

**1947- VICH SIKHAN DE PAKISTAN VICHON NIKLAN  
DI GAATHA (Punjabi)  
By Dr. Kirpal Singh**

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The contents of "*1947 Vich Sikhan De Pakistan Vichon Niklan Di Gaatha*" fill a vacuum between the mechanistic developments of statecraft leading to transfer of power, on the one hand, and the burden of its consequences imposed on the people, on the other hand. And in the case of Partition of 1947 the burdens on the people were not only gruesome but of a scale and intensity the like of which the world had not witnessed earlier. Eight million people crossed border, about five lakh persons were killed, over forty thousand women and children were abducted. All this happened within three months.

The author is a historian and a scholar of impeccable academic repute. To write on the subjects related to Partition of Punjab has been his forte. Dr. Kirpal Singh has been exhaustively and painstakingly researching documents relating to Partition of Punjab and laboriously seeking such personages who could add a personalized dimension to the account of Partition of Punjab. His numerous books in English, Punjabi (and one in Persian) are a valuable material and historical treasure. This book is expressive and a testimony to the author's findings regarding the enormity of sufferings during Partition. The book is deeply illustrative of the agony of proud and sensitive people, who acutely value their beliefs, heritage and attachments, and were subjected to brutalities and displacement from their homes and hearths. Dr. Kirpal Singh has sought to perpetuate the scenario of influences that determined the course of events. The author has highlighted the conflicting theories that compelled transfer of population. This is a rare contribution by him.

The book narrates a graphic account of the chronology of riots caused by politico-religious reasons that, even today, arouse a vivid picture of the senseless suffering of the populace. The author has settled the argument that the migration was essentially generated by constant fear of communal riots on account of establishment of Pakistan in West Punjab and its repercussions in East Punjab. It has been traced that the genesis of communal riots in Punjab was the result of instigation's of the Mulsim League, and first sprung from the district of Hazara. The population of Hazara constituted of 95% Muslims. The people of this region were of excitable nature. An incident of a school teacher roaming the streets with a human skull hung around his neck and propagating that the skull is of a Muslim killed elsewhere, aroused communal hatred. The communal flare-up had occurred earlier at places like Calcutta, Bihar and Garhmukteshwar. In times of tension between communities such an incident acted like hot blast over searing emotions. There were already feelings that Sikhs are an obstacle in the formation of Pakistan in

areas of Punjab and there were preparations wherein influential Muslim League leaders had secured and cached arms and ammunition. The account of riots is remarkable from another angle that its narration is through sources other than Sikhs, Hindus or Muslims.

The book also contains exhaustive details of the Memorandum representing the Sikh point of view to the Boundary Commission. The Memorandum gives the demographic breakdown in different areas of erstwhile Punjab and topics affecting the Sikhs economically, socially and culturally. **One of the most significant impact conveyed through the Memorandum is about the right of Sikh homeland accepted and codified through political resolutions and recorded as such in the manifesto.**

The orientation to the subject and its extensive analysis is helped by the maps of the erstwhile Punjab and the detailed factual analysis. The book is also illustrated by a range of extremely expressive photographs effusively depicting the scenes of cruelty especially in the district of Rawalpindi during March 1947.

Though the killings of Sikhs in events related to "ground zero 1984" haunts the Sikh psyche more glaringly today, yet the genocidal occurrences of 1947 are equally horrendous in magnitude and barbarity. For those who have had the personal experience of the partition in 1947, this book is an invaluable item of collection for posterity from a learned author who has himself undergone the experience.

This impressive and neatly printed book is welcome addition to the Punjab's historical literature and will prove informative to the public in general and scholars of Punjab history in particular.

