

## **Dal Khalsa Declares Self-determination and no-election Policy**

### ***Dal Khalsa and its policy on “Parliamentary General Elections 2019 in India”:***

#### **Dal Khalsa is submitted to Guru Panth and Guru Granth.**

**Dal Khalsa owes** allegiance to Akal Takht Sahib and to no other worldly power or authority.

**Dal Khalsa is** a historical movement with roots in the eighteenth century. In its present avatar, Dal Khalsa emerged on Punjab’s religio-political domain on 13 August 1978, with the vision to regain lost Sikh sovereignty and the mission to wage a struggle for justice, rights and freedom.

**Dal Khalsa recalls** that the Sikh country –Punjab, was annexed by the imperialist British in 1849 and handed over on a platter to India in 1947, without the express will of the Sikhs and other peoples of Punjab. No doubt, today, history has overrun the Sikhs, yet the yearning for self-rule lies below the veneer and how this will unfold in future is a matter of vision, conjecture and speculation.

**Dal Khalsa envisages** an arrangement like Quebec in Canada and Scotland in the United Kingdom, wherein it is possible to make right to self-determination an election agenda, subsequently leading to the right to secede. When done through an UN-administered referendum/plebiscite, it can be the most peaceful and democratic possibility for change.

**Dal Khalsa endorses** the unmitigated stand of the Hurriyat Conference boycotting elections in Jammu and Kashmir and that of the NSCN (IM) in Nagaland and maintains affinity and rapport with the struggling Kashmiris and Nagas.

**Dal Khalsa asserts** that the Indian democratic system is not conducive to attaining a sovereign Punjab through the current electoral processes. Without the right to self-determination, elections are meaningless. Sikh aspirations are too dear to be sacrificed at the altar of such a game of elections where money, liquor, drugs and even caste and class are key factors.

**Dal Khalsa believes** that legislative or parliamentary electoral victory cannot be a substitute for the goal of religio-political independence of Punjab. The destiny of our people is even more important than good governance.

**Dal Khalsa salutes** the martyrdom of thousands who laid down their lives in the struggle for an independent and sovereign Sikh state -Khalistan and we would not betray their sacrifice.

**Dal Khalsa appreciates** the role, contribution and stand of the Sikh Diaspora which has constantly and consistently upheld the dignity, honour and distinct identity of the Sikh people and unflinchingly upheld the Sikh right to their own country in the face of overt and covert opposition of the Indian state through its foreign missions and the nonchalance of the international community.

**Dal Khalsa questions** the enforced allegiance to the Constitution of India during elections. The compulsory oath of allegiance to the Indian constitution and to the unity and integrity of the country at the time of filing nomination papers is a shameful Indian methodology to insult and thrust patriotism on the candidate.

***Reviewing the working of the Indian constitution, the Sikh political parties, especially the Shiromani Akali Dal and the facade of elections that does not deliver, Dal Khalsa notes:***

In 1950, when the Constitution of India was adopted, the two Sikh representatives did not sign the Constitution and categorically declared, “We do not accept this constitution.” Over the decades, the dynamics have changed but with more than a hundred amendments, the Constitution has seized to be sacrosanct. To create an environment and mechanism for fulfilling aspirations of nationalities and regional identities, radical changes have to be made in this Constitution.

The dichotomy in the Sikh stand towards elections is palpable. Sikhs in general and especially those owing allegiance to the Shiromani Akali Dal, with their dubious and duplicitous machinations, swing like a pendulum between protesting, yearning, cribbing and complaining of discrimination, religious interference and injustices by all organs of the Indian state yet continue to participate in electoral politics, hoping against hope.

In fact, the Shiromani Akali Dal has been subsumed in the Indian political conundrum, lost its core character, relinquished its goal of true federalism and yet failed to achieve the demands of the state and its people.

From 1947 onwards, Sikhs, especially through the Shiromani Akali Dal, have formed governments, sent Sikh representatives to the Indian parliament; have been nominated to high Constitutional, administrative and armed forces posts. Despite this, the situation has not changed at all. The Punjab problem is still a problem.

**Sikhs of Punjab must consider this:**

Punjab does not have its own capital city, Chandigarh is a shared capital; the waters of Punjab unabatedly flow to Haryana, Delhi and Rajasthan without royalty to the riparian state; our language and culture is endangered in Punjab; Article 25 of the Constitution of India still categorizes us as Hindus, plethora of laws for Hindus govern us and all attempts by Sikhs to have their own Sikh Personal Law has been thwarted and dominant mainstream political parties refuse to accept our distinct identity. Justice for June 84, November 1984 and extra-judicial killings by security forces post-1984, still eludes us.

Sikhs have been subjected to gross atrocities and human rights violations and all arms of the Indian state have colluded to keep Sikh genocide under the wraps.

Our revered Guru Granth Sahib is under attack and incidents of sacrilege by state-sponsored deras and cults have increased.

The flight of Sikh human capital from Punjab, the ever-worsening drug abuse problem, the increasing number of farmer suicides, the tardy education system, joblessness and more, cry for ever-lasting solutions.

What has the Sikh community gained through participation in the Indian electoral system?

Is present day Punjab even close to what we were thrust with in 1947?

In such a regressive system and dominating political scenario, can Sikhs be masters of their own destiny?

***For Sikhs of Punjab that would support mainstream parties and candidates, Dal Khalsa has a message:***

🏠 Those Sikhs supporting the BJP-SAD and Congress should shame themselves and recall the litany of injustices, pre-1984 and post-1984, complicity of these parties in sacrilege incidents, patronizing anti-Sikh deras and cults and giving shelter to guilty and tainted cops before picking up the gauntlet for such parties.

***Dal Khalsa declares:***

**Dal Khalsa** has no faith in the current Indian dispensation and that the party and its members will not participate in the electoral charade of India.

**Dal Khalsa** has a clear and unmistakable message for the people of Punjab. The Indian elections are colonial in nature, feudal in character and ultra-nationalistic in approach. The choice it offers is between the devil and the deep sea. The minority representation that we get upon electoral victory leads to nowhere.

**Dal Khalsa** is prudent and not nonchalant in its stand. The inalienable right of the Sikhs to decide their own future cannot be bartered for anything.

Nevertheless, Sikh nationalist leader Simranjit Singh Mann and Bibi Paramjit Kaur Khalra -wife of extra-judicially killed human rights crusader Jaswant Singh Khalra and socialist leader Dr Dharamvir Gandhi, have chosen to plunge into the electoral battle to address lingering Sikh concerns and human rights issues. Notwithstanding our decision to boycott LS polls, Dal Khalsa wishes them good luck and success in their battle.