

4

Cover Story

Recurring Nightmare

Confessions of a killer cop open old wounds, leave Indo-Canadian families affected by state violence in shock

Editorial

Hindutva terror needs to be checked without delay 2

Cover Story

Recurring Nightmare 4

To Sir, with Love 10

News 13

Gaurav's Goody Bag 16

Radical Narrative

Blood for blood 18

Radical history of the month

Remembering an unsung Dalit hero 20

Cover Picture : Gian Singh Gill, the spokesman of Gurdwara Dashmesh Darbar in Surrey, outside the temple that glorifies Talwinder Singh Parmar (see portrait in the back), who was killed under mysterious circumstances by the Indian police in 1992.

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RADICAL
DESI

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."

~ Desmond Tutu

Hindutva terror needs to be checked without delay

This month marks the 68th death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the world renowned leader of the pacifist movement against British occupation of India. Gandhi was assassinated on January 30, 1948 by Hindu extremist Nathuram Godse, for standing up for the rights of Muslims and denouncing religious violence. When India gained official independence in 1947, the country was divided on religious lines. Pakistan was carved out of India following a sustained campaign for a Muslim homeland. However, Gandhi wanted to prevent the partition, and was open to an idea of post-British India being led by Muslim leadership. He held many fasts to protest against anti-Muslim violence by Hindu nationalists in the wake of partition. Although Gandhi was a devout Hindu and had many limitations - such as his belief in the caste system, display of faith in public space and his narrow tunnel of vision on race issues, besides his inclination towards bourgeois politics and his adamant approach against radical activism - he believed in the peaceful coexistence of Hindus and Muslims in India. For this reason, Hindu nationalists who wanted to see India transformed into a Hindu theocracy conspired to murder him. In all, there were seven attempts on his life. The Hindu extremists saw him as a threat to their politics and portrayed him as someone who appeased Muslims. Since then, Hindu extremism has grown to an extent that they are now capable of engineering large scale violence and organizing acts of terrorism. This growth of bigotry in the name of Hindu nationalism has led to the ascendancy of the right-wing Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) to power in New Delhi. Notably, the BJP is a political arm of the Rasthriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), an ultra-nationalist Hindu body of which Godse was a part. The RSS was banned following Gandhi's murder, but has been active in violence against Muslims and other minority groups for years. Not surprisingly, under the current BJP government attacks on Muslims, Christians and so-called untouchables have grown, while Hindutva extremists have become emboldened. The security agencies have been asked to go soft on those involved in terrorism in the name of Hindu nationalism. So much so, the demand for installation of Godse's statues has grown, and some elected officials have described him as a patriot.

It's a shame that India, widely known as the world's largest secular democracy, is increasingly becoming intolerant under the BJP government. Respect to Gandhi in India has virtually become a symbolic ritual as Hindu extremists openly glorify Godse's ideals. Those who question Hindu extremism often get attacked. In recent years, there have been violent murders of rationalists and secularists by people associated with different Hindu nationalist groups. One may disagree with Gandhi and his politics, but his assassination is an ugly reminder that Hindutva terrorism continues to prevail in India and has only spiked over the years. The previous so-called secularist Congress government not only lacked political will to contain Hindutva forces, but had been trying to please it for their own political survival. Their opportunism has contributed to the growth of this grave threat that poses a much bigger challenge to the social fabric of India. It's an accepted fact that terrorism of a dominant religious group in any society is a serious problem, conveniently getting legitimacy from the privileged majority. Unfortunately, the Indian state, which has always been very brutal in dealing with minority terror groups, has generally been very lenient toward Hindutva terrorists. Often terrorist acts are quickly blamed on minority terror groups without looking into the possibility of the involvement of Hindutva organizations. This reflects very badly on the Indian establishment and exposes its selectivity. This is not to defend terrorism by the minority groups. But the state cannot be allowed to be selective. While Islamic and Sikh militants have been killed in staged shootouts on a number of occasions, the Hindu extremists have generally escaped such high-handed police behaviour. The western powers should also be ashamed for overlooking this reality. They have not come out with any powerful statement against Hindutva terror, despite the number of reported incidents involving them. Their terror watch lists are limited to Islamic, Sikh and ultra-leftist organizations. If the world powers really care for Mahatma Gandhi, they should open their eyes to Hindutva terror that is surely going to turn into a menacing threat if not checked immediately.

-Editors

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Recurring Nightmare

Confessions of a killer cop open old wounds, leave Indo-Canadian families affected by state violence in shock

Rajinder Kaur finds it hard to express her feelings even 23 years after her brother, sister-in-law and her two-year-old nephew were abducted and killed by the Indian police. A resident of Toronto, she is one of the Indo-Canadians who lost their loved ones in the state violence during the decade-long militancy in Punjab. Old wounds have been opened again by the recent confessions of a killer cop of the Punjab police which used excessive violence to liquidate Sikh extremists seeking a separate homeland. With a choked voice, she wants to be excused from an

interview. What she can tell is that she has lost hope for justice, and any new revelations have just added to her frustration.

The only fault of her brother Kulwant Singh was that he was a human rights lawyer who advocated for the rights of militants and political activists. Singh was abducted by the Punjab police from Ropar and later killed in 1993. A trap was laid to call him out, and unfortunately, his wife and his two-year-old son accompanied him to an unknown destination without knowing that they were going into harm's way.

Their murders remained a

mystery for several months, until the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), India's premier investigating agency, stepped in following a public outcry which forced the Supreme Court to order a high level inquiry. For weeks, the advocates in Punjab protested and went on a two-month strike in the wake of Kulwant Singh's disappearance. The police tried to cover up the case by implicating Harpreet Singh Lucky in the murders, claiming that this was handiwork of the militants. As the investigation unfolded it was found that the three were murdered by the Punjab police. Lucky was subsequently freed and

got a security cover. However, the CBI court acquitted all four police officers involved in 2012. No senior police officer was ever convicted.

Recently, controversial Punjab police officer Gurmeet Singh Pinky made some startling revelations about the staged shootouts and cold blooded murders of the militants and their sympathisers. Rajinder Kaur became even more sceptical. "My parents have already died waiting in vain for justice. What is there to expect now?"

Bloody disclosures

Pinky is a former Punjab Police Inspector, who was convicted for murdering Avtar Gola over a road rage incident in Ludhiana in 2001. This murder had angered people, forcing the police to arrest Pinky. The father of the deceased, Amrik Singh, had to fight for justice against all odds. He was invited to Canada by *Radio India* and honoured by the Indo-Canadian community for his courage and determination to get the killer cop convicted.

A twist came in the story, when Pinky was released in 2014. He claims that he had served his time. But under mysterious circumstances he was reinstated this year after being given amnesty. Public outrage again forced the government to revoke the orders. Now frustrated with his own department for not doing anything to help him, Pinky has started spilling the beans. He even claims that he had given Rs. 50,00,000 to a middleman who promised to get him reinstated. After his reinstatement was revoked, he wanted his money back, which he maintains was never returned. "Instead I was told to get lost and do whatever I can", he said in a TV

interview with seasoned journalist Kanwar Sandhu.

Over a period of several months, Pinky gave many interviews to Sandhu. He accused many senior police officers, including his mentor and one of the current top cops in Punjab, Sumedh Singh Saini, of being involved in the killings of militants and innocent people in staged shootouts, and using torture as a tool to extract information and confessions. In most cases, he maintains men like him were used as pawns, in the end leaving them out in the cold. He also accuses senior officers of using vigilante groups to kill militants and their relatives to punish them for violence. One of them, the late Ajit Singh Poohla, was behind the barbaric murders of four close relatives of a militant allegedly involved in an attack on Saini in 1991. Saini had first asked Pinky to do the job, but it was Poohla who finally did it. The dead included an 80-year-old woman and a five-year-old child.

Some other revelations suggest how arrested militants were used as part of undercover operations to capture their former associates. On one occasion, Pinky claimed that a Hindu extremist was arrested and weapons were seized from him, but he was released after the intervention of an MP belonging to the Hindu nationalist Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) which is now in power in India.

He even claims his innocence in the murder of Gola, instead blaming the police department of implicating him in a fabricated case to pacify public anger.

Pinky was one of the police officers involved in anti-terror operations when Sikh militancy was

at its peak from early the 1980s to early 1990s. Interestingly, he used to be a Sikh militant at one time, but later turned into an informer and was gradually absorbed into the police force as part of undercover operations. However, he denies this and claims having been recruited as a junior police officer in 1987.

Turbulent times

The militancy that claimed more than 25,000 lives followed the sustained campaign of the moderate Akali Dal, a mainstream political party of the Sikhs in Punjab, seeking extra rights for the state. The Akali Dal is currently in power in Punjab. The Congress government in New Delhi back then remained adamant against their demands, due to which the tensions rose, and eventually the movement for a separate Sikh homeland picked up.

The situation reached a flashpoint in 1984 when the militants turned the Golden Temple Complex, the holiest shrine of the Sikhs in Amritsar, into a fortress. An army invasion was launched as a result of which many died and the buildings inside the shrine were badly damaged. This angered Sikhs across the world. There was a huge demonstration in Vancouver where the Indian consulate office was vandalized by protesters. The same year, Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards, following which anti-Sikh pogroms broke out in different parts of India. Innocent Sikhs were targeted by goons led by Congress party leaders.

In Punjab, the separatist groups seeking Khalistan - an imaginary Sikh state - indulged in violence and

killings of Hindus. The state government became incapable of handling the situation. Under those circumstances, extra powers were granted to the police, and secret funding was made available to eliminate militancy and create state vigilante groups to counter extremists. The money was also pocketed by police officers in the name of awards for killing extremists. Others were given out of turn promotions. At the behest of the government, the police grossly misused those powers, killing militants in staged shootouts, but also kidnapping human rights activists and murdering them in cold blood. To justify these extra judicial killings, they commonly used the excuse of the courts becoming ineffective to deal with militants. Human rights activists wanted the police to treat political suspects fairly and produce them in courts instead of killing them illegally.

Interestingly, the Akali Dal at that time was very critical of the police, and frequently promised to order an extra-judicial probe into the state atrocities if ever it came to power. Not only that, the Akali Dal also glorified Sikh militants. Thanks to political opportunism, they now share power with the Hindu nationalist BJP, which has always been soft on the issue of state terrorism in Punjab and saw the fight against militants as a national war. So much so, officers like Saini who patronised Pinky are being shielded by the Akali-BJP government.

During that period Punjab mostly remained under President's rule. In 1992, when the Congress government came to power in Punjab under Beant Singh, police excesses grew at an alarming rate. In the name of war

against terror, Beant Singh gave a free hand to the police. The militants also lost popular support on account of excesses they committed, targeting progressive writers, political critics and innocent civilians. Nevertheless, the supporters of Khalistan have always insisted that these crimes were committed by state sponsored vigilantes to discredit their movement and turn public opinion against them. These factors led to the end of militancy. It is a separate matter that Beant Singh was assassinated in 1995 by the Sikh separatists.

Kulwant Singh and his family became victims of circumstances created by the fight between the state and Sikh extremists. In an interview with RDNB over the phone from India, Pinky admitted that Singh was killed at the behest of senior police officers who suspected him to be close to the militants. He also acknowledged that his wife and son were murdered to erase evidence and cover up the crime as the police had no choice. Rajinder Kaur gives a different account. According to her, Kulwant Singh and his wife were murdered after their son died during interrogation. Based on information the family gathered from their own sources in the police department, she says that their son was hung upside down to force her brother to make a confession. The little one fell to his death, prompting police to murder the couple to erase evidence.

In fact, Pinky has clearly said on camera that senior police officers were directly responsible for as many as 50 such murders.

These admissions have generated lot of curiosity in the Indo-Canadian community, which has a sizable number of immigrants from Punjab,

particularly those who survived political violence.

Another prominent victim of state violence was Talwinder Singh Parmar, the leader of pro-Khalistan Babbar Khalsa International, a banned terrorist group in Canada. A resident of Vancouver, Parmar was the alleged mastermind in the Air India conspiracy. Air India flight 182 was blown up by a suitcase bomb above the Irish Sea in June 1985, killing all 329 people aboard. The crime was blamed on the Babbar Khalsa that was seeking revenge for the large scale state sponsored violence against Sikhs in 1984.

Parmar was mysteriously killed in the custody of police in 1992 while he was travelling in India. Pinky told RDNB that he was arrested at Jammu Airport and brought to Punjab, where he was killed in an "encounter". This too, he clearly said, was done at the behest of senior officers.

He also named senior Punjab police officers responsible for the killings of Kulwant Singh and his family, besides that of Parmar, but RDNB is not giving those names here due to the absence of supporting evidence and their version.

While the Parmar family declined to comment on the issue, his supporters within the Sikh community in Greater Vancouver want a fresh inquiry in the light of revelations made by Pinky. Gian Singh Gill, the spokesman of Gurdwara Dashmeh Darbar in Surrey, which glorifies Parmar as a "martyr of the Sikh cause" wants a thorough investigation and prosecution of guilty officers. Parmar's portrait greets visitors right outside the temple, whose congregation holds

annual prayers in his commemoration every year.

Although Gill is doubtful about the credentials of Pinky, he wants a dignified closure both for the sake of Parmar's family and the Sikh community.

For Gill, Parmar will always be a hero for supporters of the Sikh struggle. "He had returned to India to fight for Khalistan putting his own life at risk only to get killed in a staged shootout."

Parmar's supporters have always maintained that he was executed after being tortured by the police. An independent investigative report on his death brought out by Punjab Human Rights Organization (PHRO) in 2008 also raised questions about the authenticity of the police version. The

PHRO team found that Parmar was tortured and killed and the story of his encounter with police was concocted.

Gill is therefore not surprised at Pinky's confessions. "He is not saying something we didn't already know. But still it is an important admission coming from someone involved in the executions of militants." He thinks that Pinky is saying all this mainly because of his personal grudges with the police department and may eventually shut his mouth. "It is therefore important that an impartial inquiry under the supervision of international bodies, like United Nations be ordered as we have lost trust in the Indian judicial system."

He believes that Parmar was not involved in the Air India conspiracy, which he says was the handiwork of

the Indian intelligence to discredit the Khalistan movement and give a bad name to the Sikh community. "We have always condemned Air India tragedy and have never missed on prayers for those who died in the bombing. To blame Parmar and Khalistan movement for the tragedy is unfair. Instead of giving him a fair trial, he was murdered. Had he been alive he might have been acquitted by the courts."

Gill pointed out that Pinky has admitted having arrested a Hindu extremist from whom weapons were seized during the militancy, which he believes gives credence to the conspiracy theories behind the Air India tragedy and other violent acts blamed on Sikh militants.

He is also bitter about the role of

the Canadian government which according to him treated Parmar like a second class citizen, and never asked the Indian government to return his remains or pressure it to bring out the truth behind his murder.

Gill thinks that the Parmar family and other families affected by the state violence in Punjab are not willing to say anything, partly due to fear and partly because of lack of faith in individuals like Pinky. "Those who criticize the Indian state often get intimidated by the Indian government through their consulate offices abroad."

Balpreet Singh of the World Sikh Organization (WSO) agrees. "We still have to wait and watch as people like Pinky may not be trusted. Who knows he becomes silent after his grouses are settled?" Nevertheless, he wants the Indian courts to take notice of Pinky's interviews and intervene by

ordering an immediate investigation.

The WSO had hosted Jaswant Singh Khalra, a towering human rights activist from Punjab in 1995. Khalra went missing after being abducted by the Punjab police from Amritsar in September that year following his return from a Canadian tour. He had documented cases of missing persons and their unceremonious cremations by the Punjab police. He had come to Canada to raise awareness about the police excesses in the South Asian Diaspora. His supporters feared for his life and wanted him to stay and apply for refugee status, rather than going back. But Khalra insisted upon returning to meet death. It is pertinent to mention that while Khalra was looking after the human rights cell of the Akali Dal, the party did not do anything to bring closure in this case. Ironically, Khalra at one time was a supporter of the ultra-leftist

movement crushed by the current Akali Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal during the early 1970s by using similar tactics that were applied to end Sikh militancy by the Congress government during the early 1990s.

Pinky revealed during a recorded TV interview with Sandhu that Khalra was murdered at the orders of senior officers, and the lower rung cops who were convicted were only following them.

According to Balpreet Singh, there is nothing new in what Pinky is telling, as they already know what happened to Khalra, whose son Janmeet Singh now lives in Calgary. He was in Surrey on October 27 to attend a vigil organized by WSO to commemorate his 20th death anniversary. He too believes that his father was on the hit list of much senior officers.

Khalra's daughter Navkiran Kaur,

who lives in the US, worries that since Pinky might compromise, there is an urgent need to order an immediate inquiry. "Whatever he says is plausible and believable and matches the truth."

Kanwar Sandhu himself wants his viewers to take Pinky's revelations with a pinch of salt. According to him, Pinky should also be made accountable for the cases he has mentioned. "Even though he may not be directly involved but his responsibility as an ambivalent participant or a witness cannot be ruled out." He has expressed disappointment that both the judiciary and political parties in power have not ordered some kind of inquiry into these disclosures. He emphasised that while the stories of excesses committed by the militants are well documented, much needs to be done to reveal untold stories of the state violence.

Amrik Singh maintains that Pinky is lying, as he had killed his son right in front of his eyes. He says that he and other victims of violence committed by the police and the vigilantes will continue to challenge Pinky's reinstatement. He also cautioned people against Pinky, as he is trying to shame others in the police force for purely personal reasons.

That Pinky may change his story is evident from the fact that while talking to RDNB he said that the interviews done by Sandhu were recorded on video camera without his knowledge. He discontinued his discussion abruptly and hung up the phone saying, "Please spare me and my family as I might be in trouble. I never realised that my informal chat with Kanwar Sandhu will evoke such euphoria outside India." So much so, a Punjabi

broadcaster close to Pinky shortly called RDNB to ask whether the phone conversation with him was recorded or not.

Will Pinky's admissions bring closure in the lives of the survivors of police violence? This is hard to figure out. Whether or not he will be prosecuted or testify in the courts to get others like him tried for the crimes only time will tell, but these confessions have again stirred a debate which has put the Indian police and politicians in an embarrassing situation internationally, and raised fresh demands for an inquiry, apart from raising speculations in various quarters.

Jagtar Singh, a veteran journalist

and author from India, says that the people who have suffered during the militancy have virtually lost interest in the story, as there is hardly any public reaction in Punjab. "Whatever interest these admissions have evoked is confined to South Asian Diaspora, where the movement for Khalistan still survives. Besides, Pinky isn't telling something new. This information is already available in public domain. Going by his own record it is hard to believe what he is claiming. The only thing that can bring a dignified closure is Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Punjab."

-RDNB

Opinion To Sir, with Love

Gurpreet Singh

Recently a daring and honest journalist, Mr. Kanwar Sandhu, has captured media attention both in India and among the South Asian Diaspora for trying to bring out the truth of police brutality and state violence in the world's so-called largest democracy.

Mr. Sandhu, who is running his own *Free Media Initiative*, did a series of video interviews with a controversial police officer who was convicted for murder and has been in the forefront of ruthless anti-terror operations launched years ago in Punjab to end Sikh militancy.

Seeking a separate homeland to be carved out of Punjab, the Sikh separatists were involved in armed insurgency from early 1980s to early 1990s. They were blamed for large scale violence against the Hindus and their political critics within the Sikh community. The police at that time were given special powers to deal with the militants. But these powers were blatantly misused. Political suspects were killed extra judicially, and many innocent people also became victims of the state violence. The militancy was crushed by using excessive force, although it also lost popular support due to its own contradictions. But the story has not ended, as nothing was honestly done to bring a dignified closure for the

survivors of state violence. Sikh militants were killed in staged shootouts to give "instant justice" to the victims of extremist violence, but those who suffered at the hands of the police and the security forces never got full justice. No senior-most police officer was ever tried for human rights violations.

Mr. Sandhu was able to convince killer cop Gurmeet Singh Pinky to talk on camera and spill the beans. Pinky had served as a Police Inspector. According to some reports, he used to be a militant and later turned approver, eventually absorbed into the police force for undercover operations. Pinky however denies this, and claims that he had joined the police department as a junior officer in 1987. He was convicted for

murdering a man named Avtar Gola in 2001, following a minor incident of road rage. Pinky at that time was very influential, but following public pressure he was forced to surrender. In 2014, he was released under mysterious circumstances. There was a public outrage once again when he was reinstated in 2015. The order was later revoked following widespread protests. Since then, Pinky is finding it hard to get back his job. He now claims that he had paid Rs. 50,00,000 for his reinstatement. If his version of the story is to be believed, those who pocketed money have not only refused to keep their promise, but have also declined to return his money. Clearly, out of sheer frustration and anger he has started exposing his mentors, whom he says

used him during the militancy but aren't doing anything now to help him. He told Mr. Sandhu that he is a witness in 50 extra judicial killings of militants and their sympathisers. He also claims that he never killed Gola and was framed in the case wrongfully by his rivals within the police department. Obviously, what he says needs to be taken as a pinch of salt as his personal motives are involved, yet there is lot of plausibility in what he is saying. Journalists like myself, who have covered Punjab during turbulent years and lived there, know how police had committed excesses on people. Mr. Sandhu has done a great job by gaining these kind of revelations from a killer police officer, which are important to be documented and used for a future inquiry to unravel the truth.

Mr. Sandhu is a credible journalist who has been covering Punjab for many years. Over this period of time, he has been associated with different reputed publications, including *India Today*. He covered the major army operation launched to flush out militants who had fortified the Golden Temple Complex, the holiest shrine of the Sikhs in Amritsar in 1984. The incident damaged many buildings inside the shrine and left over 700 people dead. Those who got killed included innocent pilgrims. The army assault alienated the Sikh minority from the Indian mainstream. That operation galvanised the Sikh separatist movement and culminated in the tragic June 1985 killing of 329 passengers when Air India Flight 182 was bombed. The crime was blamed

on Vancouver-based Sikh extremists.

In later years, Mr. Sandhu covered different aspects related with militancy, ranging from crimes committed on civilians both by the militants and the police. He also interviewed insurgents, and reported on corruption and power abuse by those running the government. One can say he tried to cover all sides without any fear or favouritism, but never compromised with power.

I am proud of the fact that Mr. Sandhu is my mentor. I began my career as a journalist with *Indian Express* under his leadership. He was the Resident Editor of the paper when I joined it as an intern and later hired as a reporter by him in 1996. It was like a dream come true for me. For all these years, I have been eagerly reading his stories in *India Today*, and when finally I got a chance to work under him after completing my Masters in Journalism.

Mr. Sandhu was very encouraging and always gave his team a lot of independence to do hard hitting stories against the establishment. I still remember having done many stories related to human rights abuse under his command. I traveled extensively to villages and far flung areas to interview people affected by the state terrorism. Each time, Mr. Sandhu patted me on the back for bringing out stories that annoyed people in power. At least on one occasion, he warned me to be alert about a possible entrapment by the police in any false case.

I later quit *Indian Express* and joined a different publication, but as chance would have it I had an opportunity to work under Mr. Sandhu again when he joined *The Tribune*. I started writing for *The Tribune* from Canada, but this did not go for very long as he quit *The Tribune* and launched *Free Media*

Initiative, which has now generated a lot of curiosity. In the meantime, Mr. Sandhu had to change jobs for his uncompromising position. He had to quit the *Day and Night TV* and later *The Tribune* due to political interference in the day to day functioning of the media outlets in India.

For his courage and commitment he has had to go through many challenges, and his series of video interviews with Pinky brought its own problems. In one of the interviews, Pinky had made a controversial statement about jailed Sikh militant Balwant Singh Rajoana, who was involved in the assassination of then Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh in 1995. Rajoana remains popular in Canada, particularly within the circles of supporters of a separate Sikh state. He has been saying that he is willing to face a death sentence but won't plead for amnesty. For this reason he is treated as a "living martyr" by many of his supporters. Pinky claimed that Rajoana once gave him a tip about a rival militant making an attempt to escape jail. This interview went viral on social media and enraged Rajoana and his supporters. Rajoana's sister approached Mr. Sandhu and complained that was why her brother's version was not taken. Mr. Sandhu explained to her that since he is in jail it was not feasible; besides, the interview is part of a series being recorded for social media, but he was open to tell his version if that is possible. Rajoana's sister then set up an appointment between him and her brother inside the jail. When Mr. Sandhu went there, he was instead attacked by Rajoana.

Despite such humiliation, Mr. Sandhu did not lose his cool and never got a complaint registered against him. On the contrary, Rajoana supporters have been trying to rationalise his action, and attacking Mr. Sandhu on social media.

It's very disturbing that my mentor had to go through all this. What was his fault? He was only trying to find the truth. Rajoana, who claims to be a defender of the Sikh faith, should be ashamed for his action. Instead of being thankful to a journalist trying to expose the atrocities committed on Sikhs, he attacked him and displayed his intolerance. When Mr. Sandhu came to him, he should have spoken his mind rather than attacking him. I want to let those who glorify Rajoana as a jewel of the nation know that people like Mr. Sandhu are the real jewel of the nation. If you really care for human rights then stand up for Mr. Sandhu and not for a religious extremist. Also, we must try to find who has benefited from this incident, and where this leaves men like Rajoana. How someone in jail could commit such an act fearlessly? There must be something fishy. There could be a larger conspiracy to give Mr. Sandhu a message by those in power. After all, Mr. Sandhu did not walk into Rajoana's home or hideout. It happened inside a high security environment that falls under the control of the government. Notably, Mr. Sandhu has been highly critical of the policies of the current Akali Dal government in Punjab. He has been exposing corruption under this government. The mentors of Pinky in

the police department are being patronized by the present government. It is a separate matter that these officers committed atrocities when the Congress Party was in power. The Sikh activists, ranging from those associated with the moderate Akali Dal to the extremist camps, are unanimous on one thing: it was the so-called secular Congress which alienated the Sikh minority in the past. Still, these issues put Akali Dal in an embarrassing position by exposing their hypocrisy. Their critics have always accused them of double-speak on human rights issues and shielding the cops who killed Sikhs during militancy. They never kept their promise to order a judicial enquiry into police excesses, and run the government with the help of the Hindu nationalist Bhartiya Janata Party, which has always justified state terrorism in the name of "national interest".

The assault on Mr. Sandhu should not be seen as a small isolated incident. Instead people should look at the bigger picture of how state and the reaction often complement each other when it comes to muzzling any criticism. For now, I can only say that I stand in solidarity with my mentor and want to convey to Rajoana and those behind him that we are all Kanwar Sandhu.

Gurpreet Singh is the founder of Radical Desi. He is a newscaster and talk show host at Spice Radio in Burnaby and freelances for Georgia Straight, People's Voice and Hindustan Times.

Calendar dedicated to Banda Singh Bahadur released

A calendar dedicated to 300 years of the martyrdom of revolutionary Sikh warrior Banda Singh Bahadur was released at Surrey Strawberry Hill Library on December 13.

Issued by Radical Desi Publications Ltd. in partnership with Mehak Punjab Dee TV, People's Voice newspaper and Rimjhim and Spice Radio, the calendar was unveiled by prominent social justice activists in the local South Asian community.

Banda Singh Bahadur was executed in June, 1716 for resistance against repression. He had introduced land reforms in Punjab and redistributed wealth among the poor and landless tillers. He had also allowed Muslims to practice their faith fearlessly within his Sikh state.

The speakers were unanimous in their views to keep his legacy of social justice alive in the contemporary world, where exploitation of the downtrodden continues and religious intolerance has grown.

MLA Raj Chouhan said that his legacy is also relevant in Canada, where racism and discrimination continue to prevail. He pointed out that the indigenous peoples and Muslims are being discriminated against by the right wing forces both in Canada and US.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Barjinder Singh and Sunil Kumar of Sikh Nation, a group that organizes blood donation

camps every year in commemoration of the victims of the anti-Sikh pogrom of 1984. Thousands of Sikhs were slaughtered across India following the assassination of then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards in the first week of November 1984. The annual blood drive was launched in 1999. The date of the commencement of the drive is also marked on the calendar. Likewise, other important dates related to the history of Indigenous struggles and radical movements within the South Asian community have been recognized on the calendar.

Both Singh and Kumar insisted that India's current right wing Hindu nationalist government is attacking the rights of religious minorities and the oppressed groups. Such challenges, according to them, make Banda Singh Bahadur even more relevant today.

Parminder Kaur Swaich of the Ghadar centenary committee, Jai Birdi of Chetna Association, an independent activist Parshotam Dosanjh, and Jarnail

Singh Artist, whose late father Kirpal Singh made the painting of Banda Singh Bahadur, also shared their thoughts on the occasion.

Swaich noted that while Banda Singh Bahadur was a true secularist who never attacked the rights of the Muslims, religious minorities feel intimidated under the current leadership in India. Birdi challenged the Sikh leadership that is promoting caste-based bigotry against so-called untouchables in violation of the tenets of Sikhism that preaches egalitarianism.

Dosanjh categorically said that Banda Singh Bahadur was a defender of human rights, whose legacy will remain a guiding light for those fighting against tyranny and state violence.

Progressive Punjabi poet Amrit Diwana read out a poem that was critical of the right wing Indian leadership.

Dr. Gurvinder Singh Dhaliwal, a well known radio broadcaster was the master of ceremony.

-RDNB

Rally against Islamophobia outside proposed Trump tower

Braving cold weather and rain, people showed up at a rally held outside the proposed Trump tower in Vancouver on December 12.

The presidential hopeful and Republican leader Donald Trump recently called for banning Muslims from entering the US. Following a huge outrage against his Islamophobic statement, a vigil was organized in Vancouver by Siraat group right outside

the proposed Trump tower.

A petition has been launched seeking removal of Trump's name from the tower being built by the Holborn Group.

Over 50,000 people have signed the petition, and Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson has also asked the Holborn Group to remove the controversial name.

In the meantime, Malala Yousafzai, the Pakistani female who

received the Nobel Peace Prize, has also come out with a strong statement against Trump. Yousafzai had survived a murderous assault by Taliban in Pakistan. She had been advocating for the right of women to get education when she was shot at by the Islamic extremists. She believes that racist statements against the Muslim community strengthen the hands of the religious fundamentalists.

-RDNB

French teacher concocts story of an attack by Islamic extremist

With memories of the November terror attack which left 130 people dead in Paris still fresh in the memory of people across the world, a teacher in France made up the story of an assault by a supporter of Islamic State. The shocking initial

reports of the incident suggested that a teacher was attacked on December 14 by a supporter of IS. The story was widely reported by the international media, which tried to link it with the November attack. However, the police did not take very long to conclude that the teacher

had cooked up the story to cover up self-inflicted wounds. But the damage was already done, as the initial reporting evoked premature conclusions in a section of the media which is overwhelmed by stereotypes and Islamophobia.

-RDNB

Jose Figueroa leaves church after two years of sanctuary

With the change of government in Ottawa, Jose Figueroa has won freedom to leave a Langley church after staying there for two years.

The El Salvadorian was forced to take sanctuary inside the church to avoid deportation.

Canadian authorities accused him of being associated with a terrorist group. Figueroa was once associated with FMLN, which is now a mainstream political party in El Salvador.

The previous Conservative government was adamant to deport Figueroa. Interestingly, he had claimed refugee status in 1997, but the immigration authorities ruled

him "inadmissible" in 2010, despite the fact he lived in Langley for decades and has three children.

To avoid deportation he had to move into the church. Close to Christmas, his deportation orders were revoked by the new Liberal government, following which he left the church while making an emotionally charged statement. "I can never pay back to the church that gave me the sanctuary for all these months," he said in an interview with RDNB.

SANSAD deploras "judicial assault" on democracy

Vancouver-based South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD) has deplored the revocation of bail for Delhi University professor of English, G. N. Saibaba, and the charge of criminal contempt against renowned writer Arundhati Roy, by the single judge bench of the Nagpur branch of Bombay High Court, comprising Justice Arun Choudhari, on December 23, 2015.

In a strongly worded statement, SANSAD described these instances as "judicial assault" on democracy in India.

Prof. Saibaba is a wheelchair-bound paraplegic who suffers 90% physical disability due to post-polio paralysis in childhood. He began his career as an activist by campaigning for the rights of the downtrodden lower-caste people in his native Andhra Pradesh. Later he campaigned against the extra-judicial killings of Maoists by the police in Andhra, and the murders of human rights activists by state-sponsored vigilantes. After moving to Delhi in the early 2000s, he took up the cause of the indigenous peoples, who were being intimidated, killed, and displaced by the state to access the resources in the forests and lands they inhabited. From 2009 to 2012 he campaigned against the infamous Operation

Green Hunt, the military and paramilitary offensive in the tribal belt against the Maoists, through his organization, Forum Against War on People.

Picked up in May 2014 by plainclothes police on his way home from the university, Saibaba was flown to Nagpur, charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, and imprisoned for having contact with Maoists. He suffered acute distress and rapid deterioration of health because of the brutal condition of his imprisonment. After 14 months he was granted bail for three months to attend to his health by the Bombay High Court,

and in September the principal bench of the Bombay High Court extended the bail till December 31. The new order has reversed this and compelled Prof. Saibaba to return to Nagpur Central Jail, where his is being held in solitary confinement.

Justice Choudhari's ruling also quotes extensively from an article by Arundhati Roy criticizing the denial of bail to professor Saibaba, "Professor P. O. W.," published in *Outlook* magazine last May, to institute proceedings against Roy for criminal contempt for "bashing the Central Government, the State Government, the Police machinery so also judiciary" in "nasty" language. "Clearly it is not the critics of the abuse of justice in India but such judgements that bring disrepute and ridicule to the judiciary in India, which is the ostensible reason for the charge of criminal contempt," the statement reads.

SANSAD has also noted that the "judicial assault" on these two individuals, including Roy, who is a writer of international repute, is a part of the ongoing and increasing attack on activists, writers, and journalists who criticize governments and the state in India by hired killers or the repressive state apparatus of draconian legislation, police, and the judiciary.

-RDNB

Radical Desi is pleased to announce that we have started a new column which is going to bring smiles on the faces of our readers. Every month, Gaurav Shah, a famous radio anchor in the South Asian community, will bring human interest stories that carry the message of secularism and humanity, something which has become a necessity in today's world where we grapple with hatred and religious intolerance almost every day. Gaurav is one of those rare humanist media personalities who understand the importance of amplifying such stories. He never misses a chance to dig out good stories to educate and entertain his listeners. He spends a lot of time researching for real good stories every morning through internet and social media, a task that is challenging when bad stories dominate the world of information. By doing so, he is definitely breaking the myths and stereotypes. Here is he with his good stories of the month:

Many years ago... fulfill my family needs comfortably.
ummm... actually, But destiny got me into media.
some years ago, I was There was an artist inside me, a
born in the heart of India: City natural talent of entertaining
Beautiful –Chandigarh -growing up people. But no support and
there in a very clean and cheerful negativity started capturing my
environment. Well, at home things mind, heart and soul. Then I
were not the same. Everyone gets gathered myself as I was
affected by negative environment and so did I. But with the span of scattering, and decided to control
time and hardships and experiences negativity. I started to be positive
I learnt that if one wants to become as much as I can, and decided to
successful and happy and satisfied, spread the same through
it's in our own hands. Or you can say entertainment. Doing it since 2002,
in our own head. Yes, it's all back in India and now here in
psychological to a lot of extent. My Canada through Spice Radio 1200
basic nature was that I used to get AM, via good story in GUPSHUP
affected a lot with other's sufferings show. Thanks to Shushma Datt. I
and bad things happening in the am extending the wings of
world. I always wanted the world of happiness and positivity now
to be a happy place, but anti-social through Radical Desi. Before I start
elements and everyone's personal presenting good positive stories, I
problems become the barrier. want you all to know why positivity
Slowly and gradually, life taught me is important in today's world, when
many lessons, and one was that everywhere corruption is increasing,
happiness is majorly in our control. natural calamities, terrorism and
Being happy is an art, some have it people hungry for power and
in them by birth, some learn it with money are damaging the peace.
experience like myself, and some Exploiting and poisoning
never learn until someone teaches HUMANITY in the name of
them. Still, I wanted the world to religion. LET'S BE HUMAN. LET'S
be a happy place, but how? I didn't LOVE EACH OTHER. LET'S BE
know. Being from a lower middle POSITIVE AND HAPPY AND SPREAD
class family, my dreams were not so HAPPINESS AND POSITIVITY. A
high - just to do a good job and positive attitude awakens
happiness. You don't have to be rich

or achieve goals to be happy. It is a matter of attitude. When you adopt a positive frame of mind you become happy. Happiness does not depend on external causes. It comes from inside you. A positive frame of mind increases your motivation to succeed and get what you want. It will make you believe you will get what you want. It will also motivate you to achieve more than you ever expected. Loving yourself, and being happy, are expressions of thinking positive. This attitude would also enhance your self confidence, your courage, and your inner strength. The mind has a strong

effect on the body and on health. When you think positive, your immune system is healthier, and your body recuperates faster

Another reason why you should adopt a positive way of thinking is the effect it has on relations with people. People tend to gravitate and to like positive people, and to keep a distance from negative people.

Good Stories of the Month

Not so long ago, a Muslim man was lynched in India after being accused of consuming beef by Hindu fundamentalists. The story stirred a storm across the world. Even as politicians were debating the issue of cow protection and religious intolerance in India, a 20-year-old Muslim youth saved the life of a cow that had fallen into a well.

Mohammad Zaki was returning from a mosque when he noticed a crowd around a well in which a cow had fallen. They were waiting for a crane to reach the animal, which is considered sacred by the Hindus. But when the crane arrived, Zaki was the first to volunteer to go down into the 35-foot-deep and dark well.

Zaki is not the only Muslim whose action touched hearts of many. Abid Alvi is a Muslim man who has translated *Hanuman Chalisa* into Urdu. *Hanuman Chalisa* is a Hindu prayer for the Lord Hanuman. Often the rightwing Hindu nationalists question the patriotism and openness of Muslims in India, but there is no dearth of individuals like Zaki or Alvi, who did the translation to strengthen people's unity.

Recently, when Chennai was affected by floods, Muslims opened the doors of the mosques to Hindu victims of the natural disaster, where "Water" became their enemy and "Humanity" became their common religion. Against the backdrop of growing anti-Muslim rhetoric and frequent violent clashes under the rightwing Hindu nationalist government in India, such gestures involving the two communities brought positive hope to the secularists.

To listen to Gaurav Shah's good story every morning Monday thru Friday, tune in Spice Radio 1200 AM Band at 8:45 am. Also listen to his entertainment program Spicy Chah With Shah from 10-12 pm on the same frequency.

Blood for blood

A young man's chilling initiation into the world of hate politics and violence

Ranvir, the son of the president of the committee, followed Master Devbrat, the instructor of the gymnasium-cum-wrestling pit, the sound of Devbrat's boots echoing in the cobbled lane. The fifteen-year-old Ranvir was bursting with excitement. Today he would undergo the test and if he made it, he would be taken into the fold.

No lane of the city ran straight. A lane would run straight for a few yards and would then be joined by another tortuous lane. The houses flanking the lanes almost seemed to topple over one another so packed together were they. The sound of Devbrat's heavy boots was a familiar one in the lanes of the town.

Ranvir was still very young and his eyes had not lost their child-like curiosity. They even lacked that earnestness, so necessary when undergoing a supreme test. But in place of earnestness he had a sense of bravado, a blind determination to do or die at the behest of his mentor. When Ranvir was very young, Master Devbrat would entertain him with stories of heroes of Indian history. There was an episode from Rana Pratap's life, for instance, when the cat had stolen his food, leaving him famished and making him acutely aware of his total helplessness. Ranvir would have visions of Chetak, Rana Pratap's favourite horse, as it went tramping over the hills overlooking the city. He would even see in his mind Shivaji watching a horde of approaching Muslims from the top of some hill. He also recalled the dramatic episode in Shivaji's life when he had caught a Muslim ruler in a fatal embrace. Masterji had taught Ranvir the basic principles of knot tying

and wall climbing. He had explained the characteristics of the 'fire' and the 'rain' producing arrows depicted in the ancient Hindu epics.

Ranvir was told by Masterji that the Vedas were the repository of all knowledge and held the secret of making the bomb and flying machines. Masterji talks of the marvels of yogic power had held Ranvir spellbound. 'One having yogic power can achieve the impossible,' Masterji would repeatedly impress upon Ranvir.

'You know the story of that yogi, don't you?' he would ask his pupil, and then repeat a story he had often narrated. 'A yogi had gone into a trance at the foot of the Himalayas. He achieved great occult powers. One day, when he had gone into meditation, a Muslim, an unclean man, came there with the mischievous intention of disrupting his meditation. You know these unclean people. They don't bathe, nor do they wash their hands after shitting. They have no compunction in sharing each other's spilted food. This 'unclean' person stood there glaring at the sadhu. As his polluted shadow fell over the sadhu, he opened his eyes. A gleam shot out of his eyes and singed the polluted man to death.'

These 'unclean' people would often revolve before Ranvir's eyes. In his neighbourhood, the cobbler who sat by the roadside, mending shoes, was said to be an 'unclean' man. So was the tonga driver who lived in front of their house. Hamid, who studied with him at school in the same class, was also 'unclean'. All the members of the family living next door were also considered to be 'unclean' and polluted. It must be some such person who had gone to

the foot of the Himalayas to disrupt the sadhu's meditation. Today, out of the eight boys he instructed, Master Devbrat had singled out Ranvir for the test. The boys were scared of Masterji. He wore khaki shorts and heavy black boots and spoke in a voice like thunder. His wrath was unpredictable and could fall on anybody without warning. The test which Ranvir was to undergo was secret and esoteric, only the initiates knew what it was.

The lanes looked desolate. At one place Ranvir felt as if they were walking along a thick web of darkness. As they drew nearer they discovered that the wall of a house had crumbled down and the darkness was seeping out of its debris.

Suddenly Devbrat stopped in his tracks. Although the desolate look of the lane had given Ranvir an eerie feeling, it had not been able to curb his exuberance. There was a narrow door framed against a long wall. Devbrat pushed it open. They stepped into a big courtyard at the end of which they saw the door of a narrow room across which hung a tarpaulin curtain. In the left corner of the courtyard lay two big heaps of rubble. The place looked deserted.

Walking across the courtyard, Master Devbrat pounded on the door. Ranvir heard the sound of coughing, followed by the shuffling of feet.

'It's I, Devbrat.'

The door was flung open. The old Gorkha chowkidar of the school stood in the door, peering at the visitors. He folded his hands in salutation and bowed his head.

It was dark inside the room. To one side lay a charpoy covered with a dirty bedsheet. A lathi stood

RADICAL NARRATIVE

against the right wall and by its side a chelum lay upside down. Over a wooden peg hung the chowkidar's woollen overcoat and a long sword sheathed in a black scabbard.

Ranvir heard the crackling of hens and turned to look. About half-a-dozen white hens lay tied in a big basket in a corner of the room.

Holding Ranvir by the arm Master Devbrat led him into another courtyard, much smaller than the first and abruptly ending against the high wall of a neighbouring house. The Gorkha chowkidar followed them holding a hen in one hand and a knife in the other.

'Ranvir, kill the hen,' Master Devbrat said. The chowkidar handed Devbrat the knife. 'Before you're initiated into our fold you must prove that you possess a stout heart.'

Devbrat pushed Ranvir forward. 'An Aryan youth must be strong in faith, resolute at heart, and determined in action. Take the knife and go and sit there!' He gave Ranvir another shove forward.

Ranvir felt the place had suddenly turned sinister. He saw feathers of hens lying scattered all over. Near some rubble rested a slab of stone turned black with blood.

'Sit down and put one leg of the hen under your right foot.' Devbrat pressed the hen's wings and twisted one wing under the other.

The hen cackled furiously. But its wings having been firmly tied together it could only struggle futilely. It did this for a while then lay still.

'Hold it!' Master Devbrat sat down by Ranvir's side. 'Go ahead. Let the knife do its job!'

Sweat broke out on Ranvir's forehead and his face turned pale. Master Devbrat knew that the boy was feeling queasy.

'Ranvir!' he cried and slapped him hard on his cheek. Ranvir fell down in a heap on the ground. He

felt like crying. The Gorkha standing behind him, watched him, a glitter of excitement in his eyes. Ranvir was still feeling unequal to the task but the slap seemed to have driven away his nausea.

'Get up, Ranvir!' Master Devbrat cried.

Ranvir slowly rose to his feet and looked at his mentor with heavy, dazed eyes.

'There's nothing difficult about it,' Master Devbrat said. 'Watch, I'll show you how.'

He pressed one of the hen's feet under his boot. The bird's eyes became glazed and then slowly closed. He held the hen's neck in his right hand and slit it. Blood spurted from the neck, some drops falling on Devbrat's hand. But he did not let the hen go even though its head had been cut off. He firmly held the windpipe down till it turned white. The hen's headless body kept quivering and then became still and its wings drenched with blood became limp. All that Ranvir saw was a handful of white feathers spattered with blood lying before him. Master Devbrat flung the remains of the dead bird to one side and got up.

'Bring another hen!' he told the Gorkha.

As he turned towards Ranvir, he saw that he had vomited on the ground and was sitting there, holding his head between his hands, and breathing heavily. Master Devbrat felt like slapping him again but he controlled himself and just stood there watching him in disgust.

'I'm going to give you one more chance,' he said at last. 'A youth who can't kill a hen – how can one expect him to deal with an enemy?'

Soon Ranvir's breathing became normal and his stomach, which had knotted gradually, loosened up.

'I'll give you five more minutes,' Devbrat said. 'If you fail to kill the

hen this time it's all over with you. No initiation, no nothing.' He turned on his heel and walked out of the courtyard.

When he returned after five minutes, he saw a hen writhing under the wall, drops of blood flying from it in all directions, Ranvir was sitting by the side of the bird, his right arm held between his knees. Devbrat guessed how things must have gone. While Ranvir was struggling with the hen, it must have pecked at his hand and he had only succeeded in wounding the bird instead of killing it outright.

Writhing in agony the bird kept jumping in the air and falling heavily on the ground, leaving more and more blood stains on the ground. Blood fountained from its neck.

'Get up, Ranvir!' Master Devbrat patted him on his back. Ranvir slowly rose to his feet. He had succeeded in the test.

'Shabash!' Master Devbrat said. 'You've determination, you have will power. Though your arm still lacks strength, you've made the grade and won your reward.' He bent to the ground and dipping his finger in the blood spattered on the stone slab, made a blood mark on Ranvir's forehead.

Extract from Tamas (Darkness), a Hindi novel by Bhisham Sahni, translated by Jai Ratan, Penguin Books (India) Limited. This has been reproduced here in recognition of the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, who was murdered by a religious extremist associated with the ultra nationalist Hindu organization Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) on January 30, 1948. Tamas is based on sectarian violence at the time of religious division of India and Pakistan in 1947. It exposed the role of RSS in promoting violence against Muslims.

Remembering an unsung Dalit hero

As secularist and progressive groups continue to celebrate the Ghadar Party history, there is a need to highlight the role played by many unsung heroes of the freedom struggle. Among them was Mangu Ram Muggowal, a prominent Dalit icon of Punjab. He was a part of the Ghadar party launched in the U.S. in 1913 and believed in an armed struggle against the British occupation of India.

The contributions by individual participants of historical struggles are sometimes overshadowed by the role played by a few dominant leaders. But the followers of Muggowal believe that his role in the Ghadar movement may have been deliberately ignored because of caste prejudice. While this allegation is debatable, Muggowal's role should be acknowledged. Incidentally, his descendants live in the Greater Vancouver area.

Born in Punjab on January 14, 1886, Muggowal immigrated to the U.S. for economic reasons. He became involved in the freedom struggle following a realization of racism and discrimination in the foreign land.

The members of the Ghadar Party believed that their sufferings were the result of slavery back home and resolved to fight against imperialism. However, a person like Muggowal endured double discrimination for being a person of colour and a Dalit.

Born in a so-called low-caste "untouchable" family, he faced segregation at school and suffered physical abuse for defying the caste laws. Thankfully, the Ghadar Party believed in secularism and kept religion and politics apart, yet he faced such prejudice even in the U.S.

Muggowal not only worked for the Ghadar newsletter, but also went to Java to help in collecting and sending arms to India. He escaped a death sentence at the hands of the British allies. Thinking he had died, his family remarried his widow to his brother.

On coming back to India he was disillusioned by the continued oppression of the Dalits, who were considered untouchables by orthodox Hindus and Sikhs. He was partly upset with the popular leaders of the freedom struggle who failed to address the issue of casteism. He resigned from the Ghadar Party in order to mobilize Dalits, and

eventually launched the Aadi Dharam movement in Punjab. He believed that without bringing social revolution first, it was impossible to bring real freedom in India.

The Ghadar Party also assured him full support in his struggle against caste oppression. Since his movement was in conflict with the interest of the freedom struggle, his cause was not dear to the popular leadership. Rather, Muggowal was branded as a tool of the British Empire that was playing a divide and rule game to prolong its rule in India. Whereas the British Empire was happy to give concessions to the Dalits, leaders like Muggowal felt deceived by the mainstream nationalist leaders. Despite such differences, it goes to the credit of Muggowal that he did not support a religion based partition of India in 1947.

Even after freedom, Dalits continue to suffer caste based discrimination. Untouchability is still practised in many parts of India in accordance with orthodox principles of Hinduism, despite India being a secular country. Thousands of Dalits are forced to indulge in manual scavenging for a livelihood, in spite of claims of development and progress. Mangu Ram's legacy therefore should be kept alive to stop oppression against Dalits. Let Muggowal be remembered both as a Ghadar and a Dalit activist.

-RDNB

