

Minister Training India Yatra 2014 **by MSS Guru Raj Kaur Khalsa, Vancouver, Canada**

In the late 1990's we realized that the main way that the Teachings of Kundalini Yoga as taught by Yogi Bhajan were going to reach the global community with integrity, inspiration, creativity, and devotion was with the army of well-trained Kundalini Yoga Teachers. They were the front lines, and to ensure the integrity of this Legacy, needed to be properly trained, certified. Thus was created the Aquarian Academy. The profile and training of a Kundalini Yoga Teacher was developed.

We need an equally strong army of devotees carrying the Legacy of Sikh Dharma. Many Sikh Dharma International Ministers have been serving for many years, effectively, and some quietly. I believe it is

time to come out onto the radar of humanity, develop our profile, get well-trained, and stand and serve. Siri Singh Sahib ji gave us a face and grace, a status. Let us rise to fulfill that.



This was the inspiration behind the Minister Training Yatra, which took place in February. It was great. India is always fun and profound and always unexpected.

SS Sat Kirn Kaur joined me in leading the Yatra. It was a small, cozy, diverse, and international group, which created an intimate experience for this experimental pilot program. Five were Ministers, five were not, but keenly interested in immersing themselves in Sikh Dharma for these ten days. (One took Amrit in Anandpur Sahib; one Sikh vows in a cozy ceremony at Dashmesh Sadan.)

The Ministers were diverse as well: SS Sat Kartar Kaur is a retired Chaplain, SS Dr. Hari Dass Singh is a healer and chiropractor, SS Sat Kirn and I are more Granthi/Kirtanee types! So, the various ways of serving as a Minister were represented, which brought a broad spectrum of experience to share.

(Photo by Sumpuran Singh, Khalsa Publishing)

Yet, regardless of in what particular way a Sikh Dharma International Minister is going to serve, it is our destiny to lovingly carry the Shabd Guru, the Legacy of the Siri Guru Granth Sahib into the future. We serve and carry the values and virtues of our Guru with such Grace, as if we were carrying the Guru on a majestic palanquin. As Sikh Dharma International Ministers, we represent the consciousness of the Guru, that Infinite Position. We are a Friend to Every Soul, and serve from that depth of experience, of surrender and devotion seeing all through the Guru's Eyes. It is a consciousness, yet there is also a requirement to carry on the traditions, protocols, and ceremonies, to serve the needs of the people that sometimes requires a basic training.

THE TRAINING

In order to create a strong foundation of devotion and skills needed for any Sikh Dharma International Minister, regardless of how they will uniquely serve, we structured the training into the following categories:

- ❖ *Developing the Identity of a Sikh Dharma Minister in the Aquarian Age*
- ❖ *Developing a Personal Relationship with the Gurus*
- ❖ *Developing a Personal Relationship with Siri Guru Granth Sahib*
- ❖ *Serving the Needs of the Sangat through Protocol of the Court of the Guru, and Ceremonies*

I am so grateful to SS Sat Kartar Kaur, who lovingly chronicled the yatra and the teachings so we could share it. She captured all that was said...writing, writing, writing.

IN AMRITSAR

Ram Das sarovar nate sabh utaray paap kamatai

Nirmal hoe kar ishnana gur pooray keenay dana.

Bathing in the sacred sarovar of Ram Das, all my sins and mistakes are washed away.

I become stainless with this sacred bath.

Developing a Personal Relationship with our Gurus. We purposefully chose to do this program in India, where one is forced to experience its richness and history, intimately and very personally. Each participant was personally immersed in the experience of the Golden Temple, intimately feeling the frequency of where the Gurus walked, taught, vibrated. Drenched in the Naam, and the bowin—always the bowing.

Harimandir Sahib seems to carry the spiritual DNA of Sikh Dharma. There is nothing like it. As the Guru said about the Golden Temple and Ramdas Pur (Amritsar):

Dithay sabhay thaav nahee tudh jayhi-aa

I have seen all places, but none can compare to Yours



(Photo by
Sumpuran Singh, Khalsa Publishing)

Each day we would sit together at the Feet of the Akal Takhat and share. The format of teaching about the Gurus was through study of the Ten Bodies and each Guru's mastery. In this way, the values, virtues, and victory of Sikh Dharma is revealed, with Soul Stories invoking a stamina of the soul which creates an INFINITE POSITION within our consciousness.

SS Sat Kirn brought the group through a tour of the Golden Temple, touching the profoundly significant historical places. In all the places we visited on the Yatra, the stories would come alive to thrill our souls; each Guru becoming even more accessible.

As Sumpuran Singh from the Netherlands says: “What I have previously missed, I found during the Sikh Minister Training yatra: how to share my experience of Sikhi with other. Going to Harmandir Sahib at night to read Japji on the roof, to walk the parkarma, to dip and sip, to carry the Guru from Akal Takht to Harmandir Sahib; these experiences changed me profoundly.”

IN GOINDWAL

Guru Amar Das’ special place is a profoundly rich place filled with our history. Here Guru Amar Das lived, also Guru Ram Das with Bibi Bhani, and this is where Guru Arjun dev ji was born. We visited their humble home, now Gurdwara Chubara Sahib. The most beautiful experience, chanting Anand Sahib in Guru Amar Das’ special room! Tiny, with marble walls.

Profound experiences were had. In this excerpt from her story, SS Sat Kartar Kaur describes her profound transformative experience at the [Sacred Goindwal Baoli](#): “I sat down behind my group and experienced the next 20 minutes of tears of both grief and joy. I tried to articulate my experience but each time was overcome by an understanding that a great transformation took place within each of my cells. The experience of being nurtured is still humbling. I feel awe and deep gratitude. At Goindwal Baoli, I know that I left behind fears, doubts and grief. By God’s grace, may I continue to live out the miracle of knowing that the Shabad Guru the Naad can nourish me, guide me, and sustain me!”

THEN OFF TO ANANDPUR SAHIB, the City of Bliss, which Guru Tegbahadur established, and the Tenth Master developed and refined. We stop along the way at Bakala, where Guru Tegbahadur meditated and became the Guru.

We arrive in Anandpur Sahib! Takhat Keshghar Sahib is lit up!

We bow.... We behold the weapons. The power.

We visit many places: the forts, battlefields... and the stories continue. Bhai Kanaya’s Gurdwara is breathtakingly beautiful, serene, elegant, we walk and meditate, feeling the profound peace of this Gursikh’s soul.

AT DASHMESH SUDAN

Studying and Experiencing at Dashmesh Sudan (the Siri Singh Sahib’s teaching centre).

Developing a Relationship with the Siri Guru Granth Sahib and the protocol of the Court of the Guru, so that we can serve the Needs of the Sangat through the Guru, and with Ceremonies

Each day at Dashmesh Sudan we had classes on Gurbani, Ardas, Prashaad, getting comfortable with these protocols. SS Sat Kartar and Shabd Kaur facilitated a deeply sensitizing class on Chaplaincy and Counseling. SS Dr. Hari Dass shared a moving class on Death and Dying. He had brought his wife SSHoly Kaur’s ashes here to India.

As Hariang Kaur from the Netherlands shares: “A memorable moment for me was reading Ardas on several occasions during Gurdwara in Dashmesh Sadan. I had never done that before. Although my grasp of Gurmukhi is not good, I felt the power of the words. Standing in front of the Guru, I felt that through my prayer I was representing our sangat. It made me feel humble and strong at the same time – it opened my heart.

We served the weekly Khalsa Council Akhand Paath at Keshghar Sahib, and enjoyed a powerful kirtan for the bhog. Nothing like singing Song of the Khalsa right on the spot where the Khalsa was born!

There is a deep joy that is felt, invoked by the surrender experienced in India, in relation to the Gurus, to our own devotion.

As Jai Chandra of Los Angeles shared: "The blessings of the sacred lands we visited, resides within each and everyone, wherever we are. To come to know the Living Guru within me was the most enlightening experience of my lifetime. To have traveled to the mystical land of India and to the site's and homes of the Ten Guru's who came before me, who are passing these sacred teachings unto me is a freedom in and of itself to me and to all who are called to this Divine awakening."

Hari Shabd Kaur of Brazil said: "The devotion of the Sikhs is something beyond human nature! Here I have merged myself in a pool of Infinite Devotion."

When we feel that, all we can do is smile, from inside out. The motto of every Sikh, the Friend of every Soul blossoms forth: "How can I serve you?" *Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa, Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh!*

Here is the Hukumnama we received on our last day of the yatra *in Anandpur Sahib at Dashmesh Sadan Gurdwara for Minister Training Yatra*

DHANAASAREE FIRST MEHL (Guru Nanak)

SECOND HOUSE ASHTAPADEES:

ONE UNIVERSAL CREATOR GOD. BY THE GRACE OF THE TRUE GURU:

The Guru is the ocean, filled with pearls. The Saints gather in the Ambrosial Nectar; they do not go far away from there. They taste the subtle essence of the Lord; they are loved by God. Within this pool, the swans find their Lord, the Lord of their souls.

What can the poor crane accomplish by bathing in the mud puddle?

It sinks into the mire, and its filth is not washed away. (Pause)

After careful deliberation, the thoughtful person takes a step.

Forsaking duality, he becomes a devotee of the Formless Lord.

He obtains the treasure of liberation, and enjoys the sublime essence of the Lord.

His comings and goings end, and the Guru protects him.

The swan do not leave this pool. In loving devotional worship, they merge in the Celestial

Lord. The swans are in the pool, and the pool is in the swans.

They speak the Unspoken Speech, and they honor and revere the Guru's Word.

The Yogi, the Primal Lord, sits within the celestial sphere of deepest Samaadhi.

He is not male, and He is not female; how can anyone describe Him?

The three worlds continue to center their attention on His Light.

The silent sages and the Yogic masters seek the Sanctuary of the True Lord.

The Lord is the source of bliss, the support of the helpless. The Gurmukhs worship and

contemplate the Celestial Lord. God is the Lover of His devotees, the Destroyer of fear.

Subduing ego, one meets the Lord, and places his feet on the Path.

He makes many efforts, but still, the Messenger of Death tortures him.

Destined only to die, he comes into the world.

He wastes this precious human life through duality. He does not know his own self, and trapped by doubts, he cries out in pain.

Speak, read and hear of the One Lord. The Support of the earth shall bless you with courage, righteousness and protection. Chastity, purity and self-restraint are infused into the heart, when one centers his mind in the fourth state.

They are immaculate and true, and filth does not stick to them. Through the Word of the Guru's Shabad, their doubt and fear depart. The form and personality of the Primal Lord are incomparably beautiful. Nanak begs for the Lord, the Embodiment of Truth