

Role of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee in The Field of Higher Education in Punjab

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the background of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and its role in the field of higher education in Punjab. It incorporates the data personally collected from the SGPC office, various Gurdwaras, education institutions and other institutions.

Keywords:- Gurdwara, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Mahant.

Introduction

Gurdwara have an important place in the lives of Sikhs. When the first Guru of Sikhs, Guru Nanak Dev, started his mission in the world to teach humanity and love for God, he established Dharamsalas (Centre of Religion) wherever he went. These Dharamsalas later came to known as Gurdwaras. After Guru Nanak, all the nine Gurus continued the same mission with same spirit till the death of Guru Gobind Singh, when the Guruship was bestowed upon the holy Guru Granth Sahib and the Khalsa Panth. The Sikh established many Gurudwaras later on also. Some are historical, dedicated to the visits of the Gurus, while some are non-historical. In all these Gurudwaras the holy Guru Granth is recited and guidance is taken as to how the life should be led. With the passage of time, when the Sikhs had to fight for the survival against the Muslim rule and the Foreign invasions, they some time had to leave their homes and take shelter in the safe places. At that time these Gurdwaras were looked after by the Mahants. The Mahants became corrupt and started leading a luxurious life. They had begun even selling and embezzling the property and land attached to the Gurdwaras.

In these situation, The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee was formed on November 15, 1920. It was registered on April 30, 1921. The SGPC launched many agitation to take control of Gurdwaras from corrupt hereditary Mahants. The famous agitation were The Nankana holocaust, key's Affair, Guru-Ka-Bagh. Jaito Morcha etc. During these agitation about 500 sikh embraced martyrdom, 3000 sikhs were seriously wounded, 5000 sikhs courted arrested and many thousands of Sikhs suffered in one or another manner. Finally , in 1925, Gurdwara Act was passed and the management of the Gurdwaras was entrusted to a "Central Board" which was renamed as Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee . Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee is also called Parliament of the sikh nation. Apart from the management of Gurdwaras, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee runs many prestigious educational institutions including medical and Engineering colleges, hospitals and many charitable trusts.

Objective

- To analyze background of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee
- To analyze the Educational contribution of SGPC.
- To analyze the Technical education contribution of SGPC.
- To analyze the Medical education contribution of SGPC.

SGPC and Education :

The wood's dispatch of 1854 laid the base of modern education in India. With it began a new era in the history of education not only in India but also in Punjab. Organizations of the Sikhs like the Kuka and the Singh Sabha soon after their formation began to take interest in the field of education. Arya Samaj, Sanatan Dharam and other Hindu Educational organizations too influenced and motivated the Sikh leaders to open educational institutions on the same pattern and lines. The Sikh leadership began to realize that without the spread of education among the Sikhs, they would not be able to rise and compete with other social segments of the province. For the evolution of education of Singh Sabha played a vital role which the SGPC under took and continued at later stage. When the SGPC was constituted, its considered its religious duty not only to look after the educational institutions set by the Singh Sabha and other Sikh organization but also to assist them financially so that education could also reach the Sikh masses. The SGPC realized that education was essential for the development of its society; the emergence of reformative movements, political consciousness and economic growth in the province.

The SGPC did too much work in the field of education before and after independence. The SGPC has passed so many resolutions in educational field in different times and keep a separate budget for the development of education. After the independence besides managing the Sikh Shrines, The SGPC established a number of educational institutions. The major contribution of SGPC lies in making school and higher education accessible to common people and remote areas of the province. At present SGPC is running 72 schools and 39 institutions of higher education which also include 4 engineering colleges and 2 medical colleges. Beside this SGPC established "Sikh History Research Board" and "Sikh Reference Library". Research Board makes research on Sikh religion and provides it to the people and scholars by printing. There are thousand books on Sikh history, 100 years old newspapers and so many manuscripts in reference library. The scholars from many countries visit the library for researches. Recently a multi-disciplinary university named Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University has also been setup at Fatehgarh Sahib. The SGPC is conscious of the changing trends in education and is therefore taking bold steps in this direction to negotiate with international universities and organizations so as to meet the international standards in education.

Higher Educational Institutions of General Studies

SGPC has been setting up degree colleges from time to time a few of these institutions deserve a special mention. In 1966 Khalsa College Gardhiwala was setup in Hoshiarpur Distt. It offers graduate and postgraduate courses. Babbar Akali Memorial Khalsa College Garshankar Hoshiarpur affiliated to Punjab University Chandigarh was setup by SGPC in 1969. The college provides education of under graduation, graduation and also PGDCA. Guru Nanak Khalsa College, situated at village, Drolly Kalan, Jalandhar was established in 1971. The SGPC purpose to open this college was provide education to the rural boys and girls. Mata Gujri College Fatehgarh Sahib was founded in 1957. The college has been functioning under the management of SGPC. It had made tremendous achievements and rapid progress under the able

guidance of Late Jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra and S. Avtar Singh Makkar President of SGPC. Among its degree college Mata Gujri College Fatehgarh Sahib is the first college of north India to be given the status of Autonomous college by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi. Besides many more colleges like Khalsa College Patiala, Guru Nanak Girls College, Muktsar, Guru Nanak College, Budhlada, Sri Guru Teg Bhadur Khalsa College, Anandpur Sahib, Guru Nanak College Moga, Guru Nanak College Batala, Trai Shatabadi Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College Amritsar, Mata Sahib Kaur Girls College, Talwandi Sabo, Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College for Women, Jhar Sahib, Ludhiana, Mata Ganga Khalsa College for Girls Kottan, Ludhiana, Mata Sahib Kaur Khalsa Girls College Gehal, Barnala, Miri Piri Khalsa College Bhadur, Banala, Mata Sahib Kaur Khalsa Girls College of Education, Dhamomajra, Patiala etc., today occupies a pride of place in the galaxy of top most institutions of the province. SGPC has also setup a full-fledged multi-disciplinary university named Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University at the historic town Fatehgarh Sahib. This University is offering studies in the field of Nanotechnology, Biotechnology, Physics, Engineering, Food technology, Computer Science, Management, Social Science and Religious studies.

Technical/Professional Institutions

Guru Nanak Dev College of Engineering and Technology, Ludhiana was established in 1956 by Nankana Sahib Trust. It is a Punjab Govt. Aided Institution. SGPC is the main force behind the maintenance of the institution the foundation stone of college was laid by Dr. Rainder Parshad, First President of India. The Campus is spread over 88 acres of land. The institute is affiliated to Punjab Technical University Jalandhar and approved by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), New Delhi and the Department of Technical Education Punjab. The Following courses of study i.e. B.Tech, M.Tech, Civil Engg. Electrical Engg. Mechanical Engg. & Production Engg. and Information Technology are offered by the college.

Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Engg. College, Fatehgarh Sahib was established in 1993 by the Baba Banda Singh Bahadur Educational Trust formed under the patronage of SGPC with the approval of Govt. of Punjab. The College is approved by AICTE New Delhi and is affiliated to PTU, Jalandhar. The College started with B.Tech Programme in Computer Science and Engg. Electronics and Communication Engg. and Mechanical Engg. with a strength of 30 students in each stream. In 2006-07 session the intake was increased to 120 students each in these streams.

These institutes are properly fulfilling the mission that is removal of economic backwardness through technology which these institutions were established.

Medical Education :

Sri Guru Ram Das Institute of Medical Science and Research was established in 1971. The institute is coming up fast at the Amritsar Mehta Road with a sprawling new campus in about 65 acres of land the classes in the above institute of Medical Science and Research practically started in the year 1997. The first batch of MBBS passed in December 2002. The clinical teaching of nursing and medical students was conducted in the Sri Guru Ram Das charitable hospital, which were 400 bedded in Amritsar. The college has all required facilities for medical education. This institution is being maintained by SGPC. SGPC also established Guru Ram Das Institute of Dental Science and Research, Amritsar in the year 1992. The college building has six floors including the basement area and total covered area is 105692 sq.ft. The land on which this institute stands, measure 5 acres which was given by SGPC. First batch of 60 students was admitted in 1992. Now this institute is affiliated with Baba Farid University of

Health Sciences, Faridkot. With permission of central Govt. / Dental Council of India, New Delhi. This institute has started MDS course in three specialties Conservative Dentistry, Prosthodontics and Oral Surgery from 2004. The establishment of these medical institution are a tremendous work that has been done by the SGPC in the field of education.

Conclusion :

Although constituted as purely religious body for the management of Gurudwaras, the SGPC performs multifarious functions. Besides propagation of religion it runs a large number of educational institutions like general degree college, engg. and professional college, medical college and multi-disciplinary university. No doubt it is because of the efforts of the SGPC, the Sikh Students who belongs to the minority class have been able to achieve their goals and at present can compete with other students belonging to classes. The Sikh youth can be seen in almost all streams may be Finance, Home Department, Defense, Govt Offices, Higher education Center and Private Sectors. Directly and indirectly credit goes to SGPC for its efforts in the field of education.

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