

**YOUTH CONSCIOUSNESS IN PUNJAB FROM 1966 TO 1993: A STUDY
OF NAXALITE MOVEMENT AND SIKH SEPARATISM**

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TARSEM SINGH

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

PANJAB UNIVERSITY

CHANDIGRAH



Department of History
Panjab University, Chandigarh

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My Jawal

24-08-2021

Sukhmani Bal Riar
01/09/2021

(Prof. Muhammad Asaf Ganai)
HEAD
External Examiner
Department of History
University of Kashmir
Kashmir University
Srinagar.

(Prof. Sukhmani Bal Riar)
Supervisor

(Dr. Priyatosh Sharma)
Chairperson
Chairperson
Department of History
Panjab University
Chandigarh-160014



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Name: *Prof. Sukhmami Bal Riar*


Head of the Department
Chairperson
Department of History
Panjab University
Chandigarh-160014

Co-Supervisor
Name:

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ABBREVIATIONS

CPI–M	- Communist Party of India Marxist
CPI(M-L)	- Communist Party of India Marxist–Leninist
APCCCR	- Andhra Pradesh Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries
PEPSU	- Patiala and East Punjab State Union
PCCR	- Punjab Coordination Committee of Revolutionaries
PSU	- Punjab Student Union
CSU	- Chandigarh Students Union
AICCCR	- All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries
POC	- Punjab Organizational Committee
PCRC	- Punjab Communist Revolutionary Committee
PCCCR	- Punjab Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries
PHC	- Punjab-Himachal Committee
SAD	- Shiromani Akali Dal
SYL	- Sutlej Yamuna Link
PUCL	- People’s Union for Civil Liberties
KCF	- Khalistan Commando Force
BTFK	- Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan
KLF	- Khalistan Liberation Force
BKI	- Babbar Khalsa International
TADA	- Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapters	Title	Page No.
	INTRODUCTION	1-16
1.	NAXALITE MOVEMENT IN PUNJAB FROM 1967 TO 1975	17-44
2.	POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUTH IN PUNJAB FROM 1967 TO 1975 –A FIELD SURVEY	45-60
3.	SIKH SEPARATIST MOVEMENT IN PUNJAB FROM 1978 TO 1993	61-112
4.	POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUTH IN PUNJAB FROM 1978 TO 1993 –A FIELD SURVEY	113-132
5.	STATE RESPONSE TO ARMED MOVEMENTS IN PUNJAB FROM 1967 TO 1993	133-156
	CONCLUSION	157-167
	APPENDICES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appendix-1• Appendix-2• Appendix-3	168-190
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	191-214

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, the world has witnessed increased participation of youth in politics. This has added a new dimension to the dynamics of global politics and political movements.¹ India—especially the state of Punjab—has also been impacted by this phenomenon. The youth of Punjab has been receptive towards any movement—pre- or post- Independence, peaceful or violent—that promised a positive social change.² The youth of Punjab has, since time immemorial, participated wholeheartedly in the political affairs of the state.

Some of the prominent pre-Independence political movements/organisations in Punjab include: the Peasant Movement (1907), the Ghadar Movement (1913–1948), the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–1922), the Akali Dal Morchas (1920–1925), the Babbar Akali Lehar (1921), the Naujawan Bharat Sabha (1926), the Kirti Kisan Party (1926), and the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army (1928). Punjabis have within them the spirit of sacrifice and history bears testimony to the fact that during India's Independence struggle a disproportionate majority of freedom fighters who were incarcerated or hanged were from Punjab.

In post-Partition Punjab, three major political movements occurred: a peaceful Punjabi Suba Movement and two violent movements, namely the Naxalite Movement and the Sikh Separatist Movement or the Khalistan Movement. The last two left an impact on the socio-cultural, economic, and political ethos of not just Punjab, but of the entire nation. The present study focuses on the period 1966–93, during which the two-armed movements raged wild in Punjab. It was during this period that the state of Punjab was reorganised on linguistic basis, leading to the creation of the states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, and giving birth to what came to be known as the *Punjab problem*. This was also the time when the Green Revolution was launched in Punjab, which fundamentally reconfigured the state's social, economic, cultural, and political structures.³

¹Tarrow, S.G. (2011). *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics*. Cambridge University Press. P.12.

²Altach, P.G. (1970). Student Movements in Historical Perspective: The Asian case. *Youth & Society*,1(3), 333-357, P.334.

³Gill, S. S., & Singhal, K.C. (1985). Genesis of Punjab Problem. *The Punjab Crisis: Challenge and Response*. Delhi: Mittal Publications. P. 605.

Punjab's first armed movement, that is, the Naxalite Movement began in the late 1960s; the other, the Sikh Separatist Movement, began in the early 1980s. The former aimed to capture power and establish a classless society based on the ideas of Marx, Lenin, and Mao.⁴ The latter intended to establish a religion-based separate State. The principal difference between the two was that the former was based on class-consciousness while the latter on identity-consciousness.⁵

Several social, political, and economic determinants inspired the youth to actively participate in these movements, which in turn shaped their attitudes and political consciousness. Active participation of youth in politics is not a recent phenomenon. During the German revolution of 1848⁶ in Austria, in Czarist Russia (1917), and in several Eastern European countries, students performed an active and decisive role and became the torchbearers for the modern ideas of socialism, liberty, and equality. Youth played an important role in shaping not only the immediate politics but also the larger political culture of a society. In the words of Hammack,

In any society, youths constitute a social grouping that is latent in its potentiality. The sustenance and development of every society is dependent upon how youths are socialized into the present realities and given the creative space to develop new potentialities for future progress.⁷

According to the International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Youth movements are the organized, conscious attempts by young people to bring about or resist societal change. A prominent feature of modern societies, youth movements emerge out of generational tensions and relations a rooted in specific socio-historical conditions. Youth movements have taken a variety of forms, including student rebellions, cultural innovations (literary, artistic, musical),

⁴ Isaac Deutscher (Polish: Izaak Deutcher, 3 April 1907- 19 August 1967 was a Polish Marxist writer), once observed that the Chinese Communist revolution present the paradox of “the most archaic of nations avidly absorbing the most modern of revolutionary doctrines, the last words in revolution, and translating it into action. Lacking any native ancestry, Chinese Communism descends straight from Bolshevism. Mao stands on Lenin’s sholders. This echoes the generally accepted view of the historical relationship between Maoism and Leninism. Among most western students of Chinese communism, it is something of altruism that Marxism came to China in its Leninist form; for different reasons, Maoists have long been saying that Mao (and only Mao) is the true heir of Lenin.

⁵Ghosh, S.K. (Ed.). (1992). *The Historic Turning-Point: A Liberation Anthology* (Vol. 1). SK Ghosh. P.34.

⁶The revolution of 1848 included a series of republican revolts against European monarchies, beginning in Sicily, and spreading to France, Germany, Italy, and the Austrian Empire. They all ended in failure and repression and were followed by widespread disillusionment among liberals.

⁷Hammack, P.L. (2010). Identity as burden or benefit? Youth, historical narrative, and the legacy of political conflict. *Human Development*, 53(4), 173-201, P.177.

scientific revolutions, religious reforms, ethnic revolts, nationalist and political generations, and environmental, peace and antiwar movements.⁸

It is well-known that political parties recruit youth into active politics, thereby making them politically aware citizens of the republic. Several countries have witnessed anti-colonial struggles: India and Pakistan in early 20th century; Burma and Ceylon in 1948, Kuwait in 1961, Maldives in 1965, the UAE in 1971, Vietnam in 1945, Cambodia in 1953, Laos in 1953, Guyana in 1958, Granada in 1974, Ghana in 1957, South Africa during 1965–79, and Caribbean countries such as Dominica in 1978, St. Lucia 1979, Jamaica in 1962, and Trinidad and Tobago in 1962.⁹ The world has also witnessed numerous youth-led protests. For example, in the US, youth was at the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement (1965) as well as during the campaign against the Vietnam War (early 1960s).¹⁰

In Pakistan, students protested against the dictatorship of President Ayub Khan in 1968. The Zapatista Movement of 1994 was a youth-led fight for the rights of the indigenous people of Mexico. Even in communist countries like China, youth famously struggled for democracy in the Tiananmen Square in 1989. Youth activism and their participation in political movements continues to take place at local, regional, national, and international levels.¹¹

Technology and social media have made it easy for local or regional protests to gain national, even international, recognition. During the Arab Spring in 2010, social media helped young people organise an unprecedented revolution that began in Tunisia and spread like wildfire into Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, Bahrain, and other Middle Eastern countries. During 2011, the Occupy Wall Street Movement in New York raised a voice against economic disparity, corporate greed, corruption, and over-interference of private players in public affairs. The Dakota Access Pipeline Movement of 2016–17 raised

⁸Braungart, R.G., & Braungart, M.M. (1988). From Yuppies to Yuppies: Twenty Years of Freshman attitudes. *Public Opinion*, 11(3), 53-57, P.55.

⁹Clegg, P. (2012). Independence Movements in the Caribbean: Withering on the Vine? *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 50 (4), 422-438, P. 427.

¹⁰Laqueur, W. (2000). *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction*. Oxford University Press, P. 26

¹¹*Ibid.*, P. 21; Mazumdar, C. (1972, September 1). A few Words to the Revolutionary Students and Youth. *Chingari*, Collected Writings of comrade Charu Mazumdar, 1(2), P.20,

environmental concerns like damage to air, water, wildlife, and farming. The protest launched by Palestinian youth in 1967 against Israeli occupation of Gaza is extant.¹²

It would not be an exaggeration to state that almost all countries of the world have witnessed some form of political unrest related to identity, culture, ethnicity, religion, or nationality. However, most of such troubles seem to have originated from ethnic identity consciousness. This is true not only in the case of India, especially in south and northeast India, but in the case of several countries. The wave of ethnic identity and ethnic political mobilisation assumed such a pervasive character that the tremors were felt equally by both the developed and developing nations. For example, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Iraq, Turkey, Australia, Canada, former Yugoslavia, and Germany are some of the countries that faced—and are still facing—problems related to ethnicity and ethnic conflicts.¹³

Such formats of conflicts have been described as internal or civil war primarily because they involve a clash of identities based on ethnicity.¹⁴ Ethnicity is the manifestation of the feelings and emotions of a particular group, directed at preserving its separate identity. Such a sense of pride and identity usually depends upon the belief that one's cultural past and tradition. From an instrumental viewpoint—that is, acting as a means of achieving something—ethnicity is the creation of elites who, because of their vested interests and to gain some form of politico-economic advantage, induce and mobilise identity-consciousness within a group.¹⁵

However, there is a common belief that ethnicity is a natural phenomenon. According to Brass, every individual carries with him some “attachments derived from his/her place of birth, kinship, relationship, religion, language, and social practices which are natural to him, spiritual in nature, and that provide a basis for an affinity with other people from the same background”.¹⁶

¹²Shadid, M.K. (1988). The Muslim Brotherhood Movement in the West Bank and Gaza. *Third World Quarterly*, 10(2), 658-682, P. 677.

¹³Laqueur, W. (2000). *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of mass Destruction*. Oxford University Press, P.37.

¹⁴Hagg, G., & Kagwanja, P. (2007). Identity and Peace: Reconfiguring Conflict Resolution in Africa. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 7(2), 09-36, P. 26.

¹⁵Brass, P.R. (1975). Ethnic Cleavages in the Punjab Party System, 1952-1972. *Studies in Electoral Politics in the Indian States: The Impact of Modernisation*, 4, 3-62, P. 15.

¹⁶Ibid., P.69

During the early 20th century, there were two predominant global thoughts/socio-political currents: the communist ideology, based on class-consciousness; and, the nationalist movements, based on identity consciousness. India, too, could not remain untouched by these currents. During the Raj, the British—for administrative purposes—treated different parts of India as a single unit. This led to the consciousness among Indians that they belonged to one nation, which, in turn, provided them the impetus to fight for freedom from British control. Meanwhile, India's struggle for Independence was bifurcated by the religion-based two-nation theory: a Hindu-majority India and a Muslim-majority Pakistan, which ultimately led to the partition of India into two separate countries.¹⁷

However, the rising spirit of nationalism in no way lessened the sub-nationalistic character of India, which was largely based on language, religion, and region. For instance, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in Punjab, the National Conference (NC) in Jammu and Kashmir, and the Dravidar Kazhagam in Madras (now Chennai), among others, were parties based on sub-nationalism.¹⁸

On the other hand, a second trend, communist by nature, also influenced the Indian freedom struggle. M.N. Roy established the Communist Party of India (CPI) in 1920, which had a major influence on the Indian freedom struggle. During the post-Independence decades, both these trends would have a considerable impact on Indian politics.¹⁹

India has been struggling with socio-political violence in several states, for which two phenomena are responsible: the rise of class-consciousness, underpinned by the Marxist-Leninist ideology; and identity politics. The phenomenon of class-consciousness emerged through the ideology of the left, which, in turn, drew inspiration from the Russian (1917) and Chinese Revolutions (1966). Consequently, political movements based on class-consciousness emerged in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Jharkhand.²⁰

¹⁷Altbach, P.G. (1970). Student Movements in Historical Perspective: The Asian Case. *Youth & Society*, 1 (3), 333-357, P. 351.

¹⁸Malik, Y.K. (1986). The Akali Party and Sikh Militancy: Move for Greater Autonomy or Secessionism in Punjab? *Asian survey*, 26(3), 345-362, P. 352.

¹⁹Josh, B. (1979). *Communist movement in Punjab, 1926-47*. Delhi: Anupama Publications, P. 44.

²⁰Ghosh, S.K. (Ed.). (1992). *The Historic Turning-Point: A Liberation Anthology* (Vol. 1). SK Ghosh. P.35; Altbach, P.G. (1970). Student Movements in Historical Perspective: The Asian case. *Youth & Society*, 1 (3), 333-357, P. 353.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of identity-consciousness emerged because of a rich religious and linguistic diversity constituting the Indian polity, including some minor political movements based on caste. Political movements based on identity-consciousness have emerged in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and the northeastern region of India. The case of Punjab is significant because it has witnessed both kinds of political movements: identity-based and that based on class-consciousness. However, it was the problem of identity that became a major socio-political issues during the later decades of the twentieth century.

The Partition of India was a huge cultural and emotional setback for the state of Punjab, which straddled the territories of both the countries. Indian Punjab suffered enormously geographically because the erstwhile *land of five rivers*—an expression often used to denote undivided Punjab—was reduced to three rivers. Along with a significant portion of fertile cultivable land, even the city of Lahore, which was a major cultural hub and a bustling centre of film production and education, went in the kitty of Pakistan. A lot of important Sikh shrines also went to Pakistan. Punjab also witnessed the world's largest human migration, during which thousands were butchered and more than 50,000 women raped. Consequently, the common consciousness of Punjab was dangerously fractured, drastically changing the demographics of the state. The Sikh population earlier scattered all over east and west Punjab, was for the first time concentrated mostly in Indian Punjab. This demographic transformation proved beneficial to the Sikhs as it gave shape to a rising identity-consciousness among them, which, in turn, converted into the Punjabi Suba Movement.²¹

Around the same period, the Indian government introduced the Green Revolution in Punjab to deal with the shortage of foodgrains in the country. Owing to the success of the Green Revolution, Punjab became a model province and an object of envy for other Indian states. Simultaneously, the state experienced a prolonged period of insurgency, from late-1960s to early 1980s.²² The state was ravaged by a protracted battle between the Central government and Naxalite guerillas during the 1970s, and then between the Central government and Sikh separatists during the 1980s.

²¹Ahmed, I. (2012). *The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed: Unravelling the 1947 Tragedy Through Secret British Reports and First-Person Accounts*. Oxford University Press, P.57.

²²Bal, S.S. (1985). Punjab after Independence (1947-1956). In *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* (Vol. 46, pp. 416-430). Indian History Congress, P.417.

For a long time, the Sikhs had been demanding a separate Punjabi *suba* (region) based on their linguistic and cultural uniqueness. Thus, on 1 November 1966 the SAD campaign under the leadership of Master Tara Singh led to the formation of the Punjabi Suba on the basis of language. Two new states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh were created on the same date, as was born the so-called Punjab problem. However, a few demands remained unfulfilled. These related to demands for greater autonomy for Punjab, sharing of river waters, and issues related to Punjabi speaking territories. The Sikhs were dissatisfied as they felt that their demands had not been fully met. As the Sikh agitation progressed, a rivalry was formed between Sikh leaders and the Centre, which drove the Sikhs further towards extremism.²³

Similarly, another socio-cultural trend based on the communist ideology deeply influenced Punjab. The left political parties, the CPI, and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M), had been active in Punjab even before the formation of the Punjabi Suba. Communist party workers, including students, had been active in the towns and villages of Punjab and in various college and university campuses to educate and mobilise the youth towards the political vision of the left.

In West-Bengal, a radical group parted with the CPI (M) under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar, Kanu Sanyal, and Jangal Santhal with an aim to seize power through an armed struggle.²⁴ This armed insurrection is generally known as the Naxalite Movement. Similarly, in Punjab, some ultra-left radicals broke away from the CPI (M) and began mobilising the youth for taking the class struggle to the next level, just as in West-Bengal. Thus, began to the armed struggle in Punjab in 1967, motivated by a strong awareness of class hierarchies and an acute political consciousness among the youth. The youth of Punjab played an important and leading role in these political movements, especially when it came to armed political action against the State and the perceived perpetrators of injustice.

Here it becomes imperative to note that there have been two armed political movements, radically opposed to each other in terms of political vision and ideological orientation in post-Partition Punjab. Various scholars have studied these two-armed movements, that is, the Naxalite and the Sikh Separatist Movements. Moreover, written accounts of Punjab's

²³Bombwall, K. (1986). Sikh identity, Akali Dal and Federal Polity. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 21(20), 888–890, P.889

²⁴Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45, P.24

pre- and post-Partition development of political consciousness among the Sikhs and the wider populace of Punjab are aplenty. A number of books and articles—both academic and non-academic—have been written on Punjab over the last 15 years, and scholars have generally written on Punjab keeping the dynamics of political conflict at the centre of their perspective.

The following literature review seeks to clarify the different theoretical approaches to study the circumstances in Punjab during the two movements, as adopted by scholars, journalists, political thinkers, and social commentators. The review demonstrates that these approaches have particular strengths and weaknesses in their historiographies as well as their modes of formal analysis. For the study of the Sikh Separatist Movement in Punjab from 1966 to 1993, sources abound with a wealth of both primary and secondary information. As discussed earlier, India is a multi-regional, multi-linguistic, and multi-cultural nation with complex socio-economic diversifications. In such societies, a tendency of separateness always exists, and manifests differently at different times. In the India of the 20th-century, numerous trends emerged based on the above-mentioned factors, and Sikh separatism was one of them.

During the early 20th-century, the small peasantry in Punjab was reeling under the weight of indebtedness, rack-rent, high land revenue, and water rates (Josh, 1979). This provided fertile breeding ground for radical Marxist ideas in Punjab (Singh, 1992). The poor and small farmer had the largest participation in organisations such as the Kirti Kisan Party. They addressed themselves as workers, tailors, or more accurately, masses (Josh, 1979).

Pritam Singh (1985) opined that there was no *worker class* in Punjab because of the absence of any large industry in the state, and, therefore, the Naxalite Movement was established among the poor Jat peasantry. The Movement also gained influence among students, and art forms like music, literature, and drama played a prominent role in spreading the ideology of the left among the masses.

The demand for a separate Sikh state was organised as a counterpoise to the Muslim language resolution in 1940. During the seven-year period preceding the Partition, Sikh leaders could not play a consequential role for the larger interests of the Sikh community and Punjab owing to the lack of unity among Sikh political organisations (Riar, 2006). The sentiment of a distinct Sikh identity was born as a result of the socio-religious reforms movements of the 19th and 20th centuries (Oberoi, 1994; Kapur, 1986). Grewal

(1998) noted that the Punjabi-speaking state possesses all the characteristics necessary for the formation of a nation: geographical region, history, language, culture, and religious ideology. Brass (2015) concurred that it has a distinct historical and cultural identity.

During the post-Independence period, the SAD (Shromani Akali Dal) adopted a strategic approach of fostering a separate Sikh identity to serve its political ends (Nayer, 1966). Moreover, it astutely noted that Congress's power-play was fuelling militancy in Punjab. A simmering conflict between the two dominant religions of Punjab: Hinduism and Sikhism, eventually escalated social tensions, leading to violence (Jurgensmaryar, 1994). Thus, as Puri (1999) rightly asserted, the Khalistan Movement was not an ideologically coherent movement.

The state's reorganisation in 1966 and the introduction of capitalisation in its agriculture through the Green Revolution shaped its political dynamics (Puri, 1983; Shiva, 1991). Additionally, it increased the economic gap among the various sections of the society (Bryjak, 1985). The elite peasantry, represented by the SAD, demanded greater powers for the state, which further led to conflict between the Centre and the state (Singh, 1984). Purewal (2000) describes this economic clout of wealthy landlords—who demanded a greater share in political power—as *kulaks*. In their fight against the State, they mobilised the poor peasantry around the notion of discrimination against the Sikh community (Purewal, 2000; Gill, 1985).

The Green Revolution rapidly increased rural capital formation and coincided with the formation of the Punjabi Suba. This development whetted the contradictions among the capitalistic farmers, poor peasantry, agricultural labour, and all industrial bourgeois (Purewal, 2000). Moreover, rising unemployment provided sufficient ground for mobilising the youth for these movements (Surjeet, 1992). The Green Revolution further led to a renewed focus on religion and culture, thus inciting violence (Jeffrey, 1987; Duta 2004; Shiva 1995). It is also believed that this capitalistic modernisation of Punjab's economy, which brought enormous wealth to its society, had serious socio-cultural consequences, which degenerated into an armed militancy. Professor Gurdarshan Singh Dhillon (1992), in his favour of Sikh separatism, put forward the view that Punjab was deliberately not industrialised to ensure its dependence on the Central government.

Additionally, peaceful protests for justice were repeatedly and systematically ignored, thus feeding the simmering subliminal fire of discontent. Such discriminatory, almost

insulting, measures by the Central government, coupled with the catalytic role played by the print media, facilitated the spread of the Sikh Separatist Movement (Sidhu, 2016). Additionally, it was not a mass movement, but a Pakistan-sponsored localized militancy, as it emerged in and largely impacted the areas around Amritsar and Gurdaspur—districts closest to the Pakistan border. Innocent Punjabis were misguided by *dhadi and kavashri* folk songs, by Sikh preachers, and also by certain journalists (Gill, 2000).

Thus, it was not an ideological movement. However, alleged malpractices and excesses by the police as well as the militants marked its progress (Dhar, 2005). The dubious roles played by former President Zail Singh and former Home Minister Buta Singh also aggravated the crisis. Large crowds would flock the *bhog* ceremonies of fallen militants, further exacerbating the extremist sentiments among the Sikh masses (Dhillon, 2013). Finally came a time when the people of Punjab lost faith in the judicial system and stopped bothering about law and order (Riberio, 2015).

There are gaps in the work of scholars and journalists who have studied these Movements because they have studied them solely from a political perspective. However, a comprehensive study of the role of the youth in these movements is yet to be affected. This thesis attempts to study the formation of the political consciousness of the youth in Punjab that motivated them to follow the ideological dictates of the Naxalite and the Sikh Separatist Movements.

Though considerable academic endeavour has been performed on each of these Movements separately, no research has yet been conducted to study how the ideologies of the two Movements shaped, influenced, and affected the intellectual and political make-up of the youth. Therefore, it can be said that there is a need to undertake an in-depth analysis of these Movements to fathom the complex and subtle relationship between political consciousness of the youth and political ideologies.

After analysing the fundamental elements of the two Movements as reported by several authors, the present study attempts to locate the motivations for the active response given to these Movements by the youth. For this purpose, a historical approach will be followed from an inter-disciplinary perspective. Besides, the issues of long-term impact over the consciousness of youth will be addressed. Given that both Movements are part of history now, it is, therefore, time to assess the role played by the youth in them to better grasp how political movements shape the consciousness of youth. This study also traces the

historical background of the emergence of the ideas of Marxism and Sikh separatism in Indian state of Punjab. In this context, it investigates various theoretical studies to better understand Punjab's political movements.

This research raises some specific questions related to the Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements. What were the historical conditions and processes that gave rise to these two Movements in Punjab? How was political consciousness raised among the youth for these Movements? How did the two Movements succeed in mobilising the youth? What were the historical roots of these Movements? What was the role played by literature and other art forms in shaping youth consciousness in Punjab from 1966 to 1993? This study aims to develop a historical understanding of the major determining factors and other minor influences that shaped the political consciousness of the youth of Punjab. It also thoroughly examines the grassroots socio-cultural and politico-economic realities of the state during the period in question. This research also aims to discern the reasons—personal, social, political, and economic—behind the participation of youth in the Naxalite Movement, and then immediately afterwards, in the Sikh Separatist Movement.

The present study aims to fathom such processes of political socialisation and their consequences for the politics of the day. Through, these questions, the objective of this thesis is narrated. The first objective is to trace the Indian political scenario prevalent in the late-1960s, which led to the spread of revolutionary ideologies in Punjab. The second objective is to trace the revolutionary consciousness of the youth of Punjab in relation to the ideology of the Naxalite Movement. The third objective is to trace the socio-political history of Punjab of the late-1970s and the emergence of the Sikh Separatist Movement. The fourth objective is to trace the development of identity-consciousness among the Sikh youth under the influence of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Last objective is to trace the counter-revolutionary ideology of the State, that is, the manner in which the State responded to both the Movements.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One

This chapter discusses the social-economic, political, and historical roots of the Naxalite Movement and establishes that it was not a spontaneous uprising. It also considers the historical developments and processes that dramatically altered the quality and nature of inter-community relations in Punjab. The people of Punjab have a history of rising against

injustice: they fought against the British through the Peasant Movement, the Ghadar Movement, the Kirti Kisan Party, and the Naujwan Bharat Sabha, among others. Therefore, to understand the emergence of the Naxalite movement—and its eventual downfall—in Punjab, this chapter discusses relevant social and political causes. It uses a historical narrative to build a historical perspective of the Movement's trajectory in Punjab. The factors that spread of the Movement among the youth are also analysed.

Chapter Two

Nothing exists in a vacuum; every historical event has a social, political, or economic background. Therefore, this chapter reconsiders how the political, economic, and cultural circumstances of the time inter-connected to mobilise the youth for the Naxalite Movement. The significance of this research lies in the study of the dynamic process of rising political consciousness among the youth, especially of the factors that inspired the youth to join this insurgency. In the study, mixed methods have been applied for a thorough analysis of the demographic profile and detailed interviews of the participants of this Movement. The period between 1967 and 1975 is selected to explain the emergence of the Naxalite Movement, the actions taken for the mobilisation of youth, and the eventual decay of the Movement.

Chapter Three

In this chapter the study treats the topic of Sikh separatism in Punjab from 1978 to 1993. This was a period of severe turmoil in Punjab because of an armed Sikh separatist movement was raging under the leadership of a young Sikh fundamentalist leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. This chapter explains the factors responsible for the emergence, rise, and eventual fall of the Movement.

Chapter Four

This chapter examines the process of shaping of youth consciousness, which resulted in their enthusiastic participation in the armed insurgency against the State during the period 1978 to 1993. Fundamentalism rose among the youth in phases, and this was traced during the field survey. This chapter also analyses how the Sikh youth of Punjab were mobilised for the Sikh separatist movement and the process of their recruitment in rebel groups. Field surveys and interviews of ex-militants were conducted, and results shared herein. The snowball method was employed as a sampling method and a semi-structured

questionnaire was used for the interviews. Various aspects like motivation, socio-economic and political backgrounds, level of education, social group, etc. of the interviewees were considered to meet the above-mentioned objectives. During the course of this study, 60 ex-militants were interviewed.

Chapter Five

The fifth chapter probes the two principle perspectives of the Movements: the first, a radical Marxist vision of a socialist life, and the other connected with a pure Sikh religious revivalist vision. The Naxalite Movement in Punjab emerged in the later period of the 1960s and remained a force until early 1970s. The reaction of the State to this phenomenon, that is, counter-insurgency, although usually varied, can be grouped under two broad strategies: security-centric (emphasising a military approach to suppress revolutionary movements) and population-centric (emphasising a developmental and political approach to undermine insurgency). In several cases of insurgencies—domestic and foreign—it has been observed that an initial mishandling of a relatively simple situation by the State often exacerbates into a full-blown crisis. Then, to cover up its misadventures and incapacity, the State often responds with unmatched violence to reinforce its *legitimacy*. In Punjab as well, the State responded ruthlessly through its administrative machinery: its bureaucratic and military set-up, its law-enforcement agencies; the military special forces; and newly promulgated laws to cope with the situation.

This thesis concludes based on the above discoveries; an effort is made to concisely present the findings so that the reader receives a clear vision of Punjab's youth's political consciousness during these Movements.

Involvement of masses in any type of political turmoil is a matter of study for scholars worldwide. The concept of *mass politics* has been used by academics to understand the participation of masses in anti-State uprising. For this research as well, the theoretical framework of mass politics has been used to explain why uprising began in Punjab immediately after Independence, first on the basis of class identity and then based on religious identity, and how these socio-political movements were able to gain mass support, especially from the youth.

The theory of mass politics argues that the process of enhancement of support for any movement from a few elites to masses happens because of a number of factors such as

identity, class, etc. In Punjab, both these variables played a complex role in transforming anti-State elite politics into anti-State mass politics. This research will enrich this theoretical framework by analysing the involvement of a third variable in the history of Punjab's turmoil—the youth.

Generally, in the theory of mass politics, the two variables of class and identity consider youth as a subordinate entity, which always works in allegiance with either of them. This research considers youth as an independent variable, and class and identity as subordinate variables. Therefore, the focus of this research is to study the impact of youth consciousness on these Movements and to understand the ideology of the organisations that mobilised the youth.

The development of political movements occurs in a layered socio-political and economic milieu. Expected objectives and themes from this development provide a fine design for data collection and other equally organised pieces of information, which appropriately analyse Punjab's youth consciousness from 1966 to 1993.

The inter-disciplinary method used in this study deals with the Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements. Data for this study has been sourced from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data from 125 face-to-face interviews was obtained within and outside Punjab over a one-year period. These interviews proved beneficial in understanding the nature of protests at the time of the two Movements. Secondary sources include books, periodicals, newspapers, internet research, documentaries, and movie portals. Valuable information was gathered from these sources regarding the political events of the period 1967–93 in Punjab. The snowball method of sampling was employed, and the semi-structured questionnaire was used for the interviews. Various factors such as motivation, socio-economic and political background, level of education, social groups etc. of the activists were considered during the survey and the interviews; the results are presented in the following sections.

While a plethora of academic content is available on the Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements, hardly any research has been conducted from the perspective of youth consciousness during these Movements. Moreover, the present study has been conducted from a historical perspective with a special focus on the emergence of youth consciousness for the violent Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements.

The data for this project has been collected from both primary as well as secondary sources.

The following techniques were used to collect primary data: Field studies' information was collected using the field survey method. As several people involved with these Movements are still alive, it was considered relevant to know their views. When the Movements suffered setbacks, many participants left altogether, some became passive, some joined other organisations, but a few are still stuck with those ideas. Moreover, the Sikh separatists began working openly after the 13 April 1978 conflict with the Nirankari Sikhs in Amritsar. Therefore, it was significant to study the social background of the participants of the two insurgencies to understand their reasons for joining these struggles, their perception of the extent of mass involvement, their perception of counter-insurgency steps taken by the State, their understanding of the causes of failure of these Movements, and their reasons for becoming passive or sticking to the old line.

The ex-militants were interviewed based on their availability and the extent to which they could provide relevant information. To contact such people the snowball method was adopted. First, the well-known Naxalite were contacted and interviewed because they made no secret of their political affiliations. Then, information about their comrades was obtained from them, who were then contacted and interviewed. Their interviews were conducted only after giving them the reference of their former comrades. An attempt was made to interview participants with different levels of involvement in the two Movements. Accordingly, three levels of participation were identified: the full-timers; the part-timers; and the sympathisers.

A variety of ex-militants from both the Movements were interviewed with regard to their present political activities, which were primarily of three types: passive; active; and those who joined some other political party or changed their political affiliations.

It should be mentioned here that these considerations are not rigidly followed because of limitations of time. However, what was indeed strictly followed, was the interview of at least some people from each district where the Movements were most active. It would be relevant to record here that these were not the districts to which the respondents originally belonged, but the districts where they operated. In certain cases, information was also collected from the friends and relatives of the respondents for a more intensive analysis.

During the interviews, a guide was prepared to conduct field studies. The interview questions sought to cover the social background of the respondents, reasons for their joining the insurgency, and their level of understanding of various features of the insurgency. As these were underground Movements, complete operational familiarity was not possible for any respondent. Moreover, the probability of the emergence of some new aspects was not ruled-out during re-investigation. Therefore, it was necessary to avoid a rigid structure and questions and an interview guide were, therefore, the best alternatives. As the interviews aimed at drawing as much information as possible, it was proposed to not follow a strict pattern.

CHAPTER-1

NAXALITE MOVEMENT IN PUNJAB FROM 1967 TO 1975

The Industrial Revolution originated in England in the 18th century and soon spread all across Europe to transform rural agrarian societies into industrial societies. In the process, it ruined the small peasantry and an entire section of people whose livelihood depended on diverse agricultural activities. This led to large-scale migration of people from the rural countryside to cities, where they ended up working in factories. Consequently, a new class of people, generally categorised as the *working class*, emerged on the world scene. The life-conditions and work-activities of this class provided impetus for the creation of the Communist Movement.

Even when communism had become a recognised political force in Europe and other parts of the world, Indians were oblivious to this powerful political movement of resistance launched by the working class. It was the Indian diaspora in Europe and the US that first came into contact with communist revolutionaries from around the world. These fiery Indian revolutionaries then carried the seeds of the Communist Movement from abroad to their native country, facing numerous hardships and a stiff resistance from authorities.

The founding fathers of Indian communism borrowed the organisational structure from the Comintern (or the Third Communist International).²⁵ After the success of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (1917), the Comintern shifted its headquarters from Berlin to Moscow.²⁶ It was the Russian Revolution that became a beacon of hope for the global working class in the 20th century, and which inspired the rapid global spread of the Communist Movement. Incidentally, the Communist Movement in India enjoyed the complete support from the Comintern.²⁷

The genesis of Indian communism could be traced back to the life-journeys of those early leaders of the Indian freedom struggle who had to settle abroad because of the harsh and stiff attitude of the British government. While living abroad, some of them came into

²⁵In 1919, an international congress of communists was held in Moscow which was an association of the workers of the whole world. The First International founded by Marx, existed from 1864 to 1872. The defeat of the heroic workers of Paris-of celebrated Paris Commune- marked the end of this international. The second International existed from 1889 to 1914 up to the war. This was the period of the most calm and peaceful development of capitalism a period without great revolutions.

²⁶Lenin, V. I. (1919). *The Third Communist International: Speeches on Gramophone Records*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972 Vol. 29. P: 240-241, retrieved from www.marx.org

²⁷Roy, A. (1974). *Marxism and India*. *Social Scientist*, 3(2). P. 48-56.

direct contact with the leaders of the Third Communist International.²⁸ These communist leaders taught them the significance of politically organised *mass action* at the level of committees and organisations, such as workers' and peasants' parties, trade unions, and communist cells in the existing trade and other unions.²⁹

M.N. Roy³⁰ was amongst the first who attempted to form a communist party in India during early 20th century with the help of the Third Communist International. During the First World War (1914–19), the Comintern Congress was held at Tashkent and a bureau was set up to counter imperialism in Asia.³¹ With the help of the bureau, the Communist Party of India (CPI) was established on 17 October, 1920 at Tashkent.³² Seven founding members: M.N. Roy, Evelyn Roy-Trent, Abani Mukherjee, Rosa Fitingov, Mohammad Ali, Mohamad Shafiq, and Acharya Shafiq were elected as secretaries of the party.

Initiatives were also taken to get in touch with activists such as Muzaffar Ahmad, S.A. Dange, Singaravelu Chettiar, and especially those who, fired by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, were turning towards Marxist–Leninist politics. These people organised small pockets of communist groups in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Lahore, and Kanpur in 1921 and 1922. However, attempts at organising a communist party in India from abroad could not be fruitful.³³

Subsequently, with the unification of small-scale communist groups in Kanpur on 26 December 1925, the CPI—one of the oldest communist parties in Asia—was reorganised. Its policies gained significance in the political environment of India during the Second

²⁸Singh, R.S., & Singh, C. (1991). *Indian communism and its Role Towards Polity*. South Asia Books. P.10.

²⁹ Ibid., P.9

³⁰M.N. Roy (1887-1954) was a twentieth century Indian philosopher., began his career as a militant political activist and left India in 1915 in search of arms for organizing an insurrection against British rule in India. Roy developed friendships with several American radicals and frequented the New York Public Library. He began a systematic study of socialism, originally with the intention of combating it, but he soon discovered that he had himself become a socialist. Roy met Lenin in Moscow in 1920 and went on to become an international ranking communist leader.

³¹The ground for the formation of an émigré Communist Party of India was prepared by The Second World Congress of the Communist Third International (1920). The Comintern Executive committee (ECCI) set up a sub-committee, the 'Small Bureau', to begin the process. The Bureau organised the First Congress of the Peoples of the East at Baku in September 1920, specifically aimed at fighting imperialism in Asia. This was followed by the formation of the Communist Party of India on 17 October 1920 at Tashkent. The seven members were M. N. Roy, Evelyn Roy-Trent, Abani Mukherjee, Rosa Fitingov, Mohammad Ali, Mohamad Shafiq and Acharya. The inaugural meeting also adopted the principles of the Comintern and decided to work out a programme of the CPI that was 'suited to the conditions of India'. A preliminary discussion was held on membership procedure and affiliation to the Comintern. The meeting was concluded with the singing of 'The International'.

³²Singh, R.S., & Singh, C. (1991). *Indian communism and its Role Towards Polity*. South Asia Books, P.10; Overstreet, G. D., & Windmiller, M. (1959). *Communism in India*. Berkeley, University of California, P.1.

³³Singh, R.S., & Singh, C. (1991). *Indian communism and its Role Towards Polity*. South Asia Books, P.10-12.

World War (1939–45). The CPI's leadership declared the Second World War to be an *imperialist war*³⁴ and urged the working class to use the opportunity to further the revolutionary cause. However, when the Soviet Union joined the War in 1942 on the side of Britain against fascist Germany, the CPI changed its stance. It argued that building a political front against Britain at that moment would have weakened the joint front against fascism and offered unconditional support to Britain. Simultaneously, the Congress party launched the Quit India Movement in 1942, demanding Independence. Congress's campaign received enormous buzz across the country and the CPI was severed from the political aspirations of an emerging India.³⁵

The CPI, since its establishment, has looked up to the leaders and theoreticians of the Communist International for political guidance. The leaders of the Third Communist International believed that the aspirations for national liberation in the colonies could be effectively used for the propagation of communism and the transformation of national freedom movements into socialist movements. Therefore, the primary task of communist parties of colonial countries was to lead their respective national liberation movements in this direction.³⁶

Communist International firmly believed that given that every communist party knew the ground realities of their respective countries much better, they should make the final decision regarding the required revolutionary strategy and tactic.³⁷ However, the CPI's weakness in this regard has been its excessive reliance on the directions from the Communist International. Consequently, it failed to adapt to the changing trajectories of Indian politics. It was because of such weaknesses that the CPI destroyed all possibilities of acquiring political power when India gained Independence.³⁸

With the advent of political freedom in 1947, the CPI felt a dire need to reformulate its political programme to survive in a liberal parliamentary democracy. Concurrently, the CPI in West-Bengal was in favour of resorting to violence for expediting the communist revolution. It was soon found to be guilty of numerous anti-social activities and was, consequently, banned in March 1948 by the Government of West-Bengal under the Public Safety Act. After the removal of the ban in 1951, a process of gradual change was

³⁴Williamson, H., & Cowgill, J.F. (1976). *India and Communism*. Calcutta: Editions Indian, P. 110-111; Scalapino, R.A. (1970). *The Communist Revolution in Asia. Tactics, Goals, and Achievements*. *VRÜ Verfassung und Recht in Übersee*, 1(1), P.88-90.

³⁵Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P.1.

³⁶Khan, B.A. (1968). A New Assessment of the History of the C.P.I.:1919-1928. *Liberation*, 1(7), P.52.

³⁷Singh, R.S., & Singh, C.(1991). *Indian Communism and its Role Towards Polity*. South Asia Books,P. 27.

³⁸Khan, B. A. (1968). A New Assessment of the History of the C.P.I.:1919-1928. *Liberation*, 1(7), P.59.

observed in the CPI whereby one section of the party dissociated itself from the party's official policy of defending revolutionary violence.³⁹

In 1951, a new political programme was adopted by the CPI at a special conference in Calcutta. An attempt was made to drag the party away from its rigid path of left-sectarianism.⁴⁰ The decision to accept Constitutionalism for the establishment of democracy and socialism earned the CPI a remarkable success in the Assembly Elections in West Bengal and Kerala in comparison to other non-Congress parties. It, therefore, seemed logical for the CPI to move along the Constitutional path.⁴¹

With the establishment of a communist government in Kerala in 1957, the majority in the party found their trust in a peaceful transition to communism vindicated. However, the radical elements in the party continued favouring the policy of *reflationary transformation* through violence; they saw the process of peaceful and democratic change as too slow and time-consuming. In the process, the communist appellation was soon upset by a combination of domestic and external circumstances.⁴²

The communist regime in Kerala tried its hand at a peculiar blend of administration and agitation, resulting in a serious breakdown of law and order. Consequently, the Centre intervened to dismiss the elected government. Radical elements in the party interpreted this as a failure of the Constitutional line of the majority. Against this background, the Sixth Congress of the CPI met in a keyed-up atmosphere in 1961 at Vijayawada.⁴³ At this Congress, two rival theses and two programmes were presented: one advocated national democracy (under the joint leadership of the working class and the national bourgeoisie); the other advocated people's democracy (based on the collaboration with the national bourgeoisie but under the leadership of the working class).⁴⁴

However, party leader's thoughts it necessary to bury their differences as the third general election was around the corner. In his 1961 speech at the Vijayawada congress, Ajay

³⁹N/A (1970, April 15). India's West-Bengal State Government Sinister Example Parliamentary Road-Collapses. *Liberation*, Vol.3. No. 6, P.17-18.; Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Joshi, S., Mukherjee, A., Josh, B., & Jagga, L. (1984). The Communists, the Congress, and the Anti-Colonial Movement. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 730-736, P. 731.

⁴⁰Khan, A.B. (1968). A New Assessment of the History of the C.P.I.:1919-1928. *Liberation*, 1(7), P.66.

⁴¹Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P.17.

⁴²N/A (1970, April 15). India's West-Bengal State Government Sinister Example Parliamentary Road-Collapses. *Liberation*, Vol. 3, No. 6, P.17-18; Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P.18.

⁴³Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P.19.

⁴⁴Jawaid, S. (1979). The Naxalite Movement in India: Origin and failure of the Maoist revolutionary Strategy in West-Bengal, 1967-1971. P.19; Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P.20

Ghosh stressed the necessity of uniting with the progressive and patriotic elements within the congress to build a national democratic front for the strengthening of democratic procedures and structures in the country.⁴⁵ However China's military attack on India in October 1962 jolted the perilous balance within the CPI. It was much later on November 1, 1962 that the national council of the party severely condemned the Chinese aggression. While the resolution was passed by overwhelming majority group disagreed and its three leading leftists Jyoti Basu, P. Sundarayya and H.K.S. Surjeet resigned from central secretariat. In mid November 1962 the Government of India began a selective crackdown on the CPI left wing, arresting over 957 top and middle cadres of the party in almost all the states by January 10, 1963. Significantly E. M. S. Namboodiripad (Former Chief Minister of Kerala) who was taken into custody on November 22, 1962 was released one week later. By mid December 1962, there were indications that the CPI front organization had for the most part either declined or disappeared. From December 9, 1962 to January 6, 1963 Dange went abroad on an "explaining in Moscow, Khrushchev strongly criticised Dange for falling "easy victim to the chauvinism of the reactionary forces."⁴⁶

It is at this juncture early 1963 that a radical transformation took place within the party. In the wake of the Chinese invasion the west-Bengal unit had been seriously affected the larger scale arrest of its members. The central secretariat therefore took steps to create a provincial organization committee, which superseded the formal state party unit.⁴⁷ On March 9, 1963, the Chinese Communist Party unleashed its strongest attack up to that point on the CPI. It published four editorials in People's Daily entitled "A Mirror for Revisionists".⁴⁸ The National Council of the CPI adopted a resolution condemning the Chinese aggression, leading to a virtual split in the party.⁴⁹

The first session called by the dissenters was held at Tenali from 7 to 11 July 1964. In this session Jyoti Basu, on behalf of all dissenters, declared, "We are the Communist Party of India, we do not recognise Dange's group as the Communist Party of India. We are out of it".⁵⁰ It was also announced that the next session of the party would be held at Calcutta on

⁴⁵Jawaid, S. (1979). *The Naxalite Movement in India: Origin and Failure of the Maoist Revolutionary Strategy in West-Bengal, 1967-1971*, P.19.

⁴⁶Wood, J.B. (1965). Observation on the Communist Party Split. *Pacific Affairs*, 8, P.37.

⁴⁷Ahmad, M. (1964). *Dange and the National Archive*. Calcutta: Vanguard Publisher, P:39.

⁴⁸ Ibid., P. 41

⁴⁹Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P. 20-21.

⁵⁰Ibid., P.22; Ahuja, P., & Ganguly, R. (2007). The Fire Within Naxalite Insurgency Violence in India. *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, 18(2), 249-274, P.257.

31 October 1964. This split took a final shape with the forming of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)). The main reason for this split was the difference in outlook among the leaders regarding the tactics and strategies to be adopted against the Congress party, that is, the degree of accommodation and antagonism to be directed towards it.⁵¹

It was at the conference of delegates of CPI (M) at Calcutta on 31 October, 1964 that the party elected a presidium of three members consisting of Jyoti Basu, A.K. Gopalan, and T. Reddy⁵², and declared that the meeting represented the Seventh Congress of the real CPI. Thereafter, the CPI (M) was formally organised into a political party. It may be noted that although the CPI (M) emerged as a separate communist party, it could not prove to be a united force for those who were dissatisfied with CPI's policies. The split within the CPI was one of the most unfortunate steps taken by the radical communist leaders because the CPI, by the mid-1960s, had gathered enough mass strength and political support to be recognised as a major opposition party in the country.⁵³

However, post-split, the leaders and workers who had been collaborating for the growth of the party were divided into two groups. Once the policy of militancy found place in the CPI (M) mindset, a section of the party soon began exerting pressure on the party leadership to adopt a more aggressive and militant approach to achieve their goals.⁵⁴ Consequently, serious dissensions developed within the party during the later half of 1967 and the first half of 1968.⁵⁵

The CPI (M) had a strong base among the poor peasantry, the indigenous tribes of India, and the agricultural labour, especially in West Bengal.⁵⁶ The party leaders Promised Land reforms in the state after coming to power, and accordingly the cadres created relevant slogans to move the masses, filling them with hope for their future. On 2 March 1967, a non-Congress government was formed in West Bengal. The CPI (M), the CPI, Bangla Congress—a breakaway group from the Congress with Centrist tendencies, and 11 other leftist and Centrist parties constituted what was called the United Front Government. The

⁵¹Jawaid, S. (1979). *The Naxalite Movement in India: Origin and Failure of the Maoist Revolutionary Strategy in West-Bengal, 1967-1971*, P.1.

⁵²Banerjee, S. (1968). *Naxalbari Between Yesterday and Tomorrow*. *Frontier*, New Delhi, 1(6), P. 8–9.

⁵³Ram, M.(1972). *The Communist Movement in India*. *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*,4(1),30-44,P.39.

⁵⁴ Singh, R.S., & Singh, C. (1991). *Indian communism and its role towards polity*. South Asia Books. P. 14

⁵⁵Jawaid, S. (1979). *The Naxalite Movement in India: Origin and failure of the Maoist Revolutionary Strategy in West-Bengal, 1967-1971*, P.3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, P.30.

CPI (M) justified its participation in the government with the announcement that “it would use its government role to help the development of people’s movement”.⁵⁷

Jyoti Basu and Hare Krishna Konar, two prominent CPI (M) leaders, became the home minister and land revenue minister, respectively. The latter, a veteran CPI (M) peasant leader, announced soon after his swearing-in “a policy of quick distribution of surplus land among the landless and stopping of eviction of sharecroppers”.⁵⁸ The lower-level cadres—poor families, agricultural labour, and indigenous tribes—who were hoping for a better life were disappointed when the United Front Government delayed the issue of land redistribution as promised before the elections.⁵⁹

Those dissatisfied with the initiative of the CPI joined the CPI (M). However, even the latter could not fulfill their aspirations as it turned out to be no different from the CPI in terms of policy and strategy. Consequently, efforts were made to fathom the impasse within the party to resolve the existing challenges. One such notable dissenter was Charu Mazumdar, a CPI (M) leader of North Bengal, who wrote eight important articles between January 1965 and April 1967, giving a coherent theoretical expression to these dissident views, which were later published by the CPI (M-L) in the form of a booklet entitled *The Historic Anti-Revisionist Eight Documents Written by our Respected Leader, Immortal Martyr Comrade Charu Mazumdar*.⁶⁰ The main arguments of these eight documents may be concluded as under: the Indian revolution has to take the path of an armed struggle; however, the struggle should be organised following the template of the Chinese revolution, not the Soviet revolution; and the armed struggle in India should take the form of Mao’s people’s war and not Che Guevara’s guerilla war. At the same time, Mazumdar also specified that he would cooperate only with those individuals and groups who would: regard Mao as the leader of the world revolution and consider his thoughts as the highest form a Marxism-Leninism in the present era; secondly, believe that a situation fit for a revolution was ripe in India; believe that the Indian revolution could succeed only

⁵⁷ Mohanthy, M. (1977). *Revolutionary Violence: A Study of the Maoist Movement in India*. New Delhi: Sterling Publisher, P.49.

⁵⁸ Singh, R.S., & Singh, C.(1991).*Indian Communism and its Role Towards Polity*.South Asia Books,P.106.

⁵⁹Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45,P.25.

⁶⁰C.P.I.(M-L). (1986). *Charu Mazumdar-er Aitihāsik Atti Dalil: Charu Mazumdar’s Historical Eight Documents*.Sahid Smaran Committee, Calcutta,1-50, P. 31.;N/A (1970, May 24). Communique of the Central Committee Communist Party of India. *Collected Writing of comrade Charu Mazumdar*,Vol.2,P.60-61.

through an area-wise seizure of power; and believe that the revolution could begin and make progress only through guerrilla warfare.⁶¹

Charu launched a brutal attack on revisionism within the party by through these eight documents and promoted the idea of an armed struggle.⁶² Similarly, in Kerala, the South Country Group secretly distributed magazines within the party workers in which they attacked the revisionist orientation of their party.⁶³ In Andhra Pradesh, D.V. Rao⁶⁴ and T. Nagy Reddy⁶⁵ started speaking out against such revisionism. In Kolkata, in 1967, a secret committee was formed in the party against inter-party revisionism under the leadership of Sushital Rai Chaudhary, Pramod Sen Gupta, Asit Sen, Primal Das Gupta, and Suniti Kumar Ghosh. In Punjab, leaders such as Daya Singh, Baba Bujha Singh, and R.P. Saraf were thinking along the same lines.⁶⁶ This kind of radical re-thinking culminated in the Naxalite Movement. These sectarian groups began coordinating amongst themselves through the path laid out by Mazumdar. It was under these circumstances that the unrest within the party became overt.⁶⁷

⁶¹Ghosh, S. (1975). *The Naxalite Movement: A Maoist Experiment*. Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya. P. 25; Ram, M. (1969). *Indian Communism: Split within a Split*. Delhi: Vikas Publications, P.34.

⁶²Mazumdar, C. (1975, September 22-27). Eight Historic Documents Against Revisionism. *People's Canada Daily News*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 227-232. P.3-5; Banerjee, S. (1968). Naxalbari between Yesterday and Tomorrow. *Frontier 1*, New Delhi, (6), P.3-4.

⁶³Choudhury P. (1971, January- March). About Imperialist Linchey Deash Bandu and Important Phase of Indian History. *Liberation*,1(4), P.30-31.

⁶⁴D.V. Rao as a Communist revolutionary spans nearly five decades. It is interesting to note that the first criminal case foisted against D.V. Rao was in connection with his role in the land struggle of the Lambada peasantry of Mundrai village. He was arrested under the Defence of India Rules in 1962 (November '62 to July '63) for opposing Government of India's aggressive posture towards China, and in 1965 (December '64 to May '66) during India's war against Pakistan in 1971 he was arrested along with Tarimela Nagi Reddy and others and kept in detention from December '69 to May '72. A conspiracy case foisted against them. This is known as the Hyderabad Conspiracy Case.

⁶⁵Tarimela Nagi Reddy gained his baptism in Communism in Benares University in 1939 when confronting the British colonials and being exposed to the reactionary politics of the RSS. From then on, he illuminated the ideology of Communism treating the most hazardous paths with unflinching commitment despite being born in very rich landlord family and guaranteed of lucrative practice as lawyer. But Nagi Reddy chose the life of Communist revolutionary. He was associated with the then existing communist party ever since he started his political activities. He was a good orator, agitator, and organizer. He had organized and led many a struggle of the rural poor against the atrocities of the landlords. He led the underground life during the period of 1947-51 when he was the leader and Secretary of the Regional Committee of Rayala Seema in Andhra Pradesh (then the composing Madras province). The authorities could not arrest him despite the best efforts till he himself had come out in 1952. Ever since he was either a member of Legislature or the Parliament, till he resigned from the Legislative of Andhra Pradesh in 1969.

⁶⁶In Punjab only after the death of Nagi Reddy did the Punjab Co-ordination committee led by Harbhajan Sohi join the unity centre of Communist Revolutionary of India and a movement was organized by Punjab Students Union and Naujwan Bharat Sabha implementing the "mass revolutionary line" of Tarimela Nagi Reddy. On July 17th, 1979 Prithipal Singh Randhawa, the leader of Punjab Students Union was murdered. Today even magazine *Surk Leeh* of Punjab upholds Nagi Reddy's contribution as well as that of the Communist Party Re-organisation Centre of India (Marxist-Leninist) which is the chief protagonist of massline in Punjab.

⁶⁷Bidwal, P. (1983, January 11). From Thunder to A Whimper 1- degeneration of Naxalite. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P-8; N/A (1987, September 9). Charu on the Naxalbari Road. *A World to Win*, China, P. 3-4.

The radical sections within the CPI (M) party gave a call for an armed struggle against landowners.⁶⁸ From 3 March 1967 onwards, peasants began acquiring land forcibly and clashes between peasants and landlords erupted in several places. By May 1967, the rebels established their control in Naxalbari, Kharibari, and Phansidewa regions in Darjeeling district. By the end of that month, the first serious clash between peasant rebels and the State machinery occurred. On May 23, 1967, a police party attempting to arrest some rebel leaders got involved in an encounter with armed peasants in a village under the Naxalbari police station. Three policemen were injured, and a police inspector died, prompting police retaliation.⁶⁹

On 25 May, the police opened fire upon a crowd of villagers in the Prasadjote village in Naxalbari, killing 10, which included seven women and two children. With these killings, the movement for capturing land exploded with more violent clashes unfolding across the state. It can be said that the root-cause of this uprising was the socio-economic condition of forced labour—something that persisted since the British era.⁷⁰ There were dalits, *adivasis* (indigenous tribes), and disadvantaged rural population among the radical section, and they become members of the Naxalite Movement in the coming years.⁷¹

The violence that erupted in Naxalbari on 25 May 1967 marked the beginning of the Naxalite Movement in India. By that time, however, resistance to the radical communist had already begun spreading across the country. West-Bengal became the power centre of the Naxalite Movement and Charu its main leader. The architects of this insurgency professed that their aim was to offer an example to all the states of India and to all the countries of the world how to organise and conduct a democratic revolution. Thus, *land to tiller* became the slogan of the Naxalite Movement.⁷²

As a revolutionary ideology and programme of action, this insurgency sought to present itself as a challenge to the tradition of peaceful and constitutional methods of socio-economic reconstruction. Originating as an extremist wing of the Indian Communist Movement, it claimed itself to be the Indian counterpart of Maoism and an authentic

⁶⁸Mazumdar, C. (1972, September 1). Our Party's Tasks Among the workers. *Chengari*, No.1. P. 21-22.

⁶⁹Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45, P.26.; Bidwal, P. (1983, January 11). From Thunder to A Whimper 1- degeneration of Naxalite. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P-8.

⁷⁰Mahakul, B.K. (2014). Political Violence: A Study of Naxal Movement in India. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 4(11), P. 1–10.

⁷¹Times of India, (1972, August 6). Charu And the Naxalite Movement. *Times of India*, New Delhi P.5; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45. P. 27.

⁷²Ibid., P.29.

bearer of Marxist–Leninist revolutionary traditions. Over a short span of less than half-a-decade, the Movement made such a psychological impact that every violent manifestation against the establishment became identified with the Naxalite Movement.⁷³

The police firing at Naxalbari created tremendous tensions both within and outside the United Front Government, which was in a flux. The incident placed the CPI. (M) state leaders and ministers in a tight spot. They viewed the actions of the Naxalite unit as opposed to all known norms of democratic Centralism to which a Marxist party was expected to adhere and considered it an attempt by a local unit to bypass the party machinery with the objective of imposing its own political line on the rest of the party. Alternatively, it appeared to be very difficult for them to denounce or disown a movement of poor tillers conducted by its own local unit. The Naxalbari incident compelled the CPI (M) to take strict action against the radicals responsible for the violence, and 40 party leaders found responsible for instigating the armed movement in West Bengal were expelled. These radical cadres, however, increased their activities to incite further armed insurrection in West Bengal.⁷⁴

Within one year, the Naxalite Movement spread to other parts of India.⁷⁵ Indigenous tribes and peasants organised under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar, Kanu Sanyal, Savdesh Metra, Surjya Sen, and Suresh Bose. Charu, the brain of the Movement, spread the organisational network while Jangal mobilised the *santhals* (an ethnic group residing historically in that region).⁷⁶ Instead of holding a dialogue for the peaceful resolution of the issue with their comrades, the government chose to suppress the uprising. Ironically, the parliamentary left itself launched the first attack on the Naxalite Movement.⁷⁷

As China's socio-economic conditions were similar to India's, it was thought that the path of the Indian revolution would be similar China's. In a broadcast on 28 June, 1967 the Peking Radio expressed its support for the peasants' revolt⁷⁸, describing the Naxalbari incident as the front paw of the revolutionary armed struggle launched by the Indian people under the guidance of Mao Tse-tung's ideas and condemned the United Front

⁷³ Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.42.

⁷⁴ Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.10.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, P.19.

⁷⁶ Gill, P.S. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite Movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P. 6.

⁷⁷ Rai, H., & Prasad, K.M. (1972). Naxalism: A Challenge to the Proposition of Peaceful Transition to Socialism. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 33(4), 455–480, P.470.

⁷⁸ Peking Review, (1967, June 30). Mao Tse-tung's Thought Opens New Prospects for the Liberation of Mankind. *Peking Review*, No.27, P. 39-40.

Government as a tool of the Indian reactionaries to deceive the people. In its editorial of 5, July 1967 titled *Spring Thunder Breaks over India*, the People's Daily of China applauded the Naxalbari uprising with the comment: "A peal of the spring thunder has crashed over the land of India".⁷⁹

This incident offered a real opportunity to the revolutionaries to spread their ideology in West-Bengal. People were made to realise that the policy of the government was in the interests of the landlords and against the poor. Although it was the state government that ordered police action against the rebels, but the police were controlled by the home minister, who was from the CPI (M). Thus, it was the CPI (M) that decided to crush the revolt.⁸⁰

This particular incident compromised the position of the party and its leaders realised that the actions taken by the state's coalition government, that is, the United Front Government were not only wide off the mark, rather they would have far-reaching consequences for the unity and solidarity of the party's cadre. Owing to the favourable circumstances created by these developments in the state, the Maoist were able to mobilise the poor peasantry. The land-seizure drive spread rapidly from one region to another. Finally, a situation arose where the land-grab movement transformed into a full-blown insurgency.⁸¹

China's support for the cause made a huge impact on the leaders of the Naxalite Movement. They were now inclined to endorse China's suggestion that the revolution should be rural and peasantry-based, and an armed struggle in the countryside should eventually encircle the cities. They further stressed the need for studying the guidelines laid down by Mao while deliberating the strategy of armed uprising and the theory of revolutionary base. The slogan "*China's chairman is our chairman; the Chinese path is our path*" was a direct result of this ideological alliance. Meanwhile, the Movement's leadership was busy spreading the message of Chinese-style revolutionary tactics in West

⁷⁹Jawaid, S. (1979). The Naxalite Movement in India: Origin and failure of the Maoist Revolutionary Strategy in West-Bengal, 1967-1971 P.36; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45, P.24.

⁸⁰Bidwal, P. (1983, January 11). From Thunder to A Whimper 1- Degeneration of Naxalite. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P-8; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45, P.24.

⁸¹Times of India, (1972, August 6). Charu and The Naxalite Movement. *Times of India*, New Delhi P.5; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45. P.25

Bengal.⁸² Mazumdar directed the insurgents to create militant groups and Mao's thoughts were published and circulated by Kanu Sanyal, who was convinced that the masses must be motivated for an armed revolution.⁸³

On 2 November 1967, left-wing extremists from across India gathered in Calcutta, founding the All India Coordination Committee. They concluded that India's socio-economic conditions were ripe for a revolution.⁸⁴ In May 1968, the Committee was renamed as the All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) and declared its ideological aims: to conduct a protracted people's war in accordance with Mao's teachings; adaption of guerrilla warfare tactics; establishment of rural revolutionary bases to finally encircle cities; and abstaining from parliamentary elections.⁸⁵

Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal were to provide leadership to these voices of resistance. The purpose was to unite the revolutionaries fighting against CPI-reformism and CPI (M)-revisionism and to organise peasant uprisings in other parts of India.⁸⁶ Inspired by the Naxalbari incident, armed struggles broke out in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.⁸⁷ On Lenin's centenary on 22 April, 1969 the AICCCR founded the CPI Marxist-Leninist (M-L) based on the Maoist ideology. This act was welcomed and supported by China, which hoped for an Indian revolution on the lines of the Chinese revolution.⁸⁸

However, the AICCCR was not without problems. Its leadership had its share of differences of opinion. The Andhra Committee of D.V. Rao and T.N. Reddy was expelled from the AICCCR by Charu for expressing divergent political views on certain issues. Therefore, they formed the Andhra Pradesh Coordination Committee of Communist

⁸²Sengupta, P. (1967). November Revolutionary and the CPI. Calcutta: *Liberation*, Vol.1, P.25-26; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45. P.25

⁸³Intelligence Memorandum, (1970, 26 October). The Naxalite: India's Extreme Left-Wing Communist. CIA. No. 1477/70, Approved for reaseale 2008/02/015. P.14-16.; N/A (1987, September 9). Charu Mazumdar on the Naxalbari Road. *A World to Win*, P. 3; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45. P. 30

⁸⁴Mazumdar, C. (1972, September 1). A Few Words About Guerrilla Actions. *Collected Writing of Comrade Charu Mazumdar*, 2(1), P.18.

⁸⁵Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan. P. 37; Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51(1), 22-45, P.31.

⁸⁶Mukherji, N. (2012). *The Maoists in India: Tribals Under Siege*. Pluto, P.11.

⁸⁷Mazumdar, C. (1972, September 1). A Few Words about Guerrilla Actions. *Collected Writing of Comrade Charu Mazumdar*, 2(1), P.18.

⁸⁸Chandra, A. (1990). The Naxalbari Movement. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 51 (1), 22-45, P.31; Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan. P.37

Revolutionaries (APCCCR). Similarly, the group led by Harbhajan Singh Sohi from Punjab separated from the AICCCR because of political differences. On account of such frequent fragmentations, the CPI (M-L) could not enjoy a long stint as a political party.⁸⁹

By the end of 1972, the West Bengal government had successfully crushed the insurgency and most of its leadership was arrested. With Charu's death on 28 July, 1972 the CPI (M-L) was dissolved after it was further split into several small groups, each professing to uphold the revolutionary legacy of the Movement and each claiming to be the true successors of the CPI (M-L).⁹⁰

Naxalite Movement in Punjab

The state of Punjab is no stranger to struggles, revolts, and rebellion. It was at the forefront of India's freedom struggle against the British. This land has provided fertile ground for the birth and growth of the Gadar Movement, the Kirti Kisan Party, the Riasty Praja Mandal Movement, the PEPSU Muzara Movement, and the Red Party, among others.⁹¹ Similarly, the Communist Movement also found a roaring response in Punjab under the British rule, and this support continued even after Independence. In Punjab, it was confined, primarily, to the land-owning Jat peasantry, especially the middle-peasantry, which formed the socio-political base of the insurgency.⁹²

As a consequence of the ideological rift in the CPI, Punjab also witnessed the split in the communist party in 1964 when the CPI (M) was formed.⁹³ This is when the party in Punjab adopted a more militant stance and a radicalised ideology. The party, however, did take time to spread its ideological message. Whereas many militant cadres in Punjab joined the CPI (M), a significant number of red communists belonging to the erstwhile PEPSU continued with the CPI.⁹⁴ However, in comparison to the CPI, the CPI (M) never had a strong political base in Punjab and, therefore, remained disconnected from the mass

⁸⁹Frontier, (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. New Delhi: *Frontier*, 7(28). P.6.; Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to agitation the naxalite movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.37-38.

⁹⁰Ibid., P.43-44; Jawaid, S. (1978, September). The Naxalite Movement in India: Origin and Failure of the Maosit Revoluionary Strategies in West-Bengal 1967-1971. Brock University, P.91.

⁹¹Singh, G. (1994). *Politics of Sikh Homeland (1940-1990)*. Ajanta Publications, P.171.

⁹²Gill, P.S. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite Movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104. P. 91

⁹³Singh, G. (1994). *Politics of Sikh Homeland (1940-1990)*. Ajanta Publications, P. 69-74.

⁹⁴There were three major armed communist rebellions in India after Independence, all of which revolved around land ownership and claim over the produce from the land. First, in Telangana region of the erstwhile Hyderabad state in 1947; second, in Tebhaga region in West-Bengal in 1948; and third, a Red Communist Party-led revolt in the erstwhile PEPSU region of Punjab in 1948.

base of landless tillers, workers, and small farmers.⁹⁵ Gradually, with the efforts of red communists such as Bujha Singh and Harkishan Singh Surjeet, who were extremely active in Punjab, the CPI (M) built a strong political base in Punjab. In the Punjab Legislative Assembly elections of 1967, the party contested 13 seats and won 3—the electoral statistics highlight the representation of the CPI(M) as a political party in Punjab. This can also be interpreted as the CPI (M)'s stance of exploiting the opportunity of constitutionally guaranteed power through elections.⁹⁶

The three chief issues concerning the Punjab CPI (M) were: to recognise and implement Mao's ideas; to participate in government formation via parliamentary politics; and to move towards the upliftment of people by organising militant mass struggles.⁹⁷ Mao-inspired workers within the CPI (M) were of the view that the party was failing to achieve its larger goal of establishing the power of the proletariat. It had inherited CPI's structural and bureaucratic attitude and had lowered its revolutionary status to that of a reformist party by restricting its political activity to peasant organisations and trade unions, aiming for a few economic goals.⁹⁸

When the Naxalite uprising began to unfold in India, many of the carders began openly expressing their discontent as they could no longer contain their contempt for the party leadership. A radio announcement in Peking regarding the uprising in India greatly encouraged the Naxalite, who now openly came out against the CPI (M). Consequently, a majority of the pro-China extremists had become too radical to continue in the party in Punjab, and either left voluntarily or were expelled. They thought that the time had come to launch an armed struggle like at Naxalbari.⁹⁹

The CPI (M)'s Politburo, in order to tackle the unrest within the party, organised a school in New Delhi from 1 to 10 October 1967 in which active young party members from different parts of Punjab were included. These included Harbhajan Singh Sohi, Hakim Singh Samaon, Hardev Bhagwatana, Bant Raipuri, Inderjit Advocate, Harnack Sardulgarh, Satpal Bharti, Jarnail Singh Bahadurpur, Yashpal Bawa, Ved Prakash Gupta,

⁹⁵Singh, G. (1994). *Politics of Sikh Homeland (1940–1990)*. Ajanta Publications, P.78–79.

⁹⁶Ibid., P.87–88; Rustogi, M.L. (1971, March,1). Akali Dal Improve its Strength in Punjab. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.11.

⁹⁷Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.73.

⁹⁸Gill, P.S. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P. 93; Bidwal, P. (1983, January 11). From Thunder to A Whimper 1- degeneration of Naxalite. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P-8.

⁹⁹Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P. 6.

and Bal Parkash Gupta. In this school, Harbhajan Singh Sohi raised some questions that challenged the central leadership of the CPI (M). Consequently, P. Sundaraiya (General Secretary, CPI (M)) issued the order to expel Harbhajan Singh Sohi and his accomplices Hakim Singh Samason, Bant Raipuri, Hardev Singh Bhagatwana, and Balwant Singh from the Party on the charge of committing anti-party activities.¹⁰⁰

The news of this expulsion was published in the print media. As a result, first, the above-mentioned leaders and their sympathisers got distinguished from the CPI (M), and second, they emerged as new leaders throughout Punjab. Supporters of this new line of thought began contacting them from across Punjab. These included Master Bachitra Singh from Hoshiarpur; Daya Singh from Rupnagar; Master Hardev and Deedar Singh from Kheri Salabatpur; Babu Ram Bairagi, Amar Achwarwal, and Lal Singh Kalsan from Ludhiana; Jagjit Singh Sohal and Anhay Ram Shahtri from Sangrur; Pyara Singh from Gurdaspur; and several other comrades from Bathinda.¹⁰¹

The first meeting to assemble these comrades of Punjab on one platform was held in the village of Virk Khurd in early 1968, where a decision was taken to hold a larger meeting by contacting other comrades.¹⁰² Consequently, on 7 February, 1968 a state-level meeting was held at village Bhagatwana for those members who subscribed to the Naxalbari line,¹⁰³ and it was here that the Punjab Coordination Committee of Revolutionaries of CPI (M) (PCCR of CPI (M)) was formed. The Committee comprised Daya Singh, Babu Ram Bairagi, Jagjit Sohal, Bant Raipuri, and Comrade Dakota. It was decided to make Comrade Dakota—who was not in the meeting—convener of this committee; he later refused this responsibility and Daya Singh was chosen as convener.¹⁰⁴

The committee, in its statement, declared that the CPI (M) no longer carried its revolutionary character and that its leaders had begun working in collusion with the State.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, CPI (M)'s role in the rise of the Naxalite Movement was held in doubt, and all revolutionaries were called upon to join the revolutionary wave. This statement intensified the Committee's alignment against the CPI (M). The Committee

¹⁰⁰Ibid., P:15.

¹⁰¹Ibid., P.16; Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P. 74–75.

¹⁰²Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.17; Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.88.

¹⁰³Ibid., P.75.

¹⁰⁴Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*, Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan. P.18; Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.79.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., P:18.

also contacted senior leaders like Baba Gurmukh Singh, Somnath Pharwahi, Baba Bujha Singh, Gandharva Sen, and Hardial Singh Pooni.¹⁰⁶

On 15 March 1968 another meeting was held at village Benra (Sangrur) to launch Naxalite activities. At this meeting, it was decided that a wall-poster be published to intensify the activities of the Movement, and consequently, on the night of 12 April 1968 a poster was pasted on a wall. It read:

Vietnam Da Rah Sada Rah,
Naksalbari Da Rah Sada Rah,
Loka De Mukti Da Rah Chona Nahe,
Inqulabi Ate Kharku Jado-Jadah Han.¹⁰⁷

It stated that the path of people's liberation is not elections but a revolutionary and militant struggle.¹⁰⁸ Nine thousand such posters were pasted all over Punjab on buses, on walls of police stations and government offices, and in other public places. People saw these posters on the morning of 13 April 1968—a day chosen because of its historical significance because it was on this day in 1699 that the Khalsa *Panth* (faith) was established by Guru Gobind Singh. Sometime later, two more posters were published: one pronounced the rebels' economic demands and second contained Mao's immortal lines: "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun".¹⁰⁹

Consequently, the Naxalite Movement began spreading in Punjab. While its primary support-base included school and college students and public-school teachers, it, interestingly, gained influence among the students at industrial training institutes as well. Additionally, it found sympathisers among doctors, engineers, and lawyers.¹¹⁰ Soon, a large number of youths, influenced by the communist ideology, left their colleges, universities, homes, and jobs to join the Movement as full-time activists. It is important to note that a large number of CPI (M-L)-influenced student activists also joined the Movement in Punjab. They left the party under the guidance of Darshan Baghi, president

¹⁰⁶Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.78; Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.78.

¹⁰⁷Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.19.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., P. 20; Liberation, (1971, May). Swift Advance of Armed Peasant Struggle in Punjab. *Liberation*, 4 (4), 54-55.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., P.20; Liberation, (1971, April). To the Comrade of Punjab. *Liberation*, Vol. 4, No.1, P.6-7.

¹¹⁰Singh, P. (1985). Marxism in Punjab. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20(13), P.543-544.; The Times of India (1981, January 13). Naxalite Make Inroads into Punjab Schools. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.7.

of the Punjab Student Union (PSU), who, along with other senior communist workers, encouraged the students to quit the *new revisionist* party.¹¹¹

Punjab Student Union (PSU) and Naxalite Movement

It is interesting to note that the students' organisation, which significantly contributed to the Movement, was created by the initiative of the CPI. On 15 March 1963 Avtar Singh Malhotra of the CPI held a meeting with Darshan Baghi and some other youth at the Desh Bhagat Yadgari Hall, Jalandhar to form a students' organisation. Thereafter, Darshan Baghi called a meeting of students at the Panjab University, Chandigarh, where they discussed the need and character of such an organisation. They formed the Chandigarh Students Union (CSU), which was later renamed the Punjab Students Union (PSU). After the split in the CPI in 1964, the Marxist elements of the PSU merged with the CPI (M). The PSU organised the students of Punjab, provoked their political and democratic consciousness, and attempted to align them with the Marxist ideology.¹¹²

Comrades Harbhajan Sohi, Hakim Singh Samoan, and Daya Singh met the leadership of the PSU as representatives of the new Coordination Committee. In fact, before the Delhi school in 1967, Harbhajan Sohi stayed at the Panjab University, Chandigarh campus for about two months, studying Maoist ideology and enlightening others of the same. His views impressed comrades Daya Singh, Tarlochan Grewal, Thana Singh, as well as other activists of the PSU like Darshan Baghi, Bhupinder Singh, Meh Singh, and Rajinder Singh Dhindsa. In fact, leaders of the PSU already knew about him, having been inspired by his earlier work. During their meetings they discussed CPI (M)'s opportunistic, revisionist line and the purpose of the Naxalite Movement.¹¹³

Consequently, the leadership of the PSU unanimously severed its affiliation with the CPI (M) and joined the radical communists. Simultaneously, at the national level, Charu Mazumdar came up with the idea of an armed struggle to annihilate the class enemy as the only revolutionary solution. He felt that the formation of mass organisations resulted in revisionism and weakened the revolutionary spirit of the people. Therefore, he felt that all mass organisations be dissolved. Subsequently, at a meeting in Punjab on 15 March 1968 Baba Bujha Singh proposed that the PSU be dissolved, and its leaders become

¹¹¹ Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P.86–87.

¹¹² Bal, G. (2013). P.S.U. De Sathpana Te 1968 Inqulabi Vara. *Punjab Times*, 14 (14), P. 27; Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P.16.

¹¹³ Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P.86–89.

members of the party to participate in an armed struggle against the State. The meeting witnessed heated discussions, as the PSU leadership was unwilling to dissolve the organisation.¹¹⁴

In 1968, the PSU launched a strike to remove the principals of Government College, Ludhiana and Government Rajindra College, Bathinda. During these agitations, clashes erupted between students and police at several places. The police mercilessly beat students in Amritsar and against this police brutality, a strike was called across all the colleges of Punjab on 12 December 1968. Jagtar Singh, a student of Sudhar College (Ludhiana), was shot dead by police on the day of the strike, making him the first PSU martyr. Once again, a Punjab-wide strike was called on 19 December against the killing of Jagtar Singh. During the strike, Darshan Baghi was arrested under the draconian MISA Act and imprisoned for a year.¹¹⁵

However, the struggle to remove the two principals ended in victory. After the arrest of Darshan Baghi, police arrested other student leaders connected with the Naxalite Movement. Under these circumstances, the PSU leadership agreed to disband the organisation and joined the Naxalite Movement by going underground.¹¹⁶ These included student leaders like Harbhajan Halvarvi, Shamsheer Sherry, Darshan Khatkad, Surinder Chahal, Inderjit Bittu, Darshan Kohli, Kuldeep Singh Hansra, and Major Singh. It was the student movement that provided activists for the armed struggle during the Naxalite Movement, and out of the 83 martyrs of the Movement, 19 were from the PSU.¹¹⁷

As far as the PSU was concerned, Harbhajan Sohi—he left the CPI (M-L) in 1969—stressed a revolutionary transformation of society through mass organisations. Based on this, the PSU was reorganised by Sohi's group in 1971.¹¹⁸ Later, Sohi's line of mobilising people through mass organisations proved a milestone in Punjab's revolutionary movement. After the 1972 Moga agitation, the PSU made a significant contribution to developing the political consciousness of youth and mobilised large sections of the

¹¹⁴Ibid., P.94.

¹¹⁵Ibid., P.119.; Bal, G. (2013). P.S.U. De Sathpana Te 1968 Inqulabi Vara. *Punjab Times*, 14(14), P.27.

¹¹⁶Garg, R.K. (1973). Student Power? *Convener Committee for Defense and Release of Naxalite Prisoners*,5(43), P.14.

¹¹⁷Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P. 222–23; Bal, G. (2013). P.S.U. De Sathpana Te 1968 Inqulabi Vara. *Punjab Times*, 14(14), P.27.

¹¹⁸Frontier, (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, New Delhi, 7(28), P.6.

student community. After 1972, several Naxalite groups also rejected the line of armed struggle, adopting instead the line of mass organisation.¹¹⁹

Annihilations of Class Enemies

The first act of insurrection was organised at Hakim Singh's village Samaon in Bathinda district (now in Mansa), where drum beatings and public declarations were employed to mobilise the peasants for seizing land of wealthy landlords. The operation was planned to begin on 30 November 1968 by the Punjab Coordination Committee; peasants were informed accordingly. At the appointed hour, the rebels swarmed Samaon village, forcefully occupying land and hoisting red flags in fields. After this incident, the struggle of the poor and landless peasants began to grow steadily under the leadership of the CPI (M-L). On 10 April 1969 agricultural labourers and poor peasants struck work demanding higher wages at the 1,000-acre Birla Agricultural Farm near Rup Nagar—the Punjab government had leased it to the Birla group for seed multiplication. The farm management used the police as well as local chieftains to end the strike. The police harassed and tortured several peasants arrested during the crackdown. In order to retaliate against this brutal repression, peasant guerrillas attacked and injured two police personnel at the Chamkaur Sahib Police Station on 30 April 1969, which provoked a brutal police response.¹²⁰

A spree of attacks and killings ensued. On 5 June, a powerful landlord of Basantpur (Kangla) was attacked; he escaped unhurt because his house was already under police protection. On 8 June, in village Qilla Hakima,¹²¹ landless peasants carrying swords and spears seized landlord General Balwant Singh's land, destroying fodder and machinery. Unlike the Bhikhi-Samaon incident, this time they held-up in the surrounding areas to sustain the seizure. On 23 June, the guerrillas killed three landlords. On 4 September, the police informer in village Bhaini was shot dead when he obstructed the comrades from pasting posters in the village. On 15 September, a police informer in Jalandhar lost his life and his double-barreled rifle to the Naxalite. On 10 October, Mr Sehgal, a factory

¹¹⁹Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan. P.86; Bal, G. (2013). P.S.U. De Sathpana Te 1968 Inqulabi Vara. *Punjab Times*, 14(14), P.27.

¹²⁰N/A (1970). India's West-Bengal State Government Sinister Example Parliamentary Road-Collapses. *Liberation*, Vol.3. No. 6 P. 46-47; Mani, V.R. (1988, September 2). Armed Struggle only Ansure: Naxal Leader. *The Times of India*. New Delhi. P.15

¹²¹*Liberation*, (1972). Armed Struggle in Punjab Reaches a Higher Stage. *Liberation*, 5(1), P. 163–65

manager in Phagwara believed to have murdered five workers, was unsuccessfully attacked.¹²²

In order to suppress this violence, special police cells were created in addition to the recruitment of a large numbers of police personnel. Relentless harassment and torture of hapless peasants ensued, and warrants were issued against comrades. Like wildfire, the uprising spread to other districts. In Ferozpur, 20 peasants armed with swords and sticks killed two gun-wielding landlords. Then, in December 1969, peasant guerrillas shot dead a police informer in Ludhiana.¹²³

Even after starting the armed struggle, the PCCCR (Punjab Communist Corridation Committee) of CPM managed to stay united and coordinated with the AICCCR. When the CPI (M-L) was formed in 1969, it joined the party and was renamed the Punjab Organizational Committee (POC) of CPI (M-L), or simply, the POC. The first split in the POC occurred in 1969 when the Bathinda and Ferozpur districts committee led by Harbhajan Sohi separated from the POC to form the Bathinda–Ferozpur Committee.¹²⁴ Sohi opposed Charu Mazumdar’s ideology of annihilation of class enemy, declaring it as left adventurism. Additionally, owing to the absence of a strong and visionary leadership, he opposed the sudden formation of the CPI (M-L) in 1969.¹²⁵ Instead of jumping into an armed struggle right from the initial stage, he emphasised building mass organisations and formed the PCRC (Punjab Communist Revolutionary Committee) in 1971.¹²⁶

The rest of the party continued to work under the name of POC, executing armed actions as per Charu Mazumdar’s ideology. However, in 1970, a second split took place in the POC, mainly due to the refusal of the state committee to consider a state-level plenum as demanded by several district committees. Consequently, a section of the Punjab Committee split to form the Punjab Himachal Committee. It constituted Babu Ram Bairagi, Hakim Singh Samaon, Baldev Singh Sanghole, Darshan Khatkad, and Harbhajan Halvarvi as its leaders.¹²⁷ Meanwhile, the rest of the group continued to function as the

¹²²N/A (1970). India’s West-Bengal State Government Sinister Example Parliamentary Road-Collapses. *Liberation*, 3(6), P. 46–48.

¹²³ Ibid., P.21.

¹²⁴N/A, (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, 7(28), P.5.

¹²⁵Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.110.

¹²⁶Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.90–91; *Liberation*, 1970: N/A (1970). India’s West-Bengal State Government Sinister example parliamentary road-collapses. *Liberation*, 3(6), P.13; N/A (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, (7), 28. P.5.

¹²⁷Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.32.

POC under the leadership of Jagjit Singh Sohal, Gandharav Sen, and Daya Singh. In this dispute, the central leadership of the CPI (M-L) chose to recognise the Jagjit Sohal group, which was also known as the Charu group.¹²⁸ The Punjab Himachal Committee, naturally, disagreed with this decision and continued to function as an independent group. Both groups believed in the efficacy of armed action, and continued with armed activities until 1972, with the Punjab Himachal Committee performing the bulk of these actions.¹²⁹

This Movement heavily influenced the political space and cultural horizon of Punjab's society. In this context, literature played a significant role in the spread of the Naxalite ideology and in motivating the youth to participate in the Movement. In comparison to earlier political movements, the Naxalite had a relatively clear understanding that real emancipation of masses was not possible through parliamentary democracy, even if it provided political and juridical freedom. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the left to mobilise and organise the surging peasant rebellion in the countryside. For this end, they established a direct connection between politics and literature and propagated the message of the impending revolution using art forms like drama, novels, poetry, and music (in the form of Kavashri). The circulation of printed literature, therefore, played a significant role in disseminating the radical ideas of the communist in Punjab.¹³⁰

Numerous plays were written and staged to present the issues raised by the Naxalite. The play *Chetna Di Shakti* conveyed the message that it was imperative to raise arms against one's oppressors. Punjab has had a robust tradition of theatre, and even before this Movement, plays that dealt with the rampant exploitation and abject poverty of peasants were enacted across its villages. However, the poignant portrayal of exploitation and deprivation found in of the plays written during the Naxalite Movement inspired the audience to resist and change the existing system of oppression.

During this time, most of the writers, novelists, and play wrights were under the influence of the Marxist–Leninist ideology. Two theater groups led by Ajmer Aulakh¹³¹ and

¹²⁸ Ibid., P.32–33; Frontier, (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, 7(28), P.6.

¹²⁹N/A, (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, 7(28), P.6; The Times of India, (1980, May 5). CPI (M-L), a Split and Spent Force. *The Times of India*. New Delhi, P.7.

¹³⁰Singh, P. (1985). Marxism in Punjab. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20(13), 543–544, P.543; Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.30–31.

¹³¹The protagonist (19-08-1942 to 15-06-2017) was a public figure from Mansa district, Punjab, India. He published his play “Arbad Narbad Dhundukara” i.e., ‘Eons and Nebulae’ in 1978. His other creations include ‘Begane bohar Di Chha’ (Shade of the Alien Banyan), ‘Anhe Nishanchi’ (Blind Shooters), ‘Gani’, ‘Ik Ramayan Hor’ (One More Ramayana), ‘Nium-Jara’, ‘Satt Beganne’, ‘Kehar Singh Di Maut’ (Kehar

Gursharan Singh¹³² became extremely popular in rural Punjab during this period. A popular, recurring theme of their pro-Naxalite plays was police repression. Some of the most popular plays of the time were *Hor Ve Uthasi Marad Ka Chella*; *Yarde Da Safar*; *Jina Sach Palle Hoi*; and *Baguti De Shakti*.¹³³

Numerous groups associated directly or indirectly with the Naxalite Movement published their weekly or monthly magazines in Punjabi, in which articles were published under both real and fake names. It is worth noting that Punjabi revolutionary or resistance poetry was born in the pages of these clandestine magazines. In 1968, the first underground literary magazines called *Dastavez*, seven issues of which were published in total, was launched by comrades of Jalandhar, Patiala, and Chandigarh. In November 1971, *Rohlebaan* was published from Nakodar. Although Paramjit was the official editor, the magazine was actually edited by the legendary Naxalite poet Avtar Pash. Then, in 1972, Pash started his own magazine called *Seyaad*.¹³⁴ These and other magazines like *Lok Youd*¹³⁵ and *Mukti Marg* were mainly read by a closed group. Apart from these, there were several other left-leaning Punjabi magazines like *Preet Lari*, *Arsee*, *Sedh*, *Role Ban*, and *Srijana* also incredibly famous among the youth.

The *Kendri Lekhak Sabha*, the common platform for all Punjabi writers, also adopted a radically secular and democratic political stance in its various monthly and annual activities and programmes.¹³⁶ Owing to the lack of entertainment options, a larger number of youngsters participated in these activities, where powerful narratives delivered by impassioned orators captured their imagination and influenced their impressionable minds towards the Naxalite ideology.

New ideas and expressions sprout forth during periods of destruction and crises. The Naxalite Movement—a period of severe socio-political upheaval and chaos—also catalysed a surge of revolutionary thinking and raised a completely new breed of Punjabi writers. The genre of Punjabi fiction became the preferred mode of literary expression of

Singh's Death), 'Ishaka Bajha Namaza Da Hajja Nah Bhajan Bahin' (Broken Arms), 'Ikka Si Daria', 'Jhanam Da Pani', and 'Aise Jana Wirale Samsara'.

¹³²Gursharan Singh (16.08.1929 – 27.09.2011), was a director of Punjabi Drama. He acted as Bhai Manna Singh in a Punjabi TV serial and became popular in Punjab. He received the Kalidas Award in 2004. He died at the age of 82 in Chandigarh.

¹³³Singh, P. (1985). Marxism in Punjab. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20(13), 543–544, P.543; Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan, P.30–31.

¹³⁴Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Mohali: Lokgeet Parkashan. P. 24–25

¹³⁵Frontier. (1975). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, 7(28), P.8.

¹³⁶Singh, P. (1985). Marxism in Punjab. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 20 (13), 543–544, P. 543.

the angst and desperation of the times. Jaswant Singh Kanwal was a well-known novelist of the period who wrote famous novels such as *Raat Baaki Hai* (1954) and *Lahu De Lo* (1975).¹³⁷ The latter, which subtly captured the socio-economic complexities and political structures of contemporary Punjab, was banned immediately after its publication. Another famous novelist of this era was Karamjeet Kussa, whose novels *Agg Da Geet* and *Zakhmi Dariya* depicted the vicissitudes of Punjab's Naxalite Movement.¹³⁸

The Movement also coloured the poetic sensibilities of the Punjabis. If on one hand, poets referred to the feudal exploitation of peasants and their struggles against it, on the other, they depicted the theoretical premises of the Movement. It was a time when revolutionary sentiments underpinned by struggle, conflicts, crises, and change profusely appeared in the creations of several poets. Plays were organised in villages—and during festivals even in cities—for the dissemination of the Naxalite ideology and for raising political awareness amongst youth. Cultural programmes organised by the several *natak mandalas* (theatre groups), for instance, by Gurshran Singh's theatre team, were based primarily on the leftist ideology.

Another literary tool that was immensely efficacious for the propagation of the Movement was the songs of singers like Sant Ram Udasi¹³⁹ and Lal Singh Dil.¹⁴⁰ Their songs, with painfully evocative lyrics based on the pitiable experiences of the labour class and peasants, had a huge impact on the tender conscience of youth. These songs stuck a powerful emotional chord with the Punjabi youth, and shaped their political consciousness during the period 1968–75.¹⁴¹ Other well-known revolutionary poets of the

¹³⁷Jaswant Singh Kanwal (27.06.1919-01.02.2020) was of multiple literary virtues. He was a novelist, short-story writer, and essayist. He was born in village Dhudika in Moga district of Punjab. Interest in literature gripped him when he was young. He was honored with the Punjabi Sahit Shiromani Award in the year 2007. He targeted social customs and beliefs in his writings like 'Raat Baaki He', 'Lahoo Do Lo' (Dawn of the Blood). The last one was much controversial in its tone. In the later phase of his life, he became the devotee of Khalistan Movement in Punjab.

¹³⁸Karamjeet Singh Kusa, a novelist, beautifully presented the pain and sufferings of Dalits in his writings. In his novel, 'Agg da Geet', a Dalit named Deboo despite being industrious has to endure a life of penury life because of his low caste.

¹³⁹Sant Ram Udasi (20.04.1939-06.11.1986), a renowned poet was a product of the Naxalite and Dalit consciousness in the late 1960s. His main collections in the 1970s were – 'Lahoo Bhije Bol' (Blood-soaked Words), 'Saintan' (Gestures), 'Chounukrian' (the Four-edged).

¹⁴⁰Lal Singh Dil (11.04.1943-14.08.2007) was an outcome of the Naxalite Movement in the late 1960s in Punjab. Lal Singh Dil — affectionately known as Dil to his friends and admirers — was a poet, a lover, a wanderer, a truth-seeker, tea vendor and above all, among the most brilliant minds Punjab produced in the field of literature. Nurtured as a poet during the Naxalite movement in Punjab, Dil's poetic imagination is solely held together by the needle and thread of his experiences, of being born and raised a Dalit. To understand this, we must read what he has written in his memoirs, *Poet of the Revolution*.

¹⁴¹Liberation, (1971, May). Swift Advance of Armed Peasant Struggle in Punjab. *Liberation*, 4(4), P. 54-55.; N/A (1977, August 18). Police killed 75 Naxalite in 'encounter'. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.7.

period who became symbols of the collective consciousness of the Punjabi society included Avtar Pash, Darshan Singh Khatkal, Harbhajan Singh Halvarvli, Jamal Singh Padha, Darshan Dusanjh, and Surjit Patter. Among them, Darshan Singh Khatkal, Jamal Singh Padha, and Darshan Dusanjh never followed the strict discipline of the communist party, while others such as Sant Ram Udasi, Avtar Pash, and Lal Singh Dil moved in and out of the party.

Naturally, songs were an irreplaceable weapon in the cultural arsenal of the communists. The Naxalite, it can be said, were active producers, disseminators, and manipulators of popular music for their political ends and objectives. However, there was another reason why songs held an important place in the Naxalite Movement. From 1968 to 1973, hundreds of young people, instigated by popular leaders, participated in political actions. These were not simple action like traversing cities and village with banners, chanting slogans, and listening to speeches. This was an era of mass political movements, and for mass mobilisation, the left groups frequently organised cultural functions, which were actively attended by youth. At such gatherings it was felt that the message of the Movement could be better communicated through the simplicity and mass appeal of music and rhyme rather than through reason and debate. Moreover, the act of singing is a collective exercise in which one is gripped by a cohesive force that blends the individual with the group. Additionally, an individual's pessimism engendered by uncertainty is swiftly dispelled by the optimism of group singing, which restores a sense of control over one's life and destiny. This, in turn, provides a boost to the collective morale and helps clear confusion.¹⁴²

The Naxalite movement was also crushed in the same manner as pervious armed communist uprising, through very severe state repression. The scale of human rights violations was much higher and geographically more widespread than it had been during the earlier period –except perhaps in the southern state of West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh where in the the Indian state adopted a very strict actions against the revolutionaries. These including summery executions in police custody (called 'encounter killings'), case of brutaltorture leading to death, such as those of Charu Mazumdar and Baba Bhuja Singh¹⁴³, and long periods of imprisonment. Such treatment gave birth to civil liberties and human rights organizations that initially focused on the release of political prisoners

¹⁴²Hung, C. T. (1996). The Politics of Songs: Myths and Symbols in the Chinese Communist War Music, 1937–1949. *Modern Asian Studies*, 30(4), 901–929, P. 920–21.

¹⁴³N/A (1977, August 18). Police killed 75 Naxalite in 'encounter'. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.7

because thousands of Naxalite activist and sympathizers had been arrested and imprisoned.¹⁴⁴ During the Naxalite insurgency in Punjab, armed guerrillas fighting the alleged *class enemies* resorted to violence to propagate their idea of a revolution. Consequently, in encounters—real or fake—with the police, 83 Naxalite cadres was killed.¹⁴⁵ Between 1972 and 1975, a militant posture, both at the practice and rhetoric levels, was maintained by the Naxalite.¹⁴⁶ Then, with the implementation of the Emergency in 1975 by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the movement began to wane, eventually losing effectiveness by around 1977.

Conclusion

Post-Independence, India's major challenges included economic development of a huge country, eradication of poverty, and shaping a bustling democracy in a land of bewildering diversities. However, illiteracy and massive social inequities were hindrances in the path of achieving true democracy in the country.

During the 1960s, a strong and united CPI had gathered enough political traction to be recognised as a major opposition party in India. However, internal disagreements regarding methodology & strategy dissipated much energy of party leaders. Soon enough, they realised that in view of the changed national political situation and international circumstances, India's socio-political environment was not conducive for a violent revolution. Consequently, the party decided to take the Parliamentary politics route.

Consequent to incessant internal disaffections within the CPI, the CPI (M) was formed, which enjoyed a solid base among poor peasantry, indigenous tribes, and agricultural labour, especially in West Bengal. Party leaders promised labour and tiller friendly land reforms in West Bengal if voted into power, and accordingly, the cadres created slogans to move the masses, filling them with hope for their future. On 2 March 1967, a non-Congress government was formed in West Bengal. The CPI (M), the CPI, the Bangla Congress—a breakaway group from the Congress with centrist tendencies—and 11 other leftist and centrist parties constituted the United Front Government.

Jyoti Basu and Hare Krishna Konar, two prominent CPI (M) leaders, became the home minister and land revenue minister, respectively. The latter, a veteran CPI (M) peasant

¹⁴⁴Singh, P. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P. 93.

¹⁴⁵Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.67.

¹⁴⁶Ibid, P. 82.

leader, announced soon after his swearing-in “a policy of quick distribution of surplus land among the landless and stopping of eviction of sharecroppers”. The lower-level cadres—poor families, agricultural labour, and indigenous tribes—who were hoping for a better life were disappointed when the United Front Government delayed the issue of land redistribution as promised before the elections. Moreover, once the idea of militant resistance found a foothold in the CPI (M) mindset, a radical faction began pressurising the party leadership to adopt more aggressive approaches.

The radical sections within the CPI (M) called for an armed struggle against landowners. From 3 March 1967 onwards, peasants began acquiring land forcibly and clashes between peasants and landlords erupted in several places. By May 1967, the rebels controlled the Naxalbari, Kharibari, and Phansidewa regions in Darjeeling district. By the end of May 1967, the first serious clash between peasant rebels and the State machinery occurred. On May 23, 1967 a police party out to arrest rebel leaders exchanged fire with armed peasants in a village under the Naxalbari police station. Three policemen were injured, and a police inspector died, prompting police retaliation.

The fact that Charu Mazumdar’s tactical line was a distortion of the Marxist–Leninist–Maoist principle is no basis for condemning the entire Movement. The use of sensational *action* tactics by the Mazumdar group and their politics of annihilation of class enemies in the wake of the 1967 Naxalbari uprising damaged the image of the revolutionary peasant upsurge.

Later, in mid-1969, the Naxalite began targeted killings when the CPI (ML) adopted this policy as formulated by Charu Mazumdar. Though the emergence of violence in the form of annihilation of class enemies was an imposed line of action, the ingrained nature of violence in the culture of Punjab contributed to the impressive recruitment for this Movement.

After the emergence of the Naxalite Movement in West Bengal, the radical section in the CPI (M) in Punjab also organised under the ideology of Charu Mazumdar. In Punjab, the Naxalite Movement began as a mass insurrection against social inequality but soon acquired terrorist undertones, especially during the annihilation phase. Punjab’s Naxalite cadres pasted propaganda posters on the walls of Government office as well as at several other places on 13 April 1968—the date when Naxalite Movement officially started in Punjab. The policy of annihilation of class enemies in Punjab exhibited unique features,

which evolved consequent to the interaction between the movement and retaliatory State actions.

Initially, wealthy landlords were identified as class enemies and some of them were annihilated. However, as the landlords became alert and took defensive measures, moneylenders too were identified as class enemies and killed. Police informers instrumental in the arrest of Naxalite cadres, and policemen with a penchant for torturing or killing the rebels were also taken out.

While the policy of annihilation of class enemies was being given a practical shape, disagreements and personal differences among the leaders towards the beginning of 1970 resulted in the emergence of three groups: the Ferozepur–Bathinda Committee; the Punjab–Himachal Committee (PHC); and the CPI (ML). Among them, only the PHC and the CPI (ML) actively pursued the policy of killings in their strongholds.

The Naxalite Movement in Punjab was essentially a middle-class uprising. The leadership as well as the cadres mainly belonged to the middle-class with a rural background. Most of them were peasants, especially college students. Consequently, they had close links with urban centres also. Furthermore, the introduction of an element of vengeance in the annihilation policy was also a middle-class trait. Mobilisation-oriented propaganda activities were also specifically directed towards the middle class. The insurgents sought, and received, shelter in middle-class families who's young, educated boys held romantic notions of a revolution and joined the Movement for the glory accorded to *heroes*.

This Movement heavily influenced the political space and cultural horizon of Punjab's society. In this context, literature played a significant role in the spread of the Naxalite ideology and in motivating the youth to join the uprising. The Naxalite knew that emancipation of masses was not possible through Parliamentary democracy, even if it provided political and juridical freedom. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the left to mobilise and organise the surging peasant rebellion in the countryside. To this end, they established a direct connection between politics and literature and propagated the message of the impending revolution using art forms like drama, novels, poetry, and music, especially Kavashri songs. The circulation of printed literature also played a significant role in disseminating the radical ideas of the communist in Punjab.

The decline of the insurgency because of inexorable counter-insurgency measures by the State saw ideologically weak members disowning the fight. The failure of the Movement

in Punjab can be attributed to its inept leadership that failed to ensure a strong party organisation; failed to build a strong mass base; did not properly understand the philosophy of militant actions; and, most importantly, failed to align the slogan of *land to tiller* according to the character of Punjab, rigidly trying to impose the West Bengal model on the state.

The Naxalbari uprising, though it did not achieve much by itself, is a watershed event in the history of Indian communism. It was a movement for transforming society, and its symbolic importance is enduring. In a way, the Naxalite Movement in Punjab followed a path that was largely determined by police suppression and the killings of class enemies by the Naxalite. The post-annihilations phase was characterised by mass struggle along militant lines. The Punjab insurgency resembled the nationwide insurgency in many aspects, yet it also possessed certain Punjab-specific peculiarities.

CHAPTER-2

POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUTH IN PUNJAB FROM 1967 TO 1975: A FIELD SURVEY

Nothing exists in a vacuum. Behind the spectacular dazzle of every historical event lies an often overlooked, yet defining trail of cultural, social, political, and economic factors. This chapter discusses how, in the context of Punjab during the period 1967–75, these factors inter-connected in a dynamic process to shape the political consciousness of the youth and mobilised them to join the Naxalite Movement. An attempt has also been made to identify the individual factors responsible for shaping the political consciousness of youth, which inspired them to rise in an armed defiance of the State. An analysis of the demographic profile, and in-depth interviews, of the participants is given below.

The Naxalite Movement: A Field Survey

The Naxalite Movement, which began in earnest in 1967 in West Bengal in India, was unique in character as it deviated from the usual course of agitating through the parliamentary route, and introduced to the masses the weapon of armed revolution to achieve the larger goals of society. The Movement emerged in Punjab with certain peculiarities specific to the region. Though it was in 1967 that the ideology of the Movement began gaining traction in the state, it was actually in 1968, after a series of meetings held in several villages of Punjab that it became a true mass movement.¹⁴⁷ Then, as cracks appeared among the activists, in 1969 the Movement split in various factions. Eventually, under the dual blow of ruthless repression by the State and internal fallings-out, the Movement petered out by 1972. The 1975 Emergency imposed by the Indira Gandhi government at the Centre sounded the death knell for the Naxalite insurgency.¹⁴⁸

Participation

During the course of this research (see Table 1 below), 60 surviving participants of the Movement were interviewed—they had joined at different points of time between 1967 and 1975. Among them, 16.67 per cent had joined in 1967. They were seasoned CPI members or affiliates and not novices and served as the founding members of the Naxalite Movement in Punjab. Owing to their pre-existing Maoist leanings, they voluntarily came forward to propagate the Movement's ideology and to organise the masses. Judge also observes that the initiatives by such dyed-in-the-wool communist led to the formation of

¹⁴⁷ Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to agitation the naxalite movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan. P.13

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, P.19

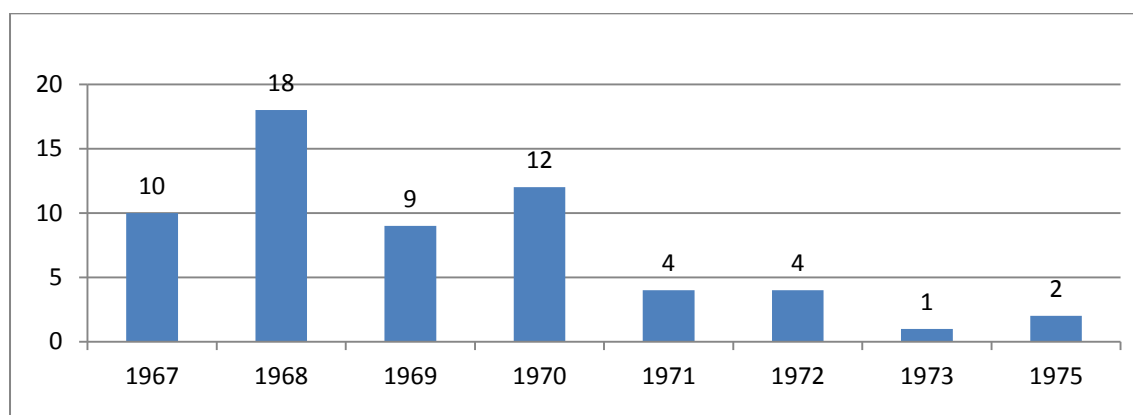
the Punjab Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (PCCCR).¹⁴⁹ Thirty per cent of the respondents joined the Movement in 1968 and mobilised poor peasants and landless labour to strengthen the mass militant struggle. In 1969 and 1970, 15 per cent and 20 per cent of the respondents, respectively, became part of the insurgency. This was the period when the Naxalite abandoned the approach of mass-mobilisation and adopted a more aggressive stance of annihilation of class enemies.¹⁵⁰ Out of the respondents, an equal figure of 6.6 per cent in 1971 and 6.6 per cent in 1972 came into the Movement's fold. The period from 1973 to 1975 witnessed a relentless and ruthless State crackdown, because of which the armed struggle attracted few activists—1.67 per cent joined in 1973 and 3.33 per cent in 1975.

Table 1. Naxalite Movement Participation Rate

Year	Number of respondents who joined	Percentage of total respondents
1967	10	16.6
1968	18	30.3
1969	9	15.0
1970	12	20.0
1971	4	6.6
1972	4	6.6
1973	1	1.6
1975	2	3.3
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 1. Naxalite Movement Participation Rate



Source: Field Survey.

*X-axis: years the Movement was active in Punjab,

**Y-axis: number of people who joined each year.

¹⁴⁹Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to agitation the naxalite movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P. 52.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*, P.22.

Region

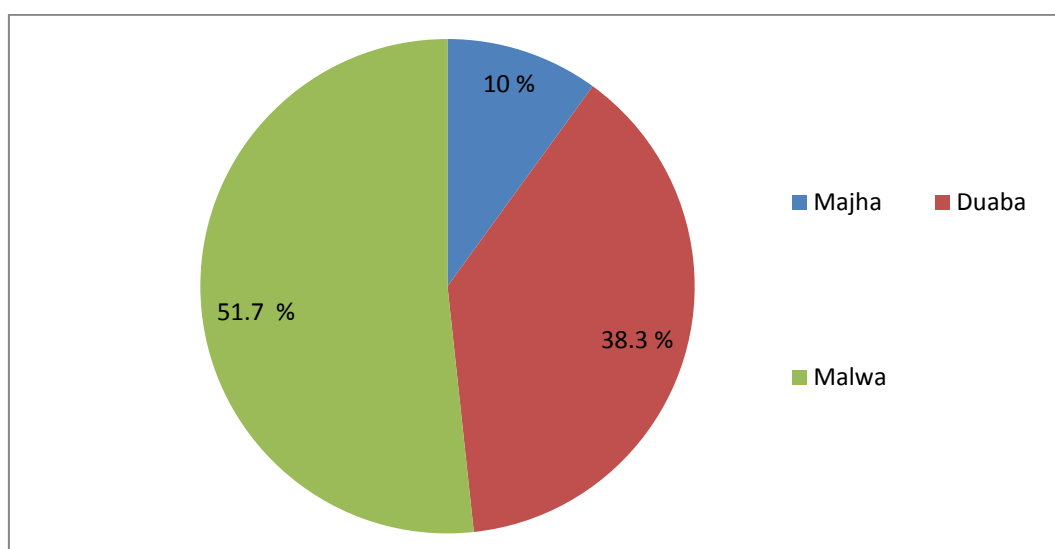
In order to analyse the factors that mobilised youth for the Movement, it is important to consider the socio-cultural conditions of Punjab of that time. The state can be understood as three separate regions, each with its unique cultural traits: Malwa—the largest of the three regions—on the left-bank of river Satluj; Doaba, between the rivers Satluj and Beas; and Majha, between the rivers Beas and Ravi. Table 2, which shows the region-wise distribution of the respondents, reveals that 51.7 per cent of the respondents belong to Malwa. There are two reasons for this: first, the region, burdened with comparatively less fertile land, is economically poorer as compared to the other regions of Punjab; and second, this relative poverty is the reason for the region's historical communist background. Therefore, Malwa youth were most easily drawn to the Naxalite insurgency. The second-largest proportion of youth—38.3 per cent of the respondents—hailed from Doaba, which also has a strong communist background and participated passionately in the Indian freedom struggle. Most of the Ghadar Party freedom fighters hailed from Doaba, therefore the requisite revolutionary streak already existed in the cultural consciousness of the region. A mere 10 per cent was contributed by Majha. Given that Majha has a strong connection with the Sikh religion—most of the religion's shrines are in Majha—the Sikh religious principles of peaceful coexistence and contentment resulted in a lukewarm response to an armed anti-State revolutionary movement.

Table 2. Region-wise Distribution of Respondents

Region	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Majha	6	10.0
Doaba	23	38.3
Malwa	31	51.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2. Region-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

District

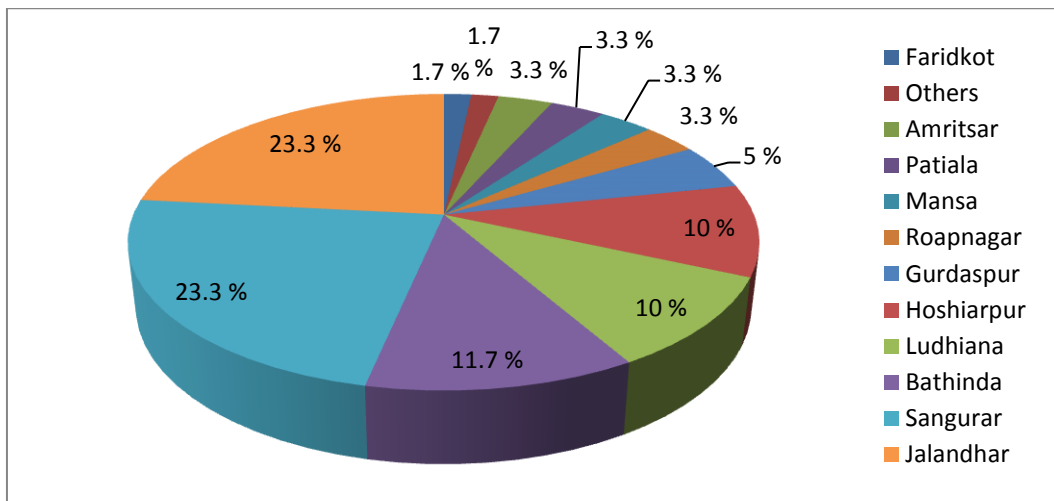
The maximum number of interviewees belonged to districts of Malwa. Out of all the respondents, 23.3 per cent came from Sangrur, 11.8 per cent from Bathinda, 10 per cent from Ludhiana, 3.3 per cent from Mansa, and 3.3 from Patiala districts. In case of Majha, 3.3 per cent of the total respondents hailed from Amritsar district and 5 per cent from Gurdaspur district. In the Doaba region, Jalandhar district accounted for 23.3 per cent of the activists, 10 per cent came from Hoshiarpur district, and 3.3 per cent belonged to Rupnagar district.

Table 3. District-wise Distribution of Respondents

Districts	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Amritsar	2	3.3
Patiala	2	3.3
Faridkot	1	1.7
Mansa	2	3.3
Bathinda	7	11.8
Sangrur	14	23.3
Rupnagar	2	3.3
Gurdaspur	3	5.0
Hoshiarpur	6	10.0
Ludhiana	6	10.0
Jalandhar	14	23.3
Others (Not Specified)	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 3. District-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Age

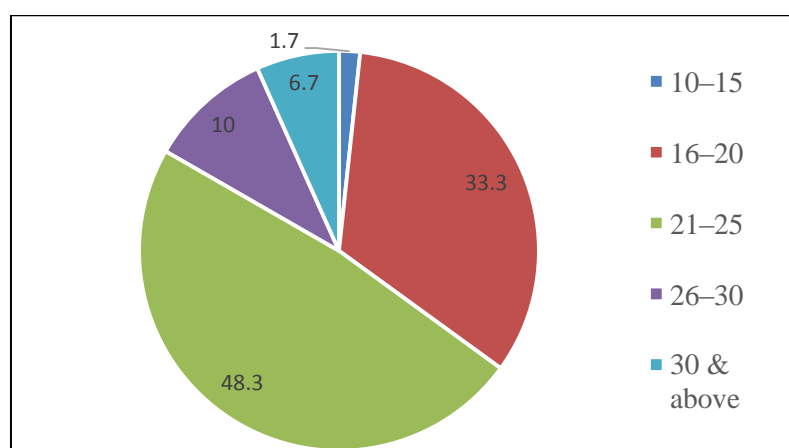
Table 4 reflects the age-wise distribution of the respondents—that is, their age when they joined the Naxalite Movement. The majority of the respondent, 48.3 per cent, were in the age-group of 21–25 years. The age-group of 16–20 years comprised 33.3 per cent of the respondent and 10 per cent were in the age-group of 26–30 years. A mere 6.7 per cent of the respondents were above the age of 30 when they joined the revolution, while 1.7 per cent were in the age group of 10–15 years. Thus, as revealed by the collected data, the average age of the respondents, when they joined the Movement, was 22.4 years. Youth, therefore, predominated the insurgent population, which could be attributed to their impressionable minds that were quickly drawn towards the powerful philosophy of the Communist Movement. Another reason could be their higher level of physical fitness, which is a pre-requisite for an armed struggle.

Table 4. Age-wise*Distribution of Respondents

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
10–15	1	1.7
16–20	20	33.3
21–25	29	48.3
26–30	6	10.0
30 and above	4	6.7
Total	60	100
Average age		22.4

Source: Field Survey

Figure 4. Age-wise*Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Marital Status

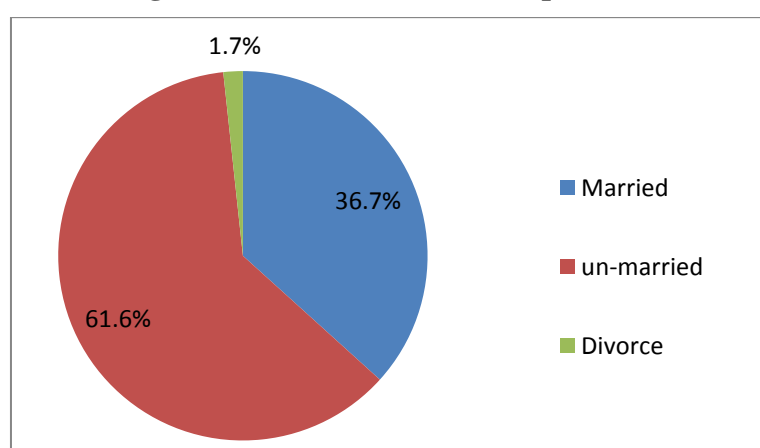
The respondents were enquired about their marital status at the time of joining the revolution; results are given in Table 5. Among the respondents, 61.6 per cent were not married when they took the plunge into the revolution. However, 36.7 per cent were married, and one respondent was divorced at the time of joining the Movement.

Table 5: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Married	22	36.7
Unmarried	37	61.6
Divorced	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey, *Status at the time of joining the Movement.

Figure 5. Marital Status of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Religion

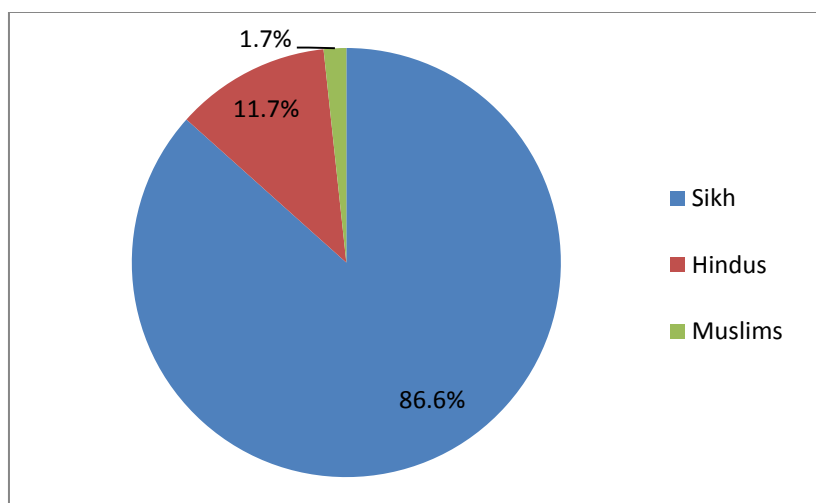
It is important to consider the religion practiced by the respondents because religion plays a decisive role in shaping a person's consciousness. See Table 6 below for the religious distribution of the respondents. As Sikhs constitute the majority of Punjab's population, the largest number of respondents—86.2%—practiced Sikhism, followed by 11.7 per cent Hindus. Islam was practiced by 1.7 per cent of the respondents.

Table 6. Religion-wise Distribution of Respondents

Religion	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Sikhism	52	86.6
Hinduism	7	11.7
Islam	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 6. Religion-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Caste

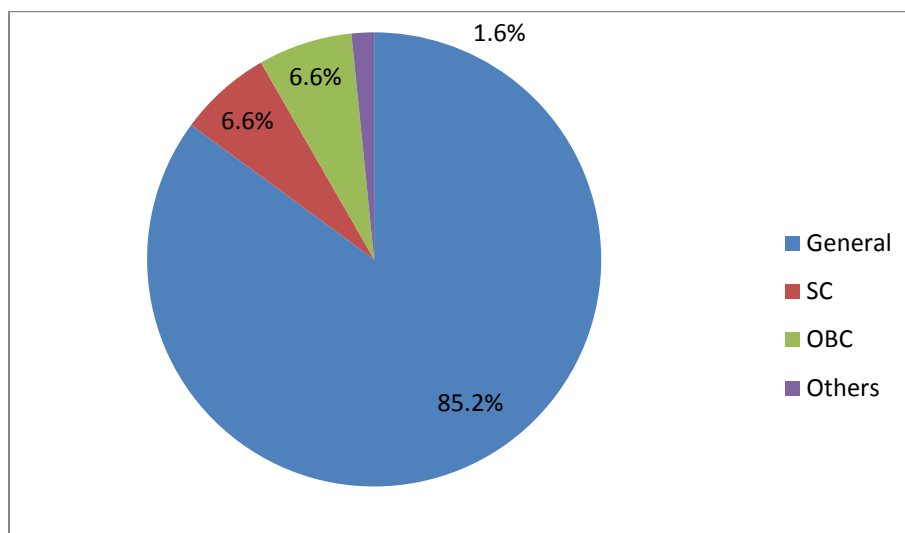
Caste hierarchies have an important place in the context of the Indian society. Therefore, caste-wise distribution of the respondents was also considered during the research, as shown in Table 7. A majority of the respondents, that is, 85 per cent, belonged to the General category, whereas 6.6 per cent were from the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Other Backward Class (OBC) categories each. One respondent belonged to a category other than these three categories.

Table 7. Caste-wise Distribution of Respondents

Category	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
General	51	85.2
SC	4	6.6
OBC	4	6.6
Others	1	1.6
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 7. Caste-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Economic Class

As it was primarily an agrarian uprising, the majority of the Movement's fighters in Punjab belonged to the landowning Jat community, that is, the peasant proprietary class. Though no scale was employed to identify the class background, three broad class-categories for the peasantry: the upper, middle, and lower peasantries, and two other classes: labour and private business, were used for the research. This categorisation was based on respondents' land ownership size and nature of employment. As Table 8 shows, 46.7 per cent of the respondents belonged to the middle peasantry class, while 30 per cent came from the poor peasantry class. Only 13.3 per cent of the respondents were wealthy peasants. The labour and private business classes were each represented by 5 per cent of the respondents. Thus, it can be inferred from the available data that the majority of the Naxalite belonged to the middle peasantry class, who had, according to Judge (1992),

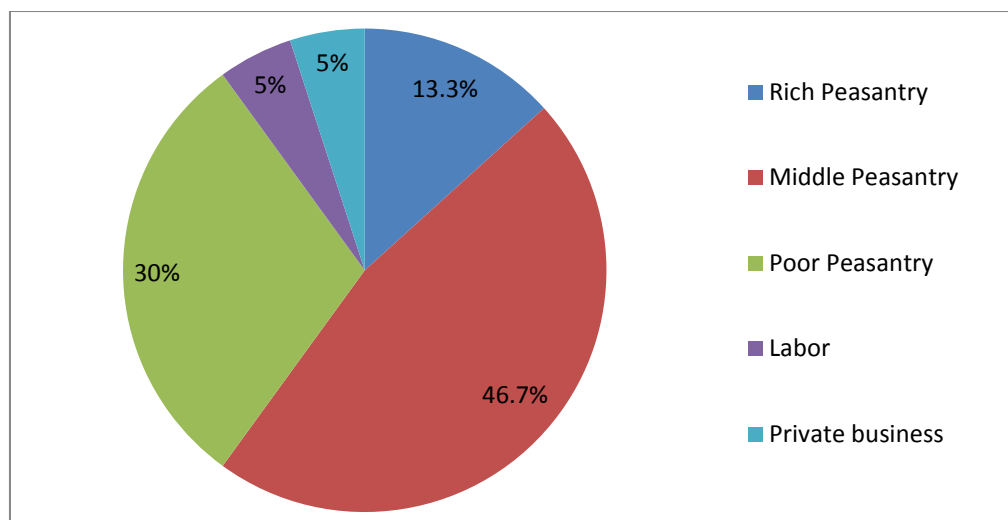
joined the Movement inspired by the martyrs of Sikh history like the Ghadar Party members, the Babbar Akalis, and the legendary Bhagat Singh. The documents published by the Punjab Communist Revolutionary Committee (PCRC), the Nagi Reddy Group, in 1974 informed that those who had joined the Movement in its later years were mainly middle-class educated youth.¹⁵¹

Table 8. Economic Class-wise Distribution of Respondents

Economic class	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Upper Peasantry	8	13.3
Middle Peasantry	28	46.7
Lower Peasantry	18	30.0
Labour	3	5.0
Private business	3	5.0
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 8. Economic Class-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Education Level

As revealed in the research, 28.4 per cent of the respondents had completed formal education up to the matriculation level, 10 per cent to senior secondary level, 23.4 per cent were undergraduate, 8.3 per cent were graduate, 8.3 per cent had studied up to the

¹⁵¹ Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.33.

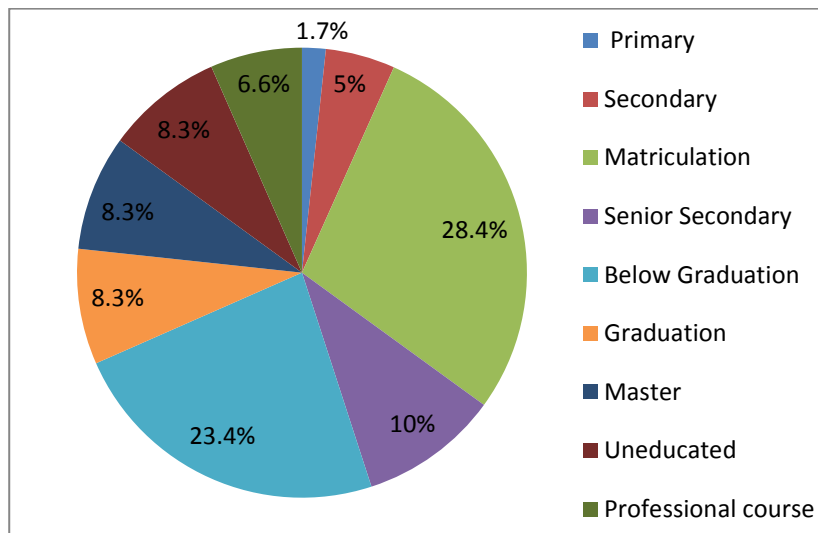
master's level, 5 per cent had studied up to the secondary level, and 1.7 per cent had completed primary level formal education. A total of 6.6 per cent of the respondents had completed a professional course and 8.3 per cent were illiterate.

Table 9. Educational Qualification-wise Distribution of Respondents

Educational Qualification	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Primary	1	1.7
Secondary	3	5.0
Matriculation	17	28.4
Senior Secondary	6	10.0
Undergraduate	14	23.4
Graduate	5	8.3
Master	5	8.3
Illiterate	5	8.3
Professional Course	4	6.6
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 9. Educational Qualification-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Occupation

The Naxalite Movement was primarily an agrarian uprising. Therefore, the largest proportion of the respondents, 26.7 per cent, was related to agriculture. Surprisingly,

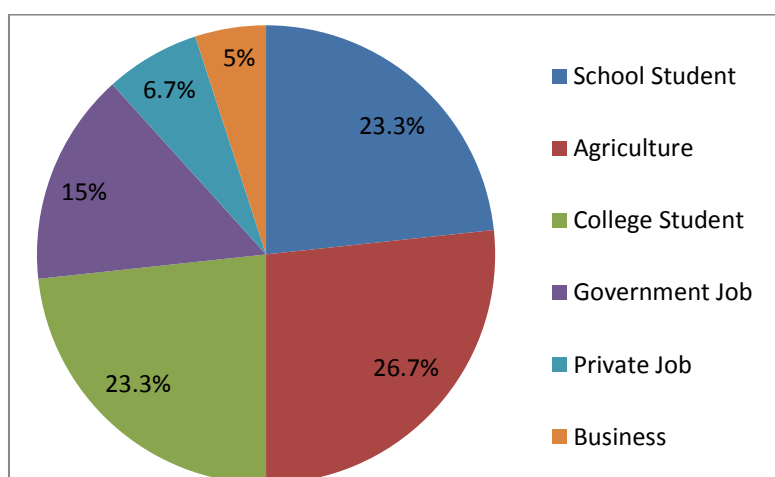
several of the respondents were students when they joined the rebellion: 23.3 per cent were school students and an identical figure represented college students among the revolutionaries. Government jobs were held by 15 per cent of the respondents while 6.7 per cent were engaged in private jobs when the call of the struggle drew them in. Additionally, 5 per cent were engaged in business. Gill also express that the students and teachers had actively participated in the insurgency.¹⁵²

Table 10. Occupation-wise Distribution of Respondents

Occupation at the time of joining	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
School Student	14	23.3
College Student	14	23.3
Agriculture	16	26.7
Government Job	9	15.0
Private Job	4	6.7
Business	3	5.0
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 10. Occupation-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Family Background

As emerged from the collected data, not all the respondents were from a left political background. Surprisingly, as shown in Table 11, the vast majority of the respondents, that

¹⁵²Gill, P.S. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P. 90.

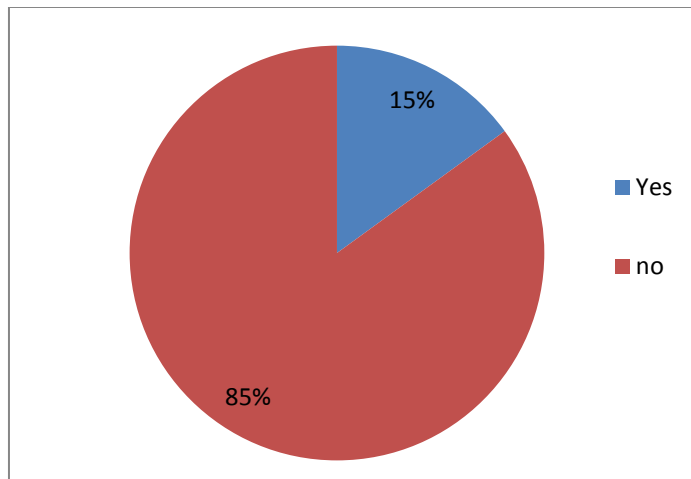
is, 85 per cent, had zilch prior affiliation with left political ideology; only 15 per cent had a family background of left ideology affiliation.

Table 11. Family Background-wise Distribution of Respondents

Left political background of family	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	9	15.0
No	51	85.0
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 11. Family Background-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Motivation

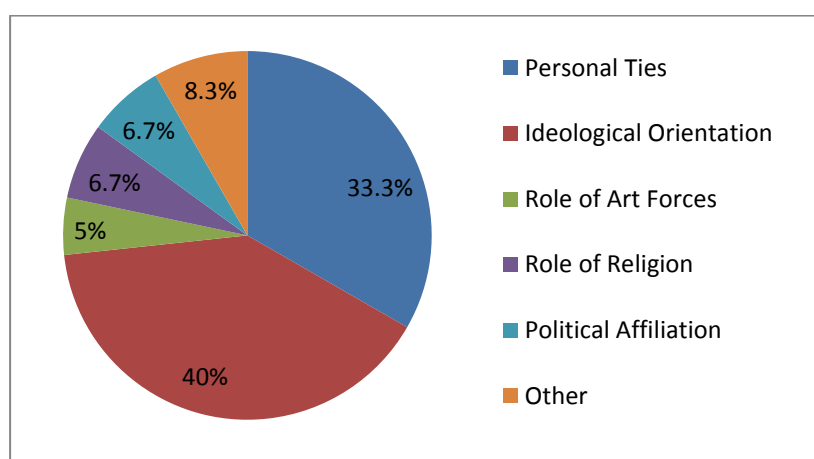
The respondents were asked about their motivations for joining the Movement in order to locate the underlying factors that shaped youth’s political consciousness during that period. In order to draw the list of possible motivating factors, participation in the Naxalite Movement was treated at par with participation in a normal political movement. The respondents were asked to select the most important motivating factor for their joining the movement. The results are shown in Table 12. The majority, that is 40%, joined the Movement because of ideological orientation—they believed that larger objectives of the society could be achieved only through revolution. Personal ties motivated 33.3%, who confessed becoming inspired by a friend of family member who was part of the revolution. Artistic expressions (songs, poetry, literature, plays etc.), and religious and political affiliations inspired 5%, 6.7%, and 6.7% of the respondents, respectively. However, 8.3% were motivated because of other factors.

Table 12. Motivation for Joining the Movement

Motivation for joining the movement	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Personal Ties	20	33.3
Ideological Orientation	24	40.0
Role of Art/Literature	3	5.0
Role of Religion	4	6.7
Political Affiliation	4	6.7
Other	5	8.3
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey

Figure 12. Motivation for Joining the Movement



Source: Field Survey.

Personal Ties

This was the most common motivation to join the Movement. Among the respondents, 31.7 per cent admitted having at least one friend who was already involved in the insurgency. For 1.7 per cent of the respondents, it was the influence of somebody known to them, who had deeper involvement with the Movement, which brought them into its fold. Thus, as data in the above table indicates, personal ties were a strong reason for respondents' motivation.

Ideological Orientation

Ideological orientation also motivated people to join the insurgency. The majority of the respondents—23.3 per cent—were of the view that the larger objectives of a society can be achieved only through revolution. For 11.7 per cent of the respondents, who were stern believers in the idea of social justice and equity, the ideology propounded by the Naxalite group inspired them to take up arms against the State. One of the respondents narrated his experience as a student of Khalsa College, Jalandhar where the Punjab Students Union (PSU) was the only student organisation that used to raise important issues related to the college, and society at larger. He joined the PSU, which later became the biggest Naxalite unit under the leadership of N.S. Dhese. Several indoctrination sessions received at the PSU motivated him to join the Movement. Their motivation was further facilitated by the promise of restructuring and reorienting the State to ensure universal social justice and equality. One respondent explained that after the Moga agitation in 1972, the Regal Theater incident happened where a trivial issue of black marketing of tickets led to the death of two youngsters. At that time, he was an MBBS student in Amritsar. In reaction to these deaths, there were protests by the students. As a student, this particular incident motivated him to join the Naxalite Movement

Political Affiliation

One of the respondents had a family background of left political ideology and that his father was an active Naxalite. Thus, he was well-aware of the philosophy of the Naxalite even before he became a member of the Movement. As a student, while staging a protest in his college against a Congress leader, he was arrested. A false case was filed against him and he was sent to jail. After that, he became an insurgent. Among the respondents, 6.7 per cent were active members of left-wing political parties before they joined the Movement.

Role of Art Forms

Art in any form has the power to remain in the collective memory of the masses. Art forms were, therefore, effectively employed to shape the collective consciousness of youth for the progress of the Movement. One respondent narrated how Naxalite literature shared by his college hostel roommate attracted him towards the Movement. Another respondent recounted reading the Punjabi novel *Lahu di Loh* as a Class 10 student and being influenced by the selflessness of the revolutionary youth of Punjab; this inspired

him to join to insurgency. Yet another respondent explained that the plays and kavishiri performances organised by the Lok Sampark Vibhag at fairs held at Khatkar Kalan village in the memory of Bhagat Singh inspired him to join the Movement.

Role of Religion

One respondent recounted how his personal experience with poverty, indiscriminate, and injustice enlightened him to the ideas of social justice, equity, and emancipation of the oppressed ones. His early religious training in the tenets of Sikhism attracted him to the Naxalite Movement that professed an ideology of humanity. Sikh history is replete with examples of crusaders for social justice and equality, and these religious figures shaped his consciousness. He admitted having links with the communist but not being impressed by them until he found a reflection of his personal ideology in the Naxalite ideology. Thereafter, there was no looking back.

Other Factors

One respondent confessed being influenced by the simplicity of the communist—their plain attire of a *kurta-pyjama* and a cloth bag around their shoulders. Then, as he was gradually introduced to their ideology, he was impressed by their fight against social injustice, inequality, and oppression. This was what motivated him to join the insurgency.

Conclusion

The Naxalite Movement was the first violent social upheaval to impact the people of Punjab in post-Partition India; hardly any individual, group, or community could insulate itself from its direct or indirect effects. Therefore, each respondent developed his own understanding of the Movement based on his personal experience and social, economic, and political background. The collected data reveals that the majority of the respondents joined the Movement between 1967 and 1970, when this armed revolution spread rapidly through Punjab; thereafter, a ruthless crackdown by the Central government forces knocked the steam out of the insurgency. It was also observed that most of the respondents hailed from Malwa and Doaba regions, particularly from Bathinda, Sangrur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, and Hoshiarpur districts. Malwa region, with its comparatively less fertile land and, therefore, poorer peasant families, had been a breeding ground for the Kirti Kisan Party, the Muzara Movement, and the Red Communists, and had a rich history of class struggle for the liberation of masses. Doaba region of Punjab had been famous of its immigration-inclined population; a large number of Doaba people had

settled abroad. Therefore, they were not new to Western ideas like communism, and were, therefore, readily drawn to the Naxalite Movement. The influence of the Ghadar Movement was also palpable in this region, which contributed to the success of the insurgency among the people of the region.

A majority of the respondents were unmarried and in the 16–25 years age-group at the time of joining the revolution. They were mostly General category Sikh hailing from the middle peasantry or poor peasantry and were mostly school or college students when they heeded the call of the Movement. Not surprisingly, the respondents largely belonged to agricultural families, but only 15 per cent among them had prior political affiliations; a roaring majority—85 per cent—neither had any political leaning towards the ideology of the left nor any family background in politics. Thus, it can be inferred that family background did not play a determining role in motivating the respondents to join the armed peasant struggle; they joined of their own volition, inspired by other factors.

The most important of these factors was the ideological orientation of the youth—they desired to establish an egalitarian society through an armed revolution. Several respondents admitted joining because of the influence of an acquaintance who was already a part of the insurgency. Art forms like literature, theatre, and music—especially *kavishri*—also played a significant role in mobilising the youth. Additionally, the legends of martyrs of Punjabi culture and the influence of a Sikh martial history also invoked the inherent revolutionary spirit of youth. Tales of countless Sikh warriors who fought for social justice, equity, and emancipation of the oppressed found a reflection in the Naxalite Movement, which drew the masses to its cause.

CHAPTER-3

SIKH SEPARATIST MOVEMENT IN PUNJAB

FROM 1978 TO 1993

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), formed in the 1920s, is one of India's oldest religion-based political organisations. Since its inception, it has been at the forefront of all political demands made on behalf of the Sikhs. However, its roles and reach have evolved over time: from its initial form as a religious organisation concerned with the reform of Sikh shrines, to a leading political party in Punjab, which played a crucial role in the attainment of the *Punjabi Suba*. Without the efforts of the SAD, the Punjabi Suba would have remained a distant dream given the persistent opposition of the Central government.¹⁵³ Following the sustained efforts and provocations by the SAD, the province was reconstituted on 1 November 1966 on linguistic basis. Consequently, according to the Census of India Report (1971),¹⁵⁴ Punjab's Sikh population rose to 60.22 per cent of the total population of Punjab, compared to the earlier Hindu majority of 62.3 per cent in 1951 and 63.7 per cent in 1961.¹⁵⁵ The first post-reorganisation Legislative Assembly elections were held on 15 February, 1967,¹⁵⁶ in which the two Akali Dal factions—the Akali Dal (Sant) and the Akali Dal (Master)—contested on separate issues.¹⁵⁷

While the Master Tara Singh Dal demanded a special status for the newly formed state as was accorded to Jammu and Kashmir, the Sant Akali Dal, more moderate in its demands, sought the inclusion of Punjabi-speaking areas of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, the Bhakhra Dam, and the city of Chandigarh in Punjab—all these demands remain unfulfilled to this day. The Akali Dal also allied with the Communist Party of India (CPI),

¹⁵³Paul, B. (1974). *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*. Vikas Publishing House, P.314.

¹⁵⁴Government of India (1971). *Census of India*. Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs. P.2.

¹⁵⁵Bal, S.S. (1985). PUNJAB AFTER INDEPENDENCE (1947-1956). In *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 46, 416-430, P.416-417.

¹⁵⁶Kumar, P. (1997). Transcending the Divide. *Deccan Herald*, P.49; Nayar, B.R. (1966). *Minority politics in Punjab*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, P.13-14.

¹⁵⁷The approach of Master Tara Singh stand of the demand of Punjabi Suba, was termed as 'communal' by the Hindus. He followed by carrying 'now or never' resolution. Chief Minister Partap Singh Kairon ordered his, as well as another leader's arrest. Master Tara Singh appointed Sant Fateh Singh in his place to continue the agitation for the Punjabi Suba. He organized 'passive resistance' on massive scale. Sant Fateh Singh went on fast unto death. But he later gave it up, on the urge of his leader. Later, Master Tara Singh himself began his fast unto death. He also broke it on the promise, given by the government, that a 'Commission' would be appointed to investigate the general question of discrimination against the Sikhs.

thereby ending Congress's exclusive control over the state's politics, and denying it—for the first time since 1947—a majority in the state Assembly. However, Congress still emerged as the single largest party with 48 seats, though its vote-share declined from 45.7 per cent in 1962 to 37.5 per cent in 1967. Thus, a large section of the Sikh peasantry supported the Congress till the 1967 elections.¹⁵⁸

The moderate Akali Dal (Sant) won 24 of the 58 seats it contested, with a 20.5 per cent share of the valid votes. However, the Akali Dal (Master) could manage only 2 of the 62 seats it contested, with a mere 4.5 per cent vote share. Statistically, the two factions together polled about 25 percent of the total votes as compared to 11.9 percent in the 1962 General Elections, which reveals SAD's improved performance in terms of both seats won and votes polled.¹⁵⁹ The Congress could not form a government as all the other parties came together to form the United Front Government, electing Gurnam Singh as the chief minister. Soon after, five Congress MLAs defected to the SAD. Gian Singh Rarewala also left the Congress, accusing it of anti-Sikh bias.¹⁶⁰ Such developments weakened the hold of the Congress over the predominantly Sikh peasantry.

Simultaneously, the support base of the SAD expanded because of three reasons: first, the state's changed demographic profile after its reorganisation in 1966; second, the success of the Green Revolution and its impact on the socio-economic and political status of the peasantry¹⁶¹; and third, the general decline of the Congress from the early-60s onwards. The SAD performed well in Malwa by securing 20 seats because of the emergence of peasant leadership within the party. However, in Majha it struggled, mainly because of two reasons: first, in Gurdaspur district, which is predominantly Hindu, it failed to shake the support base of Congress and Jan Sangh; second, Amritsar district was represented by Partap Singh Kairon, the popular ex-chief minister, whom the SAD could not dislodge. The SAD fared the worst in Doaba, winning one seat out of the 23 it contested, mainly

¹⁵⁸Kumar, A. (2004). Electoral Politics in Punjab: Study of Akali Dal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(14), 1515-1520, 1516-17; Puri, H. K. (1983). The Akali Agitation: An Analysis of Socio-Economic Bases of Protest. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 113-118, P.114.

¹⁵⁹Kumar, A. (2004). Electoral Politics in Punjab: Study of Akali Dal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(14), 1515-1520, 1516-17; Lal, M. L. (1984). *Disintegration of Punjab*. Sameer Prakashan, P.318.

¹⁶⁰Kapur, R.A. (1987). Khalistan: India's Punjab problem. *Third World Quarterly*, 9(4), 1206-1224, P. 1211.; Kumar, A. (2004). Electoral Politics in Punjab: Study of Akali Dal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(14), 1515-1520, P. 1518.

¹⁶¹The state of Punjab in India has, in the last three decades, been one of the world's most remarkable examples of agricultural growth. Growth in Punjab has been strongly associated with the well-known "Green Revolution"

because here the Hindus and the Scheduled Castes collectively outnumbered the Sikhs, especially the Jat Sikhs.¹⁶²

The United Front Government could not sustain itself for long. Large-scale defections resulted in Lachhman Singh Gill displacing Gurnam Singh; he became the chief minister with the support of the Congress. However, the Congress soon withdrew its support to the Gill-led government, which fell on 23 August 1968 and Punjab was immediately placed under President's rule. Thus, two governments fell in quick succession because of Congress's deft political manoeuvring and mid-term elections were held in February 1969.¹⁶³ To prevent a further splitting up of the Sikh votes between the two SAD factions, and to form a stable government in Punjab, the Sant faction led by Sant Fateh Singh proposed unity with the Master Tara Singh faction; the two merged on 7 October, 1968 as per the Batala Resolution.¹⁶⁴

In the mid-term elections, the SAD allied with the Jan Sangh and reached a seat-sharing agreement with the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)). However, the CPI floated away from the SAD. The major issues on which the SAD contested these elections included: inclusion of Chandigarh in Punjab; transfer of Bhakhra-Nangal Dam and all Punjabi-speaking regions of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh to Punjab; raising the status of Punjabi and Hindi language in Punjab; greater autonomy to the state of Punjab; and a broader range of concessions to agriculturists. Consequently, the SAD–Jan Sangh alliance won a clear majority and the Congress suffered a setback in the 1969 mid-term elections, even losing the status of being the largest single party in the Punjab Assembly. Although it performed poorly in terms of number of seats—from 48 in 1967 to 38 in 1969—yet it improved its share of votes polled from 37.42 per cent in 1967 to 39.28 per cent in 1969.¹⁶⁵ This recovery was primarily at the cost of the Jan Sangh and the independents. However, the Jan Sangh could not improve its position even after an alliance of the SAD, winning only eight seats—this was one less than their 1967 elections

¹⁶²Kumar, P. (1984). *Punjab Crisis: Context and Trends*. Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, P. 46.

¹⁶³Cheema, J. S. (1997). Why Some Ethnic Insurgencies Decline: Political Parties and Social Cleavages in Punjab and Northern Ireland Compared. *Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 35(3), 1-26, P.12.; Kumar, P. ed. (1992, February 9:) The Real Context in Punjab, *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, P.3.

¹⁶⁴Sarhadi, A.S. (1970). *Punjabi Suba: The story of the struggle*. Delhi: UC Kapur. P. 402-03P. 402-03; Kapur, R.A. (1987). Khalistan: India's Punjab problem. *Third World Quarterly*, 9(4), 1206-1224. P.1212; Rustogi, (1971, March 1). Akali Dal may Improve its Strength in Punjab. New Delhi, *The Times of India*, P.11

¹⁶⁵Kumar, P. (ed.). (1984). *Punjab Crisis: Context and Trends*. Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development, P.46.

score—and obtaining a meager 8.84 percent of the votes polled—again, half percent less than their score in the previous elections.¹⁶⁶

However, the SAD improved its tally both in terms of seats and the share of votes polled. It won 43 seats and polled 29.58 percent of the total votes—a considerable increase over its previous performance—to emerge as the single largest party.¹⁶⁷ It improved its performance in all the three regions of the state. In Majha, its tally doubled from five seats in 1967 to 10 seats in 1969. In Doaba, it won five seats against the one it had won in the last elections. In Malwa, the party won eight more seats than in the previous elections, raising its tally in the region to 28 seats. In Amritsar district, it won six out of the total 14 seats, thus winning 42.86 per cent of the seats. In Gurdaspur, its share was four out of the total of nine seats, which translated to a 44.44 per cent share of the total. So, its position was a shade better in Gurdaspur district as compared to Amritsar district.¹⁶⁸

Gurnam Singh again headed the coalition government, formed with the support of the Jan Sangh. The key reasons for this stellar performance were the unity between the two Akali factions, the alliance with the Jan Sangh, an election manifesto that catered to the interests of the peasantry, and the negative role performed by the Congress after the 1967 elections. Once again, soon after the formation of the government, Congress MLAs defected to the SAD, lowering the Congress tally from 38 to 28. If this was not enough, Congress members of some Zila Prishads, market committees, and block Samitis also joined the SAD, thereby further corroding the support base of the Congress—this time at the lower levels as well.¹⁶⁹

The political circumstances of the state were different in the March 1972 Legislative Assembly elections. The Congress consolidated its position by allying with the CPI while the SAD entered the electoral fray on its own—it had developed serious differences with

¹⁶⁶Kumar, A. (2004). Electoral Politics in Punjab: Study of Akali Dal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(14), 1515-1520, P.1519; Rustogi, (1971, March 1). Akali Dal may improve its strength in Punjab. New Delhi, *The Times of India*, P:1.

¹⁶⁷Cheema, J.S. (1997). Why Some Ethnic Insurgencies Decline: Political Parties and Social Cleavages in Punjab and Northern Ireland Compared. *Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 35(3), 1-26, P.13; Singh, B. (2006). Politics of Factionalism in Punjab: A Critical Study of Shiromani Akali Dal. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 839-848, P. 842.

¹⁶⁸Kumar, A. (2004). Electoral Politics in Punjab: Study of Akali Dal. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(14), 1515-1520, P.1519.

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*, P. 1520.

the Jan Sangh on the issue of language. This time the SAD, in its manifesto, stressed the need for changes in the Constitution and more autonomy for Punjab.¹⁷⁰

These elections were held a few months after a stunning victory over Pakistan in the December 1971 war, and Indira Gandhi's popularity was at its peak.¹⁷¹ The Congress swept these elections, winning 66 out of the 88 seats it contested—its ally, the CPI, also won 10 seats. The SAD could gain only 24 of the 72 seats it contested. Though, in terms of seats won by the party, the loss was considerable, but in terms of vote percentage, the loss was marginal, falling from 29.58 percent in 1969 to 27.65 in 1972.¹⁷² Moreover, the Sikh peasant support for the SAD remained strong, except in Doaba and some pockets of Majha.

The Jan Sangh was completely routed, drawing a blank in terms of seats won. The Congress secured 42.84 percent of the total votes polled—an improvement of about 3.6 percent from the previous assembly elections.¹⁷³ The reasons for SAD's poor performance included its failure to reach an electoral alliance with the Jan Sangh and other parties; in-party factionalism; a leadership void created by the deaths of the party president Sant Fateh Singh and the president of the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) Sant Chanan Singh; and the Hindu disapproval of their extending the jurisdiction of Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU).¹⁷⁴

Similarly, the Congress victory depended mainly on the popularity of Indira Gandhi after the 1971 war against Pakistan. Additionally, the disaffection of several sections of the Hindus with the the Jan Sangh also played in favour of the Congress. Similarly, those Hindus who did not want the Akalis in power abstained from voting for such parties, which they felt would later ally with the SAD. The Akalis experienced a setback in all the three regions of Punjab. In Majha, it could win only two of the 23 seats; in Malwa 22 out of 58 seats; and in Doaba it drew a blank.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰Lal, M.L. (1984). *Disintegration of Punjab*. Sameer Prakashan, P.306-07

¹⁷¹Malik, Y.K. (1986). The Akali Party and Sikh Militancy: move for greater autonomy or secessionism in Punjab? *Asian survey*, 26(3), 345-362, P. 350.

¹⁷²Singh, B. (2006). Politics of Factionalism in Punjab: A Critical Study of Shiromani Akali Dal. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 839-848. P. 842; Paul, B. (1974). *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*. Vikas Publishing House, P. 359–360.

¹⁷³Chawla, G.S. (2016). *Bloodshed in Punjab*. Har -Anand Publication. New Delhi, P. 60–67.

¹⁷⁴Lal, M.L. (1984). *Disintegration of Punjab*. Sameer Prakashan, P.12.

¹⁷⁵Lal, M.L. (1984). *Disintegration of Punjab*. Sameer Prakashan. P. 308; Paul, B. (1974). *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*. Vikas Publishing House, P. 359–360.

In the 1972 Assembly Elections, the SAD was removed from the political scene of Punjab. The Congress formed the government with Giani Zail Singh as the Chief Minister. This regime devised various means to deprive the SAD of its autonomy and its pecuniary resources, that is, the gurudwaras.¹⁷⁶ For the purpose, the chief minister's office introduced a special scheme to create a secular image of government offices and agencies. Moreover, he intended to put a dent on SAD's image by positioning himself as the pre-eminent Sikh leader of Punjab.¹⁷⁷

To knock the religious wind out of the Akali sails, he tried to create his image of a pious Sikh despite his commitment to secularism. To this end, *keertan darbar* was organised on an extensively large scale; public functions began with *ardaas*; the road from Anandpur Sahib to Patiala was renamed Guru Gobind Singh Marg and a string of horses, alleged descendents of Guru Gobind Singh's gelding, was led down this road—the villagers carrying home their droppings as goodluck charm; a new township—Shaheed Ajit Singh Nagar—was named after one of the Guru's son's, and so on and so forth. This display of religiosity certainly made Zail Singh popular in his community.¹⁷⁸

A sobering electoral loss, the fear of having lost the confidence of their Sikh voters, and the shrewd tactics employed by the Zail Singh government to appropriate the *pious Sikh* image stirred the Akalis to recreate their image and consolidate their support among the Sikhs. The working committee of the party, therefore, met at Anandpur Sahib on 11 December, 1972.¹⁷⁹ It constituted a twelve-member sub-committee to draft a policy programme document to fulfill the aspirations of the Punjabis in general, and the Sikhs in particular, and to specifically meet the aims and objectives of the Sikh *panth*.

The drafting sub-committee comprised the following eminent Sikh leaders: Surjeet Singh Barnala (chairman); Gurcharan Singh Tohra; Jiwan Singh Umranangal; Gurmit Singh; Dr. Bhagat Singh; Balwant Singh; Gian Singh Rarewala; Prem Singh Lalpur; Jaswinder Singh Brar; Bhag Singh; major general (retd) Gurbux Singh; and Amar Singh Ambalavi. The sub-committee held prolonged deliberations during the course of its 11 meetings and submitted a draft document of policy programme to the working committee of the SAD at

¹⁷⁶Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co. P.205

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., P.205; Singh, B. (1982, 26 July,). The Akali Leaders Political Game. *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, 31(45), P.7.

¹⁷⁸Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.23–24.

¹⁷⁹Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., P.19–20.

its meeting at Anandpur Sahib on 16–17 October 1973. Thus, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR) was adopted in 1973.¹⁸⁰

In the ASR, Sikh leaders and intellectuals had drawn the aims and objective of the Sikhs, so that they may serve the larger interests of the Sikh panth, Punjab, and also the country and thus live up to the expectations of the Sikhs.¹⁸¹ A meeting to revise Resolution was held at Ludhiana in October, 1978. It emphasized on the real federal structure of the Constitution and not on a separateness from the Indian union.¹⁸² The ASR was further unanimously approved and accepted by the general house of the SAD, attended by over 1,00,000 members and workers at the Ludhiana session on 28–29 October, 1978. Appendix 4 (Page No. 176) contains an elaborate explanation of the narrative behind the demands in the Resolution.

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi imposed the Emergency in 1975, the Akali leader Gurcharan Singh Tohra was in Amritsar. He was the first Akali leader to come on record against the Emergency, asserting that Indira Gandhi should have resigned following the Allahabad High Court judgment,¹⁸³ which unseated her from the Office of the Prime Minister, rather than taking such a dictatorial decision that would have far-reaching consequences. He received an emotional letter from the Janata Party leader Yagya Dutt Sharma,¹⁸⁴ calling upon the Akalis to lead the country in the fight against the Emergency.

In response to the letter, he summoned a meeting of the SAD working committee on June 29, 1975. However, as the Central government had not yet detained any Akali leader, none in the meeting favored launching an agitation, lest it provoked the State to unleash its force upon them. Despite this opposition from the members, Tohra, SAD President Mohan Singh Tur, and former chief minister Parkash Singh Badal were authorised to take the final decision. Gurcharan Singh Tohra favoured sending selected leaders and workers to court arrest in case an agitation was launched. However, he was later alleged to be in league with Indira Gandhi, a charge he vehemently denied at a meeting with Tur. In fact,

¹⁸⁰Kapur, R.A. (1987). Khalistan: India's Punjab problem. *Third World Quarterly*, 9 (4), 1206-1224, P.1213.; Leaf, 1985:495.

¹⁸¹Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An insider looks at the Punjab crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co. P.12.

¹⁸²Jeffrey, R. (2016). *What's Happening to India? Punjab, Ethnic Conflict, and the Test for Federalism*. Springer. P.11.

¹⁸³Indira Nehru Gandhi (Smt.) vs Raj Narain & Anr on 24 June 1975 Equivalent citations: 1975 AIR 1590, 1975 SCC (2) 159 Author: V Krishnaiyer Bench: Krishnaiyer, V.R. <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/1240174/>.

¹⁸⁴Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.63.

he was among the first five leaders to court arrest after offering a prayer at the *Akal Takht*. The agitation launched by the SAD on 9 July 1975—nearly 40,000 Akali workers were arrested during the agitation—was withdrawn on 22 January 1977.¹⁸⁵ Thus, the Emergency yet again brought the SAD into a confrontation with the Congress government at the Center.¹⁸⁶

The year 1977 was extremely important in the political history of Punjab. The imposition of Emergency in 1975 and the authoritarian attitude of the administration caused a groundswell of disaffection and revulsion among the Punjabis, as in the rest of the country. Several opposition parties, including the Janta Party and the SAD, launched a prolonged resistance to the authoritarian regime to safeguard the liberties of the citizens. The people of Punjab overwhelmingly disapproved of the validity of the Congress government formed after the 1977 General Elections held immediately after the revocation of the Emergency.¹⁸⁷ Similarly, the general opposition to the Congress helped the SAD win the state elections held in June 1977.

When Giani Zail Singh was out of power, he exhibited even greater religious fervour to combat the Akali hegemony than he had done as chief minister of Punjab. From public display of religiosity, he went on to cultivate the favours of holy men, who are a dimeadozen in Punjab, with almost every village having a resident saint or *babaji*. There are innumerable *deras* (hospices) in Punjab that offer free food and shelter to the needy, the most famous of which is the *Dam Dami Taksal* (*taksal* means mint), associated with Guru Gobind Singh.¹⁸⁸ It was here that one of the principal characters of the Sikh Separatist Movement emerged—a person both revered and reviled in equal measure, depending on which side of the political–ideological border one stands.

In 1977, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale¹⁸⁹ became Head of the Dam Dami Taksal: a fundamentalist organisation of the Sikhs, which traced its origins to Baba Deep Singh as

¹⁸⁵Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh militancy. *Asian Survey*, 32(11), 969-987, P. 972.

¹⁸⁶Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.63.

¹⁸⁷Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An insider looks at the Punjab crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., P. 96–97.

¹⁸⁸Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P. 24.

¹⁸⁹Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was the youngest of the seven sons of a peasant farmer named Joginder Singh. Jarnail Singh studied only up to the primary level after which in 1965 he was handed over to Sant Gurbachan Singh Khalsa of village Bhindran (hence Bhindranwale) who was the Head of the Dam Dami Taksal. He was married to Pritam Kaur. He was blessed with an excellent memory and could quote extensively from scriptures while delivering sermons. After the death of Sant Kartar Singh, who had

its first Head. Jarnail Singh was passionate about cleansing the Sikhs of impurities that had crept into their day-to-day living and manifested in their actions.¹⁹⁰ With a missionary zeal, he launched his cleansing campaign with the slogan of *nashe chaddo, amrit chkako, Singh sazzo*, that is, discard intoxicants, become baptised, and be pure Sikhs.¹⁹¹ He stressed upon a distinct identity of Sikhs, issuing warnings to Sikhs against practicing the evil habits of trimming the beard, cutting hair, and taking to alcohol and drugs. He was a staunch believer in the fundamental tenets of Sikhism and raised deeper social and religious issues, something which were neglected by the Akails, who, ironically, controlled the SGPC—the governing body of gurdwaras.¹⁹²

This was a time of intense socio-religious strife in Punjab and when an uneasy calm prevailed. In such an environment, government officials belonging to the Nirankari sect¹⁹³ used to often provoke Bhindranwale and Sant Kartar Singh, his predecessor.¹⁹⁴ Alternatively, there were protests held by devout Sikhs who considered the references to the Sikh Gurus and the Sikh scripture by the Nirankaris unwholesome.¹⁹⁵ This pattern of provocations and opposition took a violent turn when the chief of the Nirankari sect, Baba Gurbachan Singh held a special diwan (a religious public engagement ceremony) on the festive day of Baisakhi on 13 April, 1978 at Amritsar—the holiest city for the Sikhs. During the ceremony, a violent fight broke out between the Nirankaris and members of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha and the Dam Dami Taksal, in which 18 people died: 13 Sikhs from the two rival factions, three Nirankaris, and two passersby.¹⁹⁶ This incident invited a

succeeded Sant Gurbachan Singh, in a car accident on 3 August 1977, Jarnail Singh was elected Head of the Taksal, after which he received the honorific prefix of Sant.

¹⁹⁰Joshi, C. (1984). *Bhindranwale, Myth and Reality*. Stosius Incorporated/Advent Books Division, P. 5.

¹⁹¹Singh Garj: Audio CD's of speeches of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

¹⁹²Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P. 138.

¹⁹³The Nirankari movement had become significant from 1823 onwards. Its founder, Baba Dyal Das, who was a former merchant from Peshawar preached against the growing tendency of the Sikhs to revert to Hindu practices like idolatry, Brahmin rituals, and pilgrimages to the river Ganges. In the subsequent decades, a large group of Nirankaris began addressing their founder and his successors as gurus, thereby violating Guru Gobind Singh's pronouncement that he was the last Guru. Faced with the growing popularity of the Nirankaris, Sikh high priests issued a religious edict and a *hukumnama*, denouncing them as heretics. Tensions between the Nirankaris and the orthodox Sikhs mounted resulting in several clashes. However, the Nirankaris received support from some official quarters.

¹⁹⁴Joshi, C. (1984). *Bhindranwale, Myth and Reality*. Stosius Incorporated/Advent Books Division, P.7.

¹⁹⁵Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.51.

¹⁹⁶Baba Avtar Singh, a Nirankari guru, had compiled two books: Avtar Bani and Yug Pursh. These two books undermined the sanctity of Guru Granth Sahib and contained unholy references to the Sikh Gurus, much to the chagrin of orthodox Sikhs who demanded the British Government to proscribe these both books. The other major objection against him was that he had committed the cardinal sin of declaring himself as a guru in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib. See also, Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Volume II, P. 331.

severe criticism by Bhindranwale of the Akalis, who despite holding power in the State, had failed to take action against the Nirankaris who had killed innocent Sikhs.¹⁹⁷

This Sikh–Nirankari clash was to have far-reaching consequences for the socio–political landscape of Punjab. The state’s internal politics was seriously impacted when Sikh radicals like Jagdev Singh Talwandi and Gurcharan Singh Tohra openly challenged the leadership of moderate leaders like Parkash Singh Badal. It also lit-up the powder keg of simmering disaffection and anger amongst extremists Sikh leaders like Bhindranwale and groups like the Akhand Kirtani Jatha, and the Babber Khalsa.¹⁹⁸

During this period, Bhindranwale rose meteorically on the skyscape of Punjab’s internal politics. His fiery, impassioned speeches and discourses blaring through loudspeaker mounted on treetops, stirred the imagination of youth and grown-ups alike. He enjoyed a large following in Majha and his popularity resulted in a virtual army of dedicated supporters. Elections for the SGPC office bearers were due in 1979 and the Congress (I) had performed diligent groundwork.¹⁹⁹

Bhinderwale was to bludge on the citadel of the SAD by destroying its stronghold over the gurudwaras within and outside Punjab, while the Congress (I) aimed to undermine the mass political base of the SGPC and access the massive financial resources of the gurudwaras. While Giani Zail Singh cast a web of illusion around Bhindranwale to neutralise the powerful Akali leaders, Gurcharan Singh Tohra alleged that Bhindranwale was actually a Congress (I) stooge. Bhindranwale nominated 40 candidates for the elections, but despite his claim of overwhelming support of the Sikh masses, only four of his nominees made it to the SGPC.²⁰⁰

The political situation now was characterised by growing factionalism. The SAD lost ground rapidly, retaining only one out of its 13 seats in the January 1980 Lok Sabha elections. Soon after, on 15 February 1980 Indira Gandhi dismissed the Badal government in the state, even before it could complete its full term.²⁰¹ This only added to the long list of Akali grievances against the high-handedness of the Central government and its penchant for persecuting its opponents. In the ensuing Assembly Elections in June,

¹⁹⁷Kapur, R.A. (1986). *Sikh Separatism: The Politics of Faith*. London: Allen & Unwin, p. 227.

¹⁹⁸Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.40.

¹⁹⁹Singh, B. (1980). Political Reconciliation Ossible in Punjab. *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, 30(18), P.10.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., P.10.; Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., P. 166.

²⁰¹Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.41.

Bhindranwale and other Sikh radical organisations refused to extend support to the SAD candidates owing to their conciliatory attitude towards the Nirankaris. Then, on 19 May, the Dal Khalsa gave a call to the Sikhs to boycott the elections. With the Congress being the only other major player in the field, it was anybody's guess as to who would benefit from this call. The Congress won 63 out of the total of 117 seats and formed the government with Darbara Singh as chief minister. Parkash Singh Badal was elected leader of the opposition. The CPI, the CPI (M), and the BJP won nine, five, and one seats, respectively while two seats were won by a parallel splinter group.²⁰²

At the same time, a spurt was witnessed in the activities of Sikh radical groups and their demand for a separate Sikh state, or Khalistan. On March 2, 1980, Jagjit Singh Chauhan²⁰³ hoisted the Khalistan flag at Anandpur Sahib. The Dal Khalsa organised a seminar at Chandigarh on 13 July 1980 where Khalistan was described as the birthright of the Sikhs. On July 8, the National Council of Khalistan issued a circular, calling upon government employees to function within the framework of the concept of Khalistan and threatened severe punishment to corrupt officials.²⁰⁴

All these efforts were aimed at mobilising public support. In this seminar they also hammered their demand for Khalistan, soliciting political and financial support from Sikhs worldwide. A section of Sikhs, disillusioned with the SAD for ignoring Sikhs' agenda while in power, particularly concerning the confrontation with the Nirankaris, provided fertile ground for the radicals. People were asked and tasked to set up Khalsa panchayats and Khalistan brigades at the village level, but such demands received only a lukewarm public response. As the activities of the radicals intensified in Punjab, a procession was taken out by several Sikh organisations against the harassment of Sikhs in the murder of the Nirankari sect chief in New Delhi on 20 July 1980. This incident of harassment of the Sikhs brought the issue of State repression on the agenda of the SAD. Although State repression had been experienced by Punjab even during the brutal

²⁰²Singh, B. (1980). Political Reconciliation Possible in Punjab. *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, 30(18), P.10; Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, 42–65.

²⁰³Jagjit Singh Chauhan, Indian Sikh separatist leader (born 1927, Tanda, Punjab, British India—died April 4, 2007, Tanda, Punjab state, India), was a prominent figure in the movement for an independent Sikh state. He organised a government-in-exile in London. After serving as Punjab's finance minister in the 1960s, Chauhan moved to London in 1971. That year he took out a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* proclaiming the formation of the Republic of Khalistan, a Sikh theocracy, and attempted to set up a government-in-exile in Pakistan. Back in London in the early 1980s, he declared himself president of Khalistan, appointed a cabinet, issued passports and currency, and opened embassies in several countries.

²⁰⁴Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.41–42.; N/A (1981, October 3). Is hijack a stunt? *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.13.

crackdown on the Naxalite, but now it was being perceived—or made to appear—as repression against the Sikhs. This further strengthened the persecution complex already inherent in the Sikhs and stirred up the calls for radical politics in Punjab. The Dal Khalsa, again at a meeting in Chandigarh on 3 August 1980, gave a call to the Sikhs to boycott Independence Day functions.²⁰⁵

The Rise of Radicalism and Violence in Punjab

On 9 September 1981 the Akalis presented to the government a charter of 46 grievances.²⁰⁶ These grievances were more Punjabi than Sikh. On 9 September 1981 Lala Jagat Narain—a prominent Hindu leader—was murdered.²⁰⁷ This murder fanned a fire that would soon rage into a conflagration. The Hindu reaction was, as expected, hostile. They took out a massive procession at various places in Punjab. At some place's stones were hurled at Sikhs, along with anti-Sikh slogans like *kaccha, kara, aur kirpan, bhejenge ise Pakistan* (undergarments, bangles, and daggers—items representative of the Sikh faith—would be banished to Pakistan). An attempt was made to set on fire the building of a pro-Sikh newspaper, *Ajit*.²⁰⁸

Meanwhile, the transfer of the Sikh–Nirankari violence case from Punjab to Haryana and the court's subsequent decision in the favour of the Nirankaris further strained the social fabric of the state. The above narrative assesses how religious–historical experiences and symbols, and socio–political developments facilitated an environment conducive for the rise and sustenance of militant religiosity, which soon degenerated into terrorism, in Punjab in the early 1980s. This phase (1981–84) was unique in the history of the Sikhs and Punjab in more than one way. The pressure mounted on the Nirankaris forced them to seal their activities both within and outside the state. Alternatively, the Sikh Separatist Movement kicked-off under the leadership of Bhindranwale. The Movement had two main phases: from 1978 to 1984 and then again from 1985 to 1993.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁵Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.42.; Mani, V.R. (1988, September 2). Armed Struggle only ensure: Naxal Leader. *The Times of India*. New Delhi, P.15.

²⁰⁶Singh, S.B. (1982, June 21). Discriminations against Punjab. *The Spokesman Weekly*, New Delhi, P.9.

²⁰⁷The Times of India (1981 September 12). Zail Singh Blames Extremists for Lala's murder, *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.14; N/A (1984, October). Who is Responsible for Hindu–Sikh Confrontation? *Indria Gandhi or Someone else? Sant Saphi*, P.37-38.

²⁰⁸The Times of India, (1981, September 25). Demand for Khalsiatn Denounced. *The Tiems of India*, New Delhi, P:9; Samiuddin, A. (Ed.). (1985). *The Punjab Crisis: Challenge and Response*. Mittal Publication, P. 120.

²⁰⁹Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.52.

Three high-profile personalities were assassinated during the period 1980–81. The chief of the Nirankari sect, Baba Gurbachan Singh, and his bodyguards were assassinated on 24 April 1980. In September 1981, 82-year-old Lala Jagat Narain, owner of the Hind Samachar Group of papers was killed. Then, Jathedar Santokh Singh of Delhi was killed.²¹⁰

When arrest warrants were issued in Bhindranwale's name in the Jagat Narain murder case, he was at Chando Kalan in Haryana. However, the Congress government in Haryana allowed him to leave—a police party descended at the Chando Kalan gurudwara soon after he left and beat up several of his followers. Baldev Raj Nayar has elaborated the scene in one of his articles:

Warrants were issued for the arrest of Bhindranwale, who was at Chando Kalan (Haryana). Darbara Singh informed Harbajan Lal, the chief minister of Haryana about it and sought his assistance in serving the warrants. However, he had already been instructed by Zail Singh over the phone to allow Bhindranwale to leave. It was only after his departure that the police descended on Chando Kalan Gurudwara and beat up several followers. After he reached 'Chowk Mehta', the Punjab government asked him to surrender.... Bhindranwale took the opportunity to show his followers and the world at large that he would choose his own time to surrender. On 19 September, he went to the Golden Temple, 50 kilometers away, to have a dip in the holy tank and returned the same night.²¹¹

Bhindranwale offered himself for arrest in 20 September 1981 in front of a huge gathering.²¹² Eventually, Bhindranwale was arrested on 20 September 1981 in connection with the murders of Baba Gurbachan Singh and Lala Jagat Narain. He wanted publicity and government gave it to him.²¹³ His arrest sparked-off a clash between the police and his followers, resulting in the death of about a dozen people in police firing.²¹⁴ Bhindranwale was now a hero for the Sikh masses—a cult figure who was working for

²¹⁰Government of India (1984). White Paper on the Punjab agitation: A summary. New Delhi, Government of India. P.32-33.

²¹¹Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.64; Samiuddin, A. (Ed.). (1985). *The Punjab Crisis: Challenge and Response*. Mittal Publication, P.120.

²¹²Malik, K.N. (1981, October 3) Khalisatn- Aliene Role. New Delhi, *The Times of India*. New Delhi, P.1.

²¹³Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.120.

²¹⁴Singh, B. (1982, July). Singhi Te Tashadad De Khali AKhbara De Jubani. *Surra*, Monthly Paper, Amritsar, P.5-6.; Singh, G (1989, October 19) Ladye Komi Garatt De. *Sant Sepahi*, P. 39-41.

their emancipation. Contrarily, the Hindu press attacked him as the main representative of Sikh chauvinism. During this period, a number of Sikh radical organisations came up in Punjab. One of these was the Babbar Khalsa—it owed allegiance to Bibi Amarjeet Kaur and Harsimran Kaur of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha and aimed the elimination of the Nirankaris. Meanwhile, Bhindranwale and his coterie of armed followers were also functioning as an extremist outfit.²¹⁵

Bhindranwale's arrest was the starting point of terrorism in Punjab. The white paper issued by the Government of India listed several incidents of firing, bomb explosions, and sabotage of rail tracks in various parts of Punjab between 21 September and 15 October, 1981—the period between his arrest and release.²¹⁶ Bhindranwale's supporters killed four people and injured 11 in Jalandhar—sten-guns were used in the assault. The Dal Khalsa, in order to draw international attention towards his arrest, orchestrated the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane on way to Lahore was highjacked on 29 September, 1981.²¹⁷ A pattern of daily killings emerged, while the press continued to play a partisan role and inflamed the situation by shunning journalistic objectivity.²¹⁸ On 16 October, two people were shot dead and a murder attempt was made on a leading Nirankari official at the Punjab secretariat in Chandigarh. A Hindu politician and two police officers were killed on 16 November 1981. Thereafter, Bhindranwale moved his headquarters to the Akal Takht and his armed followers carried out their terrorist activities from the Golden Temple complex, where a huge cache of modern arms and ammunition was stored up.²¹⁹

Bhindranwale's public profile witnessed a phenomenal rise and he was arrested. After his arrest, Indira Gandhi visited Chandigarh and invited the Akalis to the discussion table.²²⁰ The Akalis submitted a revised list of 15 demands,²²¹ which included the implementation

²¹⁵Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P.142-143.

²¹⁶Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P.33.

²¹⁷ N/A (1981, September 30). Khalisatn Men Hijack Boeing to Lahore. *Indian Express*, Chandigarh, P-1.

N/A (1982, May 2). Centre Bans Dal Khalsa, *The Times of India*, New Delhi P. 1.

²¹⁸N/A. (1981, September 30). Khalistani Men Hijack Boeing to Lahore. *Indian Express*, Chandigarh. P-1; Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's last battle*. Pan Books, P. 69.

²¹⁹Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P.148-149.

²²⁰ Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P.151.

²²¹ The Akali Dal leaders had first to define those grievances in the shape of specific demands. They had the Anadpur Sahib Resoluion but it was wrapped in too much rhetoric and so they presented Mrs Gandhi with a list of forty –five specific demands based on the Resoluion. That list was drawn up in September 1981. It was hurriedly revised when Bhinderwale was arrested and another list, this time of only fifteen demands, was presented to Mrs. Gandhi in October 1981. The Akali Dal first list submitted in September contained forty-five demands. The list with Bhinderwale's release at the top, which they submitted only one month later, contained only 15. The Sikhs also wanted the recitation of the holy scriptures in the Golden temple to be broadcast by the government of All India Radio or whether they wanted their own was the demand for

of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution in the context of Centre–state relations; redrawing of the distribution mechanism of river waters; merger of Chandigarh with Punjab without transferring Abohar and Fazilka to Haryana; and formulation of the All India Gurudwaras Act.²²² The Akalis also sought unconditional release of Bhindranwale, which was granted on the eve of the first round of talks.

Later meetings with Foreign Minister P.V. Narsimha Rao in November 1981 in New Delhi covered the same ground repeatedly, without discussing anything specific.²²³ In the words of Nayar, “Rao kept the Sikh leaders in good humor but did not commit himself on anything or give even an inkling of the government’s thinking”.²²⁴ Though the Sikh leaders had explained at length the water and territorial disputes, yet nothing was discussed. The Akali leaders later remarked that it was disappointing and “a waste of time”.²²⁵ A second round of talks in November 1981 also failed to yield any positive results.²²⁶ Overall, the talks remained inconclusive as the Centre employed evasive methods to keep the principal issues hanging. G.S. Grewal, an IAS officer working at the Ministry of Home Affairs at that time, states that:

Although it was not conveyed to the Akali leaders in clear terms, a study of their demands reveals that except for minor ones, acceptance of their demands will create unforeseen problems for the Centre and unleash forces of disintegration.²²⁷

When Indira Gandhi laid the foundation stone of the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) canal at Kapuri near Patiala in April 1982. The Akali Dal held a protest meeting against the digging of the canal at Ghannaur (Patiala) and some of them were arrested.²²⁸ A fortnight later, the Akalis started the agitation from Kapuri itself against the proposal of sharing of the Satluj waters with Haryana. The agitation was based on the argument that if water was given to Haryana, thousands of acres would go dry in Punjab. Seeing the success, The

renaming the ‘Flying Mail’ from Delhi to Amritsar the Golden temple Express. The Akali political demands were more difficult than the religious ones. The states of Chandigarh remained a problem because the Akali Dal would not agree to cede the two tahsils of Abohar and Fazilka, which had been the quite pro for getting Chandigarh under Mrs. Gandhi’s award. The demands for autonomy was a repetition of the Anadpur Sahib Resolution demand to limit the central government’s responsibilities to foreign affairs, defense, currency and communication. N/A. (1984, October 24). Lahu Lohan Punjab. *Sant Saphi*, P. 27.

²²²Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., P.45.

²²³ Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P.159.

²²⁴ Ibid., P. 162

²²⁵Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., P.45.

²²⁶ Nayar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.123.

²²⁷Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., P.87.

²²⁸Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P.32-33.

Morcha (agitation) was achieving Longowal and his supporters found an opportunity to retrieve their impaired position. The Akali Dal thus gave the *Nehar Roko* call to stop the digging of the canal. Even communist parties like the CPI (M) joined the agitation, which continued for about two weeks. However, the Akalis failed to effect a mass mobilisation of the Sikhs around this cause and the agitation petered off.²²⁹ This could be due to the fact that most Akali morchas in the past had originated from the Gurudwaras and were based on religious or quasi-religious premises; the canal issue did not possess a religious tint as such. The Akalis, thus, decided to move to the Golden Temple at Amritsar to resume to morcha —a decision opposed by the CPI (M), which walked out as it did not want Gurudwaras to be used as bases for the movement.²³⁰

In the meanwhile, Bhai Amrik Singh President of A1SSF and Bhai Thara Singh Manager of Gurdwara Gurdarshan Parkash, both closely associate with Sant Bhindranwale were arrested by the police at Amritsar on 19th July 1982. They were implicated and booked in a false criminal case and taken into police custody. This want on act of the government compelled Sant Bhindranwale to fight for justice inspite of his illness he shifted his headquarters to Amritsar the same day and lodged himself in room number 47 of Guru Nanak Niwas. He performed a special Ardas at the Akal Takht for the victory in his fight for justice and dispatched a Jatha of 51 Singhs to the residence of Deputy Commissioner to court arrest. The Jatha when not arrested squatted in the middle of the road in front of D.C.'s official residence till arrested were made late into the night on 19th July. This was the begning of 'Dharm Yudh Morcha' by Sant Bhinderwale. The immediate demands put forth by the Sant were unconditional release of Bhai Amrik Singh and Thara Singh and withdrawal of false cases registered against them. Since these simple, demands were not met 'Jail Bharo' movement was put into action. The Jathas were daily sent from Manji Sahib to court arrest.²³¹

Taking into account the various efforts being made an All World Sikh Conference was held at Amritsar in July 1982. It authorized Harchand Singh Longowal – the president of Akali Dal, to review the on going Sikh struggle and to launch a '*Dharam Yudh Morcha*' (agitation) to press the Indian state for resolving the grievances of the Sikhs.²³² The

²²⁹Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy. *Asian Survey*, 32(11), 969-987, P.976.

²³⁰Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P.33.

²³¹N/A (1982 December 16). Bhinderwale Shift to Akal Takhat. *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, P. 7.

²³²Dilgeer, H.S. (1997). *The Sikh Reference Book*. Edmonton: Sikh Educational Trust, P. 695.

Morcha received a fillip The important argued is the collaboration of the Akali Dal and Sant Bhinderwale during this time not a part of any ideological similarities it was the need of both the faction so they meet each other. Because without each other, they were not getting Sikhs mass support.

Longowal called an emergent meeting of his Akali Dal at Amritsar on 25th July 1982 and in consultation with Sant Bhindranwale decided to join the Morcha formally on 4th August 1982. The Sant being a selfless religious leader concurred to make Longowal as Dictator of the Morcha.²³³ Once again, the Akali Dal carried out mass agitations to pressurise the government. Peasants were urged to stay away from paying back the loans that were due to the government. The characteristic Akali agitation style of passive resistance was resurrected. Individual *jathas* (groups) would daily proceed to the site of canal construction and court arrest. The campaign continued on and by September, some 20,000 agitators had courted arrest. This campaign was, however, suspended briefly for negotiations with the government, which proved unsuccessful. In response, 4 April 1983 the Akali Dal gave the call for a one-day *Rasta Roko* or ‘block the roads’ agitation; on 17 June, 1983 a one-day *Rail Roko* or ‘block the rails’ agitation; and on 29 August, 1983 a one-day *Kaam Roko*, or ‘halt the work’ agitation to pressurise the government.²³⁴ These political demonstrations were inundated with volunteers hailing from all over the province and proved remarkably successful, creating fear at the Centre about widespread Sikh unrest. In October 1983, the Punjab Legislative Assembly was dissolved, bringing the state under absolute control of the Central government. These events coincided with the rise of the charismatic Sant Jamail Singh Bhindranwale.²³⁵

The authority of Bhindranwale already increasing among the Sikhs after the Sikh–Nirankari clash when he openly criticised the Central government and the Akali leaders. Even until this period, he did have a clear concept of a good Sikh, nor the idea of who were his enemies. In his numerous speeches between 1978 and 1984, he identified three principal foes of Sikhism. First, the apostates, that is “Those who profess Sikhism but do not behave as Sikhs.” Second, those Hindus who denied the Sikhs a separate socio–religious identity and third, the Central and state governments, which protected the apostates and other “enemies” of the Sikhs, denying the latter the opportunity to practice

²³³Darshi, (2001). *Janbaj Rakha: Sant Bhinderwale*. Gurmat Pustak Bhandar. P.64; Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P.152.

²³⁴Samiuddin, A. (Ed.). (1985). *The Punjab Crisis: Challenge and Response*. Mittal Publication, P.78.

²³⁵Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., p.119.

their religious beliefs.²³⁶ Professor Dhillon says that Bhindranwale was an intensely loved as well as intensely hated man, looked upon as a villain as well as a hero.²³⁷ In his speeches, he invoked the deep-rooted martial self-image of the Sikhs and the images of a devoutly religious past, using them to foment a mass agitation. He also used these to propagate his definition of a true Sikh, giving examples of such Sikh martyrs as Bhai Matia Das and Baba Deep Singh, who laid down their lives fighting against injustice and oppression, and also evoked the imagery of the supreme sacrifices by the Sikh gurus.²³⁸

According to Bhinderwale, a true Sikh is someone who formally becomes a Khalsa, adorned with the five Ks, and refrains from all kinds of addiction. In his 41st speech, he mentions,

In the end, I wish to appeal to the young people who have trimmed their beard. If we believe in the tenth Guru, do we look like him? How will people sit that we are the real sons of our father? If you want to be your father's sons and my brothers, then keep the hair and beard. If you do not want to be sons of your father, then choose whether you want to become a man or woman.²³⁹

Additionally, a true Sikh should not just be a religious pacifist but should also be ready to take up arms in a religious battle for the sake of justice, the Sikh faith, and the Sikh nation. Interestingly, his speeches constructed religious identities via expressions integral to the daily experiences of a peasant. When he exhorted his followers to action, he called for "a struggle for our faith, for the Sikh nation, for the oppressed." His exhortations suggested that the conflict was against evil, that is, the political power that oppresses the Sikhs, and truth, that is, the Sikh faith, had already begun, necessitating all true Sikhs to participate actively in the battle.²⁴⁰ Bhindranwale also used to evoke unaddressed concerns of Punjab like territorial issues and river water issues, which could endanger the Sikh identity. In his 21st speech delivered on 16 July 1983, he mentioned,

I have got a copy (of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution). If whatever is written in it is accepted, then we.... There is no need for us to struggle. In case we

²³⁶ Pettigrew, J. (1987). In Search of a New Kingdom of Lahore. *Pacific Affairs*, 1-25, P.14-15.

²³⁷ Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, p.97.

²³⁸ Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.73.

²³⁹ Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in Context*, 352-409, P.390.

²⁴⁰ Singh, P. (2004). *The Sikhs*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co. P.71.

achieve less than what is demanded, I shall keep the watch. However, you will have to fight for it.²⁴¹

In his speeches, he strongly argued that Sikhs needed to fight against such evil forces both for their immortal, revered gurus and for their ethno-religious identity. Not only Bhindranwale, but other radical Sikh leaders were also seriously concerned about losing their true Sikh identity. Therefore, by evoking the images of a present-day Great War between good and evil, he supported the notion of ‘miri’ and ‘piri’,²⁴² powers to defeat the evil forces. Most of the youth consciously motivated by Bhinderwale’s speeches, one of the respondents narrate that Bhinderwale was a real Hero he had a course to fight with the central government. The Akali and other political parties have not that is why he was our respected. He constantly reminded his supporters that the true Sikhs belonged to “Guru Hargobind, the master of Miri and Piri, the destroyer of armies, the valiant Guru, the great warrior, the great benefactor”, and to the 10th guru, Guru Gobind Singh, the creator of the Khalsa Panth.²⁴³

On the one hand, there were moderate Sikhs leaders—the Akalis, who were paving a Constitutional path to resolve the problems faced by Punjab, especially the Sikhs. Then, there were the Hindu radicals—generally supported by India’s Hindu population and the powerful Hindus in the state administrative machinery—who constantly suspected underlying sinister designs in the ethnic and political demands of moderate Sikh leaders. At the same time, there was a rise in the popularity of Sikh radicals, as the Central government had not accepted the demands of the Sikh community put forward by moderate Sikh leaders. Those at the helm of affairs in the state gave a radical twist to the simmering Punjab problem.²⁴⁴ By playing the various stakeholders against each other, the Center wanted to sideline Punjab’s genuine demands and play its own game of holding onto power —by hook or by crook.²⁴⁵

All India Sikh Student Federation and Sikh Separatist Movement

²⁴¹Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P.387.

²⁴²Up to the time of Guru Hargobind, the Sikh religion had been passive. At his succession ceremony, Hargobind is believed to have defiantly borne two swords, symbolizing his twin authority as temporal (*miri*) and spiritual (*piri*) head of the community.

²⁴³ Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P. 400-01.

²⁴⁴ Puri, B. (1986, October 1-5). Liberal Ansure to Punjab Teorism. New Delhi. *The Forum Gazette*. 1(9), P. 8.

²⁴⁵ Sidhu, G.B.S. (2020). *The Khalistan Conspiracy: A Former R&aw Officer Unravels The Path of 1984*. Noida: HarperCollins India, P.37.

The foundation seeds of the AISSF were sown within the premises of the Sikh National College, Lahore in 1943. The Sikh student, inspired by the functioning of the Muslim Students League, established the AISSF to represent Sikh student's demands to the college administration and to preach and propagate Sikh religious teachings. The Akali Dal soon realised the value of bringing the Sikh intelligentsia in close proximity to the party, and organised conferences, study circles, training camps, and baptismal campaigns for the educated, younger Sikh generation.²⁴⁶ The AISSF has historically sought greater political autonomy for the Sikhs. During the Partition, it agitated for an independent Sikh state, and later for the Punjabi Suba cause.²⁴⁷ In 1955, when Master Tara Singh began the Punjabi Suba agitation, several Akali Dal workers were arrested. To add teeth to the agitation, Master Tara Singh mobilized Sikh students. Thus, slowly yet surely Sikh students became intimately involved with Akali politics, with many student leaders even going to jail for their participation in Akali agitations.

Master Tara Singh appointed Satbir Singh as its President. He was given the task to establish cells in every college and university, such as in 1961-62 a definite shape was given to the AISSF and Bharpur Singh (who later became the Registrar of Punjab University) was made its President. Bharpur Singh operated from the Khalsa College, Amritsar and began forming cells in other colleges. When the Akali Dal of Master Tara Singh was generally an urban party based in Majha region, student politics reflected similar dynamics. When the leadership of the party passed firmly into the hands of mostly Malwa Jat Sikhs, made wealthy by the Green Revolution, the nature of student politics also changed—it became dominated by communist organisations and the members became very few from the late 1960s to the late 1970s.²⁴⁸

The sphere of activities of the AISSF, however, remained confined to Punjab and the demands of students. The AISSF was resurrected in 1978 after the merger of several rival factions. The reorganised AISSF came into existence on 2 July 1978, with clearly defined objectives: (See Leaflets No 2 and Page No 92 in this Chapter for the working style of the AISSF).

²⁴⁶Nayar, B.R. (1966). *Minority Politics in Punjab*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. P. 189.

²⁴⁷Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P.387.

²⁴⁸Nayar, B.R. (1966). *Minority Politics in Punjab*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, P. 189–190.

1. Enlightening Sikh students regarding the teachings of Sikh Gurus and safeguarding their rights.
2. Making the Sikhs students aware of the entity called *qaum*.
3. Organising *gurmat* camps to preach Sikh history and Sikh tenets.
4. Reviving the interests of Sikh students in religious, political, cultural, and economic fields; working for the dissemination of the Punjabi language; and the establishment of a Sikh University.²⁴⁹

Before Baba Kartar Singh, the head of the Dam Dami Taksal, died in the late 1970s, he made it clear that he wanted Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale—and not his son Amrik Singh—to succeed him. Harminder Singh Sandhu, secretary-general, stated in an interview, “For a while, Sikh youths had turned their face from Sikhism, mainly because the Akali leadership had become passive, they had adjusted to the so-called democratic system”.²⁵⁰ From the comments of Sarbjit Singh Jammu, it is obvious that the resentment against the Akali Dal was deep: “We have seen that the old Sikh leadership has not come up to our expectations and the traditional Sikh leaders such as Badal, Tohra, Longowal, Barnala, now Mann betrayed the Sikh nation.”²⁵¹ By 1980, they felt ready to plunge into politics and redefine Punjab’s relationship with the Center.

Another significant incident associated with the build-up of radical Sikhism took place when the All India Sikh Student Federation (AISSF)—under the guidance of Bhai Amrik Singh—demanded the state government to ban the use and sale of tobacco in Amritsar by May 1981, or face a demonstration—which eventually turned violent.²⁵² Before the AISSF could take out a procession, the Arya Samaj and other Hindu organisations took out a massive procession demanding a ban on the use and sale of tobacco, liquor, and meat.²⁵³

The, on 31 May 1981 Bhindranwale led a procession demanding a ban on the use and sale of tobacco. In the ensuing clash with the police, about a dozen people died.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁹Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy. *Asian Survey*, 32(11), 969-987, P.18.

²⁵⁰Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's Last Battle*. Pan Books, P. 81; Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.108.

²⁵¹Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's Last Battle*. Pan Books, P. 81-82.

²⁵²Grewal, G. (2006). *The Searching Eye: An Insider Looks at the Punjab Crises*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co., P.71.

²⁵³Singh, Dalbir in *The Tribune*, May 30, 1981:2; Singh, J. (2011). *Khalistan Struggle: A Non-movement*. Aakar Books, P.45.

²⁵⁴Puri, B.(1986, Oct., 1-5).Liberal Ansure to Punjab Teorrrism. New Delhi. *The Forum Gazette*. 1(9),P.8.

This anti-tobacco agitation had several important political implications. It sparked the first Hindu–Sikh communal violence since the Punjabi Suba agitation fifteen years ago. It also led to the meteoric rise of the AISSF as an important player in Sikh politics.²⁵⁵

Up until Operation Blue Star by the Indian army, the ideological position of the AISSF was roughly midway between that of the Akalis and the outright secessionists—it dissociated from the demand for Khalistan yet refused to condemn that demand.²⁵⁶

The Federation’s position on Khalistan was identical to Bhindranwale’s. When asked about Khalistan, his reply was: “I neither support Khalistan nor am I against it. We want to stay with Hindustan; it is for the Central government to decide whether they want us with them or not.”²⁵⁷ Thus, they neither demanded a separate Sikh state, nor opposed the idea of accepting it should the Centre choose to create a separate Sikh state.²⁵⁸ He even maintained this stance on the eve of Operation Blue Star, although he was perhaps more pessimistic than ever. As the AISSF was formed to attract educated Sikh youth to the Akali movement, it is not surprising that Akali leaders have always been well-educated. The leadership that surrounded Bhindranwale was certainly well-educated; a number of its members held advanced degrees. However, when the Federation began to resemble a mass organisation, even non-student members were attracted towards it.²⁵⁹

The class dimension of AISSF supporters and its leadership must be stressed: the backbone of the Taksal and the AISSF were the sons and daughters of Punjab’s middle and lower peasantry and agricultural workers. The challenge to the Akali and SGPC leadership, dominated by leaders from Malwa region, came from the medium and small peasants. The socio–economic roots of the Taksal and the AISSF leaders were also different from the Akali leaders like Barnala, Badal, Balwant Ravi Inder, and Amrinder—all of whom come from the state’s landed gentry class. The support base of the Federation was largely located in Majha region where the Jat Sikh farmers were smaller proprietors.

²⁵⁵Cheema, J. (2009). Ethnic Sub-Nationalist Movements in Contemporary South Asia: An introduction. *Asian Survey*, 49 (6), 915-923, P. 60.

²⁵⁶Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in Context*, 352-409, P.387.

²⁵⁷Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P. 32

²⁵⁸It was the narrative of Bhai Harminder Singh Sandhu. He was the secretary of the AISSF and during an interview with a journalist he narrated this statement. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOHYbSss6nA>

²⁵⁹Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy. *Asian Survey*, 32(11), 969-987, P.17.

Therefore, Punjabi student politics in the 1980s again tilted towards Majha and Sikh nationalism. The revival of the AISSF and the presence of the extremely charismatic Bhindranwale placed enormous pressure on the Akali Dal.²⁶⁰

Bhai Amrik Singh, Sant Bhindranwale's right-hand man who was later president of the AISSF, was responsible for several murders, bank robberies, and almost daily attacks on government property. He was killed in the army action at the Golden Temple Complex in June 1984.²⁶¹ The AISSF had a strength of about 1,00,000 members in Punjab under the supervision of Bhai Amrik Singh.²⁶² Its main areas of operation were Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, and Patiala. The Federation also had the strength of about 200 armed militants, of whom about 100 took shelter in the Golden Temple Complex during the army action in June 1984. The AISSF was organised on a district-basis with a district president. These district conveyors during their annual *samagams* (meetings) elected the president and the general secretary. The president so elected then nominated 5–7 members to look after various functions of the organisation. Before the ban in March 1984, the AISSF held various conventions and passed a resolution expressing faith in Sant Bhindranwale and supporting the controversial Anandpur Sahib Resolution.²⁶³ It also organised gurmat trainings camps for Sikh youths. Sporadic acts of violence by the AISSF workers apart, the organisation focused on fomenting resentment against the government and security forces. It also issued threat letters to VIPs and political leaders. Its members raised secessionist slogans and circulated separatist literature, whenever they found an opportunity. Bhindranwale needed a mass base of support structured into a coherent organisation, and the AISSF provided him exactly that. Bhindranwale's legitimacy as the head of a respected religious institution and Amrik Singh's organisational skills made the Federation a potent political force. Moreover, they jointly built the structure that became the center of the contemporary Punjab crisis.²⁶⁴

On 14 February 1983 Sikhs were set ablaze while still alive and Gurudwaras were desecrated at several places in Haryana, sparking communal unrest between Hindus and

²⁶⁰Ibid., P. 18.

²⁶¹Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's last battle*. Pan Books. P. 107

²⁶²Crenshaw, M. (Ed.). (2010). Mapping Terrorist Organizations. *Unpublished working paper*. P. 383.

²⁶³Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy. *Asian Survey*, 32(11), 969-987, P.982.

²⁶⁴The Times of India, (1992, January 8) AISSF Group Firm on Khalistan. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P:2; Telford, H. (1992). The Political Economy of Punjab: Creating Space for Sikh Militancy. *Asian Survey*, 32 (11), 969-987, P.984.

Sikhs both in Punjab and Haryana. Such incidences of violence against the Sikhs further encouraged Bhindranwale. He openly opposed the idea of Hindu–Sikh brotherhood and his anti-Hindu speeches grew louder and more ferocious. Tape recordings of his hate speeches were widely circulated in villages. As per his calculation, in India there were 35 Hindus for each Sikh. Thus, to provoke the militant spirit of his followers he invoked the name of the tenth guru who had vowed to make each Sikh worthy of 1,25,000 enemy soldiers.²⁶⁵

His anti-Hindu speeches gave a fillip to acts of terrorism and violence, which included bank robberies, attacks on police personals and weapons snatching, damaging and burning telephone lines and railway stations, bombings, random killings of civilians, and attacks on ministers and other high-profile individuals. Some of the more infamous incidents included the murder of Deputy Inspector General A.S. Atwal at the Golden Temple complex on 25 April, 1983; the murder of Hindu bus passengers in 18th November 1983; and the revenge killing of 35 Hindus in response to the killing of eight Sikhs in Haryana on 19 February, 1983 by a mob.²⁶⁶ These incidents infuriated Bhindranwale, who described it as the ‘Hindu Police’ killing ‘innocent Sikhs’, and favoured a ‘tit for tat’ policy.²⁶⁷

Consequently, on 1 June 1984 Operation Blue Star was launched by the Indian army against the Sikh militant holed-up in the Golden Temple complex. Bhinderwale, Major General Shahbeg Singh, Amrik Singh, and several of his armed followers were neutralised; some militants surrendered while a few managed to escape. According to Tully and Jacob, “200 followers of Bhindranwale escaped on 3 June when the curfew was lifted and about 250 people surrendered in the Temple complex and 500 in the hostel complex after the two battles were over”.²⁶⁸ Among the dead were several pilgrims or temple official and attendents.

The military assault on the Golden Temple—the holiest of the Sikh shrines—and attack on the lives and properties of Sikhs by murderous crowds organised by political (Congress) leaders, gave weight to Bhindranwale’s argument that the enemies of Sikhs intended the dismantling of the Sikh religion and culture. The military attack on the

²⁶⁵Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's last battle*. Pan Books. P. 119

²⁶⁶Ibid., P.108.

²⁶⁷Puri, H. K., Judge, P. S., & Sekhon, J. S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.14.

²⁶⁸Tully, M., & Jacob, S. (1985). *Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's Last Battle*. Pan Books, P.185-86.

“spiritual and political center of the Sikhs”, in the view of Pettigrew, was “not to eliminate a political figure or a political movement but to suppress the culture of a people, to attack their heart, to strike a blow at their spirit and self-confidence”. The military attack on the Sikhs’ religious–political institutions, in addition to the systematic and deliberate ignoring of long-standing Sikh demands by the Central government, fuelled Sikh antagonism world-wide against the Indian government. According to Baweja, “on the day that the Temple complex was handed back to the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) by the army authorities [...] men cried unashamed while the women moaned and beat their chests on seeing the bullet marks on the walls of the Golden Temple. After the Blue-star, Sikh terrorism, instead of getting subdued, spread all over Punjab and its neighboring states like wildfire and became a serious concern for the Indian government.²⁶⁹

Although the operation was successful in ridding the Temple complex of militants, it was a serious political miscalculation. India was shaken by three significant incidents that followed: first, the mutinies in several places by young Sikh soldiers,²⁷⁰ and second, the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh security guards and the third subsequent anti-Sikh pogroms in various parts of India, including in Delhi. The Operation deeply scarred the religious sentiment of the Sikhs who unanimously condemned it as an unnecessary overkill.²⁷¹

The wave of police and militant terror in Punjab thus grew stronger, with the innocent being the victim on most occasions. The targets of the extremists were Hindus, Nirankaris, and Sikhs—in that order. The police retaliated by raiding houses of suspects, torturing inmates, and even killing a few of them in fake encounters to spread terror among the terrorists. The moderate Akalis reacted to these ‘excesses’ by going around the state, honoring murder and violence victims with *siropas* (a robe of honour). Anxious Hindus looked towards New Delhi for counteractions. It was at this time that the People’s

²⁶⁹Kumar, D. (1990, September 4). Man, of Medicinecalls the Shots in Punjab. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.8.

²⁷⁰Tripathy, B.K. (1986, September 22). Wrong Place and Time for Army. New Delhi, *The Spokesman Weekly*, 35(34), P.6.

²⁷¹Chadha, G.S. (1986, April 21). The Nucleus of Punjab Crisis is Political: New Awareness on Punjab is called for. New Delhi, *The Spokesman Weekly*, 35(34), P.6-7.

Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) sponsored a team with V.M. Tarkunde as chairman to access the police excesses against the Sikhs.²⁷² B.R. Nayar, a member of this team, said:

We had no hesitation in saying in our report that the police had behaved like a barbarian force, out for revenge. They had even set houses of a few absconders on fire and destroyed utensils, clothes, and whatsoever else they found. Relatives of absconders were harassed, even detained. Even many days after the excesses committed by the police, we could see how fear-stricken the people were. Villagers gave us the names of some of the police sub-inspectors and deputy superintendents involved. Some of them, they said, had the reputation of taking the law into their hands.²⁷³

The attack by the Indian army on the Golden Temple complex could neither rid the precincts of terrorists nor break their spirit. Instead, they garnered greater public support in the aftermath of the Operation and Indira Gandhi's subsequent killing. Numerous violent incidents took place after the Operation in Punjab.²⁷⁴ Operation Blue Star in June 1984 attempted to resolve Punjab's terrorism problem with a massive military operation at the Golden Temple complex.²⁷⁵ Approximately 70,000 troops from the Indian army and other paramilitary forces sealed-off Punjab and Amritsar in particular.²⁷⁶ After Bhindranwale's death in 6 June 1984, all militant organisations of Punjab adhered to the following order for the identification of the enemy, and his correction or elimination, whatever was necessary:

- (a) the adherents of the Nirankaris sect
- (b) the State and its repressive, ideological apparatus
- (c) the Hind Samachar Group for its communal, anti-Sikh orientation, and
- (d) the Akali Dal leadership, for their opportunism and 'using' the Panth for narrow political ends. They were blamed for violating the Sikh *rehat maryada* and not fighting for the Sikh cause.

²⁷²Puri, B. (1986, October 1-5). Liberal Ansures to Punjab Terrorism. New Delhi. *The Forum Gazette*. 1(9), P. 8.

²⁷³Nayar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.129.

²⁷⁴Leaf, M. J. (1985). The Punjab Crisis. *Asian Survey*, 25(5), 475-498, P.493-94.

²⁷⁵Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P.387.

²⁷⁶Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P.51-52.

Post-Blue Star, militant outfits mushroomed all over Punjab, swearing in the name of Bhindranwale to fight for delivering the Sikhs from the communal Government of India controlled by the coterie of Brahman-Bania. Thus, was formed the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF)—the first of these militant organisations—in 1984. The militants had four apex bodies—the panthic committees, each with its factional outfit(s). The most powerful of these was led by Dr. Sohan Singh, former Director of Health Services, Punjab government. This panthic committee controlled the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF: Paramjit Singh Panjwar faction head of the faction); the Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan (BTFK: Sangha faction); the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF: Gurjant Singh Budh Singhwala faction); the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI: Sukhdev Singh Babbar faction); and the Sikh Students Federation (SSF: Daljit Singh Bittu faction). The second committee headed by Wassan Singh Zaffarwal controlled the KCF. The third committee headed by Gurbachan Singh Manochahal controlled the BTFK (Manochahal faction), the KCF (Gurjant Singh Rajasthani faction) and the AISSF (Manjit Singh faction). The fourth committee under Gurdev Singh Osmanwala was, however, of little significance.²⁷⁷

Each of these committees and militant organisations, and their factions, were known by the name of their leader bracketed next to the name of the outfit. Further, the leader himself bore the name of his native village, rather than his *gotra* (the lineage or clan). This shows the rootedness of these militants who did not prefer to fight with pseudonyms or fictitious identities. This also ensured their anonymity with the rural people—their source of food and shelter—because their acts of violence were committed—except in the last phase—in urban areas.²⁷⁸

Each of these outfits comprised 20–40 hardcore militants, who moved around in bands of three to 10 heavily armed men in are assigned to their leader. The leaders of the factions were often in their thirties—sometimes early forties—while lower ranks and cadre ranged between 15–35 years of age. For instance, the BTFK (Manochahal) was most active in Tarn-Taran district; the BTFK (Chhandran) in Ludhiana district; the KLF

²⁷⁷Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P. 57–58; Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409. P. 394–96; Pettigrew, J. (1995). *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerilla Violence*. Zed Books, P. 49-50.

²⁷⁸Singh, P. (2016). Deconstructing the Punjab Crisis of 1984: Deer, Hawks, and Siqdārs (‘officials’) as Agents of State-Sponsored Violence. *Sikh Formations*, 12(2-3), 173-190 P. 179.; Tatla, D. S. (1993). *The Politics of Homeland: A Study of the Ethnic Linkages and Political Mobilisation Amongst Sikhs in Britain and North America* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).

(Budh Singh Wala) in Ludhiana, Faridkot, and Bathinda districts; the KCF (Zaffarwal) in Amritsar district; and, the BKI²⁷⁹ in Patiala and Ropar districts.²⁸⁰

The organisational structure of these militant outfits resembled the standard format of any militia group. The ranks of its leaders and cadre resembled that of a regular army. As it was not possible to obtain detailed information for every group, this research considered the organisational structure of the KCF (Zaffarwal)—one of the largest and oldest outfits—as the representative structure. According to Pettigrew, it was the only militant organisation that maintained the purity of its thought and action in tune with the principles of the Sikh religion. The initial structure of the KCF was modified in 1988 in the light of inter-group rivalries and infiltration by moles. In the new scheme of things, Wassan Singh Zaffarwal was the overall head of the organisation.²⁸¹ About 30–40 lieutenant generals reported to Zaffarwal. Each of these lieutenant generals commanded five area commanders, who further supervised and directed the activities of 20–50 militants in an area command covering approximately 50 villages. An area command usually consisted of five cells—each with up to 10 militants and named after its most important member. Each cell had two to three hardcore members and seven workers. Quite often, a cell was merged with other cells after the death of its leader.²⁸²

The responsibility of each lieutenant general was to build the supply lines of arms and ammunition from across the Pakistan border, as well as their distribution within his area of command. Their number in an area depended on the intensity of militant activity required. While the lieutenant generals knew each other, they did not know the area commanders working under each other. Each had his network of contacts and safe houses unknown to the other. Inter-regional contacts were common among lieutenant generals, who also coordinated the operational activities of their respective groups. The area commanders were responsible for the organisation of individual cells. The hideouts and

²⁷⁹“The Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) is a Sikh Separatist paramilitary group advocates an independent state for Sikhs, to be known as Khalistan. The BKI was active during the Sikh insurgency in Punjab between the mid 1980s and mid-1990s, including alleged involvement in the bombing of an Air India flight in 1985, which killed 329 people and the 1995 assassination of Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh. Punjab police have continued to make periodic arrests of alleged BKI members during the last 10 years, and Indian security agencies have alleged that Pakistani security agencies fund and train members of the BKI and other Sikh militant groups to undertake operations within India.”

²⁸⁰Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P. 57

²⁸¹Pettigrew, J. (1995). *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerilla Violence*. Zed Books, P.31; Wallace, P. (1995). *Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P. 396–97.

²⁸² Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P.57–58

sometimes supply routes for weapons were also organised by a cell. Technical problems related to the present moment and details of strategy and tactics were worked out by each cell.²⁸³

There were several organisations, both within and outside India, that supported the Sikh Separatist Movement with men and money. Table 1 below shows the names of those organisations

Table 1: Militant Organisations that Operated in Punjab

Organisation	Active period	Base
INDIA		
Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF)	1986–1993	Punjab/Delhi
Khalistan Commando Force (KCF)	1986–1993	Punjab/Calcutta/ U.K.
Bhindranwale Tiger Force of Khalistan (BTFK)	1984	Punjab/Haryana/Rajasthan
Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF)	1988	Punjab
Khalistan Liberation Army (a wing of the Khalistan Liberation Force)	1987	Punjab
Dasmesh Regiment	1984	Punjab
Babbar Khalsa International	1980-1990	Punjab/Canada
CANADA		
International Sikh Youth Federation	1984	Vancouver/Toronto
World Sikh Organization	1984	Edmonton/Vancouver
National Council of Khalistan	1986	Vancouver
Babbar Khalsa	1978–1984	Vancouver/Toronto
Federation of Sikh Societies	1980–86	Vancouver/Edmonton
USA		
International Sikh Youth Federation	1984	Los Angeles
World Sikh Organisation	1984	New York
International Sikh Organisation	1986–87	New York
California Sikh Youth	1984	Los Angeles
Anti-47 Front	1985–86	Bakersfield
Babbar Khalsa International	1985	San Jose, California

²⁸³ Idid., P. 58–59

The Sikh Separatist Movement found supporting voices in the Sikh community based in Canada, the US, and the UK.²⁸⁴ These voices had hitherto remained passive in their support, but the happenings in Punjab catapulted them into action. The protagonists of the Khalistan Movement abroad included Ganga Singh Dhillon, a US citizen and president of the Sri Nankana Sahib Foundation of Washington, and Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan in the UK, ex-finance minister in the Akali coalition government in 1969, who had raised the demand for Khalistan in a press interview in September 1971.²⁸⁵

With the formation of new organisations, the existing ones underwent radical changes. Gurudwaras, as centres of religious and social life, were transformed into centers of political mobilisation. In order to garner public support and spread the ideology of the Movement, these organisations distributed leaflets to issue warnings (See Leaflets 1, 2, 3, and 4, Pages 91, 92, 93 and Leaflet 4, Page 94). Also, giving news related to the *bhog* (demise commemoration) ceremonies of fallen militants (See News 1, 2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9, Pages 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101 and 102).

Modern communication channels like radio, television, telephone, and newspapers made the Sikhs of Punjab aware of the religious–political events occurring in other parts of the world. Additionally, faster means of transportation aided their interaction with the people of other faiths in different parts of the world. According to Jeffrey, two major influences were at work: “First, knowledge of international affairs, resulting from the innovations of the Green Revolution, and second, people being drawn into a more complex world that holds out the possibility of prosperity, often making it difficult to observe time-honored religious practices”.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴Tatla, D. S. (1993). The Punjab Crisis and Sikh Mobilization in Britain. *Religion and Ethnicity: Minorities and Social Change in the Metropolis, Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House*. P.103

²⁸⁵Bolan, K. (2005). *Loss of Faith: How the Air India Bombers Got Away with Murder*. McClelland & Stewart, P.181; Singh, A. (1986, October 1-15). Two Months in Canada, the US., and the U.K. New Delhi, *The Forum Gazette*, 1(9), P.9

²⁸⁶Jeffrey, R. (2016). *What's Happening to India? Punjab, Ethnic Conflict, and the Test for Federalism*. Springer, P. 91.



ੴ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਾਇਰ ॥



ਹੱਥਾਂ ਬਾਝ ਕਰਾਰਿਆਂ ਵੈਰੀ ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਨ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਖਾਲਿ ਸਤਾ ਨ ਜਿੰਦਾ ਬਾਦ !

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਖਰਕ ਵਲੋਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੰਮ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ, ਸਿੱਖ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਖਾਣੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਦੁਰਿਆਈਆਂ
ਕਰ ਕੇ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਚਾਲਾਂ ਚਲਾਈਆਂ ਜਾ ਰਹੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਕਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਪੰਥ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਫ਼ ਨ ਕਰਿਣਾ
ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ । ਹੁਣ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਚਲਾਈਆਂ ਤੇ ਖਾਧ ਨਾ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸੁਫਾਇ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਦਿਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ ।

ਖਾਲਿਸਤਾਨ ਕਮਾਂਡੋ ਫੋਰਸ ਵਲੋਂ ਚਿਤਾਵਨੀ !

1. ਜੇ ਲੋਕ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਛੱਕ ਕੇ ਨਸ਼ਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਸਰਾਬ ਵੇਚਦੇ ਤੇ ਕੱਚਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਜੇ ਲੋਕ ਜੁਝਾਰੂ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੁਖਬਰੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।
2. ਜੇ ਲੋਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਬਖਸ਼ੀ ਹੋਈ ਮੰਹਰ ਕੇਸਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਤਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਤੇ ਕਰਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਬੀਗੀਆਂ ਭਰਵੱਟੇ ਕਟਦੀਆਂ, ਕੇਸਾਂ ਦੀ ਬੇਅਦਬੀ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਲੜਕਿਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਵੈਸ਼ਨ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਭੰਗ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।
3. ਜੇ ਬੁਚਕ ਤੇ ਝਟਕਈ ਜੀਵ ਹਤਿਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।
4. ਜੇ ਕੀ ਪੁਲਸ ਵਾਲਾ, ਪਟਵਾਰੀ, ਖਿਜਲੀ ਵਾਲਾ, ਰਜਿਸਟਰੀ ਕਲਰਕ, ਬੀ.ਡੀ ਓ., ਜਾਂ ਤਹਿਸੀਲ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਹੋਰ ਕਰਮਚਾਰੀ ਰਿਸ਼ਵਤ ਲੈਣ ਤੇ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਰੀਪੋਰਟ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਗੁਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਦਫਤਰ ਦਰਜ ਕਰਾਓ।
5. ਚਾਸ ਲੈਣ ਤੇ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਬੰਸਾਂ, ਵਿਆਹ ਸ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਗੱਦੇ ਗੀਤ ਲੱਠ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਲਿਟਰੇਚਰ ਡਿਖਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ।
6. 11 ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਧ ਬਰਾਤ ਲਿਜਾਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ।
7. ਜੇ ਵਿਆਹ ਸ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਚ ਸਰਾਬ ਪੀਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਤਾਬਿਆਜਾਏ ਹਨ।
8. ਮਸ਼ੀ ਮਸਾਣਾਂ, ਰਾਧਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ, ਢੋਸੀਆ ਵਾਲੇ ਕੋਲ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ, ਜਾਦੂ ਟੂਟੇ, ਜਗਰਾਤਾ ਆਦਿ ਮੰਨਣ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੇ ਹਿੰਦੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਪ੍ਰੀਦਣ ਵਾਲੇ।
9. ਉਹ ਲੋਕ ਜੋ ਸਰਾਬ ਦੇ ਠੱਕੇ ਖੀਦਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਰਾਗੀ, ਢਾਡੀ, ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰਕ ਗ੍ਰੰਥੀ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਮੁਲਾਜ਼ਮ ਆਦਿ ਜੋ ਸਰਾਬ ਪੀਂਦੇ ਹਨ।
10. ਜੋ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਮੰਹਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਤੰਬਾਕੂ ਬੀੜੀਆਂ ਸਿਰਕਟਾਂ, ਅਫੀਮ ਵੇਚਦੇ ਹਨ।
11. ਜੇ ਲੋਕ ਨਜਾਇਜ਼ ਚਿੰਟੀਆਂ ਭੇਜਕੇ ਪੇਸ਼ੇ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਧਾਰੀ ਜਾਂ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਘਰ ਡਾਕੇ ਮਾਰਦੇ ਤੇ ਲੁਟਾਂ ਖੋਹਾਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਸਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੀ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਨਸ਼ਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਦੀ ਗਲਤ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਗੁਰਦਵਾਰਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰੀ ਬੈਠੇ ਹਨ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਤੇ ਜੀਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਾੜਿਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ।

ਨੋਟ—ਜੇਕੁਝ ਵਿਚ ਬਾਹਿਰੀ ਲੋਕੀ ਫੌਜਰੀ ਪੰਡਾ, ਚਿੰਟੇ ਵਰਤ, ਚਾਲੀਆ ਪਾਣਾ, ਬੰਦਿਆ ਲਈ ਹੋਰੀ ਦੁਖਾਣ, ਚਿੰਟਿਆ ਕਮੀਆ ਚਾਲੀਆ ਮਲਵਾਰਾ ਆਦਿ ਕਰੂਹੀ ਹਨ। ਜੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਸਕੂਲ ਜਾਂ ਕਾਲਜ ਦਾ ਸੁਖੇ ਇਹ ਵਰਦੀਆਂ ਛੁਡਾਣਾ ਤਾਂ ਪੁਲਸ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। 2 ਚਾਸ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਸੋਨਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਘਰ ਜਾਂ ਕੋਰਟੀਆ ਜਾਵੇਗਾ। 3 ਜੇਕਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਰ ਦਿਸਕਿਰਾਓ ਛੁਡਾਣਾ ਜਾਂ ਚਾਲੀਆ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਸੁਫਾਇ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਦਿਤੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। 4. ਜੇ ਲੜਕੇ ਵਕ ਅਠਿਆ ਤੇ ਚਾਲੀਆ ਤੇ ਵਾਦ ਮਦਾਓ ਤੇ ਫੌਜਰੀ ਕਰਕੇ ਹਨ, ਸਿੱਖ ਜਾਕਰ।

ਡਾ: ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਿੰਦਾ

ਡਾ: ਲਾਭ ਸਿੰਘ

ਸੰਪਾਦਕ—ਮਲਕੀਅਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਜਨਾਲਾ

Leaflet 1: KCF warning Letter against Anti-Social and Anti-Movements Activities (collected during field survey).



ੴ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਫਤਹਿ ॥



ਸਿੱਖ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੱਖ ਰੱਖ ਕੇ ਆਲ ਇੰਡੀਆ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਸੰਵਿਧਾਨ ਛਾਪਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। —ਸੰਪਾਦਕ

ਆਲ ਇੰਡੀਆ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ

ਦਾ

ਸੰਵਿਧਾਨ

- 1 ਓ) ਇਸ ਜਥੇਬੰਦੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ 'ਆਲ ਇੰਡੀਆ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ' ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।
- ਅ) ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਮੁਖ ਦਫਤਰ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਬ ਦਫਤਰ ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ, ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਜੰਮੂ, ਭੁਪਾਲ, ਬੰਬਈ, ਕਲਕੱਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਹਾਟੀ ਵਿਖੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ।

ਮੁਖ ਮੰਤਵ -

- 2 ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਮੁਖ ਮੰਤਵ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੋਣਗੇ :-
 - ੳ) ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਕਾਂ ਤੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਰਾਖੀ ਲਈ ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਥੇਬੰਦ ਕਰਨਾ।
 - ਅ) ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਦਿਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬਾਨ ਦੇ ਉੱਚੇ ਸੁੱਚੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਲਈ ਪਿਆਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਦੇ ਬਹੁ-ਮੁੱਲੇ ਵਿਰਸੇ ਦੀ ਸੱਝੀ ਕਰਾਉਣੀ।
 - ੲ) ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਵੱਖਰੀ ਹਸਤੀ ਤੇ ਅੱਡਰੀ ਕੌਮੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਜਗਾਉਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਦੇਸ਼-ਕਾਲ ਘੜਨ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਸਾਡਾਂ ਕੌਮੀ ਜਜ਼ਬਾ ਪ੍ਰਫੁੱਲਤ ਹੋ ਸਕੇ।
 - ੳ) ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਰਾਹਤ-ਮਰਯਾਦਾ ਦਾ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਦਰਸਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਵਿਖਿਆਨਾਂ, ਲੈਕਚਰਾਂ, ਸਟੈਂਡੀ ਸਰਕਲਾਂ ਤੇ ਕੈਂਪਾਂ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰਨਾ।
 - ੴ) ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ, ਰਾਜਨੀਤਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ, ਆਰਥਕ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਚਾਰਕ ਉੱਨਤੀ ਲਈ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਸ਼ੌਕ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨਾ।
 - ੵ) ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਲਿਖਣ ਦਾ ਪਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਦੀ ਸਥਾਪਨਾ ਲਈ ਯਤਨ-ਸ਼ੀਲ ਰਹਿਣਾ।

ਭਰਤੀ-

- 3 ਓ) ਹਰ ਇਕ ਸਿੱਖ (Bonafide) ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਜਿਸ ਨੇ ਲੌਇਰ ਮਿਡਲ (ਫੋਵੀ ਜਮਾਤ) ਇਮਤਿਹਾਨ ਪਾਸ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤੇ ਜਾ ਘਟੋ ਘਟ 11 ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਉਮਰ ਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤੇ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਪੁਰਾਣਾ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਜੇ ਉਹ ਨੌਕਰ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਸਕੂਲ ਫੋਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੰਜ ਸਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਵਧ ਸਮਾਂ ਨਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੋਵੇ, ਜੇਕਰ ਉਹ


Leaflet 2: AISSF Aims and Methods

(collected during field survey).

ਖਾਲਿਸਤਾਨ ਲਿਬਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਫੋਰਸ

ਮੁਖ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ :- ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਨੰਦਪੁਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ
KHALISTAN LIBERATION FORCE
 Head Office :- SHRI ANAND PUR SAHIB
 ਮੁੱਖ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ :- ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸੁਰਮੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ 'ਮੁੱਖ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸ' 11-10-91

02330



ਭਾਗ ਵਰਗੇ ਆਉਣ
 ਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸੰਬੰਧਤ ਹੋਈ
 ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ
 ਹਾਲਾਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਮੰਤਰੀ
 ਤੋਂ ਆਉਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਆਦਿ
 ਸਿੰਘ ਮੰਤਰੀ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਮੋਦਿਤ
 ਹੋਣ ਤੇ ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ
 ਦੇ ਸਾਫ਼ਾਈ ਕਾਰੇ ਭਾਈ
 ਸੁਖਾ, ਭਾਈ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਿੰਘ
 ਇਹ ਦਸਖੀਏ ਸਿੰਘ
 ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਖਾਈ ਕੇਸਿਐ
 ਕੇ ਕੇਸਿਐ ਦੇ ਵਾਲੀ
 ਚੰਗੀ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਸਿੰਘ
 ਨੂੰ ਚੰਗੇ ਤੇ ਸੁਖਾਈ
 ਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਾਲਾਤ
 ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਾਫ਼ਾ ਮਨ
 ਵਾਲੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ
 ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਾਫ਼ਾ ਮਨ
 ਵਾਲੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ
 ਸਿੰਘਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਾਫ਼ਾ ਮਨ
 ਵਾਲੇ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਇਹ

ਜਾਰੀ ਰਹੇਗਾ

ਸੁਖਾਈ ਸਿੰਘ

Leaflet 3: KLF letter Claiming Reasonability for the Kidnapping of a Romanian Diplomat in 1991(collected during field survey)

ਏਹ ਐਲਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਦਲੀਲ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਪਰ ਭਾਈ ਵੱਸਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਪੰਥਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ
 ਦੱਲੀ ਦੇ ਅਖਬਾਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਸ ਦਿਨ ਹੜਤਾਲ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਅੰਦਾਜ਼ਾ ਲਗਾਇਆ ਕਿ

॥ ਓ ਵਹਿਗੁ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਵਹਿਗਿ ॥

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਚਖਤ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ
ਪੰਥਕ ਪੰਜ ਮੈਂਬਰੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ

ਨੰ..... -10- ਸਿਕੰ.....

ਮਾਨਿਸਤਾਨਾ ਦੀ ਬਿਰੋਧਤਾ ਜਾਂ ਇਸਦੇ ਚਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਈ ਬੀਜਤ ਵਾਰੇ
 ਸਥਾਪਕ ਪਿਨੂ ਅਤੇ ਮੈਂਬਰਾਂ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਤਾਕਤ ਕਰਨੀ ਸਖੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਪੰਜ ਮੈਂਬਰੀ
 ਪੰਥਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੁਝੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਿ ਪਥੇ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ
 ਰੁਧਾਈ ਜਰੂਰ ਕਰੀ ਜਾਵੇਗੀ। ਜੇਕੁ ਵਰ ਬੰਦ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ ਕਰੀ
 ਮਾਨਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਨਿਕੁਣੇ ਤੇ ਇਤ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਖਾਏਭੁ ਜਿਤਾ ਜਾਵਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ
 ਕਰਤਾਵੀਆਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਮੁੱਥਿਆਵਾਂ ਵਾ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਨਿਕੁਣੀ ਪੰਜ ਮੈਂਬਰੀ ਪੰਥਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ
 ਖਾਪਦਾ ਰਹਵ ਨਿਕਾਵੇਗੀ।

ਕਹਿ-ਖਾਵੇ। (ਏਹਵਾ)।

ਠਾਥ ਤਥੇ ਮੈ ਜੋਰਿ ਕਹਿ ਬਰਨ ਕਰਾ ਠਾਥ ਨਿਕਾਵੇ।
 ਪੰਥ ਕਰੀ ਤਥੇ ਜਕਤ ਮੈ ਜਥ ਤੁਮ ਕਰਤੁ ਸਕਾਇ।

ਕੋਰਿ ਮੈ ਨਿਕਾਨ ਸਤਿ ਜੁ ਬਕਾਰ

ਤੁਹੂੰ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਵਾਸ
 ਪੰਜ ਮੈਂਬਰੀ ਪੰਥਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ

ਤਾਲੇ ਪੰਥਕ ਸਿੰਘ <i>(Signature)</i>	ਤਾਲੇ ਕੁਝੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ <i>(Signature)</i>	ਤਾਲੇ ਕੁਝੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ <i>(Signature)</i>
ਤਾਲੇ ਖਰੂਕ ਸਿੰਘ <i>(Signature)</i>	ਤਾਲੇ ਚੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ <i>(Signature)</i>	<i>(Signature)</i>

ਨੋਟ: ਪੰਜ ਮੈਂਬਰੀ ਪੰਥਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਵਲੋਂ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਿੱਖੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰੀ ਜਾਵੀ
 ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਨੇਕੀ ਵੰਗ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਸਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵਪਾਰੇ ਸਜਾਉਣ ਤਾ ਕਿ
 ਮਾਨਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੀ ਮੂੰਹ ਕੋਰੀ ਤਸਵੀਜ ਲਗਵਾ ਵਾਏ।

ੀ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਐਲਾਨ 29 ਅਪ੍ਰੈਲ ਤੇ ਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਐਲਾਨ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ
 ਰੱਖ ਦਿੱਤਾ। ਵਾਈ ਕਰੇਗੀ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਪ

Leaflet 4: Panthik Committee Warning Letter against Anti-Movement Activities
 (collected during field survey from Punjabi University Library)



News 2: Warning Issued against anti-Movement Activities

(collected during field survey from Punjab digital library, Chandigarh).




News 3: Ultimatum Issued to the Punjab Government for Making Punjabi Language Compulsory in Chandigarh Schools

(Collected during field survey)

ਸੂਰਾ ਸੌ ਪਹਿਚਾਨੀਏ ਜੋ ਲਰੇ ਦੀਨ ਕੇ ਹੇਤ
ਪੁਰਜਾ ਪੁਰਜਾ ਕਟ ਮਰੇ ਕਬੂ ਨਾ ਛਾਡੇ ਖੇਤ।

ਭੋਗ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਕਾਨਫਰੰਸ



ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਭਾਈ ਰਣਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਣਾ

ਸੰਤ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਭਿੰਡਰਾਂਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਆਰੰਭੇ ਸੰਪਰਸ਼ ਦੌਰਨ
ਭਾਈ ਰਣਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਾਣਾ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਸਿਰ
ਰੱਖੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਦਾ ਭੋਗ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਜੱਦੀ ਪਿੰਡ ਸਕਰੋਦੀ, ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ
ਸੰਗਰੂਰ (ਨੇੜੇ ਭਵਾਨੀਗੜ੍ਹ) ਵਿਖੇ 18 ਜਨਵਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਪਹਿਰ 12 ਵਜੇ
ਪਵੇਗਾ। ਇਸ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਕਾਨਫਰੰਸ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ
ਜਸਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੋਡੇ ਜਥੇਦਾਰ ਅਕਾਲ ਤਖਤ, ਭਾਈ ਜਸਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ
ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਬ, ਭਾਈ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂ. ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ,
ਬਾਬਾ ਜੋਗਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ, ਭਾਈ ਹਰਮੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਧੂ ਜਨਰਲ
ਸਕੱਤਰ, ਰਾਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਹਿਤਾ, ਧਿਆਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੰਡ, ਬੀਬੀ ਬਿਠੀ
ਕੌਰ ਖਾਲਸਾ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਰਾਜਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਮੋਹਕਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ
ਸਿੰਘ ਮਲੇਵਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਨ ਕਰਨਗੇ।

ਸਮੂਹ ਇਲਾਕਾ ਨਿਵਾਸੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਗਿਣਤੀ
ਚ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ ਲਈ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਬਚਿੱਤਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਡੇਵਾਲ, ਗੁਰਤੇਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ
ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹਾ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਆਲ ਇੰਡੀਆ ਆਈਸਐਫ ਆਈਸਐਫ
ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਫੈਡਰੇਸ਼ਨ, ਸੰਗਰੂਰ।

ਮੌਸਮ

ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ ਵਿਖੇ ਮੌਸਮ ਨੂੰ ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ
ਤਾਪਮਾਨ 24.0° ਸੈਂਟੀਗਰੇਡ (75.2° ਫੈਰਨਹੀਟ)
ਅਤੇ ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਤਾਪਮਾਨ 8.5° ਸੈਂਟੀ
(47.3° ਫੈਰਨਹੀਟ) ਰਿਹਾ।
ਵੱਧ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਸਪੱਰਸ਼ਕ ਨਮੀ 98% ਸੀ ਜਦ
ਘੱਟ ਤੋਂ ਘੱਟ ਨਮੀ 50% ਸੀ।
ਨਿਵੇਸ਼ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਰਜ 5.43 ਵਜੇ ਛੁੱਟਿਆ
ਮੰਗਲਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ 07.21 ਵਜੇ ਚੜ੍ਹੇਗਾ।

ਅੱਜ ਦੀਆਂ ਫਿਲਮਾਂ

- ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ: ਬਤਾਰ: ਪਿਆਰ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੁਹਾੜਾ 4 ਸੀ, ਚਿੱਠੀ: ਮਹਾਂ ਸੰਗਰਾਮ: 4 ਸੀ, ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ 10.30 ਜਗਤ: ਲਵਰ ਰੋਮੀਸ: 4 ਸੀ, ਕਿਰਨ ਜੁੱਤਾਰ: 4 ਸੀ, ਕੋ. ਸੀ. ਚੋਦੇਵਰ: ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ 10.30, ਤਕਦੀਰ ਕਾ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ 4 ਸੀ, ਨਿਲਮ ਹਾਦਸਾ 4 ਸੀ, ਨਿਰਮਾਣ: ਯੱਲ ਜਵਾਨੀ ਕਾ: 4 ਸੀ, ਪਿਕਫਲੀ: ਮਹਾਂ ਸੰਗਰਾਮ: 4 ਸੀ।
- ਐਸ. ਏ. ਐਸ. ਨਗਰ: ਬਾਸੀ: ਸਿੱਖਮ 4 ਸੀ।
- ਪੰਚਕੁਲਾ: ਸੂਰਜ: ਤਕਦੀਰ ਕਾ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ: 4 ਸੀ, ਕੋ. ਸੀ.: ਮਹਿਲਾ 3 ਸੀ।
- ਅੰਬਾਲਾ: ਡਿਵੈਸ ਸਰਵਿਸਿਓ: ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ 4 ਸੀ, ਨਿਗਰ: ਕੈਲਾ ਬਾਬੂਦ: 4 ਸੀ, ਇਸ਼ਾਤ: ਤਾਕਤਵਰ: 4 ਸੀ, ਨਾਵਲਟੀ: ਕੈਲਾ ਬਾਬੂਦ 4 ਸੀ, ਵਿਕੇ: ਪੱਛੋਂ: 4 ਸੀ। ਹਰੀ ਪੈਂਸ਼ਨ: ਆਥ ਮੰਗੀ ਬਾਈ: 4 ਸੀ।
- ਫਰਨਾਲ: ਅਭਿਆ: ਲਾਡਵੀ: 4 ਸੀ, ਨਾਵਲਟੀ: ਪਾਪ ਕੀ ਦੁਨੀਆਂ: 4 ਸੀ।
- ਰਾਮਪੁਰ: ਮਨੋਲ ਪੈਂਸ਼ਨ: ਨਗਰੀ: 3 ਸੀ।
- ਉਧਿਆਵਾ: ਚੰਦ: ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼: 4 ਸੀ, ਨਿੱਠੀ ਚੰਦ: ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼: 4 ਸੀ, ਚੀਪਕ: ਤਾਖਤ ਕਾ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ: 4 ਸੀ।
- ਪਟਿਆਲਾ: ਏਲੋਗ: ਮੈਂ ਤੇਰਾ ਦੁਸ਼ਮਣ: 4 ਸੀ, ਹਰਮਿ: ਲਧੂ ਕੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼: 4 ਸੀ, ਮਾਯਾ: ਗੀਤਾ ਕੀ ਸੋਗੀ: 4 ਸੀ, ਵੁਲ: ਮੈਂ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਹੂੰ: 4 ਸੀ।
- ਧਾਰੀਵਾਲ: ਅਮਿਤ: ਆਥ ਮੈਂ ਖੱਬੇ: 3 ਸੀ।
- ਸਲੋਮ: ਵੀਡੀਓ: ਸੁਰਅਤ: 4 ਸੀ, ਚਿੱਠੀ: ਮਹਾਂ ਸੰਗਰਾਮ: 4 ਸੀ, ਸਾਈਨ ਪਿਲਸ: ਤਕਦੀਰ ਕਾ ਤਮਾਸ਼ਾ: 4 ਸੀ।

ਦੂਰਦਰਸ਼ਨ

ਵਿੱਲੀ
ਸਵੈਰ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ: 7 ਵਜੇ ਤੋਂ 8.45 ਤਕ:
ਵੱਦ ਮਾਤਮ, ਮਹਾਬਲ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ,
ਸਮਾਜ, ਮੁਖਿਯਾਤ, ਪੁਸ਼ਤੀ ਕੁਰੀ ਤੰਦੁਸਤੀ, ਮਸੂਮ,
ਕਾਲੇ ਮੈਂ ਕਾਰਤਮ, ਦਾ ਨਿਊਓ, ਏ ਚੰਸ ਇਨ ਦੀ
ਕਰਨੀਓ, ਰਾਮਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਭਿਆਚਾਰ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ,
ਸ਼ਾਪਤੀ।
9 ਵਜੇ: ਤਿਆਗ ਰਾਜ ਆਰਾਧਨਾ ਮੰਗਲ-
ਮਦਰਾਸ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ।
ਫਾਅਦ ਦੁਪਹਿਰ: 2.45 ਨਹਿਰੂ ਟੈਲਰ ਕੰਪ
ਕੁਟਾਕਲ ਦੁਰਮਾਮੋਟ ਦਾ ਕਥਰੀਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ
ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ।
ਰਾਮ 5.30 ਸੈਂਟੀਗਰਾਮ, 5.40 ਚੰਤਰੀ ਸੋਗੀ,
6 ਵਜੇ ਨੇਹੂ ਦੁਪਹਿਰ, 6.45 ਨਲੀ ਕਪੜੇ, 6.50
ਘੋਲੀਓ ਵਿਚਾਰ, 6.40 ਸਮਾਜਕ ਡਰੀਓ, 6.55
ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਡਰੀਓ ਤੇ ਸੁਆਧਿਅੰ ਭਾਗ ਸੁਆਧ, 7 ਵਜੇ
ਨਿੱਠੀ ਦਰਬਾਰ, 7.30 ਤਲੀਓ, 7.40 ਸੋਭ ਤੋਂ ਸੁਣੀ
8.10 ਚੰਤਰੀਓ।
ਨੇੜੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਕਾ 8.40 ਸਮਾਜਕ, 9
ਵਜੇ ਕੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ, 9.30 ਦਾ ਨਿਊਓ, 9.30
10 ਵਜੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਮਹਾਬਲ ਅਤੇ ਅੰਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ

News 4: Invitation to the Bhog Ceremony of Fallen Militants (collected during field survey).

ਜੁਝਾਰੂਆਂ ਦੀ ਦਾਸਤਾਨ



ਇਕੋ ਟਕਰ ਦੀ ਤਰਫ਼ਾਨੀ

ਭਾਈ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੋਪੀ ਉਰਫ ਜੁਝਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ
ਸੁਲਤਾਨਵਿੰਡ (ਬ੍ਰਿਗੇਡੀਅਰ ਕੇ. ਸੀ. ਐਫ.)
ਜੋ ਜੇਦਪੁਰ ਪਿੰਡ ਵਿਖੇ ਪੁਲਿਸ ਵਲੋਂ ਫੜੇ
ਜਾਣ ਤੇ ਸਾਈਨਾਈਡ ਖਾ ਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਛੱਡ ਗਏ
ਭਣੇਵਾ ਭਾਈ ਕੰਵਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ

ਭਾਈ ਸੁਖਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਿੱਟੇ (ਸੁਲਤਾਨਵਿੰਡ)
ਬ੍ਰਿਗੇਡੀਅਰ ਕੇ. ਸੀ. ਐਫ. ਭਣੇਵਾ ਭਾਈ
ਕੰਵਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ



ਭਾਈ ਕੰਵਰਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਲਤਾਨਵਿੰਡ,
ਚੀਫ ਜਨਰਲ ਕੇ. ਸੀ. ਐਫ.



ਨਾਲ ਸਾਥੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਤਰਫ਼ਾਨੀ
ਦਿੱਤੀ

ਡਾ. ਜਸਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮਨਿਹਾਲਾ, ਲੇਫ: ਜਨਰਲ ਕੇ. ਸੀ. ਐਫ.
ਜੋ 5 ਅਕਤੂਬਰ 90 ਕੰਪਨੀ ਬਾਗ ਸਰੀਰ ਛੱਡ ਗਏ

ਭਾਈ ਬਲਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੱਬੋਵਾਲ, ਕੇ. ਸੀ. ਐਫ

ਸੰਤ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ-ਮਾਰਚ 1991

27

News 5: Invitation to the bhog Ceremony of a Fallen Militant
(collected during field survey).

ਕਬੀਰਾ ਜਬ ਹਮ ਆਏ ਜਗਤ ਮੈਂ, ਜਗ ਹੰਸਾ ਹਮ ਰੋਏ
ਐਸੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਕਰ ਚਲੇ, ਹਮ ਹੰਸੇ ਜਗ ਰੋਏ

ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਦਾ ਭੋਗ



ਸੰਤ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਖਾਲਸਾ



ਭਾਈ ਸੁਖਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ



ਭਾਈ ਬਿਕਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਰਲਾ



ਭਾਈ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ
ਉਰਫ ਭਾਈ ਮਾਧਾ ਸਿੰਘ



ਭਾਈ ਬਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖੇਲਾ

ਸੰਤ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਕਿੰਡਰਾਂਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਵਲੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ ਆਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਹਰਮਨ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਖਾੜਕੂ ਜਰਨੈਲ ਭਾਈ ਸੁਖਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ (ਬੀ.ਟੀ.ਐਫ.) ਅਤੇ ਸਾਥੀ ਭਾਈ ਬਿਕਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਨਾਰਲਾ, ਲੈਫਟੀਨੈਂਟ ਜਨਰਲ, ਭਾਈ ਮਨਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਉਰਫ ਭਾਈ ਮਾਧਾ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਬਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖੇਲਾ, ਭਾਈ ਨਿਰਮਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਕੌਮ ਦੀ ਇੱਜ਼ਤ ਆਬਰੂ ਬਚਾਉਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ 3.11.90 (ਸ਼ਨਿਚਰਵਾਰ) ਨੂੰ ਪਿੰਡ ਭੁੱਲਰ ਵਿਖੇ ਹੋਏ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਗਏ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸ਼ਹੀਦਾਂ ਦੇ ਨਮਿਤ ਰੱਖੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਖੰਡ ਪਾਠ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਭੋਗ 12.11.90 ਦਿਨ ਸੋਮਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਈ ਸੁਖਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੰਘਾ ਦੇ ਘਰ ਪਿੰਡ ਸੰਘਾ (ਤਰਨਤਾਰਨ) ਵਿਖੇ ਪਾਏ ਜਾ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਸਮੂਹ ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਸਮਾਗਮ ਵਿਚ ਪਹੁੰਚਣ ਦੀ ਅਪੀਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਦਾਸ :

ਭਾਈ ਰਫ਼ਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਛੰਦੜਾਂ
ਭਾਈ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਹੇਪੀ
ਭਾਈ ਸੁਖਚੈਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਲੱਧੂ
ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਬਖਸ਼ ਸਿੰਘ ਖੁੱਕਰ
ਭਾਈ ਸਰਵਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੌਧਰ

ਭਾਈ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੂਸਲੇਵਰ
ਭਾਈ ਬਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੰਗ
ਭਾਈ ਬਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਫੌਜੀ
ਭਾਈ ਸਤਿਨਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਡੀਨਾ
ਭਾਈ ਹਰਜਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਫਰੰਦੀਲ

Nnews 8: Invitation letter for the Bhog Ceremony of Fallen Militants
(collected during field survey).

ਮੁਕਾਬਲਾ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਹੋਏ ਉਹ ਮਾਰਿਆ ਗਿਆ।
 ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਪਹੁੰਚਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ।
 ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਰਿਪੋਰਟਾਂ 'ਚੋਂ ਇਹ ਸੰਕੇਤ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ
 ਮਿਲੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਸਰਹੱਦ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਰ ਹਥਿਆਰਾਂ ਦੀ
 ਸਿਖਲਾਈ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਛੇ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਮੁਕਾਬਲੇ
 ਤੇਜ਼ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਵਲੋਂ : ਸਮੂਹ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਖੇਤੀਬਾੜੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ
 ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ।

777ਪੀ

ਐਵੇਂ ਭਰਮ ਹੈ ਸਾਡਿਆਂ ਕਾਤਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ, ਅਸੀਂ ਹੋਵਾਂਗੇ ਦੋ ਜਾਂ ਚਾਰ ਲੋਕੇ।
 ਕਤਲ ਕੀਤਿਆਂ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਮੁੱਕਣੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਐਡੀ ਲੰਬੀ ਹੈ ਸਾਡੀ ਕਤਾਰ ਲੋਕੇ।

ਪਾਠ ਦਾ ਭੋਗ



ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਭਾਈ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੌਹਰਾ

ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਘਰਸ਼ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਕੌਮ ਲਈ ਲਈ ਰਹਿਨੁਮਾਈ ਖੇੜਾ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਵੈੱਬਸਾਈਟ
 ਦੇ ਜਨਰਲ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਭਾਈ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੌਹਰਾ ਉਰਫ ਬਾਬਾ 1 ਦਸੰਬਰ 1990 ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਹੀਦੀ ਜਾਮ ਪੀ ਕੇ
 ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਆਤਮਿਕ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਲਈ ਪਾਠ ਦਾ ਭੋਗ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਪਿੰਡ ਨੌਹਰਾ ਨੇੜੇ ਨਾਭਾ ਵਿਖੇ ਪਵੇਗਾ।
 ਦਸੰਬਰ ਦਿਨ ਸੋਮਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪਵੇਗਾ। ਸਮੂਹ ਸੰਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਤਮ ਅਰਦਾਸ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ
 ਹੈ।

-:ਗੁਰੂ ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਦਾਸ:-

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ਭਾਈ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੰਜਵੜ | ਭਾਈ ਰਾਜਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੱਸੀ |
| ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਜੰਟ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੁੱਧ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਲਾ | ਭਾਈ ਸਰਬਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਤਲੀ |
| ਭਾਈ ਦਲਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਖਾਲਸਾ | ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਟਿਆਲਾ |
| ਭਾਈ ਰਛਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਛੰਦੜਾਂ | ਭਾਈ ਨਾਇਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੂੜਕੇ |
| ਭਾਈ ਸੁਖਦੇਵ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੱਬਰ | ਭਾਈ ਅਮਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਲੋਅਰਖਾ |
| | ਭਾਈ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ |
| | ਭਾਈ ਜਗਰੂਪ ਸਿੰਘ ਜਗਜੀਤਪੁਰਾ |

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News 9: Invitation to the Bhog Ceremony of a Fallen Militant
 (collected during field survey).

Generally, these warning letters were pasted in the dark of the night in public places and contained social rules that forbade the general public from conspiring with the government forces against the militants. The letter issued under the name of Bhai Harjinder Singh Jinda and Bhai Labh Singh warned against disobeying the Sikh code of conduct and proscribed the cutting of hair, dressing up by girls, and consumption of alcohol. These letters also warned against seeking bribes and dowry, and publication of obscene songs, and made suggestions like restricting the size of marriage parties to 11 members, and abstaining from the sale of tobacco, bidis, cigarettes, and opium in villages. Threats were also issued to certain Sikhs for allegedly colluding with the Hindus to stymie the Movement. These warning letters—issuing threats as well as guidelines for proper social conduct—stimulated the idealism of young Sikhs and inspired them to join the Movement (See Page No. 91, Leaflet No. 1).

These letters were also a means of claiming responsibility for the acts committed by the militants. Generally, a claim of responsibility was accompanied with the reasons for taking that action, and a warning for the future. For example, Leaflet 3 (Page No. 93) shows a letter issued by the KLF on 11 October 1991 claiming responsibility for the kidnapping of a Romanian diplomat. A warning was issued to the Central government that the Romanian would be killed if Harjinder Singh Jinda, Bhai Sukhdev Singh Sukha, and Bhai Nirmal Singh—the killers of Indira Gandhi—were not released.

The AISSF also printed and distributed its constitution to share the purpose, organisational structure, and responsibilities of the organization (See Leaflet No 2, Page No. 92). Apart from conducting seminars and camps for Sikh students to acquaint them with Sikh culture and history, it also aimed to establish a Sikh university in Punjab. Apart from their own publications, they issued press statements—usually by threatening a newspaper’s editorial team—to spread their message among youth.²⁸⁷

Similarly, warning letters were issued in press for raising the official profile of Punjabi language (See News 3 above Page No. 96). These militants believed that the Sikh identity was being eroded by the demotion of Punjabi language in the official space. The Central government’s decision to make Chandigarh a union territory further fuelled their suspicion that Punjabi would be relegated to a second language. Such issues raised by the militants touched a chord with the Sikh masses.

²⁸⁷Tatla, D.S. (1993). The Punjab crisis and Sikh mobilization in Britain. *Religion and Ethnicity: Minorities and Social Change in the Metropolis, Kampe, Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House*. P.113

Invitations to bhog ceremonies of fallen militants attracted huge crowds. Militant leaders would arrive with their retinue of armed followers, deliver a quick speech in honour of the fallen soldier of the Sikh cause—sometimes they would give a call for a *bandh* (general closure of economic activity)—and vanish before the police could arrive at the scene. The gathered crowd, especially the young, would be thrilled by their daredevilry. Parents or dependents of slain militants would be honoured with siropas and monetary help would be extended to them, depending upon the socio-economic condition of the family (See News No. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 Page No. 97, 98, 99, 100, 101 and 102).²⁸⁸

However, violence remained the preferred mode of communication and expression for these armed organisations. Those who violated the dictated social code of conduct or did not pay heed to warnings were often attacked and sometimes murdered.²⁸⁹ Cigarette shops were burnt, girls were molested, and if a marriage party exceeded the stipulated number of 11 members, brides were captured and the marriage party and family heads beaten. Thus, the so-called code of social conduct was implemented with the device of terror (See Page No. 91, Leaflet No. 1).

Given that the Khalistan Movement was an anti-State armed insurgency, its activists could not engage directly and openly with the public to educate and organise them. This lacuna, which is otherwise best filled through dialogue, was filled through the only other available means—fear. Even the common public—fresh out of the brutal seventies—sympathised with the hardships faced by the militants for the larger cause of Sikh identity. However, things began to change when over-zealous militants, in a bid to enforce their codes of conduct, turned their guns on the masses. This was the beginning of the end of public support for the Movement.

In order to legitimise their actions and policies, the separatists used well-established religious symbols, which provided them a readymade ideology rooted in the soil. Thus, saffron turbans and *dupattas* (ladies' long scarf)—symbolising a spirit of sacrifice—flooded the socio-cultural space and a flowing beard became a symbol of defiance to

²⁸⁸Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P.157

²⁸⁹A principal of a college in Ferozpur was shot dead on April 1, 1984. The AISSF indulged in widespread acts of arson to prevent the holding of examinations. N/A (1992, February 11). Punjab ultras kill 6 teachers. *Times of India*, New Delhi, P.1

authority. These fundamentally religious idioms carried a strong political–emotional message and were effectively employed during the Movement.²⁹⁰

These organizations also used the cultural forms of folk music. Especially Dhadi and kavishri, also played an important role in shaping youth consciousness. The kavishri form of poetry originated in Malwa region as a consequence of the prevailing economic, political, and religious conditions. Given the nature of its rendition—the performer is required to sing continuously at a high pitch—it was not easy for any kavishri singer to perform for long duration. Therefore, the form evolved. A kavishri was initiated with one or two *chhandas* (stanzas) and thereafter give way to story narration. A kavishri group comprises three to four members—only one member performs at a time while others conserve their energy for their turn of a high-pitch performance.²⁹¹

The kavishri folk songs offered a natural and culturally accepted option to achieve consensus amongst the potential adherents of the Movement. They used common religious and cultural symbols and traditional beliefs to emphasise, reinforce, and propagate the Khalistan ideology. Additionally, the songs influenced public discourse by framing the issues involved any incident according to their use. The present research argues that by combining culture and politics, socio–political movements created a broader political and historical context for comprehending the existing sense of discrimination and injustice within the Sikhs.

The Kavishri singers’ propaganda songs provide an instructive example in this case where tradition was employed to pursue the ends of the Sikh Separatist Movement. As an art form Kavishri created among the youth a separatist consciousness by highlighting the connection between Sikh cultural traditions and dissent. Indeed, it can be argued that the Movement used the legacy of the Sikh gurus and other warriors from Sikh history to inculcate a certain ideology in the youth and to inspire them to participate actively in the ongoing struggle. In the process, it becomes possible to understand how the younger generation is mobilised through propaganda songs and the making and remaking of popular folk music traditions within a larger socio–political and historical context. The

²⁹⁰Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.155–56.

²⁹¹Pettigrew, J. (1991). Songs of the Sikh Resistance Movement. *Asian Music*, 23(1), P.97.

principle theme in these songs in the 1980s was the bravery of those who fought against the oppression of the Indian State to establish justice.²⁹²

While not all kavishri singers supported the Khalistan Movement, some actively did, as is established by an analysis of the content of their songs. Nirmal Singh Chola, a professional kavishar known for his mesmerising performances, later arrested and killed by the Punjab police, was a popular figure among the youth of Punjab during the Movement. There were four people in the Nirmal Singh Chola group: three of them would sing and one would explain the message of their songs. In this respect, the group's performance was in conformity with the kavishri tradition.²⁹³

Nirmal Singh's most famous song, *jaago ayeaa* (light of awareness) is over nine-minutes long and plays on the popular cultural figure, Jaago that invokes awareness as well as causes discomfort to the village elite during wedding celebrations. Other kavishri songs invoked cultural heroes like Baba Deep Singh²⁹⁴ and Bhai Mani Singh²⁹⁵ and recounted their bravery in the battlefield. Some songs narrate the assassinations of people, including that of the owner of a newspaper, which is in contrast to the *army officials and politicians* mentioned in the below-quoted lines:

Song Name: Jaago Aayaa:²⁹⁶ in the context of the Movement

Singha Jaag baihun Jago ayi ae, Singha

Kideron Ayi ae?

Motercycle Vaalya'n Ne Piche Bithyi a,

Song Name: Jaggo Aayaa:²⁹⁷ justifying assassinations

Nark Dhari Gurbachna Jaago Ne Budka ta,

Guru Granth Dee Kare Beadabi Golyan Nal Uda Ta,

²⁹²Pettigrew, J. (1991). Songs of the Sikh Resistance Movement. *Asian Music*, 23(1), P.103.

²⁹³Ibid., P.99.

²⁹⁴Baba Deep Singh (1682–1757) was a renowned religious image among the Sikh community and equally a respectable and honored martyr in Sikhism. He in the memories of the Sikhs became memorable for his sacrifice and devotion to the teachings of the Sikh Guru. Baba Deep Singh was also remembered as the first head of Misl Shaheedan Tarna Dal.

²⁹⁵Bhai Mani Singh was a childhood companion of Guru Gobind Singh and took the vows of Sikhism. Soon after the inauguration of the Khalsa Panth in March 1699 by Guru Gobind Singh, the Guru commanded him to take charge of Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar. He humbly abided the Guru's command and steered the course of Sikh destiny at a critical stage in Sikh history.

²⁹⁶Chohla, N. S. (2009, September 19). Jago Ayeaa. Youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bFskP2qSk4>

²⁹⁷Chohla, N. S. (2009, September 19). Jago Ayeaa. Youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bFskP2qSk4>

Vich Akhbara Sikha Nu Ninde Usnu Gaddi Chda Ta,
Harbans Lal Khanne Nu Jaago
Lal Ja Rang Chdaya,
Ulat Singha De Bachan Na
Kariye Usnu Sabak Sikha Ta
Kyi Vaar Eh Jaago Rani Vich Busa'n
De Chadh Je,
Gusse De Vich Ayi Kayian Da Kirtan
Sola Pad De,
Gurbachna DSP Pappi Najar
Jaago Dee Pai Gya
Aap Te Marna Si Saale Ne
Tabbar Nu Vee Lai Ke Beh Gya
Dhiyan Puttran Sanne Wife Dey Jaago Ne Kari Safayi Aa
Saer Saptaa Karde Jaago Vich Delhi Dey Aa Gyee,
Beant Singh Ate atwant Singh De Kann
Vich Ch Gall Samjha Gyi,
31 October Jis Din Indra Chadhyee Ae....

This song, extremely popular in its time, offered an alternative interpretation of the violent actions of the activists believed to be terminating the enemies of the Movement. The primary victims were Hindus affiliated with the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS) or other Hindu organisations. Then, policemen believed to have tortured the militants and/or their families were targeted. Finally, journalists critical of the Movement were systematically killed. The above-quoted lines—without explaining the context—justify these killings. It can be noticed that the references are mainly regarding politicians, journalists, and police officers. Besides, the song is underpinned by a warning that if anyone acted against the Sikh religion, they would face death at the hands of the Guru's Singh (follower of the Sikh Guru). The songs also inform that the young Sikh, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, was leading the Movement for the creation of a separate Sikh state. In the last line of the song, the singer explains that motorcycle-borne crusaders carried the Movement ahead by annihilating its opponents.

Some of the lines from these songs are extremely significant for understanding how the singer justified the killings of innocent people. The activists of the Movement, it is implied, killed them in a fit of aggression—their act is justified in the lyrics, as it was committed for the sake of the Movement. The death of innocent people was considered as an unavoidable, but necessary, sacrifices for the establishment of the Sikh State.

Songs Name: Shaheedi General Labh Singh & General Brahma

*Eh kar Gye jo kurbani Jodhe khalisatni Ankhi Soore
 Khoon Doal Gye Koam Vaste Kehani Te karni De Vich Poore
 Kehan Syane Rehan Audhare Bande Bin Neki Deyan Kaman
 Khalistan Lye Pya Shahidi Labh Singh Te Bhai Brahma
 Oh kar Gye jo kurbai Jo Ankhi Jodhey
 Oh Anankh Di Chhat Digan Ton Roki Dharmi Jodhya 'n Vangan
 Dhaaram khalistan lye Paye shahidi Labh Singh Te Bahi Brama²⁹⁸*

Another song, performed at a fundraising event in 1989 in the UK, glorifies the sacrifices of the activists killed in a violent clash with the police. Punjab police had killed two famous *khadaks* (militants), who were hailed as venerable religious figures who made the supreme sacrifice for their religion and their gurus.

*Eh Koam Da Dulara Punj Kurbani Da,
 Dhram Pujari Se, Ban Gya Putter
 Puttran De bani Da,
 Sach Nal Yari Se,
 Kar Ta Shaheed Koam De Gaddaran Ne*

In this stanza, the death of Surinder Singh Sodhi, the right-hand man of Bindranwale, is glorified to convey that martyrs are the real heroes of Sikhs.

Song Name: AK 47 Vale:²⁹⁹ glorifying gun culture

*AK 47 Vale Khalistan Bna Rahe Ne
 Kalgi Dhar Veer Dulare Jina De Satgur Pag Savare
 Tur Pye Karke Full Pure Tyari
 Galo Gulami La Rahe ne
 EK 47 Vale Khalistan Bna Rahe Ne³⁰⁰*

²⁹⁸Shiab, S.B. (2016, November 27). Operation Blue Star 1984. youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-X0tBW-kGBM>

²⁹⁹Jatha, J. (2016, April 15). AK47 Vale. youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Y6kTo8GoOs>

This stanza establishes the importance of AK47 for the Movement. Militants were hailed as fighters adorned with AK 47, battling it out against the mighty Hindu Central government. The ubiquitous presence of the themes of death and sacrifice aimed at giving the impression that the subjects of these songs were religious fanatics. This was done because the Sikhs view martyrdom as an act of transformation in society.³⁰¹ The songs spoke of the contemporary reality of the rural Sikhs and hailed the bravery and defiance of those who fought the oppression of the State to remove evil and restore social justice.

Song Name: Chalho Amritsar Chaliye:³⁰² appealing participation in the movement

*Oh Jisnu Pyara Guru Da Dwaar Hai
Chhaal Mar Ke Aajo Leeko 'n Par Hai
Ajj Khtare Ch Guru Darbar Aa
Aas Jitne De Rakho Bhave Har Chaliya
Chaloo Khalsa G Amritsar Chaliye
Sonni Bande De Piche C Apa Var Gye
Kache Gade De Piche Ce Sareer Sona Khar Gye
Kai Var C Chna Ton Phela Par Gye
Appa Naam Ithas Vich Bhar Chelya
Chalo Khalsa G Amritsar Chiley*

The above-quoted songs were used during the Movement's recruitment drives of 1978 and then after 1984. Analysis of the song *Chalho Amritsar Chaliye* (let's go to Amritsar) suggests that the movement of restoration of the Sikh identity had begun. It called upon young Sikhs to avenge the deaths of the Sikh fighters killed in Operation Blue Star. It also insinuated that the Darbar Sahib and the Sikh religion were in danger and that Sikhs must congregate at Amritsar to take part in the Movement.

Song Name: Chalho Amritsar Chalye:³⁰³ romanticizing the movement

*Vara 'n Bhai Gurdas Deyan Khendyan
Sdda Surmeyan Dilla Te Satta 'n Paindiyan*

³⁰⁰Singh, D., & Singh, H. (2009, July 02). AK 47 Wale Khalistan. youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTnH0Imbx2U>

³⁰¹ Pettigrew, J. (1991). Songs of the Sikh Resistance Movement. *Asian Music*, 23(1), P. 90.

³⁰²Jogi, B. J. (2013, August 7). Chalho Khalsa Ji Amritsar Challiye. youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6OduQmytWE>

³⁰³Jogi, B.J. (2013, August 7). Chalho Khalsa Ji Amritsar Challiye. youtube.com. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6OduQmytWE>

The above-mentioned stanza instigates the listeners to question their loyalty for the religion. It tries to make the listener aware of his responsibility but does not try to invoke collective action as defined by the concept of identity consciousness. In the 1980s, folk songs performed by the kavishri singers changed the relationship of the Sikhs with the Central government. Kavishri singers began releasing audio cassettes soliciting support for the Movement to save the Sikh religion. While majorities of these songs were propaganda songs, they also promoted solidarity and commitment of the Sikhs for their religion.

Conclusion

Punjab has been a problem state for India since Independence. The wounds of Partition had not yet healed when the social fabric of the state was stretched to its limits by a series of political agitations both in support of and against the formation of a Punjabi-speaking state. The Punjabi Suba Movement launched by the Akali Dal led to the language-based reorganisation of Punjab in 1 November 1966—this cataclysmic event also spawned the states of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. However, peace continued to be a distant dream for the state because of the Akali demands for the inclusion of Chandigarh and the neighbouring Punjabi-speaking areas of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh into Punjab. The repeated failure of the Akali leaders to secure political power in Punjab frustrated them no end, even instilling in them the insecurity of losing their Sikh voter base.

The policies and political antics of the Giani Zail Singh government further forced the SAD to reinvent their image and consolidate their support base among the Sikhs. A sobering electoral loss, the fear of having lost the confidence of their Sikh voters, and the shrewd tactics employed by the Zail Singh government to appropriate the *pious Sikh* image stirred the Akalis to recreate their image and consolidate their support among the Sikhs.

Meanwhile, the Sikh–Nirankaris clash took place on 13 April 1978 in Amritsar. This incident, which claimed the lives of 13 Sikhs, was to prove a turning point in the political history of modern Punjab. It created the ground for the entry of the most charismatic character of this story—Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He rose as a hero of the Sikh masses with his fiery diatribes against the state and Central governments for failing to provide justice to the Sikhs. His fundamentalist stance, as opposed to the moderate approach of the mainstream Sikh leadership, fired the imagination of the rural Sikh youth

who had, until then, been watching from the sidelines the never-ending political shenanigans of the Central government.

On the other hand, the political situation of Punjab now again compelled the Akali Dal to re-introduce ASR in Punjab. In the ASR, Sikh leaders and intellectuals had drawn the aims and objective of the Sikhs, so that they may serve the larger interests of the Sikh *panth*, Punjab, and also the country and thus live up to the expectations of the Sikhs. It emphasized on the *real federal structure* of the Constitution and not on separateness from the Indian union. The ASR was further unanimously approved and accepted by the general house of the SAD, attended by over 1,00,000 members and workers at the Ludhiana Session on 28–29 October 1978.

The SAD's religious–political strategy, thus, took a new turn and metamorphosed into a struggle for the Sikh identity. Following the respective failures of the SAD and Bhindranwale to mobilise the masses—the former's agitation against the digging of SYL canal and the latter's agitation for the securing the release from prison of two his followers, both failed—they joined hands and launched the Dharam Yudh Morcha for the implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution demands.

An alternative authority system directed by Bhindranwale from Golden Temple in Amritsar, increasingly replaced the administration in Punjab. So much so that, even the authority of the Centre was challenged and undermined. Meanwhile, radical faction in militant groups continued with their acts of violence—for them the demand for the implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution was non-negotiable. However, the Resolution was considered a secessionist document by the Indian court. The situation of Punjab from 1980 to 1983 becomes the battle ground between the central and Akali Dal and Bhindranwale. The violent incidents increased day by day. The ensuing violence, and the progressively worsening law and order situation in Punjab, culminated in Operation Blue Star. Thereafter, the Sikh extremists once again consolidated under the banner of the Panthak Committee and announced their demand for a Sikh state called Khalistan on 29 April, 1986. They also announced the launch of an armed struggle under the command of their self-appointed Khalistan Commando Force to achieve this goal.

The majority of the participants before Operation Blue Star in this Movement—most of them between 13 and 35 years of age—came from two Majha districts: Amritsar and Gurdaspur. But after the Operation Blue Star the Sikh separatist movement spread all

over the Punjab. Punjab became a battle ground between the Indian security forces, including the army, and Sikhs guerrillas' organizations. The separatists employed numerous art forms to propagate their ideology, certain forms of music and literature. However, the most potent art form for the indoctrination and mobilisation of the masses, especially the youth, turned out to be music—more specifically, the folk music-- Dhadi and kavishri. Songs performed by kavishri singers like Nirmal Singh altered the relationship of the Sikhs with the Central government. Kavishri singers even released audio cassettes soliciting support for the Movement to save the Sikh religion. These songs were propaganda material for the Movement. These songs also promoted solidarity among the Sikhs and commitment to the religion.

The Movement eventually failed because of its ideological weakness. Moreover, the guiding principles were not effectively shared by the leaders with the masses. Even the documents published by the Movement's leadership and their intellectual sympathisers, which aimed to disseminate the ideology of the Movement among the Sikhs, especially the Sikh youth, only served to exacerbate the sense of hurt and desire for revenge among the Sikh youth. Thus, there was a serious lack of a clear ideological direction. This is why the Movement degenerated into an orgy of violence, in which the militants completely lost sight of their purpose and directed their wrath upon the very Sikh masses that they professed to protect from Hindu repression.

CHAPTER-4

POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF YOUTH IN PUNJAB FROM 1978 TO 1993: A FIELD SURVEY

When the socio-political storm kicked-up by the Naxalite Movement subsided, Punjab heaved a sigh of relief—albeit temporarily. However, as the state got back to restoring social peace and economic prosperity, a much bigger turmoil began brewing under the surface. From 1978 to 1993, the Sikh Separatist Movement under the leadership of a young fundamentalist Sikh leader, Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, cost Punjab much in terms of peace and harmony, economic opportunities, and precious human lives. The ramifications of the Movement were far-reaching; its aftereffects can be felt to this day. As is the case with armed movements worldwide, this Movement also witnessed the active participation of impassioned youth, who took to the gun with a feverish fervor deliberately fuelled by the Movement leaders who used for this purpose a deadly cocktail of history, caste—and religion.

The rise of fundamentalism among the Sikh youth had various phases, and the same has been explored in this study. This chapter examines how the political consciousness of the youth of Punjab was shaped during this period. It also examines the process of their mobilisation as well as the recruitment process of various rebel groups. In order to answer the questions raised above, an assiduous field survey and detailed interviews of 60 ex-militants—who were between 11 and 35 years of age when they joined the Movement—were conducted.

Political Consciousness of Youth: Field Survey

The reorganisation of Punjab in 1966 on the basis of language gave birth to numerous other issues. When these issues remained unresolved despite numerous meetings with the Central government representatives, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution was adopted by the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) in 1973—it was later passed in 1978. Furthermore, the delay in the resolution of long-pending demands of the Sikhs created much strife between them and the State, culminating in an armed movement for the creation of a separate Sikh state called Khalistan.

Then, Operation Blue Star in June 1984 exacerbated the already tenuous Centre-Sikh relations, and the military assault on the Golden Temple triggered a worldwide reaction

by Sikhs. In order to understand the reasons for the rise of the Sikh Separatist Movement, it is essential to investigate the events and factors that led to the rise of political consciousness among its participants—especially the youth. For this purpose, a questionnaire was prepared to elicit reliable responses from the interviewees regarding the factors that shaped their political consciousness during that period.

The Sikh Separatist Movement, which had been brewing under the surface for long, finally exploded on to the surface after the Sikh–Nirankari clash on 13 April 1978 in Amritsar. In order to achieve its larger goal of Sikh separatism, the Movement adopted identity-based acts of violence as its strategy. Later, Operation Blue Star made it a pan-Punjab movement—even spreading it to other states.

The Movement was spread over two distinct phases: the first from 1978 to 1984; the second from 1984 to 1993. During the first phase, it was confined to a few pockets of resistance in Punjab, but in the second phase—the post-Blue Star phase—it picked up pace and grew much more violent, thanks to the meetings held by separatist leaders in Punjab’s villages.

In 1986, the panthik committee declared its demand for Khalistan—a separate Sikh state. Thereafter, the State came down on the separatists with a rare ruthlessness, thereby knocking the wind out of their sails. The Movement began losing its intensity as police actions became progressively brutal and public support for the separatists dwindled in the face of repeated instances of harassment by armed militants.

During this study, 60 ex-militants who had joined the Movement at different periods of its development were interviewed. As Table 1 shows, out of the total respondents, 11.7 per cent had joined in 1978; 1.7 per cent in 1979; 5 per cent in 1980; 1.7 per cent in 1981; 11.7 per cent in 1982; 3.3 per cent in 1983; 15 per cent in 1984; 5 per cent in 1985; 8.3 per cent in 1986; 20 per cent—a substantive increase over previous years—in 1987; and 13.3 per cent in 1988. Thereafter, the numbers began declining.

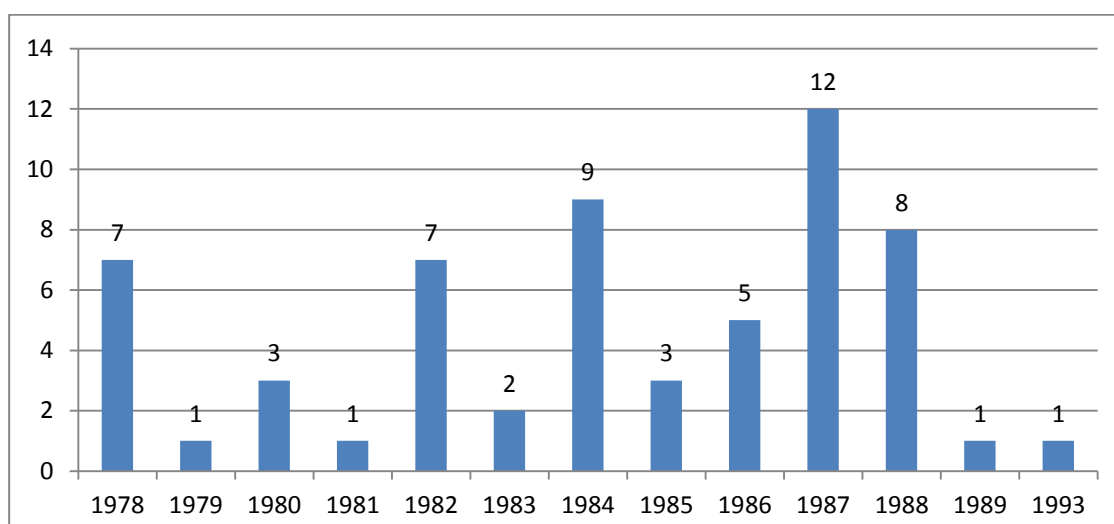
The interviews revealed that 1987–88 were the peak years of recruitment of militants. One of the respondents averred that around 40 per cent of all the militants joined during these two years.

Table 1. Khalistan Movement Participation Rate

Year	Number of respondents who joined	Percentage of total respondents
1978	7	11.7
1979	1	1.7
1980	3	5.0
1981	1	1.7
1982	7	11.7
1983	2	3.3
1984	9	15.0
1985	3	5.0
1986	5	8.3
1987	12	20.0
1988	8	13.3
1989	1	1.7
1993	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Bar Graph 1. Khalistan Movement Participation Rate



Source: Field Survey.

*X-axis: years the Movement was active in Punjab **Y-axis: number of young people who joined each year

*Data for 1990–92 is missing because none of the respondents that I met had joined during that period. That, however, does not mean that no one joined the Movement between 1990 and 1992.

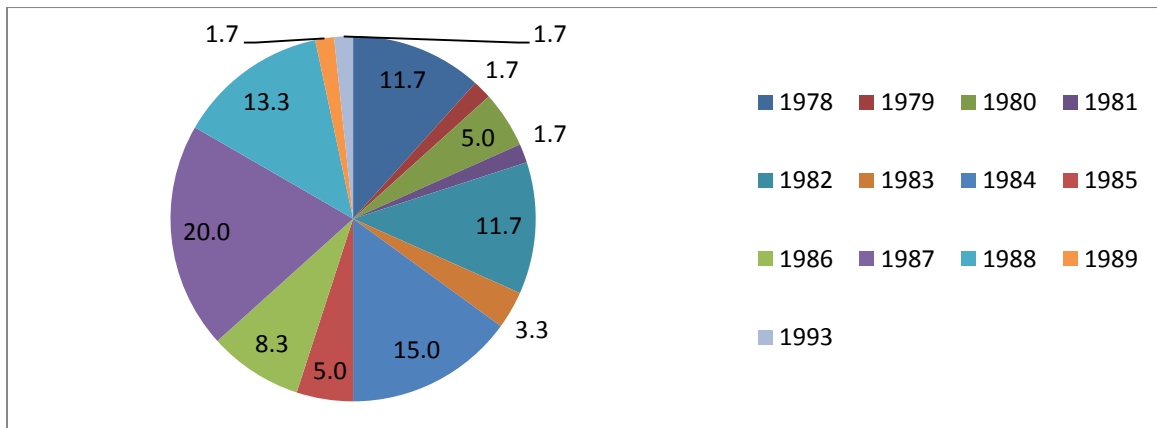


Figure 1. Khalistan Movement Participation Rate

Source: Field Survey.

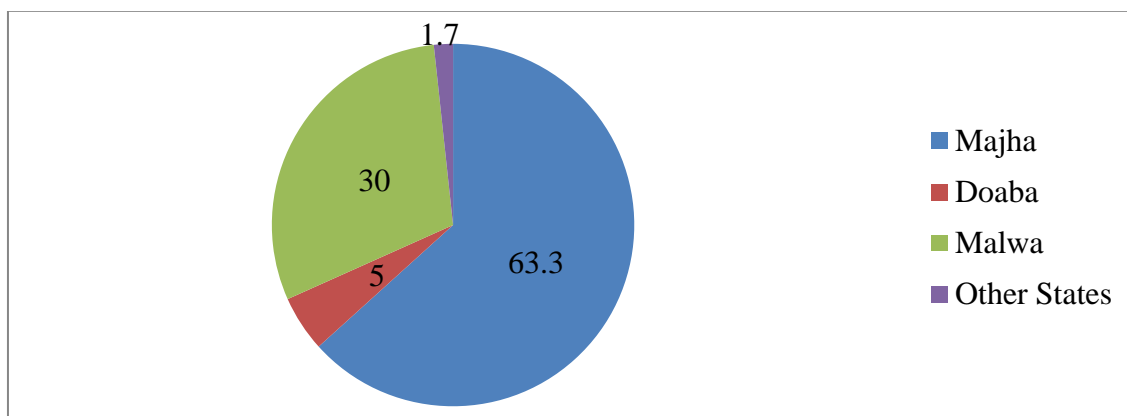
Table 2, which shows the region-wise distribution of respondents, reveals that most of the respondents—63.3 per cent—belonged to Majha, followed by 30 per cent from Malwa, and 5 per cent from Doaba region. Interestingly, 1.7 per cent of the respondents came from other states where Sikhs enjoyed a sizeable population, such as Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, and UP. According to a few respondents, post-Blue Star, participation from Malwa increased significantly.

Table 2. Region-wise Distribution of Respondents

Region	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Majha	38	63.3
Doaba	3	5.0
Malwa	18	30.0
Other States	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 2. Region wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Table 3 shows the district-wise distribution of participants. Among the districts of Majha, 28.3 per cent of the respondents came from Amritsar, 20 per cent came from Gurdaspur, and 13.3 per cent from Tarn Taran. Among the districts of Malwa, 10 per cent of the respondents hailed from Faridkot, 6.7 per cent from Bathinda and Ludhiana each, 3.3 per cent from Sangrur, and 1.7 per cent each from Mansa and Moga. Among the districts of Doaba, 1.7 per cent of the respondents joined the Movement each from Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, and Rupnagar, while 1.7 per cent were from Mohali. A total of 1.7 per cent were from districts of other states.

The available data reveals that maximum participation was from Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts of Majha. This could be because of two reasons: first, Amritsar is the spiritual and cultural centre of Sikhism, and therefore contributed copiously to this Movement. Second, according to the Government of India's White Paper on the Punjab Agitation, Pakistan supported the Sikh Separatist Movement, and Amritsar being a border district came under its influence.³⁰⁴

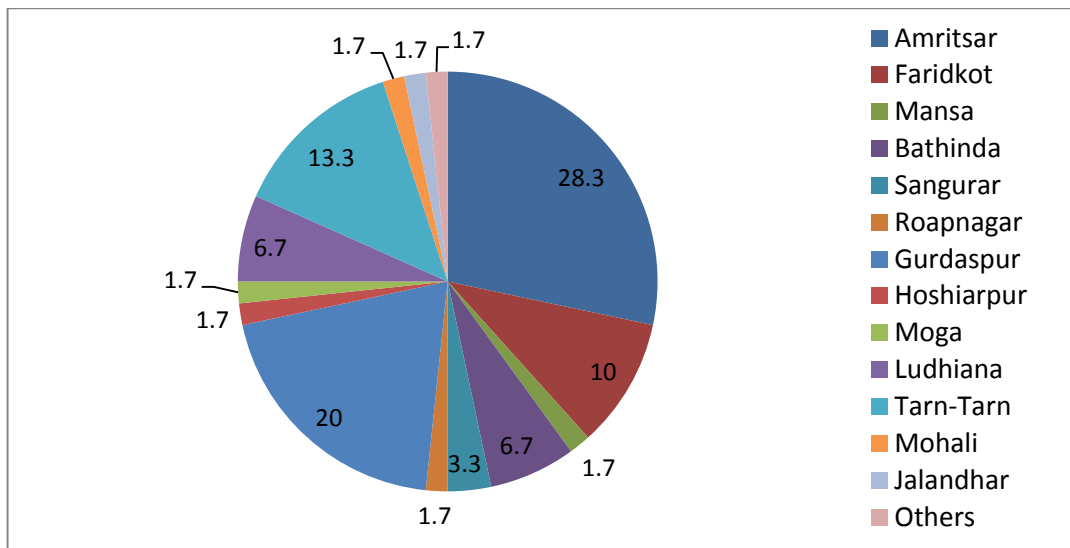
Table 3. District-wise Distribution of Respondents

Districts	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Amritsar	17	28.3
Faridkot	6	10.0
Mansa	1	1.7
Bathinda	4	6.7
Sangrur	2	3.3
Rupnagar	1	1.7
Gurdaspur	12	20.0
Hoshiarpur	1	1.7
Moga	1	1.7
Ludhiana	4	6.7
Tarn Taran	8	13.3
Mohali	1	1.7
Jalandhar	1	1.7
Others	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

³⁰⁴Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P.73.

Figure 3. District-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

As this study aims to identify the factors that shaped the political consciousness of youth during the Khalistan Movement, the age of the participants at the time of their joining the Movement formed the cornerstone of the study.

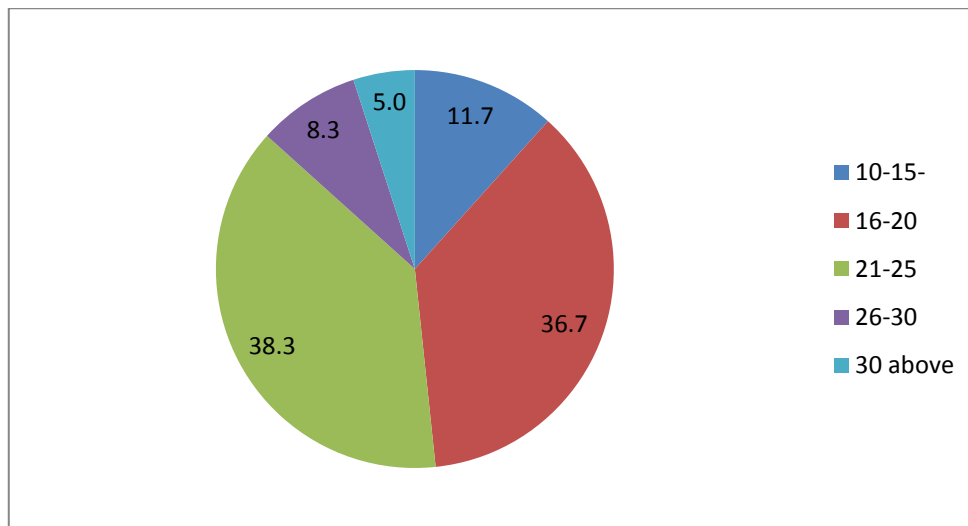
Table 4 depicts the age-wise distribution of respondents. The maximum proportion—38.3 per cent—of the respondents joined when they were in the 21–25 years age-group; the smallest proportion—5 per cent—belonged to the 30-years-and-above age-group. Additionally, 11.7 per cent, 36.7 per cent, and 8.3 per cent of the respondents belonged to the 10–15 years, 16–20 years, and 26–30 years age-groups, respectively (Also see Appenedicx No 3).

Table 4. Age-wise* Distribution of Respondents

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
10–15	7	11.7
16–20	22	36.7
21–25	23	38.3
26–30	5	8.3
30 and above	3	5.0
Total	60	100

*Source: Field Survey, *Age at the time of joining the Movement.*

Figure 4. Age-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

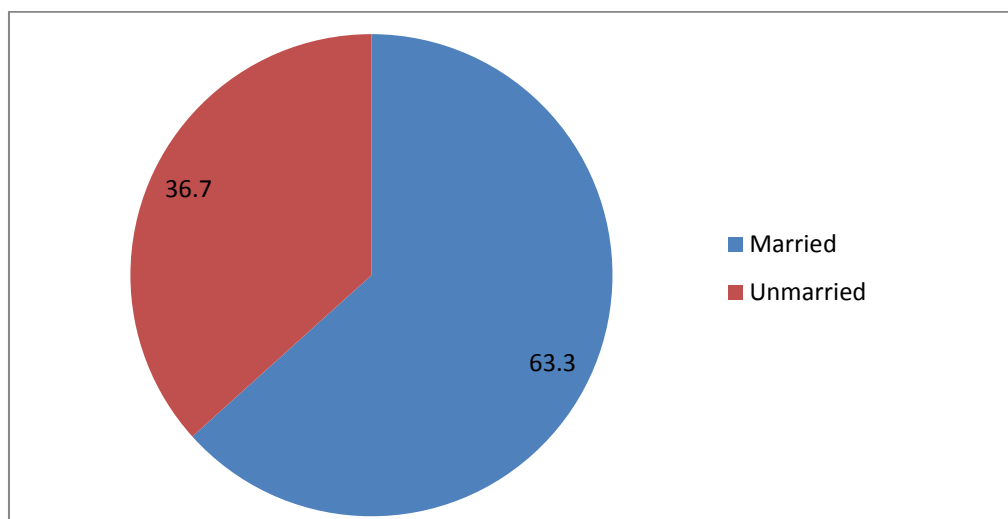
Table 5 shows that 63.3 per cent of the respondents were married and 36.7 per cent were unmarried when they joined the insurgency. None of the respondents were divorced.

Table 5. Marital Status of Respondents

Marital status	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Married	38	63.3
Unmarried	22	36.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 5. Marital Status of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Table 6 presents the educational profile of the respondents. A whopping 40 per cent were matriculates and 21.7 per cent were graduates. The rest were as follows: 13.3 per cent senior secondary education; 3.3 per cent primary education; 3.3 per cent below primary education; 6.7 per cent master's degree; and 1.7 per cent were illiterate.

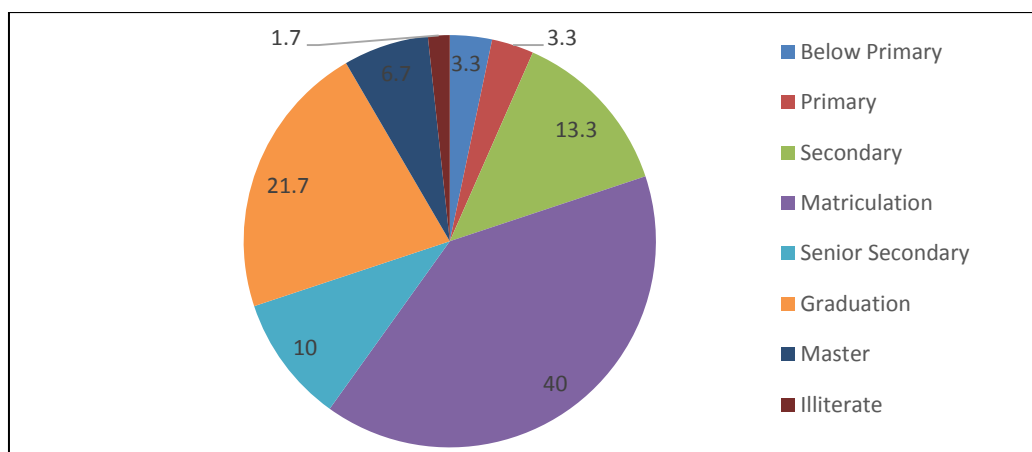
Thus, as is evident from the available data, a vast majority of the participants were at least matriculates or above. Furthermore, as revealed by various newspaper, journal, and magazine articles, Movement sympathisers and activists included doctorates, medical doctors, and engineers.

Table 6: Educational Qualification-wise Distribution of Respondents

Educational qualification	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Below Primary	2	3.3
Primary	2	3.3
Secondary	8	13.3
Matriculation	24	40.0
Senior Secondary	6	10.0
Graduation	13	21.7
Master	4	6.7
Illiterate	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 6: Educational Qualification-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

As shown in Table 7, 98.3 per cent of the respondent belonged to the General category; the remaining 1.7 per cent belonged to the Schedule Castes (SC).

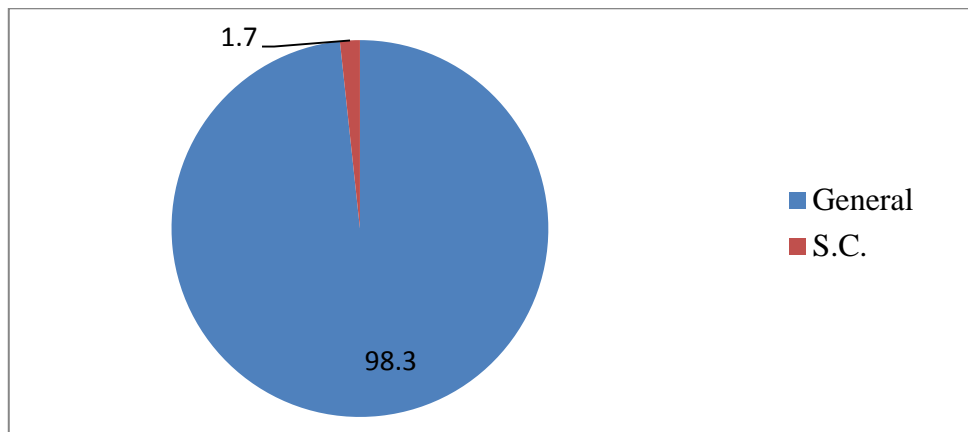
It is an often-observed peculiarity of Sikh organisations that they have poor representation of lower castes. One respondent narrated how he was threatened with a gun to his head when he suggested to his leader that they involve *dalits* (lower castes) to strengthen the Movement. The sole SC respondent averred facing caste-based discrimination even when he struggled hard for the Movement.

Table 7: Caste-wise Distribution of Respondents

Category	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
General	59	98.3
SC	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 7. Caste-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

As Table 8 depicts, 98.3 per cent of the respondents were male; only 1 respondent was female, which makes it 1.7 per cent of the total number of respondents.

It was an unwritten rule that only those women were to be recruited whose husbands were already part of the Movement. Some women did indirectly help the militants by carrying messages and transporting arms, but their most effective use was in the form of a cover for safe commute. With a woman riding pillion on his motorbike or walking beside him, a militant could often ride or walk past a police officer check-post unmolested.

It was gathered during the interviews that several women were either *virtually* married to, or emotionally attached to, leaders. For instance, Kulbir Kaur, aka Mallika (empress) was considered married to Joga Singh, a Khalistan Commando Force (KCF- Zafarwal)

lieutenant general. Similarly, Harpal Kaur died in 1993 in an encounter alongside her lover.³⁰⁵ The sole female respondent shared the following about her participation in the Movement:

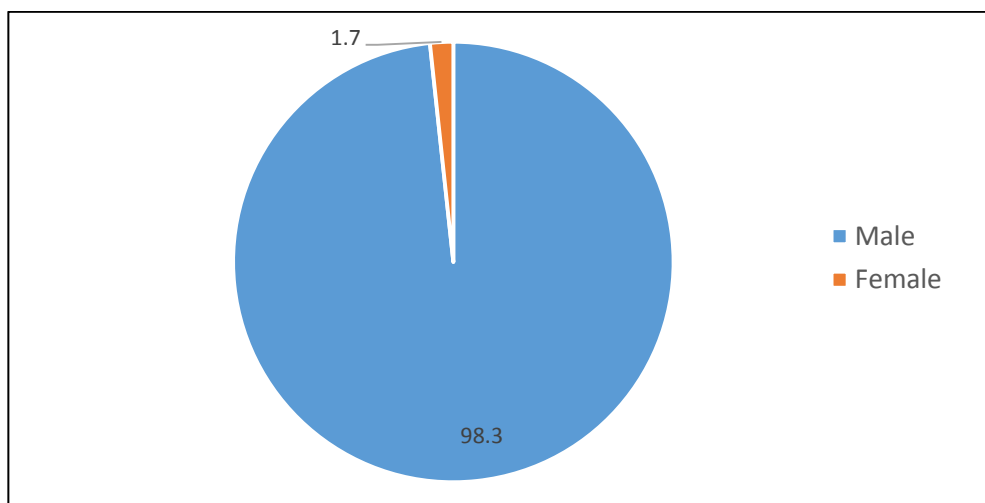
As a schoolgirl, I used to collect newspaper cuttings of photographs of fallen militants. Then, after my marriage to famous Babar Khalsa activist, who was a member of the Babbar Khalsa group, I joined the same group. My father used to be a member of a farmers' organisation, and my mother was arrested during the *Dhram Yudh Morcha*. I was 20 then; today I am 46. It was the 1984 military assault on the Golden Temple and the Delhi pogroms after Indira Gandhi's assassination that motivated me to join the Movement. I was active from 1989 to 1992. I am still fighting, but with the pen. (excerpt from interview conducted 15 March 2018).

Table 8. Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Male	59	98.3
Female	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 8. Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey

³⁰⁵Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications. P 109

The Sikh Separatist Movement, as the name suggests, was an armed struggle for the cause of the Sikh identity. Table 9, thus, reveals that 96.7 per cent of the respondents were Sikhs. Muslims and Hindus also participated, but they constituted a token 1.7 per cent each of all the respondents. Among the Sikhs, the Jat Sikhs constituted the majority, followed by the Mazhabi Sikhs and the Shimba Sikhs. However, participation of the Arora Sikhs, an upper caste community, was, surprisingly, quite low.

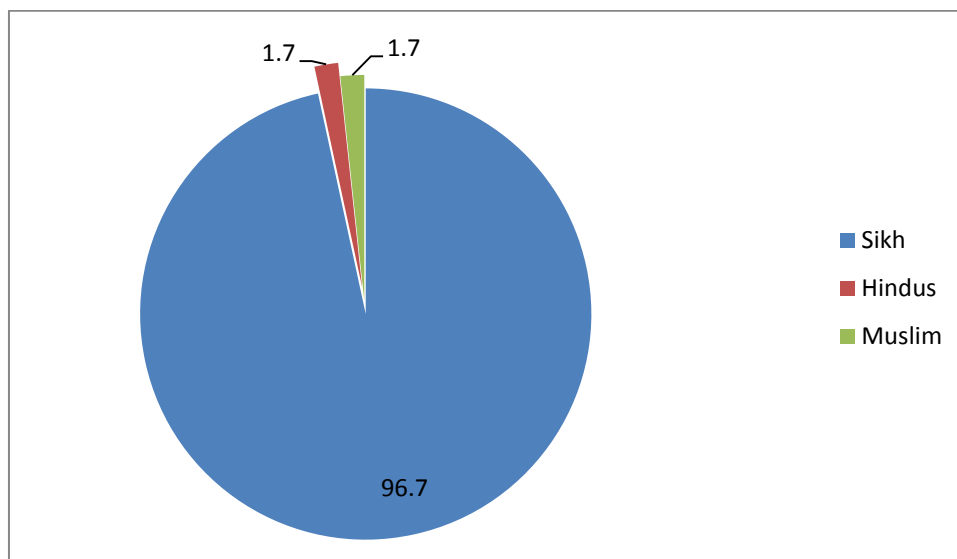
According to one of the interviewees, as many as 5 to 6 Muslim and 10 to 15 Hindu boys were part of the Movement. A Hindu respondent explained that he joined under the influence of his Sikh friend who was an active member of the insurgency.

Table 9. Religion-wise Distribution of Respondents

Religion	Numbers	Percentage
Sikhism	58	96.7
Hinduism	1	1.7
Islam	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 9. Religion-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey

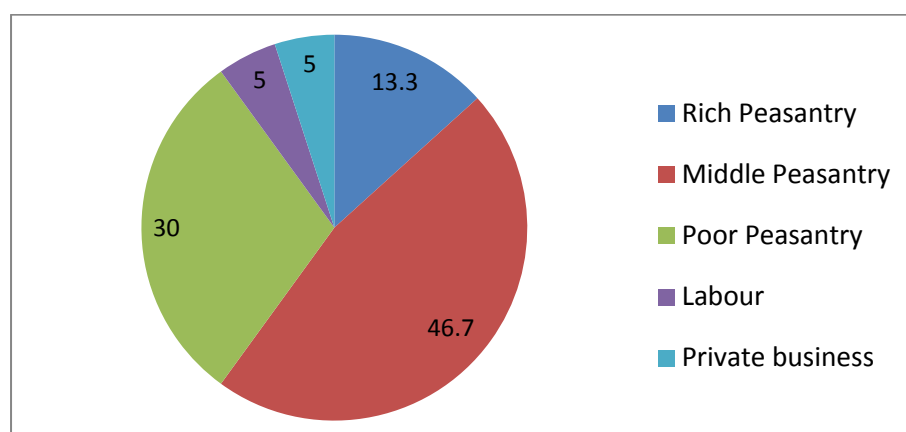
It can be seen in Table 10 that 13.3 per cent of the respondents belonged to the rich peasantry class while 46.7 per cent were from the middle peasantry class. Thirty per cent of the youth belonged to the poor peasantry class and 5 per cent were from the labour class. So, it would not be factually correct to say that only the economically deprived young people joined the Movement. For example, the war between the Taliban and the US also revealed that a large number of the militants came from the wealthy Arab families, and even Osama Bin Laden was the heir to a vast construction empire.³⁰⁶

Table 10. Economic Class-wise Distribution of Respondents

Economic class	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Rich Peasantry	8	13.3
Middle Peasantry	28	46.7
Poor Peasantry	18	30.0
Labour	3	5.0
Private Business	3	5.0
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 10. Economic Class-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey

Given that Punjab is an agrarian state, it is no surprise to note in Table 11 that the largest proportion of respondents—26.7 per cent—was engaged in agriculture at the time of their joining the Movement. A lot of the respondents were students: 23.3 per cent were in school and 21.7 percent were in college when they joined.

³⁰⁶Bergen, P.L. (2006). *The Osama Bin Laden I know: An Oral History of al Qaeda's leader*. Simon and Schuster, P. 65.

One of the most famous militants of that time, he was in school when the police arrested him along with his friend. Later both escaped from the prison and joined the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF). The involvement of schoolboys in the Movement began mostly after Operation Blue Star. Moreover, it was a time of exceptional police brutality, which instilled a fear of death in the youth. Thus, as a former director general of Punjab Police explained, the total absence of leniency from the police, even in minor cases, left no choice for the youth who found themselves on the wrong side of the law, then to join the Movement.

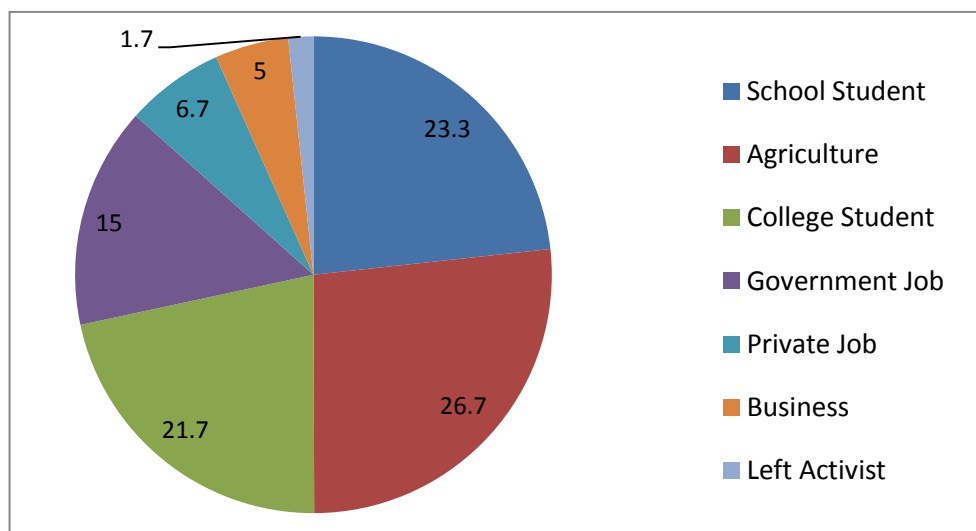
Fifteen per cent of the respondents were government employees, 6.7 per cent held a private job, 5 per cent ran a business of some kind, and 1.7 per cent were left activists at the time of joining the Movement.

Table 11. Occupation-wise Distribution of Respondents

Occupation at the time of joining	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
School Student	14	23.3
Agriculture	16	26.7
College Student	13	21.7
Government Job	9	15.0
Private Job	4	6.7
Business	3	5.0
Left Activist	1	1.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 11. Occupation-wise Distribution of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

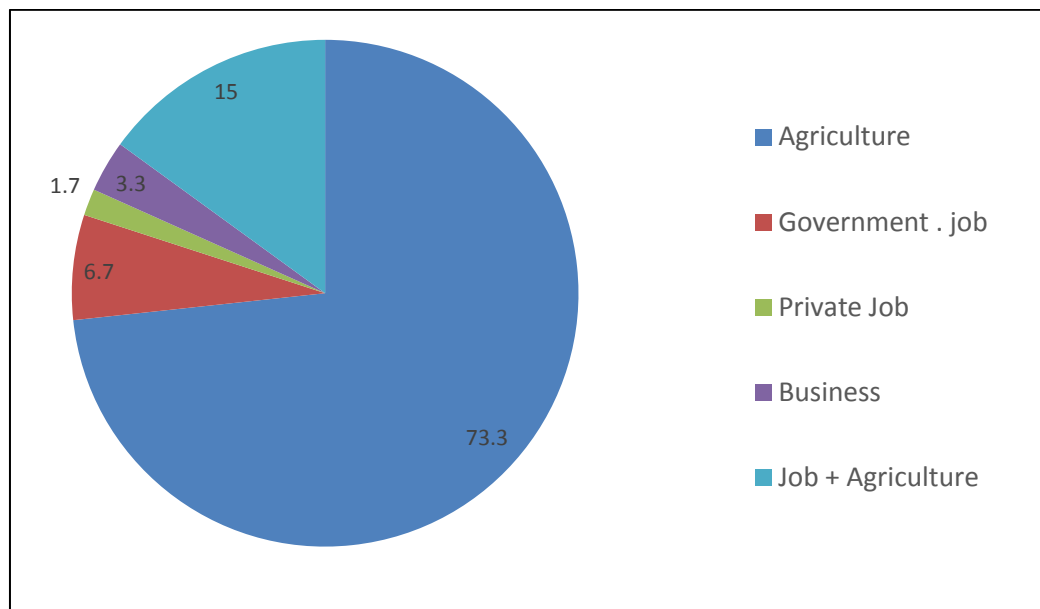
Table 12 reveals that for 73.3 per cent of the respondents, agriculture was the main source of family income; 15 per cent had both a job and agricultural income. Government jobs, private jobs, and private business were the sources of income of 6.7 per cent, 1.7 per cent, and 3.3 per cent of the respondents, respectively.

Table 12. Source of Family Income of Respondents

Sources of family income	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Agriculture	44	73.3
Government job	4	6.7
Private job	1	1.7
Business	2	3.3
Job + agriculture	9	15.0
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 12. Source of Family Income of Respondents



Source: Field Survey

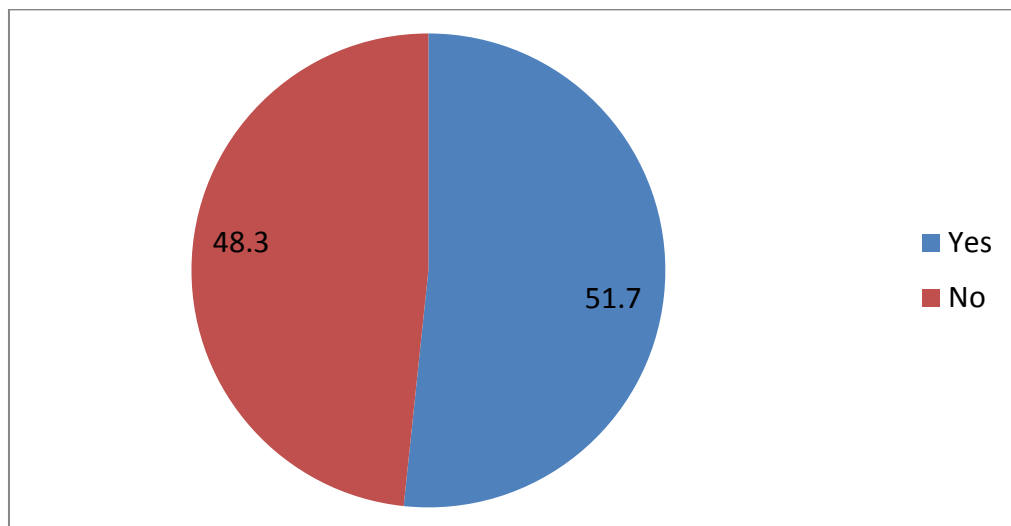
Table 13 reveals that 51.7 per cent of the respondents belonged to such families as were affiliated to the Khalistan ideology, while the families of 40.3 per cent of the respondents had no such background. Several respondents shared that their fathers and grandfathers participated and even died during the Punjabi Suba Movement.

Table 13. Political Background of Respondents

Family affiliated to Khalistan ideology	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Yes	31	51.7
No	29	48.3
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 13. Political Background of Respondents



Source: Field Survey.

Table 14 shows the various factors that motivated the respondents to join the Sikh Separatist Movement. For 23.3 per cent of the respondents, the personality and speeches of Bhindranwale inspired them on the path of the armed separatist struggle against the State. Here two points must be mentioned. First, after the Sikh–Nirankari clash, his public profile soared and he became an icon for Sikh youth. As the 14th chief of the Dam Dami Taksal, he already enjoyed a sizeable following of devout Sikhs, but after this incident his influence increased among the general young Sikh populace. Instead of merely delivering religious sermons, he began delivering diatribes against the State for its alleged bias against the Sikhs, thereby emerging as a radical Sikh leader and an organiser of mass movements. His anti-State image distinguished him from earlier or contemporary saints, and he established himself as a saint–soldier in the tradition of Guru Gobind Singh. Thus, his personality acquired the necessary magnetism for mobilising young Sikhs, who considered his discourses as gospel.

The Sikh–Nirankari clash of 13 April 1978 affected 11.7 per cent of the respondents to join the militant movement. It was one of the major incidents in post-Independence Sikh history that impacted Sikh sentiment at a mass level.

Political background of the family was the reason for 8.3 per cent of the respondents to become part of the armed struggle against the State. These respondents narrated that their families were actively involved in the Punjabi Suba Movement. One of the respondents explained,

I joined because of family relations with the Dam Dami Taksal. When Bhindranwale become its Head, our family began visiting him regularly. Besides, my elder brother was already a famous Khalistan Movement activist. Therefore, I was well-aware of the Movement and what was going on in Punjab. Additionally, we supported Bhindranwale's call to fight for Sikhs' rights against an unresponsive State (excerpt from interview dated 12 February 2018).

For 10.1 per cent of the respondents, the motivation came from a relative or friend involved with the Movement. One of the respondents explained,

One of my school friends personally knew Bhindranwale. He used to talk about him incessantly, and one day, upon my request, he took me with him to meet Bhindranwale. My conversation with Sant ji inspired me and I joined the Movement. (excerpt from interview dated 2 March 2018).

Police torture also played its part in pushing innocent youth to become dreaded militants as was confessed by 8.3 per cent of the respondents. The fear and humiliation felt by god-fearing, law-abiding Sikhs after brutal, dehumanising police beatings left them with little choice than the path of violence against the State.

One of the interviewees confessed that although he was familiar with some militants, he was not personally involved with the Movement. Still, the police arrested his entire family and stripped them naked. The incident deeply shook him and made him join the armed struggle. Similarly, Singh also discussed threadbare some incidents of police torture. He described how a Sikh girl was stripped naked and paraded around her village

by policemen.³⁰⁷ Another Sikh youth, with no evidence of his alleged complicity with the militants, was caught by the police, who tore his thigh and sprinkled salt on it.

One respondent shared that harassment by militants was also a reason for people to join the struggle.

According to 1.7 per cent of the respondents, art forms like literature, songs, newspapers etc. motivated them to take up arms for the cause of Sikh identity. Among these, Punjabi folk music forms of kavishri and dhadi played the most important role, and kavishri singers like Nirmal Singh became powerful instruments of indoctrination and mobilisation of the masses. These songs, with their usual themes of bravery of defiant Sikhs against the mighty State, inculcated a sense of commitment and purpose in the Sikh youth of Punjab.

However, the motivating factor for the largest proportion of respondents—30 per cent—was the deeply traumatic military assault on the Golden Temple in June 1984. As soon as the post-assault curfew was lifted, frenzied crowds of Sikhs rushed towards the Temple only to find their holiest shrine severely damaged by the use of heavy weaponry by the Indian army. Naturally, the event evoked intense emotion.

According to one of the respondents:

I used to be a member of the All India Sikh Student Federation and a hard-core militant. I joined because of Operation Blue Star. When the Indian army assaulted the Golden Temple, we were left with no option but to join the Movement to challenge the brutal repression of the State (excerpt from the interview dated 12 March 2018).

Another respondent shared how he broke down inconsolably when he and his wife went to the Darbar Sahib after its reopening. Bullet marks on the walls, damaged pillars, and debris strewn all around deeply traumatised him. Taking it as an attack on the Sikh faith, he joined the armed movement to exact revenge upon the State.

Five per cent of the respondents joined the Movement for the establishment of Khalistan. They were of the opinion that the SAD could not be trusted to fight for Sikhs' rights and the interests of Punjab. Therefore, the formation of a separate Sikh state was necessary.

³⁰⁷Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications. P.21

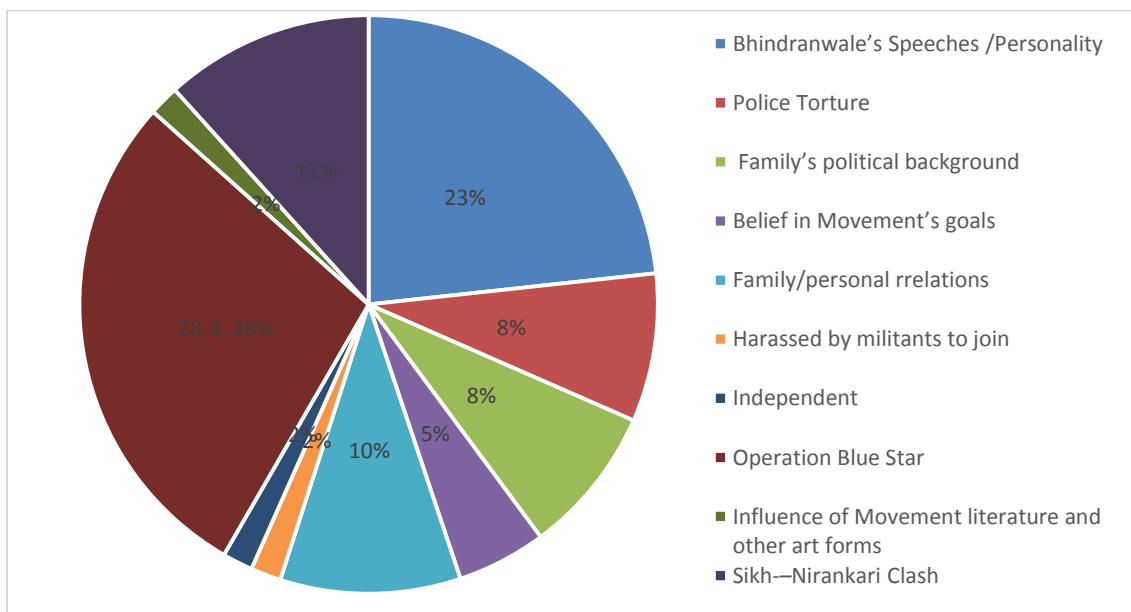
All the respondents agreed that the Movement, which was seen as primarily religion-driven, had economic and larger social objectives also. For them, it was a movement to create a just society.

Table 14. Motivation for Joining the Movement

Motivating factor	Number of respondents	Percentage of total respondents
Bhindranwale’s Speeches / Personality	14	23.3
Police Torture	5	8.3
Family’s Political Background	5	8.3
Belief in Movement’s Goals	3	5.0
Family/Personal Relations	6	10.1
Harassed by Militants to Join	1	1.7
Independent	1	1.7
Operation Blue Star	17	28.3
Influence of Movement Literature and Other Art Forms	1	1.7
Sikh–Nirankari Clash	7	11.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey.

Figure 14. Motivation for Joining the Movement



Source: Field Survey.

Conclusion

The crux of this chapter is that the Sikh Separatist Movement was not an ideologically coherent movement. Moreover, it bore several characteristics of the less well-off Jat Sikhs because they formed the core of the struggle. The most dominant and visible of these characteristics was the in-fighting among different factions for material (land, property) and non-material (honour, vendetta) issues.

Sikh radicalism during the 1980s was the direct result of the political rivalry between the SAD and the Congress. As the collected data reveals, the majority of the respondents joined the Movement between 1978 and 1993. This was the period when the Movement spread rapidly throughout Punjab; thereafter, its intensity began waning because of several factors, the most important of which was the ruthless repression by the State during the early 1990s.

The largest number of respondents hailed from Majha, especially from Amritsar, Gurdaspur, and Tarn Taran districts. These three districts are home to a large number of Sikh shrines, indicating a strong connection to Sikhism. This could, thus, be a reason for the high rate of participation from this area. Though Majha remained the hub of the Movement, after Operation Blue Star the struggle spread all over Punjab.

A large number of respondents were 16–25 years old at the time of joining the insurgency and most of them were married. Additionally, as revealed by the available data, most of the respondent belonged to the General category and were male females could participate in the Movement only if they were married to militants. Independent female participation in the Movement did not exist.

As it was a movement for the cause of the Sikh identity, it comes as no surprise that Sikhs formed the core of the recruits. However, what does come as a surprise is that some Hindus and even Muslims joined. Concerning the economic background of the respondents, most of them were associated with agriculture—hailing from the higher, middle, or lower peasantries.

It can be argued here that the participation of Sikh youth in the Movement was not entirely based on their economic background. Rather, a lot of young, passionate boys joined because they believed in the cause of the struggle and dreamt of establishing a just society based on fair play and reason. One can compare it with the Taliban–US conflict that saw Muslim youth—some from wealthy families—descend in droves from all over

the Arabian Peninsula to fight the holy war in Afghanistan. Similarly, the majority of the respondents were educated people and a large number were school or college students when they joined the insurgency.

Some of them had family connections with the Punjabi Suba Movement or other agitations held for the interest of Sikhs. Operation Blue Star was the most important reason for the mobilisation of the Sikh masses, followed by the fiery speeches and charismatic personality of Bhindrawale. A few respondents confessed joining the Movement because of the influence of a friend or relative who was already involved in militant activities. Brutal torture by the police or harassment by militants also forced some to join the armed struggle. Only a few joined the Sikh Separatist Movement for the establishment of Khalistan.

CHAPTER-5

STATE RESPONSE TO ARMED MOVEMENTS IN PUNJAB

FROM 1967 TO 1993

This chapter analyses the State's policy of resistance and confrontation against the violent Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements in Punjab during the 1967–1993 period. Was it the repressive, coercive tactics of Punjab Police and para-military forces or the gradual loss of public support that led to the decline of the two Movements? How did the State manage to contain these insurgencies within a short span of two to three years?

Modern-day civil revolts include the 19th- and 20th-century nationalist struggles in European colonies in the last two centuries; civil wars in Sub-Saharan Africa, South America, and Asia during the Cold War; and armed conflicts in the Balkans, the Middle East, and South Asia, as well as conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Left-wing insurgencies and identity-based conflicts, including those in India, can also be included in this category. These examples prove the futility of trying to locate a single reason for the emergence and growth of insurgencies. The reaction of the State to this phenomenon, that is, counter-insurgency, although usually varied, can be grouped under two broad strategies: security-centric (emphasising a military approach to suppress revolutionary movements) and population-centric (emphasising a developmental and political approach to undermine insurgency).³⁰⁸

According to Singh, “the roots of the Naxalite Movement lie in India's communist movement”.³⁰⁹ In several cases of insurgencies—domestic and foreign—it has been observed that an initial mishandling of a relatively simple situation by the State often exacerbates into a full-blown crisis. Then, to cover up its misadventures and incapacity, the State often responds with unmatched violence to reinforce its *legitimacy*. In Punjab as well, the State responded ruthlessly through its administrative machinery: its bureaucratic and military set-up, its law-enforcement agencies; the military special forces; and newly promulgated laws to cope with the situation.³¹⁰

³⁰⁸Mazumdar, A. (2013). Left-Wing Extremism and Counterinsurgency in India: The ‘Andhra model’. *Strategic Analysis*, 37(4), 446-462, P. 446.

³⁰⁹Singh, P. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P.87.

³¹⁰Dhillon, G.S. (1992). *India Commits Suicides*. Chandigarh: Singh & Singh, P. 77.

Inept handling of the Sikhs' class and identity assertions by the Central government kept their grievances festering and provided an opportunity to inimical foreign powers to fan these ethnic sparks into full-blown conflagrations. Insurgents receive from such hostile powers both overt support—that is, political and diplomatic support for their demands—and covert support—that is, weapons, money, and even mercenaries. Moreover, international human rights groups also keep an eye on a State's response to insurgencies, which impacts a country's international moral standing.³¹¹

This chapter, divided into two sections, narrates the State's counter-insurgency response, first to the Naxalite Movement—which had an all-India character—and then to the Punjab-centric Khalistan Movement.³¹² The first section discusses the State's response to the Naxalite Movement from 1967 to 1975. The second section deals with New Delhi's handling of the Sikh Separatist Movement from 1980 to 1993.

The first section analyses data and refers to illustrative cases collated by the researcher during an assiduous fieldwork for this study. Punjab is not new to left-wing extremism, with there being several instances of peasant uprisings during the pre- and post-Independence periods. However, the 1967 peasant revolt in Naxalbari village of West Bengal, led by a section of CPI (M) leaders, is generally considered the spark that lit the fire of left-wing extremism in India. Punjab, already acquainted with Marxist ideas, was amongst the first states to catch this fire in the late 1960s. The state's urban as well as rural literate youth identified with the Maoist idea that the peasantry was the real revolutionary class of a society. Moreover, the Maoist emphasis on taking up arms dovetailed with the Sikh historical tradition of armed revolt in pursuit of one's rights and upholding of dignity.³¹³

State's Response to the Naxalite Movement

The inherently militant Punjabis have confronted the State on several occasions in pre- and post-Independence India: the Ghadar Movement, the PEPSU Muzara Movement, formation of the Red Communist Party, or the Babbar Akali Movement all substantiate

³¹¹Tatla, D.S. (1993). The Punjab Crisis and Sikh Mobilization in Britain. *Religion and Ethnicity: Minorities and Social Change in the Metropolis, Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos Publishing House*. P. 99

³¹²Singh, P. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P.87.

³¹³Singh, P., & Purewal, N.K. (2013). The Resurgence of Bhindranwale's image in Contemporary Punjab. *Contemporary South Asia*, 21(2), 133-147, P. 137.

this point. Consequently, the State has always taken a Punjab-based insurgency seriously, responding with a rare brutality to suppress it.³¹⁴

Between 1967 and 1975, when the Naxalite followed the ideology of annihilation class enemies, the state government was first under the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), who were ousted from power in 1971. Then in 1972, the Congress came to power. Judge observes that the SAD government was more ruthless in dealing with the Naxalite for two reasons: first, the SAD was controlled by landlords, who were the class enemies marked for annihilation by the Naxalite. Most of the landlords killed were either SAD members or relatives of Akalis. Second, the SAD rule just happened to coincide with the high tide of the Naxalite Movement (1992:117).³¹⁵

The state government identified three categories of Naxalite based on their activities and their status in the Movement. The first category included top leaders like Bujha Singh, Gandharv Sen, and Harbhajan Singh. The second group consisted of schoolteachers—an important support base of the Movement. The third category included the sympathisers of the movement.³¹⁶

During that period, the common man held two beliefs: first, illegal activities flourished because of the complicity of a venal police force; and second, whenever the police was determined to deal with a situation, it employed extra-legal methods. This study came across numerous reports of *encounter deaths*—both fake and real—during the Naxalite Movement from 1969 to 1975. A similar pattern was observed in the case of the Khalistan Movement. In most cases, the suspects were first apprehended and then killed.³¹⁷ According to Judge, “in retrospect, it appeared that the Punjab government’s response to the Naxalite Movement varied according to the wishes of the political party that happened to be in power”.³¹⁸

Naxalite Actions and Police Response

The first action of the communist revolutionaries in Punjab was to publish a poster on 13 April 1968. The poster, which invited the masses to join the anti-State revolution, had the words *Usha Printing Press* written at the bottom—a clue that led the police to the

³¹⁴Singh, P. (2016). The Origins, Influence, Suppression, and Resilience of the Maoist/Naxalite movement in India: 1967-Present. *Socialist History*, 50, 85-104, P.91.

³¹⁵Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.117.

³¹⁶*Ibid.*, P. 119.

³¹⁷Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications. P. 124.

³¹⁸Judge, P. S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.49.

publishers, who swiftly named a certain Mangal Singh. He was arrested and tortured but named no one else, thereby entering the infamous record books as the first Naxalite victim of police torture in Punjab.³¹⁹

On 8 December 1968 the Naxalite executed their first action in the form of a public rally of 2000 people in the village of Bhikhi (now in Mansa district). Around 400 of these armed activists first forcibly occupied the land of wealthy landlords in the village of Samaon and then hoisted a red flag over the *shamlat* (common land) in Bhikhi village. Apart from Hakam Singh Samaon, the action involved Daya Singh, Babu Ram Bairagi, Jagjit Singh Sohal, Suhava Singh Azad, and Jarnail Singh Bahadurpur. Four days later, on 12 December 1968 the police cordoned-off Bhikhi village but by then the insurgents had already left the scene. Infuriated police arrested and tortured nearly 100 villagers. Hakim Singh Samoan's father was brutally tortured, and his crop destroyed. This was the first major response by the police since the Mangal Singh case. After the 8 December incident, the government of Punjab took serious cognisance of the activities of the Naxalite.³²⁰

Thereafter, the communist executed a series of actions, and the State, consequently, began to adopt new ways—both legal and illegal—to counter them. A large number of Naxalite were arrested, imprisoned, tortured, and murdered as the police was given a free hand to deal with them. In the process, 83 revolutionaries were killed by the police over the years. Offering rewards for the capture of activists, defaming them in public, torturing their family members, relatives, and sympathisers—the State spared no option.³²¹

A few left-leaning villages where the Naxalite enjoyed sympathy and sanctuary were hounded by the police. Among them were the villages of Dhadhur (Sangrur district), Manguwal (Jalandhar district), and Kala Sangh (Kapurthala district). Police launched several attacks on these villages, beat up the entire village population, and destroyed their crops and houses.³²²

Press releases of that period offer valuable details of the methods adopted by the government to deal with the insurgents. A Punjab government press statement mentions a *multi-pronged* campaign against the Naxalite. One of the measures undertaken was the creation of district-level special cells consisting of an officer, two head constables, and 12 constables. It was the responsibility of this cell to deal with the rebels in a given district.

³¹⁹Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Lokgeet Parkashan, P.20.

³²⁰Ibid., P.42–43

³²¹Frontier, (1975, January 11). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, 1(38), P.38.

³²²Ibid., P.6.

The government also appointed a deputy superintendent of police (DSP) each in Rupnagar, Hoshiarpur, Patiala, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, and Sangrur districts to supervise counter-insurgency operations. Additionally, anti-insurgent staff was trained in guerrilla warfare tactics and offered a special *dangerous duty allowance* and higher pensions as incentives. The state government also requested the Central government to delegate special powers to it to help deal with the problem. Furthermore, photographs of insurgents were circulated in police stations to facilitate their arrest. The government also undertook information warfare against the Naxalite by publishing their photographs to reveal to the public their *criminal activities*; funds were allocated to the police department in relevant districts for publicity and propaganda. Some officers even enrolled as students in colleges where the Naxalite wielded influence and tried to infiltrate the Movement to undermine it at its very source.³²³

The government also adopted the tactic of disseminating misinformation and concocting fake evidence against the Naxalite. For instance, the press was used to brand the insurgents as trigger-happy mass murderers and fake Naxalite literature was used to implicate the insurgents. Sometimes the police itself committed a crime or sent threat letters to landlords and blamed the acts on the rebels. Monetary rewards ranging from Rs 200 to Rs 5,000 were offered for information leading to capture or death of insurgents— at one point of time in 1971, this reward was as high as Rs 10,000. Even family, friends, relatives, and sympathisers of insurgents were intimidated or tortured to share information.³²⁴

Thus, to counter the activities of the Naxalite, the police itself frequently violated the law. According to the established legal procedure of the land, an arrested individual must be presented before a court of law within 24 hours of the arrest. However, arrests of Naxalite were not made public for days, even weeks. They were kept in police custody for interrogation, where several of them died either because of police torture or summary executions passed off as *encounters*.³²⁵ The police interrogation centre at Amritsar was especially used for torturing the insurgents and where crude methods were adopted for

³²³ Liberation, (1971, May). Swift Advance of Armed Peasant Struggle in Punjab. *Liberation*, 4(4),P.54-55.

³²⁴ Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan,P.120.

³²⁵ Ibid., P:121.

extracting information, but without leaving visible marks on the body. Moreover, special precautions were taken to avoid torture deaths.³²⁶

Torture techniques included physical and psychological assaults to extract information. While physical beatings and death threats were common, the police also employed special methods like *gidderh kutt* (beating brutally until the victim became unconscious), *kursi* (stretching to the maximum a victim's legs), *kilometer* (placing a log of wood across a victim's knee joint and folding the legs until the joints dislocated), *ghotna* (rolling a heavy log over a victim's legs with police constables sitting on either sides of the log), and *kachi fansi* (almost hanging a victim to death with their hands tied behind their back).³²⁷

An especially depraved method was to release rats inside a victim's trousers. Sometimes even hammers and stones were used to break legs, arms, and joints and proper medical treatment was rarely, if ever, provided to torture victims.³²⁸ Here it is relevant to quote from Judge:

Another method of eliciting confession was to pour the urine into the mouth; in one case, spices were injected into the anus. Sometimes flashlights were kept focused on the eyes of a Naxalite for long periods. Pins were inserted into the nails. Some were thrown into the river and taken out after some time and then again thrown in and taken out; this was repeated several times. In Sangrur district, in some cases, the limbs of Naxalite were crushed in a sugarcane crusher. Another method was tying the victim behind jeeps and dragging them for miles. These tortures were so brutal that several organs of a large number of victims were permanently paralysed, or the wounds of tortured stayed with them for their whole life.³²⁹

According to a report published in Jaikara magazine in March 1982, about 20 people were tortured to death by the police. The following persons are believed to be the victims of police torture: Baba Bujha Singh and Ravinder Singh (Jalandhar); Raunaq Singh and Tarsem Bawa (Ludhiana); Bhola Singh, Darshan Singh, and Nachhattar Singh (Hoshiarpur); Ram Murti and Gurdial Singh (Rupnagar); Bachittar Singh, Mehar Singh,

³²⁶Ibid., P:121; Frontier, (1975, January 11). Naxalite Politics in Punjab. *Frontier*, 1(38), P.6.

³²⁷Judge, P.S. (1992). *Insurrection to Agitation the Naxalite Movement in Punjab*. Popular Prakashan, P.123.

³²⁸Ibid., P. 124; Liberation, (1971, May). Swift Advance of Armed Peasant Struggle in Punjab. *Liberation*, 4(4), P. 54-55.

³²⁹ Ibid., P.124.

Pawan Kumar, Mohinder Singh, and Balbir Singh (Sangrur); and Gurcharan Singh (Faridkot).³³⁰

The Tarkunde Committee was set up in October 1977 to investigate the truth behind the so-declared encounter deaths of the Naxalite. The Committee was headed by V.M. Tarkunde (general secretary, Citizens for Democracy and executive president, People's Union). Other members included: Kuldeep Nayyar (editor, The Indian Express), Dara Singh (senior advocate, Punjab & Haryana High Court), Roshan Lal Batta (advocate, Punjab & Haryana High Court), Arun Shorey (senior fellow, ICSSR), and Ashok Panda (advocate, Supreme Court of India).³³¹ The Committee report reveals a heartbreaking picture of the tactics employed by the police.³³²

The Committee investigated eight encounters and reported that each of the victims was killed by the police in fake encounters. The report also stated that in at least two cases the victims were tortured to death as no bullet wounds were found on their corpses. The deaths of the following were investigated: Baba Bujha Singh (80),³³³ Amarjit Singh (19), Rajinder Singh (20), Raunak Singh (50), Tarsem Bawa (26), Kartar Chand (45), Gurdial Singh (27), and Tarsem Lal (22).³³⁴

Table 1 contains the list of 83 Naxalite killed in police action.

Table 1. List of Naxalite Killed in Police Action

S.No.	Name (Age)	Village	District	Date/Details of Encounter
1	Balwant Singh (30)	Khera	Barnala	25-03-1970
2	Ujagar Singh (22)	Badwali	Rupnagar	25-03-1970
3	Darbara Singh (32)	Rashidpur	Rupnagar	25-03-1970
4	Daya Singh (35)	Kharar	Rupnagar	27-03-1970
5	Baba Hari Singh Margind (75)	Ugrahan	Patiala	27-03-1970
6	Gulzar Singh (45)	Bhathal	Sangrur	12-05-1970
7	Baba Bujha Singh (80)	Chak Maidas	Jalandhar	28-07-1970
8	Daleep Singh (45)	Qila Hakim	Sangrur	28-07-1970
9	Babu Singh	Qila Hakim	Sangrur	28-07-1970
10	Niranjan Singh Akali (70)	Classes	Sangrur	28-07-1970

³³⁰Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P. 220–25.

³³¹Parwana, B. (2018). *Punjab De Naxalbari Lehar Da Ithas*. Lokgeet Parkashan, P.96.

³³²The Times of India, (1977, August 18). Police Killed 75 Naxalite in 'encounters. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.7; Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P.220–25.

³³³Times of India, (1972, August 6). Charu And the Naxalite Movement. *Times of India*, New Delhi.P.1

³³⁴Khaira, D. (2018). *History of Punjab Student Union*. Chintan Parkashan, P. 220-225.

11	Arjan Singh (28)	Dera Baba Nanak	Gurdaspur	16-08-1970
12	Tarlochan Singh (21)	Babak	Hoshiarpur	16-08-1970
13	Ravinder Singh (19)	Jagatpur	Jalandhar	11/12-09-1970
14	Veer Singh	Cheema	Sangrur	Arrested in Ludhiana in August 1970; still missing.
15	Prem Singh (38)	Majra	Rupnagar	24-03-1970
16	Sarwan Singh	Badwali	Rupnagar	24-03-1970
17	Munshi Ram (45)	Badwali	Rupnagar	24-03-1970
18	Ujagar Singh (45)	Dhungi	Hoshiarpur	August 1970
19	Iqbal Singh (25)	Maguwal	Jalandhar	01-01-1971
20	Raunak Singh (50)		Rupnagar	late February 1971
21	Tehil Singh (20)	Lehra	Hoshiarpur	19/20-02-1971
22	Ajit Ram (26)	Garhshankar	Hoshiarpur	19/20-02-1971
23	Hari Singh (38)	Bhatiwal Kalan	Sangrur	06-03-1971
24	Ram Singh (40)	Bhatiwal Kalan	Sangrur	06-03-1971
25	Bant Singh (22)	Rajyaana	Faridkot	25-02-1971
26	Bakhshish Singh (24)	Morkrima	Ludhiana	Arrested from Nawanshaher Railway Station on the evening of 20-03-1971.
27	Ram Murthy (25)	Soada	Rupnagar	April 1971
28	Ram Karan (18)	Gadapura	Patiala	8-4-971
29	Tarsem Bawa (30)	Doraha	Ludhiana	25-5-1971
30	Harmeet Singh (23)	Chittagong	Rupnagar	late April 1971
31	Pritam Das	Kakrala Kalan	Ludhiana	17-4-1971
32	Shiva Lal (22)	Wanganwali	Sangrur	March-April 1971
33	Jeet Singh (23)	Sikri	Hoshiarpur	23-5-1971
34	Kashmir Singh (22)	Bajaman	Amritsar	23-05-1971
35	Bachittar Singh	Boogars	Sangrur	1971
36	Ram Kishan	Manguwal	Jalandhar	May 1971
37	Daulat (19)	Mojowal	Hoshiarpur	1-5-1972
38	Harneek Singh	Dhlan	Sangrur	25-09-1971

39	Bhola Singh (24)	Gurusar	Fariadkot	June 1971
40	Darshan Singh (20)	Sukhuly	Bathinda	June 1971
41	Gurbanta Singh (23)	Raipur	Bathinda	14-7-1971
42	Teja Singh (30)	Babanpur	Hisar	14-7-1971
43	Sarwan Singh (24)	Boha	Bathinda	14-7-1971
44	Mehar Singh (22)	Mandvi	Sangrur	September 1971
45	Ranjit Singh (30)	Nangal Kalan	Bathinda	7-10-1971
46	Harnek Singh (40)	Sardulgarh	Bathinda	October 1971
47	Jaspal Singh (18)	Bald Kalan	Sangrur	28-8-1971
48	Joginder Singh (40)	Garhi	Ludhiana	October 1970
49	Bhaniga Singh	Nawapind	Bathinda	1971
50	Ajib Singh	Malkon	Bathinda	1971
51	Gurdial Singh (40)	Chlaki	Rupnagar	31-5-1972
52	Nirmal Singh (25)	Droli Khurd	Jalandhar	17-12-1971
53	Surjit Singh (20)	Bagrian	Patiala	25-12-1971
54	Pawan Kumar (28)	Bald Kalan	Sangrur	31-12-1971
55	Mahendra Singh	Ramgarh	Sangrur	31-12-1971
56	Nauhtar Singh (20)	Raipur	Bathinda	early 1972
57	Piara Singh (32)	Dadhahoor	Sangrur	January 1972
58	Beant Singh (21)	Mumma	Sangrur	January 1972
59	Sharif Muhammad (40)	Kanjhala	Kanhala Sangrur	January 1972
60	The father of the revolutionary Harbans Singh	Sanghera	Sangrur	early 1972
61	Avtar Singh (21)	Faridpur	Sangrur	1972
62	Gurdev Singh Dardi	Khiali	Sangrur	1972
63	Raj Kishore (20)	Mehalkalan	Sangrur	1972
64	Bala Singh	Bilaspur	Faridkot	1972
65	Onkar Singh (25)	Kloa	Hoshiarpur	1-3-1972
66	Lachhman Singh (21)	Raipur	Bathinda	June 1972
67	Zeela Singh (22)	Burj	Bathinda	June 1972
68	Jagir Singh	Machaki	Bathinda	June 1972
69	Baldev Krishna (27)	Gupale Kotla	Rupnagar	September 1972

70	Kartar Singh (45)	Kulewal	Hoshiarpur	10-6-1973
71	Gurdial Singh (30)	Sarahala Khurd	Hoshiarpur	10-6-1973
72	Swaran Singh (25)	Haripur Khada	Jalandhar	09-09-1973
73	Tarsem Lal (26)	Tutt Shera	Jalandhar	09-09-1973
74	Gurdeep Singh (33)	Gondpur	Jalandhar	September 1973
75	Teja Singh (27)	Kala Sanghya	Kapurthala	12-12-1973
76	Balveer Singh	Mithewal	Sangrur	1974
77	Joginder Singh (27)	The black samna	Kapurthala	22-5-1975
78	Harbans Singh (28)	Sandhya	Sangrur	12/13-08-1975
79	TarsemLal (27)	Souli	Hoshiarpur	2-2-1976
80	Bikramjit Singh (23)	Sadiqpur	Jalandhar	2-2-1976
81.	Gurdial Singh	Kala Sanghya	Kapurthala	2-2-1976
82.	Gurcharan Singh (30)	Manuke	Faridkot	07-03-77
83	Tahil Singh	Dadhahoor	Sangrur	9-2-1979

Source: Jaikara Magazine 1983 Jalandhar, Barjindra Printers editer name-Amarjeet Chandan

The Naxalite Movement activists in Punjab could not do much to counter the State's response. One of the major reasons for this was the gradual dismantling of mass organisations, which is the best weapon to counter State action, by the government. In the absence of mass support, the maximum that the Naxalite could seek was revenge or to somehow secure an acquittal in the court of law. The thirst for revenge led the Naxalite to kill several police officers and their informers, unleashing panic among the uniformed personnel and their spies. This also resulted in the acquittal of many insurgents by the courts because none dared to testify against them for fear of reprisals. Those who dared, faced almost certain violence, and sometimes even death. However, the police used to re-arrest the acquitted insurgents' days, or sometimes just a few hours, after their release to throw them behind bars once again on fabricated charges.³³⁵

The anti-Naxalite policy of the Punjab government cannot be divorced from that of the Central government. In fact, with the outbreak of the Movement in several parts of India, it was a headache mainly for New Delhi. The Central government, therefore, posted special officers to Naxalite-affected areas to coordinate with state governments.

³³⁵The Times of India, (1977, August 18). Police Killed 75 Naxalite in 'encounters. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.7.

Therefore, a state's counter-Naxalite policy used to change according to the policy of the Government of India. For example, by 1971 the insurrection was more or less completely crushed by the State, and the insurgents had begun to surrender with weapons. At this point, the Central government changed its anti-Naxalite policy, allowing the surrendering militants a chance to restart a normal life; the same policy was adopted in Punjab. Giani Zail Singh, then Chief Minister, stated in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha that the state government was prepared to release suspected Naxalite if they repented and gave assurance to eschew violence in the future.³³⁶

The Naxalite insurgency in Punjab was followed by the Sikh Separatist Movement, though there is almost no direct causal link between the two. The indirect link, however, could be the political vacuum created by the failure of the Naxalite Movement.³³⁷ The religious sentiments of the Sikhs, which had remained passive for decades, seemed to acquire a renewed sense of importance in the new socio-political context. Several Sikh revivalist groups emerged to preach the simple Sikh way of life over the depraved consumerist lifestyle that was penetrating the rural society of Punjab. It is in this context that the counterinsurgency and anti-terrorism measures adopted by the State need to be examined.³³⁸

State's Response to the Sikh Separatist Movement

This section focuses on the interaction and inter-relation between the State and the Sikh Separatist Movement, which the Government of India defined in 1984 as "the maturing of a secessionist and anti-national movement".³³⁹ It must be understood that the demographic and political profile of Punjab was a major factor that led to the failure of this socio-religious movement.

The Hindus—ideologically excluded from the Movement—constitute about 37 per cent of the population of Punjab. Additionally, about 20 per cent of the Sikhs are settled outside Punjab. Moreover, of those who lived in Punjab, not all Sikhs were part of this insurgency. Even SAD leaders—the most dominant political voices of the Sikhs—remained ambivalent towards it; some of its important leaders even openly condemned its

³³⁶Ibid., P.7.

³³⁷Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 138.

³³⁸Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J. S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding grassroots reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.124.

³³⁹Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P.3.

violent and secessionist characteristics. Similarly, Sikhs belonging to other political parties categorically denounced the demand for Khalistan as anti-national and demanded stern State action against the secessionists. Moreover, almost all the lower-caste Sikhs were opposed to it.³⁴⁰

The State frequently resorted to the use of Central security forces for counter-terrorism operations. Nevertheless, initial attempts to combat terrorism in Punjab were plagued with a host of difficulties. Pakistan is squarely blamed for fomenting civil and ethnic unrest in Punjab to aggravate Sikh extremism according to the Government of India White Paper on Punjab Agitation. As per this White Paper, there existed strong links between the SAD and the “virulent communalism bred by extremism and the secessionist and anti-national activities of a small group, largely supported by external elements”³⁴¹ that is, the Sikh diaspora of North America, the UK, and Europe as well as the Pakistan government. Amongst the chief objectives of the insurgents, as described in the White Paper, was to divide the people of the state along communal lines and, what’s more, to obliterate the common culture of Punjab.³⁴²

To analyse the response of the State towards such anti-national activities, it is important to become acquainted with the *Punjab Andolan Utte White Paper* (White Paper on the Punjab Movement) released by the Punjab government in July 1984.³⁴³ It delineates the state’s official understanding of the complications that culminated in Operation Blue Star and Operation Black Thunder and laid the foundation for future developments. This initiated such a period of violence and terror that endangered the social, political, and economic stability of not only Punjab but also the whole of India. It would not be possible to go into all the details here for the paucity of space. In essence, the arguments suggest that the Akali Dal had unlawfully launched this movement since their charter of demands (in all 45) was pending decision with the Central government. It was a camouflage for a separatist and anti-national movement at the instance of certain people and groups settled

³⁴⁰Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.113.

³⁴¹Text of the White Paper on the Punjab Agitation issued on 10 July 1984”, in *The Story of Punjab: Yesterday and Today* (Documents, Treaties and Exhaustive Bibliography, 1999), 335; also see Mahmood, “Sikh Rebellion and the Hindu Concept of Order”, P. 329.

³⁴²Government of India, 1984:36–37; N/A (1984, June 7). Army Complets Task at Golden Temple, 48 troops, 250 teorrist killed. *Indian Express*, New Delhi. P.1

³⁴³It contains 42 pages of text, followed by XI annexures going up to 123 pages. The booklet also has 28 black and white plates of Harmandar Sahib and Akal Takht. This document provides a rationalisation of the military operation at Harmandar Sahib and 42 other gurudwaras in Punjab. It focuses on the political and militant developments in the state from March 1981 to June 1984.

abroad. The Akalis have allowed the leadership of this movement to slip off their hands. They also had no intention to reach an agreement on the proposals made by the Central government “in a legitimate frame”.³⁴⁴

Meanwhile, the separatist groups had launched a systematic campaign to create bitterness and hatred between the Hindus and the Sikhs. Under the garb of religious camps, they imparted to their cadre’s weapon training and indoctrinated them with the separatist ideology. Special *hit lists* were created to take out certain policemen and opponents of the Khalistan Movement. The militants committed numerous bank robberies and looted scores of jewellery shops, thereby disturbing the peace and harmony of the state.³⁴⁵ A state of anarchy prevailed in Punjab, threatening the unity and territorial integrity of India.

Eventually, the separatists took refuge within the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar. Their activities from within the premises of the shrine posed a grave threat to the security of the country because they were being actively supported with weapons and money from Pakistan. The Government of India, convinced that this challenge could not be met by routine operations, called in the army to flush out the militants from the Golden Temple complex.³⁴⁶

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi addressed the nation on the night of 2 June 1984. Early next morning the army laid siege to the Golden Temple complex and the whole of Punjab was placed under curfew. Operation Blue Star lasted one week. In her address, the Prime Minister spoke about the demands made by the Akali Dal and declared: “...the government has accepted all those demands of the Akali Dal which are commonly known as “religious”.³⁴⁷

The White Paper lists the 45 demands of the SAD under four heads: religious (14 demands); political (eight demands); economic (21 demands), and social (two demands). “But it is very unfortunate”, said the Prime Minister “that whenever a settlement came to sight either they brought new demands or took immensely strong stand on the issues

³⁴⁴Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.108; The Times of India, (1981, July 6), P.9.

³⁴⁵Government of India (1984). *White Paper on the Punjab Agitation: A Summary*. New Delhi, Government of India, P. 24.

³⁴⁶*Ibid.*, P. 27.

³⁴⁷*Ibid.*, P. 43; Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh militancy confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.124; Sharma, L.K. (1984, September 3). Sikh convention threatens March Amry pull out by September 30 demanded. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P-1.

already settled. It seems those leaders who initiated this agitation have lost their desire and strength to keep control of its consequences".³⁴⁸ She continued:

Every three or four months a new morcha is inaugurated and Punjab gets into a milieu of agony and conflict. The worst thing is that some people hiding in the sacred places are openly challenging the unity and integrity of our motherland.

In the latter half of her speech, she notified:

But this must be understood that no government whatsoever would agree on any demand to settle the issues under the pressure of oppression and terrorism. Those indulging in such anti-social and anti-national activities must not remain in such an illusion.³⁴⁹

She also appealed to the people to remain calm and advised them to not shed blood but shed hatred. A few hours later, Operation Blue Star was launched.³⁵⁰ The Indian army was also used for anti-terrorist operations in Punjab, most infamously in June 1984 for Operation Blue Star. The navy and the air force were also pressed into service to assist the army. Similar operations were carried out at 42 other gurudwaras all over Punjab. The army also launched Operation Woodrose in the subsequent months to flush out terrorists from the rural areas along the Pakistan border.³⁵¹

The Central government had thus figured out that the SAD was not serious about the resolution of its demands; rather, it wanted to foment social anxiety in Punjab to undermine the state's Congress (I) government. This considered view of New Delhi formed the bedrock of its counter-terrorism policy. The Central government devised a strategy to combat terrorism at three levels simultaneously: administrative–legal, political, and ideological.³⁵²

The administrative–legal measures assumed utmost importance as it was primarily a law and order problem. Therefore, to begin with, it was considered appropriate to strengthen a relatively weak police force to fight the militants. The first step taken in this direction was

³⁴⁸ Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as political discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.109–10.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, P.137.

³⁵⁰ Tripathy, B.K. (1986, September 22). Wrong Place and Time for Army. New Delhi, *The Spokesman Weekly*, 35(34), P:6; Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.110.

³⁵¹ Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P. 407.

³⁵² Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P.159

to equip the bicycle riding and *lathi* (bamboo staff) wielding Punjab policemen with standard issue self-loading rifles (SLR), Enfield motorcycles, Maruti Gypsies, and wireless sets.³⁵³ However, the SLRs were no match for the AK-47—and later AK-74 and AK-94—used by the insurgents.³⁵⁴ The extremists undoubtedly enjoyed a much more effective and deadlier arsenal that included telescopic sights for rifles; light and heavy machine guns; night vision devices; and rocket launchers, besides grenades and bombs of various types. The police were forced to match this modern weaponry in due course of time. So much so that, during the last phase of counter-insurgency operations in Punjab, the Maruti Gypsies and the Toyota mini-trucks used by the police were converted into armored vehicles. Bullet-proof tractors were also used to track the rebels in village fields.³⁵⁵

The strength of Punjab Police was raised expeditiously, especially after the mid-1980s, to tackle the armed movement. From 24,549 in 1975 it was raised to 28,853 in 1980; 36,155 in 1985; 53,325 in 1990; and 70,228 by March 1994. The police was supplemented by several battalions of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Border Security Force (BSF), and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). While the strength of these battalions/companies varied depending upon the situation, they operated in the state from 1987 to 1992.³⁵⁶

These Central security forces were also needed because the primarily Sikh Punjab Police was alleged to harbour a soft corner for the Sikh separatists, if not in active connivance with them. As militancy picked up, VIP security duties were taken away from the police and assigned to Central forces like the CRPF. Later, even the CRPF was criticised for laxity and lapses, and replaced by the elite National Security Guards (NSG). The NSG's role was, however, limited to Z category VIP security duties both inside Punjab and outside.³⁵⁷

³⁵³Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.114.

³⁵⁴Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 133.

³⁵⁵Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409. P.401; Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.111.

³⁵⁶Samiuddin, A. (Ed.). (1985). *The Punjab Crisis: Challenge and Response*. Mittal Publication. P. 145; Pettigrew, J. (1995). *The Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerilla Violence*. Zed Books, P. 12.

³⁵⁷Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in context*, 352-409, P. 401.

Several legislations were also enacted to provide the police the freedom to operate, more or less, unchecked. One such measure was the National Security Act, which enabled law-enforcement agencies to detain any individual without trial for up to four years. Additionally, the Terrorist Affected Areas (Special Courts) Act of 1984 permitted in-camera trials of suspected terrorists. The infamous Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA) allowed the police to use confessions *extracted* during police interrogation as evidence.³⁵⁸ Further, if it was proven “that the accused had confessed the offense to any person other than a police officer” a designated court “shall presume the guilt of the accused” (Section 21). Death penalties could also be awarded to terrorist convicted of murder.³⁵⁹

As violence escalated after 1986, the police also raised vigilante groups. The Alam Sena was the first undercover group raised by the Superintendent of Police, Izhar Alam. Subsequently, police chiefs of many districts raised their respective senas. Two former DGPs of Punjab, Julio Ribeiro and K.P.S. Gill justified their inevitability. According to a human rights activist and a former member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly, the purpose of these groups was to (i) collect information, especially regarding the support base of militants; (ii) create confusion in the militant ranks; and (iii) turn Sikhs against the militants, which in turn would increase the flow of vital information to police and deny the militants sanctuaries.³⁶⁰

The army was called in again in 1992 for Operation Rakshak, which was meant to strike the final nail in the coffin of the insurgency. The army supervised the combing operations carried out by the CRPF and the Punjab Police. As per the *encirclement policy* of this Operation, a cluster of suspected villages used to be encircled covering a radius of 10–20 kms. The army used to form the outermost cordon to ensure that no militant escaped with the connivance of sympathetic police personnel. Police teams would then move in to capture the militants identified by the spotters—the vigilantes designated as *reformed militants* in police parlance.³⁶¹

³⁵⁸Puri, H. K., Judge, P. S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P. 134.

³⁵⁹Ibid., P. 134; N/A (1985, May 25). Terrorist Plot to Step up Violence: Security Tightened in Truble. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.1.

³⁶⁰Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.113.

³⁶¹ Ibid., P. 119; Bhardwaj, A. (1990, October 17). BSF Laxity Boots Terrorist. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P. 10.

The police also recruited a fairly large number of special police officers (SPO) especially from the insurgency affected areas to wean away the school educated unemployed youth from joining the ranks of the rebels. They also acted as informers for the police. These youth were imparted a short course in weapons handling—usually old 303 rifles—and paid a consolidated salary of Rs 1,500 per month. However, only those SPOs who proved useful in fighting the insurgency and received positive reports from superiors were absorbed in the regular police service.³⁶²

The liberal recruitment of these SPOs proved counter-productive also as sometimes active member of separatist organisations managed to infiltrate their ranks. Incidents abound of SPOs fleeing with weapons or attacking police patrols. Thus, the recruitment process was made further stringent and a comprehensive screening of the recruits was carried out. Julio Ribeiro, the then Director General of Police (DGP), specifically opposed this large-scale arming of unknown quantities as “[t]hey (SPOs) mistook the authority given to them as a signal to extort and loot, making the government even more unpopular”.³⁶³

A former DGP of the state, K.S. Dhillon, however clarified that provision of the law was never really used in court. It only served to provide a lot of power to the police, which resulted in the violation of the freedom of the common man. The official figure of suspects detained without trial up to 1993 in Punjab rose to 14,457. The 59th Amendment of the Constitution in 1989 practically revoked the fundamental right to life and liberty of suspects. The Armed Forces (Punjab and Chandigarh Special Powers) Act made the security forces practically immune to prosecution.³⁶⁴

In the early years of militancy in Punjab, in order to negate complicity between the Sikh policemen and Sikh separatists, and to boost the confidence of the police force, DGPs were brought in from other states: P.S. Bhinder, K.S.Dhillon, Julio Ribeiro, and K.P.S. Gill, in that order. It was the dynamism of such top cops that remarkably improved the functioning of the Punjab Police.³⁶⁵

³⁶²Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 112.

³⁶³*Ibid.*, P.112.

³⁶⁴Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.133-37.; N/A (1987, September1). Police De Suchi Parmukh Atwadi. *Punjabi Tribune*, Chandigarh, P.6.

³⁶⁵Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 113.

The policemen, naturally, dithered from taking on the militants because of the latter's superior firepower. Therefore, two types of incentives were given to them: one, quick promotions up to three ranks; two, cash rewards were declared on the heads of different categories of terrorists depending on their rank in their respective organisations and their dreadfulness. This amount varied from one lakh to 25 lakh rupees. The prize money was shared by all the members of team engaged in that operation. The families of fallen policemen were also suitably compensated in cash and kind—the latter included government jobs to eligible family members. The budget of the police force was increased exponentially. Besides, officers were bestowed with an unaccountable *secret fund*.³⁶⁶

To increase the effectiveness of police actions, numerous smaller manageable police districts were carved out from the larger ones and placed under the overall charge of an office of the rank of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP). Police networking and communication were improved through the use of walkie-talkies, computers, and other electronic equipment. Hotlines were established between vital centres and police control rooms. The category of vulnerable persons and property was expanded considerably, and sensitive areas received an enhanced security cover. Even trains and buses had security personnel on them.

Patrolling by police parties in towns and on highways was increased significantly. Following incidents of bomb blasts at public places, metal detectors and checkpoints were installed to negate such incidents. Security forces installed checkpoints, both permanent and makeshift, at all strategic points, routes, and on the regional and national highways to check the movement of insurgents. Frisking of individuals and searching of vehicles became a regular public affair. Such actions, thus, enhanced the visibility of security forces all over the state, which served as a psychological deterrent for troublemakers.³⁶⁷

Village safety was entrusted to self-defense committees of five volunteers from each village, who were imparted weapons training by the government.³⁶⁸ The government had managed and planned such preventive and safety measures to ensure that the law and order situation in the state did not get out of control. To dispel the fear in the minds of

³⁶⁶Ibid., P. 113; N/A (1987, November 15). Same Singh Kuhad Along with other Suspected killed by Punjab Police. *Aklai Pattrika*, Amritsar, P-1.

³⁶⁷Puri, H. K., Judge, P. S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.126.

³⁶⁸Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 114–15.

ordinary people who believed that terrorists ruled the night, K.P.S. Gill launched Operation Night Dominance in rural areas towards the last phase of militancy in Punjab. This also served to instill confidence among the policemen who were unwilling to confront the enemy.³⁶⁹

In order to enthuse the police force, apart from offering expeditious promotions and cash incentives, their overall working conditions were also improved. The construction of police colonies all over the state to ensure the safety of their families, the establishment of police schools for their wards, and financial security for the family of policemen killed in action were some of the attractions for serving in the police. Moreover, the image of the *petty policeman* of the pre-militancy era was replaced by the image of a macho man in a spotless uniform, carrying a sophisticated automatic weapon and riding an Enfield motorbike or driving a swanky Maruti Gypsy.³⁷⁰

Police and para-military forces also performed a major role in neutralising the *bandh* (general closure) calls given by various terrorist outfits whenever their leader was killed in police action. Police ensured that bandhs were not forcibly enforced. To enable the proper functioning of government offices, plying of state transport buses was ensured. The attendance of government officials was made compulsory not only on the day of a bandh but also during State-sponsored functions held on the Republic and Independence Days at the district headquarters all over the state; absentees were duly penalised. These measures were undertaken to render the terrorists' protest calls ineffective. Similarly, if a *bhog* (commemoration ceremony for the departed), the last rites, or a *shaheedi samaroh* (martyrdom function) was organised for a dead terrorist, police ensured that people did not reach the venue, which were potential recruiting centres for the separatist organisations. The government also decided to barricade the Indo-Pakistan border touching Punjab because numerous militant groups operated from across the border. A complete sealing of the border provided significant respite to the security forces by stopping the smuggling of both men and ammunition.³⁷¹

At the judicial level, the TADA ensured indefinite imprisonment of suspects. Confessions made to a police officer become admissible as evidence and the liability of proving

³⁶⁹Ibid., P.114.

³⁷⁰Puri, H.K., Judge, P.S., & Sekhon, J.S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding grassroots reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.126.

³⁷¹Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P.115.

innocence lay on the accused.³⁷² The National Security Act was also applied in the state under which an accused could be detained up to two years without charges being framed against them or without putting the case up for trial in a civil court. Besides, special courts were set up to hold quick trials for militants. In the last phase of the Movement, these courts were held within jail premises to avoid the possibility of attacks on police parties transporting accused to courts. Moreover, in-camera court proceedings ensured the safety of witnesses. A high-security jail was also established at Nabha for especially dreaded militants.³⁷³

Along with the administrative–legal and judicial measures, political measures were also undertaken by the government. It was New Delhi’s considered opinion that agitations launched by the SAD had been taken over by the separatists. Hence, it was deemed necessary to isolate the extremists from the SAD. Thus, the Central government held four types of meetings (see Table 2) with the Akali delegates under the leadership of Harchand Singh Longowal between 16 October 1981 and 15 February 1984.

Table 2. Types and Frequency of Meetings Held between Central Government and Akalli Dal

S. No.	Type of Meeting	Frequency
1	Meetings with the prime minister held at Delhi	3
2	Meetings with the members of the Central Cabinet held at Delhi and Chandigarh	3
3	Secret meetings held at Delhi and Chandigarh	9
4	Tripartite* meetings held at Delhi	10

*The third party included the representatives of all the major opposition parties in India.³⁷⁴

The Central government dismissed the Punjab government twice because it was unable to maintain peace, law, and order in the state: first, the ruling Congress (I) government led by Darbara Singh in October 1983 and then the Akali government led by Surjit Singh Barnala in September 1987. After the dismissal of these popular governments, President's

³⁷²N/A (1997/January 11). Five Sentenced to Life Under TADA. *The Times of India*, New Delhi, P.9.

³⁷³Ibid., P:115; Puri, H. K., Judge, P. S., & Sekhon, J. S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding grassroots reality*. Har-Anand Publications, P.117.

³⁷⁴Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P.116; Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in Context*, 352-409, P. 401.

Rule was imposed and a Governor was installed, who was assisted by an advisory committee to run the affairs of the government. This was expected to improve the political management of the state.³⁷⁵

Given that President's Rule could last only for six months, it had to be extended, and later prolonged after amending the concerned Act in Parliament. New Delhi also tried several governors from outside Punjab to bring peace to the state. Among them, Arjun Singh and Surendra Nath proved quite effective. The former negotiated the Rajiv Gandhi–Longowal Accord in July 1985 while the latter successfully organised elections to the Legislative Assembly in February 1992, which led to the formation of a Congress (I) government led by Beant Singh.³⁷⁶

The Central government also constituted several commissions of inquiry and tribunals to reflect upon the demands of the SAD, which included issues concerning Centre–state relations, allocation of water resources, and transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab. Similarly, a commission was constituted for the linguistic survey of Fazilka and Abohar tehsils of Punjab, which were to be handed over to Haryana to compensate its loss of Chandigarh.³⁷⁷

The SAD and several human rights organisations also demanded inquiry commissions for various riots in the state during the early 1980s, the massacre of Sikhs in Delhi and elsewhere, numerous instances of murder, rape, extortion, and kidnapping by police and other security forces, as well as those committed by the insurgents. The Central government set up several commissions like the Sarkaria Commission, the Ranganathan Commission, the Thakkar Commission, the Misra Commission etc., who drew up voluminous reports on issues assigned to them.³⁷⁸

The Punjab government also launched numerous socio–economic programmes to generate employment and self-employment opportunities for the youth of the border districts of Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Kapurthala, and Ferozepur. The formation of committees for peace and communal harmony was also encouraged by the administration. These were formed by all shades of political parties and groups, involving the local elite

³⁷⁵Ibid., P:116; Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in Context*, 352-409, P. 401.

³⁷⁶Ibid., P:116; Wallace, P. (1995). Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity. *Terrorism in Context*, 352-409, P. 401.

³⁷⁷Puri, H. K., Judge, P. S., & Sekhon, J. S. (1999). *Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality*. Har-Anand Publications, 115.

³⁷⁸Ibid, P.115.

and activists of the town or neighborhood. The National Integration Council was also lifted out of animated suspension and reactivated with enthusiasm. Congress (I) members like Sunil Dutt chalked out the *sadbhavna* (good will) rally from Mumbai to Amritsar. Chandrashekhar, who later became the prime minister of India, and a Jain monk, Sushil Muni too led long *padyatras* (marches) to the Akal Takht (Amritsar) to restore normalcy to the state through a political settlement.³⁷⁹

These measures were undertaken by the Central government to inculcate in the people values of peace and brotherhood, which formed the bedrock of Indian civilization. Television serials like *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*—and later Discovery of India and *Chanakya*—were created to strengthen the values of Indian culture.³⁸⁰ Modern values of nationalism and national integration were amalgamated with traditional values of patriotism, loyalty, and sacrifice for one's *desh* (nation). Television proved an effective medium to circulate these ideas through films, serials, plays, and songs. Several telefilms and serials based on the Punjab crisis were sponsored by the Government of India, which portrayed centuries-old communal solidarity between Hindus and Sikhs. The teachings of Sikh gurus promoting tolerance, love, and sacrifice, and related *shabads* (Sikh chants) from the Guru Granth Sahib were also continuously broadcast on the small and big screen, as well as in other media.³⁸¹

These measures intended to disseminate two ideas: first, that the Sikh religion did not subscribe to fundamentalism; and second, the violent insurgents were not bonafide Sikhs. Numerous documentaries—some subtle, some blatant—were produced on the above theme. The formation of the North Zone Cultural Centre with its headquarters at Patiala was instrumental in cultural rejuvenation. Youth were not only encouraged to engage in cultural activities but also to launch their cultural troupes to stage plays and other shows based on the folk traditions of Punjab.³⁸²

Punjab Police also perceived the importance of public media in disseminating messages to a wider population. For the first time in its history, a well-equipped exposure cell was created and attached to the Director General's office. It also closely coordinated with the

³⁷⁹Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 117.

³⁸⁰Ibid., P:117–18; Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books, P.120.

³⁸¹Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, P. 117.

³⁸² Ibid., P:118–19

Public Relations Department of the Punjab government. The achievements of the police and its people-oriented programmes were, thus, effectively publicised. All such measures helped create a positive image of the police and earned K.P.S. Gill the *super-cop* sobriquet.³⁸³

Towards the end of this protracted conflict with the extremists, the police top brass understood very well that the image of the force needed refurbishment in light of the many excesses committed by the men in uniform. The police, thus, projected its humane face, as friends of the people. The force regularly organised cultural programmes and sports meets, not only for its personnel, but for general the public too, in a bid to bridge the emotional gap between public and police. It also organised medical and social welfare camps in rural areas to win the hearts and minds of the villagers. Police assistance booths were also erected all over the state.³⁸⁴

The above discussion clearly reflects that the State was itself rife with contradictions at multiple levels, which slowly became unmanageable. The ruling Congress party in Punjab failed to divide its scarce resources justly among the competing communities, rather it indulged in manipulating them and pitting one against the other. The State took the Punjab crisis as a law and order problem and decided to resolve it by strengthening and modernising its administrative apparatus. Political measures, whenever adopted, were not to settle the crisis, but to engage the Akali leadership in a dialogue and maintain a facade of democracy.

Conclusion

These two Movements invoked the most draconian aspects of the Central government, which unleashed a reign of terror on the insurgents. The State came down heavily not only on the insurgents, but also on their families, relatives, friends, and even their villages. The Naxalite Movement lasted from 1967 to 1975, during which the police killed 83 insurgents in encounters—real and fake. Brutal, and often highly successful, counter-insurgency campaigns were launched by the State against the Naxalite, who were arrested, tortured, and even murdered—destruction of their crops was also a regular feature of these operations. When the Akali government came to power in Punjab, it adopted even more brutal measures to repress the Naxalite Movement, which was

³⁸³ Ibid., P:120; Nayyar, K., & Singh, K. (1984). *Tragedy of Punjab: Operation Blue Star and After*. New Delhi: Vision Books.P.120

³⁸⁴ Singh, B. (2002). *Violence as Political Discourse: Sikh Militancy Confronts Indian State*. Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P 119

directed against the landlords—who formed the core of the SAD. Police personnel were equipped with better weapons and trained in guerilla warfare tactics to take on the Naxalites. The brutality of the State is evident from the fact that a large number of Naxalite were permanently paralysed because of police beatings. Thus, the Naxalite Movement gave way in the face of insurmountable State repression.

The State's response to the much more violent Sikh Separatist Movement from 1978 to 1993 saw the involvement of Central security forces such as the CRPF, the BSF, the ITBP—and even the elite NSG. The army was called in to launch Operations Blue Star in June 1984 and Woodrose soon after. The military assault on the Golden Temple shook the conscience of the Sikhs, who rose in a surge of seemingly irrepressible rage against the Central government. They were opportunistically supported by Pakistan with weapons, training, as well as money. Thus, to combat terrorism and restore the rule of law in the state, Punjab Police was strengthened and modernised. Sophisticated weapons, better training, efficient vehicles, expeditious promotions, and cash incentives were provided to the foot soldiers. The strength of police personnel was raised and supplemented by companies of the CPRF, the BSF, and the ITBP. Punjab Police, under the dynamic DGP K.P.S. Gill launched operation Night Dominance to dispel fear from the minds of people and made effective use of media and social outreach programmes to win the hearts and minds of the villagers. Thus, the Khalistan Movement collapsed under the weight of a well-coordinated State response that included both, the harder aspects of police operations and softer aspects of public outreach programmes. The india state decided to test the constitutional arena in Punjab by holding state assembly elections in 1992 after a five-year period of direct central rule the longest period any Indian state has been kept under uninterrupted central rule. In the elections to Punjab State Assembly held February 1992 the Congress Party returned to power because of a boycott of the elections by all the militant and almost all the moderate Akalis Sikhs groups. During this time with 20 percent votes gave power to the congress in Punjab. After a brief period of drastic decline in militancy related violence, during the 1993.

CONCLUSION

Post-Independence India, at the threshold of a new era, was faced with two onerous tasks: building a nation and establishing a democratic polity. The newly formed nation adopted a Constitution as a necessary condition for the establishment of democracy. However, economic development and poverty remained its biggest challenges. India is a land of diversities: different religions, cultures, and languages exist and flourish in this land. Additionally, poverty, illiteracy, and widespread social inequalities were hindrances in the path of achieving a true democracy. It was, therefore, an immediate challenge to build the nation accommodative of such diversities and riddled with such social distress.

India's numerous princely states were integrated into the newly formed Union of India using the instrument of Accession. Thereafter, following the demands by different states for redrawing their boundaries on the basis of language, the Government of India appointed a State Reorganization Commission in 1953 to address this issue. Based on its report, the State Reorganization Act was passed in 1956 in the hope of attenuating separatist sentiments of states. Similarly, in the case of Punjab, a long-drawn political agitation by the Sikhs demanding a Punjabi Suba, that is, a Punjabi-speaking state led to the language-based reorganisation of the state in November 1966. However, social peace remained an elusive reality for Punjab.

Despite conciliatory efforts by New Delhi, peaceful as well as violent movements by various ethnic groups have continued, seeking either political autonomy or a separate state within or outside India. The present study, which seeks to examine violent struggles in Punjab, focuses on the participation of youth in the Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements. These ideologically different Movements were identical in their choice of instrument of protest: violence. The Naxalite Movement possessed a pan-India character; the Sikh Separatist Movement, although confined to Punjab, gained international recognition because of spectacular acts of violence—especially airplane hijackings—by Sikh militants.

The Naxalite Movement began from the Naxalbari village in West Bengal when radical sections within the CPI (M) gave a call for an armed struggle against landowners. From 3 March 1967 onwards, peasants began acquiring land forcibly, resulting in violent clashes with landlords. By May 1967, the rebels established their control in the Naxalbari, Kharibari, and Phansidewa areas in the district of Darjeeling. On May 23, 1967 the first

serious clash between the rebels and the State machinery occurred when a police party out to arrest rebel leaders exchanged fire with armed peasants in a village under the Naxalbari police station. Three policemen were injured, and a police inspector died, provoking a brutal police retaliation on 25 May, when they shot dead 10 villagers—including seven women and two children—in Naxalbari. Far from quelling the rebellion, these killings further catalysed the insurgency: land-grab incidents exploded; clashes became progressively violent.

The socio-economic condition of forced labour was the genesis of this uprising, and it was no surprise that the dalits, *adivasis* (indigenous tribes), and disadvantaged rural population—the *have nots* of the society—formed the sword-arm of this insurgency. The Naxalbari incident of 25 May 1967 marked the beginning of the Naxalite Movement in India. However, by that time, resistance by radical communists had already begun spreading across the country. Soon, West Bengal became the headquarters of this uber-violent uprising and Charu Mazumdar its main leader. The professed aim of this Movement, whose slogan was *land to tiller*, was to demonstrate to all Indians, as well as to the world, how a democratic revolution is organised and conducted.

As a revolutionary ideology and programme of action, it challenged the peaceful, Constitutional methods of socio-economic reconstruction. Originating as an extremist wing of the Indian Communist Movement, it claimed itself to be the Indian counterpart of Maoism and an authentic bearer of the Marxist–Leninist revolutionary traditions. In less than half-a-decade, the Movement made such a deep psychological impact on the consciousness of the Indian society that every anti-establishment violent manifestation became identified with the Naxalite Movement.

On 2 November 1967, left-wing extremists from across India gathered at Calcutta. They concluded that India's socio-economic conditions were ripe for a revolution and founded the All India Coordination Committee. In May 1968, the Committee was renamed the All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) and declared its ideological aims: to conduct a protracted people's war in accordance with Mao's teachings; adoption of guerrilla warfare tactics; establishment of rural revolutionary bases to eventually encircle cities; and abstaining from Parliamentary elections. Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal were to provide leadership to these voices of resistance who aimed to unite the revolutionaries countering CPI-reformism and CPI (M)-revisionism

and organise peasant uprisings across India. Inspired by the Naxalbari incident, armed struggles ensued in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.

On Lenin's centenary on 22 April 1969 the AICCCR founded the CPI Marxist–Leninist (ML) based on Mao's ideology. This act was welcomed and supported by China, which hoped for an Indian revolution on the lines of the Chinese revolution. However, the AICCCR was not without problems. Its leadership had its share of differences of opinion. Charu expelled D.V. Rao and T.N. Reddy from the AICCCR for expressing divergent political views on certain issues, who then formed the Andhra Pradesh Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (APCCCR). Similarly, in Punjab the Harbhajan Singh Sohi-group separated from the AICCCR citing differences of opinion. Such frequent fragmentations denied the CPI (ML) a long, stable stint, which jeopardized its future as a political party.

In north India, Punjab was the only state that resonated with the Naxalite ideology; its neighbouring states such as Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan were not influenced by the Movement. Even in the context of Punjab, Marxism was confined to the land-owning Jat Sikh peasantry and the industrial working-class had an insignificant role in shaping the nature of the Naxalite Movement. Global radical youth movements in the late-1960s also greatly stimulated the spread of Marxism among the educated Punjabi youth and the Naxalite Movement began in Punjab in the late-1960s. The theoretical and strategic importance of peasantry as a revolutionary class, as envisaged in the Maoist thought, appealed to the Punjabi educated youth. Further, the Movement's emphasis on *armed struggle* resonated with the Sikhs' martial tradition. The peasant uprising was crushed under the heavy, merciless feet of a rigid State by the mid-1970s, but its intellectual and political legacy left an indelible impact on Punjab's political culture.

The Green Revolution-fuelled phenomenal rise in the prosperity of Punjabis also resulted in widening the rich–poor divide, especially in rural Punjab. Even after enacting several laws to bridge this widening gap, the situation remained practically unchanged. Additionally, rising unemployment during the 1960s also served as a contributing factor for the spread of the Movement. Later, in 1969, the Naxalite began with the violent policy of annihilation of class enemies when the CPI (ML) adopted this policy as formulated by Charu Mazumdar. This identified with the tradition of violence in Punjab and contributed to the impressive recruitment for the Movement.

The implementation of the policy of annihilation of class enemies in Punjab exhibited certain unique features, which evolved owing to the acts of suppression undertaken by the State. In the beginning, big landlords were identified as class enemies and some of them were annihilated. However, as landlords became alert and took defensive measures, moneylenders were identified as class enemies and killed. Police agents responsible for the arrest of Naxalite cadres, and policemen infamous for their penchant for killing or torturing insurgents were also taken out. In a way, the Movement in Punjab followed a path largely determined by police suppression and the reactions of the rebels. The post-annihilations phase was characterised by mass struggles along militant lines. The uprising in Punjab, therefore, was both like and unlike the Naxalite uprising across India.

The Naxalite Movement was a mass nationwide insurrection, particularly forceful in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Orissa. However, in Punjab it began as a mass insurrection but soon became complex in nature. It was essentially a middle-class uprising under a rural middle-class leadership. Most of the cadres were college students belonging to middle-class peasant families. Thus, they had close links with urban centers also. These idealistic youth held romantic notions of a revolution and joined the uprising to go down in history as *heroes*. The propaganda-based mobilisation process was also confined to the middle-class. Furthermore, the introduction of the element of vengeance in the annihilation policy was another middle-class trait.

The leaders of this uprising had a clear understanding that emancipation of masses was impossible through Parliamentary democracy, even if it provided political and juridical freedom. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the left to mobilise and organise the surging peasant rebellion in the countryside. For this end, they established a direct connection between politics and literature and propagated the message of the impending revolution using art forms like drama, novels, poetry, and music, especially kavishri songs. These songs deeply influenced the impressionable minds of Punjabi youth and played an important role in shaping youth political consciousness towards the revolution. Sikh history was also invoked by the leaders of the Movement to motivate the youth in this fight for social justice, equity, and emancipation of the oppressed.

The analysis of the interviews of ex-Naxalite conducted during the course of this study revealed that the Movement spread rapidly in Punjab during the period 1967 to 1970 and declined thereafter in the face of ruthless State repression. It was essentially a youth movement because, as gathered from the interviews, the majority of the insurgents were

under 25 years of age at the time of joining the Movement. Malwa region of Punjab has been a historical hub of peasant movements such as the Kirti Kisan Party, the Muzhara Movement, and the Red Communist Party. Additionally, it had been a breeding ground for mass movements for the abolishment of the Zamindari system in agriculture. Thus, with its rich history of class struggle, it turned out to be the region most affected by the Naxalite Movement. Economic background of the cadres was also a dominant factor responsible for their mobilisation. Middle-class and lower middle-class peasantry and especially their college-educated sons, who believed in the idea of formation of a just society through armed revolution, formed the ranks of the Naxalite force.

This was the most common motivation to join the Movement. Among the respondents, a larger number of admitted having at least one friend who was already involved in the insurgency. For very few per cent of the respondents, it was the influence of somebody known to them, who had deeper involvement with the Movement, which brought them into its fold. Thus, as personal ties were a strong reason for respondents' motivation.

During the Movement, it was its radical socialist vision that captured the imagination of young university, and medical and engineering college students. While the uprising's primary support base remained school and college students and public-school teachers, it, interestingly, also gained influence among students at industrial training institutes. Additionally, it found sympathisers among doctors, engineers, and lawyers. Soon, droves of youth, influenced by the communist ideology, abandoned their educational institutions, homes, and jobs to join the Movement as full-time activists. It is important to note that a large number of CPI (ML)-influenced student activists also joined the Movement in Punjab. They left the party under the guidance of Darshan Baghi, President of the Punjab Student Union (PSU), who, along with other senior communist workers, encouraged students to quit the new revisionist party.

State's response came swiftly and unremittingly in the form of arrests, brutal torture, and murder of rebel leaders and cadres. Burning of crops of suspects was also a usual *modus operandi* of the police. Encounter deaths—fake as well as real—began to rise as the State came down mercilessly on the insurgents. The police force was imparted specialised training in guerilla warfare and allowed a *carte blanche*. The captured rebels experienced unspeakable agony within the confines of torture rooms; several dozens of them were paralysed for life and psychologically scarred beyond repair. Once the SAD—a party dominated by wealthy landlords—formed the government in Punjab, even more stringent

methods were adopted to pulverise the Naxalite, who were unable to counter the State repression.

The decline of the Naxalite Movement in the mid-1970s was succeeded by religious revivalist currents in the state. However, it would be incorrect to insinuate any link—direct or indirect—between the Naxalite and the Sikh Separatist Movements. While both were armed uprisings against the State, yet they were distinct with regards ideology and support base. However, they shared a similar end: a gradual decline followed by a definitive collapse in the wake of incessant and insurmountable State crackdown.

After the formation of the Punjabi Suba, SAD lost power in the state. In the 1972 Punjab Assembly Elections, the party was all but wiped from the political landscape of Punjab. Congress party—riding on the Titanic popularity of Indira Gandhi post the spectacular victory over Pakistan in the 1971 Bangladesh War, formed the government with Giani Zail Singh as the chief minister. This regime devised various methods to deprive SAD of its autonomy and its pecuniary resources, that is, the gurudwaras.

The Chief Minister's Office introduced a special scheme to create a secular image of government offices and agencies. Moreover, Zail Singh intended to dent SAD's image by positioning himself as the pre-eminent Sikh leader of Punjab. To knock the religious wind out of the Akali sails, he tried to create his image of a pious Sikh despite his commitment to secularism. To this end, *keertan darbar* was organised on an extensively large scale; public functions began with *ardaas*; the road from Anandpur Sahib to Patiala was renamed Guru Gobind Singh Marg and a string of horses, alleged descendants of Guru Gobind Singh's gelding, was led down this road—the villagers carrying home their droppings as Goodluck charm; a new township—Shaheed Ajit Singh Nagar—was named after one of the Guru's son's, and so on and so forth. This display of religiosity certainly made Zail Singh popular in his community.

A sobering electoral loss, the fear of having lost the confidence of their Sikh voters, and the shrewd tactics employed by the Zail Singh government to appropriate the *pious Sikh* image stirred the Akalis to recreate their image and consolidate their support among the Sikhs. The working committee of the party, therefore, met at Anandpur Sahib on 11 December 1972. It constituted a 12-member sub-committee to draft a policy programme document to fulfill the aspirations of the Punjabis in general, and the Sikhs in particular, and to specifically meet the aims and objectives of the Sikh *panth*. The sub-committee

held prolonged deliberations during the course of its 11 meetings and submitted a draft document of policy programme to the working committee of SAD at its meeting at Anandpur Sahib on 16–17 October 1973. Thus, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR) was adopted in 1973.

In the ASR, Sikh leaders and intellectuals had drawn the aims and objectives of Sikhs, so that they may serve the larger interests of Sikh *panth*, Punjab, and also the country and thus live up to the expectations of Sikhs. It emphasised the *real federal structure* of the Constitution and not separatism from the Indian union. The ASR was further unanimously approved and accepted by the general house of the SAD, attended by over 1,00,000 members and workers at the Ludhiana Session on 28–29 October 1978.

Meanwhile, tension was brewing under the skins of Sikhs and Nirankaris. The former considered the latter practitioners of a form of Sikhism that was not true to the teachings of their sacred gurus. Thus, a series of minor scuffles culminated into a bloody confrontation on 13 April 1978 in Amritsar. This incident, which claimed the lives of 13 Sikhs, proved a turning point in the history of modern Punjab.

It was this incident that saw the meteoric rise of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who, after becoming the head of the Sikh seminary Damdami Taksal on August 17, 1977 rose in stature to symbolise the Sikh Separatist Movement. He amassed a massive following of ardent supporters with his sermons against vulgar consumerism and casteism. Then, he took up cudgels against the *heterodox* sect of the Nirankaris—the 13 April 1978 clash is mentioned above. Finally, he launched a vicious anti-Hindu tirade, especially against a Hindu press baron, Jagat Narain, who had advocated the Nirankari campaign against Sikhs.

Simultaneous to Bhindranwale's rise, the Constitutionalist SAD launched a movement demanding a greater share of Punjab's waters, transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab as its capital, and increased administrative and financial powers for the states. The failure of the *moderate* Akalis in securing any tangible political success in this regard only added to the popularity of the *aggressive* Bhindranwale. SAD's religious–political strategy thus took a new turn and metamorphosed into a struggle for the Sikh identity. Then, as the political landscape of Punjab continued to shift, SAD and Bhinderwale collaborated to launch the *Dharam Yudh Morcha* for the implementation of the ASR demands.

Soon Jarnail Singh rose as a hero of the Sikh masses, with his fiery diatribes against the state and Central governments for failing to provide justice to Sikhs. His fundamentalist stance, as opposed to the moderate approach of mainstream Sikh leadership, fired the imagination of the rural Sikh youth who had, until then, been watching from the sidelines the never-ending political shenanigans of the Central government. He began advocating violence to achieve the goals of Sikhs, thus invoking the martial tradition of Sikhs. This adoption of violence naturally invited the State's wrath. Many of Bhindranwale's followers were beaten to death in police custody; numerous were neutralised in police encounters, more fake than real. As a reaction, Bhindranwale's followers and other Sikh extremist groups launched violent attacks on police, government officials, Nirankaris, and politicians.

Sensing the situation slipping out of control, New Delhi decided to employ the military option to subdue both the moderate and militant forms of Sikh rebellion in Punjab. It decided to take control of the Golden Temple at Amritsar and other key gurdwaras from Bhindranwale's armed supporters and Akali activists as well. When Bhindranwale took refuge with several hundred of his heavily armed followers within the precincts of the Golden Temple, running a parallel administration and challenging the authority of the Centre, New Delhi launched Operation Blue Star in June 1984 to flush them out. Bhindranwale and his men were no match for the firepower of the Indian army, which killed him and hundreds of his devoted followers. His defiance to the State and his death catapulted him to the rank of the Sikh martyrs of the 17th and 18th centuries, and his popularity outshone that of any living Sikh leader.

It has been observed across the world that violence—by the State or rebel groups—fails to yield long-term solutions. In fact, the process itself becomes a problem to be resolved. Thus, there were no simple solutions to Punjab's complex problems, as was hoped after the 1985 Rajiv Gandhi–Sant Longowal accord. Repeated failures by the Central government to deliver what was promised further enlarged the chasm of distrust and disaffection between the people of Punjab and New Delhi, thereby resulting in incidents of violence. Radical factions among the several militant groups, for whom the implementation of the ASR was non-negotiable, continued their acts of violence. However, the Resolution was considered a secessionist document by the Indian judicial courts. Thereafter, the Sikh extremists once again consolidated under the banner of the

Panthak Committee and announced their demand for a Sikh state called Khalistan on 29 April 1986.

The majority of the participants in the Sikh Separatist Movement—most of them were between 13 and 25 years of age—came from two Majha districts: Amritsar and Gurdaspur. Analysis of available data reveals that a large number of Sikh Separatist Movement activists were educated—most were matriculates, some even graduates. Additionally, available data reveals that the middle-class Jat peasantry formed the core of this Movement. Another important characteristic of the Sikh Separatist Movement was the participation of school and college students. Data of the 60 ex-militants' interviewees implies that the Movement was not ideologically coherent, but was born out of the political rivalry between SAD and Congress. It can also be inferred from that data that the Movement spread rapidly during the late-1980s. However, in the initial years of the 1990s, it met ruthless State repression.

It was a male-dominated movement; females could participate only if they were married to militants. Independent female participation in the movement did not exist. Majha region, most particularly its three major districts, witnessed the greatest participation for the insurgency. A strong religious connection because of the presence of numerous Sikh shrines in these districts was a strong factor for the mobilisation of the youth in these districts. Speeches and personality of Bhindrawale also greatly attracted the young masses. Operation Blue Star further incited public sentiment for the insurgency. The assault on the Golden Temple was in fact the most important reason for the mobilisation of youth for the Movement.

Affective ties were also recognised as an important factor for the participation of youth. Many young men came from families with a history of participation in the Punjabi Suba movement or other religious–political agitations. Contrastingly, a large number of militants lacked any deeper ideological orientation. They had joined the Movement for achieving the common goal of establishing Khalistan—that is, a just society based on Sikh ideology. Some activists from the Naxalite tradition also joined or aligned with a section of Sikh militants who campaigned for Separatism. Here it is surprising to note that Hindus and Muslims were also part of this Sikh-identity based movement. The militants were mostly educated middle-class or lower middle-class peasants.

The separatists employed numerous art forms to propagate their ideology. However, the most potent art form for the indoctrination and mobilisation of the masses, especially the youth, turned out to be music—more specifically, the folk music forms of Dhadi and Kavishri. Songs performed by kavishri singers like Nirmal Singh altered the relationship of Sikhs with the Central government. Kavishri singers even released audio cassettes soliciting support for the Movement to save the Sikh religion. These songs, which were propaganda material, promoted Sikh solidarity and commitment to the religion.

The Movement eventually failed because of ideological weakness. Moreover, the guiding principles were not effectively shared by the leaders with the masses. Even the documents published by the Movement's leadership and their intellectual sympathisers, which aimed to disseminate their ideology among Sikhs, especially Sikh youth, only served to exacerbate the sense of hurt and desire for revenge among the masses. A clear ideological direction was missing because of which the Movement degenerated into an orgy of violence, in which the militants completely lost sight of their purpose and directed their wrath upon the very Sikh masses whom they had professed to protect from Hindu repression.

The State's response was also effective in dismantling mass organisations. In order to counter the Sikh Separatist Movement from 1978 to 1993, Central security forces were used. Administrative and legal measures were also adopted to combat terrorism and restore law and order in the state. Punjab Police was strengthened, modernised, and suitably equipped to take on the AK-47 wielding fanatics. Police parties were supported by battalions of CPRF, BSF, and ITBP. Indian army was also called in at times, such as for Operations Blue Star, Woodrose, and Rakshak. In the final phase of this war against the militants, Operation Night Dominance was launched by DGP K.P.S. Gill to instill fear in the insurgents and confidence in the policemen. For effective political management of the situation, governor's rule was imposed in the state.

Additionally, the Government of India also appointed a commission headed by justice Sarkaria to settle the issues of Punjab. Thus, the State first framed a mechanical vision of the Punjab problem. Thereafter, it strengthened and modernised its repressive mechanism, that is, the police force. Finally, political measures were adopted to resolve the crisis and maintain the democratic apparatus.

Comparing the prominent characteristics of both the Movements, it is observed that both resorted to the use of violence for the achievement of stated objectives. In case of the Naxalite Movement, most of the participants hailed from Malwa region, which, with its comparatively less fertile land and poorer peasant families, was ideal recruitment zone for this class-based insurgency. Apart from this, Malwa had a rich history of class struggle. On the other side, in case of the Sikh Separatist Movement, most of the insurgents hailed from Majha, especially from Amritsar, Gurdaspur, and Tarn Taran districts, which are home to numerous Sikh shrines. Majha remained the hub of the Movement after Operation Blue star.

Participants in both the Movements were generally in age group of 16–25 years. While it is a given that participation in the Sikh Separatist Movement had to be majorly from Sikh community, but even in the Naxalite Movement Sikhs formed the largest number of recruits. Youngsters were drawn to the Naxalite Movements because of its promise of a just and egalitarian society. The Sikh Separatist Movement recruits cited the trauma of Operation Blue Star and the fiery speeches and charismatic personality of Bhindrawale as prominent reasons for joining the Movement. In the end, both the Movements were crushed by ruthless repression by the State.

APPENDIX-1

YOUTH CONSCIOUSNESS IN PUNJAB FROM 1966 to 1993: A STUDY OF NAXALITE MOVEMENT AND SIKH SEPARATISM

Questionnaire for Activists

PERSONAL BACKGROUND DATA SHEET

1. Name _____
2. Address _____
3. Age Now _____
4. At what age did you join the movement _____
5. At what age did you left the movement _____
6. Gender _____
5. Category:
General (), SC ()
6. Family Members _____
7. When you join what was your marital status ----Married /Single
8. Name the Parties you worked with _____
9. Educational Qualification _____
10. Area (Urban, Rural, town and district) _____
11. Family Background
 - (i) Parents Father Mother
 - (a) Educational Status _____ _____
 - (b) Employment status _____ _____
 - (c) Religion
11. Family Source of earning (Business, Agriculture, Job) _____
12. Average Family Income _____
13. Member of any organization now _____
14. which region (geographically) you belong (Majha; Duaba and Malwa) _____
15. How many years did you work as an activist _____
16. What was the name of your Organization _____
17. At What age did you join the Movement _____
18. Was you arrested during the movement? If yes, Mention _____
19. specify the year _____
20. Have you ever joined any other movement in spite of this

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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- Q.1. Where and when did you hear the word Naxalbari first time?
- Q.2. why did you involve in the movement, what was reason behind this?
- Q. 3. From where you had this information of Naxalite armed movement? Mention the name.
- A. Trade Union
 - B. Novels
 - C. Cultural Events (Play, Drama, Operas etc.)
 - D. Leftist Origination (CPI, CPM etc.)
 - E. Student Unions
 - F. News papers
 - G. Magazines
 - H. Radio and T.V.
 - I. Others
- Q. 4. Who inspired you to join the movement?
- Q. 5. According to you what was the support base of naxalite movement?
- Q.6. According to you, why this movement began in Punjab?
- Q.7. Did your family was associated with any movement? if yes, what was name of movement?
- Q.8. Why did you join this Armed movement?
- Q.9. What do you think about the purpose of the Naxalite movement?
- Q.10. Are your friends involved in this struggle?
- Q.11. Do you have any historical knowledge regarding the emergence of left ideology in Punjab?
- Q. 12. Who were the leaders you find responsible for the emergence of the Naxalite armed movement in Punjab?
- Q.13. Do you discuss about Naxalite movement at home?
- Q.14. What was the name of the organization you worked with? Explain.

- Q.15. How many of your organizations in Punjab were active in armed movement?
- Q.16. Under whose directions were your organizations working. Throw light on the working of your organization especially?
- Q.17. When your armed organization came into existence?
- Q.18. Who was the leader of your organization?
- Q.19. How did you appoint the secretary or general secretary of your organization? What sorts of responsibilities were being given to the secretary?
- Q.20. How did your organization maintain discipline.?
- Q.21. What sort of punishment was assigned to those who disobey the rules set up by your organization.?
- Q.22. How this punishment was decided upon?
- Q.23. Was this sort of parameter of punishment agreed to by all?
- Q.24. How did your cadres used to make decisions?
- Q.25. How did your party assign task to the newly appointed young men?
- Q.26. How did your armed organization used to make decisions for any sort of action?
- Q.27. How did the youth of your armed organization keep liaison with each other?
- Q.28. From where your armed organization used to get ammunition and money?
- Q.29. How the youth wing of your armed struggle is organized?
- Q.30. What was the hierarchical structure of your party in the armed struggle?
- Q.31. What is the relationship of the youth with the main body of the organization?
- Q.32. how do people in the organization communicate?
- Q.33. How the youth was being mobilized towards armed movement?
- Q.34. What was the average age of young men in your armed organization and what was there number?
- A. Above 60s years
- B. 55-60
- C. 50-55

D. 45-50

E. 40-45

F. 35-40

G. 30-35

H.25-30

I. 20-25

J. 15-20

K.10-15

L. Others

Q. 35 What was the educational qualification of the leaders of armed organization?

A. Ph. D holders

B. master's degree (M.A)

C. B.A. (bachelor's degree)

D. Twelfth (+2)

E. Metric (10th)

F. Elementary (8th)

G. fifth (Primary)

H. Uneducated

I. Others

Q.36.In what kind of work, the newcomers in the party were involved before associating with organization?

A. Private Bigness

B. Government Job

C. Agriculture

D. Student

E. Agriculture Labor

F. Labor

G. Others

Q.43. How much agricultural land did your leaders possess when they joined your organization?

A. above 50acre

B. 45-50

C. 40-45

D. 35-40

E. 30-35

F. 25-30

G. 20-25

H. 15-20

I. 10-15

J. 5-10

K. 0-5

L. Landless

M. Other Bigness

Q. 37.Caste Composition of your leaders?

Q.38. what prime reasons you define for the youth to join this armed movement as per your opinion?

Q.39. Do you think that reason for joining this armed organization by the young men was poverty or unemployment or if they had jobs in their hands then did they have to join this?

Q.40. What were the aims of your armed organizationin Punjab?

Q.41. How the targets of your armed organization were fixed?

Q.42. what sort of techniques were adopted by your armed organization to keep this movement run in the long term?

Q.43. How did your armed movement appeal to the agriculturalist, industrial workers, Dalits?

Q.45. What is the role played by the youth in the armed origination?

Q.47. What major difference you find between the armed struggle of Naxalite and the Sikh movement in Punjab.?

Q.48. what did a struggle arise between Sikh and Naxalite or whereas both of you were having center as a common enemy?

Q.49. How did you manage to pass on the decision taken by these armed organization to the common people?

Q.50. How did you choose to make a decision when someone was to be killed by an armed organization?

Q.51. What plan was used to be adopted by you to bring the youngster in the movement?

Q.52. Which methods were used to influence the new youngsters in this armed movement?

Q.53. What methods were being used for the youngsters from school, colleges, and universities to join your organization?

Q.54. Did you have any Armed training Cell?

Q.55. What was the role of women fighters in this armed movement.?

Q.56. Were there any youngsters who left the government job to join your organization.?

Q.57. What was the number of your family members who were active in this movement?

Q.58. With whom have you been associated after the failure of this armed movement?

Q.59. What were the characteristics of those people who were fighting against this Naxalite movement.?

Q.60. What tactics were being adopted by your armed organization to make people aware of this movement?

Q.61. Did any other political party of Punjab help you in the time armed struggle.?

Q.62. The Divisions of Punjab have taken to time in the history of India once on the base of religion and for the second time on the bases of language and according to you what the Punjabi got and what they lost.?

- Q.63. What do you think that the demand for Punjabi Suba was right whereas it shows that Punjab has territorially ceased to a larger extent.?
- Q.64. What has been the cause of the prevalence of this Naxalite movement in Punjab?
- Q.65. Can you narrate any five reasons for the failure of this Naxalite movement? ?
- Q.66. Was in your village or near your village any distinguished Ghadaries member lived or any distinguished Gurdwaras, which is famous for martyred of the Sikhs?
- Q.67. What contribution do you accept to put in by the revolutionary singers and poets in the Naxalite movement to aware of the youth?
- Q.68. what sort of measures were adopted by the police to torcher you.?
- Q.69. Had you published your newspaper or a magazine in the underground system? ?
- Q.70. Name the first Naxalite group that introduced literature like papers; pamphlets and magazines in Punjab for the extension of movement?
- Q.71. Which Naxalite organization of Punjab first started to aware students?
- Q.72. Could you tell about any Naxalite Party which initiated awareness programs among mass through Art as a medium in Punjab? Explain.
- Q.73. Was the feudalism system prevalent in Punjab at the time of the Naxalite movement?
- Q.74. To what extent was internal democracy given in the party?
- Q.75. Was your cadre existing independently or Was it apart of CPI or CPM?
- Q.76. Through what sources you used to convey the justification of your action among the people?
- Q.77. why did some of the Naxalites turn themselves as Khalistanis' later on.?
- Q. 78. What was your source of inspiration to fight against the state?
- Q.79. what was the role of poets in this movement?
- Q. 80. What sort of slogan were you rise?
- Q.81. What kind of slogan you were written on the walls and posers?
- Q.81. what was the political relevance of these slogans?

Q.80. what were the reasons behind the stagnation of this movement in Punjab as compared to other states?

Q.81. How did you see your cadres or groups by separating them from others?

Q.82. In your opinion, in which area of Punjab districts, youth joined this movement?

Q.83. Was it not a struggle by the unemployed educated Youth?

Q.84. Had any youngsters from foreign countries join your armed struggle and can you tell the name of any of those?

Q.85. On what basis were the Naxalite fighting whether was it peasantry movement or labor movement?

Q.86. what was the culture of your Party?

Q.87. what do you think about the current situation of Punjab? According to you, which factors were responsible such as these kinds of movements or state?

Q. 88. When did you leave your group and why? Explain the reasons behind this decision?

Q. 89. According to you, what are the responsible factors, the state, movements, or new liberalism policies for the current situation of Punjab?

Q.90. what do you think, why desired change/revolution could not bring in society, because of lack of understanding about the stature of society or the other one is, you could not break the traditional set up prevalent in Society?

APPENDIX-2

ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION

Anandpur Sahib

Anandpur Sahib – the Birthplace of the Khalsa¹ is situated at the foothills of the Shivalaks in Ropar district of Punjab. This city was founded in 1665 by Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Nanak, who was martyred by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb at Delhi for protecting the religious freedom and championing the cause of civil liberties of the oppressed Hindus.

On April 13, 1699, when thousands of Sikhs had gathered at Anandpur Sahib to celebrate the Baisakhi - the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh performed a unique drama of deep symbolic and mystical significance to select the “Five Fearless Ones”.

The Guru came to the congregation with an unsheathed sword shining in his hand and announced: “My sword wants blood. Come, who would offer me his head”.

There was hushed silence. But when the Guru repeated his words for the third time, Bhai Daya Ram Khatri of Lahore came forward and offered himself for sacrifice. The Guru took him into the tent nearby and came out with his sword dripping with blood. Again he demanded “one more head”. The four others who came forward at the call of the Guru to offer themselves for the supreme sacrifice were; Dharam Dass – a jat from Delhi; Mohkam Chand – a washerman (DHOBHI) from Dwarka in Gujarat; Himmat Rai – a water carrier (Jhewar) from Jagannath Puri in Orissa and Sahib Chand – a barber (Nai) from Bidar now in Karnataka.

It is significant to note that four of the five who first embraced this new order of Khalsa were Sudras or untouchables according to the Hindu caste reckoning. Only one was a Khatri and none was a Brahmin. What was more important that they hailed from the different parts of the Indian sub-continent.

The Guru baptised them with Khande de Amrit – water sweetened with sugar and churned with a Khand (double edged dagger) while reciting Gurubani. He enjoined the newly baptised Sikhs to be called as “The Khalsa of Waheguru” – the Lord’s Own with the common surname of Singh (Lion). The Guru honoured them as Panj Piare (the

¹Khalsa, an Urdu word, is derived from the first letters of the following words, Kh stands for Khud self; Alaf denotes Akalpurakh, God; Lam means, “what do you want with me? Here I am what would you have?” Swad is an abbreviation of Sahib (Lord or Master) and H stands for Harriyat Azadi or Liberty.

Beloved Five). The Guru then himself took Amrit-nectar of immortality from the Beloved Five and thus established the democratic principle of “Equality among the Khalsa”. The Guru prescribed the five emblems for the Khalsa i.e. KES (unshorn hair and beard); KANGA (Comb); KACHHA (Knee length breaches); KARA (Steel bracelet) and KIRPAN (Sword). The Guru declared that, “From now on you have become castless and classless. No ritual, either of Hindu or Muslim will you perform, nor believe in superstition of any kind, but believe only in one God who is the Creator. Master and Protector of all”. In this order, the lowest will rank equal with the highest and each will be to the other a brother. Woman is man’s better half and as such helps him in attaining Grace. So, she has equal rights in this order of Khalsa. No pilgrimage for you anymore, nor austerities but pure and simple life of a householder, yet you should be ready to sacrifice all at the call of the Dharma”.

Guru Gobind Singh gave the Khalsa a slogan “DEG TEG FATEH” – manifesting three ideals. By DEG. The Guru meant the establishment of socialistic and democratic pattern of the society where all people irrespective of their caste, creed and religion could partake their bread on the basis of equality, liberty and fraternity. By TEG, the Guru implied evolution of divine heroism in the lives of individuals and the Nation – which was necessary for an honourable and happy life. And by FATEH which means Victory, the Guru signified living and dying practically for the victory of the Dharma.

The Khalsa stands for Universal Brotherhood, humanism, purity and love. According to Dr. Gokul Chand Narang; “the Sikhs were turned by the tenth Guru into a Nation of warriors and heroes who would dare the lion in his own den and challenge the dreaded Aurangzeb in his own Court.”²

Anandpur Sahib where the Guru Gobind Singh established a castless, classless coherent brotherhood of saint soldiers to protect the weak and helpless and destroy the wicked, is in the news again.

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution is based upon one of the main planks upon which the Freedom Movement was carried on, was the demand for greater autonomy to the provinces (states). This was embodied in the Resolution adopted by the Indian National Congress at its Lahore Session in 1929. Since the programme of the Indian National Congress was not fully implemented, amongst others in respect of the greater autonomy

²Dr. Gokul Chand Narang: The Transformation of Sikhism.

to the states the Shiromani Akali Dal at its Annual Session in 1973 at Anandpur Sahib adopted this Resolution which reiterates the similar stand taken by some other opposition parties.

We are publishing the complete text of the Resolution with relevant statement and resolutions adopted by Indian National Congress in 1929 and Shriomani Akali Dal in 1978, when the Akalis were in power in the Punjab to enable the people to study it in depth and know the reality.

Baldev Singh Bal

In order to understand the significance of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, it had to be remembered that the Founding Fathers of the Constitution of India has envisaged a truly Federal Political structure with sufficient powers for the states to work for their development.

Unfortunately during the last thirty five years, through repeated and ill conceived amendments of the Constitution, the provincial powers have been curtailed to such an extent that the states are unable to play any constructive role for the welfare of their people. And if this trend continues, the interest of the religious and ethnic minorities in India, are bound to suffer.

Anandpur Sahib Resolution is nothing more than a deviose to guard against this danger. It is based upon the assurances given to the Sikhs on behalf of Indian National Congress by no less a person than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Sant Harchand Singh Longowal

President, Shiromani Akali Dal

Extract from "Exclusively for you Members of Parliament".

Anandpur Sahib Resolution

"The Congress assures the Sikhs that no Resolution in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give them full satisfaction."

A Resolution adopted at the

Lahore Session of Indian National Congress in 1929

"Sardar Madhusudan Singh has asked me for an assurance that the Congress would do nothing that might alienate sympathies of the Sikhs from the Congress. Well, the

Congress in its Lahore Session, passed a resolution that it would not enter into or be a party to any settlement with regard to the minority question that failed to satisfy any of the minorities concerned. What further assurance the Congress can give to the Sikhs, I fail to understand. I ask you to accept my words and the Resolution of the Congress that it will not betray a single individual much less a community. If it ever thinks of doing so, it will only hasten its own doom, I pray you, therefore; to unbosom yourselves of all your doubts ... What more shall I say? What more can I say than this; Let God be the witness of this bond that bind me and the Congress with you?"

Mahatama Gandhi

at Gurudwara Sis Ganj, Delhi

on 16th March, 1931.

Young India dated 19th March 1931.

"The brave Sikhs of Punjab are entitled to special consideration. I see nothing wrong in an area and a set-up in the North wherein the Sikhs can also experience the glow of freedom."

Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru

Press Conference at Calcutta,

on 6th July 1946

Statesman, Calcutta 7th July 1946

ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION

Policy and Programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal adopted at Sri Anandpur Sahib on October 16-17, 1973.

(A) Principles

- (i) The Shiromani Akali Dal is the supreme body of the Sikh Panth and as such is fully authorized to represent and lead them. The basis of this organization depends on mutual relations, aspirations of man and his relations with the creator.

- (ii) These principles are embodied in the doctrines of Guru Nanak Dev, viz., Nam Japo (God Worship), Kirat Karo (Do hard labour) and Wand Chhako (share your hard earnings with others).

(B) Aims

The Shiromani Akali Dal shall strive for fulfillment of following aims:

- (i) Propagation of Religion and Sikh tenets and condemnation of atheism;
- (ii) Maintaining the realisation of Panth's independent entity and creation of such an environment where Sikh sentiment can find its full expression;
- (iii) Eradication of poverty and hunger through an equitable economic structure-increase in wealth and end of all exploitation;
- (iv) Removal of illiteracy, untouchability and casteism as laid down in Sikh scriptures;
- (v) Ending ill-health and sickness – condemnation of intoxicants – so that the community is inspired to protect the Nation.

PART – I

The Shiromani Akali Dal considers it a primary task to inculcate a sense of Divinity among the Sikhs so that they are proud of being the same. In order to accomplish the same, the Akali Dal will initiate the following programme:

- a) Preaching the one-ness of God, worship, belief in the Ten Gurus and the Holy Granth, and information about the doctrines explained by them for implementation by the Sikhs;
- b) For the successful preaching of Sikh Divinity, philosophy tenets and kirtan etc. production of good preachers, singers, Dhadis and poets from Sikh Missionary Colleges so that preachers are able to propagate freely in India and abroad, villages and cities, schools and colleges etc.
- c) The work of Amrit Parchar (Baptism) to be undertaken at a larger scale, particularly among the school and colleges. Study circles of college professors and students to be organised for this purpose;

- d) Revival of Daswandh (donation of 1/10th of income) among the Sikhs;
- e) Respect and honour the Sikh historians, intellectuals, writers, Parcharaks, Granthis etc. and provide facilities to raise the standard of their life, training and work;
- f) In order to streamline the Gurdwara administration, arrangements to be made for the training of employees, maintenance of Gurdwara buildings and issuing of necessary directives to the S.G.P.C. members in this behalf;
- g) Correct printing of scriptures, research of old and new Sikh History, translation of scriptures and preparation of clean literature of Sikh principles.
- h) Strive for the enactment of new All India Gurdwara Act under which all gurdwaras in the country are managed efficiently and endeavour that old institutions of the Sikhs like Udasis, Nirmale etc. become an integral part of the Sikh society;
- i) The Managers of all Gurudwaras in the world to be woven in a single chain in order to have effective benefits of the common means of religious propaganda;
- j) To secure “Open Darshan” of Sri Nankana Sahib and other Gurdwaras which have been snatched away from the panth.

PART – II

Political

The panthic political aim is definitely based on the directives of the Tenth Guru, which is engraved on the pages of Sikh History and is in the mind of the Khalsa Panth – Its aim is, Khalsa Ji Ka Bol Bala.

To this and in view, the Shiromani Akali Dal will strive and wage struggles for the following:

1. (a) The areas which have been taken away from Punjab or have been intentionally kept apart e.g. Dalhousie from district Gurdaspur; Chandigarh; Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala City in district Ambala; whole Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur district, “Desh” ilaqa of Nalagarh, Shahabad block of district Karnal, Sub Tehsils of Guhla and Tohana, Rattia Block of district Hissar and Sirsa Tehsil, 6 Tehsils of district Ganganagar of Rajasthan and the contiguous Punjabi- speaking Sikh-populated areas, should be immediately merged, with Punjab under one administrative unit:

(b) In this new Punjab, the Central intervention should be restricted to Defence, Foreign Affairs, Post and Telegraphs, Currency and Railways. The rest of the departments should be under the direct control of Punjab:

(c) Effective arrangements should be made to safeguard the interest of the minority Sikh community living outside Punjab, so that they do not fall a prey to any discrimination;

2. Shiromani Akali Dal will also try that the Indian Constitution becomes Federal in the real sense and all states are equally represented at the Centre.
3. The Shiromani Akali Dal feels that the foreign policy of the Congress Government is useless and harmful for the country and the Nation as a whole. It will strive for good relations with all neighbouring countries, particularly where the Sikhs reside or where their religious shrines are found. Our foreign policy should not be tagged along with any other country.
4. To ensure justice for Sikh employees at the Centre and States and to raise effective voice against injustice, meted out to them, is an important part of the Shiromani Akali Dal's programme. Particularly in the Defence Services, efforts will be made to maintain the conventions of the Sikhs and the demands of Sikh soldiers would be constantly kept in view. Shiromani Akali Dal will also try that the "Kirpan" (sword) becomes an integral part of the Sikh soldiers' uniform:
5. Creation of favourable atmosphere for the rehabilitation of ex-serviceman, provision of necessary concessions and safeguards for their rights so that they live a life of self-respect.
6. The Shiromani Akali Dal feels that every man or woman, who has not been sentenced by a Court of law, should be allowed to keep a firearm without license;
7. The Shiromani Akali Dal favours a policy of prohibition and ban on smoking at public places.

ECONOMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMME OF SHIROMANI AKALI DAL AS APPROVED BY THE WORKING COMMITTEE IN ITS MEETING HELD AT SHRI ANANDPUR SAHIB, ON 17TH OCTOBER 1973

Though Indian economy is essentially an agrarian economy and no political force which is committed to building of a social order based on justice can ignore this, the crux of the whole problem is that the main lever of economy are in the hands of the big business, the capitalist and the monopolist class. It is precisely this class which has grown rich during 26 years of freedom though benefits of economic growth have been shared by other classes too. It is this class which essentially wields political powers. Therefore, any effort of building a new social order through peaceful means has to be directed in breaking the stronghold of this section of the population both on economy and politics.

The Akali Dal stands for removal of disparity between the rich and the poor, both in urban and rural areas. It, however, wants that the first attack on the concentration of wealth should be made on those who really control the economy. In the rural areas too the Akali Dal stands for the weaker sections of the populations, scheduled castes, backward landless tillers, poor peasants and middle peasants. It, therefore, stands for rationalisation of land legislation in such a manner that all lands of above 30 standard acres should be taken over and distributed among the rural poor.

The economic policy of the Akali Dal, therefore, would mainly be directed to achieve these objectives.

2. Agrarian Sector

In the agrarian sector, the country has witnessed a series of land reforms on one hand and on the other hand a new phase of green revolution. The Akali Dal is pledged to stipulate the green revolution on the one hand and to ensure that increase in Agricultural production leads to the improvement in the standard of living of all sections of the rural population, particularly the middle peasants and poor and landless population. To achieve this end The Akali Dal proposes to take in the coming period following measures:

- a) Initiate land reform measures to remove disparity and to increase Agricultural production. The existing legislation regarding ceiling on land would be reviewed and a ceiling of 30 standard acres per family be fixed. All remaining intermediaries on the land would be abolished and real security of tenure to actual

tillers conferred. Landless agricultural labour and poor peasants would be settled on surplus lands and Government waste cultivate land would be distributed to the landless, preferably to the persons belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The scheme for distribution of these lands would be evolved in such a manner that poor section of Harijans and landless population benefit from it. Along with these, the Akali Dal would also examine how the tenants can be given the right to mortgage their interests in land for obtaining credit and how restrictions can be placed on sale of lands given by Government to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes in favour of others;

- b) The Akali Dal will also strive for the modernisation of agriculture so that the middle, small and poor peasants too can benefit from cheap in-puts like electricity, water, seeds, fertilizers and credit through co-operatives and other public Agencies.
- c) The Akali Dal shall strive that agricultural prices are fixed on the basis of the cost of production of the average farmer. Prices should be declared well in advance of the sowing period. State Government shall have the authority to fix the price.
- d) The Akali Dal stands for complete state Trading in food-grains and steps would be taken to facilitate take-over of wholesale trade in foodgrains and other agricultural produce be the State Government and Government Agencies.
- e) The Akali Dal is against all type of food Zones and restrictions placed on the Movement of Agriculture produce in the country. The whole Country be treated as a single Food Zone.
- f) Special efforts will be made to complete Thein Dam and Bhatinda Thermal Plant, so that irrigation facilities and Electricity is augmented in the State and ultimately made more cheap. A concerted effort shall be made to set up an atomic electricity plant.
- g) Service co-operatives should be built up in rural areas and special attention should be paid to development of minor irrigation projects in those districts where canal irrigation is not available.

Industry

The Akali Dal demands that all basic industries should be brought under the public sector.

The Akali Dal wants that all consumer industries dealing with essential commodities be nationalised so as to keep the price level under control and to end the exploitation of the poor consumer by the industrialists and the middleman.

Public Sector industries should be set up in such a manner as to remove the regional imbalances which has been created as a consequence of discriminatory policies of the Central Government.

A planned effort be made to develop agrobased industries in the rural areas so as to relieve the pressure on population on the land. The management of industries be democratised to include to 50% representative of the Workers on the management and a detailed scheme be brought under the public sector. The Akali Dal is committed for progressive nationalisation of transport.

Public sector projects should be given more autonomy and manned by young competent persons committed to the project and special efforts should be made to build up a cadre of public sector project.

Fiscal Policy

The Akali Dal demands the review of the whole taxation structures in such a manner so that incentives for tax evasion and black money are totally eradicated. The Akali Dal stands for such taxation system whose incidence of the tax would be direct and could not be transmitted to general mass of the people. The present taxation simply penalise the poor and provides big loopholes to the rich. The Akali Dal stands for de-monitisation of the currency in order to destroy the parallel black money economy in the country.

4. Workers Middle Class Employees & Agricultural Workers

The Akali Dal would strive for:

- a) Need based minimum wage for the industrial workers,
- b) Continued improvement in the standard of living of the Government employees.
- c) Minimum wages for agricultural workers to be reviewed and if necessary, increased;
- d) Plug loopholes in the existing labour Legislation to ensure decent living conditions for the workers.
- e) Execute urgent measures for increasing housing accommodation, both in the urban

and rural areas, for the lowest running of the Society.

5. Unemployment

The Akali Dal stands for total employment in the country. To start with, it feels, it is the duty of the Government to provide jobs immediately, at least to all the educated and skilled people. Till the Jobs are not provided, unemployment allowance be provided to be shared on 50: 50 basis between the Centre and the State Governments at the following rates:

Matriculate & skilled workers Rs. 50/- per month

B.A. Rs. 75/- “

M.A. Rs. 100/- “

Professional Engineers & Doctors Rs. 150/- “

Skilled persons Rs. 50/- “

provide old age pension to all deserving persons beyond the age of 65.

6. Scheduled Castes and Weaker Section of Society

Akali Dal will strive to raise the economic standard of the Scheduled Castes and other Weaker Sections of Society by providing them educational facilities, employment and other concessions so as to bring them at par with the advanced sections of society. These classes will be provided food grains at subsidised rates.

“The Shiromani Akali Dal realizes that India is a federal and republican geographical entity of different languages, religions and cultures. To safeguard the fundamental rights of the religious and linguistic minorities, to fulfill the demands of the democratic traditions and to pave the way for economic progress, it has become imperative that the Indian constitutional infrastructure should be given a real federal shape by redefining the central and state relations and rights on the lines of the aforesaid principle and objectives.

The concept of total revolution given by Lok Naik, Sh. Jaya Parkash Narain is also based upon the progressive decentralization of powers. The climax of the process of centralization of powers of the states through repeated amendments of the constitution during the Congress regime came before the countrymen in the form of the Emergency, when all fundamental rights of all citizens were usurped. It was then that the programme of decentralization of powers ever advocated by Shiromani Akali Dal was openly

accepted and adopted by other political parties including Janata Party, C.P.I. (M), A.D.M.K. etc.

Shiromani Akali Dal has ever stood firm on this principle and that is why after very careful considerations it unanimously adopted a resolution to this effect first at All India Akali Conference, Batala, then at Sri Anandpur Sahib which was endorsed the principle of State autonomy in keeping with the concept of Federalism.

As such, the Shiromani Akali Dal emphatically urges upon the Janata Government to take cognizance of the different linguistic and cultural sections, religious minorities as also the voice of millions of people and recast the constitutional structure of the country on real and meaningful federal principles to obviate the possibility of any danger to National unity and the integrity of the country and further, to enable the states to play a useful role for the progress and prosperity of the Indian people in their respective areas by the meaningful exercise of their powers.

The Resolution moved by S. Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and endorsed by S. Parkash Singh Badal, Chief Minister, Punjab, at the 18th All India Akali Conference held at Ludhiana on 28-29 October 1978.

INDIAN COUNCIL FOR SIKHS AFFAIRS

Indian Council for Sikh Affairs (ICSA) established in 1979 under the chairmanship of S. Surjit Singh Barnala, stands to promote the basic unity of this international community. Besides looking after the interest of the Sikhs living in the different parts of the world, it has been working for propagation of the Sikh religion throughout the world.

To revive the great traditions of Shabad Kirtan, ICSA has instituted an award entitled 'Gurmat Sangeet Shiromani Award' to promote the Gurmat Sangeet – the racial of Gurbani in prescribed ragas. The Council organises All India Gurmat Sangeet Sammelan every year at New Delhi since its inception.

In 1983, the Council constituted an Annual Lecture in the Memory of Mr. M.A. Macauliffe – the author of "The Sikh Religion" a monumental work published by the Oxford University Press, London in 1909. Now the ICSA has decided to institute "Macauliffe Memorial Award" for the best book on the Sikh history.

After the tragedy of Amritsar, the Council constituted a "Sikh Soldiers Legal Aid Committee", with the cooperation of S. Mehtab Singh, Raja Inder Singh, S. Tarlochan

Singh Sarna, S. Hardev Singh, Senior Advocate and S. Rupinder Singh Sodhi, Advocate of Supreme Court, to provide legal and financial aid to the Sikh Soldiers who were facing disciplinary action for expressing their resentment on the Army invasion of Golden Temple, Amritsar. S. Khushwant Singh – a noted historian and journalist is the Chairman of this Committee.

After the genocide of the Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of the Country in the November 1984, the Council has set up a Rehabilitation Committee under the chairmanship of S. Makhan Singh, to provide financial and other assistance to the victims.

S. Gurdev Singh an anthropologist and Industrialist is the President of the Council.

For further details contact or write to:

Baldev Singh Bal

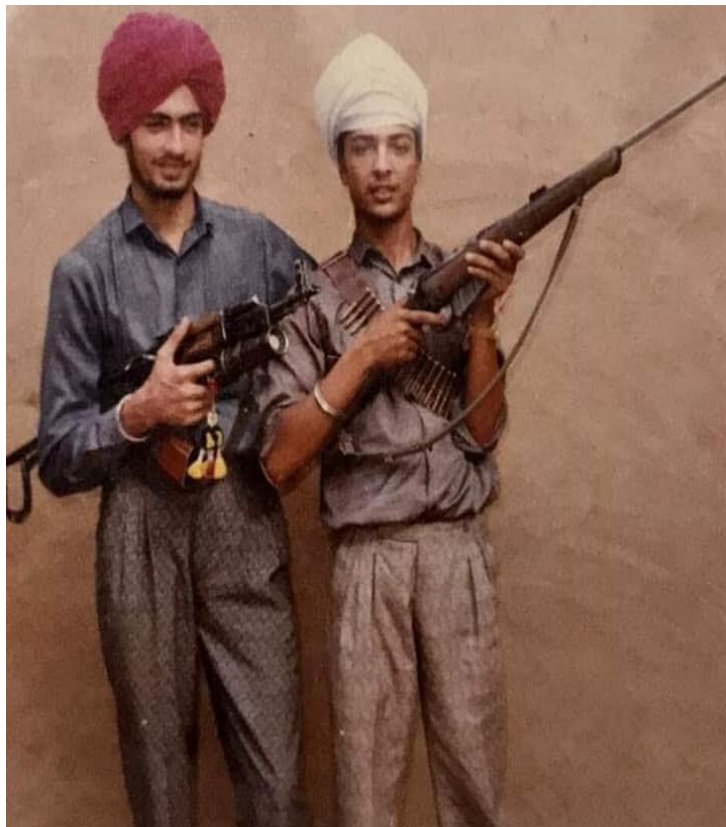
General Secretary, ICOSA

45, Chand Nagar, New Delhi: 110018 India

APPENDIX-3



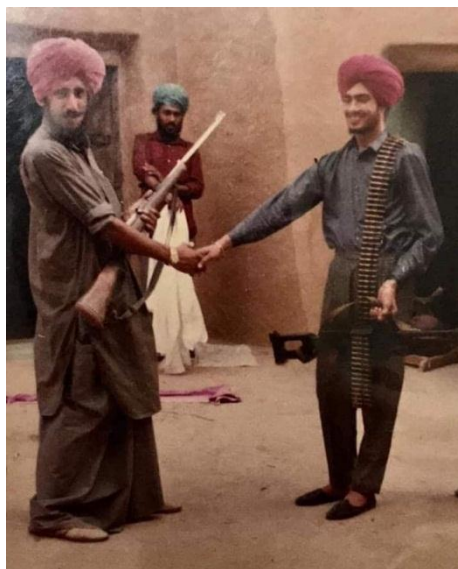
(Pictures collected during field survey)



(collected during field survey)



Collected during field survey



(Pictures were collected by the researcher himself during the field survey)

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CONCLUSION

Post-Independence India, at the threshold of a new era, was faced with two onerous tasks: building a nation and establishing a democratic polity. The newly formed nation adopted a Constitution as a necessary condition for the establishment of democracy. However, economic development and poverty remained its biggest challenges. India is a land of diversities: different religions, cultures, and languages exist and flourish in this land. Additionally, poverty, illiteracy, and widespread social inequalities were hindrances in the path of achieving a true democracy. It was, therefore, an immediate challenge to build the nation accommodative of such diversities and riddled with such social distress.

India's numerous princely states were integrated into the newly formed Union of India using the instrument of Accession. Thereafter, following the demands by different states for redrawing their boundaries on the basis of language, the Government of India appointed a State Reorganization Commission in 1953 to address this issue. Based on its report, the State Reorganization Act was passed in 1956 in the hope of attenuating separatist sentiments of states. Similarly, in the case of Punjab, a long-drawn political agitation by the Sikhs demanding a Punjabi Suba, that is, a Punjabi-speaking state led to the language-based reorganisation of the state in November 1966. However, social peace remained an elusive reality for Punjab.

Despite conciliatory efforts by New Delhi, peaceful as well as violent movements by various ethnic groups have continued, seeking either political autonomy or a separate state within or outside India. The present study, which seeks to examine violent struggles in Punjab, focuses on the participation of youth in the Naxalite and Sikh Separatist Movements. These ideologically different Movements were identical in their choice of instrument of protest: violence. The Naxalite Movement possessed a pan-India character; the Sikh Separatist Movement, although confined to Punjab, gained international recognition because of spectacular acts of violence—especially airplane hijackings—by Sikh militants.

The Naxalite Movement began from the Naxalbari village in West Bengal when radical sections within the CPI (M) gave a call for an armed struggle against landowners. From 3 March 1967 onwards, peasants began acquiring land forcibly, resulting in violent clashes with landlords. By May 1967, the rebels established their control in the Naxalbari, Kharibari, and Phansidewa areas in the district of Darjeeling. On May 23, 1967 the first

serious clash between the rebels and the State machinery occurred when a police party out to arrest rebel leaders exchanged fire with armed peasants in a village under the Naxalbari police station. Three policemen were injured, and a police inspector died, provoking a brutal police retaliation on 25 May, when they shot dead 10 villagers—including seven women and two children—in Naxalbari. Far from quelling the rebellion, these killings further catalysed the insurgency: land-grab incidents exploded; clashes became progressively violent.

The socio-economic condition of forced labour was the genesis of this uprising, and it was no surprise that the dalits, *adivasis* (indigenous tribes), and disadvantaged rural population—the *have nots* of the society—formed the sword-arm of this insurgency. The Naxalbari incident of 25 May 1967 marked the beginning of the Naxalite Movement in India. However, by that time, resistance by radical communists had already begun spreading across the country. Soon, West Bengal became the headquarters of this uber-violent uprising and Charu Mazumdar its main leader. The professed aim of this Movement, whose slogan was *land to tiller*, was to demonstrate to all Indians, as well as to the world, how a democratic revolution is organised and conducted.

As a revolutionary ideology and programme of action, it challenged the peaceful, Constitutional methods of socio-economic reconstruction. Originating as an extremist wing of the Indian Communist Movement, it claimed itself to be the Indian counterpart of Maoism and an authentic bearer of the Marxist–Leninist revolutionary traditions. In less than half-a-decade, the Movement made such a deep psychological impact on the consciousness of the Indian society that every anti-establishment violent manifestation became identified with the Naxalite Movement.

On 2 November 1967, left-wing extremists from across India gathered at Calcutta. They concluded that India's socio-economic conditions were ripe for a revolution and founded the All India Coordination Committee. In May 1968, the Committee was renamed the All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) and declared its ideological aims: to conduct a protracted people's war in accordance with Mao's teachings; adoption of guerrilla warfare tactics; establishment of rural revolutionary bases to eventually encircle cities; and abstaining from Parliamentary elections. Charu Mazumdar and Kanu Sanyal were to provide leadership to these voices of resistance who aimed to unite the revolutionaries countering CPI-reformism and CPI (M)-revisionism

and organise peasant uprisings across India. Inspired by the Naxalbari incident, armed struggles ensued in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh.

On Lenin's centenary on 22 April 1969 the AICCCR founded the CPI Marxist–Leninist (ML) based on Mao's ideology. This act was welcomed and supported by China, which hoped for an Indian revolution on the lines of the Chinese revolution. However, the AICCCR was not without problems. Its leadership had its share of differences of opinion. Charu expelled D.V. Rao and T.N. Reddy from the AICCCR for expressing divergent political views on certain issues, who then formed the Andhra Pradesh Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (APCCCR). Similarly, in Punjab the Harbhajan Singh Sohi-group separated from the AICCCR citing differences of opinion. Such frequent fragmentations denied the CPI (ML) a long, stable stint, which jeopardized its future as a political party.

In north India, Punjab was the only state that resonated with the Naxalite ideology; its neighbouring states such as Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan were not influenced by the Movement. Even in the context of Punjab, Marxism was confined to the land-owning Jat Sikh peasantry and the industrial working-class had an insignificant role in shaping the nature of the Naxalite Movement. Global radical youth movements in the late-1960s also greatly stimulated the spread of Marxism among the educated Punjabi youth and the Naxalite Movement began in Punjab in the late-1960s. The theoretical and strategic importance of peasantry as a revolutionary class, as envisaged in the Maoist thought, appealed to the Punjabi educated youth. Further, the Movement's emphasis on *armed struggle* resonated with the Sikhs' martial tradition. The peasant uprising was crushed under the heavy, merciless feet of a rigid State by the mid-1970s, but its intellectual and political legacy left an indelible impact on Punjab's political culture.

The Green Revolution-fuelled phenomenal rise in the prosperity of Punjabis also resulted in widening the rich–poor divide, especially in rural Punjab. Even after enacting several laws to bridge this widening gap, the situation remained practically unchanged. Additionally, rising unemployment during the 1960s also served as a contributing factor for the spread of the Movement. Later, in 1969, the Naxalite began with the violent policy of annihilation of class enemies when the CPI (ML) adopted this policy as formulated by Charu Mazumdar. This identified with the tradition of violence in Punjab and contributed to the impressive recruitment for the Movement.

The implementation of the policy of annihilation of class enemies in Punjab exhibited certain unique features, which evolved owing to the acts of suppression undertaken by the State. In the beginning, big landlords were identified as class enemies and some of them were annihilated. However, as landlords became alert and took defensive measures, moneylenders were identified as class enemies and killed. Police agents responsible for the arrest of Naxalite cadres, and policemen infamous for their penchant for killing or torturing insurgents were also taken out. In a way, the Movement in Punjab followed a path largely determined by police suppression and the reactions of the rebels. The post-annihilations phase was characterised by mass struggles along militant lines. The uprising in Punjab, therefore, was both like and unlike the Naxalite uprising across India.

The Naxalite Movement was a mass nationwide insurrection, particularly forceful in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, and Orissa. However, in Punjab it began as a mass insurrection but soon became complex in nature. It was essentially a middle-class uprising under a rural middle-class leadership. Most of the cadres were college students belonging to middle-class peasant families. Thus, they had close links with urban centers also. These idealistic youth held romantic notions of a revolution and joined the uprising to go down in history as *heroes*. The propaganda-based mobilisation process was also confined to the middle-class. Furthermore, the introduction of the element of vengeance in the annihilation policy was another middle-class trait.

The leaders of this uprising had a clear understanding that emancipation of masses was impossible through Parliamentary democracy, even if it provided political and juridical freedom. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the left to mobilise and organise the surging peasant rebellion in the countryside. For this end, they established a direct connection between politics and literature and propagated the message of the impending revolution using art forms like drama, novels, poetry, and music, especially kavishri songs. These songs deeply influenced the impressionable minds of Punjabi youth and played an important role in shaping youth political consciousness towards the revolution. Sikh history was also invoked by the leaders of the Movement to motivate the youth in this fight for social justice, equity, and emancipation of the oppressed.

The analysis of the interviews of ex-Naxalite conducted during the course of this study revealed that the Movement spread rapidly in Punjab during the period 1967 to 1970 and declined thereafter in the face of ruthless State repression. It was essentially a youth movement because, as gathered from the interviews, the majority of the insurgents were

under 25 years of age at the time of joining the Movement. Malwa region of Punjab has been a historical hub of peasant movements such as the Kirti Kisan Party, the Muzhara Movement, and the Red Communist Party. Additionally, it had been a breeding ground for mass movements for the abolishment of the Zamindari system in agriculture. Thus, with its rich history of class struggle, it turned out to be the region most affected by the Naxalite Movement. Economic background of the cadres was also a dominant factor responsible for their mobilisation. Middle-class and lower middle-class peasantry and especially their college-educated sons, who believed in the idea of formation of a just society through armed revolution, formed the ranks of the Naxalite force.

This was the most common motivation to join the Movement. Among the respondents, a larger number of admitted having at least one friend who was already involved in the insurgency. For very few per cent of the respondents, it was the influence of somebody known to them, who had deeper involvement with the Movement, which brought them into its fold. Thus, as personal ties were a strong reason for respondents' motivation.

During the Movement, it was its radical socialist vision that captured the imagination of young university, and medical and engineering college students. While the uprising's primary support base remained school and college students and public-school teachers, it, interestingly, also gained influence among students at industrial training institutes. Additionally, it found sympathisers among doctors, engineers, and lawyers. Soon, droves of youth, influenced by the communist ideology, abandoned their educational institutions, homes, and jobs to join the Movement as full-time activists. It is important to note that a large number of CPI (ML)-influenced student activists also joined the Movement in Punjab. They left the party under the guidance of Darshan Baghi, President of the Punjab Student Union (PSU), who, along with other senior communist workers, encouraged students to quit the new revisionist party.

State's response came swiftly and unremittingly in the form of arrests, brutal torture, and murder of rebel leaders and cadres. Burning of crops of suspects was also a usual *modus operandi* of the police. Encounter deaths—fake as well as real—began to rise as the State came down mercilessly on the insurgents. The police force was imparted specialised training in guerilla warfare and allowed a *carte blanche*. The captured rebels experienced unspeakable agony within the confines of torture rooms; several dozens of them were paralysed for life and psychologically scarred beyond repair. Once the SAD—a party dominated by wealthy landlords—formed the government in Punjab, even more stringent

methods were adopted to pulverise the Naxalite, who were unable to counter the State repression.

The decline of the Naxalite Movement in the mid-1970s was succeeded by religious revivalist currents in the state. However, it would be incorrect to insinuate any link—direct or indirect—between the Naxalite and the Sikh Separatist Movements. While both were armed uprisings against the State, yet they were distinct with regards ideology and support base. However, they shared a similar end: a gradual decline followed by a definitive collapse in the wake of incessant and insurmountable State crackdown.

After the formation of the Punjabi Suba, SAD lost power in the state. In the 1972 Punjab Assembly Elections, the party was all but wiped from the political landscape of Punjab. Congress party—riding on the Titanic popularity of Indira Gandhi post the spectacular victory over Pakistan in the 1971 Bangladesh War, formed the government with Giani Zail Singh as the chief minister. This regime devised various methods to deprive SAD of its autonomy and its pecuniary resources, that is, the gurudwaras.

The Chief Minister's Office introduced a special scheme to create a secular image of government offices and agencies. Moreover, Zail Singh intended to dent SAD's image by positioning himself as the pre-eminent Sikh leader of Punjab. To knock the religious wind out of the Akali sails, he tried to create his image of a pious Sikh despite his commitment to secularism. To this end, *keertan darbar* was organised on an extensively large scale; public functions began with *ardaas*; the road from Anandpur Sahib to Patiala was renamed Guru Gobind Singh Marg and a string of horses, alleged descendants of Guru Gobind Singh's gelding, was led down this road—the villagers carrying home their droppings as Goodluck charm; a new township—Shaheed Ajit Singh Nagar—was named after one of the Guru's son's, and so on and so forth. This display of religiosity certainly made Zail Singh popular in his community.

A sobering electoral loss, the fear of having lost the confidence of their Sikh voters, and the shrewd tactics employed by the Zail Singh government to appropriate the *pious Sikh* image stirred the Akalis to recreate their image and consolidate their support among the Sikhs. The working committee of the party, therefore, met at Anandpur Sahib on 11 December 1972. It constituted a 12-member sub-committee to draft a policy programme document to fulfill the aspirations of the Punjabis in general, and the Sikhs in particular, and to specifically meet the aims and objectives of the Sikh *panth*. The sub-committee

held prolonged deliberations during the course of its 11 meetings and submitted a draft document of policy programme to the working committee of SAD at its meeting at Anandpur Sahib on 16–17 October 1973. Thus, the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (ASR) was adopted in 1973.

In the ASR, Sikh leaders and intellectuals had drawn the aims and objectives of Sikhs, so that they may serve the larger interests of Sikh *panth*, Punjab, and also the country and thus live up to the expectations of Sikhs. It emphasised the *real federal structure* of the Constitution and not separatism from the Indian union. The ASR was further unanimously approved and accepted by the general house of the SAD, attended by over 1,00,000 members and workers at the Ludhiana Session on 28–29 October 1978.

Meanwhile, tension was brewing under the skins of Sikhs and Nirankaris. The former considered the latter practitioners of a form of Sikhism that was not true to the teachings of their sacred gurus. Thus, a series of minor scuffles culminated into a bloody confrontation on 13 April 1978 in Amritsar. This incident, which claimed the lives of 13 Sikhs, proved a turning point in the history of modern Punjab.

It was this incident that saw the meteoric rise of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who, after becoming the head of the Sikh seminary Damdami Taksal on August 17, 1977 rose in stature to symbolise the Sikh Separatist Movement. He amassed a massive following of ardent supporters with his sermons against vulgar consumerism and casteism. Then, he took up cudgels against the *heterodox* sect of the Nirankaris—the 13 April 1978 clash is mentioned above. Finally, he launched a vicious anti-Hindu tirade, especially against a Hindu press baron, Jagat Narain, who had advocated the Nirankari campaign against Sikhs.

Simultaneous to Bhindranwale's rise, the Constitutionalist SAD launched a movement demanding a greater share of Punjab's waters, transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab as its capital, and increased administrative and financial powers for the states. The failure of the *moderate* Akalis in securing any tangible political success in this regard only added to the popularity of the *aggressive* Bhindranwale. SAD's religious–political strategy thus took a new turn and metamorphosed into a struggle for the Sikh identity. Then, as the political landscape of Punjab continued to shift, SAD and Bhinderwale collaborated to launch the *Dharam Yudh Morcha* for the implementation of the ASR demands.

Soon Jarnail Singh rose as a hero of the Sikh masses, with his fiery diatribes against the state and Central governments for failing to provide justice to Sikhs. His fundamentalist stance, as opposed to the moderate approach of mainstream Sikh leadership, fired the imagination of the rural Sikh youth who had, until then, been watching from the sidelines the never-ending political shenanigans of the Central government. He began advocating violence to achieve the goals of Sikhs, thus invoking the martial tradition of Sikhs. This adoption of violence naturally invited the State's wrath. Many of Bhindranwale's followers were beaten to death in police custody; numerous were neutralised in police encounters, more fake than real. As a reaction, Bhindranwale's followers and other Sikh extremist groups launched violent attacks on police, government officials, Nirankaris, and politicians.

Sensing the situation slipping out of control, New Delhi decided to employ the military option to subdue both the moderate and militant forms of Sikh rebellion in Punjab. It decided to take control of the Golden Temple at Amritsar and other key gurdwaras from Bhindranwale's armed supporters and Akali activists as well. When Bhindranwale took refuge with several hundred of his heavily armed followers within the precincts of the Golden Temple, running a parallel administration and challenging the authority of the Centre, New Delhi launched Operation Blue Star in June 1984 to flush them out. Bhindranwale and his men were no match for the firepower of the Indian army, which killed him and hundreds of his devoted followers. His defiance to the State and his death catapulted him to the rank of the Sikh martyrs of the 17th and 18th centuries, and his popularity outshone that of any living Sikh leader.

It has been observed across the world that violence—by the State or rebel groups—fails to yield long-term solutions. In fact, the process itself becomes a problem to be resolved. Thus, there were no simple solutions to Punjab's complex problems, as was hoped after the 1985 Rajiv Gandhi–Sant Longowal accord. Repeated failures by the Central government to deliver what was promised further enlarged the chasm of distrust and disaffection between the people of Punjab and New Delhi, thereby resulting in incidents of violence. Radical factions among the several militant groups, for whom the implementation of the ASR was non-negotiable, continued their acts of violence. However, the Resolution was considered a secessionist document by the Indian judicial courts. Thereafter, the Sikh extremists once again consolidated under the banner of the

Panthak Committee and announced their demand for a Sikh state called Khalistan on 29 April 1986.

The majority of the participants in the Sikh Separatist Movement—most of them were between 13 and 25 years of age—came from two Majha districts: Amritsar and Gurdaspur. Analysis of available data reveals that a large number of Sikh Separatist Movement activists were educated—most were matriculates, some even graduates. Additionally, available data reveals that the middle-class Jat peasantry formed the core of this Movement. Another important characteristic of the Sikh Separatist Movement was the participation of school and college students. Data of the 60 ex-militants' interviewees implies that the Movement was not ideologically coherent, but was born out of the political rivalry between SAD and Congress. It can also be inferred from that data that the Movement spread rapidly during the late-1980s. However, in the initial years of the 1990s, it met ruthless State repression.

It was a male-dominated movement; females could participate only if they were married to militants. Independent female participation in the movement did not exist. Majha region, most particularly its three major districts, witnessed the greatest participation for the insurgency. A strong religious connection because of the presence of numerous Sikh shrines in these districts was a strong factor for the mobilisation of the youth in these districts. Speeches and personality of Bhindrawale also greatly attracted the young masses. Operation Blue Star further incited public sentiment for the insurgency. The assault on the Golden Temple was in fact the most important reason for the mobilisation of youth for the Movement.

Affective ties were also recognised as an important factor for the participation of youth. Many young men came from families with a history of participation in the Punjabi Suba movement or other religious-political agitations. Contrastingly, a large number of militants lacked any deeper ideological orientation. They had joined the Movement for achieving the common goal of establishing Khalistan—that is, a just society based on Sikh ideology. Some activists from the Naxalite tradition also joined or aligned with a section of Sikh militants who campaigned for Separatism. Here it is surprising to note that Hindus and Muslims were also part of this Sikh-identity based movement. The militants were mostly educated middle-class or lower middle-class peasants.

The separatists employed numerous art forms to propagate their ideology. However, the most potent art form for the indoctrination and mobilisation of the masses, especially the youth, turned out to be music—more specifically, the folk music forms of Dhadi and Kavishri. Songs performed by kavishri singers like Nirmal Singh altered the relationship of Sikhs with the Central government. Kavishri singers even released audio cassettes soliciting support for the Movement to save the Sikh religion. These songs, which were propaganda material, promoted Sikh solidarity and commitment to the religion.

The Movement eventually failed because of ideological weakness. Moreover, the guiding principles were not effectively shared by the leaders with the masses. Even the documents published by the Movement's leadership and their intellectual sympathisers, which aimed to disseminate their ideology among Sikhs, especially Sikh youth, only served to exacerbate the sense of hurt and desire for revenge among the masses. A clear ideological direction was missing because of which the Movement degenerated into an orgy of violence, in which the militants completely lost sight of their purpose and directed their wrath upon the very Sikh masses whom they had professed to protect from Hindu repression.

The State's response was also effective in dismantling mass organisations. In order to counter the Sikh Separatist Movement from 1978 to 1993, Central security forces were used. Administrative and legal measures were also adopted to combat terrorism and restore law and order in the state. Punjab Police was strengthened, modernised, and suitably equipped to take on the AK-47 wielding fanatics. Police parties were supported by battalions of CPRF, BSF, and ITBP. Indian army was also called in at times, such as for Operations Blue Star, Woodrose, and Rakshak. In the final phase of this war against the militants, Operation Night Dominance was launched by DGP K.P.S. Gill to instill fear in the insurgents and confidence in the policemen. For effective political management of the situation, governor's rule was imposed in the state.

Additionally, the Government of India also appointed a commission headed by justice Sarkaria to settle the issues of Punjab. Thus, the State first framed a mechanical vision of the Punjab problem. Thereafter, it strengthened and modernised its repressive mechanism, that is, the police force. Finally, political measures were adopted to resolve the crisis and maintain the democratic apparatus.

Comparing the prominent characteristics of both the Movements, it is observed that both resorted to the use of violence for the achievement of stated objectives. In case of the Naxalite Movement, most of the participants hailed from Malwa region, which, with its comparatively less fertile land and poorer peasant families, was ideal recruitment zone for this class-based insurgency. Apart from this, Malwa had a rich history of class struggle. On the other side, in case of the Sikh Separatist Movement, most of the insurgents hailed from Majha, especially from Amritsar, Gurdaspur, and Tarn Taran districts, which are home to numerous Sikh shrines. Majha remained the hub of the Movement after Operation Blue star.

Participants in both the Movements were generally in age group of 16–25 years. While it is a given that participation in the Sikh Separatist Movement had to be majorly from Sikh community, but even in the Naxalite Movement Sikhs formed the largest number of recruits. Youngsters were drawn to the Naxalite Movements because of its promise of a just and egalitarian society. The Sikh Separatist Movement recruits cited the trauma of Operation Blue Star and the fiery speeches and charismatic personality of Bhindrawale as prominent reasons for joining the Movement. In the end, both the Movements were crushed by ruthless repression by the State.