CHAPTER III

VILLAGE SHANKAR IN HISTORY:

A SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE

Shankar is a Doaba’s ‘bara pind’ (big village) and, like other big villages of Doaba, it has witnessed extensive migration abroad. Situated on Nakodar-Jandiala-Phagwara Road about five kilometres from Nakodar town, the village has a history traceable to the Mughal period. Jahangir (1605-1627) who is said to have donated land to its Dharamsala, now known as Dharamsala Khajooran Wali. There is also a well-known Sikh historical connection to the village. Guru Arjun Dev (1581-1606), the fifth Guru is said to have stayed in the village. No recorded fact is available regarding the basis of nomenclature of the village. It appears that village nomenclature was based on the name of ‘Shankari’, a chief of Purewal clan. Shankari’s period goes back to about 400 years\(^1\).

The village has a good connectivity with towns and major cities through rail and road links. The village is connected to other adjoining villages through nine concrete link roads. The Phagwara – Nakodar road not only links the village to the nearby towns but also to Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Great Trunk Road and Jalandhar-Ferozpur Grand Trunk Road. Through rail links the village is connected with Jalandhar and Ludhiana, Ferozpur and Bathinda railway junctions. The village interior resembles the interior of any old city of India. The entry of the village was closed at night for security purpose. One can still witness houses and walls built with small bricks known as Nanak Shahi ett (Bricks used in the period of Sikh Guru Nanak Dev Ji). The old structure of Bhai Hajari Talab (pond) and Balaki di Haweli Show that the construction of pakka houses started in the second half of the 18\(^{th}\) century. The narrow blind streets also give resemblance to the old city structures. The village topology is not plain. The central part of the village is at 25 feet height from its peripheries. The existence of the village for more than 400 year, the density of population, the emergence of political and public personalities from the village in the

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\(^1\) Harbans Singh (Patwari), interviewed on September 11, 2005 and May 11, 2006.
public and political spheres and the large scale migration from the village, have made this village one of the important villages of Punjab.

1. Social Demography

1.1. Religious Division

Before the Partition of India, the village had population of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. Although the exact data of religious divisions of population is not available yet an estimated idea can be drawn from Census Report 1931. As per Census Report of 1931, Nakodar tehsil had a population of 205,949 of which Hindus were 19,873, (9.65 percent) Sikhs 46303 (22.48 percent) Muhammadans 120,932 (58.72 percent and other 1884 (9.15 percent). The Muslim population dominated the Nakodar Tehsil.

“In 1947 before partition, total population of Shankar was about 4000 of which 1900 were Muslims”. The Muslims constituted about 47.5 percent of the village population and Sikhs 30 percent, Hindus 20 percent and the rest of the population was unspecified. Only two Muslim families remained in the village and the rest of the Muslim population migrated to Pakistan in 1947.

1.2. Caste Divisions

The Jat Sikhs village population is further stratified on the basis of castes. The dominant landed caste in the village is Jat Sikh which further divided into clans (gotras) i.e. Purewals, Takhars, Badeshas and Sandhus. Purewals are considered as original inhabitants whereas Takhars are believed to have come from Rajisthan more than three hundred years ago and settled in the village. The Badeshas, now constitute about 15 households are believed to have hailed from Fatehgarh Churian village in Gurdaspur district and settled in Shankar during the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Sandhus constituting about 10 households are Takhars Dohte (maternal grandsons). They are said to have settled in the village in the last quarter of the 19th century. The traditional occupation of the Jat Sikhs was farming. They were small peasants. Before migration to Canal Colonies in 1890’s, the average land holding of

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3 Harbans Singh (Patwari), interviewed on September 11, 2005 and May 11, 2006.

4 Ibid.
these peasants was about 3 acres⁵. The revenue records of 1903-1904⁶ shows that out of 371 sq miles area of Nakodar Tehsil, only 295 miles i.e. 79.5 percent was cultivated and only 6.74 percent of area was cultivable waste. About 31.81 percent areas was irrigated and the rest of agriculture was dependant upon rainfall. As regarding the crops, revenue record, 1903-1904 further reveals as follow.

“The chief crop of the spring harvest is wheat, which occupied 430 square miles in 1903-4; gram covered 177 square miles; and barley only 16 square miles. Maize is the staple product of the autumn harvest, occupying 149 square miles, while pulses covered 121. Sugar-cane, which occupied 49 square miles, is commercially of the greatest importance to the cultivator, as he looks to this crop to pay the whole or the greater part of the revenue. But little great millet is grown (14 square miles), and practically no spiked millet; cotton covered 28 square miles, and rice 3,188 acres⁷.”

The above data shows that the main crops during 1903-4 were wheat, gram, maize, barley, pulses, sugarcane, millet, cotton and rice. But the per acre yield was very low as the per acre yield of wheat varied from one quintal to two and half quintals. A peasant owning about three acres of land, after keeping cereals for his home use and giving to the labourers, was hardly left with any agricultural product for sale. Karm Singh (Bhai) is right in saying "uhna dina vich paisa kise kol nahe ci hunda" (in those days no person had cash money with him). He further held that people were healthy and hearty. They used to keep good number of buffalos and cows. They were well fed with milk, desi ghee, curd and other milk products⁸.

This financial position of the Jat Sikhs considerably improved as a consequence of their migration to Canal Colonies. From marginal peasants they became landlords. They also started acquiring education and developing education and co-operative institutions. The emigration to the western countries, and the impact

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⁷ Ibid.

of the green revolution facilitated their entry into jobs, business; diversification of crops and transforming their life style from laborious to luxurious.

1.3. Brahmins

The Brahmins occupy the top position among the Hindus. The village has about 30 households of Brahmins. They are further divided into clans (gotras) i.e. Sharma, Vaid and Bhardwaj. Traditionally they used to perform religious social ceremonies, not only in the Hindu families but also in the Jat Sikh families. Now most of them have settled abroad and in the major cities of India. A handful people belonging to this caste are running their shops in Shankar. They have provided leadership in modernizing Hindu temples i.e. Bhai Hajari Mandir and Guru Nath Mandir, located in patti Takhar.

1.4. Kashyatrias

The village has about 45 households of Kashyatrias. They are also divided into clans such as Puri, Tandon, Panday and Jain. They used to run shops and of whom two were moneylenders. They were respected in the village for their honesty and personal integrity. They have played a major role in developing the village market. Rai Bahadur Rala Ram, belonging to Tandon family, earned a reputation for the village by becoming a chief engineer the in Indian railway. He was the first person to own a car in Shankar. About 85 percent persons belonging to this caste have settled in the major cities like Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Faridabad and Delhi etc. and abroad and rest of them are shopkeepers.

1.5. Ramgharias

Ramgharias are known for their traditional occupational skills. They are Sikh artisan class. The village had about 150 households of Ramgharias. They are further sub-divided into gotras i.e. Channa, Jandu, Kalsi, Virdi, Matharu, Shaimbi and Sokhi. Traditionally their occupation was Luhara (ironsmithing), Tarkhana (carpentering), and Rajgiri (masonry). They used to make agricultural tools i.e. sickle, spade, cullers, fodder cutters, fodder cutting machine also known as toka, ploughshare and Persian...

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10 Information is based on interviews with Santosh Rani Jain April 25, 2006; Natha Ram, April, 2006; Nashatar Kaur, September 10, 2007 and Bhai Karm Singh August 16, 2005.
wheel. Shankari Ramgarhias were famous for making quality Persian wheels. “Two brother used to make the whole iron work of Persian wheel within two days.” They also used to make wooden equipment used in household and farming. In included windows, doors, wooden roofs, wooden equipment used in kitchens, toys, ploughing tools bullock carts etc. “A Ramgarhia artisan used to assist a farmer whole yea in making and sharpening agricultural tools and in turn he used to get about 20 kg wheat at the end of the year.” They also performed the functions of mason for making houses, cattle yards, pakka wells etc. Above 90 percent population of Ramgarhias have migrated abroad and some of them have also settled in Indian cities. The Ramgarhias living in Shankar are running auto spare parts shops, motor workshops, mobile shop, confectionary store and a few of them are also employed in government jobs. The houses of the Ramgarhia people are located in patti Purewal.

1.6. Ghumiar

The village has 450 population of Ghumiar caste. They are also respectfully known as Parjapats (Savior of honor of public). Officially, they are included in backward class. Most of them follow Hindu religious rituals. It was non landed working class. Their traditional occupation was making clay pots and selling them in the villages. they had donkeys and ponies which were employed for local carriage of goods and materials. The possession of these animals made them small traders. “They also used to upload wheat, sizar, maize, cotton from Punjab and sell those even in the remote areas of Himachal Pardesh and Jammu and Kashmir. On their way back to Punjab, they used to carry potatoes and other items of utility and sell them in Punjab. They also used their animal for transporting bricks from the brick kilns.” The highest labour charges for donkey per score per day from 1910 to 1931 were 7.80 paisa to ten rupees; the lowest charges for the same period was 6.40 paisa to 8 Rupee.

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12 Kapil Dev, interviewed on June 02, 2009.
The above data reveals that the earning from their occupation was very less as compared to the labour inputs. During 1960’s these people started migrating to Philippine and now about 200 people belonging to this class are living in Manila and doing the business of micro lending. Some families have also settled in England and the USA. The migration has benefitted them in transforming from labour class to business class. They have built up good houses in Shankar in Sandhu Patti and on Jandiala – Nakodar road. One family has also purchased agriculture land about 8 acres in Shankar. About 80 percent population of ghumiar caste is living abroad 15.

1.7. Balmikis

This is socially and economically backward class. Their houses were located on the periphery of the village. Their traditional occupation was agricultural labour. It was also known as saipy. They used to work with farmers from early morning to late night for the whole year and in turn used to get cereals less than two and half quintal. They also used to lift dunghills and clean streets, earlier they were called churah and new they reject this insulting nomenclature and their preferred nomenclature is Balmiki. The ladies belonging to this caste also used to lift solid waste from the houses of Jats, Lifting dunghill, cleaning and sweeping managing their families, some of the ladies also used to bring fodder for their cattle from the farms. Inspite of their hardworking life, they were hardly hand to mouth people 16. The ‘highest labour’ for unskilled worker, per day during the period of 1910-1931 was 8 paisa to 10 paisa and the per day lowest worker unskilled for the some period was 5 paisa to 10 paisa 17. Even in 1950, the daily wage of agricultural labourer was 36 paisa 18. Economically they were living in the situation of gurbat (abject poverty). Socially, they experienced social untouchability, particularly by the higher caste Hindus 19. They also had socially structured sense of subjugation. “Even they were not asked to do so but they did not

15 Harbans Singh (Patwari), interviewed on September 11, 2005 and May 11, 2006
Kulwinder, interviewed on June 02, 2006, Piara Singh Lole, interviewed on October 27, 2005.


18 Kapil Dev, interviewed on June 02, 2009.

like to sit equal to Jats. The relationship between the Jats and Balmikis had some elements of family relations. In the situation of crisis in the family of his saipy, it was Jat who keenly used to come to his rescue. The religious concerns of the Balmikis were not very rigid. Most of them followed Hindu religion while some of them were also following Sikhism.

Balmikis have also migrated abroad. About 1000 persons are living in England, Canada and the USA. About 500 persons are also working in the Arab countries. The rest of their population living in Shankar is engaged in semi skilled jobs, self-employment, running shops and a few are government employees. As the result of their economic development, they have started assisting their independent identity by segregating themselves from higher caste Hindus and Sikhs by building up their own multi millionaire religious temples.

1.8. Nai

It is another artisan caste, officially included in the backward class. Their traditional occupation was cutting hair, nails, carrying messages, cooking in the marriages, providing assistance in the social ceremonies like birth, marriage and death. For all these type of assistance, they used to get annual returns from the farmers in the form of cereals. On average remuneration a person used to get about 16kg wheat at the end of year. The village had about 5 households of Nais but no all of them are settled abroad and are successful businessmen.

1.9. Jheer

The traditional occupation of this caste was supplying waters in the houses, cleaning utensils in the houses of Jats and other higher castes. They also used to provide assistance in the social functions like marriage and death by cleaning utensils, cooking and supplying water. They also used to serve water to the people harvesting

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22 Surjit Nahar, interviewed on October 16, 2005, Satnam Sahota, interviewed on October 18, 2005.

during the harvesting session. For providing all types of assistance, they also used to get about 10 kg cereals from the farmers at the end of the year. The village had three households of this caste. Some people from this caste have also migrated abroad\textsuperscript{24}.

1.10. Muslim

The village also has Muslim population of about 125 persons.

Table 3.1. Shankar Village: Population and Social Features\textsuperscript{25}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Census Years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>2544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>2448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Households</td>
<td>866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{24} Karam Singh (Bhai), interviewed on April 27, 2004, August 16, 2005 and August 28, 2005, Darbara Singh, interviewed on August 29, 2005.

2. Religious and Educational Institutions

Table 3.2. Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandirs</td>
<td>Nath Mandir</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhai Hazari Mandir</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaddi Baba Suthre Shah</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mast Shah Shiv Giri Shankaria Maharaj</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bhagwan Balmiki Mandir</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Balmiki Dharamshala</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Balmiki Mandir</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khajooran Wali Dharamshala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Gurdwara Patti Rajoki</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gurdwara Uchhi Dharamshala</td>
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<td>Gurdwara Berian Wala</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gurdwara Fateghar Sahib</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gurdwara Guru Teg Bahadur</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gurdwara Guru Arjan Dev Panj Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gurdwaras</td>
<td>The construction is under consideration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Rabbi Dawar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Baba Kataru –Jathere Tondon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asthan Baba Partapu – Jathere Takhar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Khalsa School (Government Senior Secondary School)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government Senior Secondary School , Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Shankarites also mobilised resources for setting up of 2 Colleges at Nakodar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guru Nanak National College for Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guru Nanak National College for Women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 The detailed description of these religious and educational institutions is presented in the Chapter VI.
2.1. Muhammadia Model Public School, Shankar

This school was established by the Muslim families in 1996 to provide education to the Muslim children suiting to their cultural requirements. The non-Muslim Shankarites, particularly Jat Sikhs, overwhelmingly came forward with financial and moral support. The land and financial help was also provided by Waqif Board. Waqif Board is meeting annual maintenance charges. Besides, Waqif Board, it has local managing committee. It has 175 students on rolls upto middle class, out of 175 students, 40 students are girls and 15 students are non-Muslims. About 8 lac rupees have been spent on developing infrastructure so far. It is not an affiliated school, it follows Punjab School Education Board curriculum. The students appear in examinations as private candidates. Its monthly fee structure is about Rs 100-150 per month. It has eight teachers, two belong to J&K, one to Himachal Pardesh, 3 to Uttar Pardesh and two belong to Punjab. It also teaches Urdu and Arab language to all the Muslim students. Perhaps, it is the first school in Punjab which is teaching Arab languages.

In addition to providing education to the Muslim children of Shankar, it also admits the Muslim students living in the surrounding area. A few students whose parents shift to Kashmir in summer session stay in the school at night.\(^\text{27}\)

2.2. Surindera Model School, Shankar

Besides these government schools, Surindera Model High School is a privately managed school. It was established in 2003 by Col. (Retired) Daljit Singh with a mission to provide quality education in apna elaka (own Area). It is his single hand investment of about 2 crore of rupees including the price of land. This school has triple storey building with fifteen classrooms. It has separate administrative and management offices. It has facility of well equipped science and computer laboratories and a separate library. The school is located in five acres of land, having open play grounds. The fleet of three buses covers 28 villages to fetch students. At present, it has strength of 215 students in all the classes. Besides providing education upto 12\(^{\text{th}}\) standard, this school has also got affiliation of ‘open school’ to provide education to those who can’t attend school regularly.

\(^{27}\) Information received from the Principal and senior teachers of the school on July 27, 2009.
This school is being managed by Takhar Education Society (Registered). All the members of this society belong to the family of Col (Retd.) Daljit Singh. The monthly fee structure of this school varies from 350 to 500 rupees per student.\textsuperscript{28}

2.3. Other Academies

There are also two private academies in the village which have about 200 students on roll.

2.4. Mosque

Besides Gurudwaras and temples, the village has a mosque where Muslim population the village expresses their religious faith. This mosque existed before the Partition and now it is well maintained and renovated.

The description of the religious institutions and memorials has been presented in detail in the chapter VI.

3. Chhinj

Chhinj is a religious, socio-cultural and sports festival of Shankar. This festival has religious genesis. The villagers told that the village used to get frequently destabilized due to the devastating effects of floods caused by the river Satluj.

Guru Nath ordered that ladies of the village should assemble and sing hymn and dance at night for full week to seek blessings of Lord Krishna for the overall well being of the Shankar and their families. The male Shankarites were also ordered to assemble separately at night and sing hymns in paisa of Krishna and at the end organize wrestling competition to appease lord Krishna. The villagers followed the religious verdict of Baba Nath. Thus chhinj originated. The history of chhinj is synonymous with the stability of the village which goes back to more than 400 years. Since then, chhinj is being celebrated by the Shankarites but its nature has changed. The ladies of the village take it mandatory to assemble together, sing and dance for a week at night during the chhinj. But singing hymns has been replaced by the Punjab folk dance Gidha and the singing of hymns by men has also been replaced by vulgar songs.

\textsuperscript{28} Information received from Colonel (Retired) Daljit Singh, chairman of the school, on July 27, 2009.
A belief still prevails among the ladies of the village “if a lady does not sing and dance during the chhinj, a mishappening may occur either in her family or in the village.” It is celebrated during the month of October every year.

The Shankarites has been celebrating this function with the full cultural flavour and hospitality. Before the beginning of this festival, ladies invite their female relatives to beautify their houses and making other preparation for hospitality. During this function, Shankarites invite their relatives to enjoy Chhinj. They share delicious food. The chhinj has another feature of hospitality. Any person without identity or relation can visit any house and he is given a warm hospitality and offered delicious food.

This festival is an integral part of Shankarites’ life. When a large number of Jat families migrated to Canal Colonies, they used to celebrate chhinj in the same manner. Now Shankarites have also started celebrating chhinj in Toronto and Vancouver.

Chhinj has produced sportsmen, renowned wrestlers and sports culture in the village. Besides wrestling, a national level chess competition was organized in the village during this festival. The chess competition was initiated by Rai Bahadur Rala Ram. This competition produced chess players like Pal Singh Purewal who also represented Punjab in chess at the national level competitions. The Persian wheel of Ox race competition has also been added in the chhinj.

The chhinj also helped in reducing social tension among the Shankarites. Instead of fighting and quarreling, they used to test their power in chhinj by wrestling.

This festival represents the historical legacy of the village. It provides a sense of solidarity among the Shankarites living all over the world. A large number of overseas Shankarites visit their village during chhinj. The proposals for the development of the village also emerge with the visit of overseas Shankarites during this festival. Thus Chhinj is an integral part of Shankar cultural life.

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29 Harbans Kaur, interviewed on September 10, 2005.
4. **The Renowned Wrestlers of the Village**

Chinata, Dhina Singh Piara, Binder, Gauri, Babu Ram, Chain Singh, Dhannu, Swarn Singh Dhadi, Mohan Singh, Gurdawar Singh (Rustame Hind), Mohinder Singh (Rustame Africa), Thaman Singh (Nairobi ) Sant Ram (Nairobi) Darshan Billa, Chhilabha, Pritu, Baghar, Joginer, Billa, Gogi, Pritam Singh, Gurdev Singh Gabo etc.  

5. **Market**

Shankar has witnessed a market centre for the adjacent areas since the medieval period. The traders from far off areas used to bring some goods and materials on camels and after selling their goods in the village market, they also used to purchase goods produced by the local people for selling those somewhere else.

“The Muslim artisans of the village were famous for weaving for making quality bed sheets and mats and for gold and silver embroidery (Prof Surjit Singh, interview on July 10, 2005)” Shankar was well known for gold and silver embroidery. In the state till the Partition the traders from Kashmir and Rajasthan also used to purchase embroidered clothes from Shankar. After the Partition the Muslim artisans migrated to Pakistan and they took away this trade with them.

Small shops of cloths and confectionary also existed in the village in the beginning of the 20th century. The migration from the village to the overseas countries has provided a new dimension to the village market. At present the village market has about 300 shops dealing with, daily house hold goods, clothes, confectionery, liquor, meat, tractor and auto workshops, auto spare parts, motor washing, building materials, hardware, computer and mobile repair, beauty parlor and gold and artificial jewelry.

The village has also a good food grain market, run by about 15 commission agents. The farmers belonging to the nearby villages sell their agricultural produce i.e. wheat, paddy, oil seeds etc. in this market.

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31 Pritam Singh (Wrestler), interviewed on October 16, 2005, Gurdev Singh Purewal (Wrestler), interviewed on October 16, 2005

6. **Petrol Pump**

A petrol and diesel pump has recently been opened in Shankar. It has facilitated the villagers to meet the petrol and diesel requirements at their door step.

7. **Marriage Palace and Restaurant**

Besides two Jhanj Ghars (marriage party centres), the village has a marriage palace, restaurant, beer bar and pub. All these facilities are available in Purewal palace. It can support three functions simultaneously i.e marriage function, kitty party and restaurant. It is a novel facility in the village provided by N.R.I. Sukhwinderpal Singh Purewal to improve the status of his village.

It is said about the market of Shankar “A material or good which is available in the market of Nakodar town, is available in the market of Shankar.”

8. **Taxi Stand**

Village has a private taxi stand consisting of about 10 taxies, This facility of taxi service is frequently availed by overseas Shankarites during their visit to the village. This taxi service has provided employment to some rural youth.

9. **Railway Station**

The railway station was set up in Shankar in 1930’s. It connects the village with Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Ferozpur, Bathinda railway junctions. It has been facilitating daily traveling from Shankar to Jalandhar. At present, a local train, called DMU runs seven times from Jalandhar to Nakodar. The number of daily travelers from Shankar railway station to Jalandhar is about 530 travelers. Most of them are employees, and milkmen.

10. **Establishment of Industry in Shankar**

The important consequence of the migration of Ramgharia section of the society, known as technically skilled class, manifested in the establishment of industrial set up in Shankar in 1959. Pritam Singh Jandu and Harbans Singh Jandu who migrated to Uganda with other members of their caste in 1930’s dreamed of making an Shankar a industrial town. This industry was named as Jandu industry. It

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33 Sukhwinder Singh Purewal, interviewed on May 31, 2009
34 Information was received by this researcher from the dealing clerk, Railway Station, Shankar on May 26, 2008.
was situated on the outskirts of the Pati Purewal near Uchi Dharmshala. The Jandu brothers imported industrial machinery from African countries. It was export based industry making autoparts and axles for Trucks and exporting them to other Asian countries. This industry continued functioning till 1974 when it was closed after the death of Harbans Singh and Pritam Singh. The other members of this family preferred to settle abroad.

The other important industry established in Shankar was Kalsi Manufacturing Industry. It was set up by Avtar Singh Kalsi, who migrated to Uganda in 1930’s. It was also export based industry. It used to manufacture flour grinding machines which were exported to South Asian countries besides making supply to important cities in India. This industry was also closed after the death of Avtar Singh in 1989. Though these industries did not live long yet these highlighted the village Shankar. Some villagers contended that the Jandu Industry Shankar contributed to the industrial development of in this region as G.N.A Industry Goraya was modeled on the pattern of Jandu Industry Shankar\textsuperscript{35}.

11. **Hospital**

In the pre-independence era, the people of this village were dependant upon Hakims (Ayurvedic Practitioner) and mahants for medical treatment. After independence a medical dispensary was opened on the village for providing medicine and health care consultation. In 1970,s with the initiative of Dr Chanan Singh who himself was a missionary doctor, a Government Hospital was opened in the village to provide medical services to the Shankarites and other adjacent villages. It has a capacity of 25 beds. It is performing medical, surgical and consultation functions. Besides this hospital, there are about five clinics in the village.

12. **Banking Facilities**

Keeping in view of the flow of foreign remittances in the village, 5 nationalized banks and private one have opened their branches in the village. The under mentioned banks are operating in the village:

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12.1. **Union Bank of India**

It was opened in the village in 1967. At present, its annual business is about 140 crore rupees. Its services include saving account, fixed deposits and loaning for various purposes\(^{36}\).

12.2. **Canara Bank**

It was established in 1998. Its annual business is about 40 crore rupees. It also provides the same facilities\(^ {37}\).

12.3. **The Jalandhar Central Co-operative Bank**

It was also established in 1969. Its annual business is about 18 crore rupees\(^ {38}\). It also provides deposits and loaning facilities to all the sections of society.

12.4. **Punjab National Bank**

It was opened in 2007 and its annual business is about 15 crore rupees. It also provides saving account, fixed deposits and loaning facilities\(^ {39}\).

12.5. **Allahabad Bank**

It has recently been opened in 2009. Its business is estimated to cross 6.30 crore rupees in the financial year 2009-2010\(^ {40}\).

12.6. **Local Area Capital Bank**

It is a private bank, established in the village in 2004. Its annual business has reached near 34 crore rupees\(^ {41}\). It also provides deposits and loaning facilities for various projects and activities.

All these banks, except Central Co-operative Banks are computerized and provide online links. About 40 percent business of these banks is related with to foreign remittances.

\(^{36}\) Information was collected from the bank officials by this researcher on September 04, 2009.

\(^{37}\) Information was received from the Manager by this researcher on September 04, 2009.

\(^{38}\) Information was received from the Manager by this researcher on September 04, 2009.

\(^{39}\) Information was received from the Manager by this researcher on September 04, 2009.

\(^{40}\) Information was received from the Manager by this researcher on September 04, 2009.

\(^{41}\) Information was received from the Manager by this researcher on September 04, 2009.
13. **Co-operative Society**

Shankar was the first village in Jalandhar district to have Co-operative Society in 1906 to boost agriculture development. It is being managed by a local managing committee. It provides financial facilities to farmers for agriculture inputs i.e. fertilizers, pesticides etc. at subsidized rate. Three small co-operative societies being managed by local committees were operating in Shankar till early 1900’s. All these co-operative societies were merged into one Co-operative Society.42

14. **Migration to Canal Colonies**

About 50 households of Jatt Sikhs and some artisans also migrated to Canal Colonies. They became landlords very soon. The agriculture land they possessed was in murabas. The highest possession of land by a Shankari i.e Chaudhary Dalip Singh, was about 35 murabas. Three villages i.e. Dauana, Khundarian and Ali Munda in Jaranwala Tehsil, Layallpur District, were dominated by the Shankarites. Besides agricultural development, Shankarites also started getting their children educated. They also look keen interest in developing education or institutions. Their role in establishing Lyallpur Khalsa College is an example. The rewards and honours given to Chaudhari Dalip Singh by the British administration for his various activities bears witness to Shankarites’ role in the socio-economic development of the people of Canal Colonies.

After the Partition of India and Pakistan, the Shankarites living in canal colonies were awarded land in Shankar and other nine adjoining villages. The same quantity of land was awarded to them near their home town. Thus the migration of the Shankar to canal colonies transformed them from small peasants to big farmers. After the partition, the Shankarites up rooted out from Canal Colonies were adjusted with same quantity of land in Shankar and other adjoining villages i.e. Sharkpur, Allowal, Dherian, Chack Muglani, Nakodar, Malri, Sainiwal, Sanghe Jagir, Mehliana (near Behram) and Saloh (S.B.S. Nagar). Some of the farmers have also purchased land in Bikaner (Rajasthan and Uttranchal Pradesh and a few Jat Sikh have also established their business in Chandigarh, Delhi and other parts of India The big trading class of higher caste Hindus from the village also migrated to the cities like Jalandhar,

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42 Information regarding co-operative society was received from Sh. Mohan Singh Takhar, president local managing committee on July 02, 2009.
Ludhiana, Chandigarh, Faridabad and Delhi. Many of them are successful businessmen. One Jat Sikh Shankari businessman, having a humble origin, had his own private small aeroplane. A Jat Sikh construction contractor at Calcutta built up a first modern house in Shankar known as Lal Kothi. The other modern house in the village was built up by a civil servant i.e. Rai Bahadur Rala Ram in 1930s.

15. Impact of Gurdawara Reform Movement on the Village

The Gurduwara Reform Movement launched by the Sikhs in early 1920’s to liberate the Golden Temple and other major Sikh shrines from the control of the Mahants. This movement led to the mobilization of the Sikhs in the countryside. The Sikhs won this religious battle successfully and they took over the administration and management of the Sikh shrines including the Golden Temple. This agitation had significant impact on the village. All the Dharmasalas except one i.e. Dharamsala Khajajooranwali, were converted into Gurdwaras. The Mahants who earlier used to control these Dharamsalsas were removed. The Sikh masses who were earlier following Hindu rituals started following Sikh rituals. The tradition of child marriage was abolished in Sikh society in the village. A large number of Sikhs participated in the Gurudwara Reform Movement under the leadership of S.Partap Singh who emerged as one of the leaders because of absolute personal integrity and devotion. His ability enabled him to hold the prestigious post of the President and Vice President of Shiromani Gurudwara Parabandhak Committee for twenty five years. This movement generated political activism in the village and created awareness for India’s independence. Sikh women became religiously conscious. When the religious code of conduct “Sikh Rehatmaryada” was being formed by the Shromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee, maximum suggestions came from Sikh Istri Sabha Shankar (Sikh Women Organization Shankar). Two persons who sacrificed their lives in this agitation are still honoured by the Shankries.


16. Important Personalities of the Village

16.1. Village elders

16.1.1. Shankari

Shankari was chief of Purewal clan in Shankar and after whose name the village appears to be named.

16.1.2. Balaki

Balaki was Purewal chief of the village in the last quarter of 18th century. The house constructed by him is still named as ‘Baliki di haveli.’ One pati of the village is also known as ‘Pati Balaki ki.’

16.1.3. Baba Partapu

Baba Partapu was chief of the Takhars’ tribe in the village. His memorial exists in the village. The Takhars living in Shankar and other villages, assemble once in a year at his memorial and pay homage to him.

16.2. Religious Personalities

1. Guru Nath is honoured for making the village stable. A temple bearing his name has been constructed on his name in the village.

2. Bhai Hajari ji is regarded as great religious personality in the village. People belonging to all religion pay homage to him daily. During the Chinj festival, people gather in large numbers and pay homage to him.

3. Shiv Giri was a Shankari boy, born in higher caste Hindu family. He was employed on clerical job in the railway department. He left the job and became a saint. A temple has been built in his memory by the Shankarites.

4. Baba Kanshi Ram is also respectfully known as Bawa Sachkhand Shah ji. He popularized the gaddi of Baba Suthre Shah ji, in the village, people also called him Baba Suthra. His statue exists in the temple ‘Baba Suthre Shah.’ People hold him in high regard.
16.3. Political and Administrative Personalities

16.3.1. Chaudhary Narinder Singh Takhar (1888 July 30, 1956)

His educational qualification was under matric. He served as an elected President of District Board Jalandhar for 20 years. He promoted health care facilities, educational development and construction of road in the Jalandhar district. He used to serve the people of his area with a missionary zeal. Due to his developmental vision and commitment, he was conferred the title ‘Rai Bahadur’ ‘Sardar Sahib’ by the British Government. He also owned huge land in Canal Colony. His work and commitment brought him close to leaders like Partap Singh Kairon, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru and Dr. Rajender Parasad. Dr. Rajender Parasad, during his visit to Jalandhar as President of India, held special meeting with Chaudhary Narinder Singh. The Central Co-operative Bank, Jalandhar and its branches still have installed large size photograph of Chaudhary Narinder Singh, recognizing his contribution to the Bank. His unique contribution was that during his period, he settled all the civil and criminal disputes through persuasion. Not a single case of civil or criminal nature reached the court. He was quite open to public, his office and house always remained full with public. On his death, Shankarites wept and felt ‘headless.’ Due to his contribution to the village, people still hold him to high regard.

16.3.2. Chaudhary Dalip Singh

Chaudhary Dalip Singh Takhar, cousin of Chaudhary Narinder Singh, also served the public with a mission in Canal Colony. He owned about 35 murabas of cultural land in Canal Colony. His work and contribution is reflected in the under mentioned awards and rewards given to him by the British Government.

- Reward for Co-operative Societies – 15 March 1913, Deputy Commissioner Layallpur.
- Reward for first class anti plague – 14 Feb 1916, Deputy Commissioner Layallpur.
- Reward for first class Education – 3 March 1917, Deputy Commissioner Layallpur.
- Reward for good work done by and encouragement of Co-operative Credit Societies in Layallpur District – Feb 1918, (Register Co-operative Societies, Pb, Lahore)

- Reward for his service in connection with 2nd Indian war loan – 3 Dec 1918, (Deputy Commissioner Layallpur).

- Awarded for doing public good by rendering great assistance to vaccination staff in the case of vaccination and sanitation (first class certificate) 20 Feb 1919, (Deputy Commissioner Layallpur).

- Awarded for good work done by with encouragement of Co-operative Credit Societies in Layallpur District – 24 Feb 1919, Punjab Govt.

- With cash Rs. 800/- as reward for his service in connection with auditing account of the Co-operative Credit Societies of Layallpur District for the year 1919-1920—11 May 1921, Deputy Commissioner Layallpur.

- Golden reward and khilat – vice President of Layallpur Centre Co-operative Bank Ltd as a reward for his meritorious service in connection with the Layallpur Co-operative Bank Ltd – 27.4.1925, (Chairman the Layallpur Centre Co-operative Bank Ltd).

- Good work done by in connection with the encouragement of Co-operative Credit Societies in Layallpur District.

- He was granted a Gold Medal – 16 Jan 1920, (Register Co-operative Societies Punjab, Punjab Government).

- His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General pleased to confer the title of Sardar Bahadur as a personal distinction, (Political Secretary to the Government of India, Shimla 3 July 1926).

  He was also served as:

  - Vice President of the Layallpur Centre Co-operative Bank.

  - Chief Director of the Co-operative Commission shop at Layallpur.

  - President of Jaranwala Central Bank.

  - Representative in the Punjab Co-operative Union from the Layallpur district.
- Member of the Punjab Co-operative Union.
- Member District Board Layallpur.

16.3.3. Partap Singh (Purewal)

He was a retired junior officer of the Indian army and served the prestigious religious body of the Sikhs i.e. Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee as its president and vice president for twenty years. His service to the Sikh society with absolute devotion is still remembered.

16.3.4. Swarn Singh (19 August 1907 to 30 October 1994)

**Qualification:** M.Sc. Physics and L.L.B.

**Profession:** Advocate and Teacher in Layallpur Khalsa College.

**Political Career:**

- Elected as member Legislative Assembly, in 1942.
- Minister of Steel, Fuel and Mines, Union Government of India—1952-1957
- Minister of Foreign Affairs, Union Government of India—1970-1974
- Minister of Defence, Union Government of India—1974-1975
- Chairman Indian Congress Committee for two terms.

**Academic Contribution:** President, Governing Council, Layallpur Khalsa College, Jallandhar.

16.3.5. Sardar Balbir Singh (5-12-1938 to 13-2-2008)

1. President Governing Council Lyallpur Khalsa College, Jalandhar.
2. Member of Political Affairs Committee & Shromani Gurudwara Prabandak Committee
3. Former member of Lok Sabha (Jalandhar Constituency 1999-2004)
5. Patron NRI Sabha Punjab
7. Chairman Amritsar mature Kabaddi Federation of India
8. Chairman/President of various trusts, social cultural and sports organizations

9. Chief Patron of Shaheed Darshan Singh pheromone Trust, Rayya, Amritsar

10. Executive member of Sikh Educational Society which manages five colleges & three schools located in various parts of the state

11. President of Lyallpur Khalsa Collegiate School (PSEB), Jalandhar, Law Graduates Association of Punjab, Punjab Kabaddi Association

12. Member of Punjab State Sports Council

13. Vice President of Punjab Olympic Association

14. Chairman of Shaheed Baba Labh Singh Memorial Trust, Jalandhar.

15. Member of Syndicate and Senate GNDU Amritsar, three times

16. Senior Vice President of Indian Council of World Affairs

16.3.6. Dr. Major Chanan Singh (1914 (approx) to Feb 1984)

He was M.B.B.S. and joined British Indian Army during the Second World War. He was widely travelled man. He left the Army in 1946 and started medical practice in his area. At that time there was no professionally qualified doctor in his area. He used to travel to the villages to treat patients. He even used to treat patients at his own expense. He served his village as Sarpanch for 25 years. He also served as member Legislative Council, Punjab. During his tenure as Sarpanch of the village, he got all the streets paved and improved the sanitation and established Girl High School in Shankar. He also established a model government hospital in Shankar. He also played a leading role in establishing two colleges at Nakodar and mobilized financial resources from the Shankarites and his friends abroad.

Kewal Singh was a Takhar, I.C.S. officer who later on shifted to Indian Foreign Services. He served as Secretary, Foreign Affairs, Government of India. He also served as foreign secretary to S. Sawarn Singh as Union Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was also employed as visiting professor on ‘Foreign Affairs’ in a US university.

Sukhwinder Singh Purewal has served as member Bloc Samiti, Nakodar and as President, Congress Committee, bloc, Nakodar. He has also been appointed as Secretary, Punjab Pardesh Congress Committee.
1. Rai Bahadur Rala Ram served as Chief Engineer in the Indian Railway and also contributed to the development of the village. Two of his grandsons Subash Kumar I.P.S. retired, Ramesh Kumar Tondon served as an eminent engineer in the Indian Railway.

2. Balwant Rai Tondon served as special Secretary PEPSU.

3. Jaganath Pandy and his son Rakesh Pandy served as ministers in the Govt of Punjab.

4. Chaudhary Darshan Singh senior Congress leader and former Chairman Punjab Mandikarn Board hailed from Shankar.

16.4. Academic

The village is credited with about 10 Ph.D academicians including overseas Shankarites.

Kartar Kaur Takhar, Surinder Kaur (Takhar) and Kulwinder Kaur (Takhar) got the credit being the first of three graduate girls of Shankar in late 1950’s.

Jagjit Singh Takhar, an Akali leader, got the distinction of authoring the first book on poltry farming in Punjabi language. This book was also written in Hindi language later on. The former Vice Chancellor of Punjab Agriculture University Ludhiana, while admiring the book, wrote the forward of his book.

16.5. Army

1. Baba Khajan Singh, a soldier in Maharaja Ranjit Singh’s army sacrificed his life in the Anglo Sikh War, Sabhrawana. His memorial in the village stands witness to his sacrifice.

2. Karnail Singh Takhar served Indian National Army to liberate India from the clutches of British Imperialism.

3. Captain Inder Singh got King’s Commission in 1924 and served as a member of Privy Council. He was a good player of polo. He also enjoyed good relations with his officers. During senior his ill health after retirement, British Chief of Army Staff personally visited him.


6. Colonel Gurbax Singh Takhar.

7. Colonel Daljit Singh, son of Captain Inder Singh, is now serving the society by running a model school in Shankar, namely ‘Surindera Model High School, Shankar.’

8. Lt. General (Retd) Balraj Singh Takhar was second to former Chief of Indian Army Staff, Major General J.J. Singh.


10. Darbara Singh and Jagjit Singh, (interview on August 29, 2005) said that in 1965 there were 365 army personnels from Shankar.45

17. Migration Abroad

Like many large Doaba villages, Shankar has seen a fair amount of migration of its population both from within Punjab and abroad. Since the 1960s this process has accelerated due to various factors. Although there has been much out-migration to foreign countries, there has also been in-migration from neighbouring areas too. The process of emigration first touched this village in the 1890s. The first batch of villagers who set out for overseas are remembered as Deva Singh Purewal, Inder Singh Takhar, Ram Ditta (Badesha), Rann Singh Purewal and Suchet Singh Purewal, all Jat Sikhs. Eventually they landed in Australia, via a route that took them through South East Asia and Hong Kong. Virtually all of them returned to Shankar after a sojourn of 35 to 40 years abroad. On there return they built modern houses, thus inspiring and setting the next generation on a path to overseas adventures by narrating their life stories. The next batch of Shakarites is believed to have left the village during 1910s travelling through the Far East before landing in the United States. They are known as a jatha (a travelling party of Sikhs) of 12 men, all Purewals: Gurbachan Singh, Jawala Singh, Chanchal Singh, Thakar Singh, Milkha Singh and a few others.

45 Besides official records and news reports information for these important personalities was provided by Kapil Dev, interviewed on June 02, 2009, Karam Singh (Bhai) interviewed on April 27, 2004, August 16, 2005 and August 28, 2005, Darbara Singh interviewed on August 29, 2005.
Following their lead, several others migrated to Southeast Asia and also to East Africa. By the 1940s migration to the UK gradually increased. Early migrants went and returned. Then, from the late 1950s and especially in 1960s, the pace of migration accelerated rapidly. The local travel agents assisted many men and subsequently their families settled in the UK and other countries.

Currently, it is estimated that above 4000 men and women from Shankar are settled abroad, with UK having the largest numbers, followed by Canada the United States, Philippines, Kenya, Italy and Germany. From the 1970s many have also been working in various Arab countries, usually for a limited period as residential rights are severely restricted. Among these, Sucha Singh Takhar’s sons have made a fortune by expanding their business ventures. About 19 students from the village have gone to Australia to pursue higher education in the year 2009. By the turn of the new millennium, Shankrites feel proud to mention some of their overseas settlers who have distinguished themselves in the different spheres of life. Among these luminaries are Pal Singh Purewal, creator of Nanakshahi Calendar adopted by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee; Shinder Purewal, an Honorary Judge and an academician is settled in Canada; Harbhajan Singh Purewal, a prominent engineer in the US; and Surinder Singh Purewal, Assistant Director, Metropolitan Police, Surjit Nahar and Nirmal Singh Takhar, businessmen, Tarsem Singh Purewal and Rajinder Singh Purewal, journalists, all settled in the UK.

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