curfew and martial law was established. The letters which were being sent or received were opened and read. It was also announced that the government would not interfere in any religion. These were the circumstances when Baba Ram Singh brought his message to Punjab. Baba Ram Singh ji had been a part of the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He knew the internal situation of the Sikh state. He also saw the discipline and power of the organization. It is for this reason that Baba Ram Singh soon established the Namdharis into a strong organization and discipline. British education and history was much ahead of us. They were well aware that any movement first arises religiously and later becomes political. Therefore, British government observed every movement, be it religious or cultural. It also received reports of fraudulent acts and acted against it, even if there was little doubt. It used every way to crush that movement. Baba Ram Singh appointed states to unite Punjab and developed a policy of self-reliance. The British government did not want any organization to be formed in Punjab. But in front of their eyes Baba Ram Singh's states began to gather people. In two or three years, Lakhs of Namdharis got together. The British government began to see Namdhari states and Sikhs as a great danger to their Empire. The strategy of self-reliance could not be dismissed by the British government in any way. The order for the Namdharis was to wear home-made clothes, boycott British goods, settle their disputes in *Panchayats*, do not go to court, do not send their children to public schools, boycott government post offices. This program of self-reliance was a challenge for the English state. The policy announced that Namdhari Sikhs could live without the British slavery system. The postal arrangements meant that the government should not become familiar with their secret activities. It was an open arrangement not to cooperate with the British government, which Mahatma Gandhi went on to pursue. Therefore, the rulers viewed the works of Namdharis as a parallel government against their own government and treated them as rebels. The British government was dreaming of maintaining its rule in India forever. British spies used to report even small things of the Punjabi people. The secret reports of British officers make it clear that "this movement is political and not religious." Baba Ram Singh is the leader of an organization which is the enemy of the British Raj, in the hope of reviving the *Khalsa*

state. The purpose of the British rulers at this time was not merely to root out the Namdhari movement, but also that no further anti-government movement could emerge in Punjab. Malerkotla massacre is that page of Namdhari history which was written with the blood of martyrs who were martyred with the aim of protecting the country's independence and cow slaughter. This massacre, in fact, is the backbone of history of Namdharis. There is no denying if wealthy people of such community, *Zamindars*, *Mahants* of various shrines and Gurudwaras had not supported British in the bloody drama played for the freedom of the country; the history of Punjab would have been different today.

After the events of January 1872, the British government began to use its old weapon of 'divide and rule'. With which the Indian nation was divided into various part. A class stood on the side of British Empire, which included the kings of princely states, the *Jagirdars*, the *Mahants* of Gurudwaras and the government officers who were at all times exerting their power to suppress and enslave the general public. In the beginning of the 20th century, the Congress assembled Indian nation under one flag and under the leadership of single leader for a common goal. This fulfilled the dream of independence of Baba Ram Singh and his followers. Mahatma Gandhi ji adopted the whole policy from Baba Ram Singh ji and following his steps India got independence in 1947. Sikh word in the present is a symbol of Sikhism. According to Bhai Veer Singh, "The people, whose ten *Avatar* leaders are remembered by the name of Gurus, have Guru Granth Sahib as their religious book is called Sikhs." The word Namdhari is related to the adoption of the '*naam*', meaning the one who adopts '*naam mantra*' by the Guru. But in today's time it means the Namdhari sect. Namdhari is a community of Sikhs. Sikhs of this faith wear white clothes, round turban and keep a rosary of white wool. Maulavi Ghulam, Bheekh Jalandhari themselves went to Namdhari centre in Bhaini Sahib and looking at the environment there, wrote the words "I myself went to Bhaini and saw the method adopted by Kukas. It is nothing but a sect of the real Sikhs and they have re-established the Sikh religion. They follow the path of Guru Gobind Singh. Just like Nanak Shah, Ram Singh includes people from every community and caste to his sect." One of the solid ideologies of the Namdhari movement was to reconnect Sikhs directly with its spiritual heritage, to remove social evils, to adopt virtuous values, to create awareness about their own language and culture and to peacefully unite against British rulers. They kept their

movements a secret. The *Mahants*, priests and kings wrote to the government, if Ram Singh was not deported then there is a lot of danger to your and our states. All the Namdhari *Panth* was declared rebel. Other Sikh leaders also joined the government to take advantage of government facilities and started protesting against the Namdhari Sikhs.

Clearly sixth chapter deals with the development of the Namdhari Movement after the deportation of Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh. Namdhari movement went into the hands of his younger brother Baba Budh Singh who later became famous by the name of Baba Hari Singh. Many restrictions were imposed on the Namdharis. Namdharis were persecuted and suppressed in whole Punjab after that. They were kept confined to their own villages. They were not allowed to move out of the village without the permission of village *Chaunkidar* and *Namberdar*. They also had to register their incoming and outgoing movements. The prior permission from British officers was required before any event of marriage, death ceremony and *Kirtana*. It generally took long time to get the permission from British officials because of their strict behaviour towards Namdharis. Fairs, social and religious gatherings were completely banned. The lists of famous Namdharis of all districts were given to all the police stations, where all their movements were noted. They were also asked to submit bails according to section 504-505 of Criminal Procedure Code Act X. Many nationalist Namdharis were imprisoned, fined and their lands were seized in case of failure to deposit the bail amounts. The search was carried out in the *Dera* of Bhaini Sahib because it was the preaching centre of Namdhari movement. They looked into every nook and corner of *Dera* in order to find some inappropriate material but were not able to find anything. A permanent post of police was established outside the main gate of *Dera* which kept an eye on visitors. This post was removed from that place in 1923. All the restrictions were laid by government to curb the rise of any other rebellion by Namdharis. During this tough time period Baba Hari Singh commanded the followers. The followers used to come to Bhaini Sahib instead of the tight security of police for fifty years, but only five of them were allowed to enter. After some time, ten people used to get permission to visit Dera complex. Though government had banned Baba Hari Singh to go out, but his followers started visiting him in large numbers. Namdharis relations with foreign countries were already. Baba Hari Singh was called "the figure of peace". Baba Ji with his patient and peaceful nature

encouraged his fellow men and by using his wisdom, he kept his contacts with Russia, Kabul and Kashmir. He kept his contact with Baba Ram Singh in Burma in lieu of the movement against British through messengers from Russia. Kuka Gurbachan Singh and Bishan Singh was an important link between Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh and Baba Hari Singh. In this work it made an attempt to highlight the relation of Namdharis with Maharaja Dalip Singh. The relation of Maharaja Dalip Singh and Namdharis were mentioned in nineteenth century. At this time, both of them had a strong desire to liberate the country. The efforts of Namdhari leaders started long ago about this. Namdharis were very happy to see that he wanted to liberate the country. Namdharis started thinking that the freedom struggle will be easier with the arrival of Maharaja Dalip Singh. Because both had the same motive and both needed each other. In 1886, Maharaja Dalip Singh tried to return to his country from foreign land, but on October 30, 1889, the Sikh Sardars replied, "You cannot be helped; go to London and apologize." On the other hand, Namdhari Sikhs Gurcharan Singh and Bisan Singh were contacting Russia to help Maharaja Dalip Singh. The news of his activities used to arrive from time to time. They thought that now Dalip Singh and Bishan Singh will work together and soon India will be free. Many Namdharis were also saying that the soul of Baba Ram Singh is working in Maharaja Dalip Singh. When Dalip Singh came to India the atmosphere was like that at that time. Probably nothing like this would happen but they did not want any quarrel, so Dalip Singh was stopped on the way to Aden and after some time Dalip Singh went back from there.

Baba Hari Singh as well as the Namdharis survived through the toughest times with smiling faces. They developed the sect with immense wisdom and prudence. Baba Hari Singh handled his responsibility wholeheartedly for 34 years. Towards the end of his life, he had his choice in his eldest son Baba Pratap Singh to succeed him. He did several social reforms in his lifetime. He banned engagement (*kurmayi*) at the time of *Anand Karaj*, the tradition of dowry, making and serving various sweets or other eatables, large gatherings on wedding and other rituals completely. He encouraged the tradition of mass weddings on the occasion of fairs in the presence of Namdhari Guru. Baba Partap Singh made all possible efforts to encourage the use of Punjabi language. He set up the tradition that till the time, the girl and boy do not acquire the knowledge of *Gurmukhi*, their *Anand Karaj* ceremony should not take place. He wanted Punjabi to flourish the same way as the other languages were

developing. Baba Pratap Singh had a great predilection and affection towards Punjabi language. He organised a Punjabi Conference for the development of Punjabi language in Bhaini Sahib on 17-18 October. He published a weekly newspaper 'Satyug' for the growth and progress of Punjabi. Journalism was an apt medium to unfurl the imperialist nature of the British rule and to free the country from their clutches. With the efforts of Baba Pratap Singh, 'Satyug' newspaper was started from 26th May 1920. It was first published from Lahore and had to face opposition from British, but the publication of newspaper was never interrupted. All the movements of Namdharis became known to people through the newspaper. Many volumes of the newspaper were seized by government and security deposit was forfeited many times. Earlier, Satyug newspaper was supposed to get published from Ganga building in Lahore but after bail, it was published from Fazal building. Maharaj Gurdial Singh, Sant Nidhan Singh Aalam, Nirankar Singh Chetan and Sant Mangal Singh Farishta etc. preached many important essays through this newspaper. The Namdhari history was also spread by newspaper and contribution was given to freedom movement. British government was panicked by enthusiasm of Namdharis and the growing popularity of their newspaper, and they asked for bailing amount for newspaper. At the end, government seized the bail amount of Rs. 2000. In this way, publishing of Kuka newspaper ended after a period of 11 years and 6 months because of intolerance of the government. After Kuka newspaper, "*Mastana Samachar*" started which also came to an end soon. Government considered Satyug as most dangerous among all. Its access to soldiers and other government offices was strictly banned. On 13th October, 1934, '*Guru Nanak Sarb Sampardaye*' conference was held in Shri Bhaini Sahib, in which all sects of the religion participated. A representative conference of all sects of the Sikhs, who believe in Guru Nanak Dev and his teachings, was reached at Bhaini Sahib by Namdhari *Darbar*. Preparations were made on a large scale and no pain was spread by the conveners to make the conference a big success. Besides thousands of Namdharis, Akalis, Nirmalas, Udasis, Sewa Panthis, Sehajdharis, almost all different sects who traced their cult from the teachings of Shri Guru Granth Sahib responded to the invitation. Leading members of Chief khalsa Ddiwan, Siromani Akali Dal, Central Akali Dal, Udasin Mahan Madal, Nirmal Maha Mandal and other responsible bodies were speciality invited. Master Tara Singh, some other Akalis and Singh Sabha members laid down a condition that they will participate only if prayer in the name of ten gurus will be offered. The head of Namdhari sect, Baba Pratap Singh

replied that they too worship ten gurus and therefore their condition will be fulfilled. In this way, the prayers were offered and Master Tara Singh also participated. Namdharis accompanied the Akalis in many Akali agitations. They started participating in the Akali agitation with more enthusiasm. The most hard and difficult among all strikes was '*Jaito Morcha*' in which Akalis, Namdharis and Congress party jointly participated and offered arrests. This agitation was in favour of Maharaja of Nabha by Akalis, and Namdharis co-operated them greatly. In this work we had also described the Namdharis relations with Congress party. Namdharis gave fully support to Jawahar Lal Nehru's all schemes and agitations. The Namdharis *Darbar* accepts the Nehru Scheme with the reservation that complete independent be declared the ultimate goal of India. The *Darbar* also declares that no Scheme, which falls short of full self Government, can be acceptable to the Namdhari community. Baba Partap Singh co-operated with the Congress party from the side of Namdhari sect. Baba Ram Singh had introduced Indians to the unique method of fighting against the British rule i.e. non co-operation movement. Namdharis also started participating in the freedom struggle with Congress, by the inspiration of Baba Pratap Singh, because this method was adopted by Baba Ram Singh many years earlier so Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was very impressed by patriotism and sacrifices of Namdharis. The relations of Pandit Nehru and Namdharis were established in 1929. The annual session of All India Congress in 1929 was held in Lahore. During this Lahore session, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was elected as president of Congress party for the first time and the resolution for *Purna Swaraj* was passed. Namdhari workers made huge contribution to make the procession of Congress successful according to the will of their guru. Unlike all old presidents of the congress Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was riding a horse. The most striking features were the Sikh cavalry. Dressed in white spotless *Khaddhi* and wearing stylish turban, the Namdharis with their following beards presented a thrilling sight. In those days, 'Kuka Congress Party' was established with the efforts of Maharaja Nihal Singh and Chakravarthy, and by the permission granted by Satguru Pratap Singh. Its motive was to propagate the ideas of Congress party and to sacrifice their self for the sake of freedom movement. The State People's Conference was held on 17 February, 1939 in Ludhiana. During this conference, Baba Pratap Singh helped the party in all possible ways. After the conference, Pandit Nehru came to Bhaini Sahib along with other politicians and then showed pictures of Malerkotla and other massacres. Pandit Jawahar Lal said, "If the country understands the path of non co-

operation and sacrifice for the sake of the nation shown by Satguru Ram Singh, we can come into list of independent nations of the world. Nobody else can rule our country. The only way to understand this movement is that every Indian should become the part of their common Congress and strengthen the organisation by delegating their service to it. The peaceful movement for independence of the country is as new and powerful, as it was 70 years ago”.

Mr. K.M. Munshi, Ex Minister of Bombay Congress government, on 2 November 1941, visited Bhaini Sahib, the spiritual headquarters of Namdhari Sikhs. Mr. Munshi said, “He had been greatly impressed by what he had been greatly touched. He said to know the history of the Namdharis Sikhs. He was glad to hear that the Namdharis believed in the unity of India. They had many lessons to learn from the life of the Bhaini Sahib.” Namdhari sect always provided support and encouraged Congress party and other patriotic organizations which were fighting for welfare and independence at that time. Feeling the need for unity, when the Hindu Sikh issue started in the country, Baba Partap Singh Ji convened "*Hindu Sikh Milap Conference*" at Bhaini Sahib in 1943. At the holy land of Shri Bhaini Sahib, everyone pledged for "We are one" in the conference. In the same way, the soldiers of Subhash Chandra Bose's Azad Hind Force were found guilty in court martial. The hearing was held at Red Fort. Colonel Sehgal, Captain Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon and Captain Shah Nawaz were among those Punjabis who were acquitted. Major General Shah Nawaz, Col. Sehgal and Lt. Col. Dhillon of I.N.A. were invited by the Namdharis on 7 January 1946 at the Lahore residence of their head his holiness Guru Partap Singh. Maharaja Partap Singh who talked with the three I.N.A. officers gave them '*Saropas*'. They had no intention of taking part in political reign. They were and are even today, above the evil of communism. Namdharis continued their battle of freedom, social reforms and religious preaching against foreign rule starting from 1857. Namdharis neither thought of usurping property of Muslims, nor kept bad eye on their women even during the tragedy of partition in 1947. The feeling of unity never let Namdharis to be communal; the proof of this was seen during the partition. Namdharis kept themselves away from the scene of robberies and murders at that time. Baba Pratap Singh had strictly ordered that none of his Namdhari Sikhs would involve in killing other people, any robbery or usurping properties with force. Further none of them would disrespect women. Baba Pratap Singh bought about 500 square acres uninhibited barren land in

villages near Sirsa. This land was registered under his name in January 1947.

According to the secret *Hukamnama* from Rangoon, Baba Budh Singh, the younger brother of Baba Ram Singh, supported the Namdhari Sikhs in the form of Hari Singh. Dayal Singh Majithia passed a resolution on 22 March 1872, at a meeting of the patriarchs of the *Granthis*, *Mahants* and the Sikh *Sardars* in Amritsar that the Kukas destroyed their loyalty to the British in 1857 but they openly opposed the Namdharis. In 1914, the government demolished the wall of the historical Gurdwara Rakabganj in Delhi without any regard for the feelings of Sikhs. Namdhari leader Sant Mangal Singh Fatuhi Chak was the first to raise voice against it. Bhai Randhir Singh, Sardul Singh Kavishar and other Sikhs formed a front. Mangal Singh was also detained. When the entire Sikh community became united, the government had to rebuild the wall. Master Tara Singh said in a 1959 speech about the incident: "I had my first meeting with Baba Pratap Singh in 1914. When the wall of Rakabganj was demolished, then Akali movement was founded. I and Teja Singh Samundri were present in the service of Baba Ji and talked to him in detail. At that time Baba ji gathered all the *Sangat* at Lahore which was in great need and was unmatched." In 1914, a ship was carrying 347 passengers to Canada to earn a better living, but it was repatriated. When the matter became a case of Sikh oppression, the British government sought from its faithful Sikh Sardar to declare that they were not Sikhs. Baba Pratap Singh passed the resolution during a gathering in Hushiyarpur stating that the passengers were Sikhs and expressed sympathy with the families of martyrs. In the Akali *Morchas* too, the Namdhari Sikhs never opposed the Sikhs, but stood for them. Instead of the differences with Sikh religion, they helped Akalis during Nabha agitation. Namdharis also joined the Shaheedi Jathas from Akal Takht Amritsar to Jaito. According to Sohan Singh Josh, Dharam Singh Namdhari and Sant Buddha Singh Namdhari joined the Jaito Morcha. A resolution was passed in favour of the Sikhs participating in Namdhari Darbar Morcha. "The Namdhari Darbar is deeply saddened to hear the tragedy of Jaito and the Darbar sees the political agitation with utmost contempt." In 1920, the weekly *Satyug* of the Namdhari sect began to be published. Where the news and articles promoted Namdhari sect and supported freedom movement, they were also the symbols of association and solidarity with Sikh religion. It expressed sympathy with Baba Gurditt Singh and raised voice against the police outpost. Namdhari Sikhs were invited to join the Sikh League and a special

edition was published on Nankana Sahib Massacre. The Police outpost was lifted from Bhaini Sahib after 57 years on 12 May, 1923 due to increasing political activities. British government wanted to bring Namdharis on its side, but it could not be successful. During the *Guru Nanak Parkash Purab* in 1928 AD, *Guru Nanak Sarab Samprada* Conference was organized at Bhaini Sahib with the orders of renowned leaders Sant Nidhan Singh Alam and Baba Pratap Singh. In the time of Satguru Partap Singh, Sikh traditions, *gurmat* music and hymns from *Guru Granth Sahib* were popular. He organised the recitation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* for six lakhs times and of *Dasam Granth* ten thousand times. His goal for unity was: "Be in harmony with each other in accordance with *Guru Granth Sahib*. If the Akali Singhs are to perform the ceremonies, then the Namdharis should go to them and if the Namdharis have to do so, they too should come, sit together so that People will know that you are incidental." In fact, after the unsuccessful revolt of 1857, Namdhari movement was at the top in fighting against foreign rule. They kept this place with immense sacrifices and by bearing atrocities for 84 years i.e. from the fair in village Khotee on 3rd June, 1863 to 14 August, 1947 till the attainment of freedom. The motive and aim of Namdharis was to free their motherland. They had no intention of taking part in political reign. They were and are even today, above the evil of communism. Namdharis continued their battle of freedom, social reforms and religious preaching against foreign rule starting from 1857. Schools and colleges were opened in Bhaini Sahib, Jiwan Nagar, Delhi and Bangkok to respect mother tongue Punjabi. They promoted Literature by sponsoring Punjabi conferences. Namdharis neither thought of usurping property of Muslims, nor kept bad eye on their women during the tragedy of partition in 1947. They always spread the message: "*Manas ki jaat sabhey ekey pehchanbo*"

But now many changes had taken place in earlier time dowry was not taken in Namdhari sect. But now dowry is being taken due to change the time. There was no ceremony of engagement (Kurmai) before, but now days it is performed. Earlier not much was spent on marriages, but nowadays great functions are performed on weddings. There were many other sects in the Sikh religion, some of which clashed with *Khalsa Panth* to a great extent. But despite some differences, there is unity with the Namdhari sect. To this day, the chiefs of this sector any Namdhari have never uttered a derogatory word against the ten Gurus and Guru Granth Sahib. It has been

seen in Namdhari *Sangat* so far that if *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* is kept in the *Diwan* and *Kirtana* is being performed, then the master of the Namdhari throne would bow before *Guru Granth Sahib* and then sit in his place. The heads of other sects also wear turban and do not cut the beard as well as hair, but not all sects are Sikh. The Namdhari sect is a part of Sikhism and Sikhism is the biggest for them. So the Sikhs and Namdharis are not different, they have an intimate relationship.

**OPPOSITION TO THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT BY
THE BRITISH LOYALIST SECTIONS (1857-1947)**

ABSTRACT

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DR. NAZER SINGH

(Retired) Professor of History

Department of Distance Education

Punjabi University, Patiala

SUBMITTED BY:

Ramandeep Kaur

RAMANDEEP KAUR



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
PUNJABI UNIVERSITY, PATIALA**

2020

OPPOSITION TO THE NANDHSRI MOVEMENT BY THE BRITISH LOYALIST SECTIONS (1857-1947)

ABSTRACT

Namdhari revolt has an important place among the revolts against British Empire in the second half of 19th century. This movement has a glorious history as it is clear from political, social and religious perspectives. The present work “Opposition to the Namdhari Movement by the British Loyalist Sections (1857-1947)” is an attempt to highlight the role of the British loyalists section against the Namdhari or Kuka Movement. These loyalists were the *Mahants* and *Sarbrah* of the Sikh religious centres, the *Zamindars* and *Lamberdars* of the villages and the Maharajas of the princely States of the Punjab. These princely States were the Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. In this thesis work or research work we try to discuss the origin, growth and development of the Namdharis till the 1947.

Chapter first is obviously the introduction. By it we have described the origin of the Namdhari movement. Second chapter is British loyalists and their social and cultural identification. In this chapter we tried to discuss the background of loyalists sections. These loyalists played a remarkable role against the Namdhari movement. Third chapter is Namdhari reaction toward the British Policy: their intervention in Amritsar and Malerkotla. Forth chapter title is Role of the *Mahants*, *Sarbrah* of the Golden Temple, *Zamindar* and *Jagirdars* against the Namdhari Movement. It deals with the all these loyalists who had were played a significant role for crushing this movement. Fifth Chapter is Role of the Princely States: Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kapurthala. So Chiefs of the all States were in full support in suppressing the Kuka Movement. They were helpful with Cavalry, Infantry and arms. Maharaja Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Malerkotla gave all possible help to capture the Kuka Prisoners. Sixth chapter deals with the impact of opposition on the Namdhari Movement. Clearly this chapter deals with the development of the Namdhari Movement after the deportation of Namdhari leader Baba Ram Singh. Namdhari movement went into the hands of his younger brother Baba Hari Singh. Towards the end of his life, he had his choice in his eldest son Baba Pratap Singh to succeed him. He did several social reforms in his lifetime. The seventh chapter is ‘conclusion’ which summarizes the findings and interpretations of the research work.

PUBLICATIONS

It is to certify that Ramandeep Kaur has got two research papers published in the following reputed journals:

Paper titled **Opposition to the Namdhari Movement by the Zamidars, Zaildars and Lamberdars** Published in the proceeding of Punjab History Conference , 49th session, 17th-19th March 2017. ISBN: 9788130204734.

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Edited by

Ravinder Singh

Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science,
Nehru Memorial Govt. College, Mansa
Email : profravindermansa@gmail.com

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Emergence of the Namdharis and their Difficulties

Ramandeep Kaur*

1. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to highlight the issues and crisis of Namdhari movement. We will discuss the origin, growth and development of Namdharis. The founder of the Namdhari sect was Baba Balak Singh but this sect developed under the leadership of Baba Ram Singh and another Namdhari Gurus. We will also throw light on their beliefs and practices. Further we can discuss the issues between Namdhari sect and Sikhism and highlight the crisis of Namdharis. This paper is based on primary and secondary sources.

2. Emergence and Development of Namdharis

The Indian society in the first half of the nineteenth century was caste ridden, decadent and rigid. It followed certain practices which were not keeping with humanitarian feelings or values but were still being followed in the name of religion. As in case of many other movements that attracted Indian masses, support and the appalling social conditions in the contemporary Punjab had contributed towards the inception of the Namdhari movement. Namdhari sect was started by Baba Balak Singh son of one Dyal Singh of Hazro in district of Attock, now in Pakistan. He was a close and a devout follower of Bhagat Jawahar Mal. Jawahar Mal was a man given to deep meditation and a large number of people in search of spiritual solace visited him every day. He spent most of his time in reciting the Guru Granth Sahib. Before his death, Baba Balak Singh's followers were popularly known as *Abhyasi* and *Jagiasis*. But because in a state of ecstasy or removing their turbans from their heads, they would start shouting, they were called Kukas.

Baba Ram Singh was one of the three most prominent disciples of Baba Balak Singh and was chosen to succeed him. Baba Ram Singh was born on February 3rd, 1816, at Bhaini Araiyan, a village near Ludhiana region. He was the eldest son of Jassa Singh, a carpenter by profession, Ramgarhia by caste, and his mother was Sada Kaur who was a religious lady. His early education in Gurmakhi and Gurbani and the Granth Sahib was at Bhaini Sahib. When he was 20, he joined the Sikh army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and served for several years under Kanwar Nau Nihal Singh, the grandson of Ranjit Singh. In the army he met and became a disciple of Baba Balak Singh, the founder of the sect Namdhari, whose teaching made a deep impression on him? At the end of the first Anglo-Sikh war he resigned from the army and started his own spiritual life. The society of those days depicts a painful human situation. Almost all such evils against which Sikh Gurus struggled hard had crept in the social order of the times of Baba Ram Singh. People had either forgotten the spiritual injunctions of the Sikh Gurus. However, Baba Ram Singh was a staunch follower of Sikhism and had an unshakable faith in the spiritual leadership of Sikh Gurus. The extremely sensitive mind of Baba Ram Singh could not approve of new cultural influences which were harmful to their original culture.

Baba Ram Singh devised a plan to revive the glorious traditions of the *Khalsa* of Guru Gobind Singh's days. Baba began to convert the people in the fold of Sikhism and organized a *Sangat* on the *Baisakhi* day of twelfth, April, 1857 A.D., he baptized five Sikhs and also unfurled the flag of *Sant Khalsa* which was triangular in shape and white colour. Another revolutionary step taken by Baba Ram Singh was the administration of *Amrit* to the females. In June 1863 at

*Research Scholar, Punjabi University, Patiala

Siahar in Ludhiana region, he in a simple ceremony baptized the women to *Amrit*. He was a strong exponent of widow- marriage. Baba Ram Singh was against caste distinction among his followers. He preached against the Pardah system amongst women and was in favour of mixed congregation. He was openly hostile to the Sodhis, Bedis, Mahants, and Brahmans. He was against the idol-worship. A Namdhari *Rahitmama* pronounced very strict injunctions regarding the evil customs of female infanticide, early marriage and barter of daughters in marriage. He substituted the old marriage system by the *Anand* marriage in the presence of the Holy Guru Granth Sahib. He laid emphasis on memorizing the Gurbani of the *Nitnem*, such as *Japji*, *Jap Sahib*, *Rahiras*, *Shabad Hazare*, *Kirtan Sohila* and *Chandi-Path*. His followers multiplied in thousands. By 1863, the Government of Punjab was alarmed to know as if Ram Singh was organising the peasant and artisan classes for political purpose under the garb of religious propagation. As a result, Baba Ram Singh and his followers were placed under police surveillance in that year. After Baba Ram Singh, his brother Baba Hari Singh looked after the affairs of Namdharis. Baba Hari Singh was called Baba Budh Singh, but after Baba Ram Singh was exiled to Burma, he wrote from there that he has changed the name of Budh Singh to Hari Singh.

After Baba Hari Singh, Baba Partap Singh continued the practice of simple 'Anand Marriage' which was revived by Baba Ram Singh, by adding some new changes. Baba Partap Singh also founded a new Namdhari centre at Jiwan Nagar in Hissar district of Haryana state. In early 20th century, the Namdharis came in contact with Congress and supported its programme and policies against the British. After Baba Partap Singh Ji Baba Jagjit Singh was appointed as a successor of Namdharis. Jagjit Singh was one of the most important figures of 20th century India, a pilot, a poet, a singer, pioneer and so much more. His contribution in the field of music, social welfare, and agriculture (organic farming since 1862) will inspire people from time to time. They preached among Sikhs a feeling of love, religious observance, sense of others welfare and service to humanity. On 14th December 2012, Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji passed away. Now present guru of Namdharis is Thakur Uday Singh. Under Uday Singh, Namdhari sect continues his practices.

Sikhism was founded in the Punjab at the end of 15th century. Its member is known as Sikh. Sikhism was established by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and subsequently led by a succession of nine Gurus. Sikhs believe, they were inhabited by a single spirit upon the death of the tenth Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708), the spirit of the eternal guru transferred itself to the sacred scripture of Sikhism. Guru Granth Sahib (The Granth as the Guru) also known as the Adi Granth Sahib. This thereafter was regarded as the soul of guru. In the earliest century there were nearly 25 million Sikhs. Worldwide, the great majority of Sikhs living in the Indian state of Punjab.

3. Beliefs and Practices of Namdharis

Namdharis is an Indian religious group. They consider themselves a sect of Sikhism, but insist that the line of Sikh gurus did not end with Guru Gobind Singh, but continued through the Namdhari leaders. The Namdhari community does not have well-defined structure of beliefs and practices but Namdhari gurus could construct some of aspects of their *maryada*. They were to lead their day to day according to the early Sikh *Rehatnamas*. Their followers to take bath thrice daily, to earn livelihood by own efforts and work hard and eat food cooked only by the co-religionists. Namdhari should wakeup at about 3o'clock in the morning. They should take a complete bath daily, '*Purn Ishman*' washing from head to foot. Regarding the social aspects he stressed on performing their marriages according to *Anand maryada*. He prohibited using meat, tobacco and wine. Baba Ram Singh's firm beliefs was that such a man can be created only by the reading of Granth. He constantly emphasises the importance of the '*Gurbani*'. He said, in short '*Nam* and '*Bani*' are priceless treasures. Baba Ram Singh's teachings and message revolves around the tenth guru Gobind Singh and his '*Dasam Granth*'. The Namdharis are not accepted as Sikhs by the main Sikh population right from the start. The Namdharis do, however, consider

themselves as Sikhs but not Khalsa. They believe that guru Gobind Singh went in to seclusion after surviving the attempt on his life and passed the guruship on the human gurus to this day. Namdharis were founded by their guru Balak Singh (1747-1862) in the north- west Punjab. Baba Ram Singh never proclaimed himself to be guru but after his death his followers made him to in guru against the teachings of Sikhism/Guru Granth Sahib. The men are distinguished by their white "round" turban with their ears fully exposed. The more orthodox Kukas also wore attire which included very tight pants and long *kurtas*. In addition to the emphasis on reading and reciting name and *Bani* Baba Ram Singh revived the practice of performing *Akhand Path*, *Havan* and *Chandee Path*. *Chandi Di War* is a special religious practice among the Namdharis. Along with the recitation of hymns of Guru Granth Sahib the ceremony of 'havan' was performed. They have many non-Sikh traditions like the worshiping of agni.

4. Namdharis, Issues with Sikhism

The Namdharis are a self-disciplined communion of people who come under Sikhism. They consider themselves as conservative sections of Sikhs. But the primary authority of the Sikh religion the Akal Takht does not accept them as Sikhs. They did not consider him Sikh of the guru. Because:-

- He considered himself to be an incarnation of deity.
- At the time of initiation a person to in his sect, he whispered 'mantra' in his ear, which was against the Sikh customs.
- The initiated Kukas said, Born Guru at Hazro, he resides at Bhaini" where as the Sikhs believed that "Born Guru at Patna, he resides at Anandpur".
- Against the Sikh customs, the Kukas removed their turbans from their heads in Gurudwaras and spread their hair.
- Against the Sikh customs, the Kukas often got so much exhilarated and beyond self-control. They started behaving like Muslim Fakirs.
- They have many non-Sikh traditions like the worshiping of *havan* which is more similar to Hinduism than Sikhism.
- Namdharis believe that Guru Gobind Singh went into seclusion after surviving the attempt on his life and passed the Guru ship onto other human gurus to this day.

Also many historical quarters believe that Bhai Ram Singh never proclaimed himself to be guru but after his death emotional followers made him into guru against the teachings of Sikhism/Guru Granth Sahib. Therefore, the Kukas could not become Sikhs of the Gurus.

On 20th March 1867, Bhai Ram Singh went to Ananadpur Sahib with his followers but the Mahants of the Keshgarh Shib refused to do Ardas on his behalf. The Mahants told him that he differed in his beliefs. Namdhari leader Baba Partap Singh organised 'Svaa Lakh Path' in 15th April 1941 at Singh Sabha Gurudwara of Rawalpindi. Namdharis started Patra Path (page wise recitation). They did tear apart the leaves from the Granth Sahib to be recited separately. SGPC had warned the sect leader as far back as 1941 through a resolution asking them to desist from the practice of tearing apart leaves from the Guru Granth Sahib. The Namdharis at that time had assured that they would stop this Patra Path. The next issue created between Namdharis and Sikhism in the publication of book Purak Guru. The book published by Sarb Hind Namdhari Darbar, Bhaini Sahib. Which questions Sikh belief that the tenth Sikh Guru Gobind Singh passed on the guruship to Guru Granth Sahib and advocate that no book but only an individual can be guru? SGPC declared that Namdhari followers are not the Sikhs. The head of the sect to apologise for having publishing a controversial book that questions the status of holy Sikh book Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs also demanded immediate arrest of the author and publisher of the book. It was direct attack on the Sikh ideology and identity.

5. Issues in Namdhari Sect.

After the death of Baba Jagjit Singh Ji, (14th December 2012) there was confusion amongst the Namdhari Sangat. Who would be their next successor? Baba Jagjit Singh has not his own son. Thakur Udai Singh and Thakur Daleep Singh are the nephews of Baba Jagjit Singh. After the final rites and cremation of Baba Jagjit Singh it was announced that Thakur Udai Singh was installed the new guru of Namdhari Community. He occupied the seat in the presence of a large number of Namdharis at the Namdhari Darbar at Bhaini Sahib. Meanwhile, a press conference was held by members of international Namdhari Sangat. Where they declared that they would not accept anyone but Thakur Daleep Singh as the guru of Namdhari community is accepted. At the press conference that was addressed by Jaswinder Singh, Chairman of International Namdhari Sangat, Navtej Singh, President and other office members. It was claimed that Thakur Daleep Singh, elder brother of Udai Singh is to be his successor. H.S Hanspal, President Namdhari Darbar when asked about this issue said that Thakur Udai Singh is the successor of Satguru Jagjit Singh. At any rate, Thakur Daleep Singh rejected this and said he was not worthy of this position. He declared that the next Satguru would be Mata Chand Kaur. However, Mata Chand Kaur had announced in a press conference that her Choice for Satguru is Udai Singh.

Another crisis produced in Namdhari sect when, Mata Chand Kaur was shot dead at Bhaini Sahib, the sect headquarter near Ludhiana. Mata Chand Kaur was wife of sect head of Namdhari Baba Jagjit Singh. Mata Chand Kaur coming out of the Satguru Partap Academy after meeting children when two youths on a motorbike came and requested to touch her feet. After touching her feet, one of them opened fire and then they ran away. The murder has taken place at a time when there was a succession in the sect. After the death of Baba Jagjit Singh, Mata Ji announced of his nephews Thakur Udai Singh a successor to the Gaddi. However, his elder brother Daleep Singh, who runs a branch of the sect in Sirsa in Haryana, opposed this. But Mata Chand Kaur supported Uday Singh. The Namdhari supporters protested against her Nephew Thakur Daleep Singh and demanded his arrest. They took out a protest march raising slogans like "Daleep Singh nu giraftaar karo" (Arrest Daleep Singh).

6. Conclusion

So we can say that Namdhari Sikhs are easily recognized by their practices of wearing white clothing and turban. Their's is a life full of purity, piety, cleanliness. The Namdharis are a self-disciplined communion of people who come under Sikhism. They consider themselves as conservative section of Sikhs. But the primary authority of the Sikh religion the Akal Takht does not accept them as Sikh. It did not consider him Sikhs of the guru. Namdhari gurus could construct some of aspects of their maryada. Namdharis are not accepted as Sikhs by the main Sikh population right from the start. The Namdharis do, however, consider themselves as Sikhs but not Khalsa. They believe that guru Gobind Singh went into seclusion after surviving the attempt on his life and passed the guruship upon the human gurus up to this day. Namdharis were founded by their guru Balak Singh (1747-1862) in the north- west Punjab. Baba Ram Singh never proclaimed himself to be guru but after his death his followers made him into guru against the teaching of Sikhism/Guru Granth Sahib. Many crisis and issues aroused in Namdhari sect day by day. Main crisis are created on successor of Namdharis after the death of Guru Jagjit Singh Ji. The clash of succession was between the Thakur Udai Singh and Thakur Daleep Singh. Namdhari supporters announced the Thakur Udai Singh as leader of the sect. Another issue emerged on the murder of Mata Chand Kaur, wife of Baba Jagjit Singh. Namdhari supporters blamed Thakur Daleep Singh for murder of Mata Ji. They protested against Daleep Singh. We may say beyond doubt Namdharis remained successful to a great extent. In spite of all issues and crisis Namdharis established a true tradition of patriotism in the country. Namdhari history is the history of the

Sikhs. For them Sikhism is supreme. In the words of Baba Ram Singh, "Our Sikhism is Immortal". He further advised the Namdhari Sikhs not to indulge in arguments with others. Namdharis should lead their life according to Gurbani.

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OPPOSITION TO THE NAMDHARI MOVEMENT BY THE ZAMINDARS, ZAILDARS AND LAMBERDARS

*Ramandeep Kaur **

This research paper is an attempt to highlight the opposition of Namdhari movement by the Zamindars, Jagirdars, and Lamardars. These were the British loyalist sections which played a great role in suppressing this movement. This research paper is based on primary sources (Files, Confidential papers) and secondary sources. In this paper we shall discuss the statements of Lambardars and Zamindars and the information given by them to British about Namdharis' activities in different areas. These were the main agencies which were the loyalist to the British dominance and they opposed the Namdhari movement. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari activities and often harassed and humiliated them. These loyalists were enjoying special concession as a reward of their loyal services like great *Khillats* and Jagirs from British Government. This was due to British support for them through the Jagirs and some official funds for such sections. They stood by British because they wanted to save their material and social positions. British government had adopted the strategy to maintain their hegemony. For this purpose they resorted to suppression, class distinction and encouragement to their own loyalists by creating opposition against the new rebels. In fact the British adopted this policy towards the Namdhari Movement too.

When the British restructured the administration in Punjab after 1849, the services of the Chaudharis were almost totally dispensed. By the early 1860, however, it was becoming apparent that the British had by no means been completely successful in integrating the provincial and local system of government, and that there was therefore a need for some sort of linkage between the two systems that the Chaudharis had provided under Mughal and Sikh rule.¹ In 1861 the Lieutenant-Governor gave his approval to selected Zamindars who would be responsible for the suppression of crime in isolated rural areas. Within a few years, Honorary Police Chaudharis whose duties had gradually been widened to those of general intermediaries had come to be known officially, as Zaildars. In the mid 1860 these Zaildars were described as being the channel of communication, or the missing link between a mainly British provincial system of government and an entirely Punjabi local system of government. The British, desired to push their authority deeper into village society for such collaborated services. Finally, in 1872 the Punjab government decided to rationalise the Zaildari system. Their duty broadly was to act as representatives of Government. They were to communicate Government notices, reports, crimes, assist the Tahsildars, to keep an eye on the Patwaris and Lambardars.²

* Research Scholar, Department of History, Punjabi University, Patiala.

1 Andrew J. Major, *A thesis, Return to Empire: The Sikh and the British in the Punjab, 1839-1872*, The Australian National University, Canberra, December 1981, p.300.

2 *Ibid.*, p.302.

Sr.No.	Name	Authority	Village, Districts
1.	Arjun Singh	Lamberdar	Kot Bhawani Das
2.	Mahomad Baksh	Lamberdar	Batala
3.	Gulab	Lamberdar	Batala
4.	Jehan Khan	Zaildar	Ferozewala
5.	Jawahir Singh	Lamberdar	Soomed Bhai
6.	Rattan Singh	Lamberdar	Nehal Singh Wala
7.	Dharm Singh	Lamberdar	Belaspur
8.	Nrain Singh	Lamberdar	Machakey
9.	Buddh Singh	Lamberdar	Belaspur
10.	Yeajmul Singh	Lamberdar, Zaildar	Phillour
11.	Bhola Singh	Lamberdar	Sahnewal, Ludhiana
12.	Sukhu	Lamberdar	Bhaini Sahib
13.	Ghamanda	Lamberdar	Bhaini Sahib
14.	Partap Singh	Lamberdar	Jundiwala
15.	Nihal Singh	Lamberdar	Bholapure
16.	Daulat Ram	Lamberdar	Bhaini Sahib
17.	Bhugwan	Chowkidar	Bhaini Sahib
18.	Ahmed Khan	Raees	Talwandi, Ludhiana
19.	Shahbaz Khan	Lamberdar	Ludhiana
20.	Jouja Khan	Lamberdar	Ludhiana
21.	—	Lamberdar	Mouzah Rangwal

Namdhari movement had emphasized in the beginning to preserve spiritual tradition of Sikhism which had lost its earlier glory. The literary meaning of the word 'Namdhari' is the one who recites the name of God in his heart. But here it has got specific meaning related to particular beliefs and practices based on the teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. Further, Sikhs were aware of their martial heritage and political ascendancy. Namdhari movement was in fact originated by the initiative taken up by Bhai Balak Singh son of one Dyal Singh of Hazro in district of Attock now in Pakistan. Baba Ram Singh was one of the three most prominent disciples of Baba Balak Singh and was chosen to succeed him. Baba Ram Singh was born on February 3rd, 1816, at Bhaini Araiyan, a village near Ludhiana region³ Baba began to convert the people in the fold of Sikhism and organized a *Sangat* on the day Baisakhi of twelfth, April, 1857 A.D., he served baptism to five Sikhs and also unfurled the flag of *Sant Khalsa* which was triangular in shape and white in colour. Between 1863 and 1868 Baba Ram Singh transformed the Namdhari movement into a disciplined and well-organised sect. It made British to take action against him. The police took surveillance on the tours of Guru Ram Singh. The British took many actions when the government came to know that the Namdharis were struggling to bring back *Khalsa Raj* in Punjab and their existence was against the British rule. The British took the help of Sikh community in spying the activities of Namdharis. Baba Ram Singh's more excitable followers were responsible for a number of public disturbances. There was a spate of desecration of Hindu temples and Muslim tombs by Namdharis between 1866 and 1868.⁴ On 14 January 1872 a party

³ Karam Singh Historian, *Bahu Mulle Itihasak Lekh*, Singh Brothers Publication, Amritsar, 1991, p.255.

⁴ Andrew J. Major, *op.cit.*, p.317.

of more than 100 Namdharis launched an attack on the small town of Malodh in Ludhiana District. Next day they attacked the town of Malerkotla that was the capital of Muslim principality. After incident of Malerkotla in 1872, sixty six Namdharis were blown up by the canons. Further, the British sent in exile Guru Ram Singh and his prominent Namdharis. After the death of Baba Ram Singh it was under the command of Baba Hari Singh and Baba Partap Singh who had succeeded as his spiritual predecessors that the relations between Namdharis and the British continued to be mutually suspect and hostile. The activities of Namdharis were under the British surveillance particularly at Bhaini Sahib. Baba Partap Singh and his associates were not happy with the British and wished the removal of this police post as soon as possible.

These British loyalist sections played a significant role as an opposition of the Namdhari movement. When in the middle of January 1872 an outbreak of Namdharis' sect occurred in Ludhiana District, they gave full support to the British in capturing the Namdharis. Many Lamberdars and Zamindars gave all their information about Namdharis activities in their areas to the British. Lamberdar Arjun Singh and Lamberdar of village of Kot Bhawani Das gave information "There are 27 kukas in my village.⁵ The first kuka in my village was made by Guru Ram Singh." He also informed that Suba Brahma Singh came to his village three or four times. He came from Sealkot and had religious meetings in which he used to urge people to become Namdhari as the Guru Ram Singh reign would come. Lamberdar warned the suba Burma Singh and Namdharis if any disturbance occurred in his village, he would arrest them. Lamberdar Mahomd Baksh and Lamberdar Gulab son of Mahomd Sahib Lamberdar of Batala informed "There are three kukas in my village. None of suba stayed in my village. Brahma Singh and Jotha Singh subas used to pass through my village on their way from Sealkot district and they generally had 40 or 50 followers with them. When Guru Ram Singh passed from Sealkot, he was accompanied by a great crowd."⁶ Suba Brahma Singh and Jotha Singh were urging all persons to become kukas and telling them to pluck up and destroy the tobacco fields, knock down tombs and "samads". Jehan Khan Zaildar of Ferozewala told that numerous Kukas were at Chuck Hurdu where religious meetings took place. Suba made exertions to increase the number of kukas.

In Reports of R.H. Wall, Major, District Superintendent of Police, Ferozepur informed that Jowahir Singh, Lamberdar of Soomed Bhai, Rattan Singh, Lamberdar of Nehal Singh wala, Dhram Singh, Lamberdar of Belashpur, Nrain Singh, Lamberdar of Machakey, Buddh Singh, Lamberdar of Belaspur testified these informations.

Many Zaildars and Lamberdars of various villages and districts gave statements against the Namdharis who had attacked on Malodh and Malerkotla. In the incident of Malodh and Malerkotla 11 Namdhari subaas were arrested by police. Name of the subaas were Sahib Singh, Roor Singh, Lukha Singh, Kahan Singh, Burma Singh, Jowahir Singh, Mulluk Singh, Man Singh, Hukam Singh, Pahara Singh, Mangal Singh.⁷ Many Zaildars and Lamberdars gave statement to British against these Namdharis. Sardar Yeajmul Singh Lamberdar and Zaildar of thana station Phillour gave deposition that he knows most of the deported subas. He knew well Sooba Singh. He succeeded in making many people kukas at the village and he used also to visit fairs, he was always in trouble. In 1870 he was arrested in riot case as a ring leader. Bhola Singh was a son of Bughhel Singh, Lamberdar of Sahnehwal

5 File No. 499, *Confidential Kuka Movement Paper*, Report no. 49, E.C.Chard, District Superintendent of Police Gujrhwala, Ganda Singh Collection, Punjabi, University, Patiala, p.28.

6 *Ibid.*, p.28.

7 File No. 499, *Confidential Kuka Movement Paper*, Appendix C, Report by, C. Beedan, Magistrate of District Ludhiana, Ganda Singh Collection, Punjabi, University, Patiala, p.44.

district Ludhiana. He was jatt sikh aged 55. He gave information and deposition about 11 subas. He knew these men, by their names and appearances. They had been appointed by Baba Ram Singh to be subas or Lieutenants. Baba Ram Singh had intended ultimately to have 22 such followers. The duties imposed on these subas were to go about preaching kukaism and making converts. He informed that suba Mangal Singh was promised at Patiala. They have tried to be very hard to induce him and his village to turn kukas, firstly by promises and next by threats. The subas always described the British ruling power as the "*Dooshi*" (bitter enemies) and the kuka Guru as an incarnation of deity, specially sent to it. They openly told people that Baba Ram Singh and his kukas will soon rule the country. Baba Ram Singh used to hold regular *darbars*, at which his subas were invariably present. The subas used regularly to introduce new converts, who received Baba Ram Singh's blessings, and did "*Bhajjan*". After this followers used to ask in a little while when the *Khalsa Raj* will occur.⁸

All subas, except Mangal Singh were present at Bhaini Sahib on the 11th and 12th January at the Lohri festival. The whole ten of the subas at Bhaini Sahib were on mind and all without exception urged on Heera Singh and Lehna Singh to attack on Malodh. But doubtless Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh and Pahara Singh were most vehement in their exhortation. These were about 180 Mastanas in the Mela and 1000 or 1100 kukas. Lamberdar's deposition was that he was present at the Lohri Mela himself. He knows only one party starting for Malodh and Malerkotla. He heard Sahib Singh applaud Heera Singh's sentiments. His statement "I am fully aware that Raikot and Amritsar murders were the result of the orders of Ram Singh and his subas. Ram Singh's orders were that cow-killing was not to be permitted within the *Khalsa Raj*."⁹

The Lamberdar of Bhaini Sahib had deposed that he knew all the subas. He saw the whole of these at Bhaini on the 12th and 13th of January last. He had gone to the Maghi Mela as his village is close to Bhaini. Sukhu and Ghamanda Lamberdars of Bhaini saw these people there also. They are all bad character and their general business is to preach sedition and make converts to kukaism that the kuka raj is at hand. He saw all these subas except Mangal Singh and Rur Singh and another at the Maghi Mela. He heard that they were about to proceed to Malerkotla to fight. On 12th January at the Lohri Mela the nine subas consulted with Heera Singh and Lehna Singh and arranged that they should go first with a party to Malodh to get arms and then to Malerkotla and fight it. After that they were to attack Patiala, Nabha and lastly they were to attack Ambala. He heard from each of the subas's mouth, and it did happen various times and places that one day they would have the raj. Lamberdar gave the statement that "Of the 11 soobas I consider Lakha Singh, Khan Singh, Jowahir Singh and Pahara Singh the Worst. They all are dangerous and none ought to be released."¹⁰

Next information and deposition was of Partap Singh, Lamberdar of village Jundiwala taken by C. Beadon, Magistrate of Ludhiana on 19th April 1872. He knew four subas perfectly, Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh, Mangal Singh and Kahan Singh. He also knew the other subas by repute, that they were subas of Ram Singh and are kukas. At the Maghi Mela he was present. He saw Lakha Singh, Sahib Singh and Kahan Singh. He had often heard four subas acquaintance proclaimed that there would be a kuka raj, and those who had become kukas should be benefitted with Jagirs and lands. From these facts he was quite sure that they mean mischief (*Fussad*) He heard them saying that "there are many thousands of kukas, that Ram Singh is an *Avtar*, we shall conquer everything."¹¹ Lamberdar gave

8 *Ibid.*, p.44.

9 *Ibid.*, p.45.

10 *Ibid.*, p.46.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 48.

statement that "I am of the opinion that the present and future release of any of the subas would result in harm. These subas one and all are disturber of the public peace."¹²

Nihal Singh Lamberdar of Bholapure gave deposition to C. Beadan, Magistrate of Ludhiana, on 19th April 1872. He informed that he knew all the arrested subas. He was on the Mela in Bhaini. He saw whole of these subas at the Bhaini except Mangal Singh. These subas were ill-conducted men, who go about converting that if Jats become kukas, they will soon become the reigning power in the state. Lakha Singh and Sahib Singh had often said such words. He had heard seditious language used by one and all of the subas. Heera and Lehna Singh and others were arrested due to their involvement in attack on Malodh and Malerkotla. Nihal Singh gave deposition, "of the subas, I believe Mangal Singh to be the worst; next in degree are Sahib Singh and Lakha Singh." These were the faithful and favoured followers of Ram Singh. This happened to be a Lamberdar of village three or four kilometre from Bhaini Sahib. He often went and come back. This Mela is annual thing at Bhaini Sahib. The reason why he had never reported to the authorities, he said "I thought the Government knew as much about them."

The statement of Daulat Ram, Brahmin Lamberdar of Bhaini Sahib, taken by C. Beadan on 19th April, 1872 maintains that he knew eight or ten subas. These subas were generally preaching sedition. Their advice has been to all to turn kukas that those who did not, would suffer, because the kukas would reign in India. The party of *Mustanas* were leaving in Bhaini. They went off in three detachment; one at early morning of about 100 in number and other that evening, of similar number, and a third the next morning of 100. The leaders of the first gang were Heera Singh and Lehna Singh. Ram Singh himself remonstrated with Heera Singh and Lehna Singh on this occasion. Lamberdar Daulat Ram gave deposition that "Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh and Mangal Singh are the most dangerous of the subas, because they commit the more sedition but all are more or less to be feared as mischievous."¹³

The statement of Bhugwan, taken by Cecil Beadan, Magistrate of Ludhiana, on 19th April 1872 who was a Chowkidar of Bhaini, When the Maghi Mela at Bhaini was over, and people were beginning to disperse. He had occasion to go to well where Heera Singh and Lehna Singh were with the party of some 150 men. As their movents seemed suspicious he went and told everything of Surfraj Khan the Deputy Inspector of Police on duty. Thanedar went to Ram Singh who told that these were "*Mustanas*" that having eaten their meal they would probably disperse. Heera and Lehna Singh were the leaders. Sahib Singh, Lakha Singh, Pahara Singh, Hukam Singh, Man Singh and Kahan Singh and other subas were present with Ram Singh. Ram Singh and the subas said to Lehna Singh and Heera Singh, "Go to Kotla (Malerkotla) and Nabha and get arms and horses"¹⁴ and Ram Singh specially deputed Lakha Singh to advice Lehna and Heera how to act, and cheer them up on their departure. After this the party departed with full sympathy of the subas. I followed the party as far as Rampure, in Patiala then I returned to Bhaine", he said.

The statement of Sukhu, Lamberdar of Bhaini was taken by Magistrate of Ludhiana. He knew whole the subas personally. He has been attending the Ram Singh's darbars, and had taken the kuka pledge. He gave deposition that I have heard one and all of subas preaching sedition and saying that they would cause destruction to all who did not turn kukas. Lehna Singh and Heera Singh came to last *Maghi*. Ram Singh and his subas were in darbar and he said they intended to attack Malerkotla as at present its affairs were without a head; that there they would procure arms and take over Nabha, Patiala, Jhind, Ferozpur and Delhi.¹⁵ They asked Ram Singh for help. Lakha Singh assented and

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.50.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.50.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.51.

promised help. After this Heera Singh and Lehna Singh went out side the town, where the gang of *Mastanas* were encamped. He went and informed Surfraz Khan the Deputy Inspector, who had come to Bhaine for the police arrangement at fair. Next morning at day light about 100 of *Mastanas* went off. In the afternoon another batch went off the same strength. Lehna Singh and Heera Singh were the leaders of the second batch.¹⁶

The next information and deposition of Ahmed Khan, Raees of Talwandi near Raikot district Ludhiana. He knew that Ram Singh has instructed his subas to go about proselytizing tempting converts with great rewards especially after it becomes his kingdom and his rule. He stated "I am of opinion that the subas were only appointed for mischievous purposes. I have heard that they have all been promised provinces when the time comes. These subas are kept in confinement."¹⁷

Lamberdar Shahbaz Khan of District Ludhiana gave information and his depositions to C. Beadon, Magistrate of Ludhiana. He states that Ram Singh's subas are seditious lot of men. They have been at the bottom of all the recent disturbances. They induce harmless and ignorant men to become kukas. "I am of the opinion that it would be very bad policy to let them again be at large. Ram Singh appointed these men to spread his creed and promised them large territorial charges. They in turn held out Jagirs and destruction of land and property as threat to those who refuse to listen to their voice of charming."

The deposition of Lamberdar Jouja Khan, District Ludhiana which was taken by Magistrate of Ludhiana. He deposed that the conduct of the subas is political and aims at kingdom. It is not religious. Ram Singh appointed these men solely to revise his power, and promised them large rewards whenever he should rule in India. These subas are at the bottom of all strife in Punjab.

The information about subas given by Lamberdar of Mouzah Rangwal, stated that Ram Singh's subas are very dangerous men. They do nothing but make converts to kukaism by means of reports to affect that Ram Singh will shortly reign in India, and that, when he does, his disciples will receive their rewards. This sort of doctrine has great effect on the simple minds of Jat Sikhs or peasants of this part of country.

In this way we can conclude that the British loyalist sections had played a great role in suppressing the Namdhari movement. The area of Namdhari activities was quite wide and comprehensive. These loyalist sections kept a watch on the Namdhari rebels and their activities. They often harassed and humiliated them. A few Lamberdars and Zamindars were also active in these areas. In the eyes of his followers Baba Ram Singh became Satguru but in his letters Baba Ram Singh wrote himself as the 'postman' or reporter of God. In the case of Malodh and Malerkotla, Baba Ram Singh informed the Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana that some of the Kukas had gone out of his control and they were proceeding towards Malerkotla. But no step was taken to stop the Kukas in their march towards Malerkotla¹⁸. So, we can say beyond any doubt that Namdhari movement remained successful to a great extent. In spite of tooth and nail opposition, Namdharis established a tradition of true patriotism in the country. Though, the Namdhari movement did not succeed against the government of the times yet it roused feelings of patriotism. The movement would have been a marvellous success and would have found favour with a much larger population of the Sikhs.

16 *Ibid.*, p.51.

17 *Ibid.*, p.52.

18 M.M. Ahluwalia, *Kukas-The freedom fighters of the Punjab*, Allied publishers, Bombay, 1965, p. 84.

CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I, **Ramandeep Kaur** certify that the work embodied in this Ph. D. thesis is my own benefited work carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. Nazer Singh**. 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 wilfully lifted up some other's work, text, data, results etc. reported in the journals, books, magazine, reports, dissertation, thesis etc., or available at web-sites and included them in this Ph. D. 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/facts/sources in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be a cause for disciplinary action by the university.


Date: 2.11.2020


Ramandeep Kaur

Place: Patiala

This is to certify that the above statement made by the candidate is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Supervisor


Dr. Nazer Singh
(Retired) Professor of History
Department of Distance Education
Punjabi University, Patiala.

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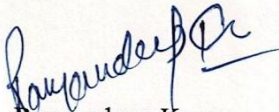
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