

**The Divine Journey
of
Sant Attar Singh & Sant Teja Singh**

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In 1866, a Brahmgyani appeared on Earth to show humanity the path to deliverance from ignorance and suffering. He came to be known as Sant Attar Singh, and he made it his mission to 'spread the eternal fragrance of Waheguru' for the benefit of every living soul.

Sant Attar Singh's great mission was carried forward by Sant Teja Singh, who founded the Sant Attar Singh Hari Saadhu Ashram in a blessed land, Village Baru—now reverently referred to across the world as Baru Sahib. For over six decades, the spiritual, academic and philanthropic institutions at Baru have been serving humanity with dedication and humility. They have also been grooming future messengers of peace through value-based education, in sync with the vision of Sant Attar Singh, who was enlightened by the teachings of Guru Nanak.

This book gives readers of all ages the story of Sant Attar Singh and Sant Teja Singh—their spiritual awakening, their divinely-inspired journey on Earth to establish permanent peace and their enduring legacy, which continues to transform lives across the world through the efforts of the Kalgidhar Society, Baru Sahib.

THE DIVINE JOURNEY OF SANT ATTAR SINGH & SANT TEJA SINGH

Respected Sadh Sangat Ji,
Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

Sangat ji, now it's the time to judge whether to use our Daswandh/ Charity money on gold/marble or to invest it on Education. The Kalgidhar Society, Baru Sahib is a solely organisation in the Sikh community which is running 129 schools in Rural Punjab providing English medium value education to 70,000 kids of farmers.

Today, farmers' protest has proved to us the need of educating their kids but due to COVID-19 and farmers' agitation all 129 schools and universities are closed. Organisation is in major financial crisis. However, we are asking you for any financial support but we seek support for meals for 500+ girls under FREE elementary teacher training program where all boarding and lodging is borne by the trust.

We seek ration support in kind for these innocent girls. You may sponsor a monthly meal for 1 or 2 girls for Rs.2000 per girl.

We don't have golak as compared to other gurdwaras and without the support of like-minded people we won't be able to serve the community. We have a very strong belief that once you provide support to feed these girls, your soul will experience the eternal peace/bliss.

Please come forward to Save Education of Rural Kids in Punjab.
We are desperately waiting for your positive reply.

Regards
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THE DIVINE JOURNEY OF SANT ATTAR SINGH & SANT TEJA SINGH

Reema Anand



farid

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Foreword

It is not often that an oversoul is sent by the Almighty to deliver humanity from ignorance and suffering. The oversoul's visit, its journey on earth, its trials on our behalf and its spiritual achievements bear testimony to the fact that someone up above is constantly looking out for humankind.

Guru Nanak prophesied that he would manifest himself 84 times—10 times as a Guru and 74 times as a *Brahmgyani*. Guru Gobind Singh, in his *Sau Sakhi*, categorically named one such manifestation: Sant Attar Singh.

Legend has it that on a hot summer day, a seer visited Baba Karam Singh and Mata Bholi in village Cheema in the Sangrur district of Punjab. After accepting the hospitality of the devout couple, the seer gave them a small bottle of *attar* (white scent) asking them to keep it safely in their house, and prophesied that a son would soon be born to them and the whole cosmos would bow before him. The seer further said that he would return to take his bottle back when the time was right. A son was indeed born to Baba Karam Singh and Mata Bholi sometime later. His prophecy having been fulfilled, the seer returned for the bottle of scent, and the child was named after it—Attar Singh.

Sant Attar Singh was the oversoul chosen by the

Almighty to bless his followers and spread the eternal fragrance of *Waheguru*. Equipped with cosmic energies, he spent his entire journey on earth with the ultimate purpose of establishing permanent peace in the universe. He emphasized that if a Sikh was humble, performed *Sewa* and recited the Divine Name with devotion and love, he would be liberated from the cycle of birth and rebirth and would merge into the Supreme Being.

Even almost a century after he shed his physical frame, Sant Ji continues to manifest himself today in his beloved devotees across the globe; and there are various institutions being run to commemorate him. From such an oversoul, we can learn a lesson that will last and inspire us for a lifetime.

RAJINDER SINGH CHADHA

Introduction

Across the world, within any community, ideologies are personified by extraordinary individuals and then they are popularized. This is considered essential for the growth-path of every distinct community. Over time, these ideologies get institutionalized, and this, too, is considered crucial for a community's evolution. It is also true of the Sikh community.

Yet, within the larger Sikh community lies an institution whose founders chalked out their own distinctive paths. Their only allegiance was to the message of the first Sikh Guru, Guru Nanak, to establish permanent peace on the earth.

This institution is the Sant Attar Singh Hari Saadhu Ashram, which was founded by Sant Teja Singh in total sync with the vision of his mentor, Sant Attar Singh, who, in turn, was enlightened by the teachings of Guru Nanak.

According to Sant Attar Singh's divine insight, village Baru, now reverently referred to across the world as Baru Sahib, was a blessed land, where countless mortal and immortal souls had meditated on the Creator's Name. It was here that, in 1956, on the conclusion of Sri Akhand Path Sahib (the rendition of the sacred hymns from the Guru

Granth Sahib), Sant Teja Singh, in all humility, beseeched the Guru to bless his followers in their task of establishing eternal peace in the universe through divine and academic disciplines. Sant Teja Singh prophesied that Sant Attar Singh Hari Sadhu Ashram at Baru Sahib would groom future messengers of peace through Brahm Vidya (value-based education), and The Kalgidhar Trust was set up to pursue this goal.

For more than a decade, I have been witness to the growth of many institutions flourishing under the umbrella of The Kalgidhar Trust, and I have tried to humbly document the growth of the Trust by making movies on the academies and colleges set up by its management.

It is an amazing story, which needs to be told keeping in mind the humble origins of its founders. The true path, as conceived and shown by Guru Nanak, makes tough demands of all committed seekers. It is full of hurdles and tests us all the time. Yet, true men of faith like the founders of The Kalgidhar Trust, once clear about their vision—which they are gifted with—keep marching on towards their destination without ever faltering.

The book in your hands is primarily conceived for the approximately 60,000 students studying in various institutions of The Kalgidhar Trust, Baru Sahib. However, I am confident that the book will also help other readers to understand and imbibe the spiritual values propounded by the two great sants, Attar Singh and Teja Singh.

REEMA ANAND

PART I

A Divine Childhood

Sant Attar Singh was born on 28 March 1866 to a devout couple, Karam Singh and Bholi, at village Cheema in Punjab's Sangrur district. Attar Singh's birth—and the fact that he would become a great sant—had been predicted by a seer whom his parents had hosted, and who had left a bottle of attar (perfume) with them. It was after this perfume that the boy was named.

Attar Singh had an elder sister, Ratan Kaur, who was greatly attached to him. In fact, everyone who met the young boy was drawn to him. His family soon saw the difference between Attar Singh and the other boys of his age and realized that he was indeed special, and destined to play a different role in life.

Later, scholars would identify his state of being at the time as Sutte Vairag or subconscious longing (for the Supreme Being).

His kind treatment of animals, his selfless attachment to his friend Bakhtawar, his withdrawal into himself and many other patterns established the fact that Attar Singh was born with an extraordinary spirit.

By his teens, Attar Singh had an aura that stopped the villagers in their tracks and they would gaze at him wonderstruck. But he was oblivious to the adoration—indeed, he seemed detached from everything around him. Although assigned the duty of cattle herding and looking after the crops in the fields by his father, Attar Singh would sit under a tree and fall into a trance beyond any human being's understanding.

Attar Singh was soon convinced that he needed to leave home, in order to find the space and guidance he needed to fully realize the objective of his life. And thus, guided by the Divine Will of the Almighty, Attar Singh, in 1883, at the age of 17, enrolled himself in the army. His first posting was in Kohat (a city in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, now in Pakistan), at an artillery godown, where he spent a year.

Throughout this time, there was an intense urge in him to merge with the Divine. He felt the need to meditate unhindered on the Cosmic Power and for that, time and quiet were paramount. Unfortunately, his duties did not permit this and his spirit felt trapped. Subedar Dalel Singh, of 54 Sikh Battalion, understood Attar Singh's urge to some extent and promised to transfer him to the infantry, where duties were limited.

Dalel Singh kept his promise, and after six months of duty in the infantry, Attar Singh went on a two-month leave to his village. Little did he know that his handsome bearing, topped with a lucrative job, would bring in matrimonial offers. He refused to accede as though it was clear to him that grahasth ashram (family life) was not his destiny.

He returned to his army duty, even more convinced

than before that the regular life of the world was not for him. It was soon after this that he happened to meet Bhai Jodh Singh, a devout Sikh who initiated the soldiers of 54 Sikh Battalion into Khalsahood routinely. Attar Singh, too, asked to be initiated into Khalsahood, and then, intensely moved by the persona of Bhai Jodh Singh, refused to leave his company. Seeing Attar Singh's perseverance, Dalel Singh came to his assistance again and shifted him to the army Gurdwara.

This was in Dera Gazi Khan (a city in Punjab province of Pakistan), and Attar Singh would now work with Bhai Jodh Singh, and watch him meditating for hours—eyes closed, calm and silent. From him, Attar Singh learned the basics of meditation and began practicing it till he had mastered the technique. This practice would hold good in his later years when he would disappear within the folds of infinity for months together.

Meanwhile, his father died, but Attar Singh did not return home.



Saadh Attar Singh meditating

The Quest

In a frame of mind described as Vairag, or conscious longing (for the Supreme Being), Attar Singh finally abandoned his worldly roles. He embarked on a long journey guided by the Divine Power.

Crying and yearning, in a perpetual state of wakefulness, he set out on foot for Hazur Sahib at Nanded in Maharashtra, where Guru Gobind Singh was martyred. Here, he spent two years meditating intensely on the One Name at Nagina Ghat, Hira Ghat and Shikar Ghat, by the banks of the Godavari river.

The historical importance of these places was not lost on Attar Singh. He felt inspired mentally and spiritually and in tune with the Divine. Like a true soldier of the tenth Sikh Guru, he discarded the superfluous clothing from his body and adopted a simple dress. He wore a Khaki Dastar (headgear) and Kachhehara (long drawers), and a Parna (piece of cloth) hung from his shoulder.

People now began referring to him as Saadh Attar Singh. By now, Saadh Attar Singh had stopped feeling the need for his body. The bliss, which he was constantly enveloped

in, satiated his hunger and quenched his thirst. Engaged in deep meditation, he once stood in knee-deep water, at a spot three kilometres from Nagina Ghat, for as long as eight days. This was when Nanu Singh, the local Gurdwara priest, found him. Nanu Singh brought him to his hut and fed him. According to Nanu Singh, he had divine instructions to do so. Soon, a close bond formed between the two. In course of time, Nanu Singh's hut became Saadh Attar Singh's refuge. He would retire into a small cave adjoining the hut and stay there alone for hours. The area around the hut would resound with Saadh Attar Singh's prayers:

*Gubinde Mukande Udaare Apaare;
Hariung Kariung Nirnaame Akaame*

(He sustains, He liberates, He delivers and He is Infinite;

The Doer, the Grace-incarnate, the Nameless, the Self-formed).

Saadh Attar Singh longed for solitude and sought places to find it. He spent a few days at Hira Ghat and then three



Ghats of the Godavari

months at Shikar Ghat. At Shikar Ghat, a devotee stuck to him like shadow and took care of him, nursing him like a child.

After three months, when Saadh Attar Singh returned to Nagina Ghat, he was in a state of Birha—intense inner pain—and in his passion to meet the Divine, he threw himself into the gushing waters of the Godavari. It is said that he was flung back onto the banks of the river and his life's mission was dictated to him.

Now, full of energy and enthusiasm, Saadh Attar Singh headed for Punjab, responding to the Divine Call.

The Traveller

Saadh Attar Singh did not plan his travels but simply marched on. He made epic journeys on foot. He passed through Khandwa, Ajmer and Pushkar to reach Haridwar. There, he spent some time with the sadhus thronging the Kumbh Mela, and then proceeded to Rishikesh.

His dress and routine remained unchanged and he still sought quiet areas. After a dip in the river Ganga, he would retire to remote hills or forests. The duration of his meditation was increasing gradually, sometimes lasting through the night.

He often went without food for days; in a state of Birha again, he would give up food and throw the chapatis from the Langar to the stray dogs around him. And if he felt sleepy or tired, he would only tilt his body slightly forward to rest briefly, while still sitting cross-legged in the yogic posture.

Sometimes during that one-year period, he again felt the futility of clinging to his physical self. He would then find lonely spots in the surrounding jungles that wild animals thronged for food and water. Although he was fully prepared for being devoured by a wild animal, wanting to be rid of

worldly existence, he remained unharmed. The animals could perceive the divine waves radiating from him. Saadh Attar Singh finally understood, gave up and bowed to the prophesied role handed to him.

Around this time, a villager from Saadh Attar Singh's village, who was travelling through Rishikesh, informed him that his mother was pining for him. Almost at the same time, Saadh Attar Singh happened to meet one Bhai Ram Singh of Thamali (a village in Rawalpindi district, now in Pakistan) during a religious assembly at Rishikesh. Both recognized the need for each other's company; it was a meeting of two divine souls. Before proceeding to Cheema to meet his mother, Saadh Attar Singh agreed to accompany Bhai Ram Singh to Sialkot.

On their way, the two enlightened beings passed through Paonta Sahib and Nahan. Many a divine note and experience were shared between them. Saadh Attar Singh rested for some time at Sialkot before taking Bhai Ram Singh's leave.

In 1891, travelling on foot, he reached Amritsar and made Baba Atal Sahib, near Harmandir Sahib, his temporary abode for resting. For three days and nights, he stayed on the third floor of the building without eating, drinking or sleeping.

On the fourth day, he ate the Langar offered to him by a devotee and went to the Baisakhi Mela at Damdama Sahib. From there, he finally left for Cheema.

A Brief Sojourn

On reaching Cheema, Saadh Attar Singh sat at what used to be his favourite spot, under the very tree where he used to fall into a trance in his childhood. Around him was a sea of green fields and he enjoyed looking at them.

At some distance, a young girl of eleven was grazing her herd. Saadh Attar Singh signalled her to come near him. He recognized her as his younger sister.

“Go, call your mother. I will look after your cows.”

She ran off and brought her mother Bholi with her.

It was a touching reunion between mother and son and she took a promise from him that he would never desert her again. But he warned his mother laughingly that he would leave her the day she discussed his marriage.

Saadh Attar Singh refused to go home and stayed under a temporary thatched roof created for him in the fields. Perhaps he had an intuition of what was in the offing.

For three months, Mata Bholi enjoyed her son's company and then her Manmukh, her worldly self, got the better of her and she began worrying about how her son could carry

on both his physical and spiritual lives, and how he would manage alone, without a wife.

Saadh Attar Singh laughed at his mother's musings and left her, saying, "You have broken your promise."

Abbotabad

Saadh Attar Singh had, more or less, dissolved all his worldly ties except one. This one issue had arisen when he was residing with Bhai Ram Singh at Sialkot. Saadh Attar Singh had left his battalion on a scheduled leave, but destiny had redirected him elsewhere and he had never reported back to the army. As per the army rules, he could be charged with desertion and court-martialed.

Saadh Attar Singh knew that the matter had to be resolved amicably and he could not let it linger.

After consulting Bhai Ram Singh, he left for Abbotabad (in the Hazara region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, now in Pakistan), where the 54 Sikh Battalion was now stationed.

On reaching the cantonment, he proceeded to see Col. Creysely, under whom he had served. Saadh Attar Singh's story of renunciation had already reached the army personnel and many of them were taken aback to see him in his new form and that too in the battalion quarters. Subedar Dalel Singh rushed to him and folded his hands in reverence.

Saadh Attar Singh requested the colonel, "I have come

to seek pardon from you and ask you to relieve me of my duties in the army.”

The colonel was shocked on seeing the transformed persona of Saadh Attar Singh and told him to go to the quarter guard and change into his uniform and stay there until called.

Without a murmur, Saadh Attar Singh retired to the quarters and sat on the bed and began meditating.

He did not talk, eat or ask for anything. Subedar Dalel Singh pleaded his case with the colonel.

“Attar Singh has renounced the world; please let him go,” he said.

“I shall see,” replied the colonel.

The colonel personally observed Saadh Attar Singh’s different phases and after a couple of days, humbled by the great soul’s mission, affectionately bid him goodbye, saying that he had relieved the Saadh of all his obligations.

A relaxed Saadh Attar Singh took leave of his friends in the battalion and left for Haveliyan in a tonga.



Rural Abbotabad

Connecting with the Masses

Sant Attar Singh, as he was now known, soon captivated the heart and mind of the Sikh Sangat. Wherever he went, the masses accepted him without any doubt or question.

Invariably, there would be couples waiting to shower their love and devotion on the young Sant. He became Harman Pyara (favourite of all).

After a two-month stay at Haveliyan, he moved on to Shahaan Di Dheri, then farther on to Mansarovar and finally to Muzaffarabad, a village in Kashmir, which was dotted with small caves.

By this time, Sant Attar Singh was not travelling alone but was accompanied by a follower, Mahant Daya Singh. Mahant Daya Singh took care of all his personal needs.

When Sant ji expressed his desire to stay and meditate on the banks of river Kishen Ganga, in the vicinity of Muzaffarabad, Mahant Daya Singh built a hut for him. Sant Attar Singh continued uninterrupted with his meditation till he felt the angelic call from Bhai Ram Singh, who was then at Thamali.

On his way to Thamali, Sant ji camped at a quiet and cold place, next to a spring in Koh Murree (a mountain town, located in Rawalpindi district of Punjab, now in Pakistan). For three days, he meditated without opening his eyes, feeling neither hunger nor thirst.

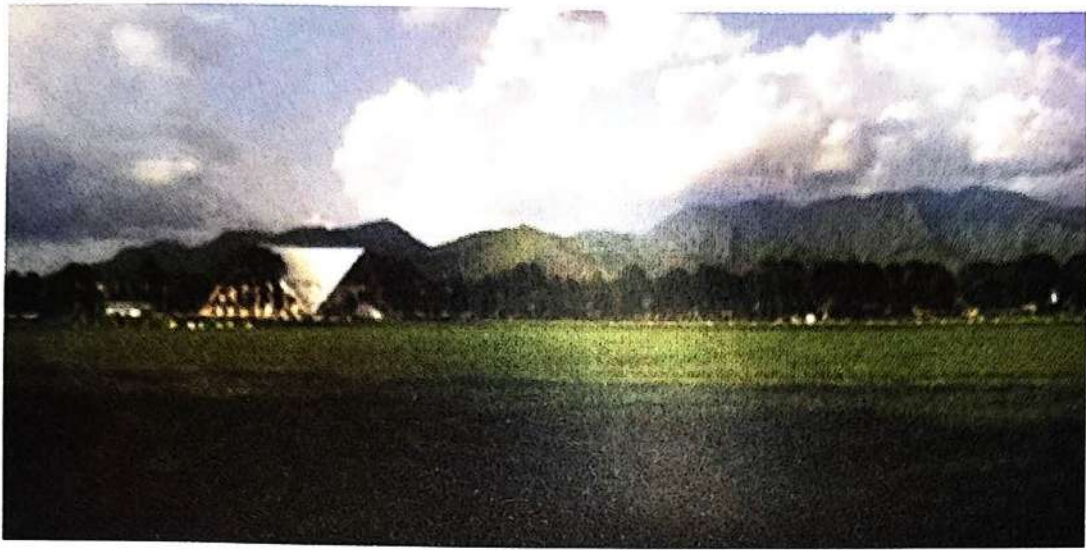
On the fourth day, when he opened his eyes, he was surprised to see a woman sitting next to him with food in her hands. She had come to the spring to fill water in her pot and had chanced upon the meditating divine soul. After eating the food, Sant ji immediately left for Thamali, where Bhai Ram Singh was waiting for him.

On meeting Bhai Ram Singh, Sant ji shared his experiences and the stories of his various travels since the time they had last met.

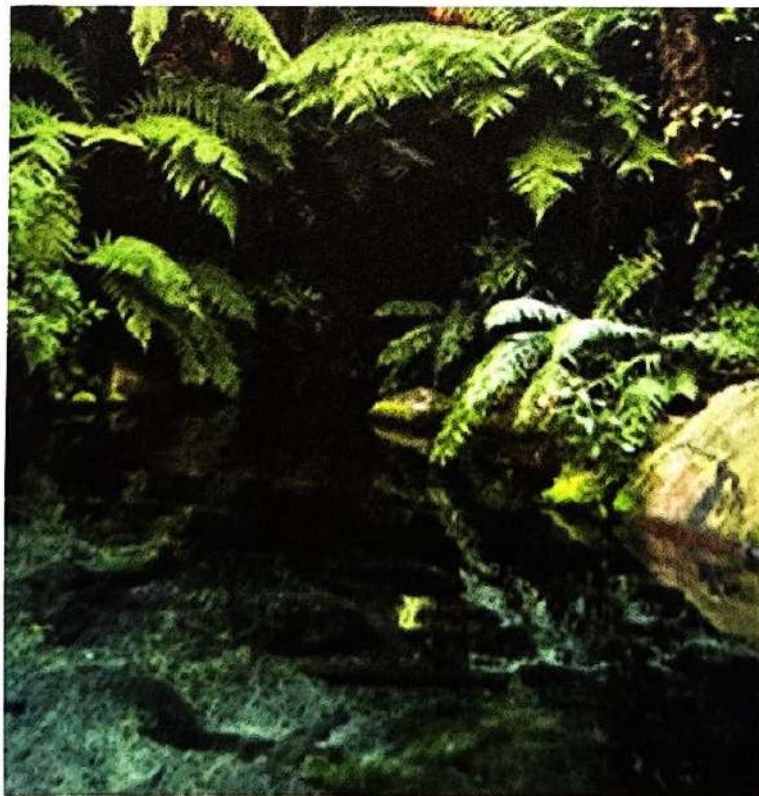
After resting, Sant ji expressed his desire to meditate, undisturbed, in those very parts. He was told that both Thamali and Kanoha, which was nearby, were ideal for the purpose. The next morning, while walking through the jungles of Kanoha, Sant ji found the isolation very attractive and decided to settle there for some time.

Before settling down, he complied with the wish of a devout couple, Wazir Singh and Bhag Bhari, that he undertake Akhand Paath and grace their home. Sant ji did this single-handedly and his rich, clear and booming voice resounded in the whole village, attracting young and old alike to the Gurbani.

After the Akhand Paath, Sant ji retreated into Pulahniyaan di Jhangi (the forest of cassia). The Sangat searched for him everywhere, but he had simply vanished.



Koh Murree in Rawalpindi district



Pulaabniyan di Jhangi

Tap

All the residents of Kanoha were perplexed by the vanishing of Sant Attar Singh and were worried about his safety in the jungle. After some days, Wazir Singh happened to chance upon Sant ji, who was in deep meditation, detached from everything around him. He clearly hadn't had any food, or even, water, for days. Wazir Singh fell at the feet of the great soul and begged him to eat a little. Sant ji emerged from his deep state of meditation and agreed to Wazir Singh's repeated pleas. Wazir Singh rushed back home and returned with his wife Bhag Bhari and some food for the sant.

After Sant ji had eaten, the devout couple requested permission to build a hut for him at the very spot where he was meditating. Sant ji agreed, and the couple began work immediately, grateful for the privilege. They had barely put a roof of thatch on wooden poles when Sant ji resumed his Tap, or meditation. The hut was built around him, but he continued his Tap unmindful of the activity.

People from far-flung villages came just for a glimpse of the rare soul. As word spread, a Ragi Jatha—a group of

religious Sikh musicians—arrived at the spot and camped there, singing sublime hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib, set to soulful ragas.

After that initial disappearance at Kanoha, Sant Attar Singh retreated from the world completely on several occasions. The only difference was that he now disappeared into his kutiya, his hut, for intense Tap.

There was a typical pattern to his meditation. He would reduce his diet gradually. For six days he would keep decreasing his intake in stages. On the sixth day, he would take a morsel in the morning and none in the evening. After that, there would be nothing.

The first time that Sant ji chose to retreat from the world and undertake a long Tap, he disappeared for forty days, leaving his followers, especially Wazir Singh and Bhag Bhari, in extreme anxiety. Wazir Singh and Mata Bhag Bhari came to the kutiya one morning and the door was shut. They waited all day, but the door did not open. They returned every morning and kept vigil for the entire day, but the door remained shut.

On the forty-first day, the couple came in the early hours, and found the door to the hut open. Both husband and wife fell at Sant ji's feet. He is believed to have said, "I had to come out because you were getting anxious."

Sant ji had lost considerable weight but there was an aura of tranquility around him. Mata Bhag Bhari massaged his head, throat and legs with ghee. Both husband and wife fed him and nursed him back to health.

Not a couple of months had elapsed when Sant ji again disappeared into his hut. This time it was for six months. But

before he went into the meditation phase, Mata Bhag Bhari took a promise from him that he would not starve himself. Sant ji tried to explain that eating broke his concentration, but the couple again requested humbly not to give up food entirely. He then told them to leave a bowl of milk and a neem twig—to brush his teeth—in the outer wall of the hut early every morning, and a little sardai (khus khus mixture) every evening.

After six months, the door to the hut opened. Mata Bhag Bhari and Wazir Singh were shocked to see Sant ji—he was reduced to skin and bones and had no strength even to stand. His hair was matted and long, reaching the floor. But his face was radiant.

The couple again nursed him back to health and with a sinking heart waited for the next phase of meditation.

Sant Attar Singh spent four months with his devotees, singing hymns and spreading love and peace all around Kanoha. After that, he decided to do Tap for a third time. He started decreasing his diet gradually, as before, and announced that the Tap would be of a year's duration. He asked Wazir Singh and Mata Bhag Bhari to add a bowl of green vegetables to his meagre supper. And then one evening he shut himself up in his kutiya.

As instructed, Wazir Singh and Mata Bhag Bhari began leaving milk, sardai and green vegetables in the niche in the wall. After one full year, on 1 April 1953, Sant ji opened the door. There was hardly any flesh left on his body, but his whole body was radiating a soft, ethereal light. As before, the devoted couple nursed him back to health—they massaged his body with warm ghee and fed him seeds

and nuts to bring life to his limbs and improve his blood circulation.

After this third Tap, Sant Attar Singh's aura spread in the entire region. Devotees began flooding Kanoha and the entire area resounded with Shabad Kirtan. Kanoha and Pulahniyan di Jhangi became centres of pilgrimage for the Sikh Sangat. Non-stop Langar would be served and Kirtan recited. Pothohar, another area frequented by Sant ji, also become such a centre.

Stories about Sant Attar Singh's divinity now travelled far and wide. Sant ji bestowed his grace upon the Sangat that thronged the area. Whenever he felt that his hut, too, was under the scrutiny of his followers, he would leave it and go to a remote area without informing anyone. Once he disappeared and went to meditate on the sand dunes of Luni (in what is now Rajasthan). The heat and the scorching sands of Luni neither deterred him from his objective nor did they affect him. Here, he came to be known as Bhuri Wale Sant (the Sant with the black shawl). Many a life in this region was transformed after coming in contact with Sant ji. Among them was a dreaded dacoit, who became a follower of Sant ji and came to be known as Bhai Ganesha.

Amrit Prachar

The travels undertaken by Sant Attar Singh bear remarkable similarity to the Udasis undertaken by Guru Nanak. Their respective journeys were undertaken to enlighten humankind, showing the way to self-realization.

Sant Attar Singh's message is that there is present in every human being the seed of godliness, which we refer to as Atma. To draw out this divinity embedded in every person, a feeder channel has to be carved, and this channel is established by the Shabad. The process is akin to a submersible water pump drawing water from the ground—water that is invisible and dormant at different depths everywhere in the earth.

Sant Attar Singh believed in Amrit Prachar (initiation into the Khalsa fold), a duty assigned to him by the Almighty which he carried out sincerely and with dedication. His belief was that by getting initiated with Amrit, a Sikh would enter a disciplined life of practising Nitnem—the recitation of Gurbani at different times of the day, every day—which is a divine bounty gifted by the Akal Purakh. Just as air,

water and sunlight are the daily nourishment for a sapling, Gurbani is the nourishment for every Sikh.

Sant ji's grace attracted like a magnet the Sikh Sangat from far and wide. Wherever he stationed himself, Kirtan and Amrit Prachar were conducted, sometimes twice a day. His simplicity and humility became the two pillars of Amrit Prachar.

Travelling for months within and outside Punjab on foot, crossing rivers and mountains, as Sant ji did, could be accomplished only by an extraordinary being—an immortal force. He was a soul on a divine mission supported by cosmic powers. There are endless stories of people being transformed and elevated after coming in contact with him.

Hukam Singh, of village Bishan; the Sangat of Dera Khalsa, then a stronghold of the Arya Samajis; Master Tara Singh, the stalwart of Sikh politics of later years and many others were initiated by Sant ji. Most importantly, principal Niranjan Singh Mehta, who was an atheist, was transformed by Sant ji into Khalsa Teja Singh, later known as Sant Teja Singh.

Creation of Mastuana Sahib

Three miles from Kanjila, District Bahadarpur, in the princely state of Nabha, was a patch of green forest with a clear pond in the centre, which belonged to a Jat named Mastu. Mastu's land was blessed with the presence of fakirs and Sadhus, who sought it for meditation. This land was named Mastuana by the holy beings who visited it.

As the story goes, a twelve-year-old lad, Gulab Singh, was guided to station himself at the land and wait for an enlightened visitor. Gulab Singh waited for twelve years and in the process he himself began to understand the play of the cosmic energies.

One night, when he saw a diffused light playing in his hut, he intuitively understood that Sant ji, for whom he had waited so long, had arrived.

He rushed into the jungle surrounding Mastuana, searching for the divine soul. Right across the pond, at the other end of the forest, he found Sant Attar Singh ready for his morning ablutions.

He, too, had been waiting for Bhai Gulab Singh.

After their initial Satsang, Sant Attar Singh asked

Bhai Gulab Singh to help him build a small hutment to rest the Guru Granth Sahib at Mastuana. Bhai Gulab Singh hesitated, as it was a big task. Sant ji reassured him, promising to help him accomplish it.

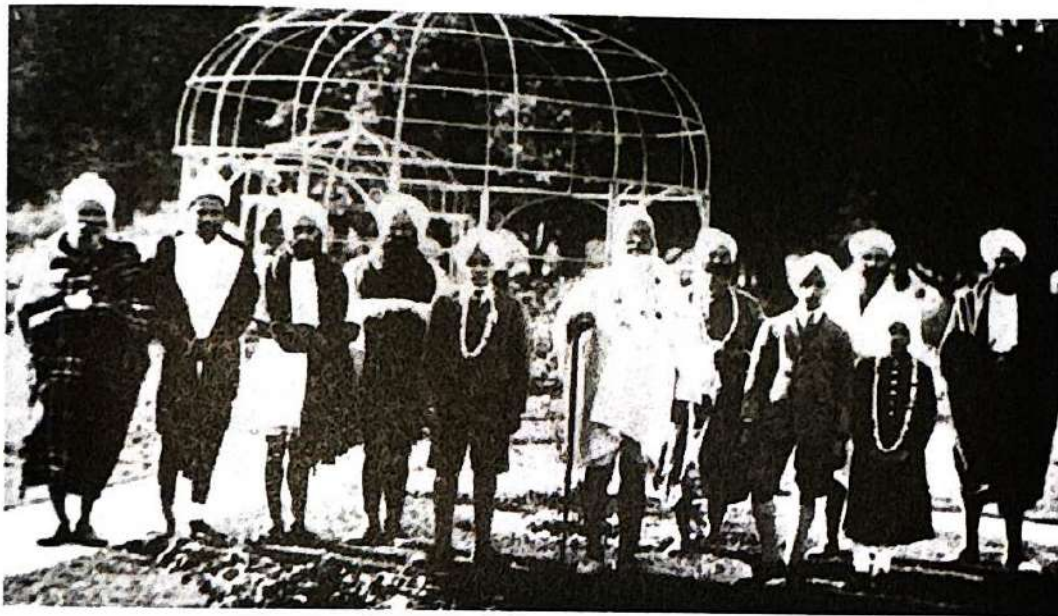
As per Sant Teja Singh, Mastuana was chosen by Sant ji as it was a spot that had been blessed by Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh.

Having reassured Gulab Singh, Sant ji asked him to stay on in Mastuana and wait for his return from his second phase of travels. Little did Gulab Singh know that he would be supervising not only the construction of the hutment but also Mastuana Sahib, then Akal College and later Guru Kashi.

After directing Bhai Gulab Singh, Sant ji left for Taran Taran. He stayed at Taran Taran for six months, where a hectic pace of Amrit Prachar had been set into motion. It is a historical fact that a sea of humanity was initiated by Sant ji. It was a task that could have been undertaken only by an oversoul. After Guru Nanak, Sant Attar Singh remains the most exclusive being who travelled far and wide to render the service of Amrit Prachar and who highlighted the importance of Shabad Guru in a Sikh's life.

Throughout his limited sermons after the ceremony of initiation, Sant ji would emphasize the strength of Shabad Guru and how it could not be compared to any word uttered by any godman. He condemned the practice of Babahood—the cult of self-styled godmen—which was becoming rampant in Punjab and elsewhere. Unfortunately, this practice, which was condemned by awakened souls like Sant Attar Singh, is still being followed in our society.

Sant ji's second phase of travels took him once again to Pothohar, Dera Khalsa, Rawalpindi, Dehra Sahib and Lahore. At one point during these travels, one Hari Singh clung to Sant ji as if he had found his saviour. He became the pot-bearer of Sant Attar Singh, and for the next sixteen years he did not leave Sant ji even for a moment.



Followers of Sant Attar Singh at the time of the conception of Mastuana Sahib

At Lahore, where Sant Attar Singh spent three months, the pre-destined meeting between him and Professor Niranjn Singh Mehta took place. It was here that Niranjn Singh was initiated into the Khalsa fold as Teja Singh. Being a Brahmgyani, a great soul with divine knowledge, Sant Attar Singh knew that he had found a successor to carry on Guru Nanak's mission. And indeed, Sant Teja Singh was to carry on the divine mission assigned by the Akal Purakh to Sant Attar Singh, during and after Sant ji's lifetime.

On his way from Lahore to Manawale, Sant ji fell sick and was running a high fever, which nearly debilitated him. It was many days before he could get back on his feet again. He realized then that his earthly body was time bound. He decided to hasten towards Mastuana to finish the installing of Guru Granth Sahib. By this time, he had also made up his mind to build a proper gurdwara at Mastuana instead of a small hutment.

Sometimes travelling on foot and sometimes on horseback, Sant ji finally reached Mastuana, where Bhai Gulab Singh was waiting for him.

Mastuana Sahib

The hectic activities of planning and building the gurdwara now began. Once the Sangat heard of Sant ji's sacred plan, there was no dearth of money.

Two groups were formed. One group with Sant ji took care of clearing the land around the pond, and the other group with Bhai Gulab Singh set up a small brick kiln to produce with hundreds of Sewaks. Very soon Sant Attar Singh realized that whatever came in the form of offerings was being used up in preparing either the Langar or Parshad. There were hardly any savings. So the form of Parshad was altered and the Langar, too, was simplified.

The foundation stone of Gurusagar Mastuana was laid by one Mistri Gujjar Singh at Badrukhan in 1902. Sant Attar Singh dedicated the next two years of his life to Mastuana Sahib.

While the building was still coming up, Sant ji saw that more funds would be required to continue the work. So, making Bhai Gulab Singh the in-charge of construction, he started on the third phase of his travels.

He realized that there was a paucity of funds in the

Malwa region, so he moved away from that area. He reached Peshawar with his Jatha and stationed himself at Bhai Joga Singh Gurdwara in the heart of the town. Thousands of people descended on the gurdwara for a glimpse of the divine soul. Amrit Prachar was conducted continuously for days, and there was non-stop Satsang, Langar and Kirtan. Sant ji's temperament would not permit him to make public announcements asking the Sangat to contribute to the cause of building a gurdwara at Mastuana. Instead, he would privately ask the organizers to help. The Sangat poured in and so did the finances.

After some time, Sant Attar Singh felt the need for solitude and quiet. He retreated into a cave on the banks of the river Toi. But the Sangat sought him out even here, and gathered on the banks of the river.

When spring arrived, Sant ji issued directions to celebrate Basant Panchami on the banks of the river Toi. Even to this day, keeping the tradition alive, Basant Panchami is celebrated on the banks of the river.

After some time, the Sikhs of Banu came to the spot and persuaded Sant ji to come with them.

By now, a familiar routine was visible in Sant ji's travels—Amrit Prachar, Langar and Kirtan. This routine was followed in Banu, and in Dera Ismail Khan, where Sant ji travelled next and camped on the banks of river Sind.

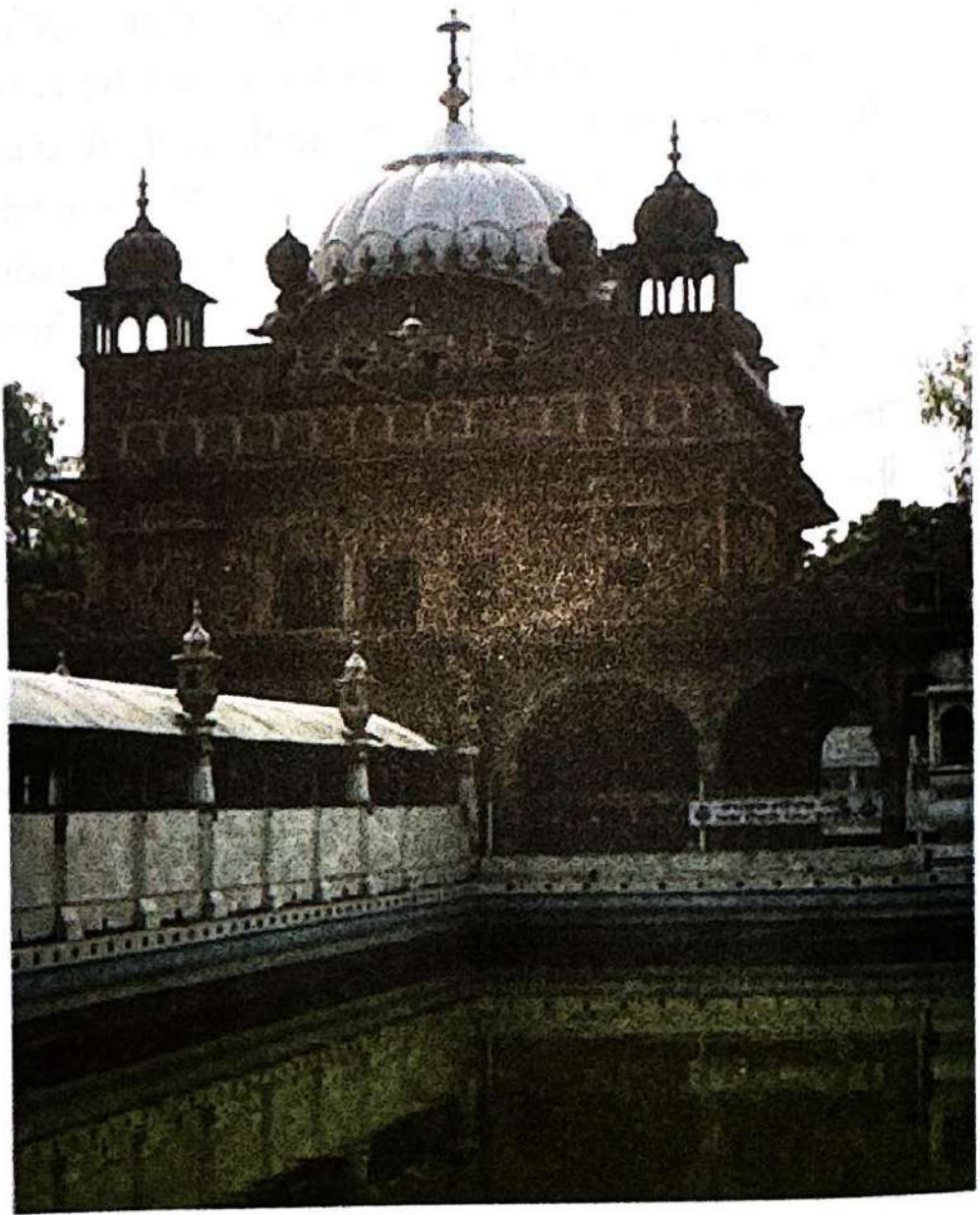
There are many tales relating to Sant Attar Singh's Sehaj Avastha, calming the forces of nature, in Banu, Dera Ismail Khan, Peshawar—indeed, wherever he went. But as Sant ji abhorred the narration of such stories, especially their description as miracles, his successors have tried to maintain

the sanctity of his directives. Therefore, such tales are seldom found in the literature about Sant ji, and we will not dwell upon them here, either.

From Dera Ismail Khan, Sant ji travelled to Multan and then on to Naushehra, where the 54 Sikh Battalion was stationed. When the armed forces heard of Sant ji's arrival in the city, a spontaneous wave of joy ran through the entire battalion. A Diwan was held in his honour, where everyone witnessed the charisma of Sant ji. His old boss, Colonel Creysely, joined the Diwan and expressed his pride in the stature achieved by his soldier. When the time came for his departure, the army band and the entire battalion saw Sant Attar Singh off.

Crossing over to Rawalpindi through Haripur, Sant ji rested for some time in Kanoha, at his old resting place, surrounded by rejuvenating springs and singing birds.

After resting for some days, Sant ji turned back towards Taran Taran.



Mastuana Sahib

PART II

Niranjan Singh

On 14 May 1877—eleven years after Sant Attar Singh ji appeared on earth—a boy was born to Rala Singh and Sada Kaur in village Balowali near Saidpur town, also known as Eminabad, in undivided Punjab. He was named Niranjan Singh Mehta by his grandfather, Nanak Chand.

Soon after, Rala Singh became a surgeon and shifted to Fazilka, while his wife and three children, including Niranjan Singh along with his two other siblings, stayed on at Eminabad. This was to be a temporary arrangement, but Dr. Rala Singh became enamored of a widow in Fazilka and decided not to bring his family from Eminabad. However, Nanak Chand, not to be browbeaten by his wayward son-in-law, packed off this daughter and grandchildren to Fazilka, so that they would have what was theirs by right.

Thus, Niranjan Singh, his two siblings, his mother Sada Kaur and stepmother began living under one roof with Rala Singh in Fazilka. As expected, the atmosphere in the house was oppressive and unhealthy.

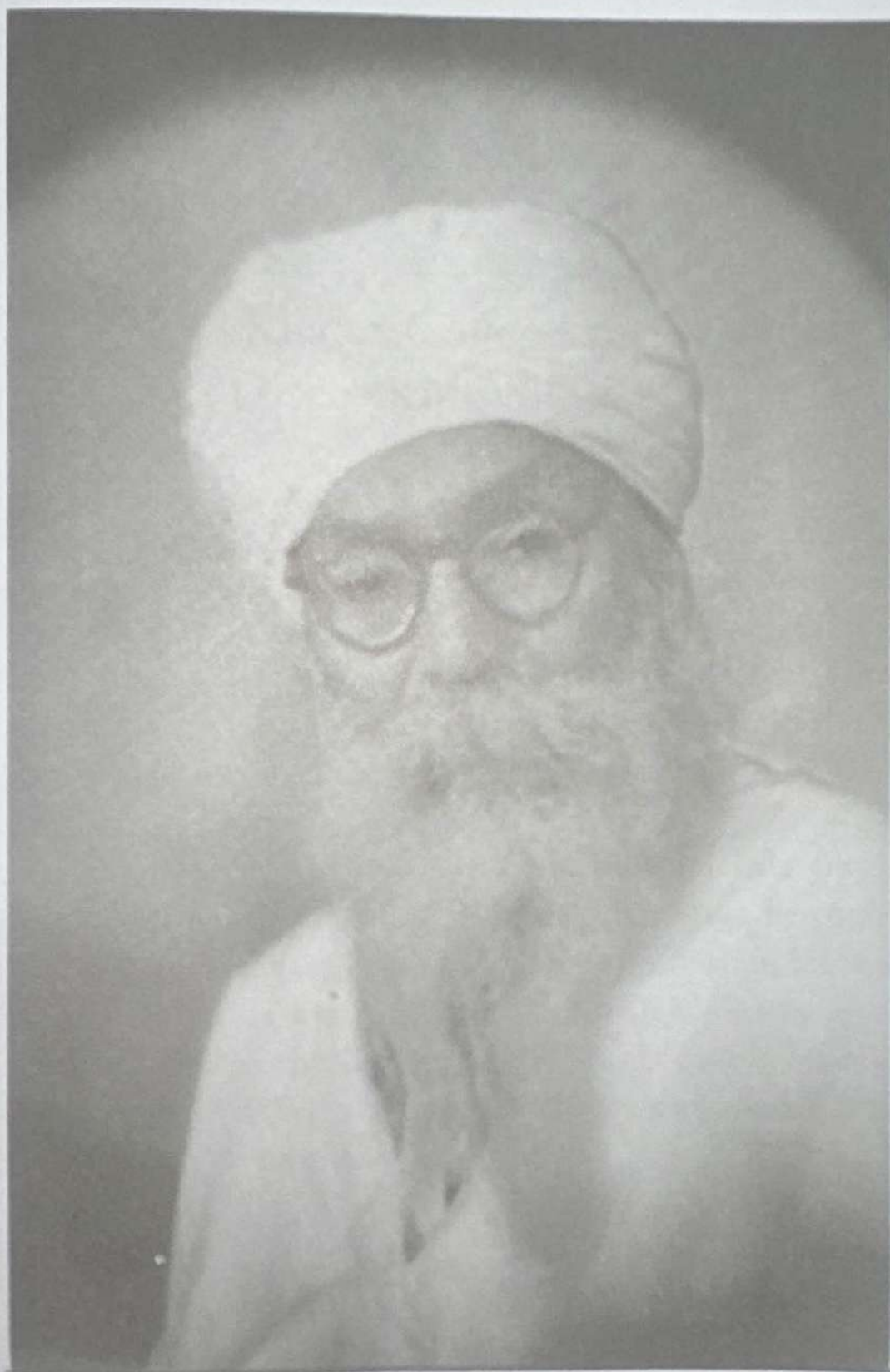
During a school vacation, when Niranjan Singh had gone to his maternal grandfather Nanak Singh's house, his

marriage was fixed. He was thus married when still a young boy. But, as was the custom, his wife was brought to the house only after he had cleared his school.

After his matriculation, Niranjana Singh spent enough time at home to witness the ill treatment meted out to his mother by his stepmother. When he protested, Rala Singh threw him out of the house and refused to pay for his further education.

However, Niranjana Singh was determined to clear his F.A. exams (the equivalent of today's 11th and 12th). He managed to pay his fee by pawning some of his wife's jewellery and taking tuition classes outside college hours.

Niranjana Singh cleared F.A. and went to see his parents—the mother who had always loved him and had suffered for her children, and the father who had abandoned him.



Sant Teja Singh

Khalsa College and Discovering Sikhism

Dr. Rala Singh now had a new respect for his son. He urged the young man to study for his Bachelor's degree and promised to fund his education. Niranjana Singh took admission in English Literature and after his first year, enrolled for LL.B, too. He cleared his law exam in 1900 and after three months, he received a Master's degree in English Literature.

After clearing law, Niranjana Singh joined Lala Jiwan Kishan Lal as an apprentice. Here he found that he could not lie in the court, so he abandoned the profession. He was 23 and the future was uncertain. Fortunately, he was soon asked to join as the headmaster of Anglo-Saxon School, Bhehra. He breathed a sigh of relief and immediately sent for his wife and mother.

While working as headmaster, Niranjana Singh enrolled himself for the Northern Indian Salt Revenue Official Grade Examination. He wrote the test in Calcutta (now Kolkata), and returned to Bhehra. While he waited for the results, he decided to acquire a B.Ed. degree in order to make further progress in the teaching profession. Meanwhile, the

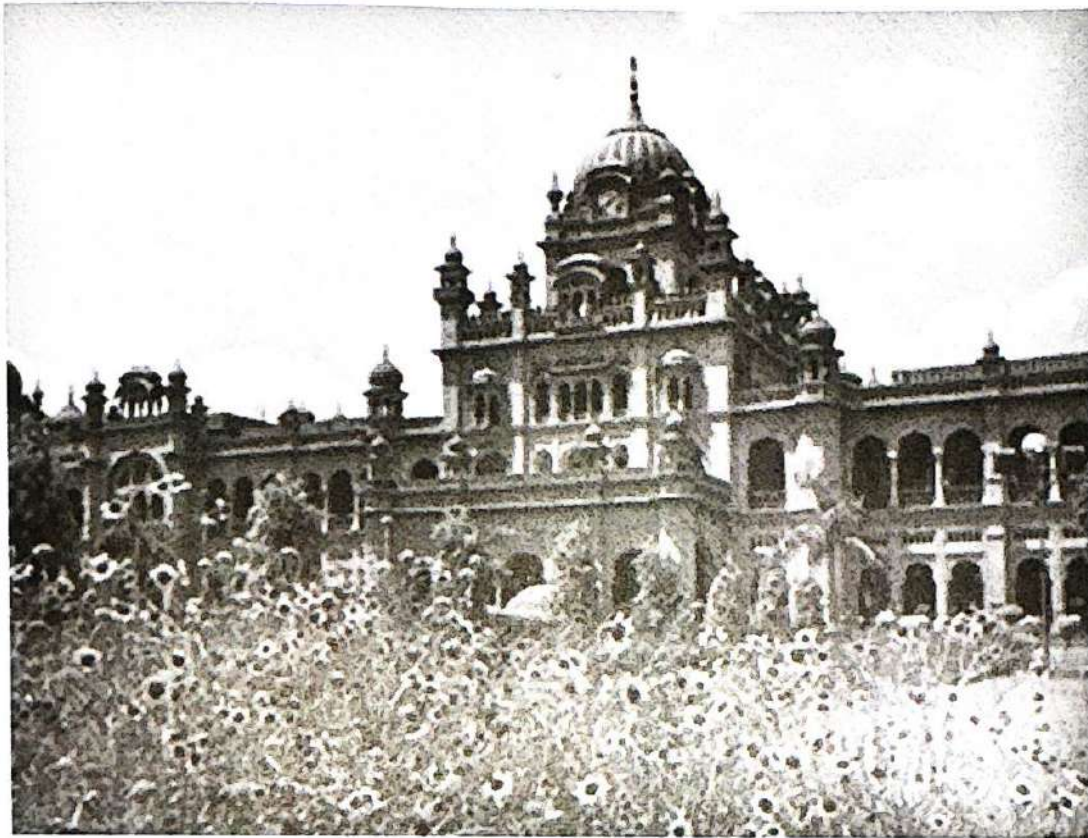
household expenses were rising and it was becoming difficult to make ends meet with his modest salary. This time he was bailed out by the Salt Revenue Department, which asked him to join as the Assistant Superintendent at Sambhar Lake in Rajasthan. He left his wife, who was then in an advanced stage of pregnancy, with his in-laws and joined duty, taking his mother Sada Kaur along.

Niranjan Singh's job in Rajasthan was to check the stealing of salt. As salt was stolen mainly by the poor, who were driven to do this by desperate poverty and the unjust laws of the British administration, Niranjan Singh did not like his job. Dissatisfied, he began to look for alternative employment. Among the people he wrote to was Sunder Singh Majithia, the prominent Sikh leader and philanthropist. He got an immediate reply and was asked to join as Vice-Principal of Khalsa College in Amritsar.

Niranjan Singh did not know Gurmukhi when he was asked to join but picked up the script quickly. He was not aware of the Rehat Maryada and had no interest whatsoever in the Sikh faith. In fact, he was almost an agnostic, and had never, as an adult, bowed before the holy Guru Granth Sahib.

He realized, however, that this attitude was not born of any real conviction. It was a mental block, and the result of ignorance. He resolved to learn about Sikhism. Gradually, he got interested in listening to Shabad Kirtan and by the time he joined Khalsa College, he was beginning to be deeply influenced by the teachings of the Gurus and had started bowing before the Guru Granth Sahib almost instinctively.

At the college, he proved to be an exceptional principal, starting various clubs and encouraging interaction among the students.



Khalsa College, Amritsar

In the vacations, he travelled along with his family to various places, visiting friends and family. On one such visit to Bhopal, it occurred to him that having come so far he should visit Hazur Sahib in Nanded, which was not far. The historical significance of this holy site inspired him greatly. The time he spent at Nagina Ghat, Hira Ghat and Shikar Ghat gurdwaras near Hazur Sahib aroused in him a sense of longing for the Limitless One and a calm descended on him. His immersion in Sikh philosophy and the quality of his worship now took on a different hue.

He returned to Amritsar to rejoin his duty at Khalsa College, and at the same time he sent his resignation to the Salt Department.

The Spiritual Progress of Niranjan Singh

Prof. Niranjan Singh's understanding of the Sikh faith and way of life increased rapidly, and he started experiencing a magnet-like attraction towards the faith. So much so that after the Ardas, he would be found lying face down and motionless, beyond consciousness, in front of Guru Granth Sahib. This started happening on a regular basis and none of his friends, such as Bhai Man Singh or Bhai Vir Singh, could offer any explanation. His medical reports declared him fit. His friends then took him to one Baba Sham Singh, who, in turn, told them to approach Sant Attar Singh, who was then camping at Lahore.

Prof. Niranjan Singh immediately left for Lahore, and found Sant ji surrounded by the Sangat. He swooned and fell to the ground before Sant ji. Prof. Jodh Singh, with whom Sant ji was very familiar, asked him about the man lying still before him. Sant Attar Singh then uttered the words: "He is a true Hari Premi (a true lover of God)!"

The words had a miraculous effect on Prof. Niranjan Singh. It seemed that his body had been cleansed and

the swooning stopped on its own. He folded his hands in supplication.

The only directive issued to him by Sant ji then was: "Reconcile with the people who have offended you".

Sant Attar Singh believed that forgiveness was the greatest virtue that a Sikh could practise. Prof. Niranjana Singh went around making peace with all those who had hurt him, including his stepmother, and asking forgiveness of those whom he believed he may have hurt.

Having made peace all around, he took his family and went to see Sant Attar Singh, who was then visiting Amritsar. Despite running high fever, on Niranjana Singh's earnest request, the Amrit ceremony was conducted, and Niranjana Singh was initiated into Khalsahood under a new name—Teja Singh. All his family members, too, were given new names.

After this, Prof. Teja Singh's heart was no more in his job and he wanted to be near Sant ji all the time. But Sant ji told him to continue with his job till he received further directions. Prof. Teja Singh went back to work at Khalsa College, but anxiously waited for directions from Sant ji.

The Summons

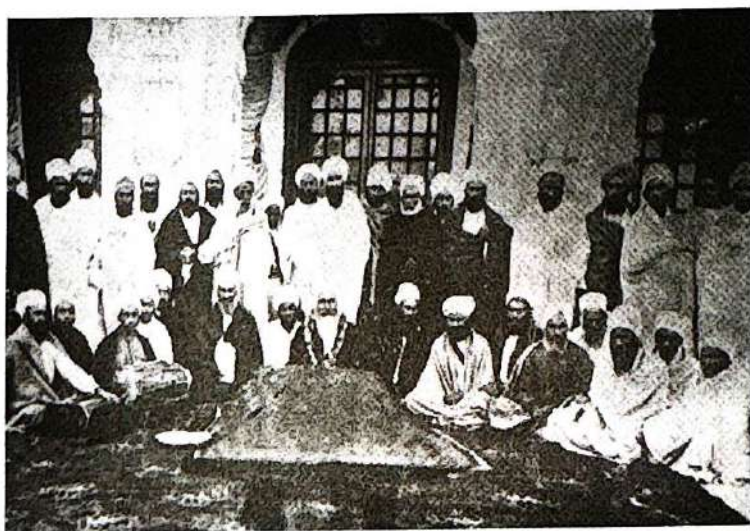
Prof. Teja Singh's wait ended sometime later, when he was asked by Sant Attar Singh to reach Mastuana. On his way to Mastuana, along with his family, Teja Singh felt a great sense of tranquillity and peace settling inside him. The closer he came to his destination, the more peaceful he felt.

There was a huge congregation assembled at Mastuana and Prof. Teja Singh found Sant ji standing in attendance before the Guru Granth Sahib, rendering Gurbani in the most melodious voice ever heard. Sant ji was standing (throughout his earthly journey, Sant ji never took an Aasan, or seat, before the Guru Granth Sahib). Prof Teja Singh was overwhelmed by the compassionate charisma of Sant ji; the divinity emanating from him settled like a cool shade over the Sangat assembled there.

This large gathering, which was like a fair and came to be known as the Jor Mela, was the first of its kind to take place at Mastuana. Soon the whole place became one large sea rippling with human voices. The tradition of Jor Mela still continues at Mastuana Sahib.

After the Ardas, Sant Attar Singh spent some time alone

with Prof. Teja Singh. He imparted to him the knowledge and technique of meditation, for him to share with the rest of the Sangat. The wisdom and knowledge handed over to Prof. Teja Singh became his natural companions till the end of his life.



An old photograph of the Sangat at Mastuana

Belief in Value-based Education

The third milestone of Sant Attar Singh's immortal journey was to establish an institution where value-based education would be imparted to its students.

According to Sant ji, "*Padhiya murakh aakhiye jit labh lobh ahankar.*" Translated, this means: the person who merely acquires knowledge is in fact a fool; mere academic excellence in life leads to the birth of ego (which distorts an individual's personality). Sant ji, therefore, promoted education blended with a spiritual ethos. His belief was: "*Vidya vichari taan parupkari*"—those who are learned do good to others. In other words, the truly learned person is truly compassionate.

It was agreed in the Sangat at Mastuana to build a school based on the above principles. In Sant Attar Singh's words: "I want a synthesis of Guru Nanak's teachings and scientific education here at Mastuana."

It was to fulfil this purpose that Sant Attar Singh desired that Teja Singh go to the UK to study the modern scientific methodology of imparting education.

And even as he set the course for Prof Teja Singh's future, Sant ji gave him immortal advice: "Even if anyone says anything to you, abuses or contradicts you or argues with you, you should have just one reply, which is Satbachan [the True Word]." In other words, speaking the Truth is the greatest, indeed the only, mantra of life.

Prof. Teja Singh followed this instruction till his last breath. He was also instructed by his mentor to build Gurdwaras wherever he toured and conduct Amrit Prachar and Shabad Vichar and clear the doubts arising in the minds of Sikhs, as spirituality is much beyond Ridhi Sidhi (occult powers).

While Prof. Teja Singh boarded the ship *Messageries Ville liner De Ce Tat* on 6 August 1906, from Bombay (present day Mumbai) and sailed out to the UK, the construction of the school at Mastuana continued with the fervour and dedication of the Sangat.

Meeting the Objectives

Prof. Teja Singh reached London via Paris. According to his autobiographical notes, "Perhaps it was destiny or perhaps the words uttered by the divine soul, but despite a detailed communication with Harvard University in the USA, I [now] found myself in London."

In London, after seeing a lot of Sikh students with shorn hair, he took it upon himself to prevent this dilution of the Sikh faith and identity. As a role model, he kept his hair intact and joined London University. He was able to convince the university authorities about the significance of hair and headgear in Sikhism, and they waived their objections. Someone challenged him to repeat the same feat in Cambridge University, where he enrolled for a course next, and he convinced the authorities there, as well.

Prof. Teja Singh enrolled himself for Doctor of Science classes. He rented a house—No. 33, Montague Road—in one of the quietest parts of Cambridge. Here, he installed the Guru Granth Sahib, which he had carried with him from India.

The same is presently installed in the Gurdwara at Shepherd's Bush.

Owing to his persistence and attitude, Prof. Teja Singh was admired by other Sikh boys in the university and soon they formed a group. When summer vacations began in the British universities, Prof. Teja Singh, not wanting to waste a single moment, decided to go to America and enrol in the Teachers' College at Columbia University, New York, and also managed to get a scholarship for the same. He opted for courses that suited the mission assigned to him by Sant Attar Singh: methods of teaching kindergarten children and administration of a school.

Shortly after he had reached the beautiful campus situated on the banks of the river Hudson and started his classes, a visiting professor from Canada delivered a lecture on the famous writer Rudyard Kipling, who had set his best-known stories, poems and novels—like *Kim* and *The Jungle Book*—in India. During the lecture, Teja Singh ji made a few interventions to differ with the visiting professor, and made certain observations about Kipling's writing and his time in India. This impressed the professor greatly and he asked the extraordinary student from India to deliver a lecture on contemporary Hindustan. Prof. Teja Singh replied, "I can touch upon Hindustan only after I touch upon Sikhism, because the Hindustan we visualize today is a manifestation of the changes brought about by the divine teachings of Guru Nanak." So it was decided that he would deliver two lectures—the first on Guru Nanak and the next on contemporary Hindustan.

When Prof. Teja Singh, still only in his twenties, arrived to deliver the lecture, there was a crowd of 10,000 students and professors waiting to hear him. He spoke for one-and-

half hours and the crowd listened to him in rapt attention. The reaction to his passionate delivery was splashed all over the continent's newspapers. Thanks to him, North Americans, and, later, the British became better aware of Hinduism, Sikhism and Indian spirituality. Some native Americans began to come to Prof. Teja Singh regularly for further knowledge about Sikh spiritual thought.



Gurdwara Shepherd's Bush

Visit to Canadian Shores

When the papers in USA and Canada carried news of Prof. Teja Singh's New York lectures, along with his photograph, one Balwant Singh Granthi, who had settled in Vancouver, a port city in the Canadian province of British Columbia, contacted him and requested him to visit the city. He sent a round ticket from New York to Vancouver. Responding to Balwant Singh's enthusiasm, Prof. Teja Singh undertook the six-day journey to this city on Canada's western shore by train.

Vancouver was a relatively nascent city compared with others in Canada, and had quite a few mills on its outskirts. These mills supported many Asian immigrants, among them a significant number from India. Upon his arrival in the city, Prof. Teja Singh addressed a huge gathering of immigrants at the conclusion of a Shabad Kirtan at Vancouver's main Gurdwara, on West Second Avenue. Later, taking a round of the city, he visited Port Moody, where he found a number of Sikh immigrants. He was happy to notice that they were following the Rehat Maryada despite tough circumstances. After engaging with the Sangat in a number of spiritual

discussions and trying to help clear the doubts in their minds on the religious front, Prof. Teja Singh returned to New York.

Americans and Europeans continued to seek Prof. Teja Singh out for spiritual guidance. Of his growing number of American fans, one T.C. Crawford became very attached to Prof. Teja Singh and, through him, to the Sikh faith. Prof. Teja Singh called him Himmat Das. As destiny would have it, Crawford became instrumental in the creation of Guru Nanak Mining and Trust Company and the conceptualization of Guru Nanak Town. Crawford needed money to save his gold mine in California, for which he was willing to transfer some percentage of his shares to any Gurdwara and requested Prof. Teja Singh to help him out. The Professor, in an effort to get money for him, once again left for Vancouver, British Columbia. It so happened that his visit coincided with the anti-immigrant and anti-Sikh wave that was being generated by the Canadian government.

This was in the early part of the century, when the government in Canada had become openly xenophobic and racist. It was using the media to paint Indian immigrants as dirty and unhygienic, without work and money, so that public sentiment and international opinion would grow against them. Prof. Teja Singh understood the ploy being used by the Canadian government to stigmatize and demonize the Asian immigrants in British Columbia and pack them off to British Honduras in South America, which was then plagued with unemployment and yellow fever. The government had, in fact, sent one of its senior officers to Honduras along with two handpicked members of Canada's

Sikh community—Satnagar Singh and Sham Singh—in order to fabricate a favourable report about the living conditions and employment opportunities in Honduras. This report would then be used as justification to throw the Sikhs out of Canada and into unsafe Honduras—and present it as something done for their own good!

Prof. Teja Singh formulated a scheme to expose the duplicity and viciousness of the Canadian Government and foil its plans. He mobilized the Sikh population of Vancouver to collect money in a very short time. A part of this money was transferred to Crawford in lieu of the shares of his gold mines, which were then transferred to the newly formed Guru Nanak Mining and Trust Company. With the remaining money, 250 acres of land was bought near Eagle Harbour in West Vancouver.

A press conference was then called by Prof. Teja Singh, which was also attended by prominent Canadians gathered by the local followers of the Professor, where he exposed the lies of the Canadian Government. He spoke eloquently and forcefully to the audience about Sikhism and its daily practices and what cleanliness meant to an ordinary Sikh. The prominent Canadians and the media were humbled and hugely impressed by the Professor's speech and realized how spiritually evolved, hardworking and enterprising the Sikhs were. With his untiring efforts and sagacity, the young Professor was able to comprehensively contradict the government's propaganda that the Sikh community neither had nor was capable of finding work and money. And once the financial strength of the Sikhs and the basic tenets of Sikhism had been highlighted in this extraordinary fashion,

it triggered a pro-Sikh and pro-Indian wave—not only in British Columbia, but throughout Canada, and gradually through the rest of North America and the world. Later, in a self-analytical mood, Prof. Teja Singh acknowledged with humility that ‘he had been sent by the Almighty to help out his brothers facing a difficult situation.’

Prof. Teja Singh was soft spoken but forceful. He addressed a number of meetings of the Indian immigrants, organizing them and building up opinion against the inhuman scheme of foreign deportation being hatched by the authorities in British Columbia. Fired by spiritual energy and his strong convictions and his belief in human rights, he warned the Canadian government of grave consequences if it continued with its programme of engineered racial prejudice and repression: “Should the Sikhs waver in their heroic loyalty to the British government,” he said in an interview to *The World*, “it would require 1,00,000 white troops to cope up with the situation.”

Prof. Teja Singh mainly spoke in the spiritual idiom, but the predominant mood was anti-imperialism, pro-human rights, defiant and militant. He seriously believed that he was on a sacred, pre-destined mission and took the task of propagating the Sikh teachings and establishing Gurdwaras very seriously.

It was the favourable public opinion generated for the Sikhs by Prof. Teja Singh that empowered Satnagar Singh and Sham Singh to dissociate themselves from the Canadian government’s cynical scheme on their return from British Honduras. Both men were no longer willing to work as pliant agents of the government. Along with other

members of the Sikh community, they dared to disregard the government pressure on them. They would not give the government the fabricated report that it wanted about conditions in Honduras. More than a thousand immigrants gathered in Vancouver's main Gurdwara one weekend to hear the honest report: British Honduras was a poor country, where already settled Indians were suffering from yellow fever and barely surviving on very poor wages. The scarcity of basic amenities was such that they wanted to return to India but could not afford to. After hearing the report, a consensus was reached among the immigrants that they would fight the government's plans, come what may. The proposal of moving the immigrants to British Honduras by the Canadian government was rejected unanimously.

Prof. Teja Singh was seen as the main person responsible for this turn of events, and Canadian government lashed out and accused him of inciting Canada's Sikhs and using aggressive language. But in the end it had to concede reluctantly that whatever he had said about the government's real intentions was the truth.

One fallout of Prof. Teja Singh's defiant campaigning against the Honduras affair—which had pitted him against not only the Canadian government but also the British Empire—was that he came under the scrutiny of the British agencies, which followed him back home even after he had wound up his studies abroad and returned to Mastuana Sahib.

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function $f(x)$ defined by the equation

$$f(x) = \int_0^x \frac{1}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is well known that this function is the arctangent function, i.e., $f(x) = \arctan x$.

2. In the second part, we consider the function $g(x)$ defined by the equation

$$g(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is easy to see that this function is the logarithm of the square of the square root of $1+x^2$, i.e., $g(x) = \frac{1}{2} \ln(1+x^2)$.

3. In the third part, we consider the function $h(x)$ defined by the equation

$$h(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^2}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is easy to see that this function is the difference between the logarithm of the square of the square root of $1+x^2$ and the arctangent function, i.e., $h(x) = \frac{1}{2} \ln(1+x^2) - \arctan x$.

4. In the fourth part, we consider the function $k(x)$ defined by the equation

$$k(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^3}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is easy to see that this function is the difference between the logarithm of the square of the square root of $1+x^2$ and the arctangent function, i.e., $k(x) = \frac{1}{2} \ln(1+x^2) - \arctan x$.

5. In the fifth part, we consider the function $l(x)$ defined by the equation

$$l(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^4}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is easy to see that this function is the difference between the logarithm of the square of the square root of $1+x^2$ and the arctangent function, i.e., $l(x) = \frac{1}{2} \ln(1+x^2) - \arctan x$.

6. In the sixth part, we consider the function $m(x)$ defined by the equation

$$m(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^5}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is easy to see that this function is the difference between the logarithm of the square of the square root of $1+x^2$ and the arctangent function, i.e., $m(x) = \frac{1}{2} \ln(1+x^2) - \arctan x$.

7. In the seventh part, we consider the function $n(x)$ defined by the equation

$$n(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^6}{1+t^2} dt$$

It is easy to see that this function is the difference between the logarithm of the square of the square root of $1+x^2$ and the arctangent function, i.e., $n(x) = \frac{1}{2} \ln(1+x^2) - \arctan x$.

8. In the eighth part, we consider the function $o(x)$ defined by the equation

$$o(x) = \int_0^x \frac{t^7}{1+t^2} dt$$

Establishing Gurdwaras Abroad

With the sorting out of Sikh affairs in British Columbia, Prof. Teja Singh once again devoted his energies to the founding of Gurdwaras in different parts of the world. He formed a Jatha along with five devout Sikhs and undertook a tour along the Pacific Coast, where the first stop happened to be Vancouver again. From there they boarded another ship to take them to Victoria, the capital of British Columbia.

At Victoria, a group of young Sikhs was initiated into the Khalsa fold and with their monetary help, some land was bought and the foundation of a Gurdwara was laid. From Victoria, the group turned towards states and cities in America—Washington, Oregon and then California. It was a successful tour because it brought hundreds of Sikh youths across North America into the Khalsa fold.

Taking a cue from this tour, the Sikhs of Vancouver asked the Jatha to visit the city again. During this visit, not only did over 5000 Sikhs get initiated into Khalsahood, but a new Gurdwara was also built in the city's Abbotsford area.

As he travelled across North America, working to spread the message of the Gurus, Prof. Teja Singh had a fair glimpse of the affairs of the Sikhs settled on different coasts. Having become highly prosperous, many of them had moved away from the central tenets of Sikhism, and as they chased wealth and influence, internal bickering had started among them; there was a lot of infighting. This disappointed Prof. Teja Singh greatly. On a visit to Abbotsford, he was much disturbed by this picture of the Sikhs, and he is known to have remarked, "You people will never know peace."

He realized that it was time for him to return to London to continue Sant Attar Singh's mission in new lands. He was now eager to establish a Gurdwara in London and raise the Nishan Sahib, the Khalsa flag, there. A group, informally known as the Gurdwara Committee, had already been formed. At a meeting of this committee, a 60-year leasehold property in Shepherd's Bush was now acquired and a Gurdwara was established there, with a major chunk of the money coming from Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala.

It was now impressed upon Prof Teja Singh by his advisors and friends that he should complete his various courses. Unfortunately, when he went back to Cambridge University to enroll again and finish the courses he had left unfinished when he had moved to North America, the authorities there refused him admission as the reports of the British Honduras episode had reached them, too. Notwithstanding the fact that he had already completed half his course, he was not given permission to continue. The only option left with him was to return to Columbia University in America and continue the course at Teacher's

College that he had enrolled for. Unfortunately, he had no finances to return to the university. He wrote to a friend, Qasim, who sent him forty pounds. But on reaching Columbia University, he was told by the President of the college that he could not continue as he was not a student but a political activist.

Prof. Teja Singh did not lose heart and remembered that he had engaged in correspondence with Harvard University before starting from India. Perhaps they had not heard about his political activism. So, he boarded a plane for Boston. On reaching Harvard, he was told he could get admission only if he paid \$150. Prof. Teja Singh had just \$5 and his family had also reached Boston by then and a house had been rented.

"Study I must," he thought. "But how?"

Thinking hard and fast, he bought some cloth and asked his wife to embroider and stitch some cushions. The cushions were sold for \$ 9, out of which \$ 5 were spent on house rent and with the rest, more cloth was bought. While they both struggled to earn and save enough money for the university fee in this manner, some help came from Prof. Teja Singh's old admirers in America, which enabled him to pay the sum of \$90 for the first instalment of the course at Harvard.

Paying the second instalment seemed impossible. Both husband and wife sat under an oak tree in the Harvard University campus one morning and Prof. Teja Singh pondered on why the problem was not being resolved. He asked his wife, "Have you entertained any unreligious thoughts recently?"

She answered, "I just dreamt of your landing a plum job when we return home."

“This is wrong!” Prof. Teja Singh exclaimed. “It goes against our commitment to the mission.”

Both prayed for forgiveness, and Prof. Teja Singh thought of returning to his friends in California if he did not get any financial respite.

But as soon as he returned home that afternoon, he found his English Literature teacher, Professor Bliso Percy, waiting for him and she offered him \$60, saying, “When you are through with your studies at Harvard, lend this money to another needy student.”

Thus, Prof. Teja Singh got a Master of Arts degree in March 1911 from Harvard University. After this, he started preparing for the journey back to India.

Continuing with the Mission

In his autobiographical notes, Prof. Teja Singh challenged a well-advertised theory that for Sikh students, academic studies cannot be combined with daily religious rendering of Nitnem. He cited his own example in the notes, of having met his professional objective along with his life's mission at Harvard itself. "It is not impossible," he wrote, pointing to the fact that modern education and Sikh religious practice are not incompatible. (It is this doctrine that the present spiritual and academic caretaker of Baru Sahib, Baba Iqbal Singh, has propounded in his institutions.)

Having completed his course at Harvard, Prof. Teja Singh prepared to return to India via Japan. He told his wife, Bishan Kaur, "You start from California via Shanghai and Hong Kong and I will catch up with you."

But when Bishan Kaur, along with their young son, landed in Stockton, Baba Jawala Singh and Baba Wasakha Singh, the Gadri Babas (the Babas of the US-based revolutionary Gadar movement fighting for India's freedom), made her disembark there, saying, "It is not safe for a woman to travel alone." Subsequently, Prof. Teja Singh, with

minimal money in hand, landed in Stockton. The family was reunited at Jawala Singh's ranch at Holtsville, near Stockton across the river Sacramento.

Both the Babas, along with other Sikh farmers, led a traditional Sikh's life and the Langar was prepared by all and shared by all. In the evening, everyone would gather for their prayers. One evening, after Rehras, Prof. Teja Singh put forward a proposal, "It would be nice if a Gurdwara could be built in Stockton, for there is no Gurdwara in California."



Gurdwara at Stockton

The response to this proposal was enthusiastic. A letter was drafted by Prof. Teja Singh and copies were sent to all the Sikhs in the area. After collecting money from the Punjabi and other immigrants, a piece of land was bought within a few weeks at Stockton for \$ 3400. Construction of a Gurdwara soon began on this land, and it was completed in record time at a cost of over \$ 20,000. It was formally inaugurated on 27 May 1912.

During this time, Prof. Teja Singh met two very prominent Indian activists and revolutionaries settled on the West Coast, Tarak Nath Das and Lala Har Dayal. Shortly after this, Das and Dayal floated a trust, disbursing Guru Gobind Singh scholarships for Hindustani students at Berkley University in California.

Even as all this was happening in California, there was restlessness brewing across the border in Canada—in Vancouver, to be precise, and Prof. Teja Singh was invited to help manage the situation. He was specifically asked by the Sikh migrants to persuade the government to allow them to bring their immediate families from India to join them. The Canadian laws of the time prohibited this, as the government wanted to limit the influx of South Asian immigrants, especially Sikhs.

Before leaving for Vancouver, Prof. Teja Singh drafted the by-laws for the Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society and got it registered. He had realized that this formal registration was important to do in order to avoid any problems in building more Gurdwaras and conducting Amrit Prachar in the state of California.

When he reached Vancouver, Prof. Teja Singh helped

the local Sikhs set up a delegation, with a sympathetic local Catholic priest as one of its members, which was tasked with going to the Canadian capital, Ottawa, and petitioning the government to apply the same laws to Sikh immigrants as were applied to other immigrants, and allow them to bring their spouses and children to Canada. The government, however, did not relent. Prof. Teja Singh then realized the community would have to force the government to be fair. He delivered stirring lectures about the British Empire's and Canadian government's unfair policies. The lectures were attended by large numbers of Sikhs and native Canadians and were also covered by the press. Pressure was thus built on the government and sometime after this, the right of Sikh residents to bring their families to Canada was approved at an Empire conference in London.

After this, Prof. Teja Singh's organizational capacity and education established him as a towering leader of the Sikh community within British Columbia. Everyone sought his advice and guidance. Before starting out for Punjab, he built a second Gurdwara at Victoria, on the request of the Sikh public there. He installed the Guru Granth Sahib in a grand manner that had never been witnessed before by the public of Victoria, or indeed all of British Columbia. A Nagar Kirtan was organized, with 5000 uniformed Sikhs moving in four parallel lines, singing religious hymns. The Guru Granth Sahib was placed on a six-wheel carriage. It took the procession six hours to reach the Gurdwara Sahib.

His task accomplished, Prof. Teja Singh was now eager to return to his mentor, Sant Attar Singh. On the final leg of his journey from Japan to Shanghai to Hong Kong and

then via Singapore to India, he was joined by Gurdit Singh of *Kamagata Maru* fame.

Eventually, getting off the ship in Calcutta, Prof. Teja Singh and his family reached Ambala via Gujranwala, to meet Sant Attar Singh.

Mastuana Sahib Revisited

While Prof. Teja Singh was pursuing his studies and mission abroad, the construction of the school at Mastuana Sahib was going on in full swing. By the time he returned with his family, the enrolment at Mastuana had already taken place and 60 boys and 50 girls had enrolled themselves.

As was the routine at Guru Sagar Mastuana, the first drum gong sounded at 2 a.m., the second gong at 3 a.m. and the Kirtan of Asa ki Var began at 3.30 a.m. The daily curriculum of the students consisted of Asa ki Var (the morning Sikh prayer), Sewa (physical service), studies and then a siesta in the afternoon. They continued studies after resting and concluded the day with Rehras and Sohila (the evening prayers).

The pattern set up by Sant Attar Singh in those early years is still being followed on the campus at Baru Sahib. The successors of Sant Attar Singh have maintained the sanctity of his mission and his words in contemporary times.

On his return from foreign lands, Prof. Teja Singh was asked by Sant ji to stay at Mastuana Sahib and apply all

that he had learnt abroad. He eagerly took over the duty of teaching Gurmukhi to the children enrolled at Mastuana. His own children, too, were admitted to the institution.

Now Sant Attar Singh prepared to leave on his final leg of travels. Before he left, he asked Prof. Teja Singh not to move from Mastuana under any circumstances. He also designated him the administrator of Guru Sagar Mastuana in the presence of Bhai Gulab Singh.

In just a few months, the institution gained an incredible reputation for academic excellence and that, too, as per Sikh norms and traditions. The number of students also increased every new session. Unfortunately, there was also sorrow in the midst of joy. Prof. Teja Singh's son came down with a mysterious fever and passed away. Sant ji, who was at Sangrur then, returned to Mastuana to condole the couple's loss.

Prof. Teja Singh carried on with his sacred mission despite the tragedy. Soon, the news of Prof. Teja Singh taking over the institution at Mastuana travelled abroad, and his admirers kept sending him invites to visit and lecture abroad. He, too, was tempted, but he was under the strict orders of Sant ji not to leave Mastuana. Prof. Teja Singh had his share of visions and flashes of enlightenment at Guru Sagar. It became his routine to get up at 2 a.m., have a dip in the Sarovar and sweep the Diwan Hall and dust the carpets. Side by side, he would recite his morning prayers till it was time for his students to arrive. He soon started enjoying his routine.

Travels to Aid Mastuana Sahib

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sant Attar Singh had started on his final phase of travels. He travelled mainly to get financial help to complete the Gurdwara at Mastuana or he travelled when the Sangat anywhere remembered him with great love and affection. During the last phase of his travels, he undertook Amrit Prachar in the Malwa region. From there he moved on to what is known today as West Punjab. A lot of financial help was forthcoming from the Sangat of Kohat, Peshawar and Banu. During the tour of this area, he spent 15 days at Dhillanwali village near Gujranwala. On hearing about his sojourn at Dhillanwali, the people of Gujranwala came and fetched him away to Gujranwala.

From Gujranwala, Sant Attar Singh one night quietly left for Hyderabad (in Sindh province) with his Sewaks. From there, he moved on to Karachi, then Ajmer, Bombay and Baroda (present day Vadodra). By then, considerable time had elapsed and Sant ji wanted to hurry back to

Mastuana. Somewhere at the back of his mind was the intuition that his earthly journey was slowly drawing to an end.

Upon reaching Mastuana, he decided not to move from there till the construction of the Gurdwara was completed. Such was his dedication to the Guru Granth Sahib that in 1905, when Punjab was struck by a massive earthquake and the whole Sangat ran out of the main building, Sant ji continued to stand in attendance before the Guru Granth Sahib. Despite repeated requests by the Sangat, he refused to budge, saying that he could not abandon the holy scripture, which is the manifestation of the ten Sikh Gurus.

The first phase of construction at Mastuana Sahib was over by March 1906. In 1909, on the occasion of the first religious congregation at Mastuana, the entire Gurdwara building was complete. Only the Sarovar was still under construction. While the Sewadars were doing Sewa, Sant ji would sit under the Reru tree. His Sewaks would see Sant ji talking to the tree on many occasions. Subsequently, it was noticed that the tree, which had been sprouting thorns more than an inch long, had stopped sprouting these.

Through all this, work on the Sarovar continued at a steady pace. People seemed to have become obsessed with the completion of the Sarovar. Sant Attar Singh enjoyed the presence of the sea of humans working through the day and often into the night. He would remark, "Without Sewa one is not endowed with humility. One may continue with endless meditation on the true name, but till the body knows humility, it cannot attain spiritual bliss."

When the Sarovar was ready, the religious centre was formally named as Guru Sagar Mastuana after the conclusion of Asa ki Var and on completion of the Diwan:

Guru sagar ratni bharpure

Amrit sant chughe nahi doore

was read in the Hukamnama (order of the day).

Dedication to Sikh Education

Whenever and wherever Sikh educational conferences took place, Sant Attar Singh made it a point to attend them, for he considered Sikh education an extension of Sikhism itself. He presided over some of the conferences. Invariably, the atmosphere at such conferences would get charged because of his divine presence and because he would make the audience join him in singing divine hymns.

In 1914, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, then secretary of Banaras Hindu University, invited Sant ji to lay the foundation stone for the first college in the university compound and conduct five Akhand Paaths simultaneously. Special tents were erected for the occasion. After the conclusion of the Akhand Paaths, Sant ji laid the foundation with five bricks of gold, heaping the concrete with a golden spade handed to him by the Maharaja of Bikaner.

On the occasion of another Sikh conference, Sant Attar Singh voiced his thoughts that Khalsahood would become popular only if the Sikhs followed the practice of Amrit Vela and the various Sikh organizations came together under one umbrella and donated one-tenth of their income to a

common pool, so that there would never be any paucity of funds. Sant ji also preached that the prime aim of all the religious bodies of the Khalsa Panth should be to meditate on the divine name. He also believed that all matters relating to religion should be conducted in Gurmukhi.

On one occasion Sant ji, along with Prof Teja Singh, went to Gujranwala, where the local committee had been waiting for him to lay the foundation of Guru Nanak Khalsa College. The foundation-laying ceremony was to be preceded by a conference, and when the locals heard of Sant Attar Singh's arrival, they turned out in thousands to hear him.

The organizers panicked, for they had not anticipated and prepared for such a large number. Sant Attar Singh reassured them and began the conference in his usual manner. Reciting hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib, he made the gathering join him and the atmosphere became electrified. It was a scene of tremendous positive energy. Prof. Teja Singh whispered to Sant ji that it was the right time to appeal for support in establishing the Akal College at Mastuana. The appeal was made from the dais and it received tremendous response.

Akal College, Mastuana

On the date decided by Sant Attar Singh, five Khalsas, including Prof. Teja Singh, gathered to lay the foundation of Akal College at Mastuana. They laid five bricks as the foundation.

The collection of funds to build the college was left to Prof. Teja Singh by Sant ji. For some time, Prof. Teja Singh stayed on in Gujranwala, raising the required funds and also looking after the affairs of Guru Nanak Khalsa College,



Akal College, Mastuana

of which he remained the principal until 1919. After that he moved on to Benaras, where he was requested by the administration of Banaras Hindu University to teach there. On Sant ji's directive, he joined the University and pledged to send half of his pay of Rs 500 regularly to Mastuana Sahib as long as he served at the university.

On the eve of his departure for Banaras, Prof. Teja Singh was told by Sant ji to source all the girders to be used in the construction of Akal College from Calcutta. So, after joining Banaras Hindu University, Prof. Teja Singh would take a train for Calcutta on the evening of the last working day every week and spend the weekend going around various Gurdwaras in Calcutta to request donations for Akal College.

In three trips, Prof. Teja Singh was able to collect Rs. 4500 for the girders. But he realized this may not be enough. But the order had already been placed with Morton Company. It being Dussehra break, he now went home and obtained a loan from Punjab National Bank against his newly constructed house in Punjab to meet the shortfall. He went to Mastuana Sahib and handed over the papers related to the girders to Sant Gulab Singh, who was looking after the construction of Akal College.

During this break, in a meeting with Maharaja Ripudaman Singh of Nabha, who was an admirer of Sant Attar Singh, it was decided that Prof. Teja Singh would take charge of Akal College and resign from Banaras Hindu University. Having decided this, Sant ji actively looked after the construction of the eight rooms of the college and found that more girders would be required. This was communicated to Prof. Teja Singh, who had gone to Banaras to resign.

Prof. Teja Singh again went to Calcutta, gave discourses and collected the remaining amount to send the girders to Mastuana.

In an effort to speed up the work of Akal College, Prof. Teja Singh also accepted an invitation from the Burma Khalsa Diwan and travelled to Burma (present day Myanmar). The response from the Sangat there, too, was heartening.

The college was finally thrown open for admissions in April 1920, and within two months, more than 400 students were on its rolls. The college had its foundations securely rooted in both contemporary and religious education. Its listed courses were spiritual and moral education, Eastern and Western philosophies, music, poetry and religious practice. This was the unique vision of Sant Attar Singh in the 1920s and this is the vision that has been incorporated by the present management at Baru Sahib into the curriculum of various schools and colleges being run by The Kalgidhar Trust.

It is but natural that with the good come the bad elements. Certain negative forces within the campus could not digest the success of Sant Attar Singh's vision and Prof. Teja Singh's implementation and administration. The main reason behind the negativity was the affection and faith openly bestowed on Prof. Teja Singh by Sant ji. While internal bickering was surfacing, the college was growing in stature. There was a collaboration between some universities overseas and Akal College, as a result of which many professors from abroad came visiting.

By October 1921, there were more than 500 students, and as the fame of the college and the school at Mastuana

Sagar spread, the number of devotees increased and so did the donations. However, the internal bickering and divisions grew. Once, while Sant Attar Singh was on his Amrit Prachar tour, matters in Akal College came to a head and physical violence ensued. This happened on more than one occasion, and each time Prof. Teja Singh escaped from being physically abused.

Despite being absent from the scene, Sant ji realized the predicament of Prof. Teja Singh. As the physical security of his and his family was threatened, Sant ji asked him to move to Sangrur along with his family.

The administration of Akal College was handed over to inexperienced hands and Prof. Teja Singh moved to Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Gujranwala, as the Principal. Meanwhile, with Prof. Teja Singh's departure, the reputation of Akal College suffered and the number of students came down gradually and so did the number of staff. While Sant Attar Singh continued to reside in Mastuana Sahib, Prof. Teja Singh continued to teach in Gujranwala.

Three days before the Jor Mela of Maghi that year, Prof. Teja Singh was engulfed with a great longing to have a glimpse of Sant ji. He applied for leave and went to Mastuana for a glimpse of his mentor, but had to soon leave the place.

After some time had lapsed, however, the stature of Akal College had deteriorated so much that it came under debt. There was no option but to bring Prof. Teja Singh back. On his return, the great Professor again planned to revive the college, but the financial part had been mismanaged to such an extent that although things did improve, it was not as Sant Attar Singh and he wished.

Sant Attar Singh and Mata Bholi

Mata Bholi, Sant Attar Singh's mother, had been staying at Mastuana Sahib for some time now, ever since differences cropped up between her younger son and her. She was happy to be close to her elder son. She was equally fond of Prof. Teja Singh, and would keep blessing him for the service he was rendering to Sant ji.

When the construction of Akal College started, Mata Bholi had to be shifted to another accommodation as her house was in the way of the construction. Prof. Teja Singh personally looked for a comfortable accommodation for her. During this period, she developed an abscess on her leg and was bedridden. To an ordinary mortal, her condition was an indication of her approaching end and this was communicated to Sant ji at Sangrur.

Sant ji replied that she had two more years to live and then she would be freed from the cycle of birth and re-birth. As the stipulated time period was drawing to an end, Sant Attar Singh returned to Guru Sagar Mastuana and went straight to the dwelling of Mata Bholi. He asked everyone

present there to leave the room and went and sat at the foot of the bed. Softly, he spoke to his mother about how to be rid of the Avagavan da Chaker (cycle of birth and re-birth). After that Sant ji returned to Sangrur.

Prof. Teja Singh entered Mata ji's room after Sant Attar Singh had left and sat near her. She narrated to him the details of the conversation that Sant ji had with her. She was asked to obey the diktat of the Akal Purakh without questioning it. In howsoever much pain she might be, she was to not question it, otherwise she would not be able to end the cycle of birth and re-birth. Mata Bholi became very sick in her last days, but she obeyed her son's directions till the end. She remained happy and unquestioning even as life was ebbing out of her. When it was time for her to depart, Prof. Teja Singh asked whether he should send for Sant ji, to which she said, "He is here with me all the time," and she lost consciousness.

Her body had become still. Only her lips were moving and she had an angelic expression on her face. She was cremated with full honours near the Akal Bunga in Mastuana Sahib.

Sant Attar Singh— The Brahmgyani

It has been believed for more than a century now that Sant Attar Singh was an immortal soul. His birth, incidents attached to his growing up, his awakening at a young age to the mission he had to accomplish in a stipulated time, his aura, his Jap-Tap, his Udasis, the Amrit Prachar he undertook and his endeavours to make mortals understand the importance of Shabad Guru in their lives are colossal and impossible for any single human being to accomplish in one lifetime. Perhaps Guru Gobind Singh's hymn might help us understand his birth in human form:

*Chit na bhaiyo humro aavan keh
Chubhi rahi surt Prabh charanan meh.*

(I had no desire to come to earth; I was immersed
in devotion of the Divine Lord.)

Sant Attar Singh was a Brahmgyani (enlightened soul) who appeared before us mortals and taught us the various stages of Vairag, Birha and Sehaj through his conduct. The life he

spent doing intense meditation was not for himself but was for the mortals around him, who carried many varieties of vibes and energies.

When an oversoul comes before mortals in human form, it is already suspended between the Dharat (earth) and Sachkhand (paradise), but when such a soul has to interact with mere humans, it takes upon itself to carry along the joys, sorrows, anxieties, disappointments, grief and much more of all the beings around it. Hence, the intense Tap carried out by Sant Attar Singh. More than thrice it has been noted during Sant ji's lifetime on earth that wherever he went, the unexpected turnout of the Sangat made it appear that the quantity of the Langar would not suffice. Yet, each time, he would tell his Sewaks to put a sheet on the cooked Langar and recite the following Shabad:

*Tichar mool na thureendo jichar aap kirpal
Shabad akhut baba Nanaka khahe kharach dhan maal.*

(The mortal does not run out of spiritual capital, as long as the Lord Himself is merciful. The Word of the Guru is an inexhaustible spiritual treasure.)

The Sangat could be a few hundred or a few thousand, but the Langar never fell short. Sant ji showed the way, and his followers have followed the path. This Ardas holds true for us even today, lest we should forget.

Once, while hearing a discourse of Prof. Ganga Singh, in Nabha House at Simla (present day Shimla), Sant ji heard the Professor describe Sachkhand as God's abode, the true place. After two days, Sant Attar Singh remarked to Prof. Ganga Singh, "Please show me Sachkhand." The Professor

folded his hands and said, "Sant ji, I am a mere mortal. What I described was mere imagination. It is for you to show me Sachkhand." In Prof. Ganga Singh's words, "Sant Attar Singh [then] receded into himself and a brilliant light started emanating from his face, which diffused into the surroundings."

Sant Attar Singh's answer to Bhai Shakar Singh's query of "What is Dasam Dwar (tenth door)" was instant and as realistic as if he had seen it all, which is true only of a Brahmgyani: "To be away from Tamo, Rajo, Sato and Gun is called Trikuti and to align oneself with the thought wave of the Almighty is called opening of the Dasam Dwar."

All one can say of the stature of Sant Attar Singh is:

*Brahmgyani sada nirlep
Jaise jal meh kamal alep.*

(A Brahmgyani is always detached from the world that he lives in, as a lotus floats on the water without being fixed to it.)

Sewa at Damdama Sahib

For a long time, Sant Attar Singh had been concentrating his energies on Guru Sagar Mastuana and the areas around it. He now felt he needed to turn his attention to other places.

His first thoughts were about Guru Kashi, Damdama Sahib, in Bathinda district of Punjab, and how to develop it. This was because sometime earlier, around 1922, while Sant Jiwa Singh was visiting Likhansar Sahib (where Guru Gobind Singh had written priceless texts and compiled the Guru Granth Sahib as we know it) and Damdama Sahib, which were in the same complex, he had found five Khalsas guarding the pond there, ready to engage anyone who dared to soil the Sarovar water. They were sent by Sant Jiva Singh to Sant ji, who heard out their narrative about the constant threat to the Sarovar from people who did not feel impelled to respect its sanctity. Within eight months of this, Sant ji initiated construction work at Guru Kashi. Those very five Khalsas, along with 50 others, joined hands with Sant Gulab Singh, earlier referred to as Bhai Gulab Singh, and began

work to expand and enhance the Gurdwara precincts and also build an educational centre.

Sant Attar Singh now decided to tour places around Guru Kashi to motivate the people into helping with the establishment of an educational centre there. The first place he chose to tour was Harigarh. People came out in huge numbers and met him halfway.

Though his body had grown weak and frail, Sant ji continued to tour the far-fetched places of Punjab, which are now in Pakistan. He went to Sialkot and engaged in Amrit Prachar. From there, he entered Jammu and then, by a lorry, went to Srinagar. From there he went on to tour Pir Panjal and then Mira Kadal. Sant ji did not like to be surrounded by people all the time, so he decided to reside outside the city. Every morning and evening, a vehicle would be sent to fetch him to the Gurdwara at these respective places. It was a known fact that Sant Attar Singh neither lectured nor interpreted Gurbani, unless very necessary. Through his sacred presence and pure and melodious recitations, he connected the Sangat with the true essence of the Guru Granth Sahib.

From the above-mentioned places, Sant ji moved to Rawalpindi and then to Gujranwala. At Gujranwala, through divine intuition he knew that one Bhai Atma Singh was in the state of Vairag and he needed Sant ji. After meeting him, Sant ji boarded the train for Amritsar. From there, he retraced his footsteps to Mastuana Sahib.

Metamorphosis of Prof. Teja Singh

If one observes astutely, the years that Prof. Teja Singh spent with Sant Attar Singh were years in preparation for the great mission first undertaken by Sant ji himself. From Sewa rendered at Mastuana, to the highest possible education obtained abroad, to managing the affairs at Mastuana, to enduring the animosity of vested interests, to being insulted and attacked and forced to depart from all that he had created, to turning from Manmukh to Gurmukh and complying with all of Sant ji's directions by saying Satbachan—all of these events were churning out the gold in him. It was a necessary process in the evolution of a superior mind that only a Brahmgyani like Sant Attar Singh could visualize.

Prof. Teja Singh's contribution towards Amrit Prachar and Shabad Vichar was also a step forward in enhancing his image in the public eye and his acceptance by the Sikh masses. Sant Attar Singh's directive that Prof. Teja Singh be present at each Jor Mela, and address the assembly on

different aspects of Sikhism, made the Professor Sabna da Pyara, the beloved of all.

One day, both the Guru and the Shishya were going to a devotee's house in a tonga when Sant Attar Singh hugged Prof. Teja Singh and said, "The Sangat has started addressing you as Sant Teja Singh. You must keep the honour of this word and keep a simple appearance (Rakh Garibi Ves). Everything will be all right then."

Wherever Prof. Teja Singh might be, it became mandatory for him to answer Sant ji's summons before any religious gathering.

Once the masses had accepted him as Sant Attar Singh's rightful heir, Sant Teja Singh knew no respite. He received and accepted non-stop invitations to Kirtans, Amrit Prachars and religious discourses from Dera Khalsa, Kallar, Chakwal, Mund and, finally, Sarai Alamgir.

A huge religious Diwan was planned at Sarai Alamgir, where Sant Attar Singh, Baba Sunder Singh and Sant Teja Singh got together. The gathering numbered 20,000-plus. Sant Attar Singh handed over the Sewa of Amrit Prachar to Sant Teja Singh and made Baba Sunder Singh in-charge of the Langar. The change in the stature of Sant Teja Singh, in the eyes of the public, had already taken place. All that Sant Attar Singh was doing now was cementing it in his own presence.

After Sarai Alamgit, the Sangat of Simla invited Prof. Teja Singh, and were so enthused by the image of an educated Sikh youth advocating initiation into the Khalsa fold that they joined in the hundreds.

Shortly after this, one Master Chhabber Singh of Khalsa

College, Gujranwala sought out Sant Attar Singh in Guru Kashi and requested his presence to install the Guru Granth Sahib in the college. Sant ji replied, "Please take Sant Teja Singh; he is my extension."

Sant ji's final words to Sant Teja Singh when he requested Sant ji to let him come back from Gujranwala to Mastuana once and for all, closer to him, were: "Fakir has three letters: Fa - Fanah (to sacrifice oneself), Ki - Kinare (to stand detached), R - Reham Dil (to have a benevolent heart). If you are ready to adopt all these, then come back, otherwise stay at Gujranwala."

Sant ji was now ready to respond to the divine summons.

The Final Call



Sant Attar Singh's health was gradually declining. He knew that he had limited time left to complete his tasks on earth. So, he hurried as much as he could. From developing Mastuana Sahib and Guru Kashi, Damdama Sahib, among others, to founding Akal College, to doing Amrit Prachar, he accomplished all.

On one of his Amrit Prachar tours, Sant ji was bitten by a snake, but he did not tell anyone so as not to worry to his devotees. But within few hours, he was feeling dizzy and had turned pale. Sewadar Karam Singh was informed and he immediately brought a snake charmer, who tried to suck the poison out. Sant ji felt some relief, and he continued on the next leg of his tour, travelling on to Balewal, even as his foot began to swell again.

Despite being in pain and the foot causing havoc with his health, the Sangat could see only a glow on Sant ji's face. He was talking to those around him with a smile and unbounded affection, but his health was deteriorating. The signs were obvious.

A devotee came to Sant ji in Balewal itself, requesting his presence in Rohtak. Sant ji refused respectfully.

Gurpurab, marking the birthday of Guru Nanak, was drawing near and as had been the tradition with the Ranis of Sangrur, a request to Sant Attar Singh was sent to grace the occasion, but this time, too, Sant ji respectfully refused. When the Chief Minister of the State came and beseeched Sant ji with folded hands, "The Sangat awaits you," Sant ji could not refuse. He agreed on the condition that he would not go anywhere or visit anyone and would stay with one Govinder Singh. Three weeks passed in spiritual bliss without the opulence which was customary.

Sant ji returned to Sangrur, close to Mastuana. Despite physical discomfort, his aura remained unchanged. Sant Teja Singh, who was with him, was not allowed to grieve.

As Sant ji's physical condition worsened, his foot was forcibly operated upon by surgeons at Sangrur. After the surgery, Sant ji refused to open his eyes or talk to anyone.

Sant Teja Singh, who was travelling to raise funds for Akal College, as per Sant ji's instructions, knew what was happening to his mentor's body but was helpless as he was not permitted to interrupt his mission and see his master. Sant Teja Singh sat before the Guru Granth Sahib and went into deep meditation. His tears flowing, he tried to communicate with his mentor. He asked for some time, but the answer was "No". He then prayed for a glimpse before the departure. This time the answer was in the affirmative. Still, keeping his word given to Sant ji, Sant Teja Singh spent the rest of the day completing his mission of collecting enough money for Akal College and sent it to Sant Gulab Singh at Mastuana. He reached Sangrur the next morning at seven.

In Sant Teja Singh's words, "The supreme soul who had liberated millions was resting peacefully in the Supreme Guru's lap. Just past midnight, about one O'clock, the great soul completed its earthly journey."

A sea of humanity, unseen and unheard of before, descended on Mastuana Sahib and amidst Shabad Kirtan, Paath and Ardas, Sant ji's mortal remains were consigned to flames. Each word uttered, each directive issued by his mentor was imprinted on the heart and mind of Sant Teja Singh.

In the Footsteps of the Master

After the passing of Sant Attar Singh, magnificent Gurdwaras came up at Mastuana Sahib, at the very spot where Sant ji was cremated, and at Cheema. The foundation for a Gurdwara at Cheema had been laid by Sant ji himself, but he had declared that the Gurdwara would be built only after him. This Gurdwara was ready by the first death anniversary of Sant Attar Singh. After Sant ji's departure, leaving Sant Gulab Singh to supervise the construction at both Mastuana and Cheema, Sant Teja Singh left on an extensive tour. Carrying on Amrit Prachar, as taught by his mentor, he touched Kallar, Kanoha, Thamali and Rawalpindi, and initiated countless youth into the Khalsa fold.

For the next five years, Sant Teja Singh was just travelling.

In 1949, he happened to visit Khalsa College, Amritsar, during the tenure of Prof. Sahib Singh. As per Baba Iqbal Singh's accounts, the lecture that Sant ji delivered there was full of invaluable information and spoke of his vast acumen in dealing with any scientific, philosophical or religious

topic. His simplicity and humility had an overpowering effect on the students. At the end of the lecture, Sant Teja Singh made an appeal to the students: "I need volunteers with capability and courage to change the thinking of the world; who have the enthusiasm to learn about meditation and spiritual education."

After the lecture, two volunteers, Iqbal Singh and Gurbakhsh Singh, attached themselves to Sant ji. They were joined later by Gian Singh and Khem Singh. Sant Teja Singh asked all four of them to meet him at Paonta Sahib after their exams.

The boys joined Sant Teja Singh ji at Paonta Sahib, where they were a witness to his extreme humility. Sant ji started schooling the volunteers along the same lines as he had been schooled by Sant Attar Singh.

Leaving them with a detailed regimen, Sant Teja Singh now resumed his travels. In 1952, the Sangat of Bangkok, after hearing him in Calcutta, invited him to Bangkok. Thereafter, as his fame spread, he got invites from other continents and he continued travelling—to Nairobi, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, doing Amrit Prachar and delivering lectures. He delivered lectures on various topics, like Education in India, Development of Complete Manhood, Plain Living and High Thinking, and The Realization of the Divine Within. He visited Bangkok again in 1954, and then Singapore. In 1956, he was invited to the All World Religions Conference in Japan, where, after a brief stopover at Hong Kong, he delivered a moving lecture.

The art of Sant ji's delivery and the gist of his lectures, which had a combination of science and religion, drew

thousands to him wherever he went. When , after 40 years, he returned to Stockton, New York and California, the Sangat there were overjoyed. They could never forget what Sant Teja Singh had accomplished for them.

After ending his foreign tours, Sant Teja Singh toured Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. While touring Himachal Pradesh, Sant ji gave precise details to Baba Iqbal Singh about a place in the State of Nahan, through which Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru, had passed and where he had rested briefly. He was directed to, "create an academic set-up, which becomes a world centre of contemporary education for students within the parameters of Sikhism". These were the same directives that had been given to Sant Teja Singh by Sant Attar Singh.

Thus came about the birth of Baru Sahib in the year 1956, under the guidance of Sant Teja Singh and the efforts of his Sewaks, Baba Iqbal Singh and Dr. Khem Singh.

Today, Baru Sahib is the centre of a unique set-up dreamt by its founders. The children being groomed here will herald a new era of peace as envisioned by Guru Nanak in his times and as conceptualized by its two Sants: Sant Attar Singh and Sant Teja Singh, the two souls who were sent to deliver Sikhism from a comatose stage.

PART III

Founding of Baru Sahib

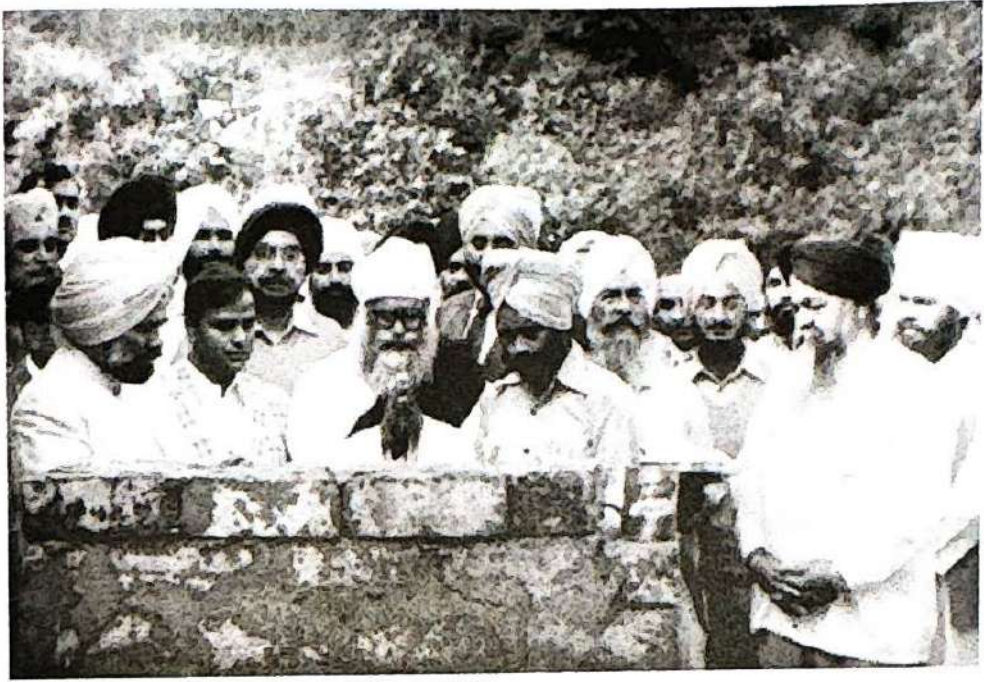
Years ago, Sant Attar Singh had a specific mission for his Sewak Sant Teja Singh. He described to Sant Teja Singh, in great detail, a particular place in Nahan district, where he wanted a Brahm Vidya Kendra established for inculcating in young children the thirst for the Divine Name. He wanted these young minds to understand the Gurmat principles and tread on the path of Truth, as taught by Guru Nanak. Subsequently, Sant Teja Singh, in his discussions with Bhai Vir Singh, formulated the founding of an institution along the lines of the ancient universities of Taxila and Nalanda. Finally, in 1954, Sant Teja Singh decided to embark on a vigorous search for the place in the remote areas of Himachal Pradesh.

Baba Iqbal Singh and other Sewaks of Sant Teja Singh were assigned the mission of finding this hallowed place. While they were engaged in a seemingly fruitless search for the same, it so happened that one Thakur Joginder Singh, who was the landlord of Baru village, was looking for buyers for his village. On being intimated about Baru village, Sant Teja Singh ji knew intuitively that the sacred

spot that his mentor had spoken about had been found. He instructed Baba Iqbal Singh to conduct a survey and submit his technical report. There was no road from Sarhan to Baru. Baba Iqbal Singh had serious doubts about the place being the one that Sant Teja Singh had described in such detail. But when he reached Baru village, he knew instantly that this was indeed the right place. It had blissful silence, an unending landscape of greenery, and natural springs of mineral water. He later discovered that Medni Prakash, the Raja of Nahan, sourced his drinking water from these very springs.

The land was bought from the Thakur, and soon the construction of a road connecting Baru with the main Solan highway was started. All the pieces fell into place and an institution visualized by Sant Teja Singh, Baba Iqbal Singh and others came into being.

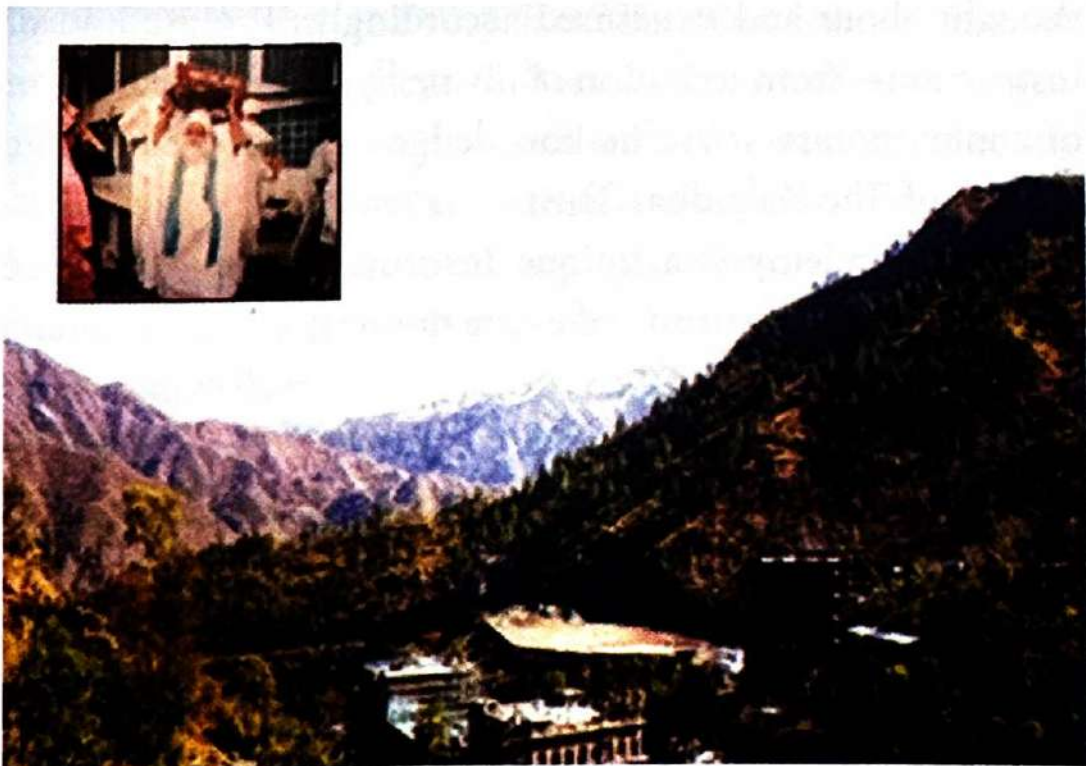
Sant Teja Singh believed that the land encompassed by Baru village was blessed by divine souls who had meditated there for countless ages. And he prophesied that Baru village would become central to the founding of a major centre of Brahm education. Akhand Paath was conducted and Ardas performed there in 1959. In a moving prayer, Sant Teja Singh asked the Almighty to bless his Sewaks in establishing the Brahm Vidya Kendra.



Sant Attar Singh Hari
Sadhu Ashram

Jagat jalanda rakh le apni kirpa dhaar
Jit duare ubre tite leh ubaar

(Save this world from burning, O Merciful Lord;
deliver it in any way you can.)



Sant Attar Singh Hari Sadhu Ashram, Baru—referred to as Baru Sahib today—is 1300 metres above sea level. Surrounded by a sea of green and guarded by seven peaks, it exudes peace and ethereal silence. The springs feeding the area are mineral rich and cure many an ailment. The waterfalls around it bring coolness to the valley and make its inhabitants feel closer to nature and God. Before night dew changes into ambrosial hour coolness, chirping of birds, the happy voices of children and strains of divine hymns all fuse into creating an environment that has to be seen to be believed.

Today, Baru Sahib, under the able guidance of Baba Iqbal Singh and his capable team, hosts a number of institutions and thousands of children. Institutions like Akal Academy are carefully nurturing children of all ages, so that they are imbued with Gurmat values and become brand ambassadors of universal peace. Each minute of their lives is carefully thought about and structured accordingly. The method of instruction—from recitation of divine hymns, to inculcation of contemporary scientific knowledge—is designed by the Sewaks of The Kalgidhar Trust.

Akal Academy is a unique institution designed to be self-sufficient. Its patrons take care not only of the children's education, but also ensure their physical well-being. Diet is of utmost importance, as is physical training. A menu which satisfies the cravings of junior and senior students is generously worked out by the administrators for an entire week in advance. Physical trainers with vast experience work with dedication towards their vocation and for the Trust, training students of different age groups in a variety

of sports. Students at Baru Sahib enjoy the options of basketball, cricket, hockey, horse riding, table tennis and volleyball. The Kalgidhar Trust also spares no efforts in inculcating in its students a pride in Sikh history and culture. It is indeed inspiring to watch the students of Akal Academy connecting with every aspect of Sikh heritage.

Very few schools in India can boast of promoting secularism through their culture. Baru Sahib has shown it and done it. It has not only Sikh students studying on its campus, but has also brought non-Sikh students under its banner and opened an English-medium school for the local hill population. Villagers from around the valley have been sending their children for education to Baru Sahib for many years now.

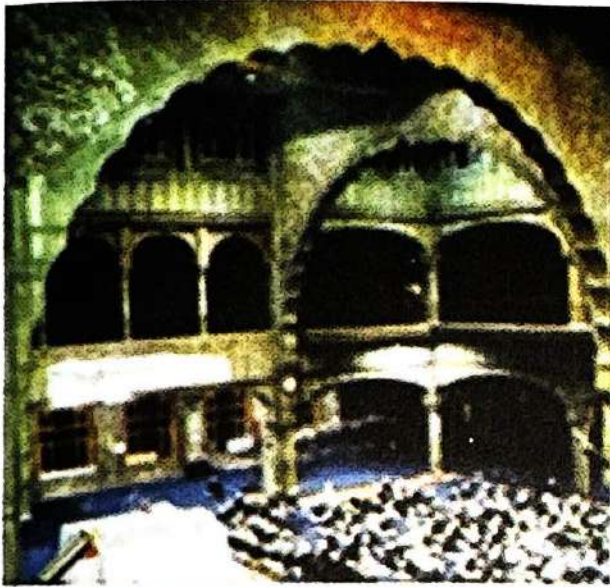
Many charitable activities are also carried on uninterrupted in the campus throughout the year. The Akal Charitable Hospital is the main centre of such activities. Free medical treatment and surgeries take place here, which are extended to villages beyond Baru Sahib. Medical facilities, which are otherwise unimaginable for the local population, are brought to the area at a minimal cost. Baru Sahib, after three decades of effort put in by the devotees, is today an abode for not only students, but also the old, the infirm, widows and orphans and the unfortunate who have become victims of drug addiction.

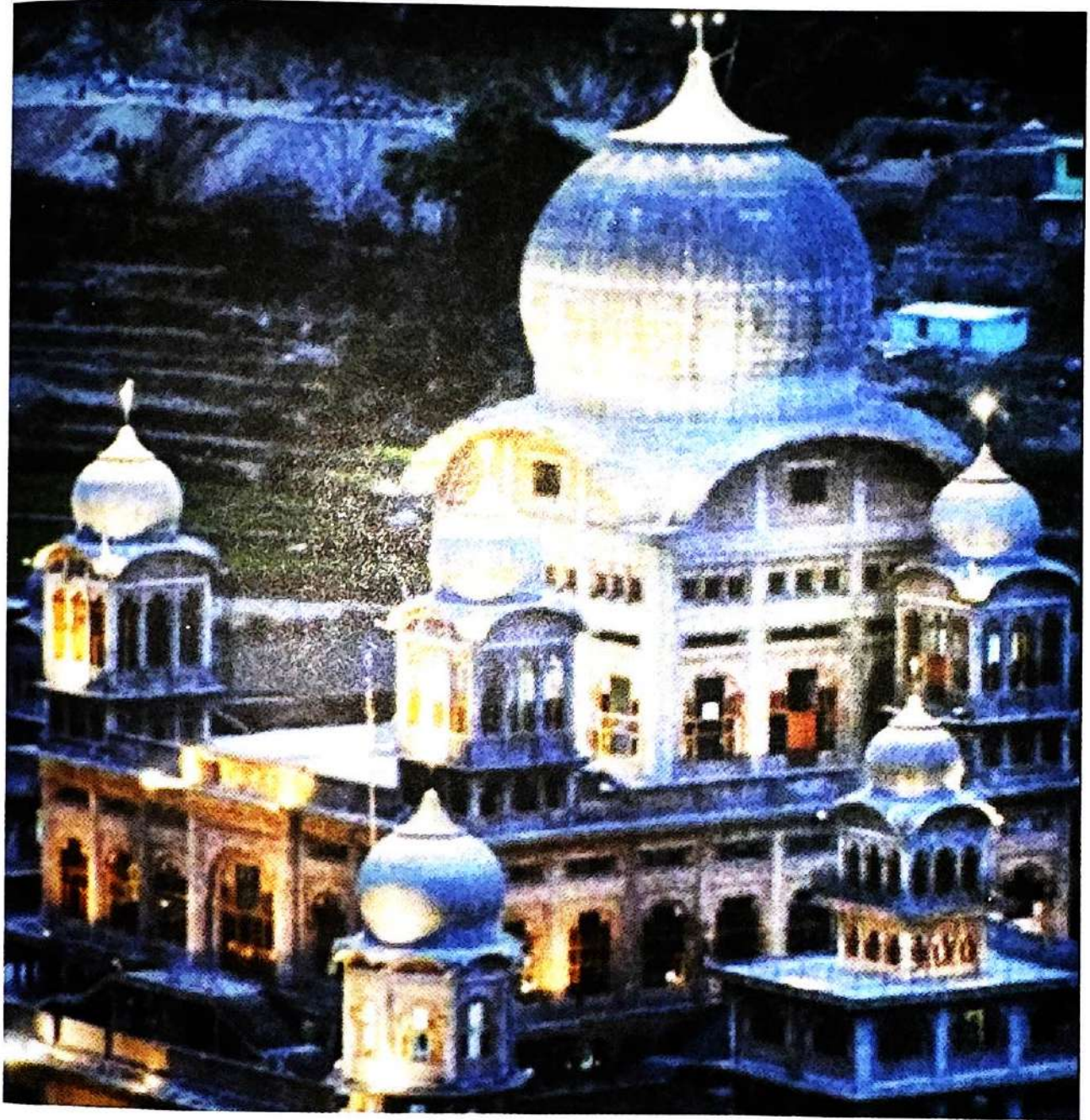
Baru Sahib has also become a major Brahm Vidya Kendra—a seat of spiritual learning, as envisioned by Sant Attar Singh and as prophesied by Sant Teja Singh. Students perform Akhand Paaths selflessly for the welfare of humanity on a regular basis.

Under the aegis of The Kalgidhar Trust, IB, Cambridge and CBSE schools are being run in several states of India. In addition, hundreds of girls of different North Indian states acquire graduation and master's degrees through various charitable educational sponsorships. These girls ultimately get absorbed as instructors in the schools being run by The Kalgidhar Trust.

The Trust has taken its divine mission to even higher levels by establishing the Eternal University at Baru Sahib, and Akal University at Guru ki Kashi, Damdama Sahib.

Thus, the divine journey of Sant Attar Singh and Sant Teja Singh continues through the numerous lotuses blooming in the precincts of the divine Baru valley and beyond it.





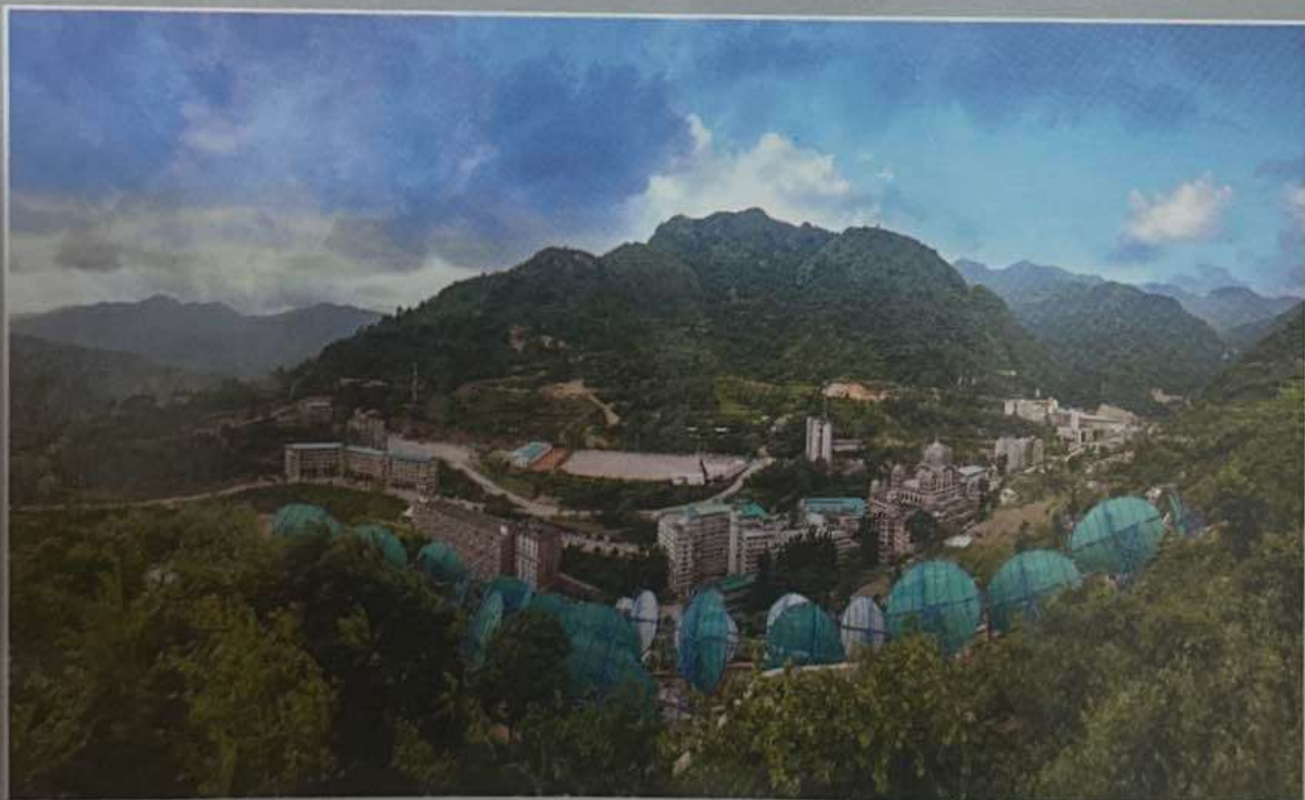
Baru Sahib

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Reema Anand also runs an NGO in Delhi for the rehabilitation of survivors of the 1984 anti-Sikh pogrom.



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