



**Never Ever We Forget  
Our Martyrs**

**Genocide Nov. '84**



**Lt. Gen. J. S. Aurora**

Founder, The Sikh Forum

&

Conqueror of Bangladesh

(As Field Force Commander, Indian Army, took the surrender at  
Dhaka from Gen. A. K. Niazi, Commander Pakistan Forces)

**Never Ever We Forget  
Our Martyrs**

**Genocide Nov. '84**

A Homage to the Innocents Killed in November 1984

**The Sikh Forum** Publication

**Never Ever We Forget  
Our Martyrs**

Commemorative Volume  
on the occasion of  
31st anniversary of  
Sikh Genocide of  
November 1984

by

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*Dedicated  
to the Innocents  
Killed in  
November 1984  
~ 31st anniversary ~*

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# Sikh Genocide Nov' 84 - Vanquished

(In Perspective)

M.S. Chadha

Sikhs are not known for recording their own history.

- There are no authentic records of 'Chhota and Vadda Ghalughara'.
- Closer to our times, there is no authentic account of Operation Blue Star. Even the number of people killed, is not known. Estimates are at great variance with the numbers reported officially. No one knows the number of pilgrims who died in the Army Operation.
- There are no records to show number of people killed in Punjab between 1984 to 1994.
- The accounts of 'Operation Blue Star' are at great variance, depending on fancy of authors. The official reports, hide more than what is revealed. No effort has been made to appoint an independent study Group of Historians to undertake research for an unbiased account.

The Sikh Forum took the initiative on 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Nov'84 Carnage to publish in a volume the names of Victims with their particulars and also first-hand accounts by renowned scholars, writers, activists and reputed personalities who lived through the carnage as horrified witnesses.

The appreciation of this effort in general, has inspired us, to publish the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Volume. The primary focus of the volume is the Carnage itself and updating the list of martyrs.

The Sikh Forum was convened by Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora in the wake of Nov'84 Genocide. Thousands of innocent Sikhs were massacred, an unparalleled brutality in modern times, to avenge the assassination of Indira Gandhi, by her Sikh Security Guards.

At Teen Murti Bhavan where Smt. Indira Gandhi's body was lying in State, for public homage under audio-visual coverage, one encountered unrestrained slogans for revenge. They (Sikhs) must be taught a lesson 'Khoon Ka Badla Khoon' 'Sikhon Ko Maro', None of them (Sikhs) should be spared, an open call for Genocide (Extermination of Community). The spark was thus triggered. Mobs were

brought in buses to indulge in man-slaughter, mayhem, loot, arson, rape and merciless burning of Sikh youth in broad day light, on the streets National Capital and other cities. The Civil Administration and Delhi Police abrogated their responsibilities. The official reports state 2733 people had been killed, unofficial estimates are more than double of that figure.

The Government of India, after a lapse of 30 long years on its own admission, has now recognized, that the killings of Nov'84 were a Genocide. This has come from no less a person than Sh. Rajnath Singh, the Home Minister, as per the statement published in Tribune on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2014, which is reproduced in this edition of the Volume. Under shock of brutal violence, entire Sikh community was traumatized, its political leadership was completely in disarray and religious leaders had lost their moorings. In the absence of any effort by Civil administration, it was left to the Sikh gentry at large (Sangat) of Delhi, to rescue the hapless victims. They were evacuated in private cars, lorries, tempos, load carriers to numerous Gurdwara. Material help, by way of rations, cooked food, clothing, blankets and medicines came pouring in, to provide succour to destitute.

Not a single Sikh, Childwoman or disabled person took to the streets to beg. Bravely they faced the atrocities with silent dignity, rare resilience and courage. The community thus stood up, as one to face the Genocide. Marshal of Air Force Arjan Singh, General Jagjit Singh Aurora met the Senior political leaders and top government functionaries, at the peak of violence to bring home the gravity of situation. But all in vain.

Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, realizing the magnitude of catastrophe, and massive relief which would be required to rehabilitate the victims, established a Trust 'The Citizen's Relief Rehabilitation & Education Fund'. All and sundry, made liberal donations, the corporate leaders of the community were most generous. A legal cell under S. H. S. Phoolka, Senior Advocate, was established to assist hundreds of victims to file affidavits, to collect evidence of eye witnesses against the guilty and for filing FIRs. In this exacting exercise he was ably assisted of Wg. Cdr. R. S. Chhatwal and S. Santokh Singh the office Supdt.

The victims were still recovering from the effects of violence when the community, faced another crisis. The General Elections were ordered soon after. To engineer landslide victory, the Congress Party launched an advertisement offensive, branding the Sikh Community, as traitors, threat to national sovereignty, 'Desh Virodhi and so on, regardless of the sacrifices Sikhs had made over centuries to protect the honour of their countrymen, communities' role during the freedom struggle and contribution in wars against 'Pakistan'. All reduced to dust. The entire Community felt under siege but thanks to the values engraved in its psyche by great



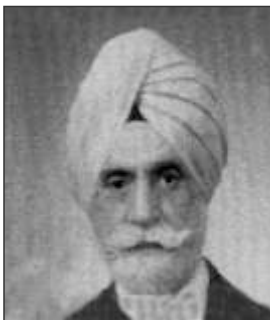
Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the community did not lose its nerve, cool composure, dignity and confidence. With fortitude it bore all the sufferings, and prejudice till the Nation itself realized the politically motivated misdeeds.

The Civil Society, led by the normally reticent Sikh Intelligentsia was galvanised to reach out to the national media with well-reasoned, convincing, logical articles. They participated in panel discussions and debates over visual media. S. Patwant Singh, S. Khushwant Singh, Dr. Amrik Singh, Dr. Maheep Singh, Dr. A.S. Narang, Dr. D.S. Maini and S. Tarlochan Singh, S. Manohar Singh Batra and many others worked diligently to uphold the cause of community. They were outstanding in the strength of their logic and reasoning to convince the saner segments of Society of the great injustice meted to the minicule minority. Their efforts were ably complemented by Sh. Inder Kumar Gujral, Sh. Kuldip Nayar, Justice Rajinder Sachar and many others.

Apart from Sikh Forum, other civil society organizations and personalities devoted to human rights and civil liberties, like 'People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) Sh. N.D. Pancholi, People's Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) under Justice S.M. Sikri and Justice V.M. Tarkunde, Nagrik Ekta Manch of Ms. Jaya Jaitley took up the Sikh cause to bring home the partisan role of Government, failure of civil administration and Delhi Police to protect the lives and properties of innocent law abiding citizens.

The years of efforts of Sikh Forum, the Intelligentsia and other human rights activists, has paid rich dividends to restore the bruised Sikh Psyche, for the community to rise from the ashes of 1984 to reclaim its glory and rightful place in the polity of Nation. The genocide thus vanquished the community has merged in the main stream with flourish. It bears no ill will to anyone for revenge, seeks only justice for the victims.

**M.S. Chadha**  
Maj. Gen. (R) AVSM  
President, The Sikh Forum



#### **Post Script**

Late S. Bhupinder Singh of Lajpat Nagar New Delhi., has bequeathed a substantial amount to 'The Sikh Forum' in his WILL. The gracious gesture is a testimony of Public faith in activities of The Sikh Forum and its role, particularly in taking care of the martyrs families.

# The Nightmare of First Week of November 1984

**Rajindar Sachar**

Some dates remain permanently fixed in your memory. In my case it started on October 31, 1984. I was then a judge in Delhi High Court. I was coming back in the evening after inspecting Shahdara Courts when I heard the tragic news of killing of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. It was a shock to the whole nation, because notwithstanding the gory murder of Gandhiji, India had not believed in political assassination. But then individuals reactions to circumstances are difficult to fathom. The killing was done by two body guard posted at Mrs. Gandhi residence. One of them was immediately shot on the spot. The other persons along with one other were also found to be involved in the murder and were convicted. It was possibly a continuative effect of equally tragic and unpardonable decision of Mrs. Gandhi to have sent army in the Golden Temple. The court found that there was only conspiracy by these three persons to kill Mrs. Gandhi. No other outside person was found to be involved in conspiracy. But what followed assassination is a nightmare which will ever haunt the nation – it was the cold calculated murder generated by Congress party in power resulting in the about 3000 Sikhs being butchered in cold blood. This unpardonable crime by a political Party, like that committed in Gujarat in 2002 will remain a permanent scar of shame on those who participated and encouraged it.

The situation outside was so horrible because the mobs were going round Delhi targeting Sikhs – there was total absence of law and order – looting of Sikh houses was openly done. Such was the unchecked situation that one of my colleague in Delhi High Court, a Sikh judge and his family was accommodated in the lounge of High Court, as we could not assure them safety and protection in their home which was hardly less than 1 K.m. from the High Court. The shame of this helplessness still haunts me.



I myself went to an area where my personal Secretary (a Sikh) and other High Court staff had their residences. Fortunately they unitedly took a determined stand and the marauders were somehow kept away. Lajpat Rai Bhawan, Society had opened office in its premises for riot victims. There volunteers

were being sent to the city and trying to help Sikh victims as much as possible by making their arrangement for their safety. I used to go in the evening to Lajpat Bhawan to participate in the programme for collection of clothes and other materials and for detailing visits of volunteers to the affected localities.

Police was not recording FIRs and placing all kinds of hindrances. An application was moved complaining about this before me to complain. It is correct that normally FIR have to be registered in the police station which has jurisdiction over that particular locality. But in that fearful situation it was hardly possible for Sikhs from various areas to go to separate police stations to get FIR recorded. So I issued notice and told the government Advocate that I am ordering that all FIRs which had already been collected throughout Delhi by People Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) will be taken to one police station (which the government may designate) and filed there. After this it will be for the government to distribute these FIRs to the respective police stations. To be honest, I knew my order may not have been strictly legal – but then circumstances were so extraordinary that not to have so acted would have been worse – it would have cast a shadow on the strength of the courts which are expected to come to the aid of oppressed (at all times). The character and strength of the courts is judged alone by the fact as to how they act in such extraordinary circumstances.

Another instance arose when people were demanding the appointment of a Commission to enquire into 1984 killings. A PIL was filed which came up before my Division Bench. The then Attorney General appeared for the Union Government and argued against. I however felt that it was important matter and needed to be examined at regular hearing. My colleague Wad J. was also of the same opinion. So we fixed the matter for regular hearing after a short vacation of High Court when it reopens. But such was the panic in the government circles that undue pressure was put on the then High Court Chief Justice. The result was that when High Court opened after vacation, I found that my roster had been changed – I was now put on criminal side – the result was obvious – the matter could not be heard by me. The matter was then heard by another Bench and the petition dismissed. But such was the indignant public reaction that the Government itself appointed Justice Ranganath Misra Commission. But its findings shocked every impartial observer. As a matter of fact the conduct of Union Government was such as to infuse no confidence right from the beginning.

A committee of eminent citizens was also formed. Its members amongst others included Justice S. M. Sikri former Chief Justice of India, Mr. Govind Narain former Home



Secretary, union of India. There was total Non cooperation from the government – yet the committee came to certain prima facie findings, where it condemned that available police force was not used in an effective manner. The Committee wrote to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister seeking a meeting so as to discuss important points with a view to emphasize that official Enquiry Commission be appointed as to instill public confidence. But surprisingly Rajiv Gandhi did not even reply nor gave interview to such an eminent committee – can you imagine how much the atmosphere was vitiated by partisan ends even at the highest level. The expected hollowness of the Ranganathan report corroborated the fears of all of us about the partisan role played by then Congress Central Government.

The various question raised by PUCL in its report of 1984 have not even been answered by now – at least the present government has no excuse not to disclose the truth. PUCL in its report gave the following finding which show the almost total partisan working of the administration, making this tragedy still more tragic. The report said;

“Men at the top in the administration and the ruling party displayed repeatedly a curious lack of concern often bordering on deliberate negligence of duty and responsibility throughout the period of October 31, to November, 4. The newly sworn in Home Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was said to have assured the BJP leader Atal Behari Vajpayee on October 31 evening that “everything would be brought under control within a couple of hours”. Gautam Kaul, Additional Commissioner of Police in front of the All India Medical Institute, referring to the disturbances which were just breaking out, said: “We cannot deal with the situation of this nature”. Strangely enough, even after this, Mr. Kaul has been made Additional Commissioner, Security - In spite of such warning’s given well in advance.”

“Soon after the assassination (October 31), we heard from a reliable source, a meeting were held at 1 Safdarjung Road, the Prime Minister’s official residence where the then Lt. Governor P G Gavai, a Congress (I) leader M L Fotedar and the Police Commissioner among others, met. A Senior Police Officer present at the meeting

expressed the view that the army should be called as otherwise there would be a holocaust. No attention was paid to the view.”

On November 1, when almost all of Delhi was aflame, an opposition MP rang up a Minister in Rajiv Gandhi’s new cabinet, and the Home Minister,



Narasimha Rao, to inform them about the situation in the city and the need for army to be called and curfew would be imposed. (Several citizens including some senior government officials went to the President of India on the afternoon of November 1, and they were told the Government was still considering whether to call out the army). But our experience on November 1 tells a different story.

The report continues “as already mentioned earlier, till late night there were no signs of either curfew or army, while miscreants were on the rampage in front of the police. In the heart of the city – Cannaught Circus – Sikh owned shops were being set on fire right under the nose of heavy para-military and police pickets. We later heard that the DC of Faridabad had asked for army on November 1, but troops arrived only on November 3.”

None of these questions have been answered so when Nanavati Commission was appointed. I wished its terms of reference had been on the pattern of Truth and Conciliation Commission appointed in South Africa by Nelson Mandela. I still feel that this aspect should be examined by the Central Government because I am of the firm opinion that apart from punishing the guilty it is important to cleanse the air and to uphold democratic values and this can be done only when all questions are answered frankly by the government to the satisfaction of those who suffered and still continue to do so – This is the mandate of Universal Human Rights.

### **Rajindar Sachar**

*Chief Justice (Retd.)*

High Court of Delhi, New Delhi

Chairperson Prime Minister’s High Level Committee  
on Status of Muslims (Ex.)

UN Special Reporter on Housing

Member, U.N. Sub-Commission on Prevention of  
Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (Ex.)

President, Peoples Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) India (Ex.)



## Unforgettable 1984

I clearly remember that on 31 October 2014 I was in Sanaa the capital of North Yemen as part of the official delegation of the state visit of the President of India to that country. Early in the morning a telephone call came from Air Vice Marshal R.S.Naidu the Military Secretary to the President of India that everybody has to reach the airport as the President has cancelled the State visit and was going to India. When we reached the airport the President also reached after some time along with the President of Yemen. Immediately on special Air India aircraft we proceeded towards Delhi. I immediately went to the cabin of Giani ji and there he told me that Shri Alexander who was the Principal Secretary of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had called him and had informed that the PM has been shot by her bodyguards and she has been taken to the hospital. Nothing more was disclosed to Giani ji. After coming out of the Presidents cabin I briefed the media contingent about the happenings in New Delhi. Prabhu Chawla ,Sardar Satinder Singh , Inderjit and other Journalists started forming their opinions .Prabhu Chawla and Satinder Singh said that Indira Gandhi must have died in the shootout as she has been shot from close range by the body guards.

Giani Ji discussed the future course of action with his Secretary and Romesh Bhandri the than Foreign Secretary . Giani Ji had made up his mind to appoint Shri Rajiv Gandhi as the Prime Minister and he disclosed this to the Journalists .As there was no facility of telephone in the aircraft during those days so no further information was forthcoming .The special aircraft of the President landed at Delhi airport at 16:00 Hrs. From airport he went to AIIMS and normal convoy of officers in cars followed .The security on the route was less than expected .My car was fourth in the convoy of the President and when we were passing through R.K.Puram some



miscreants were seen to be shouting slogans .They immediately rushed to the car and started hitting my car with lathis and threw a burning torch inside the car but my alert driver immediately threw it out and drove the car out of the harm's way towards Rashtrapati Bhawan.I was saved with grace of Akaal Purkh .No

policeman came to help us at that time . During those times our drivers used to wear turbans .When Giani Ji after visiting Shrimati Indira Gandhi came to his car ,slogans were being raised against him and the mob was closing in on his car .The security detachment of the President cleared the way for the car with great difficulty .Immediately after reaching Rashtrapati Bhawan he summoned the Vice President R. Venkataraman and sent him to All India Radio to announce the death of Shrimati Indira Gandhi. At 18:00 Hrs Shri Rajiv Gandhi was administered the Oath and was appointed Prime Minister along with four other Cabinet Ministers including Buta Singh.

At about 20:00 hrs I started receiving telephone calls that anti Sikh mob was on the rampage targeting Sikhs and their properties. And there was hue and cry all over .I immediately went to Giani ji's room and in the room and there were present his daughter Dr Gurdip Kaur and Sardar Kulwant Singh Private Secretary .He was surprised initially but when complete report was given to him , the seriousness of the situation dawned on him .I came back to my house and throughout the night I was getting reports of atrocities .In the morning I was informed by Kulwant Singh that till late night Giani Ji tried to contact the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi but in vain. This is very surprising as few hours ago he was administered oath and was appointed as PM by him. This fact was recently confirmed by Dr Gurdip Kaur the daughter of the President who was present at Rashtrapati Bhawan when the situation was unfolding. She also confirmed that the President was helpless. Next day the situation became worse as there was large scale genocide of the Sikhs and the destruction of their home and properties. The situation in the outer areas was worst and even spread to the posh areas of Delhi. The Sikhs were attacked very systematically and killed by burning them alive. The Historians compared it with the genocide done by Nadir Shah centuries back in Delhi. The Gurudwaras in the Colonies were burnt down and the police was nowhere to be seen. The police was assisting the mob in targeting the Sikhs and was seen to be attacking the Sikhs who were defending themselves.

I remember that I.K.Gujral, Air Chief Marshal Arjan Singh and General J.S.Arora had come to the Rashtrapati Bhawan and painted a very grim picture. They asked for the intervention of the President . They also met the Home Minister P. Narsimha Rao. The whole Government was busy in the funeral arrangements and nobody bothered about the Sikhs. Even the Sikhs belonging to Congress Party were attacked while on way to Teen Murti Bhawan to pay their last

