





GURU NANAK NISHKAM SEWAK JATHA

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GNNSJ



GURU NANAK NISHKAM SEWAK JATHA

WELCOMES

ARCHBISHOP BERNARD LONGLEY

OF THE CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE

OF BIRMINGHAM,

ON

SUNDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER 2012

TO CONFER ON SEWA SINGH JI MANDLA

THE DIOCESAN AWARD OF 'UBI CARITAS'





UBI CARITAS

An Ancient Latin Hymn from where The Award gets its Name

LATIN

UBI CARITAS ET AMOR, DEUS IBI EST.
CONGREGAVIT NOS IN UNUM CHRISTI AMOR.

EXSULTEMUS, ET IN IPSO JUCUNDEMUR.
TIMEAMUS, ET AMEMUS DEUM VIVUM.
ET EX CORDE DILIGAMUS NOS SINCERO.
UBI CARITAS ET AMOR, DEUS IBI EST.

SIMUL ERGO CUM IN UNUM CONGREGAMUR:
NE NOS MENTE DIVIDAMUR, CAVEAMUS.

CESSANT IURGIA MALIGNA, CESSANT LITES.
ET IN MEDIO NOSTRI SIT CHRISTUS DEUS.
UBI CARITAS ET AMOR, DEUS IBI EST.

SIMUL QUOQUE CUM BEATIS VIDEAMUS,
GLORIANTER VULTUM TUUM, CHRISTE DEUS:
GAUDIUM QUOD EST IMMENSUM, ATQUE PROBUM,
SAECULA PER INFINITA SAECULORUM. AMEN.

ENGLISH

WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE ARE, GOD IS THERE.
CHRIST'S LOVE HAS GATHERED US INTO ONE.

LET US REJOICE AND BE PLEASED IN HIM.
LET US FEAR, AND LET US LOVE THE LIVING GOD.
AND MAY WE LOVE EACH OTHER WITH A SINCERE HEART.
WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE ARE, GOD IS THERE.

AS WE ARE GATHERED INTO ONE BODY,
BEWARE, LEST WE BE DIVIDED IN MIND.

LET EVIL IMPULSES STOP, LET CONTROVERSY CEASE,
AND MAY CHRIST OUR GOD BE IN OUR MIDST.
WHERE CHARITY AND LOVE ARE, GOD IS THERE.

AND MAY WE WITH THE SAINTS ALSO,
SEE THY FACE IN GLORY, O CHRIST OUR GOD:
THE JOY THAT IS IMMENSE AND GOOD,
UNTO THE AGES THROUGH INFINITE AGES. AMEN.

GNNSJ HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION PROJECTS



1. Sri Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple), Amritsar, Punjab. [topright]: Darshani Deorhi (grand gateway to Sri Darbar Sahib) and [bottom right] inside of Darshani Deorhi



2. Takhat Sri Kesgarh Sahib, Anandpur, Punjab



3. Takhat Sri Hazur Sahib, Nanded, Maharashtra 4. Sri Fateh garh Sahib, Sirhind, Punjab 5. Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib, Bhatinda, Punjab 6. Guru's Langar Complex, Anandpur, Punjab



GNNSJ :
Perpetuating the
‘Kar Sewa’ legacy

Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ) is a registered charity dedicated to selfless service in the name of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of the Sikh faith. With the Almighty’s grace and blessings, it has undertaken through *Kar Sewa*, since 1977, the planning, design, coordination, construction, conservation, restoration and financing through self-help and community participation of notable Sikh shrines, Gurudwaras and other community facilities for wider social benefit in the UK, India and East Africa. GNNSJ is one of the few organisations outside India to have done major conservation work on the Sikh sacred shrines of India.

The concept of Kar Sewa

Kar Sewa is a Sikh tradition of planning, undertaking and sustaining projects for community and social welfare, inspired by altruistic, dharmic values and involving grassroots community participation. It is a visionary legacy of the Sikh Gurus, dating back to the sixteenth century when the construction of Sri Harimandir Sahib, in Amritsar, Punjab, was envisioned by Guru Amar Das Ji, practically initiated by Guru Ram Das Ji and finally completed by Guru Arjan Dev Ji through the principles of Kar Sewa.



KAR SEWAS
CARRIED OUT BY GNNSJ

1. Sri Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple)

Amritsar Punjab (1995-1999)

External gold gilding and its Darshani Deorhi

2. Takhat Sri Kesgarh Sahib

Anandpur Sahib, Punjab (1997-1999)

Restoration and 10 metre enlargement of the parkarma.

3. Takhat Sri Hazur Sahib

Maharashtra, Nanded, South India (2000-2002)

Internal gold gilding and fresco restoration

4. Sri Fatehgarh Sahib

Sirhind, Punjab (2003-2004)

Gold gilding of main domes and ceiling

5. Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib

Talwandi Sabo, Punjab (2007-2009)

Raising of the entire courtyard by 2 metres and enclosing it within a ten sided mass concrete retaining wall. Also construction of Singh Sahib’s residence and 21 room residential block for Budha Dhal Nihangs

6. Anandpur Langar Complex

Anandpur Sahib, Punjab (2004-2010)

Construction of three storey Guru’s Langar complex including extensive kitchen facilities

15:00

16:00

16:10 - 16:15

16:15 - 16:20

16:20 - 16:25

16:25 - 16:30

16:30 - 16:40

16:40 - 16:50

16:50 - 17:00

17:00 - 17:15

17:15 - 17:30

17:30 - 18:00

18:00

Agenda for Visit

Recitation of Sukhmani Sahib

(‘Psalm of Peace’) commences by congregation members in Main Darbar (Guru’s Court)

Welcome to His Grace the Archbishop

Pay respects to Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji

The sacred scripture and Eternal / Timeless Guru of the Sikhs since 1708 - Main *Darbar* (Guru’s Court)

Witnessing of the culmination of Sukhmani Sahib

(‘Psalm of Peace’) which takes place every week This will include standing with the congregation for *Ardas* (a formal supplication) then listening to the *Hukamnama* (Guru’s Edict)

Sharing of Karah Prashaad

(Sweet dough made of sugar, flour, butter and water which is served to the congregation as a manifestation of the Guru’s grace)

Introduction by Khushdev Singh

Welcome Address by Bhai Sahib Bhai Mohinder Singh Ji, Chairman GNNSJ

Address by His Grace the Archbishop

Followed by an award presentation to Sewa Singh Mandla of ‘Ubi Caritas’ (the highest award the Archdiocese can give for outstanding selfless service for the love of God to the Catholic Church and the community).

Response by Mr Sewa Singh Ji Mandla

and thereafter presentation of ‘*siropas*’ (representative of the Guru’s blessings) to guests

Visit to the Preserved Rooms

of Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji and of Bhai Sahib Bhai Norang Singh Ji (Founder Saints of GNNSJ)

Visit to the Gumbad (Dome) Darbar

Listening to *Keertan* (devotional singing)

Sharing of Langar

(Vegetarian meal cooked by volunteers in the Guru’s Kitchen) - Hall 6 (second floor) & Thereafter presentation to the Archbishop of a trans-light of Sri Harimandir Sahib (Darbar Sahib) and a photo album of conferment of Knighthood on Bhai Sahib Ji.

Depart

	RECITATION OF SUKHMANI SAHIB IN PROGRESS & CULMINATION
25 MINUTES	
35 MINUTES	ADDRESSES & PRESENTATION
30 MINUTES	TOUR
30 MINUTES	MEAL FAREWELL GIFTS



GNNSJ Background

Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji (1898 -1983)

Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji of Kericho, Kenya, known affectionately as 'Baba Ji', stands as one of the most eminent and influential Sikh 'saints' of the twentieth century outside India. The title sant is given to those considered to be connected to the Eternal Truth (*Sat*) and spiritual beacons for the wider humanity. They may be referred to as sadhus, a word which, in Sikh tradition, does not imply asceticism or reclusiveness; rather it suggests someone who has brought the self under control and ignited the divine spark of the Creator within, whilst living fully in and contributing to society. In the Sikh dharam or 'faith', holy people are proclaimed saints within their own lifetime. Such people embody spiritual virtues - such as love, compassion, wisdom, courage, selflessness and forgiveness - with consistency and continuity in their every thought and action. They are practitioners, rather than simply scholars of faith, in whose presence others feel both humbled and elevated and inspired to remember God. Gifted to work wonders and bestow blessings, they generate what could be described as miracles, enabling the power of divine benevolence to uplift and transform mortals.



GNNSJ

FIVE CENTRES FOR EXCELLENCE

1. Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (B'ham) UK (GNNSJ) 8-26 Soho Road
2. Marg Sat Santokh Ltd (MSS Ltd) 28-70 Soho Road
3. Nishkam Centre (NCA) 6 Soho Road
4. Guru Nanak Nishkam Education Trust GNNET 1-7 Soho Road
5. Nishkam Health and Social Care





Bhai Sahib Bhai Mohinder Singh Ji

Born in Uganda in 1939, Bhai Sahib Ji is a civil and structural engineer by profession who worked as a Housing Executive for the Zambian Government's National Housing Authority (NHA). After 19 years of working for the NHA, Bhai Sahib Ji took early retirement in 1989 to answer an inner spiritual calling. Since 1995, Bhai Sahib Ji has served as Chairman and is third in line of *Dharmic* (religious) leaders of Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ).

GNNSJ's Headquarters are in Handsworth, Birmingham – an inner city area which GNNSJ has spiritually and economically regenerated through five centres for excellence. One of these, the Nishkam Centre, an innovative community led civic association, received the Queen's Golden Jubilee award for voluntary services in July 2010. For his services to religious faith propagation, community service, education and research, Bhai Sahib Ji has been awarded two Honorary Doctorates from Birmingham's

Universities. He is passionate about values-led education and is the Patron of the Nishkam School Trust which opened the Nishkam Nursery in 2009, the Nishkam Primary School in 2011 and the Nishkam High School with Sixth Form in September 2012. GNNSJ is also poised to open the Nishkam Health and Social Care Centre in March 2013. GNNSJ also has sister sites in London and Leeds and operates internationally in Kenya and India.

In June 2010, Bhai Sahib Ji became the first overseas British Sikh to be officially bestowed the title of 'Bhai Sahib' by the *Jathedars* of the five Takhts and President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (an apex Sikh organisation representing over 26 million Sikhs), in recognition of his religious faith propagation through intra and interfaith fields, coupled with his outstanding contribution towards the conservation and restoration of Sikh historical shrines. He is the only NRI to serve as a Trustee of Anandpur Sahib Heritage Foundation, Punjab, India. Nationally, Bhai Sahib Ji is Chair of Sangat Trust television channel and Chair of British Sikh Consultative Forum.

Bhai Sahib Ji is a recognised 'Interfaith Visionary', holding the Juliet Hollister Award from the Temple of Understanding (previous awardees have included Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama). In April 2012, Bhai Sahib became the first Sikh to receive a Papal Knighthood of St Gregory the Great in recognition of his dedicated work for Roman Catholic – Sikh relations and for his enthusiastic commitment to working for peace among people of all faiths. He is a founding member of the UK's Council of Dharmic Faiths; member of the Department for International Development's faith working group; patron of Divine Onkar Mission; member of the European Council of Religious Leaders; International Trustee of Religions for Peace; member of the Fetzer Institute's Advisory Council on World Religions and Spiritualities; and member of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders. Regionally, Bhai Sahib Ji is a member of the West Midlands Faith Forum. Locally, he is a member of Birmingham Faith Leaders Group, member of Birmingham City Council's Faith Round Table and member of Birmingham University's Community Advisory Board. Bhai Sahib Ji, with other International Trustees, is currently working on establishing a Museum of World's Religions in Birmingham, UK and on formulating a Charter for Forgiveness.

Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji was born in 1898 in the Punjab village of Gura, India. He belonged to a family which had long engaged with and served holy men of the region. Married at a young age, he placed strong emphasis on the Sikh principle of *grihasti jeevan*, living the life of a householder, with all its responsibilities to the family and society. Emigrating to Kenya in 1916, he started work as a humble carpenter and set up 'Kericho Wagon Works' in 1925 in the small town of Kericho. He focused on doing *kirat* (working hard to earn his living with a prayerful mind), being a father to his family and helping others in the town, notably through municipal improvement schemes, such as the renovation of hospitals, schools and churches. His civic contributions were officially recognised by Kericho's town square being named by the Municipal Council as Saint Puran Singh Square.

In 1952, Baba Ji's spiritual holiness was given open recognition by a much-known saint, Sant Baba Mani Singh Ji. When at work Baba Ji wore western dress, keeping his *kirpan* underneath his garments, choosing to remain utterly humble despite the religious status he had been given. Baba Ji always left his beard untied and naturally flowing as per the code of an *Amritdhari* initiated Sikh. It set an example for other Sikhs to emulate.

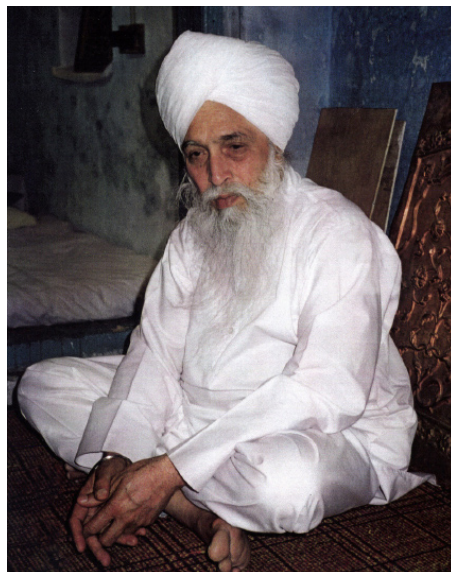
Through his life example and leadership, Baba Ji encouraged devotees to unite and follow Sikh teachings as per the message of the Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the eternal Guru and sacred scriptures of the Sikhs. He revitalised practice of the threefold principle for Sikh life, described as 'pray, work and share' (*naam japo, kirat karo, vand ke chhako*), nurturing remembrance of God, a strong work ethic and community-oriented spirit of generosity and interdependence. In addition, Baba Ji called for all service to be totally benevolent or *nishkam*.

In an effort to encourage diaspora Sikhs to be more than followers of their faith in name, Baba Ji promoted and conducted many *amrit sanchaars* (ceremonies of initiation), creating momentum for devotees to commit to the daily practice of their faith and its way of life. Thus he did not create a '*dera*' or exclusive spiritual camp, or start an offshoot of the Sikh dharam; his reverence for the Guru Granth Sahib Ji (the exalted sacred scripture) and the *Khalsa Panth* (the community of initiated practitioners of the dharam, created by the tenth Sikh Guru), was total and absolute, reflecting the centrality given to the teachings of and institutions founded

by the Sikh Gurus. Moreover, Baba Ji's message was not just a philosophy of words; he was a personification of the proverb 'practise what you preach' and applied these principles resolutely to himself at all times. As well as being *amritdhari* (initiated), doing *kirat* and living a *grihasti jeevan* himself, Baba Ji also made his home a humble place of worship itself, as it housed the Guru Granth Sahib, from which Baba Ji would read every day.

His immense compassion and connectivity with the Divine drew thousands of devotees to Kericho. Many *karamaath* (miracles) were witnessed in his presence and countless lives were transformed. In the 1970s, Baba Ji came to England, where the Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ) was formally established with its headquarters in Birmingham. Since its inception, the Gurudwara has been non-denominational and based on the principle of the selection of successors rather than election. It was in the UK that many significant, often unprecedented, events were made possible through his divinely inspired guidance. This included, in London, a historic and highly spiritual eleven days continuous *Sampat Sri Akhand Paath* in July 1976. The eleven day programme of prayers for peace and *sarbat da bhalla* (the welfare of all creation) was followed by an *amrit sanchaar* where over 500 devotees were initiated to become practising Sikhs. This set a pace for future years. Monthly *amrit sanchaars* have since been conducted by Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha (GNNSJ), totalling over 500 in Birmingham alone over a period of 35 years, in which hundreds of Sikhs have become initiated.

After purchasing a Polish Club (18-20 Soho Road) in August 1977, the Gurudwara in Birmingham opened its doors in December 1977 and became the headquarters for GNNSJ's endeavours. In 1978, GNNSJ, Birmingham was registered with the Charity Commission of England & Wales. Now, it also has sister organisations in Leeds and London (UK); as well as in Kericho (Kenya) and Delhi / Amritsar (India). In 1982 Baba Ji endorsed and participated in a peaceful march campaigning about the Sikhs' right to wear the turban, where a petition handed to Downing Street led to the ruling protecting Sikh rights. Another campaign to resolve the growing issues of Sikhs as a minority in India was held in May 1983, with a petition presented to the Indian High Commission. Just a week later on 5th June, Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji left for his heavenly abode, leaving behind a legacy of exemplary Sikh practice of selflessness which remains the inspiration for all endeavours of GNNSJ.



Bhai Sahib Bhai Norang Singh Ji (1926-1995)

Bhai Sahib Ji was born in 1926 in Dhariwal, District Jalandhar in Punjab, India. His early years were spent in Amritsar, performing *sewa* (service) at the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). He subsequently moved to Singapore and lived a life of devotion and tireless service in the company of another revered saint, Sant Baba Sohan Singh Ji of Malaka. On divine instruction from Sant Baba Sohan Singh Ji, Bhai Sahib Ji moved with his family to the UK, where he forged ties with Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji. Together, they promoted the principle of *nishkam sewa*. Bhai Sahib Ji was exemplary in demonstrating how one should respect, revere and love a saint, as well as how to practice the basic tenets of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, through instituting daily *simran* (prayer and meditation) sessions as well as serving the sangat or congregation.

Upon the 'passing on' of Sant Baba Puran Singh Ji in 1983, Bhai Sahib Norang Singh Ji continued as the spiritual guiding leader of GNNSJ. Under Bhai Sahib Norang Singh Ji, the Gurudwara expanded not only as a base for service to the Sikh community, but also for the wider community with support offered for humanitarian causes, such as the Ethiopian Famine, Bangladesh Flood and the Rwandan Crisis. GNNSJ's support extended also to local hospitals and schools. During the economic recession of the 1980s, a commercial cooperative enterprise was set up - Marg Sat Santokh Manufacturing Limited (MSS) - as an example of a self-help cooperative to provide employment amongst the community. Bhai Sahib Norang Singh Ji's foresight and vision included the building of a Gurudwara at Baba Ji's birthplace in Gura, Punjab, India, followed by the commencement of the building of the GNNSJ complex from 1997 - 1999 in the historic Sikh city of Anandpur Sahib, India. Between 1992-1995 under Bhai Sahib Ji's stewardship, GNNSJ funded over forty different small and large construction and relief projects in India. These projects were the precursors to undertaking the monumental task of the gold re-gilding the Harmandir Sahib (popularly referred to by the British as the 'Golden Temple') following extensive damage it had suffered in past years as well as normal ongoing wear and tear. This privileged assignment was granted to GNNSJ by what is the apex organisation of the Sikh dharam, the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). The historic project (kar sewa) was commenced on 3rd February 1995 by Bhai Sahib Ji, five months later he left for the heavenly abode on 3rd July 1995. The entire gold gilding kar sewa was completed by 14th March 1999 under Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singh's stewardship. Such restoration work had not been undertaken on Harmandir Sahib since Maharaja Ranjit Singh (who reigned from 1797 - 1840), had the gold gilding completed in 1830 after commencing it in 1803. It was the first time ever that a *Jatha* (group) from the Sikh diaspora had been honoured to undertake such a privileged restoration and conservation project in India of one of the most sacred of Sikh shrines.

In this way Baba Ji's legacy has continued to spread across continents and into the twenty-first century, inspired by the teaching that in the company of the holy and through divine grace, visionary transformation is made possible within us and around us for the good of all.



