

NEGOTIATION WITH BANDA BAHADUR

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Nander who's former name was Nau Nand Dehra. In the ancient period the nine saints used to stay here, so this place was recognized as per their name. One of the writer of the book "*Perplus of the erythrean sea*" he investigated that once upon a time there was a city named "Tagar" located over here and it was a capital one time. Guru Gobind Singh reached Nander in the month of sawan, 1707 AD with him 300 soldiers in the army. Guru Gobind Singh reached the cottage of Madho Dass whose name was Lachman Dass in his childhood. He was born to Ram Dev Rajput who was native of Rajouri which is situated in the Himalayan state of Punch and his occupation was agriculture. Lachman Dass could not get education. He was soft hearted and hard working person. McAuliffe writes that he came in contact with a Faqir called Janki Prasad and he adopted Janki Prasad as his guru. The circumstances, as McAuliffe proceeded insisted that he killed a female deer. He was ignorant of the fact that she was carrying two young ones in her womb when he shot her dead. This gave him a great shock so he changed his hobbies of hunting and practicing the fire arms since then. It was known that Banda was conversant in performing charms and incantations. He had remained under the influence of a Jogi named Luni and while placed as such under his influence, he learnt the 'Science of jog and incantations' under his blessings. Banda used to wield charms in the interest of gaining insight into the spiritual and temporal realms of his existence. This account is borne in the text of the Book *The Sikh Religion Vol V* which is under study:

"A jogi called Luni visited him and instructed him in the Science of jog and incantations. Being thus accomplished, he set out again on his travels, and followed the Source of the Godavari until he arrived in Nander. There he became known as a holy man in possession of many charms for the acquisition of spiritual and temporal advantages." (McAuliffe, 236).

During his travels Guru Gobind Singh led towards a hut which was inhabited by a Bairagi hermit known by the name of Madho Dass as he had fortuitously heard that the said Bairagi was in possession of the magic. It was by virtue of practicing of the said magic that no one could

make use of his couch. The attempt so made towards it is frustrated in the overthrow of the person who contemplates to sit on his couch. Guru Gobind Singh moved towards his hut but found that Bairagi was not there. Interestingly , the Guru proceeded to make use of his couch, might have been, in reality sat on his couch and began to enjoy its comfort as if it had long been his own ownership. Further it enhances the surprise all the more in the face of the fact that the Guru was not having any occasion up to his credit by that time in having any previous familiarity or acquaintance with him. Banda could be said to be a complete stranger to him. Without any significant loss of time, the Bairagi makes his way back to his hut and he was shocked to see the way the Guru had taken his property as granted and the same without anticipating any possible backlash from him. He sees as having already come to pass, without losing his composure and calm, he opens his view to the Guru for his information that it is condemnation of ‘Bairagi’s seat’ and also of the principles of the religion. He make an enquiry if an animal was butchered there as the Guru had done and he lost no time to add that it was equally the condemnation of his religion. If anyone except , he himself makes a trespass on his couch by way of appropriating it as the same too had been done by the Guru. Madho Dass further wants to know the cause of committing acts of sacrilege by way of seeking an explanation from the Guru. The following words of McAuliffe which constitute the representation of the Bairagi to the Guru;

The Bairagi made it clear to the Guru in protest that, firstly and foremostly, it was his guru who had the first claim to the place which was his seat and it was only afterwards that he has stakes to claim his seat as his own. The hermit took it as an indignant act if somebody, especially any stranger, attempted any trespass on his place. The hermit, in an argumentative strain, also informed the Guru that he was all the more repugnant to entertain any stranger, who along with being guilty of the aforesaid is also guilty of committing sacrilege and violence towards.

It is only after listening to the Bairagi calmly and patiently that he took into account for the cause of his behaviour. Towards this effect and prior explaining the cause of his behavior which was opened to the view of the Bairagi, he gave out to Bairagi that it was during his trvel to Nander that he got tired and he was naturally disposed to take rest in order to recuperate. It has never been that he had not the sense to appropriate that which did not belong to him. Continuing further, the Guru candidly makes him know that he had happened to hear the acclaim of Bairagi that he was the leader of hospitality which led to his desire to make a trial of the accounts that he had heard in favour of Bairagi and for that he made use of the occasion in which he chose to appropriate his place and couch for the innocent purpose of taking rest and he used his goat in order to satisfy his appetite.

After listening to, what Bairagi may not be equating to an explanation tendered by the Guru, he comes round to the point of the Guru and voluntarily offers himself as the Guru’s slave;

"The Bairagi accepted the Guru's explanation, recognized from His words and manner that he was a great man, and called Himself his Banda –slave-the name by which he was subsequently known". (McAuliffe, 236).

Guru Gobind Singh gets highly impressed with him and volunteer to familiarize him with the tenets which were held in esteem in the Sikh religion. As McAuliffe described that Guru Gobind Singh took him in the fold of Sikh religion by baptizing him as a Sikh under the new rites as propounded by him. Accordingly, he was endowed with his new name, which McAuliffe makes known to us, called Gurbakhsh Singh. Apart from this McAuliffe was also informed later on that he was popularly known by the name of Banda.

In return of the benediction of having baptized as a Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh. He makes expression of his readiness to serve the Guru . Therefore, he asked the Guru that in what way he could be of serve to the Guru. Banda finds that the Guru has got lost in deep cogitations. After the Guru restores himself, he makes it known to Banda that his objective was to take birth in the human form and to put a curb on the existence was of the oppressors on the Earth. By the way of consolidating the Sikh religion on his own endeavors and decisions. The Guru further clears that it was up to him to settle the task of the old enemies with the Muhammadans of Punjab. Further, the Guru came to know the readiness of Banda in that regard as to undertake to execute the given task into his hands. The Guru recognized him the fit candidate to give the fittest effect to the given task if he entrusted it into his hands. The foregoing account has been borne out textually as follows;

"The Guru after reflection found that he had an account to settle with the Muhammadans of the Punjab, and replied, 'I have come into the world to consolidate the faith and destroy oppressors. Art thou prepared to assist me ?'"
(McAuliffe, 238).

As Banda has given his assent towards executing the tasks which the Guru may happen to assign to him, the Guru vests him with the liability of extirpating the enemies of the Khalsa by making a tour to Punjab.

The Guru dictates Banda to avenge for the execution of Budhu Shah who had fought by the side of the Guru at the battle of "Bhangani" .It was the reason of providing assistance to the Guru that, in retaliation, he was killed by the Emperor.

The Guru, further, was of the view that Wazir Khan might have killed himself instead of being killed by somebody else. So accordingly he had shown justice in the battle field by killing Wazir Khan. The words used in the text to this effect follow as under;

"When Banda had disposed of the battle of the Guru's enemies at Sadaura, he was to proceed to sack some more Muhammadan cities, Then march to Sarhind, and put its governor Wazir Khan to death". (McAuliffe, 244).

Guru Gobind Singh further enjoin upon him the task of awarding proportionate punishment to the hill chief who were the persistent source of discomfiture to him. On hearing from the Guru the blameworthiness of the offences of the hill chiefs, Banda executes this bid of the Guru too in a morally acceptable way and forbid from doing the evil deed through the potential fear of further punishment he casts upon them. Banda reinforces the moral boundaries.

Finally, the Guru provides him the assistance of three Sikhs . Banda was disposed to inflict the punishment on the perpetrator, proportionate to the crime committed by them and his strong disapproval of the cruel subsequently becomes manifest in what he commits to completion. He pronounced and executed verdict of death with effect on the violent-prone enemies of the Guru with the assistance of Baba Binod Singh and others. Guru Gobind Singh ordered Banda Bahadur to move to Punjab and send *Hukamnama* in the name of the Sikhs of Punjab in which Banda was asked to become a leader. Guru Gobind Singh asked the Sikhs to give full support to Banda to fight against the Mughals. Guru asked Banda Bahadur to remember the orders given. Banda Bahadur promised to move according to his instructions and he went to Punjab.

Before the death of Guru , Guru had ordered Bada Bahadur to go out of Punjab. When Sikhs got the *Hukamnames* they at once came into the Banda's army. First of all, when Banda Bahadur attacked at Sonipat and the ruler ran away with fear by which the Sikhs were encouraged. After that Band Bahadur looted the royal treasure and killed the warriors .He distributed the whole money of treasure among his Sikhs and moved towards Sammana , which was the place of killer of Guru Teg Bahadur. The killer of younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh was also residing over here. Sammana was the beautiful and rich city of those times in which great number of Muslims resided. Banda Bahadur made this city murderous and turned whole beautiful city into mud. Later on, Banda Bahadur reached Mustfabaad .Somebody reported about Banda Bahadur that he was coming here with his murders purpose. The emperor of that place when come to know about him, he made his arrangement beforehand of two thousand soldiers to fight against them. Apart from this, he arranged two cannons. The spirit of revenge of Banda did not let the soldiers remain static and they ran away leaving their cannons there. Banda Bahadur's newly selected soldiers in the army left him but soon after the royal troops left him, again those newly selected soldiers returned back. The emperor of Kapoori , Kadmudin ,was very cruel and harsh for the Hindu community .As soon as Banda Bahadur came to know about his bad reputation, he went there in order to attack him. Kadmmudin 's havelli was put to fire and sentenced him to death. The next target of Banda Bahadur was Sadhora. Usman Khan was the

chief of Sadhora who had the negative view regarding woman to torture them. At that place there was not even a single woman to whom he had not tortured. The Hindus could not celebrate any festival due to his torture. He used to slaughter the cows and threw them in front of the house of the Hindus. Peer Buddhu Shah was also killed by him, because he supported Guru Gobind Singh in the battle of 'Bhangani'. Here Banda Bahadur killed Muslims miserably so that place was recognized as Katalgarhi and took the possession of the fort. He killed the males and females mercilessly.

After having victory over Sadhora Banda Bahadur made preparations for winning over Sirhand. Wazir Khan was the chief of Sirhand at the time who feared from Banda Bahadur. The Sikh followers from *Majha* and *Doaba* came in groups to assist him. Wazir Khan appointed the Nawab of Malerkotla to fight against Banda. He came with his brother and nephews along with huge army with him. A terrible war was fought at Ropar. In the beginning the Mughals were at the upper hand in fighting but due to arrival of more Sikhs Banda Bahadur got moral support and attacked the Mughals in which his brothers and nephews were killed while rest of the army moved back. Seeing this, the Sikhs were encouraged. This was a great victory of the Sikhs. After the victory of Banda Bahadur over Ropar, Wazir Khan realized his defeat. Wazir Khan was the chief of the Sirhind who bricked into wall the two younger sons at Sirhind. The two elder sons of Guru Gobind Singh were killed in the battle of Chamkaur by him. Banda Bahadur was very furious over the criminal act of Wazir Khan, so he was the greatest enemy of Wazir Khan. He was the only one who sent pathans to murder Guru Gobind Singh. After the victory of Ropar Banda Bahadur moved towards Sirhind. Banda Bahadur's followers looted the people on the way. Wazir Khan asked for the service of help from the *Subedar* of Lahore, so that he may compete him. The warriors of Wazir Khan fought against Banda at Banur. The cannons of Wazir Khan made a great destruction of the Sikhs. Even then, the Sikh troops raising slogans fought bravely against the Muslims. The Muslim troops were almost dead, then Banda Bahadur and Wazir Khan fought face to face. Banda addressed to Wazir Khan by saying the following words;

"O Sinner, thou art the enemy of Guru Gobind Singh. Thou hast shown him no respect, but on the contrary has put to death his innocent children and thereby a grievous and unpardonable crime the punishment for which I am going to deal thee. Thine army and thy country shall be destroyed at my hands". (McAuliffe, 248).

Banda Bahadur separated his head from the body with the sword. The whole ammunition came under the control of the Sikhs and they destroyed the whole of Sirhind very badly. The Sikh troops were in search of Sucha Nand who helped whole heartedly to kill the sons of Guru. As

soon as Sucha Nand came in the hands of Sikhs they put iron ring in his nose and made him roam in the whole Bazaar and streets of Sirhind. Every individual beat him with a slipper until he died. The Muslims were killed in a cruel way and the Sirhind city was completely destroyed. After the victory of Sirhind the Sikhs were increased in great number in the city. The victory of Sirhind encouraged Banda Bahadur to move further in his mission and made his capital to which he gave the name Lohgarh. There he collected all the weapons and treasure . Banda Bahadur laid the independent foundation stone of his state and became the king of small state. He appointed the leaders of these victorious regions .He constructed magnificent building for himself . Banda Bahadur, minted the coins in the name of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh. He got carved these coins with the words of praise of both the Guru's and the capital Lohgarh .He started his samat like Mughal kings which came to an end with end of the life of Banda Bahadur .He moved towards the hill chief's state sand captured them. Later on, he fought against the Shamash Khan of Jalandhar along with his Sikhs. Who defeated him. He declared Jihad against the Sikhs but the Sikhs got the victory and took the possession of that area . Hence Banda Bahadur became popular because of his bravery and burning discussions were made about him. The whole Sikh community was encouraged by his achievements. So they raised their voice against cruel rulers. Every Sikh was given the full support and cooperation by Banda .The Sikhs captured most of the Muslims regions with his help. The Muslims were so suppressed by the Sikhs that the Muslims feared from even one Sikh. By that time the Sikh community was so much enlightened that they got the capacity to fight against the evils. This was all due to Banda Bahadur 's hard efforts and struggle for Sikhism. Most of the people changed their religion and became Sikhs in the fear. Hindu's and Muslims baptized themselves in to Sikhs.

Later on Banda Bahadur moved to Saharanpur and asked the emperor to accept his defeat before him. If he act according to him, he will be forgiven .He obeyed him accordingly and left his resign .On this the whole property and wealth came in the hands of the Sikhs. Moreover ,Banda Bahadur fought against the Peerzada of Behat , who tortured the Hindus. This action was taken seriously by Banda on the complaint made by the Hindu community .The powers of Banda were so increased that his existence was made in front of the Muslims .The Muslims by using their religious sentiments , declared Jehad and erect on Haidry flag. Under this influence many Muslims and officers of higher rank got together to fight against the Sikhs. Bahadur Shah decided to demolish the powers of Banda and sent large army under the control of Munim Khan to Punjab . All of sudden this army attacked on the capital of Lohgarh. Here the number of Sikhs were less in comparisons to Muslims and Sikhs had lack of weapons and food. So Banda Bahadur change his look and moved away from this place. The Muslims got golden opportunity to take the possession to Lohgarh. After that Banda Bahadur reached Nahan and built himself strong. Further he moved to Anandpur sahib and prayed the smark .He reached all the places where Guru Gobind Singh visited. Here he had meeting with king of Chamba. In order to

maintain his friendship with him he sent a beautiful girl for his service. This girl had beautiful eyes. Here Banda Bahadur totally forgot the promise he had made with Guru Gobind Singh. He even forgot the forthcoming loss by involving blindly in the beauty of this girl.

Banda had already been able to bring hill chiefs under his control. He compelled the Muslim women to adopt Sikh religion and to marry the Sikh soldiers. Guru sent Binod Singh with Banda Bahadur and asked him to follow the Guru's order but Banda Bahadur never listened to him. Binod Singh forbade Banda Bahadur from marrying and Banda Bahadur revolted against him. So there was a fierce fight between Binod Singh and Banda Bahadur and he attacked Banda Bahadur with a sword but Kahn Singh took the sword from his hands. If he had not done so then Banda Bahadur might have been killed by Binod Singh. At that time Kahn Singh told about the destruction of Banda.

Banda Bahadur even didn't follow the orders of Mata Sundri. Mata Sundri wrote a letter to Banda Bahadur in which she wrote that Guru gave the responsibility to Banda Bahadur to give punishment to Wazir Khan and that responsibility was fulfilled so the revolt must be put to an end. Then Banda Bahadur said that as Mata Sundri was the only women who was competent to give him the advice. Listening these words of Mata Sundri the Sikhs thought that Banda has insulted her. So the Sikhs turned aside from Banda. Banda Bahadur went to Amritsar and spread a rumor that Guru Gobind Singh have given him the Guruship. But the devoted Sikhs discussed about Banda that he failed to obey the orders of Guru Gobind who was not moving according to the principles of Khalsa. The Sikhs tried to go deep into the history to test him. He was given 'Mahaprashad' seeing this he feared because he had the fear right from the childhood. He got angry with those Sikhs who presented him 'Mahaprashad' and the Sikhs also got angry with him. So they separated themselves from him due to many mistakes. Due to this the Sikhs were divided into two groups. Half of the Sikhs were committed to Banda Bahadur while other half were against him. So Khalsa Panth was divided. The followers of Banda Bahadur were recognised as 'Bandai Khalsa' and the opposition group of Banda was recognized as 'Tatt Khalsa'. Banda Bahadur gave the slogan of 'Fateh Darshan' instead of 'Waheguru ji ka khalsa waheguru ji ki fateh'! .The Sikhs condemned Banda Bahadur for changing the slogan of Guru Gobind .

"For the Sikh salutation ,Waheguru ji ka khalsa Waheguru ji ki fateh ! he substituted Fatah Darshan 'Victory to the sect; an alteration which was deemed apostasy from the orthodox faith"(McAuliffe, 250).

Initially, Banda Bahadur's invasions were against small and big officials. Later on, they fought against the Mughals, when Banda Bahadur fought against the Mughals, then the

people there supported him completely and was soldiers were very excited. Banda Bahadur returned to Punjab after taking control over the hill states. He came here and captured the neighboring states of Batala. Then the Mughal Emperor issued orders to destroy the Sikhs. The governor of Lahore attacked Banda Bahadur. On the other hand, when the new governor of Sirhind came to attack him, the soldiers of his army attacked him, while he was praying. The officer of intelligence was a very fanatic Muslim. He wanted to eradicate of the Sikhs. He took the responsibility of Abdul Samad Khan to arrest that man. Abdul Samad Khan, also called the Daler Jang, attacked a man with his large army. The attack was made at Gurdas Nangal. At that time Banda Bahadur was present in *Duni Chand's haveli*. He continued his fight from the Haveli. This war lasted very long period of nearly eight months. The Sikh soldiers' courage was upheld. Of course, he had lost his supplies and weapons, yet he continued to oppose the Mughals. Vinod Singh whom Guru Gobind Singh had sent to Punjab with the Banda Bahadur. He asked Banda to run away, but Banda wanted to fight bravely, so Vinod Singh left the Banda and ran away. Even Banda Bahadur had do not have any solution. He had to send a letter of consultation with Daler Jang. In the case of mildness with his army, he will surrender. Daler Jung accepted his letter and Banda Bahadur and his followers were arrested. The Banda was later sent to Delhi and many more Sikhs were arrested along with Banda on the way. The Banda was put in an iron cage. He was tied with chains all around and there were soldiers around him before, he was made to ride on an elephant. He was taken to be insulted in the streets before the people. According to McAuliffe: - In English Testimony;

" The members of an English mission who went from Calcutta to dihli in 1715 to petition the emperor for certain privileges, have left on record that they saw a procession of eight hundred Sikh prisoners marched through dihli with two thousand bleeding heads born aloft on poles. The Sikhs vied with one another for precedence in death'(McAuliffe, 253).

At the time, when the Sikhs were being assassinated, a woman took her complaint to the Mughals that her son was imprisoned by the Sikhs. Her son would be innocently killed and she should be forgiven. The mother came to save him; but the son said that his mother was completely telling a lie. He was a guru's Sikh and he too should be martyred. Mohammed Amin Khan said to Banda that he looked as an idealist but why did he indulge in the evil deeds. Muhammandan Amin Khan when he had interview with Banda and he says the following words:

, "The marks of sence of intelligence are visible on thy countenance ; how is it thou, hast never thought about the recompense of thy deeds ,and that is a short span of life with a deadly futurity thou hast been guilty of such cruelty and such detestable action to Hindus and Musulmans ? He replied "in all religions and sects whenever disobedience and rebellion among mortal passeth all bounds the great avenger raiseth up a sever man like me for the punishment of their sins and the due reward of their deeds.'(McAuliffe, 253).

Banda Bahadur told Amin Khan that when oppression grew, a hard hearted like him was sent by the God, so that he can punish the tyrants like him. The body of a man was Knit with an iron rods. He gave instructions to cut his throat. The man did that. He did this so that his child could not be made a Muslim after his death.

Guru Gobind Singh handed over the leadership of the Sikhs to Banda Bahadur before his death. Before meeting with Guru Banda Bahadur led a life of *Bairagi* and after meeting Guru his inner spirits awakened .Guru diverted his attention from magical instincts towards fighting for the evil deeds. Guru sent him to fight against the hill chiefs. Banda Bahadur entrance in Punjab enforced him to take the possession over the Mughal states and he in this way taught him a good lesson. The whole city was destroyed by the martyr Wazir Khan who took the lives of the Guru's son and Wazir Khan was made to roam in the bazaars by putting iron ring in his nose. Banda Bahadur punished the Mughals who made plans to kill the Sikhs and established independent regime of their own. He was the first Sikh to maintain his independent regime in Sikhism. He launched the coins on the name of Guru Gobind Singh and Guru Nanak Dev. He was the brave warrior who taught the Sikhs to lead a life of bravery. He had the merits of becoming capable ruler and tolerant Sikh. He was the truly devoted to the Sikh religion. In the end analysis is made about Banda that he scarified his life and fought for the injustice.

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