



Investigation Report On Chithi Singhpora Massacre In Kashmir

Investigated By

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Visit To Chithi Singhpora - Events Prior To Visit

1.1 Introduction

On March 20, 2000 the Indian subcontinent exploded with the news of the mass massacre of thirty-five innocent Sikhs in the village of Chithi Singhpora in Anantnag district of the Kashmir Valley. The impact of this was visible the world over next day when the startling news of the cold-blooded killings were splashed across the world by the media. It was not co-incidental that President Clinton had started his visit to the Indian subcontinent on that day. His reaction was sharp. He decried the killings of civilians vehemently and declared that these must stop before any worthwhile progress could be made in talks between India and Pakistan.

The media lapped up President Clinton's statement with relish. Without any investigation it was assumed to be the work of Pakistan sponsored mercenaries already operating in the valley. Pakistan's credibility took a strong beating. The Huriat Conference felt humiliated as they had always supported the militant's cause i.e., independence of J & K. This was surely a black deed by all standards. Thirty five Sikh Kashmiris had been killed in cold blood apparently to internationalise the Kashmir conflict. Indian politicians were gleeful.

This however was short lived. On March 25, 2000 came the news of the killings of five so-called foreign mercenaries in Pathribal by the Indian security forces. The nation was told that the killers of Chithi Singhpora had been eliminated. Once again the nation was started by the media revelations with-in four days that the five so-called militants were actually innocent civilians. Hartals (Strikes) and processions rocked the whole valley and the police messed it up further by firing on a so-called unruly procession and killing eight innocent civilians. The valley was rocked with further protests and hartals.

The valley of Kashmir had been under the occupation of Afghans, Mughals, Sikhs and Dogra rulers. Ladhak region of Kashmir was annexed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the 19th century and since then it has continued to be, part of Jammu and Kashmir. The British sold Kashmir to Dogra Gulab Singh as a reward for his loyal services and betrayal of the Sikhs in 1846 for a nominal amount.

In 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh, the then Maharaja of Kashmir, signed the accession documents on three subjects - Foreign affairs, defence and communications. Since then like the other Indian princely states it is part of the Indian Union.

The Sikh population in the Kashmir valley is estimated at seventy thousand spread over one hundred and thirty villages. The main population centres are Baramula, Tral and Anantnag. A few businessmen and professionals are well settled in Srinagar. Their main occupations are agriculture, transport and business. A few are employed in government service. In the last eleven years the Sikhs have lived very amicably with their neighbours be they Muslims or Pandits. In fact our team found a rare co-operation between the Sikhs and the Muslim population of Anantnag, Srinagar and other areas in the Valley. During - the hartals over the killings, the Muslims population, fearing mass migration by the Sikhs, were vehement about their support to the Sikhs. Some even declared that migration by the Sikhs would be over their dead bodies. This display of emotion was clearly sincere and spontaneous and touched the hearts of the Sikhs. Today because of this support the Sikhs have temporarily decided not to leave their hearth and home in spite of the lurking fear of further killings. They have temporarily deferred the decision to migrate en mass.

A team of prominent Human Rights activists from Punjab visited the Kashmir valley for a week. It constituted of the following:

- I. Justice (Retd) Ajit Singh Bains, Chairman, Punjab Human Rights Organization (PHRO)
- II. Sardar Inderjit Singh Jaijee, Convenor, Movement Against State Repression (MASR).
- III. Lt. Gen. Kartar Singh Gill, Advisor, PHRO and MASR.

The team visited and talked to all concerned people residing In Anantnag district. They also visited Srinagar and discussed matters with prominent Sikhs, the Press, some Huriat leaders and the local populace of Srinagar area. Very useful data was collected by means of eyewitness accounts, meetings, visits to Chithi Singhpora, Matan, Anantnag, Mominabad and the surrounding villages. This is recorded in the succeeding paragraphs.

1.2 Important Statements of Political Leaders

The investigative teams was fully aware of statements made by various political leaders and media reports published in various English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi Newspapers. Important statements of various political leaders which are most relevant to this issue are listed below:-

1.2.1 Chief Minister J & K - Farooq Abdullah

PTI, Jammu, March 1,2000 "Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah has cautioned people of Pakistan which might create problems in view of the ensuing visit by US President Bill Clinton to India. Pakistan wants to give an impression to the visiting US President that Jammu and Kashmir is burning, Abdullah told at annual function of Sanatan Dharam higher secondary school here yesterday. He said Pak-sponsored terrorism has brought miseries to the people in Kashmir and converted the paradise on earth into a hell. The Chief Minister, however, exuded confidence that the state will overcome all its problems and a new era of peace will dawn very soon... ."

1.2.2 National Security Advisor - Brajesh Mishra

Tribune News Service, New Delhi, March 21, 2000 "The National Security Advisor, Mr. Brajesh Mishra, Today said that a combined group of mercenary outfits, Lashkar-e-Toiba and Hizbul Mujahideen were behind the massacre at Chatti Singhpora village in Anantnag District last night. Mr. Mishra told correspondents that the government had evidence that the militant groups were led by Lashkar commander Abu Mahas while the Hizbul militants involved in the incident were from the Maulvi faction. Mr Mishra said both these groups were pro-Pakistan terrorist groups."

1.2.3 Parliamentary Affairs Minister - Pramod Mahajan

The Kashmir Monitor; Srinagar; April 14, 2000 "...We would only say sorry if the security forces are indicated in many of the such killings.....security forces would not be punished for the killings of civilians it would demoralize the troops who are fighting insurgency in different states....."

1.2.4 Union Home Minister - L.K. Advani

Tribune News Service, New Delhi, April 19, 2000 "Mr Advani informed Mr Suresh Kalmadi that there were reports of possible militant action during the visit of US President Bill Clinton, but there was no confirmation that a Sikh village was a target....."

1.2.5 Other Media Reports

Prior to the Chithi Singhpora carnage there had been frequent statements by the central leadership and by the State Police of J & K and Punjab expressing concern at the growing nexus between the Kashmir and Punjab militants. The Punjab regional paper Punjab Kasri, dated March 26, 2000 mentioned this nexus and also the arrest of three suspected Sikh militants in J&K.

Visit To Chithi Singhpora - Fact Collection

2.1 Visitors To The Village

When President Clinton's visit was finalized, approximately one and a half months before he actually visited India, the following events took place:

1. Fifteen to twenty armed men wearing shirt and trousers under Phiron (Kashmiri overcoat) with rubber boots used to occasionally visit the village.
2. Their height was average (not all).
3. They spoke Urdu and local Pahari language.
4. They mixed freely with the villagers especially boys and played cricket on occasion with them.
5. Sometimes a few even had meals with the villagers.
6. They hung their arms on trees in a careless and carefree manner while playing.
7. They understood Punjabi.

2.2 Relations Of Sikhs With Local Muslims

1. Relations with local Muslims were very cordial and friendly for the past eleven years.
2. Every one moved about freely including women and children. Sikh women and children were not singled out for harassment just because they were Sikhs.
3. According to Gyani Rajendar Singh, the Granthi, and others present about five hundred families of Sikhs and about thirty families of Muslims reside in Chithi Singhpora.
4. Complaint against State Government was that their educated youth are unemployed and denied government jobs. Area is also neglected and denied development aid, roads etc, are in a state of neglect.
5. Villagers confirmed that Militants used to pass through their village occasionally but never did any harm. Sometimes they stopped and odd vehicle to take a lift.
6. Villagers just did not believe that Militants had any hand in this incident. When asked who they suspected, they were guarded.

2.3 Information On Carnage (7:30 p.m. March 20, 2000)

1. **The killers were clad in uniforms worn by our armed forces.**
2. Uniforms were smeared with Holi (an Indian festival) colours.
3. Half a bottle of liquor was found at site which villagers felt indicated killers had consumed drinks prior to crime. In fact **some had seen the CO (Commanding Officer) taking a swig from a liquor bottle.**
4. **After the killings, the slogan "Jai Mata Di "Jai Hind" was shouted by the killers** before they left.
5. Villagers confirmed that Muslims families were most concerned and have consoled the death of the Sikh family members.

6. Villagers are still undecided about their future course of action but they have not yet decided to leave their village and go elsewhere. They however, fear that there may be more attacks and have asked government for security measures. ACRPF post has been set up consisting of about forty men inside the village and located in the two Gurdwaras. The team could not see any defence posts tactically located around the village. CRPF men were residing in the embro of the village.
7. Villagers were very grateful that Sikhs from Punjab and all over India have visited them and promised all help. Support of foreign Sikh too was highly appreciated. They felt proud to be Sikhs.
8. The villagers described the crime in detail. **The killers were led by a tall man who the others addressed as "CO"**; The killers were in two groups and rounded up male members present and living around the two Gurdwaras of the village. The Nambardar (Headman) and Havaladar (ex-servicemen) Jagir Singh were specially called out of their residence and informed that a crack down was to take place. All were required to come to the Gurdwara. As the men came out of their homes they were made to sit on the ground next to the wall of the first Gurdwara and the opposite wall of the smaller Gurdwara. Thus seventeen and eighteen men respectively were lined up and killed by point blank firing. The bullet marks were clearly visible on both walls.
9. The incidence of Karamjit Singh (alias Kuku) was narrated. He had collected milk from the Muslim sector and on return was stopped by the CO and made to sit down. He got restless and told the CO that he must deliver the milk for his sick son immediately and promised to return. CO said, "Aap Baitho Thora Deri. Ham Ko Khali Khana Puri Karni Hai" ("You sit for a while. We are only completing a formality".) Suspecting foul play, which he voiced to his neighbour Nanak Singh, he slipped away and reached home. He told his family to lock all doors as a calamity was about to take place. Thus he escaped.
10. Nanak Singh stayed on and was wounded. He feigned death and thus escaped. He was removed to a Civil hospital in Srinagar, then to a Military hospital. Later he was evacuated to Jammu and it is learnt that he and his family have migrated. He is under treatment in a hospital in Amritsar.
11. Karamjit Singh (Teacher) with his family has migrated to Jammu. On our second visit to the village they told us that a letter was found in the shoe of one revenue clerk of the village asking him to leave immediately as another similar incident was likely to take place soon. This had caused great anxiety among the villagers. Children were not going to school nor were adults going out of the village for work.

2.4 Visit To Matan Gurdwara (April 13, 2000 - 6 km From Chithi Singhpora)

About twenty two Sikhs were contacted and it included a cross-section of society. They corroborated the version given by the villagers. Included Sardar Diwan Singh (65 years) a venerable Sikh who had lost his son in law Sukha Singh in the massacre. Bank Manager, Punjab National Bank Matan and a teacher Inderjit Singh. Additional information provided was as follows:

1. Matan Sikhs also talked of a Muslim local of Chithi Singhpora who was said to have known the militants visiting the village occasionally. Rumour is that killers were seen talking to

him on that day. The boy is now in custody of the security forces. Villagers contacted at the village totally deny any knowledge of this.

2. Matan Sikhs confirmed that area was searched repeatedly by security forces and after a few days they heard that Pakistan currency in the form of coins had later been found in the area. This was again denied by the villagers.
3. They also confirmed the version of the villagers with regard to unemployment of Sikh youth.

2.5 Prof (Retd) Prem Singh, Srinagar (April 14, 2000)

A respectable senior citizen of Srinagar. His family has been residing in Srinagar from many generations.. One son is a Doctor in a government hospital and the other is also in government service. When asked to comment on the Chithi Singhpora carnage his views were:

1. He felts it was difficult to pinpoint the culprits at present but they do not appear to be militants.
2. Sikhs have very good relations with the local Muslim population. In fact we are as good Kashmiris as them. For ten years no incident, especially targeting the Sikhs, has taken place in the whole of J & K.
3. Prominent Muslim leadership and the general public has repeatedly assured us of their backing and that they would not allow the Sikhs to leave.
4. There have been Hartals allover the state expressing sympathy with the Sikhs.
5. Important Members of the Joint Action Committee of the Sikhs in Srinagar are, Sardar Charn Singh Bali President, Prof. Prem Singh and Sardar Lava Singh.
6. The Sikhs of J & K are a well settled community with land holdings and other business interests.
7. Reaction from the Muslim community has been very re-assuring.

2.6 Press Correspondents, Indian Express, Srinagar (April 14,2000)

We visited Muzamil Jaleel and Nazir Masoodi, press correspondents, Indian Express on April 14, 2000 and they said that:

1. The reaction of the Muslim community has been very re-assuring.
2. Large number of Sikhs serve in the Army and many Sikhs have been inducted into RR Units deployed in J & K. the state police is also manned at the top by the Sikhs. This has not prejudiced the Muslims against the local Sikh population.
3. The Sikhs of J & K have landed property and other business assets. "The love for land is strong in them.
4. We feel that it will require many more than one such incident for the Sikhs to leave the valley.

2.7 Syed Ali Shah Geelani President Huriat Conference (April 14, 2000)

He was under house arrest when we met him on April 14, 2000. His views on the carnage were that:

1. This was the work of the Indian security forces and was aimed to coincide with the Clinton visit.
2. The Muslims all over J&K had gone on sympathy Hartals. They have asked for a impartial inquiry into this incident by UN Human Rights Organization.
3. They said that Chithi Singhpora massacre was planned as both Union Home Minister, Advani and State Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah had warned publicly the Sikhs against supporting the militants.
4. Things became very clear after the killings in the fake encounter of five so-called foreign mercenaries responsible for Singhpora carnage whose exhumed dead bodies have been clearly recognized by their relatives to be innocent local Muslims.
5. They also pointed out that the statement that day published in Newspaper by Union Minister, Pramod Mahajan was a very derogatory one. Mahajan had more or less accepted the killings of five innocent Kashmiris and had exonerated the security forces by saying that every unintentional mistake made by the security forces during the performance of their duty in J & K must not be investigated. An apology from the security forces would be considered as the end of the matter. This was a very serious blunder. Mahajan's statement avers that due to their natural role and duties, Security forces are likely to commit errors unintentionally and the government will accept their apology and not proceed further. This kind of a statement will encourage genocide in Kashmir as is happening now.

2.8 Principal (Retd) Ranjit Singh, Matan (April 15, 2000)

He was met on April 15, 2000 and confirmed what we had gained from the villagers. He gave us the following additional information.

1. His brother had served in 6 J&K Militia and was killed in the 1947 Pakistan invasion in Gilgit Sector. After the Kargil conflict he received a letter from the government that they were keen to reward the family members of the martyr. He was asked to contact nearest RR Unit HQ.
2. About 15 days before the Carnage he visited the RR Unit at Khul, 3 km from Chithi Singhpora to meet the OC (a major). At the gate he met the Subedar who spoke to him in Urdu and said "Vidhai Ho" ("Congratulations") I was surprised and asked why Vidhai. He said, "Militants come to your village freely and frequently. You also feed them and look after them well. They also stay overnight and enjoy your hospitality". I was taken aback and told him I know nothing about this and do not belong to Chithi Singhpora. On that he kept silent and proceeded in a vehicle on some mission.
3. After that I returned because the OC refused to meet me. Message given to me was that government is already processing my case directly with the local authorities.
4. I narrated this incident to Gyani Rajinder Singh of Chithi Singhpora.
5. Ranjit Singh also informed us about the existence of a village named Jatre Maidak near by from Chithi Singhpora. Residents are mainly of Mghan origin with some Gujjars. The armed visitors to Chithi Singhpora used to often spend the nights in this village after their visit to Chithi Singhpora.

6. At about 1 p.m. on March 20, 2000 a boy from Matan owning land near the above village went to scatter manure in his fields. He was warned by the villagers to go away immediately as a lot of militants had gathered in the village.

2.9 Sardar Niranjn Singh, Huthamara (April 15, 2000)

Sardar Niranjn Singh, MSc. Teacher by Profession is resident of Village Huthamara, 6 km from Anantnag. He is the elected President (under Sikh Gurdwara Religious Endowment Act) of District Gurdwara Parbhandak Committee (DGPC), Anantnag. He is a prominent and well informed resident of the area. Also member of the Joint Action Committee of the Sikhs with HQ at Srinagar. He was well informed about the carnage at Chithi Singhpora as he claimed to have visited the village a number of times after the incident. His first visit was at 1 a.m. on March 21, 2000 (Night of the Carnage). He had the following to say:

1. President Bill Clinton's visit was confirmed about two months before he visited India. Soon after this so-called militants started visiting village Chithi Singhpora. They were dressed in shirts/trousers under a Phiran, wore rubber boots and cap. Mixed with Sikhs freely. Spoke Pahari/Gujjar language. Said they are residents of Lahore and Faisalabad. Had weapons which they hung on trees very carelessly. Played cricket with boys.
2. They told one lady "we have come from Lahore and were given Rupees one Lakh by Pakistan government and also promised rupees one Lakh more for each Killing in J & K".
3. On day of carnage CO of the killer group was seen drinking liquor from half bottle by a lady belonging to Jagir Singh's family just before the killings. She saw this from her house through the glass panes as it is located next to the Gurdwara.
4. They used to buy Kulchas from Muslims and take them with tea from Sikhs.
5. Challenged Sikh youths to a one day cricket match which was turned down by the Sikh elders.
6. They would carelessly hang their weapons on trees and appeared to fear no threat from the security forces.
7. My uncle Sardar Kashinder Singh BDO r/o my village knew a Jawan (soldier) of RR Unit located at Siel and used to visit him. Twenty days before the carnage, on his visit he was told by the Jawan, "Militants visit Chithi Singhpora too often. I hope Sikh Bhais (Brothers) do not get killed some day". This RR Unit was then deployed in the village after the March 20, 2000 incident. Again my uncle visited Chithi Singhpora. The RR Jawan told him. "See I told you. This would happen."
8. When asked if these visitors to Chithi Singhpora before the carnage were foreign mercenaries, he replied, "As a rule foreign mercenaries normally visit a village once and do not come back again. So these men cannot be militants. Also real militants do not part with their weapons even for a minute."
9. Wife to Havildar Nanak Singh of Chithi Singhpora has recognized killers as same people who used to come often. She saw and recognized one of these men on day of the carnage when he came to her house and dragged her son away inspite of her appeals. He averted showing his face to her but she recognized him.
10. Karmajit Singh of Chithi Singhpora who escaped the killings has also given a statement on TV at Srinagar that the killers were the same men who used to visit the village. Some people say that the tall man (CO) and some others had not been seen earlier.

2.10 Karamjit Singh, Eyewitness Of Massacre (April 16, 2000)

After some effort the team managed to meet and discuss the Chithi Singhpora massacre with eyewitness Karamjit Singh alias Kuku. He is a teacher by profession and well educated. He was guarded throughout but gave us details of the massacre as seen by him as under:

1. At about 7:00 p.m. on March 20, 2000 he had gone to the Muslim quarter to fetch milk for his family. There he met Jagir Singh of the same village and was talking to him when he heard a voice ordering the bus driver and conductor of a static empty bus parked nearby, to get down. The bus he said parks for the night near the village Gurdwara and goes away next morning. The Muslim driver and conductor got out and were told not to move from the positions.
2. At this I felt something was wrong. We met a tall man dressed in Army uniform who was giving instructions to a few other uniformed men. When asked what was happening he told me they had come for a "crack down". I smelt liquor from his breath. He took us both towards the Gurdwara where some other Sikhs of the village were already being lined up for checking of identity.
3. Jagir Singh and I were told to join the others and sit down until checking started. I sat next to Nanak Singh and told him I suspected some foul play as we had never had such a checking before. I also told him we should somehow get away from here. He did not agree. I then walked up to the so-called CO (tall man) and asked him permission to deliver the milk for my child who was not well. He replied "do Minute Baitho, Hum Ne To Khana Puri Karni Hai" he then asked me to sit down and went towards getting other Sikhs out of their houses. I saw the so-called CO drinking liquor out of a bottle and got very restless and suspicious. As soon as the CO was out of sight I escaped by crawling a few yards and running away to my house. The nearest killer at that time was about 20 yards away so I escaped.
4. On reaching my home I told my wife to switch off all lights as I felt something bad was about to take place. I also suggested to my wife that all male members were being collected and so all male family members should run away out of the village. She disagreed and made a scene so I even slapped her. However to save the situation we quickly closed all doors and windows and went to first floor. As soon as we reached upstairs we heard a burst of rifle fire. We were naturally very frightened and remained hidden in our houses. We again heard rifle fire and then loud shouts - then silence.
5. Much later I came out of the house and was witness to the massacre of our villagers near both Gurdwaras. Nanak Singh was alive and narrated his version to me. He said on a gunshot signal from CO the whole group opened fire on the innocent villagers lined up against the wall. Luckily Nanak Singh was not hit but he fell down and pretended to be dead. After some time the killers came again and said "Ek Ek goli Aur Maro Sab Ko Ta Key Koi Jinda Na Rahe". (Fire one more shot each so that no one may escape death). A single shot was fired at each man from close range. In this Nanak Singh was hit in the hips. After some time Nanak Singh and another wounded Sikh named Sartaj Singh dragged themselves into the Nambardar Naseeb Singh's house nearby and closed the door. After some time the killers came again and fired another burst at the Victims to ensure no one remained alive and shouted slogans and went away.

6. When asked the description of the earlier visitors to the village Karamjit professed total ignorance. He said he never saw the visitors during his stay in the village. He was present in the village from February 28, 2000 onwards so this version is rather strange. He also felt that this was the work of militants only.

Team Comments

1. Karamjit was very guarded throughout. His version of telling Nanak Singh that they should escape together as something strange was happening is not corroborated by Nanak Singh vide his statement published in Ajit newspaper dated April 19, 2000.
2. Beside his whole narration appeared to be tutored. He was also all the time saying that we must help him migrate to Jammu.
3. The team felt that they would not wholly rely on the veracity of Karamjit's statement as he appeared to be under some pressure to narrate a tutored version of his experience. We also have reasons to suspect that he may have had past association with some security agency as he indicated that he had frequently visited Batala and Gurdaspur a nursery of militants and won-over militants during the Punjab turmoil.

2.11 Killing Of Five Innocent Civilians At Panchalthan (March 25, 2000)

The team visited the home of one of the victims i.e. Zahoor Ahmad Dalal, resident of Mominabad near Anantnag.

1. We learnt first hand that the special task force (STF) under SSP Anantnag picked up five civilians from different localities on March 24, 2000. On March 25, 2000 fake encounter with so-called Afghan militants was enacted at Panchalthan village. All five picked up innocents men were killed. Their bodies burnt and defaced. A photograph of this act published in Punjab Kesri dated March 26, 2000 is attached as annexure to indicate the method adopted in this act. The face of the victim in the photograph was covered with a phirn lest it be recognized by his Kinsmen.
2. By March 31, 2000 the cat was out of the bag as the residents of Anantnag proceeded in procession to the DC Anantnag's office to protest these fake killings of innocent civilians. The police resorted to firing and eight more protesting persons were killed. There were Hartal and processions daily through out the valley until the State Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah ordered the buried bodies of the five killed at Panchalthan to be exhumed.

Relatives of Zahoor Ahmed Dalal recognized his body including his ring, sweater and other clothing. Relatives of the other victims too authoritatively recognized the half burnt bodies and claimed them. The government allowed the relatives to take the bodies with the provision that a DNA test be conducted by the government to confirm their identity. It may be recalled that a similar DNA test done on a British Foreigner Kidnapped by the militants had been turned down by the British government. The conviction with which the concerned relatives recognized and accepted the bodies should have closed this chapter. Strict action should have been ordered against the perpetrators of this highly criminal act.

Visit To Chithi Singhpora - Observations

3.1 Team Observations

The facts narrated above clearly indicate that the visitors of Chithi Singhpora were not members of the security forces. Dress, language, careless handling of weapons and behaviour in general discounts the security forces. That they were militants, can also be safely ruled out because it is general knowledge that militants guard their weapons most carefully and would not visit a location repeatedly knowing that an RR post is located 3-4 kms away. The finger therefore points towards the so-called Counter Insurgents/ Renegades (Surrendered militants). The description of the villagers, in fact, corroborates this assessment.

The fact that the RR Unit was located close to Chithi Singhpora and the statement of Principal Ranjit Singh and teacher Niranjan Singh clearly indicated that the security forces knew fully well about the identity of the visitors to Chithi Singhpora and did nothing about it.

The statements of various individuals in Anantnag/Srinagar tallies with what the Villagers narrated to the team. One man Karamjit Singh spoke a different language. He stressed in his statement that the killers were militants. Secondly his various actions indicate that he had an inkling that some force had come to kill on March 20, 2000 evening. His escape was miraculous in spite of his being addressed directly by the so called CO not to go home. He still escaped. In our opinion Karamjit appears to have been in some contact with the security forces. His migration to Jammu and his nervousness during the team's meeting with him clearly point to this.

The State Chief Minister, Farooq Abdullah had asked for a Judicial inquiry into the Chithi Singhpora killings by a sitting Supreme Court Judge. (Press Statement is attached as annexure II). Instead the Centre has ordered a judicial inquiry by Justice Pandhian into the Pathribal killings of five civilians and police firing at Brakpora. The Chithi Singhpora killings are to be probed by the Additional Judicial Magistrate only. This clearly indicates that the truth behind this Chithi Singhpora incident is not being allowed to surface.

All efforts should be made to normalize the situation and bring the Sikhs back into the mainstream in the State.

The team feels that Law and Order being a state subject, the handling and allotment of tasks to the Counter-Insurgency Force was done by the State authorities under the aegis of the Director General Police. Events as they unfolded clearly indicate that this force was misutilised for criminal acts outside the parameters of law. Here we have support from the publication Amnesty International (Embargoed for February 22, 1999). An extract from the same (page 26, column 2) is reproduced here.

".....Only three months earlier; Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah was quoted as saying that the Jammu and Kashmir state police and the Punjab police had achieved excellence in fighting terrorism and they could be trusted in the proxy war-like situation facing the state. The reference

to Punjab police was no chance remark as the Director General of Police appointed in February, 1997 had served for many years in counter insurgency operations in Punjab where high levels of human rights violations had been reported. The Jammu and Kashmir state police have shown a disturbing disregard for the rule of law in their expanding counter-, insurgency operations, leading to increasing allegations of arbitrary arrests, torture, killings and disappearance, perpetrated by police officers themselves and reports of their connivance in abuse committed by other agencies such as the renegades. It is also shown in the way police have obstructed victims, families, access to redress."

We feel that a Central Agency directed this operation without the knowledge of the State Chief Minister and his Cabinet. This, therefore, is an act that needs to be condemned and a high level probe ordered to punish the guilty.

The Sikh soldiers have been used disproportionately in Nagaland, Assam, Sri Lanka and all along in Kashmir. This tends to endanger the amity existing between the minority and local majority community. This has special reference to the good relations existing between the majority Kashmiri Muslims and the minority Kashmiri Sikhs in J&K.

It is our considered opinion that Pakistan had nothing to gain by ordering militants/ mercenaries to massacre Sikhs in the Kashmir valley. Pakistan had steered clear of this kind of act during the past 10-15 years of militancy in J&K.

J&K militants too had nothing to gain from such an incident.

Indian leaders however, gained substantial mileage from this incident as a spate of international sympathy was forthcoming. In fact President Clinton was joined by a number of other in decrying terrorism and killing of civilians in Kashmir. Union Home Minister Advani in one of his speeches was quoted as saying that three events brought a turn around in international opinion in India's favour. He mentioned Kargil, the hijacking of the Indian plane and Chithi Singhpora incident. closed this chapter. Strict action should have been ordered against the perpetrators of this highly criminal act.

Visit To Chithi Singhpora - Recommendations

4.1 Team Recommendations


The Chithi Singhpora Killings resulted in Major tragedy for the Sikh community in J&K. It was traumatic event which had national and international ramifications. The killers have yet to be identified by the state and national authorities. It is therefore, very vital to discount various rumours and conjectures making the rounds. The team recommends that:

The Chithi Singhpora killings be investigated by the United Nations Human Rights Commission as these killings are symptomatic of killings that have taken places in various parts of India during counter-insurgency operations. Once the culprits are identified they should be dealt with speedily, in accordance with the law.

Compensation to be given to the victims of the killings at Chithi Singhpora, Pathribal, Brakpora and other related incidents should be Rupees 10 Lakhs as recommended to be given to victims of custodial killings by the India NHRC along with allied benefits.

In spite of assistance by the majority Kashmiri Muslims and security measures taken by the centre and state government, some Sikh families still feel insecure and desire to migrate. In case they do so they should be provided with adequate facilities at least equal to that provided to the migrating Kashmiri Pandits and their families.

The Chithi Singhpora killings put a question mark on the employment of surrendered militants as a viable counter insurgency force. This force consists of individuals who have changed loyalties for material benefits. Their misuse of arms and exploitation of the situation for personal gain has been highlighted by the media repeatedly. We strongly recommend that this force be disbanded forthwith. Surrendered militants should be absorbed into mainstream of civil life rather than be employed in the counter-insurgency role.

Signed 

Ajit Singh Bains

Inderjit Singh Jaijee

Lt. Gen Kartar Singh Gill

Dated : April 29, 2000.

पत्र. सं. पंजी/1048/2000

समाचार पत्र

The Daily PUNJAB KESARI, JALANDHAR-144 001

पंजाब केसरी

जालंधर, 26 मार्च, 2000 तदनुसार तबियत, 13 पेर, 2056

छटीसंहपुरा में नरसंहार करने वाले 5 उग्रवादी मारे गए

बम्बू, 25 मार्च (प.म., काठ, रि.प्र.): पिछले 24 घंटों के दौरान सुरक्षा बलों ने छटीसंहपुरा नामक में शामिल पांच उग्रवादियों को मार गिराया तथा उग्रवादियों ने एक गुप्त परिवार के पांच सदस्यों को हत्या कर दी। इसके अतिरिक्त अन्य में छः उग्रवादी मारे गए। एनडी और पुलिस ने साइड के निम्न खंडों को बंध में हुए विलम्ब में हटा कर विलम्बों में शामिल छात्रावास विद्यार्थियों के तीन उग्रवादियों को गिरफ्तार किया है।

छटीसंहपुरा (पंजाब) में शामिल पांच उग्रवादी मारे: बीकानेर में 82 किलोमीटर दूर पारोवांस में आज सुरक्षा बलों के पांच गुप्तवादियों ने विद्रोही भंडे से पांच उग्रवादी मारे गए, जिनका इस हफ्ते 35 सिखों को हत्या में शामिल हुए बताया गया है।

बुधवार को पंजाब अन्वयता ने आज विद्यार्थियों में एक बयान में बताया कि छटीसंहपुरा पांच से पांच की संख्या है। यह बयान मकान में है उग्रवादी जिने से, इसे हटा दिया गया। गुप्तवादियों को मारी है। इस दौरान एक उग्रवादी मार गया, जिसका नाम वाले में सुदृढ़क तथा: बीकानेर में तीन दिनों के युद्धिक रूप में बुधवार इतल से लेख को छटी में पांच उग्रवादियों के एक बयान किए गए हैं। सिख समुदाय कांड में शामिल और छे उग्रवादियों के एक सिखों की संभवतः से ईकार नहीं किया जा सकता।

सकून वाले हुए दो यह गुप्त सुरक्षा के अग्रवादा मारने से पूरे इलाके को घेर

लिया और हम बयान में शामिल हुए कर दो, इस मत सुरक्षा को गिरफ्तार किया गया था।

अन्य छः उग्रवादी मारे गिराए, तीन काबु; गुप्त परिवार के पांच सदस्यों की हत्या

अज्ञात उग्रवादियों ने पहाड़ से (सी) को। सकून वाले उग्रवादी ने बताया कि सकून वाले के अनुसार कि छे इलाका में शामिल होने का सुझाव है और सिखों के फरारों में लगभग 36 उग्रवादियों ने



छटीसंहपुरा नामक में शामिल पांच उग्रवादियों में से एक को हत्या कर दी जाने का दृश्य

हिसाब लिया, जिनमें एक सिखों और पांच अग्रवादी उग्रवादी थे।

पुलिस अधीनस्थक (कानून) में अग्रवादी भय ने कहा कि सकून वाले गुप्त परिवार में बम्बू-काबु, पुलिस और उग्रवादी छात्रावास में एक संयुक्त अधिवेशन में शामिल की बैठक की।

उग्रवादी छात्रावास का नेतृत्व विद्यार्थियों द्वारा किया गया और कानून पुलिस दल की अनुमति के बिना पुलिस अधीनस्थक बयान (मंत्रालय) ने की।

गुप्त परिवार के पांच सदस्यों की हत्या: (रिपोर्ट, कलकत्ता): बम्बू के कानून पुलिस के एक दल में अज्ञात उग्रवादियों ने एक-एक परिवार के पांच सदस्यों की हत्या करने का काम किया कर दो और तीन अन्य को बयान कर दिया। सुरक्षा में तीन परिवार हैं।

उग्रवादी के गुप्तवादियों की सुरक्षा अग्रवादी लोन ने अग्रवादी को कि गुप्त बयानों के अग्रवादी में गुप्त अग्रवादी उग्रवादियों के गुप्त ने कानून अधीनस्थक गुप्त के फरारों में सुरक्षा और गुप्त लोन से अग्रवादी को बयान करके पांच को मार दिया। दो लोन ने कहा कि परिवार के तीन सदस्य बयान हुए हैं। पुलिस ने मारे गए उग्रवादियों को सकून मार केवल, गुप्त केवल, बयान केवल, अग्रवादी केवल और मारे हुए के बयान में की है। बयान अधीनस्थक इलाका, अग्रवादी और उग्रवादी को अग्रवादी में की बताया गया है।

पुलिस ने बताया कि उग्रवादियों की बयानों के लिए सुरक्षा बल क्षेत्र में पहुंच गए हैं। गुप्त (लेख पृष्ठ 17 कालम 5 पर)

Press Statement Of J&K Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah

SC judge to probe Anantnag firing, Chattisinghpura killings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BARAMULLA, APRIL 5

BOTH the Anantnag firing incident and the massacre of 35 Sikhs at Chattisinghpura will be probed by a Supreme Court judge, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah said today.

The Supreme Court judge, who will inquire into the killing of eight protesters in police firing at Brackpura in Anantnag on April three, would be asked to probe the massacre of 35 Sikhs in the same district on March 20, Abdullah told a meeting of Muslims and Sikhs here.

The Chief Minister asked Sikhs not to leave Kashmir valley as his government was ready to redress their grievances.

The meeting was attended by prominent leaders of the two communities hailing from Baramulla and Kupwara districts.

The meeting was attended

Intrusion bid
■ JAMMU: Security forces foiled an intrusion attempt by militants of Lashkar-e-Toiba outfit along the Idging. The militants and Pakistani troops also opened heavy fire. The exchange of fire continued in which one BSF jawan was injured. The intruders fled back to the Pakistani side leaving behind a wireless set and ammunition. — PTI

among others by Minister of State for Home Mushtaq Ahmad Lone and state DGP Gurbachan Jagat.

SRINAGAR: Abdullah today directed exhumation of the bodies of five people killed by security forces in Anantnag on March 25 triggering widespread protests in the district.

The exhumation of the bodies of five people, whom the security forces claimed to be foreign mercenaries involved in the massacre of 35 Sikhs at Chattisinghpura, would be

done tomorrow in the presence of next of kins of the deceased, Abdullah said.

Locals believed that the five killed were the same people who went missing a day before the encounter at Panchalthan-Fathribal in the district. Necessary tests, including DNA, would be carried out to establish the identity of the killed, the Chief Minister told public meetings in Anantnag district.

Abdullah directed Minister of state for Home Mushtaq Ahmad Lone and DC, Anantnag, Asghar Samoon, to be present at the exhumation. Meanwhile, Anantnag district which has won notoriety for being the land of massacres - is under virtual siege. Men in uniform, dotting the town, are a common sight. Stones raining on them from roof tops and vantage points is grave provocation. But they are responding. Curfew has not been relaxed since Monday.

Annexture - III

List Of The Deceased Of Chithi Singhpora Massacre

Sr/No	Name	Parentage	Age
1	Naseeb Singh	Bikram Singh	60
2	Deedar Singh	Makhan Singh	50
3	Kulbir Singh	Daljit Singh	25
4	Darbar Singh	Karan Singh	28
5	Gurmeet Singh	Nanak Singh	27
6	Ojal Singh	Kikar Singh	28
7	Char Singh	Nand Singh	50
8	Sartaj Singh	Naranjan Singh	30
9	Raghunder Singh	Pritarn Singh	35
10	Faqir Singh	Athar Singh	65
11	Karnail Singh	Faqir Singh	45
12	Sheetal Singh	Faqir Singh	30
13	Jagir Singh	Hari Singh	60
14	Ravinder Singh	Amrik Singh	22
15	Jagdish Singh	Naseeb Singh	25
16	Sartaj Singh	Daljit Singh	28
17	Ranjit Singh	Sukha Singh	42
18	Kamail Singh	Teerath Singh	45
19	Rattan Singh	Teerath Singh	56
20	Naranjan Singh	Arjun Singh	56
21	Gurdeep Singh	Jagdeep Singh	22
22	Ajit Singh	Jagbir Singh	22
23	Joginder Singh	Charn Singh	26
24	Gurbachan Singh	Baldev Singh	40
25	Uttam Singh	Baldev Singh	40
26	Surjit Singh	Suba Singh	22
27	Manjit Singh	Jankar Singh	32
28	Devinder Singh	Suba Singh	18
29	Rajinder Singh	Mohinder Singh	35
30	Rachpal Singh	Khadak Singh	40
31	Grumet Singh	Makha Singh	30
32	Sukha Singh	Ganda Singh	56
33	Ravi Singh	Foja Singh	36
34	Kuljit Singh		
35	Govind Kaur (Died of Heart Failure)		30

Annexture - IV

List Of Five Innocent Civilians Killed On March 31, 2000

Sr/No	Name	Parentage	Residence
1	Zahoor Ahmad Dalal	Abdul Gaffar	Mominabad Islamabad
2	Juma Khan	Faqir Khan	Brariangan Islamabad
3	Juma Khan	Shear Ali Khan	Brariangan Islamabad
4	Mohammad Yousf Malik	Abdul Kabir	Halan Kukarnagh Islamabad
5	Bashir Ahmad Bhat	Abdul Aziz Bhat	Halan Kukarnagh Islamabad