

**Role of the Fourth Estate in Shaping Public Opinion: A
Comparative Analysis of Print Media Representations
on Militancy in Punjab,
1980-1984**

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By

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September 2018

Declaration

I declare that the thesis entitled “**Role of the Fourth Estate in Shaping Public Opinion: A Comparative Analysis of Print Media Representations on Militancy in Punjab, 1980-1984**” has been prepared by me under the supervision of Dr. Sudheer Singh Verma, Assistant Professor, Centre for South and Central Asian Studies, School of Global Relations, Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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Abstract

Role of the Fourth Estate in Shaping Public Opinion: A Comparative Analysis of Print Media Representations on Militancy in Punjab, 1980-1984

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Media plays a significant role in creating, moulding, rupturing and reflecting public opinion in democratic society. It is known as political in nature, and diverse players easily use it for advancing their interests. It has the potency to form an opinion as well to de-form it. It could be a vehicle of divisive politics as much as it can integrate and unite. It provides an exclusive stage to individual and groups to discuss issues of mutual interests, which in turn forms an opinion is important to society and in particular to political community. Media cannot only initiate a peace process and sustain it but also it can also instigate violence society. So media, as an independent entity provides a discursive space to opinion formation through allowing discourses among people and shapes the emotions of public may be through introducing partial information.

English and Vernacular newspapers published from Punjab state such as Rojana Ajit - a Punjabi daily, Punjab Kesri – a Hindi daily and The Tribune - an English daily along with English newspapers published from New Delhi, capital of India, which having national footprints like The Times of India and The Hindustan Times have been selected for the study aimed at understanding and analysing a representation of the print media of the militancy problem in the state. The study has attempted to understand and analyse a labelling process of the print media of the

happened incidents and how much the print media was sensitive during reporting the problem and presenting diverse opinions related to the problem. The study has found the diverse role of newspapers in the representations of the incidents perpetuated by the militancy during 1980-1984. The objective of the news, the editorials and the articles published by these newspapers were not just to deliver the information but also to form an influence over the related community with favourable contents along with reaping more profits through more number of copies of the newspapers circulation. In addition, the study has done field survey of Majha, Malwa and Doaba regions of Punjab aimed at collecting information and opinions related to the problem from people whose were part of it directly or indirectly. The field study has found that various communities such as Sikhs, Hindus, Muslim, and Christian were divided ideologically. The division among communities was largely formed by the print media's presentation of information in the forms of news, opinion, etc. related to the militancy problem in Punjab.

The study has found that print media was caught in conflicting discourses in representation of militancy incidents occurred during the period. The print media has labelled the occurred violence and people involved in it according their matching ideology. The news based on the affiliated ideology of the media group has resulted into the form of the fractured public sphere. Furthermore, the comparative analysis of selective incidents represented by different newspapers endorses the diverse role of print media in context of militancy problem in Punjab. For instance, the incidents of the murder of two prominent journalists and a religious chief had representationally lost its significance due to the deviation among the print media. As, a newspaper editor has clearly criticised the role of the print media from Punjab state for distorting the facts in the news representation specifically for the business purposes. Thus, the study argues that the set positions of the various newspapers deeply affected public opinion and promoted divided media-scape as well where realities were something different but maintained accordingly.

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Abbreviations

AISSF	All India Sikh Student Federation
ASR	Anandpur Sahib Resolution
BJP	Bhartiya Janta Party
BK	Babbar Khalsa
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CISF	Central Industrial Security Force
DSGPC	Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
DUM	Dharam Yudh Morcha
FIR	First Information Report
HSG	Hind Samachar Group
HT	The Hindustan Times
ISI	Inter Service Intelligence
JSB	Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale
LTTE	Liberation Tiger of Tamil Elam
OBC	Other Backward Classes
PEPSU	Patiala and East Punjab States Union
PK	Punjab Kesri
PO	Proclaim Offender
PTI	Press Trust of India
PTI	Press Trust of India
PU	Punjabi Suba
RA	Rojana Ajit
RSS	Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh
SAD	Shiromani Akali Dal
SC	Schedule Caste
SGPC	Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
SRC	State Reorganization Committee
ST	Schedule Tribe
TOI	The Times of India
TT	The Tribune
UNI	United News of India
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The seed of vernacular¹ print media was sown in India with the introduction of English newspapers in the 18th century. James Augustus published first English weekly 'Bengal Gazette' on 29th January 1978 in Calcutta. The English press further paved the way of established of the vernacular press in India.² In less than two centuries, the print media achieved a status of watchdog in Indian democracy due to its ability and power to review three essential pillars and faith in public. The ability of communication with mass public sooner developed print media into a dominant unit of communication. The process of mediatization³ of politics and tabloidization of the print media significantly contributed further to strengthen it. By attaining public faith due to its exploring nature and ability to analyze an issue established media into as a much stronger form.

The mass media well-adopted sense of power with the responsibility when other institutions were also developing in a democratic system. The actual space provided to mass media in a democracy is due to its power to influence the civil and political system. The term Fourth Estate⁴ in context to print media and journalists define its significance to shape public opinion and indicates its influence on popularity, support, and political choice within the society. The term was ascribed by the British Parliamentary Edmund

¹Vernacular means "the language of a particular group, profession, region or country especially as spoken rather the formally written." Oxford online dictionary elaborates that vernacular is a language or dialect spoken by the ordinary people of a country or region or the terminology used by people belonging to a specified group or engaging in a specialized activity or spoken as a one's mother tongue; not learned or imposed as a second language (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/vernacular>).

²The early history of newspapers in North-Western Provinces is a placid one. The government found it necessary to encourage the publication of books and newspapers by various devices. Munshi Wajid Ali Khan in Persian started one of the first newspaper, the Zoobdut-ool-Ukhbar, in 1833. He was the editor, proprietor, and commanded respect both for his tach and ability (Natarajan 1955).

³The Oxford dictionary meaning of mediatization is the action or process whereby the mass media comes to control or affect something (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/mediatization>).

⁴MP, Thomas Macaulay, referred to the British journalists in that way in 1829, emphasizing the opinion-forming role of the contemporary press and phenomenon, which corresponds to the today's concept of exchanging ideas between journalists sitting in the Parliament's lobby. Hence it can be assumed that the journalists represent society in direct contacts with the politicians, they strive to obtain the most significant possible amount of information for the sake of society; control, comment and assess, stay outside of the traditional Montesquieu subdivision of powers into legislative, executive and judicial (Hofman 2009) (<http://www.czasopisma.marszalek.com.pl/images/pliki/ppszy/38/ppszy2009004.pdf>).

Burke, who referred to the Fourth Estate while pointing towards talking about the Fourth Estate, pointing towards journalists sitting in the press gallery (Hofman 2009, 47). Acquisition of the tag of Fourth Estate suits to the print media as it has a very versatile character, ability to cope up with different institutions while public dealing makes it a significant institution of a democracy. The characteristics of print media around the world due to sustainability helped it reframe in the tough scenario to produce vital information, thus accumulates the tag 'Fourth Estate' above its name.

In the 18th century, the growing literacy provided the print media an opportunity to develop into a fundamentally political institution, connected with concerns and obsessions of its readers. The technological advancement and innovations further lead the growth of print media. Though print media is a part of the news media, yet the business has flourished into a most pervasive global industry at the end of the millennium (Ibid, 1).

The Fourth Estate has proven to be a remarkably flexible concept as its meaning has changed over the centuries. Its growth; ranging from a description of documenting the proceedings of the House of Commons, later connected with the task of scrutinizing those in power. The process, through Fourth Estate, turned to be a communicative idea, had its genesis in the freedom of expressions about two centuries ago. While these arguments were propounded, the advocates of freedom of expression saw a place for print media to become means of such expression.

Further, the meaning of the Fourth Estate varied in response to changes in political and economic circumstances. Whereas in its earliest manifestation, the press was considered an elite, which could relay the views of other elites into the mass population to attain public support. By the end of the 19th century, the popular press media was well established; with it, the definition of the Fourth Estate changed (Schultz 1998, 3). The importance of information predated general acceptance of the idea that citizens should have access to a wide range of information to enable them to form opinions and make responsible political judgments. The press itself intruded into the political system to become a principal agency for the provision of information to facilitate political choices. The relationship between the media, politicians, Governments, and

citizens encapsulated in the short description, then the Fourth Estate developed (Ibid, 23).

Today, mass media is the most significant producer of the public sphere in which issues related to society can be discussed. It carries communicative information and opinion; both are necessary for an individual to participate in public discourse. Mass and especially information media, thus have a dual function; i.e., to provide information as well as a forum for public debate (Balks 2016, 9). The public discussions further become a witness of different proportionate of the public, which come close in a particular group to discuss specific issues. It also helps to develop a thought from received information and discussion and after that, it endorses to establish public sphere.

The flaw of information related to particular topics remains open for all, but the group with the same mindset comes closer for discussion over a specific issue. However, it stops other to adopt or approve it or did not adhere by the people itself, so generate a fractured public sphere, which is a normal phenomenon. Further, it can create a ruckus in society, and print media plays a vital role in forming or deforming it. The print and electronic media serve less as organs of public information and debate than as technologies for managing consensus and promoting consumer culture (Habermas 1991).

The consequences of mass media operations, whether planned or not, but have to achieve given objectives, whether it is attracting a large audience or influencing opinions and behaviour of them. It also needs clarity about the status effect, whether at the level of the individual, the group, the institution or the whole society, each or all may be affected in some way by the mass communication (Christian et. al 2009). The term media effect is also used in media studies by psychology, communication theory and sociology referring to mass media and media culture effects on individual or audience thought, attitude and behaviour.

On the contrary, Chappell Lawson (2002) opine that Journalistic norms and commercial competition between various print media outlets play an influential role to

shape the behaviour of the press. Market competition plays an instrumental role in encouraging the press experiment with more independent coverage. Even in an authoritarian system, private media may face powerful incentives to meet audience demands (Lawson 2002, 5).

1.1.1 Media: A Mass Publicity Tool

The mass media as its nature, while dealing with the broader public group to deliver information or message, deals with their attention too. The public as a primary receiver deals with the general information, which first was in the private domain, thus becomes a carrier to form public opinion. It functions as a critical judge, first to receive the information and later discussion in the private and public groups as per its characteristics.

German Sociologist and philosopher Jurgen Habermas sees mass media as a critical source to produce publicity with variation in meaning. A function of public opinion, it has become an attribute to whatever attracts public opinion: public relations and efforts to fulfil publicity works aimed to generate such publicity. Here the public sphere itself appears as a specific domain-the public domain versus the private. Either the part of the state or media, like the press, it helps to communicate among the members of the public, which counted as public organs, helps to sustain information for discussion (Habermas 1991).

There is an implicit understanding amongst us about what good journalism looks like, and often scholars lament when they observe that the news media have deviated from it. The collective intelligence is that journalism, apart from providing news and information in the public interest, should also encourage people to participate in a democratic system. To that extent, the news media is considering in central to the economic, social and political well-being of a nation and the global economy (Schultz 1998). The opposite view of media role is that the weakness of the news media successfully fulfils a political purpose that transcends its commercial obligations which have been severely assaulted. Its power, commercial ambitions, and moral weakness have undermined its institutional standing (Ibid, 1).

The traditional conception about the role of news media generally underwrites the presumption that press constitutes the Fourth Estate. The three essential Estates of democracy; the legislature, executive and judiciary are all semi-autonomous and official spheres of the Government (Kieran 1997, 25). The tag 'Fourth Estate' denotes active nature of it further drives it into a steady force where it obtains public faith. Berg and Lipscomb in 1904 used this quote, "Where the press is free, all are safe." More than 200 years ago, Thomas Jefferson wrote the line, and still today, an independent press is one of the shields of democratic societies (Javaid 2012, 121).

The print media has passed a long journey since its time of inception and acquired transformation of the task and vision both in the contemporary period. According to Julianne Schultz, most of the people since long have forgotten that which is the first, second and third Estate, but there is a general understanding in the community that the Fourth Estate is another name for 'media.' Due to the unique process of hype, self-promotion, definitional flexibility and being have good Ideas; the Fourth Estate has survived (Schultz 1998, 1).

What will happen, if content offered by media to audience delivered or influenced by an organization that has the objective to disturb safety? This is the case with militancy and terrorism to spread fear and further advancing their political goals through electronic and print media. In most cases, terrorist attacks are localizing, and affect only a few people. The goal, however, is to spread the message to more people than just those who were not directly hurt by the attack. The media play an essential role in achieving this by covering the news of the attacks or even by directly transferring the message of terrorist organizations (Javaid 2012, 121).

In India, it is now a widespread and reasonable doubt that the contemporary news media can any longer adequately fulfill the historical role of the press created by it for itself two centuries ago. However, Indian news media cannot be isolated from the social, economic and political changes taking place in India and overseas in recent years. The traditional model of journalism is under tremendous pressure from the latest media technologies. The increasing use of it by the audience affect socio-economic factors initiated new discourse (Rodrigues and Ranganathan 2014, 2).

The public encircled in the mediated phase of war, isolation, hate, anger and killings highlighted by the media is not much neutral. It looks alike as every media group has a particular political and social identity and agenda, which put influence over its ideology and style of coverage. The globalization left a profound impact on media policies and made it commercialized due to the effects of industrialization and capitalization. Driven by the market policies, mass media is also delivering set information with the routine news. Apart from that, it is targeting the market for commercial interests such as first to yield profit through acquiring a significant share of readership and second to develop certain kind of opinion etc. The news is good or bad; mostly, the decision depends upon the viewer's serenity.

The electronic and print media houses, hunt for news brought the concept of Target Rating Point (TRP) and Readership to gain commercial market. It leads media towards extreme coverage of an issue or incident to fill TV or newspaper for the whole day. The news hunt policy to achieve highest TRP many a times forces them to sacrifice theme of ethical journalism while delivering low viewer content in channels and newspapers. It is evident that what human eyes see and listen with ears always leaves a long-lasting effect on an individual's brain. It could generate a devastating impact in the social circle at the particular point of time.

Many a times, print and electronic media act as a preacher instead of informer about an incident or issues. Sometimes a media house adopts a set agenda about the subject and carries it in the desired direction to influence the masses. Media is a crucial player in a democratic society where it uses various tactics to sway public minds and thoughts too. It is clear that the print media can influence the public and their psychology according to needs.

The conflict of interests in society, many times politically and religiously motivated take shapes of extremism and militancy against the state with a variation in magnitude. These struggles labelled variedly as terrorism, insurgency, freedom struggle, etc., most of the time have their roots in the history of colonial pedigree. However, later these acquire aggressive form due to the failures of post-colonial states to deliver their duties. Sometimes these conflicts obtain a disastrous shape due to the

negligence of the governments or due to race or gain power from the political parties. Few of the struggles are the outcome of fear and insecurities observed by the minority communities, which further carry it towards fanatic routes and turn into radical politics of abolition.

In the contemporary period, numerous kind of conflicts around the globe are continuing where a terror environment has designed due to the conflict between state and non-state actors. Sometimes these internal conflicts bring either peace or destruction.

1.1.2 Print Media: Two Way Approach

The slogan "Pen is Mightier than Sword" seems to have an added significance in the pre and post-industrial societies in India. The birth of print media in India further paved the way for the Indian freedom struggle and the fight against social evils in India with revolutionary and enlightening writings. Few great personalities nurtured journalism in India with their genuine efforts. The stalwarts of the freedom Movement- Mahatma Gandhi, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the social reformer and liberal thinkers such as Raja Rammohun Roy, Surendranath Bannerji and Gopal Krishan Gokhale were themselves either editors or pioneers in establishing well-known newspapers. The history of journalism is attach to the growth of national consciousness and the progress of freedom movement in India (Aggarwal and Gupta 2001, 91).

The role of a communication system is important, and without it, there cannot be the existence or formation of a scale of public opinion. Media, being a communicative instrument, fits into the category of the vital tool of communication in India. Practically, news has the potential to influence the public or political system. News media also can affect citizen's feeling toward, a full screen of political objects, ranging from governments to specific pieces of legislation or an individual seeking elected political system (McCombs et. al 2011). A free media plays a vital role in creating, moulding, rupturing and reflecting public opinion, particularly in democratic societies.

In a democratic system, people are free to despise the elected Government but not its right to be the government. The term 'State,' often carries, for pluralists, a negative image of a strong organization resistant from democratic accountability. For class theorists, the image of an apparatus is forced by the requirements of capital accumulation. 'Democracy' central to pluralist's theorists, is usually qualified by the adjective bourgeois by class analysts who wish to stress upon the distortions of democracy under capitalism and is seen by management theorists either as a symbol of legitimacy or as a set of organizations (legislatures, political parties) with their own internal structure of power (Alford and Friedland 1985, 31).

Media as a medium of conveying information from diverse sources to the public has been embedded with the responsibilities to inform. It also entertains, educates, influences and mobilizes the masses to shed light on pressing issues and foster the development of the nation (Deane 2005, 177). Media also apparently helps to maintain peace in the society and plays the role of a historian by telling the society not to repeat the mistakes committed in the past. Usually, media is not seen as an ideological neutral or a political entity. As reviewed the history, it has shown that media can incite people towards violence along with establishing peace. Hitler used media to create an entire worldview of hatred for Jews, homosexuals, and other minority groups. Rwanda's radio (Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines) RTLM urged listeners to pick up machetes and take to the streets to kill humans compared with cockroaches. Broadcasters in the Balkans polarized local communities where violence became an acceptable tool for addressing grievances. The media's impact on the escalation of conflict is widely recognized more than media's impact on peace building (Bratic and Schirch 2007, 7).

It is the view of the media where instead of saving the people, it instigated public to take revenge. The perspectives of those who control the media design and shape the stories for the public view and interest, have set opinions and beliefs based on their working experience. The Media owners have personal economic benefits; they want to sell their stories and programs to the public who will buy the newspapers. Media owners and professionals decide about their need, which will fulfill their goals by showing the concerned to the public or the target audience (Ibid, 7).

Robin Jeffrey (2000) in his book opines that media is intensely political, and diverse players efficiently use it for advancing their interests and political goals. It could be subversive as much as constructive; it could de-form public opinion as much as it can form it. It could be a vehicle of divisive politics as much as it can integrate and unite; it could perpetuate communitarian sentiments as much as secular values; it could teach violence as much as peace (Jeffrey 2000). International issues expert Noam Chomsky says that structural factors such as ownership and control depend on other primary funding sources, mutual interests and the relationship between the media and those who make news and have the power to define it and explain what it means. The propaganda model also incorporates other closely related factors such as the ability to complain about the media's treatment of news (Herman and Chomsky 2010).

The severe threat that arose around the globe in the late 1970's was militancy and terrorism. Both are the two sides of a coin, which has sole aim to deliver a loss to the governments and public. Their objective is also to grab a larger share of publicity through electronic and print media. They highlight them on TV and the top page of the newspaper and further enhance mental suppression of the public. It is a kind of mediated support of terrorists and militants after their attack to legitimate religious fundamentalism and to create fear among the non-affected. Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in her famous quote called media publicity an "oxygen of the terrorism" and its allied activities (Muller 2005).

1.2 Print Media and Punjab Problem

South Asian countries are gripped into infamous conflicts and movements due to social, political, religious and economic reasons. Shia-Sunni conflict of Pakistan, Liberation Tiger of Tamil Elam (LTTE) conflict in Sri Lanka, Taliban conflict in Afghanistan, etc. are few which destabilize the nations. In India, the demand of Khalistan, a separate state for Sikhs, by few extremist groups in Punjab waged war against the country in the name of injustice. In this conflict, the print media of Punjab did extensive reporting over the issue. The English and vernacular print media of Punjab engaged in publishing news along with violent pictures on the front and inside pages imprinted an effect over the mindset of the reader or public related or affected

by the incidents. In case of Punjab, the Indian forces came in opposition of the militants and severely involved for around two decades due to the rise of extremism and fundamentalism in a section of Sikhs. Few serious incidents, if handled carefully, did not hurt the relationship of Hindus and Sikhs. Apart from that, print media of Punjab, due to their over-ambitious nature, did not just become an active player in the troubled period, but also attained a judgmental position over militancy generated incidents and related activities.

Print media in significant ways articulated social and economic grievances along with the communitarian lines. The identity as “*Punjabis*” had followed the back door in context of partition and Punjabi Suba⁵ issue and the identity as Hindus and Sikhs began to be on the floor (Nayar and Singh 1984). The origin of the English and vernacular print media in Punjab belonged to diverse sources as the owners of the newspapers were of different religion, class, and creed. The variation in their ideology and driving force of the organizations was a significant reason for the different delivery of news and language.

The English newspaper, The Tribune influenced with western discourses of liberalism, was initially a vehicle for the colonial authorities and was later introduced with various transformations after the independence of India in August 1947. Jat Sikh aristocrat Dyal Singh Majithia founded The Tribune newspaper. On the contrary, the owner of the Hind Samachar Group, Lala Jagat Narayan was a staunch Congressman who participated in India’s struggle for independence. He was also active in the Arya Samaj movement (Deol 2000). While Sadhu Singh Hamdard was owner of the Ajit Group and worked with the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (hereafter SGPC) and was active in Quit India Movement (QIM) against British rule.

⁵After 1947, the Akalis has joined hands with the Congress to form first Government in East Punjab. At this stage, the Akali Dal took a clear stand that it was opposed to communal electorate. However, after a few years later, in the mid-fifties, the Akali Dal raised the demand for the linguistic reorganization of the Punjab. In their memorandum submitted to the States Reorganization Commission (SRC), they had proposed that the ‘*Punjabi Suba*’ should comprise Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozpur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Ambala, Karnal, Sirsa, Bathinda, Kapurthala, Fathegarh Sahib and Sangrur (leaving out Jind, and Nirwana tehsils) (Chopra et al. 1984, 101-102).

All these three newspapers were covering different target audience and religious groups in Punjab. The rivalry between two vernacular newspapers Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit became fierce in the late 1970s, the period when the movement for a separate Sikh state arose in Punjab (Ibid, 171). The print media intervention during militancy phase solidified militant group solidarities and asserted their difference and distinct identities (Ibid). As a result, the militancy in Punjab, appears to be not a public sphere where different voices competed with each other in a mutually understandable language, to arrive at reasonable and mutually informed conclusions. It rather seems to be mutually inconceivable publics engaging in an exercise of combating each other to establish greater moral legitimacy for each of them against others.

The Sikh-Nirankari clash⁶ of 1978 at Amritsar became a base of conflict, which later brought Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab near to societal division. The skirmish occurred on 13th April 1978 at Amritsar resulting in the death of 13 Sikhs and many other injured on both sides. The verdict of the Karnal Court in 1980 related to this clash pours oil into the fire and later, militancy gripped the state for near about two decades causing enormous loss of human lives, economy and prosperity.

The disastrous shape of the conflict in these years inhaled many of the innocent lives of both communities. One of the bloodiest conflict of Post Independent India, the radical groups in the Sikh community tried to grip the state and challenged the sovereignty of the country. The result of the armed struggle finally handed over to the army by the Centre Government to flush out militants hiding inside Golden Temple premises. On 6 June 1984, Operation Bluestar was launched to evacuate Golden

⁶The Nirankaris decided to hold their convention in Amritsar on April 13, 1978, the birth of Khalsa...it was alleged that the place, date and time of convention were deliberately chosen by the Nirankaris in connivance with the Congress, which had been out of power and was trying to embarrass the Akali-Janta alliance. One day before the convention, on April 12, the Nirankaris took out a procession. During the course, their chief allegedly made some derogatory remarks against the Sikh religion...Next day some followers of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and those of the Akhand Kirtni Jatha went totally unarmed to the venue of Nirankari congregation to dissuade the Nirankari Chief from denigrating Sikh religion and Gurus. The Nirankaris, who were well equipped with rifles and sten guns, fired at the approaching Sikhs, resulting the death of thirteen Sikhs. Meanwhile, the 62 Nirankaris, including the chief of the sect, Baba Gurbachan Singh, charged in connection with the killing of 13 Sikhs in clash had faced trial and acquitted because they had acted in self-defence (Gill 1997).

Temple from Sikh militants by the Indian Army. Both sides faced heavy casualty of lives, especially the army paid a hefty price of this operation (Tully and Jacob 1985).

During the turmoil phase, the English and vernacular print media were generating news from occurring conflicts and violence in the state. The diverse reporting of the newspapers on different issues seen close ties with their ideological perspectives followed from its time of establishment. It not only produced a fractured public sphere but also affected the public opinion.⁷ It marked a thick line between Hindus and Sikhs but largely escaped academic scrutiny.

In Punjab militancy problem, print media failed to understand the concerns of the public, but developed hypocrisy over the issue and failed to provide a particular solution of the intensifying problem. Print Media did not hesitate to become a third party in the politico-religious conflict of Punjab to attain '*Khalistan*.' According to Andrew Major, this is an unusually common and undesirable feature of reporting on the Punjab crisis. It is an issue of the Punjab police to suspect (or claim that they do) certain criminals as 'extremists' or 'terrorists.' However, misleading newspaper headlines, which convert these suspicions into apparent facts, may foster, among the public at large, a mental association between ordinary criminal and Extremist or Terrorist (Major 1987, 43).

The present research is not going into a discussion on the diverse aspects of militancy in Punjab but limits itself to English and vernacular print media representation on several incidents related with militancy problem in Punjab and its comparison with English national media from the period of 1980-1984. Different people who have described the Punjab situation then use the concept of militancy and terrorism, sometimes interchangeably too. The relationship between media and militancy are going simultaneously.

⁷A public, as opposed to a crowd or a mass, is a well-defined group with clear boundaries that actively engages in discourse about the major issues affecting the group (McCombs ed. 2011, 1).

1.3 Militancy: Conceptual Understanding

Terrorism and Militancy have been defined as the use of violence when its most important result is not the physical and mental damage of the direct victims but the psychological effect produced on non-affected as well. Terrorism also involves in addition to the act, the emotion and motivation of the terrorist. Violence may lead to death, injury or destruction of property, or deprivation of liberty. It becomes terror when the vital aim is not to attain these ends, but through these, to terrorize people other than those directly involved. The distinction between terror and violence is not an absolute one. There may be violence linked with terror in which the intention is to harm the direct victim, but the assault may be connected to an act of terror, which either preceded or followed it (Dass 2006, 195).

Even though after entry in the new century, still terrorism has no precise or widely accepted definition, which could recognize its structure and system. For like many other political terms, it is pejorative. One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter or patriot. It is contended by some political sociologist that no definition of terrorism is in principle possible, for the very process of meaning is a part of the broader consultation of ideologies or political objectives. The Encyclopaedia of Terrorism and Political Violence by John Richard Thackra lists 67 definitions of terrorism (beginning of the year 1936 and ending up to 1982) with only nine descriptions up to the year 1968 and the rest between the year 1970 to 1982 (Dass 2006, 34).

In 1795, Edmund Burke denounced the Jacobins for letting "thousands of those hell-hounds called terrorists." Terror in that sense right from the beginning has seen as a measure to achieve justice on the one hand and a severe measure of injustice on the other (Griffith 2004, 10). The concept of terror is possibly ancient but the birth of the terror, as a theoretical category is modern and its evolution as a political concept starts with the 18th-century French Revolution. British statesman and philosopher Edmund Burke used the word to describe the regime 'De La Terreur' commonly known in English as the 'Reign of Terror' (Crenshaw 2010).

An early analysis using a historical-legalistic approach explains that the term terrorism is formed from the Latin word 'terror' which initially meant physical trembling and later came to include the emotional state of fear (Waciorski 1939). The definitions of terrorism also vary accordingly. Waciorski mentions the definition of terrorism proposed by the League of Nations convention for the prevention and the repression of terrorism adopted in 1937, "Acts of terrorism are criminal acts directed against a state and which aim, or are of a nature to provoke terror." Then Waciorski proposed a different definition, "Terrorism is a method of action by which an agent tends to produce terror to impose his domination" (Rapoport 2006).

Another definition of Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) over terrorism sees it as "A collection of individual belonging to an autonomous non-state or sub-national revolutionary or anti-governmental movement who are dedicated to the use of violence to achieve their objectives. Such an entity is seen as having at least some structural and command and control apparatus that, no matter how loose or flexible, nonetheless provides an overall organizational framework and general strategic direction".⁸

Walter Scott analyst 'Regimes of Terror' as Governmental and non-governmental and it involves (a) an act of violence, which (b) causes an emotional reaction and (c) creates social effects.⁹ State terrorism and other forms of terrorisms in this analysis look upon as two sides of the same coin (Bassi 2012).

1.3.1 Political and Religious Militancy

The term militancy refers to the violent or vicious activities of an independent or a group holding a violent status for the support of a cause or ideology. These individuals or groups adopt a psychologically militant state is in a physically aggressive posture. A common trend among militant groups around the world is; justify the use of force to achieve their ideological rhetoric. The method adopted for the enrolment of new

⁸Details adopted from www.e-cademic.de/data/books/extracts/9783892049210.pdf (Accessed on 5 May, 2017)

⁹www.palgrave-journals.com/cpt/journal/v8/n2/full/cpt2837a.html (Accessed on 5 June, 2017)

members include volunteers, recruitment, and conscription (Ibid, 18). Militancy, on the other hand, has got rather than a general meaning in the first instance- the state or condition of being combative or disposed to fight. It had seen as a measure to downplay the democratic system of the country and result of alienation from the public and particularly the youth (Singh 1994).

George Haughton in his article 'Matter of Militancy' explains that "it springs from one's values, is expressed as an attitude, and result in certain behaviours. One's value is those things in which one strongly believes. They are what one believes to be fundamentally important and true. From this comes an attitude which is unwilling to tolerate any divergence from this fundamentally important truth and which seeks to defend them. It results in behaviours which speaks up when these truths are attacked or diluted and which refuse to cooperate with any activity which would minimize their importance" (Mohanty 2006, 53).

According to the Cambridge dictionary, a militant is; active, determined and often willing to use force (dictionary.cambridge.org). The other meaning of militant is; having a combative character, aggressive, especially in the service of a cause; may be engaged in warfare and violent activities.¹⁰ However, the character of militant is more aggressive and versatile phenomenon. According to Gregor Gall, the militant is confrontational, aggressive, radical, revolutionary, combative, rebellious and belligerent in nature, which describes the exceptional identity of the militant personality.

In that sense of meaning, militancy is a state of mind, which is ready to fight alone, or in-group to compete with each other or against the state to achieve a target with a case in which their belief is. It is possible that the involvement of groups of people involved in a violent conflict with arms to resort settlement through killings to handicap the state structure. The aim to achieve a target contributes force in the violent movement with a cause mostly challenge to the authority of the system or the government.

¹⁰www.freedictionary.com/militant. (Accessed on 12 June, 2017)

On the other side, terrorism could be seen as a violent and bloody fight to develop fear among the public and to challenge governments through mass killings and bomb blasts. "Terrorism is theatre". Terrorist attacks carefully choreographed to attract the attention of the media. Brian Jenkins has noted, this already in the 1970's. In turn, the media response to these overtures with almost uncontrolled quickness, proving unable to ignore what has been accurately describing as an event explicitly fashioned for their needs. The other aim to spread terror is also politically motivated equation with a goal to achieve through arms.

This has been clearly explained by the Bruce Hoffman, "Terrorism, in the most widely accepted contemporary usage of the term is fundamentally and inherently political. It is also related to about power, the pursuit of power, the acquisition of power, and the use of power to achieve political change. Terrorism is thus violence or equally important, the threat of violence used in the service of political aims" (Hoffman 2006, 2-3).

According to Mc Chesney, R. (2004), the range of available solutions for each society is influenced by its political and economic structures, culture and communication systems among other things. The dictators and authoritarian regimes too want to generate a media system for massive supports and minimize the opposition's effect. The direct link between control over the media and control over the society is not hidden and self-evident. Nevertheless, in democratic systems, the tension to control media exists between power and non-power holders, only the battle assumes different forms. Media is at the center of struggles for power and control over the society, and are arguably even more vital players in democratic nations.

1.4 Formation of Public Opinion and Print Media

'Public sphere' is not only modern but also bourgeois through its evolution and character. Jurgen Habermas has mostly propagated this view in 1962 that pioneered the contemporary public sphere theory. The theory is seen as a network of communicating information and points of light through communicative actions (Habermas 1991). The construction of the public sphere is an outcome of issues of

general concern, ranging between the people for discussion, beyond the limits of private domains. It requires freedom of assembly and expression in the society to receive or publish opinions on the related matters of general interest (Habermas et al. 1964). Habermas himself acknowledges the transformation of press media from the Fourth Estate that genuinely guards public opinion and freedom of expression to that of a stooge of capital that commodity news items for its consumer citizens (Deane 2005).

In 1922, Walter Lippmann sketched the essential influence over Public Opinion. “The news media is a primary source of the information and pictures a set frame in an individual’s mind about the public affairs. About that world, which for most citizens is “out of reach and out of sight and obviously out of mind.” What human generally knows about the world is primarily based on the decision of the media what to tell and show to the people. The result of this mediated view of the world is that the priorities of the media strongly influence the preferences of the public (McCombs 1972).

Like as the construction of social reality through stories and public discourse, media sensationalism is a term related within the mass media circle where events and incidents are overhyped deliberately giving biased impression and manipulation of the truth. Most of the time sensationalism includes overlooking facts to find more attention of the public especially readers. Melodrama refers to not only the content, but the style of presentation keeps importance as such stories focus on attention-grabbing that attract viewers and readers to buy the newspapers and big picture covers (Andersen et al. 2008, 477).

During the Punjab conflict, the political leaders, administration, militants and ordinary public were part of the group along with print media. On the representation of violent incidents, print media was engaging each other through news and was representing it according to their set ideology. However, the involvement of print media during the militancy problem was making a vast impact on the mindset of people according to the possible situation.

Print media published news related to the conflict period which gained debate in the community and played a leading role in generating fractured view about the problem. The ideology followed by the newspapers became base for awarding such labels which further promoted the divided mediascape.¹¹ In this division, the English and vernacular media produced a fractured sphere of information which significantly made an impact over public opinion. Instead of neutral delivery of information, print media constructed perceptions and created sensationalism.¹² All these acts were helping newspapers to grow in their circulation in the meantime.

In reverse, the people in large numbers came into a group discussion about the conflict within a social system which later converted into concepts about each other's actions. These concepts eventually became a reality with the passage of time and habitually collided with each other. According to Berger and Luckmaan (2011), the continuous process further develops an embedded meaning about the reality in society. Knowledge and people conception of the fact creates an embedded scenario after the constant flow of views perpetuates an existence which loads society with the socially constructed fabric of information (Berger and Luckmaan 2011).

1.5 Punjab: Understanding through Lenses of History

The notion 'Punjabiyaat,' a general term often used to describe the sentiments of attachment with Punjab, a northern state of India, sharing boundaries with Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and the international border with Pakistan. The richness of Punjab state lies in its foundation of a shared, cross-religious, cross-caste and cross-class culture. The idea of Punjab that helps ground as Punjabi people from the region now scattered across the globe. Punjab, a land of five rivers was divided in August 1947 with the independence of India and a line of divide sketched

¹¹Mediascape refer both to the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate (newspapers, magazines, television stations, film production studio's etc.) which are now available to a growing number of private and public interests throughout the world; and to the images of the world created by these media. (Appadurai 1990: 298 cited in Ansgard Heinrich, 2011)

¹²Sensationalism according to Merriam Webster online dictionary is; the use or effect of sensational subject matter of treatment. (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sensationalism>) (Accessed on 12 January, 2017)

to create Pakistan, crossed between pre-1947 Punjab and now known as East Punjab in dialogues.

1.5.1 Ancient Period

The land of Punjab was known as Sapt Sindhava in ancient times. The Muslims, with their conquest, extended up to and including the Sindhu (the Indus), gave it the new name, Panjab means 'land of five rivers' (Singh ed. 1988, 1). The significance of Punjab lies in the existence of civilization generally recognize it by historians as well as by the geologists and archaeologists. The earliest traces of human habitation in India were found in the area of Panjab (previous spellings to denote present Punjab) in the Soan valley between the Indus and the Jehlam rivers.

Later, those who had travelled from here to the south to Sindh and Baluchistan had developed a sufficiently advanced urban civilization of which there are living proof in the extensive ruins of the once populous cities of Harappa (Montgomery district, Panjab) and Mohen-Jo-daro (Larkana, Sindha) in the Indus valley of India, now in West Pakistan. The early Aryans first came into contact with the Panjab and laid the foundation of the Indian, later known as Hindu, civilization which is a synthesis of the ancient Panjabi (also called Dravidian by some scholars) and the Aryan (Ibid, 3-4).

Aryan Sants and sages composed and sang the Vedic hymns and performed Yajnas and laid the foundation of Sanskrit literature which later enhanced with the span of time and the people used Sanskrit as a medium of communication. The seed of knowledge also spread from this great ancient land thousand year back. In the education field, Panjab was the leading area of the country. In addition to the ashrams of the Vedic rishis on the banks of the sacred rivers Saraswati and Dreshadwati, it had in the Gandhara Desa (Jehlam-Peshwar tract now in Pakistan) the well-known university of Taxila (Takhsh-Shila, now in Pakistan) where three Vedas and eighteen branches of knowledge were taught by the leading scholar of that time. In its heyday, Taxila teachers attracted students and scholars not from India but from beyond its frontiers from Afghanistan and China.

1.5.2 Medieval

Punjab has seen the rule of Alexander the great who found a network of small states in Punjab like those in Greece, all self-sufficient and independent. After the period of Chandragupta and Ashoka who have left an indelible impression on the history of India, Persians smashed the power of the Huns on the bank of the river Amu to the north of Afghanistan. By the time, Islam had taken birth and started pushing in all directions (Ibid, 4-5). In the year 1469, the founder of the Sikhism, Guru Nanak Dev was born in the village of Talwandi-Rai Bhoie (now in Pakistan), 60 km south-west of Lahore which is now named as Nankana Sahib. In his preaching's, he rejected distinctions between man and woman, high or low and by creed or caste (Aggarwal and Agrawal 1992, 22).

The word Sikh goes back to the Sanskrit word '*Shishya*' meaning a disciple or one under training. Through Aprabhansa, the term changed to a Sikh. The word Sikh came for disciples of Guru Nanak Dev (1469-1539), founder of the Sikh community and his nine successors. Sikhism had its birth in Punjab (undivided) and most of the followers lived here (Ibid). Guru Nanak chose Guru Angad to mean- a limb of his own body. The process was repeated until the time of the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1706) the last Sikh Guru who created the martial order of the Khalsa (the pure) (Ibid, 23-24).

The Fourth guru of the Sikhs, Guru Ramdas (1534-1588) found Amritsar. A Muslim Sant Mian Mir of Lahore, a friend and admirer of Guru Arjun Dev., laid the foundation of the temple. The fifth guru completed the construction of the temple. Shri Hari Mandir Sahib is the supreme shrine of the Sikhs (Ibid, 26). Ahmad Shah Abdali, a foreign invader, is said to have demolished the temple as many as seven times, the last being in the year 1764 A.D (Ibid, 27).

1.5.3 Modern and Contemporary Period

Ruler of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh was one such colossus who bestrode the Indian scene and saved Northern areas to stop entry of invaders into India. He created the biggest empire of the Sikhs, the border beyond India and into the thresholds

of Kabul and Tibet. He also held the British in check for forty years in the south of his realm and closed the Khyber Pass through which plunders had for centuries poured into India (Singh and Rai 2008). He ruled for about 50 years (1780-1839 A.D) popularly known as Sher-e-Punjab and after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the British conquered Punjab in 1849 (Aggarwal and Agrawal 1992, 36). The British rule remained later up to the Independence of India in August 1947.

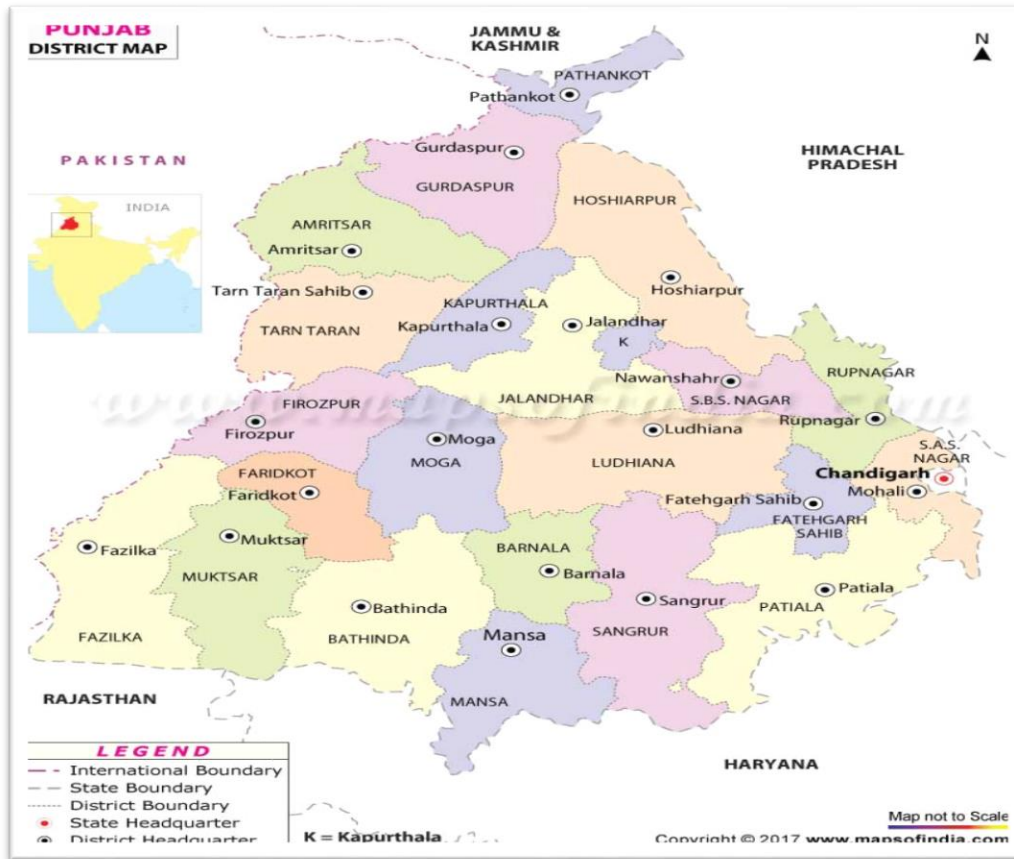
Half of the state has gone to Pakistan during partition known as West Punjab while the part of Indian side became East Punjab. Once again, Punjab was divided in 1966, in the response of a powerful movement by the Akalis¹³ which was reorganized on linguistic basis. The Hindi speaking area of southern Punjab was separated from its boundary and Haryana came into existence (Gill ed. 2003, 3). In 1950, two separate states were created: Punjab included the former Ran province of Punjab while Princely states Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Kapurthala, Malerkotla, Faridkot and Kalsia were combined into a new state as Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU).¹⁴

The total area of the Punjab state is 50, 362 square kilometers. The rural area share is 48,265 square kilometers while the urban area is 2097 square kilometer. It is bounded on the west by Pakistan, on the north, by Jammu and Kashmir, on the northeast by Himachal Pradesh and on the south by Haryana and Rajasthan. Punjabi is the official language of the state. It is the tenth most widely spoken language in the world and Fourth most spoken language in Asia written in Gurmukhi script. Besides Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu and English are the languages that people speak. Chandigarh, the union territory and is the capital of Punjab and Haryana.

¹³In the context of Sikhism, Akali "pertaining to Akal or the supreme power" may refer to any member of the Khalsa, i.e. the collective body of baptized Sikhs. A member of the Akali movement (1919-1925), a leader of the Akali Dal formed in December 1920 as a task force for the SGPC later on become a political party and a term is also used for Nihang too.

¹⁴In 1956, PEPSU merged into Indian Punjab (punjab.gov.in/history). (Accessed on 1 April, 2018)

Figure 1.1
Map of Punjab



(Punjab. Gov. in/state-profile). Adopted from:www.mapsofindia.com (retrieved on 20/4/2018)

Punjab is primarily divided into three regions based on its language. Majha area falls between the river Ravi and Beas and languages are known as Majhi, Malwa region denotes of the South of Sutlej and the language in routine use is Malwai while Doaba area falls between Sutlej and Beas and Doabi is the language dialect use in routine life. Out of these three regions, Malwa is the biggest region containing maximum districts (www.punjab.data). People observing different religion faiths are living, but the majority of them are Sikhs and Hindus. Sikhs comprises about 60 % of the total population of the state. After that Muslims, Christians, Buddhist, Jainism, etc. are the minority sects living in the state.

Punjabis celebrate numerous religious and seasonal festivals such as Dussehra, Diwali and Baisakhi and others. Punjab's economy has predominantly been agrarian.

According to Population census 2011, the total population of Punjab is 277.04 Lakh while 173.2 Lakh people are living in a rural area which is 62.51 % of the total population. The population density of the state is 550 persons per square kilometer. The number of literate persons in Punjab is 189.88 Lakh and the literacy rate of the state is 76.7 %. According to official data, there are entire 22 Districts and 168 statutory towns and 69 census town in Punjab while the total number of tehsils are 81. Major cities of Punjab include Mohali, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Patiala, and Jullundur (Ibid).

1.6 Militancy Problem in Punjab

After facing loss during partition of India, Punjab once again faced religious turmoil in the shape of militancy. The troubled relationship of political parties, leaders and print media groups cemented the tussle which severely affected all the communities. What had happened in Punjab will make a profound effect on the future of India. The wounds may be healed, but the scars would remain forever in mind. It is also an undisputed fact that most of the Sikhs were never with the Akalis and most Akalis were not secessionists in the beginning and had nothing to do with the extremists (Samiuddin edt. 1985).

The genesis of separation thoughts in selective Sikhs of Punjab was not a creation of contemporary period but having the seeds in the pre-independence period during the British Raj but the problem sharpened its teeth after Punjabi Suba issue in 1953 and Anandpur Sahib Resolution 1973 (hereafter ASR 1973).

1.6.1 Pre-Independence Period

The two nation theory and demand for a separate nation by Muslim leaders encouraged sections of a Sikh community to demand different status due to their vulnerability as a minority community (Singh and Chandra 1985; Jain 1995). As reflected in the enactment of a separate Anand Marriage Act in 1909, this made them

pursue their Khalsa identity as different from the Hindus (Ibid). At the beginning of the 20th century, the British also supported separate electorates for Sikhs in the electoral reforms of 1909.¹⁵

The British Government also passed the Sikh Gurdwara Act 1925, which gave the control of Sikhs temples to an elected body – SGPC, the most prominent, and top elected body of the Sikh Community at Golden Temple, Amritsar. They defined the Sikh as one who believes in the ten gurus and the holy Shri Guru Granth Sahib and not in any other religion (Jain 1995).

In the wake of the demand of the Muslim League (ML) at Lahore in 1940 that the Muslims of British India intend to form a separate nation, the radical Sikhs also tried to convey the same message to the British that they are also aspiring for a free nation. They asked for a province where the Sikhs would be in a dominant position as a separate nation (Ibid, 133-34). Planning of colonial rule to wean away the Sikhs from the national stream, the concept of ‘Azad Punjab’¹⁶ was evolved by the agile and fertile mind of Giani Kartar Singh. He also visualized that those territories of the Punjab, where Hindus and Sikhs predominated should constitute a separate unit (Chopra et al. 1984).

Shiromani Akali Dal¹⁷ (SAD) at its inception in 1920 raised the *slogan* ‘Azad Punjab’ and a delegation of Sikh leaders, including Baldev Singh, Ujjal Singh, Joginder

¹⁵The Lieutenant Governor supported the case of the Sikhs and wrote to the viceroy “in Punjab, the Sikh community is of greatest importance and should be considered to ensure its adequate representations” (Jain 1995).

¹⁶‘Azad Punjab’ concept was coined by the Akali Leader Giani Kartar Singh and further carry forward by Baldev Singh, Ujjal Singh and Joginder Singh under the leadership of Master Tara Singh. After the acceptance to form new nation Pakistan for Muslims, the Sikhs too tried for a separate nation, independent from Pakistan and India, for Sikhs (Jain 1995).

¹⁷ Akali Dal literally means the premier organization of the Akalis - “the immortal ones” - and has been the most powerful representative body of the Sikhs and their sympathizers since its inception on December 14, 1920. In spite of occasional difference of opinion among the Akali leaders on different issues and the emergence of the splinter groups from time to time, the Shiromani Akali Dal has remained in supreme control of the religious and political concerns of the Sikhs. With the continued hold over the SGPC and its vast influence in terms of money and manpower, the Shiromani Akali Dal continues to wield tremendous power and political influence since the heyday of the Akali Movement (1920-25). It is interesting to observe that while there are a number of other religious, cultural and political organisations of the Sikhs, it is the SAD alone which has come to be recognised as the sole representative of the Sikhs both in the political sphere, and to a great extent in the religious fields too (Singh 1996, 1). Shiromani Akali Dal which is currently recognized by the Election Commission of India is the one led by Parkash Singh Badal. <http://www.answers.com/topic/shiromani-akali-dal>. (Accessed on 21 July, 2015)

Singh under the leadership of Master Tara Singh met with Sir Stafford Cripps to present the Sikh community's point of view prior to the partition of India and pleaded that Sikhs would feel unsafe in either India or Pakistan (Jain 1995, 134). In another point of view, Akali leaders were too meet their schemes of 'Azad Punjab' and were communicating with Jinnah directly for a pact. The reaction of that came into strong opposition from the Hindu political circles (Kumar 1997, 18).

The Akali¹⁸ demanded the creation of a separate Sikh state encompassing Sikhs majority areas and their important holy shrines. Just before the arrival of cabinet mission, Akali Dal passed a formal resolution demanding Sikhistan, as they felt that "the entity of Sikhs is being threatened on account of the persistent demand of Pakistan by the Muslims" (Ibid). The partition of India in August 1947 had worsened the situation with more than 20 million people shifted from both sides, during which the Hindus and Sikhs "together faced the communal holocaust" (Singh 2007).

The fear of absorption into the larger Hindu religion and nation also made a section of Sikhs to demand a separate nation, like Pakistan for Muslims, as they want to live neither with India nor in Pakistan (Jain 1995, 130). This was in response to the demands of the Akalis in the backdrop of demands for Pakistan and the Congress party assurance that the interests of the Sikhs would be safeguarded (Wallace and Chopra 1988, 121).

1.6.2 Post-Independence Period

The relationship between Akalis and the Congress began to sour which was reflected in the resignation of Master Tara Singh from the Congress and difference of opinion over the State Reorganization Committee (SRC) in 1953 (Ibid, 121). The denial of Punjabi Suba by the Congress party infuriated the Akalis (Jain 1995). The Akali leader Master Tara Singh saw this as an attack on the Sikhs and felt that the Congress has not recognized the services of Sikhs towards nation (Ibid). It was pointed out that

¹⁸In the context of Sikhism, Akali "pertaining to Akal or the supreme power" may refer to: any member of the Khalsa, i.e. the collective body of baptized Sikhs, a member of the Akali movement (1919-1925), a politician of the Akali Dal (formed in Dec 1920 as a task force for the SGPC) later on become political party and a term for Nihang too (Jain 1995).

the Akalis demand for Punjabi Suba for the sake of Sikhs and not for the Punjabi's was one reason why the campaign became unsuccessful (Ibid).

Apparently the insistence on Punjabi to be written only in Gurumukhi script engendered anxieties among the non-Gurmukhi knowing Hindus alongside the idea of creating Punjab as a Sikh dominance state" (Madhok 1985, 79). As the Akali moderated their demand that the Sikh soldiers brace services to the country in the wars against China and Pakistan in 1962 and 1965 respectively, forced Central Government to accept the demand of Punjabi Suba, which was fulfilled in 1966 along with the formation of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana (Ibid, 138).

The idea of Khalistan has religious connotations as it indicates towards the rule of Khalsa. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who emerged as the leader of radical elements within the Sikh community in pursuance of this demand adopted hard lines of communalism. It is pointed out that "there was very little learning or piety of this man. He had a certain amount of followers among illiterate peasants but was unknown outside the districts of Central Punjab until his men clashed with Nirankaris on 13 April, 1978 at Amritsar on the day of Baisakhi. After that, Bhindranwale emerged as the champion of "orthodoxy" (Nayar and Singh 1984, 13).

However, the electoral performance of the Akali Dal was poor and they wanted certain issues to mobilize public towards them.¹⁹ Akali got only 1 seat out of 13 Lok Sabha seats in 1971 elections and 24 seats out of 117 in the state assembly in 1972.²⁰ Prominent Columnist M. J. Akbar observed that "one of the important causes of the crisis in the 1980's was that the people would not allow the Akalis to win and the Akalis would not allow themselves to lose".²¹ The Akali Dal meeting at Anandpur Sahib in

¹⁹Since independence, Punjab has been ruled both by the Congress and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). "Out of 31 governments, Congress party hold Chief Minister position more than other's that is 14 times, Shiromani Akali Dal got Chief Minister ship for 9 times (including the Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal from 2012-2017). The state was under President's Rule for 8 times. (Accessed on 26 May, 2016)

²⁰Reference of electoral record of Assembly elections 1972- (eci.nic.in/eci...1972/Statistics%20Report%20Punjab%201972.pdf) and for 5th Lok Sabha elections 1971- (eci.nic.in/eci_main1/ElectionsStatistics.aspx). (Accessed date 26 June, 2013)

²¹Cited (Jain 1995, 140).

October 1973 passed ASR 1973, which demanded more autonomy for Punjab along with other issues.²²

The demands of the resolution were comprehensive and far-reaching such as “state autonomy, Chandigarh as capital of Punjab, merger of Punjabi speaking areas into Punjab, water control to Punjab state, increase in proportion of Sikhs into the army, labour reforms, adoption of Punjabi language as second language in northern states, setup of Sikh migrants in Jammu and Kashmir, proper representation to the Sikhs in other states, abolishing the excise duty on tractors, improve the status of the labour class, establishment of broadcasting station at golden temple, amendment in the Hindu Succession Act for the future of the married girl and exemption of the farmers from the wealth and Estate tax, creation of a budget for the SC and Non-SC class for their welfare being and final one was ending the discrimination on the distribution of the Ravi-Beas waters and open the sugar and textile industry in Punjab.²³ The Resolution also reads as Shiromani Akali Dal’s keenness for having a Sikh nation (Jain 1995, 147).

The militancy in Punjab has a long historical evolution. There are attempts to trace its seeds from the divide and rule policy of the British and in context of under those communal reservations and two nation theory, the Sikhs also felt that they are separate from the rest particularly due to their vulnerability as a minority (Jain 1995). The activities of Arya Samaj in Punjab and the radical position taken by Dayananda Saraswati on the infallibility of ‘Vedas’ and his attempt to belittle Sikhism kindled tensions between Hindus and Sikhs. The Sikhs began to assert their separate identity and sections within the community and moved towards a mission to free Sikhism from Hindu influence (Barrier 1968, Jones 1973). The advocates of separate Sikh identity, particularly organizations like the Chief Khalsa Diwan, campaigned to purge Sikhism from Brahminical influence and to remove Hindu Gods and Goddess from the Golden Temple.²⁴

²²The resolution moved by the SGPC President S. Gurcharan Singh Tohra and endorsed by the then Chief Minister S. Parkash Singh Badal.

²³<http://www.sikhcoalition.org/sikhism21.asr>. (Accessed on 26 January, 2016)

²⁴They were successful in getting the idols removed in 1905 (Jain 1995, 130).

Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale had appointed as a head of Damdami Taksal²⁵ in August 1977. He was preaching Shri Guru Granth Sahib to Sikh students. At that time, he also started an Amrit Parchar program to convert Sikh children into pure Khalsa identity. The clash with Nirankaris in April 1978 and death of 13 Sikhs became a strong arm in the hands of radical elements to push their ideology faster.²⁶ The SGPC made to issue a '*Hukamnama*' from Akal Takhat declaring Nirankaris as the enemies of the Sikhs and called to sever all relations with them. The '*Hukamnama*' was followed by a series of violent incidents (Kapur 1987, 237).

After the court verdict, radical Sikhs killed the head of Nirankaris', Baba Gurbachan Singh in Delhi on 24 April 1980. This was followed by violent incidents, including hoisting of Khalistan flag at Anandpur Sahib in March 1981, Akalis tighten their positions over the issue of the separate Sikh nation, the murder of DIG Jullundur A. S. Atwal in April 1983 at Golden Temple premises, the occupation of Golden Temple by militants, Operation Bluestar in June 1984 and later murder of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984 and the eventual suppression of militancy by the state.²⁷

²⁵Damdami Taksal is the travelling Sikh University, which was founded by Shri Guru Gobind Singh to impart knowledge of Gurmat into Sikhs. The first and foremost function of the taksal is to educate Sikhs, to teach them the correct pronunciation of Gurbani, to do katha and kirtan. The taksal has always been a key strategic player in the activities of the Sikh nation, with first Jathedars Baba Deep Singh and Baba Gurbaksh Singh both being martyred defending the sanctity of Shri Hari mander Sahib, Amritsar. Sant Kartar Singh started the movement against the Anti-Sikh Nirankari movement and the whole world knows of the sacrifices made by Sant Jarnail Singh in the 80's against forces opposed to the panth www.damdemitaksal.org/about. (Accessed on 18th May, 2015)

²⁶The Nirankaris decided to hold their convention in Amritsar on April 13, the birth of Khalsa. it was alleged that the place, date and time of convention were deliberately chosen by the Nirankaris in connivance with the Congress, which had been out of power and was trying to embarrass the Akali-Janta alliance. One day before the convention, on April 12, the Nirankaris took out a procession, during the course of which their chief allegedly made some derogatory remarks against the Sikh religion...Next day some followers of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and those of the Akhand Kirtni Jatha, went totally unarmed to the venue of Nirankari congregation to dissuade the Nirankari Chief from denigrating Sikh religion and Gurus. The Nirankaris, who were well equipped with rifles and sten guns fired at the approaching Sikhs, resulting the death of thirteen of them...Meanwhile, the 62 Nirankaris, including the head of the sect, Baba Gurbachan Singh, charged in connection with the killing of 13 Sikhs in clash of 1979 had faced trial and were acquitted on the grounds that they had acted in self-defense (Gill 1997).

²⁷The important incidents in this regard can be summarized as follows from 1980 to 1984 up to Murder of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi:

24th April, 1980- Bhai Ranjit Singh of Akhand Kirtani Jatha killed head of Nirankaris' Baba Gurbachan Singh in Delhi.

20th March, 1981- Flag of new Republic of Khalistan hoisted at Anandpur Sahib.

9 September, 1981- Head of Hind Samachar Group (HSG) Lala Jagat Narain assassinated by militants.

13th April, 1982- Akali Dal organized world Sikh Conference to stress, Sikhs are separate Nation.

The Operation Bluestar has left a permanent scar on the minds of Sikh community, though most of them did not support Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Bhindranwale had been considered by many as a creation of the Congress party to weaken Akali Dal to make electoral gains (Wallace and Chopra 1988, 419). The challenge of communal disgust comes in the form of pressing 'terrorist movements' from numerically significant ethnic and self-conscious linguistics, cultural, religious and communal groups. They were deliberately provoked by separatist elites, not only to develop self-awareness but also to demand formal recognition of their distinct identities. They also demanded secession from their parent body politics (Jain 1995). In post-independence India, Akali demanded Punjabi Suba, while support of media houses like of Lala Jagat Narayan who vocally argued for Hindi for Hindus as mother language instead of Punjabi had aggravated the tension (Singh 1984, 47).

The panth was seen in danger, and a small group of hot-headed Sikhs joined militancy with a stated objective to establish a separate state (Jain 1995, 26). This had grown to the amalgamation of politics with religion as reflected in the indirect demand of the SGPC for an autonomous state within India through ASR in 1973 (Kaur and Rai 1984, 20). The extremist openly advocated that the Sikhs cannot either live in or with India. Thus, they are not only standing for the separate entity of the Sikhs but openly demanded an independent state (Chopra et al. 1984, 138).

24th April, 1982- Akali Dal launches Nahar Roko Agitation. Desecration of Gurdwaras and temples follows.
4th August, 1982- Nahar Roko SAD launches Dharma Yudh Morcha (DUM).
4th April, 1983- Rasta Roko agitation organized by Akali Dal.
25th April, 1983- DIG Jalandher A.S Atwal shot dead at the Golden Temple entrance.
6th October, 1983- President Rule applied in Punjab.
14th February, 1984- Hindu Suraksha Smiti organized Bandh in city, was marked by violence.
27th February, 1984- Pages of article 25 burnets by Akali Dal.
13th March, 1984- Attempt on the life of Chief Minister Darbara Singh.
28th March, 1984- President of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) Harbans Singh Manchanda shot dead.
2nd May, 1984- Longowal launches non-cooperation movement.
13th May, 1984- Chief Editor Hind Samachar Group (HSG) Romesh Chander assassinated by militants.
3-6th June, 1984- Operation Bluestar launched at Golden Temple by Indian Army against Bhindranwale and his companion militants.
31st October, 1984- Prime Minister Indira Gandhi assassinated in New Delhi by her Sikh bodyguards and the anti-Sikh riots began in Delhi (Singh 1992).

Later the situation disintegrated into full-fledged militancy with the formation of the Dharam Yudh Morcha (hereafter DYM) in 1982 (Kaur and Rai 1984, 20). The head of Damdami Taksal, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale declared a religious war for the Sikh community, first against the Nirankaris and then against the Indian state for allegedly ignoring community sentiments (Nayar and Singh 1984). Subsequently, violent clashes burst out in Amritsar, which very soon spread to every nook and corner of Punjab and became a reason for killing many innocent Hindus at the initial stage, but later on target many innocent Sikhs too.

In the villages and small towns in terrorist-ridden areas in Punjab, terror ruled. They themselves released '*firmons*' (circulars) and orders which were scrupulously obeyed, not because people liked or loved them, but due to fear of A.K. 47 rifles which were easily evident in the villages (Dang 2000). First, it was the Hindus who migrated from rural areas; then many Sikhs began to migrate followed by employees of the Punjab State Electricity Board, most of whom were Sikhs. Policemen also had started to shift their families from villages to towns. According to the news reports, the terrorists then started threatening Sikh families of dire consequences if they invite any Hindus on the occasion of marriage or any other similar function even doctors too directed to not to treat any Hindu patients (Ibid, 176). Further fracturing Hindu and Sikh relationship, the militant aimed to kill more people, especially Hindus as they actually wanted to start a civil war between Hindus and Sikhs. They were killing the Sikhs who have vocally opposed Bhindranwale and the idea of Khalistan (Kaur & Rai 1984).

A lot of literature is available that speaks on the seeds of separatism between Hindus and Sikhs which were deliberately sown by British. British used Sikhs to win wars and establish their rule. To communalize the situation further, the British pursued Sikhs to adopt a pure Khalsa identity to differentiate them from Hindus under a strategy of religious division. After 1947, the central leadership of the Indian Congress party assured Sikh leaders to deliver complete rights and powers once getting an attachment with India. Later, Congress did not succeed to keep their promise with them. Punjabi Suba movement, language issues, Green Revolution, ASR 1973 and Nirankari issues further aggravated the differences between Hindus and Sikhs.

In this irrational violence that was occurring in Punjab from 1978 to 1995, around 25, 000 people killed and the precise number of disappearances and illegal detainees still remained unknown, although the latter was estimated from 20, 000 to 40, 000 (Chima 2008). In this bloody conflict, the state had also lost 2 DIG's, 3 SSP's, 5 SP's, 12 DSP's, 32 Inspectors, 61 Sub-Inspectors, 112 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, 269 Head Constables, 817 Constables, 297 Punjab Home Guards and 180 Special Police Officers (The Tribune, DPR Punjab 2017).

The separatist movement and militancy have left deep wounds in the communal amity between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab and beyond. It is pointed out by various studies, like Sharda Jain in 1995, that Hindus themselves have contributed to the problem by disowning Punjabi as their mother tongue, but Akalis too have shared the blame that instead of making the demand for Punjabi Suba a regional issue, they converted it into a Sikh issue or a purely Akali issue. Another view on the issue is that the Hindus had become rootless, and had cut themselves off from the culture, history, and society of Punjab, thus leaving Sikhs to claim that Punjabi culture and depict the Punjab history as it has exclusively belonged to them (Singh 1984, 47).

Though militancy has ended, the residue of tension and communal discord in Punjab prevail even today as radical elements and sleeper cells²⁸ are regularly attempting to breach peace and harmony in the state through diverse ways.²⁹ The

²⁸Sleeper Cells: The teams designated to carry out an attack are sent to an area near the target. A team and/or people designated to supply to attack teams are sent to acquire or use existing safe houses, equipment and weapons necessary for the mission's success. These teams or any other supporting team may be living secretly with in the target area over a long period of time until called upon to do their duty. These cells are known as sleeper cells only when inactive. Once activated, sleepers assume the normal active tactical operations or logistic cells. This activation increases their detectability dramatically (Nance 2003). (Accessed on 31 May, 2015)

²⁹BKI chief arrested in Uttar Pradesh: Lahore-based Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) terrorist outfit's de facto chief Ratandeep Singh, who had only last year replaced ailing Wadhawa Singh as the BKI head and was sent by Pakistan's ISI (Inter Service Intelligence) was arrested by Punjab Police on September 17, 2014. He was arrested by State Special Operation Cell (SSOC) team of Punjab Police near Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/sair/Archives/sair13/1312.htm> (Accessed on 31 May, 2015). In another case, a sleeper cell of banned terror outfit Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) that had several Shiv Sena leaders on its radar was busted with the arrest of three people in Punjab's Gurdaspur district on Sunday. Sukhjinder Singh, Narinder Pal and Surinder Singh were travelling in a car when nabbed by the police party. An AK-47 rifle with one magazine and 20 cartridges, one 0.38 bore US made revolver with five cartridges and one Brazil made 0.45 bore Taurus pistol with three cartridges were recovered from them. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/Khalistan-liberation-force-terror-module-busted-in-Punjab/articleshow/22613882.cms>. (Accessed on 31 May, 2015)

present study attempted to revisit this troubled history of Punjab through State and National print media representations, and personal interviews of the people not only to understand the complexities of the problem but also to learn from the faults in history and suggest ways forward.

1.7 Review of Literature

Militancy problem in Punjab does not just spread the bloodshed in the state but also disturbed the relationship of different communities in the society which guns were not able to do alone. Also termed as Punjab Crisis, militancy affected all the institutions of democracy and tried to use them against each other. The peaceful arena of Punjab witnessed of a skirmish between society, political parties, administration and print media due to ideological and religious gaps. It not just divided the system into groups, but also tried to use them against each other.

There is ample literature available on the militancy problem in Punjab and its related subjects which disclose the issues and realities from different perspectives. The Indian and foreign writers, the expertise in various fields, wrote extensively on this sensitive and most debatable issues. They not only conveyed concerns related to the troubled period but also explored the cause of genesis in the vital point. Various studies by politicians, army officers, journalists, editors, writers, researchers, intellectuals, fundamentalists, former militants, police officers and teaching community defined their different experiences and narratives in this context from various angles. The research in the context of the similar role of print media has immense importance in connections with the militancy problem and its effect on the society. Various studies based on the part of print media revealed diverse new perspectives from different angles but limited itself in incidents and newspapers review.

The present research, as stated earlier, is based on the role of English and vernacular print media of Punjab along with its comparison with English national press that how print media represented several incidents related to militancy in Punjab and the motives behind it explored with qualitative analysis. It is evident that the print media groups of Punjab were established at the different span of time and were controlled by

different owners observing different religions and political ideologies. The representation of incidents in the shape of news, editorials, and articles left an impact on the society which the present research tried to explore further with the help of literature and fieldwork.

Attempts have been made to review the available literature related to the role of the Fourth Estate and militancy problem and related incidents of murders, army operations with special reference to Punjab. As per the research title, the review has been done in a thematic way. The themes are: 1.) Media, Labelling and Public Opinion 2.) Militancy problem and State Politics. 3.) Militancy, Religion and Media

1.7.1 Media, Labelling and Public Opinion

Scholars around the world explored the issue of labeling and sensitizations independently as well as in the context of print media. The news media is the most significant source of information for the public and helps them to prepare a view about an issue and promotes public opinion formation. The news media from long is coordinating in a democratic society with the communities to develop a piece of information. Author J. David Kenamer argued that the media can keep trying the separate political systems together. In easy sense, the media can connect society and democratic institutions while keeping a tab over governance. Public opinion has the force to influence policy-making and to take decisions accordingly (Kenamer 1994).

As Walter Lippman (2012) opines that public opinion is a triangular relationship between actions, the human picture of that scene and the human response to the designed view working itself upon the scene of action. A person itself intends the outline or thoughts after receiving a message and responding according to that imagined scene (Lippman 2012). Bruce Lannes Smith, Harold D. Lasswell and Ralph D. Casey in the work Propaganda, Communication and Public opinions (2015) argue that public communication is one of the essential channels of communication and to control it is the primary agenda of the governmental along with private groups and people. The government system around the world relies on propaganda to influence and control the public. To deal with large masses, modes of radio communication, print newspapers,

and films, etc. are used because of their high reach. The channel of mass communication whenever uses for the larger section induced to act together falls into despotism. The democratic social structure has easier access to public media where channels of communication have more significant chance to load a variety of interest and sentiments (Smith et al. 2015).

Stuart N. Soroka and Christopher Wlezien in their book *Degree of Democracy* (2010) see a strong connection between opinion and policy that reflects public priorities. The public is mostly inattentive to politics and uninterested and unknown about the actions of the Governments. The public notices the effects of the policymakers and responds accordingly. The public preference and public policy are the critical components of representative democracy, and public responsiveness (Soroka and Wlezien 2010).

Although, Christina Holtz Bacha and Jesper Stromback in book *Opinion Polls and the Media* (2012) define the importance of media where political leaders relied on media coverage as a proxy for public opinion. The media can shape the views of generals and in elections too because it is interrelated. The public notice and mass media cannot be segregated from each other. While doing agenda setting, the media can exert considerable influence over the public or can say the public to some extent influenced by the media's coverage (Bacha and Stromback 2012).

Maxwell Mccombs in his book *Setting the Agenda* (2014) argued over the agenda-setting theory which is a common phrase between the politics and public opinion. The news media has a significant and sometimes controversial role in setting the agenda demanded by the elite class. The expansion of the mass media industry in the 20th century enlarged its role in agenda setting in the society. It can form or deform the opinion. Scientists across the world have elaborated the ability of the news media and an expanding panoply of communication channels to influence many aspects of our political, social and cultural agenda (Mccombs 2014).

Another study *Contemporary Public Opinion: Issues and the News* (2017) discusses the agenda-setting role of news media, which all combine to make public

opinion. The news media can define an issue as necessary or more by placing it on different degrees. To that extent, the public affairs are also to be guided and influenced by public opinion. Public opinion is concerned with topics, interests, and behaviours where the concern of different individuals in a community is dependent on mutual action, cooperation or consent for the fulfillment of specific goals (McCombs et al. 2017).

in his book *Public Opinion-Propaganda-Ideology* (2012) discussed the case of Japan where the senior army and political officials admitted the importance of the press. According to them, the press and media can establish the favorable public opinion. Discussing the case of, who declared in his memories that there is an in-depth significance of the press because it has the power to influence public and opinion both (Schafer 2012).

Justin Lewis in his book, *Constructing Public Opinion: How Political Elites Do What They Like and Why* (2001) reveals that the representation of public opinion tends to be an absence of conflict. The media generally ignore the response by region, gender, race, party, education and the interests, mostly lost in the sentimentality of the majority. The unity of the public opinion is also linked to the ideology of political elites by using misleading metonymies in descriptions of political commitments. It also argues that the more use of the media tends to be more supportive in the delivery of their message more constructive (Lewis 2001).

Francis Wislon (2017) reveals that opinion is a different trend of thoughts on the different level where the view is held. The most accurate and defense of an idea make public an adjective which is describing a look. So the public must be having a plan which further can carry out or follow opinion and it could be in any direction. The nature of the public must be diverse as opinion has the tendency of diversification, and the newspapers and media channels are the primary organs of it. In scientific term, public opinion is a series of reaction involved in the collective discussion, and there must be a communication needed to participate (Wislon 2017).

Wolfgang Donbach and Michel W. Traugoot (2007) argues that the social construction of reality is affected by external factors such as culture and the social environment and it makes an impact over the human behaviour and attitudes. The human mind has ideas that exist in their minds and imaginations. That idea further tends to be behaviour that also describes an individual and its nature. It has a more significant role in social reality perceptions which affected power to influence other attitudes and actions and it is the public opinion too. Public opinion denominates the relationship between the Government and the people, and it is also taken as a factor to understand social change (Donbach and Traugoot 2007).

1.7.2 Militancy Problem and State Politics

The mutual suspicion and distrust between Hindus and Sikhs during Punjabi Suba movement was carried by Akali Dal for a separate Sikh province. The movement was not only based on the issue of language and religion rather cast and creed too were carried out simultaneously by the political and fundamentalist for gain which damaged the relationship of communities in Punjab (Nayar and Singh 1984). The pressures of electoral politics and attempts by different political parties to advance their electoral goals through aggravating religious issues leading Hindu-Sikh disharmony have been particularly criticized for their thoughtless belligerence (Gaur 1984, Surjeet 1992, Chima 2008).

Religious nationalism has been held at the root of the problem which culminated in militancy and violence and counter-violence. There were many reasons for the trouble in the state and print media's news representation was leaving an influence on readers mind and other public. The Sikh politics of the region has historical roots of Sikh communal consciousness (Deol 2000). Terrorist violence results essentially from ethnic, religious and ideological motivations and militancy in Punjab is one of the Ethno-nationalist movement for the independent Sikh state (Chima 2008).

Mark Tully and Satish Jacob in "*Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle*" describe the role of the Centre and State Governments which did not deliver their responsibilities with maturity and imagination. it has been seen as an important cause that turned the

situation worse. The army operation in Amritsar further fractured the relationship and rubbed the social and political affairs (Tully and Jacob 1985). But Kripal Dhillon in his book *"Identity and Survival: Militancy in India 1978-1993"* critically analysis from the perspective of state and central politics to find the realities while discussing the role of the big political names of the Indian politics (Dhillon 2006).

Writings about crushing violence and support the government action is also not absent either. Operation Bluestar in this strand of literature was an inevitable action as the situation was turned worst due to negligence's and the Central Government was left with not any other option. The role of the state and central leadership is acknowledged at par responsible for producing disharmony between Hindus and Sikhs either directly or indirectly, supporting the extremists (Nath 2008).

Studies blame the Sikh community as well as centre led Congress party and state parties due to their inaction during militancy. Instead of taking a decision to solve the problem, the two political parties were trying to keep the upper hand over each other. The politicizing of the problem aggravates the trouble. The day to day incident record provides a critical chance to review the issues to find the view of the writer itself when he was editor of a newspaper and Rajya Sabha member (Singh 1992). The changing political scenario of the state after 1980 studied in book *"Political Dynamics of Punjab"* forced many new things to take place resulted in new outcomes, especially into a more aggressive form of politics made an impact over the state (Wallace 1981).

Paul Wallace and Surendra Chopra (1988) in their book *"Political Dynamics and Crisis in Punjab"* deliberate vastly in context of societal violence erupted to construct Khalistan through violence on the bases of discrimination with Sikhs. State and Centre Governments reached at a crisis point due to failure in solving the matter. Finally, it led towards an army operation which increased differences between the Sikhs and the government while Hindu faced irony of it (Wallace and Chopra 1988).

J. S. Grewal and Indu Banga (1998) in book *"Punjab in Prosperity and Violence: Administration, Politics and Social Change"* discussed the state perspective and threw light over political, economic, social and cultural issues. The study gives insight into the

role of administration, violence, demographic change and condition of the relatively unprivileged sections of the society incorporating women, dalits, labourers and other village communities. The study indicates that how various factors were affecting the state politics and the political parties which were eagerly waiting to grab power which resulted in the collision of policies (Grewal and Banga 1998).

Anup Chand Kapur (1985) in the book *“The Punjab Crisis: An Analytical Study”* brought the history of pre and post-independence period of India. The British Commission received the demand of Akali Dal to form a separate Sikh state with a majority of the Sikh population and Sikh shrines which started a new debate in the course but later it was denounced. The views of the British members not to divide Punjab and to save it from disaster were ignored by the majority officers. The aftermath of partition discussed the state politics and course of Akalis to take the path of militancy to grab the right (Kapur 1985).

Satyapal Dang in the book *“Terrorism in Punjab (2000)”* reviews the political and religious role of the people, and political leaders to generate terrorism in the state. But later, they themselves faced the irony of the attacks. A study by Sikh scholar Gopal Singh (1984) discuss the role of political leaders and eager of the minority community to increase political assertions regarding identity, culture, language, and religion, etc. and crossing the state boundaries while discussing the concept of militancy, terrorism and state terrorism to snub the voice (Singh 1984).

There are attempts to see the issue from the perspectives of the Hindus as well as the Sikhs, in such a way to underscore the trajectory of events which have driven sections of both the communities in a situation of mutual incomprehension (Vedalankar 1984, Singh 1988). The extreme fanning of religious differences by vested interests to fuel the problems in an uncontrollable case in blatant violation of the fundamental tenants of the religion has found a place in some other studies (Chopra et al. 1984). The political, economic and social interests behind the mobilization along religious lines, leading to the killing of people with a political call of protecting faith has also been studied (Kumar, 1984).

This is the fact that all the Sikhs were not in favor of extremists, but due to real Punjabi demands, they failed to shift these demands into Akali or Sikhs demand. It further created question marks over their intentions while Hindus too tried to reduce the influence of Sikhs encouraged by Arya Samajist. The militant leader Bhindranwale captured the leadership of a particular religious order and grossly distorted the traditions. The amalgamation of the use of religion for political gains has become a permanent feature of the Indian political system, and Punjab is an example of that (Samiuddin 1985).

J. S. Grewal in his another book *Master Tara Singh in Indian History: Colonialism, Nationalism and the Politics of Sikh Identity* (2017) tried to revive the role of the top Sikh leader of the 1940's when India was on the verge of the divide as demanded by the Muslim League. Master Tara Singh whereas first came into discussion with the British to make safe space for Sikhs. Though he accepted the Congress plan and decided to attach with India, later adopted a different path due to the failure of the congress party in their committed promises. Master Tara Singh's role during the formation of Punjab Suba is a fight to protect the rights of Sikhs which diverted the path of Akali Dal from Congress and become the base of disagreement between the national and state party which clearly can be seen during the Punjab conflict period (Grewal 2017).

1.7.3 Militancy, Religion and Media

Cynthia Keppley Mahmood in the book *"Fighting for Faith and Nation"* (1996) brought views of the former militants involved during militancy movement in Punjab. The dialogues and discussions on various aspects brought a different point of their struggled life during a mission in active movement. The work argues and gives glimpses of militancy movement through which the actual narratives from the real movement participants were confronted with the state (Mahmood 1996).

R. McChesney (2004) in the book *"The Problem of Media: US communication politics in the twenty-first century"* argues that there are policies, structures, and subsidies to control the logic and nature of the media. Whether sometimes the control

is active, it creates a political problem which effect the society and fewer of that unavoidable. The issue of media exists in all societies, regardless of their structure, but the range of available solutions for each society is influenced by its political and economic structures, cultural traditions, and communication technologies, etc. The direct link to keep control over the media and the society is self-evident. But in democratic societies, the same tension exists between those who hold power and those who do not; only the battle assumes different forms (McChesney 2004).

Jessica Stern in the book “Why the religious militancy killed: Terror in the name of God” (2009) express the impact of religion on the human mind. The book argues that to maintain religious supremacy, as the holy books define, a human being has converted into the machine of killing. The spiritually charged brigade of terrorists firmly believe in the existence in the presence of, and it is leading towards mass destruction. The religious militancy or its bigger shape religious terrorism defines the act with the objective of revenge and to control the political power to establish a designated territory further. Around the world, this phenomenon is working, and adopted by militants or terrorists fighting in the name of god (Stern 2009).

Religion was a major considering factor for every decision in political front and issues like regional identity and economic interests of different social classes back to the fore and river water agreement mounted the tension between Akalis and state (Jodhka 2005, Chopra 2012). On the contrary, there are studies that in particular refute the above argument. Jafar (1988) in his study “*The Sikh Volcano*” has argued that there was no foreign hand involved in Punjab’s militancy and it is the failure of the Indian Government (Jafar 1988).

The life and exploits of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the leader of the militants, has also been the subject matter of a few other studies. His emergence from the position of an ordinary Sikh preacher to the head of the Damdami Taksal has been traced through religious and social dimensions, apart from the role of Congress and Shiromani Akali Dal in his making (Jafar 1988, Surjeet 1992, Nayar 2012).

Julianne Schultz (1998) in his book *“Reviving the Fourth Estate”* depicts the essence of media, which acquired the tag of watchdog of a democratic system due to its acceptance and nature of work. It also turned into a more acceptable global industry of information today. Another perspective of the study is of increasing concentration over media ownership by a politician, businessman and ethnical groups which affected the theme of the media and its goal which further required changes to keep its sanctity through journalistic independence and political autonomy (Schultz 1998). A study from the titled perspective of the development of media after the independence of India *“History of Indian Journalism”* (1955) by J. Natarajan brought a concise study of the development of English and other language press of India. The work throws a welcome light on how the media established itself from a single unit into grip over the system detailed minutely (Natarajan 1955).

Another study by Robin Jeffrey *“India’s Newspaper Revolution: Capitalism, Politics and the Indian Language Press, 1977-1999”* opines that how just an information provider entity turned itself into a vast, global industry. In India, the English language gave space to Indian languages to establish in the deep regional areas equally to the politics. It changed the behaviour and nature of the Indian politics and the readers who are feeling the power with a newspaper in the hands (Jeffrey 2000).

Studies over the changing viewpoint and trend of the media community and conversion of it into the industry to produce and distribute news in business. Vanita Kohli-Khandekar in their book *“The Indian Media Business”* (2013) reflect the idea of technology which has changed the course of the news and Hindi media in the country and is riding the race of this significant change speeding up the activity of the media (Kohli and Khandekar, 2013).

A study by Usha M. Rodrigues and Maya Ranganathan *“Indian News Media: From Observer to Participant”* (2014) hints towards the changing course of media’s nature where media itself is developing arguments and joins as a participant in the subject instead of an observer. The privatization, new communication technology and the rise of individualism developed media from a different perspective (Rodrigues and Ranganathan 2014).

The communalization of the Sikh community and leading sections within the community joins militancy is explained through troubled histories (Singh and Chandra 1985, Singh 1988). Crushing Sikhs by the British to establish their regime and as well to please them for further gains shed dim light over various aspects like nature and level of efforts of the Sikh community. The British in the whole game proposed Azad Punjab formula with Jinnah between India and Pakistan but rejected later (Vedlankar 1984).

Though, the existing literature is available on the role of the Fourth Estate, Punjab problem, political violence and many other issues, the sensitive issue lack a comparative approach of English and vernacular newspapers of Punjab, and view of New Delhi media. The research is based on such conspicuous gaps reviewed from English and vernacular newspapers and English national press to understand the gravity of the issue.

However, as stated above, since present research sees the role of print media in the context of militancy in Punjab in generating a fractured public sphere which in the works discussed above is absent. The study aims to fill such a conspicuous gap which is examined and analyzed through comparison of English and two vernacular newspapers of Punjab and two English newspapers of Delhi with selected editorials and news stories along with personal interviews collected through field study. To find the personal experience of people affected with the situation and the impact created by print media with news stories and editorials over the mind, 11 life histories are incorporated in Chapter 4. The research study explored the representation of the print media which allegedly had more profound the gap between two communities.

So, it is a very humble contribution to the existing research. Nature, causes, course of militancy and the role of different stakeholders have been studied already. So also is the historical evolution of communitarian tensions in Punjab and the consequences of militancy movement over the lives of people in Punjab.

1.8 Research Problem

The research study is based on the period of 1980-1984 to find out the comparison of mediating realities of various print media groups of Punjab and role of Delhi print media in the context of the militancy problem in Punjab. The common man of Punjab primarily faced violence and counter-violence by the state and the militants and vice versa in the 1980's and continued up to mid 1990's.³⁰

The violent happenings were creating a fissured environment in the society, and political parties were busy in delivering statements through newspapers. The English and vernacular print media of Punjab was becoming a partaker in the conflict and taken sides during militancy carnage instead of providing solutions. The Politically and ideologically divided print media was indulged in conflict and newspapers became a reliable source to condemn each other. Like any other militancy movement around the world, the Sikh separatist movement in Punjab has deeply fissured the public sphere with endeavors to fashion and de-form publics. The battles inside the public area are reflections of a deeply divided public, which often complicated the existing situation of tension and violence.

Print Media has played a significant role not only in disseminating the correct information about incidents but also characterizing the militancy movement purely for a separate homeland. Since the electronic and visual media during the selected period of research had not grown to the present stature, print media was particularly more popular in Punjab during the peak period of militancy from the 1980's. In 1980's, newspapers like Punjab Kesri, Jagbani, Jansatta, Akali Patrika, Rojana Ajit, Punjabi Tribune, Ajj DI Awaz, The Tribune, The Times of India, The Indian Express, The Hindustan Times, The Statesman etc. were some of the popular vernacular and English language newspapers in Punjab, which were engaged in news delivery during militancy

The research study is based on five major newspapers: two vernaculars and one English newspaper from Punjab, Punjab Kesri of Hindi, Rojana Ajit of Punjabi and The

³⁰<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/beant-killer-tara-nabbed-in-thailand/27150.html>.(Accessed on 25 May, 2015)

Tribune of English language selected as state origin newspapers. The Times of India and The Hindustan Times of English language selected on the base of higher circulation, to find a view of the National press over the concerned issue. Apart of that, personal interviews of people in eight different categories collected through field study in three regions of Punjab in context of militancy problem from the year 1980 to 1984, included in the thesis.

All these newspapers have been quite active in not only reporting the diverse aspects of militancy but also in promulgating their set positions on this grave issue. Militancy was simultaneously a crisis and as well as an opportunity for them. The research tries to review and understand the embedded nature of print media during militancy problem in Punjab. The print media was giving news according to ideology and taste of their readers. The print media was mainly affecting the public mind and readers living in the urban and rural area, so the opinion too was evicted. Both the communities not spared from the mediated view of the news.

1.9 Research Objectives

1. To explore how print media were representing the diverse incidents associated with militancy and what were the reasons behind the politics of such representations.
2. To explore whether the furnished news items were properly describing the incidents to the extent that it moulded and shaped the opinion of the masses.
3. To prepare a comparative analysis of the print media representations for the occurred incidents related to militancy in Punjab.

1.10 Hypotheses

The study is based on following formulated hypotheses:

1. The English and vernacular newspapers due to having ideological bases were not neutrally reporting the occurring incidents related to militancy and worked according to their set ideological positions.

2. The influence of the vernacular and the English newspapers on sensitive issues and incidents occurred during 1980-1984 was a major contributory factor in moulding and shaping the opinions and sentiments of the readers.

The independent variable in the first hypotheses is due to the ideological bases of the newspapers which was affecting the reporting. Being an effective cause, the dependent variable in the second hypothesis is the sensitive issues and incidents, which were moulding and shaping the opinions and sentiments of their readers. The research through ground studies found that the reporting of the newspaper was affecting the thoughts and opinions of its readers and general people in higher numbers. The study thus proves the hypotheses of the research.

1.11 Research Methodology

The study has used qualitative methodology for understanding the role of print media in shaping public opinion in context of militancy problem in Punjab, 1980-84. Qualitative research methodology aims to explore social reality that is constructed by actors in society. As, Lapan et al. (2011) argue that qualitative research has comprised dimension of interpretive perspective that focuses on uncovering participant's views and a critical perspective. Further, it also examines ways in which power is embedded in social settings. Qualitative research offers to employ inductive reasoning.

The study has employed content analysis method to analyse and explain the problem of the research. Content analysis is relatively a recent method. As, Mayring defines qualitative content analysis as "an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within the texts with the context of communication, following content analytical rules step by step models, without rash quantification." Text refers to a wide range of communication media that is stored in many different formats. The content analysis can be applied over texts, audio recordings, television shows, and movies, images, and telephone calls, as well as to many forms of electronic data, now including social media as well (quoted in Drisko and Maschi 2016, 5-7). The present study has used the method to analyze the printed contents i.e., news, editorials, and articles published in various English, Hindi and Punjabi newspapers from the year 1980 to 1984. The print media during Punjab militancy was delivering the news and articles

related to incidents of violence and other issues about Punjab problem where this kind of fact was actually under construction, which was intensely mediated and carefully nurtured and constructed by the print media.

The research included detailed selected cases of reporting of various incidents published in English and vernacular print media from the year 1980 to 1984. The Operation Bluestar and assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in October 1984 added more stiffness and confrontation in the region. Total five newspapers, three state and two national, as mentioned earlier, are selected to find the more realities about the role delivered by print media in Punjab and outside Punjab in the context of the problem. The Tribune of English; Punjab Kesri of Hindi along with Rojana Ajit of Punjabi is based in Punjab with higher circulation while The Times of India and The Hindustan Times based in Delhi during the time are also select by higher distribution.

The the state origin newspapers have not just published the news related to violence, but it became a partaker in the troubled period. The conflict in which the society was severely crushed, the print media was publishing news influenced mainly with their group and reader's ideology which further affected reader's sentiments. The study attempted to highlight the diverse role, where it not only de-formed the opinion but became a facilitator in provoking the communal tension and internal security. The study also tried to find the reality for the set period from field interviews of people who have seen the carnage during the year 1980 to 1984.

The research used both the primary and secondary data for exploring the dissenting voices of the media and the public. The study has incorporated personal interviews of people attached, associated and affected by militancy in Punjab collected with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire in three languages through field interviews for eight selected groups. The sample is chosen from various cities and villages of Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab.

The secondary sources undoubtedly included autobiographies, news clippings, editorials and articles of various English and vernacular newspapers; journal articles, magazines, biographies and related books with the research topic. Few of the

biographies such as *The Knights of Falsehood* and *The Punjab Story* by KPS Gill, former DGP of Punjab Police, and *Terrorism in Punjab* by Satyapal Dang and *Regionalism and Nationalism in India-The case of Punjab* by Harnik Deol explored the mediated view. *The Punjab Crisis: Challenges and Response* by Abida Samiuddin covered selective print media incidents related to colonialism, religion and its link with militancy.

1.11.1 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The total population of Punjab was 202.82 lakh³¹ in the census of 1991 and 277.04 Lakh³² in the 2011 census. The study has selected 103 samples out of the population, which comprises 68 males and 35 females. In this research, the women are not in proportionate number to their male counterparts. The reasons for the low number of females is due to lack of willingness to talk over the sensitive issue, low availability of the newspapers at home, lack of reading habits during the concerned period and in few cases rejection by the male head of the house are few constraints. Second, the number of Muslims and Christians are also not in proportionate due to low in population during set research period and lack of interest to talk about the sensitive issue.

The used sampling technique is stratified sampling. Stratified sampling is a way to guarantee desired representations of relevant subgroups within the samples. In other words, some population can be subdivided into subgroups, known as strata (one is called stratum). Stratified sampling involve strategically selecting participants from each sub group when the research goal is to compare the behaviour of participants from different sub groups of the population (Gay et. al 2012, 133).

To conduct field study, a semi-structured questionnaire prepared in three different languages - English, Punjabi, and Hindi is designed to ease the respondent in context of communication. A total sample of four important communities has been

³¹Population censuses 1991 (http://censusindia.gov.in/DigitalLibrary/data/Census_1991/Publication/India/45969_1991_CHN.pdf). (Accessed on 10 July 2017)

³²Population censuses 2011 (http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-prov-results/data_files/india/table_1.pdf). (Accessed on 10 July 2017)

collected during the field study. It comprises majority of population of Sikhs along with minority communities such as Hindus, Christians, and Muslims.

People of different age groups above 55 years living in urban and rural background have been covered in the study.³³ The reason to keep the sample restricted at 103 numbers is as – first, the sensitiveness of the issue and many people found themselves uneasy to discuss the sensitive subject due to fear and security reasons, the second is of limited approach of print media in various areas during the period of the research, and the third is much affected and concerned persons migrated from Punjab to other states and foreign countries. All these are major constraints before increasing the size of sample size. Due to a vast area of Punjab, it was tough to reach in each area of three regions due to the limited resources and the time bound work.

Further, the sample of 103 respondents has been divided into the eight different groups as per research requirements. The 11 life stories of victims, police, politicians, journalists, reader, ex-militants have been analysed in chapter 4.

1.11.2 Data Collection

The chosen sample for the study has been used during the field study that has been conducted through framed semi-structured questionnaires. For the effective response, the questionnaire is divided into four themes; General Information containing necessary information about the interviewee, the role of print media and its impact on public opinion which includes views of the respondents on the effect of news content over the mind of respondents and how it formed or de-formed public opinion, relationship and influence to know the depth of the problem and its impact over the individual and the last section deals with Role of government to find a clear view about the role and workings of the than concerned governments to control militancy in Punjab. Following necessary information collected through a questionnaire about respondents is converted into a table with percentage calculated vertically and graphic form for the easy understanding of the sample collected through field study.

³³According to geographic and historical reasons, Punjab is divide into three different regions.

1.12 Relevance of Study

The study looks at the communitarian leanings of the vernacular press in Punjab and how they construct categories according to the positions they subscribe to. It explores the manner in which the murder of a prominent journalist has been representationally lost in its significance due to the media divergence. The study also argues that the set positions of the newspapers allowed them to report the news stories in their way, and the state and nationalist rhetoric continue to wield considerable influence in deciding the character of the media scope.

Accuracy, impartiality, and responsibility in the public interest are considered to be the three main tenants of journalism. At a broader level, the proposed study would complicate such an idealist modern notion of media and would offer a much more nuanced and grounded picture wherein idealism is lost in practice. The proposed study may be seen as a humble attempt to untie the limits of our modernity and the social, economic and political situation within which South Asian media operate. The study would also try to bring back the memories of one of the most violent separatist movements in South Asia back into the academic discussion, at a time when the government agencies are expressing concerns that the attempts for the revival of militarism/extremism are underway to again create an atmosphere of tension in Punjab.

One of the major thrust areas of media studies and an area of growing academic interest in the contemporary world is the politics of representation as played out and practiced in the media.³⁴ The proposed study would foreground the communitarian locations of the modern press, creating conflicting discourses on militancy in Punjab in the war of representations they fought in the public sphere. At the theoretical level, the study would problematize the notion of the public sphere as an arena of free discussions to arrive at consensual and informed agreements and would recapture it as a sphere of competing and contesting attempt to shape public opinion.

³⁴Representation refers to the construction in any medium (especially the mass media) of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. It involves the production of meaning through language, discourse and image and occupies a central place in studies on culture (Hall 1997, Fulton and Harris 1991).

1.13 Limitations

1. From the available archives of five newspapers of Punjab and Delhi edition, few copies of Punjab Kesri, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times are not available for comparison due to unavailability in the record.

2. Few prominent persons refused to give interviews for research, research topic due to the sensitivity of the issue.

3. The concerned respondents, due to the sensitivity of the research topic, incorporated in the interviews from urban and rural background refused to click photographs or record their voice.

4. The researcher belongs to Punjab and this research is a sensitive case of Punjab. The people with whom researcher met were full of emotions, especially two major communities. Therefore, subjectivity will be of the researcher, if any.

5. The real names and place with the respondents actually belong, changed to keep their identity safe.

6. Few newspapers were not in fine condition and damaged due to various reasons, so researcher tried well to collect the original news through photography.

1.13.1 Delimitations

1. The study restricts itself to the period of 1980-1984, the time surrounding the birth of infamous militancy era in Punjab.

2. The sample for the study has set at 100 due to the limitation of resources and time while total 103 sample interviews were collected.

3. The conflict was primarily encompassing around Sikhs and Hindus along with Nirankaris. Therefore, the focus was primarily set on both the key communities to obtain an actual picture of the time span.

4. Due to the limitations of the resources, the help of social media and mobile was also taken to collect interview data.

1.14 Timeline of Study

Keeping the research objectives in mind, the field visit was designed in two stages. After finalizing the topic with due emphasis on relevancy, a list of required study

material was prepared with the help of supervisor for study. For collection of content, the research material, books, reports, and related literature was explored from various state and national libraries and institutions.

It collectively took nine visits in the year 2015 and 2016 at Amritsar and Chandigarh and in the year 2017 at New Delhi for the collection of English newspapers from archives. For newspaper clippings of the year 1980 to 1984, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar was visited for three times and two newspapers, Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit were collected. In the next round, Panjab University, Chandigarh was visited for the books and other research material.

The next visit was again made to Amritsar to collect remaining three newspapers; The Tribune, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times but due to library reshuffling in the university, the copy of The Hindustan Times was remain pending. Again, Golden Temple library in Amritsar was visited to collect the Delhi edition newspapers, but in their selective collection of the newspapers, The Hindustan Times was not available. It took about five months to find the English newspapers after continuous efforts from Delhi Public Library, Delhi as the archive department of the newspaper was demanding a hefty fee.

After analyzing significant militancy incidents from newspapers, an open-ended questionnaire was prepared with an objective in mind to achieve the goal. During three months of review and research from January to March 2016, a semi-structured open qualitative based questionnaire was ready. A pilot study was conducted on the group of 10 people in Bathinda in May 2016 to check the questionnaire structure and the data collected through it. After approval of the supervisor, the field study was carried out to record a public view of the different class, and creed from various areas of Punjab. The groundwork was sturdy, but it revealed many different realities.

Eight categories were structured out in the questionnaire to record people's opinion as per category for actual picture and to reduce bias. A list was prepared of concerned persons with the help of the Internet, police department, senior journalist and politicians and the interview were carried out from Bathinda city. During the course,

visits were made to Rampura, Bhagta Bhai Ka, Talwandi Sabo, Chak Fateh Singh Wala, Jagga Ram Tirath, Jaito and Goniana Mandi in Bathinda district, Mansa city along with village's Lambi, Badal, Malout, Gidderbaha, Abohar and Muktsar district in the first phase. In the second phase, cities like Barnala, Sangrur, Dhuri, Patiala, and Chandigarh were covered through bus and train for the interview of retired police officials, victims, retired judges and journalist etc.

In the third phase, people from Nawashahar, Phagwara, Jalandhar and Ludhiana districts were interviewed along with victims, readers, ex-militants and ex-journalist. In the Fourth phase, Taran Taran and Amritsar District along with Ajnala, Harike Pattan, Jeera and Kotkapura were traveled for interviews. With the help of social media and phone, three journalists, four readers, and two victims now living in Chandigarh, Jammu and Mohali was interviewed. All these links were received during fieldwork and random interviews in Punjab. The research work for a fixed period of 1980 to 1984, the sample size, area, type of respondent and questionnaire were discussed and designed according to the research period for in-depth exploration of this sensitive issue.

CHAPTER 2

MILITANCY IN PUNJAB: DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS COVERED BY PRINT MEDIA

The Punjab problem, which attracted the world attention, has proved to be very knotty. It certainly does not admit of easy solution. It is like many other problems, partly religious, partly socio-economic and somewhat political in its genesis. Politics, partly politics, in particular, has made it more robust than it was in the genesis (Samiuddin 1985). The misfortune event in Punjab found its base in April 1978 on the day of Baisakhi when first time Sikhs and Nirankari's directly engaged in bloodier conflict at Amritsar. This incident became a primary reason for societal fragmentation and to satisfy Sikh's resentment, issued a Hukamnama (religious order) to sever all social relationships or ties with Nirankaris by SGPC, a leading representative body of Sikhs.

The anti-Nirankari Hukamnama had several critical political effects. It caused tension between the Janta Central Government and Shiromani Akali Dal. Other political parties in India, including Akali Dal's Janta allies, criticized the edict for not respecting the constitutional right of Nirankaris (Chima 2008, 44). On the contrary, senior Sikh leaders, Jagdev Singh Talwandi, and Gurcharan Singh Tohra responded by warning the press and other political parties not to meddle in the internal affairs of the Sikhs by commenting on the Hukamnama, which they described as being above the Constitution for Sikhs (Ibid, 44).

The religious conflict remains primarily responsible for the dividing line in the society that forced people to take positions, in favour or against it, thus creating a fractured scenario. The tension and bloodshed did not stop here, and Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh became the first victim of this conflict. He was killed in April 1980 by Sikh extremists in Delhi in revenge. Afterward, bloody events became a part of the routine life of Punjabis.

The extremism did not take a long time in fostering the militancy movement which is considered to be the bloodiest chapter in the history of post-independence Punjab. The problem not only disintegrated the centuries-old relationship between Hindus and

Sikhs but also created distrust in their minds that became a cause of concern for the society. The formation of this militant movement against the state also relies on failures to deliver justice to the affected people that later produced a spark of revenge against the minority Hindu community. The Congress government was in power at the Centre looked handicapped to control.

Militancy in Punjab was first such case of post-independent India, which not only posed a challenge to the Centre but also challenged the diverse forms of unity acquired after huge sacrifices by countrymen. In the freedom struggle, the people of Punjab fought rigorously for the freedom of the nation but the political actions in the meantime brought many issues to the floor such as Punjabi Suba issue³⁵, language issues and more autonomy to the state as per ASR 1973 etc. were the few issues which became a point of worry for the majority community.

However, Punjab was doing well in the Green Revolution, but increasing gap in economic and social disparities blow the concept of social society. Hindu and Sikhs were living together for centuries. Guru Gobind Singh established Khalsa Panth in 1699 to fight against injustice (Prothero 2007, 161). The separatism seeds sown by the British further extended the division and carried Sikhs away from Hinduism.³⁶ In addition, Hindu religious leaders enhanced the division too.³⁷

The unfateful event of April 1978 proved to be a point of distraction and by the 1980's a clearcut division seen between Hindus and Sikhs was visible. In the verdict of Karnal court in 1980 in context to the Amritsar conflict, all the Nirankaris accused in the murder of 13 Sikhs were freed, and not a single man was found guilty in that bloody clash. It further infuriated few hardliner Sikhs resulting in the assassination of Nirankari

³⁵The denial of Punjab Suba by the Congress party too infuriated the Akalis (Jain 1995).

³⁶In 1855 when the British organized the first census in India, the Sikhs were not count separately. Many historians feel that if there had been no mutiny in 1857, the Sikh religion would have disappeared completely or would have survived as an ordinary gurudom. The munity came as a big boon to the Sikhs. It brought new life to the Sikhism. After the munity, the recruitment of Hindus into the Army was curtail and uncontrolled recruitment of Sikhs took place (Vedalankar 1984, 75).

³⁷The activities of Arya Samaj in Punjab and the radical positions taken by Dayanada Saraswati on the infallibility of Vedas and his attempt to belittle Sikhism kindled tensions between Hindus and Sikhs. The Sikhs began to assert their separate identity and sections within the community got into a mission of freeing Sikhism from Hindu influence (Barrier 1968, Jones 1973).

head. Punjab very soon witnessed arm struggle. Sooner it got the shape of separatist movement and murder of innocent public filled fear in the minds of people especially in the Hindu community.

From the year 1980 to 1984, the state had filled with troubles due to the failure of the social and economic system and murders of people related to media, police, political, judiciary, no one was safe from bloodshed and violence. The rise of murder cases became a curse for the society and division took place in the hearts of both the communities equally. The whole incident was backed by the Pakistan Government which was acting at the behest of imperialism to destabilize the country (Surjeet 1992, 179). The soil was ripe for the separation due to rising activities of communal forces and polarization among Hindus and Sikhs was complete (Ibid, 179).

The migration of Hindus to other states for livelihood started and Sikhs after the 1984 Delhi riots were coming to Punjab.³⁸ Many of the Hindus, who were staying here, had started wearing turbans with a long beard on their faces (Kumar 1997, 309). As Punjab was gripped by the militancy, the administration looked helpless to control the situation. Murders after the killing of Nirankari Sant Baba Gurbachan Singh in Delhi became a routine affair and no one was daring to condemn it due to fear of the militants. First, militants were targeting Nirankaris, later Hindus and thereafter Sikhs became the target of their tolerance.

The Fourth Estate, the press, and politicians too were caught in this storm of violence, which inhaled many of the precious lives. These ghastly murders, as it belonged to a different class, caste and creed, mounted pressure over the government for reaction against them. The entire scenario brought print media on the toe to grab the opportunity. The English and vernacular media of Punjab and Delhi was primarily covering the incidents related to militancy. These killings were affecting the masses as

³⁸The people though fed up with the terrorist activities and maintaining peace and harmony in the state as whole, are not aroused against the terrorist's activities and lack the patriotic feelings to denounce their anti-national activities. Moreover, with the soil ripe for communal forces due to the activities of communal organization the polarization among the Hindus and Sikhs is complete. With the migration of members of the minority community from Punjab and of Sikhs to Punjab, the situation has further aggravated (Surjeet 1992, 179).

the matter was attached to religion and print media. Further, the political blame game by the leaders left communities in hatred and anger.

Punjab Government and the administration had almost completely surrender in front of militants. The militants launched an offensive movement against Hindus and Sikhs to curb their voices and no one was spared from the gunshots.

2.1 Political Ideology: Exploring Connections with Militancy in Punjab

The French philosopher Antoine de Tracy (1754-1836) coined the term ideology in 1796. De Tracy was an aristocrat and had the sympathy with the French Revolution (1789). He related ideology as a science of the human mind, but very few political thinkers recognized that idea at the time. According to him, politics sometimes supposed to be slightly more than a struggle for power and if right, political views are more publicity designed to gain votes or public support (Heywood 1994, 2). Ideas and ideologies make an impact on influencing the political system in many ways. It gives a perspective through which a person or a larger group understand and explain its terminology.

Generally, people observe the world through a cover of embedded beliefs, opinions, and assumptions. Consciously or unconsciously, every single person finds a set of political views and value that guide their behaviour and influence their demeanor. Political ideas and ideologies are thus known as fix goals that inspire to act on the political action (Ibid, 2). A doctrine is a more or less a set of ideas, that provides the basis for organizing political action (Ibid, 11).

Political ideologies have the power to form political strength, providing the societies a unifying belief and the values for further action. Political ideologies commonly associate with particular social class, i.e., Liberalism with the favorite group, conservatism with the aristocratic group, socialism with the working class group and so on. These ideas reflect the life experiences, interests and aspiration of a social class, and therefore help to foster a sense of belonging and solidarity (Ibid, 4). The ideological force is responsible for driving every human and system of the society, and it is responsible for bringing various changes in society through critical actions. These many

ideologies are thus working as a dominating factor in the society for multiple developments. It is considering as a set kind of political thought, distinct from political science or political philosophy (Heywood 1994, 5).

The political ideologies are the critical driving forces behind the skirmish due to variation in thoughts of a human. Further actions based on it became responsible for conflict between the groups or people. The main agenda is to grab power as the public follows political parties to achieve their political goals. Thus, political ideas help to shape political systems and make a vast impact over every field area which is related to the political context, and mass communication is not an exception either (Mouffe 2005, 9).

The role of mass media in the construction and circulation of reality has been widely recognized these days. One of the major thrust areas of media studies is the politics of representation as played and practiced in the media.³⁹ The media has been placed at the centre of the processes associated with the social construction of reality. This assumes a change in consciousness regarding the very nature of reality – i.e., fact, which is not something out there, but something, which has already mediated and constructed by media itself.

The role of media is difficult to distinguish between the real and the mediated. In such a framework, the media plays a significant role in constructing realities as their way to build public opinion, which they want, alongside catering to the demands of the constituency they are dealing. A unifying set of political ideas and values develops naturally within a society. However, it can also be enforced from the top in an attempt to manufacture sincerity and operate as a form of social control. The values of elite groups such as political and military leaders, government officials, landowners, business houses or industrialist or ruling elite may use political ideas to contain the opposition and restrict debate over the process of ideological manipulation (Heywood 1994, 5). In a democratic system, which marks a rule of the public, it is a concept rather

³⁹Representation refers to the construction in any medium (especially the mass media) of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. It involves the production of meaning through language, discourse and image and occupies a central place in studies on culture (Hall 1997, Fulton and Harris 1991).

than an ideology and the political parties in democracy follow the different doctrines to ascertain power.

In the context of Punjab problem, the state engraved by the militancy was not just the armed movement or religious–political conflict but involved the confrontation of ideologies, followed by different groups, trying to justify their own beliefs and interests individually. Whereas various political groups ruled the state with the difference in ideology after the independence of India, the English and vernacular media too followed the ideological lines to pursue their agenda of promotion to develop their business. It also played a significant role in perpetuating nationalist ideas among the Indians and thus contributed significantly to India’s freedom struggle from British colonialism (Seal 1971, Hofmeyr et al. 2011).

Punjab has seen the rule of Congress and Akali Dal with Janta Party collaboration in independent India. After that, Akali Dal, and Jan Sangh remained in power. All these political parties were running the state according to their political ideology and molded the rules as per their convenience to grip the control of skill in the state. People under the law too were influenced by their panorama and supported the different ideologies peculiar to each other.

With the Akali-Janata coalition Government formed in Punjab in June 1977, it appeared that a more permanent Hindu-Sikh political unity had been finally forged in the state. The Akali was a Sikh based ethnic, political party, and the Jan Sangh - the most significant constituent member of the Janata party in Punjab was India’s premier Hindu nationalist party (Chima 2008, 41). But it did not remain for long. The tragic incident of 1978 in Amritsar where a procession of Sikhs clashed with the Nirankaris during their ceremonial function and the clash developed into deaths of Sikhs due to ammunition with bodyguards of Nirankaris. 4 of the 13 Sikhs belonged to Damdami Taksal of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale while nine Sikhs were members of Akhand Kirtni Jatha (Ibid, 42-43).

The first attempt to kill Nirankari Baba Gurbachan Singh was tried in April 1974 in Village Ghoman in Gurdaspur district of Punjab. The second attempt was carried out

in Pathankot in September 1977 followed by the third attempt at Amritsar in April 1978. After the murder of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh on 24 April 1980 in Delhi, it also brought Hindus in it. The case has overtones of religious vendetta because of the virulent hostility between the Nirankari and Sikh extremist. It has political undercurrents because of the Nirankari support to the Congress party (I) against the Akalis.⁴⁰ A series of senseless killings in the name of religion continued in Punjab. The unity of this coalition and the internal dynamics of Sikh politics were quickly affected by a religious controversy between Sikhs and Hindu-Sikh sect called the 'Nirankaris' (Ibid, 44).

Few questions arose out from the tragic incident; political ambitions, the religious antagonism, public, extremism and the ideology clash produced a ruckus in the state's peaceful environment. The murder of Nirankari Sant Baba Gurbachan Singh revealed a few facts escorted with the political mileage due to the more significant number of devotees. The political parties too were interested in getting them in tune to grab power in the state. The talk of Nirankari mata with the home minister, published in the English magazine India Today on May 15, 1980 is as follows:

"The Nirankaris, faced with the hostility of the Akalis, supported Mrs. Gandhi. The Janata's initial alliance with the Akalis and the fear that the Government was partisan towards the Akalis drove the Nirankaris even more firmly into the Congress (I) fold. In the last parliamentary elections, the Nirankaris supported Mrs. Gandhi's party. Ironically, it is under Mrs. Gandhi's regime, which claims to pay special attention to law and order, that the Baba was killed, said his weeping wife Kulwant Kaur to Home Minister Zail Singh. "We were doing everything for your party which we thought believes in secularism. You have failed to protect us."⁴¹ (Baba Assassination: Cold Blood, Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh Dead, Story, May 15, 1980, India Today. In)

Punjab, with its booming economy and people so generous and openhearted, could have been seducing by the narrow-minded and mean-spirited ideology of communal ghettoization that went by the name of 'Khalistan' (Gill 2005). Punjab while crossing from the violent period, has become a witness of major reshuffles during the

⁴⁰Baba's assassination: Nirankari Head Baba Gurbachan Singh Shot Dead May 15, 1980, India Today. <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/indiascope/story/19800515-nirankari-head-baba-gurbachan-singh-shot-dead-806668-2014-01-28> (Accessed on 6 September, 2017)

⁴¹Ibid. (Accessed on 6 September, 2017)

political and religious turmoil. It was an amalgamation of political deeds with religious sentiments, and it yields political benefits and power. The violence was rooted in the case where Congress was able to grab state power after the state elections in the 1980's when Darbara Singh was sworn as Chief Minister of Punjab after quashing of the two-year rule of Shiromani Akali Dal led by Parkash Singh Badal.

2.2 Print Media and Political Ideology

The mass media, a constructive factor in the democracy, follow and observe by the public too. Thomas Jefferson wrote about two hundred years back "Where the press is free.... all is safe". Independence of the press in such a significant situation, whereas crucial for the smooth running of the system, it also helps to keep the public in high enthusiasm. This is one aspect of media, but the other side of it is; recent expansion of print media brought many kinds of pressures on it as many people have been attached to it due to various reasons and targets. However, the news media have expanded; it often loses the plot, content and crosses the limits while covering sensitive stories and leaves deep-rooted inequality, injustice, and corruption (Rodrigues 2014, 3).

Another major strand of media research emphasizes the symbolic side of media, politics, especially its creation of illusions, images, and spectacles that masquerade as a depiction of reality (Edelman 1988). Without challenging the validity of insights in previous studies, it offers a corrective view that media politics is, like other forms of politics, driven most fundamentally by conflicts in the goals and self-interests of the key participants (Zaller 1999, 4).

Indians are news junkies. They love reading news, they love sharing their opinions and they love to disapprove the perspective of others. With more than 75,000 newspapers and well over 1000 satellite channels of several languages, India is one of the prominent markets in the information realm. Over 125 million copies of newspapers are sold every day in India and advertising remains the mainstay of the print media. The prominent national and regional parties also help few newspapers.⁴² The bias is a

⁴²Newspaper in India and their political Ideologies. <https://rightlog.in/2015/07/newspapers-in-india-and-their-political-ideologies>. (Accessed on 8 August, 2017)

common phenomenon from which the newspapers can not remain untouched. Almost every prominent newspaper in India is known to have a strict ideological allegiance and a steadfast commitment to an (in selective cases) political party.

An essential element in demo creation of any country is an active, engaged press that can uncover the analysis that has been sensitively or silenced. Repressing information and silencing discussion on politically sensitive issues could have a diametric opposing effect and lead instead to growing misconceptions and illusions based on anecdotal rumors rather than on facts (International Media Support 2008).

The journey of the vernacular press is not older than a century in the Indian subcontinent, and it witnessed many changes in political and regional levels since its inception in the late 19th century. Indian modernity was unique as it represented a peculiar blend of tradition and modernity in the making of what is known as 'our modernity' (Chatterjee 1997). The rise of the middle class in India as an outcome of the modernization process, among other things, contributed to the growing demand for English and Indian language newspapers (Joshi 2005, Neyazi 2014).

The Indian modernity is also indivisible from the making of communitarian identities; it not only constituted communities but also impelled them against each other (Devika and Varghese 2011). The vernacular press also in significant ways began to organize on communitarian lines. Punjab was not an exception either (Deol 2000).

In Punjab, the English and vernacular media tried to justify their point of view according to their flow of ideology and instead of delivering a solution, it remained busy to condemn others. The tragedy in Punjab, a warrior type of conflict between religious fundamentalist and state had shaken the conscience of the entire humankind in India. Nobody ever expected that a clash would turn into a severe problem, which inhaled the peace, and left every individual shocked and at the mercy of others. The conflict not only divided the public but also brought media into the opposition. Even though people blamed media to have turned communal with the situation and adopted different stand.

2.3 English and Vernacular Print Media: The Ideological Differences

James Augustus launched the first newspaper of the English language in January 1780 when a majority of the community were not literate, especially in English. The modernization process in the country engendered the vernacular press, which in turn improved the literacy levels in vernacular languages alongside spreading modern ideas and thinking among the people through a process of cultural translation (Menon 2007). It played a pivotal role in perpetuating nationalist ideas among the Indians and thus contributed significantly to India's struggle for freedom from British colonialism (Hofmeyr et al. 2011).

The vernacular press of Punjab in after the Post-Independence in India followed the long path of establishment and launched newspapers in local and national languages which majority can read and help them to establish well. In case of Punjab, the contradiction of language in many significant ways carried a vernacular press of Hindi and Punjabi to be developed over communitarian lines (Deol 2000).

Much before the print media's following of communitarian lines like during militancy problem in Punjab in 1980's, the vernacular press in 1920's was established well and was in the race of dominance controlled by various communities living in united Punjab. In 1923, a total number of newspapers and magazines published in vernacular languages rose from 328 to 390 in the year 1925 that indicates towards the interests of the communities to follow the line of vernacular press. Just over five years in 1929, the number of newspapers and magazines turned about double 661 in numbers. As the communitarian identities got solidified "each community in Punjab armed itself with dailies, weeklies, bi-weeklies and fortnightlies, monthlies and annual numbers to propagate their point of view and to use it as arms against each other" (Upreti 1980, 95-96).

The owners of vernacular press in Punjab further followed the same line of establishment after the Post-independence period where some newspapers, though limited, but had curiosity to develop identity in the related communities to keep control and dominance through newspaper.

The role of journalism and news publishing task has always remained a robust activity than merely providing a space to view which could be different as per the placing of the viewer. The role of journalism is to seize the wrong and to make them distressed and genuine but the market-driven journalism shifts towards perceived interests of the audience and the advertisers (Burns 2012, 7). The recent expansion of print media brought many kinds of pressure on the public as many people have attached to it due to various reasons and targets. However, the news media have expanded; it often loses the plot, content and crosses the limits while covering sensitive stories and leaves deep-rooted inequality, injustice, and corruption (Rodrigues 2015, 3).

The confrontation of ideologies between Congress party and Shiromani Akali Dal in Punjab involved the ideologically driven media. It lost the approach to the actual problem and produced fractured views instead of an amicable solution to the Punjab problem. The print media followed sensationalism, which means to approach a particular group of people and influence them through personal narrative. Media sensationalism in modern times is deeply linked with business interest too, as the production of news in such a way to cater to peculiar groups and their benefits can potentially win more audience or readers (Kaplan 2008).

Punjab Kesri was having an initial circulation of 1500 copies of newspapers in 1965 at the time of rolling, and by 1975, the distribution of Hindi daily had grown further to 12, 500 times. In just 16 years, the flow touched two lakhs newspapers (Jeffery 2000, Deol 2000). In a similar case, Rojana Ajit also jumped to the higher circulation of 2.18 lakh newspapers in 1979 from 34, 000 in 1967 (Ibid, 154-55). Former Editor, Anthony R. Fellow explains it as the media's eager for publicity and higher circulation to yield more profit and control. The publishers resorted to bigger headlines, colour picture, and very often sensationalized coverage, which arose with the storytelling press, in particular, it was new journalism also, known as yellow journalism. The yellow media established that with other issues, violence too could sell newspapers (Fellow 2010, 171-72).

2.4 Print media: The Construction of Reality

It is clear that the affixed categories are established through cultural interventions and processes of mediation. The politics of construction in the creation of knowledge, information and development of dichotomous categories like sane/insane, civilization/madness, orient/accident, etc. are inextricably related to the cultural politics of domination (Foucault 1980). The relegation of resistant people and groups as violent, insane, fanatic and barbaric was part of the colonial strategy of de-legitimizing popular struggles against domination (Arnold 1986).

The effect of news media on public discourse is more profound than merely influencing the present audience. People are learning an event through discussion with colleagues, friends, and neighbors (Neyazi et al. 2010, 78). The print media, whereas known for yielding profit from more readership and advertisement, also gave space to the politics to contest and win the elections. Thereby it successfully influenced the feeling and thoughts of the public, which is needed for parties. Alongside the rise of Hindi and regional newspapers, there was a simultaneous shift of politics from the national capital to the local center or state capital (Ibid).

The prioritization of news value from industrialization near the end of the 20th century was directly tied to the demographic profile of the target audience. These profiles were now sold to advertisers like consumer goods and services (Burns 2013, 7). Due to larger circulation, the newspaper played a central role in forming and deforming public opinion and acted as an essential channel for the public to raise their grievances and to make the state act more responsibly. Due to the growth of the Indian media in the recent decades, the power and potential of the Hindi press to influence policies could not be denied (Neyazi et al. 2014).

Punjab Kesri too had the larger circulation during 1980's when Punjab was facing the dilemma of murders and violence along with deteriorating relationship. Vernacular media of Punjab had been playing a vital role in the process of deepening India's democracy too. The English print media, which was mainly confined to the urban and educated sections of the society, could not play an active role in the grassroot

mobilization that started in the 1980's. The media revolution, which began with the unprecedented growth of Indian language newspapers since the 1980s, occurred parallel to the greater mobilization of the Indian masses in North India (Neyazi et al. 2010, 78).

Critics such as Noam Chomsky and Herman (1988) and Hall (1992) also argued over the issue that media in 20th century aimed at the production of consent not a reflection of consensus (Ibid, 8). According to McLuhan, Print brought linearity. It meant that every experience could be described 'in print,' pinned down, ordered, preserved, and probably sold for a price (Jeffrey 2000, 5).

In case of Punjab, the print media did not leave a chance to propagate their agenda of news production, which was also becoming the source of profit and influence in the state as well as in the related communities. The different kind of labelling performed over those indulged in violence, known as militants in different contexts by the regional and national newspapers made the social environment more complicated by using appellations like Ugarvadi, Deshatmand, Deshatpasand, Ativadi, Deshatvadi, Deshatgard, Terrorist and Extremist in different contexts. This situation reveals the print media preferences, the position they have taken, and the reality they produced after mediating it.

2.5 Print Media, Public and Politics

Media, the voice of '*Aam Aadmi*'⁴³ (common person) is recognized as the Fourth pillar of the democracy after the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary. The media acquired the tag of watchdog due to its accessibility and acceptance in public. It also plays a significant role in giving solutions to the problems whenever the democratic rights of an individual or a group in a country are challenged. In this situation, the

⁴³In India, the term Aam Aadmi or Common Man looks very easy but in reality, it is complex. It is a Hindustani colloquial expression and the equivalent of the Average Joe. The Indian National Congress or Congress (I) contested 2004 elections on the theme of Aam Aadmi. The Party's slogan for the elections was Congress ka Haath, Aam Aadmi ke Sath (Hand of Congress is with the common person) to popularize UPA Government. They also launched the campaign Aam Aadmi ka Sipahi (The Common Man's Soldier) campaign to popularize party works. Later in 2012, the Aam Aadmi Party formed by the Arvind Kejriwal, convener of the party and Chief Minister of Delhi.

freedom of press turns more imperative for peaceful and successive democracy. The mass media dealing with the larger group of the public can launch a particular thought for discussion with the public due to its character of dealing. It has the advantage without any restriction. It carries the issue to the public and develops an atmosphere to discuss the specific problem which produces a set public opinion.⁴⁴

The communication network for the public made up of rationally debating private citizens, which brought the political exposure of political domination before the public use of reason was, however, short-lived. It was supplanted by a third stage: mass media in industrial society. Habermas refers to the structural transformation of the bourgeois public sphere, in which, the institutions of social interchange, which allowed the general use of it had lost its power. They were replaced by the commercial mass circulating press (Jeffrey 2000, 12).

Here not only the print media stops but a common criticism of the Habermas scheme is also particularly relevant for the picture of an Indian public sphere generated by newspapers. In his third stage of mass culture, Habermas depicted the masses so flexible that they accept it without resistance or interpret the message of the Industrial mass-media mechanism. On the contrary, newspaper groups in the meantime adopted new techniques to increase their circulation number along with content, colour, size and a unique blend of sensationalism to approach a particular group of people and influence them through their narrative (Ibid, 12).

Media sensationalism in the modern times is deeply linked with business interest too, as the production of news in such a way to cater to peculiar groups and their benefits can potentially win more audience or readers (Kaplan 2008). The print media of Punjab whereas established by the different religious groups with a different ideology, indeed followed the same line of progress to increase their influence through more

⁴⁴Media is the most powerful toll for the formation of Public Opinion. It is the television, the press, the radio and internet fall in the line. A source of information and education that will shape the daily choices in people's life. That will shape the thinking and the perception of things. However, media is a political power and tool, occupied in a way by the big powers for their political and economic objective that control and pay.

readers. There was only one way to establish it by increasing their number of printed copies.

In short time, the vernacular newspapers step up the circulation numbers during the 1960's and 1970's from just a few thousand copies to in lakhs. ⁴⁵ It helped the newspaper groups to establish their own set of agenda in the masses, divided into political lines and later the religious too included. In troubled days, regional print media did not leave any chance to grip over the relevant public groups.

2.5.1 Punjab Kesri

Founder editor and owner of Hind Samachar Group, Lala Jagat Narain, Hindu Khatri by the cast and 'Arya Samaji' by faith established Punjab Kesri. He was a staunch Congressman⁴⁶ and apart from participating in India's struggle for independence, he was also active in the Arya Samaj Movement (Deol 2000, 153). He was also in the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, and after his call, Lala Jagat Narain left the college and joined Non-Cooperation Movement and was sentenced two year jail term. He also remained president of the City Congress committee, Lahore before the partition of India. The group had started in 1948 with Urdu daily, 'Hind Samachar'.⁴⁷

Later, Hindi Newspaper '*Punjab Kesri*' was launched in 1965 to cover Hindi speaking urban population and after 13 years in 1978, Punjabi language newspaper '*Jagbani*' was launched. It established The Hind Samachar Group as the front-runner in the term of the highest circulation of newspapers in North India.⁴⁸

⁴⁵The initial circulation of the '*Punjab Kesri*' which was just 1500 copies crossed 1 lakh copies figure by 1975 which was a big jump in just 16 years (Jeffery 2000).

⁴⁶Akali agitation began demanding the creation of the Punjabi Suba, which was aggressively oppose by the staunch Arya Samajist Lala Jagat Narain. Owner-editor of the Hind Samachar group of Newspapers and also in the capacity of a Punjab Congress leader he followed his party's strategic programme of persuading and inducing the Punjabi Hindus to enlist their mother tongue as Hindi (not Punjabi) in the censuses of 1951 and 1961 (Sidhu 2014). <http://www.countercurrents.org/sidhu290114.htm>. (Accessed on 8 February 2016)

⁴⁷From 1950 to 1965, it was the time when students of Government schools in Punjab were teaching Hindi as Devanagari script. Urdu seen as a language of Pakistan so that parents supported Hindi language. This made Jagat Narayan to think in terms of launching a Hindi newspaper in Punjab (Robin Jeffrey 2000, 79).

⁴⁸<http://www.printweek.in/features/interview-amit-chopra-punjab-kesari-17693>. (Accessed on 12 March 2016)

The initial circulation of the 'Punjab Kesri' which was just 1500 copies crossed 1 lakh copies figure by 1975 which was a big jump in just 16 years (Jeffery 1997, Deol 2000). Up to 1986, it had become unquestionably largest Hindi selling daily in India (Jeffery 2000, 79). The time when Punjab was gripped by militancy, print media has become an active participator in the whole mess, and Punjab Kesri was worst affected by it. The stand adopted by 'Punjab Kesri' during militancy against militants and the views regarding movement annoyed militants.

Due to writing openly against Sikh extremists, Lala Jagat Narayan (1889-1981), gunned down in September 1981 when he was returning to Jullundur from a program by the militants waiting on the roadside. The reason for his murder was the perceived insult that he and his newspaper perpetuated by hurting the sentiments of Sikhs by speaking out against Khalistan. Subsequently, militants killed his son, who was heading the group as Editor, Romesh Chander on 12 May 1984 (Kaminski 2011).

The news and editorials of Punjab Kesri look more tilted towards center government actions which were then led by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of Congress party with the nationalistic approach with a soft corner for Hindus, who were on the target of militants. The stand adopted by Punjab Kesri made it more famous and acceptable in the urban class, especially in Hindu working class and industrialist class (Deol 2000, 158). The field study carried out for the ground view also found that Hindu class. Subsequently, militants killed his son, who was heading the group as Editor, Romesh Chander on 12 May 1984 (Kaminski 2011).

2.5.2 *Rojana Ajit*

Rojana Ajit started its first newspaper before independence in 1944 with the Urdu language, but the group has converted its first newspaper of Urdu language with vernacular language Punjabi in the year 1955 at Jullundur. The founder, publisher, and editor of the Ajit group was Sadhu Singh Hamdard, who was Sikh Khatri and had roots in the Singh Sabha Movement (Deol 2000, 154). He was born in village Paddi Matwali, Jullundur in 1918. He was attached with SGPC and was active in Quit India Movement too. The target of the newspaper was to cover the English speaking population in the

cities belonging to the upper level and secondly to cater to the needs of the emerging affluent Punjab peasantry, partly as the consequences of the Green Revolution (Ibid, 155). After formation of Punjabi Suba, circulation of the newspaper was 34,000 in 1967, which rose to 2.18 lakh in 1979, soon after the imposition of the emergency by the Centre Government (Ibid).

During militancy movement in Punjab, *Rojana Ajit* was the second highest circulation newspaper especially in the villages where majority readers were Sikhs. The base of the newspaper due to its Gurmukhi language made it vital and famous in the peasantry class. The newspaper was blamed to be more writing in favour of militants in news and editorials. The newspaper stands over Punjab riots allegedly called Sikh stand by other newspapers through news and editorials.

The reason for the sympathy of the newspaper with the Sikhs was; first, the newspaper owner was Sikh and was attached to the highest Sikh body of the SGPC. Second, the ideological divide of the print media encouraged *Rojana Ajit* to support Sikhs which were more familiar with the Gurmukhi language. The newspaper also looked attached with the Akali Dal's politics where news and editorial printed by the newspaper carried more of the critics of the Congress and other parties and more in the stand of the policies of the Akali Dal.

2.5.3 *The Tribune*

The *Tribune* newspaper owned by The *Tribune* Group Trust is a famous English daily of Punjab with a significant circulation in Punjab and adjoining states. The *Tribune* was one of the earliest English newspaper established in Punjab and its readership was among the upper class of Punjab. It was the most widely read English newspapers in Punjab. The newspaper was found by Jat Sikh aristocrat Dyal Singh Majithia and was first published on 2 February 1881. Sardar Majithia was known for his links with the aristocracy in Punjab and his intelligentsia. His family had an aristocratic background and open to modern English education and modern liberalism.⁴⁹ He was the sole

⁴⁹He was born in 1849, the year when Punjab was annexed into an orthodox aristocratic Sikh family that hailed originally from Majithia in the district of Amritsar. His father Sardar Lehna Singh was a prominent

proprietor of The Tribune and remained on the post until his death in 1889. It is stated that “no one rendered greater service to the cause of liberal education and progressive thinking in North India in the closing decades of the last century than Dyal Singh *Majithia*” (Deol 2000, 156).

The Tribune was an active participant in the nationalist politics and campaigned for united India. It was in contrast to the British view as represented by men such as John Strachey (1888), who espoused that there is and never was an Indian nation and that people of different Indian regions do not feel that they belong to one nation (Ibid). The Tribune is a complete centrist paper with a strong preference for the Congress party (Mishra 2015).

Therefore, in the larger context, the newspapers in Punjab, mostly owned by the Hindu families, could not break away from their roots and past style of crusading for communal interests. Besides The Tribune Group of newspapers came under the sway of Arya Samajist and The Hind Samachar Group had also been rooted in the Arya Samaj movement. Whereas the Punjabi press *Rojana Ajit*, being sympathetic to the Sikhs, emphasized its existence of a composite Punjabi identity, including both Hindus and Sikhs whereas the Punjabi Hindus rejected this plank of Punjabiat.

2.6 Militancy in Punjab: Representation of Incidents by Print Media

Unprecedented in the history of India, the incidents, happened in Punjab in 1980's have scarred the face of a nation otherwise known for its unity. The injury inflicted by the secessionist demands and the senseless killings in Punjab was thought to have been cured by the surgical operation which the Government carried out in the form of Operation Bluestar in early 1984 (Gill EDT. 2015). The Amritsar clash between Sikhs and Nirankaris become a base where the militancy gained its height. As the time moved ahead, the number of murders too increased with the time. The turmoil brought

official of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and in 1832, he was appointed as Governor of hill territories in the Maharaja Kingdom. On the death of his father, Dyal Singh inherited one of the wealthiest Estates in the province. His childhood spent at his native village *Majithia* where he had taught by private tutors and English Governess. In 1874, he decided to visit England to complete his studies. He was deeply influence by the liberalism sweeping England and spent considerable time with the prominent people discussing the cause of his country's backwardness (Deol 2000, 155).

many people and groups under threat of death. Print media's role during militancy movement caught the attention of the public as well as militant groups.

Print media was delivering the news reports of incidents. Every print media group was working according to its set group ideology, which instead of cooperation put them against each other. The war of words was visible between them, and the Hindi newspaper paid a hefty price. Militants not just first killed owners of the newspaper but also started to target their staff and employees at a later stage.⁵⁰

The murder trend started with the killing of Nirankari Sant, who was present on the spot during the time of Sikh-Nirankari conflict in 1978 at Amritsar. The research study deals with particular cases of murders of the big guns of media and religious field along with the mediated reality of print media in the context of labeling used for Sikh militants. The representation of perpetuating violence was covered differently in English and vernacular newspapers. The discourse changed its place after the army operation in Amritsar which further aggravated the problems.

2.7 Incident - 1 (Murder of Nirankari Chief)

The bloodier Sikh-Nirankari clash in Punjab was the first incident of post-independent India which occurred in the year 1978 at Amritsar. The base of the conflict was the disgrace of religious hymns from Shri Guru Granth Sahib by the Nirankaris as is allegedly blamed by the Sikh religious circle. It was not the first attack over Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh by Sikhs reportedly over the blame. The previous attacks had not the same intensity, so it did not interrupt the routine social life in the state. On 13 April 1978, there was massive gathering in Amritsar to celebrate an event of

⁵⁰"No news is bad news in Punjab these days. If the reader does not get his newspaper in the morning, it may not merely mean sipping tea without the usual headline browsing. It could mean that another innocent newspaper hawker was kill for distributing a publication inimical to terrorist activity. In a battle between pen and AK-47, the assault rifle has prevailed again.... Since the followers of Sikh zealot Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale began rewriting the history of Punjab with bullets and blood, the Hind Samachar Group (combined circulation: 6.94 lakh) has lost its founder Lala Jagat Narayan, his son Romesh Chander and seven of its newsagents and hawkers were gunned down by the terrorists in a planned and well publicized campaign. Admitted the group's Delhi editor, Ashwani Kumar" (Killing the messengers: Terrorist adopt new strategy to intimidate the media, 15 August, 1989). <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/indiascope/story/19890815-terrorists-adopt-new-strategy-to-intimidate-media-in-punjab-816403-1989-08-15> (Accessed on 10 October 2017)

Nirankaris while Sikhs were also celebrating Baisakhi and the colossal crowd was present at golden temple.

The bloody incident nurtured land for further clashes between both the sects within and outside Punjab. After the tragic incident, a Hukamnama was issued by Akal Takhat to sever all relations with Nirankaris in the month of June 1978. Later, Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh along with his 60 supporters were acquitted by the Karnal court.⁵¹ Thereafter the state rolled deep into religious extremism where Sikhs completely opposed the Nirankaris and made them a target.

2.7.1 Description of Incident

Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, head of Damdami Taksal, a religious school for Sikh children to study religious hymns from Shri Guru Granth Sahib, led a march of Akhand Kirtani Jatha followers towards the venue where Nirankaris were organizing programme. After reaching on the spot, the Sikhs reacted and raised slogans against Nirankaris Sant Baba Gurbachan Singh allegedly for the anti-Sikhs stand. When tension mounted on both sides, the Nirankari bodyguards sprayed bullets and 13 agitating Sikhs died.

⁵¹“Praveen Swami met Akal Takht Jathedar Ranjit Singh for this interview on November 8, a few minutes before the Jathedar received a call informing him that the life sentence awarded to him by court for the murder of Nirankari the President of India has commuted set leader Gurbachan Singh. Over more than one hour during the interview, the Jathedar focused not only on the specifics of the case but on Punjab’s troubled decade of quasi-fascist terror and his vision of the relevance of religion to the state’s political life.... Injustice by the Central Government. Look at my own case. I was never associated with the (Khalistan) movement, though it started with this very case. Even before the case began, I knew I would be convict. The conditions of the trail were such that even the circumstances in my favour had been ignored by the judge.... That is not the issue. There is a law. The law demands a proper trail based on evidence. There was no evidence against me. The judge’s hands were trembling as in winter when he wrote the order convicting me. Look at Nirankaris who killed 13 of our Sikhs in the Baisakhi massacre that I avenged. There should have at least been a case against the killers in the courts in Amritsar, where the killings took place. But they were tried in Karnal, and all 60 persons were acquitted. In my case, they said that since the murder took place in Delhi, I should be tried there. Is that justice? Certainly not. I have no regrets, in neither the past nor now. What I did was the will of God. The Nirankaris can only be forgiven if they disband their sect and appeal to the Akal Takhat for forgiveness. What I did was the will of God” (e-news Interview with Jathedar Ranjit Singh, www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1521/15210370.htm (Accessed on 12 September 2017))

The killing of 13 Sikhs sooner spread out in Amritsar and in the state. The Sikhs came on the roads and carried out a protest march against it. The Nirankaris along with Baba Gurbachan Singh escaped from the spot and moved towards Delhi.

“The tight security was keeping safe Baba Gurbachan Singh from the attacks and a hot-headed group of Sikhs wants to take revenge from him. The head of Damdami Taksal, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale also called for justice, which was not given to Sikhs by the court. In 1980, Ranjit Singh of Akhand Kirtni Jatha got entry into the Nirankari Bhawan as a carpenter and started working over there. When all was set, one day he killed Baba Gurbachan Singh at his Nirankari Mandal Bhawan in the late night about 11 pm when he came from a programme from Paharganj area, New Delhi. Baba Gurbachan Singh along with his personal security guard died in the attack”.⁵² (Baba Assassination: In Cold Blood, e-India Today)

This was the first religious murder by Sikhs in revenge of the Nirankari attack at Amritsar. After the murder incident, the extremism started to climb up, and destruction and the death toll started rising. The violence affected every section and part of the state; even the press and politicians did not remain safe.⁵³

The outcome of this clash existed in a fractured environment throughout the state as these murders had started taking place under the regime of Akali Dal led State Government. The society faced many crucial changes and the worst was Hindu Sikh divides. The Hukamnama issued from Akal Takhat, the highest body of Sikhs, expelled Nirankaris from the Sikh community. Further, Sikhs started agitation against the programmes of Nirankaris throughout the country.

2.7.2 Analysis

However, the incident of April 1978 became the base for mounting conflict between Sikhs and Nirankaris in the state but both the sides were previously indulged in the conflict over religious issues. The state and central administration was well aware

⁵²Baba Assassination: In Cold Blood, E-India Today (<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/nirankari-head-baba-gurbachan-singh-shot-dead/1/409676.html>). (Accessed on 10 October 2017)

⁵³If we case our minds back to 1981 and 1982, when terrorism in Punjab was already being perceive as a serious threat to the authority of the state, we discover that the terrorists in each of these years killed 13 persons. 1983 which was described by contemporary commentators as the year of the Armageddon saw the number of deaths inflicted by terrorist's violence rise to 75 (Gill 2008). Total of 11, 694 persons killed by terrorists in Punjab during the period 1981-1993, 7, 139-more than 61 percent were Sikhs (ibid).

of the hostility between them and the mounting anger in hot-headed Sikhs. This was not handled seriously on the Baisakhi day. The permission to allow programme at Amritsar looked conspicuous attempt to invite trouble. It is also a failure of the IB and CID wings of the state and center. However, the state government in the whole problem looked the inconspicuous role. Centre government's position was also doubtful due to their support with Nirankari wing which is evident with the statement of Nirankari mata to the then home minister of the Congress party.

2.8 Incident - 2 (Murder of Political Leader and Media Tycoon)

After the murder of the religious leader of Nirankaris in New Delhi in 1980, the environment of Punjab shells with fear, anger and the rise of extremism. The revenge murder not just feared the mind-sets, but also sow the seeds of distrust between people of various communities. The murder incident at Delhi was minutely covered by the print media of Punjab and New Delhi. During that period, the reach of electronic media was marginal, and print media was the prominent source of information for the public living in Delhi and other states.

The blame game over print media started after the April 1978 bloodier incident at Amritsar, and vernacular newspapers of Punjab especially Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit were blamed in this regard. They blamed each other for writing wrongly in disfavour of the opposite party. Later with the passage of time, the newspapers started taking sides in favour and disgrace of the system. Their writings became the source to release fire against each other, and Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit purely targeted each other. The religious murder of Nirankari head became the point of disagreement where Punjab Kesri was condemning it, Rojana Ajit carried very unexpected news.

The founder editor of Punjab Kesri and former minister in the Congress Government, Lala Jagat Narain came out in support of the Nirankaris at the hearings and severely condemned the killings in his newspapers Hind Samachar, Punjab Kesri and Jagbani. Again, when the Khalistan movement started taking place, Narain termed it anti-national and called upon the state government to arrest the traitors. The use of

harsh words irked the movement leaders.⁵⁴ The blame game of the newspapers remained to continue, and it further converted into enmity between the media houses. The vernacular newspapers Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit marched against each other by crossing hands while The Tribune was too involved in it at the later stage.

The ideological differences between print media groups now opened with the murder of Lala Jagat Narain, which was a significant loss for the newspaper group as well as state and it mounted tension again in Punjab. Lala Jagat Narayan was killed in September 1981 while he was coming back from Ludhiana after attending a programme. The Hindi press wrote extensively against militant's action. The murder of Lala Jagat Narain created havoc and sent shock waves into the state and in Hindu community too. The revenge started from Nirankari clash began taking media groups into its grip, and Lala Jagat Narayan came on the target of militant groups. Though the State Government has given an armed security cover to him, on the day of the incident, unfortunately, he did not carry police security with him and went alone.

The various groups in Punjab including media fraternity had faced the worst nightmare during militancy due to raising voices against it. Being a political opponent, extremists set their targets general as well as VIP people on the name revenge or going against them. The religious sentiments when turned into hardliner expression, all failed to observe, but the political incarnation of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in Punjab changed the narrative of politics and developed it into a purely religious issue for the Sikh community.

2.8.1 Description of Incident

The print media was publishing violent and other instances occurring in the state. Vernacular media too was doing the same, but the ideological difference made them to firm against each other because of variation in a stand against erupted violence by militants. The fight of print media further moved up to readers, and it severely affected the public sphere and opinion both and disturbed the scenario. After that, nobody

⁵⁴<https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/indiascope/story/19810930-ex-minister-of-punjab-and-mp-lala-jagat-narain-shot-dead-by-assailants-773261-2013-11-07>

remained safe in Punjab, even media too. The Hindi press faced the worst of it due to the opponent stand is taken against the violence. Lala Jagat Narain was gun down in a car near Ludhiana on 9 September 1981 by extremists while he was returning to Jullundur after joining a programme. The assailants were riding Royal Enfield motorcycle. They first followed his ambassador car and later find a clear road, they stopped the vehicle and fired bullets into his chest and ran away from the spot. His driver too severely injured in this firing. He tried to run the car from the place but failed.

The pre and post-murder incidents revealed conflicting emphasis and underlying ideologies in the media representation even when one among the media fraternity lost his life in the hands of militants.⁵⁵ The first high-value murder from media brought truth to the front that things were not safe in the state, nor the relationship of print media is a cordial and political leader too divided on the issue. Now, print media, especially Hindi newspaper came on target of the militants. After the murder, the anger and fear both prevailed into the society. The killing of a Hindi newspaper editor shocked and feared Hindu and Sikhs, but it hurt Hindus more as they were watching towards him as a savior. Jullundur has seen the massive agitation of the people, and complete call of state shut down. It further increased the gap between Hindus and Sikhs.

2.8.2 Analysis

Through, the murder of a media tycoon and as well as a political leader, the militants gave a clear message to the state, press and general public that they are not in the mood to spare anyone speaking or writing against the movement. The murder of Lala Jagat Narain brought the Government and administration on toes as he was attached with the ruling Congress party. Rojana Ajit was opposing the stand of Punjab

⁵⁵The newspapers of Punjab published news of brutal murder of founder editor of Hind Samachar Group and political personality Lala Jagat Narian by the militants on 9 September 1981 near Ludhiana. The Tribune made this a top headline on 10 September 1981 and wrote '*Lala Jagat Narain Shot Dead, Suspects identified, Driver hurt*' seriously. Rojana Ajit printed this news inside the paper at page three in which they explained '*Lala Jagat Narain hit with bullet near Ludhiana, one arrested*'. Punjab Kesri published front-page news on the murder of their editor with photographs on 10 September 1981 and continuously wrote over the murder, reason, journey and thoughts of the public for Lala Jagat Narain. All the three papers carried the issue prominently but Rojana Ajit primarily picked the issue of violence erupted after Lala Jagat Narain's death and attack by the mob over vernacular Punjabi newspapers in anger and termed it as an attack over freedom of press.

Kesri on the Punjab problem, and it was seen in the editorials. Even though doubts were also raised over Lala Jagat Narain's integrity being a media person and political leadership. But the intensity which was needed over this ghastly act by the vernacular media was missing. The Government also remained unable to trace the threat gravity which inhaled the life of a media tycoon and senior leader.

2.9 Incident - 3 (Murder of Chief Editor of *Punjab Kesri*)

India's tryst with modern terror began with the militancy movement in Punjab during 1970's which later transferred into a motion for a separate homeland for Sikhs. What initiated as a political game to gain political power and mileage in Punjab by Congress party engaged Shiromani Akali Dal and Jan Sangh mid between. Sooner the power game mounted into extremism and later shifted to terror movement that easily engulfed peace and life in the state while governments appeared handicapped over the violence.⁵⁶ The situation was so alarming in the state that people stopped to move from houses after evening hours. But the state and centre governments skirmish further gave a chance to militancy to raise its head.

The Print media of Punjab divulged for representation of murder of well-known chief editor of a Hindi daily '*Punjab Kesri*' which was known as one of the most influential newspapers in Punjab, more famous in Hindus⁵⁷ due to its critics against militancy. Hind Samachar Group first lost its founder Editor Lala Jagat Narayan⁵⁸ who was murdered in 1981. His elder son Romesh Chander, the chief editor of the Hind Samachar Group

⁵⁶The Punjab Governor, Mr. B. D. Pande, expressed anguish over the ghastly murder. Mr. Pande said the senseless killings had cut short the life span of a seasoned journalist. Mr. Virbhadra Singh, Chief Minister of Himachal, expressed shock over the killing. Conveying his sympathies to the bereaved family, he said the demise of Mr. Romesh Chander was biggest non-reparable loss (The Tribune, 13 May, 1984). (Accessed on 10 December, 2016)

⁵⁷Punjab Kesri was the paper of Hindi medium, which was famous enough within the Hindu Community (Deol 2000).

⁵⁸Lala Jagat Narayan, a Chopra Khatri and Congress Party leader, had based in Lahore before he immigrated to India as a refugee following partition in 1947. He started the Urdu daily Hind Samachar in 1948 from Jalandhar. Jagat Narayan, realizing the depleting importance of Urdu in India, founded Punjab Kesri; a Hindi daily, in 1964. Narayan, an Arya Samaji was a prominent critic of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He had killed on September 9, 1981, near Amaltas Motel on the national highway while returning to Jalandhar from Patiala. The White Paper issued by the Government of India, mentioned that Narayan had assassinated because of his criticism of Bhindranwale. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jagat_Narayan. (Accessed on 15 May 2017)

also met with the same fate. It was in the air that due to his blunt writings⁵⁹ against extremists in '*Punjab Kesri*', annoyed militants who murdered its editor to snub the voice. He also faced dozens of threatening calls like his father, but ignored all.

2.9.1 Description of Incident

After the murder of Lala Jagat Narain, founder editor of Hind Samachar Group, his elder son Romesh Chander joined the newspaper on the post of chief editor. He sooner followed the same line and wrote bluntly against the militants. His critical writings, whereas liked by the public, but it annoyed the extremists soon and political opponents who were silently supporting to the militancy movement. His writings also brought Governments under fire for the non-actions against those who were spreading violence. He also faced the threats through letters and phone calls, but it did not let down his writings.

On 12 May, 1984, he was assassinated at Baba Namdev Chowk when he was returning after attending a programme observed on National Unity Day held at Guru Nanak Library, Jullundur. He succumbed to the bullet injuries in his neck and other parts of the body while his two gunmen were also badly injured in the terror attack.⁶⁰ The ideological representations of the print media look varied when a media fraternity of their group lost his life due to extremism and violence.

After losing Romesh Chandra, prominent persons of Hind Samachar Group and other media group, the Hindu community of Jullundur came on roads and burnt a library and vehicles in agitation and non-action of the Government. Though the curfew was applied in the city for peace, but public denied it. The state later crossed into more

⁵⁹Writings in Punjab Kesri opposed by the militants.

⁶⁰All prominent newspapers published news on the brutal murder of editor of Romesh Chander by the militants. The Tribune wrote on 13 May 1984 'Hind Samachar Editor Shot Dead' on front page in which news explains that four unidentified people gunned down the editor of Hind Samachar Romesh Chander. Rojana Ajit printed this news inside the paper in which they explained 'Shri Romesh died after gunned down with bullet in Jalandhar. Punjab Kesri had faced a big loss. They published full front-page news on the murder of their editor with photographs of the place of incident. All the three papers carried this issue in serious manner and explained each instance from the bottom of the edge.

unpleasant time while people were watching over the situation turning from bad to worst.

2.9.2 Analysis

Romesh Chandra, the chief editor of Punjab Kesri, was the elder son of Lala Jagat Narain. He remained on target of militants from the very initial phase of his working. He followed the same path as his father. Romesh through his articles and editorials was continually hitting the lamb by reminding both the communities of their golden past. He was continuously criticizing the political leaders for their petty politics and letting the state down, especially Shiromani Akali Dal leaders who torn the Indian constitution and surrendered before the extremism. The murder was carried out to snub the opponent voice from which the militants were fearing. Working over the directions received from cross-border Pakistan, the militancy movement ruined Punjab as well as the centuries-old relationship.

2.10 Incident - 4 (Role of Print Media after the Operation Bluestar)

Operation Bluestar on 6 June 1984 was also coincided with an 11-day long media debar, apparently hostile press, influential in urban and rural Punjab. The print media blackout throughout Punjab resulted in widespread doubt regarding official stories and aided the promotion of gossips and rumors. The long media gag eventually proved to be very costly for the Government. The entire international and national journalists present in Amritsar at the point of the operation was reportedly evacuated from the state boundary. The media blackout was arguably accompanied by attempts to domesticate and silence the cold press.

Rojana Ajit for instance has significantly toned down itself either by succumbing to the statist repression or by practical considerations of restraint at an apparent crisis. The newspaper, which sympathized with the statist positions on the issue, on the other hand, has travelled extra miles to justify the army action at the Golden Temple, which had proved a major military miscalculation considering the casualties of both the soldiers and the civilians. Punjab Kesri, which was criticizing the role of the Shiromani Akali Dal and Congress for not letting out militants from Golden Temple and called

Hindus to come out for Kar Sewa of the holy place. It also called Army for a further stay in Punjab to neutralize remaining militants in the state. The Tribune, on the contrary, gave blame to the political leaders for their miscalculation of the situation and support given to the militants.

2.10.1 Description of Incident

The English and, the vernacular media of Punjab were divided ideologically and were writing about the situation as per their set position and to satisfy their readers belonging to different communities. The case turned worse as the newspapers produced divided mediascape. After Operation Bluestar, the print media changed its voices and wrote very sensibly and seriously while raising voices for the state and the unity of the people.

The 'mediascape' of Punjab has turned very bitter with allegations and counter-allegations of the print media house against each other. The newspapers were seriously blaming for turmoil and condemned the stand over certain incidents which occurred in the meantime. The word war was so bitter that the newspapers used editorials to criticize each other over various issues. Responding to the allegation of Punjab Kesri for promoting communitarian sentiments, Rojana Ajit attacked back and alleged, "The opposite press speaks against the Sikh community in favour of Hind Government and is a loudspeaker of the government cell." However, Ajit's editorial after the Operation Bluestar carries a feeling of helplessness though it protested against the army operation and its editor surrendered 'Padam Shri.' It did not blame anyone for the painful incident as it is not sure who is at fault for the occurrence of it. In another article, it wrote that the military actions would remain painful for Sikhs and other intellectuals.

The Tribune after the restoration of the newspaper publication supported and expressed aggressiveness in its words. Editor of The Tribune, Prem Bhatia, articulated the Government's positions well in an attempt to drive the point that the military action was inevitable due to the terrorist activities. As part of a delegation of journalists visited Amritsar under Government sponsorship, Prem Bhatia was more than convinced that

“the military action was to flush out a large force of armed militants who inspired and guided violence outside and turned the holy city of Amritsar a pitiable place.”

Following the line, Punjab Kesri found the army action praiseworthy and a necessary step for ensuring communal harmony in the state. Its editorial on 17 June 1984 described that the situation in Punjab continues to be grim and in fear of militant backlash and advocated the army to be staying back. It sees possibilities of militants scattered after the military operations regrouping themselves for the further strike. It also emphasis over the ‘foreign hand’ angle when it said that the militants who fled received a warm welcome in Pakistan.

2.10.2 Analysis

The relationship of The Tribune, Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit newspapers in Punjab came on verge due to the difference of ideology and taking sides while criticising violence generated by militants active in the state for the sake of Khalistan. The militants were mounting the pressure and killing innocents, which was condemned by all groups. Simultaneously, English and vernacular media of Punjab confronted with each other, and justified their point of view. The situation was fissured, and newspapers were criticizing and indulged in word war and condemning each other through editorials. The status of print media was pitiable, and instead of finding a solution, the press with its acts became more troublemaker. The tones of print media groups changed with the Operation Bluestar, and few of them accepted their faults as Rojana Ajit took in an editorial.

2.11 Incident - 5 (Print Media: Awarding Different Labels)

The Sikh-Nirankari clash in Amritsar in the year 1978 inhaled life of 13 Sikhs and injured many. The anger mounted after politics had taken place on the issue and political parties were trying hard to keep the hand upper in the matter. After court verdict in the year 1980, the angry youth of Sikh community waged war; first against the Nirankaris and then against the state. The Golden Temple at the later stage became the center point for the groups active in militancy as the leader of Damdami Taksal Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale had shifted inside with his supporters. Murder of Nirankari

Chief, Hukamnama issued from the Akal Takhat against Nirankaris, the murder of a political leader and Editor Lala Jagat Narain, death of chief editor Romesh Chandra along with police and other political killings cornered the unity between the communities.

During 1980 to 1983, there were more than 100 killings listed in the record. Observing this violence due to conflict, the print media of Punjab as well as National media tied their fingers and started to give coverage on the front and inside pages. Ideologically forced print media looked fractured on this politico-religious conflict, awarded labels, prefixes to the people involved in violence, named them as it suits to the group and ideologically divided readers. The primary reason behind it was to maintain the circulation, readership, and power to keep their influence as larger media group.

While justifying the conflict, Rojana Ajit was mentioning the people involved in generating violence as Dehshatpasand (violence like), Dehshtmand (violence create), Dehshatgard (violence spreader) and Ativadi (extremist), etc. but avoided other labels. Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri while seeing it a deliberate attempt to let down Hindus to establish Khalistan for Sikhs, used appellation Ugervadi (Militant) while the English newspaper The Tribune took the national path by condemning the violent attacks and called them Terrorist.

On the contrary, the print media of New Delhi too was taking an interest in the coverage of Punjab problem and prominently publishing news related to violence erupted by militants. The Times of India and The Hindustan Times were using labels Militant for those fighting against the state. The duo looked little softer in approach while dealing with the Punjab issue, but both the newspapers changed their voice just after Operation Bluestar and named them Terrorist, a harder affiliation in term of militant, hence followed the same line of state English media.

2.11.1 Description of Incident

Religious clashes among Sikhs and Nirankaris and acquitted of charges against the people of the court, Religious morchas (agitations), confrontations of Sikh extremists with forces, murders outside the golden temple and Operation Bluestar are the pressing issues which put the state into a dilemma. During the conflict period, print media as its nature keenly covered the incidents of violence and political problems related to it for their readers. The print media tried to use every tactic to deliver their piece of information. The ideologically driven media looked divided while representing issues in the shape of the news. The English and vernacular print media were releasing different voices for the same incidents, publishing on the front and inside pages as per significance.

The difference of opinion and ideological support invited many concerns during the meantime. The vernacular newspapers left no chance to take advantage over each other. The bigger headlines with photos of violence threatened the mind of the public and also brought them to a position of alienation during selective ideological based reporting for their target audience.

Punjab Kesri adopted a tough stand against those people who were engaged in violence against the state and used affiliation '*Ugervadi*' (Militant) and Aatankvadi (Terrorist) clearly to condemn them. The Tribune too followed the same line and did not hesitate to call people doing violence as 'terrorist' and looked more stick with the nationalistic approach, while Rojana Ajit has restricted itself while reporting for terror incidents. The newspaper used affiliations like '*Dehshativadi*,' '*Ativadi*,' '*Dehshatgard*' and '*Dehshatpasand*' etc. and did not use affiliation '*Ugervadi*' or Terrorist for them. However, the public was eying positively towards press for a peaceful resolution of the politico-religious conflict, but print media instead of cooperation opted path of sensationalism, which puts the idea behind. The vast expansion in the number of people reading the newspaper and other means of mass media confirms that print media were working over the process of identity creation in Punjab (Deol 2000, 149).

Labeling and sensitization are two different meanings in an issue, but without any resemblance at all. In the context of Punjab, the two words relatively become a reflection of the societal discussions as the fear was gripping the minds of the public and that fearful environment further created a fractured group of people who discussed the issues as per their convenience; against the terror and the Government.

2.11.2 Analysis

Ideologically divided print media of Punjab was fighting two side battle. One side, it was opposing to each-other in context of news reporting denouncing militancy and its related incidents. Secondly, the media was awarding labels to even those who were not militants and indulged in general crimes but declared them terrorist or militant. It further created confrontation among the groups as well as society. The labelling further affected society at ground level and degraded the society structure especially Sikh community faced the heat produced by media.

CHAPTER 3

MILITANCY IN PUNJAB: REPRESENTATIONS FROM ENGLISH AND VERNACULAR PRINT MEDIA

Militancy problem in Punjab is also known as Punjab crisis in late 1970 has remained responsible for creating havoc in the social life of the people of Punjab. The crisis not only broke the economic and social order in the state but also effected centuries-old relationship of Hindus and Sikhs remained bonded during the partition. The situation turned grim in those days and people left themselves over the mercy of the God and stopped to move out in broad daylight. The political parties and police to failed to control the violence. The print media of Punjab also turned handicap due to differences.

Print media of Punjab and Delhi were publishing stories related with militancy generated violence and incidents on top and inside pages in routine and many a times it also carried photos along with it. The news, language and violent pictures were enough to create fear in the minds of the readers of different communities. According to Adam Lockyer, the news presentation by the print media was also keeping in mind their set readership, which was further giving them bounce in higher circulation. The terminology of the insurgent terrorists and government officials are generally at odds. Thus, media is forced to adopt one or the others words or phase, which in turn will generally become the accepted way to express that idea in the public forum (Lockyer 2003, 1).

The English and vernacular print media of India has crossed a long way from an English tabloid to a strong bunch of thousands of newspapers of different languages with a daily circulation in millions. The print media is earning vast money through advertisements and strong readership.

It is one impression of print media, but another reality is that media in India have been a vehicle of diverse and paradoxical ideologies and politics, affirmative and negative, in its long history launched right from the colonial time (Jeffrey 2010). It has been a tool of domination as well as resistance, though access to the media and capital

to run the media have not been available to all. The role played by print media during militancy movement for Sikh homeland is a significant case to be reviewed seriously.

The militancy in Punjab based on notion of a separate homeland for the Sikh community and the suppression of it by the state has been representing and circulated in the public by mainstream print media. A comparative analysis of role of regional and national print media representations over violent incidents in Punjab prepared from academic point of view.

The news stories, editorials and articles appeared in print media, particularly the English and vernacular newspapers of the state and English newspapers publishing from New Delhi, and their editorials offer a valuable insight to explore the ideologies behind print media representations during militancy in Punjab. The research is an attempt to explore such print media representations to explore the deviation and tried to untie the ideologies behind them. It is an attempt to understand how print media and its representations are determined by the politics of the time and how in turn print media influence the contours and course behaviour of the masses of Punjab at large.

3.1 Politicization of Representations of Print Media

In democratic societies, a free press is a pivotal custom and has an asset in shape of belief of people belonging to different cast and creed in society. Mass Media whereas is a field of autonomy, but it is challengeable now and was before even that. The media world is a challengeable field with diverse interest and ideologies of groups. These groups are working for the well-being of the society and the nation. It also confronts each other on various issues affecting its status and reliability as well.

Since its inception, so many times the media has been targeting for affairs for the support of state and non-state actors as well. One of the fields is 'terrorism' and 'militancy,' which in the 21st century turned into the biggest threat to humankind and is not an exception (European Research Project 2008). Print media has the power to acknowledge and perpetuate the ideologies of violence and peace alike and its history is full of such examples and incidents. Brigitte Nacos said that "Without massive news coverage the terrorist act would resemble the proverbial tree falling in the forest: if not

one learned of an incident, it would be as if it has not occurred.” (Nacos 2000, 175). Different forms of militancy and terrorism are apparently getting considerable media support in quest of their ideologies and its permeation to newer groups and areas.

Former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, once called media publicity the “oxygen” of terrorism (Muller, et al. 2003, 65). Vice versa, terrorism or militancy can work as oxygen, for the media too, as the fear of the terror; attacks fetch more readers than other news items. Bruce Hoffman also argues on the terrorist attacks that “Without the media coverage, the impact of the act is arguably wasted, remaining confined to the immediate victims of the attack, rather than reaching the widest target audience to whom it is actually aimed” (Hoffman 2006, 174). In modern times, media sensationalism is deeply interlinked with the business interest of the new houses as the production of news in such a way to cater to weird groups and their interests can potentially win more audience or readers (Kaplan 2008).

It assumes additional implication when the primary readership of newspapers was polarized on communitarian lines.⁶¹ In order to keep their readership tied and possible expansion, the media house takes an inexpensively and politically accustomed position of writing according to the sentiments of their constituencies and readers and promote such ideas and sentiments, which are appealing to them.

Newspapers and media houses continuing without explicit communitarian interests also would be forced to play according to the music of their respective constituencies developed over the meantime. Moreover, under the condition of long-drawn-out militancy and violence, the newspaper would be forcefully entangling to state positions— against it, for it or in-between. Militancy and violence in a sense offer media a crisis as well as an opportunity like situation.

⁶¹Communitarian term relate to the attachment of an individual with the social organization in small cooperative unit. According to merriam-webster dictionary of communitarian is of or relating to social organization in small cooperative partially collectivist communities. (<https://www.merriam-webster.Com/dictionary/Communitarian>) (Accessed on 1 November, 2017)

3.2 Print Media: Understanding Labelling and Sensitization Process

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, labelling is “a word or phrase that describes or identifies something or someone.” In a simple sense, the labels help to identify thing easily as per human tendency and it issued to things or person and in that context, the labels have issued for them, is important to understand. Labelling and sensitization are two different meanings with no resemblance at all. However, in the context of Punjab, the two words relatively become a reflection of the societal discussions as the fear was gripping the minds of the public. The further fearful environment created a fractured group of people who discussed the issues as per their convenience; against terror and the Government.

Labelling and sensitization are two different concepts bearing different meanings with no resemblance at all. Although in the case of Punjab, the two words relatively had become a reflection of the societal discussions as the fear of armed militancy was gripping the minds of the public. Fearful environment further created fractured groups in the public who were discussing the issues as per their need and convenience. Public Sphere is an area in social life where individuals come closer to discuss and identify social problems freely and through discourse, it influences the political decision. Gerard A. Hauser (1999) believes that vernacular public discourse as not only expressing but also as constantly creating, regulating and fine-tuning public opinion through a process in which we cultivate and maintain a sense of ourselves in dialogue. Through this vernacular discourse, public opinion creates a particular issue and at the same time, in a side effect not merely incidental; people create and sustain conceptions of identity and community (Hauser 1999).

Simultaneously, print media knowingly or unknowingly leaves no effort to sensitize the problem in which the role of English and vernacular media is under scrutiny. According to Anthony Giddens (2013), the notion of structure is a visible form of some sort. The notion is not merely contained within the individual; it is a flow of people’s action to connect it with the tributes of the self-consciousness. The structural properties of societies and social system are real properties, but at the same moment has no physical existence. They are real properties, in the sense in which it depends

upon the routine qualities of people's actions and it can be fixed or hard. As per Durkheimian point, society is a structured phenomenon and that the structural properties of a group or a society make effects upon the way people act, feel and think (Giddens 2013).

In troubled Punjab, the key participants in the conflict were politics, Administration, militants, common public and obviously regional and National print media, which were entangled and engaged with each other and were trying to represent the problem in their own view. However, the involvement of print media during militancy and their role in creating a fractured public sphere made a vast impact on the situational reality.

The issue of labels distributed by print media to the Sikh community involved in a confrontation with the state created a fractured situation and generated a different debate. The ideological conflict becomes base for awarding such labels, which further produced a divided Mediascape.⁶² The English and vernacular media produced a fractured sphere of information and put its effect over public opinion too. The news produced through ideological perspective produced handicap perception within the society. Instead of delivering decisive information about the problem, the print media put its efforts to construct reality and sensationalism⁶³, which helped them to grow their circulation and yield more profit.

The people in large groups come into discussion within a social system which creates concepts about each other's actions. These concepts eventually become a reality with the passage of time and habitually continue further. When these concepts adopted by the society, start to turn into reality. The continuous process further developed an embedded meaning of reality in society. Knowledge and people's conception about the reality creates a fractured scenario after the continuous flow of

⁶²Mediascape refers to the mass media in context of global cultural flows. Mediascape, indicates the electronic capabilities of production and dissemination, as well as, the picture of the world created and presented by the media (Appadurai 1990).

⁶³Sensationalism according to Merriam Webster online dictionary is; the use or effect of sensational subject matter of treatment. (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sensationalism>) (Accessed on 10 September, 2017)

views perpetuates over reality, which loads society with the socially constructed fabric of information (Berger and Luckman 2011).

Like the construction of social reality through stories and public discourse, media sensationalism is a term related to the mass media where the events and incidents are overhyped giving biased impression and manipulation of the truth. Most of the time sensationalism includes omitting facts to obtain more attention from the public especially readers. Sensationalism refers not only the content but also the style of presentation that is important as such stories focus on attention-grabbing that attracts viewers and readers to buy the newspapers and big picture covers. Sensational news is not the wrong news, but it is time-consuming. Sensationalism, especially crime and violence, can have serious social consequences (Andersen et al. 2008, 477).

During the militancy problem, the English and vernacular press concisely used certain labels in the news like Ugervadi and Atankvadi in Hindi newspaper, Deshhatgard, Dehshatmand, Dehshapadand and Ativadi, etc. in Punjabi newspaper. While English newspapers of Punjab used Terrorist to mark those people indulge in violent acts while English press of New Delhi used militant before Operation Bluestar while during the operation, Bluestar and thereafter adopted the term 'Terrorist' instead of militant to mention them. These are few affixes, which were frequently using for people involved in terror violence.

These labels were turning more into identity formation of the individual's religion, which hunted Punjab. The blame of Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit over other press for misconception the issue is a serious charge and explain the role of print media of Punjab during a certain period. Simultaneously, print media knowingly or unknowingly left no effort to sensitize the problem in which the role of English and vernacular media is still under scrutiny.

3.2.1 Punjab Problem: Divided Mediascape and Different Voices

The turning point for Punjab's fate, if it; was a Sikh-Nirankari clash in 1978. The clash whereas buying 13 Sikhs died on the spot; it also murdered the faith between the

Sikhs and Nirankaris. The highest body of Sikhs, SGPC issued '*Hukamnama*' from the Akal Takhat (High chair of Sikh Community) declaring Nirankaris as the enemies of the Sikhs and calling severing all relations with it sealed the fate permanently. A court's verdict in 1980's in the related case, a series of incidents pushed Punjab completely into the grip of militancy in the name of religion, spread in every corner, and grasped every community (Kapur 1985, 237).

The first religious killing in Punjab related to 1978 clash was of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh at Delhi in April 1980 who previously survived in various attacks. The vengeance in Sikhs sooner turned into revenge and forced them to stand opposite the state authority. In subsequent years, 1981 and 1982 worried the Government as 26 people were killed by the extremists and in 1983, the number of killings jumped to 76 (Gill 1997, 1). On one side, Shiromani Akali Dal was busy in organizing religious morchas (agitations) for more rights to the state on other side state authority was confronting with Sikh extremists fighting for the sake of Khalistan⁶⁴ charged over religious sentiments after Operation Bluestar.

In this conflict, English and vernacular print media actively participated in reporting of violent incidents and published news on the front and inside pages as per convenience and significance of the news, but the pattern of reporting and style of writings and language initiated debate during the conflict period. The difference of opinion and ideological gaps looked clearly over the surface, thus invited many issues and concerns. The bigger headlines with photos of violence threatened the mind of public and but also brought to a position of alienation while selective ideology based reporting for their target audience was continued. The vernacular newspapers during the conflict period were gaining higher circulation (Deol 2000). Editorials and news of

⁶⁴The Sikh Diaspora has always been politically more radical than the Akali Dal has with its leadership rooted to the large peasants or farmers. The Gadar Party had few active supporters among the Akali Dal Sikhs. In 1960s, Sikh immigrants raised the slogan of an 'Independent Punjab' much ahead of the Sikhs living in India. The Khalistan movement also originated first in North America under the patronage of the Diaspora and only years later found a certain solid support from a section of Sikh youth. Between 1971 and 1978, a number of Sikh organizations abroad raised the slogan of Khalistan, a separate Sikh state (Gupta 1990, 365).

three state origin newspaper The Tribune⁶⁵ in English, Punjab Kesri⁶⁶ in Hindi and Rojana Ajit⁶⁷ in Punjabi targeting a different readership along with two national English newspapers of Delhi, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times are selected for comparison.

The editorials of Punjab Kesri were observed completely against the people engaged in violence and without any hesitation; the affiliation '*Ugervadi*' and Aatankvadi gave to them and openly condemned their activity and looked towards state for more preferential actions against them (Deol 2000, 159). The Tribune too followed the same line and did not hesitate to call violence creators as '*Terrorist*' and looked more stick with the nationalistic approach. On the contrary, Rojana Ajit has clearly restricted itself while reporting terror accumulated violence and avoided naming them 'terrorist' and instead of that used soft affiliations (Ibid, 159).

Though the public was eying positively towards the press for peaceful resolution of the religious conflict, ideological gaps between the newspapers limited their cooperation and stuck with sensationalism while successfully delivering selected identities. The vast expansion in the number of people reading newspaper confirms that print media were working over the process of identity creation in Punjab (Deol 2000, 149).

⁶⁵The Tribune is own by The Tribune Group Trust, is English daily having significant circulation in Punjab. The Tribune was one of the earliest newspapers, which established in Punjab and its readership was among the upper class of Punjab and most readable newspapers in community. The Jat Sikh aristocrat Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia found the newspaper on 2 February 1881. Sardar Majithia was known for his links between the aristocracy in Punjab and the rising intelligentsia. His family had an aristocratic background and open to modern English education and modern liberalism (Deol 2000, 156).

⁶⁶Punjab Kesri, owned by the Hind Samachar Group (HSG) is one of the largest Hindi newspapers in Punjab. It emerged as a major player in the 60's when Punjab was going through a big change. The newspaper was founded by Lala Jagat Narayan who was also its founder editor. He was a staunch Congressman and apart from participating in India's struggle for independence, he was active in the Arya Samaj Movement (ibid, 153).

⁶⁷Rojana Ajit newspaper belongs to The Ajit Group. This newspaper is in Gurumukhi and is the largest selling Punjabi newspaper in Punjab. Rojana Ajit in Punjabi was launched in 1955 by Sadhu Singh Hamdard, who was its founder publisher and editor. He worked for SGPC and was active in Quit India Movement (QIM) against the British. He was succeeded by his son Barjinder Singh Hamdard as the editor (ibid, 154).

3.2.2 Print Media of Punjab

The Punjab Kesri has kept tough stand on Punjab militancy, branded militants indulged in violence clearly as Ugarvadi and Aatankvadi, which is used it with a clear sense as militant, and terrorists.⁶⁸ It often finds a resemblance with the statist



discourses on militancy in Punjab. Punjab Kesri, with a predominantly Hindu constituency of readers, has often been branded as Hindu press by a newspaper like Rojana Ajit.⁶⁹ The newspaper in its editorial prediction about the security threat to the public and state. According to the newspaper, the religious places were allegedly used as hideouts by the extremist indulged in violence and the government was claiming to recover arms from them, which directly points out to the senior leaders of the Shiromani Akali Dal.

The article on 6 May, 1984, writes:

“.... In order to force the Government to end the blockade, Sant Longowal had threatened to send martyrs groups and Jathedars to Moga.... before getting the situation worse, the Government took decision to end the blockade. Now the discussion is continuing who won. The Government announced that total 16 Ugarvadi arrested from inside the Gurdwara and recovered arms too, but Sant Longowal and other Akali leaders declared it as a pure lie and that no Terrorist was captured nor recovered any arms, as the BSF did not have

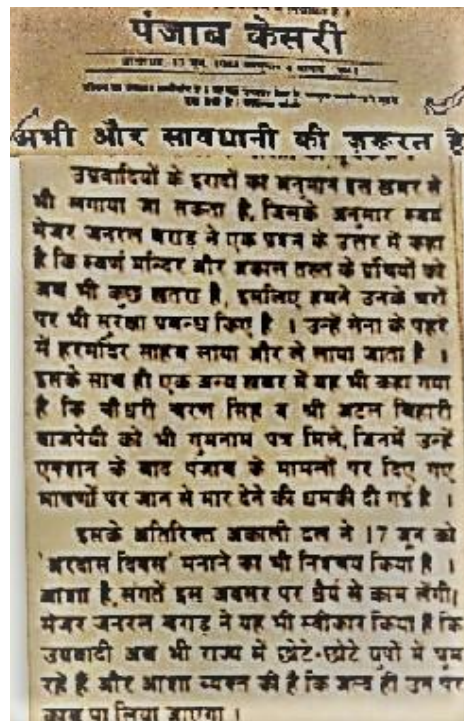
⁶⁸The news published on 17 June 1984 in Punjab Kesri with headline Punjab Ke Ghatnao Ke Piche Videshi Shadyantra: Virbhadra (English translation is Foreign Conspiracy behind the Punjab Incidents: Virbhadra). In this news, word Atankavadi clearly used, which in English means terrorists.

⁶⁹Paramilitary Forces barricade three Gurdwaras in Moga district based on in which they had information that Ugarvadi's (Militancy) had taken shelter inside the worship place. Therefore, they covered up the Gurdwaras, the blockade remained for seven days, and forces did not permit anyone to move inside or outside the Gurdwara during the time. According to some reports, 16 people were arrested and 13 arms recovered from them but it became an issue when spokesperson of SGPC categorically denied the same. Punjab Kesri also published article on 6 May 1984 in which they thank to the steps taken by the Government for peacefully solving the blockade issue of Gurdwaras. The Tribune published a news on 3 May, 1984 'Gurdwara siege Lifted' in which they described that a 7 days' old blocked of 3 Gurdwaras siege is lifted by the BSF and total 300 inmates are released for their homes after the peacefully solving the matter.

permission to enter the Gurdwaras.... DC Faridkot moved into Gurdwaras along with a few local residents in the evening at 6.30 pm for an inspection in order to assure that there are no arms and suspected person inside the Gurdwara. They checked each of the rooms in the Gurdwara. Akali leaders can say that when they sent in Martyr Group towards Gurdwara, BSF lifted the blockade of the Gurdwara. The Government can say it encircled the place in order to catch them from their hideouts in the Gurdwara and fired at the BSF from inside”.⁷⁰
 ('Whose win?' editorial, Romesh Chandra, Punjab Kesri, 6 May, 1984)

After Operation Bluestar in Amritsar, Punjab Kesri maintains its stand to raise concern against the militants indulged in violence and pausing threat to the public. The newspaper through it tried to express its concerns and worry in its editorials to keep their impressions in the Sikhs. The first time, high priest of the Golden Temple and Akal Takhat were named in the threat list. The newspaper released a warning to the administration against the *Ugarvadi's* and suggested them to deal with them strictly. The call was on a military intelligence shared by the Major General who led the army into the Golden Temple. Punjab Kesri writes:

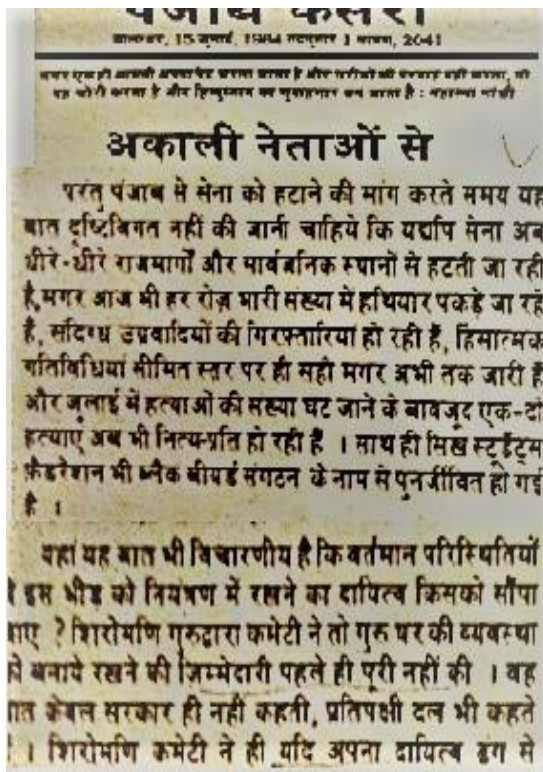
“The intentions of *Ugarvadi's* can be understood from the reply of Major General Brar that the life of granthis (a person with a duty to recite hymns at Gurdwara) of Golden Temple and Akal Takhat are still under danger and hence they have security arrangements at their houses too. In army security, they are coming to Harmandir Sahib and taken back. In other news, Chaudhary Charan Singh and Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee received unknown letters in which they were threatened to killed after their lectures given on issue of Punjab after the action. Major General Brar accepted that still *Ugarvadi's* are moving in small groups inside the state and hope that



⁷⁰Translated in English from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial, 'Jeet Kiski' published on 6 May, 1984.

sooner they will be under control”.⁷¹ (‘Still, Need to be more careful,’ Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 17 June, 1984)

In a subsequent editorial, Punjab Kesri raised its concerns over the proposal of withdrawal of the army from the state as the newspaper still see the Ugarvadis are active in various regions of the state. It remembers the situation of the poor law and order of the central government in the state and expressed its worry over the violent incidents erupted in various places after Operation Bluestar. The newspaper attached the disturbed situation of the state with the recovery of arms, which the security forces are recovering, indicating towards the serious threat to the public. The newspaper did not support the Centre and State decision to reduce security along with proofs of incidents and silence of the SGPC strengthen extremist’s organizations accepted by various parties. The newspaper again writes on 15 July, 1984:



“.... While demanding to call back the army from Punjab, it should not forget that at a time when the army is vacating the national highways and other public places, lots of ammunition is being recovered on a daily basis and more and more suspected Ugarvadis are being captured. Violent incidents are still occurring at a limited scale. In July, the number of murders in a decline, but one or two murders are continuing to occur every day. “Moreover Sikh Student Federation once again revived their activities under its new name the Black Beard. It is also under consideration that in present circumstances to whom the responsibility should be handedover to control the mob. It is well known that SGPC did not adequately honour its responsibility to uphold the Guru’s shrine in the sanctity. This is not pointed out only by the Government but even opposition parties endorse this”.⁷² (‘To the Akali

⁷¹Translated in English from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial, ‘Abhi aur savdhani ke jaroorat hai’ published on 17 June, 1984.

⁷²Translated in English from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial, ‘Akali Netaon Se’ published on 15 July, 1984.

Leaders', editorial, Vijay, Punjab Kesri, 15 July, 1984)

Punjab Kesri after the army operation clearly sees the wide gap between Hindu and Sikhs from the year 1980. What the harm occurred to the unity was an issue of worry. Through a call to Hindus to come ahead for the renovation work along with Sikhs shows the confidence of newspaper for their respective popularity in Hindus. Second, the newspaper wanted to reinstate the peace process as the group had lost two primary persons of the family due to militancy. The suggestion to Akali leadership to work for community amity and resolving fissures in social fabric established their stand for raising voice against militants. It further writes:

“In order to bring Punjab into normalcy and heal the wounds of the people, it is utmost important that Karseva for the renovation of Darbar Sahib should start immediately. Five Singh Sahibans also insisted on starting this work without any delay. The octogenarian Sikh leader Baba Kharag Singh also accepted the proposal. In the task of renovation, if the Hindus and the Sikhs work together, then the differences between the two would be a bridge at a large level. However, it is said that after one-and-a-half-hour discussion with friends of Ugarvadi (Terrorist), Baba Kharag Singh now have withdrawn his support for the idea of renovation. It said that Baba Kharag Singh decided this after a discussion in a closed room with colleagues of Ugervadis. If it is true, then it is a matter of concern”.⁷³ (Ibid)

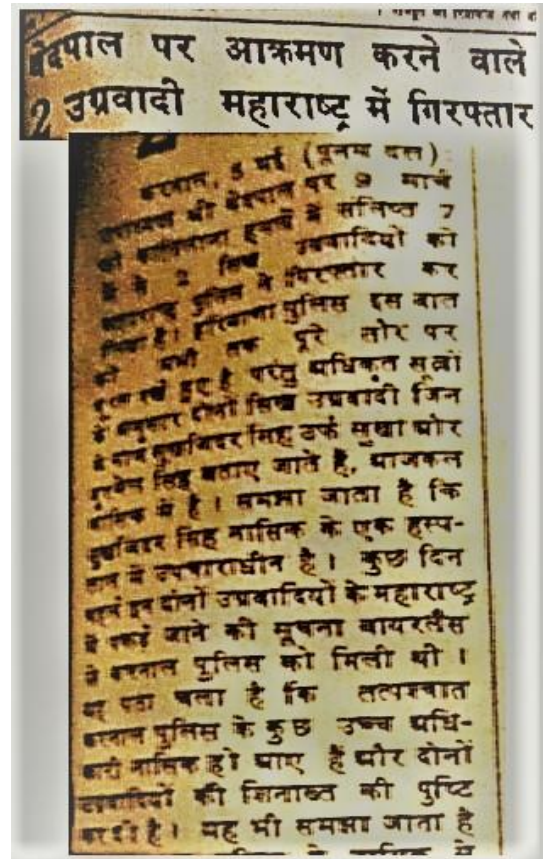


Punjab Kesri, in this conflict, looked stand against the deadly violence erupted in the state. However, the public, especially Hindus were on the target of militants and extremists, but the newspaper is openly naming religion and labelling of Ugervadi and

⁷³Translated in English from Punjab Kesri editorial, 'Akali Netaon Se' published on 15 July, 1984.

Atankvadi word, which was against the ethics of journalism. The branding of religion with individual person looked to please Hindus and state machinery. The branding of Sikhs as Ugervadi in the news shows the anti-Sikh stand in the conflict. The newspaper on 6th May writes with news:

“Two Sikh Ugervadis out of seven involved in the deadliest attack on State President Vedpal have been arrested by the Maharashtra Police. Though, the Haryana police are keeping the arrest covert, but according to recognized sources, both the Sikh Ugervadi naming Sukhjinder Singh @ Sukha and Gurmail Singh are in Nasik. It is information that Sukhjinder Singh was admitted in the hospital. A few days back, Haryana police got the arrest information through wireless from Maharashtra police. After that, a few officers of the Karnal police came back from Nasik and recognized the arrest of two Ugervadis”.⁷⁴ (Two militants involved in the attack on Vedpal arrested in Maharashtra, news, Punjab Kesri, 6 May, 1984)



Further, Punjab Kesri targets political support to the militants for their violent activities in the state. In previous writings, Punjab Kesri had allegedly criticized the stand of Akali Dal for support of extremist activities in the state. The newspaper did not lose the chance and strongly condemned the role of Sant Akali Dal for their alleged support to the agitation of Sant Bhindranwale. Through this editorial, the newspaper expressed its anger over Akali Party as well as the Marxist Party for their anti-Punjab stand and their support to Akali Dal and criticized them very piercingly. The newspaper

⁷⁴Translated in English from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri 'Vedpal per Akarman kerne wale do Ugervadi Maharashtra se Girafatar' published on 6 May, 1984.

editorial somehow wanted to aside Akali Dal over the support to militants and predicted it like an anti-public activity. The newspaper writes:



“.... Now when Sant Akali Dal clearly supported the Sikh terrorist target and accepted to opt Morcha (agitation) of Sant Bhindranwale from 4 August. He declared to lead the morcha of Sant Bhindranwale. Now in compulsion Marxist communist has to come in the ground against the Akali Dal and announced that in the future Marxist party would not join Akali Dal in any morcha. In an announcement of Marxist party, assimilation of a terrorist with Akali Dal, this morcha has started to take a communal angle. Akali Dal too shook hands with terrorists instead of taking stands along with democratic powers. The present new memorandum of their demands is a combined combination of complaints and communal demands, which instead of separation of the militant’s activities, provides a shield on the name of providing security to Sikhs. The attacks made by the Sikh terrorists over Hindus, Akali Dal did not utter a single word over it. Readers! These words are not said by any Hindu communal journalist, nor it is declared by any Hindu organization or leader, but is a standpoint of Marxist party which was seeing Akali Dal, though it is an organization of the Sikhs, as neat and clean and issues them nationalist certificate”.⁷⁵ (Who came from

your gathering out with worry, editorial, Punjab Kesri, 1 August, 1982)

In short, the Punjab Kesri in its editorials brought a strong discussion and sees militancy, more as security threat instead of fight for Punjab issues. It also sets an independent standard over the violent activities produced by militants and urged the state to deal with them strongly. The newspaper after the army operation at Golden Temple, whereas calling Hindus to come ahead for Karseva to represent itself more as

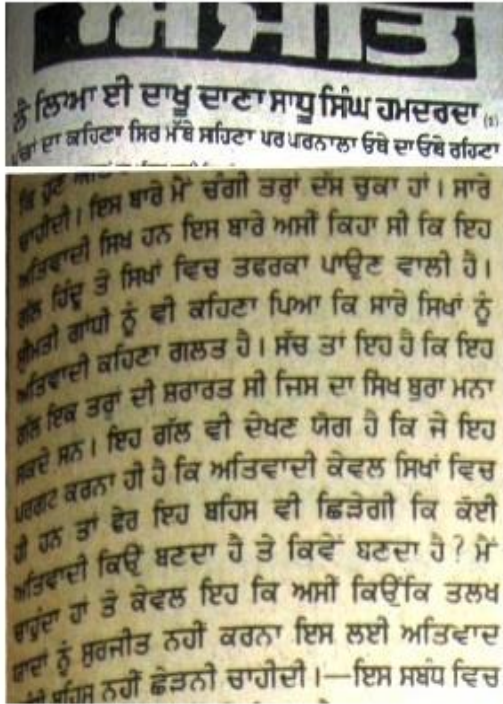
⁷⁵Translated in English from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial ‘Jo terobazam se nikla who preshannikla’ published on 6 May, 1984.

a secular entity, on the contrary, it still sees the militancy as a threat from remaining extremists in the state. It did not hesitate to label religion of the person before their names in news and editorials, which is against the journalism ethics. The tough remarks delivered by the newspaper to the SGPC and the Akali Dal for failing to control hardliners in the Gurdwaras and party show their toughness over the state issues, while the newspaper also few times brought Central Government under criticism for not dealing fairly in the issues in Punjab. The distribution of labelling in news and editorial shows the similar views of the state that was too branding the militants as terrorists in all its deliberations.

The editorials of another vernacular newspaper, *Rojana Ajit*, on the lines of commentary and ideological leanings, has been describing the militants involved in violence as *Ativadi's*, '*Dehshativadi*', '*Dehshatgard*' and '*Dehshatpasand*', a carefully chosen label which is softer in intensity than usage of Ugarvadi, Aatankvadi and Terrorist labelled by Punjab Kesri and The Tribune. The newspaper makes a disparity between violent and peaceful people of the Sikh community. Apart from other newspapers, *Ajit* made labelling as issue affixed to the Sikhs and strongly denounced the resentment with Punjab Kesri and The Tribune. The variation in labelling of different newspapers brought gaps on the floor over the subject between print media circle.

Branding Sikhs as a terrorist could develop more gap between both the communities, a threat presumed by *Rojana Ajit*. In an editorial arguing based over the statement given by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, editor Sadhu Singh Hamdard writes to stop discussion over the labelling issues. According to him, print media's stand is creating more friction between the societies. However, it also pictured the internal confrontations of print media, which is keeping diverse stand though after frequent appeals. The *Ajit* writes:

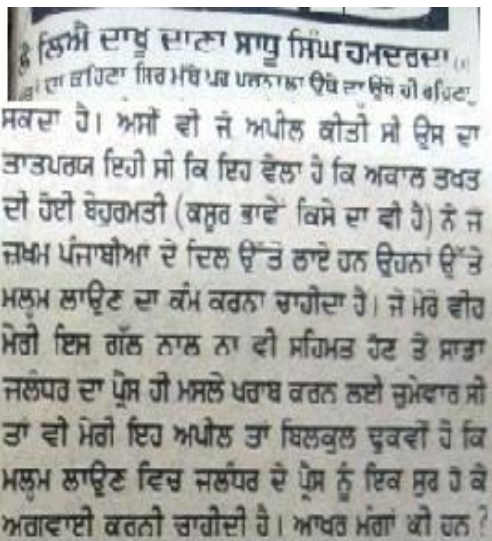
"All the *Ativadi's* seen as Sikhs, and this perception, we say will create more difference between Hindus and Sikhs. Now even Smt. Gandhi has stated that calling all Sikhs, as *Ativadi* is wrong. The truth is that is a misconception is spread deliberately by a few people and Sikhs would



mind it. If we continue to see and discuss all Ativadi's as Sikhs, then this will lead to a further discussion that why and how someone becomes Ativadi. I want to say only this that should not be recollecting the tough times so we should not enter into discussion on *Ativadi's*".⁷⁶ ('You have taken pains Sadhu Singh Hamdard-2', editorial, Rojana Ajit, 21 July, 1984)

Confronting over various issues and incidents for more than four years, the print media of Punjab, mainly known as Jullundur Press allegedly changed its stern discourse after OBS. The editorial of Rojana Ajit observed the army acted as a heartbreaker of the Punjabi community and invocation to the

print media for joint work to generate unity and goodwill in the state. The point of admission to create trouble in the state by Rojana Ajit clarifies the stand and the role of print media in the completely fabricated conflict. The clear mean of the discussion is; the press is responsible for the conflict in the state at a certain level and that could not be ignored, as they were part of the divided media-scape. Sadhu Singh Hamdard writes



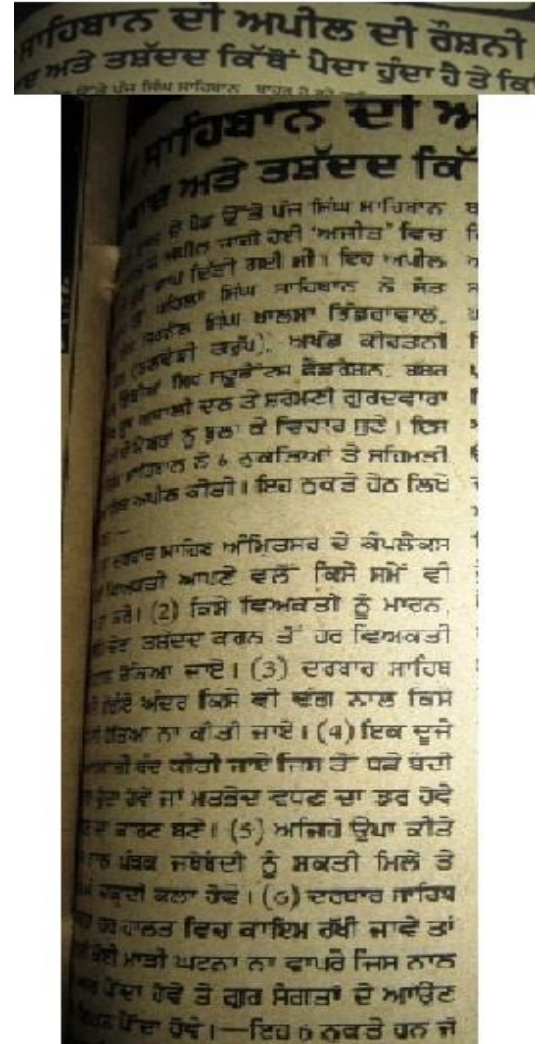
in an article:

"In addition, we have appealed to the people; the basic meaning of that appeal was that the assault on the Akal Takhat (whosoever is responsible) created wounds in the hearts of Punjabis; now it is time to heal such wounds. Even those people who may not be in agreement with me that the Jullundur press is responsible for the problem, even then my appeal is appropriate that in this healing Jullundur Press can jointly play a lead role". (Ibid)

⁷⁶Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial 'Le Laya Dakhu Dana Sadhu Singh Hamdarda' published on 21 July, 1984.

The appeal made by the high priest of Akal Takhat of the Sikh community, especially to the various groups active in Punjab was carried out by Rojana Ajit in hope to bring normalcy in the state. The step was taken after various violent incidents occurred around the premises of the Golden Temple and questions raised by the state authority and print media especially English and Hindi press along with the Sikh community itself. The militants for shelter allegedly used the Gurdwara and it was condemned by Centre Government but then denounced by committee itself. However, the appeal of five high priests to stop violence clarifies that there was trouble inside the Gurdwara, which needed to stop. Rojana Ajit writes in an editorial:

“The appeal issued from five Singh Sahibans⁷⁷ has been published by Ajit as it is. Before making this appeal, Singh Sahibans talked to Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Talwandi group, Akhand Kirtni Jatha, Sikh Student Federation, Babar Khalsa Youth Akali Dal and members of the SGPC and listened to their views. After which Singh Sahibans appealed to all the concerned to agree upon the six points they put forward. Following are those six points; no individual should take any fight any time in the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar Complex, stop all threatening, tortures and killings of humans, there should not be any killing



⁷⁷Singh Sahibans are the five Sikh high priests of the Akal Takhat, supreme for all Sikh Community. During the time of militancy, when people were getting killed on the roads and inside the Darbar Sahib complex where thousands of devotees pay obeisance regularly became a matter of great concern for all. At that moment, Singh Sahibans made an appeal to all the Sikh groups in Punjab to make situation peaceful and issued an appeal where they want assurance from all the moderate and hardliner groups to maintain peace inside the Darbar Sahib complex. The appeal issued around one month before the Operation Bluestar (Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial published on 3 May, 1984).

inside the premises of Darbar Sahib at any cost, stop hating speeches and allegations between the groups which only increase the gap between the groups, start working on regaining the respect and power of the community and the purity of Darbar Sahib should be maintained at any cost". ('Through the Light of Appeal of Singh Sahibans', Editorial, Rojana Ajit, 3 May, 1984)⁷⁸

Along with that, the Punjabi newspaper through editorial made an argument over the role of Centre Government and blamed them for grabbing rights of Punjab, and termed it as an injustice with Sikhs. The newspaper somewhere justifies the ongoing



conflict due to the negative role of Governments, which makes the issue more complex. Ajit writes

“The territory of Punjab is being grabbed away. Putting all law and order on the backburner, the water of Punjab is being taken away from the state. The situation is grave that though Punjab owned the water but disallowed to use it. Chandigarh built in Punjab and in lieu of that, the two districts Abohar and Fazilka have taken away. Hurdles are created everywhere in using the recycled water released through canals from the Ropar Power Plant. If Punjabi Hindus can practice the Hindi language, what is the fault of Sikhs in those 202 villages in which, they did not use Hindi but merged into Haryana? Is not Punjab is being treated as a stepchild? The reply for these kinds of atrocities is just Ativad”. (Ibid)⁷⁹

Rojana Ajit took a stern stand over the writings of The Tribune editor Prem Bhatia which editor Sadhu Singh Hamdard advice through his articles. The newspaper condemns the stand of those who are blaming Sikhs and Akalis responsible for the violence in the state. The newspaper is trying to

⁷⁸Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial 'Singh Sahibaan Di Appeal Di Roshni ch, Ativad ate Tashdad Kithon ate Kyon Paidi Hundi Hai' published on 3 May, 1984.

⁷⁹Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper editorial Rojana Ajit 'Singh Sahibaan Di Appeal Di Roshni ch, Ativad ate Tashdad Kithon ate Kyon Paidi Hundi Hai' published on 3 May, 1984.

bring the argument about the Sikh community, where the majority was not in favour of Khalistan. The newspaper through the statement of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi gave a stern reply to the editor of The Tribune to predict its stand wrong. With an argument, the newspaper wanted to heal the hearts of the Sikhs community of Punjab, which were isolated after the army action and were not in favour of violence. The editorial of Rojana Ajit inscribes:

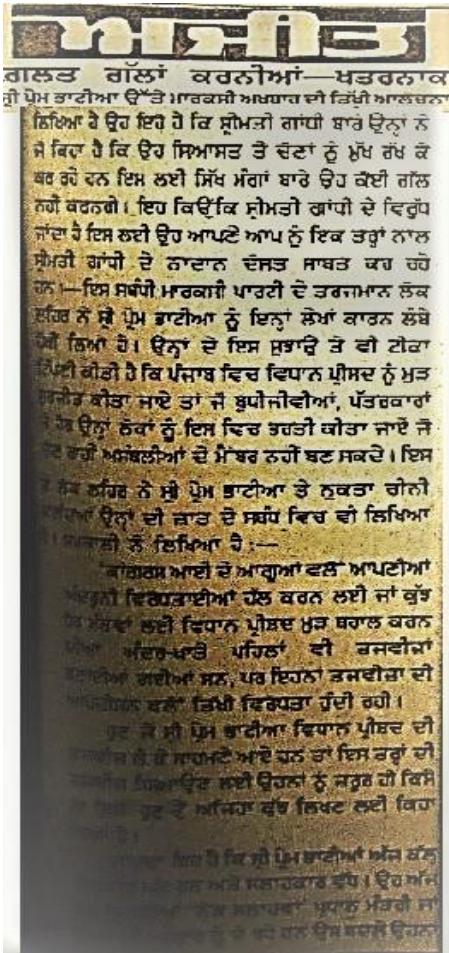
“After revealing of armful preparations by Dehshatpasand (violence liker) in Shri Darbar Sahib Complex, Sikh brotherhood, unfortunately, lost that sympathy which they had gained from different political parties of the country.... Are Sikhs supporters of Khalistan? So many times Akali made it clear that they are not in favour of Khalistan instead of that they are part of Hindustan. This position remains unchanged even today. The said incidents of Punjab are not related to Khalistan; but vested interest forcefully try to create an impression in that direction, but the Sikh community has nothing to do with that.... We laughed at the writing of our friend who is a friend of Mrs. Gandhi, and immature. We know that our brother will be angry with us on this issue, but we request him that discussion on such serious matters should be based on correct position and facts”. (‘Wrong talks are dangerous, Criticism of Sh. Prem Bhatia by the Marxist newspapers’, editorial, Rojana Ajit, 10 July, 1984)⁸⁰



The rift and gaps ideologically between vernacular and English print media was evident to all. However, the alleged differences of the press were visible through their writings, producing fractured views over the Punjab trouble issue. Rojana Ajit newspaper did not leave any chance to criticize editor and English newspaper The

⁸⁰Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial 'Galat Gallan Karniyan Khatarnak' published on 20 July, 1984.

Tribune both for supporting Central Government. Though carrying excerpts from the communist newspaper 'Lok Leher,' Rojana Ajit left no chance to criticize the editor of The Tribune directly for Pro-Centre stand, which denotes frictions in the media industry. Rojana Ajit writes in an editorial with its own viewpoint:



“What he told about Smt. Gandhi, he is keeping elections and politics in mind so she will not do anything for the demands of the Sikhs. It itself goes against Smt. Gandhi. With this, he himself is proving an immature friend of Smt. Gandhi. Related to this, representative of Marxist Party ‘Lok Leher’ took Sh. Prem Bhatia with stern hands.... Leaders of Congress party previously designed re-launching of the Vidhan Parishad through hidden ways, but these proposals sharply criticized by the opposition. Now Sh. Prem Bhatia carried the proposal of the Vidhan Parishad then somebody definitely asked him from surrounding to write like this. It is observed that Sh. Prem Bhatia nowadays lesser looks like a journalist and more of like an advisor”. (“Wrong talks are dangerous, Criticism of Sh. Prem Bhatia by the Marxist newspapers’, editorial, Rojana Ajit, 11 July, 1984)⁸¹

This point is reiterating by subsequent editorials too. For instance, on 29 May 1984, the newspaper expressed its disillusionment in being the militants referred to as Ativadis. It replies the statist attempt of relegating the ideology of militancy

as Ativad by stating that Ativadis created by the state as it neither paid attention nor tried to understand the language of peaceful protest. The newspaper writes:

⁸¹Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial ‘Galat Gallan Karniyan Khatarnak’ published on 20 July, 1984.

“We are asking to Smt. Gandhi that our ears are full with listening to promises that the Government is ready to accept the demands; but Ativadis disturb the atmosphere in the state. We are asking her who produced Ativad. Is it not a creation of the Government’s attitude where they did not understand the language of peaceful Morcha?”⁸² (‘Right and Justice are with you,’ editorial, Rojana Ajit, 29 May, 1984)



In conclusion, Rojana Ajit looked more worried and aggressive for Punjab rights and confronting over the stand of the centre government for denying rights. Instead of naming terrorist, it chose appellations like *Ativadi's* and Dehshatpasand, which is nearly equivalent to the extremist in English. At the same time, it also attempts to highlight the material and religious reasons behind conflicts, alongside divides created by the Government. It sometimes criticizes *Ativadi's* as anti-nationals and separatists, but it describes the reason behind the trouble is not an impulsive outbreak, but an outcome of the concrete circumstances of discriminations and insult of Sikhs.

The Tribune explicitly expressed its nationalist predilections with the writings and news related to militancy incidents occurred in Punjab. The editorials of The Tribune in their evaluation of the incidents, kept the centric view to keep the situation under control. However, it remained on target with ‘vernacular newspaper’ like Rojana Ajit due to the critical approach of the editorials related to Sikhs. The anti-Sikh stand allegedly adopted by The Tribune on many issues and describing the Sikhs involved in the violence as a terrorist, at par with the Punjab Kesri line.

⁸²Translated in English from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial ‘Haq aate Nayade tuhade naal ne’ published on 29 May, 1984.

The Tribune often ignored such allegations and did not respond in the same manner. The situation of security, which was shattered in the state and recent incident of murder of a former DSP going with his family, draws the scary picture of the state. It predicts that the police and its family member's life are at stake. The Tribune writes over the situation:



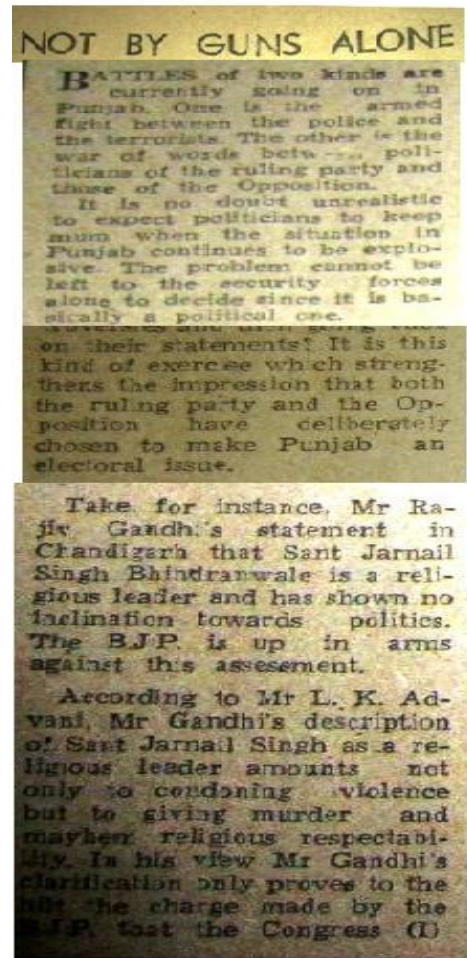
“Mr. Bachan Singh, a former Deputy Superintendent of Police, his wife, Amarjit Kaur, and his bodyguard Mr. Milkha Singh, were shot dead by two youths here today. Mr. Bachan Singh’s daughter, Miss Harjit Kaur, was seriously injured in the incident. She is struggling for life in hospital. The murder took place on Majitha Road. While Mr. Bachan Singh and his bodyguard were killed on the spot, Mrs. Amarjit Kaur died in hospital. Paramilitary forces encircled Mehta Nangal village, adjacent to Gurdwara Parkash, headquarters of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Soon after the incident following reports that the killers had taken shelter there”.⁸³ (‘Former DSP, Wife, Guard Shot,’ news, The Tribune, 1 May, 1984)

The bloody violence in the state whereas brought the public’s life under threat, on the contrary, the political parties were busy in doing politics. The Tribune, which was allegedly blamed by Rojana Ajit to support the Congress Government in Centre again kept its stand where BJP leaders carried attack over Congress party due to a statement made by Rajiv Gandhi about Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. The BJP, which was once a political partner of Akali Government of Punjab, condemned them to declare Bhindranwale as a religious face of the Sikh community. However, the article presents the view of the opposition, but simultaneously it declares the statement an overhyped view by the opposition leaders and sees no reality in this. The argument through an article of K. R. Sunder Rajan related to the statement of Congress (I) to see Bhindranwale primarily

⁸³Original editorial published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Time for Delhi to Act’ on 3 May, 1984.

as a religious leader, is an attempt to oversee the rebellious activities of the militant leader:

“Battles of two kinds are currently going on in Punjab. One is the armed fight between the police and the terrorists. The other is the war of words between politician of the ruling party and those of the opposition. It is no doubt unrealistic to expect politicians to keep mum when the situation in Punjab continues to be explosive. The problem cannot be left over the security forces alone to decide since it is basically a political one. It is this kind of exercise which strengthens the impression that both the ruling party and the opposition have deliberately chosen to make Punjab an electoral issue.... Take, for instance, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's statement in Chandigarh that Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale is a religious leader and has shown no inclination towards politics. The Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) is up in arms against this assessment. According to Mr. L.K Advani, Mr. Gandhi's description of Sant Jarnail Singh as a religious leader amounts not only to condoning violence but also to giving murder and mayhem religious respectability. In his view, Mr. Gandhi's clarification only proves to the hit the charge made by the BJP”.⁸⁴ ('Not by Guns Alone,' Article, The Tribune, 7 May, 1984)



The conflict between the state and militants was continuing from the last few years, but it was predicted that the extremists and militants wanted to form a separate homeland for Sikhs and for that, Hindus and liberals were on the target of militants. The rebellion Sikh leaders demanded, but it is difficult to understand that the key leader of rebellion group, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was not in favour of Khalistan, which

⁸⁴Original article published in English newspaper The Tribune 'Not by Guns Alone', A personal View on 7 May, 1984.

was a relief sign for the Government. In an argument, The Tribune on 7 May, 1984 writes:

NOT BY GUNS ALONE

While denying the contention that they had given a clean chit to Sant Jarnail Singh, the two Janata leaders who enjoy great esteem all over the country said: "When we asked Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale whether Khalistan was his ultimate objective he immediately responded by saying that taking into consideration the sacrifices his community had made during the freedom struggle, there was no reason why he should think of opting out of the Indian Union. It was as much theirs as of others, and there was no question of leaving it."

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The relationship between the state and the press was very crucial as the standard of English and vernacular newspapers were observing differently on the Punjab militancy problem. Every newspaper was giving its viewpoint on the crisis. The gap in the ideologies and labelling by the press only added to further tensions. The Government's decision to install blackout in Punjab during army

operation was not liked by other responsible media. They protested against the decision and the argument presented the situation of the Government controlled media. The writer through article express his notion:

PRESS RELATIONS IN PUNJAB

Press publicity and comments in a crisis situation of the kind prevailing in Punjab

cannot be entirely or even largely favourable to the Government. While newspapers must do nothing to add to the difficulties of the authorities, civil and military, they have to assess the developments according to their best reasoning.

Since the credibility of the Government media is very low, the authorities cannot do better than to provide reasonable facilities to newspapers to cover the war against terrorism which, according to official sources, is likely to spread to other parts of the country.

The peremptory restrictions on news coverage when the Army action around the Golden Temple complex began made one wonder whether the Government was fighting the Press in addition to the terrorists!

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⁸⁵(ibid), 7 May, 1984.

coverage when the army action around the golden temple complex began making one wonder whether the Government was fighting the press addition to the terrorists.”⁸⁶ (‘Press Relations in Punjab’, article, The Tribune, 14 June, 1984).

In conclusion, The Tribune, though remained critical of the state as well as violence group along with freedom of press named militants as ‘terrorist’ and had very little sympathy for them. However, the language of the newspapers is different, but their nationalist stand along with the admiration of the Centre Government for sterner action against the violence is not an exaggeration point for media, but lesser focusing over the failure of the Government in their duties is a matter of concern.

3.2.3 Print Media of New Delhi

The Punjab militancy problem was an issue of 1980’s, which troubled state, as well as of the country. The print media, a prominent source of information in the state and as well as at national level, was delivering information about violent incidents occurring in Punjab. The Times of India publishing of New Delhi was a prominent national paper⁸⁷ keeping a tight watch over Punjab’s troubled situation. The newspaper was placing conflict news in front and inside pages, at par with the state print media. The Times of India labelled the violent person as an extremist for those who were indulged in violence against the state. The stand differs from the English and Hindi print media of Punjab, which adopted tougher label terrorist for the same group. The newspapers write the news:

⁸⁶Original article published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Press Relations in Punjab’ published on 14 June, 1984.

⁸⁷The Times of India, an English newspaper published from New Delhi was 2nd highest in circulation after The Hindustan Times during 1980’s (Bhargava 2007).

Jullundur trader shot dead
Militants 'kidnap' jail
official in Amritsar

CHANDIGARH,
 October 8.
 A TRADER was shot dead by two unidentified persons in Jullundur district today and the assistant jail superintendent in Amritsar was "assaulted and kidnapped" and taken to Guru Nanak Niwas where militant Sikh leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, was staying, according to official information reaching here, report PTI and UNI.

The trader, Mr Kartar Singh Tingra of Gorayya was shot dead by two persons near village Khurkka in Jullundur district. The alleged assailants escaped on the scooter of the trader. They are reported to have fired at the victim when he refused to part with his scooter, police sources in Jullundur said.

In the other incident at Amritsar, Mr Hardip Singh, the assistant jail superintendent, was allegedly assaulted by some persons when he went inside the Golden Temple to offer prayers, police sources said. Mr Hardip Singh was taken to the Guru Nanak Niwas. His scooter parked outside the Golden Temple was damaged.

It was said that some saner elements intervened and Mr Hardip Singh came out of the Golden Temple complex. The Punjab Inspector-general of police flew and ordered M...

"A trader was shot dead by two unidentified persons in Jullundur district today and the assistant jail superintendent in Amritsar was assaulted and kidnapped and taken to Guru Nanak Niwas where the militant Sikh leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, was staying, according to official information reaching here, report PTI and UNI. The trader, Mr. Kartar Singh Tingra of Gorayya was shot dead by two persons near village Khurkka in Jullundur district. The alleged assailants escaped on the scooter of the trader. They are reported to have fired at the victim when he refused to part with his scooter, a police source in Jullundur said. In the other incident in Amritsar, Mr. Hardip Singh, the assistant jail superintendent, was allegedly assaulted by some persons when he went inside the Golden Temple to offer prayers, police sources said. Mr. Hardip Singh was taken to the Guru Nanak Niwas. His scooter parked outside the Golden Temple was damaged. It was said that some saner elements intervened and Mr. Hardip Singh came out of the Golden Temple complex". (Jullundur trader shot dead, militants kidnap jail official in Amritsar, news, The Times of India, 9 October, 1983).

The newspaper was giving due priority to the Punjab problem and was trying to bring news and various aspects affecting the public and state both. However, the higher authority of the Centre was aware of the situation of troubled Punjab and Para Military was to be installed in the state to seize the militants, but they were too clueless to control over the top heading people allegedly supporting activities of extremist and Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale's name was on top of it. However, it was administered or press, his name was roaming in the air. The lack of the cooperation with Police and Para Military Forces led the situation worst. The Times of India published news on the front page of the arrest of the persons involved in the crime:

“Mr. G. Jagatpathi, an adviser to the Punjab Governor, yesterday visited the Ram Tirath temple, 13 km from here, where a net of sacrilege was committed recently. Speaking to the newsmen later, he said he had advised the residents to post a chowkidar to guard the temple. In reply to a question about the need for posting a deputy inspector general of police in Amritsar over the head of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Mr. Jagatpathi said this was being done to ensure proper coordination between the paramilitary forces, like the BSF and the CRPF, and the local police. As the paramilitary forces were not under the Punjab police, some senior officer had to ensure coordination between the various forces. On the



question of moving a court to declare Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale a proclaimed offender, Mr. Jagatpathi said some legal procedures had to be gone through. He disclosed that the security forces were on the job to arrest extremists and miscreants and during October 6 to December 16, total 26 persons had been arrested in 31 cases”. (Punjab steps to nab extremists, news, The Times of India, 18 December, 1983)⁸⁸

The violence graph in the state was rising high. The conflict started in the name of religion, turned worst and criminals entered into the violence and pounded the state with nasty criminal activities. The state was facing two-way threats. The proclaim offenders were taking the benefit from the conflict allegedly started by militants against state and Centre Government. The Times of India place these instances on the top page to clear the politico-religious conflict where criminal entered to remit personal enmity and to make money in the name of militants. The Times of India writes:

⁸⁸Original article published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Punjab steps to nab extremists in Punjab’ on 14 June, 1984.

3 extremists surrender

By Our Special Correspondent
CHANDIGARH, January 25

PUNJAB's inspector-general of police (law and order), Mr. S. Bhinder, today claimed that for the first time, three extremists, actively involved in killings and robberies, surrendered to the police in Faridkot on Sunday.

Giving details, he told reporters here that the three extremists sent a message to the police that they wanted to surrender provided the police would not kill them. They were assured that they would be dealt with in accordance with the law.

The extremists are Angrez Singh, aged 26 of Gill village, H. Singh, aged 26 of Rode village and Soma Singh, aged 35 of Mehrsingh village. All three are in the jurisdiction of Baghapurana police station in Faridkot district.

Mr Bhinder disclosed that the three alleged extremists had surrendered weapons, including a .12 pistol, a country-made handgrenade, and a .315 bore rifle from Jathedar Ram Singh who was then staying in the Guru Nanak Niwas in the precincts of the Golden Temple. These arms were given to them on the understanding that they would stop dacoities and robberies and share of the booty to Ram Singh through Jagtar Singh of Rode village, who is a proclaimed offender in several cases.

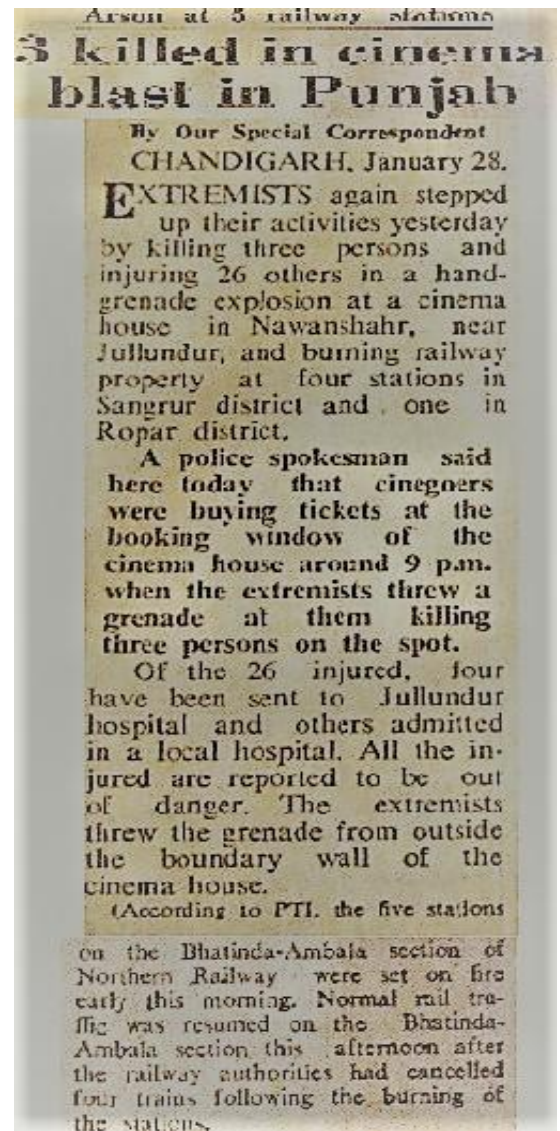
“Punjab’s inspector-general of police (law and order), Mr. P. S. Bhinder today claimed that the first time, three extremists involved in killings and robberies, surrendered to the police of Faridkot on Sunday....The extremists are Angrez Singh aged 26 of Gill village. H. Singh, aged 26 of Rode village and Soma Singh, aged 35 of Mehr Singh village. All three extremists are in the jurisdiction of Baghapurana police station in Faridkot district. Mr. Bhinder disclosed that three alleged extremists had surrendered weapons including a .12 pistol, a country-made a pistol, a hand grenade and a .315 bore rifle from Jathedar Ram Singh, which was then staying in the Guru Nanak Niwas in the precincts of the Golden Temple. These arms were given to them on the understanding that they would stop dacoities and robberies and a share of the booty to Ram Singh through Jagtar Singh of Rode village, who is a proclaimed offender in several cases”. (3 extremists surrender, news, The Times of India, 26 January, 1984)⁸⁹

The bloody activities in the state were on the rise and it turned many folds during the time of 1984. The control of the police and Para Military was losing and violence was taking place in various areas across the state. The downing of humanity and rise of anger against Hindus disturbed the environment. The militants were in communal hatred, killing the innocents in cinemas, on buses and everywhere they were finding targets. The fear of the police was negligible and the public machinery was too on the target of them to spread panic. The newspaper is describing the same instance of the burning railway station at various places by two groups; extremists and miscreants. The Times of India detailed the incident in the news on the top page:

⁸⁹Original news published in English newspaper The Times of India '3 extremist's surrender' on 26 January, 1984.

“Extremists again stepped up their activities yesterday by killings three persons and injuring 26 others in a hand grenade explosion at a cinema house in Nawanshahr near Jullundur, and burning railway property at four stations in Sangrur districts and one in Ropar districts. A police officer said here today that cinegoers were buying tickets at the booking window of the cinema house around 9 pm when the extremists threw a grenade at them killings three people on the spot. Of the 26 injured, four have sent to Jullundur hospital and others admitted to a local hospital. All the injured are reported to be out of danger. The extremists threw a grenade from outside the boundary wall of the cinema house. According to Press Trust of India, the five stations on the Bhatinda-Ambala sections of Northern Railway were set on fire early this morning Normal rail traffic was resumed on the Bathinda-

Ambala sections this afternoon after the railway authorities had cancelled four trains following the burning of the stations”. (Arson at 5 railway stations: 3 killed in cinema blast in Punjab, news, The Times of India, 29 January, 1984)⁹⁰



Just before the Operation Bluestar, the newspaper has acquired tough stand, adopted a tough stand on the news, and used the harder label to predict for the people indulged in creating violence and fighting against the state. The newspaper was using militant as a prefix to announce those people indulge in a fight, but just before Operation Bluestar, the label ‘militant’ and ‘extremist’ changed to ‘terrorist’ which predicts the

⁹⁰Original news published in English newspaper The Times of India ‘Arson at 5 railway stations: 3 killed in cinema blast in Punjab on 29 January, 1984.

stand of Sikhs more a kind of anti-national activities. It was a major change in the notion of a newspaper and followed the line of regional newspapers. The newspaper writes:

4 killed in Punjab; 78 terrorists held

CHANDIGARH, June 30
(PTI, UNI).

FOUR persons were killed and one seriously injured in different incidents in Punjab while security forces apprehended 78 more suspected terrorists and seized arms and ammunition at various places in the state in the last 24 hours.

One person was shot dead by some unidentified persons at Kalanaur in Gurdaspur district yesterday. The assailants escaped.

A retired lance naik, Surjit Singh, threw two hand grenades and also fired shots killing two persons at Swadi Kalan village in Ludhiana district last night. Surjit Singh and his two relatives were arrested while the fourth accused escaped. The weapons used by the assailants were also recovered. Swapan Singh was hacked to death with sharp-edged weapons at Kusar village in Faridkot district yesterday. In both cases, enmity was suspected to be the cause of the murders.

"Four persons were killed and one seriously injured in different incidents in Punjab while security forces apprehended 78 more suspected terrorists and seized arms and ammunition at various places in the state in the last 24 hours. One person was shot dead by some unidentified persons at Kalanaur in Gurdaspur district yesterday. The assailants escaped. A retired lance naik, Surjit Singh, threw two hand grenades and also fired shots, killing two persons in Swadi Kalan village in Ludhiana district last night. Surjit Singh and his two relatives were arrested while the Fourth accused escaped. The weapons used by the assailants were also recovered. Swapan Singh was hacked to death with sharp-edged weapons at Kusar village in Faridkot district yesterday. In both cases, enmity was suspected to be the cause of the murders". (4 killed in Punjab, 78 terrorists, held, news, The Time of India, 1 July, 1984)⁹¹

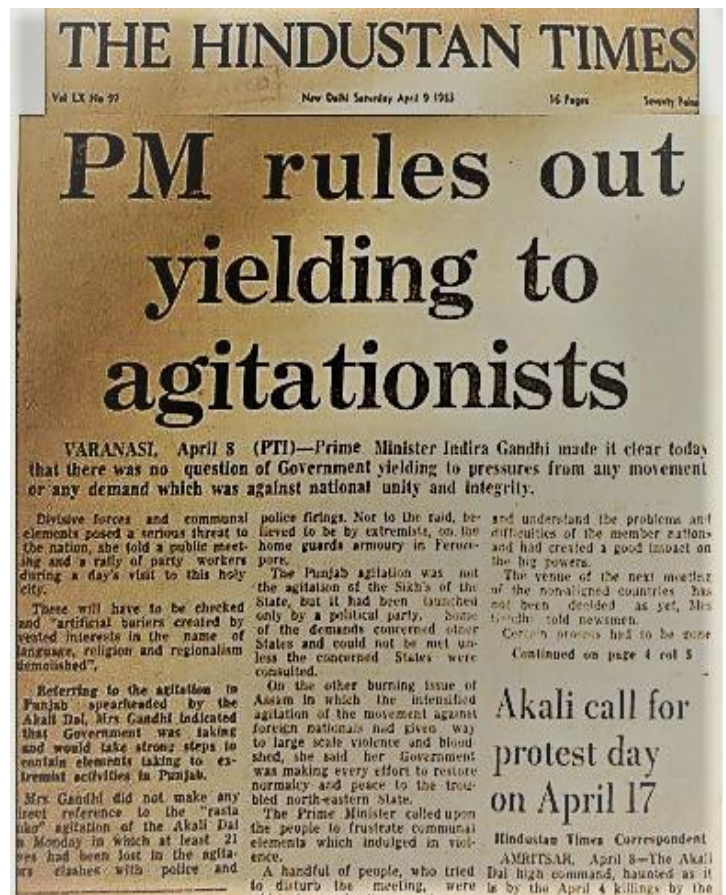
The second National newspaper published from New Delhi is The Hindustan Times in English was second highest in circulation in Delhi in 1980's. The newspaper thoroughly covered the incidents and issues arising in Punjab during the time. The major and general incidents were also being placed over the top front page while other issues were being placed on inside pages. It is proving the issue that papers outside Punjab were too taking interests in Punjab issue and placing them accordingly.

The statement of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi given in Utter Pradesh where she condemned the divisive challenges given by militants while marking them anti-national while indicating specially towards Punjab. The news stratifies the mood of the Centre

⁹¹Original news published in English newspaper The Times of India '4 killed in Punjab, 78 terrorist held, on 1 July, 1984.

to curb militancy. The Hindustan Times continuously kept checking over the Punjab issue and highlighted it as an important incident kept on the front page and labels 'extremists' were used for the people active in conflict against the state. The Hindustan Times writes:

“Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi made it clear today that there was no question of Government yielding to pressures from any movement or any demand which was against national unity and integrity. Divisive forces and communal elements posed a serious threat to the nation, she told a public meeting and a rally of party workers during a day is visiting in this holy city. These will have to be checked and “artificial barriers created by vested interests in the name of language religion and the regionalism



demolished.” Referring to the agitation in Punjab spearheaded by the Akali Dal, Mrs. Gandhi was taking and would take strong steps to contain elements taking to extremist activities in Punjab. Mrs. Gandhi did not make any direct reference to the “Rasta Roko” agitation of the Akali Dal on Monday in which at least 21 lives had been lost in the agitator’s clashes with police firings, nor to the raid, believed to be by extremists on the home guards armory in Ferozepore.” (PM rules out yielding to agitationists, news, The Hindustan Times, 9 April 1983)⁹²

⁹²Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘PM rules out yielding to agitationists’ on 9 April, 1983.

The Hindustan Times carried the story of docking tail of a cow on the front page which is pausing a question mark over the policy of the newspaper which is seen as a serious incident to curb peace by criminals or extremists; the newspaper looked confused. The forces were trying hard to control violence, but the criminals were trying to disturb the environment to spoil peace where already society was fractured and the notion of humanity was lost. Anti-social people were targeting cow, a holy animal for Hindus to spoil the environment. On the contrary, the political leaders were too divided. The leaders of the opposition parties came to Punjab to acquire information about the tense situation after police-public class and demanded judicial inquiry, which shows the division of the political parties to gain mileage. The Hindustan Times explains the situation:

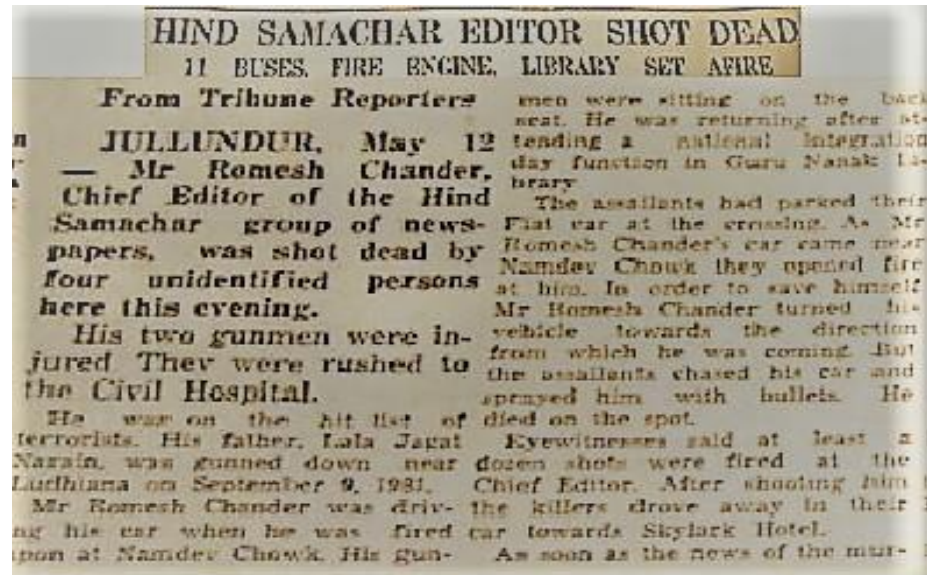


“In a pre-dawn outrage, criminal elements docked the tail of a cow in the Industrial Area Colony here and dumped the animal in a ditch the police said today. The incident created tension. The state had otherwise been returning to normal after the violence and bomb attacks of the past few days. Meanwhile, after a sudden visit to Malerkotla and Kup Kalan Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee and three other opposition MPs, at a Press conference here demanded a judicial inquiry into the “police excesses,” in Malerkotla and Kup Kalan on April 4 during the Akalis roadblock agitation. A resident of the Industrial area colony complained to the police about the cruelty done to his cow presumably by extremists. While the cow was taken to a veterinary hospital, senior police officers who reached the scene of the outrage ordered stringent police precautions to prevent any breach of the peace following the incident”. (Bid to create tension by extremists, news, The Hindustan Times, 10 April, 1983)⁹³

The newspaper is continuously writing about Punjab problem and bringing the issue in the limelight. Prime Minister, as well as Akali leaders, were divided over the issue and it indicates towards the fractured politics of the stat.

⁹³Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘Bid to create tension by extremists’ on 10 April, 1983.

The situation shows the failure of the Akali Dal leaders who were losing the plot in politics and were shifting towards extremism, which further created a ruckus in the political arena of the state and explaining the distraction of Akali Dal from the mainstream. The Hindustan Times writes:



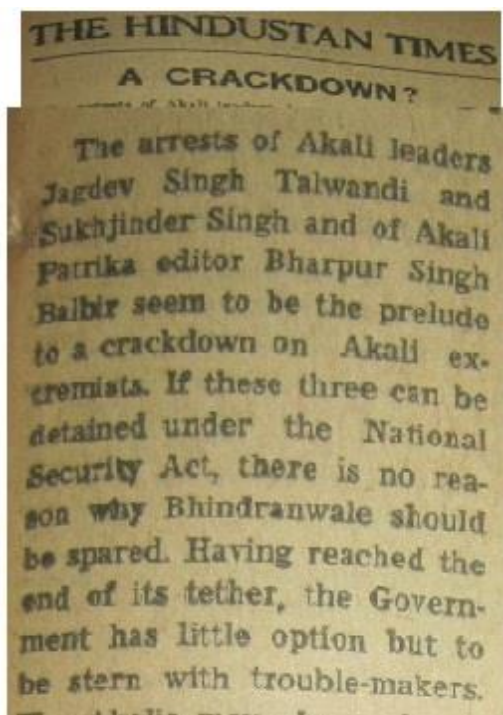
“.... The trend is towards the Akali leadership passing into the hands of extremists. This is mainly due to the policy of silence adopted by the moderates in the Akali leadership”, he said. Asked if he was aware that Sant Bhindranwale had threatened to act against Jullundur district SSP G.I.S. Bhullar, who led the police party in the Bullawal encounter, he remarked, “He says too many things. The HT Correspondent in Amritsar writes Sant Longowal condemned the arrest of Mr. Talwandi and Mr. Sukhjinder Singh. Talking to the press, Sant Bhindranwale said, it was a direct attack on the democratic system, but the Akali Dal would face it boldly. He said Mr. Talwandi had arrested despite the fact that he was ill. He declared that the Morcha would be intensified. Sant Bhindranwale said there were only two options for the Sikhs-either to submit to the wishes of the Prime Minister or to uphold Sikh traditions. If they chose to live as true Sikhs, then they should come out in the open. Referring to the arrest of the editor of Akali Patrika, he said some papers which were spreading communalism had been spared”. (Darbara sees the failure of Akali moderates, news, The Hindustan Times, 5 October, 1983)⁹⁴

Punjab was facing the political gimmicks and media contradictions over the Punjab problem as the militancy problem was sustaining in the state. First, the control

⁹⁴Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘Darbara sees failure of Akali moderates on 5 October, 1983.

of Akalis was starting to shift into the hands of a hardliner and due to that; the moderate leaders of the party were in a dilemma. However, the involvement of the press as per Centre was a serious concern for all. After the arrest of other leaders, the newspaper was stressing over Sant Bhindranwale is the need of the hour and it is possible.

Centre Government's action to arrest them for support along with the editor of Akali Patrika, Bharpur Singh Balbir and role of Akali leader seriously condemned by the newspaper through editor's column. The print media is known as the fourth pillar of a democracy and the arrest of the editor of a vernacular newspaper express serious concerns about their supportive role to the extremists, which is already known as a



factional group's mouthpiece in Punjab. The editorial of the English newspaper advised to the government to take stern action against Bhindranwale too.

“The arrests of Akali leaders Jagdev Singh Talwandi and Sukhjinder Singh and of Akali Patrika editor Bharpur Singh Balbir seem to be the prelude to a crackdown on Akali extremists. If these three can be detained under the National Security Act, there is no reason why Bhindranwale should be spared. Having reached the end of its tether, the Government has little option but to be stern with troublemakers”. (A Crackdown, editorial, The Hindustan Times, 6 October, 1983)⁹⁵

The Hindustan Times, which was softly dealing with the violence and keeping soft, stand over those who were involved in the problem. Just during the army operation, the newspaper changed its stand towards the people involved in state, producing violence and used the hard label ‘terrorist’ before mentioning their name in the news instead of extremist or militant. During the army operation in Amritsar, the newspaper without any hesitation named them as a terrorist, which is an abnormal kind of action. They then followed the same line of state

⁹⁵Original editorial published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘A Crackdown’ on 6 October, 1983.

newspapers. Being media house, change in ideology brings a surprise for others, or it was done under pressure on the Government, or it was due to the army faced major losses in the hands of militants, which forced them to use these labels. The newspaper writes:

“In a well-planned and swift operation, the security forces today flushed out well entrenched and heavily armed terrorists from the entire Golden Temple complex, including Harmandir Sahib, after fierce fighting in which over 250 terrorists and 59 army Jawan were killed. Although the armed forces had taken over most of the buildings in the Golden Temple complex during the course of the day, the terrorists surrendered at about 9 pm after one of them killed and another injured. The army conducted



mopping up operations at night including in the basement of the Akal Takhat, which was the scene of fierce fighting in which the terrorists used a highly sophisticated weapon, including rockets and missiles which even the Government’s para-military forces do not possess”. (Army controls temple, 250 terrorists and 59 jawans killed, Last bastion of resistance crumbles;; 700 arrested, news, The Hindustan Times, 7 June, 1984)⁹⁶

In conclusion, The Hindustan Times like other news, newspapers had given due importance to the issues related to Punjab. It was placing incidents and statements of

⁹⁶Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘Army controls temple, 250 terrorists and 59 Jawans killed’, last bastion of resistance crumbles, 700 arrested, on 7 June, 1984.

leaders in the context of state Punjab on top and inside pages according to the gravity of the news. Like state newspapers, the national paper avoided to land in any kind of controversy and avoided to be subjective in the matter. Whereas the questions of labelling usage, The Hindustan Times used both labels; first extremist and militant and during the Operation Bluestar, it's harder stand against the violence followed the state line and called them terrorist, a label indicating towards anti-national acts against the states.

3.3 Incident of Nirankari Chief's Murder

The religious conflict between Sikhs and Nirankaris in 1978 brought earthquake when 13 Sikhs died in the clash with Nirankaris and many injured. The clash brought personal enmity between the two groups and Hukamnama issued from Akal Takhat further brought a downpour in the relations of Sikhs and Nirankaris. After the verdict of the Karnal court in 1980 to release all the accused Nirankaris in the case embrace the life of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh, who was itself present on the day of conflict at Amritsar in April 1978. In 1981, Ranjit Singh of Akhand Kirtni Jatha in revenge allegedly killed Baba Gurbachan Singh at his Nirankari Mandal Bhawan in the late evening when he came back after a religious programme. The first religious murder in the context of clash brought an earthquake on every front and militancy prevailed in the state⁹⁷.

3.3.1 Print Media of Punjab

The Tribune on 25 April 1981 narrated the story of murder in detail and published every information related to the murder on the top of inside pages in four columns. The newspaper avoided making it a front-page story in the state, though it was one of a major issue. The newspaper placed words and avoided to make any kind of

⁹⁷If we carry our minds back to 1981 and 1982, when terrorism in Punjab was already being perceived as a serious threat to the authority of the state, the study discover that 13 persons were killed by the terrorists in each of these years. 1983 which was described by contemporary commentators as the year of the Armageddon saw the number of deaths inflicted by terrorist's violence rise to 75 (Gill 2008). Total of 11, 694 persons killed by terrorists in Punjab during the period 1981-1993, more than 61 percent were Sikhs (ibid).

contradiction related to the crime scene and situation. The Tribune narrates the incident:

“The head of the Nirankari religious sect, Baba Gurbachan Singh (50), shot dead tonight at the steps of his residence in Nirankari Colony in North Delhi. Nirankari Baba was shot several times from close range by unidentified assassins waiting to ambush. The Baba’s bodyguard Mr. Pratap Singh was shot dead. Follower of Baba and his wife also received bullet injuries. The assassination took place about 11 p.m. when Baba returned to his residence after attending a ceremony at Paharganj. Baba



⁹⁸Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Nirankari baba shot dead’ on 26 April, 1980.

The newspaper further carried the issue of weapon and security buff up of the Nirankari Baba enhanced by the police later on. But it is very much clear from the news that Nirankari Mandal was getting a kind of observation about the tough future over the Sikh-Nirankari clash, but Delhi Police carried it casually and even though the CID department too failed to judge the threat. The appointment of just two policemen in plain clothes at Bhawan became a routine paper filling activity in the Government system instead of finding any threat. The Tribune writes:

The Police Commissioner said: "We know the weapon used is a rifle." Asked if it could be a carbine. Mr Bhinder replied the possibility could not be ruled out. Elaborating, Mr Bhinder said though a carbine was not easily available it could be acquired by an individual and a licence could be obtained. Asked if there were any markings on the weapon allegedly used in the crime, Mr Bhinder said he was not aware of them. Mr Bhinder answered in the affirmative the question whether the Nirankari Mandal had written to him a letter expressing apprehensions about Baba Gurbachan Singh's safety. He explained that after the receipt of the letter he had met the Baba and besides the normal guards posted at the Nirankari headquarters in North Delhi, two police personnel in plain clothes had also been detailed for duty there. A number of people told the police that two persons made good their escape under the cover of darkness after the incident. They

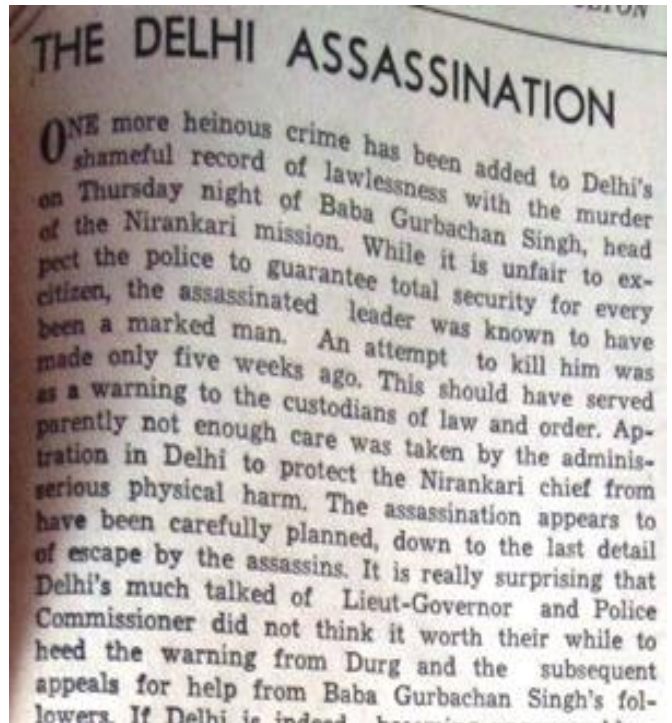
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The editorial on 26 April, 1980 written by The Tribune designate it a heinous crime occurred in the heart of the nation. The newspaper marked the responsibility of the failure of the administration for remaining failed to check the security cover after appeals of the Nirankari Chief who faced attack at home and lost a life. The editorial of the newspaper took a tough stand over the assessment failure by the police commissioner and Lieutenant Governor after the Durg attack. The newspaper also tried to deliver the tough message in Punjab to the extremist groups by

⁹⁹Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune 'Baba's murder: 5 detained' on 26 April, 1980.

condemning the crime. Different media groups saw the murder of Nirankari according to ideological frames. The Tribune writes:

“One more heinous crime has been added to Delhi’s shameful record of lawlessness with the murder on Thursday night of Baba Gurbachan Singh, head of the Nirankari mission. While it is unfair to expect the police to guarantee total security for every citizen, the assassinated leader was known to have been a marked man. An attempt to kill him was made only five weeks ago. This should have served as a warning to the custodians of law and order. Apparently, not enough care was taken by the administration in Delhi to protect the Nirankari chief from serious physical harm. The assassination appears to have been carefully planned, down to the last detail of escape by the assassins. It is really surprising that Delhi’s much talked of Lieutenant-Governor and Police Commissioner did not think it worth their while to heed the warning from Durg and the subsequent appeals for help from Baba Gurbachan Singh’s followers”. (The Delhi Assassination, editorial, The Tribune, 26 April, 1980)¹⁰⁰



The editorial of the newspaper firmed and predicted the murder because of 1978 clash at Amritsar. The case acquittal against the Nirankaris in the same case by Karnal court instigated the opponents to take revenge. The editorial termed role of administering a misleading on the name of providing security to Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh. Editorial is very clear about losing control of the Government and administration where the system failed to get information about the strategy of the

¹⁰⁰Original editorial published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘The Delhi Assassination’ on 26 April, 1980.

extremists. The newspaper's call to end revenge on both the communities is a positive step. It writes:

months ago. In fact the tension arising from the killings at Amritsar in April, 1978, showed every sign of having greatly decreased over the two-year period. The Baba's acquittal by a court at Karnal did make his enemies angry, but since the Congress (I) Government in Delhi and the Punjab administration under President's rule were much more considerate to the Nirankaris than the Akali Government in Punjab used to be, the Baba resumed his normal activities. He probably felt secure from the assurances he received from the authorities. Obviously he was misled, and the incident at Durg was the first grave signal of danger.

Even before responsibility for the murder is fixed and the guilty are identified and punished, the revolting crime must be condemned without any excuses on behalf of the assassins, whosoever they happen to be. This is no time to enter into a discussion about the Nirankari faith or such resentment as its opponents have nursed against the sect. A murder is a murder. It cannot and should not be condoned for any reason. The shock which the family and followers of the late Baba have suffered will be shared by every Indian unless some of us are so blinded by hate that the physical elimination of the hate object is seen as a solution to a problem. Physical violence only becomes an aggravating factor in a passion-charged atmosphere.

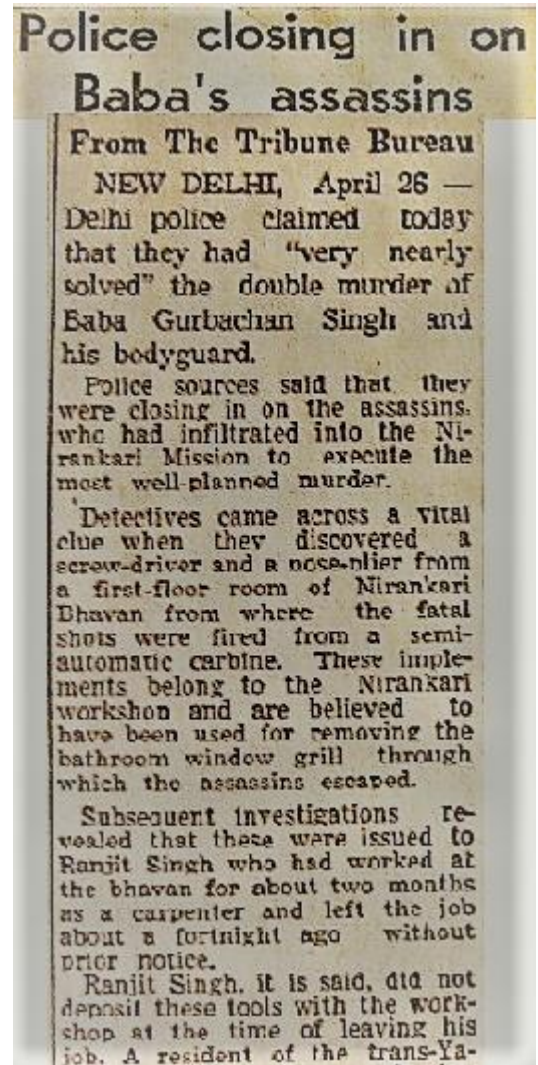
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The Tribune further carried on the next day the news of the Delhi Police investigation in which name of a carpenter Ranjit Singh was seen with doubt who was inside the Nirankari Bhavan who left the job fortnight before Baba's assassination. The police investigation related the clue found at the crime scene.

"Delhi police claimed today that they have very nearly solved the double murder of Baba Gurbachan Singh and his bodyguard. Police sources said that they were closing in on the assassins. Who had infiltrated into the Nirankari Mission to execute the most well-planned murder? Detectives came across a vital clue when they discovered a screwdriver and a Nose-Plier from a first-floor room of the Nirankari Bhavan from where the fatal shots were fired from a semi-automatic carbine. These implements are belonging to the Nirankari workshop and are believed to have been used for removing the bathroom window grill through which the assassins escaped.

Subsequent investigations revealed that these were issued to Ranjit Singh, who had worked at the Bhawan for about two months as a carpenter and left the job about a fortnight ago without prior notice. Ranjit Singh, it is said, did not deposit these tools in the workshop at the time of leaving his job". (Police closing in on Baba's assassins, news, The Tribune, 27 April, 1980)¹⁰¹



Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri remained the target of hotheaded Sikhs allegedly due to pro-Nirankari and anti-militancy writings. The editor Romesh Chandra wrote in detail about the stand taken by Akali Dal against the Punjab Kesri and termed it a

¹⁰¹Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune 'Police closing in on Baba's assassins' on 27 April, 1980.

deliberate act. According to the editorial, it was just done to hide party failures by the Akalis over violence and murders. The editorial brought a rift between the Centre and Akali Dal over the religious books of Nirankaris but condemned Akalis for adding remaining fuel to produce clues about the offensive matter written in Nirankaris books and praised Centre's stand to trim height of Akalis who were against the newspapers. The editorial writers:

बदलते हुए रंग

जा रही थी। लाला जी के लेखों की वजह से टोहरा घड़े की ओर से उनके विरुद्ध भी प्रचार-अभियान तेज कर दिया गया और उन्हें सिख-दोस्ती के रूप में पेश किया जाने लगा। पहले उन पर निरंकारियों के सम्बन्ध का आरोप था अब उसमें सिख मांगों का विरोध करने की बात भी शामिल कर ली गई।

यही नहीं बल्कि टोहरा घड़े ने उस समय के प्रधानमंत्री श्री मोरार जी देसाई के विरुद्ध भी तफाने बढतभीजी खड़ा कर दिया। अकाली नेता लुधियाना प्रमभा के प्रस्ताव और अन्य मांगें लेकर प्रधानमंत्री के पास गए। श्री मोरार जी देसाई किसी की धीम और धमकी सहन करने के जीवन भर अभ्यस्त न थे। उन्होंने किसी धमकी के अधीन अकालियों की मांगों पर विचार करने से इन्कार कर दिया। जहां तक निरंकारी झगड़े का सम्बन्ध था, उन्होंने अकालियों को पेशकश की कि यदि निरंकारियों की धार्मिक पुस्तकों में सिख गुरुओं के विरुद्ध कोई अपमानजनक बातें लिखी गई हैं, तो वे उन्हें प्रधानमंत्री के नोटिस में लाएं। एक उच्च स्तरीय कमेटी उनका जायजा लेगी और यदि ये शिकायतें ठीक सिद्ध हईं, तो ऐसी आपत्तिजनक बातों को निरंकारी पुस्तकों से निकाल दिया जाएगा। परन्तु आज तक अकालियों ने केन्द्रीय सरकार को यह नहीं बताया कि उनको निरंकारियों की कौन-सी धार्मिक पुस्तक में किस वाक्य पर आपत्ति है। अकालियों ने

“Due to the editorials of Lala Ji, the Tohra group has fastened their Anti publicity worked against him and started to post him as anti-Sikh. First, he was blamed for supporting Nirankaris and now the new thing the Sikh demands have added. Not only this, Tohra group has generated an insolent environment against Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai. Akali Leaders went to the Prime Minister regarding Ludhiana programme offer and other demands. Shri Morarji Desai was not used to bear any threat during his whole life. He refused to accept any demands of Akalis under threat. Where is the question of Nirankaris confrontation, he offered Akalis that if any kind of wrong and insulting matter written in the religious books of Nirankaris related with Sikh Gurus, they can bring it to the notice of him. A high-level committee will check it and if the complaint against it would be true, the matter will be removed from the Nirankari books. But till today, Akalis did not explain it to the Centre

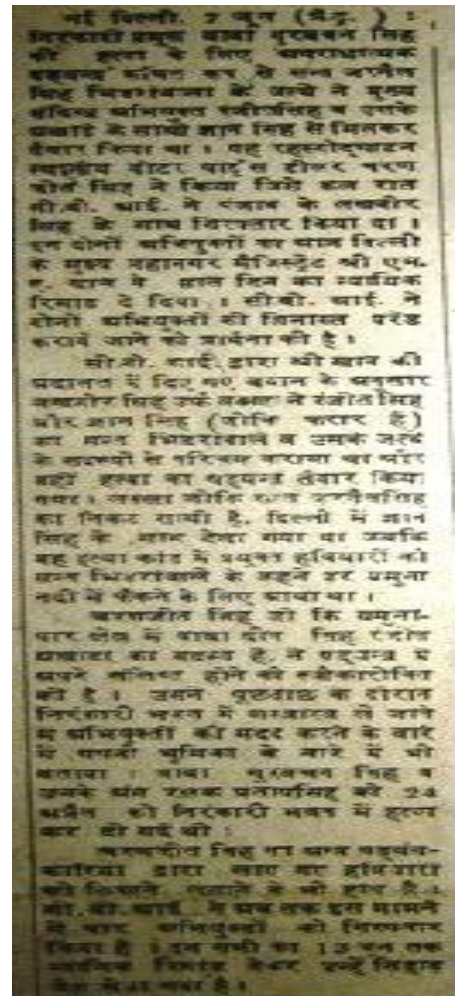
Government that what is there objection about the wording of Nirankaris books”. (The Changing Colours, editorial, Punjab Kesri, 27 September, 1981)¹⁰²

The newspaper is already facing threats did not hesitate to write critically over the murder of Nirankari Baba Gurbachan Singh. Accused in the Sikh-Nirankari clash at

¹⁰²English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial ‘Badhte Rang’ published on 27 September, 1981.

Amritsar in the murder of 13 Sikhs, the Nirankaris were acquitted by the court. Later, the discussion was prevailing in the political arena that Sikhs would take revenge on it. The newspaper was understood to be in support of Nirankaris as propagated by the fanatic Sikhs. The conspiracy was allegedly designed by the Bhindranwale Jatha¹⁰³ to kill Nirankari Baba in Delhi. The newspaper narrates:

“For the murder of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh, the criminal conspiracy was allegedly designed by the Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale with key accused Ranjit Singh and his Akhara friend Gyan Singh. The secret was revealed by the local auto parts dealer Charanjit Singh, who has been arrested by the CBI yesterday night with Lakhbir Singh of Punjab. Both the accused were sent on seven days’ police remand by the Chief Magistrate Shri M.A. Khan. CBI also requested for the identity parade of both the accused. According to given statement by the CBI to the court of Shri Khan, Lakhbir Singh @ Lakha carried Ranjit Singh and Gyan Singh (who are absconding), were introduced with Sant Bhindranwale and other members of Jatha and plan of murder also designed there. Lakha, who is the aid of Sant Jarnail Singh, was seen with Gyan Singh at Delhi although, over the message of Sant Bhindranwale, he came to throw the arms used in a murder in Yamuna River. Charanjit Singh, who is a member of Baba Deep Singh Ranjit Akhara at trans Yamuna area, has also admitted his involvement in the conspiracy. CBI till the time has arrested four accused in this case. All of them have been sent to Tihar Jail after remand up to 13 June”. (Baba’s murder conspiracy designed by Bhindranwale Jatha, news, Punjab Kesri, 8 June, 1980)¹⁰⁴



¹⁰³The situation of the Akali Dal against Bhindranwale so helpless that the leaders of Akali Dal were willingly or unwillingly supporting Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. The Akali leader and former Chief Minister of the state, Parkash Singh Badal too giving statements in support of Sant Bhindranwale. ...Akali leader Parkash Singh Badal denied the blames that he has any difference with Janail Singh Bhindranwale. Bhindranwale is our great religious leader (Bhindranwale is our great leader, news, Punjab Kesri, 18 October, 1981).

¹⁰⁴English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri news ‘Baba ke hatya ke sajjish Bhindranwale jatha ne rachi the’, published on 8 June, 1980.

The newspaper expressed its fear and anxiety in the matter of disturbance in Punjab, where innocent people were on target living in fear. The killings were continuing in the name of revenge in which all sections of people were being targeted including Nirankaris. The newspaper expresses its protest that foreign countries were supporting anti-national activities inside the country.



“.... The alleged President of Khalistan Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan after due protest of India was permitted to enter America for promotion of anti-Indian sentiments and American Sikh, Dr. Ganga Singh Dhillon in 1980 first time, came to Punjab from America and strengthened the slogan first time that Sikhs are a separate community, later, which has been adopted by SGPC. For the last few days a change occurred that, terrorists along with innocent Hindus, Nirankaris and police employees also incorporated communists into their hit list. The editor of Preetlari, Sumit and editor of Chingari, Sukhraj Singh is clear proof of it”. (Respect of the Nation is in danger, editorial, Punjab Kesri, 17 April, 1984)¹⁰⁵

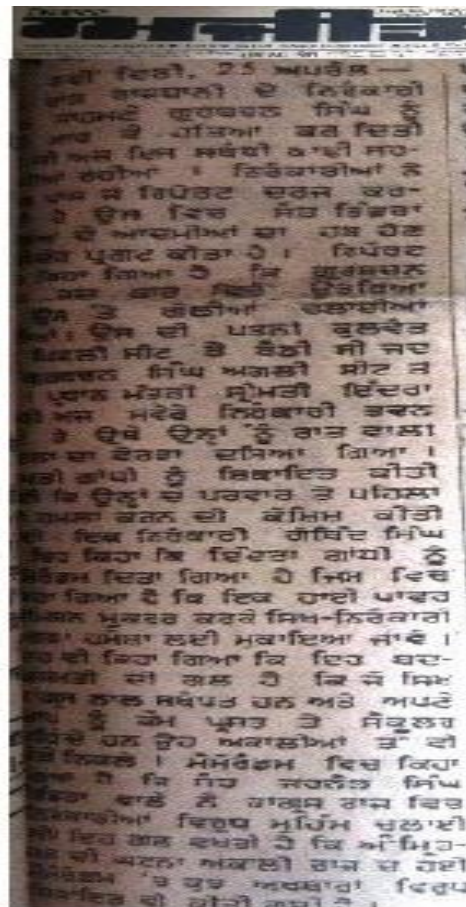
In conclusion, Punjab Kesri due to the political affiliations constraint over Nationalistic approach carried the perspective of Hindus more than Sikhs. While criticizing Akali Dal for their alleged anti-national stand, the newspaper bluntly wrote and condemned the militancy movement and silence of the Akali Dal. The language used by the newspaper against people leading violence hard with the news and editorials. However, Punjab Kesri editorials were written in the manner of advice but it avoided discussion over Punjab issues and promoted Centre stand, which brought a newspaper on the target of militants.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri news ‘Vatan ke aabroo khatre mein hai’ published on 17 April, 1984.

¹⁰⁶.... During the discussion between Sikh parliamentarians of Congress (I) with Prime Minister, they also highlighted Chief *Khalsa Diwan*’s education conference at Chandigarh. This conference organized under the chairmanship of American Sikh, Ganga Singh Dhillon and not only demand of Khalistan repeated but also a propaganda raised to declare Sikhs a separate community. It has told to Prime Minister that

Rojana Ajit, a Punjabi vernacular newspaper published from Jullundur narrated the murder story of Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh in very rude and harsh manner. The news missed designation of Nirankari Chief before mentioning his name, which looks impartial on account of a newspaper. The newspaper itself becomes a partner of the conflict and being paper controlled by Sikh editor, the anger against the Nirankaris for 1978 clash came on the floor. The news stature expresses the attitude of the newspaper on the incident. Rojana Ajit narrates the story:

“Yesterday night in the capital in front of Nirankari Bhawan, Gurbachan Singh was murdered by spraying bullets over him. Today, there was a lot of activities related to it. In a report submitted by the Nirankaris with the police, they expressed doubt over persons related to Sant Bhindranwale involved in this murder.¹⁰⁷ According to the report, when Gurbachan Singh came out of his car, the bullets were fired on him. His wife Kulwant Kaur was sitting on the back seat while Gurbachan Singh was sitting on the front seat. Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi visited today morning at Nirankari Bhawan where the detail of the incident given to her occurred on yesterday night. There was a complaint made with Smt. Gandhi that previously there were also tries to attack his family. Nirankari Gobind Singh said that Smt. Indira Gandhi has given a memorandum in which it is demanded that one high power commission should be designate which would work to end the Sikh-Nirankari conflict. It is also said that this is a



Ganga Singh has a travel agency at America and he is frequently travelling to Saudi Arabia, Libya and other countries. According to expert sources, on the support of enemy countries of India, the approval has been given in the conference to declare Sikhs a separate community (editorial, Punjab Kesri).

¹⁰⁷The 11 member delegation of Nirankari mission today met with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and demanded early arrest of the culprits involved in the murder of Nirankari head Gurbachan Singh. The demand letter given by them has mentioned the demand to arrest Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. According to a spokesperson of the delegation, Prime Minister gave her assurance to consider their demands (English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news 'Nirankari Delegation met with Indira', published on 27 April, 1980).

bad thing that the Sikhs, which are attached to Congress and tells themselves pro-community and secular, they were more dangerous than Akalis. It is explained in the memorandum that Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale has started action against the Nirankaris during the rule of Congress party. It is a different thing that Amritsar incident occurred during the regime of Akali Government". (Murder of Gurbachan Singh: Police alert, news, Rojana Ajit, 26 April, 1980)¹⁰⁸

The newspaper on the same day published the news from the account of Delhi Gurdwara Committee in which the headline looked carefully chosen to embrace Nirankaris when they were mourning the demise of their Chief. It predicts the hard stand chosen very carefully against the Nirankaris by the newspaper. By keeping the hard headlines for the selected news, the newspaper somehow presented its ideological stand over the issue. Rojana Ajit writes:



“General Secretary of Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (DSGPC), Sardar Manjit Singh in a released press statement said that All India Sikh Student Federation did a great job in the service of Sikh community for keeping the memory of martyr Singh’s killed at the hands of fake Nirankaris by establishing Nishan Sahib and Shri Akhand Path Sahib at B block, Fort Gobindgarh ground, Amritsar in the remembrance of Martyr Sikhs. Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee praises this activity of the Federation from the core of heart. In its appeal on the name of the Sikh Panth, he said that there is a need to establish a memorable on the same place where the fake Nirankaris killed the Sikhs on 13 April 1978 while keeping the respect of Shri Guru Granth Sahib.

A tar (electronic message) given to General Secretary of All Indian Sikh Student Federation, he praised the efforts of him and gave assurance of full support by Delhi Gurdwara Committee. S. Manjit Singh said that the

¹⁰⁸English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri news ‘Gurbachan Singh di hatya, police aleart’ published on 26 April, 1980.

most memorable is establishing in Delhi in the remembrance of martyr Sikhs of Amritsar, Kanpur and Delhi". (Memorial in Amritsar for Sikhs martyr killed by the fake Nirankaris, news, Rojana Ajit, 26 April, 1980)¹⁰⁹

The stand of Rojana Ajit related to news in which they missed the prefix 'Nirankari Chief' before his name Gurbachan Singh on 26 April news changed just in two days. The reason given is unknown, but probably the print media fraternity's criticism and stand forced them to review their stand. The news keeps the formal structure and without any more description, the newspaper compiled the news with reporting of significant information of the cremation:

"Today Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh was cremated at 12:03 and his bodyguard Partap Singh too cremated there. Before his cremation, on behalf of Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, Lieutenant Governor and on behalf of Home Minister Giani Zail Singh, Police Commissioner P.S. Bhinder offered flowers on the dead body. A part of them,

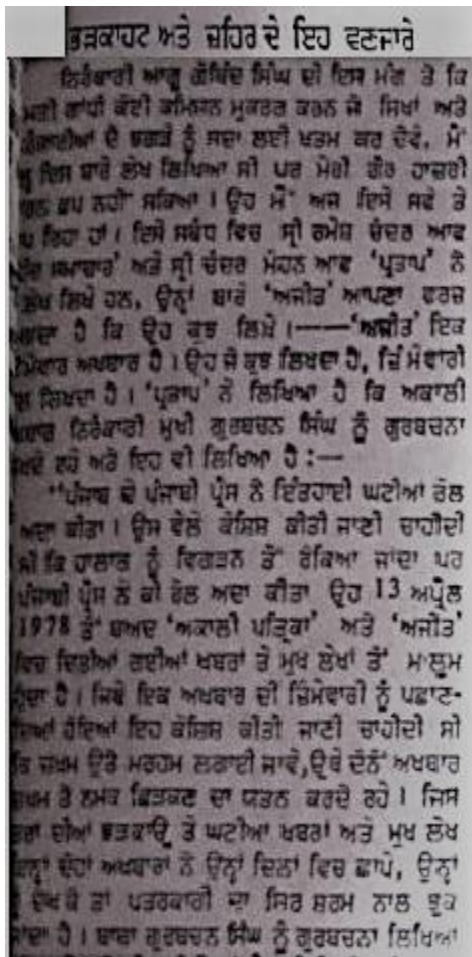


the leader of Bhartiya Janta Party Shri Malhotra and Shri Madan Lal Khurana offered flowers. The procession march with the dead body of Nirankari Chief started at 8 am from Nirankari Bhawan in which heavy rush of Nirankaris was assembled. Few Nirankaris also came from other states. There was a heavy deployment of police so there could not be any incident occurred. Few males and female Nirankaris were also crying". (Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh cremated in an Electronic cemetery in Delhi, news, Rojana Ajit, 28 April, 1980)¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news 'Nakli nirankariyan de hathon saheed hoye singha di yaad ch amritsar ch yadgar', published on 27 September, 1981.

¹¹⁰English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news 'Nirankari mukhi Baba Gurbachan Singh da delhi ch bijli shamshanghat te sanskar kita gaya', published on 28 April, 1980.

Rojana Ajit on the same day carried a stern editorial related to the murderer of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh on 28 April. The headline of the editorial allegedly a direct attack on the other print media groups, especially Hindi newspapers Punjab Kesri and Pratap published from Jullundur came in the target of editor of Rojana Ajit due to the editorial written against Ajit's news presentation on the issue of the missing designation of Nirankari Chief in a news published on 26 April, 1980. Editor Sadhu Singh Hamdard carefully selected the fiery words to demonstrate the anger over the topic. Through this editorial, the ideological differences and the rift between vernacular print media clearly looked at the floor. The Ajit replies:



“Over demand of Nirankari leader Gobind Singh that Prime Minister Smt. Gandhi should establish a commission, which acts to eliminate conflict between the Nirankaris and Sikhs. Yesterday I wrote an article, but in my absence, it did not publish. That I am writing on this page. In this context, Shri Romesh Chander of Hind Samachar and Shri Chander Mohan of Pratap have written articles. It is the duty of Ajit to write something. Ajit is a responsible newspaper. What it writes, it writes with full responsibility? Pratap has written that Akali newspaper was writing Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh as Gurbachna and also writes that the Punjabi press of Punjab has played a very despicable role. That time it was needed to make efforts to control the environment from getting worse, but what kind of role Punjabi press played, it is clear after 13 April 1978 news and main editorials given in Akali Patrika and Rojana Ajit. Being a newspaper, while reminding its own responsibility there was needed to make an effort to heal the wound, but both these newspapers were sprinkling salt over the wounds. The low-quality news and articles published by these two newspapers in those

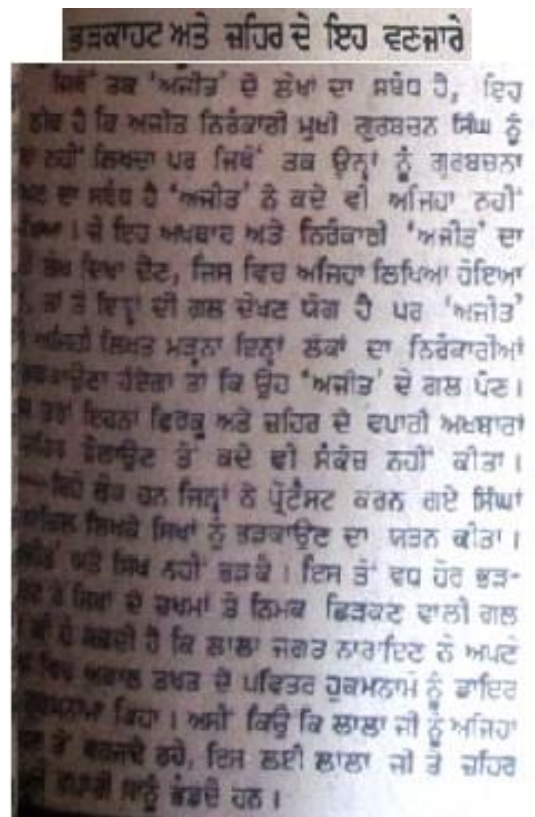
days brought shame for journalism”. (These flurry and poison dealers, editorial, Rojana Ajit, 28 April, 1980)¹¹¹

¹¹¹English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial ‘Bharkahat te jehar de eh vanjare’, published on 28 April, 1980.

The bitterness roaming in the relationship of vernacular print media of Punjab left its effect over the social environment in the state. Due to newspapers, society was being divided into the regions and religion both. People in cities, whereas were interested in reading The Tribune and Punjab Kesri, the people of rural areas were much fonder of Punjabi newspapers Rojana Ajit with few other Punjabi papers. The fractured atmosphere in the state due to political and religious fundamentalism received adequate support from print media to which they accepted later.

The Punjabi newspaper was busy in predicting the state's fate but failed to review its own status and stand. Rojana Ajit made a target to the writings of Hindi vernacular media, especially Hind Samachar owner and senior journalist Lala Jagat Narain and did not hesitate to mention his name in its editorial:

“Where ever the question is about the articles of Ajit, this is right that Ajit is not writing Baba to Nirankari Chief Gurbachan Singh, but where the question of writing him Gurbachna is, Ajit never wrote this. If these newspapers and Nirankari show the articles which have written like this, then it is an unacceptable thing, but these types of allegations fixing on Ajit are their step to create Nirankari destructive so that they can question Ajit. Like this, these communal and poisonous businessmen never hesitate to spread this. These are those people who tried to aggravate Sikhs by writing murders to those Sikhs who went to protest, but Ajit and Sikhs did not induce. What could be the more things to induce Sikhs and sprinkle salt over their wounds where Lala Jagat Narain on his article asked the sacred Hukamnama (a religious order for Sikhs) of Akal Takhat as Hukamnama of Dyer? Because we have tried to stop him from saying, so that’s why Lala je and businessman of poison blamed over us”. (Ibid)



The newspaper further makes fun of Hindi newspaper in raising voices against the Punjabi press. Ajit brought few paragraphs of the article from Hind Samachar, an Urdu subsidiary newspaper of Jagbani and Punjab Kesri controlled by Lala Jagat Narain, founder of the group. Rojana Ajit condemn the blames made by the Hindi press over them and Central Government declared to exaggerate the problem. The newspaper writers criticized the attitude adopted by the Hindi newspapers for denouncing the rights of Sikhs in the state:

ਰਮੇਸ਼ ਜੀ ਨੇ 26 ਅਪਰੈਲ ਦੇ ਹਿੰਦ ਸਮਾਚਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ :

“ਇਸ ਅਫਸੋਸਨਾਕ ਦਿਲ ਹਿਲਾ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਘਟਨਾ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਦਾ ਪਤਾ ਤਾਂ ਉਦੋਂ ਹੀ ਲਗੇਗਾ ਜਦ ਅਸਲੀ ਅਪਰਾਧੀ ਵੱਡੇ ਜਾਣਗੇ ਪਰ ਜਾਹਿਰਾ ਤੌਰ ਤੇ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ‘ਬਾਬਾ’ ਦਾ ਕਤਲ ਬਿਸੇ ਪਾਗਲ ਆਦਮੀ ਦੀ ਇਕਾ ਦੁਕਾ ਹਰਕਤ ਦਿਖਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੀ, ਸਗੋਂ ਜੇ ਪਿਛੋਕੜ ਦੀਆਂ ਘਟਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਰਖਿਆ ਜਾਏ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਇਕ ਤੈਅ ਸੂਦਾ ਸਾਬਿਤ ਦਾ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਲੋਕ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਨੌਤਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਜਾਨ ਦੇ ਪਿਆਸੇ ਹੋ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ ਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਉਦੋਂ ਤਕ ਚੋਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਆ ਜਦ ਤਕ ਕਿ ਬਦਲਾ ਲੈਣ ਦੀ ਅਪਣੀ ਅੰਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਬੁਝਾ ਲਈ।”

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਖਬਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਚਹਿਰੇ ਦੇ ਇਹ ਵਪਾਰੀ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਦੀ ਪੂਰੀ ਇਨਕੁਆਇਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਕਰਾਰ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕਤਲ ਅਕਾਲੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਕਰਵਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਪੁਲਿਸ ਨੇ ਜੋ ਹੁਣ ਤਕ ਖਬਰ ਦਸੀ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੀ ਭਵਨ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਮਿਸਤਰੀ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਕੁਝ ਕਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਕੁਝ ਵੀ ਚੋਵੇ, ਕੋਈ ਗੈਰ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਅਖਬਾਰ ਹੀ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਗਲ ਲਿਖ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਰਮੇਸ਼ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਅਗੇ ਚਲ ਕੇ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਹੈ :

“ਪਰ ਕੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਇਸ ਘਟਨਾ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਚ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇੰਦਰਾ ਕਾਂਗਰਸ ਦੇ ਰਾਜ ਵਿਚ ਲਾਅ ਐਂਡ ਆਰਡਰ ਦੀ ਜੋ ਬੁਰੀ ਹਾਲਤ ਹੈ, ਇਹ ਕਤਲ ਉਸਦਾ ਇਕ ਜਿੰਦਾ ਸਬੂਤ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਵੀਂ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਆਈ ਹੈ, ਗੁੰਡੇ ਤੇ ਮੁਜਰਮਾਨਾਂ ਅਨਸਰ ਫੇਰ ਅਪਣੇ ਘਰਨਿਆ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਨਿਕਲ ਆਏ ਹਨ। ਕੋਈ ਦਿਨ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਗੁਚਰਦਾ ਜਦ ਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਹਿੱਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਖਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਘਿਨੌਣਾ ਵਾਕਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ।”

ਪਿਛਲੇ ਦਿਨੀਂ ਲਾਲਾ ਜਗਤ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਨੇ ਵੀ ਇਸਦੀ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਲਾਈ ਸੀ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਥੋਂ ਤਕ

“Romesh wrote on 26 April in Hind Samachar that who is responsible for this lamentable heart-shocking incident, it will clear in the meantime, when true culprit is in net, but surely murder of Baba is not a planning of one or two mad people but if we keep previous incidents in the preview then it looks like a planned conspiracy. For a time, these people want the lives of Nirankari leaders and up to that time, they did not sit until they satisfy the revenge of the fire. These businessmen of poison are deliberately touching Punjabi newspapers and before the police inquiry, they are declaring it a murder done by Akalis. What the news revealed by police, they said something about a carpenter at Nirankari Bhawan. An irresponsible newspaper can write these things”. Romesh writes ahead that “can Government saves itself from the responsibility of this incident. Law and order are in bad shape during the rule of Indira Congress, and this murder is an alive source of it. Since this Government has come into power, the criminals and conspirators have come out from their bills. There is not a single day when bad incidents do not occur in the country especially in Delhi. A few days back, Lala Jagat Narayan fixes this responsibility for the

Government”.¹¹² (Ibid)

¹¹²It is a blame labelled on Smt. Gandhi and Home Minister Giani Zail Singh that they didnot secure the Nirankaris but the reality is this that the attack on Nirankari head not occurred in Market or road instead of that it occurred inside the Nirankari Bhavan which keeps value of a fort. The attack is happened there. In this situation, demanding resignation from Smt. Indira Gandhi and Giani Zail Singh makes this discussion humours. On one side, the businessmen of poison instigating Nirankaris against Akalis and Ajit and second side Nirankari head Gobind Singh is telling that there must be some solution so the conflict of Nirankaris-Sikhs could be ended....On one side, they are giving news that Akalis are the blood

3.3.2 Print Media of New Delhi

The Hindustan Times published the news on top page with giving due importance to the incident. The newspaper probably received late night information about the murder of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh. Without losing chance, it placed the news in the right corner of the top page in a single column. The newspaper tried to provide full information occurred in the late night, as they wanted to make a presentation of information:

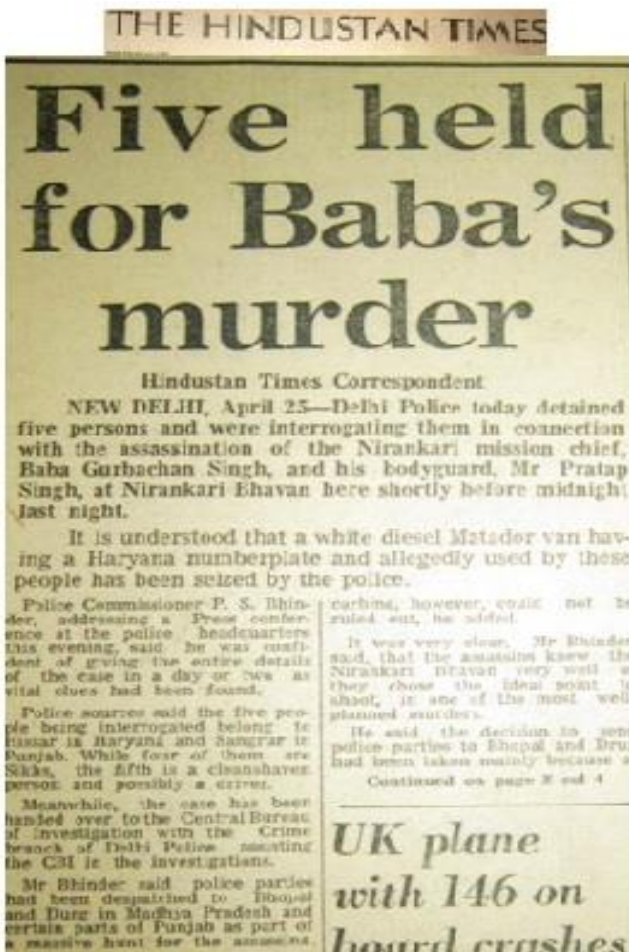
“The Nirankari chief Baba Gurbachan was shot dead tonight. The Nirankari Baba was shot at close range in the chest several times by an unknown person. According to the medical superintendent of the Tirath Ram Hospital, the Baba was brought dead at the hospital. The secretary of the Sant Nirankari Mandal told PTI that the shooting occurred around 11 pm in front of the Nirankari Bhawan when the Baba returned after attending a religious gathering. According to Nirankari Mandal sources, Mr. Pratap Singh, a follower of the Baba, was also killed in the shooting. Two persons, Mr. Kuldeep Singh and his wife, have been admitting to the Bara Hindu Rao Hospital with bullet injuries. They are reported to be out of danger”. (Chief of Nirankari mission shot dead, news, The Hindustan Times, 25 April, 1980)¹¹³



thirsty of Nirankaris and now Nirankari will cast their votes to Congress but second side Nirankari leader Gobind Singh is saying that where is the question of the Nirankaris, Congress is worse than Akalis (Translated from Punjabi editorial '*Bharkahat te Jehar de eh vanjare*', Rojana Ajit, 28 April, 1980).

¹¹³Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times 'Chief of Nirankari mission shot dead' on, 25 April, 1980.

The newspaper next day published news of the arrest of five people in connection with the murder of Nirankari Chief on the front page. Along with it, three key photographs were also placed on top; the gunshots at Baba's Mercedes car, the weeping followers of the Nirankari chief and third is of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi laying wrath on the body of Nirankari Chief describes the priority of the newspapers for the moment. The major issue which newspaper carried with other state newspapers was the arrest of people mentioning their religion as well. The newspaper narrated the incident while defying journalism ethics:



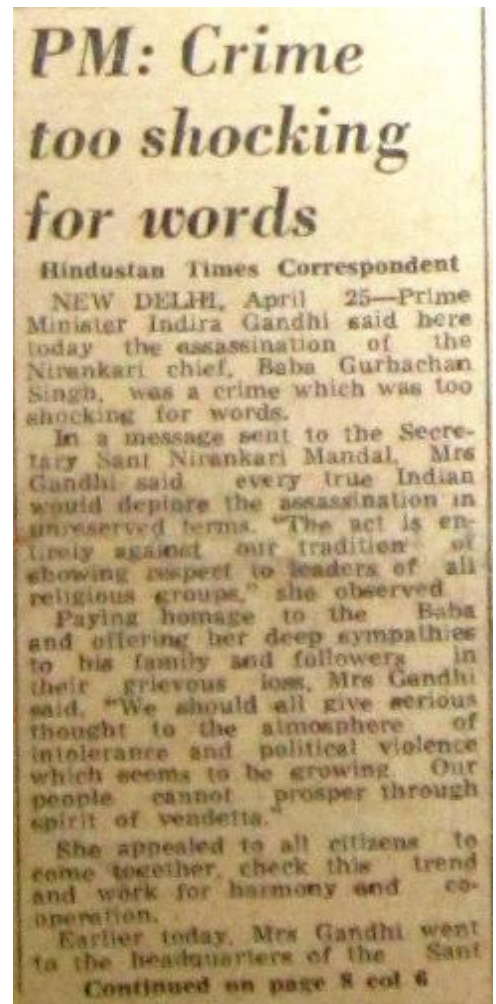
“Delhi Police today detained five persons and were interrogating them in connection with the assassination of the Nirankari mission chief, Baba Gurbachan Singh, and his bodyguard Mr. Pratap Singh at Nirankari Bhawan here shortly before midnight last night. It is understood that a white diesel Matador van having a Haryana number plate and allegedly used by these people has been seized by the police. Police Commissioner PS Bhinder, addressing a Press conference at the police headquarters this evening said he was confident of giving the entire details of the case in a day or two as vital clues had been found. Police sources said the five people being interrogated belong to Hissar in Haryana and Sangrur in Punjab. While four of them are Sikhs, the fifth is a clean-shaven person and possibly a driver. Meanwhile, the case has been handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation with

the Crime Branch of Delhi Police assisting the CBI in the investigations. Mr. Bhinder said police parties had been dispatched to Bhopal and Durg in Madhya Pradesh and certain parts of Punjab as part of a massive hunt

for the assassins". (Five held for Baba's murder, news, The Hindustan Times, 26 April, 1980)¹¹⁴

The newspaper preferentially published the news statement by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi when she went to pay wrath to the body of Nirankari Baba Gurbachan Singh at Nirankari Bhawan. She condemned the incident and showed her sympathy with the Nirankaris. After facing five threats over his life, the Nirankari Mata showed her resentment with the Congress party. The naming of Sant Bhindranwale sect and a section of the language newspapers involved in poisoning the minds brought a deep message for the political field. The newspaper did not make an embargo over the statement against print media. The Hindustan Times briefly explains the statement:

"Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said here today the assassination of the Nirankari chief, Baba Gurbachan Singh, was a crime which was too shocking for words. In a message sent to the secretary Sant Nirankari Mandal, Mrs. Gandhi said every true Indian would deplore the assassination in unreserved terms. The act is entirely against our traditions of showing respect to the leaders of all religious groups, she observed. Paying homage to the Baba and offering her deepest sympathies to his family and followers in their grievous loss, Mrs. Gandhi said, we should all give serious thoughts to the atmosphere of intolerance and political violence which seems to be growing.....Mrs. Kaur informed Mrs. Gandhi that her family had been facing threats from anti-Nirankari elements who had launched a tirade against the mission. She alleged that five attempts had been made on her husband's life in the last five years. Mr. Gobind Singh, Nirankari Working



¹¹⁴Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times 'Five held for Baba's murder', on 26 April, 1980.

Committee Chairman, told Mrs. Gandhi that Sant Bhindranwale sect and a section of the language newspapers had been poisoning the minds of the people at the instance of Akali leaders. ...The Nirankaris demanded a ban on some of the newspaper which, they alleged had been carrying on a consistent vilification campaign against Nirankaris". (PM: Crime to shocking for word, news, The Hindustan Times, 26 April, 1980)¹¹⁵

The newspaper condemns the editorial using hard words and declares it a heinous crime with strategic planning to do the murder of Nirankari Chief. The newspaper observed it as a crime done at the behest of fanatics as the Nirankari chief was continuously getting life threats. It was the indication towards extremists of Punjab as the police personnel allegedly made an arrest of persons involved in the murder. The editorial declared it a dastardly crime in view of the Delhi media. The newspaper editorial writers:

"It is too early to tell with certainty whether the foul murder of Baba Gurbachan Singh, the spiritual head of the Nirankari sect, was the work of a fanatical gang or professional killers hired for the purpose. However, there is absolutely no doubt that it was a carefully planned crime that left nothing to chance. The murder was committed in the precincts of the Nirankari Mission's headquarters in North Delhi. The two gunmen who did the job were not only able to break the tight security cordon around the Nirankari Bhawan but gain complete knowledge of the Baba's Programme, which enabled them to choose the vantage point and the right time to strike. The recovery of two unexploded hand grenades by the police shows that the killers did not rely solely on their

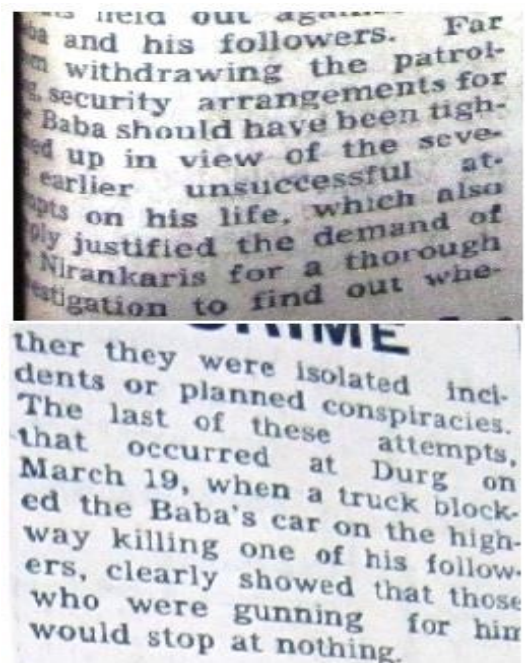


¹¹⁵Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times 'PM: Crime to shocking for word', on 26 April, 1980.

carbine to accomplish what they had obviously been planning for days. The manner of their entry and exit through a bathroom window on the first floor of the building that precluded the possibility of any detection before the murder gives further evidence of the careful preparation that went into this dastardly attack". (A Dastardly Crime, Editorial, The Hindustan Times, 26 April, 1980)¹¹⁶

The newspaper also condemned the low-security cover given to the Nirankari Baba after repeated attacks over him. The newspaper is keeping an eye over the future as the editorials indicate towards the chance of violence after this major incident. However, the editorial is not clearly mentioning the groups involved in it, but refers to the discourse about future indication to control the situation before landing in violence or continuation of revenge war. The editorial further describes about the investigation needed in the murder conspiracy:

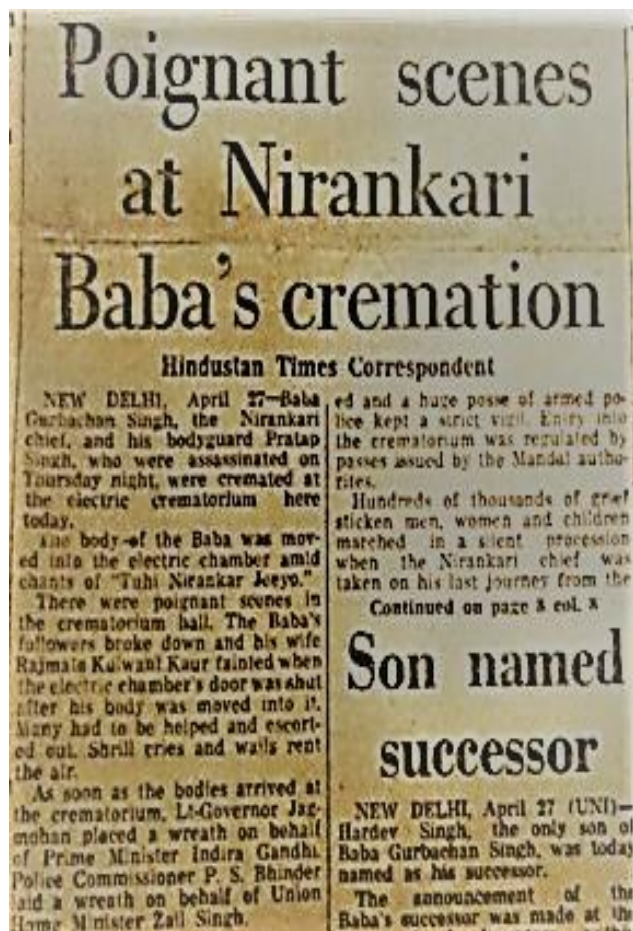
"Far from withdrawing the patrolling parties, the security arrangements for the Baba should have been tightened up in view of the severe earlier unsuccessful attempts on his life, which also justified the demand of the Nirankaris for a thorough investigation to find out whether they were isolated incidents or planned conspiracies. The last of these attempts that occurred in Durg on March 19, when a truck blocked the Baba's car on the highway killing one of his followers, clearly showed that those who were gunning for him would stop at nothing". (Ibid)



The next day top page story covered by The Hindustan Times was of cremation of Nirankari Chief Baba Gurbachan Singh. It unveils the flaw of emotions and sorrow spread out in the Nirankari Chief's family and the rest of the follower Nirankaris and

¹¹⁶Original editorial published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times 'A Dastardly Crime', on 26 April, 1980.

devotees. The newspaper has left no chance to write down the sympathetic news full of emotions, and sorrow spread around Delhi and the rest of the country.



“Baba Gurbachan Singh, the Nirankari chief, and his bodyguard Pratap Singh, who was assassinated on Thursday night, were cremated at the electric crematorium here today. The body of the Baba was moved into the electric chamber amid chants of ‘*Tuhi Nirankar Jeeyo.*’ There were poignant scenes in the crematorium hall. The Baba’s followers broke down and his wife Rajmata Kulwant Kaur fainted when the electric chamber’s door was shut after his body was moved into it. Many had to be helped and escorted out. Shrill cries and wails rent the air. As soon as the bodies arrived at the crematorium, Lt. Governor Jagmohan placed a wreath on behalf of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Police Commissioner PS Bhinder laid a wreath on behalf of Union Home Minister Zail Singh”. (Poignant scene of Nirankari Baba cremation, news, The Hindustan Times, 28 April, 1980)¹¹⁷

In conclusion, the National newspaper publishing from Delhi, The Hindustan Times gave prominent space and coverage to the murder incident of Nirankari chief. The newspaper, whereas broke the news by carrying it on the top page on the same day of the incident due to the significance of the issue. Later, the final journey of Nirankari Chief given a wider coverage of the issue along with three pictures related to the event. The editorial written by the newspaper over the murder issue condemned the security gap and gave blame to fanatics. The language used by the newspapers is soft in nature in comparison to newspapers published from Punjab.

¹¹⁷Original news published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘Poignant scene at Nirankari Baba cremation’, on 28 April, 1980.

3.4 Incident of Founder Editor and Politician's Murder

The various sections of Punjab including print media fraternity were remained on target of militants due to their critical writings and raising voice against them. The Hind Samachar Group of Jullundur faced the worst nightmare during militancy as their two prominent owners and editor of the newspaper were killed over roads due to the difference in opinion. Being a political opponent, militants target general, as well as rich and prominent people and bullets became final option to silentland put fear in them. The religious sentiments turned into hardliner expression, but the political incarnation of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale¹¹⁸ in Punjab changed the narrative of politics and developed into a purely religious issue of the Sikh community. Later, nobody remained safe in Punjab while politicians, public and the media all paid a huge price for raising voice.

The high profile killing of Lala Jagat Narain, founder editor of Hind Samachar Group, senior journalist and former Congress minister brought heat into the environment. The post-murder representation of news in newspapers brought confrontation of ideologies of print media. The differences turned open even though when one of the senior media fraternity killed by the militants.¹¹⁹

3.4.1 Print Media of Punjab

The Tribune was more investigative in nature and covered every single information related to the murder incident by reaching at crime scene where a former minister, newspaper owner and senior companion of media was killed. The newspaper

¹¹⁸Bhindranewale's emergence on the political landscape of Punjab can be trace back to 1977 when the Akali-Janta Government came to power after the Congress defeat in the assembly pools. Zail Singh, the defeated chief minister who later became president of India, was unhappiest, not only because he had lost power but also because the Gurdial Singh Commission appointed to look into his conduct as chief minister (Nayar 2012, 282).

¹¹⁹The newspapers of Punjab published news of brutal murder of founder editor of HSG and political personality Lala Jagat Narain by the militants on 9 September 1981 near Ludhiana. The Tribune made this a top headline on 10 September and wrote '*Lala Jagat Narain Shot Dead, Suspects identified, Driver hurt*' seriously. Rojana Ajit printed this news inside the paper at page three in which they explained '*Lala Jagat Narain hit with bullet near Ludhiana, one arrested*'. Punjab Kesri published front-page news on the murder of their editor with photographs on 10 September 1981 and continuously wrote over the murder, reason, journey and thoughts of public about Lala Jagat Narain. All the three papers carried the issue prominently but Rojana Ajit wrote over violence erupted after Lala's death and attack by the mob over vernacular Punjabi newspapers in anger and termed it as an attack over press freedom.

allegedly found the hand of Sikh youths and mentioned it clearly in the news. Known as a major ethical group, The Tribune too flew in emotion and represented anger and division between media fraternity of English and vernacular media. The newspaper writes:

“Lala Jagat Narain, a former M.P. and Managing Editor of Hind Samachar, Jullundur, was shot dead near Fathegarh village on the Ludhiana-Jullundur highway, 10 km from here, at 6 this evening. His driver was seriously injured and admitted to hospital. The Tribune



correspondent who reached the spot soon after the incident found Lala Jagat Narain is lying on the back seat of his Fiat car. The windowpanes of the car were shattered. He was reported to the returning from Patiala when three young Sikhs followed him on a Royal Enfield motorcycle, which was without a number plate near the Ludhiana-Jullundur bypass. At his car was fired upon near Laddowal the driver turned the car back towards Ludhiana. The motorcyclist chased it and fired again. The bullet hit Lala Jagat Narain killing him on the spot. The three motorcyclists drove towards Jullundur and after crossing the Laddowal Bridge left the motorcycle in a field. One of them was caught by a group of persons and handed over to the police. Two police parties-headed by Mr. Inderjit Singh, DSP, Phillaur and Mr. Manohar Singh Chahal, DSP Ludhiana – arrived at the spot and started a hunt for the assailants”. (Lala Jagat Narain Shot Dead, News, The Tribune, 10 September, 1981)¹²⁰

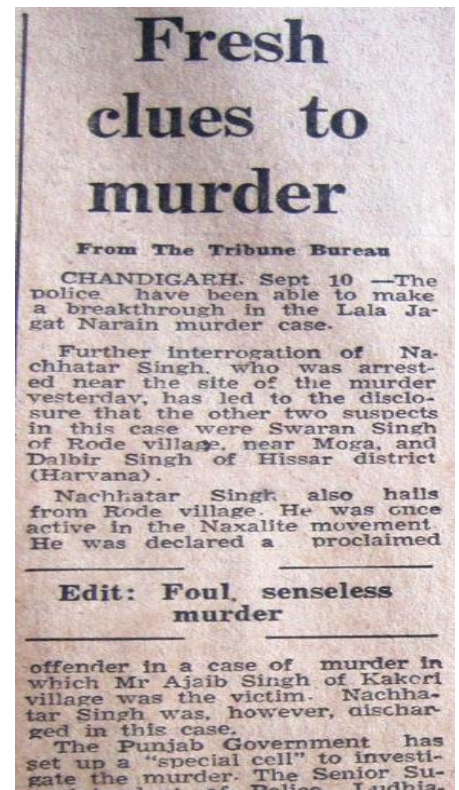
The Tribune on the next day again makes cremation of Lala Jagat Narain issue front-page news and placed a photograph of Giani Zail Singh paying his wreath on his

¹²⁰Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Lala Jagat Narain shot dead’, on 10 September, 1981.

dead body. The Tribune also developed news and kept it a top headline in a single column about the fresh clues about the murders in this case. The newspaper in its duty wanted to remain ahead and again mentioned accused name while disclosing his religion. Through writings, the newspaper looked upset over the action was taken by militants and expressed its sorrow over his murder. The Tribune further writes:

“The police have been able to make a breakthrough in the Lala Jagat Narain murder case. Further interrogation of Nachhatar Singh, who was arrested near the site of the murder yesterday, has led to the disclosure that the other two suspects, in this case, were Swaran Singh of Rode village, near Moga, and Dalbir Singh of Hissar district (Haryana). Nachhatar Singh also hails from Rode village. He was once active in the Naxalite movement. He was declared a proclaimed offender in a case of murder in which Mr. Ajaib Singh of Kakori village was the victim. Nachhatar Singh was, however, discharged in this case. The Punjab Government has set up a special cell to investigate the murder.”

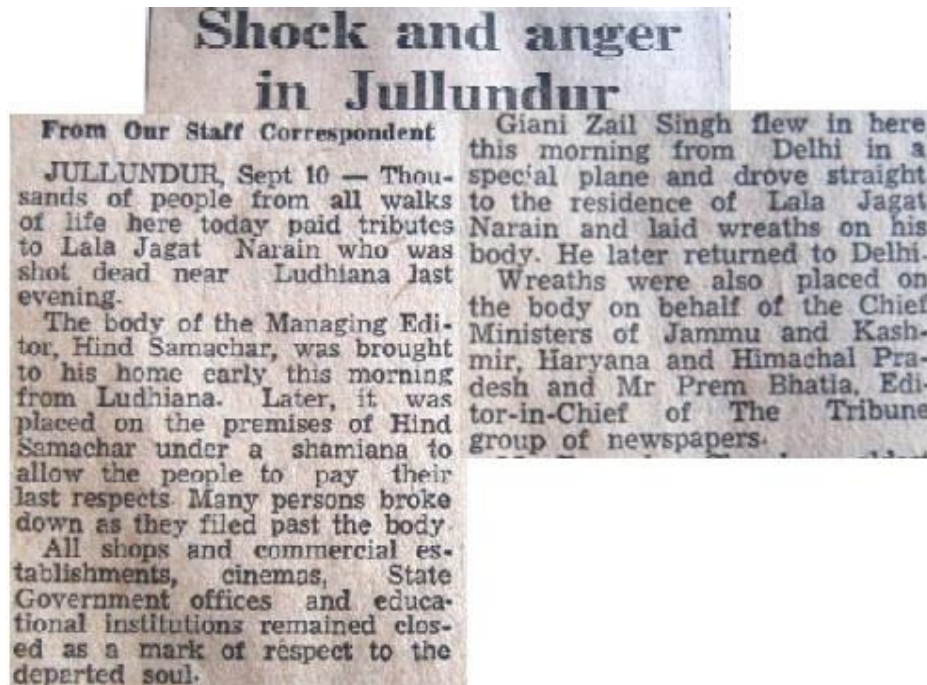
(Fresh clues to murder, news, The Tribune, 11 September 1981)¹²¹



The newspaper in detail covered the aftermath scene of the murder of Lala Jagat Narain in Jullundur. The newspaper did not hesitate to describe the impact and influence of the incident in the public that how much Lala Jagat Narain was acceptable to the community as a media personality. The closing of Government offices too showed the gravity of the incident in Jullundur. The newspaper described the impact of death; anger and sadness on the day of cremation, which Punjabi vernacular media avoided to mention. The Tribune explains the incident:

¹²¹Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune 'Fresh clues to murder', on 11 September, 1981.

“Thousands of people from all walks of life here today paid tributes to Lala Jagat Narain, who was shot dead near Ludhiana last evening. The body of the Managing Editor, Hind Samachar, was brought to his home early this morning from Ludhiana. Later, it was placed on the premises of the Hind Samachar under a shamiana to allow the people to pay their last respects. Many persons broke down as they filed past the body. All shops and commercial establishments, cinemas, State Government offices and



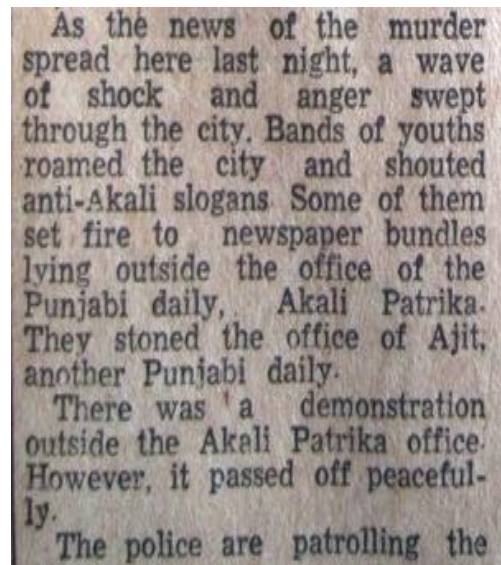
educational institutions remained closed as a mark of respect to the departed soul. Giani Zail Singh flew in here this morning from Delhi in a special plane, drove straight to the residence of Lala Jagat Narain, and laid wreaths on his body. He later returned to Delhi. Wreaths were also placed on the body on behalf of the Chief Ministers of Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh and Mr. Prem Bhatia, Editor-in-Chief of The Tribune group of newspapers”. (Shock and Anger in Jullundur, News, The Tribune, 11 September 1981)¹²²

The newspaper also reported the attack over two vernacular newspapers of Jullundur after the murder of Lala Jagat Narain. However, the newspaper completely avoided the separate discussion over the incident. The paper, however, mentioned the names of two vernacular newspapers, which faced the anger of a group of youths but

¹²²Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Shock and anger in Jullundur’, on 11 September, 1981.

used softer language for the attackers, which show the differences, generated between the English and vernacular print media. It writes:

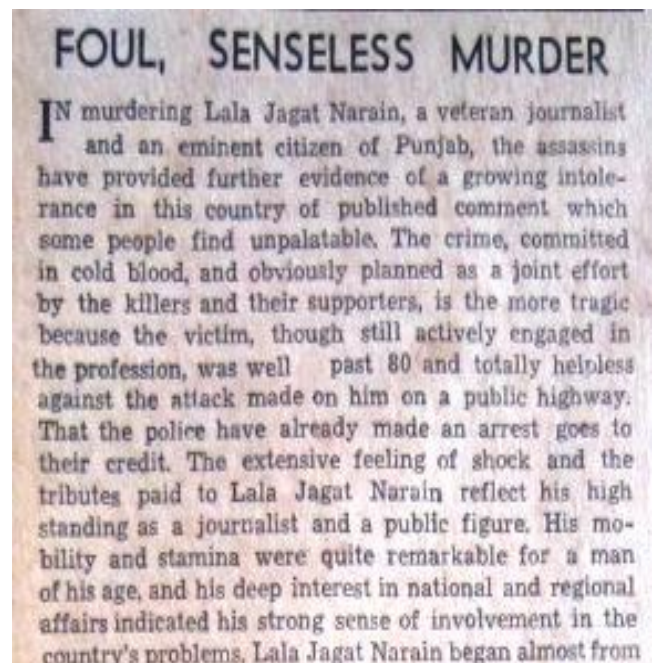
“As the news of the murder spread here last night, a wave of shock and anger swept through the city. Bands of youths roamed the city and shouted anti-Akali slogans. Some of them set fire to newspaper bundles lying outside the office of Punjabi daily, Akali Patrika. They stoned the office of Ajit, another Punjabi daily. There was a demonstration outside the Akali Patrika office. However, it passed off peacefully. The police are patrolling the city to prevent any untoward incident”. (Ibid)



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The Tribune in its editorial criticized the murder and declared it a foul and senseless killing. The paper open heartedly praised the efforts of Lala Jagat Narain and his writings for establishing a renowned newspaper in Northern India. However, it also strongly criticized the assassins and growing intolerance. When print media was indulged in blame game over news writings against each other. The Tribune writes an editorial over it:

“In murdering Lala Jagat Narain, a veteran journalist and an eminent citizen of Punjab, the assassins have provided further evidence of growing intolerance in this country of published comment which some people find unpalatable. The crime, committed in cold blood and obviously planned as a joint effort by the killers and their supporters, is the more tragic because the victim, though still actively



FOUL, SENSELESS MURDER

IN murdering Lala Jagat Narain, a veteran journalist and an eminent citizen of Punjab, the assassins have provided further evidence of a growing intolerance in this country of published comment which some people find unpalatable. The crime, committed in cold blood, and obviously planned as a joint effort by the killers and their supporters, is the more tragic because the victim, though still actively engaged in the profession, was well past 80 and totally helpless against the attack made on him on a public highway. That the police have already made an arrest goes to their credit. The extensive feeling of shock and the tributes paid to Lala Jagat Narain reflect his high standing as a journalist and a public figure. His mobility and stamina were quite remarkable for a man of his age, and his deep interest in national and regional affairs indicated his strong sense of involvement in the country's problems. Lala Jagat Narain began almost from

engaged in the profession was well past 80 and totally helpless against the attack made on him on a public highway. That the police already made an arrest goes to their credit. The extensive feeling of shock and the tributes paid to Lala Jagat Narain reflect his high standing as a journalist and a public figure. His mobility and stamina were quite remarkable for a man of his age, and his deep interest in national and regional affairs indicated his strong sense of involvement in the country's problems". (Foul, Senseless Murder, Editorial, The Tribune, 11 September 1981)¹²³

The newspaper further critically analyses the state scenario badly affected by rising religious and political extremism. Due to this, personality like Lala Jagat Narain was killed. The call to wake the system by the newspaper over the murder issue was to wake up the public to remain aware of the serious consequences, which they have to face if it continues. This was the warning signal predicted by The Tribune, which is also an indication for the print media groups, which were fighting over the issue of Punjabiyaat and other demands.

FOUL, SENSELESS MURDER

While Lala Jagat Narain's death will be mourned and condemned as a dastardly crime, this unhappy event should set people in this part of the country thinking about the circumstances in which the murder was committed. It would be dishonest to conceal the apparent motive behind the assassination. Lala Jagat Narain was known for his forthright opinions on certain issues, one of which was the danger to communal peace arising from political and religious extremism. He is reported to have received threatening communications from those who thought that he should be silenced. Lala Jagat Narain had courage but he was not guilty of impoliteness. If his views were expressed with force, he never ceased to be courteous and civilized in his comment. But those bent upon killing him do not seem to have been bothered by the thought that it was his duty to his profession to speak honestly and fearlessly. The murder itself is a warning to the two

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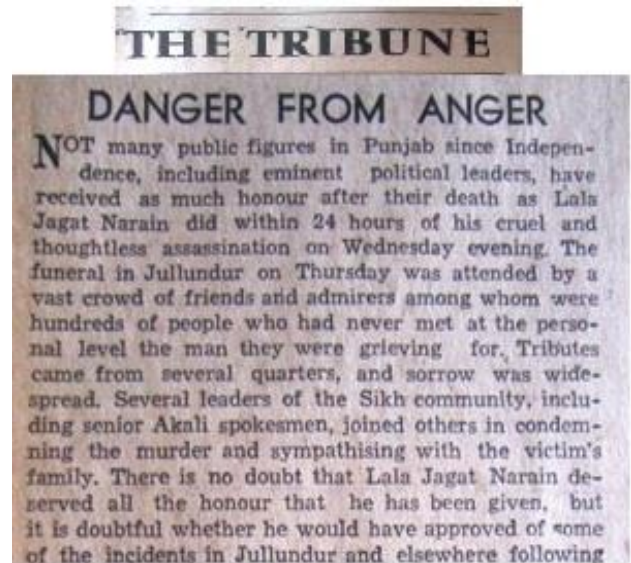
but he was not guilty of impoliteness. If his views were expressed with force, he never ceased to be courteous and civilized in his comment. But those bent upon killing him do not seem to have been bothered by the thought that it was his duty to his profession to speak honestly and fearlessly". (Ibid)

¹²³Original article published in English newspaper The Tribune 'Foul, Senseless Murder', on 11 September, 1981.

The Tribune on 12 September article saw the violent protests taking place after the murder of Lala Jagat Narayan as a wrong tradition. The personality which Lala Jagat Narain had and the charisma and respect he had on the society, The Tribune did not miss a chance to praise him for his deeds and commitments while the protest and the incident occurred after his death brought disgrace for the house and owner both. The newspaper compared the height of Lala Jagat Narain with top leaders:

“Not many public figures in Punjab since independence, including eminent political leaders, have received as much honour after their death as Lala Jagat Narain did within 24 hours of his cruel and thoughtless assassination on Wednesday evening. The funeral in Jullundur on Thursday was attended by a vast crowd of friends and admirers among whom were hundreds of people who had never met at the personal level the man they were grieving for. Tributes came from several quarters, and sorrow was widespread. Several leaders of the Sikhs community, including senior Akali spokesman, joined others in condemning the murder and sympathizing with the victim’s family. There is no doubt that Lala Jagat Narain deserved all the honour that he has been given, but it doubtful whether he would have approved of some of the incidents in Jullundur”.

(Danger from Anger, Editorial, The Tribune, 12 September 1981)¹²⁴



¹²⁴Original editorial published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Danger from Anger’, on 12 September, 1981.

The Tribune advised all to keep calm over the issue to maintain the dignity of the departed personality and the Punjabiyat and the extremism in any shape it said is dangerous. While accepting the resentment against the extremists of the Sikhs community, the newspaper further cautioned the agitators not to cross the aggravate limit.

DANGER FROM ANGER

Such aberrations are a dangerous portent for peace in Punjab and elsewhere where Punjabis reside. This is not the way to honour a departed public leader and distinguished journalist. Strong resentment against the actions of certain extremists in the Sikh community is understandable, but such resentment should not be encouraged to take the shape it did at Jullundur and some other places on Thursday. Political battles should be fought at the political level and not through ugly emotional exhortations. Thanks to the provocative campaign for separatism and secession, communal feelings have already surfaced in Punjab. These need to be curbed, not further aroused. To blame a community as a whole for the acts of a few is neither fair nor wise. Moreover, such unbecoming reactions will only weaken the hands of the authorities who have been entrusted with the responsibility of identifying those guilty of Lala Jagat Narain's murder and of bringing them to justice. The police have acted, so far,

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(Ibid)

In conclusion, The Tribune whereas critically analyses the murder incident, it also showed its anger and sorrow in the murder. However, there was violence in the city after the murder, but the newspaper wrote about this generally and did not give weight to it over the demise of a media fraternity. The division of the newspapers was quite visible and Tribune has left no chance to praise for his working and height in the media field.

On the other hand, the Punjabi language newspaper Rojana Ajit carried the news of the assassination of Lala Jagat Narain on inside pages in the newspaper. The newspaper too gave a detailed report of the murder incident and divided assailants as Keshdhari (a person with long hair) and one Hindu. It is an amazing fact that Ajit without any investigation came over the decision of religion of involved people. But the newspaper completely looked silent over the death of a senior media personality which is quite dubious. Ajit narrates the incident:

“Punjab’s veteran journalist and political leader Lala Jagat Narain today murdered with bullet shots near Ludhiana. It is descriptive that the assailants were there in numbers and were on motorcycles.

Two of them were ‘Keshdhari’ (a term used to define Sikhs) and one Hindu. They shot fired at Lala ji’s car. Lala je injured by bullets and he died. The driver is badly injured and sent to CMC hospital for treatment. The killers were seen going towards Phagwara. Our reporter in Ludhiana S. Musafir told over the phone that Lala Ji was



coming on the car from Patiala towards Jullundur, followed by three people from bypass who were riding over a Royal Enfield motorcycle. When they fired, the driver got nervous and he turned his car towards Ludhiana but the bullets shot by killers hit Lala Je and driver after breaking the glass. According to S. Musafir, the names of all three killers registered,

Ranjit Singh of Delhi, second is Kulwant Singh and the third is Nachatar Singh. The first one is a truck driver. The incident occurred in front of Tourist Bungalow near Kadian and Fathegarh in the evening at 5.45 pm and three motorcycle riders ran towards Phagwara”. (Lala Jagat Narain shot near Ludhiana, one culprit arrested, news, Rojana Ajit, 10 September 1981)¹²⁵

Rojana Ajit whereas curtailed itself to do open critics of the murder of Lala Jagat Narain, it gave preference to the violence erupted after the murder. The news is written in a complaining way, which shows the diverse ways adopted by print media. The print media were ideologically deeply divided and saw the loss from the religious angles. The line of division marked by the newspapers when it published a report from the side of Sikhs faced loss due to Hindu mob. The divided line turned deeper after the murder. Ajit narrates the incident further:



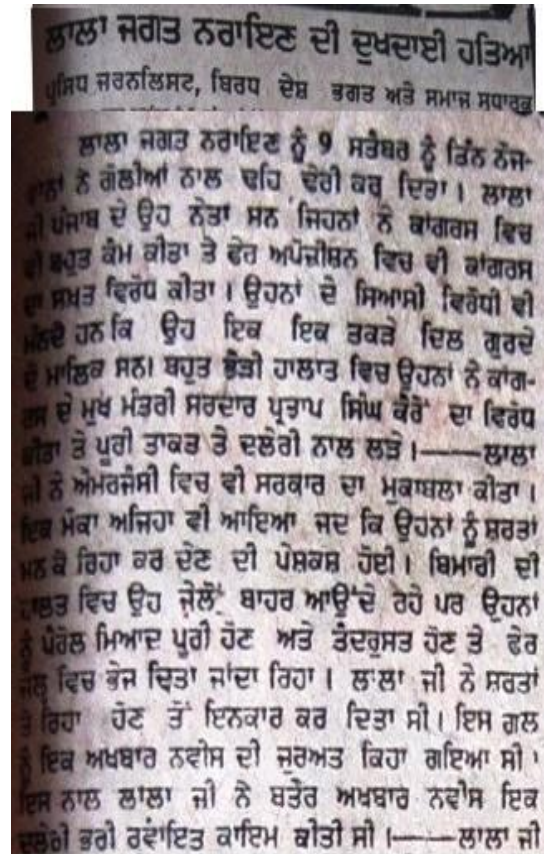
“In the pain of the murder of Lala Jagat Narain, today there was a complete strike in Jullundur and school, college, shops and other business hubs remained close. Government officials also observed the holiday. Small groups in various parts of the city were roaming and raised slogans against police and Khalistan. Police was stationed at significant places. Many people from morning first came to his home for last tributes and then Hind Samachar Ground to paid homage to Lala je. The tension increases in Jullundur due to the murder of Lala Ji. A group of angry youth entered Sodhal and wanted to flush out Nihang’s sitting there, but situation sooner is taken in control”. (Lala ji’s murder related trouble in Jullundur, Clash between police and protesters, news, Rojana Ajit, 10 September 1981)¹²⁶

Rojana Ajit took an opposite turn on the next day of news presentation about Lala Jagat Narain where the newspaper left no space of praise of leadership skills and qualities of Lala

¹²⁵English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news ‘Lala Jagat Narain nu Ludhiana nere goli mar diti, ek doshi girftar’, published on 10 September, 1981.
¹²⁶English translation Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news ‘Lala ji di hatya sambandhi Jullundur ch garbar, police te vikhavakara ch jharap’, published on 10 September, 1981.

Jagat Narain. However, the newspaper was doing critics openly of Hindi print media, but it praised owner of the Hind Samachar group. The newspaper writes:

“Lala Jagat Narain killed by three youths on 9 September with bullets. Lala Ji was that leader of Punjab who did a lot of work in Congress and then opposed the Congress when was in opposition. His political opponent also accepts that he was a strong-hearted man. In the troubled atmosphere, he strongly opposed Chief Minister Sardar Pratap Singh Karion and fought with full power and bravery. Lala Ji also faced Government during an emergency. There was a time when he was offered to release from jail on set terms. On troubled health grounds, few times came out of jail, but after completing parole and improved health, he again went to jail. Lala Ji denied releasing on giving terms. This issue was



described as a dare of a media man. With this, Lala Ji, being a media man established a new legacy full of bravery”. (Lala Jagat Narain’s painful murder, editorial, Rojana Ajit, 11 September 1981)¹²⁷

¹²⁷English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial ‘Lala Jagat Narain di dukhdaye hatya’, published on 11 September, 1981.

Rojana Ajit in the line of praising of Lala Jagat Narain further expressed its disagreement over the aftermaths incidents which occurred after his murder. Through the newspaper, editorial it criticized the mob for creating violence. The attack made on two Punjabi vernacular newspapers, including Ajit was condemned by the newspaper itself in hard words:



“We had differences with Lala je. We are representing these differences with full force. In this regard, we never allowed cast to come in between. Ajit always fought with clean sense. While representing these differences, we never left peace and seriousness, but we have regretted that there were attacks carried out on Ajit and Akali Patrika office. The communal mob succeeds to light a fire to an Akali Patrika office, but the efforts to fire up Ajit office failed. There was a heavy rush of Ajit workers, but we controlled them, but after that, there was a massive stone pelting over us and we were shocked that what these violent people do”. (Ibid)

Rojana Ajit whereas
condemned the attack over

vernacular newspapers, it also condemns the death of Lala Jagat Narayan, but described itself to condemn it strongly being a media house and declared itself ignorant that is it a political or non-political murder. The newspaper adopted a soft stand over the murder narrative:

“Till the time it is not known that the murder of Lala Ji is a political or non-political murder. However, if it is a political murder, then it is too very regretful. Murder over political differences is a very low level bad, evil that would be condemned from all sides. The law will take its course, but we regret strongly over the murder of our beloved Lala je. Whosoever committed this crime; he did not do well. However, by giving communal colour to this murder, the protest done by a few miscreants is also condemnable. Very abusive words used against us. Slogans against Blue turban and Ajit also rose”. (Ibid)



In conclusion, Rojana Ajit being a print media group, along with Punjab Kesri followed the communitarian lines and denounced the Hind Samachar Group and the other Hindi media group being a rival ideology. The newspaper instead of denouncing the grave murder of a media fraternity, owner of a media group and former minister, failed to condemn the incident and disburse the discussion into political or non-political murder, which makes things more complex and dividing. The language used by the newspapers to condemn each other generated a fractured sphere in Punjab, which was already facing the heat of fundamentalism and regionalism.

Punjab Kesri was the sole newspaper which faced the worst nightmare of the militancy phase due to political and religious extremism in the state. The demise of Lala Jagat Narain looked major loss for the newspaper, which looked deep into deep sorrow. Full-page articles from the paper, denouncing the incident by people in every field established the regard and respect of media tycoon of Hind Samachar. The newspaper covered every issue from the angle of a sympathetic aspect while denouncing the incident a coward act. The newspaper left no chance to establish the impression of a topmost favoured newspaper of every section of the society. Even though, the

newspaper also published the editorials in a national newspaper after Hindi translation. The newspaper writes down the news:

“Punjab Government revealed a mystery that murder of former MP and senior political leader Lala Jagat Narain on Wednesday is a political murder. Chief Secretary S. Paramjit Singh while talking with journalists here today said that most probably few people outlined this murder planning and then implemented. He said that those elements which want to silence those people who do not agree with them. He said that the same elements provided monetary help in this conspiracy. Shri Paramjit Singh said that with initial investigation this is discovered that the planning of these elements is not just limited up to the murder of Lala Jagat



Narayan. However few other people are too named in their list. He said that through the preliminary investigation of Nachatar Singh, these signs revealed out. According to Shri Singh, arrested Nachatar Singh was an active Naxalite in 1971. After releasing in Kokri Kalan massacre, he has become proclaimed offender and went to Rajasthan. He said that the other two accused named in this murder are Sawara Singh, son of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale’s brother and his name is registered in the FIR of Nirankari Baba murder. The second accused is Dalbir Singh of Haryana, but still, verification of these people is pending. When has it been asked to Shri Paramjit Singh that is there Khalistan support behind the murder of Lala Jagat Narain? He replied that at the time when the investigation of the murder is going on, he could not say anything”. (Lala

Ji's murder, political, planning of few others murder too, News, Punjab Kesri, 13 September 1981)¹²⁸

Punjab Kesri published an exclusive article on the first page on the same day and strongly criticized the attack made by miscreants over other newspaper offices in relation with murder agitation. The newspaper called it an unlawful activity and gave examples of the history of Lala Jagat Narayan and the newspaper after the blames of the Punjabi vernacular newspapers. The newspaper also felt embarrassed over the anti-community and newspaper slogans recited by the gathering, which bring the newspaper on low stage after in sympathy movement while newspaper pays gratitude to the people for their gathering at the cremation, which indicates that newspaper, also wanted to keep the people with them on the other hand. The newspaper describes the incident:

... On the last journey of Lala Ji, all the public of North India, especially people of Jullundur expressed their gratitude; perhaps Lala Ji could be

इस बलिदान को व्यर्थ न जाने दो

लाला जी की अंतिम यात्रा के मौका पर सारे उत्तरी भारत की जनता ने विशेष कर जालंधर निवासियों ने लाला जी के प्रति विश्व भद्रा का प्रदर्शन किया, काम लाला जी उनके देश सकते। यह एक ऐसा दुःख था जो अपने जीवन में तथा मृत्यु के बाद बहुत कम राजनीतिक वा सामाजिक नेताओं को प्राप्त हुआ है। चीनी लम्बा मान-सौम सिरों का ऊठे मारता हुआ समुद्र, नकाशों और दुकानों की छतों पर इन्सान ही इन्सान, साथ सहर बिल्कुल जन्म। ऐसा लगता था कि जैसे जालंधर का रोम-रोम तम में डूबा हुआ है। हिन्दू समाचार परिवार अपने सहृदयों और देशवासियों की लाला जी को दी गई यह अंतिम भद्रावर्ति कभी विस्मृत नहीं कर सकता।

परन्तु ऐसे दुःखद मकसद पर ही कुछ गैर जिम्मेदार तत्वों की धोर से इस सम्भार व उदास वातावरण की पवि-
 षाता (SOLEMNITY) को संभ करने का प्रयास किया गया। मुझे बताया गया है कि जालंधर के इस लोक जनस में कुछ इने-विने नीजवान कुछ ऐसे नारे लगा रहे थे जो न सिर्फ अशांतजनक ही थे बल्कि हमरों को भावनाओं को बाधक करने वाले भी थे। उसके साथ ही जालंधर के दो स्थानीय पंजाबी संस्थाओं के विरुद्ध भी कुछ हंगामा किया गया।

जिन लोगों ने यह सब कुछ किया वे निश्चय ही हमारे हिन्दुओं और लालाजी के श्रद्धालु नहीं हो सकते। लाला जी अपनी सारी धार हिन्दू-सिख एकता के सम्बंध रहे और इसी हिन्दू-सिख एकता के लिए उन्हें अपनी जान की कुर्बानी देनी पड़ी। यह खानिस्तान और सिख एक समय-काल के नारों का विरोध ही हीनिए किया करते थे क्योंकि वह हिन्दू और सिखों को एक ही माता-पिता और एक ही मूल्यों की संतान समझते थे और हिन्दू-सिख एकता की हिन्दुओं व सिखों के सम्भाव्य की कल्पना करने को तैयार न थे। यह सिखों के मन्दर पूजकतावादी तत्वों के विरुद्ध अपनी पूरी ताकत से कतम चलाया करते थे परन्तु सिख धर्म और सिख भाइयों के लिए पूरी भद्रा और प्यार रखते थे। सिखों में उनके कई सर्वश्रेष्ठ मित्र थे।

able to see. This was a scene, which has been earning by very little political or social personality after death. There was miles long queue of people, the rush of humans over streets, houses and shops, the city was

¹²⁸English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri news 'Lala ji ke hatya rajnitik, Kucha nay netaon ke katal ke be yojna', published on 13 September, 1981.

completely closed. It was looking like Jullundur's every nook and corner is in pain. The Hind Samachar family would never forget the commemoration given by citizens of Jullundur and the country. However, in this painful time, a few careless elements tried to devastate the solemnity of this serious and painful environment. I have informed that in the rush of millions, few youths were raising slogans, which were not just objectionable but were also, hurting feelings of others. Along with this, there was some objectionable step taken against two Punjabi newspapers in Jullundur. The elements who committed all this, they not are our well-wishers and devotee of Lala Ji. Lala Ji throughout his life was a supporter of Hindu-Sikh unity and to maintain the Hindu-Sikh unity; he sacrificed life. He was writing with full courage against the separatist inside the Sikhs but was kept in full respect and love for Sikh religion and Sikh brothers. He had a few best friends from Sikhs". (Do not let this sacrifice go meaningless, Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 13 September 1981)¹²⁹

The newspaper further published news on the front page in which the Government is planning to disclose the arrest of the Khalsitani militants, a proposal made by the Government. The newspaper also made a comment in which it revealed that the Khalistan extremists are getting encouragement from the leaders of the Government, which was revealing of bitter truth. The action is taken against the murder of high profile killings of media journalist and senior Congress leader Lala Jagat Narain. The newspapers narrate:

"Senior Government official demystifies that in the near future, there are chances of the arrest of terrorists and separatist related with the Khalistan Agitation in Punjab. A high-level discussion is continuing in this regard. The Punjab Government feels that the water is crossing its table. It feels that now the Centre Government is also worried about the activities of the terrorists. Apart of this, the Congress leaders of Punjab and Centre to downgrade each other allegedly supported the terrorist elements; they too feel that situation is turning worse. Our special correspondent received the information that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is also fully aware of this". (Arrest of *Khalistani's* as earliest, news, Punjab Kesri, 13 September 1981)¹³⁰

The Punjab Kesri adopted hardstand against the Government after the murder of its owner Lala Jagat Narain. The newspaper, whereas criticized the role of ruling

¹²⁹English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial '*Es balidan ko vayarth mat jane do*', published on 13 September, 1981.

¹³⁰English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri news '*Khalistaniyon ke giraftariyan sigher*', published on 13 September, 1981.

Government with a statement from opposition parties in which security lapse became the major issue.

“The Mahamantri of Bhartiya Janta Yuva Morcha, Punjab Pradesh, Shri Tarsem Singh Bahar, District Jullundur secretary Shri Vinod Kumar and President of District Kapurthala Shri Hira Lal issued a joint statement. While condemning the murder of Lala Ji, they said that a great leader of



a country and press has lost. This loss will always felt by the country. With that bravery, Lala je holds the truth and he served the Indian nation through his writings, the murder of that kind of a Sant is a slap on the face of the present Government. They said there are two murders during the ruling of the present Government, which ashamed the head of Indian nation. In Nation of Gurus and Sants, few miscreants are roaming in this country wearing different masks. Government due to the votes or the selfishness of few leaders does not want to catch these kinds of troublemakers. The blood of Martyr Lala Jagat Narayan is not that inexpensive that Government will play any ,on Government’s face, news, Punjab Kesri, 13 September 1981)¹³¹

The editorial published in newspapers, on 20 September by its editor and elder son of Lala Jagat Narain, Romesh Chandra about his remembrance and activities performed for the sake of the state. As the fundamentalists and extremists were condemning the role of Punjab Kesri and Lala Jagat Narain, the comparison was made to denounce the misconception about a newspaper owner. The editorial remembers the time when Lala Jagat Narain came in support of the Akali Dal and influenced the voters

¹³¹English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial ‘Safeed kapron mein Sant ke hatya, Sarkar ke muh per tamacha’, published on 13 April, 1981.

to cast their votes in favour of the Akali Dal. Being Congress leader, this step had immense importance for Akalis. The newspaper expressed its anger through words:



“There is no doubt that you are a true Hindu, Arya Samaji too. If keeping faith in our own religion is fundamentalism, then, without doubt, you were a fundamentalist. However, nobody knows the reality than us that instead of being Hindu, you were keeping the same respect for other religion. You have understood Hindus and Sikhs a child of the same parents and one guru. You first are nationalist then Hindu. Perhaps these people forgot that time of 1977 when you travelled to each village and city and requested to the people that Sikh ‘Guru Sahibans’ made so many sacrifices for the Hindu community. By remembering that sacrifices, you must cast your votes in the favour of Akali candidates. Four times Akali formed the Government and four times Hind Samachar supported them. Instead of that, telling them the well-wishers and spokesperson of the Akalis, few Sikh newspapers are changing themselves with the time. During an emergency, you attached with Akalis, Jan Sanghi’s, socialists and with communists, fought strongly against it, and welcomed the arrest in old age. That time you were a nationalist, great journalist and a lion of Punjab but when you opposed nation breaking separatist agitation for Khalistan and Sikhs as a separate community and Anandpur Sahib Resolution kind of demands, now you became fundamentalist, short-sighted and turned into

enemies of Sikhs”. (Obeisance in the feet, editorial, Punjab Kesri, 20 September 1981)¹³²

In conclusion, Punjab Kesri really landed in the great vacuum with the murder of Lala Jagat Narain. Living as larger than life personality in the media and state politics brought respect for Lala Jagat Narain. The after death write-ups and condolences by various personalities of the society were to snub the voices raised by various Punjabi newspapers. Punjab Kesri whereas mourned over the death of its owner, but it also

¹³²English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial ‘Charno mein pranam’, published on 20 September, 1981.

condemned the violence made by few miscreants and called it anti-human act. However, the newspaper editorial replied with sensible words to Akalis and cornered all the blame. The murder of Lala Jagat Narain has become an issue of figurative battle and political statements.

3.5 Incident of Murder of Chief Editor of *Punjab Kesri*

Punjab was facing the heat of violence from the 1970's when Naxalite's were active in various areas of the state, but sooner the police took control over them, but later the Sikh-Nirankari clash in 1978 forced Punjab in hell of terror where two communities living peacefully for centuries came against each other due to rise of religious extremism. The movement for an independent nation for Sikhs '*Khalistan*' started with full force in Punjab in the late 1970's.

The game to gain political power in the state began between Congress and Akali Dal, while Jansangh¹³³ was caught mid between, and Punjab was turned into a hell of terror, which affected the North Indian Region. Later with the rising skirmish, it encircled print media personalities and severely faced the terror in raising voices against it and Punjab Kesri is one of that example which lost its prime members.

The media of Punjab divulged for representation of a murder of a well-known chief editor of a Hindi daily '*Punjab Kesri*' which was known as one of an influential newspaper of Punjab¹³⁴ due to critics against militancy. Punjab Kesri first lost its founder, Editor Lala Jagat Narayan¹³⁵ in 1981 in a horrific attack by the militants. His

¹³³The Punjab Governor, Mr. B.D. Pande, expressed anguish over the ghastly murder. Mr. Pande said the senseless killings had cut short the life span of a seasoned journalist. Mr. Virbhadra Singh, Chief Minister of Himachal, expressed shock over the killing. Conveying his sympathies to the bereaved family, he said the demise of Mr. Romesh Chander was biggest non-reparable loss (The Tribune, 13 May, 1984).

¹³⁴Punjab Kesri was the paper of Hindi medium, which was famous enough within the Hindu Community (Deol 2000).

¹³⁵Lala Jagat Narayan, a Chopra Khatri and Congress Party leader, has been basing in Lahore before he immigrated to India as a refugee following partition in 1947. He started the Urdu daily Hind Samachar in 1948 from Jalandher. Jagat Narayan, realizing the depleting importance of Urdu in India, founded Punjab Kesri, a Hindi daily, in 1964. Narayan, an Arya Samajis was a prominent critic of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He was shot dead on September 9, 1981, near Amaltas Motel on the national highway while returning to Jullundur from Patiala. The White Paper issued by the Government of India, mentioned that Narayan was assassinated because of his criticism of Bhindranwale. See, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jagat_Narayan. (Accessed on 15 May, 2017)

son Romesh Chander was chief editor of the Hind Samachar Group also met with the same fate due to his blunt writings¹³⁶ against militants.

Romesh Chander who was gunned down in the car at Baba Namdev Chowkn in Jullundur on 12 May 1984 while heading back after attending a program on National Unity Day.¹³⁷ The ideologically divided print media represented this brutal murder through a fractured perspective.

¹³⁶Writings in Newspaper Punjab Kesri opposed by the militants.

¹³⁷All prominent newspapers published news on the brutal murder of editor of Romesh Chander by the militants. The Tribune wrote on May 13 'Hind Samachar Editor Shot Dead' on front page in which news explains that four unidentified people gunned down the editor of Hind Samachar Romesh Chander. Rojana Ajit printed this news inside the paper in which they explained 'Shri Romesh died after gunned down with bullet in Jalandher. Punjab Kesri had faced a big loss. They published full front-page news on the murder of their editor with photographs of the place of incident. All the three papers carried this issue in serious manner and explained each instance from the bottom of the edge.

3.5.1 Print Media of Punjab

The news related to the murder of Shri Romesh Chander, Editor-in-Chief of Hind Samachar Group in Jullundur appeared in The Tribune on the front page as a top headline on 13 May 1984 and strictly condemn the act:



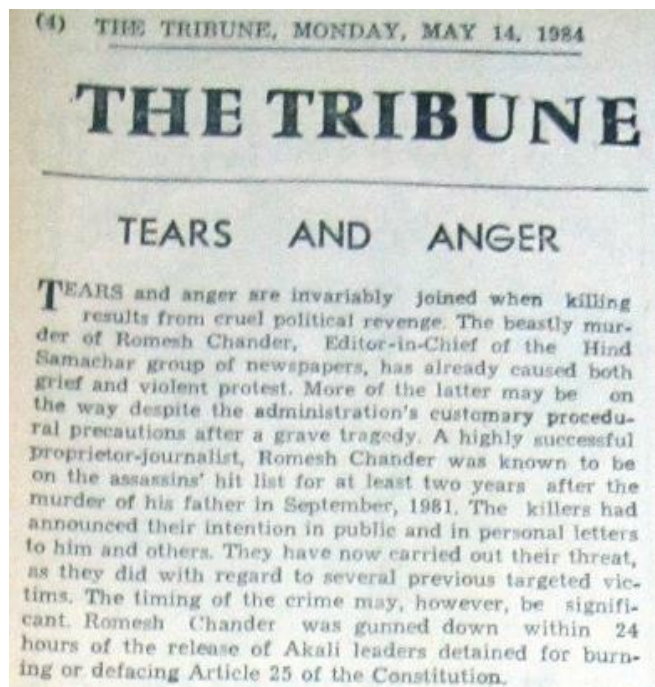
“Mr. Romesh Chander, Chief Editor of the Hind Samachar Group of newspapers, was shot dead by four unidentified persons here this evening. His two gunmen were also injured. They were rushed to the Civil Hospital. He was on the hit list of terrorists. His father, Lala Jagat Narain was gunned down near Ludhiana on September 9, 1981. Mr. Romesh Chander was driving his car when he was fired upon at Namdev Chowk. His gunmen were sitting on the back seat. He was returning after attending a national integration day function in the Guru Nanak Library. The assailants had parked their Fiat Car at the crossing. As Mr. Romesh Chander’s car came near Namdev Chowk, they opened fire on him. In order to save himself, Mr. Romesh turned his vehicle towards the direction from which he was coming, but the assailants chased his car and sprayed him with bullets. He died on the spot. An eyewitness said at least a dozen shots were fired at Chief Editor”.

(‘Hind Samachar Editor Shot Dead,’ news, The Tribune, 13 May, 1984)¹³⁸

The editorial appeared in The Tribune on 14 May captured the anger and remorse in the brutal murder incident of Romesh Chander. In a strongly worded editorial, the newspaper looked quite convinced to the point that it was purely a political

¹³⁸Original news published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Hind Samachar *Editor shot dead*’, on 13 May, 1984.

murder and raised its concerns that the incident happened immediately after releasing the Akali leaders from Jail who were detained for burning the article 25 of the Indian constitution. The newspaper also advised the Prime Minister to become wise to handle the downgrading situation of Punjab. It writes:



“Tears and anger are invariably joined when killing results from cruel political revenge. The beastly murder of Romesh Chander, Editor in Chief of the HSG of newspapers, has already caused both grief and violent protest. More of the latter may be on the way, despite the administration’s customary procedural precautions after a grave tragedy. A highly successful proprietor-journalist, Romesh Chander was known to be on the assassin’s hit list for at least two years after the murder of his father in September 1981. The killer has announced their intentions in public and personal letters to him

and others. They have now carried out their threat now. The timing of the crime may, however, be significant, Romesh Chander was gunned down within 24 hours of the release of Akali leaders detained for burning or defacing article 25 of the constitution”. (‘Tears and Anger,’ Editorial, The Tribune, 14 May, 1984)¹³⁹

The newspaper also cautions the Government that the incident might be an act at deterrence to prevent the ongoing attempts to work out a negotiated settlement between the Akali Dal and the Government. It calls for a mature response to the situation from both the central Government and Akalis and do not carry away by emotions. It also reminds the government and the public, how Akalis were important in finding of a solution of problem as extremist elements were rising and there was an urgent need to strengthen the voices of the moderate elements.

¹³⁹Original editorial published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘Tears and Anger’, on 14 May, 1984.

“In view of earlier attempts by some to prevent a negotiated settlement between the centre and the Akali Dal, the murder of Romesh Chander was most probably intended to forestall the possibility of conciliatory talks to end the current stalemate in Punjab. If these assumptions are correct, the Prime Minister and her colleagues should become wiser than they have been so far about the serious difficulties they face in resuming their dialogue with the Akalis. This was the purpose of setting free Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, Mr. Gurcharan Singh Tohra and others are not a great secret. They did not ask to be set free. The Government could have kept them in custody to await trials if it wished to opt for that course.... The Akalis have been proving right. While the leaders were locked up, the killer squads were busy building up their resources and capability to strike. The concerted raised on 37 railway stations in the state last month were proof enough of their greater power for damage”. (Ibid)

In view of earlier attempts by some to prevent a negotiated settlement between the Centre and the Akali Dal, the murder of Romesh Chander was most probably intended to forestall the possibility of conciliatory talks to end the current stalemate in Punjab. If this assumption is correct, the Prime Minister and her colleagues should become wiser than they have been so far about the serious difficulties they face in resuming their dialogue with the Akalis. That this was the purpose of the release on Friday of Mr Parkash Singh Badal, Mr Gurcharan Singh Tohra and others is no great secret. They did not ask to be set free. The Government could have kept them in custody to await trial if it wished to opt for that course.

But, obviously, Mrs Gandhi intended to make a fresh start. The immediate Akali reaction to the leaders' release was short of enthusiastic. The Akalis were not quite sure whether they would be in a position rightaway to get things moving again. Apparently the principal reason for such doubts lies in a strengthening of the forces which have chosen violence as their creed. The Akalis have been proved right. While the leaders were locked up, the killer squads were busy building up their resources and capacity to strike. The concerted raids on 37 railway stations in the State last month were proof enough of their greater power for damage.

Rojana Ajit in this issue published the murder incident of Editor of Hind Samachar Group, Romesh Chander inside the newspaper on page 3. The newspaper gave priority to express the violence in detail by the people gathered at the spot in protest against the murder instead of strictly condemning them. Ajit kept the stress more on after murderous violence as similar to the treatment given to his father's murder in 1981, which generates a question over the stand taken by them. The newspaper narrated the facts about the incident casually. The newspaper completely missed representing any condemnation from political or non-political personality. The newspaper highlighted the violence in the news which arose after the murder and related it as an attack against a certain community:

“Today near Namdev Chowk, four unidentified people killed the editor of

Hind Samachar Group with bullets. After receiving the information about his death, there was tension mounted in all around Jullundur. The mob fired up a dozen buses stationed at Corporation Transport Depot. Depot building also burnt up. Except for this, Vijay Bank, Fire brigade vehicle and half a dozen shops near to Punjab National Bank also flamed up. To control the situation in the city, curfew has been imposing up to Monday morning up to 8 am. Today evening, Romesh came back to his home after participating in a programme at the Guru Nanak District Library when



fired at him. Shri Romesh died on the spot. His gunmen along with two other people also badly injured by bullets. They all admitted to the hospital. It is reminded that father of Shri Romesh Lala Jagat Narain also killed by bullet fires on 9 September 1981”. (‘Editor of the Hind Samachar Group, Shri Romesh killed by a bullet in Jullundur,’ news, Rojana Ajit, 13 May, 1984)¹⁴⁰

The editorial of Rojana Ajit on May 14 tries to become sober in its details, but slip into visible indifference while publishing news about brutal incident through news. The attempts to present the incident in a matter of fact manner. However, the emphasis of the whole editorial appears to be centralize on the violence that followed the violentge side the depot were burned by them. The flames were visible from a one-kilometer distance. Guru Nanak Library from where Romesh Ji came out after attending the

¹⁴⁰English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news ‘Shri Romesh Chander nu Jullundur wich Goli marke halak ker dita gaya’, published on 13 May, 1984.

program was also burnt down". (The Death of Romesh Ji, Editorial, Rojana Ajit, 14 May, 1984)¹⁴¹

Rojana Ajit in an editorial on 20 May 1984 looks little bit bias in the presentation and along with condemnation of murder; the newspaper is stressing more to condemn the violence and relates to it. The newspaper wrote extensively about the loss of public, especially against Sikhs. Being newspaper, how it presented facts along with photos of the shops related to Sikhs expressed a biased nature to present facts. The newspaper writes:

"The editor of Hind Samachar Group newspapers Shri Romesh Chander murdered. Remorse over it was also a natural phenomenon, but the reaction erupted after this that is more regrettable than this because some violent people damaged Government and private property. They did not see that this wealth is related to the country and the burden of this entire has to bear by the public. The mob in anger fired 12-13 buses, which were standing near the place of incident, burnt by the mob. After that office of PIB burnt. The later mob also damaged to the private property. Shops were burnt in this style that nothing remained recoverable in the shop. The most regrettable issue is shops related to a certain community burnt deliberately and selectively as it was done". (Release Compensation Immediately, Editorial, Rojana Ajit, 20 May 1984)¹⁴²

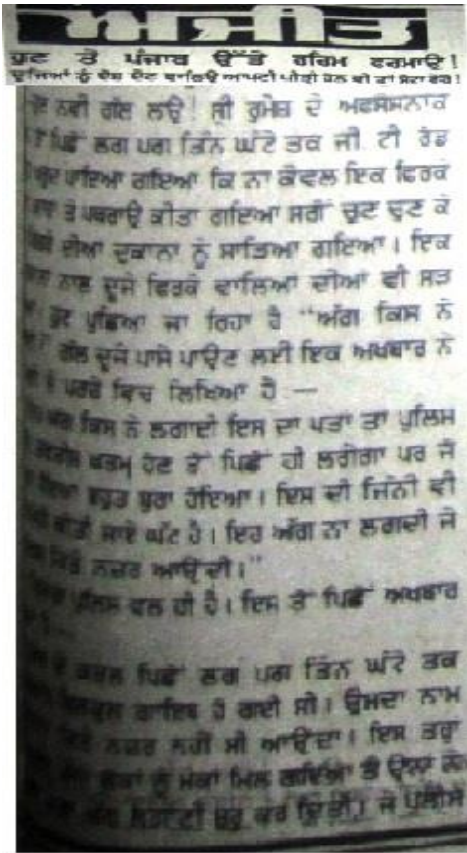


The few crucial points apparently infuriated Rojana Ajit. If the administration exactly did its duty, the situation had not gone out of control. The burning and looting

¹⁴¹English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit news 'Romesh ji da dehan', published on 14 May, 1984.

¹⁴²English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial 'Turant muawaza deo', published on 20 May, 1984.

were not under anyone's control and nobody directed this. The murder of Romesh Chander was the main reason that kindled the violence and there was a clear paralysis to the Governmental machinery and looting has been continuing and many anti-social elements were trying to give it a communal colour.¹⁴³ Ajit writes:



“On the unfortunate murder of Shri Romesh Chander, G. T. The road has been blocked for full three hours.... Stones were pelted on a specific community and shops were burnt selectively. One or two shops belonging to the other religious group were also burnt. To make turmoil an issue, one newspaper writes that the culprits will be known only after the police investigation. What has been happening is very bad and no amount of condemnation is less. This fire would not have happened if police were present over there. The newspaper also writes that the police was not present for three hours of the murder. As a result, the people got a chance to go unruly and to set the shops ablaze”. (‘Let Mercy on Punjab Now,’ editorial, Rojana Ajit, 21 May 1984)¹⁴⁴

In conclusion, Rojana Ajit looked completely annoyed as Government remains to fail to control the mob and attacked over them. The newspaper in which manner is stressing

more over erupted violence against a high profile murder creates doubt over it. The mediated sphere due to the fraction and ideologically gaps looked completely de-shaped where a major murder became a place of politics and instead of discussing pain

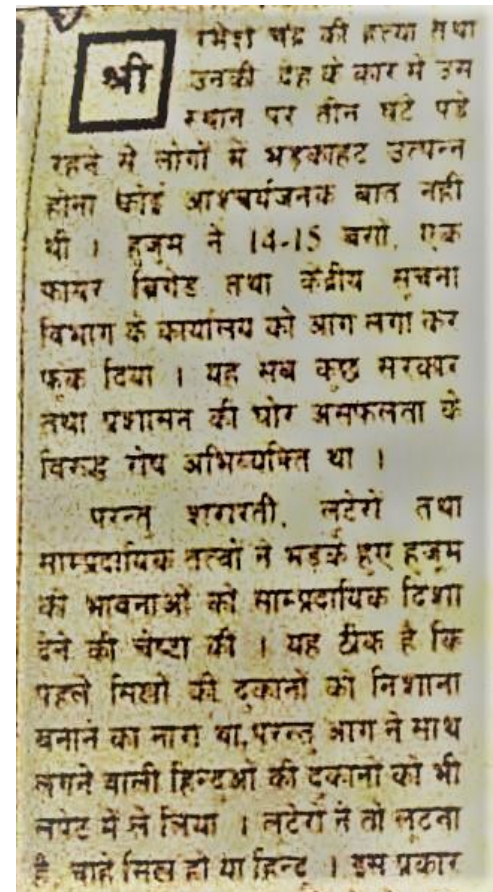
¹⁴³Punjab Kesri in remorse and grief has put the administration under fire even for not responding on time for their call to fix up the time of cremation. “On 13 May morning, I arrived at Delhi from Bombay and from there I reached to Jullundur. When I reached home, all the members, relatives and friends were eagerly waiting so that decisions on the last rites of Romesh je could be decided. It was not right to keep body of Romesh je at home for long. Our family members and friends of Romesh je were continuing in touch with administration but nothing was final. At 10.30 when I reached home, under guidance of Dr. Baldev Parkash, friends and family members were trying to contact IGP Punjab, DC and SSP Jullundur and but in vain.” (‘These New Cremation Grounds’, Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 27 May, 1984).

¹⁴⁴English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial ‘Hun tan Punjab ute reham farmao’, published on 21 May, 1984.

and problem of communities; it centralizes itself on a single community with whom its owner belongs.

Punjab Kesri, on the other hand, sees the violence essentially because of failure on the part of the administration. In an editorial written on 20 May 1984, it recollects that the body of their chief editor remained in the car unattended for three hours, which made the mob go out of control. The anger was particularly directed at the Government, though it admits that looters and anti-social elements to have taken advantage of the situation. It also recollected that though there was a mob cry to burn the shops of the Sikhs, the fire burned Hindus shops too; and the looters did not discriminate between the Hindus and Sikhs. The newspapers explain the story:

“The fact that Shri Romesh Chander’s body remained for three hours in the car was enough to make mob go out of control and it was not surprising. The mob burnt 14 to 15 buses, a Fire Brigade vehicle and burnt central information office. It was all against the failure of the Government and the sentiments were against the administration. However, the looters and fundamental elements have given the emotions of an angry mob a communal colour. It is true. First, there was a call from the mob to burn the shops of Sikhs, but the same fire also has caught the shops of Hindus too. The aim of looter is to loot, whether Hindu or Sikh. During the curfew, more shops burnt in different parts of the city. As a result, the shopkeepers, both Hindus and Sikhs, began to shift goods from the shops to their respective houses. (‘The Incident in Jullundur on 12 May is due to the failure of Government and Administration’, editorial, Punjab Kesri, 20 May 1984)¹⁴⁵



¹⁴⁵English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri article ‘Jullundur mein 12 May ke garbar Sarkar parshashan ke asafita ka parinam’, published on 20 May, 1984.

Here the newspaper writes against the attempts to give it a communal colour to the incident. It writes that the Punjab Kesri, on the other hand, continues to register its protest in the alleged attempt to give the mob violence a communal colour. It condemns other newspapers:

“In this situation, it is wrong to give it to a communal colour. It should be our common demand that the looters and the culprits should be arrested and should be dealt with severe measures. The burnt shops should be given the right appropriate compensation. In this situation, it is inappropriate or the part of the city Akali Dal to call for a bandh on 16th May, only to give it to a communal colour.... If Hindus and Sikhs brethren’s work together to help the shopkeepers at the receiving end, the communal environment would decline”. (Ibid)

Punjab Kesri expressed its anger over the administration’s role after the murder of its editor Romesh Chandra. The base of the anger of the newspaper was non-



cooperation of the administration after the murder instance with the newspaper. In an argument, the newspaper writes that one the one side; the murderer is roaming free in the region while the public is facing Irene of the terrorists. The editorial writers:



“After post-mortem, we received the dead body of Romesh jig and then we wanted to cremate the body with all rituals and due respects. We requested the administration to relax the curfew for two to three hours so that we can give a proper last journey to the departed soul and a fitting funeral. However, the administration did not allow this and we decided to cremate the body in the Hind Samachar Ground without a procession, as we did not want to create a problem for the administration. It was also shocking that police did not allow people to come to Hind Samachar Ground for attending the cremation. Not even least relaxation was conceded by the administration...Thousands of brothers and sisters

shed their tears indoors". ('Last Journey,' editorial, Punjab Kesri, 20 May 1984)¹⁴⁶

The newspaper also complained that the situation remained unchanged for the Bhog ceremony too. It writes further:

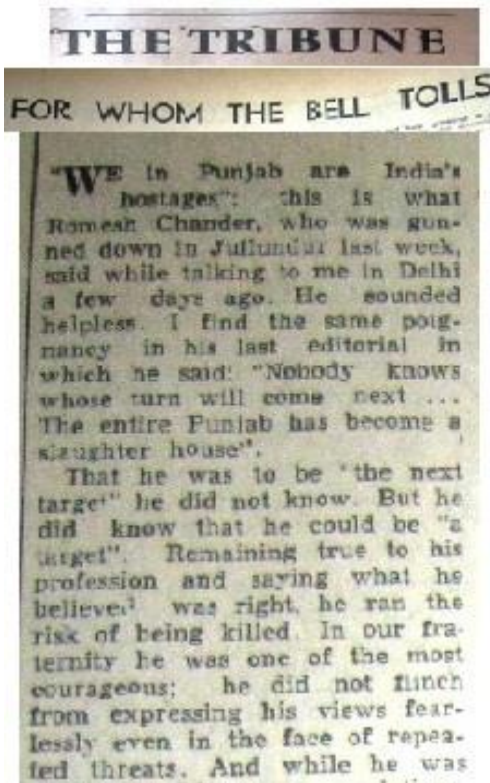
"On his Bhog program, the state did not relax curfew and people had to remain in their houses. Therefore, with the small gathering at the cremation ground, we collected the mortal remains in an urn. The plan was to carry the urn of Romesh Ji's mortal remains from Jullundur in Haridwar. We requested permission of the administration so that people remained absent from the cremation; ceremony can take part in it.... They assured us that they would think about this issue with humanity, but on that day, there was not any relaxation in the curfew. The administration thought from their point of view and people missed the chance to join the final journey of their revered partner in good and bad times" (Ibid).

In conclusion, Punjab Kesri looked much aggressive over the death and as well as the treatment is given by the administration by not allowing relaxing in curfew. The newspaper did not hide its stand and soft corner for the Hindus who were at the receiving end to face violence in the state. Punjab Kesri also tried to use the murder of its editor to settle the score and advance their ideological and communitarian positions they have already taken. The verbal war unleashed around the violence and looting after the murder made the murder and the real issues irrelevant and foregrounded the communal feelings over the issue.

The Tribune on 18 May 1984 published an article written by the prominent journalist Kuldip Nayar entitled 'For Whom the Bell Tolls', which captures the prevailing situation in Punjab as illustrated by the killing of Romesh Chander. Describing Romesh

¹⁴⁶English translation from Hindi newspaper Punjab Kesri editorial '*Antim Yatra*', published on 20 May, 1984.

ji as one of the most courageous journalists, Nayar expresses his concern for Punjab becoming nothing short of a slaughterhouse.



“We in Punjab are India’s hostages.” This is what Romesh Chander, who was gun down in Jullundur last week, said while talking to me in Delhi a few days ago. He sounded helpless. I find the same poignancy in his last editorial in which he said: “nobody knows whose turn will come next.... Entire Punjab has become a slaughterhouse... That he was to be the next target, he did not know, but he did know that he could be a target. Remaining true to his profession and saying what he believes was right, he ran the risk of being killed. In our fraternity, he was one of the most courageous; he did not flinch from expressing his views fearlessly even in the face of repeated threats”. (‘For Whom the Bell Tolls’, article, The Tribune, 18 May 1984)¹⁴⁷

Nayar indicates to the reason that possibly led to the killing of Chander as he had been working towards a settlement between Akali Dal and the Government of India, which might have angered the militants who apparently did not want to buy a negotiated peace within the framework of the Indian nation. He also cautions the central Government the growing feeling of antipathy against it as it is unable to protect innocent people.

“I know that Romesh Chander had supported the genuine demands of the Akalis Dal and in Delhi (through press meeting) he had appealed to the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and the Home Minister arrive at a settlement with the Akalis. Maybe, the terrorists struck as they had done in the past-because the air was once again thick with reports of conciliatory gesture from the Government as well as Akalis.... Besides the police, the murder of Romesh has lessons for the Congress (I). If it had any electoral advantage in view, it has disappeared because of the feeling that Mrs. Gandhi’s Government does not work. Anger is mounting-more against the administration than against the terrorists! The opposition parties which have been inactive since the breakdown of the tripartite talks have left only a few supporters in Punjab because since they have not been successful in producing tangible results.... There is also a lesson

¹⁴⁷Original article published in English newspaper The Tribune ‘For whom the bell tolls’ published on 18 May, 1984.

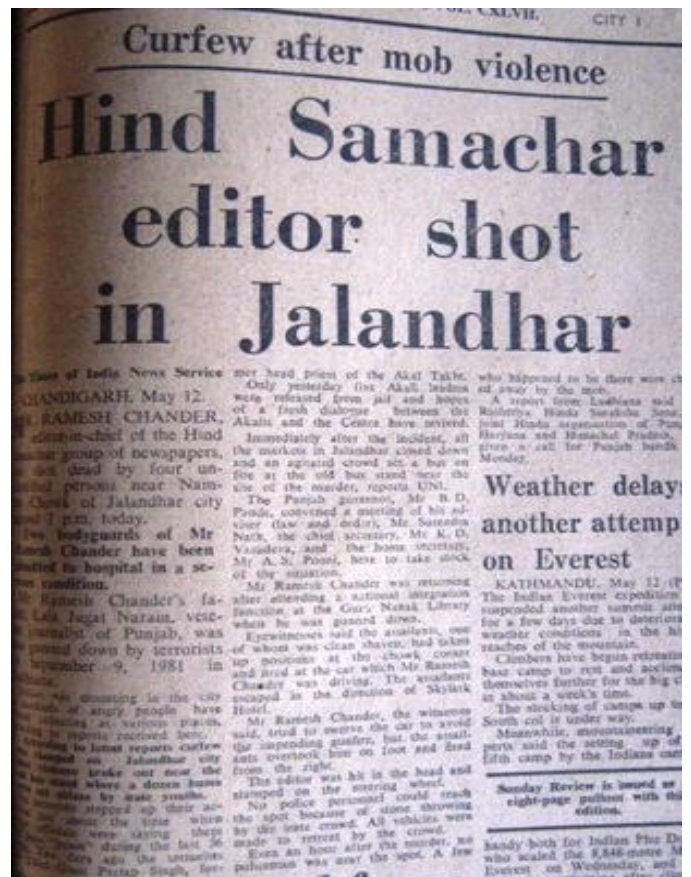
for the moderate Akalis leaders. They have seldom shown sufficient boldness and have preferred to make a compromise with extremists". (Ibid)

In conclusion, The Tribune suggest all the concerned that the situation is grave and concerted effort is needed to crack a lasting solution. The voice has been much conciliatory than that of the Tribune editorial itself, which cautioned the Government that the incident should not divert it from its ongoing attempts of finding solutions through negotiation (Bassi 2012).

3.5.2 Print Media of New Delhi

The newspaper carries the news of the murder of Chief Editor of Punjab Kesri and Hind Samachar Group, Romesh Chander on the top front page to narrate the story of murder and violence. The newspaper describes the history of the previous murder of its owner and chief Editor who was also gunned down by the militants. The newspaper narrates the story:

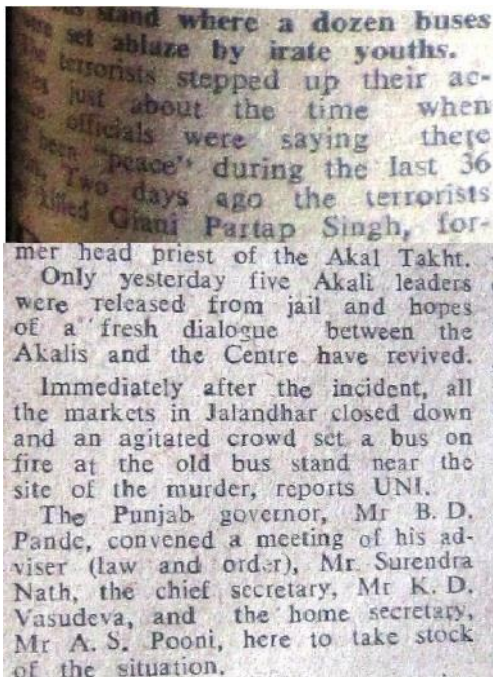
"Mr. Ramesh Chander, editor-in-chief of the Hind Samachar Group of newspapers, was shot dead by four unidentified persons near Namdev Chowk of Jullundur city around 7 pm today. Two bodyguards of Mr. Ramesh Chander have been admitted to hospital in a serious condition. Ramesh Chander's father, Jagat Narain, veteran journalist of Punjab, was also gunned down by the terrorists on September 9, 1981 in Ludhiana. The tension was mounting in the city and hundreds of angry people have



been collecting at various places, according to reports received here. According to latest reports curfew was clamped on Jullundur city after violence broke out near the old bus stand where a dozen buses were set ablaze by irate youths". (Hind Samachar editor shot in Jullundur, news, The Times of India, 13 May 1984)¹⁴⁸

The newspaper further explains the activities of the militants and its relation with the Akali leaders who, freed from jail a few days ago when the incident re-continued in the state. The newspaper positively sees the release to bring peace back in the state, but militants again became active in the state and started murdering. The newspaper

further pointed out the activity of the administration of the government after the high profile murder of a Chief.

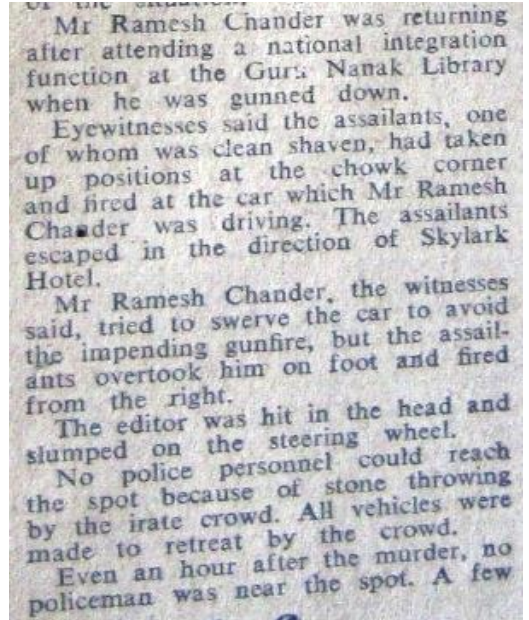


"The terrorists stepped up their actions just about the time when senior officials were saying there has been peace during the last 36 hours. Two days ago, the terrorists also killed Giani Pratap Singh, former head priest of the Akal Takhat. Only yesterday, five Akali leaders were released from jail and hopes of a fresh dialogue between the Akalis and the Centre have revived. The Punjab Governor, Mr. B.D. Pande, convened a meeting of his advisor (law and order), Mr. Surendra Nath, the chief secretary, Mr. K.D. Vasudeva, and the home secretary, Mr. A.S. Pooni, here to take stock of the situation". (Ibid)

The newspaper narrates the complete story of the incident through an eyewitness account who has seen the whole incident when Romesh Chander was assassinated. The live narrative of a fight to save life shows the apathy of the system that how people from the general and specific field are getting killed in the state mercilessly.

¹⁴⁸Original news published in English newspaper The Times of india 'Curfew after mob violence, Hind Samachar editor shot in Jullundur', on 13 May, 1984.

“Mr. Ramesh Chander was returning after attending a national integration function at the Guru Nanak Library when he was gunned down. An eyewitness said the assailants, one of whom was clean-shaven, had taken up positions at the Chowk corner and fired at the car, which Mr. Ramesh Chander was driving. The assailants escaped in the direction of Skylark Hotel. Mr. Ramesh Chander, the witness said, tried to swerve the car to avoid the impending gunfire, but the assailants overtook him on foot and fired from the right. The editor was hit in the head and slumped on the steering wheel. No police personnel could reach the spot because of stone throwing by the irate crowd. All vehicles were made to retreat by the crowd. Even an hour after the murder, no policeman was near the spot”. (Ibid)



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In conclusion, The Time of India narrates the incident in a detailed manner through an eyewitness account. The newspaper though saved itself from making any kind of comment or partaker in the issue, but the front-page establishment of the news in a detailed manner shows the impact of the incident at the national level.

3.6 Representation of Print Media after the Operation Bluestar

Due to the Operation Bluestar, there were 14 days long forcefully media break in Punjab on the orders of Congress-led Central Government. The national and foreign journalist were carried out by buses to other states from Punjab, as there was a media blackout before the army operation. The long media blackout throughout the Punjab state resulted in widespread doubts and unofficial stories along with the promotion of rumours. The action arguably was taken to domesticate and silence the unflavoured press. The ideological stand of Rojana Ajit adopted before pre-Operation Bluestar has seen a significant change in the writings through editorials, which has toned down; either due to statist repression or the aftermath crisis in the state. The newspaper, which sympathizes with the statist positions on the issue, on the other hand, has travelled

extra miles to justify the army action in the golden temple, which proved a major military miscalculation considering the casualties of both the soldiers and the civilians.

3.6.1 Print Media of Punjab

Responding to the allegation of Punjab Kesri that it is promoting communitarian sentiments, Rojana Ajit shot back by alleging that “the opposite press speaks against the Sikh community in favour of Hind Government and has been a loudspeaker of government cell.” However, *Ajit’s* editorial after the Operation Bluestar carries a feeling of helplessness though it did protest against the “painful” incident and its editor surrendered the honour of Padam Shri. In another article, he has written:



“What occurred in the Durbar Sahib Complex is an incident which would always be remembered in history. Whoever is faulty and whatever the situation under which it happened and whatever occurred, the incident would give pain to not only the Sikhs but also every wise man in the society. After the ban, when Ajit started rolling on the first day, we printed design on the 1st and 3rd page without printing anything else on those pages, which reflects our sorrow over the sad incident. On the second day, some of our friends in the profession expressed their disagreement with it. However, it was just an expression of our painful heart, it has nothing to do with the agitation, and it is not a reflection of our agitated mind either. I do not wish to offer any reply to those who disagreed with what we did. In deep pain, if this sad incident, I returned my honour Padam Shri”. (‘What is the benefit of such discussion? Sorrow over incidents occurred in Durbar Sahib’, editorial, Rojana Ajit, 21

June 1984)¹⁴⁹

The editorial also indirectly endorses the Governmental position of the ‘sad’ incident when it subscribes to the emotional speech of the President of India and

¹⁴⁹English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial ‘Hun iss tareh di behas da ke labh, Darbar sahib samouh wich vapriyan ghatnavan da dukh’, published on 21 June, 1984.

suggests that he is with deep sorrow and is filled with mourns over the incident. He started his speech with these words:

“Question arises that what Giani Je asked in his lecture? He has started his lecture, my fellow countrymen! I am addressing you at this time with my heart full of sorrow and agony.” His words show that whoever is responsible and whatever occurred at Durbar Sahib, his heart is filled with mourns and pains. He was not speaking as a Sikh but as the President of India”. (Ibid)

Rojana Ajit also expresses its concern about the poor message the state of things at a golden temple in the aftermath of the operation can send to rural Punjab.

“According to the PTI news, 120 villages Panchayat Members from different parts of Punjab has gone to Durbar Sahib for Darshan. They were together in Chandigarh and then reached Amritsar by plane. After seeing Durbar Sahib in the present form what thoughts would have crossed their mind and what impression they will give to their respective villages. It is a wish and prayer of each Sikh heart that they do Darshan and bath at Durbar Sahib without any restriction and control. In this regard, Singh Sahib Gyani Kripal Singh was asked that efforts are doing for this”. (“Wish,” editorial Note, Rojana Ajit, 21 June 1984)¹⁵⁰

Its voice becomes so conciliatory when the newspaper admits that the issue has become complex and everyone should deal the same with care. It clearly indicates that how discussions and debates without restraint and maturity can bring more harm:

¹⁵⁰English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial note, ‘Tamanna’ published on 21 June, 1984.

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਮਸਲਾ ਹੋਰ ਗੁੰਝਲਦਾਰ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ

ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦਾ ਮਸਲਾ ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਤਨਾ ਗੁੰਝਲਦਾਰ ਬਣ ਚੁਕਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਲਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਹਰ ਧਿਰ ਨੂੰ ਬੜੀ ਸਾਵਧਾਨੀ ਨਾਲ ਚਲਣਾ ਪੈਣਾ ਹੈ। ਹਾਲਤ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਕੋਈ ਕਦਮ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਸੰਸਥਾ ਵਲੋਂ ਉਠਾਇਆ ਜਾਵੇ, ਉਸ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਤਿਖੀ ਅਲੋਚਨਾ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਅਲੋਚਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੰਗ

“Issue of Punjab is more complex now that to solve this everyone has to take care more. The situation has become such that whenever a person or group took a step, at the same time that step and person came under fire of criticism”. (‘Issue of Punjab is more complex,’ article, Rojana Ajit, 28 June 1984)¹⁵¹

In contrast, writing more than a month after the Operation Bluestar, Rojana Ajit felt that the withdrawal of the army from the golden temple premises is necessary for getting things back to normalcy in Punjab. It lambasts at the editor of The Tribune who suggested the opposite and whom it doubts advising the central government in the same line. The newspaper, without directly targeting the central government takes a safe route of

ਗਲਤ ਗੱਲਾਂ ਕਰਨੀਆਂ—ਖਤਰਨਾਕ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਾਟੀਆ ਉੱਤੇ ਮਾਰਕਸਵਾਦੀ ਚਿੰਤੀ ਅਲੋਚਨਾ
ਸਪੱਸ਼ਟ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਾਟੀਆ ਅੱਜ ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਇਤਨਾ ਘੱਟ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ ਵੱਧ। ਉਹ ਅੱਜ ਕੱਲ੍ਹ ਇਤਨੀਆਂ ‘ਨਕ ਸਲਾਹਕਾਰ’ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਲਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਖਰੀਦਣ ਉੱਚ ਬਦਲੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ

attacking the editor of another newspaper for misguiding the government.

“It looks like that Shri Prem Bhatia, now a day is lesser a correspondent and more an advisor. He is someone who is giving positive advice to the Prime Minister and her government, in lieu of which he can get one seat or not we cannot say anything about this. Shri Prem Bhatia wrote regular editorials on the issues of Punjab and Kashmir. In these articles, he did not leave any chance of praising Smt. Gandhi in all possible manner. He also apparently gave some suggestions on the Punjab problem too.... From all sides, the demand is gaining ground that the army should quit from the Hari Mandir Sahib and all the management of the Golden Temple should be transferred to the SGPC. However, on this issue of the management of Shri Hari Mandir Sahib, Shri Bhatia has given wrong advice. We feel that if the government moves according to this advice, definitely the position will be worsened”. (‘Wrong Talking Are Dangerous,’ Editorial, Rojana Ajit, 11 July 1984)¹⁵²

ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਅਹੁਦਾ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਕੁੱਝ ਕਹਿ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਕਦੇ। ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਭਾਟੀਆ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਤੇ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਦੇ ਮਸਲੇ ਦੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਲੜੀਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਸੰਪਾਦਕੀ ਲਿਖੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਇੰਦਰਾ ਗਾਂਧੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿਫਤਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੁਲ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਣ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੋਈ ਕਸਰ ਬਾਕੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਛੱਡੀ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਮਸਲੇ ਦੇ ਹੱਲ ਲਈ ਕੁੱਝ ਸੁਝਾਅ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਕੁੱਝ ਅਨੁਮਾਨ ਵੀ ਲਾਏ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਕੁੱਝ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

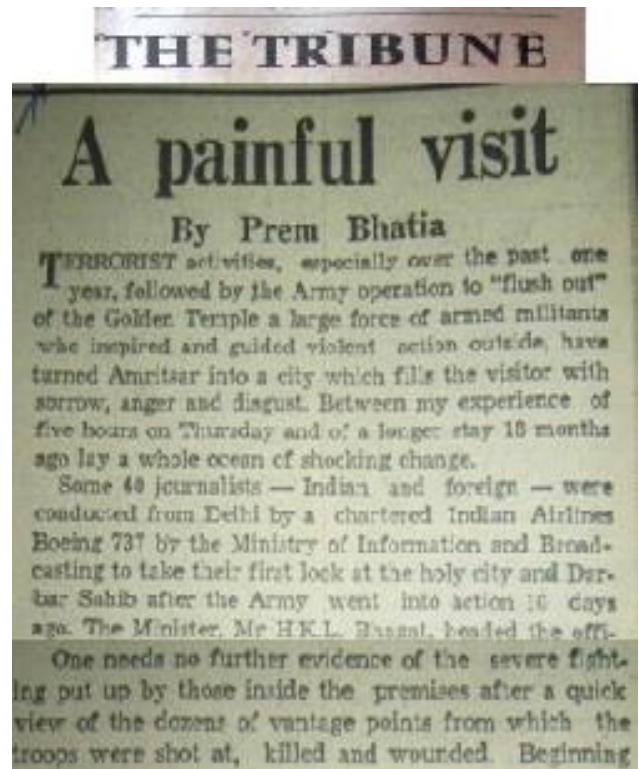
‘ਸਾਰੇ ਹੀ ਪਾਸਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਇਹ ਮੰਗ ਉੱਚੀ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਫੌਜਾਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੰਪਲੈਕਸ ਵਿਚ ਹਟਾਈਆਂ ਜਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਾਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਸ਼੍ਰੀਮਟੀ ਗੋਮਟੀ ਦੇ ਹਵਾਲੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਵੇ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਭਾਟੀਆ ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਦੇ ਸਬੰਧ ਵਿਚ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਗਲਤ ਸੁਝਾਅ ਦੇਣ ਤੱਕ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸੁਝਾਵਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਅੱਗੇ ਵਧਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੀ ਰਾਏ ਵਿਚ ਹਾਲਾਤ ਹੋਰ ਵਿਗੜਨਗੇ।’

¹⁵¹English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial, ‘Punjajb da masla hor gunjaldar ho gaya hai’, published on 28 June, 1984.
¹⁵²English translation from Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit editorial, ‘Galat gallan karniyan khatarnak’ published on 11 July, 1984.

In conclusion, Rojana Ajit had adapted tough attitude and language with more aggressive positions against the 'Hind Government' and the newspapers of Punjab for being state's supporters. But probably the damage occurred during the fight between the army and militants during Operation Bluestar, the aftermath situation of Akal Takhat pressurized them for being on the softer stand. Therefore, it called for greater cooperation between the communities and recommended collective work to renovate the damaged Durbar Sahib.

The Tribune right from the beginning of its re-publication after Operation Bluestar spoke quite emboldened and did not hesitate to turn aggressive in its language. The editorial written on 16 June, the day on which it resumed publication in Punjab, Prem Bhatia, its editor, articulated the Government's positions well in an attempt to drive the point home that the military action was inevitable due to the terrorist activities. As part of a delegation of journalists visited Amritsar, under the government sponsorship, Prem Bhatia was more than convinced that the military action was to flush out "a large force of armed militants' who "inspired and guided" violence and turned the holy city of Amritsar a pitiable place."

"Terrorist activities, especially over the past one year, followed by the army operation to flush out of the Golden Temple a large force of armed militants who inspired and guided violent action outside have turned Amritsar into a city which fills the visitor with sorrow, anger and disgust. Some 40 journalists Indian and foreign, were conducted from Delhi by a chartered Indian Airlines Boeing 747 by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to take their first look at the holy city and Durbar Sahib after the army went into



action 10 days ago.... One need no further evidence of the severe fighting put up by those inside the premises after a quick view of dozens of vantage points from which the troops were shot at, killed and wounded". ('A Painful Visit,' Editorial, The Tribune, 16 June 1984)

In another significant article entitled 'Punjab: The Inside Story' published on 19 June was written by scholar Inder Jit. The details of Bhindranwale secessionist and anti-national plans were described in it. The editorial was convinced that the sources of information to the government were authentic and plan of the militant leader was to create a separate Sikh state with the intention of repeating 1947 in which the Hindus would be driven out of Punjab on the one hand and bring Sikhs elsewhere in India back home on the other.

PUNJAB: THE INSIDE STORY
INFORMATION is now available from authoritative sources in regard to the circumstances that ultimately compelled the Government to call the Army in to assist the civil authority in Punjab. Topmost among the factors that weighed with the Government was the "authentic knowledge" it had of a diabolical plan carefully hatched by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to achieve his secessionist and antinational goal of carving out a separate Sikh State. He wanted his followers to repeat 1947 and the monstrous carnage to drive Hindus out of Punjab and bring Sikhs into the State from elsewhere in India.

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The article indicates that meticulous planning has gone in from the side of Bhindranwale and his group in order to materialize his subversive intentions. The militant leader was said to be confident that the army would not be entering the holy shrine and at best was expecting only police or paramilitary raid. It also tells the readers that Delhi has taken pains to avoid the bloody confrontation and the decision taken with reluctance as all efforts to avoid the same have failed.

“The plan was to be put through on a signal from Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Here, too, the militant Sikh leader is said to have done a lot of calculating, planning which, however, went wrong and proved to be his undoing. Sant Jarnail Singh reckoned without Delhi and Mrs. Gandhi a capacity to take the hardest of decisions and call the army in. He thought Mrs. Gandhi should only use the ordinary police or at best, the paramilitary forces—the BSF and CRPF. The Centre, he was confident, would not use the Army and that the security forces would never be sent into Hari Mandir Sahib. He also believed that Delhi would have the police first laid siege to the Golden Temple and eventually enter the holy precincts”. (Ibid)

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The editorial of The Tribune on 21 July criticizes the leaders for bringing people on the verge of majority and minority. Giving the examples of the British era, the editorial criticized the role of all parties, which troubled the people in Punjab. The editorial went ahead and criticized the leaders, that their lust for power on the division of people is making the situation worst. The editorial writes:

“It is unfortunate that 37 years after independence, we Indians should still be thinking in terms of the majority and minorities. However, the entire credit for that should go to politicians. They never tire of saying that the British adopted policy of divide and rule to

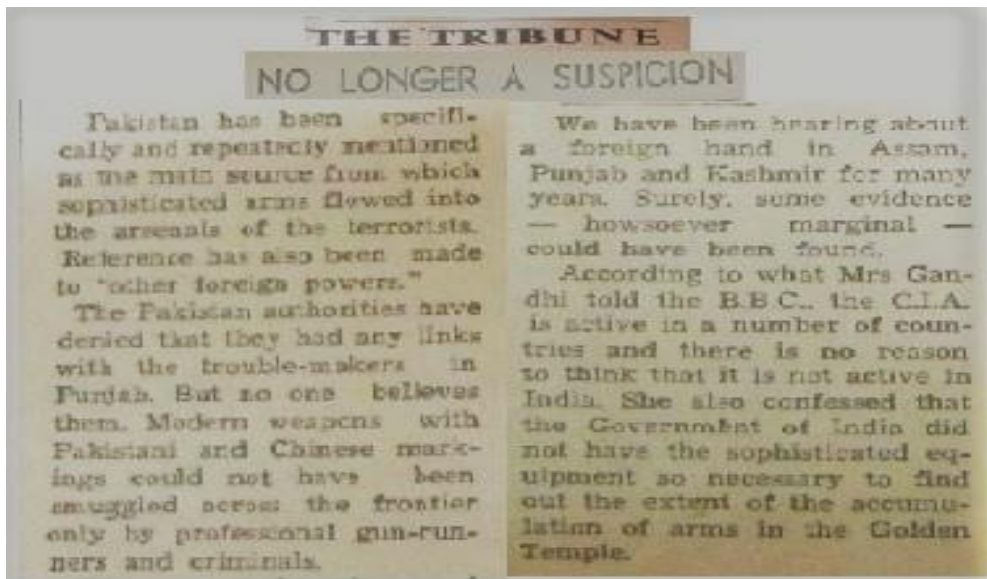
MINORITY FEARS

IT is unfortunate that 37 years after Independence we Indians should still be thinking in terms of the majority community and minorities. But the entire credit for that should go to politicians. They never tire of saying that the British adopted a policy of divide-and-rule to hold on to India. But is the policy adopted by our own rulers any different? All that politicians in Independent India have been interested in is office, and to stay in power they have played one community against another. As long as the Congress (I) was certain that the minorities would not vote for any other party, it projected itself as their champion. But lately, in an undisguised attempt to monopolise Hindu votes, it has been going out of its way to alienate the minorities. It

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The Tribune also published articles, which supports the foreign hand theory- particularly that of Pakistan. For instance, the article written on 25 June by K.R Sunder Rajan has concluded that militants received the arms from Pakistan and China. The article also finds an active role of the CIA in the whole militancy.



"Pakistan has been specifically and repeatedly mentioned as the main source from which sophisticated arms flowed into the arsenals of the terrorists. Reference has also been made to other foreign powers. The Pakistan authority has denied that they had any links with the troublemakers in Punjab. But no one believes them. Modern weapons with Pakistani and Chinese markings could not have been smuggled across the frontier only by professional gunrunners and criminals.... We have been hearing about a foreign hand in Assam, Punjab and Kashmir for many years. Surely, some evidence - howsoever marginal could have been found. According to what Mrs. Gandhi told the BBC, the CIA is active in a number of countries and there is no reason to think that it is not active in India. She also confessed that the Government of India did not have the sophisticated equipment so necessary to find out the extent of the accumulation of arms in the Golden Temple". ('No Longer a Suspicion,' Article, The Tribune, 25 June 1984)

In conclusion, The Tribune, with its nationalist credentials at best, fully endorses the enforced governmental action as all other options apparently dried out. It also called the true Sikhs to get unsympathetic to the cause of militancy and preached the

imperative of being truly national and secular. The newspaper has also seen the foreign hand behind the conflict backing by foreign agents. It is a significant aspect needed to be closely studied the role of press before and after Operation Bluestar where media silence presented a different character which once had been known for diverse reporting.

Punjab Kesri found the army action praiseworthy and a necessary step for ensuring communal harmony in the state. Its editorial on 17 June describes the situation in Punjab continues to be grim and in fear of a militant backlash advocates the need for the army to stay back. It sees possibilities of militants scattered after the military operations regrouping themselves for a further strike on the people. Citing Press Trust of India (PTI) news, it also emphasizes the ‘foreign hand’ angle when it said that the militants who fled received a warm welcome in Pakistan:

“To make situation normal and make communal harmony stronger, the steps taken by the administration and the army are ultimately very welcome without any doubt and praiseworthy too and the people of Punjab are feeling relieved. Relaying of kirtan from Shri Hari Mandir Sahib and as well as Durbar Sahib of Taran Taran Sahib has started and they are now open for devoting. Apart from this, day curfew in Punjab has been taken off from most of the Punjab, printing of newspapers resumed..... When the situation becomes normalized, we are happy about it, but we should not forget that still there is a need to keep more vigil and alert under the compelling conditions in the state. There are reports that still a few groups are waiting for a chance to strike and they are silent for the time being just because of the army. The news was given by Press Trust of India that a few shady people crossed the border and reached Pakistan where they all are welcomed very warmly. Pakistan Radio and Television are in full swing



to add fuel to the fire. With them, the BBC London has also put oil on the fire by relaying an interview of Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan type people”.¹⁵³ ('Still Need More Alert', Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 17 June 1984)¹⁵⁴

The Punjab Kesri criticized the demand for withdrawing the army from the Golden Temple and from Punjab, it also often cited Major-General Brar's statement that situation is not threat free as 'terrorists' are still active in small groups across the state. The life of even the Granthi's of Golden Temple and Akal Takhat are under threat forcing the army to give them a security cover.¹⁵⁵ It confronts the Akali leaders who demanded for the withdrawal of army by citing the statement of the army and the Home Minister that the army won't stay even a single extra day in Punjab if its presence is not

needed for upholding the peace.¹⁵⁶ The Punjab Kesri writes:



“SGPC has not fulfilled its responsibilities to maintain the work of the Guru's home. The government does not only mention this but also the voice of the opposition parties too. If SGPC responsibly would have payed off the duties, then it was not possible for Bhindranwale to succeed in control of Akal Takhat. The sad incident occurred in Punjab that would not have happened and the need

¹⁵³Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan was the founder of the Khalistan movement that sought to create an independent Sikh state. Chauhan, a Sikh Jaat from the Chauhan clan, grew up in Tanda in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district. A medical practitioner, Dr. Chauhan first elected to the Punjab Assembly from the Tanda as a candidate of the Republican Party of India in 1967. He became Deputy Speaker when the Akali Dal led coalition Government took office in Punjab and he became Finance Minister. In 1969, after losing Assembly elections, he moved to United Kingdom in 1971 and same year he went to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan to try to set up Sikh Government. Then he visited to USA to meet with supporters. In October 1971, he placed an advertisement in the New York Times proclaiming an Independent Sikh state. In 1977, he returned to India and then migrated to Britain in 1979. In London, Chauhan established an organization "Khalistan National Council". He also came in contact with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and with many other organizations in Canada, the USA and Germany. He declared himself president of the "Republic of Khalistan", issued Khalistan passports, postage stamps and Khalistan dollars. He died in April 2007 at his native village Tanda in Hoshiarpur. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jagjit_Singh_Chauhan. (Accessed on 19 June, 2017)

¹⁵⁴Original published in Hindi Newspaper Punjab Kesri 'Abhi aur savdhani ke jaroorat hai', on 17 June, 1984.

¹⁵⁵'Still Need of More Alert', Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 17 July, 1984.

¹⁵⁶The situation in Punjab is becoming normal and many leaders and think tanks of the society are demanding to call off the army. Today two retired army officers Lt. Gen Arora and Lt. Gen Sinha demanded to call back the army. In this context army officers said that without any need, army will not stay an extra day in Punjab and also Home Minister Mr. P.C Sethi promised this that army will not have spent a single day in Punjab without a reason. 'To Akali Leader', Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 15 July, 1984.

for white paper which Centre Government issued on Operation would not have arisen". ('To Akali Leaders', Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 15 July 1984)¹⁵⁷

Punjab Kesri continued its frontal attack on Akali leadership for its double game during Militancy. It alleges that the same Akali branded Bhindranwale as a stooge of the Congress, later allowed him to make the golden temple his safe shelter. Once the recalcitrant militant went out of control, the Akali leadership under Sant Longowal agitated against his presence in vain. It narrates further:

“Akali leadership insistently proclaimed that Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale is the Indira Congressman. Romesh Ji repeatedly wrote if this is really so, then why Akalis have given shelter to Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in Durbar Sahib and why were they helping him and followed him blindly. They themselves became a puppet in his hands, then why are blaming Indira Congress. However, Akalis were not having an answer to these questions. Sant Longowal raised a strong protest against the presence of Bhindranwale in Durbar Sahib and threatened self-immolation on this issue but these things had no effect on Akali leadership”. ('To Akali Leadership,' Editorial, Punjab Kesri, 15 July 1984)¹⁵⁸



The newspaper also criticizes the decision of Akali Dal to send Shaeedi Jathas in an attempt to force the Government of India to withdraw the army from the state in general and from the golden temple in particular. Punjab Kesri felt that such pressure tactics would only worsen the situation, as it is not advisable for the army to recede without completing their mission. Instead, such explosive debates, it felt that the time is

¹⁵⁷Original published in Hindi Newspaper Punjab Kesri 'Abhi aur savdhani ke jaroorat hai', on 15 July, 1984.

¹⁵⁸Ibid, 15 July, 1984.

ripe for constructive work of bridging the healing the Community relationship by promoting united Karseva of both Hindus and Sikhs to renovate the damaged golden



temple.

“Prime Minister took this ultimatum of Akali Dal seriously to send Martyr groups by doing this; Akalis have not shown the intelligence to understand the becoming situations and act sensibly. During normalization of the situation, security forces throughout Punjab have taken the actions, until now the arms are being recovered. The Government cannot allow in any condition to repeat the earlier history.... Although Akali leaders do not like to listen to us, yet we would like to tell them for their own and state benefit that they should act judiciously and do not commit such an act, which may become a hurdle in the path of normalizing the situations. After immediate shunning of the present program of sending Shaeedi Jathas, they should cooperate in producing such situations, which may help in starting Karseva in Golden Temple. The Hindus and Sikhs, if come unitedly, may normalize the conditions of Punjab and once again Punjab can propel on the path of progress. If any type of political advantage

they want to have from these incidents, even, then to do this is wrong because history cannot be washed away by this serial incident”. (Ibid)

In short, Punjab Kesri continued to be antagonistic towards the Akalis, though it at times calls for reconciliation and joint Karseva to renovate the golden temple. It was arguing for the extension of military presence in the shrine and in Punjab as it was fearful of re-grouping of militants and counter-strike alongside finding adequate justification for the Governmental action.

3.6.2 Print Media of New Delhi

The Times of India after Operation Bluestar kept a tab over the Punjab situation. The newspaper carries the variety of news and reflects the mood of print media fraternity sitting in New Delhi. It includes the news of killing and arrest of terrorists, the

new adoption of the word to address violent people, which previously was extremists. The series of articles and editorials written over the tense situation, mistakes and further need of the army to control the situation were published with preference. The newspaper changed its soft discourse about the Punjab situation and adopted hard dialect to write over violence. The newspaper writes:

“Four persons were killed and one seriously injured in different incidents in Punjab while security forces apprehended 78 more suspected terrorists and seized arms and ammunition at various places in the state in the last 24 hours. One person was shot by some unidentified persons at Kalanaur in Gurdaspur district yesterday. The assailants escaped. A retired lane naik, Surjit Singh threw hand grenades and fired shots, killing two persons in Swadi Kalan village in Ludhiana district last night. Surjit Singh and his two relatives were arrested while the Fourth accused escaped. The weapons used by the five assailants were also recovered.... Security forces recovered one country-made pistol, one hand grenade, 31 assorted empty cases and 394 rounds from the Golden Temple Complex during the last 24 hours. One country made rifle was also recovered from a religious place in Amritsar district”. (78 terrorists held, news, The Time of India, 30 June 1984)¹⁵⁹



The Times of India also brought the neighbouring nation, Pakistan under suspicion lens. Though the Pakistan administration and political line were denying any kind of support and statement in relation to Punjab, the newspaper brought statements

¹⁵⁹Original news published in English newspaper The Times of India '4 killed in Punjab, 78 terrorists held', on 30 June, 1984.

of their ministers who profoundly delivered speeches over the issue while criticizing the role of Indian Government and army action to flush extremists from the Golden Temple premises. The newspaper with the information brought Pakistan in suspicion as intelligence agencies too named Pakistan for support for the cause of forming Khalistan. The Times of India describes:



“While the Pakistani President, Gen Zia ul-Haq, has denied that his Government was assisting the extremists in Punjab, statements by his ministers and the propaganda, by the official’s media in Pakistan prove the General wrong. If the various statements made by the Pakistani ministers in the context of the Punjab situation were to be read even cursorily, the official denial of involvement in the internal affairs of India would be found to be meaningless. Take for example the Pakistan Defense minister, Mir Ali Ahmad Talpur’s statement in Lahore on June 26. He said what had happened now in the Indian Punjab was more than what happened in the Jalianwala Bagh massacre. He said Mrs. Gandhi could not

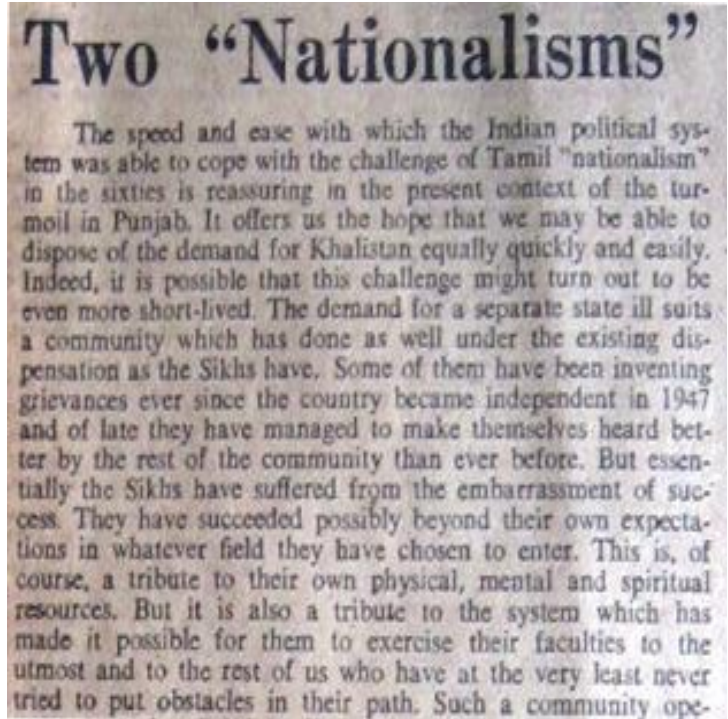
wash away the bloodstains by praying in the Golden Temple. The Pakistani defense minister said he had sympathy with the Sikhs at a personal level. “It is against civilized behaviour to destroy the shrine to flush out extremists.” (Pak propaganda proves Zia wrong, news, The Times of India, 1 July 1984)¹⁶⁰

There was a question mark over the span of the nationalism of Sikhs to get separate state Khalistan. The editorial in The Times of India correlated it with the Tamil trouble issue of 60’s. For the hope for an amicable solution to the Punjab problem, the core issue puts up through the editorial that what is the reason behind that Khalistan

¹⁶⁰Original news published in English newspaper The Times of India ‘Pak propaganda proves Zia wrong’, on 1 July, 1984.

issue has been raising to the Sikhs being a separate nation and what are the reasons for that the intolerance inflicted into the Sikh community. The Sikhs succeed while staying with the Indian nation and it is a point where they must think of the support they received from others but not counted by them. The editorial writes:

“The speed and ease with which the Indian political system was able to cope with the challenge of Tamil nationalism in the sixties are reassuring in the present context of the turmoil in Punjab. It offers us the hope that we may be able to dispose of the demand for Khalistan equally quickly and easily. Indeed, it is possible that this



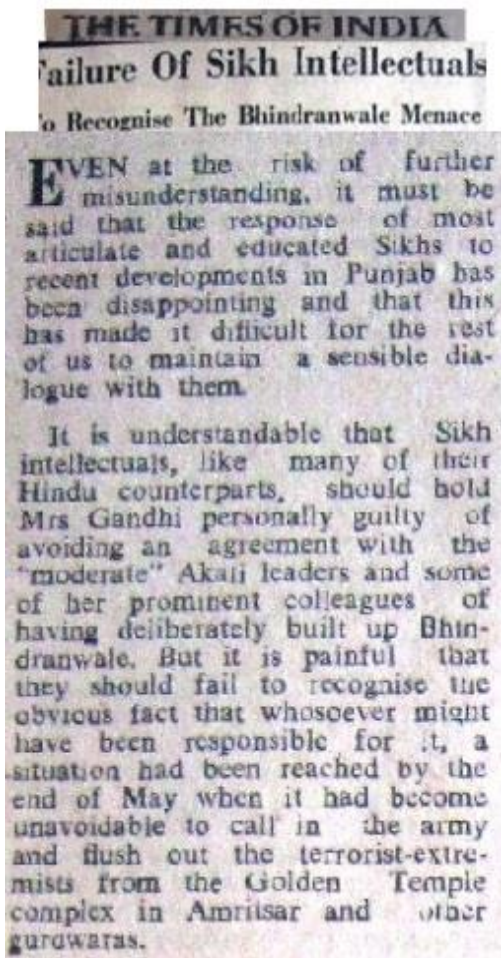
Two “Nationalisms”

The speed and ease with which the Indian political system was able to cope with the challenge of Tamil “nationalism” in the sixties is reassuring in the present context of the turmoil in Punjab. It offers us the hope that we may be able to dispose of the demand for Khalistan equally quickly and easily. Indeed, it is possible that this challenge might turn out to be even more short-lived. The demand for a separate state ill suits a community which has done as well under the existing dispensation as the Sikhs have. Some of them have been inventing grievances ever since the country became independent in 1947 and of late they have managed to make themselves heard better by the rest of the community than ever before. But essentially the Sikhs have suffered from the embarrassment of success. They have succeeded possibly beyond their own expectations in whatever field they have chosen to enter. This is, of course, a tribute to their own physical, mental and spiritual resources. But it is also a tribute to the system which has made it possible for them to exercise their faculties to the utmost and to the rest of us who have at the very least never tried to put obstacles in their path. Such a community ope-

challenge will turn out to be even more short-lived. The demand for a separate state ill suits a community, which has done as well under the existing dispensation as the Sikhs have. Some of them have been invented grievances ever since the country became independent in 1947 and of late, they have managed to make themselves heard better by the rest of the community than ever before. However, essentially the Sikhs have suffered from the embarrassment of success. They have succeeded possibly beyond their own expectations in whatever field, they have chosen to enter. This is, of course, a tribute to their own physical, mental and spiritual resources. But it is also a tribute to the system which has made it possible for them to exercise their faculties to the utmost and to the rest of us who have at the very least never tried to put obstacles in their path”. (‘Two Nationalisms’, editorial, The Times of India, 1 July 1984)¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹Original editorial published in English newspaper The Times of India English ‘Two Nationalisms’, on 1 July, 1984.

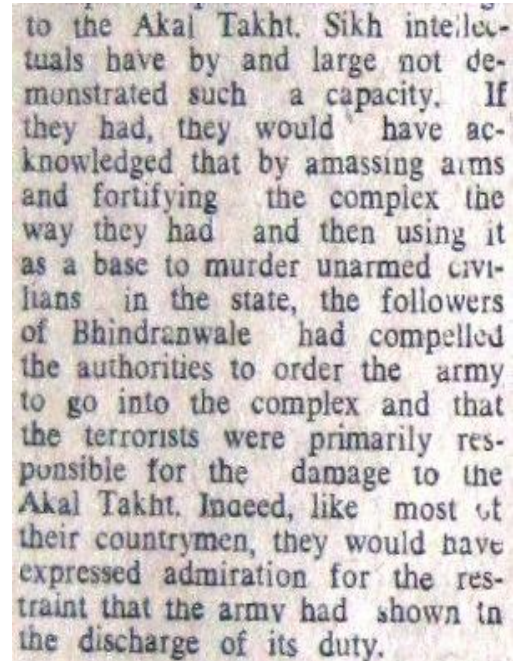
The Times of India whereas criticized the stand taken by the Sikh extremists in the whole conflict, it also expressed its anguish over the silence adopted by the Sikh intellectuals due to which the troubled period got prolonged and so did the problem. The paper on another side, targeted Central Government for taking the issue lightly and involvement of the few government ministers to promote Sikh extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Though Government blamed external hand in the whole mess, the minister level involvement raised a question mark over the integrity of the governments. Another editorial in The Times of India describes:



“Even at the risk of further misunderstanding, it must be said that the response of most articulate and educated Sikhs to recent developments in Punjab has been disappointing and that this has made it difficult for the rest of us to maintain a sensible dialogue with them. It is understandable that Sikhs intellectuals, like many of their Hindu counterparts, should hold Mrs. Gandhi personally guilty of avoiding an agreement with the moderate Akali leaders and some of her prominent colleagues of having deliberately built up Bhindranwale. But it is painful that they should fail to recognize the obvious fact that whosoever might have been responsible for it, a situation had been reached by the end of May when it had become unavoidable to call in the army and flush out the terrorist-extremists from the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar and other Gurdwaras”. (Failure of Sikh Intellectuals, article, The Times of India, 4 July 1984)

The Times of India talks about the anonymous letter written by an Akali leader, which see the future of Punjab in grave danger due to the actions of the extremist’s leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and the followers using arms to destroy the opponents. The conflict between two sects further increased and so did the height of violence due to which the decision of army action was taken to flush extremists because of their stronghold over the Golden Temple premises and the fear prevailing in the public.

“Sikh intellectuals have by and large not demonstrated such a capacity. If they had, they would have acknowledged that by amassing arms and fortifying the complex the way they had and then using it as a base to murder unarmed civilians in the state, the followers of Bhindranwale had compelled the authorities to order the army to go into the complex and that the terrorists were primarily responsible for the damage to the Akal Takht. Indeed, like most of their countrymen, they would have expressed admiration for the restraint that the army had shown in the discharge of its duty. (Ibid)



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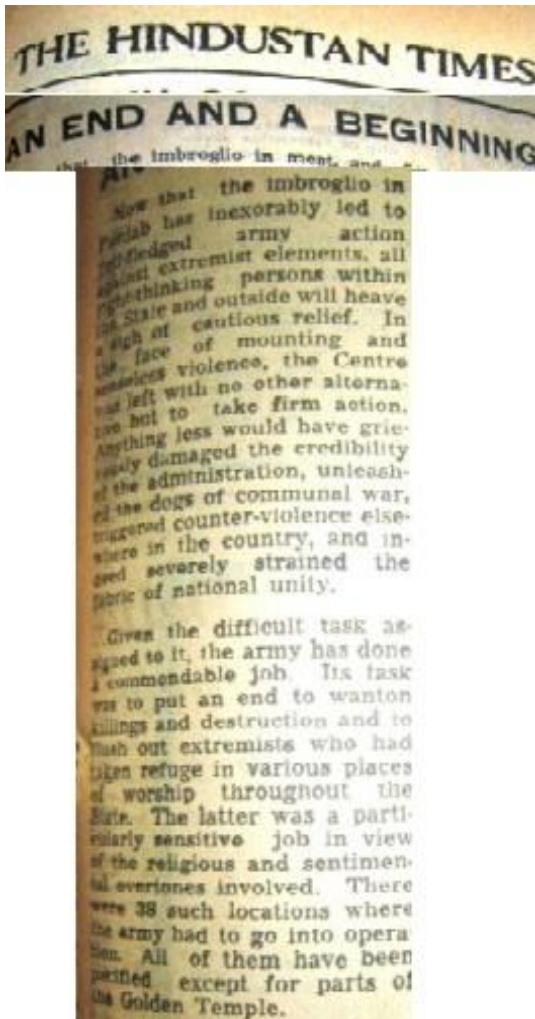
The Tribune’s article written by Girilal Jain also highlighted the issue of an anonymous letter written to centre about Bhindranwale where it is describing the toughness of the militant leader. The comparison with Iran’s religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini brought another facet of Bhindranwale, which was also a fear factor for the Akalis along with minorities. The article describes further:

“This failure is in fact, even more, shocking because it antedates the army’s entry into the Golden Temple complex and follows the widespread awareness of the consequences of Ayatollah Khomeini’s triumph in Iran. Some Akalis were aware of the danger. One of them wrote the anonymous letter dated April 2, 1984, which said, Khomeini ascended the throne in Iran himself, but Bhindranwale can never do so. He would not be allowed to do so by our political leaders. We cannot have Idi Amin ruling in Punjab. He would destroy everything and take us back by two centuries. So he may even have to be liquidated”. (Ibid)



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The Hindustan Times just after the Operation Bluestar writes on June 7 about the troubled situation and tension prevailing in the region due to communalism. It supports the decision of the center as being the last option to curb the violence and murder. It indicates that the delay in the action or opting another channel would have been the failure of the administration. The newspaper applauds the army for saving the sanctity of the temple and Punjab:

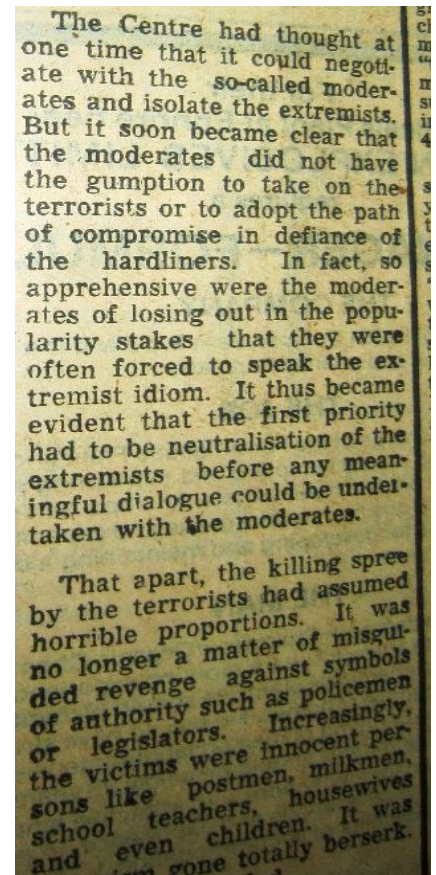


“Now that the imbroglio in Punjab has inexorably led to full-fledged army action against the extremist’s elements, all right-thinking persons within the state and outside will have a Singh of cautious relief. In the face of mounting and senseless violence, the Centre was left with no other alternative but to take firm action. Anything less would have grievously damaged the credibility of the administration, unleashed the dogs of communal war triggered counter-violence elsewhere in the country, and indeed severely strained the fabric of national unity. Given the difficult task assigned to it, the army has done a commendable job. Its task was to put an end to wanton killings and destruction and to flush out extremists who had taken refuge in various places of worship throughout the state. The latter was a particularly sensitive job in view of the religious and sentimental overtones involved/ there were 38 such locations where the army had to go into operation. All of them have been pacified except for parts of the Golden Temple”. (An end and a beginning, editorial, The Hindustan Times, 7 June 1984)¹⁶²

¹⁶²Original editorial published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘An end and a beginning’, on 7 June, 1984.

The editorial further describes the helplessness of the Centre Government to initiate talks with Akalis divided into two factions: the moderates and the stronger extremists who are making stops over the talks to be continued. The dreaded step is killing of the innocents in the state by the extremists creating fear in the atmosphere of the state. The editorial seeks the stern action as the final option against extremists to revamp peace in the state and writes:

“The Centre had thought at one time that it could negotiate with the so-called moderates and isolate the extremists. However, it soon became clear that the moderates did not have the gumption to take on the terrorists or to adopt the path of compromise in defiance of the hardliners. In fact, so apprehensive were the moderates of losing out in the popularity stakes that they were often forced to speak the extremist idioms. It thus became evident that the first priority had to be neutralization of the extremists before any meaningful dialogue could be undertaken with the moderate. That apart, the killing spree by the terrorists had assumed horrible proportions. It was no longer a matter of misguided revenge against symbols of authority, such as policemen or legislators. Increasingly the victims were innocent’s persons like postmen, milkmen, school teachers, housewives and even children”. (Ibid)

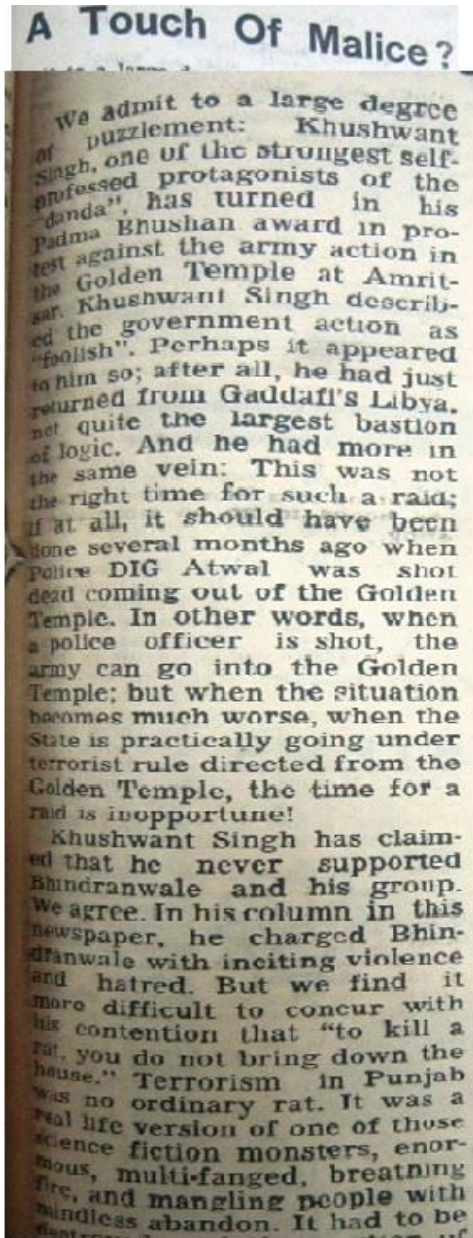


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Former editor of The Hindustan Times and former Rajya Sabha member Khushwant Singh also faced the criticism over the issue in an editorial written by the newspaper. Taking the depleted condition of the state in the centre, the newspaper editorial loaded criticism over him for returning his Padma Bhushan against the army attack over Akal Takhat while he was in favour of soft action to solve Punjab problem. The editorial described the depleted condition of the state and its residents:

“We admit to a large degree of puzzlement: Khushwant Singh, one of the strongest self-professed protagonists of the ‘danda’ has turned in his Padma Bhushan award in protest against the army action in Golden Temple at Amritsar. Khushwant Singh described the Government action as foolish. Perhaps, it appeared to him so; after all, he had just returned from Gaddafi’s Libya, not quite the largest bastion of logic and he had more in same vein. This was not the right time for such a raid; if at all, it should have been done several months ago when Police DIG Atwal was shot dead coming out of Golden Temple. In other words, when a police officer is shot, the army can go into the Golden Temple; but when the situation becomes much worse, when the state is practically going under terrorist’s rule directed from the Golden Temple, the time for a raid is inopportune. Khushwant Singh has claimed that he never supported Bhindranwale and his group. We agree. In his column in this newspaper, he charged Bhindranwale with inciting violence and hatred. But we find it more difficult to concur with his contention that “to kill a rat, you do not bring down the house.” Terrorism in Punjab was no ordinary rat. It was a real life version of one of those science fiction monsters, enormous, multi-fanged, breathing fire, and mangling people with mindless abandon”. (A touch of malice, editorial, The Hindustan Times, 11 June 1984)¹⁶³



In conclusion, The Hindustan Times’ soft stand is at par with The Times of India and was covering the Punjab situation from day one. On the issues related to Punjab, the newspaper also wrote down editorials over the depleted condition of the state, but after army operation, it adopted tough stand. The newspaper adopted the nationalist approach while denouncing the late action by Centre Government.

¹⁶³Original editorial published in English newspaper The Hindustan Times ‘A touch of malice’, on 11 June, 1984.

3.7 Analysis of Representation of Print Media on Militancy in Punjab

The history of Sikh unrest in Punjab was lying during the time of Independence of India when Giani Kartar Singh (Chopra et al. 1984) coined the concept of 'Azad Punjab.' Few certain issues, which existed after the independence of India, settled down proportionately, but on 13 April 1978 clash at Amritsar gave a chance to the fundamentalist to reconstitute on the name of religion. Though the clash was in between the sects of Sikhs, it encircled Hindus after the Karnal court verdict on this issue in 1980 where all the Nirankaris accused in this crucial case were acquitted. Later, Punjab engraved into the disaster of militancy (Gill ed. 2004). The first casualty in this confrontation was Nirankari Sant Baba Gurbachan Singh, who was killed in Delhi by Bhai Ranjit Singh of Akhand Kirtni Jatha who later was awarded imprisonment in the case.

Militancy problem in Punjab symbolized the dark phase after the independence of India. From 1978 to 1995, the curse and dilemma arose due to enmity between the two sects became too much violent that it did not spare any mercy over the people caught in the trap. The fear was generated by the Sikh militants fighting against the state on the issue of disparity¹⁶⁴ with them by the ruling Congress party. However, in reality public, first Hindus and later Sikhs faced the consequence of it. The state remained failure over the execution of their duties to control the menace and arrest of those indulged in generating violence.

However, the situation was brought under control coupled with the complicated situation unleashed by alleged indiscriminate repression by the state. The conflict started from a Sikh-Nirankari clash reached up to the highest boiling point, which once ended with Operation Blue Star on 6 June 1984 before mounted again. Indian Army and Paramilitary forces after the orders of the Central Government encircled the Golden Temple to flush them. When pressure did not work, the army launched an attack over Akal Takhat where militants fortified their positions and gave a tough reply of the attack

¹⁶⁴Sikhs blamed the Congress party remain partial with the since from the time of independence of India in 1947 when Sikhs too demanded the same status as given to the Muslim league as a separate nation 'Pakistan'.

to the army. Both sides remain long engaged in a lethal arm fight and both the sides bear huge losses along with the structure of Akal Takhat. The further instances were mixed of chaos, violence and state repression (Tully and Jacob 1984).

As Punjab was witnessing an upsurge in religious sentiments and political turmoil, the newspapers of English and vernacular languages were writing continuously over the violence produced by militants in different parts of the state. This bloodier conflict bears the huge loss of economy and brought casualties. The most burning issues were getting well placed in English and vernacular press in the region and at the national level as well. It was the key issue which every newspaper was developing it for the information of their readers and were enjoying a high circulation of their concerned newspapers. During the time, the front pages of the newspapers were allocating front space to the violent incidents and bloodbath, including sharp political dialogues delivering on various instances devastating deep impact over the society.

The importance of print media was considered good by the militants or terrorists for reaching up to the public to generate support and sympathies for their actions in the name of religion. As Brigitte L. Nacos explains that terrorists have four set general media-centric objectives: First is to gain attention and awareness of the audience around the corner. The second is in recognition of the organization's motives... the third is to gain respect and sympathy of those in whose name they claim to attack and the final objective is to gain a quasi-legitimate status of a media treatment on par with legitimate political actors (Nacos 2007, 20).

The head of the movement Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who remained on the forefront of the separatist movement, was keen to meet with journalists for his stories in newspapers. The journalist of Indian Express, Sanjiv Gaur was appointed in Amritsar in the year 1982. When he met with Sant Bhindranwale in Room No. 47 of the residential chambers of the Golden Temple complex, revealed:

“I introduced myself. Soon, I was ushered in. Bhindranwale, in a long blue robe, was reclining on a cot. He was also wearing a pistol. I folded my hands in greeting, and said, Sat Shri Akal. He looked at me to ask: Tu mainu interview karan aya hai?’ (Have you come to interview me?) I said, I have not come to interview you. I have been posting here. I shall

interview you when I understand the situation better. I have come only to 'Darshan' (gratitude) you. Bhindranwale looked 'pleased.' I stayed with him for fifteen minutes. Bhindranwale was hospitable and spoke very openly about the situation" (Kumar 1997, 121).

He also hinted that Bhindranwale scrupulously browses the newspapers. He was keen enough to see that how the newspapers cover him and write about him. Sanjiv Gaur, who got a warm reception in the beginning, recalls that how keen was Bhindranwale about the news representation by journalists. What he personally observed about his (Bhindranwale) nature and height of his in the Sikh community:

"I did a story in which I described Bhindranwale as a phenomenon which had taken over the Golden Temple. The Sikh devotees instead of making their offerings at the shrine were putting them at his feet. He [Bhindranwale] was publicity conscious and pampered journalists as long as they did not write critical stories. There is no doubt that he was newsworthy" (Ibid, 121).

The tension between the Hindus and Sikhs was mounting higher and Sanjiv Gaur allegedly found its example itself from Bhindranwale, the top Sikh preacher. He was going to meet with Bhindranwale in the residential complex of the Golden Temple. Sanjiv Gaur was surprised to see his alleged tirade against Hindus:

"For the first time, I have heard from his mouth very contemptuous remarks against Hindu Brahmins. He referred to them as '*Bodi Wale*' - and I was one of them - was common among the Sikhs of Punjab" (Ibid, 121).

Sanjiv Gaur recalls how it underwent a dramatic change after he did a few stories over him, particularly highlighting his violent tactics and his alleged invective against Hindus. He did a story about the Naxalites intruded into Bhindranwale's camp and the story appeared on the front page of the newspaper. When Gaur next time met him, the response was completely diverse:

Next time when I went to see him, he was very angry. He was downright insulting: '*Tuke Likhya hai*' [What have you written?], He asked me, "How dare you?" He went on. I was completely shaken. At that time, Bhindranwale was talking to Anikendra Nath Sen, the resident editor of the Times of India, who was then working for a magazine called 'Probe.' As Bhindranwale saw me, He forgot all about the interview he was giving and started shouting at me. I got quite scared. He ordered one of his bodyguards to fetch the newspaper that carried my story. He asked me

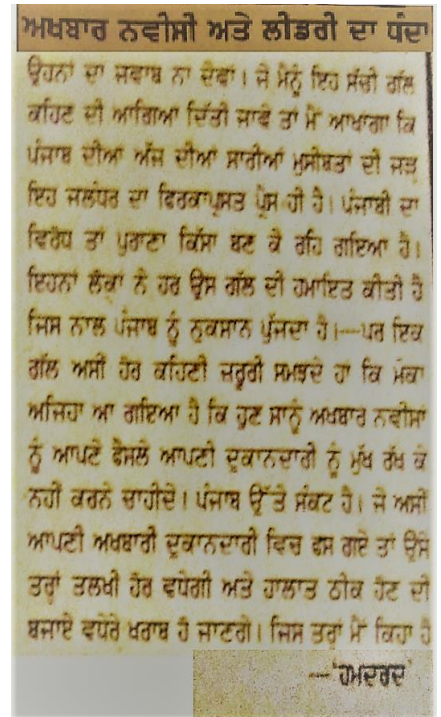
to read it aloud and to translate it in Punjabi; I felt humiliated. He was downright insulting to me and asked me “How dare you” and went on” (Ibid, 125).

The journalist was facing the serious threat for writing against the separatist groups and its heads, which was a great challenge for the journalists working in Punjab especially in Amritsar, the hot center of the whole movement. In this troubled phase, print media adopted the judgmental status over issues of conflict and violence occurring in Punjab and loaded their newspapers with critical language perpetuating their ideology and condemning others.

The print media, whereas were yielding circulation, publicity, it was counter utilized by extremist groups and receiving a good amount of publicity. So the English and vernacular press in Punjab and outside became a serious partaker in the troubled issue which made its role more crucial and peculiar.

It is significant to understand that print media owner itself acknowledged the role of newspapers for creating chaos and disturbance in the society. Before one month of the launching of Operation Bluestar, on 2 May 1984, the editor of Rojana Ajit acknowledged the root causes of the problem, i.e. ‘The print media of Punjab itself.’ In his editorial, Sadhu Singh Hamdard holds the Hindu press (indicating towards Hindi dailies of Jullundur) primarily responsible for the trouble in Punjab, though the usage ‘communal press of Jullundur’ two convicts Ajit in the bloody conflict:

“If I am allowed to say this truth, I will say that today root cause of whole problems in Punjab is this [sic] communal press of Jullundur. The agitation against the Punjabi language is an old chapter now. These people supported that every point which damages Punjab. However, one more important thing we want to deliver that now we press owners should not take the key decisions only in terms of our business. There is a danger on Punjab and if we continue to get caught in our newspaper business interest only, then only jealousy will aggravate and the situation will turn worse instead of being normal and would not return to normalcy”. (Editorial ‘Newspaper Ownership and Business of leadership’, Rojana Ajit, 2 May 1984)¹⁶⁵



The editorial written by the founder editor of Rojana Ajit Dr. Sadhu Singh Hamdard, just a month and four days before the Operation Bluestar, reflects the business module developed by the print media in Punjab over the militancy problem and there is no doubt that the editor has dared to accept the truth, but it was not responded to by the same gravity by the rest of the print media group. The depressing role played by the vernacular media, according to the editor of Rojana Ajit was more responsible for worsening the situation. He evidently made a target out the fundamental business interests of the newspaper groups established to yield money. However, the 2 May, 1984 editorial was targeting opposite press of Hindi and English and condemning the people for being carried out into the political journey, though it turns out to be self-critical.

It also clearly brings out the strong clue about the commentary print media in the region. The above confession brings out the point where the Fourth Estate hangs in

¹⁶⁵Original published in Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit, editorial, ‘Akhbar Navisi ate leadri da dhanda’, on 2 May, 1984.

between to become a counteractive force but turns into an instrument in perpetuating violence and disruptive politics.

CHAPTER 4

MILITANCY IN PUNJAB: UNDERSTANDING THROUGH GROUND EXPERIENCES

The Punjab Militancy was an unprecedented movement in the political history of Punjab in the post-independence India, which has left bitter experience in the minds of people. It also had cleaved society based on religions. In the 1980s, environment of fear had prevailed everywhere in the country. It was more severe in the state of Punjab. The region was known as saga of bravery for century, which was alienated due to of the the incident. The Operation Bluestar carried out by the government of India on 6th June 1984 in Amritsar was aimed to quell the secessionist's demand for Sikh homeland '*Khalistan*' that was advanced by engaging in the senseless killings of people by extremists. The such religious and political violence that was coloured in such a way in which taking shelter of one religion while killing innocent people of another religion had blackened the more cherished slogan 'unity in diversity' in India (Kaur et al. 2012).

Whereas print media do its duty to provide information and incident reports to the masses everyday morning, it are busy in producing information and news in the form of burning issues and published opinion relating to the issues, which are attracting people to select the particular newspaper for daily reading. The owner of the particular newspaper does so for getting higher readership yields higher circulation of copies of newspaper. The higher circulation generates credibiity of the newspaper among readership, which finally helps in receiving more advertisements that yields the higher income. The higher income is essential to run the media industry in the present time.

The media use every tactic to sustain with the same motion to ride over and above the ground line. A certain ideology choosed by the newspaper is also a tactic to remain in competition. According to Borschel, media is the prime tool for bringing information about arts and culture to the public. The media industry is a massive business upon which we are almost completely dependent for news and information about our local and global world (Borschel 2012).

The media have the power or potential to develop a general issue into a matter of discussion where people in large number come in groups to discuss it. Further, these

discussion helps in forming a public opinion - either in favour of or opposite of it. It is interesting to know that most of the time the people do not become aware of the agenda-setting movement of the media. The issue of Punjab is also following the same line of accord where print media of Punjab had worked to form or de-form the opinion of the masses about militancy problem in Punjab by extensively covering the violent incidents occurring in Punjab along with the newspapers of Delhi edition that had expressed the incidents in their own narratives. The newspaper with their aggressive ideological grounds were setting their own set of naratives to influence the readers for getting the higher circulation of copies of the newspaper, which had attracted more advertisements and yielded more profits to them. In Punjab, the print media followed it very seriously.

The troubled period had ended in the mid-1990's, the bitter memories of the incidence are still live in the minds of people. Several studies have already been concluded on the issue of militancy aimed at find out causes and consequences in socio-political environment in state and nation at large. The previous studies had discussed different aspects of the involvement of various groups - governments, administration, political persons, religious groups, police, military, paramilitary forces and foreign groups, etc. in the violent conflicts.

Although, it is general information to the public of Punjab, which was discussed in a few studies carried out by the experts like Gopal Singh, KPS Gill, Shinder Thandi, Darshan Tatla, Kuldip Nayar, Khushwant Singh, Pritam Singh, Jaspal Sidhu, Harnik Deol, Satpal Dang and Robin Jeffery, etc. All thses studies are not found comprehensive in nature. The present study has attempted to do comparative discussion of the role played by the print media – English and Vernacular languages published within state and in the national capital territory as well. The present study also has made attempts to understand the stored memories in the mind of people of Punjab through analysis of the collected data from the conducted field work.

4.1 The People of Punjab, Print Media and Field Study

During the time of 1980's when Punjab was surprising from fundamentalism, extremism and factionalism, the most affected part of the state was its public which after post independence of India, was facing the curse of violence which had a base to design another country '*Khalistan*' a pure land of Khalsa (an identifying name for Sikhs). During the time, the print media's role was seeing very crucial as it was the sole mode of information apart of Radio and Television, which had limited access.

The print media while it was published the violent news on the top pages along with photographs, it was making an impact of over the public in which they were getting into the grip of fear, division and anger from the bloodshed. It had affected the mind of readers as well as general public because the violent news was getting space between the people for discussion and set a form of opinion, in which people of different origin were coming closer for discussions and forming similar groups according to the same mindset. According to Maxwell McCombs, Public opinion formation and change cannot exist without communication between two persons or groups. There can't be public and there can't be any form of opinion without the presence of communication (McCombs et al. 2011, 3).

To study the impact of print media's role in setting public opinion in the context of Punjab problem and its impact over the public's mind which then continued readers or the listeners. Therefore a field study visit set and travel were made to different corners of the state in various districts, villages and Tehsils and met with people follower of different religion. An open-ended qualitative based questionnaire was designed to reach a conclusion to testify the idea in research and specifically keeping in view, the hypothesis on the role of media, the field work was done.

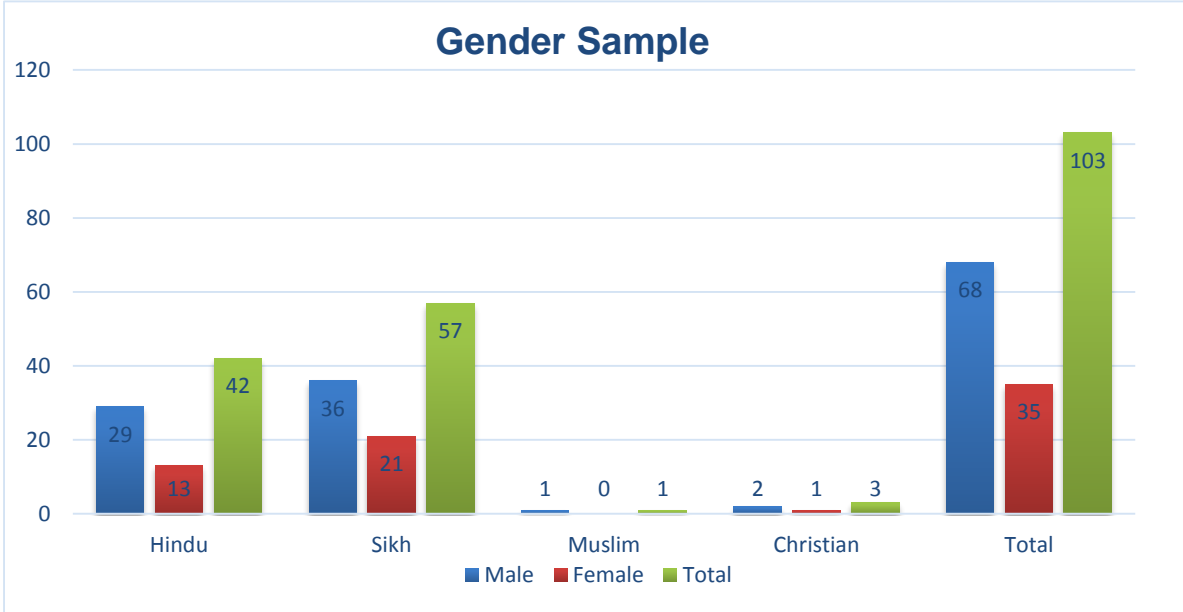
During this field visits, two objectives were fixed; one is to collect the news clips from Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar for Punjab region and Jawaharlal Nehru Library New Delhi and Delhi Public Library, Delhi for Delhi region, the second objective was set to collect the views over the role of print media and its impact during the year 1980 to 1984. Chapter four of this research work is having the detailed background of the second objective of the field study as to getting into the impact of print media in

affecting public’s mind during the set time and form or de-form opinion. Therefore, in this chapter, all the vintages based on the data collected are being placed and quantitative as well as majority qualitative analysis have been made, referring to the data analysis and interpretation. Chapter four of the work is divided into three sections, which are covering the following: i). Sample selection ii). Qualitative analysis.

4.1.1 Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile

Through a semi-structured questionnaire, a qualitative based primary field study of three regions of Punjab conducted during the field study and interviews of 103 respondents recorded. During the study schedule, the study carried gender ratio, area background, qualification, background, the source of Income, income range, reading habits and the category which they belong to, are detailed down in table and chart for easy comparative analysis.

Figure 4.1



Source: Primary Field Study

Figure 4.1 is describing a categorized sample selected from three regions: Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab and based on the number of respondents selected for the interview on the related topic. Out of the total 103 respondents, total male respondents are 68 while 35 female respondents interviewed over the topic. Out

of total 103 respondents, 42 are Hindus while 57 respondents are Sikhs. Apart from that, 1 Muslim and 3 Christian respondents are also included in the study. In Muslim, there is only a male respondent while out of three Christians, two are male and one female respondent interviewed. The blue colour in total denotes the number of males while the red colour indicates the women.

The study has found that the males were more habitual of reading newspapers instead of females. The low female count in the study is due to lack of reading habits, low literacy rate, low availability of newspapers at homes etc. while in a few cases, the family head was dominating. The females too denied personal discussion on sensitive issue independently.

Table 4.1
Area Background

Community	Background				Total	
	Rural		Urban			
Hindu	17	33.33%	25	48.07%	42	40.77%
Sikh	33	64.70%	24	46.15%	57	55.33%
Muslim	0	0	1	01.92%	1	00.97%
Christian	1	01.96%	2	03.84%	3	02.91%
Total	51		52		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.1 is a categorized sample of area background of respondents selected from the rural and urban areas of three regions: Malwa, Majha, and Doaba of Punjab and divided in rural and urban area. Out of a total of 103 samples of respondents, total number of respondents from rural area is 51 while the number of urban respondents is 52. Out of total respondents, 42 Hindu while 57 Sikh, 1 Muslim and 3 Christian respondents are interviewed.

The study has found that out of total 103 respondents, people belonging to the rural area also expressed their views on the topic. Though few of the people were not receiving the newspaper at their homes in rural areas, they were well aware of the situation due to regular discussions in groups over the newspaper reports in the

gathering called ‘Sath’ (a place in a village where people sit together). The Punjabi newspaper was more dominating in the villages than Hindi or English due to dominance of the Sikh community using Punjabi language at homes. In cities, the scanario was vise versa in the cities and majority of the Hindu community giving more stress to Hindi language for speaking and reading.

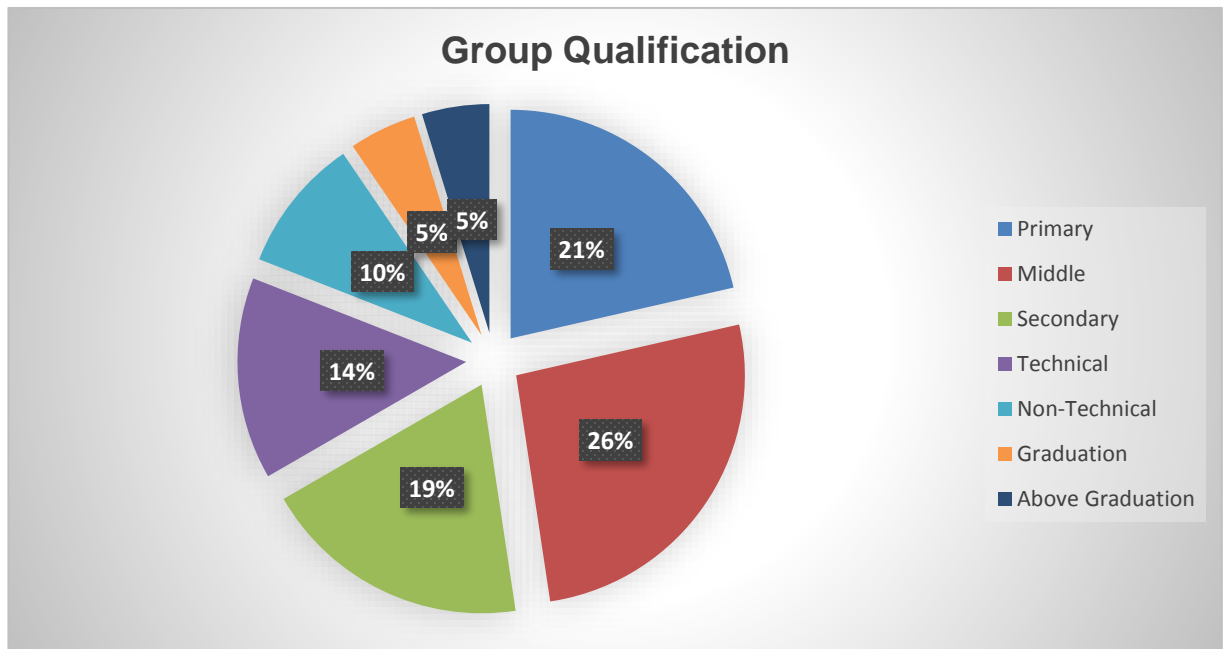
Table 4.2
Group Qualification

Education	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian		Total	
Primary	9	21.4%	11	19.2%	0	0	0	0	20	19.4%
Middle	11	26.1%	17	29.8%	1	100%	1	33.3%	30	29.1%
Secondary	8	19.0%	7	12.2%	0	0	2	66.6%	17	16.5%
Technical	6	14.2%	10	17.5%	0	0	0	0	16	15.5%
Non-Technical	4	09.5%	5	08.7%	0	0	0	0	9	08.7%
Graduation	2	04.7%	4	07%	0	0	0	0	6	05.8%
Above Graduation	2	04.7%	3	05.2%	0	0	0	0	5	04.8%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.2 is a categorized sample of respondents, and their qualification in the Malwa, Majha and Doaba regions of Punjab. Out of total 103 samples respondents, 20 Hindu and Sikh respondents studied up to primary and 28 up to middle level. 17 respondents studied up to secondary level while 16 respondents are of technical field. Apart from that, nine respondents are of the non-technical field; six respondents are graduate during period while 5 Hindu and Sikh respondents are above graduate (see figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2



Source: Primary Field Study

In this composite sample of 103 respondents, 42 Hindus and 57 Sikhs were educated from primary to above than graduation level while 1 Muslims and 1 Christian respondent studied up to the middle while 2 Christians respondents studied up to secondary level. The study reveals that the higher number of respondents falls in the primary and middle-level education, but they were fond of reading newspapers.

Table 4.3
Source of Income

Source of Income	Community								Total	
	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian			
Farmer	7	16.66%	26	45.61%	0	0	0	0	33	32.03%
Govt. employee	9	24.42%	9	15.78%	0	0	1	33.33%	19	18.44%
Self employed	19	45.23%	10	17.54%	1	100%	2	66.66%	32	31.06%
Labour	7	16.66%	12	21.05%	0	0	0	0	19	18.44%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.3 is a categorized sample of the source of income of total 103 respondents belongs to Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of the total respondents, 16.66 % Hindus are doing farming while 45.61 % is the ratio of Sikhs doing farming at that period. 45.23% Hindu population in the study is self-employed while the proportion of Sikhs is 17.54% in the same category. The number of government employees among Hindus and Sikh community is 24.42% and 15.78% respectively. While total 16.66% Hindus and 21.05% Sikhs were working as labour during the period.

The study shows that out of 42 Hindu respondents, 7 were farmers, 9 were government employees and 19 were self-employed while seven were doing labour in that period. Out of a total 57 Sikh respondents, 26 were farmers, 9 were government employees while ten were self-employed and 12 were doing labour works to run the families. While 1 Muslim and 2 Christian respondents were self-employed and 1 Christian was government employee.

Table 4.4
Income Range

Monthly Income (in Rs.)	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian		Total	
100-500	18	42.8%	26	45.6%	0	0	0	0	44	42.7%
501-1000	12	28.5%	17	29.8%	1	100%	1	33.3%	31	30 %
1001-1500	9	21.4%	9	15.7%	0	0	1	33.3%	19	18 %
Above 1500	3	07.1%	5	08.7%	0	0	1	33.3%	9	08.7%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.4 is describing a categorized sample of income of the respondents belongs to Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of the total 103 respondents, total 44 respondents fall into an income group of 100-500, 31 respondents were earning between 501-1000, 19 respondents were earning between 1001-1500 while nine respondents were earning above rupees 1500. The number ratio of the respondents is depicted in the chart in Appendix. The highest proportion of 42.85% Hindus falls in Rs. 100-500 group while highest 45.61% Sikhs are also falling in the same income group.

Above Rs. 1500 groups, 3 Hindus, 5 Sikhs, and 1 Christian fall in the highest earning ratio while 1 Muslim falls between Rs. 501-1000 earning group.

Table 4.5
Newspaper Readers

Newspapers	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian		Total	
The Tribune	9	21.42%	8	14.03%	0	0	0	0	17	16.50%
Punjab Kesri	27	64.28%	6	10.52%	0	0	2	66.66%	35	33.98%
Rojana Ajit	5	11.90%	40	70.17%	1	100%	1	33.33%	47	45.63%
Any Other	1	02.38%	3	05.26%	0	0	0	0	4	03.88%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.5 is a categorized sample of 103 newspaper readers from Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of the respondents, the highest ratio 64.28% Hindus were reading Punjab Kesri. 21.42% Hindu respondents were reading The Tribune followed by Rojana Ajit 11.90%, and only one person was reading any other newspaper. 70.17% Sikh respondents were reading Rojana Ajit then. The Tribune was read by 14.03% while 10.52% Sikh respondents were reading Punjab Kesri newspaper while three were reading any other newspaper. 1 Muslim and 1 Christian reader was liking Rojana Ajit while 2 Christians were reading Punjab Kesri. The number and percentage ratio of the newspaper readers is mentioned in the chart.

The sample size reveals that Punjab Kesri dominated Hindus while the majority of Sikhs were reading Rojana Ajit. Total 24 Hindu respondents and 41 Sikh respondents were reading Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit respectively.

Table 4.6
Social Category

Social Category	Community								Total	
	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian			
General	22	52.38%	30	52.63%	1	100%	3	100%	56	54.36%
OBC*	6	14.28%	8	14.03%	0	0	0	0	14	13.59%
SC*	14	33.33%	19	33.33%	0	0	0	0	33	32.03%
ST*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

OBC*= Other Backward Classes, SC*= Schedule Caste, ST*= Schedule Tribe

Table 4.6 is describing a distribution sample of Social Category of the communities living in Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of 103 respondents, 56 respondents were of general category belongs to Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and Christian community. Total 14 Hindus and Sikh respondents belonged to OBC category while 33 Hindu and Sikh respondents belonged to SC category. The distribution sample ratio of a social group is mentioned in the chart.

As per study size, out of total Hindu respondent, 52.38% were of general category, 14.28% are of OBC, and 33.33% were of SC category. While 52.63% Sikh respondents were from general, 14.03% were of OBC and while similar 33.33% Sikh respondents belonging to Schedule Caste category. Apart from that, 1 Muslims and 3 Christian's were of a general class. According to data census 1991, there is no Schedule Tribe in Punjab.

Table 4.7
Social Order of Punjab before 1980

Community	Opinion				Total	
	Positive		Negative			
Hindu	40	41.66%	2	28.58%	42	40.77%
Sikh	52	54.16%	5	71.42%	57	55.33%
Muslim	1	1.04%	0	0	1	0.97%
Christian	3	3.12%	0	0	3	2.91%
Total	96		7		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.7 presents a categorized sample of social order in Punjab before the year 1980 collected through field study from respondents belongs to Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of the total 103 respondents, 92 respondents replied positively about the correct social order in the state and described it peacefully while 11 respondents replied that the environment was not good and a majority in this group falls from the Majha region of Punjab. Out of total 42 Hindu respondents, 38 replied positively while out of 57 Sikhs, Respondents, 51 replied positively. Such a scenario has been depicted in the column chart. Apart from that, 2 Christian respondents were positive about the correct social order of Punjab before 1980 while 1 Muslim respondent found Punjab peaceful before 1980 at the time. The first incident in Punjab related to the militancy problem occurred on 13 April, 1978, when there was a clash between Sikhs and Nirankaris and total 13 Sikhs and 2 Nirankaris died on the spot. The case was decided in the year 1980 in which Nirankaris set free from the case and in revenge, Nirankari Chief killed in Delhi in the same year.

Table 4.8
Social Order of Punjab after 1980

Community	Opinion				Total	
	Positive		Negative			
Hindu	0	0	42	40.77%	42	40.77%
Sikh	0	0	57	55.33%	57	55.33%
Muslim	0	0	1	0.97%	1	0.97%
Christian	0	0	3	2.91%	3	2.91%
Total	0		103		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.8 is presenting a categorized sample of Social Order in Punjab after the year 1980 from respondents belonging to Malwa, Majha and Doaba regions of Punjab. Out of the total 103 respondents, all the 103 respondents replied negatively about the State's social order after the year 1980 when Punjab was just landed into the militancy problem. The respondents agreed that after 1980, Punjab was filled with extremism

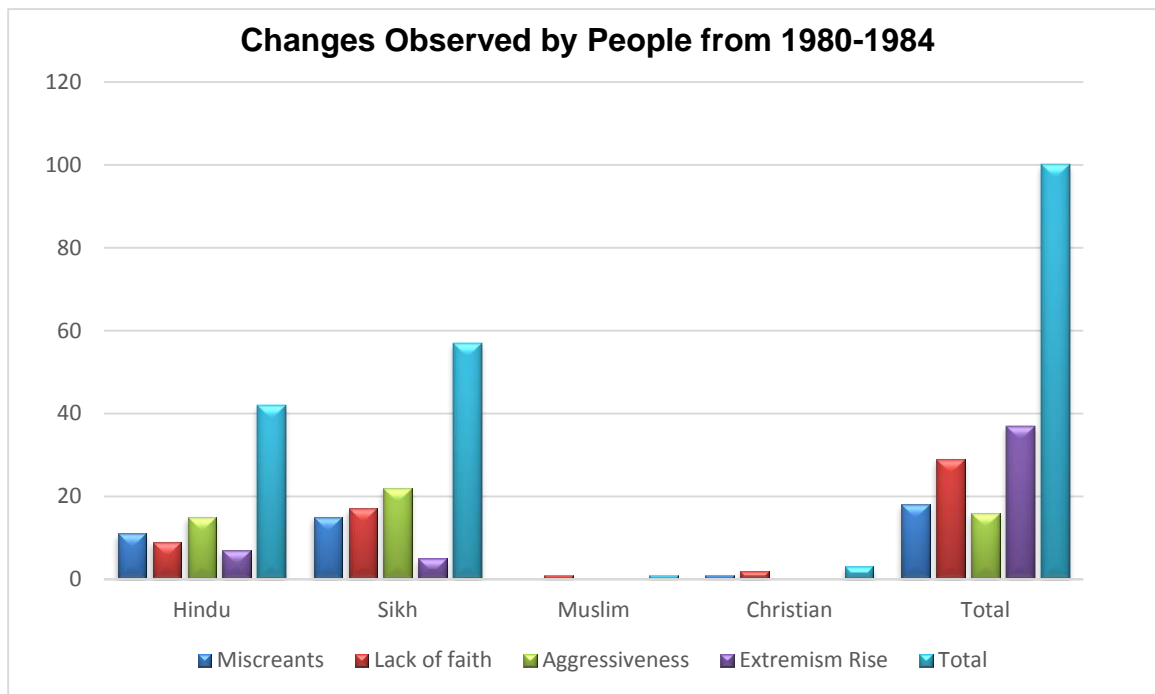
and violence. The distribution sample includes 42 Hindu respondents, 57 Sikh respondents, 1 Muslim and 3 Christians respondents.

Table 4.9
Changes observed by People from 1980-1984

Changes	Community								Total	
	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian			
Miscreants	11	26.1%	15	26.3%	0	0	1	33.3%	27	26.2%
Lack of faith	9	21.4%	15	26.3%	1	100%	2	66.6%	27	26.2%
Aggressive	15	35.7%	22	38.5%	0	0	0	0	37	35.9%
Extremism	7	16.6%	5	8.7%	0	0	0	0	12	11.6%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Figure 4.3



Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.9 presents a categorized sample of the changes observed by People between 1980-1984 in Punjab from 103 respondents belonging to Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of total respondents, 27 respondents felt that the

miscreants were increased in the meantime while a set of other 27 respondents felt that lack of faith between Hindus and Sikhs was also a major reason of the disturbance in the state.

In the respondent's chart, 37 respondents felt that aggressiveness was increased during the militancy problem in Punjab. While 12 respondents accepted that the rise of extremism was also the reason for the disturbance in the state in the man time. The majority of Hindus 15 respondents felt there was more aggressiveness while highest 22 Sikh respondents also felt that it was increased in the nature of people. The distribution sample ratio of the changes observed by people over 1980 is mentioned in the column chart (figure 4.3).

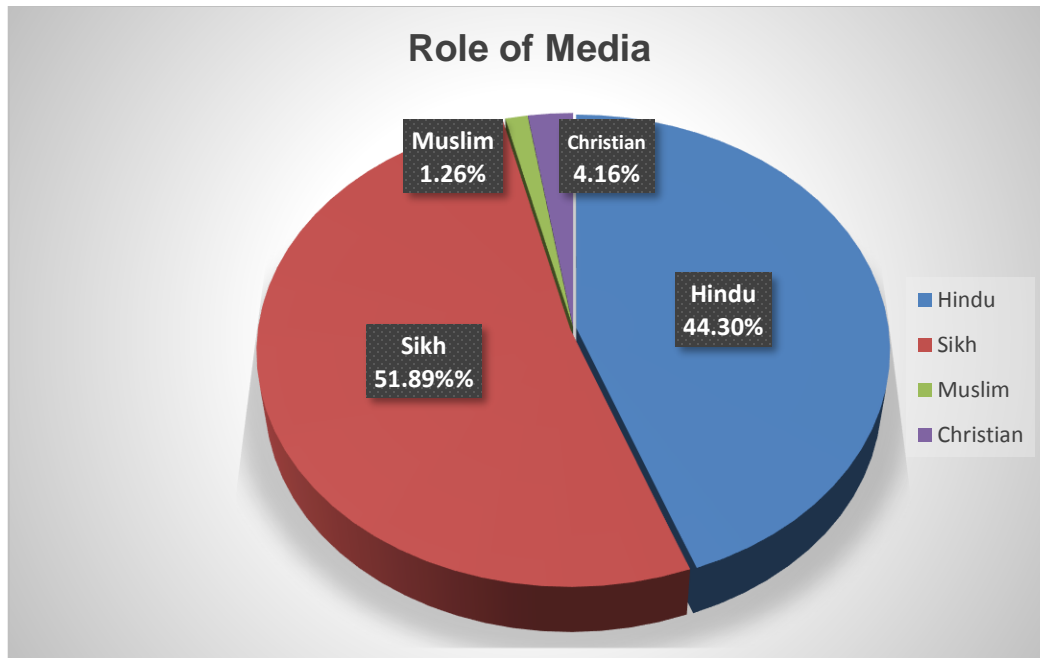
Table 4.10
Impact of Print Media in Punjab

Community	Impact of Print Media				Total	
	Yes		No			
Hindu	35	44.30%	7	29.16%	42	40.77%
Sikh	41	51.89%	16	66.66%	57	55.33%
Muslim	1	1.26%	0	0	1	0.97%
Christian	2	4.16%	1	2.53%	3	2.91%
Total	79		24		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.10 is categorized sample of the impact of the role of print media during 1980-1984 over the people of Punjab collected from Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of the total 103 respondents, 44.30% Hindus means 35 Hindu respondents accepted that there was impact of print media over the society and the writings given by newspapers of that period about militancy incidents was having an impact, and it was the prime discussion in routine and was affecting the opinion as well while only 7 Hindu respondents denied it.

Figure 4.4



Source: Primary Field Study

On the similar, out of 57 Sikh respondents, 39 respondents accepted that there was an impact of print media over the minds of public being when they were reading newspapers or were listening to news from someone else. The distribution sample ratio of the impact of the role of print media during 1980-1984 is mentioned in the chart (figure 4.4).

The study reveals that the majority of both Hindus and Sikhs were crossing from the same experience and print media's militancy generated violence news and the language used by the newspapers were similarly working to create fear, isolation, division and anger between the communities of Punjab. It seriously effected two major communities of Punjab Hindus and Sikhs at large.

Table 4.11
Political Ideology followed by Print Media

Newspaper	Political Ideology				No Ideology		Total	
	Congress		Akali Dal					
The Tribune	7	16.27%	3	8.33%	11	45.83%	21	20.38%
Punjab Kesri	31	72.09%	1	2.77%	7	29.16%	39	37.86%
Rojana Ajit	2	4.65%	32	88.88%	4	16.66%	38	36.89%
The Times of India	2	4.65%	0	0	1	4.16%	3	2.91%
The Hindustan Times	1	2.32%	0	0	1	4.16%	2	1.94%
Total	43		36		24		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.11 is a categorized sample of Political Ideology followed by print media during 1980-1984. During field study data was collected from respondents belong to Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of the total 103 respondents, the highest 72.09% respondents think that Punjab Kesri was following the Congress party line while 88.88% people felt that Akali Dal's ideology was followed by Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit.

While 16.27% people feel that The Tribune was following the Congress ideology while only 8.33% respondents feel it was following Akali Dal. 2.77% of people think that it was following the ideology of the Akali Dal. 4.65% people feel that The Times of India was with Congress ideology while 2.32% thinks that The Hindustan Times was also attached with the Congress.

Table 4.12
Nature of Reading Newspapers of Public

Readability	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian		Total	
Reading Single newspaper	18	42.8%	38	66.6%	1	100%	2	66.6%	59	57.2%
Reading The Tribune and Punjab Kesri	16	38.1%	6	10.5%	0	0	0	0	22	21.3%
Reading Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit	6	14.3%	8	14.1%	0	0	1	33.3%	15	14.5%
Reading more than two Newspapers	2	4.8%	5	8.8%	0	0	0	0	7	06.7%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.12 is a categorized sample of Nature of the reading newspaper of Public during 1980-1984 collected during field study from Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab of 103 respondents. Out of 42 Hindu respondents, 18 respondents were reading the single newspaper while 16 respondents were reading Punjab Kesri and The Tribune both. Only 6 respondents agreed that they were reading Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit while 2 respondents were reading more than two newspapers.

Out of 57 Sikh respondents, 38 were reading Rojana Ajit newspaper while 6 respondents were reading The Tribune and Punjab Kesri while 8 respondents were reading Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit both. Only 5 Sikh respondents were reading more than two newspapers. 1 Muslim respondent was reading one newspaper while 2 Christian respondents were reading the single newspaper while 1 Christian respondent was reading Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit both.

Table 4.13
Reasons of Sustaining Militancy in Punjab

Reason of Militancy	Community								Total	
	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian			
Political Support	26	61.9%	38	66.6%	1	100%	2	66.6%	67	65.1%
Lack of Govt will	9	21.4%	16	28.1%	0	0	1	33.3%	26	25.2%
Revenge	4	9.5%	2	03.5%	0	0	0	0	6	5.8%
Foreign Hand	3	7.1%	1	01.7%	0	0	0	0	4	3.8%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.13 is categorized as the sample of reasons of sustaining militancy in Punjab. Collected through field study from Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Total 103 respondents comprise reply from 42 Hindus, 57 Sikh, 1 Muslim and 3 Christian respondents. Out of 42 Hindu respondents, 26 respondents feel that due to political support, the militancy produced and sustained while 9 respondents feels that lack of Government will become a hurdle in the act. Further, 4 respondents see it revenge that promoted militancy in the state while 3 respondents see the foreign hand behind the bloody conflict.

Out of 57 Sikh respondents, 38 respondents see the political support, 16 lack of Government will and 1 sees the foreign hand behind it while only 2 Sikh respondents see it a revenge war. In overall scanario, four major factors, political support, lack of government will to act against militants, revenge between the communities and involvement of foreign communities are major contributory factors for sustain of militancy in Punjab (Table 4.3).

Table 4.14
Changes Observed in Behaviour of People

behaviour changes	Community								Total	
	Hindu		Sikh		Muslim		Christian			
Fear	19	45.2%	13	22.8%	1	100%	2	66.6%	35	33.9%
Aggression	12	28.5%	17	29.8%	0	0	1	33.3%	30	29.1%
No Change	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anger	11	26.1%	27	47.3%	0	0	0	0	38	36.9%
Total	42		57		1		3		103	

Source: Primary Field Study

Table 4.14 is categorized sample of Changes observed in the behavior of the people Collected through field study from Malwa, Majha and Doaba region of Punjab. Out of 103 respondents, 45.23 % Hindus sees fear as a major factor in the nature of people. While 28.57% sees aggression and 11 respondents sees the anger in the behaviour of the people.

While 22.80% Sikhs see fear, 29.82% aggression and 47.36% people feel that anger was prevailing in the nature of people. While 1 Muslim and 2 Christian respondent see fear was attached in the behaviour while 1 Christian feels that aggression was more in the nature of the people.

4.1.2 Analysis

The field study information after analyses depicts that all the communities living in Punjab during the mean time of 1980-1984 faced a tough time of militancy and they all paid a hefty price for it. The field study further divided for analyses where views presented by different respondent of a different class, caste and creed divided to find the answer. It is a social order before 1980 and after 1980 which people clearly feel that there was a major change in the social order or environment after 1980 and it was primarily vise-versa. The society saw the increase of extremism, fear, miscreants and lack of faith was also a key factor. The English and vernacular newspapers were also found working under the impression of political ideology which people replied positively

and told that the print media of the time was clearly found divided into ideological divisions and political parties had to influence over them. The nature of reading newspapers was also set in the society. The Hindu class in the majority was reading Punjab Kesri while the majority of Sikh classes in villages was reading Rojana Ajit. The reasons for that division is due to the sides taken by print media, which further encouraged communities to take sides. While major factor behind sustaining of militancy was political support to extremism and lack of political will to control the situation which aggravates the problem. All these factors made changes in the society and people who are a key part of it, came under its effect and fear, aggression and anger became the part of the life of the public.

4.2 Life Histories

Life histories are defined as reconstructions of history of experiences of an individual, which are described at a certain point in their lives by a particular researcher for a designated purposes. All of life histories will have bearing on how the stories were told, which stories were told, and how these were presented or interpreted (Etherington 2006). The method of life stories connects the researcher with the subject and storyteller emotionally, which can potentially reduce the power gap between the research and the research participants (Osella and Osella 2006).

The selected life histories are described, reviewed, and brought forth with the vast details of remembrance, thoughts, ideology, role of media in forming public opinion and its consequences. It has captured social as well as human perspectives of incidents. The life histories have covered ex-policemen, ex-militants, victims, politicians, journalists and readers. The concerned life histories belonged to the troubled time period of Punjab from the year 1980 – 1984, which gives different perspectives of the issue. They also helped to understand the personal narratives about the troubled time period. They are described as follows:

4.3 Life History - 1

Gurpal Singh (changed name), former militant, who is having age 55 years, was more famous with his nickname 'Baba' in his personal circle. He is belong to a village near Raman. His father was farmer and had 10 acres of land. He is youngest in the family of the six brothers and sisters. Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale pronounced him as 'Baba' (senior person) at his childhood, which later became a nickname of him. When he was met first time with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale at Anandpur Sahib, he was 11 years old. He approached to Bhindranwale by taking a complain of a ragi jatha (religious singer group) for doing wrong explanations of Gurbani hymns. As a result, Bhindranwale had passed an order to the Jatha for being present on Akal Takhat but they never came due to fear. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale had impressed of his humor.

At the age of 22 years, he was arrested in a murder case of a Hindu businessman Devraj of Khanna Mandi in 1982 along with 10 other Sikh people. Sooner, an encounter order was released from the senior office but the then SHO Roshan Ram denied to comply the orders. All people were released thereafter but it annoyed Gurpal Singh. He again went to meet Bhindranwale in Amritsar. He spend two years with him at Golden Temple in personal squad. When the army encircled Golden Temple, Bhindranwale ordered him along with few others to go back on June 2, 1984. After the Operation Bluestar, Gurpal remained active for a decade but never killed any innocent people during the militancy problems as claimed. Once a family complaint him in dharam durbar (religious court) about rape of their daughter by a militant. He warned, but after ignoring it, the guns delivered the justice:

“What I feel, there was respect, love and regard for and between everyone before the year 1980. But thereafter, the situation shifted. Few people acted to break centuries-old relationship of Hindus and Sikhs. The Hind Samachar Group was one the top of the list to break the society. They separated Hindus and Sikhs through biased news stories. Police with the directions of government, was spreading terror through goons. After killing innocents in Operation Bluestar, we respected the

relationship but in Delhi, the political leaders killed Sikhs. Though, Hindus and Muslims came for help but still it can not be forgot.

The intellectual community did their work, but newspapers of Punjab worked to mint money. The state newspapers like Rojana Ajit, The Tribune and Punjab Kesri did not comply their duties. Only BBC London had done well. Ajj Di Awaz was doing well, but it was declared Khalistani newspaper. The people talks about Ram Raj, but it will come when everyone will have equal rights. Our politicians are partial and they never raised a voice in the parliament for people and 1984 incident is an example.

If talked about media, the newspapers were not giving true information because it was not possible for journalists to defy editors orders. We were reading Akali Patrika newspaper. Sadhu Singh Hamdard of Rojana Ajit was busy in writing gazals instead of news while Lala Jagat Narain was also partial. The murder case registered against us by the police, though the affected family declared us innocent, these newspapers described us terrorist in the news. The newspapers were doing biased work without going to field and were creating disturbance.

In politics, Shiromani Akali Dal is more responsible for spreading terror in Punjab than Congress party and Indira Gandhi. First, they promoted militancy in the state and later tried to control it, because Akali made a tie-up with Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh (RSS) and tried to snub Sikhism through government agencies. "A community who sacrificed their lives for the nation, will not kill their own people. Militancy did not damage the relationship, but actually the wrong discussions were more responsible. Bhindranwale always told Hindus and Sikhs to remain firm in their own religion. The behavior affected due to communalism spread by agencies in public mind."

The militants in Punjab had become a fear face in public during 1980's. The story narrated by an ex-militant, Gurpal Singh about his joining the militancy movement. Lived in the personal squad of Bhindranwale, he not only narrated various facts over the Punjab issue but also raised questions over the role of print media. The print media without major investigation, was publishing news stories and awarding labels to innocents. The role of politicians, print media and police system during the troubled time was complex enough and thus demanded deeper investigation. Being militant in the past, they were also worried for the innocents which represents different aspect of them. The police system was to under pressure and it was partially responsible to brought youngs like Gurpal Singh into the extremism movement.

4.4 Life History - 2

Sukhpal Kaur (changed name), former militant, who is having age 57 years, born in the religious Sikh family in Gurdaspur district, Since her childhood, she has attached with Shri Guru Granth Sahib. She took '*Amrit*' (divine water) with Sikhism rituals in young age. According to her, the meeting with Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in January 1984 was one of a lucky day for her. She also participated in DYM and remained many days in jail with her mother in the year 1982. After Operation Bluestar, she marched towards Golden Temple in protest with elder people.

After marrying with a militant, she always kept a gun with her and also faced police encounters while staying in forests, fields and other tough areas. Her relatives were forced her to leave that life, but she refused. She was used to working in the fields with her father. When a Punjabi newspaper published the pictures of Sikh people died during DYM, she cut those pictures from the newspapers and circulated among her classmates. She recalls memories as follows:

“One of our neighbour offered a marriage proposal for me with a boy living in foreign country to my parents, but it was my wish to marry with a militant. I first saw a boy in a marriage function in our relative's house and later with whom I got married. He was a top militant leader which I later informed about. Against my family wish, I married and lived

with him in safe as well as though place but I never feared due to blessings of god. We usually travelled together because it was safe for my husband. My husband acquired big name during the militancy movement and later killed himself when caught in police net but police never succeed to arrest him throughout his life.

What I personally feel, the environment of Punjab was very peaceful and all communities were living together before 1980's. Later, Shiv Sena and Indira Gandhi started politicizing every personal issue and demands made by Sikhs. She had a nature where she first was promoted the problem and later acted to control, but rang the wrong bell in Punjab issue.

In newspapers, I mostly read Punjabi newspaper Rojana Ajit, Jagbai and Akali Patrika. I observed that people were keeping faith in the press. But print media of Punjab was divided and working for the interest of relevant groups and readers. They never talked about actual issues of Punjab because very few authentic journalists were active during the time. Print media was able to play crucial role, but it missed the opportunity. The majority of people that time was reading local language newspapers. If these newspapers had written articles with good advice, definitely the result remained positive but it never happened.

The print media never helped to understand or make a mind about militancy problem. The negligence of the governments in Operation Bluestar and Sikh riots in Delhi became a base for strong reaction in shape of militancy. I remind an incident where another militant group killed innocent Hindus in a local village. My husband called the group leader and questioned him. Later they killed a family of police official and deliberately put our name in that killings. After my arrest, the same official blamed my husband but it was not true and I told him about the facts.

There was no major impact of militancy in our area and Sikhs and Hindus were living together, but the attack of the year 1984 aggravated the people. I lost my husband in this religious war, but I feel proud that we never killed any innocent but it were government agencies involved in the killings. The demands were purely related with Punjab state but deliberately converted into Hindu-Sikh issue.

“There were few leaders who were not wanted a solution of the problem and Punjab faced huge loss in context of love, life, respect and brotherhood. Today, youth of Punjab is taking drugs due to unemployed. Sources of the state are shrinking, but the governments are not visionary anymore, I feel”.

The narration of female militant describes various aspects about her interest and affection for militancy movement. The couple was in the movement for the sake of rights but feels that the fight for rights of state shaped as religious war. Whereas the role of politicians did not remain up to the mark, the print media to lost the opportunity to bring peace in the state. How much militancy damaged the state, the internal and external factors were also equally responsible for spreading hatred in the state. The pain for Hindu and Sikh unity in the minds of militants shows the respect of relations but it ignored largely.

4.5 Life History - 3

Manjit Singh (changed name), former Senior Superintendent of Police, who is having age 62 years, born in a Sikh Jat family in Amritsar district. Manjit Singh is now working for the welfare of retired police personals nowadays. His father was doing farming while mother was a housewife. He has two sons and a daughter. He worked for more than 35 years in the police and remain posted at sensitive areas during militancy. Graduate from Pathankot, he joined Punjab Police as Assistant Sub-Inspector in 1980's and his first posting was in Amritsar. A former DGP of Punjab, the then SSP gave him charge of City Kotwali. Many a times, he faced attacks and participated in encounters against militants. He further narrates:

“The environment of Punjab was cordial and very peaceful. People in cities and villages were in a good relationship. There was never any issue of Hindu and Sikh in the state. It all started with Sikh-Nirankari clash in April 1978 which poisoned the environment because Pakistan in the meanwhile started supporting to Sikh youth to wage war against the government and country in 1980’s and to break Hindu-Sikh unity but failed. The murder plot of Nirankari Sant had become a ready ground, which suited our enemy well and they used it to disturb us. They gave ammunition to our people to fight against the nation, and terrorism prevailed long in the state.

During 1980’s, I was reading Punjabi newspaper Jagbani, Punjabi Tribune, Rojana Ajit and English newspaper The Tribune. It was important to get information about the situation of various areas of Punjab. Jagbani, Punjabi Tribune and The Tribune were writing against terrorism, but a few Punjabi newspaper was frequently printing news and bhog advertisements of slain militants and the statements on top pages while other newspapers were working in control. The print media did not act well to understand militancy because they were indulge in word war and condemning each other through news and editorials.

What I think is, the print media of Punjab was fractured and biased. The few Punjabi newspapers were promoting the agenda of terrorist groups. It made an adverse impact on the moral of police busy in fighting against terrorism. The newspapers were highlighting police actions and terrorists were attacking in reaction on another place. Newspapers did not compl with their duties. Due to such a contradictory role, it failed to develop an mutual understanding over the issue. Punjab Kesri and The Tribune tried well to write truth about it, but not any other newspaper dared to touch the realities. The biased news were disturbing the society. And were not following the line of journalism.

The role of political parties was to remain suspected during the period because few were supporting Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. When he became a cult personality, the few other parties came in support of him to earn votes and save lives as well. The terror was so grave in state that rich people like doctors were giving monthlies to terrorists to remain safe. We too were hiding our original identity and do not disclose about family because many families of police personals eliminated by terrorists but government was mum over that which encouraged them further. They were just doing politics and Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan converted it into religious colour. It trained terrorists in their own land and supplied illegal ammunition in large quantity. Punjab remained acute sufferer of terror and lost precious lives and economy which is still unrecoverable”.

The former senior police official narrated various facts in context of militancy problem that it was nurtured on the soil of Punjab. Due to deliberate ignorance and involvement of political parties with militant leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, foreign agencies left no chance to spoil the peaceful environment of Punjab. The mass media has the ability to keep check over the deficiencies in the system, but in Punjab, print media adopted different way and indulged itself into the skirmish by becoming partaker of it. The fractured role of print media and the sides taken by it in support of militancy further aggravated the tension between Hindus and Sikhs. The killing of families of police personals by militants and vice versa brought turmoil in the state. The involvement of Pakistan was rooted deep and acted to break down the country by using youth of our countries.

4.6 Life History - 4

Ranjot Singh (changed name), former SP, who is having age 62 years, born in a Sikh Jat family in Fazlika area. After his retirement from Punjab Police, he is now working for the welfare of retired police personals. Since his childhood, he has intelligent in studies. He has two brothers and do farming in the village. He studied up to B.Sc. Non-Medical from State University. In 1980's, he joined Punjab Police and

remained posted at Sangrur, Bathinda, Mansa, Barnala and Patiala. He still remembers the sensitive time when he engaged in direct gun fight with militants. According to him, he always saved innocents from atrocities during the crucial period:

“I share one incident after joining the police duty, once I was going with my daughter on cycle at home in the village. I saw few young boys standing on the road. They looked me suspicious and I was ready, but they did not act anything. In next days, I got an information that they were wanted to kill me and had handgrenades with them, but due to my daughter over the cycle, they postponed the plan. In this tough environment, police and people survived.

Before 1980's, there was not any issue of fear and people were very accommodating. There was love and affections between Hindus, Sikhs and other communities as well but extremism and terrorism spoiled everything. They were killing innocents and police informers to breakdown the network. People restricted themselves to meet with us which affected police intelligence. Few of them started support to terrorists to save their life and to earn money as well. The youth was more attracted towards gun and aggressive ideology.

The political leaders and their discussions were not positive and were enough to solve the problems. They were more eager for votes and it gave open access to youth to act freely. I was reader and read Rojana Ajit and Punjabi Tribune newspaper during 1980's which were major source of crucial information. Punjabi Tribune was publishing authentic news and had balanced approach, but Rojana Ajit was vague in nature and was supporting Akalis. They were giving news about police-terrorist encounters in routine in newspaper which troubled us a lot.

We were generally worry that when things would be in control. Whenever we went on duty, we never expected safe return until we were not come back to our homes, it worried our families a lot. The rest of the

crimes were in control, but terror activities were increasing. In encounters, loss of human life was continue on both sides. Policemen during the time left jobs in heavy numbers while many policemen killed in gunfight with terrorists and vice versa.

In press, there were few people who were supporting to the cause of terrorists and were good sympathizers of them. But when terrorists started to kill their families, they shifted towards police for help. If we see the role of print media during 1980's, you will find that print media was not performing its duties well. What I remember that news were raising the moral of terrorists and downgrading police personals in few punjabi papers. The print media was promoting division and militancy simultaneously in the state. It is also reality that few journalists were writing in fear to save lives from them. The divided role of press produced fear and failed to bring fruitfull result in the state.

Though, it is Hindu or Sikh, the public relation was cordial and remained cordial till now but fear was so high that at 6 pm in the evening, there was a curfew-like situation in the cities and villages were more worse. I remember an incident when the then SSP of Amritsar advised us to go back to town via Jullundur and Ludhiana instead of Taran Taran and Makhu area, which were highly sensitive areas of militancy.

The Government acted in the last when militancy gripped the state. Our neighbouring country was supplying ammunition to the terrorists. I support the action of the government in the last phase by Beant Singh and our former DGP, KPS Gill. The political trouble shifted to religious due to divide and rule policy of our leaders.”

The story described by a former senior cop is an eye opener where political leaders used it as tool to fetch votes instead of crushing it. It is all due to their greed for power and chair. It is the apathy of the political system that public left free for kill inj the hands of militants and anti-social elements. Although, the role of press raise many

questions that how their divided role was damaging police system but this is also truth that the fear gripped everyone and nobody was daring to write openly against the terrorists. In all matter, the silence of our political leaders found as a serious concern. However, it is also true that militants were also human where they left a police official to save his daughter but the duo's were on the target of each other which put pressure on both sides and their family were worst sufferer of it.

4.7 Life History - 5

M. K. Pradhan (changed name), former Chairman, who is having age 67 years, is a general secretary of a national party. Being beragis, he does not include himself in any religion. He was born in district Jullundur and did his initial studies from local school. After studied up to graduation, he joined politics in 1970's. His father was a farmer while mother was looking after the family. Being a senior member of the party, he is still active in politics.

During the conflict period, his party leaders and workers was doing a rally in Jullundur district. In the meanwhile, two militants came on the spot and fired at them with AK-47. About half a dozen party workers and leaders died in that attack while many others injured. To save Pradhan's lives, a Sikh friend jumped before him and laid his life for friendship. He was also injured in this attack but luckily survived. He openly deliberates over the militancy problem in Punjab:

“Punjab was a prosperous state before 1980's and people of all religion were living together as they were leaving together from centuries. After 1980, the political enmity spoiled religion and prosperity in the state. The social relations at personal level remained unaffected, but in general, it was shaped badly. The Hindu attached more with Hindu and Sikh remain in touch with Sikh only during discussions. I frequently read Punjabi Tribune and Jagbani newspapers because it were not promoting enmity between the public as few other Punjabi newspapers were doing. They were promoting non-state actors in the state.

I remember that newspapers were involved in contradiction and were condemning each other through editorials and news. The reality is, due to difference in ownership and the ideology, they were promoting conflict instead of peace building. The fractured views related with any incident was troubled people a lot. The Hindi readers of the city were getting different perspectives from Punjabi readers living in the villages and it was same as well with them. The incident in newspapers of murder of Nirankari Chief and Lala Jagat Narayan, Hind Samachar Group (HSG), had different stand than Punjabi newspapers. I still remind this because there was a major protest in Jullundur over the issue. The print media primarily failed to build peace and promote cooperation.

What I feel about relationship of Hindus and Sikhs, both communities lived together from centuries in a peaceful environment. The fear level was equally for innocent Hindus and Sikhs. My Sikh friend laid his life to save me so how we can say that the relationship was not cordial? Hindus and Sikhs are brothers of one mother and can not be divided. It is the public which threw out terror from Punjab. If they did not, nobody was able to save Punjab.

The Akali Dal tried to promote the problem while Congress party tried to control it. At certain levels, Congress too made mistakes, but Akalis were more in mood to use terror in their favour. The government acted when militants established a mechanism against the state. It is my personal observation that governments had chances to do well, but they deliberately missed it. The leaders were busy in statements and militants were busy in bloodshed of innocents. The state faced huge losses due to militancy movement and still, it is facing impact of it.”

The narration of a political leader first on the role of press clear one thing that people during the time were to worried and watching towards press for amicable solution of the problem when political leaders failed but it never happened. The general public in relation saved the future of Punjab as his Sikh friend saved his life which shows

the bonding between Hindus and Sikhs. The killing and saviour both were related with same group and forgot message of Guru's to serve others and political system used it to find their goal. The silence of political system increased enmity and spoiled the state system. The media too had vast responsibilities, but failed to protect the innocents.

4.8 Life History - 6

R. C. Bansal (changed name), former cabinet minister, who is having age 70 years, is attached with a state level party. He born in a nearby village of Patiala and did his initial studies from local school and after that got a degree from law college. He has a son and two daughters, all are married and settled well. His father was in agriculture and also doing a small shop in the village. He came into politics in 1960's when green farming was making farmers prosperous. With his hard work and being a prominent Hindu face, he became minister. He is a witness of the troubled period and still remembers the same. During militancy period, he stopped moving to villages in the evening because of on the target of militants. He recalls the black period when all hopes were badly shattered:

“Punjab is a peaceful and prosperous state and Hindus and Sikhs both are shareholder of its progress. But militancy period is an exception of it. The conflict of 1978 at Amritsar drew lines between Sikhs and Nirankaris and murder of Nirankari Sant in 1980 launched the terror. owner of the Hind Samachar Group, Late Lala Jagat Narain murdered in 1981 by fanatic Sikhs which shocked Hindu community because there was no rift between the communities. Our party, which follows the religious ideology, wanted to bring peace. There were few militant groups which wanted communal riots but failed due to our party efforts. This was one of a disturbed period, but *Punjabi's* never left the relationship.

I was read The Tribune and Punjab Kesri during the time span. The Tribune was delivering high quality news and there was no space for yellow journalism. Punjab Kesri was also right, but its level was not the same like Tribune. Punjab Kesri was fearlessly covering violent

incidents of militancy because the group itself had become a victim of militancy. While seeing the top pages of newspapers during that period, I was turn more in worry that where Punjab would go?

Rojana Ajit's attitude towards militancy was soft and the majority of Sikhs were attached with it while Hindus were more attached with Punjab Kesri and The Tribune. Ajit was stressing more on news and advertisement of Bhogs of dead militants and few Akali leaders were participate in that.

The ideology of newspapers disturbed the peace and pour oil on the fire. Punjab Kesri and The Tribune wanted to make peace in the state and wrote against militants. Many times, the incident in shape of news published in newspapers was carry variations. Though murder of Lala Jagat Narain's or DIG Atwal's murder outside Golden Temple, there was variation in the news of Ajit and Kesri. The print media primarily failed to promote one thought over the problem. Very few newspapers clearly wrote against militancy and were unbiased.

As I personally observed, the foreign powers were interfering in the national affairs and people started snatching chains, cars and money etc. They too ill treated with mothers and daughters in the villages and cities. The actual militants fighting with an aim were not involved in these shameful acts.

The state government did not respond strongly to criminals, though it was Badal or Barnala Government, they tackled light handedly and I completely disagree with that. The action taken by Beant Singh and KPS Gill was right but very late. Newspapers helped me to build an certain opinion about this movement. The political rivalry was working behind the scene and supported militancy. Amritsar and Tarantaran belt of Majha region was much affected due to border area near to Pakistan. Both Akali

and Congress party committed mistakes to control militancy. Sikhs always fought against atrocities but here it turned oppsite.”

The history defined by a former cabinet minister describe two aspects. First, he found Hindi and English press's role positive and it gave him a correct understanding of the problem but he also admitted the divided role of Hindi and Punjabi newspapers in producing different stories. The political role of Akali Dal and Congress was also not remain much postive and the mistakes lead Punjab into turmoil. The matter was highly sensive but print media of Punjab and politicians encircled in their own ideologies instead of saving humanity and Punjab.

4.9 Life History - 7

Amarjit Singh Dhillon (changed name), senior correspondent, who is having age 61 years, belongs to a village of district Muktsar, now liviing in Ferozpur district. His father was farmer. They are three brothers and he alone is a district in- charge of a Punjabi newspaper. After passing 10th class in the year 1972, he attracted towards left ideology. He was selected as patwari but left the job due to his interest in journalism. In 1980's, he went to Moscow in USSR (now Russia) for study. He disclosed a very exclusive narrative of a highly sensitive information acquired at foreign land:

“In 1980, I went to Moscow, USSR (now Russia) for study and Dr. D. R. Nostrovich was our teacher who was teaching International Communist Movement to us. He also remained Ambassador of various countries during Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) regime. One day during class, he told us that for India, a very crucial period is waiting to get start and a state named 'Punjab' would be sooner land in trouble. I was amazed and thought that how it is possible because I recently came from Punjab and the environment was very calm and peaceful in the state.

That information disturbed me and the same day in the evening, I went to meet Dr. Kab at his home. During dinner, he told me that at international level, there is a plan designed to disintegrate India and

Central Investigation Agency (CIA) is involve in this. Then he told me a prominent name of a Sikh organization of Punjab. When I told him about the person, he told me that former US President Ronald Regan called the same person for a personal dinner and discussed the matter for 1 hour. When I came back in August 1981, I observed the same situation which shocked me. The time was changed in case of social order in Punjab in camparison of 1980.

The reason for the trouble was Akali Morcha, which they launched against Emergency in 1975. Giani Zail Singh first time played religion card and supported Sikh faces, but it went against him. Congress produced selected tough Sikh faces which later used by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) together.

During the years 1980-1984, the relationship between Hindus and Sikhs remain constant, but in selective areas, the terror and fear mounted high. I remember that in a cremation of a Hindu brother at district Muktsar, only two persons were present in the cremation ground. If we discuss the press role, it was not positive. I was reading The Tribune, Indian Express, Nawa Zamana and Punjabi Tribune. Rojana Ajit had become the firm voice of the extremists and they were running business in that loop.

In opposition, Punjab Kesri became the face of Hindus and presented themselves as saviours of them while The Tribune was unbiased in reporting. Newspapers due to fear and for profits were doing time pass and instead of a solution, it spoiled the environment. The ideologically divided print media failed to promote any positive thought because the newspapers and journalists were divided on religious basis. Only communist newspapers and leaders dared to speak against terror.

Both state and Centre Government did nothing to save Punjab except promises and statements. If someone tried to do, he was killed. The parties were treated Punjab as a laboratory for experiments. For

writing critically, I too faced the threat of militants as one of my friends killed by militants at his home. It was a political issue which later converted into religion and it sets back the state.”

A highly exclusive fact disclosed by a prominent journalist during 1980 about the role of foreign agencies proves that it was all designed in a planning. They were putting money and arms to increase fundamentalism in the state on Sikh issue. The political and religious leaders just became a puppet of the designed situation and were shifting their responsibilities on others. There was pressure over print media because of threat and fear over the lives of journalists, but the newspapers and its team were also divided on the name of religion too disclosed by a prominent journalist. The political leaders used the situation and press for their personal achievements. The threat level to real journalists was to snub their voice so that they can not speak in favour of people and many key journalists lost their lives to save Punjab.

4.10 Life History - 8

D. S. Brar (changed name), former principal correspondent, who is having age 66 years, belongs to a village near Sangrur. Now, he is living in Rajpura and teaching students. He did his post graduation from government college. He started his carrier as journalist from Indian Express newspaper. Now, he is in the academic field and visiting the universities for lectures in related fields especially Punjab. He told his journey as journalist a path of truth and gave its credit to his parents who told him to support truth. He covered many prominent issues like Akali Morcha and army operation at Golden Temple in 1984:

“Punjab from the time of independence facing ignorance of Central leadership of congress party. Former Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru promised Sikhs for preference in the political system, but that did not fulfill. Punjabi, especially Sikhs sacrificed most of lives for the country, but it did not appeal them. To get rights, Sikhs chose agitation path. Print media of that period of time was also following central leadership, so the genuine demands of the Sikhs to ignored by the press. The ASR 1973

was meant for more autonomy in democracy and it was for all states but it took in wrong way. The 1978 incident at Amritsar was also a political mistake because the Centre was well aware about the enmity between Sikh organizations and Nirankaris and a major incident occurred which later hold the whole state.

The environment before 1980 was peaceful, but after that political ignorances carried the state into a dark era. The Operation Bluestar is a result of that failure committed on behalf of the state and Central Government. The relationship of Hindus and Sikhs never disturbed except few cases. The people wanted to live together in peace, but the local and national press acted as the mouthpiece of the Akali Dal and Congress-led state and Centre Government.

Whereas is the question of press, it did not leave any effort to promote troubles in the state. Rojana Ajit was writing for the Majority community Sikhs while Punjab Kesri was writing of the rights of minority Hindus and The Tribune was writing by keeping New Delhi in view. I was reading The Tribune, Indian Express, Rojana Ajit and Indian Express. Rojana Ajit ditched with Sikhs while Punjab Kesri did same with Hindus. They just increased enmity between Sikhs and Hindus, but in reality, they were running a business, though The Tribune was not involved in this. They had sole aim to increase circulation to earn money and to keep influence over the political system.

The Nirankari Sant murder in Delhi was not covered as an incident but used as a tool of promotion. Punjab Kesri published big news while Ajit printed it within the newspapers with half facts. Due to the variation in vision and goal, the print media was producing half-baked news which was not easy for society to digest.

The state government's role was also not satisfying. It was just watching over the happenings. If we discuss the role of government, nor

state or center did anything constructive to save Punjab. Instead of that, the poor working of our leaders of both the parties well used by the neighbor country. The Centre Government conducted Operation Bluestar, which was a big blunder and it created rifts in the mind of Sikhs. The pure political issue due to the negligence of political leaders converted into a religious matter. It set back the progress of state and inhaled many innocent lives.”

The narrative of a former senior journalist of a national news agency explored many hidden facts. The relationship of Sikhs from the time of independence did not remain cordial with congress party. Later, the demands put up before the government did not accept and it turned a demand for autonomy of Sikhs due to various factors. The enmity between the Sikhs and the government encircled other communities too. The role of press described by him to wanted to hold the power to earn money and circulation both as per designed target. These targets diverted the path of press due to stick with the certain ideologies which broke the journalism ethics. The involvement of political parties and government to spoiled the peace while foreign agencies earned benefit of internal enmity.

4.11 Life History - 9

Rajwinder Singh (changed name), a farmer and former political secretary, who is having age 58 years, belongs to Lambi area in Sri Muktsar Sahib. His father was working with Indian Railway in Rajasthan. His wife is a government teacher in a village school. His elder son is working in Mumbai as a professional photographer. Belongs to Sikh religion, he recalls the time because of his affiliations with a state political party. Being a reader, he recalls the time of 1980's when Punjab was entering into most tough phase after partition period. He was reading Rojana Ajit and The Tribune:

“The social order of Punjab started to disturb after the year 1980 when Karnal Court cancels the case against Nirankaris registered due to 1978 Amritsar clash. The outcome of this verdict came into murder of Nirankari Sant, but Hindus were not involve in it any manner. After the

murder of Hind Samachar Group's owner Lala Jagat Narain, the conflict shifted between Hindus and Sikhs. The radicals tried to put this issue in the minds of the Sikhs that Punjab is only for Sikhs and Hindus are not more suitable now being an enemy. Hindus started to migrate to cities from the villages and from cities, they migrated to other states. It started after the incident in the year 1983 when Hindus passengers in a Bus, were killed on road by militants in Muktsar.

If we talk about press, Rojana Ajit was covering Sikh issues on priority. My family was also reading this newspaper and it was giving coverage to militancy incidents on the front pages, but it never described full truth to its readers. Hindus and Sikhs are brothers from centuries, but radicals pour drops of dispute in the relationship. The duty of press is to work unbiasedly for public, but it was not completely followed in Punjab and print media developed a fractured environment for readers.

Following different ideologies, the newspapers were more worried about money and Rojana Ajit and Punjab Kesri was on the similar line. Their money need sharpen the teeth of militancy in the state due to the direct and indirect support on the name of religion. They were not worried to provide a solution of the problem. People till today are not able to single reply that why all that happened? Still, people using pictures of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale behind cars and buses. If you ask them a question, they can not reply accurately.

Congress party to grab power tried to fractured Akali Dal and Sikh community. Later, the forces stood against Congress itself. This was the affection of the Hindu and Sikh community that after so much trouble and pain, politicians and extremists failed in their agenda to start riots. Congress did not keep its promises. Militants thought to achieve the goal with bullets, but they proved wrong.

Where is the question of the government, it was not satisfactory at the initial level, but when government acted, too much loss had happened. Pakistan, supplied bulk of ammunition to our people to kill us. They were just spending on weapons, but hands were ours. The extremist not just killed people, but they tried to snub centuries-old relationship. They failed because '*Waheguru*' (name of god) was with truth. The political issue changed into a religious issue and our politicians got a chance to fool people. Still, the state is facing the burden of those dark days where families are broken due to the selfishness of few people and till day Punjab is paying for the suffering”.

The narration by a Sikh reader is an eye-opener in the 1980's issue is eye opener. Though he was attached with that party which was doing politics on the same religion, but his unbiased views described many mistakes committed in the past by leders. Like as politicians, our press was too busy to make money. They succeeded, but on the dead bodies of their brothers and sisters. The role of the local press was not much constructive as it was required. It was the people who had not left the unity and failed the bid of extremists. The political hand behind the rise of extremism described anti-national role. Due to them, the sons of this motherland lost their lives on both sides.

4.12 Life History - 10

R.K. Garg, (changed name), former government employee and victim, who is having age 65 years, belongs to a medium class family in Sangrur District and nowadays living in Barnala after retirement from a Central Government organization. His father was a shopkeeper and mother was a housewife. He did technical diploma from government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) before joining the power plant. He got married in 1977 and had two daughters and one son. He was reading Punjab Kesri and The Tribune newspapers. He recalls that day when he was sitting in a temple and was doing Prathana (Pray) along with others. In a short while, two turbended boys came with AK-47 and started firing at them. The incident killed three people on the spot while he himself was badly injured. After 5 hours operation, doctors recovered two bullets,

one from the abdomen and second from his chest, but the 3rd bullet was risky to recover so doctors left it near his backbone. He recalls:

“I got my first job in a Fertilizer plant and worked for 3 years and later I shifted to a Central Government organization. That time, I was living in a rented house in the city. After marriage, I started to live in government township. One day in winters, we about 20 people, including women and kids were sitting in the temple and praying. Sooner, two young Sikh boys appeared covered in blankets. Before we could understand, they started firing at us with AK-47. Three bullets directly hit me and I fell on the ground unconsciously while three other people were dead on the spot. When Ambulance was carrying me to Hospital, few Sikhs came on the spot from nearby fields and stopped the vehicle. Later Punjab Police and Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) carried me from the spot. After initial medical treatment, I had referred to Ludhiana, but ambulance stopped due to fault. After a short while, a police gypsy crossing from the spot carried me to Dyanand Medical College (DMC), Ludhiana for operation. The doctors evacuated two bullets from my body while the third is still lying near to my backbone. For the next two years, I got treatment at Sir Gangaram Hospital, New Delhi. It was the worst time of my life. My family and education of my kids was totally disturbed.

If we talk about state and people, there was love, respect and emotional bonding between Hindus and Sikhs but after the year 1980, it reshaped opposite and filled with anger and fear. Sikh extremists forcefully wanted to moved out Hindus from Punjab and wanted to capture houses of Hindus as it was became a routine discussion Though, all people were not same, but majority brains were falling in the line. Punjab Kesri and The Tribune were remained full of news related to violent incident on top and inside pages and it was created fear in the minds. These papers were delivering correct news, but terrorists were against the Punjab Kesri because it was against them.

The newspapers were also internally fighting. The language used by few state newspapers against each other was harsh and was impacting the minds of public. When press was doing all this, how people could remain saved from the effect. As Punjab Kesri was supporting Hindus, Rojana Ajit was promoting Sikhs. How you can expect honesty from newspapers while they were taking sides and were in pressure of militants too. Print media has become a space to earn money.

For the rise of militancy, our politicians were responsible for it? They were fighting to grab state power so they were taking help from militants as well. In our country, the ultimate goal is chair and power. In Punjab, Sikh killed Hindu and in Delhi, Hindu killed Sikhs but ultimately it was the murder of humanity. Militancy effected every single family directly and indirectly. The state government failed to reply against the militants and they misguided the people. My wife deliberately disturbed by few hardliners in office during government job and I made a complaint to the authority, but nothing happened. She had taken pre retirement from office.

Till the day, I am fighting for red card due to affected by militancy and in absence of action, I have to moved to High Court for justice. The militancy whereas killed thousands of innocents, it made Punjab economically poor and left us divided into communities”.

The pain of a victim during militancy increased when government system denied to protect their rights. In the case, this all happening but system is not worrying for anyone. The peaceful and loving people divided into groups due to political gimmicks. The state and central leadership played a poor role instead of protecting them which was needed. The eager to grab power launched an enmity situation between the public. Though it was press or politics; both generated a fractured relationship. The killings of innocent Hindus in Punjab and Sikhs in Delhi riots thereafter is a result of political failures which people need to understand deeply.

4.13 Life History - 11

Jangir Kaur, (changed name), reader and victim, who is having age 62 years, belongs to Ferozepur district. She has studied up to class 8 from local school. They are seven sisters and brothers, and all settled well. Her father was working in a private company while mother was taking care the home. She got married in the year 1973 and has two daughters. Jangir Kaur's husband Rajan Singh was working in a state department and belonged to Fazilka district. She was reading Rojana Ajit and Jagbani newspapers since marriage and were follower of Nirankari sect. One day, she along with her husband, Gurdhayan Singh, were going to Nirankari Bhawan on scooter when her husband was gunned down from point-blank range and three bullets were fired in his head. He died on the spot. She narrated the emotional and painful incident:

“I still remember that faithful day when my husband was gunned down by the militants and my family faced pain of it till today. There was a holiday. Me and my husband were going to Nirankari Bhawan on scooter. When we reached near to Bhavan (building), my husband hit with bullets in head. We both fell on the ground. We both carried to the hospital by local public where my husband declared brought dead. Later, few people came to hospital to check the situation and I personally saw them. They came to get information about my husband that is he alive or not! After two days of the incident, militant group Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) apologized for the injuries to me through a Punjabi newspaper which people told me later. They wrote that *“Bhen nu chot pahunchan da sada maksad nahi se te iss gal da sanu afsoos hai”* (It was not our target to injured sister and for this, we apologized).

My husband had earlier received threat letters, but he never told us. After his death, we found those threat letters at home given by the same organization. Later, they wanted to help my family. First, they were killing and after that they wanted to help. After few months, we received a clue about the involvement of a colleague of my husband, living near

the home. That incident broke my family and people had stopped to visit our house due to fear.

This was the same situation of Punjab, the prosperous and peaceful state Punjab before 1980 went into religious extremism. The Hindu and Sikhs were friend, later stopped to talked with each other. Through newspapers, we were getting aware of the troubled situation in the state. The newspapers were covering militancy related violent incidents on the top pages and next morninh when we were read that news, it spread more fear in the minds of public. Nobody had that dare to talk about it openly. The newspapers were not giving any help to understand the problem. We too were not keen and aware to get information about it.

What I still remember that there was a difference of news of Jagbani and Rojana Ajit. I was personally felt it while reading. Rojana Ajit was more propagating Sikh issues only and this stand badly damaged the society because others were too taking positions on it. The newspaper was busy in promoting of the incident into bigger shape. Second, people were getting killed on the name of religion and politics. Though I had a doubt on it, but later it was cleared that on the name of religion, they were killing people.

The government gave time militancy to prevail. We also heard that after the murder of Baba Gurbachan Singh, the killer went to a politician's house to hide. A political drama ruined Punjab's economy and relations. Later, I forgave to those who were involved in my husband's murder. They too are our brothers and if they had committed a mistake, it is our duty to forgive them.

The people of the state faced a very tough period and saw fear and death. People lost their family members and still not able to overcome from that loss. The enimity of Nirankaris and Sikhs turned personally and reached into homes and it

also encircled Hindus thereafter. The enmity level went high after issue of Hukamnama by SGPC against Nirankaris to severe relations. The terror groups involved in carnage were totally blind on the name of religion. The failure of political system brought the state under suspension and print media instead of prevention, become the parttaker of it.

4.14 Analysis of Print Media Representations and Ground Experiences

The Sikh-Nirankari clash in April 1978 brought stiffness in the relationship of print media groups of Punjab along with the society. The incident sow the seeds of enmity between Sikhs and Nirankaris, and equally established a division between vernaculars newspapers. The troubled period was started after the court verdict in the year 1980 wherein all Nirankaris were accused for the 1978 incident. The killing of Nirankari head in the year 1980 in Delhi had indicated in advance about the future developments. However, the political leadership unfortunately failed to understand the gravity of the problem. After that print media were targeted by militants for raising voice against them. Lala Jagat Narayan was killed on a state highway by militants in the year 1981 due to religious intolerance. Then, there was no full stop on violent activities in the society, which was bringing increasingly under grip of violence of the whole of the state.

The print media has a duty to highlight every small or large event or incident in shape of news without subjectivity. As already discussed, the stakeholders of print media groups in Punjab during the 1980's had belonged to different cast, creed and the most significantly with different ideologies. All these factors were affecting their writing along with their business ventures based on different customer groups. The newspaper after the 1978 incident was started to divide society, but it came on the floor after the murder incident of Nirankari Sant and owner of Hind Samachar Group in the year 1980 and 1981 respectively. Thereafter, the situation had turned from the bad into the worst. The enmity between print media had begun in Punjab when extremism had started to acquire religious colour in early of 1980's. Print media had actively published news and editorials related to the actions and the reactions after the serious murder crimes.

At a point, the owner of Rojana Ajit had clearly accepted the divisive and fractured role played by the print media. He also appealed the rival newspaper groups to change the stand and discourse for saving Punjab. The admission of an editor discloses a crucial reality that hurt religious sentiments had brought the society into dark. The vernacular newspapers had made the complex situation through publishing news, editorials and articles related to the incidents for accruing monetary profits. The affected thought is enough to create a devastating effects on individual and the society at large. The print media in Punjab had published news related material was doing the same.

The field study revealed that people still remembers the major violent incidents occurred in Punjab and recalls the divisive representations made by newspapers. The print media through news, editorials and articles was branding militancy in different labels. One group has accepted that it was a result of atrocities on a specific community, while other has denied it by indicating that it was a political move. The fractured news was reshaping communities into the separate religious groups when the news items assimilated for public discussions affecting public opinion. Finally, it resulted into the form of fractured public sphere. The field study showed that the different readers admitted that the news was making an impact over their mind and forming and affecting their opinion directly. The field study also reveals that Hindus were more attached within the Hindu circle. They were reading Hindi daily, Punjab Kesri in majority. While, the Sikh community were reading Punjabi daily, Rojana Ajit and more assimilated within the same community circle.

The death case of Lala Jagat Narain had published on top pages by Punjab Kesri and The Tribune and described it as a major loss to the society. Even, the Tribune had not left the chance and praised his workings as media fraternity and political leader. However, Rojana Ajit narrated the incident news on next pages. Even Next day, Rojana Ajit published the violence news on priority basis erupted against the murder of Lala Jagat Narain but ignored discussions over ghastly murder of a media group owner. The Punjabi newspaper published news of murder of Nirankari Sant without naming Sant

before his name. After sharp criticism from other press groups, the newspaper in reply published few harsh articles by naming rival newspapers in owners.

Rojana Ajit whereas was writing more in favour of Punjab, Sikh issues and Akali Dal, Punjab Kesri itself admitted that the newspaper supported Akalis in 1977 elections while owner Lala Jagat Narain was a staunch congress man and was cabinet minister during regime of Congress party. Ajit criticized the policy of leadership and media business and wrote extensively over the issue in its editorials, while The Tribune remained more based on nationalistic approach.

Awarding different labels to the people indulged in violence by the press was also a concern in the meantime. Revealing identity by mentioning religion in news was exhibiting frustration, anger and friction in the society and in the media groups simultaneously. Rojana Ajit kept its stand soft over militancy and had tried to justify extremism through editorials while accusing state for atrocities over Punjab and Sikhs but lesser stressing on Punjabi and Punjabiya. The newspaper used affiliations like Ativadi, Dehshatgard, Dehshatmand and Dehshatpasand, etc. While Punjab Kesri adopted more aggressive terms like Ugervadi and Aatankvadi for those indulging in violence. The newspaper had also mentioned religions before labels in few news. The group was more concerned about critical situation of Hindus while criticizing the role of leaders for the troubled situation of Punjab. The Tribune was using single label as terrorist for those generating violence in the state.

Both the newspapers of New Delhi, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times was giving priority to the Punjab situation and prominently placing violent issues on top pages. The priority to the violence on top was feeding more readership; but simultaneously it was increasing rifting between the communities at par with state media. Both the newspapers were using 'militants,' and 'extremists' as labels for those creating violence but at the time of Operation Bluestar, the newspapers changed the terms with 'terrorist' for fighting against the army. The national media grabbed full chance to deliver full information with tough headings on news, editorials and articles showing no sympathy. Even though, writers like Khushwant Singh too faced the irony of the editors for returning his award against the attack.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The militancy problem in Punjab had its own troubled issues and serious concerns as it grasped the life of people for two decades. Many scholars, political leaders, bureaucrats, police personals, military officers along with senior editors, journalists and former militants, who had experienced this phase, have written their personal experiences and narratives in the shape of books and articles. The problem of militancy has been studied in the context of the role of the army, failure of the state and centre Governments, impact of green revolution and unemployment and foreign hand with in-depth analysis along with the role of print media. The constructive attempts of the previous research in the context of the role of print media had restricted itself to the selective issues from a few newspapers and partially discussed it. However, it has largely ignored a comparative analysis of the newspapers' representations on various incidents within English and Vernacular print media within the state and across India as well. The study has analyzed five English and Vernacular newspapers. They are three from Punjab and two from the national capital territory, New Delhi. The contents in the shape of news, editorials and articles representations of the selected incidents related with militancy problem during the set period of 1980-1984 have been analyzed.

The newspapers published from Punjab, The Tribune, Punjab Kesri and Rojana Ajit were not only having readership based on the language speaking but also on political, ideological and social grounds. The Tribune was covering metropolitan readership of Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab while Punjab Kesri was more concentrating on the urban Hindu readers due to acceptance of Hindi language, while Rojana Ajit was more acceptable in the rural area readers with the Sikh majority, speaking and reading Punjabi. Such diverse readership had given these newspapers an exclusive edge over each other. While, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times published from New Delhi had published the news, the editorials related to the problem of Punjab being the distant observer. Moreover, they were continuously representing the state issues at the national level. The strategies adopted by the print media groups had paved their way to establish itself; but at the same time, they had initiated the process to form fractions

in the social solidarity as they reported the incidents politically and ideologically motivated.

The study has been conducted keeping in mind the formulated objectives. The objectives are – first, to explore how print media was representing the diverse incidents associated with militancy and what was the reason behind the politics of such representations; second, to explore whether the furnished news items were properly described the incidents to which extent that it moulded and shaped the opinion of the masses; and final, to prepare a comparative analysis of the print media representations for the occurred incidents related to militancy in Punjab. Furthermore, the study has formulated two hypotheses related to the problem of militancy in Punjab. The hypotheses are – first, English and Vernacular newspapers due to having ideological bases were not neutrally reporting occurring incidents related to militancy and worked according to their own set ideological positions. Second, the influence of Vernacular and English newspapers on sensitive issues and incidents occurred during 1980-1984 was a major contributory factor in moulding and shaping the opinions and sentiments of the readers. The study has attempted to understand and analyze the role of the print media in the context of the problem of militancy based on the above-mentioned research objectives and research hypotheses. After the in-depth study, the research has in a position to put the arguments related to the issues area.

The study has found that English and Vernacular print media of Punjab and Delhi owned by the different groups had seen the problem as an opportunity where from they can grow. In addition, the print media had not played a politically neutral role during the troubled phase of Punjab. The media was busy in reaping the benefits while reporting the horrible incidents and presented ideologically driven information related to the problem before people. One can understand the role of the print media in representing the occurred horrific incidents during this phase. The print media through labelling differently based on their interests and ideology reported the incident of the murder of media tycoon and political leader, Lala Jagat Narain. Punjab Kesri and The Tribune, for instance, had termed this incident a huge loss for the society and acclaimed his services for the society, while Rojana Ajit denounced the incident of murder in inside

page but also could not be found any personal comment in the editorial page simultaneously same day. The next day, the same newspaper had stressed more on the aftermath violence that may be understood through the place given to the news in the newspaper, which was on the front page of the paper.

After the news coverage of the incident of murder by the editor of the newspaper Rojana Ajit, the office of the newspaper had met with the attack of people. The newspaper had sternly criticised as saying that the incident of the attack was an attempt for oppressing the voice of Punjabi newspaper and blamed other newspapers for the incident. While The Tribune had published the news regarding the murder on the front page by criticising the act while published news with less stress of the aftermath violence related with the murder on the same day of the incident.

Rojana Ajit emerged largely as a voice of the majority Sikh community. The newspaper kept on to attack over the Congress-led Government at the Centre for allegedly doing biased treatment with Sikhs in Punjab. The newspaper related such attacks over the Centre Government were highlighting through publishing editorials. It also adhered to the aggressive ideology in which it continuously attacked over the rival newspapers. The newspaper had allegedly termed the others biased during the reporting of the incidents. The conflicting environment among the print media has started to emerge due to the allegedly blaming others by Rojana Ajit. As, Rojana Ajit had strongly criticised the suggested few points for solving the problem by Prem Bhatia, an editor of The Tribune. Even though, the newspaper did not hesitate to call the editor of The Tribune as an advisor of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

The Punjab Kesri had emerged primarily as a voice of the minority Hindu community. The newspaper had adopted a very stern stand against the problem of militancy and the militants along with Akali Dal's support to the religious extremist through publishing the news with importance and its editorials. Furthermore, the newspaper was publishing the news with the critical views of the militant leader, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. However, Rojana Ajit had sternly criticised Punjab Kesri as being presented an appeal to Hindus for denouncing the Punjabi language over the Hindi language during Punjabi Suba movement. While The Tribune has largely adopted a

secular and nationalist stand in the news presentation. It had published critical views against militants in news, editorials and articles. It was further criticizing Akali Dal for the state's condition.

The Delhi based newspapers, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times had adopted the centric approach during publishing the news related to the problem of militancy and presented nationalistic viewpoint before the readership. Both the newspapers were covering minor and major violent incidents on the front and inside pages during 1980-1984. The Hindustan Times, for instance, had published emotional photographs along with news related to the murder of the Nirankaris Chief on the front-page. It had also published frequently lesser important news such as chopping of cow's tale on front-page, which showed the newspaper's interests to instigate the religious sentiments in the national capital territory. However, the soft stand and discourse of these two newspapers had turned mild tone in reporting the news regarding the problem before the Operation Bluestar and after the Operation adopted very tough stand and started using labelling against militants as 'terrorist'.

The field study has revealed what people have said about the print media's affiliation with the political ideology that was linked directly or indirectly with the existing political parties. People have recognized the political affiliation or comfort of The Tribune and Punjab Kesri along with the two national newspapers with the Congress party ideology while Rojana Ajit with the Akali Dal's ideology. A few people have denied such type of affiliation with the newspaper houses.

The print media representation had played a major role in shaping and moulding opinions and sentiments of their readers. The newspapers published from Punjab were not only engaged in shaping the opinions but also contributed to de-shaping it at the same time. The newspapers had published the news and the editorials related to the occurred incidents suitable to their ideology and keeping readership in mind as well. During the troubled period, the newspapers had acted as mouthpiece of particular language speaking and religious community. The major reason might be achieving more number of circulation of copies of a particular newspaper for adopting such kind of strategy by the media houses. As an editor of Rojana Ajit had published an editorial

in which he called for leaving such downgraded practices aimed at reaping monetary benefits at the cost of the health of the state.

The people of Punjab were caught in a mid between the state and the militants who were allegedly fighting against the state for rights for the majority community. During the time, print media had a firm grip over Punjab's readership and were only the primary source of information for the public. According to various scholars, the mass media is an entity, which has a capacity to influence the masses with its positive or negative reporting. The print media of Punjab followed the same line, represented the incidents, according to their embraced ideology, and did not hesitate to disturb the sentiments of the readers. The print media was busy in construction of reality instead of presenting the actual situation. Every newspaper was trying to promote its own viewpoint in the context of the militancy. The media has emerged as a divided entity on religious issues and promoting such issues that were instigating conflicts in the community.

Print media, instead of a responsible caretaker of democracy, was involved into a war of words and busy to justify its viewpoints in the context of militancy problem of Punjab. Their mediated realities in relation to militancy issue, projected a different story. For instance, the difference in the position taken by the newspapers can be observed during the reporting of the incident of the murder of Nirankari Chief, Baba Gurbachan Singh, which was shifted on religious lines. The editorial war started between Rojana Ajit and Punjabi Kesri where Ajit was criticised by the editor of Pratap and Punjab Kesri for not using affix word 'Baba' or chief before his name. Further, both the newspapers were targeted by Rojana Ajit for criticising its stand and did not hesitate to call them 'venom spreaders' in its editorial.

After the murder of chief editor of Punjab Kesri, Romesh Chandra, Punjab Kesri labelled this as a major loss in the context of society and state while Rojana Ajit seemed a little worried over the murder of a media fraternity. However, it tried to divert the debate over the labelling of the Sikh community by media groups, which made a murder representation insignificant while advancing their set positions in the already emotionally charged atmosphere turned more turbulent. The Tribune, on the other

hand, whereas mourned the death of their dear friend, journalist, it also alerted the state and the Akalis not to be carried away by the act of deterrence from the side of the militants to spoil the atmosphere for talks and peaceful negotiations but avoided itself to reply any blame.

The newspapers were further divided into categories to naming violence and the people involved in it, which were used expediently by these newspapers in such a way where it is de-legitimizing the militancy problem. On the contrary, they were also indulged in safeguarding the militants. The Punjab Kesri had labelled the militants as Ugravadi and Aatankvadi, even though it did not hesitate to mention religion before naming them. It is considered an unethical act in journalism. Rojana Ajit, on the other hand, with its soft stand over the violence refused to call the people creating violence and murders by giving religious and material reasons behind it. The newspaper with a soft corner carried the issues and described violence as an output of atrocities over Sikhs by the prejudiced governance of Congress. The newspaper carried names like Ativadi, Dehshatgard, Dehshatmand, Dehshatpasand, etc. were aimed to describe the people involved in the conflict. However, The Tribune was very critical over the coverage of the militancy problem in the state and voiced for curtailing the freedom of the press. It also labelled militants as terrorists and had shown a little sympathy for their cause.

The field study in this context has found that the majority of the people who were reading the newspapers were under the influence of the newspapers along with those who were not regular readers. In addition, the field study has discovered that the respondents have admitted that they were more devoted to those newspapers who were talking largely about the community they belonged to. For instance, Hindus were reading more Punjab Kesri while Sikhs were reading more Rojana Ajit than any other newspaper. However, The Tribune was limited in number, was read by both the societies. The comparative analysis of print media representations has found that ideologically divided newspapers were coming in contradiction during publishing the news related to the various incidents. Rojana Ajit's aggressive position against the Punjab Kesri and The Tribune and Congress Government' at the Centre continued up

to the Operation Bluestar. The Punjab Kesri, on the other hand, had continued its antagonism against Akalis, though after the operation, the newspaper declared it unfortunate and called Hindus and Sikhs for joint Kar Seva to renovate Golden Temple.

The editorials of the Punjab Kesri also published justifications due to which the military action was inevitable. The Tribune also supported the military action in the Golden Temple as a necessary action as the Government's efforts failed to flush out militants. It also called true Sikhs to be truly nationalist and secular and advised them to remain insensitive to the cause of militancy. On the other hand, the news and the editorials of Delhi newspaper The Times of India remained unsympathetic to the cause of militants and adopted tougher stand after the Operation Bluestar. While The Hindustan Times, also following the same line, changed the discourse after the operation and remained insensitive to the militants, and did not hesitate to name them terrorists.

The print media of Punjab was entangled in a scenario where they had started to look at the incidents through the communal line, which resulted in stiffness between the print media houses of Punjab. The incident of 1978 became a base of the conflicting situation between the print media, which once again was exposed in 1984. The newspapers representations of news were not just fracturing the society into pieces, but it also became a firm source to settle scores against each other. The published material in the shape of news, editorials and articles reviewed during the research found that the language of the newspapers was harsh and provoking which was giving an impression of friction in the media groups itself.

At the initial stage of the study, the predictive statements have been formulated for pursuing study further. It was hypothesised that the English and Vernacular newspapers due to having ideological bases were not reporting neutrally the occurring incidents related to militancy and worked according to their own set ideological positions. The selected incidents in the research, however, saw a variation in the representation of the facts and were busy in presenting their own narratives. However, the murder case of Nirankari Chief, Baba Gurbachan Singh, and murder of media tycoon and owner of Hind Samachar group, Lala Jagat Narain, the murder of chief

editor Romesh Chandra of Punjab Kesri along with the aftermath of Operation Bluestar and labelling issue, the newspapers diversely presented the facts. The newspapers remained busy to denounce each other over-representation of news and termed their own ideology and facts correct in order. Due to the ideology differences, the labelling awarded by the various newspaper groups to the people indulge in violence was different. Rojana Ajit has remained softer in the stand while Delhi based newspapers adopted tough stand during the army operation and termed them, terrorists. While Punjab Kesri and The Tribune from its initial level carried tough stand in labels. To label that all the newspapers had reported the incidents in line with their embraced ideology would be wrong, some were, and some were not.

It was also hypothesised that the influence of the vernacular and the English newspapers on sensitive issues and incidents occurred during 1980-1984 was a major contributory factor in moulding and shaping the opinions and sentiments of the readers. The fractured view presented by newspapers sooner started to affect the society and selective flow of information for the set class of readership by different newspapers encouraged peoples to remain in similar groups. The bitterness of print media of Punjab increased the enmity between the society as well which was established and confirmed in the field study conducted in various districts of three regions; Malwa, Majha and Doaba of Punjab. The respondents of all four communities have accepted that the newspapers were diversely presenting facts in news and editorials while using harsh language as well. The majority of the respondents have also accepted that newspapers influenced a lot in the formation of their opinion and sentiments during the troubled period.

In sum up, the study has attempted to fill the gaps that were found during the review of the literature. The role of print media and its representation of violent issues in the shape of news, editorial and articles were diversified. It was largely affecting the sentiments and opinion of the masses in the state of Punjab. The fractured viewpoint presented by print media further initiated division in the society, which was later accepted by an editor of a prominent Punjabi media house which was a major revealing during the troubled period. It is evident from the study that if media could form a

peaceful society, it has also potency to destabilize it if it plays a negative role. There is a need to enlarge the study period with more involvement of respondents. There is need to do an in-depth analysis of each group in the context of militancy problem in Punjab so a correct picture could be attained which further would help to find more realities and faults on account of both sides so that, the peace and harmony could be maintained in the state.

5.1 Recommendations

The role of print media during Punjab militancy problem had remained problematic. Instead of playing constructive role in society, they had acted in fracturing the peaceful social environment due to variations in their ideological perspectives. The representation of violent incidents in its own tunes had affected public mind during the 1980's. Therefore, there is a need that media houses ought to introspect their role-played during the crisis. The state should promulgate certain guidelines for the media to deal with the very sensitive issues in society. There should be decentralisation of power for regulating media reporting.

5.2 Future Scope of the Study

Every study has research limitations, which are applicable to the present study as well. There are few points which may be included in the further studies. The period of the study may be extended in the future studies. The militancy affected families or individual person moved to other states and to foreign countries may be included in the studies to follow. The present study is based on review of selective incidents from five newspapers with available news representations. The more incidents may be added in the future studies by incorporating more regional as well as national newspapers along with Hindi and English magazines, journals and other contemporary folk literatures for better understanding of the problems and their impacts on society. The study of the present study has been based on three regions - Malwa, Majha and Doaba of Punjab. The future studies may be conducted on specific regions. The role of women is also very significant in the study. The women may be encouraged for the discussions to find their piece of narrative as well.

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