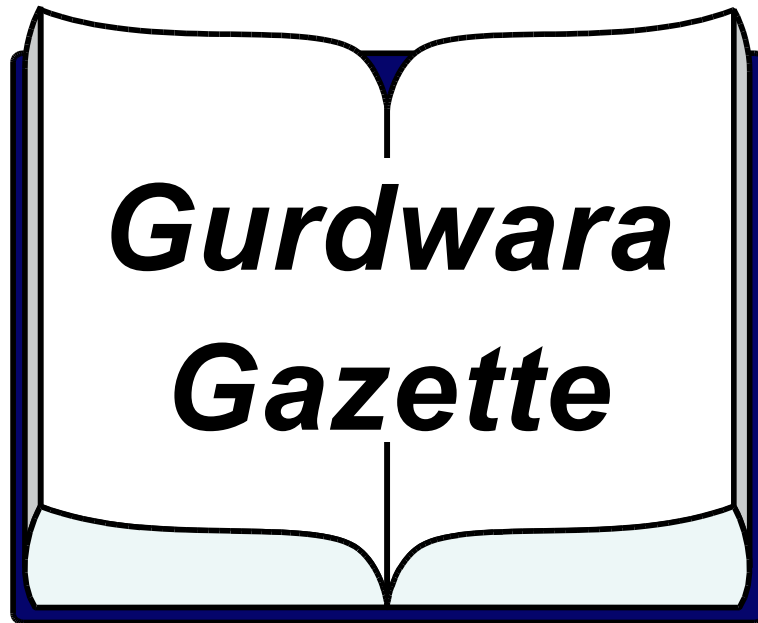


English Section



Editor : Manjit Singh

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DAYS COMMEMORATING HISTORICAL EVENTS
(16th May to 15th June)

- 16 May (a) The Sikhs attacked Lahore. Ahmed Shah Durani's Regent offered Sikhs to collect custom duty on all the goods coming from Multan side. The Sikhs rejected Durani's offer. (16-5-1764)
- (b) Akali Dal passed a resolution that only Amritdhari (baptised) Sikhs should be given job in Gurdwaras. (16-5-1939)
- (c) British "Cabinet Mission" released its report and conceded the demand of Pakistan. (16-5-1946)
- 17 May Sant Harchand Singh Longowal elected as a president of Shiromani Akali Dal. (17-5-1981)
- 22 May Sikh passengers reached Vancouver (Canada) by Komagata Maru ship. (22-5-1914)
- 23 May Sahibzada Ajit Singh led Sikh army to punish Ranghars of Nuh. (23-5-1699)
- 25 May Delegation of 16 Brahmins from Kashmir under headship of Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt visited Chakk Nanaki and requested Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib to protect them from forcible conversion of their religion to Muslim by the Mughal regime. (25-5-1675)
- 26 May (a) Sri Guru Arjan Dev ji arrested, imprisoned and tortured for three days. (26-5-1606)
- (b) Publication of Sikh papers, 'Akali' and 'Parbhat', stopped by government. All the employees were arrested and sent to jail. (26-5-1960)
- 27 May Open firing by police at Gurdwara Dukh Niwaran Sahib Patiala. (27-5-1984)
- 29 May Moghul emperor ordered charging double Jaziyah from the Sikhs. (29-5-1711)
- 1 June (a) Maharaja Ranjit Singh got Koh-i-Noor diamond. (1-6-1813)
- (b) Seventh Shaheedi Jatha (group of martyrs) left Akal Takhat

- Sahib for Jaito. (1-6-1924)
- (c) Hindi and Punjabi medium stream started in the schools of Punjab. (1-6-1948)
- (d) Indian army fired at Sri Harimander Sahib and killed 11 Sikhs. (1-6-1984)
- 2 June (Maharaja) Ranjit Singh captured Multan. (2-6-1818)
- 3 June Indian army attacked 120 Sikh Gurdwaras including Sri Harmandir Sahib and thousands of innocent Sikhs were killed in that attack. Curfew imposed and they arrested Akali leaders of Punjab. (3-6-1984)
- 4 June (a) Indian forces invaded Sachkhand Sri Harimander Sahib, Sri Darbar Sahib, Sri Amritsar and more than 36 other shrines. Thousands of Sikhs killed. All the Akali leaders arrested. (4-6-1984)
- (b) USA condemned Indian atrocities on the Sikhs. (4-6-1987)
- 5 June Indian army continued killing Sikhs, Several Sikhs killed with their hands tied on their backs and rest of them killed after being arrested. (5-6-1984)
- 6 June (a) Indian forces occupied the Sikh shrines, libraries and museums. Most of them were set on fire. (6-6-1984)
- (b) Several thousand Sikhs marched towards Amritsar to stop sacrilege. Hundreds of Sikh marchers were shot dead. Several thousand Sikhs, including women and children were arrested. (6-6-1984)
- 7 June Sikh soldiers protested against army attack on Sri Harimander Sahib and when they left for Amritsar several Sikh soldiers were killed and thousands were arrested by Government. (7-6-1984)
- 9 June (a) Baba Banda Singh Bahadur's son tortured to death, his heart pulled out and thrust into Banda Singh's mouth. Baba Banda Singh were cut limb by limb. Several other Sikhs were killed on the same day also. (9-6-1716)
- (b) Martydom of Bhai Tara Singh of village Wan (Amritsar). (9-6-1726)
- 10 June (a) 8th Shaheedi Jatha (Group of martyrs) left Akal Takhat Sahib for Jaito. (10-6-1924)

- (b) The Sikhs took out huge procession at London, New York and in the Capitals of all the major countries throughout the world to protest against attack on Sri Harimander Sahib. (10-6-1984)
- 11 June The Sikh soldiers left army barracks at Ramgarh to protest against the attack on Sri Harimander Sahib, Sri Darbar Sahib, under 'Operation Blue Star' and began march to Amritsar. (11-6-1984)
- 12 June (a) "Khalsa Akhbar" launched by Professor Gurmukh Singh and Giani Jhanda Singh. (12-6-1886)
- (b) The Sikh procession at Delhi fired at by police. Harbans Singh and three others were killed and several were injured (some of them died later). (12-6-1960)
- 13 June Master Tara Singh became the president of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. (13-6-1936)
- 14 June Dr. Ganda Singh returned Padam Sri Award to Govt. of India as a protest against invasion of Sri Darbar Sahib by the Indian army. (14-6-1984)



ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ
ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਣ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ ੪੭੩)

In continuation with the last edition:

Asht Ratnas- Eight Eminent Sikhs

-S. Surjit Singh 'Gandhi'

We are taking pleasure while publishing these contents from the book '*History of the Sikh Gurus*' by *S. Surjit Singh Gandhi* former Head of Sikh History Research Board (SGPC).

Bhai Jaita ji

The Sikh religion up to the time of Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji had caught the imagination of the Panjab and outside. The down-trodden section of the people which is always the biggest one in the feudal social structure was specially attracted towards it because of its emphasis on ameliorating the condition of the people both on social and economic planes. If statistical data is considered to be a reliable pointer, it can be safely surmised that the people whom the Guru sahibs met or about whom he spoke were mostly the poor, the down-trodden and the so-called low caste people. The Gurus focalised notice of such people led him to the framing of ideology whose focal point was such people. Hence the emergence of such people as the staunchest supporter of the Gurus was a must, and no wonder, Bhai Jaita ji served the cause of the Guru even at the risk of his life like so many others of his social status.

Who Bhai Jaita ji was has been a matter of great controversy. Shri Gill has tried to prove that he was a son of Sada Nand, a Brahmin who was employed as an astrologer in the court of Aurangzeb and who belonged to Mathura. Sardar Gill quotes from 'Sisnama' a book written by Giani Chatur Singh. But the view is wrong because Chatur Singh does not quote any source. Moreover there are certain indefensible facts which inhere the description of Bhai Jaita ji by Giani Chatur Singh. Giani ji says, "that the Sada Nand went to Aurangzeb to give his predictions. Before doing so, he recited a Shabad upon which Aurangzeb lost temper, ordered him to get off. Sada's father, Jas Bhan turned him out of his house making out to the people that he had turned mad."

The story suffers from serious snags. In the first instance Aurangzeb did not like to consult any Hindu astrologer and secondly no astrologer of the name of Sada is mentioned in any contemporary records. So far as the recitation of Shabad is concerned, it contains nothing which can annoy anybody. Moreover, had he been a Brahmin or a Khatri, there was no need on the part of the Guru to call him 'Rangretta Guru ka Beta.' In that case, he would have said "Brahmin or Kshatriya Guru ka Beta." In fact, Bhai Jaita ji belonged to scavenger's class and Rangretta is the name given to it and they are called by this name even today in different parts of the Panjab.

Which place did he belong to is also a matter of controversy among the scholars. Chatur Singh says, "that his parents belonged to Mathura." Prof. Kartar Singh regards him as the inhabitant of Ramdaspur near Amritsar. Prof. Kartar Singh mentions that Sada left Ramdaspur in the wake of the death of his beloved wife, Bibi Premo along with his son Jaita and went to Bakala at the time when as a result of the efforts of Makhan Shah and others, the fictitious Guru were fully exposed and constrained to leave Bakala. There he embraced Sikhism and became a devout Sikh of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji.

Though we have not come across any contemporary or semi-contemporary evidence, yet the tradition of Ramdas being the cradle place of Bhai Jaita ji is too strong to be brushed aside.

Recently we have come across the following entry in Bhat Vahi Multani Sindhi which records that Bhai Jaita ji's father's name was Agya Ram who was the resident of Mohalla Diwali Sikhan Delhi. In view of this, evident conclusion may be drawn that Bhai Jaita ji belonged to Delhi and his father was not Sada but some other man. But a little probe into matter will bring into relief the reality. In fact Bhai Agya, after the death of his wife began to live a life of resignation, self-absorbed and oblivious of the world around. People often unable to penetrate into the real self of the man began to call him 'Sada', the simpleton.

After his visit to Bakala, Sada decided to pass his days while rendering service to the Guru and thereafter he seemed to have always been in attendance upon the Guru. Bhai Jaita ji also remained in the court of the Guru, of course, with his father. All Sikh records say that when Jaita ji was taken to Baba Bakala by Agya, he was yet a child. If childhood is assigned 5 years or a little more, it means that he had the privilege of long company of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji upto the age of seventeen. During these years, he must have imbibed the requisite spirit of espousing

the cause of Sikhism. Whether he accompanies the Guru in his tours, nothing can be said with certainty, but there is every possibility that he was with the Guru when he left Kiratpur for tours to the places in the north and west of India. On way back to Kiratpur, it seems that Bhai Agya and his son Jaita decided to settle at Mohalla Dilwali, Delhi. Bhai Jaita ji, as also his father, being dedicated Sikhs, took to preaching the Guru's Gospel and they were quite well-known, having intimate contact with all important Sikhs including Lakhi Shah and his sons.

Bhai Jaita ji used to come to Anandpur Sahib off and on to keep himself a breast of the latest instructions of the Guru and when Guru Tegh Bahadur ji was arrested and taken to Delhi, Bhai Jaita ji came to Anandpur Sahib to pay his homage to the young Guru, Gobind Singh and also to apprise him of the situation and the mind of the Mughal Government. Whether Guru Gobind Singh gave him certain instructions or not, one thing is clear that he must have gone back to Delhi, fully inspired and duly determined to do his best to serve the cause of the Guru.

The fateful day came on November 11, 1675 and executioner's sword severed the head of the Guru. The headless body and the head lay in front of kotwali in the Chandni chowk which used to be the most thronged place in the city. The plan of the government was to cut the body into four pieces and to quarter them all sides of Delhi. Bhai Jaita ji could not withstand all this. Bhai Nanu a washerman Sikh, also of Diwali Gate, also felt like Jaita ji. Both of them met each other. Bhai Agya also took part in the deliberation. According to Bansawali Nama and Bhat Vahis, Bhai Nanu picked up the head, went home and asked Bhai Jaita to do the needful. Bhai Jaita wrapped the head in a piece of cloth, put the sacred head in a basket and covered it with flowers. He, regardless of the inconvenience ran towards Anandpur Sahib. He was accompanied by his father and Nanu. On the way, he stopped at four places Viz Sonapat, Ambala, Nabha (Near Chandigarh) and Kiratpur. At Kiratpur Guru Gobind Singh received the hallowed head of his father, took it with all reverence to Anandpur where it was consigned to fire. Guru Gobind Singh ji was so much moved at the courage and devotion of Bhai Jaita ji that he took him in tight embrace, kissed him and announced 'Rangretta Guru ka Beta' i.e. to say 'Bhai Jaita is the son of the Guru'.

Since then Bhai Jaita ji had started living at Anandpur. The Guru was all affection for him, and had full faith in his capability to further Guru's cause. The archaeological evidence is pertinent at this point. At Anandpur, there is a build-

ing known as Tap Asthan 'place of meditation' of Bhai Jaita ji, very close to Guru Gobind Singh's dwelling place. No other Sikh had his house as near as Bhai Jaita ji. This thing leads us to conclude that Guru Gobind Singh had special regard for Jaita ji. Tradition says that Bhai Jaita ji not only used to meditate and reflect on Guru's word but also gave lessons on Sikhism to the people. 'Tap Asthan' in Sikh context does not mean a place of an ascetic, rather by this is meant the place where Sikh culture is imbibed and steps taken to inculcate it among the people.

Bhai Jaita ji witnessed variegated activities of Guru Gobind Singh at Paonta Sahib and possibly it was here that Bhai Jaita ji became and adept in the art of archery, gunnary, swords-manship and horsemanship.

In the battle of Bhangani and various other battles which Guru Gobind Singh fought, Bhai Jaita ji played his part well. In the absence of any recorded account, it is not possible for us to give any details of his acts of bravery, yet it is irrefutable that he was one of the greatest generals of the Guru's army.

On March 30, 1699, when Guru Gobind Singh inaugurated the order of the Khalsa he took 'Khande ki Pahul' and was then given a new name, Jiwan Singh.

Guru Gobind Singh evacuated Anandpur Sahib on the night of 6-7 Poh Samvat 1762 B.K. (5-6 December, 1705). The moment the enemy got wind of the departure of the Sikhs, they forgot all about their pledges and set out in hot pursuit immediately. Skirmishes commenced from Kiratpur onwards. Realizing the impending danger, Guru Gobind Singh ji gave a band of 50 men to Bhai Uday Singh and charged him with the responsibility of checking the enemy's advancement. Bhai Uday Singh fought at Shahi Tibbi with the enemy with a handful of men; all of them perished fighting covering themselves with imperishable glory.

When the battle of Shahi Tibbi was in progress, Guru Gobind Singh, along with the rest of Carvan lost no time to reach the bank of Sarsa river. Bhai Jaita ji was with the Guru, advancing and planning.

About this time, the news arrived that a contingent of enemy troops was fast approaching and was likely to launch an attack in a short time. The river was in high flood at that time, and it was apprehended that in the eventuality of an attack from the enemy, it would become all the more difficult to cross it. Under the circumstances, it was considered imperative by the Guru to set apart a Jatha out of his Sikhs for checking the further advance of the enemy. The choice of the

leadership of the Jatha fell on Bhai Jiwan Singh who proved himself worthy of the trust reposed in him by the Master. The Bhai and his brave 100 companions offered a stout and stubborn resistance to the enemy and all of them died martyrs. Sarup Singh Kaushak, the author of 'Guru Kian Sakhian' records as under:-

"A momentous battle was fought on the bank of Sarsa, the arrows of Bhai Jiwan Singh brought havoc upon the enemies. All the Sikhs fought gallantly with a total disregard of their lives. A large number of the Turks were killed in the battle-field. A hard contest took place between the two parties for half pahar (four and half hours). Then suddenly as a result of a volley of matchlocks Jiwan Singh was shot in his forehead. His departing words were 'Wah Guru ji ki Fateh'. By the sun rise, all the Sikhs had lost their lives".¹

References:

1. ਜੀਵਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਬੇਟਾ ਆਗਿਆ ਕਾ, ਪੋਤਾ, ਦੁਲੂ ਕਾ, ਬਾਸੀ ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਮਹਲਾ ਦਿਲਵਾਲੀ ਸੌ ਸਿਖੋਂ ਕੋ ਗੈਲ ਲੈ ਸੰਬਤ ਸੜਾ ਸੈ ਬਾਸਨ ਪਖੋ ਮਾਸੇ ਸੁਦੀ ਦੂਜ ਵੀਰਵਾਰ ਨੇ ਦਿਹੂੰ, ਸਰਸਾ ਨਦੀ ਦੇ ਤੀਰ ਰਾਜਾ ਅਜਮੇਰ ਚੰਦ ਬੇਟਾ ਭੀਮ ਚੰਦ ਕਾ, ਪੋਤਾ ਦੀਪ ਚੰਦ ਕਾ ਪੜਪੋਤਾ ਤਾਰਾ ਚੰਦ ਕਾ, ਬੰਸ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਚੰਦ, ਚੰਦੇਲ ਗੋਤਰ ਰਾਣੇ ਕੀ ਫੌਜ ਗੈਲ ਦਸ ਘਰੀਆਂ ਜੂਝ ਕੋ ਸਾਮ੍ਹੇ ਮਾਥੇ ਸਹਾਦਤ ਪਾਈ। ਆਗੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਭਾਣੇ ਕਾ ਖਾਵਿੰਦ, ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਜਾਣੇ, ਗੁਰੂ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਪਣਾ ਜਨਮ ਸਉਰੇਗਾ।

Conti....

Appeal

The devotees are requested to bring the 'PAVAN BIRS' of Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Old ones for SANSKAR) to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Bhawan, Gurdwara Ramsar Sahib complex near Gurdwara Shaheed Ganj Baba Deep Singh Ji 'Shaheed' Sri Amritsar Sahib only instead of Sri Akal Takhat Sahib. This has been decided to facilitate the 'SANGAT' for the Holy Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Newly published) are available at the same venue.

-Guru Panth Da Das-

**Secretary,
Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee,
Sri Amritsar Sahib**

Patna Sahib: Guru Gobind Singh's legacy (PART-I)

JAGMOHAN SINGH GILL*

The Sikhs worldwide are celebrated the 352nd Parkash Purab of the most revered, the great path-finder of new horizon and the Badshah-Darvesh (King and Saint), Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Every year thousands visit to His place of birth Patna Sahib, Bihar, India - where stands one of the five Takhts - Takht Sri Harmandar Ji - to celebrate the auspicious occasion with great grandeur. Guru Gobind Singh Ji was the embodiment of spirituality, a messiah to fight for equality among human beings, and stand up against suppression, and tyrannic brutalities, without hesitating to use the sword for this cause. ਤਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਭਯੋ, ਪਟਨਾ ਸਰ ਬਿਖੈ ਭਵ ਲਯੋ ॥ "Tahi Parkash Hamara Bhayo, Patna Shahar Bikhe Bhav Layeo", this is how Guru Gobind Singh Ji himself mentioned about his birth in the city of Patna in his biography - Bachitar Natak. Guru Gobind Singh ji did not aim to defeat enemies or captive them and grab their territories, but to create of good human beings. The beauty of Khalsa was divulged. Great nations are always known for their thoughts and deeds. Nishan Sahibs and Parchams (Flags) are the tallest of tall pillars, symbolising great courage. Religion bridges the gap between a human being and his social order. Valour is not a mere display of raising hands, but demonstration of courage with discipline in difficult times. Birth of 'Dasam-Pita' Guru Gobind Singh Ji at Patna, beacon of these great Godly and humanist messages, was a good augury for the human race. Guru Gobind Singh ji's father the ninth Nanak, Guru Teg Bahadur ji, along with his family and large contingent of Sikhs launched a special tour espousing for the cause of 'Sarbat Da Bhalla' (welfare of the universe), towards the east of the country in the 17th century. Guru Ji reached Patna via Allahabad, Varanasi, Mirzapur and Sasaram with a sizable population of Sikhs at these places, Sangats and Dharamshalas emerged as the places of congregation. Guru Ji's holy message concerning the Almighty spread at every corner and among the masses. Patna had already established itself as the main centre of the Sikhs in Eastern India. At

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that time Patna had emerged as India's most important commercial centre and was reckoned as a cosmopolitan city. Patna in 17th century was an important river-port and boasted a flourishing economy with a share in the activities of the English, Dutch and other European's East India Company. We are thus discussing the evolution of the capital city of Bihar from Pataliputra to Patna. This being one of the oldest cities of country, we can divide its historical significance and background in two phases. Earlier period of Patna before Parkash of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. The history of Patna starts about two thousand years before Prakash or advent of Tenth master Guru Gobind Singh Ji. It was known as Pataliputra and the capital of Magadha. The city was developed and built on a high ground in the confluence of the rivers the Ganga, the Sone, the Gandhak and the Pun-Pun. The city is marked as a symbol of the rise of Maurya and Gupta Kingdoms. Patliputra, its old name in Sanskrit, was even called Kusumpura and Pushpapura. In Greek it was referred to as Palli-Bothra and in Chinese as Paa-Lin-Fou. We also get some references in ancient mythology of the Puranic period. Emperor Ashoka's edicts sculpted on stone at Sarnath and Girnar confirm it. Chandra Gupta Maurya defeated the Greek King Selucus in Punjab and thus became the master of the entire North India. Then he spread his kingdom and extended his empire under the guidance of his spiritual and political mentor Chanakya came to be known as Magadha Empire. This was mentioned in the works of several chroniclers like Megasthenis, Hieun Tsang, Fa-Hien etc. The city is reflected in the traditional Buddhist and Jain cultures. Many marauders attacked and ruined this city in different phases which resulted in its being completely ruined between the 11th and the 12th centuries. After the eclipse of the empire a few people lived here due to its navigable significance. Some signs of this once thriving city are also found in the 15th Century. Guru Nanak Sahib visited this place during his first Udasi; the amazing tour to share the message of the Almighty along with the Universality of three basics Kirat Karo, Naam Japo and Wand Chako to human-beings among masses. According to Janamsakhis, Guru Nanak Sahib made the journey through Allahabad and Varanasi and then reached Patna. Here Guru Ji preached devout Sikhs like Salis Rai Johuri and Adharka Arora to walk the path of truth. The city's reconstruction was started during the rule of Emperor Sher Shah Suri of Afghan origin in the year 1541. He built a fort and established it as a provincial capital. The name of Patna emerged. One of the many meanings of Patna can be Pattan. In Sanskrit, Punjabi, Hindi or Latin (from Pontoon) the meaning of Pattan

means the port situated on the banks of a river or the sea. In Patna there are two old Temples of Patan Devi. Patan Devi may be the goddess of people living along the banks of river. This is special trend among the Khattris. They had a whole array of images of their god or goddess as idols. They keep the idols of Kul-Devi or Kul Dewta wherever they settle and establish temples to keep them there. Behind name of Patna there may be several other reasons too. During the period of the Emperors Akbar, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, the city of Patna had a steady growth. Owing to its strategic location on the banks of big rivers it became a major river-port. Raja Todarmal one of nine gems or stalwarts (Navratna) in the court of Akbar, measured the land of eastern India making collection of revenue easier. He belonged to a Khatri family of Lahore. He accompanied many people from Punjab and Delhi having expertise in collection of revenue, measurement of land, administrative jobs and many other supporting activities. Most of them were Khattris. Patna city emerged as a metropolis during the great visit of Ninth Master Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. The people of Punjabi background (Hindu and Muslim) were present in siezable numbers. They had a good say in the market activities of Patna. In between Marufganj, Nadirganj and Chowk Bazar, the population of Khattris, including Saraswat Brahmins (Punjabi origin), was markedly found. Among them, Harimandir Galli, Jiria Tamolin Ki Galli, Hira Nand Shah Ki Galli, Bagh-Lodhan Galli, Kachauri Galli and some other are to be mentioned. We get many references of the presence of Salis Rai Johury and Adharka Arora in Sikh history. Bhai Gurdas in his Vaars wrote about the presence of Bhai Badli Sodhi, Bhai Naval and Bhai Nihala Sabharwal in Patna, Bhai Bhanu Behl in Rajmahal and some other Sikhs during his time. During the time of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji, Jaita Seth, Raja Fateh Chand Maini, Rani Visambhra Devi, Pandit Shiv Dutt, Jagat Seth (then India's wealthiest banker), and possibly the family of Amirchand, who became the richest businessmen during the 18th century in the city of Calcutta, also resided along with large number of devotees having faith in Sikhism at Patna. They were recognized as the Sangat of Patna or Poorbi Sangat. Guru ji parted from with his family went further eastward to spread the message of the Lord Creator under the protection of these local Sikhs. Among those who he left behind was his mother Bebe Nanki, wife Mata Gujari Ji, and her brother Kripal Chand Ji, and some other Sikhs. The new house was constructed with the permission of Guru Sahib for their stay. The same year, on the day of Poh Sudi Sapatami,

year (1666 CE) Guru Gobind Singh Ji arrived in this world. At that time the Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib was at Dhaka, preaching Gurbani. Patna: Period after the Parkash of Tenth Master Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Early childhood of Guru Gobind Singh ji was spent in Patna. The sangat of Patna looked after the family of Guru with great excitement, utmost care, respect and devotion. The early life of Guru Ji was of great astonishment. Every type of basic needs and other requirements were looked into with care. According to the belief of many historians, Guru Ji stayed here for almost six years. As per Guru Teg Bahadur Ji's wish the entire family was recalled to Anandpur Sahib. The entire Sangat of Patna bid farewell to Guru Ji and his family with moist eyes. They were not able to bear separation from their beloved Guru leaving Patna permanently. But it was a must for Tenth Master and his family had to move towards Anandpur. Among the Sangat, the country's richest banker Jagat Seth was present. He told Guru Ji that in every prominent town or city he was having his big houses with Gomostas and caretakers and urged him to stay at those stop-overs with comfort there while travelling to Anandpur Sahib. But Guru Sahib, the messenger of Almighty, had a different preference for staying amongst normal Sadh-Sangat. Guru Ji had blessed the sangat of Patna before he started his journey further. Patna, then a key commercial city of Bengal (Bihar at the time was part of Bengal), established direct contacts with European and Asian countries. The world's major trading peoples like the Parsis, the Armenians, the Jews, the British, the Dutch, the Danish, the French, the Portuguese, the Chinese, the Pathans, the Khojas, and the Arabs not to speak of the Moghuls within the country, had trade relations with Patna. India's major merchants the Khattris, the Jains, the Marwaris, the Gujaratis, the Sindhis and several other indigenous ones settled in Patna. It got an international status owing to its multi-national, multiethnic and multi-lingual flavour. In the year 1703, the name of Patna became Azimabad under the administration of Aurangzeb's grandson Azim-Us-Shaan. At that time Patna was at the height of progress. Variety of goods were imported and exported through said ships and other means of water network from different parts of the world. Various items like salt-petre, different varieties of cotton, silk, garments, opium, spices and many other products were traded. After 1757, the British got the full control of Patna and developed the most of the western part of the city. Cantonments were constructed in Bankipore and Danapur. The population of Patna dropped sharply from the third decade of the 19th century. This was due to the emergence of a large colonial metropolitan city in

Calcutta (2nd to London in the British Empire). Some of the trades shifted to Dhaka. After the partition of Bengal, Patna became the provincial capital of Bihar. Old Patna was known as Patna City. This part is very densely populated, with dingy and narrow lanes and bye-lanes. In the newer part of Patna there was progress. Chief administrative offices, universities, colleges, accommodation of military forces and the public, general residences and offices were developed with new infrastructure. Key Sikh Centres of Patna Historical importance or features of Patna for the Sikhs: Guru Nanak Sahib's visit during his Udasi created the Sangat in Patna. The impact was seen in the time of Guru Hargobind Ji, the Sixth Master. Patna became the headquarters of the Sikh diocese of East India. In the sixth decade of the 17th century, the Ninth Master Guru Teg Bahadur Ji came to Patna with his family. Sometime later he left towards farther East, keeping his family in the safe hands of the Sikhs of Patna. Great Sant-Sipahi (saint-soldier), Badshah Darvesh and thinker Guru Gobind Singh Ji was born in Poh Sudi Sapatami, Vikrami Samvat 1723 (December 26, 1666 CE) at Patna, bestowing it to the status of the most holy place for the Sikhs. His arrival was ordained to dispel the darkness of world prevailing at that time. Thus owing to this significance, Patna rose to a place of great heritage for the Sikhs. About two hundred years ago, the population of Sikhs in the city of Patna was about fifty thousand. Commemorating this glorious history, many Sikh shrines were built. Among them is Takht Sri Harimandir Ji, the most important one situated in the lane known as 'Harimandir Galli'. It was also called 'Kutch-Faru-Khan'. Guru Gobind Singh's birth might have changed the name of this place as 'Hari Mandir'- Abode of the Almighty, thus prompting renaming of the lane as 'HariMandir Galli'. Sri Hari-Mandir became the most important seat of Sikhs in eastern India. This house belonged to Salis Rai Johury (he received the blessings Guru Nanak Sahib). He converted this place as Dharamsala for the convenience of the general congregation. As per the Hukumnama (the order) of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji sent from Munger to Raja Fateh Chand Maini and other local Sikhs a new building was constructed for the residence of Guru Ji's family. Early information of Hari-Mandir Ji: Mullah Ahmed Bahbahani gave details about the status of Hari-Mandir Ji in last part of the 18th century in his Merat-UI-Ahwal Jahan-Nama about the birth place of Guru Gobind Singh Ji as maintained by the devotees. He says, "A beautiful shrine has been built at the birth place of Guru Ji known as Harimandir. This has become centre of power for the Sikhs which is also called Sangat in reverence".

Other important information about this was made by famous European historian, Charles Wilkins, in his writings about his Patna visit on the 1st of March 1781. He recounted the description very minutely, underlining its different features which was published in 1788 under the title "The Sikhs and their college at Patna" in an Asiatic society research paper. He observed and provided details of built-up area of the Harimandir Ji, the daily routine of reading the holy scripture of Guru Granth Sahib and worshipping the Almighty as divine service, reciting this holy text, religious festivals and other activities. Information about the entry of the Sikh pilgrims was given. Some other writers also gave vivid description in their writings about the Patna Sahib. In the centre of its campus an 80 foot high mast of Sal-wood was erected, covered with cloth and a religious flag was hoisted on it. This is known as Nishan Sahib. This tall wood was fitted in the iron pipes outside. This was an offering made by Raja Jang Bahadur of Nepal to Takht Sahib. The main building of Sri Harimandir faced many calamities. At the beginning of the 19th century it was devastated by a terrible fire. Then again, Maharaja Ranjit Singh built a new Gurdwara Sahib. Sewa of building was started from 1839 and completed in 1841. Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not get a chance to see this newly constructed Takht Sahib as he died during this period. Meanwhile, in 1887, with the inspiration from Mahant of Takht Sahib Bawa Sumer Singh to the Maharajas of Patiala, Jind and Faridkot, these Kingdoms supported in development and a gave new shape to periphery of campus. In 1934, entire Bihar was rocked by a devastating earthquake. Some portions of Harimandir Ji were badly damaged and developed cracks. Construction of the new building started in 1954 on the day of Kartick Purnima and completed in the year 1957, on the day of 'Poh-Sudi-Sapatami'. Sant Nischal Singh of Mandi Bahauddin of Gujarat district of western Punjab (later on his headquarters was shifted to Yamuna nagar- Jagadhri espousing for the cause of 'Sarbat Da Bhalla' (welfare of the universe), owing to Partition of India and Sant Kartar Singh of Sultanpur-Lodhi carried out this Kaar-Sewa with other associates. Earlier the management and authority of Harimandir Ji was with its Panch with the sole authority resting with its Mahant or Pujari. This five-member Panchs maintained liaison with the Mahant for religious, administrative, financial and other activities. Considering its historical importance the Government of India (East India Company) took over the management through Board of Revenue, Bengal under Regulation XIX

of 1810. Mahant Ganda Singh got the right on 11th March, 1865 through this. Section IV of the Act gave the power to the District Judge to select the Mahant or Pujari at his discretion. Little changes or amendments took place subsequently. This system prevailed till last Sarbrahkar, Mahant Kartar Singh Bedi. A committee of fifteen members was constituted to help him till 1954. Services of Mahant or Sarbrahkar and trustees were dismissed on 14th December 1954. Again on 17th December 1956, the constitution and the byelaws were framed and approved by the District Judge, Patna, and new board of representatives was formed. It included representatives of various prominent Sikh organisations of Amritsar, Patna, Delhi and Calcutta.

Patna Sahib's income used to come from several sources including Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Chandu Lal, Prime Minister of Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maharajas of Patiala, Nabha, Faridkot and Jind kingdoms. Queen of Dhaka and other influential and wealthy devotees made annual offerings to Patna Sahib. This donations made the running of various charitable works like regular Langar, medical dispensary, Middle and High School for both girls and boys, Guru Gobind Singh College, very smooth. A document in the office of State Central Records of 17th April 1839, reveals celebration of two Gurburabs in a large way. The first one was only Gurburab and the second one was Prakash Utsav of Guru Gobind Singh. As per my observation Gurburab signifies the Avtar Purab (entering of the Holy soul in the world) of Guru Nanak Sahib. This was celebrated by Sikhs in every Gurdwara Sahib and Nanak-Panthi Deras on the day of Kartik Purnima. Such traditions are also seen today. At present some more Gurburabs like Martyrdom day of Fifth Master Guru Arjan Dev ji and and Ninth Master Guru Tegh Bahadur ji, Baisakhi the birthday of Khalsa, Dushera, Holla Mahalla and some functions are organized with devotion and deep respect.

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Information

The issue of April month of the monthly 'Gurdwara Gazette' magazine could not be published because India imposed lockdown in whole country due to the Corona Virus Pandemic. Now a joint issue of April and May 2020 has been published.

-Editor

ਕੋਰੋਨਾ ਮਹਾਂਮਾਰੀ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰੂ: ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼



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ਕੋਰੋਨਾ ਮਹਾਮਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਚੱਲਦਿਆਂ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗੁਰੂਸਰ ਪਾ: ਨੌਵੀਂ ਹੰਡਿਆਇਆ (ਬਰਨਾਲਾ) ਵਿਖੇ ਲੋੜਵੰਦਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਲੰਗਰ ਵਰਤਾਉਂਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਭਾਈ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਲੌਂਗੋਵਾਲ।



ਲੰਗਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਲੰਗਰ ਭੇਜਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਮੁੱਖ ਸਕੱਤਰ ਡਾ. ਰੁਪ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸਕੱਤਰ ਸ. ਮਹਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਹਲੀ, ਮੈਨੇਜਰ ਸ. ਜਸਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀਨਪੁਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਕਮੇਟੀ ਦੇ ਬੁਲਾਰੇ ਸ. ਕੁਲਵਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਰਮਦਾਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ। (25 ਮਾਰਚ)

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