



Laying Foundations: *Preparing for the Struggle Ahead*

Chet, Nanakshahi 555



Written and produced by the Khalistan Centre

The Khalistan Centre is dedicated to supporting and cultivating Gurmat-driven leadership to further the struggle for Khalistan.

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We acknowledge that the Khalistan Centre, is on the unceded traditional territory of the Katzie, Semiahmoo, Kwantlen and other Coast Salish Peoples.

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ੴ ਸ੍ਰੀਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂਜੀਕੀਫਤਹ ॥

ਇਨਗ੍ਰੀਬਸਿੰਘਨਕੌਦਯੈਪਤਿਸ਼ਾਹੀ ।

ਏਯਾਦਰਖੈਂਹਮਰੀਗੁਰਿਆਈ ।

In the midst of widespread panthic mobilization around the world, there has been a wave of motivation amongst panthic *naujawan* to organize and participate directly in the *sangarsh* in some form. This document collates content from previous resources developed by the Khalistan Centre in order to effectively understand our current moment, the challenges that lay ahead, and what panthic *naujawan*—as the future of the panth—can do. This is only intended to be an introductory guide to understand the context of Indian state repression, and the trajectory of the Khalsa’s ongoing struggle for the establishment of Khalistan today.

Despite the benefits of virtual technology, the bulk of the work required right now will occur through face-to-face and person-to-person engagement in local *gurdwaray*, university campuses, and other community spaces. For more information or direct support for your local organizing efforts, contact us at fateh@khalistan.org.

The text below covers a range of topics to establish a basic understanding necessary for effective mobilization, including:

- What is happening in Punjab;
- The Indian state’s structures and mechanisms of genocide;
- The genesis of the Sikh *sangarsh*;
- The Guru Khalsa Panth’s vision for *raj* and the examples of our *shaheeds*; and
- Tangible ways we can move this struggle forward.

The current wave of repression we have seen in recent days is a continuation of the state’s genocidal policy to repress any Sikh mobilization that steps outside the boundaries of the state’s control. The degree of force and intensity of the psyops (psychological operations) was not only aimed at suppressing the growing political consciousness of Sikh *naujawan*, but also to shock, confuse, and terrorize Sikh communities around the world with the spectre of overwhelming force. Considering the state’s concerted effort to disseminate disinformation aimed at distressing viewers, it is imperative that Sikh *naujawan* do not get distracted into playing the state’s game on their terms. The Khalsa chooses its battlefield on its own terms.

While we continue to repel the current onslaught on multiple fronts, *naujawan* must prioritize strengthening our own internal capacity (individual and collective) and infrastructure as we inevitably barrel towards the next phase of our *sangarsh*. We call on Sikh *naujawan* around the world to acknowledge the gravity of the situation and avoid a false sense of satisfaction with temporary actions. Instead, we must commit to consistently *building* upon each small victory to move towards our ultimate objective. Foregoing overnight, symbolic victories, it is important that we begin to relish the gruelling and invisible work of preparation that will be required for sustained periods of time in the years to come.

Preparing for the next wave of conflict requires work on multiple fronts:

- Building our internal strength and capacity as individuals, organizations, and as a larger collective. This begins from the foundations of our *jeevan* (spiritual life) and continues to every other aspect of panthic organizing—increasing our knowledge base, strengthening our skills and organizations, and developing a variety of effective institutions necessary to confront the vast resources of the Indian state.
- Developing broad communication and coordination between Sikh *jathay* (units) starting at each local level and then spreading across the globe. We do not need to develop singular “mega organizations” or umbrella groups; we simply need to develop a *saanjh* (connection) and establish clear means of communication and coordination while maintaining the flexibility and tenacity of existing *jathay* at each local level. This approach allows us to develop collective grassroots leadership structures alongside a fluid and decentralized organizational model.
- Synthesizing the breadth of understanding and analysis in our panth regarding our current challenges and brainstorming audacious ways to move forward. This is necessary as we move towards consensus on three key points:
 - A firm understanding of our vision for *raj*, and the Khalsa’s *sidhant* which guide every step of our path;
 - A clear analysis of our current political context and the various vulnerabilities, threats, and opportunities in front of us; and
 - Develop the organizational structures, strategies, and tactics required to navigate our current *halaat* and successfully advance towards our overall objective.

While the state will continue to pursue its own counter-insurgency policy to erase our voice and eradicate our existence, Sikh *naujawan* around the world will continue to manifest the Khalsa’s resilience and tenacity demonstrated in every era of struggle:

ਮੰਨੂ ਸਾਡੀ ਦਾਤਰੀ ਅਸੀਂ ਮੰਨੂ ਦੇ ਸੋਏ।
ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਵੱਢਦਾ ਅਸੀਂ ਦੂਣ ਸਵਾਏ ਹੋਏ।

*Mannu is our sickle,
We, the fodder for him to mow.
The more he cuts,
The more we grow.*



What is Happening In Punjab?

On March 18, 2023, Indian security forces launched a so-called “mega crackdown” to arrest Sikh *naujawan*, specifically targeting Bhai Amritpal Singh of *Waris Punjab De*. Amritpal Singh had been doing *parchar* in Punjab for several months and speaking about social, environmental, and political issues. He openly advocated for the secession of Punjab and establishment of Khalistan.

Fearing the increasing political consciousness and *roh* (righteous rage) of Sikh *naujawan* over the past several years—particularly after the 2020–2021 *Kisaan sangarsh*—the Indian establishment used the opportunity to mobilize its violent security apparatus and jingoist media conglomerates to undermine and neutralize growing Sikh political mobilization in Punjab which continues to threaten the current status quo in the region.

This wave of repression featured significant coordination between numerous security forces including 80,000 local police forces, the National Investigation Agency (NIA), 50 units of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), 10 units of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), 8 units of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), 12 units of the Border Security Force (BSF), 10 units of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), 10 units of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), and an additional 8 specialized units of the CRPF. This militarization of Punjab reinscribes the mobilization of the Indian state’s genocidal counter-insurgency which effectively laid the groundwork to transform Punjab into a police state in the hopes of repressing and containing radical Sikh resistance.

This counter-insurgency operation included widespread arbitrary detentions and censorship of both news media and social media. Over 353 Sikhs have been arrested, including grassroots activists, *parchariks*, lawyers, journalists and the family members of targeted individuals.

Individuals taken into custody have their phones, laptops and other electronics seized as police mine for additional intelligence and means to surveil Sikh activists.

Citing a threat to “public order”, internet services and mobile communications were subject to a widespread shutdown—disabling communication for 27 million people in Punjab for several days—while Section 144 of the Indian criminal code was invoked across Punjab to criminalize the assembly or gathering of more than four individuals. Several activists have also been airlifted to a detention facility in Assam, where they were detained using colonial era laws. Protests organized in support of arrested *naujawan* are being shut down using police force—leading to even more arrests.

The use of internet shutdowns and digital censorship is a standard feature of the shrinking space for democratic dissent in India today. Digital censorship has been far reaching. As the counter-insurgency operation commenced, Indian government requests for accounts to be withheld in India were actively enforced by Twitter. This censorship has been widespread with hundreds of accounts targeted, including journalists, activists, vocal individuals, Sikh organisations, media outlets, elected officials in India and abroad, as well as SGPC officials like Giani Harpreet Singh.

This censorship and internet restriction has been used in conjunction with aggressive psyops (psychological operations) aimed at terrorizing Punjab’s populace, demonizing Khalistan and Sikhs across the subcontinent (and wider world), while simultaneously spreading disinformation to sow confusion and neutralize effective Panthic responses. Taking advantage of the internet blackout and censorship of critical journalists, nationalist media outlets were given free reign to manufacture news coverage about Sikh activists and disseminate sensationalist headlines aimed at



causing distressful psychological impacts on viewers. In this sense, Indian media continues to function as a participant of India's violent counter-insurgency operations against Sikhs and other resistance movements.

Understanding the Indian State

Since the 1980s, the Indian state has been committed to eliminating the widespread support in Punjab for the establishment of Khalistan as an independent state. The Indian state's vicious military operations have been well documented in the way they eliminated Sikh political activists, guerrillas, and their families from the political arena in the early 1990s. This repression has continued since then through the ongoing omnipresence of state violence in Punjab and the persecution of vocal Sikh activists.

The result of this genocide has been the erasure of democratic political space for Sikh political dissent. The enforced peace since the decline of the armed insurgency is maintained not through political settlement, but by maintaining the omnipresence of repressive state violence—and making it felt by potential Sikh dissidents today.

Restricting the public space (ie. politics, media, academia and other arenas of public discourse) of Punjab exclusively to Indian nationalist forces, the state has maintained its coercive judicial-military apparatus to swiftly eliminate any Sikh political opposition through extrajudicial killings, judicial interference, and the lived reality of the omnipresence of state violence. The genocidal violence of the counter-insurgency maintains its lingering presence and is reproduced daily upon those who seek to dissent—forcing them to live under a regime in which violent perpetrators maintain positions of power over survivors.

India's tactic to isolate Sikh activists by

appealing to nationalism and manufacturing claims of Sikh "extremism" fits a consistent pattern to legitimize genocidal violence and police repression. The Indian establishment seeks to demonize Khalistan and Sikh political activism, and enforces this by criminalizing any expressions of Sikh sovereignty. Sikh *naujawan* must avoid this trap by rejecting their labels altogether and proudly celebrating our resistance and *shaheeds*.

The reassertion of Indian political hegemony over the region is thus not the result of a political settlement or the resolution of Sikh political demands but the imposition of a violent "peace" built upon genocide.

It is evident from recent events however, that Sikh tension with India and movements for Khalistan have not disappeared or "faded into irrelevance" as the Indian establishment claims or hopes. It is crucial that the recent wave of repression in past weeks is understood in this context of a political conflict between two political entities rather than misrepresented as a "law and order" problem of terrorism and extremism, or conversely as individual human rights issues that can be resolved through the Indian judicial system.

Sikhs, as a sovereign people, continue to resist and build institutions of sovereign self-governance and will continue to do so in multiple arenas outside the terms and conditions that the state tries to impose. As long as the Indian state continues to repress the right to self-determination and restricts the political space necessary to advocate for Khalistan, Sikh *sangat* will resolutely continue its movement towards sovereignty by any means necessary.

Locating the Sikh *sangarsh*

In 1849, the *Firanghi* (European colonizer) annexed *Sirkar-i-Khalsa* and embarked on a colonial project to dominate,

repress, and exploit the Panth & Punjab. The *Firanghi* imposed specific economic and political structures to repress expressions of indigenous sovereignty (*patshahi*) and replace them with an authoritarian state that could efficiently exploit the land and people for the profit of the empire.

This is the same repressive structure that celebrated “independence” in 1947.

Sikh conflict with the Indian state subsequently emerged out of two driving forces: Sikh aspirations to sovereignty driven by the principles of *patshahi* and *miri-piri*, as well as resistance to the subjugation of Punjab in service of the Indian nation- and state-building project. This project subordinated Punjab’s economy and natural resources to serve state-building and industrialization across the rest of the region—despite the devastation it wrought on Punjab itself. At the same time, Delhi used the institutions of the state to assimilate the region’s diverse peoples into an artificial Indian “nation.” These initiatives led to the overriding of Punjab’s constitutional powers over its own hydroelectricity, river waters, capital city, economic development, and other areas.

The political institutions of India were clearly constructed to enable majoritarianism with minimal safeguards for minorities, and an Indian nationalism explicitly based on Brahminical identity and symbols. In this sense, the Congress’ brand of liberal nationalism has only been quantitatively different from the BJP and RSS. From its inception, India established a highly centralized state structure to maintain majoritarian control and unleashed a nation-building project to ensure the peoples of the subcontinent were assimilated into a unitary ‘Indian’ national identity. Various regions and communities that have resisted this process have been projected as pathologies that must either be assimilated or annihilated altogether.



While Sikhs in the region sought to mobilize non-violently in order to decentralize the political structure through electoral politics and civil disobedience, the armed struggle eventually emerged in the face of intense state repression. The genesis of armed Sikh resistance began following the murder of Sikh protesters under police supervision in 1978, the state-sanctioned torture and killings of panthic Sikh *naujawan* in 1982 and 1983, and finally, the army invasion of Sri Darbar Sahib during the Battle of Amritsar in June 1984.

Khalsa jee's Vision and Sidhant

The Guru Khalsa Panth's *sangarsh* has always been an exercise of the *patshahi* bestowed upon the Khalsa to destroy the tyrants and protect the poor, and establish a just society-polity based on *sarbat da bhala*. In this legacy, the Khalistan *lehar* (movement) was initiated as a revolutionary resistance to abolish the Indian state, capitalist exploitation, and Hindutva's caste-based supremacy—with a clear commitment to advancing the liberation of the oppressed across the subcontinent.

To further this vision, Sikhs in every era have manifested this purpose in their *jeevan*, and in the collective institutions built by the Panth. Our *maulikta* (our indigenous existence as Sikh) and our *patshahi* (our Guru bestowed sovereignty), demand that we create space to exist outside the domination of any worldly power, build bases from which to offer shelter, dignity, and security, and ultimately—realize the purpose of the Khalsa by establishing *Halemi Raj*.

From these indigenous Sikh forms of social organizing, developed powerful mechanisms for sovereign self-governance rooted in Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib and the institution of the *gurdwara*. The Khalsa serves the universe through these institutions by providing refuge and defence for all oppressed and marginalized peo-

ples, while working to uproot oppressive systems in all their forms.

Rejuvenating our praxis, goals, and struggle in line with *Gurmat* is the starting point for continuing the Khalsa's *sangarsh* and regenerating the social, political, and economic systems envisioned in *Khalsa Raj* today.

Footsteps of our Shaheeds

The legacy of Sant Jarnail Singh jee and the Sikh *jujharoo lehar* is not in the realm of political manoeuvring or legalistic reform. Sikh *jujharoos*, led by Sant Jarnail Singh jee, understood our current *sankat* (crisis) lay in our condition of *gulaami* (subjugation/slavery)—not simple discrimination by the Indian state. The notion of *gulaami* is not merely political rhetoric but a deep theorizing of the condition of Sikhs in today's world: the domination and alienation of Sikhs from their source (Guru Granth-Panth) and the homelessness (disenfranchisement / lack of political agency) this causes. In this sense, homelessness refers to the reality that we are constantly living in a colonized world order and trying to find ways to fit and survive within the status quo through some mode of assimilation.

Discrimination and mistreatment are merely symptoms of powerlessness. The lack of political power and agency inevitably means we have no authority to establish policy or structures in accordance with our worldview premised on *sarbat da bhala*. The political and economic issues plaguing Punjab and Sikhs in India—the loot of Punjab's natural and human resources, policies of cultural assimilation, and imperialist domination of Punjab are only symptoms of *gulaami* that must be addressed accordingly.

Understanding this reality, Sikh *jujharoos* did not submit to the state as the sole source of "power" nor were they seeking "rights" to be conferred by the state—they proactively and definitively lived with *annkh* (dignity) as a transfor-

mation and goal in itself. In this sense, Sikh *ujharoos* were not making requests for “equality”, “rights” or “justice” to be conceded by the state.

Because Sikh *ujharoos* did not see the state as the source of power, justice, and sovereignty, they instead **regenerated Khalsa institutions outside the framework of the state to build power with the blessings of Guru Granth-Panth and support of *sangat***. By rejuvenating the Khalsa’s lifeworld, Sikh *ujharoos* began the regenerative process to develop the necessary institutions to ground and rehabilitate Sikh subjectivity in the world— the only avenue to genuine liberation. From collective leadership through *gurmatta* and *Sarbat Khalsa*, to political struggle through *dhadi* ballads, *amrit sanchar*, and *shaheedi smagams*, a new mode and space of politics was chalked out— separate from the state— which revived the revolutionary praxis of the Khalsa in a meaningful way.

By restructuring panthic institutions as the ground of our existence and power— *supported by the means to maintain our autonomy through armed self-defence*—Sikh *ujharoos* simultaneously undermined the state’s sovereignty and authority, while building a Khalsae alternative from the ground up.

Whereas the state claims an exclusive monopoly over the right to force, Sikh *ujharoos* illustrated the centrality of *shastar* (arms) to maintaining our *pats-hahi*—eviscerating the illusory separation between the mythic “religious” and “secular”. **Without the cover of jungles or mountains, Sikh *ujharoos* defied the basic tenets of guerrilla warfare by waging a massive armed struggle in the countryside of Punjab due to the pervasive support within the Sikh *sangat* of Punjab.**

This support was further strengthened by the revolutionary solidarity forged between *ujharoos* and other struggling and oppressed peoples around the subconti-



ment and beyond. Through this process, Sikh *jujharoos* chalked out a radical vision for the abolition of the imperialist Indian state and the possibility of a society-polity built on *sanjhivalta* and *sarbat da bhalala*.

Our ongoing *sangarsh* today is not simply for a seat at the table of world powers; we want a new way of sitting and navigating the world altogether that is rooted in our own epistemology and values. This requires a just global order in which we are grounded and exist as Sikh— not citizens or nations. This is the radical project asserted by Sant Jarnail Singh Jee and the Sikh *jujharoo lehar* for Khalistan. Our *shaheed* shattered the illusions of modernity/coloniality and the Indian state by reasserting the Guru Khalsa Panth's authority as *Meer* (political sovereign) and *Peer* (spiritual sovereign) in this world.

Building Blocks

Developments over the past ten years make it abundantly clear that a renewed Sikh mobilization has been simmering organically in Punjab (and around the world); the formation and leadership of which is currently developing in the crucible of political struggle and state repression. This process was most clearly witnessed during the Kisaan *sangarsh* where *naujawan* across the world mobilized, clashed with security forces, and sustained a *morcha* which eventually brought Delhi to its knees with the repeal of the so-called farm reform bills in 2021.

Considering the grave implications of explicit advocacy for Khalistan and the restrictive conditions of Indian electoral politics however, it is imperative to assess the broader field of political engagement from the grassroots to determine the strength of Sikh *naujawan* today. Even during agitations that do not explicitly make secessionist demands, it is clear that the Sikh *sangarsh* for Khalistan remains the animating focal point of every Sikh agitation in Punjab.

Recent examples include the uprisings against the pending execution of Sikh political prisoners and in support of their immediate release in 2012 and 2014, as well as the ongoing *morcha* for their release today. These respective movements heavily featured themes of Sikh sovereignty at the centre of political discourse outside of the Indian electoral system and brought Punjab to a complete halt through general strikes on several occasions. These mobilizations revolved around Sikh guerrillas, incarcerated for their unapologetic participation in the armed struggle for Khalistan, and received widespread support from all segments of Punjab's society.

With the rejection of discredited Sikh leadership in the form of the Akali Dal, the momentum of these uprisings was channeled into attempts to reconvene the Sarbat Khalsa, a collective assembly of the Khalsa *panth*, to re-establish independent institutions of Sikh self-governance. This represented a strategic manoeuvre to establish sound leadership—while rejecting Indian political institutions—under the leadership of revered guerrilla commander, Bhai Jagtar Singh Hawara, as the Jathedar of Sri Akaal Takhat Sahib. This gathering ratified and reiterated the *gurmattay* (Guru-Panth's resolutions) of the 1986 Sarbat Khalsa which dismantled and replaced the SGPC (a creature of Indian legislation) and ultimately set the *panth* on its current course towards Khalistan.

In response to a renewed increase in Sikh political activity in Punjab since then, Indian security forces have been clamping down on activists in Punjab and the diaspora. Since 2017, nearly 300 *naujawan* have been arrested under draconian measures of the Indian penal code. Those arrested are predominantly young Sikh men, active in democratically organizing their communities to advocate for an independent Khalistan outside of the electoral system.

Using the backdrop of a spike in insur-



gent strikes in Punjab between 2015–2017 and the proliferation of widespread grassroots advocacy for Khalistan and Sikh self-governance, state security forces manipulated the context to debilitate Sikh political activism by criminalizing Sikh dissent as sedition and terrorism. In a set pattern, Indian security forces alleged foreign conspiracies were destabilizing the country and swooped in to neutralize activists across the region— with reverberations abroad.

As a result of this, *naujawan* engaged in a diverse range of activism from social media advocacy, to political organizing, and Sikh *parchar* (education) have faced arrest and torture, prolonged incarceration, and ongoing surveillance and harassment after their release. Such “crimes” include “liking” pro-Khalistan social media posts, possessing Sikh literature and participating in WhatsApp groups.

These incidents clearly illustrate the *modus operandi* of Indian security forces: maintain a close watch on young activists and inflict extrajudicial violence on them through the use of arbitrary anti-terror legislation. Once youth are inducted into the Indian penal system, they can face several years of incarceration without bail due to their alleged “terror” affiliations and the nature of the legislation. This prolonged incarceration takes place before activists are even tried or convicted of any crime. In other words, Indian security forces have been using anti-terror legislation to arbitrarily detain and incarcerate Sikh activists—removing them from their communities—as a political tool to restrict activism rather than ensuring “law and order” as it is claimed.

Despite these challenges, a new generation of Sikh *naujawan* remain committed to exercising their Guru-granted *patshahi* by resisting state violence and remaining resolute in their explicit commitment to the struggle for Khalistan.

Geopolitical Context

Alongside the state’s repressive apparatus and the political mobilization of Sikh *naujawan* around the world, another important factor to be examined is the global dimension of our *sangarsh* today.

As the global order shifts towards a multipolar system where the US is no longer the unchallenged hegemon, NATO-aligned countries increasingly seek to develop stronger ties and relations with the Indian establishment in order to contain the strategic influence of China while simultaneously accessing India’s massive market.

While some shifts towards India are tied to policy imperatives to counter China’s rising influence in the region and beyond, there are also other important economic considerations. With the recognized significance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor specifically and the broader “Belt and Road Initiative” which would reroute the global trade system and fulcrums of global power, **the Panth and Punjab are now centre stage as key stakeholders in global politics.** This simultaneously presents us with opportunities as well as various threats.

As we have seen in recent weeks, Indian officials have embarked on an aggressive campaign to villainize and isolate Sikhs across the subcontinent and around the world. This includes sensationalist headlines seeking to undermine the legitimacy of Sikh political mobilization as well as the use of diplomatic channels to encourage international partners to similarly crackdown on Sikh activists for advocating for Khalistan. These countries, including Canada, UK, and Australia, have gone to considerable lengths to criminalize and repress Sikh activists in the past which suggests they may commit to continuing down this trajectory under Indian pressure.

Within all of these calculations, it is clear that the fate of Sikhs is not even an af-

terthought for global powers. Despite the rhetoric of human rights in NATO-aligned countries, their consistent pandering to India make it abundantly clear that for many influential political actors, their “national interest” does not always include protecting the integrity of human rights in their local contexts or promoting human rights in the global community.

The precarious position of Sikhs around the world is once again laid bare in the absence of political sovereignty, despite every attempt to ingratiate ourselves to our host societies. **It is imperative that we take stock of the current geopolitical realities and chart our own autonomous policy initiatives in order to implement our own strategic objectives and achieve our collective political vision.** While this includes sophisticated approaches to policy debates and initiatives within NATO-aligned countries, it also requires a serious analysis of the geopolitical terrain to map out our strengths, vulnerabilities, and opportunities as a collective *panth*.

Lessons from the Kisaan Morcha and other Sikh mobilizations

The spirit of the mobilization seen around the world in recent years is the rage of Panth-Punjab’s soul against Delhi; a rage that has been building in the face of decades of violent repression and imperialist policies rooted in assimilation and genocide. This is a rage that has shown renewed sparks in the past decade but has always been quickly put out. Multiple attempts were made to channel these ongoing frustrations, but they were contained by compromised leadership, misguided tactics, and selective state repression. This rage has once again broken through layers of manufactured complacency, coercive state control, and the restrictive frames of electoral politics.



Keeping the Panth's sovereign *hond-has-thi* at the forefront of our response and actions, our political consciousness and praxis must be centred around Guru Granth-Panth by developing the Panth's political power through our own institutions. **Our political solutions will come from self-empowerment and sovereign infrastructure; not submitting to the whims of electoral politics or representation through systems of borrowed power.**

We cannot rely solely on the limitations of our finite intellect, but need to connect with *Naam* and *Bani* to become vessels of the Guru's *hukam*. Justice and political power emanate from Guru Granth-Panth only—they will not and cannot be granted to us by our oppressors.

This will be a long struggle—that goes much further beyond any immediate concerns or demands—and the foundations of our future victories will be built on the grassroots power we build today. In this context, recent *morchay* have taught us several concrete lessons that should continue to inform our methods of organization and our tactics.

1. The Kisaan *morcha* especially reminded us of the power of **collective leadership when the reins are in the hands of the *sangat***. The “leaders” in that *morcha* were only temporary representatives and spokespersons rather than leaders in a hierarchical or authoritarian sense. Building on decentralized structures of power, **autonomous communities and institutions must be developed from the grassroots in opposition to the centralized model of the Indian state and the fascist aspirations of Hindutva**. These models must be developed and exercised from the grassroots—they cannot be granted by the very state structures we are resisting against. Relying on an individual or several individuals for leadership consistently leaves

a community vulnerable to targeted strikes which would render them leaderless and directionless.

2. Our future lies in the power of the *jujharoo* Khalsa; a power that is wielded by the *sangat* to empower the weak and destroy oppressive structures. The examples of direct action we have seen in recent years, whether through boycotting and sabotaging the infrastructure of the state and the corporate engines of nationalism or directly clashing with security forces and removing their barricades on our literal path. Countless incidents over the past three years give us a glimpse of our potential strength. **We must harness this energy to shift the terrain from a politics of grievance seeking solutions solely from state institutions, towards exercising our collective power through direct action and our own sovereign institutions.** Justice and political power emanate from Guru Granth-Panth only—they will not and cannot be granted to us by our oppressors.
3. Sikhi is the guiding revolutionary force for the Panth and the foundation of our *sangarsh*. The legacy of our *shaheeds* and the Guru's vision for *sarbat da bhala* are some of our greatest strengths. Our Sikhi is not a “religion” limited to private worship, nor is our *sangarsh* limited to shielding a frozen racialized identity defined and constructed by a Eurocentric lens. **Our political vision and *sangarsh* flows through Sikh praxis which roots our existence in this world as Sikh on the path of the Guru—defined by our commitment to actively play the Guru's transformative *game of love*.** The success of our *sangarsh* therefore does not rely solely on the limitations of our finite intellect, but is premised on our transformation through *Naam*

and *Bani* to become vessels of the Guru's *hukam*. The Indian state is acutely aware of this relationship, which is why *amritdhari naujawan* and Sikh *dharmic* institutions were specifically targeted through its genocidal counter-insurgency, and why the Indian establishment seeks to demonize the *sangarsh* for Khalistan, or even vague Sikh political mobilization today.

What Next?

A major question remains for those of us unfortunate to have been displaced or otherwise separated from Punjab: how do we meaningfully contribute to the success of the *sangarsh* as we advance towards the next phase? While the frontlines of the struggle are obviously in the streets and fields of Punjab, the responsibilities of the Guru Khalsa Panth are not limited or distinguished geographically. *Naujawan* of the Guru Khalsa Panth have been the driving force of history in every era we celebrate and **that responsibility to struggle for *Khalsa jee ke bol baale* (exercising the Khalsa's inherent sovereignty) and *sarbat da bhala* (welfare of all of Akaal's creation) remains on our shoulders today.**

1. Our *sangarsh* seeks to root our existence in this world as Sikh, and to strive for *Khalsa jee ke bol baale* and *sarbat da bhala*. Sikhi itself is therefore our fundamental starting point. Strengthening your individual relationship with *Naam-Bani* and building a local *sangat* committed to *seva* for the *sangarsh* is key to the longevity of our movement and our ultimate *fateh* (victory).

2. Initiatives to facilitate *face-to-face* discussions that delve deeper into our current circumstances in the context of an ongoing political conflict with the Indian state. It is imperative that we understand the nature of the Indian state and its relationship with imperialism, as well as the role of the Guru Khalsa Panth in this world. These initiatives can take



a variety of forms and balance between internal development and shaping public policy and opinion around the world.

3. Map out and understand the interconnections between various governments and corporations around the world that engage with and support the Indian state. There remains a great deal of work to identify links between intergovernmental trade deals and the repressive criminalization of Sikh activists in several countries including Canada and the UK, as well as recent trends of censorship over social media.

4. The dynamics of the *Kisaan morcha* illustrated the importance and strength of coalition-building. In line with the Khalsa's tradition of *gareeb di rakhiya*, *jarvanay di bhakhia* (protection of the poor, destruction of the tyrant), we have to prioritize solidarity with other allies in every region we reside in and actively engage in grassroots organizing against state power and capital. While we resist the violence of the Indian state, we must also identify and challenge the global power structures that benefit from and support the Indian state's violence.

5. Lastly, we must rebuild meaningful personal and institutional connections with land, communities, and activists in Punjab. Using whatever skills or interests Guru Sahib has given you or your local organization, find ways to share that work with the grassroots in Punjab. Find ways to build meaningful connections and relationships with our homeland beyond tourism and consumption; connect with activists on the ground; support them and amplify their voices.



ABOUT THE KHALISTAN CENTRE

Mobilizing the Khalsa panth to effectively achieve *Khalsa Jee De Bol Balay* through the establishment of an independent Khalistan.

The Khalistan Centre is dedicated to supporting and cultivating Gurmat-driven leadership to further the struggle for Khalistan.

In order to develop the capacity of Panthic *naujawan*, the Centre will facilitate leadership development by engaging in critical research and dialogue, outlining strategic political initiatives, and offering insightful analysis of past and current affairs.

The Centre aspires to build Panthic leadership in line with the Guru's vision and the Panth's mandate. Our work will focus on mobilizing Sikhs who are committed to dismantling the sovereign power of the state over our land and bodies, and regenerating the Guru Khalsa Panth to exercise its *patshahi* from the grassroots.

The work of the Centre will be powered collectively by *naujawan* involved with many transnational *panthic* organizations, including the Sikh Liberation Front, National Sikh Youth Federation, and with the support of Gurdwara Sahib Dasmesh Darbar (Surrey, BC) and the Ontario Gurdwaras Committee.

In order to achieve the Centre's vision our objectives are:

Vichaar - Cultivating a Gurmat-oriented understanding of the Sikh *sangarsh* and our vision for *raj*.

Vidiya - Developing future generations of effective Panthic leadership grounded in the values and institution of *Miri-Piri*.

Rann Neeti - Executing a strategic function to assess domestic and geopolitical strategic opportunities and threats in line with our long-term vision.

Virsa - Preserving and celebrating our *jujharoo* heritage as a reservoir of collective wisdom for future Panthic leadership.

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