



Panj Piare

Why in News

Recently, a controversy erupted in Punjab over the use of the term “**Panj Piare**” for political leaders.

Key Points

- **Part of Sikh Tradition:** The Panj Piare is the term used for the **Five Beloved:** the men **who were initiated into the khalsa** (the special group of **Sikh** warriors) under the leadership of the last of the ten Gurus, **Gobind Singh**.
 - They are deeply **revered by Sikhs** as symbols of steadfastness and devotion.
- **Origin:** Guru Gobind Singh established the institution of Panj Piare while founding the Khalsa **on the day of Baisakhi in 1699**.
 - To preserve the culture, Guru Gobind Singh asked for five men willing to surrender their lives for him and the cause. With great reluctance by nearly everyone, eventually, five volunteers stepped forward.
 - Guru Gobind Singh himself got baptised from them at the same stage to tell the Sikhs that Panj Piaras have **higher authority and decision making power** than anyone in the community.
 - The **original five beloved Panj Piare** who played a vital role in shaping Sikh history and defining Sikhism are:
 - **Bhai Daya Singh** (1661 - 1708 CE) from Lahore
 - **Bhai Dharam Singh** (1699 - 1708 CE) from Hastinapur
 - **Bhai Himmat Singh** (1661 - 1705 CE) from Jagannath Puri
 - **Bhai Mukham Singh** (1663 - 1705 CE) from Dwarka
 - **Bhai Sahib Singh** (1662 - 1705 CE) from Bidar
 - Since then, every group of five baptised Sikhs is called Panj Piare and accorded the respect enjoyed by the first five Sikhs.
- **Contributions:**
 - These spiritual warriors vowed **not only to fight adversaries** on the battlefield but to **combat the inner enemy, egoism**, with humility through **service to humanity** and **efforts to abolish caste**.
 - They performed the original **Amrit Sanchar (Sikh initiation ceremony)**, baptizing **Guru Gobind Singh** and about 80,000 others on the festival of Baisakhi in 1699.
 - All five Panj Piare fought beside Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa in the **siege of Anand Purin** and helped the guru to escape from the **battle of Chamkaur** in December 1704.
 - The unanimous decision taken by Panj Piare has to be followed by everyone in the community.
 - **Akal Takht Jathedar** also can't take any decision unilaterally and every diktat from the Akal Takht has to be **signed by all the five Jathedars of the five Takhts** (Temporal seats) or their representatives.

Khalsa Order

- **Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa order** (meaning 'The Pure'), soldier-saints.
- The Khalsa **upholds the highest Sikh virtues** of commitment, dedication and a social conscious.
- The Khalsa are men and women who have undergone the Sikh baptism ceremony and who strictly follow the Sikh Code of Conduct and Conventions and wear the prescribed physical articles of the faith (**5K's: Kesh (uncut hair), Kangha (a wooden comb), Kara (a iron bracelet), Kachera (cotton underpants) and Kirpan (an iron dagger)**).

Battle of Chamkaur

- The battle was fought over three days from 21st - 23rd December, 1704 between the **Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh** and the **coalition forces** of the **Mughals and Rajput hill chieftains**.
- Guru Gobind Singh makes a reference to this battle in his **victory letter Zafarnama**.

Akal Takhat Jathedar

- Akal Takhat Sahib means **Eternal Throne**. It is also part of the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar. Its foundation was laid by **Guru Hargobind Ji**, the sixth Sikh Guru.
- A Jathedar is **a leader of a Jatha (a group, a community or a nation)**.
- Among the Sikhs, a Jathedar is an ordained leader of the clergy and leads a Takht, a sacred and authoritative seat. Sikh clergy consists of five Jathedars, one each from five takhts or sacred seats.

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