

Challenge & Opportunity: Agenda for SGPC

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PART II

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FOR DHARAM PRACHAR, key subject should be Humility, piety and personal living - as a *Gursikh*. Preaching by example, and being a role model are key characteristics which needs to be emphasized throughout the training and study. An advanced is proposed for the pracharaks, - after a years in the field, especially for those aspiring to go abroad. Advanced course students should also be required to become fluent in one national or international language.

This will be an investment worth making - rather than marble flooring of the Gurdwaras. These Granthis should be trained at SGPC expense and each village / town Gurdwara should have a trained *pracharak-granthi*.

In my humble opinion, the spurt in “Derawad” and personal guruship has come about due to lack of well -nformed and inspiring Granthis at the local gurdwara.

Gurmat Kirtan:

A Gurmat Sangeet Academy should train Kirtanias upto diploma level. We have too many so-called Kirtani jathas moving around who tend to sing Shabads in film tunes. In the process they distort Gurbani to fit in populist frame, thus distorting the emphasis, and sometimes the meaning of the *shabad*.

I have spoken to some of them. The normal response is: where can I learn to do Kirtan in *Ragas*, or afford to spend years learning it? I come from a poor family and have taken up this profession to earn my livelihood. I was fortunate to have good voice, and kirtan in tunes needs just about six months to pick up!

Another reason given is: “The Sangat likes it”. It is partially true. **The Sangat has rarely been exposed to proper Gurmat kirtan , i.e. singing of the *shabad* in the *raga* as it is entered in SGGs, including the *Ghar* and *Tal*.** Those who are fortunate enough to listen to it will always swear by it. It has a magical effect because you understand every word of it, being spelt in *Raga*. There is a college in Amritsar run by SGPC, but the capacity is very small. We need to re-look at the needs of the community and make suitable amends to ensure proper kirtan at all historical Gurdwaras, including those *kirtani jathas* traveling abroad.

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