

## Bhai Daya Singh (Birthday 26 August 1669 )

Bhai Daya Singh (Birth 26 August 1669 ), the first of the Panj Piare or the Five Beloved celebrated in the Sikh tradition, was the son of Bhai Suddha, a Sobti Khatri of Lahore, and Mai Diali. His original name was Daya Ram.



His name is uttered first among the five Beloved of the Guru (Panj Pyaras) in the Sikh Ardas. In the historic divan in the Keshgarh Fort at Anandpur on 30 March 1699, he was the first to rise at the Guru's call and offer his head, followed by four others in succession. These five were the first to be admitted to the fold of the Khalsa and they in turn administered the rites of initiation to Guru Gobind Singh who called them collectively Panj Piare. Daya Ram after initiation became Daya Singh. Although the five

enjoyed equal status as the Guru's close confidants and constant attendants, Bhai Daya Singh was always regarded as the first among equals. He took part in the battles of Anandpur, and was one of the three Sikhs who followed Guru Gobind Singh out of Chamkaur on the night of 7/8 December 1705, eluding the besieging hordes. He was Guru Gobind Singh's emissary sent from the village of Dina in the Punjab to deliver his letter which became famous as Zafarnamah, the Letter of Victory, to Emperor Aurangzeb, then camping at Ahmadnagar. Bhai Daya Singh, accompanied by Bhai Dharam Singh and finally managed to have the letter delivered to Aurangzeb. A shrine called Gurdwara Bhai Daya Singh marks the place of his sojourn in Dhani Mahalla. Bhai Daya Singh and Bhai Dharam Singh returned and rejoined Guru Gobind Singh at Kalayat, a town 52 km southwest of Bikaner in Rajasthan. Bhai Daya Singh remained in attendance upon the Guru and was with him at the time of his joyti jot at Nanded on 7 October 1708. He died at Nanded soon after, where today, a joint memorial for him and for Bhai Dharam Singh known as Angitha stands in memory of these two famous Panj Piare. It stands on the site that marks their cremation near the bank of the river Godavri.

### Bhagat Puran Singh Ji - A changed life

In the year 1923 a wiry young man set off on a journey from his village to Ludhiana to do his year ten examination. After his exam was over he thought he must go to the temple and thank the gods, being quite religious and very regular with his prayers. In the temple he bowed respectfully to the deities and recited his prayers. He noticed that the idols needed cleaning. So he washed and cleaned them. There were other devotees in the temple. When they sat down in a line waiting to be served food, he also joined them. But to his utter dismay and embarrassment he was asked to leave. He had to go hungry that day. The next day he left for his village. On the way to the village he came across Gurdwara Reru Sahib. He decided to rest there for a while. Langar was being served to the sangat by a Sikh. He was hungry so he joined them too. He had his fill. He was served langar without any discrimination. It made him very happy. The young man noticed some people doing chores around the Gurdwara Sahib. He had a chat with them. He was surprised to find out that they were just volunteering their services. In the evening he listened to Rehras Sahib Path followed by Gurbani Katha by Gianiji in the Gurdwara Sahib. Later he was given a comfortable place to sleep. In the morning while getting ready to carry on with his journey, he was thinking of how well he had been treated by the Sikhs. He set off towards his village. He had to pass through Khanna, a district of Punjab. As soon as he reached there he bought a Gutka Sahib. At heart he had already converted to Sikhism. He recited Japji Sahib Path all the way to his house. After a few months he became a Sikh after taking Amrit. This was the young man who later came to be known as Bhagat Puran Singh. His is well known for devoting his life to care of the disabled and needy. He founded the Pingalwarha in Amritsar, a home for the disabled.

**GURPURABS & PROGRAMME August 2015**

*There are no Gurpurabs this month*

On first Friday of every month **Youth Program** held at Gurdwara Sahib from 6-8pm

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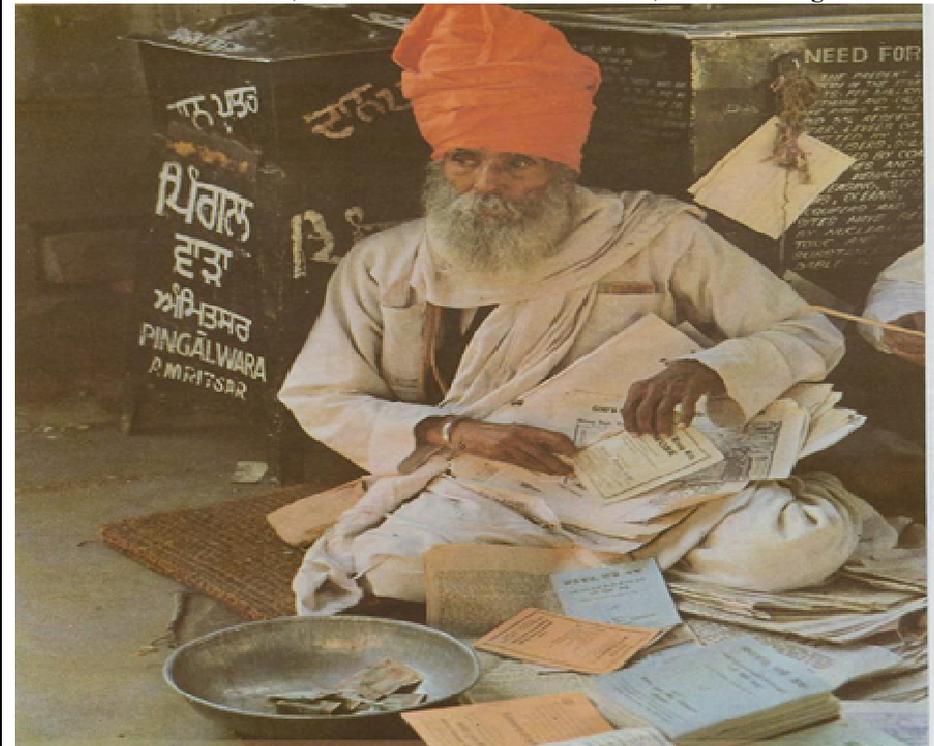
# Nit Chardi Kala

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### Bhagat Puran Singh Ji (Death Anniversary 5<sup>th</sup> August 1992)

*Bhagat Puran Singh Ji is undoubtedly one of the great Sikh heroes of this century who worked totally selflessly all of his life to provide the last hope to the mentally and terminally ill patients. We should not draw parallels between him and Mother Theresa but if at all anyone from India was ever worthy of Nobel Peace prize, Bhagat Puran Singh Ji surely was that person.*

**SIKH GURUDWARA PERTH, 10 Cheltenham Street Bennett Springs WA**

## Guru Ka Bagh Morcha

This is an account of one of the many struggles by the Sikhs in the early 1920s, for regaining control of their own Gurdwaras. Though many Gurdwaras had already been freed without much of a problem, but Gurdwara **Guru ka Bagh** in Tehsil Ajnala, Dist. Amritsar, would prove to be a bigger hurdle. This place has two historic gurdwaras located close to each other. One commemorates the visit of Guru Arjan Dev ji and the other, laid out on the site of a bagh (garden), which gave it its name, is associated with a visit from Guru Tegh Bahadur.



In 1921, Sundar Das was the mahant of Guru ka Bagh. He was indifferent to his religious duties and squandered the resources of the Gurdwara. He objected to the Sikhs cutting wood on the land attached to Gurdwara for firewood to be used in the Guru ka Langar. This sparked off the agitation, and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee decided to daily send batch (Jatha) of Sikhs to court arrest if prevented from taking the firewood. From 22 August 1922, police began to arrest the jathas on charges of theft, riot and criminal trespass. The arrests gave a boost to the movement as more and more Sikhs came

forward to join the protest. On 25 August 1922, S.G.M. Beatty, Superintendent of Police, ordered the lathi-charge on the Sangat. Yet jathas of black-turbaned Akalis chanting the sacred hymns reached the spot every day, only to be mercilessly beaten by the police until they fell to the ground. This happened every day. Political leaders, social workers and reporters came to witness what was described as an ideal non-violent protest. A.L. Verges, an American cinematographer, prepared a film of the proceedings under the caption, "Exclusive Picture of India's Martyrdom." English missionary and educationist Rev. C.F. Andrews (1871-1940) who visited Guru ka Bagh and saw as he put it, "**hundreds of Christs being crucified**", gave a graphic description of the passive resistance of the Akalis. He sent to the Press a detailed report on what he witnessed on 12 September 1922: "...when I reached the (Gurdwara Guru-ka-Bagh) a spot where I could see the beating itself. There was not a cry raised from the spectators, but the lips of very many of them were moving in prayer....." "... There were four Akali Sikhs with their black turbans facing a band of about a dozen policemen, including two English officers. They had walked slowly up to the line of the police just before I had arrived and they were standing silently in front of them. They were perfectly still and did not move further forward. Their hands were placed together in prayer. Then without the slightest provocation on their part, an Englishman lunged forward the head of his metal bound lathi (staff). He lunged it forward in such a way that his staff struck the Akali Sikh, who was praying, just at the collar-bone with great force. It looked the most cowardly blow as I saw it struck.... The blow which I saw was sufficient to fell the Akali Sikh and send him to the ground. He rolled over, and slowly got up once more, and faced the same punishment over again. Time after time one of the four who had gone forward was laid prostrate by repeated blows, now from the English officer and now from the [Indian] police who were under his control. The others were knocked out more quickly. ....The vow they had made to God was kept. I saw no act of defiance. It was true martyrdom for them as they went forward, a true act of faith, a true deed of devotion to God..... A new heroism, learnt through suffering, has arisen in the land. A new lesson in moral warfare has been taught to the world..... It was very rarely that I witnessed any Akali Singh, who went forward to suffer, flinch from a blow when it was struck.... The blows were received one by one without resistance and without a sign of fear." On 27 April 1923, Punjab Government issued orders for the release of the prisoners. Thus ended the morcha of Guru ka Bagh in which, according to Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee records, 5,605 Sikhs went to jail.



## SIKHS & WW1 (Anniversary 4<sup>th</sup> August)

This photo shows company of the 15th Sikhs performing kirtan in their billets after being relieved from the line. Flanders was a perpetual battleground in World War I. The Sikh regiment was the first Indian contingent to land in Europe. "Unique stalwarts from the east" remarked the press. One of their most memorable events occurred on 28 October 1914 when the regiment was detailed to capture the village of Neuve Chappelle in France. After bitter hand to hand combat the village was captured - of the 280 Sikhs who started assaulted only 58 survived. "**A remarkable people, the Sikhs, with their Ten Prophets, five distinguishing marks, and their baptismal rite of water stirred with steel; a people who have made history, and will make it again.**" Martial India, F. Yeats-Brown

### Bhai Sukha Singh & Bhai Mehtab Singh (2<sup>nd</sup> Aug. 1740)

After the invasion of Nadir Shah and acting on his advice Nawab Zakaria Khan the Governor of Lahore decided to totally exterminate the Sikhs. He issued instructions to his officials and to village heads to kill or arrest Sikhs by announcing cash rewards for the heads of the Sikhs. Massa Ranghar, the village head of Mandiali was handed over charge of Sri Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), and he acted in a most mischievous and offensive manner, hurting religious sentiments of Sikhs. While Darbar Sahib's parikarma



was used as stable for horses the sanctum sanctorum was converted into dance hall. There he would watch dancing girls while smoking and drinking. Around the building armed guards were posted to prevent entry of anyone without permission. Due to persecution in Punjab the Sikhs had moved to deserts of Rajasthan. Here they heard the heart wrenching account of discretion of Golden Temple. When asked by the Jathedar, Bhai Mehtab Singh immediately volunteered to punish Massa Ranghar. Another Sikh named Bhai Sukha Singh volunteered to accompany him, on his sacred mission. Both were granted permission by the Jathedar and special prayer was held for the success of their mission. Both Bhai Sukha Singh and Bhai Mehtab Singh proceeded to Amritsar and arrived there on **2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1740**. They dressed themselves as village heads and carried with them a bags full of well-rounded pieces of earthen wares which appeared to be bags of coins. Straightway they headed for Harmandir Sahib. On arriving there, they told the guards that they were village heads and had come to deposit land revenue with Massa Ranghar. They tied their horses with a tree near the entrance of the Harmandir Sahib now known as Lachi Ber and proceeded to Darbar Sahib. They found an intoxicated Massa Ranghar sitting on his cot smoking and watching dancing prostitutes. While Bhai Sukha Singh stood guard near the door of main hall, Bhai Mahtab Singh went inside. He threw his bag under Massa's cot and said, "Chowdhury here is the land revenue." When Massa Rangar happily bent down to pick up the bag Bhai Mehtab Singh swiftly drew out his sword and with single blow, cut off his head. Those present inside were stunned by the sudden development, in the meantime both brave Sikhs decamped with the severed head of Massa Rangar, and rode away from the scene before the guards could recover. They went straight to Rajasthan to join their jatha thereby redeeming their pledge.