CHAPTER – IV
SHANKAR ABROAD: A PROFILE OF MIGRANTS

A profile of 41 emigrants relating to their family history, processes of migration, experiences overseas and linkages with the homeland, has been described hereby in order to make in depth understanding of the process of migration from the village. The sample of 41 migrants represents all the characteristics of migration from the village. The profile of these migrants is as under:

4.1. Deva Singh: Early Migrant 1870-1963 (1890)

Deva Singh Purewal S/o Sardar Fateh Singh Purewal was reported as the first person who migrated to Australia in 1890. He belonged to Jat Sikh Purewal family. The family was living jointly in a small double storey house. Deva Singh’s family was housed in the ground floor and the first floor was occupied by his elder brother Punoo. The main occupation of this family was agriculture. He had about less than one acre of agricultural land which could hardly meet basic needs of his family members. He had only son namely Rann Singh who was also engaged in agricultural occupation. Deva Singh got his son married. Deva Singh’s wife passed away. He decided to go to Australia for earning. In those days, Australia was in need of agricultural labour for sugarcane farming. The pilots of merchant ships from Australia to India were given incentives by Australian farmers for bringing agricultural labour for them. Some persons from Jandiala town first went to Australia and information regarding better opportunities in Australia reached Shankar. This influenced the persons like Deva Singh to migrate to Australia for better earning.

Deva Singh was adventurous, hard working and religious minded. He travelled about 30 km on feet from his village Shankar to Phillaur and reached Calcutta by train. From there he boarded ship for Australia. During the initial period he worked there as an agricultural labourer in the sugarcane farms. Then he started working as a travelling salesman and purchased his own shop and worked as a shopkeeper. In 1913, he decided to come back to his native village and when he reached Singapore, he again changed his mind to go back to Australia for more earning. He worked there till 1937. In 1937, he came to his village as a suited booted turbaned gentleman. He lived in Shankar for rest of his life and died in March 1963. He used to share his
experiences of Australia with his family members. Pal Singh Purewal, his great grandson told that once a priest used to visit him and tried to motivate him to convert into Christianity but he declined the priest’s offer and remained stick to Sikh faith. He also narrated another incident that one day, he was wandering as a travelling salesman, he could not reach his destination and he requested a farmer for providing him night stay at his farm store. The farmer permitted him for stay. He was very hungry but his self respect did not permit him to request that farmer to serve him food Instead he satisfied his hunger by eating two raw potatoes from store. It was one of the examples of hardships he faced.

Deva Singh used to send remittances to his family through bank. Although the exact amount of remittances sent by Deva Singh could not be ascertained yet it was for the first time that the major amount of foreign remittances came to this village. The tentative amount of the foreign remittances sent by him was above 50’000 rupees, which was considered a large amount at that time. Once upon a time he sent Rs 32,000 to his family. Being such a big amount, the family had to purchase a heavy weight iron box, to keep that money safe in the house. The remittances were used for purchasing of land and the education of children. As a result the land holdings of the family increased to about 25 acres. One example of his liberal mind on expenditure on the education of his grand son and great grand son Pal Singh Purewal told that, he gave Rs. 8,000 for their education in 1948. The family owes Deva Singh for economic and educational progress, ethical and moral value system to which the family is still committed. Deva Singh’s riches further triggered a movement in Shankar to migrate abroad for more earnings. Deva Singh neither called any of his relative nor family members to Australia. He rather wanted that his family members should satisfy their requirements with the wealth he earned for them. They should stay at the homeland instead of facing hardships for earning money, which he faced during his stay in Australia.

4.2. Suchait Singh and Rann Singh (1890)

Suchait Singh and Rann Singh belonged to Jat Sikh Purewal family having less than 10 acres agricultural land. They went to Australia in early 1890s. They were

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1 Harbans Singh (Patwari), interviewed on September 11, 2005 and May 11, 2006, Pal Singh Purewal, interviewed on February 16, 2005.
three brothers i.e Suchait Singh, Rann Singh and Buta Singh. It was a joint family. Buta Singh looked after family when Rann Singh and Suchait Singh left for Australia. They were uneducated, married and were in the age group of 20 to 25 years. Rann Singh and Suchait Singh went in a group of people of adjoining villages. They went to Calcutta by train from where they boarded the ship for Australia. It is pertinent to mention here a incident that Suchait Singh was younger to Rann Singh and he was afraid of boarding ship and started crying, Rann Singh closed his eyes with a piece of cloth, picked him up and took to the ship. They worked in the sugarcane farms about ten years. It is revealed in the letter written by them to their family in Shankar that they sent remittances for purchasing of land for economic upliftment of their family. The social networks of these migrants in Australia developed strongly which helped them to stay in the foreign land for a long period away from their families. The favourable and non-racial discriminatory attitude of the Australians also helped them to stay in Australia for a long period. Their communication link with their families and relatives was mainly through messages through co-workers and letters.

Both of the brothers returned to Shankar around 1900, lived in village for 3-4 years and again went to Canada in a group. They worked in a saw mill established by a Punjabi Jat Sikh of the Manjaki area of the Doaba region namely Assa Singh Jandiala. They came back to Shankar in around 1914. Suchait Singh died around 1916 and Rann Singh decided not to go back to abroad and looked after joint family. He also died around 1920-21. The earnings made by them were spent for purchasing land, marriages of their children, housing and maintenance of their families. There was also a popular saying in the village *Khao pindwich ate kamaobahron* (earn from abroad and spend in the village).

Another member of this family, Lal Singh Purewal went to USA in 1902 and established there with family. He returned to Shankar in 1953. He purchased land near Patiala and settled there. He died in 1956. All of his family members are now settled in Canada. Hari Singh Purewal son of Suchait Singh, after completing his family here left for USA in 1932. He was influenced by the riches of Shankarites in the USA. When he reached USA, his cousin Lal Singh Purewal advised him to leave USA fearing his arrest for his illegal stay. Being convinced by the advice, he shifted to Argentina. He worked there very hard and purchased agricultural farm there. Then he called his brother Nasib Singh to join him. Both of them managed about 100 acres of
agricultural land in Argentina. They returned to Shankar in 1964. Hari Singh died in 1985 and Nasib Singh died 1986. But process of migration continued in the family. Hari Singh’s other brother Joginder Singh a wrestler settled with his family in England in 1950’s. Joginder Singh also purchased a large piece of agricultural land near Patiala (Punjab). Now his family is well settled in England and has rare connection with the home land. Hari Singh had two sons Jarnail Singh and Gurmail Singh. Gurmail Singh Purewal was post graduate and also migrated to England on ‘work permit’ in 1953 and settled there with family. The year 1976 witnessed a change when a graduate girl from their family namely Manjit Kaur migrated to Canada on marriage basis. Manjit Kaur was married in a family belonging to nearby village and well settled in Canada. Manjit Kaur’s in-laws were financially well off, she unlike other women did not join any job. She worked as a house wife. She sponsored her parents and a brother. On her sponsorship, her father Jarnail Singh, mother Parmjit Kaur and brother Iqbal Singh reached Canada in Feb, 1982. Jarnail Singh was uneducated, his son was only a matriculate and his wife was also uneducated. They started their life in Canada as agriculture labourers in the farms of Punjabi Jat Sikhs. During their initial stage they felt their work of agricultural labourers as humiliating and below standard. So they thought of earning about $10,000/- and return back to Shankar. They thought that with the interest of $10,000/- in India, they can lead a peaceful life. They gave up their idea as they got used to their work which started them paying handsomely. They started multiplying their earnings with Indian currency. Jarnail Singh’s elder son Gurpal Singh was also smuggled into Germany by the travel agents belonging to Hoshiarpur district Punjab by charging Rs 25000/- (twenty five thousand rupees only). Gurpal Singh remained five years in Germany and then shifted to the USA and from the USA he again migrated to Canada and joined his family. Jarnail Singh’s family worked hard and purchased agricultural land. Now they own about 70 acres agricultural land in Absford. Jarnail Singh also purchased about 35 acres of land for his daughter Manjit Kaur. This family has experienced the five generations of migration from Suchait Singh and Rann Singh to the grand children of Jarnail Singh. The fifth generation is born and growing up in Canada and England².

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4.3. **Thakar Singh 1896-1990 (1913)**

Thakhr Singh Takhar was born around 1896 (approximately) in a peasant family. He had about 6 acres of agricultural land. Thakar Singh had no formal education. He got married to Harnam kaur in 1911. They had a son namely Karm Singh Takhar. Thakar Singh left for the USA in 1913 when his child was less than one year old. It was not ascertained that how did he managed to reach the USA. However it was narrated that first he worked in East Asian colonies of British Empire for sometime, and then from there he reached the USA. He had experiences of First World War in the USA. He worked there as a farm labourer. He did not call his family members or relatives to the USA. He remained there till 1974 about 61 years. He did not contribute much for the economic development of his family. He had links with Babbar Akali movement and donated money for that movement for the liberation of the country. He also made some donations to social cause outside village. Thakar Singh happened to be the first migrant who donated money for India’s independence. When he came to the village he could converse in fluent English language and had progressive ideas. His wife could enjoy his company less than two years throughout the married life. People used to ask her when her husband Thakar Singh would come and she used to reply that he would come after her death. It proved true, Thakar Singh came in 1974 after six months of his wife’s (Harnam Kaur) death. Although Thakar Singh did not spend much on family yet his western progressive ideas contributed to the education of his grand children. All of his grand children are educated³.

4.4. **Surjit Nahar (1930)**

Surjit Nahar’s father Gurdas Mall Nahar was working as a contract farm labourer also known as “Saipy”. He did not get any formal education. Surjit Nahar’s grandfather was tailor. The style of living of this family was like other poor “Balmik” families in the village. Nahar’s father Gurdas Nahar migrated to Kenya around 1930 with the help and motivation of his friends. After four years of his arrival in Kenya, he called his wife there. They had four children there. The eldest son was Surjit Nahar. Surjit Nahar got education from Kenya. He is graduate and also has specialization in the discipline of psychology. Surjit Nahar’s father Gurdas Nahar came to Shankar in

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³ Niranjan Singh Takhar (Master), interviewed on September. 11, 2005 and November 09, 2005.
1953. He purchased 12 acres of agricultural land and built up a Kothi (modern indoor house) in Shankar. He was the first Balmiki to become land owner in the village. Surjit Nahar worked as a farmer in the village from 1958 to 1960. He decided to abandon farming as it was not much profitable occupation. As he already possessed British passport being a born citizen in British colony, he migrated to England in 1960. He started his life in England as labourer in construction work. He continued this work for two years. Then he started his private job as a commission agent for filling up immigration and sponsorship forms. In 1970 he joined British Airways as a Flight Escort officer. He continued this job for 27 years.

He had three children born in England. The eldest son Rajnath born in 1964 is working as “Flight officer” in British Airways. His wife Roma Nahar works in school. His daughter Anita Sobha, born in 1963 is working as Income Tax inspector and she is also member of high power committee which deals with Income Tax policy matters. She has distinction of first girl hailing from Balmiki family of Indian origin, working on one of the top executive post of Income Tax in British Government. His son Anil Nahar represents transport union and catering company union. One of his sons is a doctor having specialization in diabetes, running clinic in London and he is also planning to open clinic in Bombay.

Surjit Nahar’s three sisters are also settled in England. His sister Nindero Sahota is now living in London and her son is Barrister in Queen’s Council. His other sister who has expired, her husband Joginder Lally and three sons are working for the social welfare of Balmikis living in England. His other sister living in London has three sons. One is architect, other works in business employment exchange and one is working as representative in a P.M.W Firm. He has been working for the welfare of Balmiki community for the last 30 years. He is a general secretary of Balmik Sabha International. Balmik Sabha International has also assimilated in it four major organizations i.e. Shri Guru Balmik Sabha, South hall, Shri Guru Balmik Sabha Coventry, Shri Guru Balmik Sabha London and Balmik Cultural Association, London. Balmik Sabha International has around 30,000 members and its branches are spread in the Punjab (India), Bombay (Maharashtara, India), the USA, Canada, Germany, Singapore and Thailand. Balmik Sabha International’s area of operation is bringing Balmiki community living all over the world under one platform and making them feel proud of their social identity; teaching them the philosophy of Guru Balmik
Ji and promoting the education standard of Balmikis. It builds up Balmik mandirs and celebrates religious festivals. It has built up very beautiful temple known as Shri Guru Balmik Mandir, South Hall. Besides performing religious ceremonies, it provides free meals to devotees. This facility is available for 24 hours for all days of week. Balmik Sabha International prepared “Yog Vasishat” (A religious book in praise of Guru Balmik) in 2003. It has planned to install it in all the Balmik mandirs. It has also established some schools at few place i.e. Bombay (India), Thailand, London, for the education of Balmik Children.

The British Government nominated Surjit Nahar as J.P. for United Nations Organization. He represents World Food Programme. He acts as observer to the member countries affected by starvation; U.N.O. releases funds for the effected countries on the basis of its observers report. Surjit Nahar feels proud of representing at U.N.O as his social work has elevated him to this post despite of his humble social origin.

4.5. **Aujagar Singh Takhar (1931)**

Aujagar Singh S/o Diwan Singh, born in 1909, qualification F.A, caste Jat Sikh, sub caste Takhar, migrated to Singapore in 1930. Aujagar’s father Diwan Singh, uncle Bhagwan Singh and his grandfather Jawala Singh were the freedom fighters. Fearing harassments by the police, they decided to send Aujagar Singh to Singapore. Due to the same apprehension, Diwan Singh and Bhagwan Singh purchased land in Lyallpur, district now in Pakistan and migrated there. They also had about 10 acres of ancestral land in Shanker. Bhagwan Singh died in the freedom struggle against British rule and Diwan Singh remained in Lyallpur district till the partition of India.

Before migrating to Singapore, Aujagar Singh was married and he also took his wife to Singapore in January 1931. He worked as cloth merchant jointly with his sister Gurcharan Kaur and brother-in-law who were living in Singapore since 1915. Three children of Aujagar Singh were born in Singapore namely Harjinder Singh in 1931, Sardul Singh in 1933 and Jaswinder Kaur in 1936. Aujagar Singh’s wife shifted to Shankar along with her children in 1937 and concentrated on the education of her children. Aujagar singh though managed his business in Singapore yet frequently visited Shankar. He had three more children born in Shankar. After receiving

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4 Surjit Nahar, interviewed on October 16, 2005.
education from homeland, Harjinder Singh and Sardul Singh went to Singapore and joined their father.

Harjinder Singh got married in 1962 and settled in Singapore with family. He expired in 2002 and the rest of the members of his family are living in Singapore. Sardul Singh continued his study in Singapore and completed his Ph.D. He again migrated to Canada in 1967 and joined teaching profession. He worked as a teacher in Alberta University, Canada. In 1998, he again migrated to USA and took 1500 acres of agriculture farm on lease in California. He expired in 2002. His wife and two daughters Mankirnjit Kaur Takhar and Neeta Takhar are post Graduate and married. Mankirnjit Kaur is a Lawyer and Neeta Takhar is managing her own business.

Aujagar Singh’s daughter Jaswinder Kaur completed her graduation in 1960 and got married in 1968. She along with her family migrated to Canada as skilled workers in 1970. They had three children born in Canada i.e Gurpreet Singh, in 1971, Sukhdeep Kaur 1972 and Gurdeep Singh 1976. All the three children are doctors. They are still unmarried.

Aujagar Singh’s one son was settled in England in 1962. Three children of Aujagar Singh preferred to live in India. His youngest son Jasdev Singh is managing agriculture farm consisting of 19 acres in Shanker. His daughter Amrit, who is a post graduate and employed as a college lecturer in Nakodar, is also married in Canada. His son Ravi has received education in M.B.A, IT from England. It is also pertinent to mention here that Aujagar Singh’s sister’s children are also well educated and settled. Her daughter Gurjot Kaur is a Senior I.A.S officer in Delhi. Her son Kulvikas, graduate has shifted from Singapore to Canada on marriage base. Her other son Parmprakash Singh got his Ph.D. from USA and employed as professor in University in Singapore.

This family is a joint family. They own house and property in Shankar. The children born in this family are familiar with Punjabi Culture. This family like other overseas Shankarites, has not made any substantial investment in homeland because their future generations perceived their future brighter in the host countries.5

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4.6. **Aujagar Ram (1941)**

Aujagar Ram, S/o Babu Ram, caste Nai (barbar) was born in 1915. His father Babu Ram was *Hakeem* (an auruvadic practitioner). Aujagar Ram went to Indonesia in 1941 and worked as an employee of Amirtsar based cloth merchant in Indonesia. He lived there alone, the rest of his family members, were living in Shankar. He worked in Indonesia from 1941 to 1962. During this period of more than two decades, he came to Shankar once in 1952 on the marriage of his elder brother and immediately after the marriage, he left for Indonesia.

In 1954, he arranged immigration of his son Bhagat Ram and brother-in-law to England on work permit. In 1962, Bhagat Ram called his wife and children in England. Bhagat Ram though uneducated yet was semi skilled and got fluent command over English language. He worked in Gravesend as a foreman. Within a short span of time, he became famous in the Punjabi community in London for providing job to the unemployed Punjabi immigrants. In 1962, Aujagar himself migrated to England on work permit and joined his son Bhagat Ram. He later on sponsored the immigration of his younger brother Narinderpal to England. Both of the brothers worked together as contractors in the construction work. Besides getting established in business, they concentrated on the quality education of their children. Bhagat Ram’s two sons namely Ashok Kumar and Rakesh Kumar are reputed engineers. The grandson of Bhagat Ram, Deepak is Engineer in the World Bank. The grand daughter of Ashok Kumar has pursued her higher study in medical science from the USA. Narinderpal’s children couldn’t rise as much in education.

Aujagar Singh wanted his linkages with Shankar intact that’s why he did not permit his son Inderjit, a primary school teacher, to migrate aboard. In 1986, Inderjit’s elder son Sunil Kumar also known as Laddi went to England as a tourist. He got married there to England based Punjabi girl. His marriage was arranged by his cousins. He also became a British citizen. He has established a very good business there as a contractor in the construction work. Inderjit’s younger son Sanjiv Kumar also known as Tinka was employed in Indian Navy. He got married to a Canadian immigrant Punjabi girl and migrated to Canada in 1993. Inderjit took premature retirement from his job and migrated to Canada with family on the sponsorship of his son. Inderjit’s son operates taxi service and he himself and his wife work as seasonal agricultural labourers.
Thus the whole of the family of Aujagar Ram has migrated abroad and have fourth generation in England. Only Inderjit’s family has invested some of their earnings in homeland. They purchased 8.5 acres of agricultural land in Shankar in 1947 which is now rented and have a 1/3 share in “Punjab Concrete Block Company” in Tajpur near Jalandhar. This business has given employment to about 25 persons and is generating handsome turnover. All the members of his family visits homeland off and on. Inderjit told that he has visited India seven times and England four times since 1995. The new generation, which is born abroad doesn’t like to settle in the homeland due to climate and administrative reasons.

4.7. **Giani Pakhar Singh Purewal (1952)**

Giani Pakhar Singh Purewal S/o Didar Singh, born in 1923 (approximate). He passed matriculation in 1938 from Arya School Nakodar. He joined government service as a clerk. He continued his study during service. He did F.A from Lahore, later on passed graduation. He also qualified a Sikh religious study at under graduation level known as ‘Giani’. Due to qualification prefix Giani was attached with his name. He could converse in seven languages i.e. Urdu, Persian, Arabic, English, Punjabi, Hindi and Sanskrit. He was religious minded having absolute personal integrity and had a missionary zeal for social service. He retired from government service as a superintendent to Deputy Commissioner Kapurthala in 1980.

In 1952, he took leave from his service and went to England on work permit. He joined there as a bus conductor. He had to cut his hair off and remained un-turbaned. He regretted it the most and even he did not send his photographs to the family with non-Sikh image. His religious values, identity and social service zeal compelled him to return to his home land. He told his family that foreign country (England) was not suitable for him. He felt satisfied for serving people at home. He also did not like that any of his family member should go abroad. He spent the rest of his life in the village. He gave top priority to the education of his children rather than purchasing property.

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6 Inderjit (Master), interviewed on September 16, 2005.
7 Surinder Singh Purewal, interviewed on October 17, 2005.
4.8. Piara Singh Takhar (1953)

Piara Singh Takhar S/o Aujagar Singh Takhar born in 1930, educational qualification undermatric, father’s land holding about six acres, went to England in 1953 with the help of a travel agent. A piece of land was mortgaged to mobilize money for his migration to England. He worked in a factory as an unskilled worker. He got married in England based Punjabi Jat Sikh family having their origin from the Doaba region of Punjab. He sent remittances to Shankar to get his land freed which was mortgaged and he also purchased about seven acres of agricultural land in Shankar. Piara Singh worked very hard to establish himself in the foreign land. He came to his village first time in 1977, after twenty four years of his landing in England. He facilitated migration of his younger brother Kewal Singh Takhar to England by arranging his marriage to England based Punjabi girl. He also provided housing and other facilities to his younger brother for about four years. He also arranged marriages of his two sisters one in England and other in Canada. Their one brother Balbir Singh Takhar an officer in Punjab State Electricity Board, is living in Shankar. Balbir Singh’s daughter Sandeep Kaur has also settled in Birmingham, England. It is also pertinent to mention here that Kewal Singh Takhar like Piara Singh Takhar also worked very hard as a worker in a foundry and visited his village after 17 years of his migration to England. Piara Singh Takhar has two sons namely Michal Takhar, age 44 years and Ravinder Singh, age 42 both are married in England with Punjabi girls. Michal Takhar has two school going children i.e. Munik Takhar and Gurwinder Takhar. Kewal Singh Takhar’s daughter Ranjit Kaur Tahkar has very brilliant career and is employed in foreign services department having annual salary about, £ 48,000 (Forty eight thousand pounds). This family has elevated from simple unskilled foundry workers to small businessmen, their children have quality education and they own houses in England. Now they like to visit their homeland to enjoy holidays and meet their relatives. They also make some donation if someone approaches them. They contend that life has become quite competitive and expensive in the host countries. It is not now possible to sent remittance to homeland for making commercial investment. No one of their family wants to settle in India due to climate and administrative reasons.

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8 Piara Singh Takhar, interviewed on October 03, 2005.

Piara Singh Lole S/o Babu Ram, caste Ghumiar (Parjapat) subcaste Lole, born in 1928, education qualification 7th standard, migrated to England in 1954. Piara Singh’s father used to practice traditional occupation of making clay pots and selling them in Shankar. Piara Singh was a tailor. Before migration he was married and had three children, one boy and two girls. His migration was arranged and supported by his father-in-law who was living in Manila since 1904 and had settled his son in England. Piara Singh migrated to England on work permit and he got British citizenship. He called his family to England in 1962, after the eight years of his migration. Piara Singh did not face problems such as accommodation and job. His job in a wool factory was arranged by his brother-in-law who was already living in England and accommodation was also facilitated by him. Piara Singh worked in a wool factory about ten years and then he started his own business of tailoring and readymade garments. Piara Singh invested his earnings in the upbringing of his children, their settlement and marriages, housing and business. All of his children are married in England within his own caste. His grandson Jivan Singh Lole, senior Economist in financial market, is doing white collar job. Piara Singh’s son Rattan Singh and his daughter are managing their own manufacturing shops. Indian value system and institution of family is well intact abroad.

Piara Singh has built up a modern house and purchased about 10 acres of agricultural land in Shankar. All the members of his family visit Shankar. Piara Singh’s family has now fourth generation in England and they don’t have any plan to settle and invest in India.\textsuperscript{9}


Pritam Singh Purewal, born in 1928 (approximate), son of ex-servant of British Indian Army, education up to primary level, went to England on work permit in around 1955. He worked as an unskilled worker in factory. After five years of his landing in England, he called his family consisting of his father, wife and fourteen years son Balbir Singh Purewal. Balbir Singh Purewal also worked as unskilled worker in a factory for 20 years. He got married. His wife also worked in a factory. In 1980, he established his own small scale factory. Now Balbir Singh and his wife are

\textsuperscript{9} Piara Singh Lole, interviewed on October 27, 2005.
retired. They have three sons namely Kulwinder Singh Purewal, education up to University level and Gurdeep Singh Purewal, education up to college level. All of his sons are married in Jat Sikh Punjabi families. One of his son is managing his factory and other two sons are doing white collar jobs in the private company. This family often visits Shankar. They have their ancestral well maintained house and about seven acres of agricultural land, which has been rented. Balbir Singh Purewal says that he enjoys his visit to village and meets his fellows. He has great love for his childhood memories in the village. His sons also visit village but don’t want to settle here. His children are clean-shaven but Punjabi culture prevails in their family. This family contributes some donations for religious, educational, sports and cultural purposes during their there visit to the village. Although this family purchased about 3-4 acres of agricultural land and constructed a house in Shankar yet the major share of their earning was invested in the maintenance of family, education of children, housing and establishing a factory in England\(^\text{10}\).

4.11. Harbans Singh Takhar (1955)

Harbans Singh Takhar was born in 1938 in Jat Sikh family. His father Karnail Singh Takhar went to Singapore and joined Indian National Army headed by Mohan Singh and Netaji Subash Chander Bose. After the dissolution of INA, he came back to Shankar and started farming. He owned very small piece of land about less than one acre. After spending some time in Shankar he went to England and returned after a sojourn of a decade.

Harbans Singh Takhar had political orientation and was very active member of Akali Dal faction headed by Udham Singh Nagoke. He decided to settle in England in mid 1950’s and he was helped by Udham Singh Nagoke in getting visitor Visa to England. He landed in England with three pound cash in hand. He started his career as factory worker. From factory worker he established himself as a hotelier. He was married in 1962 to Jat Sikh girl and has two sons. His elder son Ravinder Singh Takhar also known as Ravi Takhar is law graduate of Oxford University and now he is solicitor His younger son owns hotel in England. His sons are also married in Jat Sikh families and he has two grandsons Tan and Adesh Takhar. Harbans Singh Takhar has missionary spirit of social service. He used to help Indian migrants in

\(^\text{10}\) Balbir Singh Purewal, interviewed on November 16, 2005.
getting jobs, social security and providing them for boarding and lodging. He remained politically very active in England. He was first elected vice president of Indian Worker Association South Hall in 1960. This association was actively involved in the protection of interest of Indian migrants. Then he was also very active member of Indian Congress in England. He was one of the leaders who were persuading Indian Congress in England for the protection of interests and dignity of Indians settled in England. He has established a marriage palace in Nakodar known as Punjab Palace. He is one of a few overseas Shankarites who have invested in commercial projects. Although he is a British citizen, yet he loves to live in his mother land. He often visits and lives in his homeland.


Najar Singh Purewal S/o Kishan Singh, born in 1933, illiterate, having 10 acres of land, migrated to England in 1958 on work permit. He was married and had five children, four sons and one daughter i.e Tarsem Singh, Santkoh Singh, Surat Singh, Gurdip Singh. Najar Singh worked in a factory as a labourer. In 1970, his wife and two sons migrated to England as dependents. He married his daughter in village Talwan, about 20 k.m. away from Shankar. Najar Singh is elder son Tarsem Singh, reached Canada in 1975 as a visitor. He was married and had three children i.e. two daughters and one son. Tarsem Singh got Canadian immigration. The immigration of his wife and children was in process when Tarsem Singh died of an accident. His family reached Canada to attend his last ceremonies. Najar Singh managed the entry of Tarsem’s wife and children in England. He discharged his responsibility in looking after Tarsem’s family. Tarsem’s elder daughter is married in USA and managing her business of cloth merchant. The younger daughter of Tarsem Singh, Manjit Kaur is a Laywer and married in England. Tarsem Singh’s son, Gurdip Singh is a teacher and settled in Canada on marriage basis. Najar Singh’s other two sons i.e Surat Singh and Gurdip Singh are also well Settled in England. Najar Singh’s one son, Santokh Singh did not like to migrate abroad and he is doing farming in Shankar. Najar Singh expired in 1999. Although this family has settled abroad yet it has kept its interaction and intimacy with Shankar through frequent visits.

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Tarsem Singh Purewal S/o Sohan Singh Purewal, born on April 5, 1937 in the village Dauana (now in Pakistan). He completed his graduation in Arts with mathematics and physics in first division from Lyallpur Khalsa College, Jalandhar and migrated to Canada in 1959 on student visa for pursuing higher studies.

Family Background: Hajjura Singh, great grand father of Tarsem Singh Purewal, was allotted one muraba i.e. 25 acres of land in Dauana, Tehsil Jaranwal, Distt. Lyallpur (now in Pakistan) in 1891. Hajjura Singh migrated with family to this allotted land in canal colony. Sohan Singh Father of Tarsem Singh Purewal was also born in 1913 in Dauana. This family was known for his hard work and they increased their landholding from 25 acres to 150 acres. After partition of India and Pakistan, this family was rehabilitated in Nakodar with 20 acres land. This family has a credit in its favour to have a first electrical tubewell for irrigation in 1951.

Migration: After completing his graduation in 1957, Tarsem Singh studied two years in Guru Nanak Engineering College, Ludhiana in 1959, he applied for admission for higher studies in Canada and got student visa. His father Sohan Singh was very particular about his son’s career. So he provided him full financial backup. About Rs. 10,000/- (ten thousand rupees) was given to Tarsem Singh Purewal by his father at the time of his leaving for Canada.

Tarsem Singh Purewal landed in Canada in 1959 and stayed with Charanjit Singh Purewal young friend of Tarsem Singh who arrived in Canada in 1956. Tarsem Singh, as impressed by his teacher who studied at Berkeley University, approached USA Embassy for seeking admission in Berkeley University and he got student visa for USA. He reached USA and had a temporary stay with his relatives hailed from his nearby village Samrai, District Jalandhar. There he also worked as a labourer for a week. He did not face any major financial problem because his father provided him full financial support. His friend Charanjit Singh Purewal also offered him financial help. He joined Berkeley University to pursue the study of Masters in Nuclear Engineering. He completed Master in Nuclear Engineering in 1962 and joined Bethel Corporation, San Francisco California in 1962 and continued till 1965. He was provided guidance and moral support by his mentor Kenneth Davs, vice president, Space and Nuclear Division and with his help he got USA Green Card in 1963. Then
he was hired by General Elective Co. Canada on his terms and conditions in 1965 and migrated to Canada. In 1964 he came to Nakodar and his father persuaded him to get married. His marriage was arranged with Jatinder Kaur, a school teacher at Massouri, district Dehradun in Uttar Pradesh. She belonged to Jat Sikh Chauhan family of Nabha town in Patiala district Punjab. In 1966, she also migrated to Canada. Tarsem’s father Sohan Singh also got immigration to Canada but he did not like to live in Canada and he preferred to live in Nakodar. Tarsem Singh also arranged migration of his sister to Canada. Now he is living with his wife and three grown up children i.e. Dilshish Kaur Purewal, Uplekh Singh Purewal and Mateshwar Singh Purewal. All are student of medical science having specialization in Anesthesia and pain management. They are yet unmarried and have a plan to establish their own hospital. They are quite familiar with Punjabi language, culture and traditions. They often visit Punjab with their parents. None of them want to settle in India because they perceive their career prospects and quality of life better in Canada.

Tarsem has a very long work experience. His work experience, hobbies are social and political activities. He is the first overseas of Shankar to offer $ 5 billion investment in the filed of electricity and energy sector.


Ajit Singh Purewal S/o Gurpal Singh Purewal, born on Nov, 1, 1940, educational qualification matriculation, father’s occupation agriculture, having land holding upto 10 acres, migrated to England on work permit in 1959. He himself filled up work permit form and got visa within six weeks. The total expenditure incurred on his migration was Rs 1827/- (One thousand eight hundred and twenty seven rupees only). He started his career as a machine operator in a motor cycle company making B.S. motorcycle. In 1966, he called his father and wife to England got settled there. He worked about 20 years as a operator in Cadbury Chocolate. His wife also worked as a machine operator. Now they are retired. Ajit Singh Purewal has two children, one son and one daughter. His son Mr. Sukhwant Singh Purewal has “A” level education and he owns a post office and running a shop. Ajit Singh Purewal’s daughter Sukhwinder Kaur also studied ‘A’ level and she is married in Canada and now she is also well settled in Vancouver.

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Ajit Singh Purewal told that he did not face any major problem. They fought a racial movement led by some Britishers very boldly and emerged victorious. Ajit Singh Purewal has inherited a spirit of hard work and social service from his ancestors. His grandfather S. Partap Singh, former President of Shiromani Gurudawara Parbandhak Committee, was respected as a man of absolute personal integrity with a zeal missionary service. His father Gurpal Singh was also known for his hard work and self respect. Ajit Singh Purewal has been perpetuating his family’s tradition of social service. He has purchased a piece of land in England and cultivates vegetables. He serves these vegetables to public free of cost and also offers these vegetables to Gurudawara for Langer (Community Kitchen). He mobilized £1,000 (One thousand pound) from door to door to help earth quake effected people in Gujrat, India. This service was admired by British Prime Minister as he personally wrote to Mr. Singh. It was also highlighted in local media. He has been liberally donating money for education, religious and other social services. He along with his cousin Amrik Singh Purewal has been organizing annual free Eye Care and Treatment Camp in Shankar in the memory of their chachaji (Paternal uncle) S. Sarwan Singh, former minister of Foreign Affairs, Union Government of India. This eye camp has been organized for the last thirteen years. The annual expenditure on this camp is about Rs. 2 lac.

Ajit Singh Purewal is now leading a retired life and busy in social service in Shankar and overseas. He has travelled about four countries i.e. Switzerland, France, Canada and the USA. He has now his third generation in England and they are quite familiar with Punjabi culture and religion. His two grand daughters have deep faith in Guru Granth Sahib (Holy book of Sikhs) and they understand Gurbani
d. Dev Dutt Sharma was born on March 27, 1939. His father owned brick kilns in Shankar, Jandiala and Nakodar in partnership with his friends. Dev Dutt was a matriculate. He was about 1½ year old when his father expired. Dev Dutt used to look after his father’s business of brick kilns and he also started purchasing sugarcane and selling it. He was employed as a patwari (a revenue clerk) for a few months and left it as it did not suit him. Dev Dutt’s family was big family. They were seven brothers

14 Ajit Singh Purewal, interviewed on October 27, 2005 and October 13, 2005.
and one sister. His elder brother Ramesh Chander Sharma was government employee of British Govt. of India. He was employed in Jalandhar Cantt and migrated to England in 1951 on work permit. His brother, employed in Indian Airline also migrated to England. His brother Vaid Bharat did Ph.D in Botany in 1961 and got employed as a lecturer in Lyallpur Khalsa College Jalandhar, also migrated to England and later on shifted to USA. His sister did her graduation from K.M.V, Jalandhar and was married in 1960. The family gave priority to education and after getting education, they left village for green pasture abroad. It is also pertinent to mention here that Mr. Kapil Dev Sharma, an elder brother of Dev Dutt was the first person to work in Kuwait Airline and helped young Shankarites to migrate abroad. Dev Dutt Sharma’s migration was arranged by his elder brother Ramesh Chander. He was granted a tourist visa for Nairobi. He also got permission for one week stay at London to see his brother. He stayed at London and did not go to Nairobi. He got British citizenship again with the help of his brothers. He worked in foundary as a labourer for two years and came to Shankar in 1961 to get married. After marriage he took his wife with him to England. He started very hard and risking job in electroplating experimenting with cyanide and other chemicals dangerous for health. He opted this job as it was paying more to him as compared with other unskilled jobs. He used to earn 20 (twenty pounds) per week. He continued this job for 23 years. He purchased house and brought up his family. Then he shifted from Birmingham to Scotland and purchased a shop which he managed very successfully. He also started wholesale liquor business. He continued this business from 1982 to 1996. His son got job in custom excise at London and then he closed up his business in Scotland and settled in London. Whatever he earned in Scotland was invested in purchasing a house in London. His house was more expensive and beautiful than that of his brothers. He has three children i.e. two sons and one daughter. His elder son Garry Dutt is now well established and married to a British lady. He owns two restaurants, one in Spain and other in France and is living in London. His younger son is officer in British Air force and is married to a Indian girl. His daughter also has good job. Now Dev Dutt has expired and his family is living in London. They have their ancestral house in Shankar. His family visits village to meet their relations in the mother land and performs other social ceremonies.\[^{15}\]

\[^{15}\] Dev Dutt Sharma, interviewed on September 11, 2005.
4.16. **Mrs. Surinder Kaur (1960)**

Mrs. Surinder Kaur D/o Narinder Singh Takhar, born on 1-8-1939, education qualification post graduation, went to England in 1960 on student visa to pursue higher education. She joined diploma in Education in London University Institute of Education. She was the first unmarried girl from Shankar to land in England for pursuing higher education. She belonged to well to do family which owned about 50 acres of agriculture land. Her father Narinder Singh Thakar used to visit England as a tourist. It was the exceptional case where a person used to visit England for travelling purpose only. His visits used to be very short from one and half month to three months. Mrs. Surinder Kaur stayed in England for two years. During her study she did not experience a racial or any other sort of discrimination; rather she was a respected student leader. She represented students union as a vice president. Surinder Kaur got married to Indian army officer. They migrated to Canada on family visa in 1972. Surinder Kaur’s sister Harpal Kaur also followed her. Surinder Kaur started her career as a semi skilled worker in a private firm. Through sheer hard work, she built up a good career of her children, purchased a house and a taxi company. Her elder son is a director in a Gas company. He has earned a good academic career in mechanical engineering and Masters in Business Administration. His wife is a Lab technician. Her another son is a bank officer. He is post graduate in business administration. Whatever Surinder Kaur has earned abroad, has invested in Canada. After the death of her husband, she is looking after her old mother in Shankar. She told that her family has a plan to settle in Canada and whatever property she owns in Shankar will be sold and invested in Canada. About Punjabi culture she contented that it is adapting to changing scenario.\(^\text{16}\)

4.17. **Surinder Kaur Takhar (1960)**

Surinder Kaur Takhar D/o Chain Singh Takhar (a renowned wrestler in Shankar,) born in 1940, migrated to England on marriage base. Her husband was working in Singapore and after marriage, he migrated to England and he called his wife in around 1960. Mrs Surinder Kaur Takhar sponsored the migration of her parents and two younger brothers in England. After a brief span of time, Chain Singh Takhar, father of Surinder Kaur called his elder son Kulwinder Singh Takhar also

\(^{16}\) Surinder Kaur Bhattal, interviewed on September 10, 2005.
known as Kala, who was uneducated, to England in 1964. Kulwinder Singh was sixteen years old when he migrated to England. The whole family members worked as labourers in the factories. Kulwinder Singh still works as labourer. His wife works in bakery. He has three sons, one i.e. Balraj Singh Takhar pursing education in school and two elder sons i.e. Nirmal Singh Takhar and Gurmej Singh Takhar both have received education at high school level and are married in Punjabi Jat Sikh families as per Punjabi traditions. They are doing semi-skilled jobs. This family has not made any substantial investment in mother land except renovation of their house. They still own a small piece of land inherited from their ancestors. Kulwinder Singh and his family did not face any problem such as housing, racial discrimination and unemployment. The traditional Punjabi culture still prevails in the family. Kulwinder Singh Takhar has been contributing donation for chhinj since 1995. He has spent whole of his earning on housing, maintenance of family, education and marriages of his children. This family like other migrants does not want to settle in India^7.

4.18. **Pritam Singh Purewal (1963)**

Pritam Singh Purewal, birth 1930 (approximate), a wrestler, uneducated, land holding about 2 acres, migrated to England in 1963 on work permit. Pritam Singh Purewal used to go for wrestling competition not only in nearby towns and cities like Jalandhar, Phagwara and Ludhiana but also Meerut, Delhi and Calcutta. In the Shankar, the ordinary successful wrestler was paid only one kg Gurh (Sijjar a sweet made from sugarcane) and four Annas (25 paisa). The nearby cities and towns he was paid about Rs 10 to 14 for his successful competition. The other Indian cities used to make handsome payment. It means that a wrestling was not a profitable profession. It was a prestige symbol to be a good wrestler.

Pritam Singh Purewal’s family was joint family, his two paternal uncles reached England around 1955. They went illegally. His elder brother Tara’s migration was also facilitated by his uncles. Pritam Singh Purewal faced problem of language as he was not familiar with English language. Although he was physically healthy yet he was not used to do labourious work. After reaching England he disserted his wrestling profession and started working as labourer in foundry. He worked very hard and overtime. In 1966, he called his wife and three children in England. His younger

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^7 Surinder Kaur Takhar, interviewed on October 14, 2005.
daughter Surinder Kaur was born in England. Pritam Singh Purewal’s major contribution is that being an uneducated, an ordinary foundry labourer he got his four children educated at University level. All of his earnings were invested in upbringing of his children, their education, marriages and housing. His two daughters are teachers, one is in the University and other is teaching in a nursing institute. His younger daughter Surinder Kaur was manager at airport. She left this job and got married in Toronto. Now she is a Canadian citizen. His son Manjinder Singh is also well placed. Manjinder Singh’s son is pursing study. Pritam Singh makes regular visits to Shankar. He still owns his house and two acres of agriculture land. He says that his family and his future generation do not like to come back as the climate and governance of the host country is more conducive for them. He comes and lives in Shankar because he is born, grown up and lived in Shankar and has more emotional attachment with his homeland and native village than that of the rest of his family members. He upholds that his future generation has successfully maintained their Punjabi identity and culture.\(^\text{18}\).


Guljar Singh Purewal, born in 1932, education qualification matric, agricultural land holding two acres, retired Junior Commanding Officer (JCO) in Indian army, migrated to England 1964 on work permit. His wife was expired and he had three sons. His elder son Sukhdev Singh Purewal was employed in Indian army as a soldier and his two sons were below sixteen and students of 7\(^{th}\) and 8\(^{th}\) standard. Guljar Singh sponsored the migration of his two dependent sons i.e. Harminder Singh Purewal and Tarlochan Singh Purewal and they reached in England in 1965 and 1967 respectively. After reaching England they continued their study. Tarlochan Singh Purewal served British Airway as supervisor and Harminder Singh Purewal changed about five jobs and now he is running his own store. They are married to Punjabi Jat Sikh girls and their wives also do jobs. Tarlochan Singh Purewal has two sons i.e. Sharanjit Singh Purewal and Harpreet Singh Purewal. Sharanjit Singh Purewal is married and serving as a security officer and Harpreet Singh Purewal is unmarried and pursing his study. Harminder Singh Purewal has two sons. One of his sons is an officer in Canadian Airways and another one is security officer. Both are unmarried.

\(^{18}\) Pritam Singh (Wrestler), interviewed on October 16, 2005.
Guljar Singh Purewal’s elder son Sukhdev Singh Purewal is now living in Shankar. His daughter Sukhjinder Kaur got married in England and she sponsored him. Sukhdev Singh Purewal visited England in 1975 and he did not like to stay there. This family has not invested in home land because no one of their future generation wants to settle in India. This family had developed their loyalty to the host country. They have maintained Punjabi identity and are following Punjabi culture in the host country\textsuperscript{19}.

4.20. Tarsem Singh Takhar (1964)

Tarsem Singh Takhar S/o Gurdev Singh was born on November 15, 1948. He studied up to 4\textsuperscript{th} standard (primary level). He migrated to England in 1964 on the sponsorship of his father, who migrated to England in 1954 on work permit. Tarsem Singh Takhar worked in various factories as unskilled labourer for more than 12 years. He visited Shankar in 1969 to get married and went back to England along with his wife. His wife was employed in the garments making factory. They worked overtime to get established in host country. Tarsem Singh told that he did not face any racial and other problem in the host country. They have two children, one boy and other girl. Their son Santokh Singh Takhar, a lawyer, is a complete Gursikh. He is married in a Punjabi Jat Gursikh family. His wife works in the field of accountancy. They have their two children. Tarsem Singh Takhar’s daughter Kulwinder Kaur is married in England. She and her husband are also doing white collar job. Tarsen Singh Takhar was motivated to be a religious man by his son Santokh Singh Takhar who strictly adheres to Sikh philosophy and rituals. Tarsem Singh Takhar visits village after 2-3 years to get his mood (mindset) changed by interacting with his native land and people and to pay homage at religious place to thank almighty for the prosperity of his family. His son and daughter in-law also visit their ancestors’ village. No one from their family wants to settle in India due to mal-administration, unsuitable climate and they have developed loyalty toward the host country as they are born and groomed there. Their mother land is the host country which they are born in.

This family has not made any major investment neither in agricultural land nor in any business but they have renovated their house in Shankar and still own a small

\textsuperscript{19} Sukhdev Singh Purewal, interviewed on October 13, 2005.
piece of agricultural land inherited from their ancestors. Tarsem Singh Takhar contributes some donation for chhinj and for other social welfare and religious purpose if some one approaches him.\textsuperscript{20}

4.21. Naranjan Singh Takhar (1965)

Naranjan Singh Takhar s/o Karm Singh Takhar, grand son of Thakar Singh, one of the early migrants to USA from this village, migrated to England in 1965 on teacher visa. He and his wife were working as school teachers. He was posted in town Mahilpur, District Hoshiarpur. Some of his colleagues decided to apply for immigration to England. He also made up his mind to seek immigration for England. He called his wife there after two months of his arrival in England. The aim of his migration was to work there and purchase a truck and come back to rejoin his job. He started his job there as a factory worker and purchased a truck in first year of his arrival. Then he gave up his mind to return India. He constantly worked there for 22 years. In his initial years in England he also faced a difficulty as he had to cut his hair off as it was the safety requirement of the employer. He compromised with it. He also purchased a house in England. He brought up his children there and got them educated. His son and daughter are doctors and are married in England. Now Naranjan Singh is living in Shankar. He has purchased about 45 acres of land near town Nurmehal which is about 12 KM away from Shankar. He has made a substantial investment in housing and agricultural infrastructure. He is enjoying his retired life in his village Shankar.

Naranjan Singh has third generation of his family living in England. His family system is still intact. He commands authority, respect and affection in his family. Naranjan Singh attributes the economic and social development of Shankar to the migration abroad. About 60 member of this family i.e. brothers of Naranjan Singh and their next kin, are living abroad. Majority of them are in USA. Kartar Singh Takhar who migrated to USA on marriage basis in 1967 had six children, five boys and one girl. Kartar Singh Takhar is one of the major donors who donated about 15 lakhs of rupees for the welfare of the village.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{20} Tarsem Singh Takhar, interviewed on October 16, 2009.

\textsuperscript{21} Niranjan Singh Takhar (Master), interviewed on September 11, 2005 and November 09, 2005.
4.22. Pal Singh Purewal (1965)

Pal Singh Purewal S/o Harbans Singh Patwari was born on November 23, 1932. He is great grandson of Deva Singh (early migrant). Before migration he was a science graduate and employed as government school teacher. He migrated to England in 1965 on the basis of skilled worker as a teacher. He brought his family to England in 1967. In England he lived with his family for nine years without facing any major difficulty. The pursuit of academic excellence was the sole motivating force behind his migration. He improved his academic qualification in England and shifted from teaching profession to electronic engineering. His younger brother Tarn Singh Purewal, a mathematics teacher in government school, migrated to Fizzi and from there shifted to Canada with family. On the wish of Tarn Singh Purewal that the whole family should remain at one place, Pal Singh migrated to Canada with family because his teaching qualification was already approved by the Government of Canada. Now all the three brothers i.e. Pal Singh, Tarn Singh and Sardul Singh, are living in Alberta, Canada. Tarn Singh also improved his qualification in Canada by achieving Bachelors’ degrees in Electronics from the University of Alberta. Pal Singh’s wife Gurjit Kaur worked as a lady technical Assistant (LTA). Pal Singh’s elder son, Satinder Singh Purewal is Ph.D in the area of Petroleum Engineering from Imperial College, London. He is working as a chief engineer of Holland based Shell Company. Pal Singh’s younger son Harinder Singh Purewal has done B.Sc. Computer Science from Alberta University, Canada. He is married and working as senior consultant in New York. Pal Singh’s daughter Varinder Kaur has done Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta. She is married and settled in Canada. Her husband is Bachelor of Commerce and managing real estate business. Pal Singh has three grandchildren i. e. two grandsons and one grand daughter. Thus Pal Singh Purewal’s prime emphasis was on the quality education of his children and his academic pursuit. He has authored ‘Nanak Shahi Calendar’ elaborating events and dates pertaining to Sikh religion. ‘Nanak Shahi Calendar’ has been adopted by Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee. He has been honoured by Sikh organizations at homeland as well as abroad. He has authored ‘Hijri Calendar’ elaborating dates and events concerning Islam. He was also honoured by the Muslim organizations in Pakistan. In the Sikh world his name is identical with Nanak Shahi Calendar. Shankarites also feel proud of his contribution.
He often visits his village. His house and property is intact in Shankar. He has also donated about Rs. One lac for the construction of Gurdwara in his patti. His father Harbans Singh, a retired patwari did not like to live abroad and is living in Shankar. He is the only member of this family living in Shankar. None of this family member wants to settle in homeland and now they have established in the host country. This family has preserved Punjabi cultural value system even staying in the foreign land.

4.23. Surinder Singh Purewal (1968)

Surinder Singh Purewal S/o Giani Pakhar Singh Purewal was born on September 6, 1946 in a Jat Sikh family. He was groomed with Sikh religious values by his father. He passed his B.Sc. in 1968 from Lyallpur Khalsa College Jalandhar. In the same year his maternal uncle (Mamaji) arranged his marriage in England with a Punjabi Sikh girl hailed from Phagwara town in Kapurthala district and settled in England. On his arrival his friends advised him to cut his hair off by giving the logic that the girl he was going to get married may not like his Sikh face, but he turned down their advice politely. In the second week of his landing in England, his brother arranged a job for him as a worker in biscuit factory. He continued this job for eleven months. The working environment did not suit him and he left this job. He joined clerical post in telegram office and worked there for eleven months, then he joined as temporary clerical officer. He claimed to be the first Sikh Executive officer in England. He continued this job for three and half years. On 1 April, 1974, he joined executive officer social securities. He faced heavy odds while discharging his official duties but he discharged his duties with absolute personal integrity. His official record of efficiency and honesty elevated him to the top Executive Officer in Prime Minister’s office. He also worked with crown court’s Judge for four years. He also discharged the duties of Honorary Magistrate for six years w.e.f. 1993. From 2001 onwards he is holding the office of Assistant Director of Internal Audit, Metropolitan Police Authority, London.

Besides his professional duties, he also upheld the dignity of labour which he inherited from his family. During 1978, he worked as a part time worker in Bread...
factory. He also used to sell eatables i.e. Channa Bhuteras. He some times worked for 48 hours at a stretch.

He has five children. One of his daughters, Jagjit Kaur Purewal is dentist, married in the USA, and the other one, Tarndeep Kaur Purewal has specialization in Criminal Psychology. She is widely travelled girl. She adventured to travel alone to Eastern Europe, Turkey, Jordon and India. She told that she felt proud when South Indian people treated her with special honour for being “Jat Sikh girl”. She was also happy to see her parental village. The third daughter from his second marriage is studying in school. His son Prabjot Singh Purewal has specialization in applied chemistry and marketing. He is working as medical representative. His two sisters and brothers are also living in England. He narrated his bitter experience in India. He was interrogated at Airport New Delhi as a terrorist. A group of C.B.I. officials also visited his village to interrogate him. He wrote a letter to Prime minister of India to prove any unlawful activity in which he was suspected to be involved. But he did not receive any reply. His name was listed in “Black list”.

The emotional attachment with motherland and kinship relations at home land made him attached with his place of origin. He owns parental house in the village and often visites village to attend social ceremonies in his kinship. His two brothers also live in Shankar. He had the opinion that although lots of development took place in the village yet for the last decade some negative aspects of development were also taking place. The Sikh masses are deviating from Sikh identity and culture. The village which had distinction for making the suggestions to Shiromoni Gurudawara Prabandhak Committee for “Rahet Maryada” by the Eistri Sabha Shankar (Women’s organization of Shankar) but today, it is difficult to find “Panj Payara” (five baptized Sikhs) in the village. Youth of today doesn’t like to work with their own hands, rather than they are dependent upon migrant labour for agriculture work. He was also worried about the excessive use of drugs and alcohol by the youth. He contended that the way our youth work abroad, if they work here in the same manner, India can progress.

He has neither purchased any property in India nor made substantial investment in housing. The major share of his earnings was invested in the education of children and the housing. He is a political personality. He has involved himself in the social welfare functions. He has made some donations for Gurudawara and Chhinj
festival in the village, Pinglwara, Guru Nanak Mission Hospital, Jalandhar etc. He is the member of organizations who honor the Indians for their distinguish achievements in England\textsuperscript{23}.


Gurdev Singh Paigani S/o Malangi, born on 15/11/1936, educational qualification graduation, caste Balmiki, subcaste Paigani, migrated to USA in 1969 as a permanent resident. He was self-employed, married and had four children.

**Family History of migration**

Gurdev Singh’s uncle (Chacha Ji) Sh. Umra, born in 1869. He went to the USA through illegal channel in 1891. He was illiterate and working as an agricultural labourer in the village. He was married and had no issue. After leaving Shankar in 1891, he did not return and had no connection with the family. His younger brother had information that he was living in Arizona State. He tried his best to trace him but all was in vain. The second incident of migration took place in 1892 when Malangi, Gurdev Singh’s father, left for the USA. He was 22 years old, an illiterate and working as a agriculture labourer. He was married and had two children at that time. He was used to come back to Shankar after having earned some money. From 1892 to 1936 he went to the USA for five times and he remained in Shankar till his last in 1961. He had eight sons. The third case of migration occurred in 1949. In this year Jeet Singh Paigani, born in 1928, married, and education qualification matriculate, left for the USA to pursue the higher studies. He did civil engineering in the USA. He divorced his Indian wife and got married to US lady. He struggled very hard to get established in the USA and visited his native village first time in 1973. He supported his younger brothers in pursuance of their studies. He also facilitated the migration of his younger brothers to the USA. His younger brother namely Sukhdev Singh, born in 1930, working as a medical practitioner, unmarried also left for the USA in 1951. He also pursued his higher education in medical science in the USA and became medical practitioner. In 1969, Gurdev Singh and Rattan Singh both brothers went to the USA on the sponsorship of their elder brother. Thus all the eight brothers reached the USA till 1970.

\textsuperscript{23} Surinder Singh Purewal, interviewed on October 17, 2005.
Gurdev Singh’s wife expired after one year of his migration to the USA leaving behind four children below the age of twelve years. Gurdev Singh took all of his children to the USA in 1974. His daughter Sukhwant Kaur and son i.e. Mahinder Singh, Mupinder Singh and Harminder Singh pursue their studies in the USA. Sukhwant Kaur’s marriage was arranged with an Indian Balmiki boy having Master’s degree in medicine. Mahinder Singh also got Master degree in medicine and got married to US lady. He has three daughters and one son. Mupinder Singh is running three offices i.e. Certified Public Accountant, insurance of homes and health and real estate. He is married to a girl of Indian origin belonging to his caste. The youngest son of Gurdev Singh is a school teacher and he is also married.

Gurdev Singh Paigani is running his business of real estate. This family also purchased an agricultural farm in 1981 consisting of 3400 acres in Arizona and 230 acres in Yuba City. This farm was named as Paigani Brother’s Farm. This farm was purchased with down payment of $10 million. They did farming business for five years. In 1985 the farm was sold with the approximately double profit and this amount was again invested in real estate.

All of the Paigani brothers are living at different places. Now this family has 300 members including children living in the USA. Before migration to the USA, this family was following Sikhism and now all the members of Paigani family, except one, have converted to Christianity.

This family has not made any investment in the homeland except building a house because no one of the family members wants to shift here. This family owns house in Shankar and Gurdev Singh visits Shankar annually to meet his fellow Shankarites. The children born in this family follow Punjabi culture, speak Punjabi language but they can’t write Punjabi.


Harinder Singh Takhar, born in 1950 (approximately), education qualification masters in Economics from Doaba College Jalandhar, migrated to Canada in 1974. Harinder Singh’s grandfather Damodar Singh was allotted agricultural land in Canal Colony in District Lyallpur (now in Pakistan) in 1890. Thus whole of the family migrated from Shankar to Lyallpur district. After partition, this family was allotted

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agricultural land, along with other Shankarites, in the village Mehliana, near Phagwara.

After migration he pursued higher studies in certified management accounts. In 2003, he got elected as member Parliament as a labour Party candidate. He has served as transport minister and minister of small Business, Govt. of Ontario. He was facilitated and honored by Shankarites on his visit to Shankar. He takes keen interest in the welfare of Punjabis in Canada.


Rajinder Singh Purewal S/o Ajaib Singh Purewal, born on May 22, 1952, educational qualification graduation from Lyallpur Khalsa College Jalandhar, migrated to England in 1975 on marriage basis. He got married to a Punjabi Sikh girl who was settled in England in her childhood as she migrated to England with her parents in 1964. He was helped by his maternal parents who were about 45 family members living in England since 1955. They hailed from a nearby town Jandiala Manjaki. They provided financial assistance of about £3,000 (three thousand pounds) for purchasing a house. Rajinder Singh Purewal worked as labourer in a factory which was making parts of cars. He worked in this factory about 8 years. Then he joined another factory. In 1987, he started his own business dealing with garments. He employed lady workers in this business. In 1995, he closed this business. He started a new business of journalism. He, with the help of his friend, invested about one lac pound, and started publishing a newspaper in 1995. It is pertinent to mention here that a Punjabi newspaper, “Des Pardes” was started by his cousin Tarsem Singh Purewal, who was murdered and the publication of this newspaper was carried out by his sister. During the initial years the publication of newspaper was not profitable business but later on its circulation increased about 50 lac and started earning profit. His newspaper is widely read in Europe, North America and India.

Rajinder Singh Purewal has four children i.e. two sons and two daughters. They are well educated, running their own business successfully and strictly following Sikh faith and traditions. Rajinder Singh Purewal and his wife are baptized Sikhs and they are working for the betterment of Sikhs all over the world. He contended that although he respects all the religions and political parties yet he supports those

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individuals, leaders and political parties who work for the betterment of Sikhs and human rights. He established a wing of political party ‘Akali Dal Mann’ in England. He also gave a wide publicity to ‘Nanak Shahi Calender’ prepared by Pal Singh Purewal and approached Sikh leadership for its implementation. He also headed a Sikh Sewak Society International, founded in 1995 and gave free treatment to about 1000 polio affected patients in India. He distributes free literature to promote Sikhism and eradication of social evils. He is very particular about rooting out practices which tarnish the image of Sikhs. In this direction he is planning to organize medical camps for drug eradication for Punjabi youth. Besides religions reforms, he has made donations to schools in Shankar, Lambaran (Jalandhar), Amritsar, Guru Nanak Mission Hospital, Jalandhar. Guru Nanak Mission Hospital, Dhahan Kaleran, Saheed Bhagat Singh Nagar and provides salary to preacher of Sikh Guruduwara in Shankar26.

4.27. Sukhdev Singh Purewal (1976)

Sukhdev Singh Purewal S/o Mohinder Singh Purewal, born in 1952, education qualification matriculation, the total landholding of this family about 2 acres, migrated to England in 1976 on marriage base. Then he arranged marriage of his two younger brothers with his wife’s two sisters because his wife’ parents and children were already British citizens. After marriages his brothers namely Gurmit Singh Purewal and Balbir Singh migrated to England. They are running their own shops and have purchased their independent houses. Sukhdev Singh Purewal has two sons. His elder son Bindi Purewal is married and running his own business and his younger son Onkar Singh Purewal is pursing his study. Gurmeet Singh Purewal has three children, two sons and one daughter. They are grown up and pursing their study. Balbir Singh Purewal has two daughters and they are also students. Balbir Singh told that he did not face any major problem except one that his wife was educated in England and whereas his education was only of primary level i.e. passed 4th class, but they managed this obstacle successfully.

Their sister namely Kuljit Kaur got married in Canada in 1982. She sponsored her parents. On her sponsorship, her mother, father, and younger brother Gurcharnjit Singh Purewal landed in Canada and now they are Canadian citizens.

26 Rajinder Singh Purewal, interviewed on November 23, 2005.
They did not make any investment in their mother land, except renovation of their house. They come to their village frequently, particularly during chhinj and enjoy their interaction with their village fellows. They don’t have any other relative in India except their paternal aunt. Whole of the family is settled in England and Canada.  

4.28. Gurdatt Bhardwaj (1976)  

Gurdatt Bhardwaj born on 2 December, 1925, caste Brahimin, subcaste Bhardwaj, occupation small shopkeeper, education qualification 4th standard, migrated to Canada in 1976 on family visa sponsored by his daughter Avinash who got married to a Canada based Punjabi boy in 1974. Bhardwaj has eight children, his elder son Kamal Bhardwaj is a computer instructor in England, and two sons are living in Shankar and owning their shops in this village. The rest of his family is a Canadian citizen. Gurdatt Bhardwaj recognizes the elevation and riches of his family due to the grace of Gurunath Ji, with whose blessings Shankarites believe that this village was stabilized. Recognizing to Gurunath’s grace, Gurudatt Bhardwaj has converted the Gurunath Mandir from Kacha Mandir to a beautiful modern Mandir by spending about nine lakh of rupees from his own earnings.  

4.29. Gurmail Singh Purewal (1977)  

Gurmail Singh Purewal official name Karnail Singh Purewal was born in Jat Sikh family on 8-Oct-1957. His father Lakhshar Singh was educated agriculturist. The family is known as Pahria da Parwar (Family of educated persons). Gurmail Singh’s grandfather was educated. Hardly there was any educated person in village at that time, that is why family is known as Pahria da Parwar.  

The history of migration of this family started in 1969. When Tarsem Singh Purewal, elder brother of Gurmail Singh Purewal went to the USA on student visa. He did his graduation in engineering from Guru Nanak Dev Engineering College Ludhiana. Then he joined job in Punjab electricity board and worked for one year. He left for the USA to pursue higher studies and completed M.Sc Electronic Engineer from University of Washington, Sialton. He got married to United State born lady. He joined job in tele communication department and worked for twenty five years and

27 Sukhdev Singh Purewal, interviewed on October 13, 2005.  
28 Guru Dutt Bhardwaj, interviewed on September 03, 2005.
now he is retired. He has three children. His elder son Semi Purewal has completed Doctor of Philosophy in Discipline of Computer Science from the University of Georgia. His daughter Mandi Purewal is graduate and his younger son is also graduate in science with excellent academic record.

Gurmail Singh Purewal did Matriculation from Shankar then he joined Lyallpur Khalsa College Jalandhar. He left for the USA in 1977 on the sponsorship of his elder brother Tarsem Singh Purewal. He pursued his studies in mechanical and technical engineering and joined a company as a technician. He got married to Kulwinder Kaur a Punjabi girl from village Rurka in Punjab. Kulwinder Kaur also got education in accounting in the USA. They have one child namely Hardeep Singh Purewal studying in 10th Standard in the USA.

His younger brother Charanjit Singh Purewal also went to the USA. He settled in California. He worked there 14 years as an agriculture labourer. He also worked in sugar mill as a labourer. Now he owns his grocery store. He got married to a Punjabi Jat Sikh girl. He has two sons studying in 10th and 7th standard.

Gurmail Singh Purewal came to village after eight year. Now he visits his village after every four to five years. In future they will try to visit every year to keep social contacts and emotional ties intact with the village. They have strong desire that their children should remain in touch with Shankar. For this they don’t want to sell their property and house. They also do some sort of charity in the village and are supporting education of two children of poor family in a nearby village.

4.30. Gurmit Singh Takhar (1979)

Gurmit Singh S/o Bhagat Singh, born on 30/7/1931, educational qualification under graduation, working as a government school teacher, migrated to the USA in 1979 on the basis of permanent resident as a skilled worker. The main reason for his migration was to secure future career prospects. The migration history of this family starts from early 1890s when Narain Singh Takhar, the brother of Gurmit singh’s grandfather, went to Australia. He was married and had children. He came to Shankar after the sojourn of about twenty three years. He worked as agricultural labourer in the sugar cane farms. His riches was a manifested in the celebration of his granddaughter’s marriage when he gave Rs. 2,100 cash to her as a marriage gift.

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29 Gurmail Singh Purewal, interviewed on October 17, 2005.
besides dowry and other expenditure incurred on the marriage. This amount of Rs. 2,100 was perceived a huge amount at that time, a rare person possessed in the village. The second case of migration occurred in 1905 when Kartar Singh and Swarn Singh, elder brothers of Gurmit Singh's father left for the USA via East Asian colonies. They were followed by their cousins i.e. sons of Narian Singh. The elder one was known as Khalsa, the second Chanan Singh, third Didar Singh and the fourth Ganda Singh. They settled in Canada. They were married and had children. They took their families to Canada after getting citizenship.

Kartar Singh and Swarn Singh were deported by the USA Government for their illegal stay and they reached village in 1938. They did not lose heart and managed the entry of their families in UK in 1940's. In between this time, the younger brother of Gurmit Singh’s father left for the USA in 1929. He got US citizenship and came to Shankar in 1957 and took his family to USA. Lashman Singh sponsored the migration of his elder brother Bhagat Singh and his wife and they reached in the USA in 1969. Three sons of Bhagat Singh also settled in UK with their families in 1960’s with the help of their paternal uncles and their families. In 1979, Gurmit Singh also decided to migrate to the USA for better career of his children. His migration was sponsored by his mother and he got migrated to the USA with his wife and three children. He worked very hard to get established in the host country. He like his paternal uncle Lashman Singh also purchased a agriculture farm of 50 acres. His children are married and well settled in the USA. He also has four grand children pursing their career in the USA. Now Gurmit Singh and his wife are living in Shankar for last five years. He is the only person from this family living in Shankar and the rest of the members of this family, numbering about 80, are settled in UK, Canada and the USA and they visit village during holidays and on other social functions. This family has not made any substantial investment in Shankar. The future generation of this family living in above mentioned countries is conscious of their identity and culture. They have also adapted to the cultural patterns of the host countries. No one of them wants to settle in India due to the climate and administrative reasons. But they have house and agriculture land inact in Shankar.

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30 Gurmeet Singh Takhar (Master), interviewed on August 20, 2004 and September 11, 2009.
4.31. **Najar Singh (1979)**

Najar Singh S/o Bishan Singh, born in 1942 (approximate), caste *Ghumiar* also known as parjapat, subcaste Lole, occupation making clay pots, small trade, first time went to Iran on work permit in 1967. From there he had a plan to shift Denmark but couldn’t succeed and returned to Shankar. He started his business as a small shopkeeper. He went to Manila (Philippine) in 1979 with the help of his relatives. He started his business of micro lending which continued till 1984. In 1984 he returned to Shankar and got his sons married. He along with his younger son is living in Shankar and running a shop in Shankar. He has also invested substantial amount of his family’s earning in purchasing plots in Nakodar. His four sons are living in Manila since 1977 onwards and doing business of micro lending.\(^{31}\)

4.32. **Balwinder Kumar Lole (1979)**

Balwinder Kumar was born on 15 August 1958. He is matriculate. His father use to work as a small trader on horse-driven carrot known as rehra. Balwinder Kumar after completing his education, learn carpenter work and went to Iraq in 1979 where he spent four year and then he came back to the village then again he went to Dubai as his relatives were also working there. Then he went to Philippine. He has been living there for 19 years and doing money lending business.

The most of the people belonged to *parjapat* caste know as *Ghumiar* are living in Philippine with their families. They are about 100 members. They also managed the entry of their relatives in Philippines. Balwinder Kumar narrates that in 1975 there were only five member of Punjabi Community in the city he is living in, now about 80% people belonging to his caste, from this village are living in the same city. Besides expanding their money lending business in Philippines, they have also invested money in agriculture land, purchasing shops, real estate and building houses. Balwinder Kumar has also purchased 8 acres agricultural land, purchased shop and built up a house. The migration of *parjapat* community to the Philippines has elevated them from labour class and small traders to the shopkeeper and market traders and also improved their standard of living. It further has brought in them the community consciousness. As Balwinder Kumar told that he is vice- President of Parjapat Sabha Nakodhar and Shankar. He is also donating money for charity. He donated money for

\(^{31}\) Najar Singh, interviewed on October 14, 2005.
cycle stand in Govt. Senior Secondary School for Girls Shankar and donated sports kits to children to support sportsmanship among the children.32


Sukhwinderpal Singh Purewal S/o Late Gurbax Singh, born on 31-01-1959, Undergraduate, visited Canada in 1980 as a tourist. He was unmarried and running a shop of electrical spare parts and repair in Shankar besides looking after farming business. His family also owned about 10 acres of agriculture land. After spending six months in Canada, he went to see his sister in West German. His brother-in-law and sister insisted him to settle him in German. He got married to a German lady and became a German citizen. He worked as an electrician in American Company established in German. He continued this job for five years. In 1985 he divorced his wife and settled in England on marriage base. He felt homely in England with Shankarites and his student fellows living in England. He joined a US multinational company as an electrician. This company sent him to Boston city in the USA for further training. He spent six months in the USA while receiving this training. In 1989, he started his own business as a labour contractor. He employed 300 persons in his business. This business not only made lots of profit for him but also earned goodwill among his worker fellows. He was used to take care of each and every individual’s problem. In 1997, he established his business in Shankar. He has set up a marriage palace known as Purewal Palace, a Restaurant named as Punjabi Rasoi (Punjabi Kitchen), Bear bar and pub and kitty party hall. This establishment can support three functions simultaneously. He invested about 2 crore rupees from his own sources. Besides his business, he is socially as well as politically active. During his student life he was active member of leftist movement. He joined Congress Party in 2000. He served as President, Youth Congress, Block Nakodar from 2000-2005. He got elected as Block Samati member from Nakodar constituency as a congress candidate in 2004. He also served as President Congress Committee, Nakodar block. Keeping into consideration of his work and activism, Punjab Pardesh Congress Committee has appointed him Secretary, Punjab Pardesh Congress Committee in 2009. He has been keenly involved in the development of Shankar. His wife and three children are living in England. His wife, Gurmej Kaur Purewal, is managing family

32 Balwinder Kumar Lole, interviewed on October 27, 2005
affairs as a house wife. His elder daughter Jasdeep Kaur Purewal is doing managerial job at the airport. His son Randeep Singh Purewal is pursuing his study in M.B.A in the University. His youngest daughter Monika Purewal is also pursuing her career in medical science.

4.34. Harbans Singh Takhar (1981)

Harbans Singh Takhar (alias Buta) was born in 1958 in Jat Sikh Takhar family. His father Chanchil Singh Takhar was one of the biggest land holders in Shankar. He owned about 80 acres of land. Chanchil Singh Takhar was progressive farmer. He has distinction of producing potatoes in 1930’s and 1940’s and marketing them in Calcutta. The family also has history of migration abroad. Arjan Singh and Krishan Singh both paternal uncles of Harbans Singh Takhar went to the USA in around 1911. Chanchil Singh Takhar the father of Harbans Singh Takhar also visited England in 1968-69.

It is distinguished case where post graduate person belonging to land lord family migrated abroad. Harbans Singh Takhar (Buta) went to England in 1981 as a visitor. His sister was already settled in England on marriage base. After spending few days in England, he got tourist visa to USA along with his sportsmen friends. He was helped by Balmiki family of Shankar settled in USA also know as Malangi family. This family is known as land lord family settled in USA. Harbans Singh Takhar (Buta) started his career as a simple worker in gas station and settled himself as a businessman in USA. His hard work and communication skill in English language helped him to settle in business stream. The whole of his family members are settled abroad and he has maintained constant links with his home land. He does not want to sell his land as selling of land will not contribute much to property abroad. He has a wish to do a charity for his village. Number of proposals are under his consideration. His family adheres to Punjabi customs and Sikh values and has no plan to settle in homeland.


Makhan Singh Chauhan born in 1957, caste Ghumiar, subcaste Lole, education qualification under graduate, went to Doha Qatar in 1982 as a worker. He,

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34 Harbans Singh Takhar (Buta), interviewed on March 21, 2008.
in collaboration with his elder brother Rakesh Singh, who went to Dubai before him, owned a carpenter shop. He visits Shankar at least once in a year. He has founded ‘Young Sports Club’ to promote sportsmanship among young children in hockey. He has also mobilized donation of 2 lac from a N.R.I. Rajinder Singh Purewal. His aim is to promote sportsmanship among young children of Shankar and to channelize their energy for constructive purposes so that they can be kept away from drug addiction. This club organizes annual hockey competition in Shankar with the help of Shankar overseas and village notables35.


Jagjit Singh Takhar was born in 1915. His father served British Indian Army and retired as a head constable. After retirement he opened a small confectionary shop known as, pansari di dukan in Shankar. He was the first Jat Sikh to work as a shop keeper. After some time he left as shop keeper and engaged himself in farming on a small piece of land.

Jagjit Singh Takhar completed matriculation in 1931. He passed undergraduate degree in Sikh religion known as ‘Gaini’ after 25 years of doing matriculation. He completed his graduation in 1983 as a private candidate. He was very successful poultry farmer and has a distinction of authoring first book on “poultry farming” in Punjabi language, which was further published in other two languages. The forward of his book was written by M.S Randhawa, Vice Chancellor Punjab Agriculture University Ludhiana.

Mr. Bhagat Singh, uncle (chacha ji) of Jagjit Singh reached USA in 1914 illegally. He was not educated. His mother arranged money to send him abroad. He was trialed in USA for shooting a man, whom he perceived as ‘Traitor’ for helping USA police in getting illegal Indian workers arrested. His trial was fought by his Indian migrants and ultimately he was released. He was honored as ‘hero’ among Indian migrants. He was married in India and he also got married to a Mexican lady and settled in USA. His Indian wife went to her parents, lived with them and passed away. Mr. Kuldip Singh Takhar elder brother of Jagjit Singh went to USA with the help of his uncle Bhagat Singh. Mr. Kuldip Singh Takhar’s education qualification was matric. After some time he took his wife and children to USA and settled there.

His four sons are settled USA, one is working in defense service, second is teacher in higher education, third boy is employed in post office and fourth has his own business. They have American wives and except one of his sons, all are clean-shaven. Their children little bit understand Punjabi language but on the whole their life style is western.

Kewal Singh Takhar, the younger brother of Jagjit Singh migrated to Canada in late 1970s with the assistance of his elder brother Kuldip Singh Takhar. Kuldip Singh Takhar was Gursikh wearing turban and having beard. He was not allowed to work for wearing turban and open beard. The matter was taken to court and Shoromani Gurudawara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) helped in fighting the case which was decided in the favour of Kewal Singh. Now he is retired and clean-shaven and settled in Canada.

Ranjit Kaur, daughter of Jagjit Singh migrated to Canada around 1980 on marriage base. Her academic qualification was under graduate. She is employed in bakery and her husband is labor contractor. Surjit Kaur, another younger daughter of Jagjit Singh also settled in Canada on marriage base. She is also under graduate and employed in health department for caring old aged. Her husband is truck driver.

Jagjit Singh went to Canada in 1983 on the sponsorship of his daughter and settled there. He worked there as a farm laborer. He continued his reading and writing efforts. He wrote some piece of thoughts in press against Government of India for ‘Operation Blue Star’ and organizing the killing of Sikhs in India after the death of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. He also expressed his resentment against the killing of Sikh youth in fake police encounters. Consequently Government of India put him in black list for supporting militancy in Punjab and seized his passport. He couldn’t visit motherland for sixteen years.

Mr. Jagjit Singh kept himself active in the sphere of politics. He acted as a president of Akali Dal (Canada) and vice president Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Society. Neither he nor his family invested money in India. Whatever they earned abroad has been invested, in housing, maintenance and the education of children in the host countries. However he has made small amount of donations to Gurudawaras, Chhinj celebration and school etc.
Since his landing abroad, he has made only three visits to his home village. He still owns a ancestral house and piece of land in Shankar. The remnants of poultry farm are still there. He attributes his connections with the village to his love for homeland. He says that the young generation of the Sikhs born abroad does not have much intimacy with their ancestor’s homeland because their motherland is the host countries where they are born in. They visit India but don’t want to settle here. Indian administrative culture, natural climate and social cultural constraints are the main irritants for their settlement in India.

Mr. Jagjit Singh was very active member of Akali Dal in Shankar. He narrated that he organized a Akali Conference in village in 1975 which was addressed by top Akali leaders like Parkash Singh Badal, Gurcharn Singh Tohra, Mohan Singh Turr, Balwant Singh, Iqbal Singh Dhillon, etc despite of serious threats from Congress quarters.\(^{36}\)

### 4.37. Satnam Sahota (1985)

Satnam Sahota S/o Piara Singh Sahota, caste Balmik, born 1961, educational qualification under matric, went to England in 1985 as a tourist and settled there with the help of his elder brother Raj Sahota, who always treated him as his son. He was already settled there. This family has a migration history. Satnam Sahota’s great grand father Channa Ram migrated to Kenya around 1905. Satnam Sahota’s grandfather and paternal uncle also migrated to Kenya. They went alone and their families were left behind in Shankar. Satnam Sahota’s father Piara lal Sahota was government employee in excise department and was thoroughly turbaned gentleman. Channa Ram died in Kenya and the rest of the family members shifted to England after the liberation of African country. Satnam Sahota’s other four brothers are living in England. These brothers are Raj Sahota, Rakesh Sahota, Kirn Kumar and Harbans Singh. Harbans Singh is living in England for last 40 years and doing job as a security man. Satnam Sahota married to a England based Punjabi girl Gurdeep Kaur from Balmik caste. This family have purchased houses in England and are getting their children educated. The establishment of caste based Gurudawaras and other religious institution making them realize that Balmiks belong to socially downtrodden caste, compelled them to establish their own Balmik temple in South Hall, Birmingham, Coventry and Shankar.

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\(^{36}\) Jagjit Singh Takhar, interviewed on October 15, 2005.
Satnam Sahota is also a member of Balmik Sabha international, South Hall. His family along with other Balmikis mobilized Rs 25 lac to set up a beautiful Balmik mandir in Shankar. Late Member Parliament Balbir Singh Purewal also contributed from government grant for the establishment of this Balmik mandir and many other Jat Sikh Shankarites also contributed money for their mandir.

Satnam Sahota and his family have their ancestral renovated house in Shankar and they live here whenever they visit village. The new generation of this family does not like to settle in India but they visit Shankar with their parents.

4.38  
Kuldeep Singh Makhan (1993)

Kuldeep Singh Makhan, also known as K.S. Makhan a Punjabi folk singer, son of Kulwinder Singh Takhar, educational qualification graduation from Lyallpur Khalsa College Jalandhar, went to England in 1993 as a tourist. He got married to Canada based Punjabi girl and migrated to Canada in 1997. His parents have multipurpose visa of Canada. His younger brother is also settled in Canada. He has built up a grand house on the periphery of village and owns a small piece of land. One of his younger brothers is living in Shankar. K.S. Makhan has earned his name as one of the distinguished Punjabi folk singers and he has recorded more than seventy songs and nine music albums. Besides his career as professional singer, he is promoting Punjabi language and culture among the young generation of Punjabis born overseas through his songs. K.S. Makhan has also donated money to Shiv Giri Mandir, Shankar, Govt. Senior Secondary School, Shankar, G.N.N College Nakodar, Chhinj Committee etc. Although he is permanent citizen of Canada yet he frequently visits his village and performs in India.

4.39  
Kulwinder Kumar (1996)

Kulwinder Kumar was born on May 14, 1967, caste Ghumiar, subcaste Lole, educational qualification M.A. Psychology and M.Phil., migrated to Manila, Philippines in 1996. Before migration he was regular employee of the Government of Punjab. He served about two and half years as a superintendent of social security and then he joined Red Cross Society and served it for two years. His father was working as general merchant in Himachal Pradesh from 1962 and expired in 1997. The

37 Satnam Sahota, interviewed on October 18, 2005.
38 Kuldeep Singh Makhan, interviewed on October 23, 2005.
traditional occupation of this caste was making clay pots, animals particularly donkeys, ponies and horses carriage trade and small scale trade of food grains and vegetables. They used to carry rice, sugar to the uphill of Himachal Pradesh even when no roads existed and sold these articles there and from there they used to load their animals with potatoes and sold in the Punjab. This trade elevated them from their traditional occupation of clay pot makers to the small traders. Some of them started trading food grains in Punjab also known as Ahahrtyas (Commission agent in food grains). These Ahahrtyas also used to lend money to the peasants and purchased their agriculture products.

Kulwinder Kumar’s paternal cousins and in laws were living in Manila, Philippine. He went to Manila with the help of his in - Laws as he perceived that his single hand earning from the Government job in Punjab was not enough to meet his requirements. He went there as a visitor and then he got dependant visa. He is doing micro lending business and he is still Indian citizen because Philippine government neither grants them citizenship nor right to property. The house and shop they have are on rent. Kulwinder Singh still has house in Shankar and visits his village frequently. Whatever he has earned, he invested in his business in Philippine and maintenance of his family39.


Amarjit Singh Sandhu was born in 1945 in Jat Sikh family. His educational qualification is up to 7th standard. The migration history of this family started in 1946. His maternal grand father and mother (Nana & Nani) migrated to England from Singapore. His paternal uncle (Taya Ji) teacher in high school, migrated to England on work permit (Voucher System) on the sponsorship of his friend. Then he settled there and invited his family. His younger brother Jasvir Singh Sheera hockey player went to England as a tourist in 1973 and settled there. Amarjit Singh Sandhu went to USA (California) in 1997 as a tourist. He worked there as agricultural labourer for four and half years and came back as he did not wish to settle in the USA. The total number of his family members living abroad is about 50 including children.

After coming back he purchased about 7 acres of land with the collaboration of his brother. He has four and half years of experiences living in Yuba City. He

39 Kulwinder Kumar, interviewed on June 03, 2006.
narrates that the Punjabi Culture is very much prevalent. He further appreciated citizen’s respect for law of land in the USA.

He has been organizing Persian wheel Oxe Race Competition for last thirty years. This competition is organized during the Chhinj Festival. The annual expenditure occurring on this competition is about sixty thousand rupees. Most of the donation is donated by NRI’s voluntarily. The prizes given to the winners are 1st prize Rs 5100, shield, siropa and one tin (16 kg) of desi ghee, 2nd prize Rs 4100, one tin desi ghee, 3rd prize Rs 3100, one tin desi ghee, 4th prize 2100, one tin desi ghee. This competition has been very helpful in establishing linkages of the overseas Shankrites with Shankar.

4.41. Chattar Singh Matharu (1997)

Chatter Singh, born in 1936, caste Ramgarhia, subcaste Matharu, occupation mason, education upto 4th standard, father’s occupation registered building and road construction contractor, migrated to Canada in 1997 on family dependent visa sponsored by his daughter. Chanan Singh Matharu was the first member of this family to migrate to East Africa in 1945. His work permit to East Africa country was sponsored by Tara Singh Channa who was settled there and working as contractor for construction work. Tara Singh’s father Arjun Singh was the pioneer from Ramgarhia caste to migrate to East Africa. Chanan Singh migrated to England around 1960 and after four years, he called his family in England. Chanan Singh facilitated the migration of his four brothers to East Africa and England. Chatter Singh Matharu has four daughters who shifted to England on marriage base and one of his daughter, Inderpal Kaur again shifted to Canada from England. She sponsored her parents and they migrated to Canada. Chatter Singh Matharu’s two sons Gurpreet Singh Matharu and Harpreet Singh Matharu also migrated to Canada on marriage base. Chattar Singh Matharu works as mason and his sons work in wooden factory. Chattar Singh Matharu told that he did not face language and other racial problems because of wearing turban and keeping beard because he worked with Punjabi contractors. This family has experienced three generations overseas and they have interaction with their kinship in India and abroad. This family did not make any investment in India because neither they nor their coming generations want to settle in India. But they

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40 Amarjit Singh Sandhu, interviewed on November 21, 2005 and November 26, 2005
have their ancestral house in Shankar and live in it when they come to their home
land. Chatter Singh Matharu told that like other Ramgarhias abroad, they also used to
donate money to Ramgharhia Education Society, Phagwara and Ramgarhia Panchyat
at Shankar, besides giving some donation for religious ceremonies, Chatter Singh
Matharu is a thoroughly religious minded and has a complete image of a Sikh. He
loves his homeland and visited it three times in nine years\textsuperscript{41}.

The above description discloses that the migration touched this village in
1890. The majority of the early migrants were male Jat Sikhs in the age of 20-24
years. The two brothers from the lower caste i.e. Balmiki, also followed suit and went
to USA in the last decade of 19\textsuperscript{th} century. The countries of the destination of these
migrants were Australia and USA. None of the early migrants was a retired soldier of
British Indian army. Up to the pre-colonial period, the migration from the village
continued to East Asian, African colonies and North America. After the colonial
period, the migration from the village took turn to England on the basis of voucher
system. The liberalization of immigration policies by UK, Canada and USA created
the flow of migration from the village as the large number of people shifted to these
countries on the basis of marriage and dependent family members of the overseas
Shankarites. Their social and cultural network also generated the flow of migration to
abroad from the village.

\textsuperscript{41} Chattar Singh Matharu, interviewed on October16, 2005.