

# BRIEF HISTORY OF TAKHAT SHRI DAMDAMA SHAIB

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## ABSTRACT

Fourth *Takhat* of Sikhism is situated at Talwandi Sabo. During his journey, Guru Gobind Singh loosened his belt at Talwandi Sabo for taking rest. Therefore, Talwandi Sabo is also known as *Damdama Sahib* (Damdama is defined as a place of rest or relaxing). The place is also visited by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, Guru Hargobind Rai and Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Bhai Dalla of Talwandi Sabo, served Guru with zeal and zest. Guru *Granth Sahib* was completed at *Damdama Sahib* by Bhai Mani Singh on the instructions of Guru Gobind Singh. Except *Damdama Sahib* there are other Gurudwaras situated on this place - *Likhansar Sahib*, Bhai Bir Singh Dhir Singh, Mata *Sahib* Kaur Mata Sunder Kaur Burj and Bhora *Sahib* Baba Deep Singh, Gurudwara Paatshahi 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, Jandsar *Sahib*, Mahalsar *Sahib* etc.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF TAKHAT SHRI DAMDAMA SHAIB

There are numerous villages namely Talwandi situated in Punjab, among them our research work is limited to the study of Talwandi Sabo famous as *Damdama Sahib*. *Damdama Sahib* which was named firstly as Talwandi Sabo, due to its connection with Guru Gobind Singh its name is famous as *Damdama Sahib*, because Guru rested here when he reached here after loosening his belt (*Kamar Kassa*), so the name of Talwandi Sabo became famous as *Damdama Sahib*. Talwandi Sabo is old and important historical and religious place of Punjab State. This place was very prosperous when Saraswati River flown near it when its flow was near Thanesar. Slowly the river fallen behind and the place became desert. But with the boons of Guru Gobind Singh the town again became fully green. The chariots of businessmen and landlords wandered on the roads like the modern motor cars in this town. Except this we will study the history of *Damdama Sahib* in detail in this chapter and will try to analyse the Gurudwaras and historical things found there.

Talwandi Sabo is a famous religious town of Punjab, where Fourth *Takhat*\* of Sikhism is situated. This place is mainly related with Sikh Religion, because the founder of Sikhism Guru Nanak Dev reached here while going from Sirsa to Sultanpur during his religious journeys. Guru Nanak Dev sat near the *Gurusar Sarovar* and sang hymns and he gave the boon to the place that it will become a famous pilgrimage spot. Talwandi Sabo will become renowned as the centre of *Miri-Piri*, *Deg-Teg*, *Gyan-Vigyan*, and *Braham Vidya* (i.e. swords of Guru Hargobind Rai, God's blessings of Sikhism, Knowledge related with Science and Spiritual bliss)<sup>1</sup> So, Guru Nanak Dev gave the hints of a golden future of this place. Later Sixth Guru Hargobind Rai affirmed his Sikhs namely Bhai Jaita, Bhai Bidhi Chand, Bhai Jetha etc. that 10th Guru would prepare a copy of *Guru Granth Sahib* at the place of *Damdama Sahib*. This is mentioned in the *Gurbilas Granth Paatshahi Chhevi* that at the place of Talwandi Sabo (*Damdama Sahib*) in Malwa Region barbarian people will take knowledge. Tenth Guru will narrate another copy of *Granth* there and it will become famous in the world as "*Shabad Guru*".<sup>2</sup>

Guru Teg Bahadur also visited Talwandi Sabo after Guru Hargobind Rai Ji. When he started his religious journey he was eager to visit Talwandi Sabo at sometime. When Guru reached Bahadurgarh Fort (Patiala) then he said to Nawab Saifudin during conversation that, "*Saifudin! There is my secret Kashi in a forest land, I will discover it after visiting there*".<sup>3</sup> This affirmation confirms that Guru Teg Bahadur visited Talwandi Sabo and it also confirms that there were only forests in Talwandi Sabo everywhere at that time. To fulfill this foretelling of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, Guru Gobind Singh reached at Talwandi Sabo in the year 1705 AD.<sup>4</sup> Guru reached Talwandi Sabo via Pakka Village, where Bhai Dalla Singh, a devotee of Guru, received him whole-

\* Takhat means - 'Throne of a King' from where the kingdom is established. (Prof. Joginder Singh, Guru Jot Parkash, Sunder Saroop Parkashan, New Delhi, 1991, Page No. 228)

<sup>1</sup> Balwant Singh Kothaguru, "Sri Damdama Guru Ki Kashi" Giani Kaur Singh Sahitya Shastri, Bathinda, 2007, P. 17

<sup>2</sup> Bhai Sukha Singh, "Gurbilas Paatshahi 6" Publisher Language Department, Patiala, 2006, P. 238

<sup>3</sup> Pyara Singh Padam, "Malwa Sakhi Pothi", Khalsa Tract Society, Amritsar, P. 4

<sup>4</sup> Louis E French and W.H. Mcleod, "Historical Dictionary of Sikhism", Rowman & Littlefield, New York, 2009, P. 138

heartedly. Bhai Dalla Singh gifted a number of things to Guru Gobind Singh. For many days, Guru's meals came from Bhai Dalla's home. Bhai Dalla was devoted in the service of Guru along with his family. Bhai Dalla requested Guru to stay in the fort, but Guru chosen to stay at the Tibba of *Damdama Sahib*, which is situated geographically at 75°-50" East and 29°-50"North axis.<sup>5</sup> No doubt, Talwandi Sabo is a now a fertile and prosperous place but it was mere a desert in early 20th century. There was nominal agriculture and wild animals wandered everywhere in forests and the environment was scary at night with the sounds of animals' voice.<sup>6</sup>

There are two reasons being its name 'Talwandi Sabo's' popularity. First, Chaudhary Dalla of this area distributed the entire collected crop among masses and its every part (til-til) so the name of the area was formed Tilwandi, second the daughter of this Chaudhary whose name was 'Sabo' managed the affairs of this area, so the complete name of the town was given Talwandi Sabo and this name became popular. Secondly, there was huge shortage of water in Talwandi Sabo in old times as it was a desert place and there was only a *Sardara Da Khooh* (well of landlords) in Talwandi Sabo, so landlords denied other castes' people right over this well and they were deprived of water. Gills digged another well for themselves, but they also did not allow the alleged lower caste people to fill water from this well. Lastly, Boria caste people also digged a small well for them, which has now vanished, but other two wells are still present in this area. On the orders of Guru Gobind Singh Baba Deep Singh also dug a well and water is still filled from this well.<sup>7</sup>

*Damdama* word means- place where someone took rest or stayed there. The name *Damdama Sahib* is famous due to the connection of Guru Gobind Singh with this place. When Guru reached Talwandi Sabo in the year 1705, Bhai Dalla requested Guru to stay in the fort but Guru refused this offer and sat on a higher place (Tibba) and opened his belt. In modern times, *Gurudwara Damdama Sahib* is situated at that place. Therefore, Talwandi Sabo is called as *Damdama Sahib* since then. Guru made that Tilla plain and established a tent. Bhai Dalla arranged meals for some days, and then the meals were prepared in tent, and there was no difference on the basis of caste and creed in serving meals. Bhai Dalla served goods and water for the functioning of *Langar*.<sup>8</sup> Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha in his great historical epic of Sikhism 'Sikh History' has mentioned 10 places popular in the name of *Damdama Sahib*. *Damdama Sahib* is the higher seat for sitting of Guru i.e. it is an altar and famous *Gurudhams* in this name are -

- The famous place Talwandi Sabo related with Guru Gobind Singh Ji was situated in Patiala Dynasty's Nazamat (establishment) Barnala Tehsil Bathinda, Police Station Raman and the place is also called Guru Ki Kashi. Guru Ji stayed here for about 9 and half months due to the service spirit of Bhai Dalla Ji. Mata Sundri Ji and Mata *Sahib* Kaur Ji along with Bhai Mani Singh Ji came here from Delhi to meet Guru Ji.

Guru Gobind Singh stayed in *Damdama Sahib* for one and a quarter year (15 months). Usually, it is considered that Guru stayed here for 9 months, 9 days and 9 moments, but it was the time taken by Guru to write the Bir (copy) of Sri Guru *Granth Sahib*, detailing the *Gurbani* and organizing the *Sangat* for hymns (Kirtan). Guru also visited some nearby villages during his stay at *Damdama Sahib* - viz Bhagiwander, Kotshamir, Jandali Tibba, Titarsar, Maisar, Chak Fateh Singh Wala, Laverisar, Hazi Rattan, Lakhi Jungle, etc. Guru spread Sikhism in every village. Every village has Gurudwara in the memory of the visit of Guru Gobind Singh. But the main centre of Guru's stay was *Damdama Sahib*.<sup>9</sup>

After staying for one and a quarter year at *Damdama Sahib*, Guru Gobind Singh headed towards South India, Guru handed over the management of *Damdama Sahib* to Baba Deep Singh before his leaving for the South. Baba Deep Singh served *Damdama Sahib* from the year 1707 to the year 1760. He constructed a higher *Burj* (fort), well and *Bhora Sahib* there during that time. Baba Deep Singh appointed Bhai Sudha Singh to manage *Damdama Sahib* before his visit to Amritsar along with the group (*Jatha*). After Bhai Sudha Ji, Bhai Desa Singh etc. were ordered (by Guru's will) to manage the affairs of *Damdama Sahib* and serve it.<sup>10</sup>

The place where Guru took rest in Talwandi Sabo, *Gurudwara Damdama Sahib* is constructed there. Guru Gobind Singh got written the *Bir of Granth Sahib* there from Bhai Mani Singh and he also entered the *Baani* of Guru Tegh Bahadur in it. At this place itself 48 Braham Giani Singhs listened *Gurbani* from the mouth of Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>11</sup> Guru bestowed *Amrit* to 120000 people at the place of *Damdama Sahib*. The tradition of *Akhand Paath* was also started from *Damdama Sahib*. Continuous *Akand Paath* still runs at *Damdama Sahib* even today. Due to such great works completed at this place Guru declared it *Takhat* and many other *Gurudwaras* are also situated at this place, brief description of those is given in coming paragraphs.

<sup>5</sup> Balwant Singh Kothaguru, Ibid, P. 13

<sup>6</sup> Personal Visit and interaction with Gurudwara

<sup>7</sup> Personal Visit and interaction with Gurudwara

\*Word Gurudwara before 18th century it was called Akhada or Dharamshala and after 18th century it was named Gurudwara. Gurudwara means views of Guru. (Harjinder Singh Kalgir, SGPC, Kiven Bani, Sikh Univ Press, 2000, P. No. 7-8).

<sup>8</sup> Pinderpal Singh, "Khalse De Panj Takhat", Lahore Book Shop, Ludhiana, 2010, P. 45

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Amarjit Singh, "Takhat Sri *Damdama Sahib*", Manager, *Takhat Sahib*, Bathinda, 2012, P. 4

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Amarjit Singh, Ibid, P. 13

<sup>11</sup> Giani Gian Singh, "Panth Parkash", Language Department, Patiala, 1987, P. 319

First of all, we will mention *Gurudwara Manji Sahib Paatshahi Nauvi*, sitting there Guru Teg Bahadur bowed down to the *Damdama Sahib* place and made a foretelling that Guru Gobind Singh will discover this pious pilgrimage. On the Right hand of *Takhat Sahib* a small building made of *Samma* (wood) is built in the memory of Guru Teg Bahadur Ji, which is shaped as Umbrella. Weapons of Guru *Sahib* are also found here. After that comes *Gurudwara Likhansar Sahib*. *Guru Kalgidhar* gave the boon of *Guru Ki Kashi* at this place. Writing work of *Guru Granth Sahib* was also done here.<sup>12</sup> Building of *Gurudwara Likhansar Sahib* is 30'x44' and 54' high. It is a double-storey building, a *golden-Kalsh* (urn) is situated on its top and *Sarovar* is 204 square feet wide and 14 feet deep. Devoted Sikhs still pray for education by writing *Gurmukhi* Alphabets on this place. Guru Gobind Singh checked the shot of gun at *Gurudwara Baba Bir Singh Baba Dhir Singh*. When Guru called sikhs for the checking of gun-shot then *Baba Bir Singh, Baba Dhir Singh* presented themselves for the cause. This *Gurudwara* is constructed in the memory of these two devoted Sikhs. It is situated in the eastern side of *Takhat*. The foundation stone of the *Gurudwara* was put by *Saint Sewa Singh Aandpur* on 13 April, 1981 and the new building was constructed by *Baba Harbans Singh Delhi*.<sup>13</sup> *Akalsar Sarovar\** has its unique importance which is situated in the premises of *Takhat*. The children born in the eight month of pregnancy are bathed here. When Guru stayed here, he bathed here and the water of his bath was stored in a little pool (*Chhappar*). Presently, an eight-cornered water-course is made on this place in modern days. This place will receive boons. These affirmations are still true. This *Sarovar* was constructed by *Baba Deep Singh*. Then *Sant Chanda Singh of Bunga Kattu* made it eight-cornered and constructed a *Pucca* water course. There is a place in the shape of fort in the right side of *Takhat Sahib*. This *Burj* (fort) is 70 feet high. *Baba Deep Singh* built this *Burj* with his own hands.<sup>14</sup> This *Burj* was made to deploy army in the condition of combating. There are different types of holes at different points to shot at enemies coming from far and near. *Baba Deep Singh's Bhora* was also made near the *Burj*. *Baba Deep Singh* daily chanted *101 Japuji Sahib Pathon* that place. There are also two pots at this place, in one *Baba* used to store water and in other *Baba* stored grams (*Chana*). This *Bhora* and pots are still present there. This place was the worship place of *Baba Ji*. *Baba Deep Singh* made four copies of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* at this place. *Gurudwara Mata Sahib Kaur* and *Mata Sunder Kaur* are situated behind *Takhat Sahib*. These were built by *Sant Jawala Singh* at first and then *Baba Harbans Singh Delhi*. *Mata Sahib Kaur* and *Mata Sunder Kaur* stayed at this place when they came from *Delhi*. *Bhai Mani Singh* was along with them and visited *Talwandi Sabo*<sup>15</sup>. *Mata* and others asked *Guru* about the whereabouts of his sons at this place and *Guru* said pointing to *Sikh Sangat*

*"In putran ke sis par vaar diye sut chaar  
chaar muye to kya bhaya jiwat kayi hazaar<sup>16</sup>"*

*Gurudwara Manji Sahib Paatshahi 9th and 10th* are situated on the south-western corner of *Gurusar Sarovar*. Whether, *Guru Nanak Dev* visited this place foremost, but no place is found in the premises of *Takhat* related with *Guru Nanak Dev Ji*. The only information available is that *Guru Nanak Dev* sat on the banks of *Gurusar Sarovar*. After him *Guru Teg Bahadur* and *Guru Gobind Singh* visited this place. This building's construction was done on the services of *Sant Sewak Jatha (Group) Bunga Mastuana*. A 125 feet high *Nishan Sahib* was constructed on this place. *Gurudwara Jandsar Sahib* is situated on the northern-western side of *Takhat Singh* half mile away. This place was also visited by *Guru Gobind Singh*. *Guru* distributed salary to the soldiers at this place and no one had knowledge about the treasure here before *Guru Gobind Singh*.<sup>17</sup>

Historical *Jand tree* is situated on this place. *Guru* tied his horse with the *Jand tree*. *Gurudwara Mahalsar Sahib* is situated one kilometer far in northern-western side of *Gurudwara Jandsar Sahib*. This place is also known as 'Holgarh' and 'Tibbi Sahib'.<sup>18</sup> *Guru Gobind Singh* played *Hola Mahalla* at this place on the eve of *Vaisakhi*, where Sikhs shown their valour and tricks. *Guru* gave the knowledge of warfare to Sikhs at this place. A *Sarovar* was also situated at this place, but nowadays a new *Sarovar* is being built.

<sup>12</sup> Principle Teja Singh Ganda Singh, "Sikh Itihaas (1469-1765)" Punjabi University, Patiala, 2006, P. 77

<sup>13</sup> Sohan Singh Sheetal, "Guru of Humanity (Guru Gobind Singh)", Bhai Chatar Singh & Co., Amritsar, 2012, P. No. 307

\* *Sarovar* means Pious and Pure Bath place (Dr. Saroop Singh Alag, Harmander Darshan, Alag, Shabad Yug Trust, Ludhiana, 2012, P. No. 17)

<sup>14</sup> Ranjit Singh Kharag "Golden Crystals Essays on Sikh History", International Publishers, Chandigarh, 2013, P. 5

<sup>15</sup> Dr. Kuldeep Singh Dheer, "Veh Pargatyo Mard Agamada" Language Department, Chandigarh, 1997, P. No. 73

<sup>16</sup> Giani Gian Singh, "Jeevan Das *Guru Sahiban* (Twarikh *Guru Khalsa*)", Bhai Jawahar Singh Kirpal Singh & Co., Amritsar, 2007, P. 562

<sup>17</sup> Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, "Encyclopedia of Sikh Literature", National Book Shop, Delhi, 1993, P. 89

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Amarjeet Singh, *Ibid*, P. 20