

A Historical Study of Takhat Shri Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo (Bathinda, Punjab)

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Abstract

Takhat Shri Damdama Sahib is situated at Talwandi Sabo, which is 28 kilometers towards deccan from district Bathinda. It is a great place of Sikh Panth. This place is recognized as the fourth Takhat among five Takhats of Sikh Panth. This place is adorned blessings as 'Guru Ki Kashi'. There are Takhat Sri Damdama sahib, Gurdwara Manji Sahib Patshahi Nauvi, Gurdwara Likhansar, Gurdwara Jand Sahib, Gurdwara Mata Sahib Kaur and Sunder Kaur, Gurdwara Baba Bir Singh and Baba Dhir Singh, in the Takhat Sahib complex.

Keywords: Damdama Sahib, Gurdwara, Guru Ki Kashi, Gurus, Sikh Panth

Introduction

The district of Bathinda takes its name after its headquarters town Bathinda. There are different versions about the origin of the name of the town. According to Khalifa Mohammad Hassan's *History of Patiala*, its ancient name was Bikramgarh. Bathinda is said in the Hindu records to have been Jaipal's capital and place of residence. Tabarhindu was in all probability, the old name of Bathinda. According to another vision, it is said to have been named after Binai Pal and his Wazir (minister) Thanda Ram, i.e. from Binai B + Thanda = Bathanda or Bathinda. It was also called Gobindgarh after the Gobind Fort, where Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of Sikhs stayed and a Gurdwara constructed by Maharaja Narinder Singh of Patiala State. Before the change effected by the Survey of India, the name of the district was Bathinda.

It is bounded by the Faridkot District in the north and west, the Sangrur District in the east and the Hisar and Sirsa districts of Haryana State in the south. Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib is situated at Talwandi Sabo, which is 28 kilometers towards Deccan from Bathinda. This Takhat was officially recognized as the fourth Takhat of Sikhism on 18 November 1966. On a demand from the Sikhs, a sub-committee was appointed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar by General Meeting Resolution No: 789 on 30 July 1960. A report of the sub-committee containing 183 pages was received to declare Damdama Sahib or Guru Ki Kashi as the fifth Takhat of the Sikhs. A general body meeting of the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee at Amritsar approved the recommendations through resolution number 32 on 18 November 1966. It was declared as the fifth Sikh Takhat by the government of India in April 1999 during tercentennial celebrations of the formation of the Khalsa.

History of Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib, Talwandi Sabo

The history of Talwandi is connected to the *Udasis* of Guru Nanak Dev when Guru was going to Sultanpur from Sirsa and reached this village. About 159 years after Sri Guru Nanak Dev's coming Guru Teg Bahadur also arrived at this village at the time of commencing the voluntary service for construction of Sarovar by devotees. The Guru dug out five *Dushalas* of earth. The Ninth Guru stayed here for about one month. At this time Guru showered many boons on Dalla son of *Chaudhary* Salem Shah. *Chaudhary* Salem Shah of his area remained present during this service. He was a man of religious nature who was always ready to help saints and poor people. Salem Shah had adopted Sikhism from Guru Hargobind. During the battle of Mehraj Bhai Salem Shah helped the Guru by sending his horsemen and other soldiers. Guru Gobind Singh was the third Guru to visit Talwandi thirty years after Guru Teg Bahadur. At this place Guru Gobind Singh untied his *Kmarkassa*. On account of this, the name of this place became prevalent as '*Damdama Sahib*'. At this place Guru Gobind Singh



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Compiled Guru Granth Sahib and got it written by Bhai Mani Singh. Forty eight Singhs listened to the *Katha* of Guru Granth Sahib for the first time from Guru. The school for the knowledge of *Gurbani* started from here only. It has got the prestige of one of the fifth Takhats. In its premises eighth Gurdwaras are situated each having its own special significance.

Gurwara Manji Sahib

Patshahi nauvin Guru Teg Bahadur sat here. This monument of ninth Guru is present in Shri Takhat sahib complex. Guru Teg Bahadar sitting here predicted that intelligent, brave powerful and truthful Guru Gobind Singh will come here in future.

Gurdwara Likhansar Sahib

At this place Guru blessed Damdama Sahib as 'Guru ki Kashi' when Guru was dictating a volume of Shri Guru Granth Sahib for writing. While writing which *Kalm* (pen) wore off through use or friction was maintained and kept safe. A new *Kalm* (pen) was taken for writing. After writing and completion of a volume of Shri Guru Granth sahib, all old *Kalms* (rustic pens) and the remaining ink were thrown into Likhansar. Guru Gobind Singh blessed this place with the boon of 'Guru Ki Kashi'. It has great significance in the field of education. Here people do prayer along with writing of Punjabi Alphabets.

Gurdwara Jand Sar sahib

At this place Guru used to disburse salaries to the Sikh soldiers. The *diwan* was held at this place in the evening and Guru explained the meanings of difficult and deep words of *Katha of Gurbani* and rendered them firm in the minds of Sikhs. Old scholars mark their presence for at least one day for their preaching (discourse). Here old *Jand* tree is still present where Guru tied his horse.

Gurdwara Mahallsar Sahib

The name of this Gurdwara is also Holgarh and Tibbi Sahib. The tenth Guru used to conduct *Hola*

Mahalla festival here. *Mahalla* is celebrated here during *Vaisakhi*

Gurdwara Mata Sunder Kaur and Mata Sahib Kaur

Mata Sunder Kaur and Mata Sahib Kaur used to reside at this place. At this very place the wives of Guru Gobind Singh, Sahib Kaur and Sunder Kaur inquired about their sons from Guru. Guru started pointing towards *Sangat*, "I have sacrificed those four sons, to save the lives of these sons. We should not worry about those sons because we have thousands of sons alive." This place is near to 'Takhat Sahib'

Gurdwara Baba Bir Singh and Baba Dhir Singh

This Gurdwara has been constructed in the memory of Baba Bir Singh and Baba Dhir Singh. It is near Shri Takhat Sahib and towards East from Shri Takhat Sahib. When the tenth Guru tested the target of the gun Baba Bir Singh and Baba Dhir Singh stood in front of the gun at this site. Memories of Bhai Bir Singh and Dhir Singh were associated to this Gurdwara.

'*Damdama*' has got worldwide fame in religious field. Festival of *Vaisakhi* is celebrated here very popularly. Before two days of *Vaisakhi*, Akhand Path is performed here. Religious plays are shown, people are baptized and brave acrobatics are performed. In leadership of five beloved (*Panj Pyare*) a group of pilgrims departs from Damdama Sahib for Jandsar Gurdwara. The sports persons of *Gatka* are rewarded here. After the recitations of *Kirtan prasad* is offered and Darbar Sahib is highly decorated. In the second day of *Akhand Path* discourse of *Gurbani* is organised. Poems of bravery are sung by heroic singers (*Kvishers*). There are some historical things at Takhat (religious seat) as *Guru Granth Sahib Bir* written by Baba Deep Singh.

1. The Sword of Guru Gobind Singh that he carried.
2. Double edged Sword of Baba Deep Singh is well preserved at Takhat Sahib.



3. Pistol (Rifle) gifted by beloved Sikh with which he has tested Bhai Bir Singh and Bhai Dhir Singh's love.



4. The Mirror, which is blessed by 10th Guru that cures the disfigured face of paralysed persons if the person looks into the mirror with dignity and faith.



5. An Ancient stamp that was used to stamp on the Publication of *Hukamnamas*. It is made of metal in which words are carved in *Gurmukhi*.

The following words are carved:

“ਅਕਾਲ ਸਹਾਇ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਕੀ ਜਗਾ ਤਖਤ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਮਦਮਾ ਜੀ”



(With blessing of God the place of Guru Gobind Singh Damdama Sahib)

6. Ancient Portrait, in which Guru Gobind Singh compiling Guru Granth Sahib with help of Bhai Mani Singh. This is made by a beloved painter of Guru.
7. Two trees of *Kreer* with which Guru tied his horse (copparis decudu)

Aims of the Study

1. To explore the history of shri Takhat Sahib, Talwandi Sabo.
2. To know about the Sikh Gurus' visits in Talwandi Sabo.
3. To know about the history behind the name of Damdama Sahib.

4. To highlight the importance of this historical place.

Conclusion

Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib was developed as a centre of Sikh learning by Guru Gobind Singh and is considered one of the five Sikh Takhats. The Guru rested here after the battle at Muktsar, earning the place its name which means breathing or resting place. It was here Guru Gobind Singh prepared copies of the Guru Granth Sahib before dispatching them to the other Takhats. It was also from Damdama Sahib that the Guru issued his hukumnamas (edicts) to the Sikh congregation. This place in remembrance is named as Gurdwara Damdama Sahib

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