



ਸਰਬੱਤ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ

Sarbat Khalsa

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ

ਪੰਚ-ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨੀ ਜੁਗਤਿ

Date: August 23, 2025

The Select Committee
Govt of Punjab.

Sub: Proposed Anti-Sacrilege Bill – Farcical and Unnecessary

Respected Members of the Select Committee,

There is no doubt that past and ongoing incidents of sacrilege of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji have deeply disturbed the Sikh community and require a permanent solution. It is painful to repeatedly hear news of the main accused, Sadh Ram Rahim, being released on parole for months at a time, and officials of the then Badal Government—responsible for the shooting of innocent protestors—continue to roam free. The Punjab Government has done nothing substantive to punish the culprits of previous sacrilege incidents under IPC Section 295A (now codified as Section 299 under the BNS). In this context, the proposed Anti-Sacrilege Bill diverts attention from the real perpetrators, while exploiting Sikh sentiments—something equally disturbing.

Sarbat Khalsa organization consulted with legal advisors and held a webinar on the topic, 'Far-reaching impact of the anti-sacrilege Bill.' After examining the various aspects of the draft Bill in detail, Sarbat Khalsa Organization find the bill farcical and unnecessary on the following grounds:

1. Violation of Freedom of Expression

This year marks the 350th anniversary of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji, whose supreme sacrifice upheld the legacy of human rights and freedom of expression. Such Bills contradict that legacy, as it creates avenues for misuse and misinterpretation by those in power. Laws that can potentially curtail the fundamental right to free expression must never be enacted.

2. Equating Guru Granth Sahib Ji with Other Scriptures

The clause 2(a) of the proposed Bill reads as:

'Holy Scriptures' means any of the Scriptures considered sacred and held as 'Holy' by respective religious denominations and may include Sri Guru Granth Sahib or extracts thereof including Pothis and Gutka Sahib, Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Quran Sharif and Holy Bible.

Whereas, Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is unique:

·It contains hymns from saints of various backgrounds, with a universal message for the welfare of all:

ਖੜੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੂਦ ਵੈਸ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਹੁ ਵਰਨਾ ਕਉ ਸਾਝਾ॥ (Mehl 5)

ਪਰਥਾਇ ਸਾਖੀ ਮਹਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਬੋਲਦੇ ਸਾਝੀ ਸਗਲ ਜਹਾਨੈ॥ (Mehl 3)

·It is the only scripture regarded as Guru—equivalent to the Prophet—by its followers.

·The Supreme Court of India has recognized Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as a “Juristic Person” in the context of property rights.

Clause 2(a) diminishes the already established status when it equates Guru Granth Sahib Ji with other scriptures. Furthermore, Pothis and Gutka Sahib, while revered, cannot be equated with Guru Granth Sahib Ji.



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3. Scope for Inclusion of Controversial Texts

The phrase “may include” in Clause 2(a) is dangerously vague. It could be misused to include contentious texts such as Bhavsagar Granth by Bhaniara Sadh, Avtar Bani by Nirankaris, or others against which Sikhs have historically protested. Even within the Sikh community, certain texts (e.g., Sarbloh Granth, Bachhitar Natak, etc.) are respected by some schools of thought but questioned by others. The loose wording in the Bill risks suppressing legitimate differences of opinion and stifling scholarly or theological debate.

4. Undefined ‘Sacrilege’ and Risk of Misuse

Clause 2b reads as:

‘offence’ means and includes any sacrilege, damage, destruction, de-facing, disfiguring, de-colouring, defiling, decomposing, burning, breaking or tearing of any Holy Scripture, or part thereof.

It is strange that the Bill for “Offences against Holy Scriptures” is propagated as an anti-sacrilege bill, but the definition of ‘sacrilege’ is missing. The 2b clause separates ‘sacrilege’ from other physical acts of damage, destruction, etc. This gap allows complainants to stretch the term according to their whims—potentially even targeting Sikhs for preaching Gurbani hymns that critique ritualism and religious hypocrisy. For Ex:

ਬੁਤ ਪੂਜਿ ਪੂਜਿ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਮੂਏ ਤੁਰਕ ਮੂਏ ਸਿਰੁ ਨਾਈ ॥ (Bhagat Kabir)
ਹਿੰਦੂ ਅੰਨ੍ਹਾ ਤੁਰਕੁ ਕਾਣਾ ॥ ਦੁਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਸਿਆਣਾ ॥ (Bhagat Namdev)
ਕਾਦੀ ਕੂੜੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਮਲੁ ਖਾਇ ॥ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਜੀਆ ਘਾਇ ॥ (Mehl 1)

The Gurbani’s liberating message could easily be mischaracterized as “offending” other religions under such a loosely worded law. This is a direct threat to the Sikh mission of awakening humanity from the shackles of falsehood and priestly control.

Conclusion

In light of the above, the Sarbat Khalsa Organization firmly opposes the proposed Anti-Sacrilege Bill—as well as any such legislation that endangers freedom of expression or distorts the unique status of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

From Panch-Pardhani Council:

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cc:

CMO, Punjab Govt
Speaker, Punjab Vidhan Sabha
President, SGPC, Amritsar.