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Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib's Travels

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Abstract

This paper is about the travels of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji in the Malwa region's Bathinda district. In this paper we have tried to give the records of the visited places such as villages, towns, founded new ponds, wells. Moreover, we have listed the devoted Sikhs of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji in this paper. However the main focus in this paper is to illustrate the importance of places and the events. It is mentioned here that this paper is based on the survey done by Dr. Sukhdiyal Singh^[1]. The places visited by Guru Sahib has been developed as important Sikh Shrines now-a-day, Some of those places are as follows:- Talwandi Sabo (Gurdwara Manji Sahib), Rajgarh Kubbe (Gurdwara Tahla Sahib), Maur Mandi (Gurdwara Maur Kalan Patshahi Nauvin), Maur Dhilvari (Gurdwara Dulami Ki Dhaab/Dulamsar Sahib), Maisar Khana (Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Nauvin), Dikkh (Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Nauvin), Dhadde (Gurdwara Sahib Dhadde Patshahi Nauvin), Krod (Gurdwara Sahib Krod)

Keywords: Guru Tegh Bahadur, Travels

Introduction

According to the linguistics survey done by Sir George Abraham Grierson^[2], Punjab has been divided into four regions - Majha, Malwa, Doaba and Powadh. Out of these four, Malwa region has its own importance. It is the area lying between the Satluj and Ghaggar rivers. Harbans Singh states that the Malwa is a dialectical variation of the Sanskrit word "Mallwa", an ancient tribe named *Malloi* which is traced from Greek accounts. This tribe challenged the might of conqueror Alexander the Great in the 4th century B.C. but they were un-successful against his power. Those people later migrated to the south of the Sutlej giving it the name 'Malwa', the land of the Mallwas to their new homeland^[3].

No doubt the areas Majha, Doaba and Powadh has important place in the Sikh history but Malwa region with its wider areas has great significance in the Sikh history. Malwa region has eminent places, as it is the largest region in the state of Punjab. We can find different relics and places of the prominent events of Sikh history in this Malwa region of Punjab.

Certain historical facts are related with this region such as Guru Nanak Dev Ji's peregrinations covered this ancient land. Guru Angad Dev Ji took parkash (birth) at Sarai Naga, which lies in the Malwa region. Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji visited Bhai Ki Daroli and founded new village Mehraj. Guru Har Rai Ji and Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji travelled Sahib extensively through this area. Guru Gobind Singh Ji travelled and stayed in the Malwa region for a long time. He prophesied this region with greenery and ample water resource which the people didn't even imagine due to the sandy lands but today those things are prevailing in this region.

Before talking about the travels of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji, it will be worthy to give brief sketch of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji. Revered as the Ninth Guru, He was the youngest of the five sons of the Sixth Guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, and Mata Nanaki. He did his training at Amritsar under one of the best instructors Bhai Buddha and Bhai Gurdas, two of the most revered Sikhs of the time. They taught him the manly arts of archery and horsemanship, later the religious texts and music.

Sri Gur Pratap Suraj Granth record that Tegh Bahadur (Guru) took part in the battle of Kartarpur it pays homage to his skill and valour.

Pun Suraj Mal Dhun Ko Sambhar/ Kar Chomp So Chorot Sar Parhaar/
Sri Tegh Bahadur Firat Manhe/ Barjant bouhat, Ghar Hatant Nahe/ ^[4]

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After the battle of Kartarpur Sahib Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji retired to Kiratpur, located at the foot of Sivalik hills. Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji spent nine years of uninterrupted bliss in the company of his father. After Guru Hargobind Sahib's death, he left Kiratpur Sahib with his mother Mata Nanaki and wife Bibi Gujari for Bakala, a village in Amritsar district, where Mata Nanaki's father had his ancestral home. He lived a strict and holy life and spent most of his time in meditation and went out riding and followed the chase.

He went on long journeys to instruct the sangats in different parts of the country and proclaim far and wide the message of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Guru Sahib made three travels totally; out of which third visit concluded a fairly extensive journey through Majha, Malwa and Bangar regions. The first halt during this journey was at Amritsar, followed by those at Tarn Taran, Khadur Sahib and Goindval. Crossing the Beas and Sutlej rivers, Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji reached in the Malwa. He visited Zira, Moga and Darauli and then sojourned in the Lakkhi Jungle, a desolate tract comprising mainly present day district of Bathinda. This journey took Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji up to Dhamdhan, from where he returned to Kiratpur.

Saroop Das Bhalla mentions visit and short stay of ninth Guru Sahib in Talwandi Sabo ^[5]. Talwandi Sabo or Damdama Sahib lies in jurisdiction of Bathinda district. When Guru Sahib reached at Talwandi Sabo he sat at the huge ant hill base and explained that the nine spears in height will be erected. According to literature provided by S.G.P.C. Sri Amritsar Guru Sahib sat at this point situated near Takht Sahib and prophesied a mystical soul (Guru Gobind Singh) will come to this place. Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib stayed here around 9-10 days.

There is another Gurdwara Manji Sahib, Guru Sahib sat there and supervised the digging of tank Gurusar. He pulled out the mud from the sarovar (tank). In this Gurudwara Sahib sewa is done by Sant Sewak Jatha Bunga Mastuana Sahib (Trust). It is written on the information sign board placed in the complex that Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji pulled out mud with his robe five times and Guru Gobind Singh Ji also took out mud from this sarovar with shield five times. There is a Bhora Sahib located near Sarovar. This sarovar is 130*90 metre and 10 metre parkarma (path) along sides.

Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib gave name to Damdama as Guru Ki Kashi ^[6]. This prophesy came true when Guru Gobind Singh instructed Bhai Mani Singh to prepare fresh copy of Guru Granth Sahib on the land of Damdama Sahib. Now a days, Dadami Taksal or the Damdama School of Learning is providing value based traditional education to the students. This is also one of the five prominent places of Sikh Faith known as Sikh Takhts.

Kar Vichar Satgur Challe lakhi Jungle Des/
Pun Sabo Ki Talwandi Gaye/
Tis Des Meh Kal Kchok Rahe/
Damdame Par Baithe Gurudiyal/
kar Darshan Sangat Hoe Nihaal ^[7]

In the above stanza it is stated that Guru Sahib went to lakhi Jungle which is the main part of Malwa region. He went to Sabo Ki Talwandi. There he stayed for few days. Guru

Sahib sat on Damdama. Followers come for blessings and leaves with delightedness.

Gurdwara Tahla Sahib is sacred to both Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh, is in the revenue limits of Rajgarh Kubbe, a village 5 km southeast of Maur Kalan in Bathinda. This Gurdwara Sahib got its name from the Albergia sissou tree. A copse of tahli trees (Albergia sissou) and a pool of water where Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji often came from Talwandi Sabo while out for his afternoon ride. But today the tree has been cut down only Manji Sahib remains ^[8]. Guru Gobind Singh Ji visited the place once from Talwandi Sabo during chase. The memorials raised in honour of the Gurus were later enclosed in what came to be known as Gurdwara Tahla Sahib, which also lends its name to the small habitation which has since grown beside it. The square domed room in the middle of the brick paved walled compound of the Gurdwara is called Manji Sahib in which a few old weapons are on display. The Gurdwara is managed by the local sangat. There are two views of historians first one states that Guru Sahib visited this place from Maur Mandi whereas second states that Guru Sahib came from Talwandi Sabo. There was a pond near this place which was dug deep by Guru Sahib with sangat so that more water is collected in it for people and livestock. Bhai Kahn Singh states that Guru Sahib came here from Sabo Ki Talwandi and sat under the tahli tree (Albergia sissou) ^[9].

Maur Mandi lies in Bathinda District 15 km away from Mansa, this is also called as Maur Kalan/Vadde Maur. This town was established by Mann clan Jatt named Maur. The people of this village have faith in Sikhism, were followers of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. It is situated in Bathinda district and post office Maur. Guru Tegh Bahadur had followers from this Town named Nathu, Lalla, Raghu, Mirja and Assa ^[10]. This area is known to be the area of jungle during Guru Sahib's visit. People at night did not come out of their houses as scared of ghosts, etc. To overcome this illusion of people Guru Sahib stayed in the open sat under the Jand tree to make the people fearless of the vampire/ghost. Gurdwara Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib, Darbar Sahib is situated on this place in the remembrance of Guru Sahib.

Sri Gur Kryo Kooch Nij Dera/ Nikat Damdame Maur Vadera/

Jannd Kharo Iss Meh Jou Bharal/ Kand Pattar Jutt Leh Bistaral/

Baseh Pisach Issi Main Kab Ko/ Gram Bikkhe Dinnas Bhae Sabh Ko/

Chaldal Lagyo Jand Tis Manhe/ Satgur Baak Nefal Kem Jahil ^[11]

This village is also called Dhilvari Maur to distinguish it from Maur Kalari in Bathinda district ^[12]. This village is 30 km from Barnala, via Tapa. In a thicket about 2 km northeast of Maur, there used to be a pond, called Dulami ki Dhab, where, according to local tradition, Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji used to come often for his afternoon ride from Dhilvari. A shrine was established later near this pond which came to be called Gurdwara Dulamsar Sahib.

Dr.Harbans Singh also mentions this olden village 10 km west of Maur Kalan. Guru Sahib made a brief halt here by the side of a small pool, called Maisar (Maisar Khana). To mark the spot where the Guru had alighted from his horse,

Sikhs raised a platform over which a Gurdwara was later constructed. The old pool is still there. It was subsequently called Tittarsar in the belief that the Guru had granted liberation to a tittar, partridge, here. But now a separate Gurdwara Tittarsar has come up 2 km to the southeast of the village. It is dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh Ji. There are five artefacts related to Guru Gobind Singh are also kept by Sardar Shamsher Singh from Bhai Dal Singh dynasty are (Kharag, Dastaar, Chola, etc.)^[13] Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Nauvin, as the shrine inside the village is called, owns 12 acres of land and is administered by a local committee with the supports of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee^[14]. Sukhdyal Singh states that the name of this village has come from sarovar (pond) of Devi Mai people called it 'Mai Da Sar' head of lady (mai). Sidhu clan jatt from Jaisalmer founded village near this pond and it was called Maisar Khana^[15].

Dikkh is situated 16km from Bhaini Bagha. According to Sakhi Pothi, a humble Sikh entreated the Guru Sahib to come and put up in his house. The Guru Sahib accepted the invitation of his devoted Sikh. Guru Sahib was blissful with his devotees dedication, blessed his host who had served him with complete devotion. The Sikh, who served Guru Sahib was childless, thereafter he had four sons. A memorial (Manji) platform raised in honour of the Guru Sahib, about 200 metres west of the village, was later buried under sand; but, as memory of the Guru's visit survived, it was uncovered again and a single room Gurdwara established on the site in 1917^[16]. There is a shrine now known as Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Nauvin, comprises a domed sanctum within a square hall with a verandah on three sides. On adjacent compound lower level is used for the Guru ka Langar and rooms for pilgrims. The Gurdwara owns 10 acres of land and is affiliated to the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. Special congregations take place on fullmoon days^[17].

Dhadde village is on Maur Rampura Phul road, is 14 km away from Maur Mandi. Guru Tegh Bahadur halted here coming from Dikkh. The Gurdwara Sahib Patshahi Nauvin is half a kilometre away from the village to the south of it. Its present complex constructed in 1952 comprises a square divan hall, including the sanctum, and some ancillary buildings within a walled compound. The Gurdwara is managed by a committee of the local sangat^[18]. Guru Tegh Bahadur came to Krod village from barah and gurne then went to dhamdhan from here. There is Gurdwara Sahib related to Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib^[19].

Conclusion

As a conclusion, we can say Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji made three major travels after Guru Nanak Dev Ji in His life. His third travel to the area of Malwa region was of quite importance, which has played vital in the Sikh History. Guru Sahib made several developments by constructing new wells and ponds in the region. Guru Sahib did many efforts to develop this area by all means.

Guru Sahib mainly emphasized on the water resources. He led the kar sewa of digging ponds. People of this area were superstitious Guru Sahib tented outside the villages to eliminate their superstitions. He focused to educate and unite them with the Ultimate Reality by means of Gurbani (Holy Hymns).

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