

Great Sikh Women Māi Bhāgo – Bhāg Kaur

Māi Bhāgo (ਮਾਈ ਭਾਗੋ) was a descendant of Phero Shāh, the younger brother of Bhāi Lauṅgā (ਲੌਂਗਾ) who converted to Sikhī during the life of Gurū Arjan. Born in her ancestral village of Jhabbal in present-day Amritsar district of the Pañjāb, she was married to Nidhān Singh of Paṭṭī (ਪੱਟੀ). Overall, she was a staunch Sikh by birth and upbringing.



Her story begins in a moment where Mughals and hilly chiefs had surrounded Anandpur Sāhib and were demanding it be evacuated. The Mughals promised that anyone who renounced their allegiance as Sikhs of Gurū Gobind Singh would be left untouched. A group of 40 Sikhs, led by Mahām (ਮਹਾਂ) Singh, decided to take that route and told Gurū Gobind Singh that they no longer belonged to him.

Gurū Gobind Singh accepted their decision and asked them to record this renunciation in a document. After the forty Sikhs signed this document, they left Gurū Gobind Singh and returned to their homes. Upon their return, Māi Bhāgo learned of their abandonment of Gurū Gobind Singh and was distressed to hear that some of the Sikhs of her neighborhood had deserted their Gurū. So Māi Bhāgo took action and began an inspirational movement. She rallied the deserters of the Gurū, and together, they traveled to reunite with their leader.

Meanwhile, Gurū Gobind Singh had to evacuate the fort of Anandpur, and his children were lost in the confusion. The two youngest sons, Zorāvar Singh and Phatah Singh, went along with their grandmother (mother of Gurū Gobind Singh). Meanwhile, the elder two Ajīt Singh and Jhujhār Singh were with their father. Then at the battle of Camkaur (ਚਮਕੌਰ) Gurū's elder sons attained martyrdom, and the Gurū was saved by five Sikhs and he evacuated Camkaur. While traveling in the Mālṡā (ਮਾਲਵਾ) region he was hotly pursued by Mughal forces of Aurāṅzeb (ਔਰੰਗਜ਼ੇਬ).

Traveling day and night in the Jungles of Mālṡā region, imperial Mughal forces were in constant pursuit of the Gurū. Gurū Gobind Singh reached village of Khidrāṅā (ਖਿਦਰਾਣਾ), when Māi Bhāgo, and the men known as Cālī Mukte (ਚਾਲੀ ਮੁਕਤੇ) she was leading, stopped near the pool of Khidrāṅā where an imperial army in pursuit of Gurū Gobind Singh was

about to overtake him. They challenged the pursuing host and fought. Now this battleground is known as Muktsar (ਮੁਕਤਸਰ) Sāhib.



Her hut in Jinvārā (ਜਿਨਵਾਰਾ) has now been converted into Gurduārā Tap Asthān Māi Bhāgo. At Nanded, too, a hall within the compound of Takht Sackhand (ਸਚਖੰਡ) is devoted to her, and Srī Hazūr Sāhib marking the site of her residence is known as Buṅgā (ਬੁੰਗਾ) Māi Bhāgo.

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