

Anandpur Sahib Resolution

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Anandpur Sahib Resolution, a frequently invoked document of modern Sikhism pronouncing its religious rule as well as its political goal. After having enjoyed power under chief ministers, Gurnam Singh and Parkash Singh Badal in the Punjab, newly demarcated in 1966, Sikhs are represented by their premier political party, the Shiromani Akali Dal, were able to capture only one seat at the elections to Indian parliament (1971) from among the 13 which were Punjab's portion. In the Punjab Assembly elections which took place in March 1972 their tally was a mere 24 seats of a total of 117, and the Punjab Government passed in to the hands of the Congress Party, with Giani Zail Singh (later, President of India) as chief minister. This electoral debacle led to self introspection on the part of the Shiromani Akali Dal which appointed on 11 December, 1972, a sub-committee to reflect upon the situation and to proclaim afresh the programme and policies of the Dal. The 12 member committee consisted of Surjit Singh Barnala, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Jiwan Singh Umranangal, Gurmeet Singh, Dr. Bhagat Singh, Balwant Singh, Gian Singh Rarewala, Amar Singh Ambalavi, Prem Singh Lalpura, Jaswinder Singh Brar, Bhag Singh, and Major General Gurbakhsh Singh of Badhoni. The first meeting of the sub-committee took place at Amritsar. The venue then shifted to Chandigarh where the committee completed its task in ten successive meetings. Counsel was available to the sub-committee of the celebrated Sikh intellectual and thinker, Sirdar Kapur Singh, whose impress the draft emerging finally from its deliberations carried. The document was adopted unanimously by the working committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal at a meeting held at Anandpur Sahib, town sacred to Guru Gobind Singh, also revered by Sikhs as the birth place of the Khalsa. Since it was adopted at Anandpur Sahib (October 16-17, 1973) the resolution came to be known as the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. It was endorsed in the form of a succession of resolutions at the 18th All India Akali Conference of the Shiromani Akali Dal at Ludhiana on 28-29 October, 1978. An English version of the resolution is quoted below:

Whereas, the Sikhs of India are a historically recognized political nation ever since the inauguration of the Khalsa, in AD 1699, and

Whereas, this status of the Sikh nation had been internationally recognized and accepted by the major powers of Europe and Asia, viz. France, England, Italy, Russia, China, Persia (now Iran), Afghanistan, Nepal, and the Company Bahadur, Fort William, Calcutta, till the middle of the 19th century, and again by the outgoing British as well as by the Hindu-dominated Congress and the Muslim League of India in the middle of the 20th century, and

Whereas, the brute majority in India, in 1950, imposed a constitutional arrangement in India which denied the Sikhs of their political identity and cultural popularity, thus liquidating the Sikhs politically and exposing them to spiritual death and cultural decay leading inevitable to their submergence and dissolution into the saltish sea waters of incoherent Hinduism, and

Whereas, the Sikhs have been thus shackled and enslaved in unethical and cynical repudiation of solemn and binding commitment and public promises earlier made to the Sikhs, while the Sikh representation in the Indian Constituent Assembly, in 1950, refused to affix their signatures to the official copy of the Indian Constitutional Act thus promulgated, the Shiromani Akali Dal in the name and on behalf of the Sikhs proclaims that the Sikhs are determined, by all legitimate means, to extricate and free themselves from this degrading and death dealing situation so as to ensure firmly their honorable survival and salvage their inherent dignity within India and their birthright to influence meaningfully the mainstream of world history. The Sikhs therefore demand, firstly, that an autonomous region in the north of India should be set up forthwith wherein the Sikh interests are constitutionally recognized as the fundamental State policy. Secondly, that this autonomous region includes the present Punjab, Karnal and

Ambala districts of Haryana, inclusive of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka, Dalhousie, Nalagarh Desh, Siraa, Guhla and Ratia areas and Ganganagar district of Rajasthan, thus bringing main contiguous Sikh population and Sikh habitats with this autonomous Sikh region as an integral part of the Union of India, and, thirdly, this Sikh autonomous region may be declared as entitled to frame its own internal constitutions on the basis of having all powers to and for itself except Foreign Relations, Defense, Currency and General Communications which will remain subjects within the jurisdiction of the Federal Indian Government.

"MAY THE RIDER OF THE BLUE HORSE HELP US."

A. *BASIC POSTULATES*

1. The Shiromani Akali Dal is the very embodiment of the hopes and aspirations of the Sikhs and as such is fully entitled to its representation. The basic postulates of this organization are human co-existence, human welfare and the ultimate unity of all human beings with the Lord.
2. These postulates are based upon the three great principles of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, namely Nam Japo, Kirat Karo, and Vand Chhako, i.e. meditation on God's Name, honest labor, and sharing the fruits of this labor with the needy.

B. *PURPOSES*

The Shiromani Akali Dal shall ever strive to achieve the following aims:

1. Propagation of Sikhism, its ethical values and code of conduct to combat atheism.
2. Preservation and keeping alive the concept of distinct and sovereign identity of the Panth and building up of appropriate condition in which the national sentiments and aspirations of the Sikh Panth will find full expression, satisfaction and facilities for growth.
3. Eradication of poverty and starvation through increased production and more equitable distribution of wealth as also the establishment of a just social order sans exploitation of any kind.
4. Vacation of discrimination on the basis of caste, creed or any other ground in keeping with basic principles of Sikhism.
5. Removal of disease and ill health, checking the use of intoxicants and provision of full facilities for the growth of physical well-being so as to prepare and enthuse the Sikh Nation for the national defense. For the achievement of the aforesaid purposes, the Shiromani Akali Dal owned it as its primary duty to inculcate among the Sikh religious fervour and a sense of pride in their great socio-spiritual heritage through the following measures:

1. Reiteration of the concept of unity of God, meditation on His Name, recitation of gurbani, inculcation of faith in the holy Sikh Gurus as well as in Guru Granth Sahib and other appropriate measures for such a purpose.
2. Grooming at the Sikh Missionary College the Sikh youth with inherent potential to become accomplished preachers, ragis, dhadis and poets so that the propagation of Sikhism, its tenets and traditions and its basic religious values could be taken up more effectively and vigorously.
3. Baptizing the Sikhs on a mass scale with particular emphasis on schools and colleges wherein the teachers as well as the taught shall be enthused through regular study circles.
4. Revival of the religious institution of dasvandh among the Sikhs.
5. Generating a feeling of respect for Sikh intellectuals including writers and preachers, who also would be enthused to improve upon their accomplishments.
6. Streamlining the administration of the gurdwaras by giving better training to their workers. Appropriate steps would also be taken to maintain gurdwara building in proper condition. The representatives of the party in the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee would be directed to pull their weight towards these ends.
6. Making suitable arrangements for error free publications of gurbani, promoting research in the ancient and modern Sikh history, translating holy gurbani into other languages and producing first-rate literature on Sikhism.

7. Taking appropriate measures for the enactment of an All India Gurdwaras Act with a view to improving the administration of the gurdwaras throughout the country and to reintegrate the traditional preaching sects of Sikhism like Udasis and Nirmalas, without in any way encroaching upon the properties of their maths.
8. Taking necessary steps to bring the Sikh gurdwaras all over the world under a single system of administration with a view to running them according to the basic Sikh forms and to pool their resources for the propagation of Sikhism on a wider and more impressive scale.
9. Striving to free access to all those holy Sikh shrines, including Nanakana Sahib, from which the Sikh Panth has been separated, for their pilgrimage and proper upkeep.

POLITICAL GOAL

The political goal of the Panth, with any doubt, is enshrined in the Commandments of the Tenth Lord, in the pages of Sikh history and in the very hear of the Khalsa Panth, the ultimate aim of which is the pre-eminence of the Khalsa (KHALSA JI KE BOL BALE).

The fundamental policy of the Shiromani Akali Dal is to seek the realization of this birthright of the Khalsa through the creating of a geographical entity and a constitutional set-up of its own.

For the attainment of this aim:

1. The Shiromani Akali Dal is determined to strive by all possible means to:
 - (a) Have all those speaking areas, deliberately kept out of Punjab, such as Dalhousie in Gurdaspur district, Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Sada, etc. in Ambala district, the entire Ina tahsil of Hoshiarpur district, Shahabad and Guhia blocks of Karnal district, Tohana sub-tahsil, Ratia block and Sirsa tahsil of Hissar district and six tahsils of Ganganagar district in Rajasthan, merged with Punjab to constitute a single administrative unit wherein the interests of Sikhs and Sikhism are specifically protected.
 - (b) In this new Punjab (as in all other states) the Center's interference would be restricted to Defense, Foreign Relations, Currency and Communications, all other departments being in the jurisdiction of Punjab (and other states) which would be fully entitled to frame their own Constitution. For the aforesaid departments of the Center, Punjab (and other states) would contribute in proportion to their respective representation in Parliament.
 - (c) The Sikhs and other minorities living outside Punjab should be adequately protected against any kind of discrimination against them.
2. The Shiromani Akali Dal would also endeavor to have the Indian Constitution recast on real Federal principles with equal representation at the Centre for all the States.
3. The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly denounces the Foreign policy of India as framed by the Congress Party. It is worthless and highly detrimental to the interest of the country, its people and mankind at large. Shiromani Akali Dal shall extend its support only to such policies as are based upon the principles of peace and national interest. It strongly advocates a policy of peace with all neighboring countries, particularly those which have within their borders Sikh population and Sikh shrines. The Akali Dal is of the firm view that the foreign policy of India should in no case be one of playing second fiddle to any other country.
4. The Shiromani Akali Dal shall firmly resist and discrimination against any Sikh (or even other) employees of the Centre or State government [on the basis of his caste or creed]. It shall also endeavor to maintain the traditional position of the Sikhs in all the wings of the Defense services and needs of the Sikh army personnel shall be adequately taken care of by the Panth. The Shiromani Akali Dal shall also ensure that kirpan is accepted as an integral part of the uniform of the Sikhs in the Army.
5. It shall be the primary obligation of the Shiromani Akali Dal to help rehabilitate ex-servicemen of the Defense forces in the civil life, and for such a purpose it would extend them every help to enable them to organize themselves and raise their voice in an effective way to gain adequate safeguards and concessions for an honorable and dignified life.
6. The Shiromani Akali Dal is of the firm opinion that all those persons, including women, who have not been convicted of any criminal offence by a court of law should have the right to possess any type of small arm like revolvers, guns, pistols, rifles, carbines, etc., without any

license, the only obligation being their registration.
7. The Shiromani Akali Dal seeks ban on the sale of liquor and all other kinds of intoxicants, and shall press for a ban on the consumption of intoxicants and smoking in public places.

Apart from defining the basic postulates and principles of policies and its ultimate goal, the open session of the General House of the Shiromani Akali Dal, held at Ludhiana, also traced the outlines of the long-term socio-economic and cultural aims and objectives of the Party, for the attainment of which it adopted twelve sub-resolutions. A closer analysis of these sub-resolutions shows that while the core of the basic resolutions passed by its working committee at Anandpur Sahib in 1973, namely attainment of special Constitutional state for the Sikhs to ensure their growth in accordance with their own socio-spiritual traditions and tenets was fully endorsed by the General House of the Shiromani Akali Dal, the scope of the greater autonomy to the state of Punjab for the aforesaid purpose was widened to include all the states. Thus, the shape and scope of the Anandpur Sahib resolution as it finally emerged out of the Ludhiana meet of the Shiromani Akali Dal envisages:

1. The attainment of pre-eminence of the Khalsa through special constitutional safeguards and powers for the Sikhs.
2. Greater autonomy to all the states by recasting the Centre-State relations on the basis of limited powers for the Centre.

Resolutions adopted, in the light of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution, at open session of the 18th All India Akali Conference held at Ludhiana on October 28-29, 1978, under the presidency of Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi are as under:

Resolution No. 1

Moved by Sardar Gurcharan Singh Tohra, President, Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, and endorsed by Sardar Parkash Singh Badal, Chief Minister, Punjab. The Shiromani Akali Dal realizes that India is a federal and republican geographical entity of different languages, religions and cultures. To safeguard the fundamental rights of the religious and linguistic minorities, to fulfill the demands of the democratic traditions and to pave the way for economic progress, it has become imperative that the Indian constitutional infrastructure should be given a real federal shape by redefining the Central and State relation and rights on the lines of the aforesaid principles and objectives. The concept of total revolution given by Lok Naik Jaya Parkash Narain is also based upon the progressive decentralization of powers. The climax of the process of centralization of powers of the states through repeated amendments of the Constitution during the Congress regime came before the countrymen in the form of the Emergency (1975), when all fundamental rights of all citizens was usurped. It was then that the programme of decentralization of powers ever advocated by Shiromani Akali Dal was openly accepted and adopted by other political parties including Janata Party, C.P.I. (M), D.M.K., etc. Shiromani Akali Dal has ever stood firm on this principle and that is why after a very careful consideration it unanimously adopted a resolution to this effect first at the All India Akali Conference, Batala, then at Anandpur Sahib which has endorsed the principle of State autonomy in keeping with the concept of federalism. As such, the Shiromani Akali Dal emphatically urges upon the Janata Government to take cognizance of the different linguistic and cultural sections, religious minorities as also the voice of millions of people and recast the constitutional structure of the country on real and meaningful federal principles to obviate the possibility of any danger to the unity and integrity of the country and, further, to enable the states to play a useful role for the progress and prosperity of the Indian people in their respective areas by a meaningful exercise of their powers.

Resolution No. 2

This momentous meeting of the Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Government of India to examine carefully the long tale of the excesses, wrongs, illegal actions committed [against the

Sikhs] by the previous Congress Government, more particularly during the Emergency, and try to find an early solution to the following problems:

(a) Chandigarh originally raised as a Capital for Punjab should be handed over to Punjab.
(b) The long-standing demand of the Shiromani Akali Dal for the merger in Punjab of the Punjabi-speaking areas, to be identified by linguistic experts with village as a unit, should be conceded.

(c) The control of headworks should continue to be vested in Punjab and, if need be, the Reorganization Act should be amended.

(d) The arbitrary and unjust Award given by Mrs. Indira Gandhi during the Emergency on the distributions of Ravi-Beas waters should be revised on the universally accepted norms and principles, and justice be done to Punjab.

(e) Keeping in view the special aptitude and martial qualities of the Sikhs, the present ratio of their strength in the Army should be maintained.

(f) The excesses being committed on the settlers in the Tarai region of the Uttar Pradesh in the name of Land Reforms should be vacated by making suitable amendments in the ceiling law on the Central guidelines.

Resolution

No.

3

(Economic Policy Resolution)

The chief sources of inspiration of the economic policies and programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal are the secular, democratic and socialistic concepts of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh. Our economic programme is based on three principles:

(a) Dignity of labor.

(b) An economic and social structure which provides for the uplift of the poor and depressed sections of society.

(c) Unabated opposition to concentration of economic and political power in the hands of the capitalists.

While drafting its economic policies and programme, the Shiromani Akali Dal in its historic Anandpur Sahib Resolution has laid particular stress on the need to break the monopolistic hold of the capitalists foisted on the Indian economy by 30 years of Congress rule in India. This capitalist hold enabled the Central government to assume all powers in its hands after the manner of Mughal imperialism. This was bound to thwart the economic progress of the states and injure the social and economic interests of the people. The Shiromani Akali Dal once again reiterates the Sikh way of life by resolving to fulfil the holy words of Guru Nanak Dev: "He alone realizes the true path who labors honestly and shares with others the fruits of that labor."

This way of life is based upon three basic principles:

i. Doing honest labor,

ii. Sharing with others the fruits of this labor, and

iii. Meditation on the Lord's Name.

The Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Central and the State governments to eradicate unemployment during the next ten years. While pursuing this aim, special emphasis should be laid on amelioration the lot of the weaker sections, scheduled and depressed classes, workers, landless and poor farmers and urban poor farmers and urban poor. Minimum wages must be fixed for all of them.

The Shiromani Akali Dal urges Punjab government to draw up such an economic plan for the state as would turn it into the leading state during the next ten years by raising per capita income to Rs. 3,000 and by generating an economic growth rate of 7% per annum as against 4% at the national level.

The Shiromani Akali Dal gives first priority to the redrafting of the taxation structure in such a way that the burden of taxation is shifted from the poor to the richer classes and an equitable distribution of national income ensured.

The main plank of the economic programme of the Shiromani Akali Dal is to enable the economically weaker sections of the society to share the fruits of national income.

The Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Central government to make an international airport at Amritsar which should also enjoy the facilities of a dry port. Similarly, a Stock Exchange should be opened at Ludhiana to accelerate the process of industrialization and economic

growth in the State. The Shiromani Akali Dal also desires that suitable amendments should be made in the Foreign Exchange rules for free exchange of foreign currencies and thereby removing the difficulties being faced by the Indian emigrants. The Shiromani Akali Dal emphatically urges upon the Indian government to bring about parity between the prices of the agricultural produce and that of the industrial raw materials so that the discrimination against such states that lack these materials may be removed. The Shiromani Akali Dal demands that the exploitation of the produces of cash crops like cotton, sugarcane, oil seeds, etc., at the hand of traders should be stopped forthwith and for this purpose arrangements be made for purchase by government of these crops at remunerable prices. Besides, effective steps should be taken by government for the purchase of cotton through the Cotton Corporation. The Shiromani Akali Dal strongly feels that the most pressing national problem is the need to ameliorate the lot of millions of exploited persons belonging to the scheduled classes. For such a purpose the Shiromani Akali Dal calls upon the Central and State governments to earmark special funds. Besides, the state governments should allot sufficient funds in their respective budgets for giving free residential plots both in the urban and rural areas to the Scheduled Castes.

The Shiromani Akali Dal also calls for the rapid diversification of farming. The shortcomings in the Land Reforms Laws should be removed, rapid industrialization of the State ensured, credit facilities for the medium industries expanded and unemployment allowance given to those who are unemployed. For remunerative farming, perceptible reduction should be made in the prices of farm machinery like tractors, tubewells, as also of the inputs.

Resolution No. 4

This huge gathering of the Shiromani Akali Dal regrets the discrimination to which the Punjabi language is being subjected in adjoining States of Himachal, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, etc. It is its firm demand that in accordance with the Nehru Language Formula, the neighboring State of Punjab should give "second" language status to Punjabi because of fairly large sections of their respective populations are Punjabi-speaking.

Resolution No. 5

The meeting regrets that against the "claims" of the refugees who had migrated to Jammu and Kashmir as a result of the partition of the country, no compensation had been provided to them even after such a long time and these unfortunate refugees had been rotting in the camps ever since then. This Akali Dal session, therefore, forcefully demands that their claims should be settled soon and immediate steps should be taken to rehabilitate them even if it involves an amendment to section 370 of the Constitution.

Resolution No. 6

The 18th session of the All India Akali Conference take strong exception to the discrimination to which the minorities in other states are being subjected and the way in which their interests are being ignored. As such, it demands that injustice against the Sikhs in other states should be vacated and proper representation should be given them in government service, local bodies and state legislatures, through nominations, if need be.

Resolution No. 7

The 18th session of the All India Akali Conference notes with satisfaction that mechanization of farming in the country has led to increase in the farm yield and as a result the country is heading toward self-sufficiency in foodgrain. However, the session feels that poor farmers are unable to take to mechanization because of the enormity of the cost involved.

As such, the Shiromani Akali Dal urges upon the Government of India to abolish the excise duty on tractors, so that with the decrease in their prices, the smaller farmers may also be able to avail themselves of farm machinery and contribute to increase in agricultural produce of the country.

Resolution No. 8

This conference of the Shiromani Akali Dal appeals to the Central and State governments to pay particular attention to the poor and laboring classes and demands that besides making suitable amendments in the Minimum Wages Act, suitable legal steps be taken to improve the economic lot of the laboring class, to enable it to lead respectable life and play a useful role in the rapid industrialization of the country.

Resolution No. 9

This session seeks permission from the Government of India to install a broadcasting station at the Golden Temple, Amritsar, for the relay of Gurbani Kirtan for the spiritual satisfaction of those Sikh who are living in foreign lands. The session wishes to make it clear that the entire cost of the proposed broadcasting project would be borne by the Khalsa Panth and its over all control shall vest with the Indian Government. It is hoped that the Government would have no hesitation in conceding this demand after due consideration.

Resolution No. 10

This mammoth gathering of the Shiromani Akali Dal strongly urges upon the Government of India to make necessary amendments in the following enactment for the benefit of the agricultural classes who have toiled hard for the sake of larger national interests:

1. Hindu Succession Act be suitably amended to enable a woman to get rights of inheritance in the properties of her father-in-law instead of the father's.
2. The agricultural lands of the farmers should be completely exempted from the Wealth Tax and the Estate Tax.

Resolution No. 11

This vast gathering of the Shiromani Akali Dal strongly impresses upon the Government of India that keeping in view that economic backwardness of the scheduled and non-scheduled castes, provisions proportionate to their population should be made in the budget for utilization for their welfare. A special ministry should be created at the Centre as a practical measure to render justice to them on the basis of reservations. The session also calls upon the government that in keeping with the settlement already made, no discrimination should be made between the Sikh and Hindu Harijans in any part of the country.

Resolution No. 12

The Congress government is called upon to vacate the gross injustice, discrimination done to Punjab in the distribution of Ravi-Beas waters. The Central government must also give approval for the immediate establishment of six sugar and four textile mills in Punjab so that the State may be able to implement its agro-industrial policy.

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