

Grassroots Global Ministry

The Siri Singh Sahib Bhai Sahib Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogiji established the Sikh Dharma Ministry in 1971 to serve the organizational, leadership and spiritual needs of our Dharma, rekindling the *manji* tradition started by Guru Amar Das.

We have a diverse, rich resource of people that make up our Sikh Dharma Ministry. It's time that we learn more about each other, about what other Ministers are doing, and about how they are doing it. For our second volume of our Global Ministry in Action, we received inspiring stories of service from our brothers and sisters in Western Europe and Russia. Our theme for 2015 is the service and compassion of the eighth Sikh Guru—Guru Harkrishan Singh. We reflect upon his qualities in this newsletter as well.

Future issues will explore our service in other parts of the world...please enjoy these stories and may they inspire your service to humanity. We would love to hear from Ministers around the globe about your service projects as well!

Humbly,

The Sikh Dharma Ministers' Newsletter Team

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Serving the Global Sangats in Western Europe and Russia

Transforming Lives in the United Kingdom

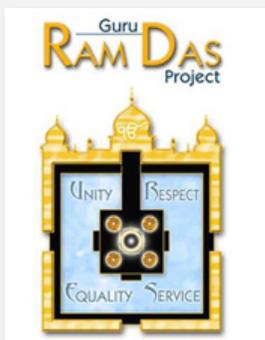
Following in the tradition of Guru Ram Das and Guru Harkrishan, the **Guru Ram Das Project** is a UK-based charity set up with the primary aim of improving the mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing of the community.

The project's main service is the provision of Kundalini yoga and complementary therapies to those in need including: programs for alcohol and drug rehab, mental health, the homeless, elderly people, and more.

Our second objective is to advance the education of the public in Dharmic (healthy and balanced) lifestyle based on the highest standards of personal conduct and service to others, so individuals may empower themselves and inspire others to participate in their communities and lead fulfilling lives.

Our third objective is to advance the education of the public through improving opportunities for learning about Sikh Dharma, strengthening relations with the Sikh community through interfaith work, supporting shared spaces for exchange and social interaction and encouraging harmony across communities.

For more info:
<http://www.grdp.co.uk>



"The Bhakti path winds in a delicate way. On this path, there is no asking and no not-asking. The ego simply disappears the moment you touch Him. And the joy of looking for Him is so immense that you just dive in like a fish in water. If anyone needs a head, the lover leaps up to offer his." - Kabir



Guru Harkrishan Ji

The Joy of Looking for Him – Leading Yatras to India



Reported by SS Sat Siri Singh Khalsa, UK

In January 2005, I had the most transforming experience in my life thus far. Outwardly it was not very spectacular, but the revelation I had inside bypassed all my reason and understanding of myself at that time. After about two years of practicing Aquarian Sadhana, I quit my job as a quantitative analyst for a bank, following a couple of months of painful struggle with myself and my plans for life. To find inspiration and re-orientation, my wife and I were planning to go on a two-month journey to South India.

However, as a consequence of the tsunami, our flights were cancelled, and we decided to take the offer from the airline to fly to Delhi instead. On a stopover somewhere in the Middle East, we met a couple on their way to a Yatra organized by the late Singh Sahib Sardar Singh Khalsa to accompany Yogiji's ashes to Kiratpur, Punjab. We thought this was a great opportunity and were lucky to get places on Sardar Singh's Yatra bus.



One morning during Amrit Vela in Anandpur Sahib, I stood outside the Guru Teg Bahadur Nivas. Looking up at Keshghar Sahib Gurdwara, listening to the music or recitation resounding from up there, all of a sudden I knew that I (or my soul) belonged.

(continued on page 3)

(Yatra—continued from page 2)

I was filled with an incredible feeling of love and destiny and the desire to live and fulfill it. I belonged to this timeless community of Sikhs (students). This was clearly not my usual mental process at work, in which I would make a decision based upon personal preference. It was a door that opened inside and I was blessed to recognize something bigger and older than what I knew of myself at that point. The crucial link within this epiphany was that this community was living life based on two simple priorities: singing music in praise of the Divine, and feeding the hungry for free, continuously and everywhere. I knew that there was no better way to live. This is what I later understood to be the Guru Panth, the revelation of the Guru through the Sangat of His Beloved Ones. One year later, I came back to Anandpur to take Amrit at Keshghar during the festival of Hola Mohalla 2006. Since then I have returned on a regular basis. A few months later, I was asked to organize a [Yatra](#) for the students of my yoga teacher, SS Karta Singh Khalsa of France. I gladly accepted. In February/March 2015, I was blessed to organize, lead and teach on a Yatra—my fifth so far.



Yatris following in the path of the Sikh Gurus

I always wanted to offer people an opportunity to be exposed to, witness and be touched by the same power and spirit that touched me so mercifully. We spend the two weeks of this Yatra visiting spiritually and historically charged places of worship and communities and ashrams of lineages, initiated by the Sikh Gurus, where people have kept up their authentic way of life and service to mankind independent of mainstream reforms, including:

- Sultanpur Lodhi, where Guru Nanak experienced the transformation of enlightenment and composed Japji Sahib
- Goindwal Sahib, where Guru Amardas established the free kitchen for everybody, and where we recite Japji Sahib on the 84 steps of the well of liberation
- Amritsar and the Golden Temple, where Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjun manifested a sanctuary of extraordinary beauty and peace
- Bangla Sahib, the place of the healing powers of Guru Harkrishan
- Sis Ganj Sahib, where Guru Teg Bahadur sacrificed his life for the freedom of the Hindu Dharma against the oppression of worldly powers
- Anandpur Sahib, where Guru Gobind Singh initiated the Khalsa nation, and where we gather for the unique experience of Hola Mohalla
- Gobind Sadan, the ashram of the late Baba Virsa Singh, the spiritual teacher of Yogi Bhajan, an interfaith ashram, academic spiritual institute and organic farm
- The Namdharis, a most autonomous lineage and the preservers of genuine Raag Kirtan on traditional string instruments; famous also for their excellence in animal welfare, cattle breeding, and seed banking of useful plants
- Nirmala Kuteya ashram of Sant Balbir Singh, the only environmental activist in the Punjab, having cleansed the completely polluted river where Guru Nanak used to do ishnaan

One of the lessons I have learned during this time is that momentous life-changing events always happen differently than scheduled and expected and that they happen differently for every individual. I know I can never claim to have anything to do with it, not even to ever know anything about it. This year, we had an international group of 17 people from England, Germany, France, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine, and India. Within the 15 days of our Yatra, we slept in seven different places, bathing our bodies, minds and souls in sacred rivers, sarovars, baolis and the Naam of Gurbani Kirtan, and joining in some humble seva.

On the first Amrit Vela morning at Harimandir Sahib in Amritsar, one of our yatris slipped and fell on the perkarma during the seva of washing the marble. She injured her shoulder seriously and had to be operated on in hospital where she had to stay for three nights. During our sharing of how and why this could happen, one of our Indian yatris told us that if this kind of "accident" happens in a place like this, it is not due to personal karma, but a selfless act of a soul to take karma from other people into process. This brought to all of us a new dimension of evaluating incidents like this, and reminded us of the life story of Guru Harkrishan, who, after sacrificing his own young life, rid the city of Delhi from the grave epidemic of cholera and smallpox.

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਿਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਜਿਸ ਡਿਠੇ ਸਭਿ ਦੁਖਿ ਜਾਇ ।
ਸ਼ਰ੍ਗੁ ਉਰ ਖਰਸਿਹਉਨ ਦਹਿ-ਓਰਿ ਜਿਸ ਦਟਿਹਣ ਸਏਬਹ ਦੁਕਹ ਜਡੋਣ
Meditate on the Great Harkrishan, by having His vision, all pains vanish.

Wahe Guru Ji ka Khalsa! Wahe Guru Ji ki Fateh!

Serving and Teaching in Portugal

reported by SS Shiv Charan Singh



[Quinta do Rajo](#) is a beautiful ashram created in the tradition of the Sikh Gurus and Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan. It offers the opportunity of an experience in harmony with nature and within a spiritual community.

Training, workshops, classes and events are held on various and specialized topics. We recommend and support a natural and vegetarian diet. Through the process of living together and co-creating our environment a bright spirit is awakened, strengthened and supported by ancient techniques and healthy practices. This leads to rejuvenation of the whole Self.

[Quinta do Rajo](#) concentrates spiritual teachings and balancing challenge with inspiration, providing a true invitation for one to become whom one is meant to be. Quinta do Rajo is in Santa Susana, a village located between Ericeira and Sintra, about 45 minutes, by car, from Lisbon. We are surrounded by countryside, overlooking the valley of the Lizandro river. In the area, there are rural villages merged in a landscape of deep valleys and high hills.

Quinta do Rajo receives people who wish to offer seva (voluntary service) for a minimum stay of six weeks. We offer back free food and accommodation as well as a friendly and welcoming community environment.

Volunteers may participate in our regular classes or spiritual activities on a donation basis. This is a very special and interesting opportunity for people undergoing a changing process or who feel the need to take a break from their routine and to get closer to Nature.

The Association Ram Dass Guru— Building Community in Portugal



[The Association Ram Dass Guru \(ARDG\)](#) is a non-profit organization, established in March 2013 with the aim of bringing the teachings and practice of Kundalini Yoga to those who can benefit from them, but who can't afford to pay for them. Other cultural and sports activities can also be promoted by ARDG, according to the availability of human resources and according to the needs found in the community.

The activities are carried out by certified teachers to whom are only given donations to cover travel expenses. Therefore, the Portuguese teachers also support this project. Its activity is already taking place regularly, for example at the Farol institution, an organization near Sintra (Portugal) that is a shelter for addicts. Free classes of Kundalini Yoga are taught as well as Mith-a-Drama sessions.

“There’s only one thing which will bring happiness to you. When you humble yourself and serve others, then God will fill in the gap and shall serve you....There’s no other way on the planet to free your soul unto the destiny and unto God but by serving those who need a hand—smiling at them, wiping away their tears, forgiving them.”

—The Siri Singh Sahib of Sikh Dharma

Guru Harkrishan’s Healing Light



by Singh Sahib Shiv Charan
Singh, Portugal

There is a simple example of the pure compassion that is borne out of the innocence that comes naturally to a child. Guru Harkrishan was just such a child when he heard the news of a plague that was taking many lives in Delhi. He immediately requested to go there. Upon his arrival he insisted that he drink the water from one of the city’s wells, knowing that it was impure and contained the spreading virus. He inevitably became sick and passed away within a few days.

To the surprise of all, soon after Guru Harkrishan passed away all the people in Delhi started to heal and the water was found to be drinkable again.

It is important to note that the healing he offered was not exclusive to his own family or disciples, but rather inclusive of all regardless of differences of religion or caste. With his mind clear and clean there was no doubt or hesitation, just an immediate empathy and readiness to be the channel for change.

Be the change you want to see in the world and remember the struggles and sorrows of others while you take time out of your busy life. Tune in around you and be a medicinal drop in the ocean of life.

Reaching and Teaching in Spain



White Tantric Yoga in Barcelona Spain

“This body has to earn from karma to the state of dharma. What is dharma? That’s the question which everybody asks. Karma needs action and reaction. Every action you do will have a reaction. That you cannot change.

“Dharma is when you take action to uplift and serve others—this is your dharma—and for this seva, you will get an abundance; you will get a thousand-fold return.”
—The Siri Singh Sahib of Sikh Dharma



Asociación Española de Kundalini Yoga in Madrid

Creating Sevadars in Spain



reported by Lakhmi Chand Singh
to SS Dr. Shanti Shanti Kaur Khalsa
Asociación Española de Kundalini Yoga (Spain)

With joy and inspiration from the Divine I share with you this project that is growing within the Spanish community. A few years ago I had the honor to become the representative of AEKY (Asociación Española de Kundalini Yoga) in the Madrid area. Since that time we have been building a team for organizing events, classes and meetings, and all activities related to Yogi Bhajan’s teachings.

The events began; hundreds of people came; the joy was growing. But there was not enough volunteer support to keep up with the ever-expanding needs for seva. We questioned how to meet the challenge—there were so many people attending the events but only a few sevadars organizing them.

Since then we have started collaborative initiatives through the teacher trainings. AEKY representatives inform the students about 3HO, KRI, IKYTA, AEKY and answer their questions, including those questions about Sikh Dharma and the Siri Singh Sahib, in order to share the values of all these community organizations founded by Yogi Bhajan.



Serving the Kundalini Yoga and Sikh Dharma community in Spain

Next June, we will serve, together with other Yoga schools, in the Dia Mundial del Yoga organized by the Embassy of India in Madrid. IKYTA, and AEKY serving the legacy of Yogi Bhajan will be there doing seva for the thousands of guests.

We see the need to strengthen the relationships with our teachers, as they grow as sevadars, in order for us to create a sangat with the capacity to communicate and resolve inner conflicts, a community in which the Aquarian teachers will love to participate and integrate, to grow as human beings, to experience their destiny and serve.

How to accomplish this? Through meditation and prayer the vision appears. As we share all everyday tasks, facilitate group discussion, and provide tools to develop profound and conscious communication, the inner connection among the sevadars will come. By Guru’s Grace we will expand our capacity to serve our community of teachers and the whole society, with happiness and holiness.

Serving Guru Harkrishan's Legacy in Russia



reported to MSS Tarn Taran Singh and SS Karta Singh Astoul
by Deep Prem Kaur, PR Manager
Russian Kundalini Yoga Teachers' Federation

The Kundalini Yoga sangat has existed in Russia for several years. Since 2010 it has been supporting a volunteer collaborative project with the Karabanovsky Children's Home. The idea of starting this kind of seva came at Winter Solstice Sadhana "by the will of God". The founder of the project, Akaljit Kaur (Dorina Alekseeva), tells the story: "One morning after Sadhana I stayed to drink tea and discuss the subject with one girl. Both of us were willing to do something like that." Later on the girls organized a collection of New Year's gifts, went to the Children's Home, got acquainted with the children, and have been visiting them monthly ever since. According to Akaljit Kaur, there were many people willing to help. Everyone responded to the call. She says: "We started with giving material support to the Home. But later on we realized that additional help was needed in the areas of communication, socialization, education, and entertainment. Now we are focused on work with teenagers."

The volunteers are planning a psychological training for the girls in the near future. A psychologist will teach them how to assess themselves realistically. The volunteers have noticed that many of the girls are lacking self-awareness – an authentic sense of themselves. They are given compliments for superficial things; they get anything they want because people feel pity for them. Akaljit Kaur goes on to say: "[Working with these children] is a very deep experience for myself and I have realized its value in the course of time. You do not only give your energy, but get something subtle in return, which brings you to a new spiritual level. You know, there is energy at the heart center. If you turn it downward, you'll feel sorrow and become degraded, but if you direct it upward, you will acquire compassion, and that is a lofty experience."

There is another inspiring seva project in our sangat. The Federation of Kundalini Yoga Teachers does not yet have its own Gurdwara space; therefore we have to rent it. One of the yogis, who is a Managing Director and Founder of a Moscow company, came forward and offered to pay all the monthly expenses for the House of the Guru. He asked to remain anonymous. It is his blessing to do this as a seva.

He tells his story: "I made this decision after my trip to India, when I saw with my own eyes how the system works. Any time you come, pray, eat and give as much as you can. It is so simple. I don't have any special feelings about this. I just do what I regard as true. But there is satisfaction, maybe gratification that all my actions in this world contain a part of goodness. We have to make decisions every day, especially in business. People's lives and projects depend upon these decisions. It is always a pressure. And it is difficult to resist this pressure without faith and God." He believes that in order to begin such seva, a person should feel this need within himself. He stresses: "If you do it mechanically, just because you have to do it or because everybody else does it, then, I think, it will bring no changes. It is important to do what you believe in fully, not to betray it. No matter what it is."

The Gurdwara space in Moscow is gradually developing and expanding. We have been building from the ground up. By Guru's Grace the Siri Guru Granth Sahib has appeared. We have moved to a new light space, where more opportunities to serve other people and to spread Yogi Bhajan's teachings will appear. Thanks to modest and anonymous help from sevadars such as the ones we have interviewed, miracles do come true.

Akhand Path in Moscow

This year in May, a sacred Akhand Path will be held in Moscow, Russia. This is a deep process of the continuous reading of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. The sacred scriptures are written in a poetic form. People take turns reading without interruption so that there is an unbroken Sound Current pervading. This is the fourth Akhand Path hosted by this sangat.



This practice creates a blessed Light dome, which heals and protects the environments where we live. Reading from the Guru gives a touch to the living Word of God through the Naam. This is one of the most effective practices in Kali Yuga, intensifying relationship with soul and leading to liberation.

**"When you go to Siri Guru Granth Sahib, it's the greatest meditation. The law of meditation is that when meditation starts working you will face your boredom, your negativity, your corruption, your fear and your lower self. Those five things will come to you, then your meditation."
—The Siri Singh Sahib of Sikh Dharma**



Bringing Spirit to European Winter Solstice



reported to Sikh Dharma Ministry
by Sarbjit Kaur Khalsa, European Khalsa Council Chairperson

In December 2014, the European Khalsa Council (governmental body of Sikh Dharma in Europe) hosted the first European Winter Solstice. For many years Singh Sahib Sardar Singh Khalsa of Norway had envisioned a Winter Solstice event in Europe, but for various reasons, it had never manifested. Then, at our 2014 winter session of the European Khalsa Council in Amsterdam, Singh Sahib Sat Hari Singh Khalsa of Germany brought forth a formal proposal: that Winter Solstice be hosted by the European Khalsa Council and that the profits go to the European Khalsa Council to fund projects.

He also wanted the event to have a more Sikh Dharma educational focus than the summer Yoga Festival in France, which has had more of an emphasis on Kundalini Yoga. The proposal received a favorable vote. There was very little time for planning, practically no money, and no advertising, so there were only around 50 people in attendance, mostly from Spain, with a few from Germany, Finland, Italy and other countries as well. Actually, beginning on a small scale was wise, since we needed to look at the logistics of mounting such an event.

Our first Winter Solstice was held in southern Spain in a very beautiful area where the temperature in winter is very comfortable—around 70 degrees Fahrenheit during the day. The surrounding area is a delicious blend of desert hills painted in different shades of golden brown. The beach area is only a half hour away. People stayed in warm rooms or in tents.



We held workshops on the history of Kundalini Yoga, Tantric Numerology, Yogic Massage, Yoga for Children, Sat Nam Rasayan and the whole range of teachings of Kundalini Yoga. We had expeditions to the mountains and got to work on the farm at the site and even feed the animals.

To learn more about the activities of 3HO, Sikh Dharma Ministry, and Sikh Dharma International in Europe, visit [3HO Europe](#)



But the most beautiful part of the event, in my opinion, was that it was centered around the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. The attendants were mostly yoga students, with hardly any exposure to a Gurdwara or to Sikh Dharma. We taught them about our Gurus, the Siri Guru Granth Sahib, and Gurdwara protocol. It was like teaching children the alphabet. Everything was explained in a universal, non-ritualistic way.

Singh Sahib Sat Hari Singh did a great job comparing the Guru to the Sun. Every morning after sadhana we went outside to greet the outer Sun and then came back inside to greet the inner Sun, which is the Guru. Slowly and surely people began to get the idea!



The most outstanding for me was that I could attend Gurdwara every morning—something I am not able to do at the Yoga Festival because I am too busy. And to share with yoga students my love for the Guru in a relaxed environment was tops.

In Europe there are very few 3HO Sikhs and we have been very busy developing Kundalini Yoga. I believe it's time to develop our Sikh identity in Europe: this was one of the reasons for European Winter Solstice.

We invite all to participate in this event as teachers and students – think of the European Winter Solstice as a Sikh vacation!—*Sarbjit Kaur, Spain*



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**"You answered the call of duty—
that's the beauty of life."**

**Siri Singh Sahib Bhai Sahib Harbhajan
Singh Khalsa Yogiji
(July 7 1977)**