

Preserving Sikh identity, faith, and culture during Indian Rule.

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RSS and BJP governments are actively conniving to change Sikh history, Sikh religion, and Sikh identity to assimilate Sikhism back into their fold. Some of the blatant attempts to call our Sikh leaders Hindus and celebrate them as Hindus to change the narrative is a perilous move the Sikhs must fight for survival. We will discuss some of the examples as follows:

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur:

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was a pivotal figure in Sikh history, known for establishing the first Sikh state and implementing significant social and administrative reforms. He led the first major Sikh offensive against the Mughal Empire, culminating in the capture of Sirhind and the establishment of Sikh rule in the region. His key achievements include abolishing the Zamindari system, granting land ownership to farmers, and establishing a new Sikh administration.

Military Leadership and Conquests:

Led the first major Sikh offensive against the Mughal Empire, challenging their dominance in Punjab.

Conquered key territories, including Samana, Sadhaura, and Sirhind, establishing Sikh rule in these areas.

Established the first Sikh state with Lohgarh as the capital.

They fought numerous battles against the Mughals, demonstrating exceptional military prowess and strategic acumen.

Introduced the Nanak Shahi coins, symbolizing the establishment of Sikh sovereignty.

Established a new calendar for Sikhs, marking a distinct identity for the community.

Legacy:

Inspired the spirit of resistance against Mughal rule and laid the foundation for the eventual independence of Sikhs.

His actions demonstrated a commitment to justice, equality, and the welfare of ordinary people.

His legacy continues to inspire Sikhs, and he is remembered for challenging oppressive systems and establishing a new era of Sikh power.

His martyrdom day is observed **on June 25**.

Haryana govt "Veer Banda Bairagi" ad on his martyrdom day invites backlash from SGPC, Akal Takht.

The controversy erupted after the Haryana government's Department of Information and Public Relations published advertisements in leading dailies (**Veer Banda Bairagi**) and made social media posts on June 25, marking Banda Singh Bahadur's martyrdom day.

In Sikh history, the term "Baba" is an honorific title used to express reverence and respect for elders, spiritual leaders, and individuals who embody piety and guidance. It's not just a literal term for "father" or "grandfather" but a symbol of a nurturing and guiding presence within the Sikh tradition. Several prominent figures in Sikh history are known as "Baba," signifying their significant contributions and revered status.

Veer Bal Diwas, observed every year on December 26, honors the heroic sacrifice of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh, the young sons of Guru Gobind Singh.

Guru Gobind Singh's two older sons were Sahibzada Ajit Singh and Sahibzada Jujhar Singh. Ajit Singh was 17 years old, and Jujhar Singh was 13 years old when they died fighting in the [Battle of Chamkaur](#) in December 1704.

The two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh were [Baba Zorawar Singh](#) (aged 9) and [Baba Fateh Singh](#) (aged 6). They were bricked alive for refusing to convert to Islam. Wazir Khan, the Mughal governor of Sirhind, ordered this execution. The date of their death is widely accepted to be around December 26 / 27, 1704,

The Indian government, by calling their Martyrdom Day Veer Bal Diwas (Brave Children's Day), is insulting the Sikhs. The two young sons of Guru Gobind Singh showed maturity beyond their age and sacrificed their lives without any parallel in history; how can they then be called children?

General Zorawar Singh was a formidable military commander in the Sikh Empire under Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

While he did not conquer all of Tibet, General Zorawar Singh led successful campaigns to Western Tibet in 1841.

Here's a breakdown of his Tibetan campaigns:

Conquest of Western Tibet: Zorawar Singh's campaign into the Tibetan plateau, part of the Dogra Kingdom's expansionist policy, saw him capture key Tibetan fortresses, including Rudok, Gartok, and Taklakot.

Expansionist ambitions: His campaign was driven by strategic aims, such as controlling trade routes and addressing Tibetan claims over Ladakh.

Initial success and ultimate defeat: Despite initial victories, his army faced severe weather conditions and logistical challenges. Tibetan forces, reinforced by the Qing Empire, launched a counteroffensive.

Battle of Taklakot and death: In the Battle of Taklakot in December 1841, Zorawar Singh was mortally wounded

Zorawar Singh's family lineage was associated with the Hindu Chandel Rajput community, but he was a Sikh general and worked in the Sikh Empire; how can then Hindus be calling him a Hindu general?

Historical Revisionism

When a government tries to change the history of a minority community to influence their thinking, they are typically engaging in a form of **historical revisionism** aimed at achieving specific political or social goals:

1. Control and Manipulation:

Shaping Identity: By altering the historical narrative, governments can attempt to redefine a minority group's identity, often portraying them in a negative or subservient light. This can create internal division and weaken their collective identity.

Controlling Narratives: Controlling the historical narrative allows governments to suppress dissenting voices and promote a version of history that aligns with their interests and justifies their policies, potentially leading to social and political control.

Justifying Dominance: Governments may revise history to legitimize their dominance over minority groups by highlighting a specific historical narrative that supports their authority and marginalizes alternative perspectives.

2. Cultural Erasure and Assimilation:

Undermining Heritage: By distorting or omitting key aspects of a minority's history and contributions, governments can undermine their cultural heritage and create a sense of loss and disconnection from their roots.

Promoting Assimilation: This can be a deliberate attempt to force minority groups to adopt the dominant culture's values and practices, resulting in the loss of unique traditions, languages, and social structures.

3. Maintaining Power Structures:

Reinforcing Hierarchies: Changing history can reinforce existing power structures and perpetuate discriminatory practices by presenting a biased narrative that supports the majority's dominance and marginalizes minority groups.

Promoting Stereotypes and Misunderstanding: When a government manipulates historical narratives, it can foster ignorance, stereotypes, and biases towards minority groups, which can lead to conflict and undermine social cohesion.

4. **Hindering Social Progress:**

Preventing Recognition of Injustices: By downplaying or denying historical injustices, governments can impede societal progress and avoid acknowledgment and accountability for past harms, hindering healing and reconciliation processes.

Stunting Inclusive Development: Without an accurate understanding of history, addressing present-day inequalities and working towards a more inclusive and equitable society becomes difficult.

In essence, governments trying to change the history of minority communities are attempting to manipulate public understanding of the past to control the present and shape the future, often at the expense of marginalized groups' identities, well-being, and social progress.

In environments where a dominant religion is prevalent, minority religions often face challenges in preserving their identity, culture, and practices. These challenges can range from social and cultural pressures to outright discrimination and persecution. **However, there are numerous strategies minority religions can employ to survive and thrive:**

1. **Strengthening Internal Identity and Practice:**

Maintaining Traditional Practices: Minority religions can focus on preserving their rituals, ceremonies, and customs, even in private settings, if necessary.

Language Preservation: Maintaining their distinct language is vital, as it is a carrier of cultural identity, traditions, and spiritual knowledge.

Intergenerational Teaching: Passing on knowledge, values, and beliefs to younger generations within the community is crucial for cultural continuity.

Promoting Religious Literacy: Educating members about their faith and its significance strengthens their identity and understanding.

Developing Internal Institutions: Establishing religious schools, cultural centers, and community organizations can provide a space for worship, education, and social support, fostering a sense of community and belonging.

2. Building Bridges and Fostering Understanding:

Interfaith Dialogue: Engaging in respectful dialogue with other religious communities, including the dominant one, can help foster understanding, build trust, and break down stereotypes.

Cultural Exchange Programs: Organizing events and activities that showcase their culture, and traditions can raise awareness and promote appreciation.

Challenging Stereotypes: Actively working to dispel misconceptions and combat negative stereotyping in media, education, and public discourse is essential.

Advocating for Religious Freedom: Minority religions can work to advocate for their right to practice their faith freely and without discrimination.

3. Seeking Support and Advocating for Rights:

Building Alliances: Connecting with other minority groups and civil society organizations can amplify their voices and create a stronger front against discrimination.

Engaging in Policy Advocacy: Working with policymakers and government officials to advocate for laws and policies that protect religious freedom and minority rights can have a significant impact.

Strategic Litigation: Using legal means to challenge discriminatory laws and practices can be a powerful tool.

International Engagement: Engaging with international bodies and human rights organizations can raise awareness about their plight and garner support for their cause.

4. Utilizing Digital Tools:

Digital Activism: Using social media and online platforms can help raise awareness, mobilize support, and connect with a broader audience.

Online Communities: Creating online spaces can provide a sense of community and support for members, particularly when they face social isolation or discrimination.

In summary, a minority religion can navigate the challenges of a dominant religious environment by strengthening its internal identity, engaging in interfaith dialogue, seeking external support and advocacy, and utilizing digital tools effectively. By adopting a proactive and multi-faceted approach, minority religions can work towards their survival and the preservation of their unique culture and faith for future generations.