



DEVELOPMENT OF SIKH INSTITUTIONS

From Guru Nanak Dev to Guru Gobind Singh (1469-1708 AD)

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The *Guru* left Damdama (Talwandi Sabo) for the Deccan on Kartik Sudi 5, 1763 Vikrami (October 30, 1706 A.D.). For some time he waited for Daya Singh's return at Talwandi Sabo whom he had sent to Aurangzeb at Ahmednagar to deliver his letter 'Zafar Nama' but he did not receive any communication from him or Dharam Singh. He, however, got wind that Daya Singh had to face a lot of difficulties caused by the obstructionist tactics of Subedar Wazir Khan's hired persons who were specially deputed to scuttle the attempts of Daya Singh to meet the Emperor to deliver the letter personally. The Subedar did so because he thought that if the *Guru's* letter and Daya Singh dialogue with the Emperor succeeded in arousing the moral conscience of the Emperor, a lot of harm was likely to accrue to him.

The *Guru* also got inkling that the letter had been delivered and its contents had moved the Emperor.

The *Guru* sensing change in the mood of Aurangzeb decided to move towards the Deccan even before Daya Singh could reach Damdama. The most important factor that impelled the *Guru* to take this decision was the fast failing health of the Emperor who was about ninety-one in 1706 and had been overtaken by illness. The *Guru* deemed it appropriate to go to Deccan himself and settle the affairs with the Emperor for which purpose Daya Singh had been sent with the letter.¹

The exact number of those who accompanied the *Guru* is not known, yet, on the basis of accounts available to us, it is not difficult to surmise that the number was quite large. Among them, a few notables were Man Singh, Ram Singh and Fateh Singh of Bhagtu Family, Dharam Singh and Param Singh, the sons of Bhai Rupa. Rai Dalla also accompanied the *Guru*. As the *Guru* proceeded further, some of them went back to their homes, but even then the hard core was quite large and included Mani Singh, Bhupat Singh from Amritsar, Sodhi Kanwal nain from Dhilwan, Udey Karan, Gurdas Singh from Sadhora, Ram Singh and Tilok Singh from Phul, Godaria Singh from Bhucho, Dan Singh with his son from Ablu, Ram Kaur from Ramdas.

En route to Deccan, the first halt of *Guru* Gobind Singh was at village Kewal. Shri *Guru* Gobind Singh Katak Sudi Panchami (1763 Bk) on October 30, 1706 AD on the way from Talwandi Sabo (Damdama Sahib) to Nanded Sahib (Hazur Sahib) on the south side. When *Guru* Gobind Singh came to the village kewal,² Jatt Bhai Kawela Singh Sran was grazing buffaloes at that time. When he met *Guru* Ji, Bhai Kawela came home and told his wife Mata Punjabo Kaur that *Guru* Ji had come. Mother brought milk to *Guru* Ji and accompanied by Bhai Dalla Rao, Bhai Ram Singh, Bhai Fateh Singh, Bhai Dharam Singh, Bhai Tilok Singh, Bhai Man Singh, Bhai Param Gill, Bhai Gurdas Singh, Mata Ram Kaur etc. Milked. Then *Guru* Ji rested at this place for the night. Some of the forest trees with which *Guru* Ji tied his horses still exist today. The next day *Guru* Sahib performed the kirtan of Asa di War. When *Guru* Ji prepared for the south. The *Guru* told the Singhs to join the Paintra. Then *Guru* Ji went to the next stage towards village Jhorar Rohi. Nowadays *Gurudwara* Pantra Sahib is built on this place. The name of this village is only named after Bhai Kawela. In the field of Punjabi language, this village is known as keol. The river Saraswati used to flow at this place in ancient times. According to some historians, the river Ghaggar is considered to be the oldest form of the river Saraswati, but in time the river disappeared. In the time of Baba Deep Singh, rations were sent by the *Sangat* of Kewal, Dharampura, Takhtmal, Dadu, Tilokewala, Singhpura and Pakka Shaheeda for *Guru* ka *Langar* at Talwandi Sabo (Damdama Sahib).

Today, the village is located in Tehsil Kalanwali, District Sirsa, Haryana. Then the *Guru* sojourned at village Jharori, wherefrom he proceeded to village Jhanda. When the night fell, Feteh Singh and his brother Ram Singh left the *Guru's* camp. Rai Dalla placed his offerings comprising two gold bangles and one double-edged sword and slipped out of the *Guru's* camp and betook himself to his native place. These people did so because they could not shed their attachment with their people. Some others left the *Guru* gearing the difficulties of the arduous journey.

The *Guru* expressed surprise at the doings of Dalla particularly because he wished him to prepare himself for certain other jobs. when at dawn, the *Guru* asked where Dalla was, someone from amongst this followers told "There is no Dalla-Malla, there is only Allah and the *Guru*; the theme being that at that point of time, the *Guru* was all alone, determined to carry out his mission in spite of high risks involved in the process. The *Guru* remained calm and continued to march towards his destination.

The *Guru* reached Sirsa now in the state of Haryana which was a small town then. People expressed their regards for the *Guru* by serving him and his Sikhs. In the course of his stay, he was told that open goldsmith named Gulab Singh had been imprisoned in an underground cell by Nabi Bakhsh, the Chaudhri of the village, Khural. The reason was that he did not honour the order of the Chaudhri to offer his daughter to cater to his carnal fits. The *Guru* mounted his steed and taking five

Sikhs with him marched to the place. He freed Gulab Singh and chided the Chaudhri who out of fear prostrated at the *Guru's* feet. The *Guru* forgave him and instructed him to stop tyrannizing the people. The *Guru* having visited neighboring places such as Gobindpur came back to Sirsa. After this the *Guru* set out in the direction of Rajasthan reroute to Ahmadnagar where the Emperor was encamped.³

Passing through Haripur (Bad Tirath) the *Guru* reached Nauhar. Here the people were the votaries of Jainism. Instead of practicing the high ethical principles of their religion, their whole emphasis lay upon rejection of non-vegetarianism, which they thought was the only way to Bliss and social reconstruction. The *Guru* exposed the hollowness of their thinking and tried to make them understand the theory and practice and the ultimaticity of 'Non-violence'. Vegetarianism or non-vegetarianism is irrelevant to the process of building a good society as well as good individuals.

From Nauhar, the *Guru* proceeded to village Bhadra, where he was affectionately received by a Rajput family. The next halt of the *Guru* was at village Sahewa. During the course of travels, Dharam Singh and Param Singh carried the weapons and clothes of the *Guru*. they had taken a resolve to prepare a fresh cot for the *Guru* at his every halt.

Thencefrom the *Guru* proceeded to Bahaduran. There he gave horses, one each to Dharam Singh and Param Singh. Thereafter the *Guru* reached Sahena. From there he proceeded onwards to Madhu Singhnai. Bhai Ram Singh, a scion of Bhai Bhaktu, lost heart and beat a hasty retreat.

After this the *Guru* reached Pushkar Raj, a place of pilgrimage sacred to Brahma. The place earlier had been made hallowed by *Guru* Nanak. Pandit chetan Misar who was the in-charge of the place fell at the *Guru's* feet and received Pahul to join the Khalsa fellowship.

After this, he *Guru* reached Naraina also known as Dadudwara where the saint Dadu had lived. His shrine, by this time, had come under the charge of Mahant Jait Ram. One day the *Guru* saluted the sepulcher of Dadu by lifting an arrow to his head. The Khalsa took exception to it and demanded a tankhah (religious punishment). One of them, Man Singh quoted the *Guru's* own verse Gor Marhi Mat Bhul Na Mane (worship not even by mistake cemeteries). The *Guru* at once confessed guilt of religious misconduct and paid a sum of Rs.125/- part of which was spent on *Guru* Ka *Langar* and the rest on the purchase of a canopy to cover the place where food was served.

In the course of conversation, the Mahant raised certain pertinent question. Was the living-style the *Guru* had adopted appropriate especially when according to Dadu, attachment with material world was futile and in no way helpful in the process of spiritual ascent? Was it justifies to bear weapon? The *Guru* replied that materiality and spirituality are not exclusive to each other, rather they form the parts of the same whole. Both are to be developed if the individuals and world are to march ahead. God, man and the world are related to each other organically and certainly not antagonistically. God as the soul create or permeates everything, seen and unseen and hence material

things are not to be discarded or looked down upon, rather utilised and harnessed properly. Resort to weapons is legitimate, if it is done to eliminate evil in emulation of God as a 'smasher of the wicked'. According to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta 'While sojourning at Naraqina, the *Guru* asked the Mahant that he could secure help from the Rajput princes to eliminate the Mughal government. The Mahant replied that it was not possible'. There seems to be no plausibility in the statement of learned historian, for the Mahant being a recluse and indifferent to world affairs, had no worthwhile contracts with the Rajput princes. However, the *Guru* while traveling through Rajasthan, must have been disappointed at the political predilections of the Rajput princes. Except the Raja of Marwar, all other important princes such as Jai Singh of Mewar, Mokam Singh of Nagaor, Jai Singh of Jaipur, were openly on the side of Aurangzeb.

From Naraina, the *Guru* reached Kalot via Lali and Maghroda. Bhai Daya Singh and Dharam Singh on way back from Deccan met the *Guru* and related to him their experiences in the Deccan. The Emperor's Gurj-Bardar and Mansabdar had gone ahead towards Delhi with the royal farman for Munim Khan while Daya Singh and Dharam Singh came to the *Guru*. After this, the *Guru* reached Bhagaur, the headquarter of a parganah in the erstwhile Udaipur State about 70 miles north-east of Udaipur city. Here he heard the news of the death of Aurangzeb at Ahmednagar on February 20, 1707. The *Guru* decided to stop moving further towards the south. Aurangzeb being no more, March towards the South did not serve any purpose as now the *Guru* would not be able to build bridges of understanding between the Sikhs and the Mughal government nor could he arrange that the guilty Subedar Wazir Khan, was appropriately punished. He, therefore, decided to wait and watch and turn to Delhi where Revered Sundri and Sahib Kaur were living.

The war of succession had begun among the late emperor's sons. Prince Mauzzam (Bahadur Shah) was in Jamraud, a few miles away from Peshawar when his father died. Azam Shah (Tara Azam) who was in Deccan with his father at the time of his death assumed command of the imperial army and proclaimed himself as the next Emperor.

Bahadur Shah too marched from Jamraud to lay his claim to the throne. He left Jamraud in the last week of March, 1707, and reached Peshawar on the last day of the month. His trusted governor at Lahore, Munim Khan, had kept the troops in readiness for the long awaited war of succession and welcomed Mauzzam who was formally declared Emperor Bahadur Shah before he entered Lahore. Collecting men and money from the officials of the Mughal government in that part of the empire, he reached Delhi in the end of May. Wazir Khan, the Faujdar of Sirhind, had contributed eight lakhs. Mohammad Mauzzam left Delhi in the first week of June, took possession of treasures at Agra and moved toward dholpur to oppose Azam Shah, his rival claimant to the throne, who along with a huge army and his very intelligent and valorous son, Bidar Bakhat, was fast marching to this place.⁴

On the way to Delhi, Muazzam, who had first hand knowledge of the *Guru's* valour and his

influence in the Punjab, especially among the Sikhs, thought it appropriate to seek *Guru's* help, partly to avoid any Sikh trouble while he was busy in a civil war and partly to use the Sikhs in his cause. The *Guru's* contemporary Sainapat in Sri *Guru* Asobha says that the *Guru* was approached for help by Mauzzam's emissaries. William Irvine writes in this connection "It seems certain that Gobind Singh met Bahadur Shah at some point when the prince was on his march down the country from Lahore to Agra to contest the throne with his brother Azam Shah."

Bhai Jodh Singh, in his work Kalghi Dhar Hulas says that the Prince Muazzam deputed Nand Lal to persuade the *Guru* to join with his Sikhs promising at the same time on behalf of Bahadur Shah that he would look into and redress any grievance, the *Guru* might have against his house. The *Guru* read the letter and also listened to the pleadings of Bhai Nand Lal. Though the *Guru* was not sure of Bahadur Shah keeping his word once victory was his, yet he decided to offer help to him.

While reaching this decision, the *Guru* deemed to have been actuated by certain considerations. First, Bahadur Shah was a generous, munificent and extremely good-natured prince. His tolerance and amiability were in great contrast to the bigotry and hypocrisy of his predecessor, Aurangzeb. The *Guru* had himself seen that in spite of his father's instructions, he had refused to molest the *Guru* in 1695. The *Guru*, therefore, thought that if he won the battle of succession, he would be more amenable to liberal influences, especially his own. Secondly, as per law of primogeniture, which was prevalent among the Mughal rulers, Bahadur Shah being the eldest of the three living brothers (Mauzzam, Azam Shah and Kam Bux) had a legitimate right to the throne of his father. Thirdly, Nand Lal held out full assurance on behalf of the Prince. The *Guru* thought in terms of influencing Bahadur Shah in the same ways as he had envisaged a possible change of heart in the case of late Emperor, Aurangzeb.

According to the author of the book *Mulakat Da Parsang*, Bahadur Shah personally called upon the *Guru* at Delhi on May 20, 1707 to persuade him to assist him in his difficulty. The *Guru* agreed and deputed Kuldipak Singh as a liaison Officer who remained with the Emperor up to the end of the battle of Jajau on June 8, 1707. He also decided to send two to three hundred Sikhs soldiers under the command of Dharam Singh to side with Bahadur Shah, as a token of his moral support.⁵

The *Guru* at Delhi first stayed in a house lying at the back of Humayun's tomb. The site is now marked by the Gurdwara Damdama Sahib. As a token of love for the so-called low caste of Delhi on account of Bhai Jaita's valorous deeds, the *Guru* shifted to the colony of Shoe-makers, called Mochi Bagh. The *Guru* was so much impressed by their conduct that he changed the colony's name to Moti Bagh, the Garden of Pearls. A gurdwara stands at this place. It lies on the Ring Road now called Mahatma Gandhi Marg. When the *Guru* was in Delhi, a goldsmith supplicated for the boon of a son. He waited on the *Guru* a couple of times. One day the *Guru* was going to hunt in the

neighboring jungle, the goldsmith followed him along with the Sikhs. They had not gone far, when they saw a woman leaving a newly born male child in bushes. The *Guru* asked the goldsmith to adopt the child. Later, the child was adopted by Revered Sundri, the mother of the Khalsa who named him Ajit Singh.

The armies of Azam and Bahadur Shah clashed each other on June 8, 1707 at Jajau, situated between Agra and Dholpur. The fierce fire of joint armies of Bahadur Shah and of the *Guru* wrought terrible havoc in the ranks of Azam Shah and Bidar Bakht. Bidar Bakht was killed in action and immediately after, Azam also fell victim to an arrow.

Bhai Jodh Singh in Kalghidhar Hulas and Gian Singh in Twarikh *Guru* Khalsa hold that the *Guru* also reached the battlefield to assure Bahadur Shah's victory. According to Jodh Singh, the *Guru* told the prince "Have faith, you will get victory." *Guru's* word never goes in vain, the same author adds that the *Guru* pushed his horse near Azam's elephant and killed him with his arrows.

Muazzam inquired whose arrow killed Azam Shah. The arrow was pulled out of Azam's dead body. It was found to be gold-tipped arrow of the *Guru*. After the defeat and death of Azam and his son, the *Guru* left for Delhi forthwith without even meeting the Emperor.

Bahadur Shah who now became the undisputed Emperor of India honoured the Sikhs who had taken part in the battle and gave each of them precious gifts. He sent Dharam Singh to Delhi with a letter expressing his gratitude to the *Guru* for the help which he had rendered in the battle. The emperor also invited him to Agra.

The residence of the *Guru* at Delhi became the focus of the Sikhs and non- Sikhs. The *Guru* held congregation of Sikhs twice daily. He often visited Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib in Chandni Chowk, where his father, *Guru* Tegh Bahadur, was martyred on November 11, 1675. The *Guru* also paid visits to the site of Gurdwara Rakab Ganj where *Guru* Tegh Bahadur's headless body had been cremated by Lakhi Shah Lubana by setting his house on fire. The *Guru* raised a gurdwara at that spot as a memorial to the supreme sacrifice of his father.

After about a month's stay at Delhi, the *Guru* made preparation to leave for Agra in response to the invitation of the Emperor. The *Guru* made appropriate arrangements for the stay of Mata Sundri at Delhi under the protection of the Sikhs. Sahib Kaur, however, importuned him to allow her to accompany him. The *Guru* yielded to her request, ultimately.

The *Guru* on the third day after his departure from Delhi arrived at Mathura and encamped at Suraj Kund on the bank of Yamuna. He made a tour through Brindaban and visited all its famous places. Then he proceeded further on the road to Agra. He established his camp 12 Kms from Agra and 6 Kms from Bahadur Shah's camp.

Shortly after, Khan-i-Khanan, Munim Khan the Prime Minister invited the *Guru* to his palace

situated within a beautiful garden. The *Guru* along with his brave Sikh soldiers reached there. Munium Khan accorded the *Guru* a hearty welcome and received him with all the honour due to his position expressing, '*Guru ji*' you have done a great favour to me by coming out to my palace to allow me a n opportunity to have your sacred glimpse. The same day the *Guru* came back and laid his camp nearby. On the fall of night, heavy rains poured. The next day, the *Guru* made a rapid survey of the area close by and selected a garden, where he and his followers decided to stay.

The life-style at the camp was that of a true Khalsa. Assemblies met twice a day where information of the Sikh creed was given. People in hordes from far and near visited the camp to receive instructions.⁶

On July 23, 1707, Bahadur Shah invited the *Guru* to his court. The *Guru* and his Sikhs moved to the royal presence. He was accompanied by his soldiers, but at the gate of the palace of the Emperor, he instructed them to stay back except one Sikh whom he took along with him to the place where the Emperor met him. The *Guru* was having an aigrette fixed to his turban and other weapons along with him. His face looked resplendent and his personality radiant. The Emperor thanked the *Guru* for his help in the battle and offered valuable presents to the *Guru*. He distributed the presents to his Sikhs as well just as he did to his other generals.

He honoured the *Guru* as a revered saint and requested him to continue to lend his company frequently. The *Guru* was accompanied by two to three hundred horsemen and some more Sikhs on foot. The Emperor, in token of his respect for the *Guru*, presented a robe of honour including a jeweled scarf, a Dhukh Dhukhi, and an aigrette worth sixty thousand rupees. The *Guru* did not, however, put it on his person there as it was the custom, but asked one of his Sikhs to carry it to his camp. The Emperor did not mind this demeanor of the *Guru*, for he treated him as a holy saint and not as his servant or dependent.

According to Khazan Singh, another present of one Lakh of rupees was granted for Mata Sundri and sent to Delhi.

The *Guru* stayed there for about five months. During this period he met the Emperor quite often, who sought solace from the *Guru*. The discussion often revolved around two points religion and Sikh-Mughal relations.

What exactly transpired between the *Guru* and the Emperor during their meetings, we are not in a position to know; but even then circumstantial evidence and the Hukamnamas of the *Guru* help us to establish a few facts. The visit of the *Guru* first to Khan-i-Khanan, the Prime Minister, and then to the Emperor Bahadur Shah himself, had evidently a much greater significance than ordinary courtesy visits. The

Guru had left the Punjab for the Deccan at the invitation of Aurangzeb for a personal interview. The only subject that could be discussed between them was the Mughal- Sikh relations-the causes of their

estrangement, the ways and means of a peaceful solution of their problems and the implementation of the decisions arrived at between them. That alone again could be subject of *Guru's* talks with the Khan-i-Khanan and Emperor Bahadur Shah at Agra. The opportunity that had unfortunately been lost owing to the death of Aurangzeb, I had presented itself under happier circumstances and interview with the Prime Minister and the Emperor had taken place in a very cordial atmosphere. Both were grateful to the *Guru* for his ungrudging response to their appeal for help in the struggle for the throne and were happy over the success in this context. Since no reliable details of discussions with them are available in any of the extant contemporary records, Persian or Punjabi, it cannot, therefore, be said with certainty as to what hopes were held out to the *Guru* by Bahadur Shah but there is no denying the fact that the *Guru* was hopefully looking forward to a satisfactory conclusion of his negotiations with the Mughal Emperor and soon expected to return to Anandpur.⁷

Regarding the *Guru's* objectives which the *Guru* had in his mind while negotiating with Bahadur Shah many illogical and flimsy conclusions have been drawn. According to M.A. Macauliffe the *Guru* egged up by the spurt of revenge wanted Wazir Khan to be sentenced to death as per Muslim law. Dr. Hari Ram Gupta also opines like that and according to him, the *Guru* wanted Wazir Khan of Sirhind, Sucha Nand Diwan of Sirhind, Gangu Brahmin of Kheri, Jani and Mani of Morinda, Shamas Khan of Bajwara, Mukarram Khan of Jalandhar and Dilawar Khan of Lahore to be delivered to him.

Both the scholars have erred, and like a good historian, they have not cared to consider the mission of the *Guru* and his central tendency, nor have they based their conclusion on some reliable evidence. Harboursing revenge or taking resort to the revengeful act was in sharp contrast to the personality and mission of the *Guru* because revenge is an evil impulse and engenders hatred, and secondly, it has never solved any problem-much less the problem of improving human material. From the perusal of Zafar Nama and other sayings of the *Guru*, it is almost certain that the *Guru* did not want anything more from Bahadur Shah than was normally required-that the unjust and the oppressors of the people be removed from office or transferred to distant places to create peaceful conditions in the country. It was fundamental to Sikh religion that punishment was no solution to reform the sinner. The *Guru* had brought about the change in Emperor Aurangzeb through his conduct and sacred words sent in the form of Zafar Nama, and now he had all hopes to change the attitude of Bahadur Shah who happily was made of nobler and sublimer stuff as compared to his father. In all likelihood, the issue of resettling at Anandpur was also broached by the *Guru*.

The *Guru's* point-of-view seemed to have elicited affirmative response from the emperor, but hill chiefs of Shivalik and Wazir Khan, the Faujdar of Sirhind, were not feeling comfortable at the development.⁸

It is against the back drop of that the *Guru* issued instructions in the first week of October, 1707 to his Sikhs in the Punjab to join him fully armed on his arrival in Kahlur. For this, we have very reliable piece of documentary evidence in the *Guru's* own letter dated October 2, 1707 addressed from the neighborhood of Agra to the Sikhs of Dhaur. Translated into English, the letter reads as follows:

From the Tenth *Guru* - To the *Sangat* of Dhaur. You are my Khalsa. The *Guru* shall protect you. Repeat *Guru Guru*. With all happiness, we came to the Padshah. Dress of honour and a jeweled Dhukh dhukhi worth sixty thousand was presented to us. With the *Guru's* grace the other things are also progressing (satisfactorily). In a few days, we are also coming. My instructions to the entire Khalsa *Sangat* are to remain united. When we arrive in Kahlur, the entire Khalsa should come to our presence fully armed. He who will come shall be happy Sammat 1764, Kartik 1st.

The letter points to some other things, besides giving reference to the *Guru's* visit to Emperor Bahadur Shah, who presented to him a costly dress of honour. The other things could only be the friendly negotiations for a change in the century-old hostile attitude of the Mughals towards the Sikh *Gurus*. From the attitude of the Emperor during the interviews, the *Guru* seemed to have formed the impression that his negotiations would soon be concluded to his satisfaction, facilitating his early return to Anandpur. The only persons to be adversely affected, directly or indirectly, by the implementation of the peaceful settlement between the Emperor and the *Guru* were the hill Rajas of the Shivalik and Nawab Wazir Khan of Sirhind. To meet any emergency that might be created by them on his return to Anandpur in Kahlur state, the *Guru* asked Sikhs to join him fully armed. The irrefutable evidence of the letter also repudiates the conjecture that the *Guru* had left the Punjab either in despair or to arouse the Rajputs and Marathas against the Mughals. If the accidental changes in the circumstances, owing to the Prince Kam Bux's rebellion in Hyderabad, had not taken the *Guru* to the Deccan in company with the Emperor with whom the negotiations referred to above were then still in progress, in all probability, he would have returned to the Punjab.⁹

But the *Guru's* expectation of an early return to Anandpur, where he could pick up the old threads and continue with his mission, proved to be a wishful thinking. No doubt, the Emperor's gestures of goodwill towards the *Guru* were impressive, yet he was wary of agreeing to the demands of the *Guru*. With the issue of succession to Mughal throne not finally settled, he could ill-afford to annoy the Muslim fundamentalists' lobbies at the court by going against the interest of Wazir Khan who had the solid backing of the Naqshbandis, then led by Khalifa Saifud Din, and had contributed handsomely to the war fund of the Emperor for which he was given a stupendous raise in rank from 1500 zat 1700 sawar to 4500zat and 4000sawar (Akhbar-i-Mualla Dec. 1, 1707). At the same time, he could not afford to offend the *Guru* who had a considerable following of his devoted disciples, scattered all over the Punjab, possessed of the potential to disturb peace in the north-west.

Nor could he vex the hill chiefs because they were also a potent political factor having the capacity for creating trouble. Therefore, he was sagacious enough to realise that *Guru's* presence near his court was preferable to his dangerous freedom in the Punjab. But simultaneously he was careful enough not to let his real calculations known to the *Guru*, at least for the time being. His polite and kind demeanour towards the *Guru* was all the more impressive for its political, albeit negative advantage, to the new Emperor.

To the *Guru*, he gave the impression that when the affairs of succession were settled, he would favorably consider his demands. Political conduct of the Emperor, generally speaking, portended status quo so far as the relations of the Mughals with non-Muslims were concerned. According to news-letter of December 7, 1707, he sent orders to the imperial kotwal of Delhi (Sarfray Khan) to see that the Hindus should not ride in palanquins and ride on horses of Iraqi and in ears. They should also keep their heads shaved. The realisation of Jazia and pilgrim tax continued as it was prevalent in the period of Aurangzeb. The contemporary poet of Delhi, Mir Jafar Zatali also condemned, although in different context, that to take up service under Shah-e-Muazzam was to lead the life of a beggar and disgrace. Such conduct of the Emperor was indeed a malediction and much good could not be expected of him.

In view of all this, there was very little hope that Bahadur shah would do something in favour of *Guru*.

The *Guru* had also smelt the rat, but still he did not break off with him. Perhaps, he was yet under the impression that after dealing with the disturbances, the Emperor would do the needful.¹⁰

According to Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, 'The *Guru's* residence in the imperial camp was fatal mistake committed by the *Guru*. The entire Mughal court was anti-Hindu and anti-Sikh. The *Guru* was looked down upon as a rebel punishable with death. Wazir Khan was a hero for them, fit to be rewarded rather than punished. His representative was always in attendance at the court. He must have reported the matter to his master. The *Guru's* influence with the Emperor was looked down upon by one and all. Every courtier was alert to see that no harm came to Wazir Khan, while intrigues to harm the *Guru* were set afoot in right earnest.

Dr. Gupta's portrayal of the scenario is sufficiently correct phenomenological but the *Guru* was filled with the mission to bring about a change in the hearts of the fanaticized people and to give them a lesson in humanism, as also to people them to follow the course towards reconstruction of a society whose members were bound by the scarlet thread of love for each other, co-existing on the basis of mutual respect, equality and faith in Nam permeating all things, living and non-living. The *Guru* had achieved some success in this direction, the proof of which lay in the admiration of a large number of Muslims including Pir Budhu Shah, Gani Khan and Nabi Khan et al. Even Aurangzeb, the

arch-fundamentalist had to grow soft towards the *Guru* when he received his letter 'Zafarname' which was, in a way, an attempt to awaken divinity in Emperor. The *Guru*, therefore, was not discouraged, much less disappointed to work for his mission, even in the midst of hostile atmosphere. And the ray of hope there had always been, because Bahadur Shah respected and listened to him. If at the end, Bahadur Shah did not accede to the warrants of the *Guru* that formed a story in itself with a moral of its own. In fact, Bahadur Shah could not extricate himself from the syndrome of Muslim fundamentalism in spite of the divinely inspired forces of humanism as symbolised by the *Guru*.

Nevertheless, the *Guru's* apostolic approach forbade him to leave Bahadur Shah in a huff.¹¹

Emperor Bahadur shah lived at Agra in peace till November 12, 1707 A.D., when he had to go to Rajasthan as disturbances had broken out there. The Emperor reached Amber (Rajasthan) on January 20, 1708 A.D.. Raja Jai Singh Kachhwah had taken side of Azam Shah in the battle of Jajau and therefore had earned disfavour of the emperor. Now Bahadur Shah occupied Amber and confiscated the property and belongings of Raja Jai Singh. Then he made over the country of Amber to Bijal Singh, Jai Singh's younger brother, who had already served under Prince Mauzzam when he was viceroy of Kabul. After settling the affairs at Amber, Bahadur Shah advanced to Jodhpur via Ajmer. After a short sojourn at Ajmer during which he offered his prayers at the mausoleum of Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti, he proceeded towards his target Jodhpur, the capital of the state of the same name which, after the expiry of Aurangzeb, had been occupied by Ajit Singh, the Posthumous son of Jaswant Singh who had been actively assisted by his faithful general and patron Durga Das. The whole ethnic stock of Rathore Rajputs had rallied around Ajit Singh. After a lot of diplomatic exertions and show of strength, at long last Ajit Singh was prevailed upon to wait upon the Emperor and accept his suzerainty.

The difficulty with Jodhpur being thus, to all appearance satisfactorily disposed of, the Emperor retraced his steps from Mairtha, a town nearby Jodhpur.

On the 2nd April, 1708, the march was resumed in the direction of Chittor and Ujjain. On the 12th, the camp was not far from Hussinipur.

On the 14th April, 1708, Rana Amar Singh Sisodia sent a letter expressing reverence for the Emperor and an offering of twenty-seven gold coins. This gesture of the Tana assured the Emperor of the peaceful settlement of a large part of Mewar never accepting the legitimacy of the Mughal rule.

When the next day dawned, the Emperor was informed that the Rana had taken flight to the hills doubting the sincerity of the Emperor. Bahadur Shah felt much upset at the Rana's volte-face, but thought it politically expedient to first combat with his younger brother, Kam Bux, who had proclaimed his own sovereignty of the Mughal rule instead of acquiescing in that of Bahadur Shah.¹²

In Rajasthan, calm had been established, but it was uneasy. Sisodias, Rathores and Kachhawahs, the most important ethnic segments of Rajputs who had been smarting under the fundamentalist rule of Aurangzeb, were in a mood to assert, and if possible, to assume independence. This type of mood was manifest when on 30th April, 1708; Bahadur Shah was at the town of Mandeshwar. Maharaja Ajit Singh, Raja Jai Singh Kachhawah and durga Das Rathore, took to flight, throwing open challenge to the Mughal authority in Rajasthan which Bahadur She had recently established.

The *Guru* did not immediately start his march along with Bahadur Shah when he left Agra. He stayed back and joined him at Ajmer between March 24 and April 2, along with his trusted Sikhs. He saw for himself how the Rajput princes reacted to the advances of Bahadur Shah and with what great difficulty the Emperor could secure superficial calm . He must have also noted how Aurangzeb's rabid fundamentalism had engendered innate hatred for the Mughal rule equally among the Rajput commonality and Rajput elites.

Even in the midst of mirk and dross, the *Guru's* mobility shone forth and its lustre enlightened whosoever came to his sublime presence, or to the assemblies ofthe Sikhs, held twice daily.

En route to Amber, the *Guru* visited village Sanward seventy-two kilometres distant from Amber. He also visited Udaipur Wati in the region of Sekhawati. The Jagirdars as well as the people of these places showed utmost respect. It is said that one of the Jagirdars of Sanward was blessed with a copy of *Adi Granth*. At Ajmer, the *Guru* encamped at a short distance from Mughal encampments. Tradition goes that the *Guru* paid a visit to the Masouleum of Khwaja Muinuddin Chisti and honoured its custodians with Hukamnama (an epistle of benediction) (Piara Singh: *Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji Di Rajasthan Yatra*).

On April 30, 1708, the Emperor was at Mandeshwar and sojourning at different places. He reached the bank of river Narbada in the second week of May, 1708.

While the imperial camp halted on the bank of Narbada River, a Muslim trooper killed Man Singh, one of the three devoted Sikhs, who escaped the battle of Chamkaur to swim and sink with the *Guru* even ion his horrific predicamernt. The *Guru* was naturally much upset. The Emperor ordered that his murderer should be seized and handed over to the *Guru* for punishment. The *Guru* forgave him and lethim go scot-free, understandably to make him and all those of his ilk realise the *Guru's* house was incorrigibly merciful because mercy being the quality of God could engender vital forces in a sinner to shun committing sins again.¹³

The *Guru* and the Emperor crossed river Narbada on May 17, 1708. During his halts en route, the *Guru* and the Emperor had their separate camps. According to Khafi Khan, the historian of the time, the *Guru* was proceeding towards southern India with Emperor Bahadur Shah at the head of two or three hundred horsemen and also infantry men armed with spears.

Bahadur Shah reached Burhanpur situated on the river Tapti towards the end of June. The *Guru's* camp also followed him. Where the *Guru* stayed, that place was known as Khooni Bhandar-the Bloody Spot-because at one time six cruel lions had been killed there.

The *Guru* was very warmly received here by the people. Sikhism had already made its niche in the psyche of a considerable section of its population. At this place, a number of missionary centers of Suthre Shahis and Udasies were doing work of proselytisation for quite a long time. Bhai Gurdas in his eleventh Var Pauri 30, had clearly referred to Bhai Tirath, Har Das and Dhir et al. engaged in missionary work at Burhanpur with the result that a large number of people had embraced Sikh religion.

A Maratha writer, Sainapat, who is the author of Sri *Guru* Sahai says, "*Guru* came to this area for preaching to people of all shades and religious groups, who attended congregations." The *Guru's* holding of assemblies and imparting religious education has also been vouchsafed by Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi.

All these witnesses prove beyond doubt that the *Guru*, while journeying along with the Emperor, did not lose sight of his central concern which was that humankind should be elevated spiritually and ethically to be ever humanistically dynamic.

The *Guru* stayed at Burhanpur for twenty days during which period he, apart from meeting his Sikhs and non-Sikh devotees, stole time to visit Raj Ghat, a place on the bank of river Tapti, made sacred by *Guru* Nanak's visit earlier as also to have interface with other spiritual luminaries including Mahatma Jiwan Das, an aged holy personage who had chosen to be an 'Udasi' and had earlier met *Guru* Hargobind and *Guru* Tegh Bahadur.¹⁴

The *Guru* also met Mahant Jait Ram of Dadu Dwara who per chance was there. Jodi Jiwan Das and Mahant told the *Guru* about one Bairagi Madho Das and his great occult power.

The Emperor, who had left Burhanpur after a stay of one or two days, now wrote to the *Guru* to join him. According to Giani Ishar Singh Nara, Bahadur Shah did not want that the *Guru's* influence among the people should increase. The *Guru* being embodiment of transparent sincerity, uprightness, and truthfulness, did not doubt the Emperor and left Burhanpur. On the way, he sojourned at Jainabad, Balapur and Akola. Thereafter, he stayed first at Banera and then at Amravati.

From here the *Guru* proceeded to Hingoli. At some distance from this place, the *Guru* joined Bahadur Shah and held his camp at a distance of two three miles from Emperor's camp. Both Bahadur Shah and the *Guru* followed the route via Malikpur, crossed Ban Ganga on August 13, 1708 and in the beginning of September, 1708 both the camps halted at Nander, a place of pilgrimage on the river Godavari and about a hundred and fifty miles to the north-east of Hyderabad.

Throughout the journey from Agra to Nander, the *Guru* utilised his time for the propagation of his mission. Dr. Ganda Singh writes that at times the *Guru* was not seen in either of the two camps

for days together even for a whole week and was busy suffusing the people with Sikh religion. On the way, he also acquired first-hand perception of men and matters around.

George Forest in his letter XI in A Journey from Bengal to England (Published, London, 1798, Vol. I, pp. 262-63) vouchsafes "He (*Guru* Gobind Singh) even received marks of favour from Bahadur Shah who being apprised of his military abilities gave him a charge in the army which marched into the Deccan to oppose the rebellion of Ram Buchish (Kam Bux)." Many of the later historians including Elphinstone dittoed him. Elphinstone asserted that Forster's account was confirmed by Khafi Khan. But this is not correct. Khafi Khan says that "*Guru* Gobind Singh accompanied Bahadur Shah with 200-300 horsemen carrying spears and some infantry. His exact words were:

*Dar Ayam Ke Bahadur Shah Padshah Matwaju
Haidrabad Gardindant Gobind Nam Az Sargrohan
Aan Kaum Badnam Bahazur Rasida Ba
Do Sad She Sad SAwar Neiza Dar Wa Piadah Dar
Raqab Rafaqat Namud.*¹⁵

There is no ambiguity about the words 'Rafaqat namud' which only means accompanied and nothing more. The events in the life of the *Guru* do not lend any support to the aforesaid statement. At Agra, we find the *Guru* ordering the dress of honour presented to him by the Emperor to be carried away by a follower instead of carrying it according to court etiquette and practice in the royal presence. This was a rare privilege never allowed to officials or servants of the state. Again, during his southward march, *Guru* sometime separated himself from Bahadur Shah's camp for a number of days to carry on his missionary work. Twarikh-i-Bahadur Shah tells us come into these districts to travel and accompanied the royal camp. He was in the habit of constantly addressing assemblies of worldly persons, religious fanatics and allsorts of people."

This could certainly not have been permitted to a servant of state especially when he was proceeding on a military expedition against a threatening rebellion. There is still another strong evidence against a threatening rebellion. There is still another strong evidence against Forster's wrong conclusion. On the 5th Ramzan, 1121 H. (November 7, 1708) a month after death of the *Guru*, a report was made to the Emperor Bahadur Shah as to the disposal of movable property of the *Guru* Gobind Singh. It was of considerable value and according to rule (applicable to imperial officials and servants of the state) ought to be confiscated. The emperor remarked that he was not in want of the goods of a Darvesh and ordered that the whole should be relinquished to the heirs. The Akhbar-e-Darbar-i-Maualla (Rajasthan State Archives) had one entry on November, 1708, where the Emperor is reported to have said "The imperial treasury will not flourish with these good, it is the property of Darveshain-Saints. It should not be interfered with." Here Emperor also did not consider the *Guru* as a state servant.

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