

MAN  
WITH  
MISSION

*Jagdev Singh Jassowal*

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Published by

*Jagdev Singh Jassowal Charitable Trust (regd.)*

*and*

*Prof Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation (regd.)*

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*Jagdev Singh Jassowal*

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Based On Books by  
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## Special Thanks



*Prof. Mohan Lal Sharma  
Translator*



*Rattan Singh Sherpur  
(Jagraon) Ludhiana*

This book is dedicated to all individuals, societies and institutions who are enduring to present, protect and promote punjabi language, art, literature, culture and heritage throughout the globe.

**FAMILY TREE  
of  
Jagdev Singh Jassowal**

Dharma  
Chuhar  
Gadila  
Hakumat  
Dayal Singh  
Sunder Singh  
Wadhwa Singh  
Kartar Singh  
Jagdev Singh Jassowal  
Brothers  
Gurdev Singh Grewal  
Sukhdev Singh Grewal  
Chamkaur Singh Grewal  
Nirmal Singh Grewal  
Inderjit Singh Grewal  
Sons: Sukhminder Singh Grewal  
Jaswinder Singh Grewal  
Grandsons:  
Amarinder Singh Grewal  
Johny Grewal  
Jimmy Grewal  
Sons of Gurdev Singh Grewal-  
Jagjit Singh Grewal, Balraj Singh Grewal  
Son of Sukhdev Singh Grewal-  
Shminderpal Singh Grewal  
Son of Inderjit Singh Grewal-  
Maninder Singh Grewal

**Members of the Jagdev Singh  
Jassowal Charitable trust**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal  
Jagpal Singh Khangura  
Pargat Singh Grewal  
Master Sadhu Singh Grewal  
Surjit Singh Grewal  
Surjit Singh Grewal  
Balraj Singh Grewal  
Ravinder Grewal  
Jasmel Singh Dhaliwal  
Gurnam Singh Dhaliwal  
Inderjit Singh Grewal  
Jaswant Singh Dhillon  
Gurbachan Singh Thind  
Satinder Singh Grewal  
Raj Jhaj  
Iqbal Singh Rurka  
Jaswant Singh Grewal  
Iqbal Mahal  
Jagdip Gill  
Gurnek Singh Grewal  
Dilbag Singh Khatra Kalan  
Iqbal Singh Lohgarh  
Sohan Singh Thekedar.

## The Translator's note

It is the freakish ness of Destiny that my life and career have been associated with the name of Jassowal twice, first, when I was a lad of eighteen and now when I am an old man of eighty one. Then I was an ordinary Patwari in Lyall pur District at Chak No. 89, Jaipur (on Jhug Branch, now. in Pakistan) and Now I am a post graduate lecturer in English on the staff of G.N.Khalsa College for Women, Model Town, Ludhiana. This difference in career and fortune is due to the , fact that recognizing my mental and intellectual calibre as well as my -literary propensities a big landlord and freedom fighter of village Jassowal, Lala Sadhu Ram Beri whose squares of land I was one day (in 1938) examining for the assessment of revenue exhorted me to re-continue my studies and even gave me the promise of Financial help (though he could not help, as he died a martyr in the British jail during the Quit India Movement of 1939). However, following his wise and sympathetic advice I joined D.M.College Moga & later for post graduation, D.A.V.. College, Lahore and had a brilliant student career. I not only rose in life myself but also raised to eminence my poverty-depressed kith and kin; The credit for it wholly and solely goes to my guide and preceptor L. Sadhu Ram Ji Beri (of Jassowal), Ludhiana. And Now I have rendered this humble service to S. Jagdev Singh Sahib of the same Jassowal village at a time when I am almost on the brink of my earthly career, I cannot foretell what new happy twist this second contact with the same village Jassowal will give to my career and fortune, but I feel most proud to think that I have had the good luck of being in close contact with two great sons of the Punjab, and not only of the village Jassowal, and of being in their good books.

By translating in English the noble record of S. -Jassowal's career and achievements I have done nobody any favour but have only repaid the debt of gratitude I owed to these worthy sons of my country; I feel my spiritual kinship with them and in consequence, pay them my humble tributes.

As to my own assessment of S. Jagdev Singh Jee, I need not repeat all that he has done for reviving and rejuvenating the decaying and fast vanishing pristine Punjabi culture and identity under the onrush of globalization; much has been said already. I only add that politics which has been mentioned in very impolite terms by different writers and , thinkers, has become all the more a dirty game, today, a. Monopoly of dubious character, and overambitious politicians who inspired by narrow & selfish motives of self-advancement and self-aggradisement indulge in all sorts of vile practices and bring a bad name to their motherland. No wonder if simpleminded and guileless men like S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal fail to maintain their foot-hold on this slippery and precarious ground. For .truly philanthropic and patriotic persons the present days politics offers little scope. I also find that our national character is still in the making despite the fact that we have had an unbroken democratic rule of several decades. Nepotism, casteism, provincialism, communalism - and above all hooliganism are still the order of the day and

genuine merit has been thrown into abeyance. Even Gandhi ji, had once complained that people bow to power, not to service, and the majority of our masses bring still illiterate and ignorant, are easily deluded by false slogans and empty promises, not meant to be fulfilled, and give their votes to undeserving candidates. It is evident from the corruption charges and legal cases which are under trial against several prominent politicians all over the country.

In such a situation, if S. Jassowal has met with disappointment in the political domain, it does not bring him any discredit. He is the man whom all political parties, even those diametrically opposed to each other in thought & approach, have found equally useful and trustworthy; and even exalted him to high positions from time to time. It betokens his merit. He has helped all who sought his help and got nothing in return. He is a true secular character & the circle of his vast friendship covers men of all - communities and affiliations. His beneficiaries, too, belong to all communities. His simple, rural type of life, complete absence of the rich paraphernalia of an aristocratic household, the periods of Snadial depression and stringency that he passes through so often despite his homely and unobstentatious standard of living- all indicate his honest & upright nature and his morally refined mode of earning- a true Sikh of Guru Nanak Ji!

I think that God, the Omniscient, has done him a great favour by taking him out of the political quagmire and making him the "man of the masses". His present expedition for the cultural and artistic revival of the Punjab and his endeavour to restore to Punjab its lost identity & character are the efforts that in all probability, will bestow upon S. Jassowal the same award of honour which Bhoodan Movement has bestowed upon its pioneer Sh. Vinobha Bhave. At present, it may seem to be a vain conjecture, but history will, certainly be in his favour & he will be universally acknowledged as the harbinger of the Cultural Revolution in the Punjab and the the Custodian of Punjabi-identity and character.

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## An Introduction to the- Book

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is the name of an extraordinary personage. He is a Jat farmer, an artist as well a lover of arts and artists, a politician, a good husband and a decent father, a friend of friends, a glob-trotting tourist and a man of manifold perfection. He is the Messiah of folk-singers, musicians, artists & of the poor and the low. He is the man who reaches every place where his need is acutely felt, stands by the common man, and shares his problems & difficulties and shares with them his joys and sorrows. He is the man who loves to be known as one of the masses. There is ever seen a crowd of visitors at his residence. He shows respect for every artist, great or small & for him all artists belong to the same venerable category. He watches them, goes through their performance and has the ability to make valuable suggestions and give them hints of guidance. He places art and the artist on a high pedestal. During his career till today he has made myriads of achievements, Professor Mohan Singh Memorial Punjabi Cultural Annual Fair is his gift to the Punjab. It has revived and rejuvenated Punjabi culture and made giant's strides in this direction, were you to attend one such fair, you will find every aspect of Punjabi culture fully manifest & alive. The name that Shree Jassowal has won in the political, social, religious and cultural fields falls to the lot of only men with rare good luck. Today any cultural fair without him would look blank. His individuality is so sweet, warm & affectionate, and so cordial and genial that every artist loves to approach him to derive calm and comfort from his inspiring personality.

He has, temperamentally, a regal bearing, is a disburser of gifts and endowments, is the helper & guide of the poor and the downtrodden and the problem-solver of the ragn-muffins. When ever he speaks on the stage he is so eloquent & artistic that he thrills and enthral the whole audience with his fund of knowledge to the wonder and admiration of great orators. His uniqueness lies in the fact that his words always contain same basic & original facts & he never follows a beaten track. Every artist whom he has encouraged and initiated has advanced on the path of progress. To write a book on such a multidimensional and myriad faceted personality so unique, and filled with deep thought, benevolent and so artistic is not the job of the riff raff.

In this sense Ninder Chugianvi has done something of historic importance by undertaking this voluminous literary venture. Even by this time Ninder has gifted ten books to the lovers of Punjabi language and each book surpasses the preceding one. In none has he beaten a retreat. He displays special dexterity in presenting an ordinary fact artistically. Being a disciple of Lal Chand Yamla Jat he possesses originality & ability and lucidity of expression and presentation. I can't say how and from where he picks up such facts and points as are quite novel and original for the laity and of a special kind; and besides their heart ravishing quality, they are highly informative as well as zestful. While writing on artists, folk-singers, musicians

and poets he creates such a romantic atmosphere that the reader feels simply bewitched and hypnotised. He has no peer even in his romantic appeal; several knots get resolved quite effortlessly.

Ninder Ghugianvi's first book entitled "Toombi de Waris" was published in 1994. It was on the disciples of Yamla Jat. It takes into account nearly one hundred and fifty of his disciples along with their photographs and general details. Even this Juvenile attempt made in so young an age had a good reception in the literary as well as cultural field. Next he got published his novel Godha Ardali in 1997. It also won a good readership. Here he has narrated quite romantically the life-story of a judge's orderly. He wrote his next book entitled 'AmarAwaz'on Yamla Jat in 1997. It was quite an easy and effortless task on his part, because he had already created a strong and deep impression on Yamla Ji, the other members his family as well as on the near links of Yamla Jat and grown popular among them for his intelligence, and suave tongue. It also fell to the lot of Ninder Ghugianvi to write in 1998 a book entitled 'Kulti wale Faqir on Puran Shah Koti, the Pole Star of Sufi music and present it to the votaries of Punjabi literature & art. His book on the Peak-singer Hans Raj 'Hans' entitled 'Lok Geet Warga Hans' (1999) also fetched Ninder Ghugianvi great fame and name. His book written on the budding musical artist Gurcharan Virk under the title 'Virk da Geet Sansar' found a ready sale. It also shows the miracle of Ghugianvi's charming style. On the basis of this name even in his Young age, as a successful journalist, literary artist and popular essayist Ninder's writings frequently appear in all important Punjabi newspapers and journals and attract from the readers praise and appreciation as well as criticism and evaluation. In this way- he is frequently talked of in literary and cultural circles as well -as in newspapers and magazines. Ninder has written serial-wise the account of his own service as an orderly to a judge and it has appeared fifteen or sixteen times in the Punjabi Tribune. These writings have been both praised and criticized so often. It has made Ninder Ghugianvi all the more popular with Punjabi literateurs as well as artists.

His books speak for themselves. If you start reading any of his books you can't leave it unread from cover to cover. He has the knack at compressing an ocean into a cup in the figurative sense. His mention of even trifles bears the charm of his unique style. Can't say what special boon God Almighty has bestowed upon this juvenile artist that one feels inclined even to kiss his pen!. He pours out his whole personality and character into his writings.

One of his books written on S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is also a unique attempt. At the beginning of this writing he has referred to his own love of letters. What struggle he had to wage in his keenness to read and write books and what problems he will have to face in future the pursuance of this literary career he has given in detail. He has also made full mention of himself. In the next chapter he has given a very detailed account of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's worldly life. There is an exhaustive account of his childhood,

of the mischiefs of childhood, his educational activities, his hobbies & entertainments, his politics, his artistic tastes, his cultural activities, of governmental as well as non-governmental ranks he held, his worldly life and of so many feuds and disputes of what shape and character a man's circumstances lend him and how Jassowal passed through hard ordeals and was thereby transformed into pure gold etc. find a detailed account in this chapter In the next chapter we are introduced to S. Jassowal's other kith and kin. An exhaustive & interesting account has been given of this dynasty from his ancestors down to the present generation, in the chronological order. S Jassowal's contribution to the development of Punjabi culture has been given in the next chapter. It records S. Jassowal's all activities- cultural as well as literary in full detail along with interesting & constructive criticism of those activities. There is mention of Punjabi artists and of cultural fairs & festivals and of S. Jassowal's contributions to them. A detailed account of S. Jassowal's multidimensional personality has been given in the next chapter. It is both entertaining and informative His foreign tours and visits have been mentioned in the next chapter. The chapter containing an interview with S. Jassowal's wife Ms. Surjit Kaur Jassowal lends a new zest to the whole account. S. Jassowal in poetry S. Jassowal in the eyes of scholars and men of letters, the honours and dignities bestowed upon him form another part of this Volume. They reveal step by step his multi dimensional personality during the publication of this book S. Jassowal had to murderous attack when even the writer of this book Ninder Ghugianvi attending his presence How this murderous attack was made on S. Jassowal and how he had a narrow escape- this whole account has been depicted beautifully by Ninder Ghugianvi in a separate account. In fact, he it was that saved S. Jassowal's life! This writing, too carries the flavour of a good narrative.

A number of relevant photographs have been collected and inserted here. They all are vignettes of his crowded, eventful life and reveal it in glimpses. This procedure not only reveals facts in their true colours but also dispel several doubts and shows close links of this great person with the masses.

In this sense this book has a great historic value. I would like to congratulate Sh. Ninder Ghugianvi, the author of this all round perfect, and entertaining book. I would also point out to him that the destination is still afar & he should continue his efforts, rather than come to a stand still led by fatigue or vanity & self-concert. May he be ever happy!

**Harbhajan Singh Batalvi,**  
297- Master Tara Singh Nagar,  
Jalandhan

## **An Exponent of Punjabi Culture**

A tall, stalwart stature; an impressive look; voice ; a warm, affectionate temperament- Jassowal himself is a typical model of a Punjabi gentleman. In the Punjab fairs were already held in the memory of holy pirs and faqirs, but the founder of and festivals in honour of poets and other fine artists, is, undoubtedly S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal only inspired many musicians, folk-singers, artists and arts-lover and introduced them to the arts-loving punjabis. S. Jassowal is a great institution in himself. The organizers of all cultural fairs in Punjab regard it as a great honour and good luck for them to have S. Jassowal, the great exponent of Punjabi culture, amidst them. The good work done by S. Jassowal to bring into relief on the world map and to give it a conspicuous colouring on its canvas is laudable in high degree.

The interest that Ninder Ghugianvi, the writer, has shown in writing about the authentic Punjabi artists & their services is deserving of the highest esteem. He has won the honour of being the authentic and capable explorer and devoted writer of this unexplored literary & artistic region.

I convey my heartiest congratulations to S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal and the young writer Ninder Ghugianvi for the presentation of this book.

**Dhera Kammiana,**  
Patiala.

)

## The Biography

Village Jassowal Soodan lies situated at the foot of Ludhiana, only at a distance of nine kilometers. The number of its voters is a bit higher than nineteen hundred, while its area is nearly fifteen hundred acres. As Sood bankers have been the residents of this place from the very beginning, it began to be called 'Jassowal Soodan'. To the south-west of Ludhiana in nearly fifty two villages Grewal Jats have settled in large numbers Even in this village Grewals reside in a large number It comprises three 'Patis'-Mayia, Sugu and 'Dau'. Because of the all round fame of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal this village has become known all over the world.

### The Birth of Jagdev Singh Jassowal

Jagdev Singh Jassowal was born on. Apr 30, 1935 at his ancestral village Jassowal Soodan in the early hours of morning. He had already three elder brothers of whom Nirmal Singh passed away in early age. Jagdev Singh is the fourth child of his parents. When his Zaildar father S. Kartar Singh and his mother Sardarni Amar Kaur began to call him 'Jago', he became popular in the whole village with this name. His childhood passed in the midst of love and affection. Jago saw for the first a bicycle in this village- He also saw water pumps newly provided, the matchbox, too, was a new introduction. He also saw the 'rasa mandli' of his village organised by one S. Sarwan Singh and witnessed its performance. He would enjoy with eagerness bear shows and monkey shows, fights between mongooses and snakes. Jago would follow the juggler like his shadow, till he was out of the village. When a juggler put a silver coin into his mouth and then waved and beat his 'damru' (a drumlet) over his head and there dropped in a pile silver coins on the ground, ago was struck with wonder to see it.

Once there came a juggler in the village; a gathering was formed. Jago, too, moved about the front. He came close to the juggler. The juggler said, "Come, my boy, sit down and close your eyes."

Jago sat down and closed his eyes. The juggler placed his hand on his closed eyes and said, "Well, boy, can you see your maternal village?"

"Yes, I see it."

"Well, my boy, can you see the village of your 'Bua' (father's sister)?"

"Yes, sir, I can see it."

"Well, boy, can you see fairies moving about in a garden?"

"Yes, I do".

Then Jago grew impatient and said, "If you want to show me any thing worthwhile, please show me Canada".

The juggler said, "O youngster, I have not seen Canada myself; how can I

show it to you? How clever you are!

There was a general laughter.

In this way by virtue of his cleverness & quick-wittedness Jago soon

became the most popular lad of the village endeared by all. In those days the prominent singer of the area Nigahia used to come to entertain the people with his songs and Jago sat with him till late enjoying his music. You can assess the popularity of Nigahia from the fact that people would say:

"Nigahia's music and sleep in the upper storey are equally enjoyable!"

Jago would accompany "Siri as he drove their cattle (Buffaloes) to the village pond and there he would catch hold of the tail of a buffalo and try to swim in the water. In this way he learnt how to swim. Later, he would accompany village boys to the canal and enjoy swimming there. He, however, did so clandestinely avoiding the notice of his parents. One day a powerful flow carried Jago far away. He had a narrow escape. He was weeping for fear of shoe-beating at home. He said to his companions "Please, see this fact must not sneak into our house. If any of you tell my parents about it, I will break your bones; remember!"

But the matter did not remain concealed. The boys did tell their parents, on reaching home, about Jago's misadventure. Women rushed to his mother & said, "O Zaildarni, your son was saved by Wahiguru; Had he been swept away,....O God, forbid! May God save him!" It highly astonished Jago's mother. "Tell me, what has happened?" when she learnt the whole thing, she burst into tears. when Jago's father gave him four or five slaps, Jago placed his hands on his neck and began to entreat him against further thrashing! "pardon me; this time. I shall never in future go to the canal for a bath.... please, pardon me this time!"

After the father had given him a sound thrashing, he began to dread his father. He never in future went to the canal bank for a bath. He would rather go to the water channel in his fields and have a few dips. Once Jago, without informing his parents went to far off fields belonging to others, along with some companions to pluck berries. They left their own fields far behind. They filled their coffers with berries and there was left no room for more. They now thought of returning. A dark cloud attended with a wind storm approached. They could find no place of shelter. They were four in number.

Jago said, "Where should we go now, O fools?"

Nathi pointed to a straw hut in front of them. O there is a cottage! Let's go in. But as they attempted to enter the cottage, they found a bitch with her litter. She sat comfortably suckling her young ones. She gnashed her sharp teeth and rushed at them. They ran in stampede, their berries were scattered.

From the other side a man spoke from the field, "O who are you, O boys? stay where you are! Your mother.... They ran following one another. They could find no way. Sukha began to weep. Jago while running said, O Sukha, don't weep. I also know how to weep; Run forward." The wind storm was blowing hard. They took their stand on a water channel. Jago suggested, "Let us lie down in the water course upside down." Accordingly, they all lay down in the channel upside down. Sukha was still weeping. It was a very dark & dreadful storm. The trees growing by the fields were cracking and

falling down. Utter gloom was making a loud shrieking sound. Sukha cling to Jago and said in tears, "O we are dying, mother! Please, save us, O mother! O my father!"

The berries they had plucked with so much labour, were all scattered & lost. The dark thunder storm hovered over them for two hours while they kept lying in the water. When the storm subsided, a farmer came to his field driving his bullock-cart. Seeing these strangers he said, "O where are you roaming about? Which is your village?" Jugo answered, "We come from Jassowal. We have lost the way, being over taken by the storm.

The farmer gave them a lift in his bullock-cart and brought them to their village. They heard a hue & cry in all houses several children had been lost; the children of such and such persons.

Jago's father was losing temper with his mother, " You have spoiled the boy I'll give him a severe shoe-beating! Only you stand in the way. Jago's mother was weeping. As he reached home, she elaped him to her heart, but the father dragged him out of her embrace and gave him a sound thrashing. After that Jugo never accompanied his friends to pluck berries from the fields.

One day while roaming about in his fields Jugo found some holes on a mound. They were the places of shelter made by swallows and parrots to live in. At the opening of one hole some parrots & their females were making a noise. Jago was pleased to see it. He thought there were the young of the parrots in that hole. He wished to obtain them. But as he thrust his hand into the hole, some insect or creeper bit his finger. Jugo at once pulled out his hand and began to cry with pain. When he reached home, he began to lose his consciousness. Venom had spread in the whole body His mother at once sent for some wise man. He gave a cut on Jugu's finger and ejected the poison. He also chanted some sacred words. Then Jugo found relief. After that he never even peeped into a hole, much less put his hand into it.

His Education etc.:

When Jugo's father took him to the village primary school to get him admitted, he also took with him some brown sugar tied into both the ends of a scarf. This brown sugar was distributed among all the boys of the school. Jugo was quite good at studies; and his teachers would often predict to his father, "Zaildar ji, your son is very clever & intelligent, he will become a prominent person one day" On hearing such words from his teachers Jugo would shyly bend his head and give a smile. He passed the 4th primary class. even won a scholarship and was also made the monitor of his class. When he passed his fifth primary class, he was admitted to the lower middle school of his village and he passed his classes upto the middle. Master Ujagar Singh held him in deep affection. Jago was ahead of all boys in all school activities He would lead the students in 'Shabad gan' In physical drill and exercise, too, he was ahead of all. In fetching drinking water for his teachers also he always took the lead. The famous poet and portrayer of

today, Ajayab was his drawing master. Besides them Darshan Singh, Amar Nath and Master Babu Ram and the late Joginder Singh- all highly encouraged him and were pleased at his ability & good studentship.

He had to cover six kilometres on foot along a dusty foot track and cover again six kilometres on his return to his village Jassowal. Thus, he had to cover twelve kilometres daily canal also fell in the way There was no bridge over it but only a wooden plank. As Jago and his companions crossed it; the plank sagged under them and almost touched the water below and they felt scared. They would make a lot of noise all through the way, leap and bound and enjoy themselves. But as soon as they came to the canal, and saw the wooden plank acrossed it , they got breathless. They also crossed the railway line after casting a stealing glance up & down, this was & that. Jugo also did his domestic chores and got the blessings of his parents. He had also made a toy-cart, and as soon as the evening fell, he would take it out and enjoy driving with his playmates, and won't return until his father went in search of him. On a holiday he would also take the cattle to the meadow for grazing. It was usual with him to graze cattle on every Sunday. He was generally accompanied by Baba Nathu. If a cattle strayed into someone's field, he would say, "O my son, Jugia, go and bring the cattle back, then I'll relate to you a folk-song." At it Jugo would make a dash and then come back breathless. Now father, relate...relate the song". The Bapu would start with a loud voice and Jago collected in his mind all the folk-songs heard in this way. He would cram up these folk-songs in the same way as he did counting tables at school. Even today he remembers some of those folk-songs stored up in his mind. One of them is as follows:-

The meteor arose & all fell atinking;

I was looted partly by the village panchayat and partly by the government. My jewellery was snatched by my in-laws and my youth was robbed by my paramours! The youth-surcharged, shepherdesses

Tended their sheep...

Tended their sheep.

Baba Nathu would say, "O my Son. Jugo, if you take two rounds (about the cattle), I would fill your coffer with folk-songs." In this way led by the greed of folk-songs, Jago would look after the sheep all the day long, and would exhibit no sign of fatigue or disgust.

When they were to get corn ground, Jago would feel immensely pleased. If his mother ever ground the corn at home, he would feel crest fallen and dejected. And when he took corn to the flour-mill, he would take out a bag ful of it from the sack, reach the neighbouring shop and buy & enjoy sweet gachaks (fried ground-nut kernels mixed with heated brown sugar). His companions, too, enjoyed it at his expense. When his mother detected his theft, she stopped sending him on this corn-grinding mission.

A buffalo had recently littered; but she won't yield milk. Someone suggested that she should be fed on green fodder, especially green grass;

some other person would say, "Amar Kaur, feed her on cotton-seed or gram-husk and the residue of oil seeds; still other would say; " O feed her on baklians (a corn) then she will yield plenty of milk."

Jago would then, crush baklians (maize cobs) in the pit and along with it eat them himself. But he ate them avoiding others notice. Warm baklians gave him a special relise. Then he took the remains to the buffalo inside the shed and ate them again. In this way only 1/3 or, 1/4 of the 'baklians' fell to the buffalo's share. The result? the buffalo showed no increase in her yield. Jugo's mother asked her neighbour Ind Kaur, "O Ind Kaur, now I have tried bakalian's too, the buffalo won't increase the yield. Now may I consult some sorcerer?"

Ind Kaur was a very wise old woman. She had seen Jugo on a day eat baklians in haste with both his hands and she came just at that time and caught him red-handed; but she kept the matter concealed from Jago's mother. On another day when Jugo's mother again complained to Ind Kaur about the buffalo's case and showed her longing to increase the yield of milk, Ind Kaur said, "O Zaildarni, just listen to me, You want to increase the buffalo's milk. But why do you engage Jugo in crushing the baklians? His age needs playing & enjoying himself." Let him play; the poor fellow should not be compelled to do such drudgery." And in humour Ind Kaur told his mother the whole thing. The mother gave Jugo a stroke on the back & laughed and said, "O you wicked fellow! how clever you are! How could I know that? You daily devoured all the 'baklians' and kept the buffalo unfed?"

Jugo saw a conference for the first time, held in the neighbouring village- called 'Chhoti Lalton'. After the advent of freedom when the great patriot of Lalton Baba Gurmukh Singh returned home from a long jail term, the people offered him the most cordial & respectful welcome. Jugo watched the whole scene.

A stage had been made on a bullock-cart under an acacia tree. Though the gathering was not so big, it comprised only sober and sensible people. The patriotic sentiment and spirit seemed to have permeated all of them. Jugo also heard all the speeches made on this occasion; and when he learnt of the hard struggle gone through in life by Baba Gurmukh Singh, his hairs stood on end. On this occasion a poet recited a poem which ran like this:-

"O bring me a 'neem crusher'; yes, bring me a 'neem' crusher; if some one craves for a third World War, bit him with that neem crusher on the face!"

Jugo was profoundly impressed at the wording of this poem as well as the speeches made by other speakers; and a strong desire welled up his mind to attend such conferences, and listen to the poems, songs & speeches made on those occasions.

Thence forth whenever he learnt of such a conference, or got a hint of some social gathering at any neighbouring place, he made it a point to attend it, and came back mentally recalling and enjoying its programme.

Whenever there was some festival at the village or some other grand occasion, he was seen playing an active role. When the village damsels set fixe to a doll, invoking there by Lord Indra's boon of rain, Jugo would guide and assist them & played an active role. He would prepare a doll with needle & thread. On the eve of Diwali the village girls performed the '19anjhi' ceremony, Jugo would also accompany them & join in their Songs.

After passing the Matriculation Examination Jago felt idle and restless. He thought of doing something remarkable: assembling his playmates together he formed a play club in his village; organised a tournament of hockey and kabbaddi. It highly pleased the villagers, when they saw this play-programme on a grand scale. It further enthused Jogo. He would participate in' hockey playing. At that time Jugo also played hockey with the well-known Indian hockey-player Bal Krishan Singh Grewal who was also one time the coach of the Indian hockey team.

He joined the Arya college at Ludhiana. Here, too, he was lucky enough to benefit from the guidance of scholarly professors. He daily came on a bicycle. When he passed the EA. Examination, he got the railway pass at four rupees per month. Thus, he passed his B.A. examination. For M.A. he joined the Government College, Ludhiana. Here he was blessed with the company of a prominent scholar of today professor Kirpal Singh Kasel and studied with him with Zest & Zeal. Besides that he got the fatherly affection of Dr. Piar Singh and Dr. Gulwant Singh. Here poet Bhupinder Singh Harsh also studied with him. When he joined the Mohindra College, Patiala, he availed himself of the invaluable guidance of the prominent scholar and writer professor Pritam Singh, Dr. Atar Singh, Dr. Gurcharan Singh and Prof. Vishva Nath Tiwari. At that time his class fellows included the eminent theatre-artist of today Harpal Tiwana and Nina Tiwana, Dr. S.S. Dusanjh, Dr. Amarjit Singh Dhillon, Charanjit Singh Walia, (an ex.M.P.), Joga Singh Brar, (an ex-chairman, Punjab State Electricity Board) and Professor Karmjit Singh and many others. Next, he also passed the B.T. Examination from the Malwa Training College, Ludhiana.

### His Marriage:

After he had completed his studies upto M.A. 'Jago' Now began to be addressed as 'Jagdev' by the village people, though his kith & kin still called him 'Jugo'. Even at the college he was called Jagdev. Now his parents grew eager about his marriage. When some men came from the village . Dhur kot (near Barnala) to perform his betrothal ceremony Jagdev hid himself in the barn. They began to look for him hither and thither; his uncle looked into the barn and found him sitting there with his head buried into his knees!

"I won't marry, Uncle.... I'll run away from home---Tell mother, I will not marry as yet... I'll run away from home, if she compels!"

The mother brought tears to her eyes and said, "O my Jugia, you may

not marry as yet, but no harm if you solemnise your betrothal ceremony Don't send back the visitors disappointed. It will be disgraceful, if I sent them back, I'll eat poison; please, agree to the proposal."

Jagdev had to submit & ring ceremony was performed. A little later they came to fix the date of the marriage. Jagdev said to his mother, "At that time you had said that I might not marry soon, but should allow the ring ceremony, but now they have come so soon for marriage? I am not going to marry so soon.

He did his best to resist, but failed hopelessly. The date was fixed for his marriage with Surjit Kaur who was the only sister of five brothers and the daughter of S. Amir Singh and Bhagwant Kaur, the residents of Dhur Kot near Barnala.

From the village Jassowal the marriage party proceeded in chariots and bullock carts and reached Killa Rai pur station for the train; for Barnala did not stop at Jassowal. From Killa Rai pur the marriage party reached Bhuri by train; but here developed some defect in the train's engine and the marriage party had to stay here for three hours in impatience and worry. Then another train arrived. It ran from Patiala to Bhatinda. They boarded it and reached Barnala From there the men from the bride's side took the marriage party to their place in chariots and carriages. They entertained the marriage party for three days. Several programmes were held. and the marriage party was given a most cordial and reverential treatment

The music-troupe of Poet Karnail Singh Paras, Ramuwalia who was the leading and most popular singer of the day- also accompanied the marriage party to give its performance. Karnail Singh Paras was assisted by S. Ranjit Singh of Sidhwan and Chand Singh Gandhi. The musical concert was so impressive that it held the audience spell-bound. They demanded again & again the repetition of the version of 'King Dahud'. An extract of this account begins as follows:-

"When Begam seeks some excuse to meet Dahud, she seeks her mother's permission to go & have a walk in the garden." the questions and answers of the mother and the daughter were sung by the trio Paras, Ranjit Singh and Chand Singh Gandhi like this: Begam:- "Mother, I would make one request in all love and regard. I am just like a nightingale in your garden. I wish to enjoy the sight of the orchard and of its plants and saplings for the last time.

I must go for a walk along with my friends for the last time.

The mother objects to it and says:

"O what has made you so fond of garden walks that you are barking like a dog.

You are wrangling with me like a co-wife.

You have so racked my nerves that my temples have been aching since dawn.

You should know that marriageable girls do not cross their thresholds."

The audience honoured and applauded the troupe of Karnail Singh with rich dividends.

In short, Jagdev Singh was married. His parents and other kith and kin were immensely pleased. But Jagdev Singh thought other wise: "My marriage took place so soon; but I am to reach a distant goal; what shall I do now?"

His participation in the Panjabi Suba Agitation and arrest: The Panjabi Suba agitation was in full swing. Jagdev Singh was to go to his in-laws for 'maklava' (the first conjugal visit): His mother said, " Jugia, go to the town and get some fine shirt and Payjama stitched." Jagdev Singh came to the town, gave the tailor his measurement. The tailor said, "I am awfully busy at this moment to prepare your suit Then you may come & have it. Please stay or roam about somewhere in the mean-time.

There was Kalghidhar Gurudwara nearby Jagdev Singh thought to himself "Let me have the longer (lunch) and pass that interval in the Gurudwara.

There he found a big congregation in the hall, and heard slogans.

"Punjabi Morcha Zindabad!"

A prominent Poet Ram Narain Singh Dardi was the stage secretary Dhadi Giani Ram Singh Jhabewal was singing in a loud but melodious voice:-

"I scaled the fort of Kandhar & raised it to the ground along with its towers and pinnacles.

Jagdev Singh got inspired; the songs and speeches of the various speakers gave him a strong emotional stimulation. He forgot to get his suit from the tailor, and even lost all sense of time. He missed even the train that ran to his village. Even the police had arrived. Some one raised a slogan, and at the spur of the moment Jagdev Singh also shouted, Punjabi Suba ZindaBad!" He, too, along with others was arrested and they all were conducted to the police station & shut there.

On the other hand, at home all were worried. "He left in the morning and has not come so far! where has he gone?" when his mother came to know that police had arrested him, she began to weep.

"I wonder at you, my son, Jugia! you were to go to your in-laws for 'muklava'(the first visit of the bride-groom to his in-laws after marriage) and you went to jail! What were you to gain by this slogan raising?"

Partap Singh Kairon was the chief Minister of the Punjab. Fifty thousand people were arrested. Kairon felt almost shaken. Some counsellor advised him that the majority of the arrested people were Jats; if he wanted to terrify & demoralise them, he should impose heavy fines on them; for Jats were not afraid of jail; that a bania was afraid of imprisonment, and a jat of fine. So fine should be raised. Kairon was convinced.

The arrested persons were produced before Kuldeep Singh Virk, a senior sub-judge, at Ludhiana. He sentenced them to three years imprisonment as well as fined them rupees five thousand. Jathedar Gurcharan Singh Tohra was among them. At last the Supreme court reduced

the term of imprisonment to one year, but the fine was kept in tact and they had to pay it. For the realisation of this fine so much police force was sent to each village that one could see only police men everywhere & they seemed to outnumber the villagers! The people got scared. M.L.A. Atma Singh raised the question in vidhan Sabha: "How much police force was sent to Jagdev Singh's village to realise the fine?"

According to the official record the T.A. and D.A. of the police that went to his village rose to rupees twenty five thousand!

### Father's Death:

On June 18, 1958 Jagdev Singh's father S. Kartar Singh was murdered. It plunged the whole family into bitter distress and anguish Jagdev Singh was at a loss to decide what he was to do and what he was not to do. He looked totally confused and bewildered. His maternal uncle S. Amar Singh Brar however came to share their grief and problems. If they needed bran or fuel or wheat flour, he would supply it at their place; if some milch cattle went dry, he would replace it with a new one; Jagdev Singh in-laws, too, were quite well off and prosperous people. They also stood by him in that hour of trial.

The Beginning of his political career and Legal profession:

On his release from jail as Jagdev Singh returned to his village, his village men unanimously elected him as the village Sarpanch. Jagdev Singh now applied the village name to his own name and thus completed his name as Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

Jagdev Singh Jassowal now devoted himself to the tasks of social welfare and the development of his village. He got repaired and reconstructed village lanes, and drains, levelled elevations and depressions, and general walks, cleansed all foulds; helped the poor in every possible way; and then he became the most popular and respected man of his village. He would resolve all feuds and disputes of the people in the village panchayat itself; greeted all with folded hands and thus won rich applause and admiration.

In the year 1960, he organised a big Akali conference at his village. It was attended by prominent leaders like Master Tara Singh, President Shromani Akali Dal, Sant Fateh Singh and other Leaders of the top level. Justice Gurnam Singh for the first time announced his decision to join the Akali Dal in this very conference. The speakers highly applauded S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal for his worthy deeds in this richly attended conference. It further established his position and enhanced his reputation.

He wished to advance further and he said to himself, "If I remain contented with this Sarpanchship of the village, I shall turn into a frog in the well. I must do something else; and for it I shall have to relinquish all home comforts."

Accordingly he resolved to pass law; but there was no money at home. His mother's jewellery and other valuables had already been consumed in

his father's legal cases and petitions. His wife's jewellery, however, was still in tact. When Jassowal came from inside and informed his mother and wife who were sitting in the compound, of his decision, his heart swelled within. His wife was plying the spinning wheel and his mother was sitting by her. Jassowal said, "It is my ambition to become a lawyer and come back to my village in a black coat... how will this ambition be realised, mother?"

Just on hearing it Surjit Kaur rose & went in, and soon brought out the bag containing her ornaments that lay in a wooden box, and said, "Here it is, Sardar ji, take these ornaments, sell them, dispose them of as you please; your pleasure is my pleasure."

Jagdev Singh Jassowal's eyes filled with tears. He sold the ornaments to a gold-smith, got the money and joined the Aligarh Muslim University to pass LL.B. Examination. He passed this examination with passion and diligence; put on a black coat and returned to his native village. The members of his family, neighbours and the village folk in general expressed their joy at his new achievement. His mother brought tears of joy in her eyes and said, "My Son, may you flourish in life and bring lustre to our family!"

He became the talk of the whole village. One said, "He is very industrious and courageous, will make much progress!" The other said, "O he... will bring credit and glory to the village!" Such optimistic remarks of the people further enthused and inspired him.

On becoming a lawyer he started his practice at Ludhiana, came to the cabin of Mr. J L. Verma, an eminent lawyer of the Punjab in criminal cases, and began to receive training from him. When he got fully trained, he put up his own sign board and got a Jain youth from Gujjar for his assistant scribe. He could get no case. He felt highly depressed, and realised that a lawyer's profession was a mere external show; no case was coming; that the court atmosphere was simply unpalatable; none laughed; thus court atmosphere was quite unusual and uncommon. There were crowds of people, all beset with troubles and serious problems and involved in quarrels and disputes. None had a smile on his countenance. He wished to smile and laugh; with whom could he share his smile? When had he entangled himself? He felt he had followed a wrong track.

An incident happened someone eloped with a girl from a neighbouring village. The Panchant of that village along with the girl's parents came near Jassowal and approached an SP and requested him to arrest the kidnapper as early as possible. Jagdev Singh Jassowal along with the girl's parents & relatives met the S.P. and when he returned to his Cabin, his scribe said to him very cheerfully, "Sardarji, congratulations!" Jassowal asked, "Congratulations... for what?" The word 'congratulation' a bit cheered him.

When he heard the whole thing, he learnt that it was the men from the boy's side and they wanted to file a suit to this effect that the girl had been extracting heavy amounts from their son with the pretension of love! and had made off with their son with seduction. Jassowal fell in confusion as to what

he should do and what not. The scribe had even charged from them the fee, and even prepared the 'Vakalitnama'( the authority letter for the Lawyer) Jassowal was caught in a mees. He had just come from the

S.P. after complaining against the boy.

"Well", he said to the scribe, "Jain, return their fees; let them engage some other lawyer.

When Jain came to know of the whole matter, he too, felt astonished. He said, Jassowal Sahib, here we can expect only the crippled and the mutilated or loafers and vagabonds. What can gentlemen like us do here?"

From that very day Jassowal took off his black coat and hung it to a peg; picked his diary and necessary documents and returned home; after that he gave up All idea of doing legal practice.

Now he was again, at the service of his village and its people. He would contact political leaders and with his suave tongue and brilliant intellect widened the circle of his friends and acquaintances, and enriched his knowledge. In order to attend Akali conferences and gatherings he would abandon even his important matters and alongwith several of his Village people would attend them even covering long distances. The village people always made response. It further encouraged and inspired him.

Master Tara Singh was highly pleased with him. He made Jassowal the general secretary of Shromani Akali Dal. M.L.A. Gurnad Singh and M.L.A. Atma Singh were also appointed with him as general secretaries. In this capacity Jassowal further accelerated his political activities and came closer to Master Tara Singh. There came general elections in 1962. S. Jassowal was confident that Shromani Akali Dal would certainly give him the Akali ticket for he had also undergone imprisonment; and was also highly educated person with LL.B. i.e.legal knowledge and an industrious mind. But he was not given the ticket it went to a new entrant from the Congress to the Akali Dal. It disappointed Jassowal.

Partap Singh Kairon contacted him and persuaded him to join the Congress. Pandit JawaharLal Nehru was the Prime Minister. He came to Ludhiana; a conference was held on this occasion; Jassowal joined the Congress. Now he intensified his activities in the Congress.

In the mean time Partap Singh Kairon passed away. There were others like Jassowal who were being ill-treated; because Darbara Singh was all in all. None cared for Jassowal and he again came into the Akali fold. He had already intimate relations with justice Gurnam Singh of the neighbouring village Narang wal. When justice gurnam Singh became the chief Minister of the Punjab, he appointed Jassowal as his political secretary. In this way s. Jassowal got his seat at Chandigarh Secretariate in the room next to that of the Chief Minister and his authority was duly recognised. His village folk, the people of the neighbouring villages rather of the whole area were highly pleased at S. Jassowal's appointment. By rendering good service to these people he even won the good will of Justice Gurnam Singh and there

developed a greater intimacy between the two. Gurmeet Singh Brar (the father of Jagmeet Singh Brar M.P.) was Justice Gurnam Singh's Parliamentary Secretary and R.S. Phulka, was his private secretary and Gian Singh Kaphon, (father-in-law of Captain Amrinder Singh) and Simranjit Sitigh) were then Chief Secretaries.

The elections of 1972 arrived. Justice Gurnam Singh gave S. Jassowal the ticket to fight the elections on behalf of his new Dal. The elections were fought in cooperation with the Congress S. Beant Singh, Rajendra Singh Sapero, Gurcharan Singh Gatvali, Tara Singh Lyallpuri and Raj Singh came out successful; Jagdev Singh Jassowal conceded his place to Giani Arjan Singh at a very small vote margin.

Justice Gurman Singh was later appointed an ambassador to Australia & he left. Now S. Jassowal began to feel himself all alone, totally neglected-a political orphan! Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi did his best to bring about unity between these two Akali factions but failed.

Giani Zail Singh approached S. Jassowal and said, "Jassowal, no matter if you have lost the election, it is true you have friendship with Justice Gurnam Singh!"

Giani Zail Singh appointed S. Jassowal Chief Advisor to Punjab Sports Youth Welfare and Culture Board. He also got an official car, a bungalow, telephone etc., besides a handsome salary. Giani Ji also gave him a special room, close to his own in the Secretariate. Thus, Jagdev Singh Jassowal once again got his honoured seat in the Secretariate, alongwith that of the Chief Minister and a sign board heading his name was tagged to the room.

S. Jassowal now felt that his destination was still far off and he must strive on. In this way he grew all the more active in the Congress circle and began to earn credit. Ms. Indira Gandhi was much pleased at his activities.

In 1980 he fought elections from the Rai Kot sector and defeated the Akali Dal candidate Dev Raj Singh (the elder brother of S. Jagdev Singh Talwandi and was elected to the Constituent Assembly. After becoming an M.L.A. S. Jassowal participated all the more enthusiastically in deeds of public welfare. He opened schools in villages and hospitals and Dharam Shalas in towns, and gave special attention to the uplift of his area. Now his range of activities widened still and as an M.L.A. a member of the parliamentary delegation he went to various countries; participated in numerous discussions, conferences and seminars and presided over a number of conferences & social gatherings. through the communication media he came still closer to the people and won more popularity.

But now some congressmen themselves began to undermine his position, and he, in reaction, grew indifferent to the party and in 1989 he joined the Shromani Akali Dal (Badal group). At that time Jathedar Jagdev Singh Talwandi was the President of the Akali Dal. He made peace with

him. In 1989 Elections to Lok Sabha came. Jassowal was given a ticket. He suffered a crushing defeat. The Akalis defeated him. They said that he was a congress man why to help him?

Getting disappointed with the Akalis he rejoined the Congress. In 1997 the Congress Party appointed him to fight election against S. Parkash Singh BadaL the President of Shromani Akali Dal from the Kila Rai pur Constituency. At this time Jassowal's brother Captain Chamkaur Singh Grewal passed away and his sister-in-law Joginder Kaur (W/o Late Sukh Dev Singh Grewal), too, passed away. His whole family was plunged in mourning, so he had little interest in elections. But he could not disobey his party. Secretly some congressmen, too, opposed him. He suffered a crushing defeat.

It gradually dwindled his interest in politics. These defeats and humiliations had an adverse effect on his mind & he, in a way, segregated himself from politics.

As already said from the very beginning S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal benefited from the guidance and patronship of very eminent professors and literateurs. As a result of their company and the influences he gathered from them, he developed a great interest in & attachment with the rich cultural & artistic heritage, formed close and the most intimate relationships with the eminent scholars, artists, and men of letters & now getting away from politics he began to devote more & more time and attention to the cultural & artistic activities and to writers and artists.

Today Jagdev Singh Jassowal is hailed as the 'Baba Bohar' i.e. the main story of Punjabi culture and art, the honour of cultural festivals & fairs, & the father of budding artists & is now leading a happy & peaceful life in his house No. 3256, (PI>one & Fax number as 0161-412009) in Gurdev Nagar, Ludhiana.

### **Jassowal family-an Orchard**

Ancestors:-

Jagdev Singh Jassowal's father

S. Kartar Singh Zaildar

Grand father = Zaildar Wadhawa Singh

Great Grand father = Zaildar Dyal Singh

S. Kartar Singh Zaildar: He passed the Engineering degree from Haward Engineering College, Lucknow and became an engineer. He visited several countries and worked there as an engineer, and then after the death of his father, Wadhawa Singh returned to his country village and became the Zaildar of his area. He became the Sarpanch of his village several times and even remained the Senior Vice President of the District Board, Ludhiana for fifteen years.

Mother- Sardarni Amar Kaur: S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's mother. I always found her calm & sedate of disposition with a faint flicker of smile on her countenance and ever engaged in telling beads. She daily went to the

Gurdwara. She was highly broadminded and benevolent. After leading a long life she died on November 7, 1995. Her birth place was village Bagha Purana near Channu wala.

1. Subedar Gurdev Singh Grewal: who lives at the village Jassowal these days has a son named Balraj Singh Grewal who did his engineering in Punjab Automobile and then migrated to Canada. He does his business there. Gurdev Singh Grewal's grand son Ishat Preet Singh is doing non-medical. His father Jagjit Singh died in America.

2. Sukhdev Singh Grewal Engineer : He is the chief engineer of Canada's(multi-purpose) Company The rest of his family also lives in Canada.

3. Captain Chamkaur Singh Grewal: He was a Captain in the Indian Army. After his retirement he lived in Canada for several years and passed away in 1997.

4. Inderjit Singh Grewal: He got his post diploma of automobile & joined service in the Transport Department, and now a days he is doing service in the Punjab Transport Department as a Senior Joint Transport Commissioner. He has a son named 'Chitwan'.

Wife- Surjit Kaur: Bibi Surjit Kaur, the wife of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal had the ambition that Jassowal Sahib become a Judge of the High Court, for he was highly qualified and had a quick, alert brain. But still she is quite satisfied with her husband's achievements. Bibi Surjit Kaur was born at Dhur Kot, Barnala in the District Sangrur. Her father was Late S. Amir Singh Dhaliwal and her mother was Sardarni Bhagwant Kaur.

Bibi Surjit Kaur says "If I, too, had been educated like my husband, I would have gone far; but in those days they seldom got their daughters educated."

His Son: His son Sukhminder Singh Grewal does farming. His wife Bibi Kulwant Kaur is a homely type of woman. They have two children. The elder child (a son) is named 'Sunny' and the daughter is Manmeet Kaur (Minni).

Second Son: His second son S. Jaswinder Singh Grewal has settled at Mission - a town in Canada. His wife is named Daljit Kaur. They have three children. The eldest child is a son named Johny Grewal, the second son is Jimmy Grewal and their daughter is Jeena Grewal.

### **A Variad-hued and multi-dimentional personality**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal was yet a minor; when his mother after the evening meal daily gave all her children milk in cups. Jassowal highly enjoyed milk heated in a clay-utensil and covered with cream. But they got only a limited quantity of milk each according to his share. Jassowal always longed for more.

One day the mother as usual gave him milk. All were sitting in the kitchen. After quaffing his milk Jagdev Singh struck his pot against the ground and said, " Bebe, the Maharaja of Patiala must be drinking plenty of milk."

The mother answered, "The Maharaja has no shortage of milk; he may even bathe in milk".

It suddenly came to her mind that Jugo wanted more milk. That was the reason he asked such questions. She poured into his cup (bati) the milk that fell to her own share, and said, "Have more, my son, I won't take it today you can have it." As she said it, tears came into her eyes. Jugo quaffed her milk.

Time passed on and the day came when Jagdev Singh Jassowal was made the President of Guru Gobind Singh Foundation. Before him Maharaja of Patiala Yaduwinder Singh had been its President and then his son Amrinder Singh, too, had been its President.

When Jassowal told this thing to his mother, that he had become the President of that institution which had been previously presided over by Maharaja Yaduwinder Singh & his son, she remembered that mention of milk long ago and tears again began to trickle down her eyes. She said, "Live long! my son Jugia!"

Black turban with yellow head sheet beneath, white shirt & pajama, shoes of unseasoned leather, size above six feet, dishevelled beard, sharp features, wheatish complexion, an ever smiling countenance but marked by an occasional streak of sobriety, agility shown in the execution of any task, but even this agility displaying a streak of patience & fortitude.

Then a hilarious laugh attended with a clapt zest for everything; to express an idea with gusto & without mincing words or concealing anything!----- these are some of the facets of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's multi-dimensional, personality.

He has a loud thundering voice coupled with serious reflection; but mainly we get his loud, thundering voice. He is very garrulous and has a big stock of maxims and proverbs in his arsenal whatever he says is accompanied by a varse maxim, "Hain Ji, Hain Ji" is his manneism. When he is pleased at something, he goes on repeating: "I am well-pleased! a number of times. When jassowal intends taking his bath, he sits on a small wooden cot in the posture of a religious man, and seems to be inquiring of every limb and part of his body about its well-heing. While taking his meal he sits squat in all dignity on sofa or a big devan and takes his meal slowly and slowly by properly chewing and crushing it with his teeth. In the morning he makes his breakfast of loaves, made of wheat and gram flour, curds, butter, whey and mango pickle. Whether summer or winter only these items make his breakfast. Though he has been a diabetic for several years, he never misses taking a lump of brown sugar after meal.

He tasted wine for the first time at the time of his marriage. After that he developed a permanent weakness for it.

When at leisure, he opens the drawers of his table and also goes through old papers & documents; he also writes replies to the letters received. He gives a special attention to the cleanliness of his house. If he finds some

relative coming or leaving, he at once engages him to do something for him. He would, then go on issuing instruction after instruction. "O, see how thick the cob webs are! remove them at once they spell disaster!"

One day I had the chance to call on an artist in the company of S. Jassowal. We had some two or three other companions as well. When the artist seated us in his room, S. Jassowal's eyes fell at the nooks and corners of the ceiling. The ceiling was all covered with spiders webs. Jassowal said to one of our companions, "O boy, take that club, and fasten some rag to its end. The boy did as directed; then order came, "Remove all those cob webs; see how they are covering the whole ceiling!"

## Signs of devastation

In the mean time the artist in whose house we had come, entered with glasses of water. He was abashed to see one of our companions remove cobwebs from the ceiling and cleanse the room. S. Jassowal impressed upon his mind the value of cleanliness in detail and advised him to keep his house ever spick & span.

If some novice who desires to become an artist comes to him & says, "Father, I too, wish to become a singer," he first carefully assesses the talent and artistic standard of the boy before he arrives at a conclusion. He would send him hither and thither on different errands, ask him to do certain domestic duties, give him instructions with much affection; and if S. Jassowal finds that the boy under consideration is really talented and has already some artistic achievement to his credit, he would help him whole-heartedly. He gives him money, food, and entertains him with funny tit bits. In this way many young artists become his disciples, and render him service and advance in their art. & in life.

S. Jassowal has said that so far he has done absolutely nothing for his house, not even purchased a needle! S. Jassowal's wife keeps sitting at home all the day long. If some one asks her, "Bibi Ji, you, too, should accompany Jassowal Sahib to attend the cultural functions, she makes a prompt answer, "Why? is it the house of low out castes..... How can I fasten a lock as big as the head of a he-cat to my house? what would the guests think of us?. So I am quite well at home, Sir".

Whenever you call at jassowal's you will invariably find three or four or at least one or two men sitting there. If some artist pays a visit, Jassowal would say with a smile, "O welcome! you have come at the right moment... O sing some song." The artist may feel shy or refuse to sing for want of proper instrumental accompaniment; at it Jassowal would say, "Oe, sing, sing something; it is a good moment, sing something." The artist perforce, has to sing. If some poet falls into his grip, Jassowal says, "O how fine! a great good luck!....you came at the best moment; I have been remembering you since morning, nay I was dying for your company. I ever remember your such and such poem. I like it very much.... Please, relate a little.... that poem of yours."

Then Jassowal assumes a comfortable posture and asks those sitting with him, "Lo, listen to Poem; stop talking; listen carefully... listen to the poem. The poet has, perforce, to read the poem. If some drummer pays him a visit, Jassowal eulogises him, "O how fine your drumming;... O fellow where did you learn this fine drumming from?"

The drummer gets swollen with pride; and S.Jassowal finding his trick successful at once orders him to give a bit rhythmic account of his skill. The drummer would say wringing his hand, "Bapu ji (Father,) I have not brought the drum. At it fastening his grip Jassowal would retort, " O what is there in a drum, you may use the table... use the table as a drum. At it the drummer bashfully starts thumping the table with his hands- "Dabrik! Babrik!!"; while S. Jassowal tosses his head & says, " Oh, peak performance! fellow, you have used your hands most rhythmically!) "O how rhythmically you have used your hands!"

He would, then, take out a fifty rupee note from his pocket and handing it to him say, "Take it, have a little refreshment." The drummer, immensely glad, will say, " Well, Father, "sa sri kal" (Sat Siri Akal) and before departing as he touches Sardarji's feet, Jassowal would say, "O friend, have some tea! Baljit, Oe, bring a cup of tea! the man is to go home!"

At times S. Jassowal loses patience even on the stage, when the companions of the artists are just setting & tuning their instruments, he would shout, "Oh so late! O sing, please sing; others, too, have to sing... sing; do sing, no need of instruments. You may do without them.

Thus, the artist has to submit to S.Jassowal's hasty demand. If light goes off, Jassowal would say to the artist, "No matter ! no matter, don't lose nerve! go on with your song.... go on singing, my son... go on my brave fellow!... I am much pleased with you. Live long!"

Jaswinder Bhalla and Bal Mukand Sharma had been only recently introduced to S. Jassowal. Bal Mukand Sharma was appointed as District Manager in the Markfed Department. Sharma and Bhalla came to Jassowal with a packet of sweets to give him a sweet tooth. Jassowal had a man sitting with him. They were just approaching, when Jassowal pointing to the man sitting by him said, "Oe Bal mukand Sharma.... this gentleman is our friend Sohi ji.... He is fighting elections for the parliament; touch his feet... yes, touch his feet. Oe! he is going to become an M.P."

Bal Mukand Sharma said, "Bapu Ji (Father), first sweeten your mouth, congratulations, I have become the District manager in the Markfed!"

"Oe really? Very nice, bravo!" Jassowal was much pleased; then shaking Sohi by the shoulder said, "O Sohi, O Sohi Ji,.....he has become an M.D. now you fellow touch his feet." He thus, created a very fine atmosphere. Jassowal has a knack at feeling the pulse of the gathering and controlling the situation.

Nirmal Jaura said that he was once going to attend a gathering in a car with S. Jassowal; another friend was also sitting with them. He said, "

Jassowal ji, please stop a little at this village; here Arora Ji, a friend of mine, lives. Today there is the Bhog Ceremony of his wife; we must show \* our attendance.

They reached the house and took their seats. To pay tributes to the deceased the stage secretary announced the name of S. Jassowal. Jassowal rose to his feet. It slipped from his mind whether the 'Bhog ceremony' was of Shree Arora's mother or wife. He spoke into the mike: "For Arora separation from his mother is simply unbearable!"

The friend whispered into Jassowal's ears, "Jassowal Sahib, it is not Arora's mother but wife that has died." At it Jassowal at once gave a turn to his statement & said, "O my dear, a man's mother, in fact, dies on the day he loses his wife... as the wise say Even wife is, in a way, man's mother; she renders service to him, looks after the children. provides him full succour in old age, looks after the house, I think Arora Ji has lost not his wife, but his mother." Some people were highly surprised at this somersault of S. Jassowal.

Nirmal Jaura related another story: One day early in the morning Jassowal rang him up & said, Jaura, I am at home, I am unwell, please, come to me.... and while coming bring with you some white sheets of paper.

Jaura taking sheets of white paper reached Jassowal's house. Jassowal felt indisposed. He said, " Jaura, make small chits of the paper. Jaura made the chits. Then Jassowal said, "Now write on them these phone numbers of S. Badal, Bibi Jagir Kaur and of Jathedar Puran Singh; then close these chits and hand them to me."

While preparing these chits Jaura was at a loss to know what the matter was, However, he wrote down on a number of chits the residential phone numbers as well as the mobile phone numbers of S. Parkash Singh Badal, Bibi Jagir Kaur and Jathedar Puran Singh and handed over a lump of chits to S. Jassowal.

Nirmal Jaura kept sitting there for half an hour, and had his tea. In those days a heated correspondence was going on between S. Badal, Bibi Jagir Kaur and Jathedar Puran Singh; and even the press was engaged in active propaganda regarding these personages.

Jaura was still sitting when a man came & after saying 'Sat Siri Akal', sat down. Then seeing Jassowal quiet the man said, "Jassowal ji, these days a serious wrangle is going on between Bibi Jagir Kaur and Puran Singh; what will become of it?"

Jassowal took out a chit from that lump and said, "I am unwell. don't trouble me, these are their phone numbers, you may directly contact Bibi or Jathedar Puran Singh and inquire of them.

Jaura kept smiling; while Jassowal was reticent. The man felt a bit ashamed.

It is said once Jassowal had a severe tooth ache, and no remedy gave him any relief. Visitors came to him as usual and tormented him with irrelevant

enquiries. Jassowal wrote on a blackboard these words: "I have tried on me all talismans as well as got myself tested at the C.M.C. but have got little relief If you have any recipe or remedy please write it down on the board: but don't disturb me.

Who so ever came to enquire about his health, got the some response. Jassowal would point at the black-board and suggest to him to read that sentence.

Several days passed in this way. Such colourful & laughter exciting incidents of S. Jassowal are in possession all & sundry; and if we start writing them, the number will be inexhaustible.

Have another anecdote which has a direct bearing on all the top intellectuals of the Punjab.

There was a gathering of the Punjabi Sahit Academy. Jassowal remained a member of this academy for several years. The Academy decided to request Jassowal Sahib to invite seven or eight good artists to grace the occasion. He, accordingly, invited seven or eight good singers. The assembly was attended by topmost intellectuals and scholars; even the chancellors as well as the Vice-Chancellors of various universities were present. Dr. S. S. Johal, Dr. H.S.Soch, Dr. A.S.Khera, Dr. J.S.Poar, Dr. Pooni, and some other scholars sat there engaged in chats & discussions, before the functions began. Talk turned to S. Jassowal. All those scholars and V.C.'s opinioned that S. Jassowal in pursuit of the Punjabi- culture and cultural programmes had ruined his glorious political career. Had he not run after these Punjabi singers and Punjabi culture, he would have been one of the top leaders of the country.

Well, the function commenced all the intellectuals mentioned above came to the stage. Jassowal sat lest in that line of the notables. Music programme started. The stage secretary was Dr. Parminder Singh, whom so-ever he called at the stage, came, and touched the feet of S. Jassowal first and then quietly passed in front of all the intellectuals and started singing. Even before the start he uttered the name of S. Jassowal with deep regard.

All the singers turn by turn showed the same behaviour. All those scholars felt discomfited, "O wonderful, how enamoured are these artists of the Punjab of S. Jassowal! So much affection & regard no other leader has been able to command."

These were the words of a scholar who donned his chair on the stage. Another scholar supporting his companion's view said, "Yes, Respected Dr. you are right. All Punjabi artists, great & small look upon S. Jassowal as their deity; none cares for us.

While reading a newspaper or something else Jassowal uses spectacles of number 2. He collects all newspapers but he goes through them only partially in the morning, only casts a bird's eye view. In the morning he only reads the main headings. If something strikes him of special significance

he goes through it in entirety. But when at leisure he reads the papers in detail, and leisure he seldom enjoys. There are daily the programmes of cultural fairs & festivals.

In his early career he read plenty of books; but at that time he needed the study of humans and of human nature, which he never did. Now he does not study books even. In his boyhood days he tended goats and sheep and herded cows & buffaloes no doubt; but he never misguided or deceived any human being.

The circle of S. Jassowal's friends is very vast. But now he is pleased to make as few friendships as possible. "A host of friends means a lot of worry". He now says that by increasing the number of his friends he is now repentant." It has many reasons; several friends are now hospitalised. If he does not go there to inquire after their health, they must be calling names to him; if he does not attend the marriage of some one's son or grand son or grand daughter, he, too, might be talking ill of him. And if he daily attends marriages or visits hospitals, how will he earn his living to meet his expenditure? If he daily visits hospitals, he himself will fall ill & contract several diseases; and if he, unfortunately, falls ill, then who will look after him? then who will attend and look after cultural fairs & programmes? God save him!

Jassowal had deep affection for his mother, when she passed away, he was plunged in grief. He says, "When I raised my mother's bier, my shoulder must have felt the pressure of tons of weight. In one's life the greatest weight one feels is the weight of the bier of one's mother. When he lost his father, he felt as though he had been decapitated and when his elder brother Chamkaur Singh died, he felt as though someone had cut off and made off with his right arm.

Jassowal stays at home long when he is empty of pocket or is suffering from ill-health. Otherwise, he is ever on foot attending funerals and other social fairs and festivals. On one hand he says that as he has travelled a lot, he should not travel any longer; on the other he says that a happy birth took place in another person's family while the duty of dancing was assigned to him. death over took some other person and lamentation was done by him. In other words, he ever danced to the tune of others. Now he wants to become totally detached just like the homeless .

When Jassowal receives a marriage card, he feels as though he had received court summons; and if a packet of sweets accompanies the invitation card, he feels as though his warrants had come. When he eats the sweets of the packet, his diabetes become all the more serious; and if he does not eat it, he feels as though he had shown ungratefulness; rather committed a sacrilege.

There are twelve thousand, one hundred and eighty eight villages in the Punjab. Jassowal has visited nearly all these villages on the eve of some one's death, or to join marriage party of another; the funeral of a third, & so on. Sometimes in the course of travel he had to stay at some house, for the

night and some times being over taken by rain or thunder he had to lodge for the night; sometimes he attended a betrothal ceremony or a birthday party. He has visited many Gurudwaras and crematories. When young he lived at his maternal uncle's house, and was fed at their expense. Then he went to school and had board and lodging in hostels; Next, he was fed at his friends' expense. He also enjoyed meals at the Government's expense, attended fairs and festivals and there filled his belly. Now he wants to take his meal at home only. It has no parallel anywhere else.

Jassowal has ever trusted the people who came in contact with him; but they always betrayed his trust. He has again and again fallen a victim to their treachery; though he never deceived anybody. He is convinced that to deceive is a sin but to be deceived is not a sin, though it may be a fault....

He is most sentimental. If he ever learns that some close friend or some familiar artist is indisposed or unhealthy, he would proceed even on foot to inquire about that person's well-being. He won't even wait for his car. At times he takes a rickshaw; If some acquainted person meets him on the way & offers to give him a lift, or escort him. Jassowal seldom leaves the rickshaw,

One of his houses once lay vacant; and none offered to take it on rent. Jassowal felt much difficulty. He even suffered from financial crisis. If some friend or intimate went to him he would invariably say, "Well, Sh, what did you decide about my house? Did you find some rent-payer? Please, must do something. I am dying. Oe, none is taking my house on rent, what should I do?"

He had told every acquaintance that he won't charge less than Rs. 5000/- per month as rent. Some friend brought a customer who offered 7000/- rupees as rent. When he introduced him to Jassowal the latter as usual repeated the same words; " O Sir, I am quite clear about it; I won't charge even a pice less than Rs. 5000/- p.m. That friend interrupted and giving a turn to the sentence remarked, "Bapu Ji, first listen to me, You are giving me no time to speak; We are talking about the house that lies in this locality, which you are to give on rent for rupees 7000/- p.m. I am not talking of that other house.

Jassowal at once took the hint & grew reticent then after a pause said, "OI was talking of that house."

The tenant agreed to pay Rs. 7000/- p.m. and left.

Jassowal then thanked his friend and said, "O wonderful, well-done, you have done the best thing, I am pleased with you. I wanted 5000/- & I got 7000 Rs. ! Wonderful! I am highly satisfied."

In a joyful mood he began to dance. On the day the tenant came, Jassowal's joy knew no bounds; he even sprinkled oil on the threshold. Jassowal keeps a very intelligent dog. Jassowal seldom keeps him out of

his sight; the dog, too, seldom leaves his company. Jassowal often says, "O how can I become a slave to anybody, when I haven't made even my pet dog my slave?" He never puts him in chains, but lets him move about freely.

As soon as Jassowal rings the bell, the dog comes running, and wagging his tail, sits down by his side. If the dog is not given food in time; or the item which the other men of the family have eaten, Jassowal gets out of his elements and rebukes all around. Then he won't let anybody utter a word. At that time the dog moves about around him wagging his tail.

Jassowal has absolutely no faith in religions, castes, high or low social strata; gotras etc. He attaches equal importance to all religions. As already said, " Jassowal got his education for sometime even from Khalsa High School, Kila Rai pur. It is a school after the name of Sikh Panth. Jassowal also got his education from Arya College, Ludhiana which is associated with Hinduism. Jassowal also got his education from the Muslim University, Aligarh.

It is related to Islam. Thus, he has learnt to respect every religion and he cordially respects every man, every caste and sub-caste.

Life for him is just like a fair. He has seen a lot of the world so that life is not like an onion but a drum: if you remove one cover of the drum, you will again find an identical drum-skin below.

Jassowal very often embraces his dear ones and brings tears to his eyes; he shares with them their joys and sorrows, though mostly you will find him engaged in joyful prattle, in amusing anecdotes and tit bits. He often says, "I came into the world in a joyful state and must leave it again in the same hilarious spirit; he does not want to meet a lingering death seeing his strength & capacity dwindle day by day. He does not like to feel helpless in age and depend on any other person. He desires to sleep at will & wake up at will and not become a burden for anybody. He also attaches the highest value to the comforts of home. East or west, home is the best. So he does not like to go to any place whatsoever. If some one were to ring him up and ask," Jassowal Sahib how do you do?" he has a ready-made answer, "O, I am passing my days as girls spend their 'Tian days" i.e. in a most jubilant spirit.

Jassowal regards old age as a second childhood. First parents take care to see lest their child fall into a pit: stray towards a road, or some snake or other insect bite him; lest he touch a too hot object; Then time passes on and children grow adults, and parents grow old; then children see lest the old man fall; otherwise, they will have to look after him, it he breaks some limb in a nasty fall or damages his hands or burns his mouth mishandling a cup of too hot tea.

Then they will be involved in unnecessary trouble. Time takes an opposite turn. In short, Jassowal wants to remain self-subsistent & self dependent rather than cause any trouble to his sons & daughters or any other relative.

He is fully convinced that if a man remains mostly besieged by worries

he is also endeared by all sorts of maladies. Just as the mother gives her suck to her child and puts it to sleep, if a man also puts his desires and longings to sleep and lead, a carefree worryless life; he will prolong his life.

One day his wife said to him, "sardar Ji, please, do take rest some time, the brain needs rest.... before how many people you daily exert your brain". Jassowal placed his hand upon his ear and sang in a loud voice: "

One day will cease all shouts of joy and passionate excitement; and (after one's departure) all friends and dear ones will sit down lost & forlorn". He then raised another tune on a high-pitch: "

It is but natural to come into existence & then depart. This world is a passing show of an hour....

He said to his wife, "After my departure, you will daily weep reclining yourself against the wall and nobody will bother about you. One enjoys oneself only in human company

"The moment the soul retires from this physical frame, they will grow impatient and try to dispose of the corpse as early as they can....

Jassowal says, "The whole world has now become an abode of swindlers! In Guru Nanak's days there was only one 'Thug'(Swindler), now the whole world seems to be filled with swindlers. Population has increased to an alarming extent and Jassowal feels surprised and says, "At first I was acquainted with ninety nine percent people of Ludhiana. Now I am not acquainted even with 18 % people. Now I feel suffocated here and at times I feel like retiring to my village; then again I have to suppress this feeling. Just as a strange cattle doesn't mix with other cattle.... but feels lonely and out of place, so do I. How can I escape this feeling, when I am a human?"

Jassowal knows full well that our culture is being seriously damaged; fraternal relations are being rudely snapped; mutual affection and regard is coming to an end; the new generation is becoming indolent, and ease-loving; that strong and robust village youths thrust 'Zarda' (a compound of tobacco) into their mouths and waste their time in playing cards, forming groups; while youthful damsels are loitering about aimlessly; and young people take intoxicating pills and capsules and waste their youth rolling in roads & streets and there by pushing the Punjab into the pit of destruction; he feelingly realises that these alcoholic, unemployed idlers when move about in gangs can easily wreck the happiness and peace of the Punjab. The government must pay due heed to this aspect of Punjabi life; governments should not merely ride on the horses but should also provide them with fodder and corn; otherwise, if the horse collapses breaking his waist, the rider will inevitably fall to the ground. He, too, will break his limbs."

Jassowal had once close intimacy with S. Kapoor Singh I.C.S. (an eminent Sikh Scholar) Kapoor Singh fell seriously ill; he sent for Sardar Jassowal & the latter went to pay him a visit: Kapoor Singh's vital parts were losing their vitality. He was stating his condition to S. Jassowal, when another eminent Sikh leader dropped in. He asked Kapoor Singh, "S. Kapoor Singh

jee, your need to the Sikh Community is very great; please, lead the Sikh community." Kapoor Singh flew into a rage. He said in anger, "Turn him out of my room!" & he was driven out. When Jassowal later, came out of the room, he found that Sikh leader still standing there. He said to Jassowal, "I was insulted! I had come only to see S.Kapoor Singh ji.

When Jassowal told S. Kapoor Singh that the leader was still standing outside and wanted to have his darshan, (sight) Kapoor Singh rose to his feet and said, " Jagdev Singh, listen to me, they are all low type of people. When I was active and energetic, healthy and in power, ... I made them repeated entreaties, " Please, have any service from me, I am at your disposal," none heeded my entreaties.... what can I do now?.... At that time they called me mad! crank! Now I am on the verge of death and they say my services are badly needed by the Sikh community!" Such are these Sikhs! You can't read their psyche, Jagdev Singh. They have brought ruin to the Sikh community!"

Regarding politics Jassowal says frankly, "What sort of politics is there where every one wants to grind his own axe? No leader has any thought of the country & its culture; all are swayed by self-interest.

Jassowal worked with Akalis also; while he is still a servant of the Congress. But now he is getting away from politics and has devoted himself entirely to the service of Punjabi culture. He has lost all interest in politics. He says, " I no longer go on hunting with a double-barrelled gun in hand; and sitting on the back of a horse. I no longer run; but if my foot stumbles on a quail, I won't let it escape!"

His mother often said to him, " My son, the world knows only two relations- one is mother's relation and the second of the wife: the mother gives man his birth, rears him into manhood,... she herself may remain unfed, but she provides food for her child; she sleeps on the wet side; but puts the child on the dry side; while wife is man's chief prop and pillar in old age. She serves him; she has even to attend his funeral. If she does not weep for her husband from the core of her heart, they would say, "O please, weep out of respect for public opinion..." So these two relationships must be kept in tact. None should ignore his mother and his wife."

Jassowal regards these counsels of his mother as gospel truths.

Jassowal feels deeply pained to see the rich Punjabi culture & tradition on the wane. He says, "O people, what is the fault of poor girls and young women that you have banned all their festivals. You have given up 'Teenas; trees, too, all, being felled so that girls do not use them for swings, why were all the fairs & festivals the favourites of our children, ended? Why are we now being crushed under the strokes of the western culture? Control yourself or you will entirely lose your Punjabi identity?"

He suggests to the organisers of the cultural programmes: "O organisers of cultural fairs, I humbly request you with folded hands, that if you wish to hold and enjoy such festivals, you should do so with full pomp

and show and celebrate them in full detail, as they ought to be. If, on the other hand, you are simply to make a show with music and dance, it will be of no avail. If a fair is to be held in the memory of some particular individual, you must fully represent his views and his mode of life and thought; all else has a secondary importance.... since the time I placed before the Punjabis my idea of holding cultural programmes, the love and affection which the Punjabis have given me is simply invaluable! I am grateful to them all. Fairs bring the people nearer each other.... and stitch them together like thread & needle; while political parties play the role of scissors. They segregate the people from one another & destroy social unity. Whenever a cultural fair is held. I feel as though I were blessed with a son! Fairs promote love & mutual affection & understanding, besides providing entertainment; remove tension and clash. O my countrymen, you may remain-as members of any party whatsoever for three hundred and sixty four days of the year, but please, do assemble together at a fair one day every year. It will keep you united even after death!

I have loved mankind, and not money In this age of materialism.

I could also join the general race; but I do not need material possession s. I have not accumulated wealth or material goods, but have won the love and regard of the people. What have I to make of money? Money can never make those achievements which love and affection and good name can do. Some big men possess enormous wealth, but they do not enjoy any public love and regard. They have no happiness in life. I have made a successful, attempt to rise above material allurements and considerations and remain ever happy and contented.

A man should first of all have healthy & active physique. On his body depends his existence. In the second place he should learn to control his mind and keep it in a stable state.

Yamla Jat has written that as compared with humans lower animals and birds fare much better; they live naked, no doubt, but man even in rich garments looks naked. In the case of lower animals even their nakedness conceals their nudity. The dog, is superior to man; for he barks at a stranger; and barks in front of him; but man barks at his own men and that too, behind their back. So great is the difference between man and dog. There are hundreds of countries, thousands of religions; countless are there dialects, but birds and lower animals have no religion, and no country; they have the same language everywhere; the sparrow chirps in Japan as she chirps in India.... If a donkey brays in Korea, he brays in the same way in London; the buffalo which bellows in Argentina, also bellows in Norway; the dog that barks in Canada also barks in Iraq. Birds and beasts are born well-trained; but man spends his whole life-time in learning but still he learns nothing.

Folk-Singers ought to live in propinquity with the people and not make their profession purely commercial. Music is the food of the soul, many musical artists are out of tune & unmusical, shrill and not melodious; they

only create unpleasantness and disturb peace. Artists should first write down the sentences which they are to recite in music, if they wish to become great artists. Folk tunes, folk-instruments and folk voice- enjoy a long life. Some artists want that they should at once find a place on the T.Y; have their photographs appear in newspapers; should not be obliged to do any hard practice, or observe any preceptor-disciple relations; learn any music, or musical tune, but they must still receive clapping from every individual listener. But if they are so anxious to receive clappings that they have to request the public to clap, then where lies the difference between a good artist and an average artist. But we see that the stage-secretary requests the audience to clap for an artist! Had music not existed man would have died a natural death out of sheer boredom; none would have cared to use a bullet! There is no music institution in our country like the M.N.A. found in other countries; where the artists sit together and exchange views on music. How unfortunate that there is no government-sponsored 'Sangeet Union' or Sangeet academy where one could learn something.

Artists are our common property in the same way as the Sun, the Moon and the air we breathe in are. They seek everybody's welfare.

When a farmer sows the seed, he sows wheat seed; but later wild growth and unwanted weeds crop up. To kill them he uses insecticides and other poisonous powders and exterminates them.

Likewise, cultural fairs are held to make room for the growth of clean type of music. So that the audience be made eternally attached to their rich cultural heritage. If whenever some singer offers a cheap and inferior type of song or immoral music, the audience ought to boycott him and interrupt him even on the stage. It will end all dirty & obscene musicality.

The artists, on their part, should sing their songs before all the members of their family(in cluding all the female members), and after getting their approval, should seek a cassette recording of those songs. Their families can prove their best censor-board.

A genuinely good art is always appreciated though it may not fetch much market price, I am, thus, reminded of the following verse of Sant Ram Udasi:

"Please, let me remain clung to the deep-roots."

The artist should never ignore his cultural back-ground & cultural heritage. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is not at all a hypocrite though at the same time he is not an ascetic. He is quite frank and undaunted and there is no discrepancy between his outer self and inner self. A man of such noble exalted and invaluable thoughts- S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has on the one hand, enjoyed in his life the company of Baba Nathu, the shpherd of his village, and on the other the august presence of the various Prime Ministers and Presidents of the country! and from all places he visited he has acquired new qualities and virtues.

Jassowal also asserts with full clarity that only the donor is the man

who gives you respect, love, honour, a happy welcome, money, some virtue, or good quality, alms & even wisdom. An inferior person is he who cheats and misleads others, injures their feelings and torments them. Just as S. Jassowal has an equal fascination for classical music Gurmat Sangeet, and folk-songs, he is also equally affectionate towards all artists- great or small.

When asked what special dishes he would like to take, he smiled and said, "Of the flying objects I do not eat 'Kites' (note the pun); and from the aquatic animals I do not eat 'boats; and among the quadrupeds I don't eat a cot'. All else, if and when available, I gladly eat."

If you ask him, "Sir, have you seen an excellent man anywhere?" he retorts, "So far I haven't seen an excellent man anywhere". For Jassowal the best wine is that which one drinks in a calm and contented mood with one's close friends. The best doctor for Jassowal is he who along with giving the patient a medicine dose also invokes divine blessings upon him. Among the best villages he finds his own village the best of all; of the countries he loves his own country best. The best ride for him is the one whose rein lies in his own hand. He has never seen a film. The books he likes best are Gulistan & poet Sheikh Saadi.

Among sports he likes hockey & swimming though once for swimming in a canal (without informing his parents) he had received a sound thrashing from his father. He has even made at home a vast bathing pool of a tolerable size. Among seasons he like neither summer nor winter, but a season of moderate temperature.

As to the explosive growth of the country's population, Jassowal like a responsible citizen, is acutely worried. He says, "Produce a limited number of children, so that you can properly look after them. Who can manage for a 'Janj'(a marriage party) of children? In the past children used to work and earn; while the children of today pour oil on the roots of their parents, they render even their parents entirely worthless, incapable of doing anything worthwhile. Time there was when in every household hung the portrait of the obedient son 'Sarwan Kumar, carrying in a sling on his shoulders, his old and blind parents. Now, in stead, we find the photograph of some filmy actress in a half-nude state! Now we do not see anywhere even the photograph of Martyr Bhagat Singh.

Addressing the religious hypocrites, S. Jassowal says, "God resides in every human heart; never break anybody's heart; ...

"Look for God in human hearts and do not exhaust all your funds on the construction & protection of the so-called holy places only; spend something on educational institutions as well, these institutions also are in no way, inferior to the other institutions.

Regarding saints and mendicants of today, Jassowal holds quite clear-cut notions:

Addressing the holymen he says, "Baba Nanak, rendered a great service to the world; he visited every house-hold and gave the benefit of his teachings

to the people by visiting every home. Had he any gun-man escorting him or air-conditioned cars? If you are really true devotees of God and true saints, what need have you of gunmen and body-guards?

From whom are you anticipating danger, o holy men" c.f.

"Whose feet should I touch; the whole world is fraught with holymen?"

(Or) They wear wooden ear rings to loot the whole world!

Jassowal is quite a carefree man. His ideas and expressions clearly indicate the sour and the sweet experiences and facts of life. If he is sitting in an aeroplane and the engine of the plane develops some defect, he will get down and board a train; if the locomotive engine too develops some flaw, he will at once get down the train and board a bus; if the bus gets out of order, he will sit in a tempu; if the temliu goes out of order, he will take a rickshaw; and if the rickshaw too, proves disappointing, he will take to his feet! Jassowal gave up the presidentship of Professor Mohan Singh Fair and handed it over to Pargat Singh Grewal, because he knows it very well that his legs are now inclined towards the crematory and the fair should remain away from the idea of death and not burn itself along with his person; it should be later, handed over to the coming generation and thus it should last till the end of this world.! His birthday was celebrated at his native village 'Jassowal Saudan On this occasion there was such a big gathering of his votaries and admirers as well as of the artists, come from the entire province that the then Chief Minister S, Beant Singh was wonder struck to see such a big gathering, There were set up seven hundred & fifty tents and pavilions; while the open air programme of folk-songs and the fair was so grand and on such a large scale that the whole.District of Ludhinana does not offer a parallel to it.

Jassowal has had a very chequered career and witnessed many an up and down. But he has ever proved so prudent and cautious that he always moulded .the critical situation to suit his own requirements. This talent belongs to very few persons. Once the situation was so critical that even a dog did not bark at S. Jassowal's bidding; and even if it did, i rushed at Jassowal himself. God be thanked th'at he escaped with his legs unhurt.

In Jassowal's household in the summer season all trunks and wooden boxes which are usually used to accomodate quilts & blankets were stuffed with rupee coins and currency notes; and the quilts and cushions were to be kept out; Then such a crisis came when he had to borrow from some friend a petty loan of twenty rupees! and there was absolutely no change in his house! But even such disastrous catastrophes did not convert him into a beggar!

He has ever felt pleased & contented while helping some one & offering love and encouragement to someone. Jassowal has brought the breeze of spring in his life by entertaining artists & sitting in their company, by honouring & befi-ielding men of letters, & wisdom. Thus, he has achieved equipoise & tranquillity in his otherwise, strife-torn existence!

## Jassowal's Nest

How beautiful is Gurdev Nagar, a part of Ludhiana where dwells S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, the 'beloved Bapu (father) of artists! He has, in fact, kept the main gate of his house quite lofty and wide, and not so far got this complaint from anybody. "Friendship with elephants and gates too narrow?"

When even an elephant crosses his main gate, the beam of the gate still retains, some space above the elephant and the elephant can quite easily pass through it.

As of the village gate the leaves of this gate are also very broad and made of iron, and above them, if you cast a glance, you will find written in bold Punjabi letters, "Jassowal's Nest".

In you cross the gate, you will first see a big room. This room is just like a museum. If you enter the room, you will feel amply blessed to see the various sights. your eyes will be irresistibly focused upon the paintings & embellishments on the walls. You won't look at the people sitting below.

You will see there some portraits of the fading Punjabi culture. The chief among them are a maiden, churning milk; on one side you will see a woman plying at the spinning wheel, and on another side you will see the photograph of a woman who is coming with a basket on her head; a child is accompanying her; while the young man escorting her has a fan in one hand and a 'Kirpan'(a sword) in the other. It is a heart-ravishing picture!

If you glance at the other wall, you will find a beautiful portrait of the Tenth Guru Guru Govind Singh. Alongwith it there are two portraits of Lord Krishna & Baba Farid which give us the message of secularism. On the front wall is hung the 'Sanman Pattar' written in poetic form in honour of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal by the famous poet Sardar Panchhi. A copy of that 'Sanman Pattar' is recorded in this book as well.

In the front photograph you see an aged music-artist playing upon a rebeck; he is shabbily clad and blood is oozing from his back. It is a most attractive portrait, presented to S. Jassowal by the "Lok Kala Rang Manch, Moga". To the side of the photographs of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev, you will find below them the photograph of S. Jassowal with Pt. Nehru, Kairon, and Darbara Singh reminding us of the olden days just after the Partition. Then there are two beautiful separate photographs of Justice Gurnam Singh and S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal prepared by the Bollywood Studio. The photograph of the girls performing 'giddha' in Professor Mohan Singh Fair is very attractive. It looks like a beautiful 'Jhanki'(spectacle). Besides acquainting us with the beautiful costumes of the Punjabi maidens & their attractive 'giddha' it also seems to hurb a defiance at the shallow western culture. On the wall also hangs a symbol of all religions. It is attached with electricity, and is ever glittering. This 'symbol of religions' betokens equal love & equal respect for all religions, all castes, and for the rich and the poor shown by S. Jassowal's family. The basic facts of life have been recorded in

English on a photograph, Jassowal reads them at all times. A Sofa set, a T.V. set, the telephone, two beds, a lamp placed on a big table, and about three small tables are lying in the room. (on the table). The almirahs are covered with 'phulkaris' (embroidered sheets of cloth) used as curtains.

If you get out of this museum-like chamber, and proceed a little ahead, you will be immensely pleased to see green, luscious flowery plants, laden with flowers, and flowery creepers climbing the walls; and in a small enclosure there is a beautiful statue of a peacock made by sculptor Banta Singh and set up on a wall. The peacock is standing with its wings spread out. There is also a stork holding frog in its beak; In one corner there is a snake creeping towards its hole. This picture highly captivates the mind. These pictures are headed by the following lines:

"The peacock is engaged in dance, The snake proceeds to its hole; The gentle stork picks up a frog.

While sitting in my chair I am composing this verse. Who can avert the writ of God?..."

This portrait seems to convey the message that all living creatures whether they live in water, or on land or fly in the air and mostly stay in the upper atmosphere- are all leading happy, contented lives, as designed by God. Therefore, O foolish human heart! you, too, should partake of this gaiety and jubilation in nature, why to feel so depressed? The peacock is dancing; the stork is cheerful; the snake in ecstasy is proceeding to its hole! While living in Jassowal's house you will feel as though you were moving about in a big village farm-house. In summer breezes come from all quarters and in winter you will get sun-light everywhere. For sparrows Jassowal has constructed special wooden nests which are hanging there. Sparrows joyfully use these nests. They dwell there chirping, flying and frisking about. There we see earthen pots ever filled with water for the general use of all birds. There all birds drink water and take flights. Jassowal also spreads corn before the birds or other eatables. He sprinkles grains, before them, in the morning; and they remain busy all over the day picking them up.

Now listen to an interesting thing; A big earthen pan lay filled with water; and Jassowal was sitting at some distance. A dog came and began to drink water; a cat, too, stealthily approached and began to drink water; soon a sparrow also came and dipped its beak into the water. Jassowal was highly surprised to see it. He raised a scream of joy to see this rare spectacle! He told it to his wife. He regretted that he didn't have a camera with him at that time; otherwise, he would have taken a snap of this rare and accidental phenomenon. Thus, when even birds and beasts enjoy themselves at his house, what to think of his friends and votaries who frequently visit his place?

Every guest who visits his house is served the same food that Jassowal takes himself. None has ever left his house hungry and thirsty. Those who

drink wine, are provided by him with full dose. I have seen with my own eyes several singers, poets and news correspondents & others leave his place reeling and staggering.

Some one asked Jassowal, "Sir, what is the nature of your link with culture?" Jassowal retorted, "As is the link of the curlew with the Moon, of the kite with the thread, of the snake with the veena, of tea with the cup." He went on to say, "culture is just like my turban while politics is just like my shoes. I'll keep my turban ever on my head and my shoes on my feet." However sad, dejected and disappointed a man may be when he visits S. Jassowal's house, he will come back in cheerful, hilarious spirits. Cannot say what magical properties S. Jassowal possesses, that he has attracted almost the whole world towards himself. Many ponder over it and try to find out the secret of this fascination but are lost in confusion.

Some try to copy Jassowal, but the art of copying, too, requires keen intelligence on our part as some one has rightly remarked. So they fail hopelessly. Many talk ill of him, and he remarks, " They are my P.R.O's. whom I have employed on an honorary basis. I have not to pay them any salary; but I hold their services as indispensable. They cleanse me of all dirt, and spare me the trouble of washing myself."

Jassowal is a big institution in himself; and an exalted personage; he is a mani-faceted, multi-coloured, respectable and lovable character. There is no counting of his close and bosom-friends; cannot say at how many places his votaries and ardent admirers dwell, they are in countless numbers both at home and abroad. At times, God knows what becomes of S. Jassowal; that he places his hands upon his ears and begins to sing at a high pitch: c.f.:-

"My sons, may not weep for me, but the friends of my heart will certainly lament my loss."

### Jassowal's contribution to Punjabi Culture

Jagdev Singh Jassowal had close relations with the Prominent writer Kartar Singh Shamsher. In the same way he came in contact with Professor Mohan Singh and Later there developed a close friendship between them. Mohan Singh & Kartar Singh's company instilled in a still greater degree love of letters in S. Jassowal. Thus, these friends began to call literary meetings which both Punjabi and Urdu renowned literateurs attended. Jagdev Singh Jassowal got from Gopal Singh Khalsa a lot of humorous as well as ironical mode of Speech & also learnt from all these gentlemen the art of addressing public meetings, Eminent Sikh scholar S. Kapoor Singh I.C.S. also left a deep mark on S. Jassowal's mind. From these scholars he learnt many virtues and got a lot of knowledge.

Professor Mohan Singh & Jassowal became so closely related that

they daily began to hold evening meetings. If Prof. Mohan Singh did not come to Jassowal's; the latter would visit him at his residence. This close intimacy developed further.

On June 3, 1978 Prof. Mohan Singh passed away. Jassowal was acutely shocked at his friend's departure. He began to sing in his sense of loneliness:

"My friend in the neighbourhood has left me, leaving a scar in my heart.

He was the man without whom I could not live even for a moment; now several months & years have elapsed since he left."

Jassowal made up his mind to preserve the sacred memory of his friend Prof. Mohan Singh; and he called at his residence a meeting of writers and artists. It was decided to hold every year a gathering on Professor Mohan Singh's birthday. Gopal Singh Khalsa, Dr. Parminder Singh, Surjeet Patar, Guru Bhajan Gill, Principal Prent Singh Bajaj, Prof. Mohinder Singh Cheema, Principal Takhat Singh, Jashir Singh ahlixwalia, Dr. Sewik, Mohammed Sadiq- Ranjit Kaur, Kuldeep Manak, Surinder Chhinda, Kalyan Singh Panchhi, Kulwant Jagraon, Mohinder Deep Grewal, Principal Bharpur Singh, and other prominent personages made their appearance. All these eminent persons promised S. Jassowal their full support and cooperation.

Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Trust was founded and on October 20, 1979, a fair was organised in the memory of Prof. Mohan Singh. The very first fair got its roots dug deep in the earth. It so greatly attracted the people that they began to await it with impatience. Gradually the number of the audience increased. Artists and writers, too, felt deeply inspired. Even those who did not know Professor Mohan Singh as a poet now began to revere him. The fair came to be annually held; a caravan began to be formed. All artists big & small came to Jassowal's assistance. Funds began to be amassed automatically; all tasks began to receive an automatic completion and accomplishment. The fair began to be attended to suffocation. Artists began to attend it in such large numbers that it became a problem for the organisers whom to select and whom to reject. Both artists and the listeners enjoyed full freedom. In this way this Prof. Mohan Singh Fair became popular not only in the Punjab but even in foreign lands. The Punjabi friends sitting abroad also began to lend their cooperation. Punjabi Sahit Academy, Ludhiana, and the two Punjabi writers' Associations Universities, North Zone Culture centre' along with Bhasha Vibhag Punjab (Language Department, Punjab) all cultural and literary & social institutions began to extend their cooperation & support. All the photographers of the Punjab, artists, musicians, folk-singers, literateurs, news correspondents, 'rass dharias: (theatricals), qwaals, snake charmers, 'gatka' parties, 'Bhangra' teams, giddha teams, folk-dancers, along with exhibitions and demonstrations came in such large

numbers as if they had come from home as well as abroad on formal invitation. Every artist and art-lover began to look upon his attendance in the fair as a matter of great honour and privilege.

Seeing this growing popularity of the fair some evil-wishers began to burn in the fire of jealousy. Quite unjust criticism ensued. It was of course, a good omen to have critics. Along with the fair S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal became a popular figure. Some began to call this fair 'Jassowal fair'. The press, all magazines and journals, the radio, the T.V.- the whole media began to cover the fair. Seeing an over whelming number of the spectators and the Punjabi Bhavan's accommodation inadequate the fair was taken out of the building, and as in villages, began to be held in the open at the village Dad.

Artists and writers began to be honoured. New artists, in their eagerness to win public favour & applause, began to regard the stage of the fair as an opportune vantage point to come into public limelight; and in this way many artists won honours and distinctions. The audio-video cassettes of the fair began to travel abroad. Because of the honours the Punjabi artists won and the growth of the new artists cassette culture also flourished.

Seeing the artists and the writers assemble at one platform Jassowal's joy knew no bounds. He felt honoured to see that he had brought together a lion and a lamb to drink at the same water trough!

On Prof. Mohan Singh's contribution to literature in general and to Punjabi poetry in particular there started symposiums & seminars; and they began to be attended by scholars of the highest calibre. Seeing the progress of Prof. Mohan Singh Fair a powerful movement started in Punjab to organise such cultural fairs & festivals on a large scale. All this highly pleased Jassowal.

But dark days came for the Punjab & people got frightened. Blood and violence became the order of the day. But the fair still held its ground and was celebrated as usual with all pomp & show, Jassowal would go to the houses of the artists, exhort & encourage them. On several occasions Diwali also came on the date of this fair; Dussehra too, at times fell on the same date; but the fair was still held & it remained well attended, even though the people all over the Punjab were seared and unnerved, they didn't desist from attending the fair.

Even politicians attended the fair; even now they come but come after removing the shoes of politics outside the fair-ground. Jassowal warns them before hand that it is not a political stage but the stage devoted to art and culture only; that here they will have to speak only on art, culture & literature. This fair has been well-attended so far by Punjab Chief ministers, ministers at the Centre and several deputy commissioners & other district officers and leaders big or small.

On October 20, 1999 was held the 21st Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial

Fair. It was at the acme of its perfection, in full bloom;- and seemed to disseminate the message of promoting unity and the sense of fraternity among all Punjabis, and the lovers of art & literature & Punjabi culture.

## Cultural Fairs in the Punjab

Formerly, fairs were held at the mausoleums of Sufi pirs and faqirs, or there were game-tournaments, or other big traditional programmes, taking the shape of fairs. If this Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair were called "the mother of all Punjabi fairs and festivals". It won't be an exaggeration. This very fair has given birth to all other Punjabi fairs many of which by this time have reached the threshold of youth & puberty. Seeing this growing number of fairs, and the crowded attendance of singers & artists S. Jassowal felt highly elated; he grew more confident & encouraged and the organisers of these mushroom fairs began to approach him and seek his guidance. By this date S. Jassowal has presided over several fairs and even now he is, as usual, performing this duty. He has attended many fairs where distinctions were bestowed upon a number of artists, writers, musicians & folk-singers players, and literary artists. In the whole Punjab wherever a cultural fair is held, S. Jassowal is requested to preside over it or is taken there in all formality as the chief guest. He has been attending annually several such fairs for many years! Many organisers of the cultural fairs first consult him while fixing the dates of their fairs and also consult him while choosing the artists and about other programmes. To help these fair-organisers Jassowal at times takes with him some good artists too. In this way many artists have attended cultural fairs with S. Jassowal and by giving their performances have won popularity & fame. Many of them now charge handsome amounts from the companies for permitting them to record their performances in cassettes and even programmes give them rich dividends. The accounts of these artists will be given in the coming pages in full detail along the new artists when some artist becomes well-established and given Jassowal the slip then he goes in search of a new artist. In this way many young artists very eagerly approach him and call him 'Bapu ji', 'Bapuji'; till they, too, acquire popularity at his hands & later give him the slip! But S. Jassowal ever exhort & encourages these artists.

## Fairs held abroad

In Denmark S. Gurdial Singh 'Ramta' holds a fair every year in the memory of Prof. Mohan Singh; while S. Jassowal chalks out and shapes the whole programme. He has presided over the fair in Denmark. In the same way in Canada Sahib Singh Thind is conducting this Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair.

## Honour :-

It is deemed a great honour to be acclaimed in Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair. Every year the organisers make a very minute and judicious selection of the personages to be honoured in the fair. Still some omissions or commissions occur unavoidably. Many artists betray impatience like a fish out of water to get themselves honoured but the organisers decide as they please. By this time numerous writers, singers, folk-singers and others who rendered conspicuous services in the field of art or literature have been honoured & acclaimed in this fair.

## The President of the Fair

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has entrusted the reins of the fair to S. Pargat Singh Grewal for many years. Pargat Singh along with his companion and general secretary of the Fair S. Gurbhajan Singh Gill and with the full cooperation of all other members and office holders leaves no stone unturned to make the fair a grand success: Jassowal is the chief patron of the fair. He loves to see the fair and often utters the following verse of Sardar Panchhi:-

"I am that taper

Which has given to all  
the light I once possessed".

He is complacent that by virtue of his efforts there has occurred a big revolution during his life time and that many artists make their names in the fair and improve their future prospects. At the time the people were in tears and a bitter gloom spread over the land of the Punjab, Jassowal was moving from place to place organising cultural fairs for the entertainment and delight of the people. He would take with him comic artists who with their jests and rhythmic dances & songs instilled a new delight and enthusiasm in the people. In this sense S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal may be called "a glittering glow worn" in pitch dark nights. Shree V.N. Narain in one of his books writes about S. Jassowal thus!" Bhagat Puran Singh's rendering service to the helpless lepers and S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's organising fairs amply bear a testimony to the fact that the Punjab is yet alive.

## Music artists:-

The musical artists twinkling like stars in the galaxy, as already said, are all the creations of the Fair of Prof. Mohan Singh and they themselves, too acknowledge this fact that if S. Jassowal had not helped them or Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair had not been held they would not have become artists.

Kuldeep Paras for the first time sang in this fair in 1986; and Hans in 1989 made his debut. Surjit Bindrakhia too, won his name & fame only from this very fair. At first he came to attend this fair in the Bhangra team of Pammi

Bai to contribute his folk songs, Harbhajan Mann sang in this fair for the first time in 1992, Parminder Sandhu in 1991 & Jagmohan Kaur in 1992, gave their first musical performances in this fair.

Mohammed Sadiq-Ranjit Kaur, Kuldeep Manik & Surinder Chhinda had already associated themselves with this fair. Manmohan Waris was sent to this fair to sing for the first time in 1994 by Maninder Gill. Jazzy Bains, Pragat Bhagu, Dilbag Akhtar, Manjit Rai, Daljit Kaur, Kamaljit Neeru, Bhupinder Kaur Mohali, Sunita Bhatti & Faqir Chand Patanga, Amrita Deepak, Narinder Mavi, Paramjit Sindhu- Pammi Bai, Sukhi Brar, Channi of England, Kamaljit Neelo, Bal Mukand Sharma, Jaswinder Bhalla, Manjit Rupowalia, Ravinder Grewal, - all these artists have made their names only through this fair.

Among the stage-directors Asha Sharma, Nirmal Jaura, Darshan Bari, Daljit Singh Jassal, too have become famous only through this fair. Among (Dhadi Poets) Dhadi Rachhpal Singh Pamal, Charan Singh Alamgir, Des Raj Lachkani, Hardev Singh Kanwal, Pandit Som Nath Rodianwala, and numerous other Kavishars are considered to be the products of this fair. From Bhai Dilbagh Singh Gulbagh Singh and Singh Bandhus to Sufi Gayak Puran of Shah Kot, Barkat Sidhu, Pyare Lal-Puran Chand of Guru ki Vadali etc. a number of Sufi singers have given their musical performances in this fair.

On the eve of Prof. Mohan Singh's Fair in 1995 a beautiful anthology of Prof. Mohan Singh's songs was given a cassette form under the guidance of Mohammed Sadiq. It was enjoyed and appreciated by the lovers of arts and men of letters. Principal Sant Singh Sekhon fully participated in all the twelve fairs and even attended two meetings in connection with the fair sculptor Banta Singh & T4j Partap Sandhu's created statues, along with portraits, and the portraits made by several other artists and sculptors came into fame only through the medium of this fair. There might be only some unfortunate, solitary artists whose art did not reach the fair.

These days S. Jassowal has Kuljit Mani, Ravinder Gill, Jatinder Gill, Bhag Singh Kheri, Manpreet Kaur Khanna & many other artists who have come into his presence and feel honoured thereby.

## Young Artists:-

In the same cultural fair young (Child artists, too) began to be tested. It enabled the fair authorities to find out and come by young artists. Master Salim and Master Khan and other young artists made their names in this Fair. Many other juvenile artists presenting their performances in this fair strengthened their positions. Even now on the eve of every fair (bal gayki) young children's performances are given in 'Bal Gayki Darbar'.

The Views of the Artists:-

Among the artists who first came in contact with S. Jassowal one was Harbhajan Mann. He tells us that he was in Canada in the Year 1992.

Jassowal visited Canada. Paras Ramuwalia family invited him to a dinner at their residence. There for the first time Jassowal met Harbhajan Mann. Harbhajan's cassette 'Chithya O Chithya' was yet to be released, though it had been recorded.

Harbhajan Sangin the presence of Jassowal. The latter was much pleased to hear it. He said to Harbhajan Mann, "Boy, what are you doing here? Come to me in Panjab...I will enable you to shine.

A little later Harbhajan Mann came and met S. Jassowal. Gur Sewik was also with him. Jassowal invited him to his house and organised a gathering and introduced him to artists as well as lovers of art. After that Jassowal made it a point to take him with himself on all marriages and other festive occasions. First of all Harbhajan Mann sang at Prof. Mohan Singh Cultural Fair without the accompaniment of musical instruments. The audience listened to him in all eagerness and highly praised and acclaimed him. In this way in the company of Jassowal Harbhajan established his reputation, and his cassettes also became quite popular.

Harbhajan Mann gives the whole credit for his reputation in Punjab to S. Jassowal. Today he is a singer of the national calibre. He clearly admits that it is owing to the patronship of Jassowal Sahib that he has won this name & fame. Had Jassowal not helped him, he might not have won so much appreciation from the public.

The leading comic singer Bal Krishan Sharma relates another story. He says that he and Jaswinder Bhalla were yet students at the local PAU in 1987. S. Jassowal attended the 'Kissan Mela' (Fair), and these two mimicked bards & jesters. Jassowal was much pleased. He invited them both to his house. There they discussed several fluctuations that were occurring frequently in Punjabi Comedy. S. Jassowal asked them to take some steps to remove the stalemate that had come into this field and get some cassette recorded. Little did they know how a cassette is recorded. Jassowal took the initiative and rang up the proprietor of M.V.I. and requested him to come to his house. He agreed to record their comedy cassette. Thus, on October 20, 1988 their first Cassette 'Chhankata 88' was recorded and later released on Prof. Mohan Singh Cultural Fair. It greatly attracted the public. Ten thousand cassettes were sold on that very fair. After this cassette they created such a stir that in every fair Chhankata began to be released.

Bhalla & Bal Mukand Sharma say it with pride that "Jassowal ji not only showed them the path but also smoothed it; "If we have succeeded in amusing & entertaining. The credit for it all goes to S. Jassowal Sahib".

Kuldeep Paras is a melodious singer. Paras had just embarked upon his musical career, when he got a golden chance: There was at the house of his Preceptor Surinder Chhinda (himself a prominent music artist) the birth day party of his son. Jassowal Sahib had also reached there. Paras sang a

song and Jassowal took him within the folds of his arms and said, " My son, You have performed a miracle! You have secured more marks than your Guru (the preceptor)"

Three years later, Jassowal became an M.L.A. A theatrical performance was going on in the Punjabi Bhawan, and Paras was singing. Jassowal recognised him from his voice. He came to him and said, "Well, O boy, are you the same Youngman.... who had sung at chinda's house?" He, at the same time took Paras in his fold and patted him. Next day he called him at his own residence. S. Jassowal was just leaving to attend a marriage. He took Paras, too, to the marriage. Paras put on a 'Kurta' and a 'Chadra' (a loin cloth) in a cattle shed. And as he began to sing, there was a rain of coins. He had never got so much money before. His joy knew no bounds; he collected all the currency notes and put them into the lap of S. Jassowal. The latter said, "No, my son, it is your earning; only you can use it. The amount rose nearly to rupees twenty thousand! From there he brought Jassowal straight to his house & sitting in a car of red light when Paras returned home, he at once rose in the estimation of the whole village, that an M.L.A. had visited their house. Paras's mother was wonder struck to see such a big amount. She said, "Oe where have you committed a dacoity?" At it Jassowal said, "Sister, this is your son's true and well-earned income, keep it with regard in your box."

From that day till now, Paras has developed an eternal attachment to Jassowal Sahib. After that Jassowal took him to several places and popularised him.

Manjit Rupowalia has emerged as a sweet & melodious singer.... with the debut of his cassette "Dil Soch Ke Lavin," he at once won recognition & repute. He, too, gives the whole credit for his public recognition to S. Jassowal. He says, "If I had not come in contact with 'Bapu ji (S. Jaesowal), I might have lost myself in the attempt to establish my reputation as a singer, I came into contact with Bapu ji. He took me to the fairs along with himself; and I began to sing with confidence. Gradually, in due time I held my own. He introduced me to a singer named Guru Charan Virk. The latter recorded my cassette which proved a hit."

Manjit Rupowalia is deeply impressed at S. Jassowal's myriad - coloured personality; and he has seen S. Jassowal in different colours. Manjit says that "Jassowal is a good-natured, and amiable gentleman I have minutely watched and studied him. As we look at him, we feel as if the pangs of the whole world were embedded in his heart. To help every person, share his pain & suffering, to show him love- are his special characteristics. He solves all my problems and leads my every task to completion.

One feels immensely pleased to spend the major part of one's time in his company. I will not only try to keep him company but will actually live with him. I pray that every son may have a father like him! & every wife such a husband, and every friend such a friend and every brother- a brother like

him. Ravinder Grewal, an expert singer, since his early years has been a staunch devotee of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. He met S. Jassowal for the first time in the year 1992-93. He had known Jassowal for a long time, but it was only a cursory acquaintance. According to him, as he gradually came close to Jassowal, he had the chance to look at him very closely and with great eagerness. At Ravinder's village Gujjarwal there was sports tournament. Jassowal, too, had reached there. Ravinder sang a song which ran as:

"O our dear friend has left us wailing all alone, by willfully losing his temper with us."

Jassowal highly enjoyed it. After the programme he visited Ravinder at his house. He was also accompanied by Krishan Kumar Bawa and Pawan Dewan. Jassowal said to Ravinder's parents, "From today he is half my son," In short, from that very day Ravinder Grewal got associated with Jassowal and from place to place he went with S. Jassowal, attending marriages, fairs, cultural associations and many other festivals . & gave his musical performances. With the help of S. Jassowal he got his cassettes recorded & they fetched him great popularity & his name came to be included in the category of singers of the new generation. Ravinder Grewal remarks that "Bapu Jassowal ji is really an admirable personage. He picked me from my home & adopted me as his son, and enabled me to earn my living."

Admiring Jassowal from the core of his heart Ravinder Grewal remarks: "Very few parents there are who can bestow (so much affection upon) their children as S. Jassowal has bestowed upon me."

Ravinder Grewal's cassettes have become quite popular and he is gaining both in money & in fame by dint of his musicality. He gives the whole credit for his success to Jassowal.

Singer Mavi sprang into fame all of a sudden. Her songs are heard with great interest and zest on all occasions. Even in foreign lands she is heard with equal delight. She, too, giving credit to S. Jassowal for her success says: "I have been able to win appreciation & admiration from my audience only because of S. Jassowal. It is through his co-operation that I have won honour & appreciation on all fairs & festivals and even got my cassettes recorded."

### Jassowal's foreign Tours

In 1990 S. Jassowal made a foreign tour. He went to Canada, America and England. There too, he persuaded the Punjabi lovers of music, art and culture to make contributions in this direction. He has successfully endeavoured abroad too, to organise cultural fairs and thereby disseminate songs & culture of the Punjab.

During his visit to Pakistan also he met Mian Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and induced him to promote brotherhood between the

two Punjabs in order to safe-guard and propagate Punjabi culture. Nawaz Sharif was deeply impressed at S. Jassowal's sweet & interesting talk & views as well as at his genuine love for Punjabi music and culture.

Jassowal also demanded from Nawaz Sharif that Punjab's cultural and historical heritage should be fully safe-guarded without further delay, and also the new generation be made fully conversant with it. He added that the findings of the Folk-lore Institute of Islamabad and the Museum at Lahore should be preserved at the centres meant for this purpose and also the artistic creations, the cassettes & the photographs of the famous artists and their books be placed in them. so that the cultural heritage of the Punjab as well as the cultural acquisitions of the two Punjabs be properly safe-guarded.

Jagdev Singh Jassowal also laid stress on the facilitation of the means of communication and tour programmes between the two Punjabs. Jassowal also requested Mr. Nawaz Sharif to give full protection to the native place of Prof. Mohan Singh at village Dhamial in Rawalpindi District, and declare it an archaeological place. He also suggested how along with Persian Script Gurumukhi Scripts could also be used in writing Punjabi.

Jassowal also presented to Mian Nawaz Sharif a set of video cassettes of the various fairs and cultural festivals of the Punjab. The latter was highly pleased to receive it. Jassowal made his tour of Pakistan in order to do good to the Punjab's art and culture. He studied Lahore carefully. He saw the places associated with Baba Farid, Waris Shah as well as Sasi's grave, he also met several writers and artists. He had with him the Ex-minister Harnaik Singh of Gharuan- story-writer and Journalist Gulzar Singh and Partap Singh Gill (Ex-governor of Goa), Nawaz Sharif treated them as his distinguished guests and accorded to them a grand reception. He seated them in chariots and took them home to the accompaniment of drums & trumpets. He served them thirsty Six varieties of dishes.

With the consent & cooperation of his companions S Jagdev Singh Assowal has invited many artists of the West Punjab to this Punjab and rred on them special honours. Among them are Late Anayat Hussain 45hatti, Alla Ditta, Sabar and the well-known writer Alias Ghuman. After the death of Anayat Hussain Bhatti he dedicated Prof. Mohan Singh Fair to him.

With the intention of resolving bitterness between the two Punjabs and fostering unity Jassowal carried a burning lantern to the Wagha Border and extended his full cooperation to Kuldeep Nayyer and Dr. Tara Singh Sandhu in this venture.

### His other foreign tours:-

He visited America, Canada, England, Norway, Denmark, Pakistan, France, Italy, and Germany and there participated in Cultural fairs in order to organise cultural institutions & associations.

## Conclusion:-

From these activities mentioned above, and after learning the views of the eminent singers this fact becomes not only amply clear but also provides evident-proof of what a great contribution S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has made for the uplift and upbringing of the budding artists and singers who are spreading their sweet fragrance in the orchard of Punjabi culture & art. If he has endeavoured to search out genuine artists who are so well-known today and are still twinkling in the firmament of Punjabi music, it is a matter of great honour and credit for Punjabi 'Sangeet' (music). If he has started a movement of cultural fairs he has also amply popularised them with his infinite labour and successful effort & converted it into a mass movement. It seems, today, that there has occurred not only a revolution in Punjabi culture & art but it has become a great venture on his part, far beyond the reach of average men of action. What Jagdev Singh did for the growth and development of Punjabi Culture, Art & artists & for folk-singers none else could do. This exchange of thought with the readers also indicates this fact and the writings and speeches of other scholars inserted in this book, too, make it clear that Jassowal's contribution in this field is unique & unparalleled.

## A few words with Surjeet Kaur Jassowal

It is generally admitted that behind the rise to eminence of every great man his wife, too, plays a considerable role; and that people are generally eager to exchange a few words with his wife. It was, therefore, indispensable to have a few words with S. Jassowal's wife Surjeet Kaur to rease and determine the extent of her influence over her husband:

So here is an interview:-

Q- Respected Mother, please, give some information about your native place and your kith & Kin?

Ans.: My son, my father was very hard and strict of temperament. He ever cast on us a stern look and never allowed us to peep outside our house. Even if there was some marriage in our neighbourhood, we would go there in a clandestine manner avoiding the notice of our father. Such was our upbringing. Time spirit, then, was of such a conservative character. They kept their daughters and sisters in doors with utmost strictness.

Q.: How did you feel after your marriage with Jassowal?

Ans.: My son, I may tell you that I am the beloved sister of five brothers; and when they began to think of my marriage and held mutual consultations, I said that I won't like to inarry in a family where I was obliged to carry dung & rubbish and take bread & 'lassi' (whey) to the fields. I was, then, engaged to S. Jassowal. He was, then, in his student career. A little later we were married. I was much pleased at his social service & his interest in deeds of

social welfare. I feel our family life is quite good. I am proud of being his partner in life. He remains busy in doing deeds of public good & in the dissemination of Punjabi culture and inheritance.

Q.: Mother, what do you think of Jassowal's activities, and services rendered to society & Punjabi culture, his political activities and achievements?

Ans.: Son, I have already said I am well-pleased & satisfied at them, but my ambition was to see him exalted to the position of a Judge of High Court. It would have been a matter of great pleasure for me.

Q.: How did you take his absence from home and his indifference to domestic affairs, owing to his over-busyness in public life?

Ans. The fact is that he always kept his target in view. Children are looked after by mothers only; he seldom paid any heed to household affairs; he devoted himself entirely to the cause of the people.

Q.: How did you feel, when he became an M.L.A?

Ans.: My joy at that time knew no bounds. But I was deeply grieved when grand mother passed away; it plunged me into deep grief

Q.: Now that Jassowal Sahib has launched a movement in the Punjab; and attends these fairs every now & then; have you ever accompanied him to any of these fairs?

Ans.: Never; nor evered wish to go. Who will look after the house; if I too, attend these fairs?

Q.: Whar is your opinion about these cultural fairs?

Ans.: It is good to organise them; they provide entertainment for the people & make them conscious of our rich cultural heritage. It provides training & information to the new generation.

Q.: . S. Jassowal started Prof. Mohan Singh's Fair and it must have added to your labour and expenditure?

Ans.: Mohan Singh was my respected brother, very honest, buoyant and broad-minded. Whenever he visited our house, there was a good assemblage; cheerful cries & jokes were frequent, he would recite his poems. There my husband would say, -"Surjeet Kaur, please, learn from Professor Sahib, how to prepare 'Raita' ( a compound of curds & vegetables), he is an expert in the preparation of this dish. The fair has indeed converted our house into an office. It keeps the people frequently visiting our house; Professor Sahib was a close friend of Sardarji. We do not mind any expenses.

Q.: Which of the Punjabi male or female singers is your favourite?

Ans.: I enjoyed the music of Yamla Jat also, he was a mendicant type of man. Next, I appreciate the songs of Manak, Didar Sandhu was a good singer. Ranjit Kaur and Surinder Kaur, too, are my favourites. I, infact, would like to honour all other artists as weU. I have a pan-like heart in this respect, true to say ( and she laughed).

## Ranks held by Jassowal

- 1.) Sarpanch of Jassowal village, for five years, (unanimously).
- 2.) Member, Punjab Vidhan Sabha, (from 1980 to 85).
- 3.) Vice- president, Pradesh Congress Committee (I) 1983-86.
- 4.) Political Secretary to Late Gurnam Singh, Chief Minister, Punjab, 1969-1970.
- 5.) Member, Regional Transport Authority, Jalandhar, for three years.
- 6.) Counsellor, Punjab Government Youth Welfare, Board, for two years.
- 7.) General Secretary, Shiromani Akali Dal, for two years.
- 8.) Member, Punjab State Citizen Council, (for two years)
9. Member, District Re-organisation Registration Committee, Punjab, for 3 years.
- 10.) Chairman, Punjab Dairy Vikas Corporation (Ltd.) two years.
- 11.) Chairman, Punjab Forest Development, Corporation, two years.
- 12.) Member, Counsellor, Punjab State Electricity Board, Patiala, two years.
- 13.) Member, Counsellor, Punjab Government Language Department, Patiala, two years.
- 14.) Member, Counsellor, Committee Door Darshan, Ketider, Jalandhar, for three years.
- 15.) Member Punjab Art Council, Chandigarh, two years.
- 16.) Fellow, Punjabi University, Patiala, two years.
- 17.) Member, Sangeet Natak Academy, Chandigarh- two years.
- 18.) Member, Punjab Government Public Relations Department, Advisory Board, two years.
- 19.) President, Guru Gobind Singh Foundation, Chandigarh, for four years.

## Ranks held at Present:-

- 1) Founder President, Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation.
- 2) President, World Punjabi Cultural Manch.
- 3) President, Punjabi Kala Manch
- 4) Senior Vice-President, International-Children Centre, Amritsar.
- 5) Vice-President, World Peace and Religious Institution, Delhi.
- 6) Patron, Rural Polytechnique Welfare ( Circle Phagwara).
- 7) Chief Patron, Kala Darpan, Ludhiana.
- 8) Life Member, Punjabi Sahitya Academy, Ludhiana.
- 9) Member, Sikh Education Society, Chandigarh.

## His other Achievements

1. He represented Punjab on behalf of the Indian Parliamentary Association in several national gatherings.

2. He participated in several topics & discussions many a time on All India Radio & Doordarshan.

3. He remained confined to jail for two years during the Punjabi Youth Movement.

4. In the Congress Satyagraha, (1970), too, he was sent behind bars for four months.

5. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is also a chief patron of several other cultural, social, literary & other institutions.

## Honours bestowed upon Jassowal

It seems difficult to count all the honours and distinctions bestowed upon Jassowal Sahib from different institutions and on different occasions.

His whole house seems to be full of shields, mementoes and panegijrics. You may enter any room or store of his house, you will find it stuffed with shields and mementoes. Bathroom is the only place in his house which contains no mementoes.

On behalf of great personages Jassowal has been awarded honours and distinctions from time to time. Among all these "Devotee of Peace Prize", Ambassador of Culture Prize, Punjab Music Prizes, Dr. M.S. Randhawa Prize, Prizes representing fairs & festivals, Mohammed Rafi Prize, Nand Lal Nurpuri Prize, Babu Rajab Ali Prize, Gulzar Mohammed Prize, and hundreds other prizes.

Out of these countless awards of honour we shall here place before you only three writs of honour. One of these is pertaining to Punjab Government Cultural Affair, and the second is from Punjabi Cultural Stage, Regd. Fazilka entitled God of Ravolution, Prize, The third is Lok Kala Award, 1999.

## His True Acclamation:-

Jagdev Singh Jassowal remarks that the best prize is one given by the people especially by our own people. Everybody can't win honour among the people. Only one who wins public love and regard is counted among great & powerful persons. "I have endeavoured to mix with the people, share their weal & woe and win their cooperation in all social & local deeds and won their love and regard. I have partly succeeded in this mission.

A copy of the writ of Honour

Bestowed upon S. Jassowal by the cultural Department of the Punjab Government in 1988.

The institutions set up by the people of the Punjab in general and by some eminent personages, in particular, have from time to time endeavoured to propagate, preserve and relay the proud Punjabi culture and the results of their efforts and contributions are quite evident.

Our contemporary Jagdev Singh Jassowal has risen from the masses but acquired a unique honour and distinction & now has become an institution in himself and is guiding the artists as well as the votaries of Art. The multifaceted development and expansion of his personality has taken place only after he stepped into the cultural field.

He has encouraged and inspired every budding artist, extended his helping hand to him and supported him without doubt he has made a most constructive & valuable contribution to brighten up the visage distinction all the more conspicuous.

The Punjab Government (Cultural Department) feels proud of honouring such an able & efficient person.

20-10-1988

**Shrimati Daljit Kaur**

I.A.S.

Secretary,

Cultural Department, Punjab.

**Dr. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia**

I.A.S.

Director

Cultural Department, Punjab Govt.

## An Award of Honour

from The Sabhyacharak Marg, Fazilka  
(An Apostle of Cultural Revolution Prize)

The whole life of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, the uncrowned king of Punjabi Culture, has been dedicated to Punjab, Punjabi language and Punjabi Culture. He has revived and rejuvenated the field of Punjabi culture and because of his indefatigable efforts there has occurred a revolution in Punjabi culture.

Today on the eve of the second anniversary of preceptor 'Sh. Lal Chand Yamla Jat Memorial Fair'

The Manch feels pleased and proud while bestowing upon him the Postle of Punjabi Cultural Revolution award-1993' for his constructive contribution to Punjabi Culture. Amin!

Surinder Singh

Chakpakhi

President

Gurcharan Singh

Musafar,

(Patron)

## Lok Kala Award-1999

(Award for Folk-art-1999)

On behalf of the Indian Cultural Association (Regd.) Kartar pur we feel proud while honouring S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal on the occasion of the 18th (Lok Kala) folk Art Fair dated 14-15th of January, for his contribution to Punjabi Culture.

**Karampal Singh Dhillon,**

President

Indian Cultural Association,  
Kartarpur

## Hari Singh Dilbar's letter to S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

### Respectable S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal Ji,

It seems to me that a majority of Publishers are engrossed in greed and avarice: and do not enjoy valuable words; only money appeals to them. Majority of them lack inspiration; they are not the lovers of Punjabi culture. How can a dry and indifferent heart appreciate culture? The genuine appreciator can be only a man of wonderful temperament.

You will be surprised to know that in that letter I had written two 'Tappas' for my songs and even now I sing those 'Tappas bolian' with finesse at the time when in the evening the fodder-cutting machine works with the engine. At that time the day, October 20 swims across my eyes. When the Punjabi artists had given a grand performance in the Punjabi Bhawan & Your grand personality had appeared in its most conspicuous form. Such a well-attended assembly is in itself a compensation for the artists.

If the editors have such an experience, they may with pleasure publish this open letter.

No publisher exhibits such a romantic and self-abandoned playfill temperament that characterised Professor Mohan Singh. The Respected Professor Suffered in thousands publications, but he did not give up his love for his mother, Punjabi. He spent thousands of rupees on his friends. But the publishers of today extort rupees in thousands even from their friends.

Had this letter been only for you, I wouldn't have come to you in person. I would have only posted it. Actually it was directed to you only but when it was finished, I felt that it was not capable of touching your heart and my heart only, but could shake the minds of our several readers as well; and it was not advisable to keep it concealed. So it has become an open letter, despite its private leanings. When I told you about this letter, you at once observed, "Your parents will not so lament you....." I at once, followed your subtle & witty remark. Had you not been so gifted with this subtlety of intellect, you might not have won success in conducting cultural fairs. You are the monarch of Punjabi culture- a rank not yet touched by publishers. Grave-worshippers show callous indifference for the living ones, but shed copious tears for the dead! These publishers have trampled many a precious gem under their feet.

The pressmen get money but in return publish trash. You may give them gold they (won't) value it more than copper. You may teach them culture which leads to the growth of moral conduct, and without which even the greatest kingdom will go to rack & ruin, these avaricious publishers won't cast even a cursory glance at you or your script; show them money and they

will bow in obeisance before you. They are flouting all their culture and moral decency to the winds. Now all gentle courtesy is suffering a deterioration. They have lost all control, all sense of duty, though they have adopted the pose of the custodians of culture. They will make predictions just like the most advanced incarnations of God; these low, mediocre, people! what is the objective of an editor money & fame.

Put a lump of gold into their pocket and they will provide the space of an editorial to an open letter! For them masques carry greater importance than the daily news papers. They are running their papers with empty hands; but the editors are rolling in wealth. I once wrote a letter to a rabid editor to publish my novel serial-wise in installments in his paper; and I enquired of him about the possible charges for that. No answer came for several months. Growing impatient & annoyed I demanded the manuscript back. Answer came:

"We shall answer after going through it". He had absolutely no idea of what a novel means. What answer could he make? I had thought it would enhance the newspaper's reputation. But the Editor wanted money first. All this goes under the name of good conduct.

I am not at all worried about his not publishing my novel. Of course, its publication must have brought me immense pleasure. If I had had no love for this letter or if it had been insignificant, a mere document full of flattery; and if every evening & morning I had not sung two small verses & 'Tapas'in my sharp & shrill voice, and in the same way, if I had not sung and enjoyed Prof. Mohan Singh's small, but highly stirring & inspiring verses, I would have not minded such indiffereent & contemptuous behaviour from the press. I have only to convey to you my real state of mind. You may not trouble yourself about making a reply.

I am your well wisher,  
**Hari Singh Dilber, (The Novelist)**  
Lalton Kalan, District Ludhiana.

### From S. Jassowal's pen

About the famous Punjabi folk-singer Narinder Biba he had long ago written a small article, which had also been published at many places. In this section of the book we have published small literary pieces from his pen about Narinder Biba, Prof. Mohan Singh, Journalist Hardeep Singh Bhanwra, Late Varinder, Late Didar Sandhu, Late Ustad Lal Chand Yamla Jat, and the well-known and popular Singer of today Kuldip Paras.

The Queen of Punjabi Folk-songs Ms. Narinder Biba's folk music and folk songs constitute an integral part of Punjabi Culture. In the twentieth century Narinder Biba led folk music to giddy heights and thus made a most valuable contribution. That is why she is remembered as the Queen of Punjabi folk music.

A slight constitution, wheatish complexion, a cheerful, smiling

countenance, sociable nature, broad, magnificent temperament, highly hospitable, melodious voice, a blend of rhythm & tune! Narinder Biba is such a personage! She is just a flowing stream of Punjabi folk music. She lifted from the humble dust many a folk singer with her patronising spirit and assistance.

Narinder Biba learnt music upto the M.A. standard and then made Ustad Yamla Jat her guru & Preceptor. Later she became a life-partner of Mr. Jaspal Singh; gave birth to a promising son and intelligent daughters. Her sister Satinder Biba a budding Punjabi singer and her husband were killed in a road accident. Jaspal, too, was soon snatched away by death; her youthful daughter died a painful death. But like a firm & strong rocky wall she stood hurling a defiance at all these tragedies of life; never let her feet reel & stagger and every moment she proceeded toward her destination!

She participated in many a Punjabi film and put into the lap of Mother Punjabi countless cassettes of Punjabi songs. She won fame both at home & abroad. In singing at the highest pitch she had no parallel. There was hardly any village in the Punjab where she did not hoist the flag of her music and song.

A few years back this news was published in all newspapers under broad headings:- that Narinder Biba, the Queen of Punjabi folk-song, had passed away. This news stunned one and all. Gurubhajan Gill, Pargat Singh Grewal, Sohan Lal Arora & I reached the Yellow bungalow. Professor Mohinder Singh Cheema accompanied us; seeing there Narinder Biba quite hale & hearty our joy knew no bounds and we wiped our tears of joy.

We at once fetched Ladoos from the market; put them into Biba's mouth as well as distributed them among the people. We also prayed for her long life. The news papers had to apologise for publishing this news. Later, we learnt that some other, Gayka (Singer) from Phagwara, named Narinder Kaur had passed away; and the news correspondent took her for Narinder Biba and got it published. At it on the same day we announced to bestow upon Narinder Biba, Prof. Mohan Singh Award, On the day of the Fair we seated her on an elephant and paraded her before the audience by way of paying her our compliments: Karnail of Jawaddi placed on her head a metallic pitcher containing five thousand & one hundred and fifty one rupees; she was also bedecked with shawls and profusely garlanded.

Biba ji has made very rich contributions to the previous Prof. Mohan Singh Fairs: and on every fair has left her unique stamp. She is a life long patron of Prof. Mohan Singh foundation and is linked with numerous folk-fairs. Last year she was highly honoured & acclaimed at Dhadi (rebeck-player) Amar Singh Shaunki Fair at Mahalpur. I pray for Narinder Biba's long life so that for a long time she might fill constantly the lap of Mother Punjabi with her songs and this taper should burn for a long time.

Note:-

S. Jassowal had written and got published this article a bit earlier than the eternal departure of Mrs. Narinder Biba.

**The Editor**

## The world Poet Mohan Singh's Achievements

To the whole development which the Punjabi literature has made in the modern age, the contribution of Prof. Mohan Singh is very great. I have been ever proud of the fact that I have spent a few decades of my life in close proximity with him. Though my first acquaintance with Professor Sahib was of a clandestine type, because when I studied for my M.A. in Punjabi in Mohindra College, Patiala, Prof. Mohan Singh's poetry was dominant in all student gatherings and in all poetic competitions; every time in poetic recitations only those students won the prizes who recited Professor Sahib's poems. Our professors might discuss Sufi Poetry or the *Hir of Waris Shah*, the King of Punjabi Literature, they invariably came to the point that Prof. Mohan Singh was not only the Waris of Punjabi poetic tradition but had even widened its scope.

Besides extending the Punjabi poetic tradition, Prof Mohan Singh also threw into his poems, a flood of light on the world around him and transcending the personal and individual bounds talked of the common humanity. He depicted the chaos prevailing in his environment under the heading '*Adhvata*' and suggested only one solution for its removal; and that was that for the solution of all our problems, we should accept the principle of peaceful co-existence and base the common principles of all nations on this cardinal principle. His intentions were always aim oriented, and his reason & rationality was always impartial and based on logic. Mohan Singh's poetry was always in favour of solving personal and social tangles with the mutual combination of emotionalism and intellectualism. His poem "I live two lives" suggests that his poetic self ever strove against the mutually contradictory waves of hopes and despairs and kept marching forward and never admitted defeat. In stead of turning his back upon life, he ever kept saying:

"Please, let me lie on the breast of the mother Earth & let me suck its breasts, though they be highly rigid, they will yield two drops of sweat".

Prof Mohan Singh's poems '*Amal*', '*firshul*' etc. indicate exactly this very leaning.

Mohan Singh's knowledge of the world is also clear from the fact that he churned in his poetry the nectar of morality religion, philosophy, etc. all kindred discussions and brought out poetic gems. He portrayed in his poems those human longings and aspirations which lend human life its constructiveness.

Today when our country is enveloped in darkness because of the revolutionary changes, we ought to derive our inspiration from the immortal verse of Prof. Mohan Singh, sifting truth from error in life we should work for

that happy dawn which opens the closed door of our country's luck and bring to our view such a perennial spring where green foliage is never rendered pale or hectic red, by Autumn and where '*Kasumbhra*' flowers are ever in red bloom.

World Poet Mohan Singh Live Long!

## Prof. Mohan Singh - a great poet

Professor Mohan Singh is a poet of poets. It can be re-iterated with confidence that every poet contemporary to Mohan Singh has been influenced by him in one way or another; just as Gurbax Singh Preetlari makes a powerful appeal to new essayists, in essay-writing, Mohan Singh fascinates his contemporary poets in the field of poetry.

To harmonise tradition with modernity is not the task of every body. But Prof. Mohan Singh from '*Sawe Patra*' to '*Buhae*' has been giving some new thoughts. The readers of the '*Sawe Patra*' feel that in '*Kasumbra*' some change has occurred in respect of zest or taste. Critics know that in '*Sawe Patra*' there is the creation of romance and the universe of '*Kasumbhra*' is inclined towards seriousness. In '*Adhwate*' there is the next travel from this turning point. In '*Kach Sach*' the romance of the '*Sawe Patra*' becomes false and the pain of the peasant & the labourer true. In the '*Awazan*' we don't find the secret of mysticism, nor is there any zest of romanticism; there are rather dreams of a new and more exalted state of existence. Gradually as Prof. Mohan Singh's physical eye-sight grew dim, his poetry showed the miracle of the rainbow colours. Same may be said of the musical sense. With the advance in age as his hearing capacity dwindled, the pulsation of rhythm in his poetry grew more soft and subtle. His previous poems are macabre in character while his subsequent creations are of a sensitive type at the last stage he displays a blend of colour and taste '*The Light of Asia*' may be a work of translation, but in language, sensibility & flow of words and in the creation of atmosphere he gives an evidence of his originality. Mohan Singh had grown fully aware of the fact that he had become a better and a more elevated type of poet. He grew in stature in the world and made further & still further advance. Such continuous development you can't find in any other poet of the Punjab. He, at every stage, made a poetic response to every constructive contemporary knock.

Prof. Mohan Singh's friends have called him the poet of beauty and amour. His critics have ever expressed the view that he is very efficient in the poetic portrayal of beauty and love. Pragmatists have ever looked upon him as a poet of peasants & labourers. It is true that he himself remarks that the griefs of his friends have over-whelmed his personal grief. As a matter of fact, Prof. Mohan Singh is at most completely a sensitive type of poet and good heartedness is his chief merit. He can carry no obsession in his mind; rather like a Lotus in bloom he is receptive to every new ray of the Sun. In this way the level of his poetic foundation is stably founded in cordiality & human

love, and sympathy is the basic principle of poetry. This accounts for the purity and genuineness of his poetry and veracity in his account. And since for half a century he has given a poetic reception to the change and advance of time, no other poet has showix such a remarkable skill. Almost half the years of the twentieth century (1928-1978) are ringing and reverberating with Prof. Mohan Singh's unique utterances in Punjabi poetry.

Mohan Singh has also made poetic experiments. 'Ambi da Buta' is one such experiment; 'Kuri Pothohar Di' is another. He almost till the end of his life; has been adding new tunes to the established poetic tradition. His every experiment is poetically constructive. No other Punjabi poet has made use of so many poetic forms and devices in his poetry as Prof. Mohan Singh had done. Songs, quatrains, 'Vars lyrics, ballad compositions, poems, epics etc. His imagery is highly surprising. Realism, romance, war, fairy land, nature etc in all Mohan Singh is the creator of colours and tunes; he is the portrayer of song and setting. There is another hue in Mohan Singh's poetry & there is intellectual food for all temperaments, Mohan Singh is the Mansrovar of Poetry. We are only called upon to play the herons and enjoy the throbs of its waters.

His diction & glossary simply make us struck with wonder. He is every inch a Punjabi poet. Pothohari, Multani, Majhi, Doabi, Dogri, Mulwai, and Poadhi's words are seen melting in his poetic & creative cauldron. We don't find in any other Punjabi Poet's creations the use of words, picked from all parts of the Punjab.

Mohan Singh had a humanistic point of view; his heart was touched with the pangs of human suffering; and his eye cherished dreams of a better future for mankind. Mohan Singh is that taper which no adverse wind of time can blow out.

## In the Memory of Late Varinder

By depicting & portraying so gloriously & artistically the Punjabi public life, its wells, its bounds, 'Sathain'(public places), rivers, streams & rivulets, the luscious green fields of the Punjab, blooming flowers, birds flying in the sky, the yoked oxen and their tinkling bells, and along with that Punjab's whole cultural heritage, love songs & stories; Jats, the sons of the Punjabi mother-tongue, their humble existence, their pangs of separation, and the hard challenges confronting them in the course of existence, in his Punjabi films, the late Varinder Ji has not only protected Punjabi heritage, and embellished it, but even tinged it with his own blood! In short; with his life sacrifice he has also risen in the public estimation as a public hero. I salute him for his noble martyrdom. There is a strong link between the Jat and his land; Jats make use of their clubs for the sake of their lands, take out their lances and do not hesitate to face each other in open combats and even lay down their lives. He, too, while depicting in his films tragic aspect of the Jat's life, was himself shot down when engaged in 'shooting' a film! and thus,

occurred an unforgettable tragedy on the Punjabi soil!. In the cultural field of the Punjab such invaluable gems grow but seldom. As some poet has remarked:

"For thousands of years the narcissus flower bewails its lack of lustre, for it is after a very, very long span of time that there appears a true appreciator and lover of its beauty."

## On the eve of Bhanwar's getting his award of Honour

Harbhajan Singh Bhanwar has won such a big name in the domain of journalism that he is one of the important names, counted on fingers. A journalist has to pass through a number of hardships & countless difficulties, mental strains and critical moments, on his journalistic venture 'Bhanwar has proved a stable, fearless, efficient and wakeful journalist. Though on August 31, 1998 Bhanwar Sahib will retire as the senior Principal reporter of the Tribune; yet I am sure he will not sacrifice his journalistic sword but as an independent journalist will bring into lime light the burning questions of the Punjab, the Punjabi public life, social and cultural, artistic and political problems and thereby win a new distinction and recognition for himself. Bhanwar's writing, language and style of writing a news or a topic is unique, romantic and heart-ravishing- quite distinguished from that of the majority of journalists.

## A Blessing for Singer Kuldeep Paras

Kuldeep Paras took bold flights even in his tender age; though music did not come to him by inheritance, yet he, by dint of his labour, diligence, and intense practice has become a star in the firmament of Punjabi folk-music; for in those days when Punjab was passing through a political crisis, and there were held very few musical concerts, and the folk-singers were pulling down their shutters & removing their sign boards, this singer besides holding music fairs also took the general public with him. When he sang folk stories and myths, he touched the very acme of his skill. He has sung the songs not of any single music maker but has brought into the gamut of his singing (the love songs) of Bant of Rampur as well as the 'Kalyan' of Dev of Threke, and done full justice to all. In the beginning every artist desires that after hard struggle he should win distinction and though he might be weighed in gold coins abroad, he should also have his flag hoist over his native surrounding. At Ruper his father had his sawing machine. Paras performed a rice-distribution Yagya every year and held a function of folk songs. In this way he held several programmes in his village and also did deeds of charity. He also built a room in the school in which he had received his early schooling. Thus, he has become a famous folk-singer. He has also highly widened the scope of his friendship. As a rule when a man gets both fame and money he forsakes his near & dear ones; bids farewell to his home environment. But Paras has literally held his ground. Besides the

friends of his early boyhood days even in foreign lands where ever he has gone, he has placed his friendship on a very sure foundation. He has won much name & fame in Prof. Mohan Singh cultural fairs. He doesn't attach himself to any body in haste nor wishes ill of any body; but some time back I felt that he had fallen a victim to wine and this drinking had robbed his body of its previous lusture and sheen. But now I think he has got rid of that bad habit and his countenance has regained its lost glow. He does not lie much in bad with a sheet on his person; his body now looks quite spick and span, ever ready to take a flight! I am grateful to God that while his singing faculty has got rejuvenated his family life, too, has re-acquired its equilibrium; and I am not only sanguine but quite sure that in the 21st century he will be counted among the few distinguished folk-singers of the Punjab. His cassettes not only provide entertainment to the people but also add new dimensions to the rich cultural heritage of the.Punjab.

### Remembering Didar Sandhu

It is good that the Punjabi Cultural Manch Ferozepur has released a book containing research on Didar Sandhu, the Polestar of folk-song, and the folk-singer of the present age.

Who was Didar? It is not simply difficult but even impossible to depict him fully within the limits of this informative above. Flowing continuously like a stream in the field of folk-song. Didar for twenty eight years had become a promising institution in himself. He was a public servant and a trust worthy friend. He tilled the land with his own hands, and even employed his pen in writing Punjabi songs. He ever mixed with people and wrote for the people. Like warris Shah's songs his songs too, dance on the lips of the people. While writing he integrates idioms & proverbs to his songs as a gold smith studs a precious gem in his ornaments. His songs are an adornment of public places, shops, forges, wells, fields, corn heaps after the harvest, and of wrestling rings. None challenged or equalled him in portraying love, grief and the sense of loneliness. Whosoever dies in the prime of his life, will become either a flower or a star was rightly said by Shiv Kumar Batalvi; but for us Didar is afragrant, and gorgeous flower emitting his fragrance in the Punjabi cultural orchard as well as a light shedding star that never ceases to illuminate the firmament!

No matter, if physically he is no longer with us.

Didar was a Jat but not a restive type of Jat. He was the same within and without. The place that Byron held in the domain of English poetry; Didar Sandhu holds in the Punjabi folk-music. Lord Byron, too, died in his youth like Didar. They both will live for ever. Though we can never repay the debt we owe Didar for his literary services and his literary creations, we have decided that on every annual function of Prof. Mohan Singh Cultural Fair, we

shall bestow an award of honour in the name of Didar Sandhu, upon some reputed Punjabi artist, in order to preserve his name for ever as well as repay if not the amount borrowed, at least its interest to Didar Sandhu.

### We bow our heads before Yamla Jat!

To write or say something about Sh. Lal Chand Yamla Jat looks like showing a candle to the Sun. He was a great man as well as a man of wisdom. He always showed great respect for me. He also entrusted to me the turban of his fair. But it was sheer misfortune that we could not erect in his honour some befitting monument nor organise some successful cultural fair. I nearly every year pay a visit to the flar started by Yamla Jat at the settlement of Pir Katorae Shah. The status that Yamla Ji held is still in 44ck, No other folk singer can prove his rival for that place. He has become Immortal; only he could occupy the place he held. Many try to imitate him, but those who can guard & preserve Sh. Yamla's mode of thought or follow in this footsteps are very few.

Yamla Jat throughout his life wished well for every body and did none any harm. That is why the world still worships him like God; he could soon become a thing of the past. I realise it full well that Yamla Jat has made such a rich contribution to the people's heritage spiture, that none else has ever done so far.

Now there is none to make any such addition or contribution to abi culture or Punjabi dialect. All are anxious to fill their own bellies We:Maed to get peace of mind in Yamla Jat's company. His discourses were most valuable, his suave tongue and lbving mode of speech was unique in itself. We feet as though he were not talking but singing. For this reason people listened from the stage, as though he were a sage sitting before them and delivering a sermon. He was, infact, a great sage or saint who did hard peuances for the acquisition as well as dissemination of folk song and folk art. He made his name though amassed no wealth. That is why his name is immortal.

His son Jaswinder Yamla passed away in the prime of his life. It plunged all the lovers of Punjabi folk songs in deep grief. Jasdev Yamla & his wife Biba Sarvjit Kaur 'Chamta players' are today shining in the firmament of Punjabi music. As we attend to Jasdev Yamla's music the figure of his illustrious father begins to swim before our eyes. I pray to God that this thmily may ever prosper and serve Punjabi, their mother tongue & Punjabi cultural inheritance!! None can repay the services of this family; it is, indeed, a great & most exalted family!

### Jassowal's Memo to Prime Minister

Respected Madam,

The disputes regarding the sharing of Ravi Beas Waters, the future of chandigarh and the redemarcation of the territorial boundaries of Punjab

and Haryana on linguistic basis need your immediate personal attention so that the Party can unitedly and squarely face the onslaught posed by communal and extremist elements. It is being strongly felt that these problems have not been represented to you in their proper perspective and it is only on this account that the issues have remained unresolved for such a long time. In the succeeding paragraphs, an effort is made to explain the issues in their proper perspective in order to help your goodself make up your mind and resolve the issues at the earliest.

## 1. Punjab's case in river waters dispute.

Briefly stated Punjab's case in River Water Dispute is that Punjab being the riparian State of Ravi, Beas and Satluj, has full and exclusive rights over the waters of these rivers and that no riparian state can claim sharing of waters of these rivers as a matter of right. The riparian principle is the fundamental principle in international Law governing the rights of the State over international rivers. In India, our Constitution sanctifies this Principle by enshrining River Waters in Every 17, List II of Seventh Schedule.

## 2. Decision of Narmada Water disputes tribunal

Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat and Maharashtra are the riparian States of River Narmada. The dispute regarding the sharing of the waters of the river was referred by Govt. of India to the Narmada Waters Disputes Tribunal constituted on 6-10-1969.

Rajasthan, although not a riparian State of River Narmada claimed share in its waters and its case was referred to this Tribunal by Govt. of India vide Notification No. 10/1/69-WD dated 16th October, 1969. The Tribunal vide its judgement dated 23rd February, 1972 decided as under:- "The riparian states have legislative and executive Jurisdiction under entry 17 of List-II read with Articles 162 of the constitution with regard to the use and control of waters of Narmada River for public purpose. It follows, therefore that the riparian State of Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra have a legal right to claim apportionment of Narmada waters. Rajasthan has no such legislative or executive jurisdiction over Narmada River waters and has therefore no legal claim for apportionment of the water of River of Narmada. It follows that Rajasthan has no local stand to make a complaint u/s 3 of the 1956 Act...."

In the course of his arguments, the Attorney General referred to the concept of transbasin diversion from areas where waters are available to areas where they are scarce.

In our opinion, the contention of the Union of India is not really to the point. The question for decision of the Tribunals is not whether trans-basin transfer is a socio-economic point of view but whether under the constitution of India and on a proper interpretation of the 1956 Act, the State through whose territory an inter-State river does not flow, is entitled by Law to a share

in the equitable distribution of its waters. The question is not what is desirable but what is possible to be done within the present constitutional framework. As we have already indicated the correct legal principle applicable to the present dispute is the Doctrine of Equitable Apportionment as between riparian States or between States located in the Inter-State river basin.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that the State of Rajasthan is not entitled to any portion of the waters of Narmada-basin on the ground that the state of Rajasthan no portion of its territory is situated in the basin of river Narmada. We also hold that the Rererence of the Central Govt. No. 10/1/69-WD dated 16-10-1969 in referring the complaint of Rajasthan to the Tribunal for adjudication under Section 5 of the 1956 Act is ultra-vires of 1956 Act."

## 3. Assertion of riparian rights by Punjab

Historically speaking, Punjab has been asserting its riparian rights over the rivers for the last 120 years. The right was asserted in 1896 at the time of construction of Sirhind Canal and giving its water to Patiala, Nabha etc. when seigniorage was charged from these states; in 1918 at the time of constuction of Bikaner (Gang) Canal when Bikaner agreed to pay seigniorage to Punjab in lieu of water; in 1948 at the time of signing the agreement with Pakistan for supplying waters to Pakistan canal when Punjab asserted its proprietary rights over Beas and Satluj.

## 4. Dispute with Rajasthan.

Punjab's dispute with Rajasthan is that Rajasthan being a non-riparian State, cannot have any claim over the water of Ravi-Beas and Sutlej. The claim of Rajasthan is based on the decision of the meeting held on 29.1.1955 under the Chairmanship of Shri Gulzari lal Nanda, Central Irrigation Minister in New Delhi under which 15.85 Million Acres Feet of the waters of Ravi and the Beas, based on mean supplies in the two rivers, available over and above the actual pre-partition use in India, was allocated as follows between the States concerned- J & K 0.65 MAF, PEPSU 1.38 MAF, Punjab 6.50 MAF and Rajasthan 8.00 MAF". Punjab's plea is that the decision was taken in undue haste due to the fact that World Bank and Pakistan team was coming to India.

The contention of Punjab, further is that 1955 decision with Rajasthan is no agreement in the eyes of law as an agreement, to be valid, has to be drafted in the manner prescribed under Article 299 of the Constitution in the name of the Governor. The unsigned proceedings of a meeting held on 29.1.1955 cannot be termed as an agreement between the States concerned. Similar questions arose before the Krishna Waters Disputes tribunal and Godavari Waters Disputes Tribunal where Mysore State questioned the legality of 1951 agreement between certain southern States on the ground that the proceedings of a meeting have validity and can not be termed as an agreement. Both the tribunals framed issues on this point

whether, the agreement should have been as per article 299 of the constitution. Moreover, out of a total 33.8 MAF of Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, Rajasthan has been given lion's share of 11.1 MAF for Rajasthan Canal, Gang Canal and share in Bhakra Canal.

## 5. Dispute with Haryana

Punjab's Dispute with Haryana is that Haryana being a non-riparian State cannot have any water out of the Ravi and Beas rivers. As per provisions of the Constitution, the Central Govt. has no power to distribute River Waters while reorganising the States. The only power the Central Govt. has as per section 78 of the Punjab reorganisation Act, 1966, is that in case there is no agreement between Punjab and Haryana regarding their respective rights and liabilities in Bhakra Nangal Project as Beas Project, within two years, the Central Govt. may determine their respective rights and liabilities with regard to the projects. Section 8(3) lays down the rights to receive and utilise the water available for distribution as a result of the projects.

It is clear from the above: the Central Govt. can determine the rights of Haryana State in the Projects having regard to the purpose of Projects only. It cannot distribute any surplus water available in Punjab. In spite of this clear-cut provision, the Central Govt. distributed 7.2 MAF of water which was Punjab's share as per 1955 decision. This 7.2 MAF was not in any way connected with the purpose of the project. Not only did the Govt. of India have no power to distribute 7.2 MAF of water, actually, this surplus did not exist at the time of the re-organisation in 1966. Most of this water had already been used in Sirhind Feeder and Upper Bari Doab Canal etc. At the time of compiling Punjab's requirements in January, 1955 no portion of present Haryana State was included in allocation of 7.2 MAF worked out by Punjab because Haryana areas involved lift irrigation schemes. While preparing the requirements of the Punjab, Govt. envisaged the following allocation of 7.2 MAF:-

U.B.D.C.	1.69 MAF
Chak Andher Tract	0.24 "
Bet Areas of Ravi Beas	0.23 "
Shah Nehar '	0.79 "
Eastern Canal	0.21 "
Sirhind Feeder	2.79 "
Pepsu Area	4.33 "
Total	7.28 MAF

As per purpose of Beas Project, Haryana is entitled to 0.9 MAF of water and not to 3.5 MAF, presently allotted to it. Moreover, the water in Bhakra reservoir is just sufficient to fulfil the requirements of Bhakra, Sirhind, and Bist Doab Canals and there is no water for feeding a fourth canal of 3.5 MAF. If 3.5 MAF has to be fed in the new Haryana Canal, it would be possible only by reducing supplies in Punjab Canals.

The new hybrid varieties of Wheat, Rice & Sugarcane etc. need water intensive and as Punjab is taking up rice cultivation in a big way, its requirement of water during the next 15 years will be around 50 MAF. annually

Keeping in view the claims of Punjab and overall national interest and the interest of Rajasthan and Haryana, it would be most appropriate if the Hon'ble Prime Minister personally intervenes and determines the respective shares of all the States concerned afresh.

## 2 Transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab

It is an established fact that Chandigarh is in every way a Punjabi City. Historically, culturally and linguistically it belongs to Punjab. It was built by demolishing Punjabi Speaking villages. Barring construction labour, almost all its 89000 inhabitants in 1961 census, were refugees from West Punjab whose mother tongue was Punjabi. Due to Hindi-Punjabi controversy at the time of 1961 census, most of the inhabitants gave Hindi as their mother tongue with the result that Kharar 'lbhs. although a Punjabi speaking tehsil, turned out to be 55% Hindi speaking. The central Govt., however, kept the city as a Union Territory and bifurcated the rest of Kharar Tehsil between Punjab and Haryana. The Prime Minister by her award in 1970 rightly gave Chandigarh to Punjab but tagged it to the transfer of 114 villages of Fazilka Tehsil to Haryana on the ground that these were Hindi speaking villages. The tagging of transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab to the transfer of these 114 villages to Haryana should be done away with and Chandigarh should be transferred to Punjab unconditionally. If the linguistic Commission finds that there are Hindi Speaking villages there should be no objection to their transfer to Haryana.

## Transfer of other Punjabi Speaking Areas.

As the Congress had accepted in principle the pleas of formalities of a Punjabi Speaking State, it would be in the fitness of things if left out Punjabi Speaking areas are merged with Punjab. The census figures will not be helpful in determining left-out Punjabi Speaking areas in Haryana and Himachal Pradesh as census reports do not contain information regarding mother tongue below tehsil level. The only alternative would, therefore be to appoint a commission of linguistic experts to determine the mother tongue of the disputed villages.

Concluding, I pray and earnestly hope that you would kindly take effective action to resolve the Punjab tangle which has led to the deterioration of relations between the sister communities and hampering of economic development in the State. Timely intervention alone can save the situation, otherwise the feeling of justice delayed justice denied would further complicate the whole issue and a situation may develop where it may defy an amicable settlement.

## Poetic Portrayals of Jassowal Sahib

### Prof Mohan Singh Fair

20th of October - a day of vigorous excitement! Brother, it is the day of Prof. Mohan Singh's Fair. S. Jassowal conducts it.

Punjab is seen, today, engaged in rhythmic dance in the Punjabi Bhawan. Hearty congratulations to S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, who set the tradition of cultural fairs. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians.

All highly enjoy; Punjab, today in Punjabi Bhawan. Is engaged in rhythmic dance.

This Cultural Fair is quite unique in the world; Giddha, Bhangra, stage & song present a show of wonder.

A wonderful show indeed! One sings on the flute sweet; melodious tunes. Today Punjab in Punjabi Bhawan. is engaged in rhythmic dance, Singers, Dhadis (rebeck players), poets, reciters.

Are holding a concert;

And 'Jogis', bards, clowns are amusing one and all;

Truly, such an august day

Is witnessed off and on.

'Ib-day Punjab in Punjabi Bhawan

In engaged in rhythmic dance

We find in this fair, book-stalls well-arranged;

Like blooming flowers

Suggest S. Jassowal's dreams;

Prof. Mohan Singh looks smiling on every countenance;

Today, in Punjabi Bhawan Punjab is engaged in rhythmic dance.

All the world's artists

Assemble at this august place,

We find sparks of joy

floating like glow worms in the sky.

Everyone who attends

Is honoured & upheld,

Today Punjab in Punjabi Bhawan

Is engaged in a rhythmic dnace.

It is not I alone, the whole world avers,

The place is over crowded with little scope for more.

This Fair uplifts Punjab in the whole world's esteem,

Today Punjab in Punjabi Bhawan

Is engaged in a rhythmic dnace.

There fell the tears of woe & love

which singed the hearts as

tender as blooms

Inderpuri desires to resolves all, hearts' doubts,

Today Punjab in Punjabi Bhawan.

Is engaged in a rhythmic dance.

## O Jagdev Jassowal

Jagdev Jassowal is one who has become the custodian of our culture and is now keeping guard on it

Who has become the Votary of art & worships Art, has his diety.

He is Moon of the world of Art

With none to equal him.

WHO abandoned Politics & linked himself to the works of art and culture,

He is our Jagdev Jassowal.

His is a man of resoute will who never abandoned courage.

He ever moves on to his goal,

And knows full well his goal.

He crushes thorns under his feet

and clashes with stones and pebbles

He is our Jagdev Jassowal.

For him No difference lies between a King and a cobbler,

All befriend their friends

But he befriends even his foes!

He loves alike both young and old;

He is Jagdev Jassowal.

who brought together on one stage all Punjabi artists

None did it before him, ever aeons ago!

Who is ever in quest of singers novel and new;

He is our Jagdev Jassowal.

He is the Chieftan of the bands of singers and artists

Who honours and patronises

artists with head, heart & purse!

Who searches out every Year new Jewels of art

He is our Jagdev Jassowal!

He had abiding friendship with Prof. Mohan Singh;

Organised Mohan Singh fair

To the knowledge of the world!

It was a deed of wonder, Yes,

verily a deed of wonder!

He is our Jagdev Jassowal!

He became a true servant of the literary art,

Being a fountain of love who disburses love in the world;

whom praise can't elate;

Nor dispraise can disparage;

He is Jagdev Jassowal, Yes,

Jagdev Jassowal.

**Inderjit Hasanpuri**

## The Son of the Mother Punjab

The Son of the Mother Punjab Jagdev Jassowal  
Handsome like the Moon, Just see his ruddy face!  
From crawling he learnt how to stand on his feet;  
He learnt to walk holding  
his father's finger,  
From the outset he learnt  
how to do noble deeds.  
and ever strove to search out men of virtue  
and merit

A saviour of the afflicted! he alleviated their woes,  
His goodness is on the lips of all;  
Entering politics he served,  
the masses, and entertains  
all at cultural fairs.

We longed for the advent of the protector of  
our culture,  
Today he is there to defend that cultural heritage.  
He is honoured at all fairs of culture  
in which participate all artists,  
young & old, minors & adults.

At 'giddhas and 'bhangra'  
the drummer raises his voice;  
The spectators rise to their feet  
and do the clapping;  
In the lines of his songs Jassi  
puts the words; Jagdev Jassowal  
Jagdev Jassowal, Jagdev Jassowal

**Dr. D.R.Jassi**

## Jassowal shall live long!

You will live long, Jassowal!  
None can prove a match for you.  
The culture of the Punjab is invoking God's blessing for you;  
May the whole world acknowledge your Sovereignty!  
Only rarely do mothers produce sons philanthropic!  
You developed love and interest in the heritage of folk-drts;  
You told the new generations the modes of life of their fore fathers  
Only those endowed with self respect do shoulder such responsibilities;  
Only rarely do mothers give brith to philanthropic sons!  
Our culture at all places sheds its light;

The whole world eulogises this culture of ours!  
The whole world today does obeisance to Punjab  
Rarely mothers produce such philanthropic sons!  
O singers, music-makers,  
and artistic brethren,  
Do present only the genuine culture of the Punjab  
and donot sing songs so foul.  
You face the serious menace of Western 'Pop' today;  
Only rarely do mothers produce such philanthropic sons!  
All fairs held in honour of mendicants & Faqirs, gurus & pirs are our  
common concern;  
Our ecstatic artists eulogise Punjab and sing ecstatically.  
Mother tongue to Jassowal is dearer than his life;  
Very rarely do mothers produce such philanthropic sons like him!  
**Ram Singh 'Albela' Narain Garh.**

## A portrayal of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

**Inderjit Hassanpuri**

Custodian of culture who safe-guard our culture  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal.

A votary of Art, who worships fine arts.  
The glorious Moon of the age  
with none equal or peer  
who abandoned politics and  
linked himself with Art.  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal

A man of resolute will who never lost his verve,  
But ever marched on to an arduous journey's end;  
who trampled under his feet  
Thorns on the way and thistles  
who hit hard with kicks  
all stones on the way & pebbles  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal

His mustering on one stage  
All Punjabi poets & artists  
was a task ever undone  
Through many ages & eons  
who meets the needs & wants  
of incipient ones in art  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal.

Who has placed himself  
At the head of throngs of art;  
Honours with soul & heart  
Renders financial help;  
who searches every year  
New 'jewels' of fine Art  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal.

Who offered true friendship  
To Mohan Singh professor.  
With a fair in his honour  
Is well-known to the world.  
Who worked indeed, a miracle.  
Leading the fair to zenith.  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal.

Who became a true servitor  
of fine art, literature.  
A fountain of true love  
Disbursing love to all  
Whose praise or worth appraisal  
Beyond 'Hassanpuri' at all  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal.

Whom M.L.A.'s position  
could not content at all  
And mind's bird impelled  
To seek a new pasture;  
who secured complete deliverance  
From the snare of cursed politics  
Is Jagdev Jassowal; yes, Jagdev Jassowal.

## The Punjab's Jat Jassowal

This voice came from the land of sages,  
seers and pophets.  
The Punjab's Jat Jassowal won great name & honour.  
The scholarly are true to remark  
"He is a brimful cauldron of love  
He taught millions to swim-  
As iron by wood's afloat.  
He causes the water to flow  
Into the reservoir of common use.  
The Punjab's Jat Jassowal....

True mendicant is one who can tame five  
bitterest foes.

True friend also is one  
who stands byus in woe.  
Became well-known in the world,  
Jassowal's name and fame  
The Punjab's Jat Jassowal ...  
There is, at all, no clash  
Between his thought and word & deed  
Faced many defeats & triumphs.  
Never, let them ruffle his brow.  
That's why this 'Pir of Punjab'  
wins Bravo! bravo!" from all  
The Punjab's Jat Jassowal...

His greatest flaw of character  
Is his utter veracity & truth.  
He sets the cunning aright  
TYub subtle hints & words.  
Encountered lofty mountains!  
Never showed the white feather!  
The Punjab's Jat Jassowal...

Can't say where gods dwell;  
That's why I re-iterate...  
Jassowal is the only god  
who dwells upon this earth.  
'Lehri Jat' of "Kurar village"  
Too feels indebted to him  
The Punjab's Jat Jassowal...

Great glory to Mother Amar Kaur  
who bore a warrior Son!  
This Son of Kartar Singh Zaildar  
Made a tour round the world.  
With the frame of a cypress tree  
And heart as white as milk  
This Jat of Punjab, Jassowal  
Won fame and name in the world.

**Inderjit Hassanpuri**

## The Preceptor of the Singers

*He is our friendship and is a cauldron of fragrance! An exponent of culture!*

A king of singers, a donor of bliss, settled on the head of folk-arts! Should he find merit anywhere, he would be all praise and admiration! simply infatuated by it! He is a beetle in search of fragrance! a moth enamoured of light! a rush of well-attended gatherings! In pursuit of genuine merit he can cover any distance. An artist seeking recognition never goes from him disappointed. He never shows any partiality He takes art both as his religious creed and his politics. Under governorship his reputation is greater than that of any other leader. He sways like a serpent both by the Naxalite tune of 'Udasi' and the tune of Yamla Jat's fiddle; he is immensely delighted at the mimicking jokes of clowns as well as the melodious tunes of 'quuals'. Singers revere him like a Sage or a Prophet who has provided them with a fixed theatrical stage to make their demonstrations and work for their advancement. He knows that more money is the creed of the artists; for they expect to have their reward after the performance rather than unburden their own pockets. It is true of every artist whether he is a toombi (fiddle player, or a band man, a dhadi (rebeck player) or the writer of nuptial songs. His eye is ever focussed on the purse of the donor; and he can't put off with a smile the one who brings him customers and earnest money. This political 'guide' of the singers was highly enamoured of the great poet Professor Mohan Singh's manly self abandon. When he offered the great poet a bumper full of wine, they would talk with gusto about their old and commonly enjoyed sweet-hearts! there would be a great uproar and Jassowal would dance ecstatically! But the great poet laughed with reserve. I say with some regret that the great poet did not write even a line on the magnanimous hearted Jassowal; while the latter every year holds the Mohan Mela" in his memory! It is because he is a Jat, and not a hypocrite!

When he makes some announcement, the whole Ludhiana rushes towards him, and Punjabi Bhawan gets stuffed with people like a truck stuffed with barn. There is a rich feast of music free of cost. Goddess Srasvati pays her obeisance to him before she enters the arena. She stirs like a tune and convulses like a serpent; she is musical like a coel and Veena - like descends into and touches the hearts of the audience. When the rebeck rattles like clubs at fencing, the drumlet throbs and produces a tune, and the cadence of 'vaar' touches the highest pitch. When on the stage of the Punjabi Bhawan 'Giddha' makes its clapping and the 'Bhangra' causes a termour, then is there any listener who doesn't feel infatuated by costumes and colours and the melody and exclaim, "Well done! Jassowal! well done!" Who does not call him, 'the king of culture'?"

The listeners may not have the ability to cope with the flight of the pegasus of the great poet's imagination, and stature, but they fully realise

the enthusiasm and labour under gone by Sardar Jassowal in making 'Mohan Mela'(i.e. the Mohan Singh Cultural fair) a success. People flock here in trollies, and the business of Prof. Mohan Singh's son, (a businessman of books) also thrives and he makes a roaring sale of books! But Jassowal is of the view that anyone who attends the fair should go back fully satisfied.

He is the monger of love;  
a cauldron of fragrance,  
an embodiment of courage  
and administrative skill;  
an active patron of Punjabi culture!  
a devotee of Goddess Sarsvati, a King of Singers!  
as well as the last refuge of every folk-art and skill!  
Should you, ever see the 'Mohan Mela'of Ludhiana,  
You will witness S. Jassowal's all these aspects of personality & character.

This law graduate of Jassowal Sudan and a sion of zaildars, has ever been a most obedient son of his mother.

Bebe Amar Kaur Brar says, "O my Son, Jagdev, place these 'Bakalian'(a boiled cattle feed) before the buffalo, Jagdev would say, "please, hand it to me and would rush towards her. Than lifting the basin containing 'bakalians' (a corn) he would reach the buffalo. Tnon avoiding his mother's notice and showing the basin to the buffalo, he would eat up all the 'bakalians' himself. How could the buffalo's yield of milk increase in this way? the bakalians suited Jagdev Singh and improved his health and added to his stature!

'Satyam, Shivam, Sundram'  
(Truth, beauty, goodness!)

**Dr. Atam Hamrahi**

(The thirty second poetic portrayal, from his book 'Bawani')

## The Bull on the Earth

You may call him anything;  
He is Jagdev- a deer of the deart!  
Or the 'Jand' tree growing by the wasteland  
Or the bull on the earth!  
You may call him by any name.  
Of course, he is Jagdev;  
God Vishnu of the world of Punjabi culture!  
The nourisher and supporter of  
those engaged in cultural deeds!  
The help of the helpless  
The shelter of the shelterless!  
Verily, he is Jag-Dev!  
(The donor of the world!)  
Yes, he is a deer of the desert!  
The muskdeer, roaming  
over desert in quest of musk!  
In quest of musk that lies within  
He strays at times in the Punjabi'Bhawan,  
on the eve of Mohan Singh Fairs,  
In the cultural meets of the  
Sikhs at Guru Gobind Singh Bhawan.  
This craving ever keeps him on foot!  
It drives him to the Punjab's  
villages and towns, the  
fairs and sport programmes.  
In search of his own musk  
he is ever a way farer,  
He is the deer of the desert, indeed!  
Yes, he is a 'Jand' tree growing  
in the wasteland .  
In whose shade the Punjabi  
female singer would no longer  
say: " O jandoria, while sitting  
under you I have lost my husband."  
In fact, he is a holy 'Jand'  
growing in the wasteland!  
He is also a bull on the earth;  
On whose horns rests  
the weighty world of Punjabi folk Music.  
The Singers sing and dance  
on the stage of his horns;  
But he remains stable,  
mute and unshaken!

Just like Lord Shiva's Nandi Bull!  
In fact, he is the bull on the earth.  
For the Punjabi folk-singers!

**Dr. Labh Singh Kheeva.**

## The Man of the Age- Jassowal

S. Jassowal is the Governor of the remaining Punjab  
No doubt, Jassowal is the rhythm and tune of this age.  
By the Grace of God, he is the valiant-

-Jagdev-

who constantly protects and  
serves the world of art.

It is not by chance that he has  
chosen for his residence the place  
called 'Gurdev' Nagar.

Jassowal symbolises eternal  
labour that churns the ages

even; The most respected representative of the remaining Punjab is  
Jassowal.

The world is full of incessant strife,  
hubbub & noise;

Everywhere is rampant materialism in an acute form;

But O men of the world, the world that Jassowal has chosen is entirely  
different. He is the Golen Age of Geniune Art".

"the honour of the modern age.

The seeds of prudence & foresight sown by Sh. M.S. Randhawa before  
his departure were collected by S. Jassowal from the beautiful patch by  
enduring the pricks of the thorns of clumsiness and ignorance. He has, thus,  
proved the standard-bearer among all chieftans of the Punjab for showing  
the prudence so needed in the present day context.

Jassowal is the 'pandal' i.e. the organising force behind the cultural  
Sphere. He is, no doubt, the most honoured personage of the remaining  
Punjab. Actually Jassowal is the protector and saviour of Punjabi cultural  
heritage. He is the most honoured representative of the remaining Punjab.  
The cultural heritage that was gasping for life has found a happy, (life-giving)  
solution.

The reflections of the people, their flow and stream of life, their hints  
and gestures have been made a part of history. He is the friend and grief  
sharer of all and sundry. Jassowal is the preserver of falling reputations; He  
is indeed, the honoured representative of the remaining Punjab.

A Matchless friend

Jagdev Jassowal is a peerless friend, with an effulgent forehead, tipsy  
eyes and a charming countenance!

Yes, Jagdev Jassowal is a friend who has no peer.

He is the voice of the Punjab;

the organ of Punjabi culture

its sword and shield!

Jagdev Jassowal is....

A matchless friend, indeed!

He has a craving for love  
Is enamoured of Punjabi culture  
He is a taper, nay, a flambeau;  
Jagdev Jassowal is a peerless  
friend, indeed!

He is a queer type of man,

He is a friend of all;

A carefree man, a man of merit!

Jagdev Jassowal is

a peerless friend, indeed!

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He is a fragrant rose!

He is his own compeer;

and his own critic.

Jagdev Jassowal is

a peerless friend.

'Rahi' pays his compliments to this  
man who is the motive force

behind all cultural fairs &

enjoys name and fame;

I pay him 'Sat Siri Akal!'

Jagdev Jassowal is

a peerless friend, indeed!

**Dr. John Akbar Rahi**

## A Poetic Portrait

Dr. Atam Hamrahi

Note:- This poem is a creation of Dr. Atam Hamrahi meant for Prof Mohan

Singh's Memorial Punjabi Cultural annual Fair. Here the Fair tells its own story

"I am Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair held every year on October 19 & 20, I am the fruit of Punjabi culture, which is common to all Punjabis, and am held in the Punjabi Bhawan, Ludhiana. I am attended with literary & cultural activities of an high order, Punjabi songs, as well as multidinous entertaining programmes and demonstrations. The great poet Prof. Mohan Singh himself who was like Pegasus God Apollo's winged steed, his literary off spring and his friends, true or false, his favourites beloved votaries, and even the writers disgusted with him, had not the least idea that a wrestler-like man of Pyramidal size and stature the son of S. Kartar Singh zaildar, and (mother Amar Kaur Brar; a law-graduate, and of a centrally situated village Jassowal Sudan, in Grewal area would exalt the name & fame of a leading poet into the eulogy of the Punjabi identity and the Punjabi culture; and that in Punjabi music & song obscenity would be replaced by decency and, thus, a revolution, would take place. It is by virtue of his great enthusiasm alone that I have become an object of love and regard on an international level.

After completing his education & studies and covering his legal studies in 1970 this tall & robust Jassowal settled down in Gurudev Nagar, Ludhiana with his eyes focussed on political power. Here he made friends with Kartar Singh 'Shamsher' a magnanimous poet of independent views and the renowned writer of 'Nili' and 'Ravi' and 'Bar de Dholia' S. Jassowal & Shamsher Sahib had some land allotted at Barewal in lieu of the squares of land left in West Pakistan. 'Shamsher' had been a friend of Prof. Mohan Singh since the time when Mohan Singh was a 'munshi' (a school teacher) of Persian of Khalsa School at Khanewal, in Montgomery Bar. Close to them lived S. Gopal Singh Khalsa, a lion-hearted intellectual of Akali Politics, the parliamentary secretary of the total Punjab of the pre-partition days and the leader of the opposition party, whose enlightened son S. Harinder Singh Khalsa by resigning the ambassadorship of India in Norway by way of protest against the atrocities perpetrated against the Sikhs during the Blue-Star Operation, has further elevated the eight-towered mind of his respected father.

'Shamsher', Mohan Singh and Khalsa often held friendly meetings. Jassowal too, began to sit with them. when Shamsher migrated to Canada, the 'trio' began to hold a meeting every evening and Jassowal began to have benefit from the intellectual discussions of the two revered personages.

In this way he became an expert in public dealings and in exercising diplomacy, and became a fluent orator. Prof. Mohan Singh created in him

zest for literature; while Khalsa ji playing the role of Chanakya made him expert at political tactics. Thus, this self-sacrificing and ardent votary of Punjabi literature and culture and their patron, Jassowal is a wonder of the present day world & a leading personage who through my medium has falsified the maxim that the world only worships the rising Sun" or that 'authority for sakes a dying king', and made me the birth of Prof. Mohan Singh's memory, of Punjabi culture', and of all entertainments in general. On May 3, 1978, when the Sun of Punjabi Poetry set, S. Jassowal was among those who attended the funeral pyre. He expressed his devotion to Prof. Mohan Singh and while attending Mohan Singh's final rites made with the departed soul a tacit agreement that he would ever maintain the memory of his fame and achievements. It was just like the promise made by Shahe-Jehan with his dying wife regarding The Taj. Thus, on 'Sher Shah Suri Marg' at the time of the funeral meeting I took my birth. At Jassowal's residence my first anniversary was celebrated by S. Jassowal by making S. Gopal Singh Khalsa the President of an assembly of nearly fifty Mohan devotees; and the next assembly of nearly five hundred persons was presided over perhaps by Principal Takhat Singh. By the time of the third anniversary my fame & fragrance had spread like the fragrance of lilies, Jasmin and 'Nightqueen' all over the Punjab. Singers, male as well as female, artists and the audience found a useful common forum formed for self-expression and the display their talents, their self-display as well as mutual entertainment. Folk-artists could display their sweet musicality as well as their physical charms, enhanced further by their gorgeous costumes, and thereby obtain advance-orders for attending the nuptial and other festive occasions of the whole year.

In the year 1980, as soon as S. Jassowal became an M.L.A. there appeared in his house crowds of suitors and applicants; and with his ascension to political power my name also suddenly sprang into fame. On the eve of the Silver Jubilee of Punjab Sahit Academy for the first time, I was held in the Punjabi Bhawan on the third anniversary; and literateurs and artists, poets & the Spectators assembled together in close association. In the year 1991, I celebrated my 13th anniversary.

In the Indian and Punjabi popular belief number 12 (twelve, carries great importance. The Kumbh Fair is held after every twelve years; and a Punjabi maiden attains puberty at the age of twelve; the Punjabi youths gone abroad to earn their living have been returning home after twelve years; our dialects too, have been changing at the distance of twelve miles; and they say after an interval of twelve years even the heap of dung under goes a change of fortune and acquires a happy transformation. I, too, have crossed the twelfth year of my life this year and stepped into youth and maturity.

Now I feel a bit youth-surcharged and have acquired richness & exuberance of energy; for among all fairs I have acquired a novel and unique distinction. Now the spectators and the participants in the fair come to attend

me in buses, trollies and on foot in long files-exactly as devotees go to attend holy meetings of saints, or as they go to attend 'Jarag'and 'chhapaf fairs; to attend the Maghi on (1st of Magh) of Jagatpur and Muktsar, the Baisakhi at Damdama Sahib, Basant Panchmi at Patiala, Hola Mohalla, Jaur Mela, the Dewali of-Amritsar and the Amavas of Tarn Taran, Devi's Mela at Masurkhana; the sports tournaments of Qila Rai pur. Considering Prof. Mohan Singh the Sion of Goddess Sarasvati, singers reach here to pay their tributes and Qusals, to submit & dedicate their Kalis, singers sing Panegyrics dedicated to Saraevati. 'Dhadis' sing war songs and thereby stir the spectators; and stage-singing poets raise their tunes to the highest pitch without the accompaniment of musical instruments.

Treasure is kept under the charge of Colonel Dalbara Singh Grewal, and cheque under the supervision of Prof. Parminder Singh; while all stocks are kept under lock & key by an able amiable and responsible gentleman Pargat Singh Grewal.

Difficulty lies in giving a push to the vehicle; later it is kept going by the spectators, vendors and other goods-sellers.

At the twelfth fair last year when S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal was obliged to go abroad, the organisers of the fair during his absence did not pay the least attention to my dignity and grandeur to my artistic and cultural fragrance; On seeing the Punjabi cassettes exported abroad the Punjabis settled in foreign lands began to hail him as Jassowal of the cultural fair. This is the way they became the heroes of the masses. From the political field many leaders have got uprooted, but Jassowal because of his cultural enthusiasm and activities has created a new field for himself and thereby left behind all politicians. He is the "Cultural minister of Punjabi identity", whom the people await with far greater eagerness & zeal on all cultural gatherings than they do the official ministers! Though he has not the least amount of fund to help or finance these cultural fairs he exhibits such zeal & enthusiasm that with his blessed presence and good wishes the new recruits to the cultural fairs become confirmed & staunch adherents of the Punjabi culture and its exponents!

It is a popular belief that one can't preserve one's name and identity without a male issue. I am Jassowal's third son,- that lends him an eternal cultural existence, one that occurs every year and indicates his birth-day! I'll carry on my existence even after his death. Whenever the government becomes enthusiastic and sympathetic towards Punjabi culture, here too, will be erected Prof. Mohan Singh complex like the one Pakistanis have raised at Jandiala Sher Khan in honour of Waris Shah. That is why I urge Prof. Mohan Singh's successors that they should not place on sale the house their revered father and great poet built in the last stages of his life in Maharaj Nagar, Ludhiana- the house on which he lavished all his hard earned money as well as endowments he received from his benefactors. They ought to convert this house into a national memorial and even invite the Punjabi

public in general for help in this task, though they might like Guru Har Sahai's Sodhis later impose a ticket on the visit to this house. It is my warning as well as earnest request! In the beginning at the time of my inception the coquettish and fastidious public of Ludhiana won't turn their eye towards me; they would show a version to me for my rustic character. But, later, when they began to receive guests in their houses, in large numbers, all desirous to attend me, then by way of imitation first their children began to grace me with their visit and I became a well- attended gathering; later, sensible townsmen, and high & low official authorities came to attend me along with their respected wives & other ladies '& their young ones; and thus they began to increase my strength as well as splendour.

On the day of the fair, the PUNjabi Bhawan is filled to capacity with spectators like a truck stuffed with bran! At times it becomes difficult to get out of the fair ground by making a way through the people; while for the fastidious spectators who get late for the programme it becomes, well-nigh impossible to find their way in. It is as hard as to dig a pit into stone with one's finger-points. It seems that in a few years they will have to shift the fair to some other, more spacious site. Jassowal has done a lot and tried many a scheme to enhance my reputation. Once he brought on the back of an elephant S. Sant Singh Sekhon and Sh. Patar from Kuldip Manak's house, On another occasion, he came to the fair- ground with Narindar Biba Parkash Kaur, Hamdard and Amrita Sewik, on elephant's back, to the accompaniment of band music. It was for the first time that the masters of arts & literature were conducted in a procession in this dignified manner. This procession was led by Prof. Mohan Singh's portrait!

This year the caravan of my devotees will start from Abohar. For such a big gathering there has ever been good provisions for a 'langaf (Community meal).

On this day Punjabi Bhawan seems to contract and this year the sports programme organised by Panchayti Raj Khed Parishad' will further accentuate the charms of this fair. I am a symbol of this rainbow-coloured culture of the Punjab for all men, women, young & old; and I have given a set back to obscenity in vogue in Punjabi literature & culture. For me the distinction between literateus, musicians and multi-dimensional jugglars no longer exists. In the present times, in these days of trouble & strife I am releasing the stream of human live; now the leopard lies with the lamb. In the 20th century , I am the only fair held in honour of a poet. Here it is strictly forbidden to sing foul & immoral songs. In the beginning Jassowal used to bring artists to the fair by cajoling & flattering them. But today the Fair Committee invites applications from singers & artists and allots time for them on a rationing basis; for every one is, today eager to display his artistic skill. It is now attended by great artists, male as well as female singers of a high calibre, writers and men of letters, singing bards, 'dhadis: (rebeck players), music-makers, Quals, drummers, acrobats, magicians, monkey-players, fencers and snake-

charmings. A big (chorus) is formed & 'Giddhal and 'Bhangra' of all varieties are performed. At the 'Chhappar' fair at the mausoleum of 'Gugga Chauhan' there is a snake-display and they lay wagers on snakes; while at 'Jarag' Fair donkeys are worshipped. At Missar Khane songs and hymn are sung through out the night in praise of the Goddess and on the Mohan Fair when every art associated with Punjabi culture is fully paraded, I shall as a matter of fact, become a connecting link among all these fairs. Jassowal by extending his patronage & protection to every art & skill has become a rock of shelter for Punjabi Culture.

Jassowal conceived, created and evolved & endeared a new kind of fair, and led it to its full growth and perfection by dint of his magnanimity and manly enthusiasm. My face now bears the tints of puberty and exuberance of youth, and I have now become most enjoyable and exciting like the pink hue that appears on the face of a Punjabi damsel just as she opens her eyes in the morning; and looks as fresh, tender and graceful as the newly grown buds of the peepal tree. My Punjabi fans who live and work out of Punjab return home and stay here upto my duration, enjoy my programmes with gusto and relish to their heart's content and then return to their places of work fully surfeited with delight to last for the whole year.

Today I am attended by my fans who come here by air from Canada, America, London & Malasia. I have now acquired the sheen of a thirteen year old blooming damsel. I sparkle like a silken garment, and glitter like a pearl! My reputation has risen sky-high, I provide an opportunity for youngmen and youthfit maidens to display my sparkling charms and radiance; for on seeing a beautiful damsel one begins to cry like one bitten by a cobra who can allow no remedy!

In connection with fairs it is quite reasonable to refer to Grewals' contribution. S. Dalip Singh Grewal made Qila Rai pur another Olympia by introducing Punjabi rural games, while zaildar Kartar Singh Grewal of Jassowal's son by organising 'Mohan Mela' (i.e. Prof. Mohan Singh's Cultural Fair) has provided guidance in the sphere of culture and thereby become 'Baba Bohar' & 'Baba Boot" This cultural magnet is Jagdev Singh Jassowal who has risen as a revered Guide of all present day artists and writers. His cultural family has crossed all limits. You have heard on my anniversaries all leading folk singers, sober musicians, masters of classical music Quaal, musical poets and 'Dhadis: When Gurubhajan Gill gives his comments as a stage secretary, his Gurdaspuri's stature, looks all the more grand and pompous, while Shamsher Sandhu's pink coloured, butter-soft and blue-eyed face becomes as ruddy as the (kinu citron fruit of Abohar!

The whole situation is placed under the charge of S. Pargat Singh. When the life-member and patron of Punjabi Bhawan Dr. Parminder Singh, sees such a mammoth gathering, he feels that his dream cherished forty years ago has got a concrete shape. It makes him immensely happy and his joy knows no 'bounds'. Pressman Satbir Singh's supervision reaches its

zenith; and Janmeja Johal keeps his prying eyes rolling like a beetle to catch the beauty of the Punjabi identity; and the camera of ochre-clad, Harbhajan Bajwa, the votary of Punjabi culture and art remains ever on the click to bestow upon me an historical significance; From Patiala arrives Parmajit Sandhu with his song 'Nachdi Jawani' (i.e. bubbling & exuberant youth).

On one fair S. Jassowal got a portrait of Prof. Mohan Singh prepared by S. Karnail Singh a painter, and made it a household article in the whole Punjab. The money used on this item was a saving from the general expenditure of the fair. Harpal Singh's painting skill, too, won its recognition only through the portrait of Prof. Mohan Singh; and now Manjit Singh Ghali has sculptured a statue of the respected professor. Now we feel the shortage only of a bronze statue & it will be provided by Deputy Commissioner Sarwan Singh Channi. For the 'Sarwan-like son' of the Punjabi identity there stands in readiness the sling of Literary service. Kuldeep 'Paras' got great recognition because once electric supply failed in the fair & he had to sing at a high pitch. 'Chamkila ' so notorious for singing filthy songs won his recognition and even his riddance from sin, by singing a song on 'Nankana Sahib'in this fair.

Jagjit 'Zirvi', Surinder Kaur and Amarjit Gurdaspuri's music performances, sober, have got a high measure of appreciation and recognition only because of my mammoth gatherings. When Harcharan Channi who had quite accidentally come from England, sang his song "Bhabia ni Bhabia "( O my sister-in-law) the whole gathering swayed with emotional excitement. The people who attend my gatherings form friendly alliances with oneanother. On one such occasion a Punjabi singer Surjit Budrakhia raised the longest tune of twenty nine seconds and thereby made his name in the history of male singers and got his place secure in the "Guinness book" Gurmeet Bawa, the wonderful tune raiser of Amritsar, when before coming over here makes her singing practice at Amritsar, the Pakistanis gather at the Vagha border to listen to her marvellous voice!"

"For such a huge expenditure that this cultural fair involves now money comes flowing like a stream in the form of cheques and currency notes; and the impetus that S. Jassowal gives to this flow none can imagine or conceive. He exhausts the whole magnificence of Punjabis on the conduct of this fair. Like pirs and saints Jassowal, too, makes no budget. He only keeps the progress of the fair in view and leaves the rest to God! Generousmen, capable, enthusiastic government officers, and the government itself fill his coffer, and there is felt, as a matter of fact, no deficiency whatsoever. The public contributes money lavishly, when it is spent in a right manner; but if that money falls into the hands of those who fill their own coffers, the public gives no second chance to such people. If you once visit this place, you will see what a fine romantic atmosphere is created by the fair! There is held a free and rich feast of music; men of merit are here exalted; and their cooperators and assistants are duly admired and appreciated. Goddess

Sarsvati's female attendants, beautiful singers, bedecked like fairies step into the field of their devotees and sing heart-ravishing songs quivering like a wave, and convulsing like a female snake, and warbling like a koel they descend into the hearts of their listeners & drown them into the unfathomable ocean of delight. When the drumlet rattles like the clubs in fencing, and the violin elicits a tune, and the cry of 'Vaar' rises to the highest pitch, and causes a stir in the breasts of the listeners, when on the stage of the Punjabi Bhawan 'Giddha' makes its palm strokes and 'Bhangra' makes its thumping sounds, then is there any listener, enamoured of gaiety, beauty & colour who won't exclaim involuntarily, "Wah! Oe, Jassowal's dat!" and regard him as the 'King of Punjabi Culture' who moving from village to village and attending all fairs and festivals has set up in them the tradition of inculcating a genuine excellence.

Jassowal is a vessel of love, a cauldron of sweet fragrance, a sapling of light, a magnet of unity and oneness, a computer of loving memories! an embodiment of courage and of organising skill, an exponent & advocate of Punjabi culture, a votary of Saraswati, a patron of every art & skill, the King of Punjabi culture whom all Punjabis regard as their own!" with little sense of alienation.

I pray for his eternal security and happiness; for I am the cultural 'purb' (rejuvenation) of all Punjabis- a symbol of their joys, of their rainbow-coloured and vigorous youths- Professor Mohan Singh Memorial

Fair.

I welcome all of you! Yes, O Satyani, Shivam, Sundram!  
(May there be truth, beauty & goodness!)

### I saw the Benevolent One!

A bouquet of verses dedicated to Honourable S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal- the Pride of knowledge and literature, a benefactor of his friends & associates, a saviour of his country & nation!

The world has not seen a benevolent man like Jassowal- neither on earth nor in heaven.

In generosity he has been found such a rain-filled cloud that pours down its rain drops quietly wherever it finds land parched with thirst; Jassowal Sabib, your heart is a bar. and your words a jar of wine. Nowhere did we ever see a christ-like munificent Pir as you are or a (Magus like you).

Your heart has the generous flow of a flowing stream; while your suave expression has the melodious sweetness of the flowing cataracts.

Were a poet to draw a parallel in your case, he would only remark that he found S. Jassowal as rich in sweet charity as sailing rainy cloud! In the linguistic as well as the poetic sense you have no parallel in the whole world; I have neither found the like of your poetic sense nor in style & diction.

Even the most exalted personages bow in reverence before you our wakeful eyes have found only this Rock of refuse!

Usually they bow their foreheads out of reverence before every door, they see;

But his is the place where even hearts bow in reverence.

He ever flashes across our minds, and makes his way through our hearts; for whenever we see his foot prints, we find them upon our hearts.

He is a generous, who fulfils the needs of everybody. Whosoever returns from his door bears a smile of cheer on his countenance. He is an institution in himself; I have found him a mature old man among the elderly; and a youthful person among youngmen.

Thousands of people watch him with their own eyes; but the study that we have made of his person is far beyond the ken of other people. Love of letters, appreciative sense of Art, and enrichment of literature these are the genuine qualities we ever found in his personality.

He is ever busy planting new saplings in the soil of literature; Even this orchard (Mohan Fair) has been fed and watered by his august hands.

He sheds tears to see an artist suffering from the pangs of poverty. We have found an unfathomable anguish in his moistened eyes.

He renders help to everyone and comes as a yeoman to offer succour to the afflicted. We have found him playing the role of a boatswain, whenever, we saw a boat caught in a whirlpool.

We, too, have remembered our Orchard every moment, when our eyes, like the eyes of the caged birds fell upon him.

Even though we remain subjected to all kinds of tortures, yet we have never brought any word of remonstrance or protest on our lips.

If ever we were obliged to extend our hand for help before any one; it was only before him (S. Jassowal). & we never looked to Heaven for help.

We took the transient spring for our perennial bliss & genuine tranquillity; we took it for our destination, though, in fact, it was only a stage on the way to the other world.

The image or influence of our nest is still fresh in our minds.

Whenever "Panchhi" cast a glance at a floating cloud, he everytime perceived imaginatively only the same figure and shape (that is, that of S. Jassowal).

## Jassowal- the Custodian of the Punjabi heritage.

**Kirpal Singh Kasel**

In the development of the present day cultural history the name of Jagdev Singh Jassowal has become an object of great pride.

In the year 1978 when he inaugurated Prof. Mohan Singh Cultural Fair, he not only set up a new tradition in the present day cultural history but also, ushered in a new era of cultural fairs; and this tradition, later acquired the character of a movement. Today, in the whole Punjab wherever a cultural fair is held, it gets associated especially with the names of renowned poets, 'dhadis', (rebeck players), or singers and musicians, and S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is specially invited as the initiator of this cultural movement.

You may take the case of Prof Mohan Singh Memorial Fair, which is held every year on October 20, the birthday of this great poet. The whole credit for its organisation goes to S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal alone. In the beginning this fair or festival comprised literary & cultural discussions, and a poetic conference, and on the first occasion I had the august chance to read my paper on the poetic achievements of Prof. Mohan Singh. After that this tradition of the fair was duly maintained, and the fair has now assumed a new shape to bring into relief the special aspects of Punjabi culture and tradition. In Ludhiana District the 'Chhapar Fair' had a distinction of its own. In the same way today Prof. Mohan Singh Cultural Fair has become the chief place of rendezvous between the folk-artists and the Punjabi masses who come to attend it in a crowded form and enjoy the beauty and gaiety of this fair. Mere attendance of the people in thousands indicates that this fair has made a special niche for itself in the cultural history of the Punjab under the leadership and supervision of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. As the fair starts from the statue of Prof. Mohan Singh in the shape of a long procession, it bring into prominence its distinctive features and gorgeous colours.

Not only this, under the patronage of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal many other cultural fairs have also taken their origin. The peculiarity of these fairs is that while Punjabi Poets and folk-artists are well-attended on the stage by the audience, in the shape of big gatherings, Punjabi culture is also safeguarded in its existing form and full effort is made to that end. Well-known poets, singers, writers and other artists are also honoured and rewarded and thus, through the memorials attached to these fairs, poets, folk-singers and writers are highly encouraged. It gives great inspiration to the new artists, yet in the making.

My relations with S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal stretch back to over forty years. I was then a lecturer in the Government College, Ludhiana, when Jagdev Singh joined this college as an M.A. Punjabi student. His father S. Kartar Singh's gruesome under had a deep effect on Jagdev Singh's young mind. His father was a well-known & prominent personage of Ludhiana

District; and Jagdev Singh also needed some means of support in order to make up the deficiency caused by the sudden & untimely demise of his father, and to win a good name for himself. He had developed love for Punjabi language and it led him to do his M.A. in this subject. The same love prompted him to jump into the political arena and he emerged as a leader in the political strife. He may have won many successes in the political field; and though as a member of the Legislative assembly and the chairman of various Government institutions he did very well, yet his greatest contribution is the role he has played in the evolution & propagation of Punjabi culture. Besides being the Chairman of Guru Gobind Singh Foundation he has also been associated continuously with Punjabi Sahit Academy, a distinguished institution! Active politics has also made him an orator of high order. During the last quarter of the 20th century, he made such a valuable contribution to the propagation of Punjabi culture as cannot be forgotten; or ignored. Another cause of his success in all these fields is the wide circle of his sincere friends. Humility generosity and the spirit of cooperation as well as his ability to win the cooperation of all his friends are some other praise worthy features of his personality. At any rate S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's name has become unforgettable in the field of cultural development of Punjab and in this respect his contribution can never be overlooked.

I whole-heartedly desire & pray that S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal make his maximum contribution to the development of this cultural movement launched by him; and serve his dear mother-tongue and Punjabi culture through his rich experience of the whole life!

## Jassowal-from the Window of the memory

Prof. Surinder Singh Narula

Whenever I think of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, my memory and my thought harmonise together in such a sweet duet that it not only thrills and inspires me through and through but also conjures up in the courtyard of existence a personage- singing, smiling, dancing, leaping & bounding, thrilling & throbbing! When Jagdev Singh Jassowal was an M.A. student in Mohindra College, Patiala, I received an invitation from Dr. Vishwa Nath Tiwari, the President of Students' Union to the effect that I should address the students & express my views before them on the novels written by me. At that time S. Teja Singh was the principal of that college. It is sheer chance that in my college days S. Teja Singh was my class tutor and it was owing to his encouragement that I entered the field of Punjabi literary pursuits. When I reached the college to make my speech, there were present at the college gate Sh. Vishwa Nath Tiwari and S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal along with other M.A. students to receive me.

Even at that time Jassowal's stature was as tall and majestic as it is today; but it didn't cover so much space as it does today. That cypress-like tall Jassowal lowered his arms towards me in order to hold me in his warm embrace, for I was, as ever, so slightly built. I was escorted to Principal Sahib's room; There Principal Teja Singh introduced me to the students. While introducing me to Jassowal he said that he was the most active, energetic and agile student of the class. Since that day Jassowal has ever remained as swift-footed & active as ever.

He has ever maintained and sustained his salutary agility. He has been the general secretary of Akali Dal, the vice-president of Punjab Congress, a member of the Punjab Assembly. Wherever he has worked he has played always a leading role whether it was some office or an institution, whether it was political or cultural. The spirit of self-display that he has does not show itself in an explicit form, but it spreads everywhere and emanates from his person at all places like the fragrance of a flower; and is felt everywhere. If we ask some one which great revolutions have occurred in the history of the Punjab, then, I think, he would say that the greatest revolution occurred when even during the calamitous days of militancy the Punjabi folk ever remained happy & cheerful, singing & dancing; that during the period when a dark, gloomy night of woe was hanging over our heads like an inversely suspended bat, and the people were craving for security & peace, and the whole Punjabi politics had been paralysed & even a glow-worm was not seen twinkling anywhere, S. Jassowal by means of his cultural festivals, folk-singers, musicians, versifiers, players, and other dramatic performers made such a demonstration on war-like footing that it doesn't look less than a marvel!

I think many a time which elixir S. Jassowal possesses that has enabled him to make such momentous achievements. I can hit upon only two things: God helps those who help themselves. Whatever Jassowal has done for the sake of Prof. Mohan Singh and is still doing is an expedition which is sure to have far-reaching consequences. The government, under the poverty-abolition 'programme' enforced several schemes and thereby endeavoured to improve the standard of public life; but man's chief differentia is that he does not live on bread alone; but is such a broad-visioned rational being that he needs food for the soul as urgently as he needs food for the body. Jassowal has through self-thought come to the conclusion that through economic development alone man's full development as a human is not possible, and his individuality can't be brought into prominent relief; it requires the inculcation of such merits & values that raise him from the level of a mere animate being into a true human being- the paragon of God's creation!

I offer my militaryman-like salute to Jagdev Singh Jassowal and earnestly pray that he may live in the aeons to come and the cultural fairs started by him get the maximum attendance and serve as symbols of the ever-throbbing, ever pulsating heart of the Punjab! Amin!

## Jassowal of Mohan Singh Festival

Ram Sarup Ankhi

Once the famous Punjabi Singer Surinder Kaur visited Ludhiana and gave her performance at a gathering. When she had finished, Jagdev Singh Jassowal rose to his feet in order to thank her and said, "Bibi, you are the 'Koel'(Nightingale) of the Punjab, you have made Punjabi songs immortal; your style displays the divine frenzy of sayyed Bulleh Shah; the impress of GuruNanak's song, and deep and subtle suggestiveness of Waris Shah. You have given a lot to the Punjab, but we can't give you even a blade of grass! It is hard to repay your debt. Had I been the chairman of the Forest Corporation, even today I would have allotted a whole forest to your name." Now it is a matter of reflection what Ms. Surinder Kaur would have done with the forest got in prize? Would she have named a nook of land in it? But just think of Jassowal's liberality and broad mindedness!

Jassowal is just a roaring river in spite of which who so stumbles perishes. He tamed even an unruly and violent camel. Once he went to attend the 'Bhog' ceremony of a revered old man named Hari Singh Nalua, and came to the stage to pay his tributes to the departed soul. He forgot the word 'Narula'. There came in his mind 'S. Hari Singh Nalua'. He called the deceased 'Hari Singh Nalua' and began highly to eulogise him. The man sitting below twice touched Jassowal's knee to make him realise his mistake, and use 'Nalua' in stead of 'Narula'. At that Jassowal became all the more lovable and said, "Oe, he may be a 'Narula' for you; for us he was 'Nalua'. Hari Singh Nalua indeed a lion-hearted person!"

I often say Jassowal is our brother-in-law; for there is no difference, between 'Dhur Kot' and 'Dhola' only a distance of two miles; and his in laws live at Dhur Kot.

He is an M.A. of three subjects besides being an L.L.B. Seemingly, he is a simpleton, and simple-minded Jathedar, by temperament a pure 'Jat'- but if you start a talk on Punjabi culture, he will dazzle the intellect of the most scholarly of men.

While doing his M.A. in Punjabi language he developed a keen interest in Punjabi poetry Prof. Mohan Singh after his brief and temporary stays at Lahore, Amritsar, Jalandhar and Patiala when finally settled down at Ludhiana, he converted Ludhiana into Lahore, evenings were quite colourful and romantic. Jassowal often attended these evening programmes. There would also come other 'fans' of Mohan Singh's poetry. The poet, too, had reached a mature age. He grew at times most emotional, and at others sad and gloomy. He would often say, "who will remember me after my death?" At that Jassowal would thump his chest and say, "Mohan Singha, worry not, there will start a fair in your memory, you are 'Gugga Pir': "the stalwart poet of our Punjabi poetry- an object of reverence! We shall organise your fairs and make the whole world attend them. You will feel inclined to return from your paradise!"

Prof. Mohan Singh was born on October 20, 1905, and died in the year 1978; and in the next year on his birth day Jathedar Jagdev Singh Jassowal held a fair in the Punjabi Bhawan in his memory; and also set up Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation. The people of all communities and all social strata became the members and patrons of this Foundation from time to time. Today every year the fair is held on the 19th & 20th of October; every type of music is played; and papers are read on Prof. Mohan Singh's poetry and discussions are held, cassettes are released containing his songs; The most interesting and colourful of all is the programme of Punjabi Singers. In it renowned Punjabi Male singers as well as Lady singers make their performances and bewitch the audience. On the noon of October 20, the fair-ground becomes so crowded that in the open-air theatre of the Punjabi Bhawan there does not remain even an inch of ground un-occupied! That is why the fair is now held outside the Punjabi Bhawan. Every year a renowned poet is conducted in procession all over the town and thus honoured. Persons of other faculties, too, are duly honoured.

In our boyhood days we used to attend Devi's fairs at Handia, Kaleke and Maisar Khane; and we would start awaiting these fairs a month or so before their dates. It was not even in our dreams that there would ever be held on a permanent basis a cultural fair in the memory of a Punjabi poet or writer. But Jathedar Jassowal converted that dream into reality. It is not simply an honorific of Prof. Mohan Singh but of the whole Punjabi literature that the name of a Punjabi poet has come among us in the shape of a fair; the poet's pen has not only become a part of Punjabi culture, but has spread over the man of culture like an ochre-coloured cloud! Drums are beaten in Ludhiana's Punjabi Bhawan & the loud tunes of the singers catch our ears. groups of scholars are seen going through books at book-stalls, and enjoying the exhibition. At one place you see acrobats engaged in their acrobatic leaps and bounds; a snake-charmer has taken out a snake from his basket and is playing upon his veena. In the midst of such a big gathering two names in particular cling to our minds- Mohan Singh & Jagdev Singh Jassowal. In the month of September, when the clash between heat and cold and tea and whey goes far-ahead, we begin to await the advent of Mohan Singh Fair. On the 20th of October, we feel neither heat nor cold, how fine! We hear that on this day the Pakistanis have started a fair in the memory of Waris Shah- the great poet of the Punjabi community. While Waris Shah was the poet of Punjabi psyche, Mohan Singh was the poet of his age- the poet of our own age, His poetry exhibits all the seven colours of the rainbow. Mohan Singh wrote a poem in the memory of his deceased wife. Here is an extract:

"Mohan, how could you become a poet,  
I had not died?"

Now we ask the deceased Mohan Singh:

"O Poet, how could your fair be held,  
Had Jassowal been not- there?"

In the year 1988 all the writers, scholars, artists and the outstanding personages of the Punjab were given clocks by way of honouring them. These clocks carried portraits of Prof. Mohan Singh; In my house this clock placed on the godrige almira is custantly tricking and thereby making me feel as though I were listening to some poem recited by Mohan Singh.

On the day of the Fair jagdev Singh Jassowal also used to hold a 'Kavi Darbar'( A Poets' conference). The Punjabi poets from all over the world assembled here and recited their latest poems. Every poet was offered a cup of 'Soma rasatwine). But gradually as the circumstances grew unfavourable poetic conferences lost their fervour. It is hoped that these conferences will acquire rejuvenation with all their pristine splendour!

## The Governor of the Singers- Jassowal

**Sarwan Singh**

Jassowal is a Jathedar much talked of. Let them say whatever they like, he is a man worth considering- cheerful of disposition, sociable, and highly histrionic. With apparent politeness he probes into the heart of the listener. Let us first describe his gigantic, majestic stature. Were you to weigh him in coins, Surjeet Singh Barnala would prove half his weight and Parkash Singh Badal would come out to be 3/4 of him, while poet Surjeet Patar would be 1/3 of him. Of course, if Gurbhajan maintains his diet at a good level, he might prove the nearest approach to him.

The circle of his acquaintance is so vast that from the peacock of Sujapur to the Chief Minister of Punjab all are his close friends. According to his own confession out of twelve thousand villages of the state he has so far visited the cremation grounds of six thousand villages and attended marriages in three thousand villages ( as a member of the marriage party). After doing three M.A/s; LL.B. & B.T. and qualifying in examinations of rural interest he jumped into the arena of politics; but ultimately he became a champion of the cultural field.

He could become a Professor or do legal practice; he could also become a Judge. But his contacts with Master Tara Singh, Pt. Nehru and Kairon put him on the wrong track. Following the ZigZag path of politics he became the general secretary of Shromani Akali Dal, Vice-President of Punjab Congress, a congress M.L.A. and the chairman of several corporations. He fought the parliamentary elections as a candidate of the Akali Dal, and even forfeited his security! Once there came a time, when even the chance of his becoming the Chief Minister was within sight; but it gradually receded farther and farther. In the mean time rebeck and 'Sarangi'players, flute players, men of letters, photographers and other similar artists appointed him as their governor- the governor of 'gavyias' ( of musicians)- the King of Cultural activities, the Pir or Guide of artists! This Governor before reaching his present stage passed through strange situations. Janmeja Johal once took his snap and sent it to the press with this remark below- the "Governor is sad". To inquire about his well-being- the well being of one who ever shared the weal & woes of others, I one day reached Ludhiana. He was giving an interview on the phone to some distant journalist:- He was in an underwear, a loose, open banyan and was bare-headed! He had arms like wooden rollers and legs like pillars. After the interview he received me with great affection. After offering me cold water of a pitcher and ordering the preparation of tea he started his stories. Both fair and foul words are his mannerisms. He said, "My politician colleagues have built their bungalows, bought forts, amassed huge wealth, while I sit here as wealthless as ever! Do I not?... My bank balance is only nineteen rupees! I may use this amount from either side! On

one hand this cursed mind doesn't sit still. It impels me to keep myself engaged ever in one activity or another. I can now find no way out... no fixed target! If I feel like giving a head blow, what should I strike my head against, 'Sir? You may show me some way out of this predicament?"

What solution could I offer? I only said, " Jassowal Sahib, your heart is in its right place, but your brain? the whole trouble lies with your brain. Hasham also said complaining, "I am tormented by my keen sense", and added; "Fools enjoy a peaceful sleep and make a lot of money.

"O, I, too, say the same thing. The whole problem has been created by the brain only I provide jobs for hundreds and thousands of boys, not to speak of transfers. They may knock at my door at mid night, I have done a lot for the people. But I have seen that they do not recognise any services while giving their votes. I am now at a loss to decide what I am to do? I can't faU in love; politics has disappointed me, what is the use of bying for my sons? Sir, you know I was once the president of thirteen institutions and societies; and later gave up the presidentship of half of them. I may, by and by resign the presidentship of all. My one son lives abroad; the other does the farming; the young ones are getting regularly their upbringing. What else do I need, Sir? I can't stay abroad indefinitely. I can't sit idle; at times I make a visit to the village. There I recover & recognise my identity. There I am a senior uncle of one and a junior uncle of another, Am I not so, Sir?"

In the mean time he got a telephonic call. I began to think how can a man involved in so many occupations feel lonely & bored? He feels alone even in crowded fairs! He has brought about a spate of cultural fairs & festivals and provided to the audience singing and dancing artists in all around, that not a single day passes when he is not garlanded and received at the stage!

His entering politics was not a deliberate act on his part; he had left home to pay his first conjugal visit to his in-laws after the nuptial ceremony. On the way he was attracted by the voluble & stirring speeches of the Akali speakers. While standing there he just burst out, "Punjabi Suba, Zindabad!."

A wooden cot lies permanently in the compound of his house. Sitting on it he speaks the truth as readily as he utters blasphemy & falshood. While sitting on that wooden cot he also massages his body, drinks whey; and raises loud appreciative cries on hearing the music of the artists, and their Sarod playing. At times from a can or a jar he, distributes the largess of Punjabi culture. To the back of the wooden cot on the wall has been carved a dancing pea-cock. There are also carved a snake, a heron, and a frog. There is also a writ on the wall which runs as follows:-

"The peacock dances, the snake crawls to its hole; the innocent-looking ( but crooked) heron picks up the frog.

Who can avert the writ of God?"

Jassowal's philosophy is :

"Let all living creatures on the surface of the earth live in peace some may take bold flights in the sky like the heron; some enjoy life in water like

frogs and fish; some live like snakes joyfully in their holes, and some dance like the peacock on the surface of the earth; Man should, likewise, live in an atmosphere of love and friendship. Does life remain worth living without love & affection?. I wish to leave this world singing and dancing; you may see, Sir".

He sums up the last one hundred years of the modern history of the Punjab in one sentence:

Singh Sabha movement, Gadar Movement, Akali movement, Freedom Movement, Communist-Naxalwari Movement, Militancy and now the cultural fair & festival movement! Next will come, 'Dalat Lehar' (the Movement of the Back-word classes).

Jassowal's historie achievement is the inauguration of Prof. Mohan Singh's cultural fair and thereby giving birth & extending his patronage to other fairs.

Once about two days prior to Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair I chanced to go to S. Jassowal's residence. He took out from his mail box several envelopes; and every envelope he opened contained a cheque. He was much pleased and announced the amount of each cheque- "Lo! it is worth one thousand! This one is worth five hundred! Lo! it is of fifteen hundred!..... O, it is a cheque for two thousand. At the time of the first 'Mohan Fair', they had collected not more than ten rupees from every donor; "Oh! Sir, this envelope contains five cheques. O what a big amount! they have certainly followed in my footsteps. It is true I feel worried about celebrating the fair every year, You know." said Jassowal, "One feels much worried, prior to the thir, to think how it all will get its completion; but later, as at a Saint's settlpmnt, the whole thing takes place automatically through rich donators, the fair comes & passes like a happy dream.

Rration comes from our friends, hustle and bustle belongs to the gathering, the fair belongs to Prof. Mohan Singh." To make the sentence complete, we may say, "and the pomp and show belongs to S. Jassowal!"

## Bosewell's Johnson: Jassowal's Mohan Singh

**S.N.Sewak**

Dr. Johnson was a great litterateur of eighteenth century but he was immortalised by James Bosewell whose life of Johnson is considered to be the greatest English biography. Many people no longer read Johnson's own works but they still enjoy his writings, sayings, and opinions in this life story which is remarkable for its authenticity and vivid descriptions. Bosewell was able to produce such an absorbing work because he almost worshipped Johnson and kept his company for a long time. Mter his death, he was able to bring out the wit and wisdom of Dr. Johnson with utmost honesty and marked clarity.

Mohan Singh was one of the greatest figures of twentieth century Punjabi literature. He was a progressive poet, literary journalist, oriental scholar, creative critic, well-known teacher, \* political thinker, and an efficient organiser. Above all, he was a man who loved one and all. So wide and diverse was his circle of friends that he virtually remaine surrounded by his admirers and well-wishers all the time. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, an advocate-turned-politician and a committed culture enthusiast, was perhaps his best friend at Ludhiana. During the last years of his life, Mohan Singh became Professor Emeritus at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana at the invitation of the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. M.S. Randhawa, and he constructed his house nearby. We would never forget the warm gatherings at his house where Mohan Singh charmed everybody with wit and humour, frank opinions, and wise comments on literature and culture. More often than not, Jassowal was present there. The other favourite venue for such metings was Jassowal's house in Gurdev Nagar. Drinks added colour to these meetings and Jassowal collected everlasting impressions about the diversity of Punajbi culture from Mohan Singh's frequent observations and sayings. In fact, Jassowal was to Mohan Singh what Bosewell was to Johnson.

After the death of Prof. Mohan Singh in May 1978, Jagdev Singh Jassowal was most shocked. He had lost a great friend who inspired him in many ways. But Jassowal was not a writer, he was a true devotee who wanted to do something special for his Master. He could not write a biography of Mohan Singh but with his devotion and great organisational capacity, he immortalised him by organising Mohan Singh Mela, a unique cultural event, on his 73rd birthday on 20th October, 1978. Since then, the Mela has been held regularly at Punjabi Bhawan or elsewhere in Ludhiana. It has become an important literary-cultural festival of Punjab. Thus Jassowal has produced a living biography of Mohan Singh who is now known to people although they have never read him.

Mohan Singh Mela is held at Ludhiana on October 19 and 20 every year. It includes singing of Mohan Singh's poems, seminars on his literary

contribution, folk songs, popular songs, folk dances, martial arts, cultural exhibitions, production of plays and literary competitions. Popular singers generally dominate the Mela but they are often required to include a poem or song of Mohan Singh in their presentations. The Mela is organised by Mohan Singh Foundation which was founded by Jagdev Singh Jassowal and is, at present, headed by Pargat Singh Grewal. However, it is Jassowal's Mohan Singh who has been immortalised in the eyes of people at large.

Perhaps Jassowal has done better than Bosewell in his own way.

## Ambassador of Punjabi culture

**N.S.Tasneem**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal, lovingly called 'The Ambassador of Punjabi Culture', is always in the limelight. He is seen either sailing ahead of others towards the arch of victory or burning his boats ceremoniously on the shore of disenchantment. He has been down many a time but has never been out. He has emerged stronger after every setback on the political front, he has conquered new domains with the each passing year.

There is a longing in the hearts of the people to share with one another the glorious moments of togetherness. The reason for this is the void that has been created by the machine age in the lives of the people of all walks of life. Estrangement from society and, with the passage of time, from his own inner self has converted the modern man into an auto motion. In an effort to find his roots, he has now associated himself with his cultural moorings. He is feeling nostalgic for his lost identity and craves for the fulfillment of his primordial desires.

In this scenario, it is quite easy to comprehend the reason of the cultural renaissance in Punjab. The folk songs, folk dances, folk tales and folklore are now holding sway over the minds of the people. Out of these currents and crosscurrents of Punjabi culture has emerged a figure that is fully conscious of the aspirations of the common folk.

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is acting as the centripetal force to bring together all that is the best in the culture of this land of five rivers. He has himself come a long way from being swept off his feet by the "Mere rhyme and rhythm "to the sobering effect of' the still, sad music of humanity." During the past two decades, his concept of identifying the birthday of Prof. Mohan Singh with the cultural mela has taken firm roots.

Jagdev Singh was born on April, 1935, at Jassowal (Ludhiana). He received his postgraduate education at Government College, Ludhiana, and Mahendra College, Patiala. Later, he got his LL.B. degree from Aligarh University. From 1980 to 1985, he was an MLA and in that capacity was appointed Chairman, Punjab Forest Development Corporation. He also held the post of Adviser, Punjab Youth welfare Board. During his political career, he worked as General Secretary, Akali Dal, as well as Vice-President, Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee. In a way, he has seen both the sides of the hedge. Still, his childlike curiosity impels him to seek a newer world. He gets its glimpses when he visits his village Jassowal to rediscover his lost childhood.

In exasperation, some people consider him a poor judge of men. The reason is not far to seek. During cultural festivals, persons with divergent views and even at cross-purposes gather under his canopy. His patronising attitude to them is sometimes quite baffling. The fact, however, is that he may seemingly be indulgent to all of them but in his heart of hearts, he knows the sincerity or hypocrisy of each and every individual. He may have

read many books but he has read still more the faces of the people around him. He never passes judgement in a hurry. Interestingly, he enjoys being deceived time and again. In the words of Majaz Lucknavi:-

Mujh ko ehsass-e-freb-e-rung-o-boo hota raha

Main magar phir bhi freb-e-rung-o-boo khata raha

(I had been all the time conscious of the deceit of colour and fragrance.

Still I allowed myself to be deluded with colour and fragrance.)

Jagdev Singh Jassowal, Chairman, Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation, has held aloft the banner of Punjabi culture in foreign countries also. He is leaving for Canada on August 1 for participation in the International Prof. Mohan Singh Punjabi Cultural Festival to be held on August 6. In Surrey (British Columbia). Pargat Singh Grewal who is President, Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation, will accompany him.

This function, expected to be the biggest in North America, will be presided over by Mr Ujjal Dosanjh, Prime Minister of British Columbia. Mr Sahib Singh Thind and Mr Gurinder Singh will be hosting this historic meet.

## S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

**Dr. Ajit Singh Sikka**

Many years ago, I saw him from a distance, a tall man with a flowing beard surrounded by many persons. Later I came into contact with him. Now I have found him a good-natured man whose countenance is all tranquillity and smiles and full of good-humour and pleasantry. His manners are gentle and just in his every day dealings. His conscience and tender heart would not hurt a fly. Though a person distinguished in politics and praised for his quality of promoting Punjabi Culture for the last many years, he will not needlessly offend others. In his lifetime, he has travelled a lot and seen many men and women and observed their cultures but he does not suffer from anything that irritates or annoys him. He does not enter into enmity and bears everything with patience. It is his habit to attend to the hurriicane of the political and moral world with the temper and spirit of a philosopher. Originally he is a man of taste and understands the spirit of Punjabi Culture and helps the new folk-singers after judging them in a humane and liberal way.

## Pen-Portrait Mr. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

**Prof. Mohinder Singh Cheema**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal has personality in amplemeasure Nature has done him a liberal deal. Height and a little more than proportionate weight are elements that lend him the exterior of a bearded and turbaned Sir Winston Churchill. He has a sharp mind, dynamic, restless, very active; active even when he is resting.

His political graph is mercurial; it rises high, very high, then suddenly falls to a crash. He again picks up courage and shoots up to gain height in another political party. He reaches almost the top in the provincial sphere,

then the slip-down takes upon him resulting in down-sliding. He is a die-hard; changes the party affiliations to gain new ground. He is duly launched. He maintains the tempo, adds more speed and goes out of the trajectory, making a downward parabola. In early youth, he was a right hand man of Master Tara Singh, the legendary Sikh Leader. When justice Gurnam Singh was the Chief Minister of Punjab, he successfully conducted himself as his political secretary. He tied his wagon with the political train of Congress and rose to be Vice President of Punjab Congress Committee. He was elected an M.L.A. and held a couple of Chairmanships. He bade a temporary farewell to the Congress to be reunited to the Parliament as an Akali leader, Fate betrayed him, he rejoined Congress to fight Akalis. In 1997, Jassowal was pitted against S. Parkash Singh Badal, the then prospective Chief minister of Punjab. It required courage, Jassowal lived up to that. He is a die-hard optimist. He is a fighter, but chooses the wrong fight and unsuitable ground.

He has the body of an elephant, the courage of a lion, the speed of a horse- but he lacks the horse-sense; the foxy political cunning attitude also, Good education, company of intellectuals, bad memory for bad experience, progressive vision, love of culture and forgiveness are his personal assets. Restlessness, impulsiveness, and callous attitude to personal economy are his liabilities which cost him dear. He is often unmindful of frustrations and remains cheerful. Very few can afford to be so. He greets his adversaries as friends.

He was liked by S. Partap Singh Kairon, he was keenly enquired about by Pandit Nehru; he impressed all those who mattered. He took his fate seriously, but destiny held something else for him.

Jassowal is an excellent host, always fond of company; people flock to him. The foreigners visit him. The N.R.I's call upon him to enjoy his company and to share their experiences. He discovers talents to encourage promising artists. This is perhaps, his destiny What led him to it? Thereby hangs a tale.

Prof. Mohan Singh, the great poet, settled at Ludhiana in 1968. A few admirers made him the nucleus of good company jassowal enjoyed it In 1978, Prof. Mohan Singh died. This made him restless; he was deeply touched, highly agonised.

A man returning from the Waris Shah Urs( Sheikhu pura) Pakistan informed him of a foundation set up in Pakistan in honour of Waris Shah. Jagdev Singh Jassowal shared with him his experience. It gave him the idea to celebrate the departed poet's birthday.

October 20, 1978, the birthday of Prof. Mohan Singh provided Jassowal the concept 'of a memorial resulting in Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation.

For the last two decades he has been organising cultural festivals. He provides the in-put and know how. He is fondly called "The Governor of Performing artists, especially the folk-singers. What all the living political

parties failed to disclose to him, the death of Prof. Mohan Singh did. In 1995, on his 60th birthday, a lac of people flocked to his village, The Chief Minister of the Punjab offered him a car as a birthday gift.

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is feverish as he organises what are known as cultural melas. He encourages all such organisers as show a bit of keenness. He is a powerful persuader. He is one of the most busy persons of contemporary Punjab. He is nearly always on the move. A day at home he calls worse than the day in jail. Incidentally, he has rich experience of jail life as a political activist, both as an Akali and a Congress man.

He is a loco-motive.\*He carries freely. He needs a rail-track which is trust-worthy. He loves to charter dark seas. He is running full steam. There are many many rail junctions. He has to make a choice between Culture and Politics, perhaps between Activism and Mysticism.

Sardar Jassowal is a self-charging dynamo and a moving mountain. With all his successes and failures, he is a rare personality. He signs on the page of contemporary life and History.

## An Interview

### "I set up a new tradition of Punjabi Cultural fairs." Jassowal Prithi Raj Singh Bassian

More than six feet tall, a loose beard, a smiling countenance, such is the person of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, the Governor of Punjabi Culture, the king of musicians, and a friend of friends. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has done admirable work for the dissemination of Punjabi culture, and in the social and political fields- not less than that of an institution! Here is an interview taken specially in the interests of our readers.

Q.- Jassowal Sahib, please, throw some light on your family?

Ans.- I belong to a Jassowal Jat Sikh family Just at the foot of Ludhiana lies my ancestral village Jassowal. My father S. Kartar Singh (Zaildar) remained the Vice-President of Ludhiana Municipal committee for more than twelve years. In those days only the Deputy Commissioner used to be the President of the Municipal Committee. My mother Sardarni Amar Kaur belongs to a Sidhu Brar family; while my wife comes of a Dhaliwal Jat family. I have two sons and we are four brothers. In educational qualifications I am an M.A., LL.B.

I inherited politics from my Respected father, who remained the Sarpanch of our village Jassowal for a considerable part of his life from 1935 to the year 1958, I caught my political infection from him

Q.- In what capacities have you worked so far? I mean what ranks have you held so far?

Ans.- Were I to count all those ranks, it might take the whole time of the interview. Still in the main I remained the senior Vice-President of the Punjab Congress Committee for three years. In 1969 when S. Gurnam Singh became

the Chief Minister of the Punjab, I was his political secretary in his Sikh Ministry. For five years from 1980-85 I was an M.L.A. from Rai Kot constituency. I was also the general secretary of Shromani Akali Dal for several years; the Chairman of Dairy Development Corporation for two years; the Chairman of the Forest Corporation for two years. Besides it I was the President of Guru Gobind Singh Foundation, Chandigarh; the President of Vishva Punjabi Cultural Manch. Even now I am the Patron of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation. Alongwith it I am the executive member of Door Darshan, The Radio, the Sangeet Academy and several other cultural organisations.

Q.- You held high positions both in the Congress and the Akali Dal. In which party did you feel more at home?

Ans.- I spent almost equal time in both the Congress & the Akali Dal. Satisfaction is the name of a certain state of the mind. In politics man is never satisfied. He wanders from pillar to post throughout his life. Same is the case with me.

Q. - What have been your accomplishments in the cultural field?

Ans. I set up a new tradition of Punjabi cultural fairs, which provided a chance to many an obscure artist to come forward. Moreover, to link my Punjabi brethren to their natural cultural heritage I hold seminars, symposiums and art exhibitions from time to time. My doors are ever open to every Punjabi artist to whatever parts of the country he may belong.

Q.- Which male and female artists benefited from your help and guidance?

Ans. - Who am I to provide opportunities to any one? Only because of my and my men's endeavour and enthusiasm there started a cultural movement to organise such cultural fairs and many young men and women took part in them for the realisation of their cultural ambition and they emerged as stars in the fragment of artistic glory. If I count the names of those artists, I might unjustly ignore some one.

Q.- You brought forward so many artists to the fore front, did they, too, stood you in good stead socially or financially?

Ans. - These days even our own scions do not take care of us, how can I expect any help or assistance from these patronised artists?

Q.- How did you hit upon the idea of organising or even starting a Prof. Mohan Singh Fair which today has become a big Punjabi Cultural Fair renowned in the whole world.

Ans.- Prof. Mohan Singh was our neighbour and a close friend. He was a big poet of the Punjab and died on May 3, 1978. On his sudden demise a condolence meeting was held at my residence No. 1127, Gurdev Nagar, Later, again at my residence there was held a meet of the representative litterateurs & artists of the Punjab on his birthday that falls on October 20, and it later took the shape of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair

which was held in the Punjabi Bhawan on this very day. "We had started alone to our destination, People came & joined together And the caravan took its shape.

Q.- Are you now satisfied with the shape and dimension which the fair has taken?

Ans.- Satisfaction is another name for stagnation. Moreover, it is not a question of my personal satisfaction, but of public satisfaction. It is a fact that the light of this taper Prof. Mohan Singh Fair has kindled many tapers and cultural fairs have now spread not only in many villages of the Punjab and are still spreading but have come into vogue in many foreign lands and are becoming international in character.

Q.- You are the originator of these cultural fairs. You carried on your work even during the days of terrorist activities. Had you to face opposition from any (terrorist) quarter? Didn't you feel any apprehension?

Ans.- A man is killed by his own sins. I had always regarded it as a good deed to make my contribution to these cultural fairs. One feels never afraid while doing virtuous deeds.

Q.- Did you get any government aid in carrying on these fairs?

Ans.- The little bit of help which other fairs receive my fairs also did.

Q.- What is your opinion of these cultural fairs which are being held from place to place these days? Are they rendering real service to the people or are merely amassing money?

Ans. Some fairs are really most impressive in disseminating (Punjabi) literature & culture; no praise is too much for them. Some fairs are held with ulterior motives their aim is to please and flatter some government authority or some police officer. Those who sing on such occasions symbolise only 'Kalyuga'. These fairs are a stigma on the fair forehead of the Cultural Fair.

Q.- You fought Lok Sabha election in 1989 on the Akali ticket from Ludhiana constituency at the behest of S. Parkash Singh Badal, while from District Rai Pur constituency you fought elections against S. Parkash Singh Badal on the Congress ticket. What are your relations with him these days?

Ans.- In the political life friendships and animosities are never of a permanent character; and relations too, ever remain in a boiling cauldron. I regard every person as better than myself. As Sheikh Farid remarked: "Black are my garments; black is my dress- I move about a sinner! They call me Darvesh" (a holy man).

Q. - Now do you wish to remain active during the major part of your time in cultural activities or in politics?

Ans.- I am passing through the evening of my life; I wish to devote the remaining time of my life to the dissemination of Punjabi culture and its popularisation.

Q. - Despite not being in politics you are still getting major or minor public grievances redressed by the political authorities, (rural roads'

construction being one of them). But at the time of February 1997's general elections why did the people, even of your ancestral area not give you their support?

Ans. - In the political field I have never deceived & betrayed anybody, though I myself have been definitely deceived. But I feel no regret. (then he laughed and said): "Good that I broke my spinning wheel Now I'll be free from all turmoil!"

Q.- Please, throw some light on your foreign tours?

Ans.- I have been to several countries in connection with the outspread of Punjabi culture. It was at the invitation of the organisations and institutions of those countries. The prominent countries I visited are England, Canada, U.S.A., Norway, Denmark and Pakistan.

Q. - What was your most trouble-some period of life? and what was your happiest time? Please describe in detail.

Ans.- The death of my beloved and respected mother was the most painful occurrence in my life. I have seldom had any happy moment in my life. My life has been mostly a bed of thorns! If a happy moment ever came, it flew away in no time. Still in 1998, when I celebrated the 60th year of my life in my village as my Golden Jubilee, there was formed a big Punjabi cultural fair. I will never forget those happy moments. Otherwise, I have enjoyed feasts at the invitations of the Prime Ministers of India as well as duly honoured the bonds-of my friendship with the cowherds and shepherds of my village. In my life such a time also came, when I was at the pinnacle of glory & esteem in the Punjab; and I also witnessed such times, when even a dog did not bark at my bidding! I saw those days when police men even also saluted me; and also those when they took me hand cuffed to jail to be detained there! I spent two years in jail during the Punjabi Suba Agitation. I had such a time when I owned and enjoyed fabulous wealth, and also faced such situations; when I could not come by a few coins despite the search of the whole house. I have had such times, when even strangers flattered me; and then came such moments when even my kinsmen turned their back upon me c.f.:-

"The leaves under which I sought refuge began to fan air unto me. Sometimes I had such moments when even terrible losses left me unnerved; and also the moments when even the loss of a needle was unbearable for me. At times I travelled in a bullock-cart and at times in an aeroplane's executive classes!

At times people invited me to attend big gatherings as a chief guest; and at times I sent for my own kith & kin & even they did not respond to my call; and if in the hour of darkness I knocked at someone's door, he feigned to have fallen into a deep slumber! c.f.:- "I called repeatedly one & all. But none paid heed to me!" In other words I witnessed great ups and downs in my life- enjoyed cool and soothing breezes and faced hot blistering gusts of wind!"

Time there was when I cherished very rosy dreams of life in the political field; but now I have put my ambitions to sleep like a man other who thumps her weeping child to sleep with a lullaby. I feel at home with all vicissitudes of life.

## Punjab's renaissance man

**J.S.Bedi**

Mr Jagdev Singh Jassowal is recognised in Punjab as a person who has influenced the politics of Malwa, especially in the Ludhiana belt. Mr. Jassowal did take to politics in his youth, contested elections and was elected to the Punjab Assembly in 1980. But politics, dominated by opportunism and self-interest, did not go well with him, and did not offer him enough opportunity to come up to the expectations of the people of his constituency

A recently released book on Mr. Jassowal, 'Jagdev Singh Jassowal-Jeevan te Shakhsyat', bring out the fact that 'For him the culture of Punjab is his turban and politics his shoes'. The comment of Mr Jassowal on politics, as recorded in the book, is expressive enough. He says, "Politics has lost its charm; all are concerned with their vested interests: no leader is worried about the plight of the people, society, the country, and culture.

Nearly, a decade ago when Mr Jassowal met me at the Chandigarh Lake Club, he admitted that he had finally decided to quit politics to devote himself fully to the promotion of art, culture and literature of Punjab and to revive the cultural heritage of the state which was being threatened by the imported culture of the West. He was then accompanied by a number of rural musicians, folk singers, and stage-artists who were proud of receiving his patronage. A sarangi-player said: Eh Jassowal tan.sadde wastey farishta hai. A folk singer confided that under the patronage of Mr Jassowal, he would definitely make a mark in the field of Punjabi folk music. Similar sentiments were expressed by a 'dholaki' player and a 'tumbi' player.

For many years, Mr Jassowal has been holding Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Mela at Punjabi Bhawan, Ludhiana., where 'kavishars, dhadis, nagalchis, bhands, raadhariyas and gawwals' assemble to regale the audience with their performances. Besides, Punjab's evergreen folk dances such as 'Bhangra 'Giddhat 'Lok-Nach' are also arranged. On the concluding day of the mela, outstanding artists and men of letters are honoured. Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Mela, which was first held in 1979, continues to be an annual event. Now it has come to be known among the rural masses as 'Jassowal da mela' In view of the response from the folk artists of Punjab, a number of government departments and non- government cultural and literary organisations have come forward to provide funds for the mela. The credit for all this goes to Mr Jassowal who has brought about a cultural renaissance in Punjab. The Punjabis settled abroad have also started organising such melas in countries like Denmark and Canada.

Several Punjabi artists such as folk singers Harbhajan Mann and

Kuldip Singh Paras, comedians Jaswinder Bhalla and Bal Mukand Sharma admit that they owe their success to "Jassowal ji". About his own attachment to Punjabi art and culture. Mr Jassowal says it is a relationship like:

Chann nal chakor da, patang nal dor da,  
Been nal supp da, cha nal cup da.

"I am hand in glove with Punjabi culture and art as a curlew is with the Moon, the thread with the kite, the snake with veena and tea with the cup c.f: Another invaluable contribution of Mr Jassowal to the state of Punjab is the spirit of communal amity, brotherhood and national solidarity he has propagated from the Sabhyacharak Manch of which he is the president.

Born in the village of Jassowal, 9 km from Ludhiana, on April 30, 1935, Mr Jagdev Singh is a law graduate from Aligarh Muslim University. He has permanently settled in Gurdev Nagar, Ludhiana, where he is visited by a large number of people. He is the founder president of " Prof. Mohan Singh Foundation " and President of the "Vishav Punjabi Sabhyacharak Manch". Recently, he visited Canada to participate in the 5th international Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Mela held in the city of Surrey, British Columbia. This mela is held there every year under the presidentship of Mr Gurinder Singh. Thousands of Punjabis, Canadians as well as Americans attend this mela.

## A Visit to Pakistan

### Another ambitious step of S. Jassowal

**Narpal Singh Shergil, Patiala (U.K.)**

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal had a meeting with Mian Nawaz Sharif, the Premier of Pakistan, and the representation of 'the Cultural Stage Sabhiacharik Manch', was successful. The deputation comprised S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, the president of Vishwa Punjabi Sabhiacharak Manch ("The World Punjabi Cultural Stage"), S. Harnek Singh Gharuan, the ex-Minister of State, S. Jarnail Singh, the famous Punjabi painter; S. Harinderpal Singh Aulakh and Miss Sandeep Kaur. They had a brief but significant meeting with Mian Nawaz Sharif, at his farm house at Jati Umra, near Lahore, a few days back. They demanded that the historical, literary and cultural heritage of the total (undivided) Punjab be at once safe-guarded. They said that in the Folklore Institute of Islamabad, The Museum at Lahore, as well as in other culture-related institutions, the books written by famous Punjabi literateurs, the artifacts of well-known painters and sculptors, the audio & video cassettes of Punjabi folk-singers, the tunes of Punjabi folk songs, should be duly preserved and that the most invaluable heritage of the ancient and the modern Punjab culture should be fully protected and safe-guarded. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal also insisted that at the time of cultural fairs that are held both in the Indian Punjab and the Pakistani Punjab the visa system should be made easy and time-saving both for the artists and

the lovers of art. He also appealed to Mian Nawaz Sharif that the ancestral home of Prof. Mohan Singh, the leading Punjabi poet, that lies at the village Dbamial in Rawalpindi District, be preserved as a national memorial. He also requested that Pakistan Government should provide proper facilities for facts-collecting to the famous Punjabi literary 'Dr. Atam Hamrahi' who was writing a 'heavenly' book 'Shah Nama Punjab' and for a famous Punjabi scholar Prof. Mohinder Singh Cheema who was preparing a documentary book on the common culture of the two Punjab. S. Jassowal also suggested that in all Punjabi writing in the West Punjab they should also use 'Gurumukhi' Script along with the Persian Script at all possible levels; for the clothing of a language has nothing to do with religion, as is the case with Bangla Language which is spoken by the followers of several religions but has the same Bangla Script.

The Prime Minister at once granted permission to the batches of Punjabi artists and actors to go to the historic Gurdwara of Nanakana Sahib and complete the remaining portion of the Punjabi film 'Door Nahin Nankana', at the request of S. Harnaik Singh Ghanuan; but also expressed a desire that all efforts should be made to produce standard type of Punjabi films. When S. Jarnail Singh, a painter, presented to the Prime Minister selected paintings of his invaluable artistic skill, the Prime Minister highly appreciated them.

Last year on the eve of the freedom celebration there was organised a 'peace and good will' march between India & Pakistan under the leadership of the renowned journalist Mr Kuldeep Nayyar. At that time S. Jassowal presented to the Pakistan's Prime Minister a set of the poems written in Urdu on Indo-Pak friendship as well as sung by S. Panchhi, a renowned Urdu Poet, and the Respected Prime Minister read it with great zeal and respect.

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal also dedicated to Mian Niwaz Sharif, a set of video cassettes of the cultural fairs of the Punjab; and the latter received it with great regard & said, " I shall be much pleased to see these old cultural fairs of my Punjab in my hours of weariness and fatigue". Later, Mian Nawaz Sharif gave a dinner to the distinguished representatives of his ancestral village Jati Umra, Distt. Amritsar, who had arrived headed by Colonel Partap Singh Gill, the ex-Lieutenant Governor of Goa; Mian Nawaz Sharif observed that "during the sports in Delhi, I had gone to my native village 'Jati Umra' and had even spent the night there. In order to keep that sweet & cozy memory ever fresh in my mind. I have named my farm and my village in Pakistan 'Jati Umra'.

Mian Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister, Pakistan, then ordered his special ambassador Khwaja Sadiq Akbar to prepare a detailed report above, and offer the same to him for a speedy action.

## A brave son of a Punjabi mother

**Sukhminder Rampuri**

I had come to know of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal since the time he was a P.A. to justice Gurnam Singh, the Chief Minister of Punjab, but got the chance to see him, when after the overthrow of Gurnam Singh Ministry Sant Fateh Singh came to Narangwal to lay the foundation stone of the main hall of the college.

I had gone to Narangwal by chance to see my friend Jaswant Ratan. When he came to see me off, he told me that Sant Fateh Singh was visiting Narangwal that very day to lay the foundation stone of the college hall, and that it would be an enjoyable programme. So I delayed my departure.

There was police every where both within and without the college. My friend & I parked our bicycles along the trees and began to wait for the arrival of Sant Ji. We took our stand on the edge of the road to the left side of the college. The place where the foundation stone was to be laid was some thirty or thirty five yards away from us.

Sant Fateh Singh under the coverage of official as well as non-official body guards was about to reach the site, when a jeep came from the south at the speed of lightning and stopped by our side. The men sitting in were Jagdev Singh Jassowal and his companions. They were shouting:

Fatu Mama, hai! hai!; Fatu Mama hai! hai!"The police grew highly nervous where had these cursed fellows come from? some other people, too, joined in raising these slogans. Police at once moved, and rushed towards Jassowal's jeep. We, too, received a few club blows on our backs. We left our bicycles and ran to the fields."Fatu Mama, hai! hai!" raising this slogan the jeep ran towards small Narangwal as fast as it had come. After a brief spray of rain when the Sun re-appeared, the weather became normal again. We returned and took our bikes. This was my first view of S. Jassowal. This view had cost me a pain on the Back for two days.

I knew Jassowal; and he too, had heard of me through the 'Punjabi writers' society'. I came to know of it on the day when while coming from Chandigarh he paused at the Rest House of Rampur; and his car picked all of us one by one and seated us inside and brought us into the Rest House. We were Surjeet Rampuri, Surinder Rampuri, Mal Singh Rampuri & I. Jassowal lay in bed in the Rest House. He rose and met each one of us most cordially. At this first personal contact I saw him carefully at close quarters. Outside the Rest House thick dusk was turning into night moment by moment.

The car driver was bringing bottles of wine from the 'digg' and another man was bringing ice; a third one was bringing 'Soda water'; while the man serving in the Rest House was bringing tumblers. After the first peg there was a little chit chat and then there was a mini 'Kavi Darbar' (poetic meeting). I was the last to speak. Even otherwise, I was the youngest of the whole lot. After I had spoken, came the turn of S. Jassowal. He raised a long and loud tune and highly amused us. As he sang, his melodious tune spread all over the Rest House, and even the trees in the Rest House seemed to sing in unison. In this orchard of 'Rat Ki Rani' (a kind of yasmine) there are three

trees; and it seemed as though their fragrance were adding its own musical content to Jassowal's tunes. This contact of mine with my Respected brother Jassowal was a very rich and cordial contact; and it brought us very close to each other.

We were small, mediocre persons; he was in possession of power and authority! Though these days he was out of power, yet a man who once wields power, becomes permanently attached to it.

After a brief departure from the head lines of news papers, Jassowal once again appeared on the front pages in all his glory & splendour, when he converted the birthday of Prof. Mohan Singh into a "Punjabi Cultural Fair", when he coalesced together all the scattered fragments of Punjabi culture and made their demonstration on the stage. He honoured on the stage from all singers like Mohammed Sadiq, Kuldeep Manak, Ranjit Kaur and Narinder Biba to all litterateurs; and from 'bhands' (Clowns) bards and other professional jesters to jugglers and snake-charmers. At that time S. Jassowal and the spirit of Punjabi culture got merged together into one; and Jassowal became the symbol of Punjabi culture. In the beginning for about two years the Mohan Singh Fair looked dull & not so well-attended; but now it has crossed all limits of ascendancy. Now even the vast compound of Punjabi Bhawan looks so narrow and the Fair ever remains in search of new grounds vaster and more spacious than the previous ones. Now in the Punjab any cultural fair or musical conference looks dull and insipid without Jassowal. He has his personal dealings with every man of letters. He calls Rampur the Literary Capital of the Punjab. Punjabi Literary Society of Rampur, being the first literary society of Punjab, has a special attachment with the Rampur public.

Though politics has penetrated every nerve and fibre of his being, yet he now prefers to move about in literary and cultural circles rather than in the political field and says, "I feel deep mental tranquillity while sojourning in the literary circles".

In proof of this fact I will here place before you a talk by way of argument which being his friend I once had with him; for by now I had no longer had only a cursory acquaintance with Jassowal which I had when I first saw him on the day he was seen shouting "Fatu Mama, hai, hai!"

Jassowal and I sat gossiping together in his own house, -I said in the course of the talk Bhai Sahib, You political people often remain political minded only; but the venture that you have undertaken to award honours upon the literary artists, will, one day surely yield a good result. Bhai Ji., asked me, "Which good result?"

"May be, these poor writers will one day begin to write something intelligible to the masses."

He laughed with a clap and said, "The foam of their intellectual cud often besmears my clothes too, how can they write at the level of the mass

intellect?" He complains that "writers do not write in full mental composure and devotion; nor show any spirit of a true votary of bearing. That is why Punjabi is not so valued as Urdu is done."

Just as you have started honouring them, may be, as in the case of the paralytic cured of their disease". said I. At it again he laughed in a guffaw. "But Bhai Ji, tell me one thing. While leading a political life how did you think of taking this turn?"

"My younger brother, when they expelled me from politics, I chose this career; I can never sit still". I grew serious and said, "Jassowal brother, you are great. Just as you have disclosed this secret of your life; few politicians do. Have the people rejected you? No, not at all. Does this big gathering of the people at the Mohan Singh Fair indicate your rejection by the people or your acceptance, politics is only one aspect of life while the total Punjabi culture represents total life; and you are the uncrowned monarch of Punjabi culture!"

Today I am conversant, if not with all, at least, with most of the characteristics & virtues of Bhai Jassowal. I know how Punjabi food-bread of wheat-gram mingled flour, whey and butter is served in his house. I know all those literary artists of Ludhiana who are closely related to him as well as those bards who climbing on Jassowal's shoulders hope to attain to the ranks of Shelley, Milton and Keats.

But Jassowal, unmindful of all this is steadily marching forward, along with his assistant Pargat Singh Grewal. He is a brave son of the Punjabi mother- the standard bearer of Punjab, Punjabi, and Punjabi-ati. "(of Punjab, Punjabi language and Punjabi identity).

I bow to him for his ardent passion for & contribution to Punjabi identity & culture and pray to God Almighty, "O God, grant a long life to this worthy Son of Yours., grant him the capacity to serve Punjab, Punjabi language and Punjabi culture!"

## To-day's Hatim Tai- Jassowal

### Harbhajan Singh of Batala

At the eve of Prof. Mohan Singh's death Misha Ji and I called at his place for condolence. There we had the chance to see a man with a giant-like stature, donned with black turban, having a loose beard, and wearing 'Kurta' (Shirt) and 'Payjama'.

Misha Ji introduced me to him saying, "He is Jathedar Jagdev Singh Jassowal." This introduction of fifteen years back got the shape of closer and still closer acquaintance, as time passed and our depth of cordiality went on increasing. I frequently got the chance to see S. Jassowal after that. Why not? He will greet you with a warm embrace every time! The introducer Misha Ji got aside, but our intimacy grew deeper and deeper.

There was the function of the inauguration of Mohan Dai Oswal Cancer Hospital. Jassowal took me and photographer Kaka with him; and a few

moments later reached his native village Jassowal apparently to attend there some marriage ceremony. In fact, Sant Ram 'Udasi' was very sad that day & he was in our company; his Son was to be employed. A kiln-owner interrupted and stopped us on the way. He requested us to have our lunch with him before leaving. When Jassowal did not agree, he placed two or three bottles of wine in our car. As we went a little further, Jassowal said, "Did you see the wisdom of a Khatri? How can a man escape them?" We reached the village Binjhol, Justice Gurnam Singh's son was an office-holder in the Market Committee. He gave a broad smile to see Jassowal. Jassowal Sahib said, "Bhai, we have come to see you only." He is Mr Udasi, please see that his son is employed some how- on a permanent or temporary basis, as you can." He seemed to have gathered speed and impetus! Jassowal at once brought a smile on his face. As the car proceeded, they saw a man sitting on a sack spread by the roadside & selling berries. We bought one Kilogram of berries and began to eat them on the way. These homely berries became very tasty in Jassowal's company.

Jassowal always laughs freely and unrestrained like parched maize grains. He has a free and fearless temperament, a genuine Punjabi temperament. While sitting at home on a wooden cot he looks like the head of a monastery! In a foreign land if you were to describe a typical Punjabi, then I think, none can be a better illustration than S. Jassowal.

He is a master at organising fairs and festivals. Prof. Mohan Singh Fair he conducts himself every year. He has also created a zest for these fairs in many others too. Fairs give a glimpse of every aspect of life. At one place, you see young lambs engaged in an encounter; at another a snake dancing to the tune of the snake-charmer; at a still other place, you see dancers dancing in a ring; at one place, folk-singers are entertaining the people with their songs. Jassowal has not only conveyed Prof. Mohan Singh's message to the people through these fairs, but has also rejuvenated Punjabi culture. He has placed, at the service of the people, their common heritage, their tradition and practice, folk-songs, their faith & creed, their games and sports, and entertainments. He is a born servant of the people. Once the Governor of the Punjab visited Punjabi Bhawan; the police prevented the public from going in. Jassowal also took his stand in the open like other people and formed a ring. He said, "If the people are not allowed to enter the Punjabi Bhawan, I, too, won't enter. He is an educated Jat & Jats do not know how to beg, they only know how to give. If they can afford to give sugar canes, they will give sugar-canes; & if they can give only a 'rewri' (a lin-seed coated sugar) ball, they will give a 'rewri'. But Jassowal is far above the common dat. He is generous like Hatam Tai- every inch a Hatam Tai! He can go even to the extent of removing his clothes from his person and give them in charity! Like a hermit, fire Jassowal's fire of charity & generosity remains

ever smouldering. On one side he receives I.A.S. type of people, and on the other, bare-bodied and bare-footed paupers' and he deals with both with equal efficiency & skill; and they all go back so satisfied!

One day Late Dr. Gurnam Singh Tir while sitting with him began to complain of toothache. Jassowal put his hand into his pocket and took out a clove and gave it to him. As soon as S. Gurnam Singh placed it under his tooth he felt some relief. Can't say how like Satya Sai Baba Jassowal takes out everything. If you like, he can procure for you even the milk of the sparrows.

He is good at making schemes and projects. Out of home, we can't say, what he does & what not,; but at home also he has made four parts by raising artificial walls. In one part of the house live the members of the family. One part is complete guest house; in one part lie buffaloes and in one part, are seen the spectators, sitting, some above, some below, drinking and uttering exclamatory words. The programme remains in progress & who so ever comes, gets something and drinks something; and leaves when satisfied. One leaves, and another comes; as in a 'Divan Khana' the public rush ever continues.

In the fields of art and literature he has gone too far. He has honoured and patronised singers and artists every year to such an extent, as we cannot conceive even. Even ordinary singers he has raised sky high. He respects them so much that a singer in fact, begins to regard himself as an important personage.

They say the fortune of a family is judged even from its parlour. In the same way you can read and understand Jassowal's nature from just a brief exchange of words. His words smack of raw maize cobs and taste like unheated fresh milk! Even from his complexion you can derive that flavour of Punjabi culture which you ever search for in others.

He is unique in himself, a model of a good man. He is the president of several institutions, their secretary or patron member; can't say what other arrows he has in his repertory. He will certainly bequeath to the lovers of Punjabi culture & identity something invaluable. We should repose full trust in him; for he is in every respect a man of capacity & capability. I pray for Jassowal's long life and good health & long to see his fame spread far and wide!

## In Indefatigable Man of Action

**Dr. Pritpal Singh Mehrook**

A few years back a public function was organised by the cultural society, Hoshiarpur under the super vision of S. Tirath Singh Swatanter for the release of Lal Padhianvi's book "Sandhuri Geet". I was entrusted with the responsibility of reading a paper on this book. To preside over the function S. Jassowal had conveyed his assent. As God willed it, on the eve prior to the day of the

conference S. Tirath Singh Swatanter passed away! On the next day, exactly at the scheduled time S. Jassowal reached. He looked very sad and lost in grief.

The proposed conference changed into a condolence meeting. S. Jassowal very poignantly expressed his grief over the sad demise of S. Tirath Singh Swatanter and while paying his tributes to the deceased he praised him in the most glowing terms for his rich contribution in the cultural field and called him 'the indefatigable ambassador of Punjabi culture, the one who ever remained actively engaged in the dissemination of Punjabi culture'. The audience on one hand, were acutely pained at the sad, eternal departure of S. Tirath Singh Swatanter, and on the other were mesmerised more than ever before, by the magnetic personality of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal - the tireless, enthusiastic, motive force behind all cultural activities! The people, present in the assembly realised the fact that Jagdev Singh Jassowal's name had become a respectable symbolic representation of the sages of the ancient times, ascetics of the Middle Ages, and the public servants of the modern age.

S. Jassowal's whole life is devoted to folk-culture and humanism. With the solemn pledge to disseminate Punjabi culture far and wide up to the extreme limit S. Jassowal both exhorts & inspires the creative propensities of the artists as well as serves as a source of inspiration for both the new as well and the established artists. To preserve the rich cultural heritage of the Punjab and to keep it in the burgeoning state S. Jassowal takes a keen interest and makes newer & still newer schemes & endeavours to give them a concrete shape for the realisation of that end. He not only cherishes ever new dreams to keep himself in link with the cultural tradition of the Punjab and to derive new inspiration from it, but also awakens the same dreams in several other minds. He captivates everybody by dint of his righteousness, diligence, industry as well as affability in social behaviour. He treats everybody with courtesy & affection and shows great breadth of mind. He believes that man's true greatness does not lie in his personal acquisitions and achievements but in his spirit of renunciation and human service; not in vain splendour but in simplicity, not in rest & comfort but in arduous labour; not in deeds of self-interest but in deeds done in the interests of others.

He has the knack at gauging the innermost depths of the minds of the artists, literateurs & intellectuals, and taking out to the surface, like an expert diver, all that is good, healthy, genuine there in. To kindle the inner spark in the mind of the artists he is ever ready to employ all possible means at his disposal and lay at the stake all he has. Hundreds of artists who love Punjabi culture have sought the blessings of this custodian of artistic faith & supreme artist & won name and fame. Today, Jassowal is not an individual but an institution - the institution of Punjabi culture. His heart is tender, mind salutary, temperament enthusiastic and point of view scientific. He is ever ready to

open the doors of cultural evolution of the society and this iron-man is never tired and never bored. This tireless man of action sticks to the path taken and goes on in pursuance of his goal.

Today the inspiration and encouragement given by S. Jassowal to the cultural circles has become an integral part of the cultural activities of the Punjab; and a cultural programme, however grand and ambitious, in the absence of S. Jassowal looks pale, imperfect & poor. Certainly, his services rendered for the preservation of mother-tongue Punjabi and Punjabi culture are unique in a way & of great importance.

This fragrant rose has yet much fragrance to emit; it has yet to scatter the heart-ravishing fragrance of its genius all around and keep aromatic the orchard of Punjabi art and culture with its sweet smell.

## The Apostle of Punjabi folk-culture

**Prof. Kulwant Singh Grewal**

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is a very great and towering personage of Grewal community. I am referring to those days when the educational and literary environment of the Punjab was under the dominant influence of two colleges - Mohindra College, Patiala and Khalsa College, Amritsar. He was a student of Mohindra College and a student leader of state level. I had just finished the stage-recital of my poem 'I am a poet' with ample appreciation from the audience & taken my seat, when two strong arms almost squeezed me and I heard, "God has preserved your dignity & honour, brother. Well, whether I was senior to him in age or junior, it matters little, but one thing is certain: whatever has happened in the Punjab in connection with folk song during the previous generation and whatever they call genuine folk-song, are all under the kind, chaste and far-sighted eyes of my blessed & monarchical type of I 'o her with lofty & epical vision. I refer to those days when I was a language scholar in Bengali in Yadav pur University, Calcutta. S. Jassowal visited Calcutta, in the company of Justice Gurnam Singh and Sant Fateh Singh. It was in the year 1964, the prominent literary artists in those days were Captain Bhag Singh, S. Manjit Singh Calcutta, Prof. Hira Lal Chopra, S. Hardev Singh Grewal, Giani Bachan Singh Sarn, Giani Bhachittar Singh, Prot Kulraj Singh, Sh. Raghbir Singh Bir & some others. They all had accepted my suggestion that for the reception of Sant Fateh Singh they should contact the prominent revolutionary poet of Bengal Qazi Nazur-ul-Islam. The Revered Saint was heavy of physique. Leading the cavalcade of thousands of cars he was proceeding towards us in royal splendour! The main Bazar of Calcutta and all other roads & passages were blocked with traffic.

The love and affection which our Bengali brethren exhibited that day forms one of my most cherished memories - and my precious treasure! Qazi Nazur-ul-Islam lived in a very narrow street along with his son Qazi Shabeshghi.

on an upper storey. The stairs leading to it were very narrow and curved. The Saint was very cheerful of disposition and could use as well as receive ironical remarks with equanimity. He was climbing the stairs as well as singing!

"We hear that very narrow are the stairs through which the men of Yamraj (i.e. the Lord of Death) will take us away. Jassowal Sahib who was the political secretary responded with their joinder, "Father, we, the poor fellows, will also be able to pass through those passages through which sturdy men like you can pass.

Suddenly there came a terrific bursting sound which caused thousands of pigeons to fly away from the attic of a house of Muslim 'Khojas, and then gradually began they to return and perch on the attics of the crowded bazars of Calcutta. Qazi Nazar-ul-Islam (please remember, he was the national poet of Bangla Desh) was mentally ill in those days. Whenever he shook hands with any body, he first stared at him very carefully and invariably took out that person's pen from his pocket. We had been informed of this habit of the Qazi. So Revered Saint and I were already well-prepared for it. Saint ji, had in his hand 'Siri Sahib' draped in pink Satin. Can't say what happened that the Qazi welcomed the Saint most politely. He muttered something, "O Sikh Greatman, I love you! love you! love you?" At the same time he gave a warm embrace to the Revered Saint. Well, all the snaps taken by the camera then, were published by the press all over the eastern part of India. My brother Jagdev Singh, later, related this miracle before the people, and said, "Would that such a breeze blow that out of the mutual love of Punjab and Bengal there grow millions of poets & singers who by introducing zest into the insipid existence of India widen the path of mutual love!"

This magnanimous personage by starting Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair, at Ludhiana has done a deed of great charity & benevolence for the whole community of poets & singers. This Fair is a cultural movement whose founding personage is my brother Jagdev Singh Jassowal. I pay my compliments to the sacred & blooming landscape of Jassowal which has given the world such a blessed personage in the form of Jagdev Singh Jassowal!

Jassowal is not a name of some individual but of that cultural climate and environment which during his very life time has identified itself with him and made him the Head Priest of the Pulpit of Punjabi cultural life! The man who earns so much love and regard even during his life-time is a divinely blessed individual indeed!

At the end I offer my tributes to his activities and achievements through this verse of mine and offer him a million of congratulations; "Your name has been written in heaven; while our names have been written in your books.

## Prof Mohan Singh & Jagdev Singh Jassowal

**Prof. Mohinder Singh Cheema**

Prof. Mohan Singh possessed Waris Shah's heritage; while S. Jassowal

had politics at his disposal. There was no common ground between them. But still they became fast friends. Mohan Singh was proud of the power of his pen, proud of his distinction as a poet. Jagdev Singh was just a reader, but sagacious enough to evaluate a talent; Mohan Singh had lacads of readers, lacads of appreciators & votaries. He did not hanker after praise or appreciation. He only felt the scarcity of friends. At Ludhiana Kartar Singh Shamsar showed him friendship and he even included S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal in the list of his friends. Jassowal, thus, became their common friend.

At one time Prof. Mohan Singh had knocked at the ear of Jagdev Singh in the capacity of a poet, and had also opened the portals of his mind. Now as a friend Mohan Singh has knocked at the Gurdev Nagar house of his friend Jassowal! Jagdev Singh's court yard was filled with and roofed edge was adorned with illuminations! Friendship with Mohan Singh became the cardinal point of his creed; and friendship with Jassowal became Mohan Singh's motive force! They began to have long walks together; heart to heart talks together; held poetic meetings till late at night. They would relate stories & incidents of the whole world, exchange hundreds of verses and tit bits - make remarkable statements, exchange knowledge of all kinds. Mohan Singh's deep & vast erudition lent Jagdev Singh Jassowal's talents & faculties a constructive shape & direction.

Jagdev Singh became more sensitive and emotional in relation to his village Jassowal, even his physique began to smack of the soil of his village! He realised that true wisdom lay in relating his intellect to the wheat of his fields! he realised the commonness of man and the soil as well as the significance of the native place; new secrets came to be divulged to him; his zest or sense of enjoyment woke up; he realised the greatness of the Malwa region; the true meaning of the Punjab fell into his wit. Besides realising the beauty and mystery, latent in Punjabi culture he also grew conscious of its potency and capability; he began a search for true Punjabi identity. An healthy stomach always feels the intensity of appetite; when the brain is on the path of growth, curiosity is further accelerated. All this happened to S. Jassowal too. A sound mind has ever lain in a sound body. Led by curiosity or craving for knowledge S. Jagdev Singh got from Master Tara Singh not only training but also an initiation into politics. He became the general secretary of Akali Dal, in search of a wider field of action he became a favourite of Pandit Nehru also and donned himself with the congress robe. He kept the dark colour of his turban fast like the colour of a 'majithi chola' became the Vice President of a new party. During Gurnam Singh's ministry he became the state-counsellor and did great deeds; he also fulfilled his obligations as a member of the constituent assembly in his own characteristic way and accomplished great deeds. He also experienced political set backs; set before himself new targets; searched for new goals and fields of action; worked with Giani Zail Singh also.

I have always given my congratulations to S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

for his political defeats on the eve of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair and prayed for his long-life. I have witnessed on his every exultant success the signatures of Prof. Mohan Singh. I have also always paid my compliments to Prof. Mohan Singh's memory. I regard S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal as the first Jathedar of Punjabi culture, i.e. the first custodian of Punjabi culture. He has until now honoured scores of rebeck players, folk-singers etc; and thousands are on his list. He knows every artist in person; is a sort of computer. In hours of trial he pinions to their seats thousands of people of Gurdaspur-Tarn Taran region, for the whole day with his oratorical speech. To revive the memories of the neglected and half-forgotten artists he goes to far off, out of the way, villages, even to cremation grounds. At one place he holds a poetic meet, at another a music-conference; at one place there is a tournament and sports programme; while at another dance and other arts are at display; on one side there is a literary symposium and on the other a critical appreciation of books. Here a new singer is being brought to the stage and there a new cassette of some old artist is being released. From Shawki to Didar Sandhu all are under critical review and are being eulogised. In the Punjabi Bhawan more than half of the functions are held by S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. He holds no office, keeps no staff, makes no self-display, has no paraphernalia, mere personal diligence & enthusiasm are his forte! Jassowal is the first organiser of fairs and festivals of the Punjab. A fair sets up a tradition, an individual can't. Jassowal is changing even the concept of culture. Despite being an individual he organises fairs, and acts as an institution in himself. He has set up a practice which twenty years, since 1978. It is Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair! Just imagine the wonderful exploit of this Fair- organiser! It is the twelfth Fair (upto year 1990). In 1990 he conducted at Ludhiana the proceedings of this fair from Canada- with a remote control, as it were! My compliments to you, Jassowal to your patience & fortitude, compliments to your earnestness of purpose. You have demonstrated magic in many shapes. Even this fair involves magic, we have never seen such a fair-organisation. Such magic is bound to over-whelm every body; no pen can adequately describe it. Mohan Singh's memory, too, is so magical in effect.

He is a true man, every inch a man- a student of Khalsa school; brilliant of intellect- because of the broad liberal education of the Arya College, Ludhiana. His passion for knowledge is boundless - because of the bracing cultural climate of Government College, Ludhiana and Mohindra College, Patiala; he has become an admixture of history, tradition and literature. His angle of vision has the elevation of an eagle's vision; because of his studentship of Aligarh University. From that vantage point he visualises the identity and oneness of humanity. Owing to the august & benevolent guidance of Baba Nanak, the unique example of Guru Gobind Singh. Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair eulogises and recognises all human achievements & does not simply confine itself to Punjabi culture and identity & in the capacity

of Guru Gobind Singh Foundation's president he establishes his links with all the prominent personages of the day. He even invited Sh. K.R. Narainan, the then President of India to inaugurate the historic symposium. He is the combination of resourcefulness and administrative expertise..

At Jassowal's house you can see at any time the noise and stir of a regular Zoo. At one place you will see sculptural designs, at another music-practice in progress!

S. Jassowal's house is also a museum of the articles but Punjabi culture. In his hospitality you won't find formality & artificiality, homeliness & naturalness. Whenever Prof. Mohan Singh had his meal at Jassowal's house, of ovenbaked loaves with rape-plant 'Saag' in a bronze-plate and a lump of butter on it; then after taking some brown sugar at the end he would exclaim; "My friend, Punjab is alive & alive she will remain for ever!"

Jassowal by transforming his friendship into devotion, has preserved Mohan Singh's memory. We, too, say, "Friend, Punjab is alive & alive she will ever remain!" A whole volume is needed to dwell on this point in detail. Prof. Mohan Singh had been bewitched by love; while Jassowal betrays on him the spell of Mohan Singh's memory Puran Singh's blessing seems to be absolutely correct.

## A Cultural Caravan- Jassowal

**Prof. Gurbhajan Gill**

It is not possible to say anything about one's nearest and most cordial friend exactly; you cannot see your own face, if you take it too close to the mirror. To see our own semblance we have to stand at some distance from the looking glass, while writing something on S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal we face almost a similar problem- the problem of seeing our own reflection while standing too close to the looking glass. When I came to Ludhiana for my studies from a small village in Gurdaspur District, GGN Kh. used to be the centre of all literary activities. My tutor Dr. S.P. Singh and our Principal Sardul Singh had created for us very beautiful atmosphere in our college. Prof. Sohan Singh, Balraj Sahal, Gurbakhsh Singh Preetlari, Jaswant Singh Kanwal, novelist Gurdayal Singh, Shiv Kumar Batalvi, and nearly all writers of the new generation often visited our college & I had the chance to listen to them at close quarters.

Prof. Mohan Singh had then, joined the Punjab Agricultural University, as Professor Emeritus. Under the supervision of Vice-Chancellor Dr. Mohinder Singh Randhawa a galaxy of writers, artists and intellectuals also appeared around him. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal became the most illuminating pillar of light. He spent his mornings and evenings with him and held discussions with him on literary topics. Their meeting place was the upper storey of the Gurdev Nagar post office, or the bungalow of S. Gopal Singh Khalsa in Sarabha Nagar. In this company the fourth face was of the stage-poet Kartar Singh Shamsheer who wrote 'Nili Dhir'. Around them both was the invisible

'Lakshman Rekha' (boundary line) which did not allow any alien to come near. I realised this fact, when in connection with a literary conference while making a search for Prof. Mohan Singh I leached to come to their possible meeting place. In the Collyriamdy edhterary meet of the evening Prof. Mohan Singh was reciting in a sing song manner and in pothohar style his poem 'Sadi gal suni ja' in an ecstatic manner. It was immediately followed by the interesting tit bits of Shamsheer 'Sahib' and then came S. Jassowal's laughter which came like the crackling sound made by the parching maize grains.

I had seen Jassowal then for the first time. It refers to the year 1971-72. Then there was a long interval and we saw each other from a distance. In 1978 Prof. Mohan Singh passed away and with tearful eyes when S. Jassowal persuaded the then Chief Minister S. Parkash Singh Badal to bid a fair departure to Prof. Mohan Singh with state ceremony, it was something that Punjabi writers saw for the first time. In their company was S. Kulwant Singh Virk who at that time was S. Parkash Singh's Information Secretary.

The same year Jassowal called a meeting, at his house, of all the writers, artists & intellectuals of the Punjab to organise a special function in the memory of Prof. Mohan Singh. Men like me, too, attended this meeting. I was, then, a lecturer in Lajpat Rai Memorial College, Jagraon and attended this meeting along with Prof. Takhat Singh. Those fifteen years from 1978 to 1993 now look like fifteen days. Now there is held every year a big Folk Cultural Fair in the memory of Prof. Mohan Singh and it is attended by thousands of folk-singers and artists both from Punjab and outside Punjab. Nearly ten lac of people enjoy this fair during three days. This miracle has not happened in a jiffy; but is the result of fifteen year's hard labour: like the one who burns his own house and then enjoys the light, S. Jassowal, too, has poured down his blood to make the fair a mammoth gathering- a big caravan of ever moving, ever progressing. Today, all the cultural fairs that are held in every village, in every town and in every street- owe their parentage to Prof. Mohan Memorial Cultural Fair, sketched by S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal on a vast canvas. This fair has been attended even by Bhai Dilbagh Singh, Gulbagh Singh Chann; Singh Bandhus & Lal Chand 'Yamla Jat', too, have been singing here; Surinder Kaur and 'Mastana', Gurdas Mann, Hans Raj Hans, Narinder Biba, 'Koke wali' Sarbjit, Chandi Ram 'Chandi', Amarjit of Gurdaspur, - all have time after time attended this fair and given their performances; rather one who has not participated in the programme of Mohan Singh Fair is not considered an artist. Even artists think that if they win Jassowal's and patronage & are given the chance to give their performance at this fair, they will be assured of their livelihood for twenty years. Such a remarkable achievement is not possible for a man of mediocre stature.

Jagdev Singh Jassowal has ever remained on the highest rank of power but whether he is in political power or remains out of this power, his distinction lies not in being an M.L.A. or a chairman, but in being 'Jassowal'. His Punjab does not lie between Shambhu & 'the Ravi river, but

wherever he sits, he creates a new Punjab. The town may be Washington or Vancouver or Southhall, every Punjabi is included in the list of his loving friends. If leading folk-singers come within the fold of his loving arms, the snake-charmers of Dugri village, too, do not remain deprived of his loving embrace. He listens to the words not only of the top novelist Surinder Singh Narula but also attends to the pea-cock of Sujapur and enjoys its sight. His friends' friends sadden him from moment to moment; but he opens his heart only before a few people. The results gathered by him from his experience have been availed of by the leading personalities of all parties but he himself still passes his hot summer days, semi-clad on the old wooden cot and enjoys himself. Let others learn from Jassowal how to share the joys of their friends. At times, however his scrutiny proves fertile and celebrating big festivals in the memory of petty individuals becomes an anathema for him or a standing joke against him.

During the last twelve years Punjab had to pass through the heavy ordeal of militancy. During this period Jassowal became a shield of protection for many singers and artists, nay, a protective sword for the folk-singers, a main stay for Punjab singers. I saw with my own eyes several singers reclining their heads against his shoulders with tears in their eyes. Had Jassowal not taken care of them at that time, many of them might have set up petty booths along the G.T. Road or set up flour-mills. Jassowal has never regarded Amar Singh Chamkila as a good singer; but he took his cruel and unexpected death as a challenge for himself. He stood over his burning pyre and said, "If country's problems can be solved by killing the artists then make us all stand in a line and shoot us!" Only Jassowal can make such a declaration.

Though in the name of cultural revolution in the Punjab the cultural fairs have not always been proceeding in a healthy direction, yet we should not forget that these fairs have not allowed Punjab to forget the traditional laughter, fun & frolic. It is also these fairs that teach us how to live together and how to die together.

Jassowal, today, is not an individual but the name of a caravan; his mode of thought is purely Punjabi and it endeavours to keep Punjabi language & Punjabi culture at the highest level of excellence. May, this river called 'Jassowal' flow at the same speed & flow eternally, be sieged with joys & merriments, sports and frolics !

## A Friend of Friends- Jassowal

**Ajmer Singh M.A.**

A friend's position is not lower than the position of Aven the greatest of men. Prof. Pura Singh writes, "To search out a handsome and good friend is the task of great wisdom." The fact is that to come by an sincere, true & genuine friend is a matter of great good luck! Tolstoy remarks, "Many people

say that this world is entirely selfish, But no, a true, loving friend can never be selfish; he rather by way of proof willingly & cheerfully lays down his life in our dire need."

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is a friend of friends & a lover of loving hearts; he remains ever attached to his companions and abides by them through thick & thin. He is by birth inclined to love and shows great regard for his kith & kin and dear ones. Just as it is very painful to remove a nail violently, it is equally difficult to come by a true friend under duress. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal during his studies at Khalsa High School, Kila Rai pur had made himself quite prominent by dint of his sharp intellect & broad mind. Some naturally became enamoured of him; especially the teachers who taught him highly loved him. They foretold that this Jagdev Singh would one day acquire the capacity to give something to the whole world. This promising youth soon transformed himself into such a sweet fragrance by which the circle of his friends became wider and wider day by day.

Then came such days when he developed a lust for taking political some results political life, in fact, is the life of clever tactics and deceitfulness. Famous Greek philosopher Socrates has called politics an other name for Satan's activities. But Jagdev Singh Jassowal's political life, too, became for him a sort of novel experience. He had the virtue that wherever he was stationed, he did something worth while. He became the general secretary of Shromani Akali Dal and a close associate of Sant Fateh Singh. As Waris Shah has written that Hir could be distinguished from among a thousand young women; in the same way, this unique Sardar, too, remains ever prominent in every shape & form. This friend of the friends even on stepping into the political field, learnt many things at every step. How strange it is that though he is an M.A. he never even for a day, thought of taking some economic gain from this degree. Of course, he did stick to his friends through thick and thin & in this respect never betrayed any slackness. He feels highly pleased to extricate from misery and distress his every friend & acquaintance. It is a false delusion to suppose that one gets more & more happiness by amassing huge wealth. Our Revered Guru has observed, "Where there is a lot of wealth, there is too much of worry", and worry is a kin to the pangs of death; so to seek mental peace in the abundance of wealth is like making vain efforts to search out a lump of gold from a heap of river sand. Jagdev Singh has ever searched for true friends. Because of his passing the LL.B. Examination from the Aligarh University he not only broke two records set up by old renowned Muslim students; but also established his reputation as an able student with keen legal knowledge and legal sense. There, too, he made cordial friendships with many students. He is such a Sardar of Jassowal as has never chosen to knock about in law-courts wearing the black-coat of the lawyer; but only believes in flying sky high. He remarks that the most blessed day of his life is when he renders some help to some friend and helps him in his distress & pulls out a thorn from his sore foot.

In 1967, when the Akali Ministry was set up in the Punjab, Justice Gurnam Singh, the Chief Minister, showed great prudence & fore-sight in appointing S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal his personal assistant. During this period Jassowal rendered great service to the people. He would visit Ludhiana every week, meet his friends and other people of his area, and strain every nerve to remove their grievances and solve their problems. He solved the problems of hundreds of them. It widened the circle of his friends. He is highly enamoured of Punjab, Punjabi and Punjabi identity. He says that he has made extensive tours of foreign countries like England, America, Canada, France, Italy and Germany, but he has nowhere found the sweet, cold water of the Punjab, her sweet, delicious loaves, her big pans overflowing with 'curd', milk and whey! That is why he has made it the mission of his life to set up a Punjabi stage from where to propagate and disseminate Punjabi culture and Punjabi spirit. He loves Prof. Mohan Singh's writings, songs and his poems. Though there are many other poets in the Punjab, - perhaps every inspiring and fascinating than Prof. Mohan Singh; yet Jagdev Singh deserves great praise and credit for propagating his friend Mohan Singh's poems not only in the Punjab but all over the world to keep his friendship with his friend alive for ever. He, thus, started Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair at Ludhiana, and thereby brought into prominent relief the professor's valuable artistic creations. To keep Mohan Singh's light ever aflame is the miracle of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal only. His courage & perseverance are loftier than the lofty Himalayas! No defeat or despair has ever caused a tremor in his legs! At the sight of a crowd of his friends he feels immensely pleased.

During his five years' stay at Punjab Assembly as its member he rendered a creditable service to Punjab and Punjabi language & culture. If he gained anything, it is that the list of his friends grew longer and longer. He observes that he always accepted a lump of salt offered by his friends as if it were a lump of sugar! He is always happy with his friends. He never feels self-important & self-conceited, has no hauteur, no vanity, no self-interest. He is ever eager to maintain his friendship & his friends.

## Jassowal- the custodian of Punjabi Culture

### Harcharan Mangat

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is highly enamoured of Punjab, Punjabi & Punjabi and is a custodian of Punjabi Culture. Being the chairman of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation he has started, an annual Fair and thereby lent Punjabi culture a mentionable richness and dignity. By getting Ustad Lal Chand Yamla Jat, Jagmohan Kaur and many other renowned folk-singers and artists honoured at social gatherings like the fair he has ushered in a golden age in the history of Punjabi culture. Punjabi culture is getting westernised; and Western culture, T.V. culture and the anti-Punjabi political clique are bent on destroying Punjabi culture. In this grave situation S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal by carrying on his cultural activities in different

fields and spheres of life has virtually become the custodian of Punjabi Culture. The steps taken by S. Jassowal, to keep Punjabi culture alive and in burgeoning state are unique and historic in significance. He is showing the cultural Punjabi world the right direction like the polestar and thus guides the Punjabi artists. Not only in Punjab even in foreign lands S. Jassowal has done much admirable work to popularise and disseminate Punjabi culture. In the cultural field S. Jassowal is quite ably and dexterously guiding the Punjabis.

I am quite sanguine that in the near future under the able guidance of S. Jassowal, Punjabi culture will touch glorious heights of grandeur and sublimity.

Even in the political sphere he has played a most transparent role in the capacity of an M.L.A. Even now as the president of the 'International Punjabi Cultural Manch' he is rendering valuable service.

Jassowal is a multi-dimensional personality. By virtue of his goodness, honesty, politeness, broad-mindedness, sociability, hospitality, fortitude, and many other human qualities Jassowal is not only loved by his countrymen but is also popular with the nations abroad. S. Jassowal is an optimist- 'ever aspiring, ever achieving' type of man, cheerful and lively of disposition. His warm welcome and affectionate greetings mingle sweetness in one's life. A playful smile, that ever stirs his lips is indicative of the beauty of his spirit. Whosoever meets Jassowal once ends with becoming his permanent friend. S. Jassowal has deep philanthropic learnings. He is a friend of 6-friends, the lover as well as the loved one! By sharing with people their weal & woe he helps stabilise social relationships. He is not a pessimist but an optimistic man of action. To those who come in contact with him, he exhorts to lead brave and adventurous lives. May God grant him a long life in order that he remains the watchman and custodian of Punjabi culture!

## The Man with wakeful eyes

### S. Ashok Bhaura

Just as the light of the Sun and the Moon knows no limit, and the sea-water is unfathomable, S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's greatness is indescribable. From where to begin the account of a personality interspersed in fragments in the cultural sphere, from where to find its links is beyond the comprehension of a common man. One has to bow before his sustained labour and diligence shown in continuing the Prof. Mohan Singh Cultural Fair for the last two decades and bringing about a cultural revolution in the Punjab by organising cultural fairs and festivals in village after village. We have also to bow before him for his extending his helping hand to every new singer and artist. His farm-house in Gurudev Nagar, Ludhiana has become a Mecca for those linked with cultural activities. 'The Governor of Punjabi Culture', 'the father (Patron) of folk-singers', 'The Messiah of folk-heritage', and several other titles and epithets have been associated with this grand

personage. Just imagine for a moment the time when S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal in his physical self will no longer exist in this perishable world; you will feel like shedding copious tears over his sad departure! Who will, then come forward to share with the folk-singers their smiles and tears, their joys and sorrows and be a source of comfort and consolation for them? Who will, then, hold fairs and festivals in every village? Who will, then, undertake the responsibility of spreading Punjabi culture all over the world in a systematic uniform manner and maintain its international level? Critics are found in every field; but once, at least, they, too, will break the point of their nib and raise a slogan in his praise. Well, it is not yet necessary, at this stage to harbour such imaginative, though plausible views in the mind & make it careworn and worried; for he is, actually alive and is moving about everywhere for the preservation of our culture.

I do not know Jassowal at all as a politician, nor have ever tried to understand him as a politician; for in the cultural field his stature touches the sky and his political stature looks a mere pigmy stature. During the past few years perhaps none has seen him at close quarters as I have done. The basis of many aspects of my writing is this 'Baba Bohar' (Supreme conductor) of cultural fairs. For the success of my song 'Shaunki Mele da' he has acted as my two arms and during my days of misery and stringency he has lent me a great moral support and redoubled my energies. During these few years many memories of my life have got linked with him.

None surpasses Jassowal in oratory. Let there be any sort of stage, every word uttered by him makes the audience ecstatic and they eagerly catch every word that escapes his lips; there are frequent clappings during his speech. As we move about in his company, we catch a glimpse of many aspects of our normal existence that cling to our memory. At the time I wrote my column 'Sur Sajna de, with regard,....to folk-singers and rebeck players, he said, "You run after these people on every holiday with your pen and notebook in hand, come to me, in stead, and I'll give you material for your writing in a single day that may suffice you for the whole month. Make it a point to see me, I'll pay your railway fare." I obeyed him. During such interviews he remained quite wakeful and alert intellectually, and his every word and sentence was meaningful. I highly appreciate his words, "When you go to some one's house, demand whatever you want to take; if you wish to drink whey, and the host is serving tea, or if you wish to take tea & the house-keepers are offering you 'sherbet', don't kill your taste to take whatever they offer; do not eat anything against your wish."

Jassowal's capacity & enthusiasm to do every work with might and main is not the virtue which every man can lay his claim upon. He leads to its logical conclusion whatever task he lays his hands upon. To set up the World Punjabi Cultural Academy' and to give it the practical shape to perform its cultural functions is the outcome of S. Jassowal's incessant labour and diligence as well as his true devotion to the goal in view. If one is inclined to

find faults only, one can discover a number of faults even in the gait of a passerby; but I will advise Jassowal's critics to find sometime and sit with him in all calm and composure and I am confident, they will irresistibly feel inclined towards him! He sincerely receives and entertains every visitor to his house; and there is no selfish motive in his hospitality. In his house you can see the 'charkha' (the spinning wheel), 'phulkari' (khadi cloth rich in embroidery work); but they are the symbols of Punjabi culture. He has not kept a bell to call the servant; but makes use of a 'bhompu whistle of a rickshaw driver. After pumping it he will call the servant. One who stays with him for the night will get early in the morning for his breakfast which consists of loaf made of wheat and gram flour, onion, curds and pickle; and throughout the winter season he will get loaves (a compound of wheat-gram flour and buck-wheat leaves), and curds. Jassowal will make even a stuffed belly receive two to four loaves more! "Oe, take them; can't say when you get them again! Even now while travelling, he invariably keeps four or five loaves with him in his car!"

Occasionally one or two artists may express some mild grievance against S. Jassowal; but it will be known to everybody that on the 'bhog-' ceremony of Late Singer Chamkeela, when none dared to utter a word for fear of the militants, S. Jassowal had burst into copious tears and said, "You can't get anything by killing Chamkeela; if you can establish Khalistan by killing artists, then first of all shoot me to death!"

From it everybody can understand how much love he bears the artists and what a soft corner he has in his heart for them. Though now S. Jassowal has partly succeeded in moulding the mind of his wife in favour of the artists, and she has started participating in his cultural activities, yet we do not find the previous homogeneity between them.

He admits that the peace of mind which he gets by engaging himself in cultural activities, could not be had in the political field nor in legal practice; but now he is not interested like Alexander in conquering the whole world! He thinks that the best that can be done, is only in the field of culture. After the death of Prof. Mohan Singh he got inspired by his love for the deceased to organise fairs in his honour, and these fairs attracted him towards the dissemination of Punjabi culture.

One day while leaving Ludhiana for Chandigarh he made a sort of spray on my armpit. I said, "What is it?" Do you know what answer he gave? He said, "Have it! have it! the body won't emit foul smell." At it we both burst into laughter.

Those who know S. Jassowal by name only must see him in person; unless those who profess their loyalty to culture see S. Jassowal's house-the Mecca of the artists or come within the warm fold of S. Jassowal, they will remain only knee-deep in their knowledge of Punjabi culture or its custodian.

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal should now declare some one to be his successor lest after his death; these folk-singers, rebeck players, stage poets, clowns, or other artists should regard themselves as bereaved and shelter-less people.

## Jassowal - the standard bearer of Artistic Fairs

### Giani Harkewal Singh 'Sailani'

For the cultural fair that is celebrated so pompously at Ludhiana every year under the name- Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Mela for the propagation of our mother tongue- Punjabi, and Punjabi culture & identity, all Punjabis deserve our congratulations. But the man who has put them on this path is S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal- the standard-bearer of Punjab, Punjabi language and Punjabi identity & culture. It is through his enthusiasm incessant effort and fortitude, coupled with the cooperation of the Punjabi public that its popularity & attraction, pomp and show, its gaiety and colourfulness- have acquired a unique distinction. Conducting this fair for the last thirty years he himself has got identified with it and become a 'fair' himself. Even in the remote corners of the Punjab wherever a cultural fair is held, it automatically becomes S. Jagdev Singh cultural fair & gets identified with his name. The fair which S. Jassowal attends acquires the same volume & magnitude that belongs to S. Jagdev Singh himself. Just as literary men and other artists win popularity with the masses and govern their minds- their uncrowned kings; in the same way he has become the king emperor that governs the minds of litterateurs and other artists as well as the thriller of the music-oriented hearts of the masses- and their uncrowned monarch!

It won't be an exaggeration if he is called the 'pole-star' or the Qutab Minar of Punjabi Cultural fairs'. But, as a matter of fact, not only in the Punjab but all over India and in many parts of the world such cultural centres are emerging and seeking guidance and inspiration from S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal day and night.

If you read news papers, you feel as though there has occurred a spate of Punjabi cultural fairs and many of them quite visibly bear the stamp of S. Jassowal's personality and are actually deriving guidance & inspiration from him. On January 29, 1988 at Mahilpur he planted the sapling of a cultural fair called 'Shaunki Mela' with his own hands, and did not forget to water and look after it; rather since then he has been watering it and looking after it every year. Now, those who have come to attend it after twenty years will feel that this fair, too, is acquiring the gigantic dimensions of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair.

The inhabitants of Mahilpur area pray for his sound health and long life; and they heavily appreciate the sincere & self less service he is rendering to this fair every year.

### The Hermit with the fire- Jagdev Singh Jassowal

The hermit with the fire is one at whose place the public traffic ever continues and fire remains constantly smouldering; and often some holy men sit by the fire, engaged in chat and also discuss divine things.

This is exactly the state of S. Jagdev Singh's house. You may go there in the morning or in the evening, you will find at all times sitting there singers, music-makers, artists, photographers, rebeck-players, bards, political as well as religious leaders. At times Jassowal sitting in the midst of these people looks like Guru Gorakh Nath, sitting on a mound, surrounded by a flock of his disciples with torn ears; and sometimes it seems as though Lord Krishna were sitting among his (female attendants) When he shows & disburses his subtle smiles from beneath his small moustaches, emanating from his thin lips, one feels as though S. Jassowal were sprinkling over the audience white, fragrant yasin petals. Jassowal feels much pleased while befriending singers and artists, and helping them. Many singers have stayed long at his house, getting board and lodging free of cost and learnt their particular art into the bargain, and today they have amassed huge wealth, and are moving about in cars & living in magnificent bungalows. They, too, hold Jassowal in high esteem and pay their compliments to him. Perhaps they don't show so much reverence even for their fathers as they show for Jassowal. They realise that their parents couldn't raise them from humble dust to the height of the sky as S. Jassowal has done. Their parents gave them birth & then sent them to S. Jassowal to provide for their food & drink; and like Guru Gorakh Nath's disciples, they get from Jassowal initiation in Yogic exercises, if they are to make their careers.

Jassowal is a friend of his friends as well as foe of his foes. I have witnessed his friendship quite frequently, enmity only occasionally. He is cheerful of disposition; that is why he has acquired such a handsome physical stature by God's grace. All these blessings are the indication of his cheerful and carefree disposition.

Jassowal is not greedy by nature he takes delight in extending as well as receiving hospitality; otherwise, any other person in his place, would feel annoyed at the burden of regular celebration of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair. Whatever contributions are made during the fair are distributed by him among the artists and general workers; he keeps nothing with him; any other man, in his place would only feather his own nest. He takes delight in enjoying everything with his friends. Now, of course, some of his companions have grown a varicious and ill-tempered; but S. Jassowal has always left a good impression on every departing person whether he was the Chief Minister of the state or a mere peon. Several times on the eve of a fair; Jassowal has sided with the singers and the public in general and not bothered about the Governor or the Chief minister; for he knows that the singers and the people are his constant companions; while the state dignitaries come so rarely. So metimes when the policemen disturb the people or the singers, he does not care for officers or leaders but sides with the people and the singers. This

shows his love and attachment with those people, among whom he daily sojourns. It is on this account that, Jassowal is called the "Governor of Singers", and the ambassador of Punjabi culture", every punjabi singer obeys him, whether he is Gurdas Mann or Harbhajan Mann because Jassowal duly appreciates their performance.

Professor Mohan Singh Memorial Fair is also a symbol of Jassowal's close friendship with the deceased; otherwise, many a singer and literary artists has passed away, 'unsung, unhonoured & unknown"! None has left behind any fair in his memory. In fact, culture has suited Jassowal more than politics. It is because in 'Culture' there is no leg pulling; and no leg-puller. In politics all are leg-pullers. So how could politics suit him? He has made many efforts to join politics. Many big leaders have often made promises with Jassowal but have always betrayed him at the decisive moment. Jassowal has never become so crooked in thought and action as majority of politicians are! so it is beyond any question that his mode of thought tally with their mode of thought. Nobody will ever shower so much love and affection upon the artists, and singers as Jassowal is showering today.

If you wish to ascertain the extent of the social regard in which S. Jassowal is held you may visit his house, and you will see that not to mention his rooms even his doors and windows are crowded with shields and trophies offered to him by various societies and institutions. On one side you will see photographs & portraits hanging; on the other you will see paintings; at one place there is a statue occupying some space, while on a wall are hanging flails and spinning wheels. One feels, on seeing all this, that S. Jassowal's house is a museum of old cultural relics form which we can get Punjab's old and traditional heritage. His house is surpasses all trophy-show rooms; for here you can see a rich variety of gorgeous trophies, big & small! They all announce the love and regard in which the Punjabi society holds for him.

Prof. Mohan Singh Fair has generated a number of new artists. Those folk-signers who could never become socially known have got their training in Yoga by Sardar Jassowal, the mound-seated hermit of Jassowal! That is why I call Jagdev Singh - the Hermit with fire!

Every man big or small attends his bon-fire and goes back after ' getting his needs fulfilled. It is the mark of a good and great man to fulfil the needs of others', otherwise, the well-known hermits and leaders are interested only in getting their own needs fulfilled and poor people go back from their doors empty-handed. None has ever returned disappointed from Jassowal's door.

## My first introduction with Jassowal

**Malkeet Singh Goara**

If you just cast a cursory glance at the headlines of a newspaper, you

will find invariably the name of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal in some corner or the other. Cultural fairs in his absence, look, prosaic & insipid and not well-attended & well-enjoyed. His absence from such fairs is ever acutely felt.

Who the deus is this Jassowal?

1, think in this 'era of media propagation none can remain unaware of it. High positions go on stifling from one person to another according to the trend of circumstances. But Jassowal's axed place even political upheavals can not shake. This personage has acquired a distinction by virtue of its manifold qualities, Whoever came in contact with Jassowal Sahib, became his permanent votary; whosoever spread his skirt before him by way of seeking his help, never went disappointed but invariably got something.

During the last years of the erst while decade. I completed my literary venture and intended making some use of it. Some friends and well-wishers advised me to see S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal that only he could ferry my boat across to the shore. I ran my eyes hither and thither to find out some one who could escort me to S. Jassowal. I made for the Barewal village for I had caught the hint that slander Singh Jassowal owned some land in Barewal too. My maternal aunt's daughter was married in Barewal. I found in my Aunt's son-in-law S. Balwant Singh a ray of hope. After having tea I told him the aim of my coming. He said that we should start the next morning at an early hour', for at that time Jassowal might be having some tipsy friend to attend & that Jassowal himself, too, was a guy type of man and one could not say in what state he might be. Awaiting the next morning we had a long chat and then fell asleep.

Next day, just at Sun-rise we were at S. Jassowal's Farm-house no. in Gurdev Nagar, Ludhiana. I turned my eyes upwards. There was written; "Jaskowal's nest. I glanced inside the farm house. It looked quite spacious. As soon as the servant saw us, he put us several questions at the same timer "Whez'e are you coming from? What has brought you here? Whom do you want to see etc. Balwant said, "We have come to see S. Jassowal Sahib, please, tell him the men have come from Barewal". As soon as the gunman heard of Barewal, he showed us in through a medium- sized iron-door and seated us on a big wooden cot lying in the compound, and left after telling us that the Sahib was coming within five minutes.

While sitting there I just cast a glance at the front wall on which there was a painting on a board nearly twenty five square feet in space. A peacock was dancing. On one side there were the paintings of a heron and a serpent. The heron had a frog in its beak. I kept casting furtive glances at this fine work of painting. A little later my eyes turned to something written above this painting. On the board was recorded in a strange manner:

"The pea-cock is dancing,  
The snake is proceeding to its holei"

In the mean time I heard some one's footfalls- someone was coming. I grew a bit nervous. A tall and voluminous person came and said, "Well, Balwant, what has brought you here's?"

I regarding him as my elder tried to bow down and touch his knees obediently but he took my hand within the fold of his hands and clasped me to his bosom. This mode of greeting left some indelible impressions upon my mind. Then as we were just making up our mind to start the talk and explain the purpose of our coming; the telephone bell rang. Jassowal Sahib picked up the receiver and answered the phone call: "Well, Balwant, first tell me who this young man isn't asked Jassowal Sahib ending the phone talk. "He is our relative, Sir"

What have you in this bag, So stuffed? Is everything O.K.?"

"What should I say, Jathedar Sahib? The fellow has written seven or eight big volumes', but has no money to get them published. He came to me with the request that I should introduce him to Jassowal sahib."

"Well, have you now met me? asked Jassowal Sahib, with a smile.

"Yes, Sir", I answered with equal readiness.

"Balwant, you have not told me his name?"

"My name is Malkeet, sir.

"Well, Malkeet, my boy, I will take some ten minutes, let me take off the telephone wire; otherwise, I may neglect it; you, in the mesh time, take off your shoes and sit on the cot comfortably" saying it Jassowal Sahib, went in. I wondered to think how such a man could be so polite and simple. His words were as it were, drenched in honey. His forceful and elaborate language was creating a lasting impression on the mind. Oblivious of his own greatness as a man how he was dealing with strangers so cordially!

Some one knocked at the door. and at once four or five men hurried in I thought these men might be most influential; otherwise, how could they intrude into the house without seeking his permission? one of them shouted, "O Jathedara, in which well have you fallen?" "Balwant, go and tell them I am taking out the telephone wire, it will take some five or six minutes.

But one of them forcibly entered his room and the others sat down by us. They started talking. "Jassowal is a very gay type of man; he is a friend of the friends, he never gives a frown at anybody's coming, the people fail to appreciate such a man and value his services, how rudely they overthrew him! he is so self-sacrificing in the service of the people; and they could not give him any votes! So selfish the damned ones! get their purpose served & then disappear!"

Balwant said to me. You have got your introduction with the Jathedar; he won't disappoint you; mention your books and get his view. I leave now Balwant left, leaving me alone amidst those strangers. It was only a cursory acquaintance. The sound of the foot falls inside disturbed my concentration.

I saw Jassowal Sahib approaching with some close acquaintance of his. He asked each one of them about his welfare and then said to me, well, Malkeet, has Balwant run away?"

I explained his difficulty and became quiet, for I had nothing else to tell. Then he said, Don't feel shy; he is your name sake- Malkeet from Mukandpur". Then he began to call continuously, Rajinder! O Rajinder"

A servant appeared. S. Jassowal said, "count these people, and bring meals for them, Be quickly."

I thought that without much acquaintance why to put burden upon a person? So I said, "Jassowal Sahib, I have already had my meal".

"I know you well. When do the women of Barewal serve anybody with 'prathas' at such an early hour! Soon you will feel the pinch of hunger. You have come of your own sweet will; now I shall send you back with my own sweet will!"

After some hesitation I took the plate. It came to my mind again and again that the townsmen do not offer tea or water to anybody', while this man was forcibly making his visitors take their meals. Only God knew of what substance he was made. The townsmen are to get rid of their guests (Visitors); and he was compelling his guests to stay & leave at the host's will! There is a world of difference between this man (Jassowal) and the common men. Earlier I was tormented by the thought how I would be able to see so big a man; but his affectionate behaviour had satisfied all my misgivings. We were, yet engaged with our meal, when there was again a knocking at the door, come on Mister, come on!"

Three men came in; and one of them spoke out just on coming, "Well, Sir, is the bell defective', we kept pressing the button in vain".

"O come in, sit down, you stalwart fellow. Bells are for strangers', you are allowed to hit us like a brick." Then the servant, "O Rajinder!" when he came, Jassowal asked him to bring meals for three persons more.

I thought he was acting like one holding a Langar (community dinner). It was really remarkable that in these days of dearth he was so lavishly disbursing his resources and even his house-keeper (wife) was not annoyed at this continuous labour', that she was working so hard in this awful heat of summer! she had no time for a moment's rest; and how hard pressed was his whole family!" I felt that there was hardly any other person so hospitable as was S. Jassowal.

We had not yet finished our meals, when Jassowal Sahib called his servant, Rajinder, bring some nine or ten cups of tea; see that it is very fine. Put tea-leaves in milk".

The servant took the order and went back. The same idea again monopolized my mind. He does not mind any labour and expenditure. I was worried to think lest loaves fall short of our need. I took two S. Jassowal ordered the servant to place two more loaves into my plate.

My name-sake Malkeet said, camels are loaded in the state of their protest. What is the sense in keeping the door narrow. when Jassowal is with US I got a bit non-plussed. I had no answer to make.

Jassowal's broad mindedness and liberality made a deep impact on my mind. I was just going to say something', when Sardar Jassowal snatched my words and said, "Malkeet, let us take out the mail of these brethren first. It is a matter of some ten or twenty minutes', while our task is longer."

One said, "that police officer troubled me most" the other said, "The S.D.M. does not transfer my property to my name", the third said, "My son has been transferred to Ferozpur; please, prevent it" & so on.

Jassowal paid individual attention to each one of them; and phoned to the respective departments to redress their grievances. He asked the clan sitting by me, Malkeet, what has brought you here? Are you O K ?"

Yes, Sir, I have come only to have a sight of your honour & inquire about our welfare."

"Good! here we have only friendly meets & nothing else".

Then after a pause he turned to me and said, Howell, Malkeet, what is the state of militancy in your area? it is so rampant here!" I answered, Sir, no limit to it! people lie in beds just as soon as the evening falls', all lights off! even dogs stop barking; but so far we have not sustained any loss of life".

What fate will befall our counter, observed S. Jassowal and grew serious. A troubled expression appeared on his face & he said, " O mad men, why are you camping trouble to your own brethren? why are you terrorizing innocent children? At whose behest are you committing these Sins?"

I Just ejaculated inadvertently, "Jassowal Sahib, such things are now being done even by those who have some sort of friction with each other, who are waiting dog like till the man dies and they grab his land! Let anybody commit a murder, only militants are held responsible."

Jassowal felt so anguished that it could be easily detected. By placing his hand upon his forehead he had concealed his trickling tears; while we were the mute observers of his tears and eyeing one another.

An atmosphere of silence enwrapped us for a while; The Sun, too, in his own playful manner was gradually intensifying his attack. Then Jassowal Sahib observed, "The Sun has grown so hot; Let us go inside."

We followed him to his room. I had just stepped into the room, when I was struck with wonder to see that at the interval of twelve feet from one another, three shelves were stuffed with implies. I while sitting on a sofa kept watching them. They were more than I could count. I said to myself how dearly this man loved fairs and festivals. It would be really a lucky day when he stayed at home. The man from Chhapaar said, Jassowal Sahib, Now please, grant us the permission to leavened" O sit down awhile and enjoy cool air, why do you want to die of burning sun?"

Whosoever requested for leave, was asked to keep sitting. I, too, felt a

bit impatient, as to when I should have my say, "I can't say how he read my mind. He said, "A Jat Sikh either doesn't write at all, or, if he writes, he will write careful loads of books! Just look at Malkeet's big bag, it is all stuffed with his own writings!"

Then he said to me, "Malkeet, on what topics have you written your books" I told him about every book individually. Then he said, "Well, tell me how you took to writing as your profession?" I said that I had read Shakespeare in my M.A. class. I had decided to write books in his style, on the first day I felt my effort and output inadequate & poor; but gradually I under went improvement." "Did you get any service, too?" "My parents were illiterate; they could not choose for me any line. And you know youth is akin to madness; I did not much bother about my career. "Do you wish to join some service? May I try somewhere, if you wish?" "No, Sir, now you may only help me in the wrong line that I have adopted." This I'll do", Then he said, "Can you write such songs as are current these days?" I said, "Yes, I can. Even during this first meeting with Jassowal Sahib all my nervousness was gone. I felt as if I were sitting in my own home and talking to some intimate friend & well-wisher of mine; all sense of alienation at once disappeared. All had left one by one by this time. We kept talking till 4 p.m. Then I requested him for leave. He said, "You have come from afar, you may leave tomorrow morning. "Sir, I have not informed at home; they might be worrying. "O I'll ring them up!" he answered. "There are no phone in the villages, Sir." "But they are being, installed in our areas?" "There is a distance of a hundred miles between your place & ours, Sir." Despite his repeated requests to sit down I rose to my feet to depart. "Well, leave the books here & come again after two or three days. I will contact some publisher and make some scheme about your books." I felt so encouraged & elated that I could n't contain myself. I was returning with sweet memories of the virtues of a truly humanitarian and humane personage!

## Glory be to Jassowal!

**Jeet Golewalia**

A talk about Punjabi cultural fairs will remain incomplete, unless we mention the name of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. Nearly two decades back cultural fairs were no better than mere, vain dreams. During the 'Akhara' days (ring-period) the athletic fans had to cover often twenty miles before they could reach the ring. The spectators could see their favourite artist only after facing heavy trials. One reason was that except the stage artist no other artist had the courage to step on the stage & give his performance. Even the hisurely & well-to-do families could have contacts with good artists only on rare occasions. The four walls around the ring stood in the way of artistic enjoyment of the spectators.

It is a fact of broad day-light which even Prof. Mohan Singh admitted that "he would not have become a poet, if his wife not passed away. On the

other hand, this also looks quite plausible that Jassowal would not have been the founder of cultural fairs and their standard bearer, if he had not been a friend of Prof. Mohan Singh. After the demise of his beloved friend the hard & incessant labour that S. Jassowal has put in, none else could undergo. The wise remark that the man who is remembered after his death is as good as a living man. To keep an object in the state of its motion is one thing, but to make a novel and unfamiliar object a household word is like licking an unsaltish slab. With the help of his friends & helpers and after the death of his friend in 1978, S. Jassowal undertook this great venture. Since then this fair has been, without break, going on. While now it has entered the thirty year of its life, it is not an exaggeration to say that while this fair is glory of Punjabi and Punjabi identity, it is also quite well known in many countries abroad on an international level. Let there be any medium of publicity official or non-official, this fair is invariably talked of. The credit for it goes not only to S. Jassowal but to his companions who move side by side with him and give their full cooperation. Today every artist associated with Punjabi culture, regards his singing or some other artistic accomplishment as incomplete, until he has attended the Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair and even given his performance; and upto this day all Punjabi artists without exception have participated in this fair one time or the other.

The munificent Jassowal, the patron of the artists, has maintained his dignified, elephantine march in this direction and has further stimulated this fair; in consequence by dint of Prof. Mohan Singh Foundation's efforts even in this panicky atmosphere (owing to the terrorist activities, of the Punjab a number of literary and cultural institutions took their birth. Among them are Rebeck-player 'Dhadi' Amar Singh 'Shaunki' Memorial Institute at Mahilpur. Didar Sandhu Punjabi Cultural Manch, Ferozepur, Shaheed Uddham Singh Foundation etc, etc. Jassowal Sahib helped and patronised every cultural Society - big or small, in the Punjab and lending it his guiding finger taught it how to walk! All fairs were held in all enthusiasm; and even in the midst of terrorist conflagrations. S. Jassowal visited every one of them. By dint of these cultural fairs he has given the Punjabi atmosphere an healthy and constructive orientation.

Today, not only through the important towns and cities of the Punjab but also through the cultural institutions at the grassroot level the Punjabi public is enjoying the artistic programmes of dozen of renowned singers & artists.

It is all the result of Prof. Mohan Singh Foundation's and especially of S. Jassowal's efforts.

It is ardently prayed that in Punjab these Cultural Fairs ever continue and S. Jagdev Singh have a long life & good health to carry on this sacred mission !

## A Multifaceted Lamp- Jassowal

**Kulwant Singh Mangat**

During the materialistic era of the last years of the twentieth century the political chess players of the country have nothing left in them except fraud, and cunningness. In such a situation no honest journalist will like to use his pen in favour of a political person. But there are some pious, saintly type of politicians who inevitably exercise their august influence on the average type of men like us. Men whose words accord their deeds are very few among politicians. Today I am going to use my pen in favour of such a saintly personage- a perfect man, S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. He is the hero in question. He is an M.A., LL.B. He is a true Sikh of the Guru; but not a proverbial Sikh. If you see him for the first time, you will find a cypress-statured, loose bearded person, draped in a 'Pajama ' & 'Kurta' (Shirt) the true glimpse of the old, traditional & typical Sikhs. He has numerous shapes; he is a true embodiment of human virtues, whenever you call at his house, you will find him welcoming you with a cheerful countenance. If several men call on him, he will first ask the stranger, "where are you coming from? what has brought you here?" The stranger will tell that he has come from such and such a place. At it a man sitting nearby will say, "Bhai ji, he does not belong to our area; at it the good man will say, "The man has come with high hopes, he has spent money on the fare, therefore his work must be done first of all . At times owing to over- busyness he sleeps at 2.a.m. even then the suitors come at 4.a.m. and say, "O bhai Jassowal, we have travelled a distance from our village to see you & you are still in bed?" He will at once wake up, order the servant to prepare tea or 'lassi' (Whey), and in the mean time get ready to accompany them to do their work. I have been in contact with political men for two decades and seen every leader at close-quarters, but I have never seen such a good man as S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

The circle of his acquaintance is very vast. He has been in close intimacy with prominent persons like Pt. Nehru, S. Kairon, Smt. Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah. There is no Indian leader- present or past with whom he has had no acquaintance. He got his degree in Law from Aligarh University; very prominent Muslim Leaders of today were his class-mates. He makes use of 'Gurbani in a most correct form in his speeches. The listeners are, then, wonder struck at his knowledge and correct pronunciation; especially when he preaches Gurbani in a correct form from a religious stage or is holding a literary function in the Punjabi Bhawan at Ludhiana. Well-renowned folk-singers, actors, litterateurs, are very close to him. Often he conducts literary and cultural function in the Punjabi Bhawan. He is a true man of letters and a politician simultaneously. He is highly honoured at the 'Dehras' (Settlements) of great Saints like the Saint at 'Kaleran: Saint of Rara Sahib, Baba Madhu Sudhan Singh ji Bedi, an off-spring of Guru Nanak Dev as well as at many other holy settlements.

Akali leaders are convinced of his ability and talent. When S. Jagdev

Singh Jassowal presented to the Prime Minister a Memorandum regarding the solution of Punjab problem, the Akali leaders were stunned to read its account in Punjabi news papers. They wondered that they could not present the Punjab case so ably as he had done; they were also surprised as to from where Jagdev Singh Jassowal had collected all its data. Perhaps Jassowal is the first congress leader of this type who raised his voice in favour of the Punjab problem. He is a wonderful orator. He can address from every stage with equal cool and equanimity. He has greater acquaintance with men of letters and other artists than he has with politicians. To make good any promise given is a part of his nature. It is a tragedy with the Punjabi litterateurs that they totally neglect a writer after his death. But no praise is too great for S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal who spent thousands from his own pocket and celebrated Prof. Mohan Singh's birthday for full three days in the Punjabi Bhawan, Ludhiana!

People of all types, connected with literature, assembled on the occasion, and set up a trust in the memory of Prof. Mohan Singh besides conducting the usual Fair called Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair.

Then Jassowal's politics took its birth in Akali Dal. At quite a young age he rose from Sikh students Federation and joined Akali Dal under the strong leadership of Master Tara Singh and became its general secretary. During the Punjabi Suba agitation his household articles were auctioned by the government; he also paid fines, and courted imprisonment, when Judge Dr. Justice Gurnam Singh became the Chief Minister of the Punjab, he appointed Jassowal as his political secretary. His letter of resignation from Akali Dal written to Saint Fateh Singh is an historic document. He occupied several posts of honour under the Punjab Government. He also remained for some time an office-bearer of the Sahitya Academy. People worship only the rising sun; but S. Jassowal sides with the declining side... when the Janta Party came into power, the main leaders, and congress bulwarks deserted Smt. Indira Gandhi, S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal took her side. Many big Akali leaders came again & again to compel him to join Akali Dal; but he never deserted Smt. Indira Gandhi. Elections to Punjab Assembly came, and the question of tickets rose. Old congress leaders allotted S. Jassowal the ticket for Rai Kot Constituency. At that time the brother of S. Jagdev Singh Talwandi, (the President of the Common Akali Dal) was his opponent. From this constituency only an Akali candidate had been winning elections for the last many years. This iron-willed and firm man S. Jassowal accepted the challenge. At Rai Kot. Capitalists and feudalists stubbornly opposed him, and made desperate efforts to defeat all congress candidates. But at that time. All political circles became surprised, when the brother of Mr. Talwandi of lost the elections and Jassowal gave a sharp slap on their face by gloriously winning the election. He humbled all those who had endeavoured to push him out of politics and with this intention had allotted him this formidable

seat. But S. Jassowal was not given that honour in politics which he richly deserved. After this victory Jassowal made the Chairman of, Forest Dev. Corpn. officer)!

## An Ambassador of Culture- S Jassowal

**Rajinder Savak**

"They fell in need of the blood of an orchard,  
The first axe-blow fell upon our neck!  
Still these occupants of the orchard tell me:  
This orchard is ours; not yours!"

Perhaps it was a similar tragedy that turned S. Jassowal from politics to culture. I refer to those days, when S. Jassowal had just been married. He reached his in-laws' house in jail. On one hand, his parents awaited his return; and on the other, his in-laws awaited his arrival at their place. Jagdev Singh instead of 'Muklava' (the first conjugal visit to in-laws after marriage) got imprisonment for one year. During his absence his father, too, met his end, but Jagdev Singh did not look behind; perhaps he thought.

"Don't look behind, nor join the company of sinners,  
Look ahead, for the destination is within your fold."

And Jagdev Singh went on moving farther and farther. He began to take interest in politics even during his studentship and played an active role in student movements. Many times he even got the rank of the village Sarpanch. During the Punjabi Suba Agitation several times his property was auctioned and several times he paid the fines. After he had become the general secretary of the Akali Dal, Jagdev Singh's tall & majestic stature, and thick physique became all the more impressive and they began to say, "Well, he now looks a perfect Jagdev Singh Jassowal." He let loose his well-knit beard as the Jathedar & imprinted the stamp of Sikhism upon his Jathedari rank. An Urdu poet remarks:-

we knew full well, but still could not maintain our distance.

Accordingly while kindling the tapers we burnt our own flingers.

This Jathedar politics did not suit him and he joined congress (I). In this capacity he raised a still more effective voice in the cause of Punjabi identity, Punjabi culture & Punjabi language. Whenever the meeting was held- at Chandigarh or in Delhi, he presented the case of 'Punjabi & Punjabi' (Punjabi identity) most ably and effectively. Late Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was fully convinced that S. Jassowal pleaded every case most logically. He was several times made a victim of mental tortures: but he ever obeyed the dictates of his own conscience. In fact, his candid temperament and frankness in thought & expression were the cause of his trouble. He, often, knew the consequences of his frank & plain- speaking; but he did not change his ways.

A few years back at Delhi was held a seminar of Private Members in the Constituent Assembly as well as in Parliament. In it S. Jagdev Singh

Jassowal disclosed that in the Punjab Assembly from the year 1951 to 1980 only thirteen bills had been placed before the house and out of them only three were passed; and even out of those three bills only one became an Act!

He added that during the period from 1952 to 1980 the Private members placed before the Constituent Assembly 6522 resolutions out of which discussions were held only on 101. During this period the House passed only 20 resolutions. He also informed the members that very often during discussions the attendance of the private members in the house was always very thin; for which reason the Private members felt indifferent and unenthusiastic. S. Jassowal also appealed to the members to hold such seminars in other provinces too. The really great men are those who change the entire world!

Led by this passion to change or transform the world S. Jagdev Singh even trusted those people who did not deserve any trust. The result was as expected; Jassowal's several friends and well-wishers got alienated from him; while many of his ill-intentioned comrades came too close to him!

In fact, this tragic flaw took Jassowal out of the political field and dragged him into the cultural field. S. Jassowal says that the political factions have rendered the present day political atmosphere so vitiated and chaotic that the people, too, have been caught in quagmire. In this tense & egoistic environment culture is being completely ignored and disregarded. The wise say that if you wish to kill a nation, you should kill its language first. The native that forgets his own heritage, culture and language, is sure to meet perdition. So I feel that at this juncture it is almost necessary to take some drastic steps to preserve and safeguard our culture, language & tradition". But when the time to do something in this regard came, the death of Jassowal's friend Prof. Mohan Singh. Intervened. S. Jassowal started a cultural fair in the memory of his friend Prof. Mohan Singh on an annual basis; and it adds to its glamour every year. An interesting thing is that at S. Jassowal's house in 1127 Gurdev Nagar, Ludhiana the fair atmosphere is daily witnessed: sometimes folk singers are seen making their performances & sometimes fencers; at times come erudite scholars and writers, at others clowns and bards to amuse the audience with their light and amusing bits; at times poets at others journalists-make their appearance. It is a virtue in S. Jassowal that he even tries to make the wolf lie with the lamb. There can be no combination of fire and water but Jassowal Sahib seeks to derive pleasure from their combination.

When S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal got engaged in politics, it was on the lips of all that he played the double role of a man of letters and a man of culture & intended to unite literature with culture in the political cell. Gradually he became known as the cultural ambassador of the Punjabis.

Let there be any literary meet or a cultural programme at night, S. Jassowal is invariably seen there. There might be many such litterateurs as

get help and support from S. Jassowal. The interesting thing is that even after helping several people he has never tried to get any credit for that by uttering a single word in self praise; as many others do.

Sir, you, too, should, find some time in your over-busy life and attend the cultural fair of three days beginning from October 20, it would be a pleasure to have your presence. You may come, however, on any convenient day. S. Jassowal Sahib will be awaiting with a batch of artists to welcome you. Be sure when you come, you won't feel inclined to leave.

## The prop & pillar of Punjabi Culture

**Gurmeet Khan puri**

I don't feel any hesitation in saying that S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has established himself, not only in Punjab or in India only but in the wider international circle as a personage that seldom takes its birth even in centuries. Some government as well as private institutions have, no doubt, been set up to preserve and safe-guard the rich Punjabi cultural heritage, but Jassowal is the only personage that has lent the necessary inspiration to them. That is why people call him with affectionate regard the 'Baba Bohar, (Chief Head) of cultural fairs, 'the Governor of cultural fairs, the organiser of fairs, the 'first watchman of Punjabi culture', 'The heir to Punjabi Inheritance', The 'Messenger of Punjabi culture', 'The Hatim Tai of the Present age', 'The Leader of the fairs'- 'the bull beneath the earth'- the Man of the Age', 'The Sixth River of the Punjab', Who has not heard the name of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal or seen his face in person or through the medium of television or news papers?

S. Jassowal is a multi-faceted personage. He is a powerful orator, a lawyer, a political leader, a man of letters, a family man, an ideal husband, an ideal father, a social servant in the true sense, and above all a personage that has devoted his whole life to the service of the masses, dedicated a cultural fair to them and has never let it down.

Mohan Singh Memorial Fair started a series of cultural fairs. By the inspiration lent by it, there came into being 'Shaunki Mela' and 'Didar Sandhu Mela'. Next came Salamat Ali-Nazaqat Ali' Cultural Fair at Sham Chaurasi; and then.... then the people of the Punjab became virtually mad for fairs. Fairs began to be organised in every town and every city. Now this cultural revolution has reached such a stage that every village regards it as a matter of sacred duty to organise a cultural fair. This revolution has now taken every village within its fold.

Not only this but a new mode of thought has got a fair root that the fair which is not attended by S. Jassowal, cannot be called a cultural fair, nor do people recognise it as such. Before starting a fair the organisers call at him and seek his advice and his blessings. Just imagine how his house always preserits the scene of a fair.

S. Jassowal just on waking daily goes to attend the fair that is to be

held that day. When there are more than one fair to attend, he makes it a point to make his attendance at each place. It has rendered him great harm, but he never utters a word of complaint. He also calls on the singers and artists and participates in their joys and sorrows. He also attends the meetings of fair-organisers. He, thus, disburses all his income realised from landed property in fairs and festivals.

All the young and the old are convinced of his sympathy & sincerity. In 1995 a Punjabi artist Gaurav's "Bhangra Top programme used to be relayed on the T.V. and it had grown quite popular. He longed to get it inaugurated by the then Chief Minister Late S. Beant Singh. Jassowal took Gaurav with him and fixed time to see S. Beant Singh in his office. Jassowal said, "Gaurav, your work will be done, but if you can show the Chief Minister, some idolatory letters from your spectators, he will be further impressed. Gaurav answered that he had a bagful of such letters. At it he asked him to take the whole bag to the Secretariat. The whole staff grew nervous to see it; for they did not know what it contained. I was also present. We met the Chief Minister and showed him the bag; (actually a sack). At Jassowal's request he at once gave his consent. In the same way I, too, had come on the same day along with Jassowal to prevail upon the Chief Minister to attend Salamat Ali-Nazaqat Ali Cultural Fair at Sham Chaurasi. Jassowal made the Chief Minister give his consent even in my case. While S. Beant Singh's speech was recorded in Gaurav's programme. S. Beant Singh left the place before the fair started. But in this case there can be found no other example of S. Jassowal's virtue of keeping his word!

Jassowal makes a search of new singers & artists every year and introduces them to the public and when they secure a safe place in the domain of their art, he, like the animal parents, lets them go and have their independent self-dependent life. Ravinder Grewal, Mavi, Manjit Rupowalia, Dyal puri and several others I have seen with my own eyes climbing the rung of social scale with his assistance.

Through this writing I am talking of the new aspects of S. Jassowal's life; as for the other aspects there is already much seen and heard.

The circle of his influence and contacts is very vast. Many might suppose he visits fairs for self-advertisement. It is absolutely wrong. His conscience is against egoism and hauteur. He is only monopolised by the passion for propagating & disseminating Punjabi Culture. The proof of it is provided by Prof. Mohan Singh Fair. He had, many years ago, on the eve of this fair, made this wonder-exciting declaration that would be held by S. Pargat Singh Grewal in fixture. The organisers of the fair did not agree. But S. Jassowal true to his word, did not budge an inch from this decision to accept their demand. Now though S. Jassowal is patronising this fair he keeps the organisers ever ahead of him and likes to enjoy the fair in stead. He generally says that his mother used to say, "My son, it is always right to leave the fair when it is in full swing.

Everybody knows that S. Jassowal is linked with the Congress party. But the most important achievement that places him on the international map is that beginning with Punjab. he spread Punjabi culture and started cultural fairs from country to country and thus brought about a cultural revolution. If today in the Indian films. Punjabi music and Punjabi singers are in the ascendance, the credit goes to this enthusiastic person S. Jassowal who has brought a flood of cultural fairs in the Punjab and thereby developed the talent of the Punjabi artists and through them awakened the dormant artistic talent in the people at large. He has thus, brought about such a revolution the flames of which have not only enveloped India but have also spread in the whole world, and left their scars on every culture. Today a man who knows any language can well understand Punjabi music and grows ecstatic to hear it. The credit for all this goes to this patient, sensible, resolute-willed, and ecstatic man S. Jassowal. He has done what no other man had ever conceived even.

But for Jassowal who would have started Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair. Even if the fair had been held, it would have remained confined to poetic recitations alone; none would have, then, taken the arduous responsibility of linking it to Punjabi music. when Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair was first held in 1978, its well-wishers & men of letters appreciated it; but from the other quarter instead of constructive & reformatory criticism very dirty and degrading remarks were made against it. But after that time when dark days came to Punjab, situation further deteriorated, Artists were obliged to earn their living by hawking. But this iron-man did not give up his resolve and carrying on his dance on the edge of the razor, spent all he had on these cultural fairs and became financially strained. He never discloses his trouble to anybody. A jat in general increases his land but this jat....

Whenever we call at his house, we notice no mark of urbanity there; the whole house is surcharged with Punjabi culture, you will get your meal, whey (lassi), bread made of the admixture of wheat & gram flour & loaves containing buck-wheat leaves, You will also get truth sincerity, love and affection. You will not find artificiality but only frankness & geniality

Jassowal is within the reach of both big and small persons and looks upon all as equals.

During the cultural fairs in the Punjab he feels so elated that he grows almost wantonly ecstatic. Then he begins to dance on the stage at the head of all. Seeing him in this state the spectators too, follow suit & begin to behave all the more ecstatically.

While S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is so eager to see the Punjabi artists ever in the ascendance and holding an eminent position in the world, he also desires that they should show their attendance at these cultural fairs at nominal charges. Once on the eve of the cultural fair at Sham Chaurasi I

made a request to S. Jassowal to invite a particular star-artist to the fair. He said, "He is not a great artist. Even if he is, he has been brought up by you and the cultural fairs patronised by you and will certainly come.

For me S. Jassowal is a source of inspiration. I, too, get the chance to be near him and have his sight- sometimes we spend together many nights making arrangements for the fairs. It provides us a chance to probe into the depths of his heart. There is great sympathy & regard for the artists in his heart.

Once, we came in contact with each other at 'Athole Fair', S. Jassowal suggested that we should visit the house of the man in whose memory this fair was held. Accordingly, S. Jassowal and I making inquiry after inquiry reached, late Jagtar Singh Parwana's house. We found the residence of the deceased in a most dilapidated state. A sister of the deceased lived there; there was no electricity and no water supply, seeing the tears of that girl Jassowal sat down on a cot and began to shed tears. Though he couldn't contain himself, he kept consoling the girl. He, then, took out one thousand rupees from his pocket and offering this amount to her, asked her to get the house electrified; he added that he had only that much amount with him; he would again come some time and give her more. Seeing his sympathy we, too, were deeply moved.

Last year he took us to the house of a renowned but quite destitute singer Sanmukh Singh 'Azad'. There we saw that in a house of two rooms there was nothing except a broken trunk, a cot, a glass & a tray. Jassowal buys him every month wheat flour, pulse, sugar & other necessary articles. Then he bought for him a bicycle. He has, in his heart, grief & pain and genuine sympathy for the artists; but as a result of his wisdom and fore-sight he doesn't let any political party come near at any Punjabi or other fair or festival. There he alone is the governor, if some person comes to visit a cultural fair, no matter whether he is a B.J.P. politician or a B.S.P. politician, he comes only as a friend, leaving all his party affiliations behind; and if he speaks and addresses the spectators, only the cultural tune would be dominant in his speech. This is again the reason that Jassowal attends every fair unhesitatingly and the people of all convictions and of all classes honour him and receive him with open arms. Such virtues add to the lustre of his personality; and by virtue of these merits he is daily gaining in importance and popularity.

At times when at some press conference he dictates a press note to the pressmen on same social gathering or function, he carefully sees to it that no word or letter gets dislocated. His syntax is so fine as though he had beautifully strung together the beads of a rosary. He has a rich store of vocabulary- both in English and his mother tongue- Punjabi thus, he has a comprehensive knowledge and vocabulary about all those customs and practices that fall under the head of Punjabi culture.

There is naturalness & simplicity in his language. At times he indulges

in such light talk that the listeners burst into peals of laughter. At times his remarks on the realities of existence become immortal truths. He often says, "In order to be well-established in life do hard labour keep company with the well-established people; "address & speak to every man in the language which he well-understands. "Never lose self-confidence, etc.

Jassowal very often goes abroad but returns as soon as his mission there is complete; and chooses to move about on his own soil. Love for the soil of his motherland is deep-rooted in his heart. The Mohan Singh Memorial Cultural Fair started by him is now being held in Denmark and many other countries. All this is the out-spread and expansion of his own personality.

Now Jassowal's invention Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair has become an annual feature. People do not solemnise any marriage on 20th of October and the artists have come to realise that only the artist who sings at Prof. Mohan Singh Fair is considered a qualified artist. So S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has now become a moving institution, which has kindled a light, a light which moving from taper to taper is now illuminating the whole world.

## A Brief Interview

### Harbhajan Singh Gill

I had an ardent desire to see him and be in contact with him. The man whose very name fills one's mouth is S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, the heroic character of my writings, the grand father of rural cultural fairs and a great son of the Punjab. May my respectable brother live for eons to come! I am a writer of twenty books and at the moment am writing my twenty first book 'Garna Sahib Bodal- a book of Survey (Hoshiarpur) the outcome of a research of three years and a half. After completing the book and getting the photograph of the village 'Bodal' I stood in need of getting the good wishes of the prominent supporters of Punjabi culture and their valuable suggestions and messages. First of all my eyes fell upon S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal and I found him out at his residential place "Jassowal's nest' at Ludhiana.

After a formal introduction I referred to my writing skill, literary achievements, my multi-faceted contribution to my country & my nation, and requested him for a message and a photograph to be inserted in this book of survey. After completing this task we indulged in our personal chat and inquired of each other's welfare. From it started a series of meetings and interviews.

Jassowal, the custodian of the cultural heritage, continuing the talk said that the characteristics of the cultural life of the Punjabis are not so prominently visible. I said that it was not the case and that we Punjabis are men of broad, liberal temperament as S. Jassowal himself was ever cheerful, ever smiling! I added that Punjabis are, very active and agile, sanguine, broad-minded, clear-hearted and industrious and do wonders in every sphere they step in; that in the matter of food-production Punjab was already ahead

of all other, states of India, and the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana had stood first among all agricultural universities of Asia; that in the field of sports Punjabi athletes had won laurels in the whole world; and in Valour and self-sacrifice no nation in the whole world bore comparison with the Punjabis. It was clear from the recent Kargil Conflict in which the 8th Sikh Regiment and the 14th Sikh regiment had eradicated the Pakistani troops from Dras and Kargil- an adventure in which from my Tehsil Dasuha alone twenty nine army officers and jawans had died martyrs.

S. Jassowal listened to me with rapt attention and grew a bit serious. But I could not bear to see the 'Sun of Malwa in such a sober state. I then made reference to Prof. Mohan Singh and said that he was a poet of love, a music maker, an editor, and a translator, whom S. Jassowal had made an immortal poet and whose composed poems and songs he made world renowned singers (both male and female), record in their cassettes & then introduce them in all hearths and homes of the Punjab; he had also enhanced among the people the value and importance of writers, intellectuals and folk-singers.

Interrupting me he said, "Harbhajan ji, you know little about Prof. Mohan Singh. He was born to Dr. Jodh Singh in the Pothohar ranges preading from Rawalpindi to Jehlam) at the village 'Asal Dhamial' on October 20, 1905. He did his Matriculation at Mardan village, then he did Munshi Fazil; M.A. in Persian, and M.O.L.; when the Punjab was partitioned on August 15, 1947, he came to Amritsar and took up the teaching profession in Khalsa College, Amritsar. But before that he worked for sometime at Sikh National College, Lahore and Khalsa College, Patiala. Then he came to Jalandhar and worked as a lecturer; but along with it he became a publisher (Hind Publishers Limited, Jalandhar). He also made me a share-holder and a member of The Hind Publishers. Professor Sahib liked fish-pakodas' and Bag piper whisky very much, and his favourite food was the winter fare of the Punjab- maize bread, Saag Sarson of rape plant, curds, brown sugar. He also enjoyed sucking sugar canes!

Jassowal Sahib, then said that "Dr. M.S. Randhawa and Prof. Mohan Singh became co-editors and wrote a book entitled 'Love-stories of the Punjab', containing very beautiful pictures and rich in literary and topical interest. It was later printed by Bhasha Pritam Singh ji of Delhi.

S. Jassowal Sahib also said that Prof. Mohan Singh was very fond of sucking mangoes. Doctor M.S. Randhawa every year during the mango season took him with him to his village Bodal. He also held there a Kavi Darbar ( a poetic meet) and invited the renowned poets of the Punjab. The triple friendship grew thicker, when Dr. Randhawa became the Vice-Chancellor of Punjab Agricultural University and just on occupying his new seat he brought him from Jalandhar to Ludhiana and appointed him as

Professor Emeritus in 1970 in the University. As a result along with leaving Jalandhar Prof. Mohan Singh also relinquished ' the Hind Publishers'; and in 1978 he bade farewell to this world."

I might have prolonged the conversation, but S. Jassowal Sahib asked me how much propinquity I had maintained with him (Prof. Mohan Singh). I grew a bit sad, because from 1958 to 1978, he had been my friend as well as publisher and I had often taught his creations in Punjabi courses. The whole film of our days of friendship began to swim before my eyes and my eyes grew moistened.

"Just as while appreciating my poetry you have dropped a few tears, Mohan, when you breathe your last, the people, too, will shed abundant tears!"

## II

My Respected Brother- Jassowal who believed in happy & cheerful living, as well as in keeping the people around cheerful, and who on Prof. Mohan Singh 's birthday i.e. October 20, had continuously organised twenty Mohan Singh Memorial fairs from 1978 to 1998 was more than a match for an ordinary & mediocre individual like me; and I today sat with him!

"Jassowal Sahib, you have been the chairman of 'Vishwa Punjabi Culture Kala Manch' as well as the Founder president of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair' and in this capacity you have taken great pains to preserve and promote the past, the present and the future culture of this colourful Punjab and safe-guard this national heritage, but I see, that the appreciation and recognition that you have got in lieu of all this is Almost negligible; as Warishah has observed.

"Better alone than in the company of the depreciators; O Waris Shah. but why have you not become good yourself?"

He burst into laughter at it and said, "Harbhajan ji, you have asked an interesting question. But I have now to cover myself with my own blanket."

I said, "No, not at all. Bhai Sahib, our gorgeous Punjab has given to the whole world very great and sublime values.

The Rig Veda was created here, Rishi Valmiki's creation The Ramayana was composed and compiled here in the Punjab and Guru Granth's creation by the Revered Gurus was done here. They taught universal human love, and reverence for one's Faith. They also inspired true & pious men to become ideal citizens and useful to their fellow beings c.f.:-

"First of all came the Light Divine; all are the children of the same One God. All humans belong to the same class; It has called the whole earth 'Mother'; and all humans its children. "

In other words, she is my mother Earth and I am the child of the soil. My compliments to Mother Earth.... my compliments to Mother Earth!"

On hearing it he said, "Will you like to say some thing further about Prof. Mohan Singh?"

I at once changed the whole tone of the topic & said, "Bhai Jassowal Sahib, you have been conducting Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair since 1978; and have honoured innumerable singers, lady singers, rebeck players (Dhadis), Versifiers, music-makers, musicians, folk-singers, painters, scholars Qwaals, poets, writers and sculptors. They were honoured & acclaimed by the great sons of the Punjabi; but have the Language Department of Punjab, Punjabi Sahitya Academy, Ludhiana or any other top government institute ever honoured you, the great son of the Punjab' for your invaluable contributions to the survival- and outspread of the culture of this colourful Punjab?"

He answered, "Never,.... never," I clasped him to my bosom and getting his permission took my way.

## The Inheritor of Punjabi Heritage

### Surmukh Singh Sehgal

Nearly at a distance of ten miles from Balachaur on the road to Ropar, we can see the board of 'Maiohar Gau Shala'. (cow-shed). There on crossing the canal we proceed over a distance of two miles and arrive at a big settlement of holymen & mendicants. They perform a 'havan' yajna every year in the month of November. Here are kept stray & un-owned cows and these holymen look after them. People from far off places come to attend this 'Yajna' and make financial contributions. Holymen, too, assemble in large numbers. On this day Diwans' are also organised and people of the area- both government onicals & leading public men come in large numbers and address the gathering. The visitors are provided food from the 'langaF( community kitchen).

It happened on November 25, 1982, that S. Beant Singh (the then Public Rehabilitation Minister), Punjab visited this place. He was accompanied by S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal M.L.A. and the Chairman of Dairy Vikas Corporation, Punjab, Master Dalip Chand, the M.L.A., Pt. Sarban Ram; M.L.A.(Garh Shankar) Chaudhury Balu Ram and other eminent personages. We, too, on official mission reached the place of conference. I was in charge of the stage-arrangement. I had heard S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's name on T.V. and in the newspapers, but had not chance to see him. By chance I had the opportunity to request this great personage to come to the stage and address the gathering.

I gave the public the little bit of information I had of S. Jassowal; He came to the stage and on finishing his speech took me into his embrace on the very stage as was usual with him, and asked me what my name was, I said, "Surmukh Singh Sehgal and added that I worked in the Public Relations Department, at Hoshiarpur, and that I had a pen for writing. At it we grew very close to each other & had a hearty talk; we, then, sat together in the 'langar' & had our meals together. Then leaving the Dehra we went out & got ourselves

photographed. He asked me to see him sometimes at Ludhiana. He also gave me his address. This brief introduction made me feel as though I had been re-united with an old friend of mine.

A few days later, I reached his place in Ludhiana. At once I was offered meal, tea & lassi (whey) and then he had a talk with me, on my return he gave me several books in Punjabi for my studies. Thus, our mutual relations grew thicker by degrees.

I then made my visits to his place more frequent. At his residence I also had several chances to see S. Beant Singh, the Congress President. Joginder Pal had been erst while our Public Relations Minister; I had a chance to see him, too, at close quarters. In these very days I was gathering matrials to write the biography of Giani Zail Singh, the former President of India, S. Jassowal provided me with much information about Giani Zail Singh & I recorded that information in a write-up on Giani ji under the title "Yugpursh Giani Zail Singh" Every time I met S. Jassowal, I got from him some new information. By temperament he is quite hot & agile but soon lapses into a cool, reflective Posture. At home he generally lives simple and when guests come, he offers them the same meal which he takes himself; rather he himself partakes of the dishes that are served to the visitors. Once from Ludhiana he took me in his car to a village named Hario-Balio, near Samrala. First we reached the residence of a freedom fighter and inquired about his welfare. I donot remember the name of that freedom fighter. Then at this very place we attended a marriage where the folk-singer Kuldeep Manik was to give his performance. The stage had been set up in a dry pit. People surrounding the pit were awaiting the singer to give his programme. We, too, highly enjoyed the programme of that assembly. When the programme was over, Kuldeep Manak approached S. Jassowal and most respectfully requested him to come to the stage and address the gathering. When S. Jassowal speaks at a high pitch, there is felt no need of a loud speaker. He said in his speech that "Our singers have preserved our cultural heritage; through the medium of songs & dramatic performances; they add lustre to our culture". He added that our artists can become N.T. Rama Rao & M.G.Ram Chandram; & our lady-singers can become as great as Vajanti Mala and Jaya Lalitha. They, too, in their early stages worked on small stages.. Today, they have entered politics and become Chief Ministers and, members of the Raj Sabha. Our people, as yet, donot show full respect for our singers and artists; while the artists spread the message of love and affection through the medium of their songs; and people of all communities gather to see them, and enjoy their programmes. Therefore, these artists are our common possessions."

On October 20, 1983 on the eve of Prof. Mohan Singh Fair, at Ludhiana, when an open stage was held at night, out side the Punjabi Bhawan S. Jassowal was sitting behind at a back seat. With him sat Inderjit Hassan puri, Dr. Parminder Singh, S.S. Narula and a number of stage poets including

Faiz Ahmed Faiz, whom I heard for the first time; and S. Jassowal honoured and acclaimed him at the stage. Faiz recited his select verses and thereby held the audience spell-bound. Nearly at 1 a.m. the conference came to an end. Then at Jassowal's residence poetic recitations started. At 2 a.m. the artists were swaying rhythmically and saying, "There has not been born another lover of art who supports and encourages the artists so much as he does." These were the words of Sant Ram Udasi. Jassowal's son was to leave for Canada. So Sant Ram Udasi's creations were recited and Jassowal also joined the recitation.

Jassowal's inclination is not so strong towards politics as it is towards folk-singers, artists and towards cultural fairs. He is the first per soil who weighed Mr Udasi, a poet of the masses, in coins. It is doubtful if the government of any state ever weighed a poet in coins as he did. Jassowal asserts that he daily conducts three fairs. This practice can be maintained only if people hold such fairs in their respective villages. He is a fair in himself. Whenever you call at his house, you will find people flock there as they do at a fair. When Jassowal goes somewhere, he always keeps five or six artists with him.

At his house there is a small museum, in which besides photographs you can see other artistic creations tastefully arranged. In every room of his house you will find shelves of almirahs and walls stuffed with medals, trophies, cards of honour, and such things. There is no institution in the whole province whose award of honour does not lie in his house. In other words, his house itself is a symbol of culture. Jassowal, the custodian of culture, is ever ready to help the artists & the lovers of art and alleviate their sufferings and solve their problems.

One never feels bored while sitting in his house but feels like moving about in a museum. Today Jassowal is indelibly inscribed on the tongue of every Punjabi. If there is any talk about culture on the T.V, Radio or in the Press from the B.B.C. London, the name of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is bound to be mentioned, As soon as the day dawns, Jassowal becomes engrossed in his work; and returns home late at night. Thus, his whole life is dedicated to culture. May God grant this great & unique personage a long life! Live long Jassowal, the saviour of our cultural heritage! Amin!

## Jassowal- a Philanthroper or a man of business

**Baljinder Mann**

Millions of people take birth in the world, lead their lives some how and then depart; but those poeple attain to immortality who rise above their individual selves while living in the society, and do deeds conducive to social welfare or in the interests of others; who work for the uplift of the whole world and all mankind. One among them is the initiator of cultural fairs, and an ocean of love, S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. Theme 'philanthrope' or 'the man of business' does stir the readers atleast once. I have picked up this topic,

because I have been in close contact with S.Jagdev Singh Jassowal for a decade. Not only this, I have also come in contact with the people who raise objections to this contribution.

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is a great patron & appreciator of art. He has selected & picked up rough diamonds everywhere and controlled and preserved a vanishing art. He has exalted to the rank of artists those men of song who were dubbed no better than bawds. He has honoured and admired them. The list of his friends includes from the lay men to P.C.S./I.A.S., Governors and Presidents of the Indian Union. Among the politicians he remained the political advisor of the Punjab Chief Minister; an M.L.A. and the chairman of several corporations, the founder and patron of numerous literary & cultural institutions. Eien today S. Jagdev Singh attends cultural gatherings and conferences as actively as in the days of youth!

He is that personage who provided the torn people of the Punjab an opportunity to sit together in the days of militancy or terrorism. He ever kept on foot even in the dark days of fear and terror, grief and sorrow; and propagated our rich cultureal heritage and gave the message of love, hope and faith to the people.

He never allowed any narrow, fonatical thought to cross his mind, rather like a blossoming flower has ever emitted his fragrance among the people. He is so energetic that to commemorate the artists he organises a function in no time. When I endeavoured to revive & popularise the Mahalpur 'Shaunki Fair' S. Ashok Bhaura and I had, S. Jassowal at our back to provide the necessary inspiration. During the years 1988-89 when militancy was at its peak such a mode of thought about culture and the country and the nation was not less than an act of self-sacrifice. The famous comedians Jaswinder Bhalla and Bal Mukand Sharma rose to the peak of perfection in the domain of art only because of the help and support of Sardar Jassowal. Many a singer and artist has risen to high positions through his support. It is difficult to give the long list of unknown artists. S. Banta Singh and the founder of an opera S. Joginder Baharla etc. prominent figures were honoured & acclaimed at Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair and thereby rejuvenated, when they were in drooping spirits; he has also revived several dying out cultural traditions. In every part of the world a Punjabi national is fully aware of the cultural activities of S. Jassowal.

As the present day artists are doing he could take the Punjabi singers and artists to Canada & organise their programmes and make millions, but he is only a votary of art and culture. Let there be a cultural fair in any part of the country, he will give his consent if invited, and invariably attends it. S. Zorawar Singh Bains tried his best to make him a business man; but he only remained a philanthrope; he could not become a businessman even upto this day.

S. Jassowal's respected wife once told me that in the beginning while

sitting in the court compound he always talked of cultural fairs; how could he attract legal customers and cases? Sardarni Surjit Kaur never participated in his cultural activities but she always supported and inspired him.

In 1991 on the eve of the 13th Prof. Mohan Singh Mela I accompanied him on a tour of the whole Punjab and got the blessings of eminent men like Principal Sant Singh Sekhon. He believed that only the task done with one's own hands was the task best done. One can get any work from him any time. He often tells the suitors to make use of his name and if there comes some obstacle in the way, they can see and consult him. He is fully devoted to the people and is ever at their disposal. He has never thought of his family's welfare so much as he has thought and done for Punjabi culture.

Giani Har Kewal Singh, a national awardee teacher remarks that "there can be no alternative to S. Jassowal. He should be allowed to remain only a cultural authority.

He once wrote in a magazine for children published by 'Sur Sangam Educational Trust (Regd.) Mahal pur in Hoshiarpur District that "if parents & teachers pay due heed to the young buds, they will, on growing up, provide the human society a thick and warm shade."

If he gives word to anybody, he makes it a point to keep it. By virtue of his cheerful disposition he befriends everybody. The oldman of Malwa by dint of his youthful heart & temperament remains ever busy in cleansing and renovating the countenance of culture.

The carefree man when entered the middle of the 7th decade of his life courted jail life during the Punjabi Suba agitation. Regarding Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair held at Ludhiana on October 20, every year, he says that "once Mohan Singh said to me; all formalities-and courtesies are shown to a man as long as he is alive, the moment he breathes his last, he is neglected by every body. After his death I made good my promise and told him that courtesies & pleasantries can last even after one's death."

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal like a true psychologist, befriends & scrutmises everybody and portays his inner state of mind. He has not only a rich accumulation of folk proverbs in his heart, but has stored up the whole cultural legacy of the Punjab in his mind. Once when a music-maker could not set the tone and rhythm of his verse, Jassowal only in five minutes dictated to him an entirely new & fresh song. A man of open nature that he has neither any big bungalows in big cities nor any plots. That is why we have said that he is a philanthrope & not a businessman.

## A Multifaceted Taper

### **Gulzar Singh 'Shaunki'**

Fair complexion; a tall, cypress-like stature, a broad chest, pillar-like thighs, roller like arms, a sharp-pointed nose; sleepy, intoxicated but bewitching eyes which ever make sagacious gestures; pearl-like white teeth, that spread a magical smile like flowers scattering fragrance a white silken

beard-an indication of a wise, prudent man; thick, masculine moustaches which ever remain erect, and give him the semblance of a lion; a black turban with a white or yellow sheet beneath.

He wears absolutely a rural dress shirt, pjama, and native, Punjabi shoes on feet, and occasionally a 'gurgabi' (half-shoes). When he walks at a tipsy, elephantine gait, in all dignity & splendour, he shakes both heaven and earth. His spiritually effulgent countenance highly impresses the beholders; his speech frequently betrays his Malwai tone and diction. He has a lofty and exalted mode of thought which wins him respect and regard in every society he enters. That is why he never feels any malice, ill-will or the sense of alienation amidst any community or any racial or religious group. Besides being free from all rancour he is also quite exempt from fear. That was the reason that in the dark days when militancy was in full swing, he, unmindful of the militants bullets held cultural conferences and fairs everywhere.

Like his broad, massive physique, he has liberal food & drink habits, free & in restrained mode of life, an open mind & heart, a candid mode of thought, - he loves to have absolute, unrestrained freedom all around. That is why he is called the lover of freedom!" And it is by this virtue that he feels at home both with the child and the adult and attracts the love and regard of all. Besides our literature and culture, he is ever anxious to preserve our old folk-music and improve and refine our novel mode of singing.

That is why he is called "the Grand Father of cultural fairs", 'the Governor of the singers', 'the inheritor of the Punjabi heritage', a multi-dimensional personage', 'a friend of friends', 'an open volume!' a multi-faceted taped', 'an ocean of love!' the guide & preceptor of folk- singers', 'the man of the age', 'an uncrowned king!', 'the legendary Bull of the fairs!', a prophet of culture!'- the one who has led Punjabi Mother tongue and Punjabi culture- to all the nooks & corners of the world, & not of Punjab & India alone and enlightened the whole world with their light! Besides helping and patronising Punjabi- singers, artists, versifiers, litterateurs, poets, 'dhadi singers (rebeck players) clowns & bards, he remains ever ready to preserve Punjabi culture & direct the flow of the cultural stream. He is ever eager to raise the fallen, convert the walker into a racer, and encourage the runner. That is why he is called 'the Ambassador of Punjabi Culture'. He has provided jobs for thousands of youths, and caused as well as prevented many transfers. He has helped the people in many other ways too, but none has ever stood him in good stead.

He is quite Suave of tongue and it wins him the affection of all. 'Yes, Sir', is his mannerism. He is primarily interested in Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair' and is anxious to see it fairly conducted. But as the fair gradually draws near, it miraculously runs its course in all smoothness! The secret lies in the universal friendship that he enjoys and the atmosphere of cordiality that he has created around himself and which extends itself from a day labourer to the Prime Minister of India! He has also spread his net-work

of friendship abroad. His this very quality that despite being so great he ever keeps himself at the level of the humblest of the humble and the lowest of the low, has endeared him to one and all and it accounts for the fact that at his residence there is always witnessed a traffic of the lovers of art and literature of all classes and communities. 'Do good and forget it'- this is his motto and betokens his exalted & sublime nature and here lies the secret of his popularity.

I have been in close contact with Jassowal Sahib for several years. I am deeply impressed with him and every time I come I learn from him new things and feel inclined to acquire new virtues. A long interview I had with him has been published in many papers and journals and was much appreciated by the readers and the lovers of art & I felt much encouraged. At my humble request S. Jassowal has attended several conferences of Sahitya Sabha, Regd. Dhuri. I hold invaluable the love and affection which S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has bestowed upon me.

### An eye-witness account of the Jassowal

**Charan Kaushal**

If a son was born in any house, he went first of all in all gladness to congratulate the parents; if some young man was to be married, he invariably reached to attend his 'ghori' ceremony and standing in the first row gave a clapping and joined the Bhangra dance in all enthusiasm; like wise, if a death occurred in a family, he was one of the first to shed abundant tears. Even during the dark days of militancy and terrorism he was the first to organise and hold cultural fairs. This S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, the throb of the juvenile hearts of the Punjab, had his 60th birthday celebrated at his native village Jassowal, in 1995 to the beat of the drums, in all pomp & show.

The constructive thinker of the Punjabi culture and the convenor of cultural fairs S. Jassowal is a bosom friend of my father Pt. Som Dutt Sharma, the ex-minister of the Punjab. He had invited my father to attend his afore said birth-day celebrations. But owing to some political engagement he could not come and directed me to attend the function. There were almost marriage like preparations at his place at Jassowal. S. Jassowal had 'laddus' in a bronze tray and was offering them to every visitor. On one side big tea-cauldrons were placed on fire, and Sangar (Community lunch) was in progress.

In the scorching heat of summer they had wrapped his head in an embroidered sheet of cloth, given a sword in his hand, and holding another embroidered cloth from the four ends and spreading over him. The organisers of the function were escorted Jassowal through the streets of the village, taking dignified steps. They were singing Punjabi songs. A young man with his eyes covered with cloth was riding a bullet motor cycle & leading the procession. The snake-charmers who had come from different places carried snakes & big pythons around their necks and played upon their flutes as they

passed; while the Punjabi youths accompanied S. Jassowal to the stage doing Bhangra dance all along the way. There stood a maruti car covered with Phulkari sheet of cloth in the 'Pandal (the bounded place of the function).

When Babu Jassowal reached the place of the fair like a bridegroom, he was welcomed by the renowned folk-singers of the Punjab, painters and poor peasants and labourers, and the Babu would embrace one and thump on the back another, look sternly at one for coming late and also show him affection. Another source of attraction was articles associated with Punjabi culture- the wheels, farmers' bullock-carts, the corn grinding stones, ploughs, hoes, battle axes, javelins, big frying pans, and an exhibition of the new implements of agriculture placed there by the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, puppet shows, a washer woman, weighing twelve maunds, and a 'toombi' (a small harp) a 'bugdu', flutes, tongs, snakes, water bowls, pitchers, the music played on a bronze salver, and the portraits made by painters of writers and political leaders. When Babu Jassowal under the campy of an embroidered cloth was stepping on the stage, thousands of men, women and children and young men rose to their feet and greeted him with their claps and prayed, O Jassowal may you ever hold even grander fairs than these ! On reaching the stage Babu Jassowal bowed to the mammoth gathering and raising his hand triumphantly welcomed all of them.

After some time when the great messenger of peace S. Beant Singh, the Chief Minister of Punjab arrived. the 'dhadis' (Rebeck players), drummers, flute players, yogis with their Veenas, - all accorded him a welcome with one tone and rhythm. While S. Beant Singh stirred his feet in unison with the rhythm of these artists, S. Jassowal, too, had applied his hands to his ears and was singing at a high pitch with them. S Beant Singh, Chief Minister, while addressing the gathering said that during the April harvest when peasants and labourer families have no leisure from labour, today this mammoth gathering suggests that to the Punjab the atmosphere of peace is returning. He added, "I may live or not, my ministerial staff may live or not, I would like to see the time when a Punjabi damsel, laden with gold ornaments, starts from vagha border and crosses undisturbed the Shambhu barrier.

Unless it happens, I won't believe that peace has returned to Punjab". He said, "Though S. Jassowal has become sixty his feet are still automatically' fising from the earth. I congratulate the Punjabi public on this august occasion and pray to Waheguru that Jassowal remain strong enough to hold such cultural fairs over a long stretch to time!"

Bibi Rajinder Kaur Bhatthal , S. Harcharan Singh Hero, Malkeet Singh Dakha, Jasvir Singh of Sangrur, S. Gurmeet Singh, Secretary to the Chief Minister, Punjab, Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana S. Charanjit Singh Channi had, particularly attended the function. The renowned poet of the Punjab Dr. Atam Hamrahi and Urdu lyrical poet Sardar Panchhi traced the record of the whole career of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal in their recitations. Next, all the

leading singers of the Punjab raised a flood of music- the sixth river of the Punjab, as it were. Different songs were sung in response to public demands. As the evening fell, the pavilion got thoroughly illuminated and the fair- fans after doing their respective jobs again went to the pavilion and resorted to songs and dance. Punjabi singers sat around the pavilion at the booths running motors for water and offering hot water. A renowned singer of the Punjab asked, a 'pakoda' maker what he would charge for the whole big tray, the later hesitatingly demanded rupees four hundred. The generous singer paid that poor fellow five hundred rupees and distributed the 'pakodas' among the people. It was by this time 10 p.m. and at the fair-ground the singers and the duet- singers were still making a display of their art. Jassowal's wife Bibi Surjeet Kaur was sitting in the company of ladies enjoying the whole show very much 'Bhangra'dances were in progress. Some were requesting the artists for the recital of 'Hir di 'Kali', 'Mirza Jeona Morh' & 'Mahia' etc. till the whole programme came to a reluctant end at 2 a.m. The people while leaving were saying; "Bapu, please hold such fairs again, we will surely attend them". They were saying 'tata: 'good bye' etc. to one another; while S. Bahadur Singh, Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, 'Jassowal Soodan' was bidding farewell to all of them.

## Mohan Singh Fair - an historical survey

**Pargat Singh Grewal**

Time's flow never ends; it keeps marching forward countless people came into the whirlpool of time & departed, are still coming and departing. It will go on even in future. It is an eternal truth. But something will survive. It is a question to which only History can respond; for History alone is such a document as bears a witness to those who have left something behind. History is in itself a unique incomprehensible topic which is ever in the making.

Here we are referring only to 'Mohan Singh Fair'the appropriate topic at the moment. Before we give an historical account of the Fair, it will be advisable to throw some light on ourselves too.

I met the founder of this fair S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal, when I was absolutely ignorant of the world and its ways and in respect of my intellectual maturity was yet too young though approaching manhood. Today he has crossed his youthful stage lipped into old age and I, too, have crossed my stage of youth. The cordial relations we have can be established not in years but in many lives; for S. Jassowal has brought me up like his own sons, looked after me and introduced me to the world. He has always nodded to what I said and brought it to completion. That is why some complaint that Jassowal only listens to Pargat Singh & does what the latter says; that he does listen to others, but he may or may not act upon what they suggest. I,

however, think that S. Jassowal loves his younger brother Inderjit Singh Grewal most and respects his mother Mrs. Amar Kaur more than he does any other person in the whole world! All else lies between.

If we refer to the 'fair', one thing is quite clear that during the cycle of birth-rebirth once his hand fell upon political power and then this problem stood before him like a formidable mountain: what he had to bequeath to posterity? The cyclic order of life span before his mental eyes like a cinematographic film! He spent many precious years of his life in the company of the great leaders of the Punjab such as Master Tara Singh, Sant Baba Fateh Singh, S. Kapoor Singh (I.C.S.), S. Partap Singh Kairon and S. Gopal Singh Khalsa and among intellectuals and poets his choice fell on Prof. Mohan Singh. In the balance Prof. Mohan Singh's side looked heavier, and his memory which he had, for two years, celebrated in his own house, was now brought to the public forum and set-up in the public court yard!

Then a series of activities started two months were spent in making strenuous preparations for the approaching fair and the next ten months of the year were spent in making schemes & projects for the next fair! Politics and leadership were thrown into abeyance! a venture of much greater significance cropped up! According to a broad estimate nearly two crore rupees were spent on this cultural fair during the last twelve years.

Sometimes wounds deepen and worsen with the passage of time, and an average person, being infirm by nature, gets shaken so often. But Bravo! S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal! he gets ready even to sell himself off for the sake of the Fair!

Once I asked him if he had ever attended the programme of Sant Ram 'Udasi'. I added that if he ever attended his performance, he would forget all others. He said, "Where does he live? Call him at once." I said, "I do not have his address & that I had heard him at my own village in 1979". At it he began to ask every visitor of the address of Sant Ram Udasi; and after a month brought him in his car to my residence and said, "Here is Udasi." Then he kept him in his car for nearly two months all the twenty four hours and then announced that 'Udasi ji' would be weighed in coins and the world bears a witness, that Mr. Udasi was actually weighed in coins in the presence of lacs!

If you ask him to give some suggestion as to how a task should be done and how to mobilise the necessary strength and capacity to accomplish it, he will say, "If you keep your aim ever in view and do only one thing at a time, then how can you fail to accomplish it?"

When he embarked upon his programme of conducting these cultural fairs, I asked him what his ultimate mission was, he said, "Punjabi intellectuals are convinced of their own wisdom and complain that none bothers to listen to them or follow their suggestions; all are interested in mere trash. The folk-singers say that they do not know what these intellectuals are writing which the people do not accept. This is a big gap just like that

between day and night. My aim is to bring them together and thus usher in a new dawn in the Punjab. So that whatever the intellectuals write and say the folk-singers and other artists convey to the masses and thus become the co-sharers of their activities." today, I see that when journalists, T.V. men and radio authorities honour and appreciate the singers, the latter, too, have endeavoured to bring maturity and fidelity in their songs and speeches. This unison between the intellectuals & the artists has been brought about by S. Jassowal through this cultural fair!

The fair has established a strong foot hold in the history of the Punjab, to which hundreds of literary conferences, cultural stages, theatrical clubs and trusts bear a witness. These clubs and trusts and the fairs and festivals organised by them have sprung up during the years 1980 and 1990, and made successful experiments in working on the lines of this 'Mohan Singh Fair'. Today in every corner of the Punjab there is held some literary conference or cultural function or theatrical performance by theatrical organisations; and newspapers are filled with their reports. The North Zone Cultural Centre of the Indian Government is also the off-spring of this very mode of thought; and now even the Cultural Affairs Department of the Punjab Government has turned its attention to this side. I may add that in 1990, S. Jassowal went on a foreign tour at the invitation of The World Cultural Conference and before leaving he asked his assistants to conduct the fair as usual so that he might be sure that it would be carried on when he was no more. We could not make any elaborate and satisfactory arrangements, still whatever singers and artists we could get at, we did and held the fair. But we were surprised to see that without any formal invitations or announcements spectators in thousands and singers and artists too, came of their own accord on the 19th of October in the Punjabi Bhawan and held the fair as usual with their mutual cooperation.

Today this fair after covering twelve years of its childhood has entered the juvenal period analogous to the 21st year of puberty in human life as it is written in Punjabi c.f. "when she crossed her twelfth year", youth came in all its glory and the cobra of Love hit her."

In the same way this fair, too, has attained to puberty. Now its parents (organisers) are no longer worried about its safety and long life. Of course, one doubt is still there that like a youthful lad it might take a wrong turn and get spoiled such worry is often shown by parents about their children.

## The Honoured Man - Jassowal

**Ram Sharan Mansurvi**

Souls emit & spread their fragrance in the world in proportion to the fragrance they possess; and air-currents raise symphonies in the atmosphere; the rustling sound of the leaves, the gurgling sound of the cataracts, the rumble of the lightning the seven-coloured glimpse of the rainbow in the sky & the coquettish glance of a newly married damsel, betraying some

bashfulness and self-consciousness are linked together through all the medium of beauty!; exactly in the same way S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal's personality acts as a magnetic force. With his gentle, warm, affectionate, sociable and cheerful temperament he never grows weary of loving and reverencing the style and culture of the world, the soil of the Mother Earth and the singers and artists.

I have known S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal ever since he passed his LL.B. and then starting with the career of the village sarpanch he rose in politics and established cordial relations even with the president of India and other important personages of the country. His infinite love for Punjabi culture, is like that of a tippy elephant; He attends every social meeting and joins every social gathering distributes cheerfulness and shares with the people their weal and woe. He is, indeed, a great personage. Among the great men of the world he is the only learned man, in my view, who supports and encourages art-lovers and artists and appreciates true art. It is only through his patronage that the art of several artists has achieved world-wide recognition and several artists through his encouragement have won renown in the world.

Were I to explain the nature of S. Jassowal, it won't be an exaggeration to say that the component parts of his name 'Jag'+ 'dev'+ Singh+'Jassowal' mean a god like personage in the world as well as one endowed with the stature of a lion; a great man who is the inhabitant of a famous village and has won name and fame in the world.

Jassowal Sahib has dedicated himself to the service of Punjabi culture; the pleasure he derives from rendering a disinterested service to literature & art, can't be bought with money. His face gives a glimpse of a saintly & holy countenance, visible, only on the faces of 'pirs' and prophets. That is why he welcomes one and all and gives a proof of his goodness of heart.

Whenever, some one visits his 'Ahlana', nest or residence, he, too, acquires a bird-like temperament, and feels himself to be released from the bondage of material love and attachment.

I am sure that the man who ascends the Moon first of all will be S. Jassowal alone- who will listen to the story of Punjabi culture as related by the Moon Mother; & while sitting on her spinning wheel will organise a cultural fair on the Moon as well. He will make use of the vast theatrical stage of the Moon for this purpose.

## Carefreed sportive Jassowal

**Dr. Bhagwant Singh Mangewal**

Whenever they talk of cultural fairs, the plump and austere face of S. Jassowal begins to swim before their eyes. The dreadful monster of Capitalism has broken all the centuries old customs and conventions of the Punjab; the Punjabi fairs have a unique recognition & significance. Regarding these fairs a scholar once remarked that 'fairs serve as an axle or connecting

link between rural life and urban life & keep them knit together like an axil that keeps the two planks of the spinning wheel knit together. These fairs meet the domestic requirements of the village people and the business demands of the townsmen and on this two faceted wheel revolves the strap of their common interests; then roll after roll of the thread of acquaintance is turned out".

These words represent the Punjab of the days of yore. In the existing situation the old connective role of the traditional fairs of the Punjab has considerably decreased; the divisions between the towns and villages have become fewer than before and owing to the net-work of roads, the modern means of communication, the press and the electronic media, the difference between the modes of thinking of urbans and rurals has also decreased. For this reason the village fairs have lost their former lustre and glow. Jassowal had realised three decades ago that the Punjabi fairs would not be able to keep alive in future. So he made up his mind to organise cultural fairs of a new type and it soon developed into a movement. By starting Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair he has not only guided & led the men of letters and singers of the Punjab to the Punjab level but also to the international level. Through the medium of these cultural fairs he has given the Punjabi culture a new orientation. In this context he has always agreed to play the role of the guide of the cultural front of the central 'Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha' (Sekhon). He is also a life member of the Central Association. Along with patronising the Punjabi artists he has also unified them. To the Punjabi singers and artists who suffered for want of mike facilities he has provided a right path, and by bringing the new and budding singers and artists before the public at the cultural fairs he has further enriched the Punjabi cultural heritage as well as opened new avenues for the Punjabi longings. He partonised several obscure singers and gave them a unique distinction and many of them are today touching the firmament of artistic glory. If it were said that such singers are the finds of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair, it won't be an exaggeration. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is a man of multi-faceted personality. Majority of the Punjabis are even today in the dark about the many invisible aspects of his personality. Thus, quite carefully and with a lot of foresight he is safe-guarding the Punjabi culture & is striving to maintain the Punjabi identity, he is also playing an active role to organise into a unity the more aggressive forces of the land. He bears a most profound love for his mother land her people & the artistic creations of his country. He looks askance at foreign glamour and glitter and despises westernisation of indiginous culture. Owing to his reflective nature he does not give as much importance to the world famous Niagra water fall - an object of great fascination for the progressed countries as he does to the watermills of his own country. Many years before the present day international liberalisation and globilisation he had sensed a danger to the Punjabi culture and art and

begun to take steps for their preservation and security. His profound reflectiveness bears the deep impress of Aligarh Muslim University where he enjoyed the company of great thinkers, politicians & educationists.

He is a man of carefree and sportive disposition. He picked up a number of helpless artists and made them run fast and they never looked behind. Which so ever artist got the patronage of S. Jassowal, ever went on along the path of progress, Jassowal, too, has faced many a big tempest and has ever, remained unnerved & undaunted & stuck to his path as his fancy bade him. He is a man of creative and constructive nature, It is never in his mode of life to disappoint any body or weaken his morale with discouraging remarks. He remains ever in the ascendance and has the ability and capacity to bring together on the same platform the men with entirely divergen & ideologies. In fact, his earnest devotion to Punjabi culture and identity brings even an opponent having different views round to his point of view. He expresses his point of view in a simple, lucid language and in a plausible, logical manner.

He is a master of the stage. He immediately establishes a rapport with the audience and soon gets mixed up with them. On listening to him every person thinks that Jassowal is translating exactly his heart in his words. He facinates not thousands but lacs of people with his sweet & oratorical language. He can read the public mind like a great psychologist. His knack at adjusting his feelings to the feelings of his listeners has the influence of an eminent poet Karnail Singh Paras, Ramuwalia with whom S Jagdev Singh Jassowal had a close & cordial relationship.

To discourage profanity in Punjabi folk-music he demanded from the Punjab Government appointment of censorship. He has also cooperated with the like-minded cultural & literary organisations and set up a big front against profanity and obscenity in art and music. Because of him the deterioration which was rapidly assailing the Punjabi folk-song has been checked to some extent.

By organising Professor Mohan Singh Memorial Fair he has set up the tradition of organising cultural and literary fairs in the names of literary persons. The uniqueness of this fair lies in the fact that on the eve of this fair besides musical and theatrical performances on the stage singers and men of letters are also honoured and acclaimed. Besides Mohan Singh Fair he has also patronised Dhani Ram Chatrik Fair, Shiv Kumar Batalvi Fair, and Amar Singh Shaunki Fair.

He is also supervising over 'Punjab Lok KalaKar Manch (Punjab Folk-Artists Association) and Punjabi Sahitya Academy. By erecting a statue of Prof. Mohan Singh at Ludhiana he has played a leading role. It is the greatest tribute paid to a writer.

Jassowal has done much more work than many great institutions. That is why his name is mentioned with great affection and regard not only in Punjab and India but also in the international circle.

With deep knowledge of politics S. Jassowal is a man of intellectual propensities. Despite his involvement in active politics Jassowal has not been besmeared with its mud but like the lotus flower rising above the marsh is scattering his fragrance on all sides. His light & brilliance will guide like light house, those on the path of culture and literature for eons to come.

## Loving words

From mother's side S. Kartar Singh Zaildar, the respected father of S. Jagdev Singh, had his relatives at our village Dhadogal. I have had several occasions to see Jassowal Sahib in person; it is really a matter of great pleasure to see him. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is the name of personage who has dedicated his whole life to the dissemination of Punjabi culture. This great man espoused the cause of folk-singers and artists at a time when the people called them 'Kanjar-bawds'.

Jassowal has always fought for Punjabi identity and espoused the cause of Punjabi culture, 'Struggle' is Jassowal's other name. Today all folk-singers & artists should be grateful to S. Jassowal as well as follow his good instructions; as he has provided employment for many of them. It is my prayer that Jassowal Ji may live long. Amin!

**Dr. Pawan Kumar 'Pabbi'**

I have been in close and loving contact with S. Jassowal Sahib for the last fifteen or sixteen years. I am deeply impressed at his whole personality and his lofty individuality. In fact, Jassowal is that prop & pillar on which the whole Punjabi culture is sustaining itself. His contribution to Punjabi culture and his work done in favour of art and artists & his efforts for the upliftment of Punjabi language - are his most valuable activities.

**Amrik Singh Talwandi**, Mullanpur, Ludhiana

Whenever I pay S. Jassowal, a visit, I always anticipate that he will demand from me a musical recital. And it always happens. He listens to my songs and whole-heartedly admires them. I have been enjoying Babu Jassowal's love and blessings for many years, and I think that if an artist and singer wins Jassowal Sahib's love & appreciation, it is a unique gift and blessing for him, only to be had by sheer good luck.

**Ravinder Dewana,**

## An Interview with Jassowal

**Harbhan Singh Bajwa**

Only that man can win an eternal name in the world who leads his life in the service of his mother tongue and his native culture. S: Jagdev Singh Jassowal's career and activities include both these things; for what S. Jassowal has done for his mother tongue and indigenous culture. No institution has done so far nor is doing at present. Rather Jassowal has become an institution himself.

He has been conducting Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair for the last

thirteen years. For twelve years Ranjha had tended Heer's buffaloes and ultimately succeeded in winning her hand. In the same way the Kumbh Festival is held after twelve years and millions of pilgrims have a holy dip during the festival and consider themselves purified thereby. Prof. Mohan Singh Fair has now crossed the age limit of twelve years and is now running unassisted. It no longer needs any guidance or escort. Regarding the inception of this fair we had an interview with S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. Here are some extracts from that interview:-

Q.: Jassowal Sahib, may I know when you first climbed up this cultural steed, when you first took yourself for a politician and anything else after - that?

Jassowal: Bajwa Sahib, I hail from a village and I lead a rustic life. When we were students, my respected father used to say, "Well, either cut fodder in the field or graze the cattle." I found grass cutting difficult & cattle grazing easy. So I always chose to graze cattle. There in the meadows I would daily meet opium-eaters, widowers, old bachelors and such people, tending their cattle as well as entertaining me with the recitals of 'Heer - Ranjha', 'Sohini-Mahiwal', 'Sasi-Punnu', 'Mirza-Sahiban' and 'Puran Bhagat'. I enjoyed their songs & recitals very much.

Q.: Please tell, if you went alone with the cattle or there were other cattle-herds too who accompanied you? and do you remember the songs or stories of those cattle-herds?

Jassowal: I do not much remember their songs; but I remember their sayings & maxims so much that were I to relate them all, it might take more than the whole night.

Q.: I can't give so much time; please relate only one or two of those sayings:

Jassowal: By way of sample I relate one or two sayings:

a) A comet appeared in the sky; It set all families a thinking.

b) I was robbed (of my honour) partly by the head men (Panches) and partly by the Jat land lords.

The Jewellery was snatched by the house holders and my youth by my boy friends. The wives of all ungrateful men are ultimately reduced to shepherdesses. I remember many of such well-known sayings.

Q.: All those cattle herds could not be married people; many of them might have been unmarried people or old bachelors, I suppose?

Jassowal: Yes, majority of them were old bachelors. I, too, then, was single. But I was mentally quite mature for I enjoyed their emotional songs very much, as young maidens do on 'tians' ( a rainy festival of girls). Thus I enjoyed this life of a cattle-grazer.

Q.: You were mentally so mature, were there others, too, equally mature and sexually alert like you?" If so, kindly throw some light on the ways & manners of those people, some incident or episode that appeal to the listeners and give them an idea of our old culture?

Jassowal: The people you are referring to, Bajwa Sahib, have broken their links with their old cultural inheritance, their land, their own fellow beings & their roots & origin. They have lost their cultural legacy; they have got urbanised: Then how can you come by that old culture of yours?

Q.: May I know why they have been cut off from their culture? any reason?

Jassowal: They have lost all sense of pride in their literature, mother tongue, culture and brotherhood; they rather prefer to lead a sequestered, secluded life and are, thus, getting farther and still farther from their old culture without imbibing even their so-called new culture. These people look like a curse to me; they are neither crows nor swans.

Q.: Jassowal Sahib, Please leave all this and do not drag me away from the topic. I inquire of you when you were a cattle-grazer, how did you lead your life? And when you got fully educated, how did you start your life? Did you undergo any change?

Jassowal : At that time I was God's guest, had little botheration or worry

Q.: When you completed your education and got married, you entered politics. Please, tell me what change you noticed in this new atmosphere?

Jassowal : There is a lot of difference between the two spheres. None can forget one's childhoodness own village, own well, own fields, own land, own brotherhood, own kith and kin- none can forget! He who forgets all these, gets cut off from his own inheritance. I was married before the marriageable age; and I got my 'muklava' (first conjugal visit to in-law after the marriage) after three or four years after my marriage. My father then said, "please, go to the town and buy clothes of your choice." I, accordingly, came to the town; A conference was in progress in the Gurudwara Kalgidhar; and leaders were making speeches on the issue of conducting a 'morcha' (struggle) for 'Punjabi Suba'. I felt attracted. These speeches were most fiery and captivating; and slogans: "Punjabi Suba ZindaBad!" were being raised. I, too, Joined them in J raising this slogan. The police arrested all those people. I, too, courted arrest. I had the pieces of cloth with me and I was to get them sewn on reaching the village. Now instead of going to my in-laws for 'muklava' I went behind bars! Thus, I become a leader. I did not become a leader of my own accord.

Q.: You might be remembering the names of several people who spent jail life with you?

Jassowal: How can I mention all those names. I can only say that all the present day leaders (Sikh leaders) were with me in jail. I had done my M.A. by then. I was a studious newspaper reader. But in jail there were only elderly people with religious leanings.

Q : You became a leader uninformed. Did you undergo police beating or not?

Jassowal: There was a good use of club. The police clubbed us as mercilessly as we bent maize cobs! This scar on my shoulder was caused at that time. Please. do not think that it is a scar caused by a fall from the roof

Q.: When you came to wield political power, how and you enjoy it? How did you take this political life?

Jassowal: I take politics as I take the shreds of cloth comprising a ball; when you unravel a cloth-ball, you will come by nothing except worthless shreds of cloth. In other words, I have got nothing from politics; and I haven't much enjoyed it.

Q.: When did you come to befriend Prof. Mohan Singh and why?

Jassowal: I was telling you that love for Punjabi culture I had developed at my village.

Q.: This I admit; but how did you come into close friendship with Prof. Mohan Singh?

Jassowal: When I studied at Arya College, Ludhiana, there was once held the first Punjabi Conference at Ludhiana in the year 1951. All the leading Punjabi poets attended this conference. I listened to all of them. But I found only prof. Mohan Singh attached to the Mother Earth or closely associated with her. I grew fond of him and sought contact with him. I entered the crowd in order to reach him and get his autograph, but I lost my note-book on the way. It made me much disappointed.

## Men Like Jassowal are born but seldom!

**Dr. Kulwant Kaur**

It was the seminar hall of Punjabi Bhawan, Ludhiana. There was a surging sea of the audience and a hustle & bustle all around, a gathering of various types of people, and the second day of Prof. Mohan Singh Fair. All arrangements on the stage were complete. All were awaiting the arrival of the chief guest. All of a sudden a tall, stalwart man holding a banner in hand paused in front of the stage with one end entrusting to a serving man. Soon he climbed up the stage and began to tie the ropes. He could get the thing done by anybody on order; but, no; His act of tying the ropes and strings showed his earnestness of purpose and his sense of devotion!- his infatuation for Punjab, Punjabi language and culture, as well as his fidelity and devotion to Prof. Mohan Singh and his infinite devotion to his Mother tongue Punjabi. He was the cynosure of all eyes, S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal- a unique character, - a remarkable Sardar an Akali from his dress fashion, but a Congress man from his mental make-up...!.....!! You may see how fitly this verse of Hamdard Sahib applies to him:-

"I was over whelmed by your congress, at last; though my heart was that of an Akali" as I entered your town.

At one time he was all in all in the Akali Dal & its active member in the political field; though he has been also an M.L.A. from the Congress side. How can gusts of wind be controlled? Who can stem the tide of the flowing

streams? Who can take within his fold roaring, impetuous tides? so he is today impervious to both Akali Dal and the Congress and is the Governor of singers and artists, of the spectators, of Punjabi culture and identity. He is the seething & surging fountain of his Punjabi inheritance and culture. He is the custodian of his cultural legacy. He is the surging and roaring ocean of true Punjabi identity- a lofty mountain of courage & fortitude, an inexhaustible store-house of Punjabi culture.

A sion of Grewal landlord, a promising youth of a well-to-do and affluent family, he has carried the name of his village Jassowal to all corners of the world and brought it an endless fame, and has ever reposed his pride in it. He is the emitter and disseminator of Punjabi fragrance & is aptly called the light of Punjabi identity. He was a beloved son of a Zaildar father. He saw the light of the day at the time when the wave of pragmatism swept the land of the Punjab. Progressive writers of the type of Munshi Prem Chand and Prof. Mohan Singh were busy in expounding and disseminating their evolutionary as well as revolutionary philosophy, when this remarkable child made his appearance on the waste-land of Jassowal. It was the year 1935. In those good, old days how could the sions of well-to-do Jat families ever choose to befriend books and take any interest in their studies? But this intelligent child Jagdev made friends with his writing board and satchel. He also formed his relations with the fields of his village and began to pore over his books while sitting on their ridges. In 1960, he passed his M.A. examination in Punjabi from the Mohindra College, Patiala. It was a great achievement in those days.

A great orator and a great lover of literature & its appreciator S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal was eager to carry on his studies further, but the Panjabis situation was not so favourable. Those were the days, when, though India had got her freedom, the Punjabis were still the victims of alienation. Even this independence could not give them any mentid respited and they were struggling for the creation of the 'Punjabi Suba' Jagdev, too, during this Punjabi Suba agitation had several times been to jail. That i why for the furtherance of his studies he chose Aligarh Muslim University and did his LL.B. from there.

With colourful, rosy dreams, ambitions of bold and lofty fligh and eager to excel himself in other lines, Jagdev Singh Jassowal became law graduate in 1964. He was quite ready to start his legal practice and was quite expert in forensic eloquence in legal interrogations & responses. But one who is destined to become the advocate of sensitive, vulnerable people could not feel at home with wicked, crafty fellow lawyers.

Politics of a corrupt legal structure, custodians of Law with morally dead conscience and other legal practioners could not provide a congenial atmosphere for him. The character-killing of an ordinary scribe pinched him

so much that he bade farewell to legal practice for ever. But who can say Jassowal has abandoned legal profession or practice for ever? He is, in fact, pleading the cause of Punjabiati, of Punjabi culture and identity.

This embodiment of fidelity and goodness later joined politics. But after his first victory and subsequent defeat in elections he got so morally shocked at the capricious, precarious ground of politics that his noble and conscientious temperament could not bear this fluctuation & flicker in the mood of the voters & he bade good bye even to politics.

Today, he is the leader of the masses, a friend, guide & philosopher of all types of artists & singers. Who does not recognise his countribution to Punjabi heritage today? He is now a popular figure, a countenance dearly loved by all, At one place he is the President of Guru Gobind Singh Foundation: at another; the headman of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair, on one hand, he is the motive force behind World Cultural Academy and on the other the soul of many a sundry organisations. He is active day & night. "I sit at home only when my pocket is empty or feel unwell," says he. It is hard to find such precious gems- they are born but seldom.

After a long drought in the artistic field now there is abundant rainfall of art & music. But even in burning, scorching deserts he has been feeling & acting like one in an oasis even during dry, moistureless blasts of wind he has been feeling the puff of cool eastern breeze! He has become the helper, the prop & pillar of the weak and the helpless; a succour for the troubled and amicted in crises!

Today S. Jassowal has attained to that lofty height in the cultural field where he has to stem the tide of vulgar and inferior folk-music and further the cause of genuine & morally refined music. He is also to help rise the budding artistic geniuses and widen the range of the spectators. He is also to enlist the services of the litterateurs and win their cooperation. raise and determine the standard of art and mobilise the public.

## Jagdev Singh Jassowal's mode of thought

**Surmukh Singh Sehgal**

There is perhaps no institution whatsoever with which his name Jagdev Singh Jassowal is not associated. Different singers, writers, artists and intellectuals have given him different appellations and honoured him. For example, Jassowal has been called the 'Caravan of culture', The 'Messiha of writers and artists; the 'prophet of culture', 'The supporting tree of world culture, the 'monarch of artists', 'the light house, The Mecca of artists', 'the University of writers and artists', the 'ring leader, 'The Governor of cultural Fairs', The Custodian of our cultural Heritage', The Back-bone of our cultural fairs as well as culture,' The Governor of Artists', & so on...

During an interview I once heard him say, "I need neither votes nor notes (currency notes). I am neither to become an M.L.A. nor a minister; Now I think even to keep myself aloof from these cultural fairs and lie at

some sequestered place, on a cot under a tree. I have grown fed up even with these fairs. The folk singers and artists whom I rendered all possible help during their days of stringency have now raised their rates to a high pitch and got segregated from the masses, from both villages and towns. Every man can't afford to pay them according to their high demand and organise a function. The same fees that they demand can suffice to celebrate a girl's marriage. But these artists do not even show any regard for me. People come to me in the hope that the Jathedar will help them engage an artist at a reasonable or a bit light rate; but when I ask them for concession, they first elevate their demand by rupees five thousand and then at my request come down to their mentally accepted demand; thus the matter remains undecided.

Jassowal wants that these artists become members of the legislative assemblies, ministers, chief ministers. He often says, "Please, take care of these artists; they are an essential rather integral part of our society; they have safe-guarded our culture. The government ought to provide them houses at cheap prices; and if they fall ill, they should be given free medical treatment. They should be given even identity cards so that when they go from one province to another, they be in a position to have rest in a government bungalow. In their old age they should be given pensions; but the government has yet paid no heed to his suggestions. Jassowal also thinks that documentary films should be prepared on these writers and other artists; and they be given due honour in the governmental sphere and in the world at large.

I edited a book written by S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal and met many men of letters in this connection. I feel pained to write that I met writer friends who secretly oppose him, though apparently show him respect. Jassowal's heart is just like a river; he may remain in discomfort but he desires to see every other person happy. He never eats or drinks any thing concealing it from the eyes of others. He does not even withhold any amount or arrears payable to others; but believes in making prompt payments.

Public Relations Deptt., Punjab, Chandigarh.

## S. Jassowal as I know him

### Ninder Ghugianvi

It was the final day of my Revered preceptor Ustad Lal Chand Yamla Jat's bhog ceremony. To attend the ceremony, I took my bus at Faridkot early in the morning and reached Ludhiana in time. From the bus stand I made for Jawahar Nagar Camp, the settlement of my Preceptor, when I saw S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal & Pargat Singh Grewal coming from the opposite side.

I was shivering with cold and had a high temperature. I paid my compliments to Jassowal Sahib; He responded to my Sat Sri Akal and paused

a little. He asked me who I was & from where I had come. I said, "Revered Bapu, I am called Ninder Ghugianvi, a disciple of Sh. Yamla Jat & just like his son. I am going to attend his bhog ceremony at his residence.

"O my son, you seem to have a temperature", said Jassowal as he felt my pulse and said aloud, "O fool, your body is almost aflame with temperature and you are going to attend a bhog! You must get some medicine.

"Bapu Ji, I know no clinic here, That is why I am proceeding to the Dera (settlement)."

"O no, you will die of fever, come with me & I shall provide you some medicine", saying it he took me by the hand and escorted me to a clinic nearby. He got medicine for me & paid from his own pocket. He, then took his way & I came to Yamla ji's dera.

It was my first introduction with S. Jassowal. I was amazed to think that such a great man was so considerate towards small men like me. This is the merit of all genuine, great men.

S. Jassowal, since then has so often come in contact with me. He even started taking me with him on all cultural fairs he attended.

Once At Fazilka, on the eve of Ustad Yamla Jat Memorial Fair, in 1992, Jassowal paid his visit. I, too, was sitting in front of the stage along with pressmen enjoying the fair; By chance his eyes fell upon me. He made me a gesture & I went to him & touched his knees. He said, "My son, Ghugianvi, where is your rebeck(Toomba). I will surely press you to sing Hasham's Sassi to me." Well, he got permission from the fair organisers and I sang Hasham's Sassi, as ordered. He gave me a reward of Rs. 100 for it.

My preceptor Yamla Ji highly respected S. Jassowal Sahib & on this account S. Jassowal too, annually attended the fair of Baba Pir Katore Shah, at his residence. Once on the eve of this very fair my Ustad presealed S. Jassowal a turban as a honour and hailed him as, "the "Alambardar of Artists " said, "I pay you my homage on this very account." Later, when Ustad ji got a hurt, & he was confined to bed and could not even move about, S. Jassowal along with a batch of artists went to his Dera to fetch him from there. At, that time my Preceptor said, "S. Jassowal, I feel highly beholden to you & to this batch of the artists for the love & affection you have shown. I will surely attend your fair though it be my last visit." Many of the people who attended the fair must be remembering that artists simply picked up Ustad Ji on their shoulders & seated him on the stage and got from him his 'toomba' recital. This was the last time that Ustad Ji sang at that fair. A few days later he got another invitation from Fazilka to attend the Cultural Fair; and Ustad Ji in the same unwell state reached there to give his performance! Now many a time I have a talk with S. Jassowal about my Ustad ji and he gets most gloomy & dejected; for the shabby condition in which the family of my revered Preceptor lives, is much below expectation, the sions of such a big artist must have a decent standard of living which, unfortunately, they do not enjoy; S. Jassowal is ever in favour of granting a high standard of living to the descendants of an artist

of national standing. S. Jassowal is very sentimental, but tender-hearted, and a suave-tempered man of lofty views, and dimensions. He is also a keen observer of men and an appreciator of genuine merit. It is on this account that he has given to Punjab many renowned artists and folk-singers so far. At the time when Punjab was terror-stricken, being in the grip of militancy and people felt scared while coming out of their houses, it was S. Jassowal who started the movement of cultural & musical fairs & festivals in the Punjab and gave the Punjabi public much needed entertainment as well as persuaded it to safe-guard its rich cultural legacy. That is why he has won so much popularity, this name & fame!

Once, for one year I could not see S. Jassowal some how. I was, then, preparing a book on Punjab's leading artist Hans Raj Hans, entitled 'Hans, an embodiment of folk-music'. In this connection I badly needed S. Jassowal's message. So I wrote to him. Only after four days I got his letter containing his message on 'Hans Raj Hans' along with congratulations such as the promptness of disposal in the repertory of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal!

On another occasion I went to Ludhiana & rang up to Jassowal Ji. He spoke in a harsh tone, "Oe where have you died? Where are you loafing about O naughty fellow? Come here & I shall teach you a lesson."

As I entered his house I found him standing in his orchard and directing his servant about cleansing it. "O Silly fellow, you are seldom seen; in which well had you fallen?" he exclaimed as soon as he saw me. I touched his knee & said, "Bapu Ji, I could not find time to come over here." At it, he exclaimed "O have you become a P.A. to the Governor? & he laughed aloud....His servant, too, joined us in our laughter."

## Bapu Jassowal's second birth

### Ninder Ghugianvi

It was June 28; At the residence of Maestro Lal Chand Yamla Jat, there was an annual function in the memory of Baba Pir Katore Shah.

Only two days back I had met Jassowal Sahib and got from him some matter for this book and returned to Barnala where the book was being compiled. Jassowal Sahib had told me at the time of my departure that on the day of this fair I should directly call at him in the morning from where we would go together to attend the function of my preceptor 'Yamla' Jee.

So according to the programme already decided, I left Barnala early in the morning and exactly at 9-15 reached Jassowal Sahib's residence. As routine Jassowal Sahib sits in the front big room with his friends. But that day there was none in that room. I proceeded further Jassowal Sahib lay in bed in his sleeping room. On seeing me he said, "O Ghugianvi; you are very punctual. You have come exactly at the right time... sit down, my son; sit down Ghugianvi." I touched Jassowal Sahib's knee and sat down in a chair in front of him. Bapu Jassowal had washed his hair and let it loose to dry. As

usual he looked quite calm and sedate and in a cheerful mood. I said, "Bapu ji, today I see none else in the house, How to account for it?" Where is 'Bebe'ji?" "Your Bebe and Rajinder (the driver) have gone to Jassowal- will soon be returning, we shall leave on their return. You Ghugianvi, come and have some water." He, then, took a bottle of water lying on his table, filled a glass with water and gave it to me. At the same time the phone bell rang. It was a phone-call from a singer named Kulwant Billa from Khanna. Jassowal Sahib was exchanging words with him with great love and affection.

Suddenly, there came a thundering voice of some man from outside and in a few seconds this voice grew louder and louder still and seemed to approach us, ..... Jassowal's watch dog was also barking and following that voice. The gauzy door with double leavers was closed. Thundering aloud and calling names a Nepalese came, gave a push to the door and intruded into the room! This Nepalese looked like a monster. A thick, round head, a lion-like mouth, big sharp teeth, big & ferocious eyes! a heavy physique, strong and robust!- was that Nepalese Devil! "Come out, O you, who call yourself the leader of the Punjabis! you damned creature! You sister....f...!"

I was frightened. The Nepalese monster went on thundering aloud, and calling names, while Jassowal Sahib lying in bed was responding to the phone call. The man at the phone said, "Bapu ji, some mad man has entered your room and calling you names, so loudly." Yes, my son, he seems to be a mad person," "Well, my son, ring me up again after some time."

And Jassowal Sahib then placed the receiver. The Nepalese monster was still thundering, "Come out! You sister f! call the police! Yes, call the police! Where is your police?... call the Governor!.... " the Nepalese was saying stretching his arms forward. His arms were big, of the size and thickness of a rafter and his biceps? You can well imagine.

I, too, thought that some mad man had intruded into the room. Now, it is difficult to get rid of him.

Jassowal while still lying in bed said to him; My son, sit down and have some water... take the chair."

But the Nepalese devil was making a lot of hubbub. I had seen only for the first time and that too, in Jassowal Sahib's house, the shouting and thundering devil that he was....

Seeing him so uncontrolled Bapu Jassowal had just tried to rise from his bed, when that devil at once took Jassowal Sahib in his fold and threw him down on the bed with a thud. Then there was a desperate struggle. I, too, participated in the clash....! I was only twenty two years and a half and this was my first chance to see such a grappling situation and participate in it! I have neither come to grips with any one nor disentangled two fighting persons, nor seen any such clash. Even if I ever saw a clash, I always turned my back and took my way. In brief, I had neither ever given a slap to any one nor received a slap. Now listen... we three were in clash, struggling, falling,

rising! almost in a wrestling bout. Babu Jassowal was exhausted and felt helpless. The Nepalese monster even during the scuffle was using abusive language, "O Damned creature! I won't spare you today kill you.... kill....!"

At last Jassowal recovered a little. He rose to his feet & said, "well keep standing, Your sister fu...!" Keep standing & let me bring my rifle! you sister fu....!"

Jassowal rushed into the next room and there remained the devil. I was standing. The Nepalese devil gave me a big fist blow on my jaws with both his hands combined. In this young age it was my first chance to receive such a blow... It is hard to describe my feeling & shock!

I was simply stunned! and in this paralytic state my head struck against the wall. My nose began to bleed, in profusion, blood welled in my teeth as well, well... let us proceed!

After giving me this double fist blow the devil entered Jassowal Sahib's room. How could I watch it indifferently? I, too, followed him Babu Jassowal was just about to take his 'Kirpan' (Sword) but after a little reflection he desisted, and simply kept standing. Rather admitting his defeat he even folded his hands before the Nepalese monster and even a little gave a false smile.

The Nepalese devil again caught hold of him and we again began to struggle against him. All the three were grappling together moving up and down. The Nepalese devil in rage was producing sharp sounds- "boon! beam! ooh! " etc.

In the course of wrestling I was buried under both that devil and Jassowal Sahib. With great difficulty I extricated myself. Babu Jassowal's teeth, too, were bleeding. He was now totally exhausted and felt entirely helpless. His old frame could work no further!

The fact is that Jassowal is about 66 or 67 years old. He is also suffering from diabetes..... How could he display his former strength & agility? It is not necessary that a man with a heavy physique and tall stature be also strong and vigorous.

Well, Jassowal, Nepalese devil and rovere grappling; In the course of struggle we again came out of the back room into the front room. We were rubbed against the wall. At it the big mirror dropped & smashed into pieces. It was before this mirror that Jassowal used to tie his turban so carefully. The bottle of water was lying on the floor. It was made of rubber and when it came under our pressure it made a crackling sound and got twisted and broken. Water spread on the floor. The table was also filled with water. The telephone directory also was drenched in water. Jassowal caught the Nepalese devil into the grip of his arms and held him tight. Jassowal's right arm came exactly in front of the Nepalese's mouth. He found his opportunity, opened his full mouth and took a big bite of his arm. The bite was so painful that Jassowal gave a shriek. Oh! he has killed me! Oh! Oh!" Jassowal began to cry aloud I got all the more frightened.

I cannot say how it struck Babu Jassowal; he shouted, "O Ghugianvi, do not do anything else, only pull him by the testicles, then he will release my arm."

I closed my eyes; because the kicks of this Nepalese devil could hit me on the face, when I was to pull his testicles.... So I shut my eyes and caught him by the testicles and gave them a powerful twist. At it the Nepalese devil cried out, Oh! Oh! Aa! aa! O, mother, I am dying!" When he released Jassowal's arm from his mouth, a big piece of flesh dropped from his mouth. It further melted my heart and I got much perturbed.

The Nepalese devil at once fell down on the ground with a thud, Jassowal placed his foot on his throat and gave him three or four violent jerks. Then at once Jassowal picked a chair that was lying toppled nearby and placed its two iron-legs on the belly of that devil and pressed the chair hard and then sat down on the chair.

Only a faint cry escaped the throat of the Nepalese devil "Pardon...me.... Sardar Sahib.... par..don.. me!"

The devil had become almost lifeless & enfeebled. We heaved a sigh of relief. Then Jassowal said, "Oe, Ghugianvi, you sit down on this chair, and keep the devil under control, I'll ring up the police."

"Babu ji, I cannot control him; you should keep him in this very state, I'll phone the police." He will get up and attack me & beat me."

"O no, I'll phone the police", Saying it Jassowal left the room and went outside.

Now I was alone. I thought this Nepalese devil will get up and rush at me, I, too, tried to rush out and in so doing pulled the leaf of the door behind me. The Nepalese devil was shut into the room! Babu did not ring up the police, but only took a few irregular steps and moved in a circuit and did nothing.... What else could he do? The poor fellow sat comfortably in his house, when'all of a sudden this devil emerged to kill him!

When Jassowal had escaped from the room, he saw another similar devil standing outside his house. The latter seeing him at once took to his heels! Jassowal was to ring up the police from the outer room which lay on one side. He feared to go in lest the other ruffian who had just run away, should return and attack him within his house like the first.

Jassowal said, "Ghugianvi, my son, well done! have shut the devil inside the room!... well done, my son!" He could hardly breathe, I said, "Babu ji, don't worry; how can he escape now? You should drink some water."

Jassowal had two draughts of water and flung the glass down. The glass rolled on the ground far away. Jassowal stared at the glass as it rolled.

Now Babu Jassowal and I rang up the police station; but the phone remained long engaged..... Babu was losing his patience, leaving the room. Babu and I began to call the people aloud for help! "run quickly; run quickly! some men have come!" Jassowal began to call his client, an electric mechanic "Mr. Ram Lal; "O Ram Lal! Oe Ram Lal!" O have you died?

Ram Lal came out with great difficulty and stood by us placing his hands upon his hips. Some two or three more persons came in response to our call, Jassowal was not, in his senses, I contacted the police station on phone. It was the Saraba Nagar Police Station. They said, Your area does not fall within our range; you should ring up the police station Division No. 5,....."

I said, "We haven't. their phone number, please ring them up yourself; it will be very kind of you."

"All right", saying it the man on duty laid down the receiver.

Jassowal could not speak even, "Ghugianvi, Oe, my son,... have this lock and lock up the room lest the bastard come out."

When I went to the door to lock it up from outside; that Nepalese monster was trying to break open the door from inside. But how could he now come out? locked the door and even tightly shut the gauzy double leaf and fastened its hook. Now the Nepalese monster stopped hitting the door. An idea struck me & I said to Jassowal Sahib, "Bapu ji, your rooms have many ventilators and all of them are open and quite spacious, I fear lest the ruffian come out through any of these on the roof."

"Oe, you are right.. You have had a very wise thought my son, Ghugianvi, go and lock up the door leading to the stairs; do it-at once, my son."

The stairs were also locked up. The telephone bell rang. I applied the receiver to my ear and said, "Yes, Sir." I am, Santokh Singh Inspector speaking... form division No. 5.

Has any untoward happening occurred at Jassowal Sahib's residence?" At the same time Jassowal Sahib, took the receiver from me & said, "I am Jassowal speaking... please, come a bit hastily;... we have caught the culprit... please, come quickly " & laid the phone.

Some five minutes later Sub Inspector Bakhshish Singh and Constable Charanjit Singh arrived on a scooter. Jassowal asked them, " Where is the rest of the police?"

"They are coming, Sir, even our Sahib is coming," said one of them. Only a few minutes later Inspector Santokh Singh, along with a number of constables arrived in a jeep. I had the key to the lock. I handed the key to S. Santokh Singh and he opened the door... very cautiously. All the constables became alert.

The Nepalese devil lay motionless with his face turned down feigning a swoon. A police man gave him a kick. But he did not stir. Another constable again gave him a kick and then there was a fusillade of kick blows. He then stirred a little. The policemen lifted him and made him stand, Santokh Singh gave him a powerful slap on the face. It gave me much comfort. Then there came slaps, kicks, fist blows and all in quick succession. But they all seemed to have no effect on the Nepalese devil.

On the other hand, Jassowal's dog was disturbing every body with his

constant bark. I just made an attacking pose and tried to 'Shoo' him off; but he did not stop barking. He rushed at the Nepalese devil again and again in order to tear him to pieces; but he was helpless.

Jassowal stood unnerved. His clothes had been torn; and besmeared with blood. The devil had eaten up his whole arm. The white bone was clearly visible, Inspector Santokh Singh seated Jassowal Sahib on the bed. By this time some more men from the neighbourhood had come.

The Nepalese devil was not moving at all. His arms were tied behind the back and he was being pushed to the jeep. The policemen were trying to make him walk to the jeep. But he was unwilling to proceed. He was a most trouble some fellow. So they drag him on.

At the same time he was also being thrashed. They threw him into the jeep with great difficulty, he had a big stature, and heavy weight- the cursed fellow!

Santokh Singh said to Jassowal, 'Bapuji, don't worry, this same jeep will come to take you; you will be medically examined, please, get ready for that's The jeep had left, I rang up - Nirmal Jaura, Pargat Singh Grewal, Gurbhajan Gill, Ravinder Grewal, Manjit Rupowalia- All said with one voice: they are all coming.

Gurbhajan & Nirmal Jaura came together first of all. Bapu Jassowal was taken to the hospital. Soon after Rupowalia, Tej partap Sandhu, Harminder Rana, Satnam Mukkadam, Pawan Dewan, Harinder Singh kaka, and many other friends & pressmen, press photographers all come on the scene. In C.M.O's office journalists were asking questions to S. Jassowal & he was explaining the whole thing in a scared voice. He was being photographed; His wound was dressed; photography, medical report, X-ray E.C.G.- all legal procedures were under gone.

I was made the chief witness and by me Jassowal was shown to be admitted to the hospital. Well, The news of the murderous attack on Jassowal spread like a wildfire', and the people who heard it ran to inquire about his health, some rushed to the hospital, some to the police station; wherever they could.

When we all along with Jassowal reached his house, we found a big crowd of people. They surrounded Jassowal to inquire about his health. Gurbhajan Gill said, "Please, don't ask any more questions to Jathedarji, he needs rest."

Bibi Surjeet Kaur and his driver Rajinder had also arrived by this time. Bibi Surjeet Kaur was shedding copious tears. People were coming from the villages too, cars, scooters, jeeps, tractors, trollies- all were pouring in. All were filled with astonishment to know about the incident. Jassowal spoke in a dim voice relating the incident. Then turning to me said, "Ghugianvi, my son, relate the remaining things."

I got exasperated & said, "How can I ? my jaws are swollen" Still in obedience to his order I would relate the incident in a few minutes.

When the news was released on the Radio & the T.V.; it caused a sensation. B.B.C. too, broadcasted this news. All the Jassowal's friends & well-wishers, sitting abroad began to make phone-calls repeatedly. The phone was extremely busy. People were coming in large number to see him. Evening fell, then Jassowal sat down in his chair in the big room besieged by ten or twelve friends. All looked pale and worried.

Jassowal said, "Please, laugh all of you & make merry. It is my second birth. Why do you look so gloomy, o naughty fellows, as if ... in mourning?... O Malkeet Singh, take it..... two thousand rupees.

Go and bring a kit of excellent wine. Let us drink to our heart's content... friends... be happy! It is my second birth!.... my life is saved... this damned life!... I have met no harm, I am O.K. May my son, Ghugianvi, live in ages to come!..... ! He has saved my life.... He came to me like God.... he not only gave me life by writing a book on me,... but his to-day's role... I... I... !"

Jassowal was in tears. Wine tumblers touched each other, Jassowal's peals of laughter- made a thunder. The friends sitting around all were cheerful. Their drooping spirits revived. Jassowal now grew loquacious, mirth appeared in his eyes; he was saying again & again "O, today. I get my second birth!... today I have been born again... my second birth... today!"

He was breaking into guffaws again and again. On the other hand, Bibi Surjeet Kaur was raising above her folded hands, and praying, "O Waheguru, .... we entirely depend on you... you kept Sardar ji safe & sound... O Waheguru, we seek shelter with you,... leaving Sardar ji, alone at home, ... Waheguru... has saved him...!"

Jassowal's pet-dog, too, hovered around wagging his tail, and rubbing himself against his legs and showing his affection. Jassowal patted him on the head and said, "O my tiger!... son, if today I had breathed my last... who would have placed before you bread and milk?... then on whose bed would you have climbed for rest... my son?... if I had passed away today"

While patting the dog Jassowal shed big tears.... which sank into the light pink carpet spread in the room.

## Ninder Ghugianvi

### Nirmal Jaura

Seeing so many glorious and creditable achievements of Ninder Ghugianvi at the young age of twenty two or twenty three mature adults are not simply filled with wonder but even feel proud of this remarkable genius. I love and regard him as my younger brother and have been keenly observing him for years struggling hard and burning mid night oil in the pursuit of literary perfection. Ninder-Ghugianvi rendered service to a District and Session Judge from 1994 to June 1995 and then did a government job from the year 1996 to the year 1998 in The "Bhasha Vibhag Punjab, Patiala". These days Ninder Ghugianvi besides working as a script writer of the T.V. and the Radio station, is relaying the T.V. and radio programmes and is doing very well as

a writer and journalist. In the year 1989 he came under the tutelage of Ustad Lal Chand Yamla Jat and after passing the music test form the Jalandhar and Bathinda radio stations started his new career as a folk-singer; but for the most part he remained inclined towards journalism and writing. His writings published in the leading and renowned magazines and journals in the form of penegyrics, satires, short-stories press reports, translations and other literary creations outnumber one thousand! Even the number of the books written by him goes above one dozen. He has been a regular columnist of the Music Times ever since its inception. It is a matter of great honour and pride for him to see some of his writings included in the 'Vishva Kosh' released by the 'Bhasha Vibhag Punjab, Patiala! Even in the history of Punjabi Literature, a special reference has been made to Ninder Ghugianvi. This, too, is his most significant achievement. By virtue of his numerous writings on the folk singers of the Punjab, Punjab's cultural heritage; the leading cultural artists and other important personages linked with art and culture & other miscellaneous characters he has done a big job and thereby made his place secure in the sphere of Punjabi literature, Punjabi Culture and journalism. In the Punjabi Tribune he gave a series of articles under the heading: "I was an orderly to a Judge". It caused a sensation in the literary world; it also gave an ample proof of Ghugianvi's power of self-expression.

I am highly proud of the achievements of my younger brother.

## Prof Madan Lal Sharma (Born 1920)

Prof. Madan Lal Sharma hails from the village Kot Mohammed Khan (Tehsil Tarn Taran) in Sri Amritsar, District and belongs to an unorthodox but strictly vegetarian & teetotaler Brahmin family. His father Pt. Rura Ram was a petty shopkeeper. Madan Lal betrayed sparks of his genius even in his childhood, when after a schooling of one month only he was able to read urdu newspapers to the wonder and amazement of his teachers! Later without proper guidance and that too, of a short-lived private school he passed vernacular final examination standing first in Amritsar Distt. Similarly, he got very high marks in the Matriculation Examination winning a place of honour in the province. In intermediate, too, he got his name put up on the D.M.College Moga's Honours board. In short, he had a glorious college period and held exalted ranks of the proctor, president of the hostel, union of literary circles etc. He met his college expenses purely with tuition work by coaching his own class fellows.

Partition brought him to Ludhiana from Lahore, where he had completed his studies & he had to start an academy in order to help support his aging parents and juvenile brothers & sisters who all needed college education. It was a hard time of penury and struggle for survival which lasted

for several years & during which he could make no remarkable achievement. As Dr. Johnson, another victim of early poverty, remarks: "Slow rises worth by poverty depressed".

For seven or eight years he taught at the S.D.P. College for Women, Ludhiana and for the last sixteen or seventeen years Prof. Sharma has been taking post graduate classes at G.N.Khalsa College for Women, Model Town, Ludhiana and does some writing on general literature in his spare moments. He has already written several books both of academic and general interest some of which have brought him international recognition & distinction D..K-9012-69649 dated 13-10-1992 (Oct.13, 1992) His recent translation of Shree 'Japji'Sahib in English verse has won him appreciation. Even now despite his advanced age his literary pursuits are intact and he expects a bright future ahead.

## A FLOOD OF LOVE

### Baljinder Singh Maan

Gifted with a robust, stalwart physique and carrying an oceanic heart within, when this man who is a guide and rock of refuge for innumerable persons like me when raises the slogan of Punjabi culture and identity from the stage, some intellectuals call him 'the messenger of Punjabi culture' and some 'the governer' of Punjabiat. In my view he is the uncrowned king of Punjabi culture, for though many have talked about Punjabi culture and character while sitting in easy chairs, the man who talks of Punjab and of his love for the Punjab's soil from the open stage and before lacs of people is none but 'Jagdev Singh' after Dr. M.S. Randhawa. He has love and affection for every body, but his passion for Punjabi culture dates from the time when, a boy, he rushed from his village Jassowal to other villages far off as well as near to attend "Raas" (morality plays), music conferences and dramatic performances. This very passion enhanced and confirmed his relationship with Punjabi culture or mode of life and thought. When I went to see him and know of his thoughts, S. Labh Singh the Youth Co-ordinator of Ludhiana District was with me.

I saw this invaluable jewel of Punjabi culture for the first time, on January 29, 1989, at the first "Shauki Fair" at Mahilpur. Then ensued a series of meetings and interviews. These meetings and the passionate love for Punjabi culture brought us so close to each other that he became for me my father, my friend and well as the boatswain of Punjabi cultural artists. Well, Sir, wont you have a desire to meet and have a talk with such a revered personage? So, come and hear his auto-graphical account in his own words :

Q. Why did you start Prof. Mohan Singh Fair?

Ans. The first Punjabi Conference was held at Ludhiana in 1954. AT that time the head of Punjabi Department of the Arya College was Prof. K.C. Gupta. In thiis conference special seats were assigned to Amita Pritam Prem Singh Prem, Dr. Sher Singh, Dr. Piar Singh, Giani Gurmukh Singh Mussafar etc. I had, in my heart a special place for Prof. Mohan Singh. I had not got even his autograph by this time. when for the first time S. Kartar Singh Shamsher of Barewal who wrote 'dholas' of Bar introduced me to Prof. Mohan Singh, I felt as though I hadthe sight of great God himself. Another friend of his S. Gopal Singh Khalsa bought him a plot in front of the gate no. 3 of the PAU Ludhiana. In the beginning I was his votary, then we became friends. On May 3, 1978, after the death of the respected Prof. nearly fifty people assembled at my place and among them. S. Pargat Singh Grewal, Prof. Harbhajan Gill, Mohinder Deep Grewal, Surjit Patar, Prof. S.S. Narula, Doctor S.S. Dosanjh, Surjit Kaur Noor, Principal Takhat Singh, Dr. S.N. Sewak, Narinder Biba, Didar Sandhu, Dr. Atam Hamrahi, Mohammad Sadiq etc. decided to celebrate his birth day and held a fair on October 20, 1978. In 1980, when I have made President, I propagated in villages in favour of the mela (fair) and met a good response.

Q. Please, throw some light on the other aspects of Prof. Mohan Singh?

Ans. About his native and temperament we can learn a good deal from his literary creations. Still I may add that he was fearless, open-minded, a friend of friends, a votary of Punjabi-and a flood of love.

Q. Which of his creations do you like most?

Ans I like his 'Desh Piar', 'Ambi da buta', 'Taj Mahal', and above all. 'Maan Varga Ghan Chhawan Buta-Menu Nazar Na Awe". Moreover, I enjoy highly his following verses :

"Her back is seemingly as soft as the skin of pomegranate :  
as tender and fragile as a rose flower !  
Whenever she casts her amorous glances,  
She breaks the blade of a sword as we  
break a piece of stone."

I have also got the cassettes of his lovely songs.

Q. Any incident associated with Prof. Mohan Singh?

Ans. Incidents are many but once he opened his mind to me and said, "All formalities and courtesies are there as long as we live; the moment we close our eyes, we are forsaken by all."

These words were a challenge to me and I took a solemn pledge never to desert him. When so many other fairs were hold. Couldn't cultural fairs be held? Those men of letters and arts who always criticized one another, and found fault with one another, now began to sit together on the stage and display their artistic merits. People left their villages and migrated to towns, but they began to crave for their culture. This fair brought our culture too, into the town.

Q. Now that the fair is being actually hold, how do you feel?

Ans. I feel the same delight which a mother feels, when her infant child begins to utter a word, stand on its feet and takes a step. This fair took Prof. Mohan Singh out of the literary circle and brought him into the hats and helmets, wells and water channels, fields and corn-stacks of villages. It gave me, too, much encouragement.

Q. How do the spare time from your domestic duties for active participation in cultural activities?

Ans. In the beginning the members of my family too had no knowledge of these cultural activities. My wife Surjit Kaur came to realise the importance of these activities after twelve years. How can common people easily understand them. I am only living for the sake of this cause. Common people will perhaps come to know of my cause after my death.

Q. What is the government attitude towards culture?

Ans. The government could do a lot but did not; even now it has become a bit conscious because of general awakening among the people. when there occurs an impasse in culture, the nation becomes life less and inert. Those nations cannot live long that forget their genuine culture. Therefore, we must always strive to do something for the growth and development of our culture. Cultural institutions ought to be brought under government protection and support. Our government and people have exploited artists to achieve their personal end; whereas the government and the people of South India appreciating the true worth of the artists entrust them even with political power.

Q. What more ought to be done in the cultural sphere?

Ans. We have yet spun not even a single cotton roll from the cotton roll container. There should be group formations on the village level for the growth of culture and the people, we should organise gatherings and conferences like Baba Farid Mela & 'Shaunki Melas' these activities are parallel to organising big gatherings. In the villages vacant, un-inhabited spots and gates should be made the centres of cultural activities, the government ought to give pensions to artists and men of letters; Punjabi Bhawans should be raised at the district level; a Punjab State Cultural Academy should be set up; statues of great artists and literary men should be erected at public places as they do in foreign lands; these artists should be honoured at state and district levels. A museum and a directory should be prepared for the protection of folk music and folk musical instruments. For the promotion of Punjabi life style, literature and culture only those conversant with Punjabi life-style and culture should be appointed at the T.V. stations and maximum coverage should be provided for cultural gatherings. One day in the year should be celebrated as a day of culture. We have just given a start in this field, only time and history will tell how far we have succeeded in awakening the people. I regard it as my duty to Punjabi culture that -

"Sacrifice your life, if you wish for a high rank  
for a seed becomes a garden rose only when it mingles with dust."

Q. Please, throw some light on the setting up of a world cultural academy?

Ans. While on tour abroad Ashok Bhaura and I felt that cultural awakening is needed even on the world level, and that it was necessary to strive on the world level to knit together the people engaged in this cause and hasten our activities. We shall also prepare video, audio cassettes and produce telefilms; and every year a cultural artistic conference would be held in one country or the other.

In our country politics dominates Art. No. politician Patronises artists; the Punjabis have a great and rich artistic heritage; the Rig Veda was revealed on the Punjabi soil, Universities like Texla, The Ramayana and other holy scriptures that preach human love and brotherhood were also written here; of these the creation of Gurbani is a unique creation in the world. It is our common property. Then how can we ignore it and keep ourselves alive? I wish all cultural artists should become heroes.

Q. What is your philosophy of life?

Ans. Man is mortal but his activities and achievements are remembered by postivity. We need not be afraid of death but should shun all evil deeds and serve mankind. This should be considered my philosophy of life.

Q. After abandoning politics why did you choose only cultural activities?

Ans. Now I donot wish to conquer the world like King Alexander nor Ravna like control death but for getting eery thing else have devoted my body, mind, wealth, time energy are resources to the service and propagation of culture. In common We own our land and water, the earth, the sky, the thick cool shades of banyan trees. Still we donot understand all this wrangling and bickering about possession? When countries like Korea and Germany can effect their re-union, then why do Punjabis lie scattered and disintegrated all over the world? To re-unite them the cultural sphere seems to be the most appropriate place and cultural activities the ideal means. They preserve and safe-guard old heritage and cause new cultural furrows.

Q. People go abroad to earn and make money, why did you not stay there?

Ans. I am attached to the soil of my own country and also feel quite contented. I am proud of being a Punjabi and say like Sant Ram Udasi :

"Let me remain in my own country, O Breeze; let me remain here like a cotton bud in bloom.

Let me remain under valued in the market. I am just a 'dervesh', a mendicant."

While living abroad my mood was -

"O my mother, I long to return to mly native land!"

Surjit Patar, too, writes in the same strain, when he says :

“Those who wander about in foreign countries in quest of their livelihood when return home, will either bask in the fire of the their mothers’ funeral Pyres; the others will take their seats under the trees covering the graves of their own.”

Q. Please, tell us something about your personal life?

Ans. I have passed through several vicissitudes in life. My father S. Kartar Singh was a great freedom fighter; while my mother was Amar Kaur. I am trying to pay off my debt of gratitude to them; “for I learnt my first lesson in social service from them. My mother taught me the dignity of manual labour. We, all the five brothers, are lovingly engaged in our respective pursuits, I have two sons. I was the personal secretary to Justice Gurnam Singh, Chief Minister of Punjab after remaining the chairman of various corporations and boards. I have been seeking reform in all departments in which I worked.” After setting up institutions relating to Punjabi literature and culture. I am patronising and serving them. My respected wife Mrs. Surjeet Kaur has enabled me to do all that I have done by willingly lending her helping hand.

Village : Mehmadhu Wal  
Via : Mehal Pur  
District Hoshiarpur 140105

## The Bal Nath Of The Moud Of Folk Music

**Ajmer Singh Aulkh**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is the Bal Nath of the mound of the folk music. He has taught unnumberable Punjabi singers and new music learners to step upon the ladder of music and at the same time provided opportunities for advancement. He has the knack at understanding the beautiful musical talent in a boy or girl at first sight, when he find out such possibility in a raw young man or woman, at once converts him or her into a disciple of his mound and giving appropriate instructions. Then they starts see show in a few days that discipline of the mound captivates the hearts of the heart among the audience with his songs and actions.

In this connection I remember an incident that occurred some ten or twelve years back. On the occassion of the marriage of Krantipal son of the famous novelist Ram Sarup Ankhi, Jagdev Singh Jassowal and I met each other. Jassowal had in his company our present day well known Punjabi singer Harbhajan Mann. By that time Mr. Mann had succeeded in getting only his one cassette released. Mann was only a novice in this field by this

time. Though an expert musician had been invited to attend the marriage, at Jassowal’s suggestion Mr. Mann was allowed to sing one or two songs. Before this time I had neither seen any cassette of Maan or heard him in person from any stage. I was impressed by the song of Mann and said to Mr. Jassowal that “The boys’ throat rours out folk music.”

Jassowal said, “Well, did you enjoy the boy’s song?” I said, “Highly !” Availing himself of the opportunity Jassowal at once retorted, “If you have no enjoyed his music then organise his programme in your college at Mansa.” When I began to think of the possible expenditure, Jassowal, at once, added, “We shall come in cars, but you will not have to pay any thing even for our petrol charges. Only make arrangement for some money some hours for conducting the function.” As I was the Incharge for ‘Cultural Activities of the college, it was not so difficult for me to organise the function, nor was it going to be so costly. So I readily agreed. Jassowal did come to Mansa along with the boy in a cavalcade of four or five cars without putting any pressure of expenditure on us.

On that very day I learnt of Jagdev Singh Jassowal’s valuable virtue by dint of which he explores and provides new opportunities for the promising singers to advance in life. How can such singers forget the kindness and benevolence of Mr. Jassowal, even though they may have reached the acme of musical advancement and perfection?

Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Fair, started by him in honour of Prof. Mohna Singh is no longer a near fair but has assumed the shape of a musical mound. He is certainly the Ball Nath of this mound of music but has not adopted this respected rank of himself but the flux of popular Punjabi culture and music has automatically provided him today under the supervision of this Ball Nath. Thousands of lovers of music pay visit to this cultural fair held at Ludhiana.

But the remarkable thing is that Bal Nath does not stop after organizing this fair but just on the conclusion of this fair he, wrapped in the garb of ambition and passion, embarks upon new adventures. This gypsy lover of Punjabi folk music carrying the basket of Punjabi folk song wanders from village to village in Punjab and even in foreign lands the hawk of this cultural mendicant can be heard very clearly c.f. “Carrying of the basket of love and amor we are moving from door to door, O people.”

May this pure and chaste hawk which is the throb of, Punjabi hearts and artistic food of Punjabi souls - reverberate not only in Punjab and in foreign lands but also cause echoes in every part and particle of the universe. The author is a well known Punjabi Dramatist & Ex-President of Kendri Punjabi Lekhak Sabha.

## The Thick Shade Of Culture iterature

**Prof. Kanwaljit Kaur**

Mr. Jagdev Singh is a unique personage, an example in himself. Men like Jassowal take their birth in the world after ages. Jagdev Singh is no longer the name of an individual but of an institution. His broadening personality has embraced and included within itself. The whole of Punjab, Punjabi literature and culture, dramatic arts and Punjabi heritage. He has grown into a thick shade over Punjabi heritage, literature, culture.

He was born at Village Jassowal, in Ludhiana district, at a house of Zaildar Kartar Singh Grewal and Mrs. Amar Kaur, Jagdev Singh Jassowal has led his village Jassowal to lofty heights of glory and eminence not only in India but in the entire world. Even at the age of 75 Jassowal's heart is as soft and tender as that of a child, passionate and enthusiastic like that of a youth, and philosophical like that of profound philosophers when he happens to be swaying over the tricks of acrobats, the dance of the folk dancers, and the Veena music of snake charmers at the Prof. Mohan Singh's memorial fair, his face clearly portrays the child like impression of his early days. It is a delight to see Mr. Jassowal's enthusiasm at a cultural gathering or fair. Sitting in the company of writers, intellectuals, poets and men of arts, he explores the profound philosophy of life so sensibly that even great scholars, feel envious of his thought, endless wisdom and knowledge.

Jassowal is a bundle of virtues. This bundle contains innumerable diamonds, rubies and pearls.

He is such an open book on every page of which is written some thing which is open to various interpretations. What the world thinks or says about him Jassowal never bothers; he has ever followed his own path. Though he began his career with politics, politics never suited his temperament. Jassowal is deadly oversee to such politics where the politician changes their colours like a chameleon and where uttering lies and false hood is not considered a vice. He has never allowed false hood, ostentation and fraud to become a part of his life. That is why he has got the support of men like Partap Singh Kairon, Justice Gurnam Singh, Giani Zail Singh and Rajiv Gandhi time after time. Despite all this he could not mould himself according to the nature of politics. Though he remained in politics for sometime, got the chairmanship of various boards, institutions and corporations, yet after a short time he bade farewell to all these and devoted himself entirely to the dissemination of Punjabi art and culture. After turning his back upon politics he wrote down on a piece of paper, "it is good broke my spinning wheel. Now my life will be free from all tribulations" and hung the paper on his door and never turned to politics. After leaving politics he devoted himself entirely to the rejuvenation and revival of Punjabi literature and culture in Punjab. Punjabis have been organising fairs and festivals in the name of Pirs and Faqirs at cremation grounds and tombs and on the name of villages. The convention of holding fairs in the name of literary persons started by only Jagdev Singh. 30 years back has reached its Zenith and taken the shape of a movement. Because of his first step taken in this direction the number of

fairs that are being held at various villages in the memory of literary artists is a solid achievement of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. This contribution on his part has given him such a lofty stature that he has emerged as a great hero of this century in the domain of Punjabi literature and culture. Now, he can be considered as Greek God of Punjabi literature.

He is known as the 'Masiha' (Rock of shelter) for Punjabi folk singers, many call him the 'Governor' of singers. It is admitted that no singer or artist can perform outstandingly in his field until he meets S. Jassowal wins his approval and attends the Mohan Singh Memorial Fair. Hundreds of artists have enjoyed and benefited themselves from Jassowal's patronage.

Jassowal's house is a living example of Punjabi culture. It seems that the foundation of Punjabi culture and literature set up by him was laid in his own house. Every part of his house indicates the mark of Punjabi way of life, Punjabi literature and culture. Every one who visits his house feels the flavour of Punjabi hospitality. None can leave his house without eating something. If nothing else he will certainly be offered a glass of lassi or water. Someone refuses to take any thing offered. Jassowal takes it for an affront and feels displeased. His house is called 'Ahlana' (Nest); and every visitor finds enough space to move about. Every food article lying in the kitchen, all articles placed in the almirah, all the currency notes lying in his pocket the Great Jassowal disburses liberally in the Hatim Tai manner. Whenever our mother (Mrs Surjit Kaur) makes some objection or resents in any way he says, "Bibi (Mrs.) this house is like a gurdwara where many come to pay and deposit something and many come to take away something."

His house is at all times attended by visitors. Every visitor whether he is a minister or a sentry, the head of a university or a clerk, a singer or a poet, a writer or a listener, a snake-charmer or an aerobat, a farmer or a labourer, a journalist or a publisher, every one is a friend of Jassowal without any discrimination. Every one regards him & fell him, his own and he, too, considers every visitor to be his kinsman and give him the warmth of his oneness and affection.

Different people address him with different names. One calls him 'Jathedar', other calls him 'Bapu Ji', one calls him 'Jassowal Sahib', the other calls him 'Sardar Ji' writers and scholars in their writings call him 'Baba Bohar', of literature and culture, the 'Sixth river', of Punjabi culture the 'ocean' of Punjabi culture; or the 'A lambardar', the messenger of Punjabi culture; the Pole star, a great 'horseman' of Punjabi culture, the God of cultural revolution, the great son of his 'mother tongue', the leader of fairs etc. They praise and eulogies him with different appellations.

Mr. Jassowal is a personage, linked with genuine and immaculate feelings and passions. He is a man ever ready to take ashore the people who seek his succour and support. Those who know him remark that he ever asserts that one should think a thousand times before doing ill to any body but take only a minute, rather a moment while doing good. Perhaps

this is the reason that any body who visits his house is immediately asked about the purpose of his coming lest his purpose be lost during the formal talk ensuring later on. He exerts and strains every nerve to help that person instead of giving a mere verbal promise.

Jassowal is an honest leader, a good administrator, a devoted social worker, gifted with fine susceptibilities, and a true art connoisseur. He is a lover of literature and an exponent of Punjabi culture.

All are aware of these virtues of Jassowal, but they are yet unaware of this fact that he was also an ignored leader of the *morchas* pertaining to the movement for Punjabi Suba. In his demand for Punjabi suba he stayed long in jails besides paying heavy fines. During this period he had to taste the rigorous life in various jails of Punjab. It is a pity and matter of sorrow that no leader of any political party ever recognised his service and sacrifice in this field and gave the honour he deserved. Jassowal, too, never made a complaint to any government about this negligence.

His wife Mrs. Surjit Kaur cherishes a desire of a true Sikh devotee. That like other devotees have the 'Parkash of Shri Guru Granth Sahib' in her house. Jassowal mostly rejects her wish and puts her off saying, "please don't invite God to our house to direct His attention towards me. if you call Him, He will say, "O Jassowal, where have you been all this time I have already called all your old companions to my place? Now you, too, accompany me." He adds that he has yet many things to do. If God has so far neglected me, let Him remain in this state for sometime more."

Mr. Jassowal is such a multidimensional personality that he has worked very hard and undergone strain of labour for the uplift of the cultural artistis and men of letters. He is such an active perseverent and zealous worker who even at the age of 75 is working with single minded, devotion for the preservation of the cultural heritage both of India and Punjab. The contribution made by Jassowal in the social, fraternal, political and cultural spheres will serve as a source of inspiration for the coming generations. May God grant a life period of millennium to this great son of Punjab for the service of Punjabi language, culture and literature !

(This article based on intimate understanding, closeness and goodwill between the writer's husband Dr. S.P. Singh and Mr. Jassowal.) Lecturer, Khalsa College for Woman, Civil Lines, Ludhiana.

## special personage is S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

**Sukhchain Singh Lyallpuri**

The Word 'Paighambar' (Messenger) means one who carries messages from door to door. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal has carried the message of Punjabi culture to every home. On this account he is called the messenger of Punjabi culture. Men of such type are born, not frequently but after centuries.

"For thousands of year the narcissus flower grieves at a soon lack of lustre for, the true observers and appreciators are born the garden after thousands of years."

It is not an ordinary thing to be man of Jassowal type, it is the birth of an era. It is like the continuous march of a caravan. He is just like a mountain. After 1947 in Punjab nearly all governments that took shape were conducted by Punjab and for the preservation of Punjabi culture and heritage a special department was also constituted. This department was named Cultural Affairs Department, Punjab.

This department remained in the hands of several ministers but, none of them made any special contribution for the preservation of Punjabi cultural heritage. But this messenger of Punjabi culture devoted his whole life to the dissemination of Punjabi culture and elevated it the height of the sky; he started a cultural movement in Punjab.

S. Jagdev Singh's spent the golden period of life in the company of prominent leaders. Among them were Master Tara Singh, Sant Fateh Singh, S. Kapoor Singh (I.C.S.) S. Partap Singh Kairon, S. Gopal Singh Khalsa, Justice Gurnam Singh, Pt. Jawar Lal Nehru and Prof. Mohan Singh. Nearly they all passed away and Mr. Jassowal ignoring all these organised Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair. What was the reason? It is, rightly speaking, a literary fair, apart of Punjabi culture. S. Mohan Singh and S. Jassowal have revived Punjabi culture from its death bed by giving oxygen injections and rejuvenated it.

The Punjabi community is considered to be the most powerful energetic and healthy community in the world. But when the strong and vibrant culture of this strong community fell under the pressure of foreign cultures no body came to help extricate it. Punjabi mother wished to remove the stigma of *disco* from its culture, was there any one who could come to her rescue? was there any body who could lay his life at the stake and come forward to safe guard its honour and convention. Hearing the call of his Punjabi mother this brave and stalwart Punjabi *jat* up his loins and jumped into the field. He wiped the tears of Punjabi mother tongue, knit her hair and installed her to her exalted seat. When he touched her feet and getting her blessings *Bhim-like* rusked naked to the bottle field. A Shaheed *Udham Singh* has done after the *Jalian Wala Bagh* massacre, when he picked up the dying and wounded people, poured water into their mouths, dressed their wounds and restored them to their normal state. Exactly, in the same way *Jagdev Singh Jassowal* picked up the wounded Punjabi culture from the *Jalian Wala Bagh* like Punjab, in the dyeing state, poured water into its mouth, gave his own blood and the throb of his heart, his breath and brought it back to life from its half dead state. Then he went from village to village and dressed the wounds of Punjabi culture and revived and rejuvenated it again our common Punjabi culture as grown youthful again. Now in every town, every city, every village and in every field of the Punjab we can hear the beat of drum accompanying

bhangra, dance and Ghidda again. And cultural fairs are being held from place to place. All this, the outcome of hard labour put in by the simple minded man Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

In his house in Gurdev Nagar if he is present himself his house looks like the Punjabi Bhawan. Because there are seen among many visitors at least ten or twelve folk artists too. Jassowal in variably asks them to sing some songs for his amusement. God dwells in his house and we can see a langar going on at all time and visitors eat things of their house.

I think if a man has not seen Jassowal's house and basked in its atmosphere has seen nothing at all. Here one man is seen singing a song; an other is taking tea; a third person is seen taking his meals; and other is drinking whey; one is writing a poem and another is taking interview of Jassowal. It is not possible for man to dress so many people at the same time as well as attend to the mobile calls. But Jassowal controls all this himself. His friends are also remarkable persons. He can get the cooperation and assistance of S. Pargat Singh Grewal, Prof. Gurbhajan Singh Gill, Prof. Mohinder Singh Cheema, S. Inderjit Singh, Hassanpuri and many others. He is a companion in weal woe and a great source of inspiration far all. Be cause of his inspiration and encouragement I have started a fair at Ferozpur in the memory of Shaheed Udham Singh by the grace of God. It has become one of the greatest fair of India. On the stage of this fair besides folk singers, folk dancers, the artists of Punjabi Films and Hindi artists who have migrated from Punjab are honoured with gold medals.

Just as it is believed that there is a bull named 'Dhauha Bald' in the interior of the earth and sustains the earth, on his horns, in the same way Mr. Jassowal like that mythical bull of culture on the earth and promotes punjabi culture. On the stage of his horns Punjabi singers sing and dance. People come in lacs to attend and enjoy these fairs. I pray to God to grant Mr. Jassowal still more power and energy so that he might make Punjabi culture the best culture in the world. May the Punjabis ever enjoy the warmth of his affectionate arms ! May his august feet ever stroll about the villages of Punjab and he ever remain the honour and glory of the Punjabi cultural stage ! For the Punjabis he is the eighth wonder in the ever remain the source of attraction for the people. Jassowal has no enemies but, of course, a few critics. I would request them to be friend him first and criticize him next. He is a great persone of 21<sup>st</sup> century. They should try to understand him and regard him as the thick shade of a banyan tree, and pay him visits. May God ever grace him with the showers of mercy grant him good health and long life. He may remain ever absorbed in the service of Punjabis. May this hundred faceted taper. This Punjabi culture shine for a long time in the courtyard of Punjab and in its light Punjabi culture shine like the sun and out shine all foreign culture ! At the end I pay obeisance at his feet

Chairman, Shaheed Udham Singh Memorial Foundation, Punjab, Ferozpur

## The sixth River of Punjab

**Harbir Singh Bhanwar**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is a well known figure in the Punjab, Jassowal is the symbol of Punjabi culture and pride of the punjabis. He is not an individual but an institution. He is a moving encyclopidia of Punjabi folk-song, folk dance, folk-tales, folk maxims and proverbs of the history and mythology of villages and of Punjabi culture. Jassowal is a friend of every noble-hearted Punjabi. I am proud of being his meak and petty friend. I have also been his voter and casting my vote in his favour at the time of elections to the Vidhan Sabha.

I have known Jassowal for near by four decades, since the time when I had not entered the journalistic field but was serving as a teacher. My village is Pakhowal. which formerly lay in Raikot constituency, but now lies in kila Raipur constituency. This constituency has remained always dominated by Akali Dal and generally an Akali candidate has ever been successful. Justice Gurnam Singh who became the Chief Minister of Punjab twice after the Punjabi Suba, had been successful from this very constituency. When he was the chief minister, S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal was his political secretary.

Then he was elected as an M.L.A. Though he did a lot of work, he was defeated in the next elections. He lost a political battle, but did not lose head. but remained linked with his land, with its soil, its people, he shared with them their joys and sorrows.

I think his political defeat gave a very important beautiful and pleasant orientation to his career and life. If he had won the second time, he would have been immersed completely in politics. It was good he suffered a defeat. He started in Punjab a cultural movement which has now become a mass movement- a veritable sixth river of the Punjab and an integral part of the cultural life of this border state of which every Punjabi who loves punjabi language, literature and culture feels proud. By starting the cultural revolution Jassowal has done what no powerful political party with a sound public base could do. Perhaps it has no parallel in the whole country.

Often it was said that Punjabi had no culture; that if they had any culture; it was agriculture, Jassowal has given a stunning slap on the face of such people. Today in every province of India, on the punjabi T.V. channels there is the domination of Punjabi folk songs, Punjabi music and dance and Punjabi culture. The credit for all this goes to the cultural movement started by him.

In the development of our country's culture and its preservation, village folk have played the greatest role. Its preservation, especially has lain in ch hands. The village people lead a very simple, unsophistscated and clean life; while most of the town folk lead an artificial, ostertatious life. At andreta, in Kangra District this journalist had the chance to live and see Mrs. Norah Richards, The Doyen of Punjabi theatre at close quarters. She would advise all visitors during the talk to go and live in villages. Even through her writings and performances she conveyed the same message. Her argument was

that those who live in villages have their roots in nature and soon get mixed up with nature. If a man is a writer, he will make a wonderful creation; if he is an artist he will touch the heights of art. She often said that in England made great Progress at the time when most of the people lived in the country (led rural life). She used to say that India's nirvana lay in the development of her villages; that if her villages were provided with education, health, means of traffic and other basic necessities of life. Nobody would live to go to the towns & cities.

All these ideas of Norah fully apply to Jassowal . He is fast linked with his native soil. His temperament, his manner of speech, his actions- all convey a glimpse of village life. It is true to has been living in Ludhiana for many years; but his mode of speech, his walk and talk, his actions, all are rural in character. In the day time he often goes to some village or makes a program me to attend some cultural function. His house in Ludhiana is a 'dehra' (Settlement) for new singers, new artists; or I might call it their Jassowal has established numerous new singers, new artists, new music makers, with his patronage, blessing. His house is a fair ground for artists.

Before partition lahore used to be the center of Punjabi cultural activities, but after the Partition of the country on the communal basis which was unnatural and wrong-many punjabi poets, singers play etc. Shifted to Delhi and Bombay & settled there or wherever they could find a place to settle. No town or city in Punjab could become the cultural centre. Now Ludhiana has become that cultural centre.

When united families began to break up in the Punjab, agriculture no longer remained a profitable occupation. It had a profound influence on the Punjabi life. Along with agriculture the other co-related occupation also began to die out. The village people began to migrate towards towns in search of livelihood. There they did get their livelihood but could not quench their thirst for Punjabi Culture. S. Jassowal once told to this Journalist during an interview that the Punjabi Poet Prof. Mohan Singh was his friend. On the eve of his first anniversary he conducted a small cultural programme which received a very encouraging response. Next year the public response was still more encouraging. The people who came to city from villages now began to satisfy their cultural hunger, in this way it has now become a cultural movement and every year Prof. Mohan Singh fair has become more and more popular like the chhapar fair. Great folk singers, dancers, bhangra dancers etc. wait for it like the moon of the Id. Now they have begun to honour, in this fair those writers, scholars, intellectuals, poets, singers etc. who have rendered great service to Punjabi culture, Punjabi people and punjabi identity. It is a very good practice. Once I suggested to him that he should also honour at least, one journalist who has rendered good service to Punjab and Punjabi Culture. He promised to think over this suggestion. Punjab is the feeder of the country and the most prosperous province of the country. It is also unlucky in the sense that a part of the Punjabis have become

indifferent to the role of mother tongue and its rich cultural heritage. It is true of city people. This class links its language and culture to other things. S. Jassowal has ever been striving to bring this class in to the main stream and link it with their Punjabi glorious culture and language. He will, certainly succeed in this mission.

At times S. Jassowal feels a great yearning for his past political career and turns to it. I tell him to discard politics altogether. Now politics has become a very dirty game and is quite contrary to his disposition; that if he goes on serving the mother tongue and Punjabi Culture diligently, usual, and carries this movement, nobody will ever forget or ignore him because of this service of Punjabi culture, he will ever find a place in the hearts of the lovers of Punjabi culture and win their respect permanently. May God grant him a long life and good health so that he may carry his mission of serving Punjabi Culture, Punjabi literature and Punjabi language as usual. Amin!

## An Excellent Man

### Dr. Saroop Singh Alag

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is the sixth river of Punjab. When we use this epithet, there swims before our eyes his broad, liberal river like temperament. If a man keeps him company even for five minutes, tension, depression, worries etc leave him in no time. The water like life of this sixth river works like a tonic for that frustrated person. This man with lion's temperament with his continuous labour of day and night has kept unpolluted Punjabi Culture, Punjabi public mode of life and conventions for the last three decades and burnished and refined the original shape of Punjabi identity (Punjabi identity) rather further set it off with his hard penances.

Fifteen years back I had the chance to see S. Jassowal in Canada where we had been invited to attend a world conference. We travelled together by air, stayed together in the same room during the conference; and after the conference spent 20 days together. During these days I had a very good chance to study S. Jassowal at close quarters and I can say without the least hesitation that I found Jassowal an excellent man from every point of view. Even in those days he advised every person he contacted to earn dollars by all means but at the same time to keep alive and well preserved their Punjabi cultural inheritance and give their children also the shape, colour and hue of Punjabi identity. Our religious, social and cultural heritage if very rich and worthy of reverence; it will be in our own interests to link our children to this Punjabi culture. I saw that S. Jassowal encouraged ambitious Punjabi youth and with their help and cooperation started the convention of holding Punjabi fairs and festivals abroad; He propagated Punjabi culture and games and thus brought into relief the worthy and respectable aspects of Punjabi Culture and identity.

We annually go to foreign lands to realize the objectives of 'Shabad yag' And feel pleased to see that now during the summer vacations in the

whole western world are held Punjabi fairs and festives attracting huge gatherings. Everybody enjoys them, the younger generation has begun to take pride in their cultural inheritance. Even the foreigners feel pleased to attend these fairs. At the back of this ventures the labour and perseverance of S. Jassowal. The fine and dignified atmosphere of these fairs lends respectability to the spectators even. By infusing a new spirit in these cultural fairs S. Jassowal has made Punjab not only richer than before but fixed it to a high pedestal of glory at the world level. I admire this multi-dimensional man who has also brought honour and respectability to Punjabi folk music and other arts. It is my prayer that this cheerful, enthusiastic, broadminded, simple and candid Punjabi gentle man remain ever passionately engaged in this so valuable service. It is also my prayer that he should make an active contribution to the removal of drug addiction from among the Punjabi youth and saw them from further tarnishing and denigrating their image in this hostile and destructive atmosphere. In case he renders this philanthropic service to save the Punjabi youth from perdition every Punjabi will hold him and his co-workers in high esteem for ever.

It's my heart desire that S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal should remain ever cheerful and happy and raise the status of Punjab in the whole world.

## A wakeful life on Sleepy Nights

**S. Ashok Bhaura**

As life advances, the pangs of separation become more and more acute. So we can't say when separation between individuals occurs; for advancement in life and reduction in the number of breaths occur simultaneously. This is also true that children enjoy celebrating their birthdays but the elderly quite seldom. For this thing always lurks in some corner of their minds that the end is drawing near the beginning has gone for behind. Well: I offer my congratulations on the birthday of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. It's because we feel that we are sharing views with a man of the age, who is the founder of many fairs and festivals. By celebrating his birthday we are paying our tributes to Baba Bohar (the old banyan tree) of Punjabi culture offering our compliments to him and also guiding the future generation about his work and made of work.

During my literary career of twenty-five years I have been keeping company with S. Jassowal for twenty-two years. I have gained so much from him that I can't explain it in a few words.

A timely pragmatic change in culture encourages progress and development; whereas a breach with one's culture makes the nation sick and ill. The patients of this disease are increasing day by day. There are however, some persons in society which are striving hard to protect and preserve their mother tongue, their culture and their Punjabi identity. The leader of this caravan is S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal whom the Punjabis all over the world hail as "The Ambassador of Punjabi Culture". He is the patron of

Punjabi Singers. There is hardly any Punjabi Singer who has not rendered his singing service to S. Jassowal and not received his blessings. In the same way he showers awards of honour upon writers, poets and men of letters. After Prof. Mohan Singh many subsequent poets of a high rank have been the beneficiaries of his benevolence and got the warmth of his nearness. Jassowal has honoured them all in one form or the other.

## The Epitome of friendly love

**Dr. DarshanBari**

Those who on the canvas of life leave the prints of their good deeds and virtues, live for ever and for ever like the sun, the moon, the earth and the air.

Among the twenty districts of Punjab lies Ludhiana and to the South-west of Ludhiana at a distance of nearly nine Kms lies a village called Jassowal which is associated with the Grewal Jats. It is one of the fifty-two villages of its kind which consists of Bazar houses gate and havelis made of small kiln-bricks and are surrounded by old looking trees. This Jassowal Sudan is the village of that emperor of Punjabi culture whom they call S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. In the twentieth century he remained the vice-president of the engineering college and Ludhiana district board. Late Zaildar Kartar Singh was his father and late Mrs Amar Kaur Brar was his mother and he was a law graduate and the ex-sarpanch of his village and an M.L.A.. Now he is the president of numerous institutions and foundations and every man studies him from his own point of view and applies to him a different epithet according to his estimation for example, they say "Jassowal is a cauldron of fragrance." The moving announcer of Punjabi Culture, some call him a governor of Punjabi singer.

In fact it is the blissful hand of Jassowal that patronises all folk art. They say that poets and prophets have no budgets but only objectives and help divine. This is the case with S. Jassowal. There have been on October 19-20 every year large human gathering at the fair ground of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair forming an ocean of human heads and Punjabi Bhawan.

I was to start the account of Jassowal with the glimpses of his life; well I will do it now.

For the first time I met S. Jassowal on the theatrical stage of Punjabi Bhawan at the time of rehearsal of late Harpal Tiwana's play 'Kaudian Wala Sap'. S. Jassowal told me along with Jaswinder Bhalla (a student) and Bal Mukand Sharma to play mimicking tricks on the stage of Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair; we were all stage artists. We performed our making acts so nicely that I remained the stage secretary of this Mohan Singh's fair for many years.

1) Once I went to S. Jassowal's house along with my friend S. Kirpal Singh Khatra, an inspector in the Food and Supply Department. He said, "There are sitting two boys. Please test them and tell if they sing well or not". These

beardless boys sang their songs I said just casually, "They sing in a simple manner as they are village boys. If they work hard they will succeed". Jassowal's critical and appreciative eye so induced the boys that later, one of them shone as Ravinder Grewal.

2) On the occasion of Prof. Mohan Singh memorial fair Jassowal once offered the spectators among many artists such a unique artist as beggars all description. He was Harbhajan Maan.

3) At a fair in Ludhiana Jassowal said, (In the Punjabi Bhawan) Just let the children occupy the stage and do their roles till 11 a.m." S. Pargat Singh Grewal brought a little girl to the stage. I made the little girl sing two songs, in stead of one and fill the girl's palm with big currency notes by way of encouragement. Today that girl is the wife of the famous music director Harjeet Guddu and is known as Mrs. Harinder Hundal. I will mention other artists at some other time. Jassowal provided them with means of living with his kindness. In the coming lines I will refer to only a few incidents which throw light on S. Jagdev Singh's personality.

For artists Prof. Mohan Singh memorial fair is a hybrid of Punjabi Fair; just as the fair at Killa Raipur is the hybrid of Punjabi Players). Many live to eat, very few eat to live. S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal can be seen in different colour on different occasions. In the circle of social friendship Jagdev Singh Jassowal is like the attachment of pious relationships. He is as much the source of joy as the first love letter of a good friend. The first sign of initial love; or you might say he is like the light of a four pointed taper, kindled at the tomb of a pir in a desolate forest on a pitch dark night.

At times he will be seen entering essembly scholars with a pensive, reflective countenance and half closed eyes, seeking the salution of some serious problem that has menopalized his mind. Sometimes in a fralicking mood he starts screaming joyfully like a child, state of mind, he will remove his turban from the head and playfully move his fingers on his small bun and recollect some long forgotten Punjabi Tune and starts singing. Not only that, he would, while talking to a friend lay stress on a word uttered by the friend and at the same time squeeze hard the hand of another friend standing close by. All this happens suddenly. The best moments, worth remembering are those when S. Jassowal chants some old tunes and seeks his own reflection in some stares some other folk melodies and seeks to them own reflection in them and is lost in memories. In size he is a replica of old Punjab as through some one had turned the seed of love in a folk parlance:- Cf. "The sun is mine but takes after you, know the real truth of my love", for S. Jassowal fun and laughter constitutes real life. On the day when nobody comes to see him at his house in Gurdev Nagar Ludhiana, he falls ill. He is at home, when his purse is empty; otherwise he is ever on the wings of a wind. A man like me who companies him is lost in wonder and exclaims, "Bravo! O Jassowal!"

## A ocean of Punjabi Culture

**Dr. S.S. Dusanjh**

Jagdev Singh is a well-known and popular figure in the field of politics, literature, art and culture. He was so active in the Akali Politics that when the present day prominent Akali leaders were struggling for recognition, Jassowal was the General Secretart of Akali Dal. He has been so active even in the congress that when the congress leaders who are all in all today were craving for recogintion and identity and were in search of respectable ranks, he was the vice-president of the Punjab State congress committee. Jassowal is an M.A., and L.L.B. is fond of literature, an exponent of Punjabi Culture, is resolute of will, industrious, a friend of friends but is not a time server. In Politics any body can rise, at least, once by chance or industry and talent, but it is equally necessary to indulge in intrigues and contrivances and to step on the shoulders of one's friends to maintain once's position. Jassowal is incapable of that. He can become a shoulder for his friends, but can't step on his friend's shoulders to maintain his position. This is why despite having healthy, talent and diligence. Jassowal bade farewell to politics during his lifetime. Many politicians fought for securing an honourable place for their mother tongue, motivated by the desire for winning honour and distinction for themselves, and confirming their place in politics. Many politicians show respect for singers who attract people with their songs, and many political leaders exploit literary associations and use them as chessmen to further thier political interests. I mean to say that their is no scarcity of such leaders as have misused art, literature and culture to gain political ends. Perhaps, Jagdev Singh Jassowal is the sole leader who has made use of his political tune for the dissemination of Punjabi culture, Art and music. Prof. Mohan Singh was a leading Punjabi poet; Dr. Mohinder Singh Randhawa was a patron of literary artists, painters and scholars. In the days when prof. Mohan Singh was passing through a critical period, Dr. M.S. Randhawa, in the capacity of the vice-chancellor of Agricultural University Ludhiana honoured Prof. Mohan Singh by bestowing upon him the title of Professor 'Emeritus'. Prof. Mohan Singh shifted from Jalandhar to Ludhiana and settled here. The lover of literature S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal stood by Prof. Mohan Singh. Spending few years in comfort at Ludhiana, Prof. Mohan Singh passed away. There is no exaggeration to say that prof. Mohan Singh would have remained an alive to the people of Ludhiana, Had Jagdev Singh Jassowal not made serious efforts to perpetuate the golden moments spent. In the company of prof. Mohan Singh.

In Pakistan a fair is held every year in the memory of Waris Shah. It took centuries for this fair to become a tradition, but S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal made up his mind, after the death of Prof. Mohan Singh to perpetuate Prof. Mohan Singh's memory in the minds of the people. Prof. Mohan Singh was not known to the people beyond the limited circle of literary men but when Jagdev Singh Jassowal began to hold the fair every year, Mohan Singh

became a prominent literary figure not only in Ludhiana, or in the whole Punjab but even in many foreign countries. It is S. Jagdev Singh's miracle that not only Prof. Mohan Singh Mela has become a tradition but also there has emerged Prof. Mohan Singh's chowk at Ludhiana and the road leading to Prof. Mohan Singh's house has become "Prof. Mohan Singh Marg". Though Jagdev Singh has bidden fare-well to politics, he has employed the power, the popularity, the experience and other things gained through political career etc. As a tool to popularise and disseminate Punjabi Culture and Punjabi Literature.

Prof. Mohan Singh's fair became a means for the Punjabi artists to course and sing literary songs. Punjabi popular music and Punjabi culture had been coarse so far and stage-singers were afraid of singing literary songs. But at Prof. Mohan Singh's fair while singing Mohan Singh's literary songs they came in contact with other Punjabi poets and quite fearlessly began to sing other poets songs as well. If today have succeeded a little in rising above this coarseness, we cannot ignore the valuable service rendered by S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. Today there is witnessed a continuous literary and cultural activity in the compound of Punjabi Sahit Academy at Ludhiana and other is a heavy and encouraging public response. The credit for all this goes to S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

Jagdev Singh's house remains ever opened for literary men, singers, journalists, scholars, politicians and for the people who seek justice from the government. There are very well-known places in the world where the people get to enjoy the colourful sight of the setting sun. S. Jagdev Singh House, too is such a place where people gather to enjoy a colourful evening. In these evenings the politics of the time, too, becomes the topic of discussion." and Akali and Congress leaders without discrimination become the subjects of criticism and discussion. There Punjabi poets also recite their verses and singers sing gazals. There is hardly any important Punjabi singer or poet who has not yet attended any of such colourful evening. Today every public gathering, every fair or festival is considered incomplete without the presence of S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. At Prof. Mohan Singh fair all types of artists, poets, literary men, singers, giddha and bhangra dancers, acrobats, mimics, bards, players are duly honoured with awards. Every aspect of Punjabi culture flows like a stream but, taken collectively, Punjabi Culture is just like an ocean and Jagdev Singh Jassowal is an epitome of Punjabi Culture on this account I call him "Ocean of Punjabi Culture".

## The Pole Star of Punjabi Culture

**Kulwant Singh Jagraon**

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is that great Punjabi who has worked such unparalleled of spreading the hue of rich Punjabi Culture all over the world that not only the present generations but also the future generations will feel proud of it. The master of a brilliant brain and multidimensional intellect. S.

Jassowal has done for the revival and preservation of Punjabi Culture what even very big institutions could not do. He is highly enamoured of Punjabi cultural inheritance and folk song; on this account some call him the 'Baba-Bohar' of Punjabi Culture. The uncrowned king of Punjabi culture 'A following Stream', 'The ambassador' of Punjabi culture and 'The Pole Star'. Thus pay their tributes to him but no single epithet matches this man of wide sky like imagination and thought. Jassowal is simultaneously, the Sun, a deep Sea, the Himalaya mountain, A piteous mendicant, A sympathetic friend and a good man who shares the weal and woe of others. Anybody who comes in contact with him is transmuted by him from iron into gold.

For the Punjabi folk singers S. Jassowal is no less than a 'Pir' or spiritual guide. His house is the 'Mecca' of Punjabi singer as well as culture. He has the unsquare some sense of shifting a pearl from trash. He wished that public representatives ought to fulfil their obligations with regard to public interest and keep in mind their sacrifices and the objective for which they had struggled. But majority of them were swayed by power intoxication and no heed was paid to the mother tongue on the basis of which the Punjabi Suba had been carved. The age in which Jassowal entered politics was such that he could make a huge fortune for himself. But his conscience did not allow him to do anything unfair. The central policy has always been anti-Punjab. Now they lay before him only two alternatives; he could either employ diplomacy like other leaders, make high sounding statements about the mother tongue make fine promises (not liable to be fulfilled) and thus remain clung to politics; or leave politics in the interests of the mother tongue and render it positive service. This worthy son of Punjab bade adieu to politics and decided to devote his whole life to the service of mother tongue.

A Jagdev Singh Jassowal Played a leading role in the movement of Punjabi Suba and made a great contribution to it; he bore many sufferings. During this movement he courted jail life for two years and paid a fine of rupees fifty thousand. At last the day came when the centre was compelled to grant Punjabi Suba. He was in the prime of his life at that time. Appreciating the hard labour and sacrifice the people elected him as their representative to the Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly). And in this capacity he chalked out several programmes in favour of Punjab, Punjabi language and Punjabi Culture. But his companions did not give him full co-operation.

Though S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal is a leader, leadership did not suit him well. For the sympathisers of such delicate and tender arts seldom succeeds in the ups and downs of political life and intrigues of power politics. For this very reason the platforms which S. Jagdev Singh occupies are seldom held by other people, much less the politicians. He not only provided jobs for the jobless but also patronised a number of artists so well that they rose from humble dust to the height of the sky and set remarkable examples of glorious success.

## What I know about Jassowal

**Janmeja Singh Johl**

To write about Jassowal is to involve one self in trouble. In the first place, we cannot decide whether to address him as 'Jathedar' or as 'Governor' of singers or to describe him as Jagdev Singh 'Grewal' bearing association with his village Jassowal. Even if we accept all these epithets, we fail to find a clue to approach all aspects of this multi dimensional personality. We cannot find out the thread where by to dis-entangle the moments of Jassowal's life and reduce them to writing. The Jassowal of morning appears before the people in one light. The Jassowal of the advanced day appears different; Those who see him at noon find him still an other person. The visitors who wait on him in the evening find him quite a different person. While those who hold assemblies with him after sun set are quite different and romantic persons. Now which of these visitors should be brought under the focus of writing? It is difficult to gauge the profundity of Jagdev Singh's dis-position changing with the ticking of time. At one moment he happens to turn towards some poor person to help him; and the next moment he is found scolding some burdon some fellow; along with that he asks his servant as a parent to fetch him tea, lassi, maize bread, a lump of brown sugar or a glass of milk for all present there. When he suffers from the shortage of money, he sends them messages. Few days back I called at him to enquire about his well-being. He shared with me reluctantly, a draught of wine as if it were tea and said," what is dhanaula known for?" I answered,"for being a cattle market".

He laughed aloud and said,"You see I brought a wife from the place from which they buy buffaloes!" An old man consulting a mirror blames the looking glass for showing his wrinkles on the face and does not accept the sight presented by the looking glass. He calls the mirror but won't accept the change which that has crept over his face. But Jagdev Singh Jassowal is big stature and face are set in a literary, musical and cultural framework sop nicely that they will remain ever fresh and youthful though centuries may pass.

If you wish to learn a lesson from troubles you may consult Jassowal and if you wish to enjoy a wakeful life during dark nights, set with him get all your places in life by Jassowal you will achieve perfection. He will be youthful even after crossing centuries and I pay my compliments to his cultural youth.

## I Too saw Jassowal

**Krishan Kumar Bawa**

Jagdev Singh Jassowal is the name of such a unique personage that desires to take the whole society within its embrace and upon it all the social and cultural blessings.

I met S. Jassowal in 1980 during the Vidhan Sabha Elections. My

village Raba is the last village in Raikot constituency of the Vidhan Sabha. S Jassowal had, at that time, defeated S. Dev Raj Singh Talwandi the younger brother of S. Jagdev Singh Talwandi, a prominent leader of Akali Dal and uprooted this political plant from the political field of Raikot. Since then I have been seeing Jassowal as I used to see him during his membership to the Vidhan Sabha, and it was S. Jassowal who activated me in the political field. I had seen many people who came to see him because he was an M.L.A. or because they needed his help in the solution of their personal problems. When he was no longer an M.L.A. there occurred a great decrease in the number of the visitors. But S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal never gets angry with selfish persons nor curses any grudge against that, this is the way of the world and one should not mind it. I have found Jassowal sahib's life absolutaly free from greed or avarice and always a source of inspiration for his friends.

It was Jagdev Singh Jassowal who reached Bombay to inquire about the health of the renowned Indian humorist Dr. Gurnam Singh Teer. It was my good luck to be with him during this visit. In Bombay we were accorded a most cordial welcome by the Punjabi Community. From Bombay as we reached Pune, Jassowal Sahib's Bhabi ji, (brother's wife) pointed at several bottles, containing all varieties of wine and said,"you may begin your drink just now, your brother is soon coming." He came after a short time and his joy knew no bounds, when he saw Jassowal at his house at Pune. He at once took out his fiat car and said,"Let us enjoy the sight of Pune as well as have our drinking bout."

I saw that at Pune besides other places Jassowal Sahib also visited the Ashram of Acharya Rajneesh and after going through medical test filled up the form. He also bought books throwing light on the verities of life.

Once Jassowal Sahib told us that he made a pilgrimage to Shri Hem Kunt Sahib. While returning he fell down and hurt himself. He said to a driver."A trunk lies in my room. It contains rupees two thousand and my visiting cards. You may keep the money with you but bring me the visiting cards." As he was relating the incidents I asked him why had allowed the driver to keep two thousand rupees for himself. S. Jassowal answered,"At the sight of money the driver could become dishonest and then he was not to return with the visting cards. In case i died, my corpse whould have remained lying unclaimed. So visting cards were in dispensable for me." I, too, was inspired by S. Jassowal to set up "Bairagi Maha Mandal" and commemorate the great Viragi Baba Banda Bahadur and for the last twelve years have been carrying on the Lohri Mela according to the order of S. Jassowal. Similarly, at his behest along with my companion Pawan Diwan I organised first Vairagi Mela at Mullanpur and then at Ludhiana.

Whtever and whenever I saw S. Jassowal I always had some new thing to learn despite being a political leader S. Jassowal has so much contentment I have seldom seen any other political leader and his birthday. Many books have been written on S. Jassowal, many video cassetts have also been made

on him. The Society has also honoured him greatly; but in the political field this invaluable jewel has not been given the place he deserves. But even today the leaders of highest rank often consult him.

These days he is busy in constructing Virasat Bhawan at Ludhiana and says that he is highly indebted to the people for their love.

## Jagdev Singh Jassowal: Personality and Capacity

**Pargat Singh Grewal**

Many days back a letter came from my younger brother Bhupinder Singh Sandhu that I should write to him about some incidents and episodes connected with Jagdev Singh Jassowal's life. But I was at a loss to understand what could be written about Jagdev Singh Jassowal's life in few sentences or pages; for to write about him requires paper on which many big volumes can be written and one or two quintals of ink and, still, the account might remain incomplete. The reason is that ever since Jassowal came into self-consciousness he made so many achievements and indulged in so much activity in the Punjabi world that is beyond all description.

Though he gave up the path of Politics twenty years back yet he can do as much work casually as a very big minister or M.L.A. can do provided that he has the will to do so. It has been seen so often that while sitting in bed he will write to the railway minister and present a problem in such a way that a few days later some railway officers or men will be seen knocking at his door and he will get his work done by them as even the railway minister or an M.L.A. will fail to do.

In a gathering, if he is in proper mood, he will create such an atmosphere that all will go on, as he chooses. A few days back he attended a college function as the chief guest. There he got from the P.W.D. minister the permission to widen the road leading to his village from ten feet to 18 feet and nobody came to know of it. These examples are only two specimens. We fail to recount all his miracles. If he is to seek a job for some one, he will get the thing done by the Public Service Commission free of cost while there is a lot of corruption in this department and scams of lacs daily come to light. It is the miracle of his magical skill. It is not a miracle but his earning of forty five years. It is his bank-balance which is never exhausted and can never be exhausted.

Punjab, Punjabi culture and Punjabi identity all are found in his blood and he has served Punjabi culture fearlessly. It brought him fame but also a divorce from politics however even today he has not become a non-entity in politics. He does not take speed even under pressure perhaps it is his way of life. But one thing is quite clear that he will never become obscure from the memory of Punjabis, he has carved for himself a safe place and this place he will ever occupy; coming generations will long seek guidance and inspiration from him and he will ever extend his loving arm towards them.

President, Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial Foundation, Ludhiana.

## The Dancing, Singing and laughing soul of Punjabi Culture

**Dr. Surjit Patar**

A friend of mine came to seek admission to the dramatic department. During the interview, the director asked him, "Why do you seek admission only into this department?"

My friend answered, "There is a lot of fun and amusement in this department."

The director asked the next question, "If the plays which you have read so far, which play do you like most?" The friend answered, "Shakespeare's Macbeth." The Director said, "Why?" My friend answered, "There is a lot of fun and laughing in it." Next, the Director showed him some pictures and said, "Which of these pictures do you like most?" The friend pointed at a child's picture and said, "This one." The Director asked, "Why?" The friend said, "There is a lot of gaiety on its countenance."

Wherever I find fun and frolic. I remember Sardar Jagdev Jassowal. Jassowal has so closely identified himself with 'Mela' (Fair) that without Jassowal 'Mela' and without 'Mela' Jassowal looks quite lonely and destitute. Jassowal is such a shady tree as voluntarily and quite eagerly invites poets, versifiers, folk singers, dancer, scholars and other artists to come and sit under his shade.

While standing on the stage in a fair Jassowal looks so tall that his feet lie on the earth but his turban seems to touch the stars. At that time he outshines all the rich and high ranked people there and looks like an emperor among kings. An emperor distributing joy among thousands of spectators. An emperor who adorns many a budding singer and makes them future heirs to the throne.

While participating in every one's joys and sorrows he has covered countless miles.

When his day which is divided into public joys and sorrows, rejoicings and mournings, engagements and marriages enters the evening hour, the heart of this emperor becomes like the coffer of a spiritually advanced mendicant, stuffed with the smiles and tears of many households. Perhaps this fact accounts for his being a great orator, a good audience catcher and an all round public figure.

His mind is a confluence of many memories. Many a maxim, many a fact, many a conclusion, many an event, many sayings, many proverbs comprise its capital. He often says, "It is better to reign over time than to work on the earth." He rules over his times. He makes every moment of his life rich and beautiful like a fair. Wherever he sits, he turns that spot into a fair-ground. All artists, old and new, frequently pay him visits.

His visitors go back after receiving from him. The largess of new enthusiasm, some wise maxim of some laughter, of invitation to some new fair, of some incident from his colourful, variegated life of some tit bit or some folk song.

Often he mockingly remarks, "The faithlessness of politicians though frequently rankless in my mind, yet I think that when I have to attend eight fairs in seven days so that I can't even go back home, how can I allow this & to disturb my peace of mind?"

In fact compared with political diplomacy is more cordial and friendly, more sympathetic and lively of spirit. He is not a friend of those who loot and exploit innocent people but of those who enjoy the fun and joy of fairs and festivals.

Because of this convention of new fairs started by Jassowal Punjabi, at times, unburdens its crowded mind through artistic outbursts, otherwise, it would have been, by this time, completely packed up in the idiot box.

Jassowal can laugh at himself; he can be easily taken in our confidence; he can address quite prominent and self-conscious people on equal terms; he can drive away his personal trouble or sorrow by singing a song or reciting a tit bit. He regards it as his greatest pleasure to organise and hold an assembly of artists and appreciators of arts.

He is an epitome of punjabiat (or punjabi life and culture) in his person, we can perceive the dancing, singing and laughing soul of the Punjab.

## Born for Punjabi Music and Poetry

### Dr. Ranjit Singh

The Magnanimous Personality that is striving hard to protect Punjabi music and Punjabi poetry from the heat of time is known as S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. He is acting as a big old banyan tree providing safety and shelter to Punjabi Music and Poetry from the ravages of time under his thick shade. For the last four decades he has been cooking as an all time saviour and protector of Punjabi music and poetry. There is no doubt that with the evolution of society certain changes also occur but this change becomes the basis of an easy and proper evolution only when it follows a straight and smooth track. Just as a plant changes its colour and hue with the passage of time, in the same way society needs a change but if in the name of evolution or change the very roots of the plants are cut off, the plant can not survive. The same is true of social evolution. Punjabi cultural heritages is one of the oldest cultural heritage of the world. The human evolution began along the banks of Punjabi streams and the foundation of culture was laid. Because of smooth, plain and even Punjabi land and flowing stream it has been counted among the richest cultural inheritances and cultural centres of the world. That is why foreign marauders and invaders came here from time to time braving many dangers. They endeavoured to spread here their own culture and mode of life. All those Punjabi joined the foreign governments as workers abandoned their villages and migrated to towns. They gave up their culture, their mother tongue and tried to copy and imitate their masters. They called it progress; while, in fact it was a sign of their inferiority and meanness. The fraternities that get uprooted and segregated from their cultures meet the

same fate that befalls the rootless trees. The illiterate and poor people of our villages who had nothing to do with the foreign masters preserved and protected their mother tongue their culture and their heritage generation after generation. That is how Punjabi culture is known as folk culture or the culture of the people with the advent of freedom. It was hoped that well educated and well to do Punjabis would relink them with their mother tongue, culture and their inheritance. As long as a nation does not feel proud of its language and cultural inheritance, it can't progress. The pride in one's heritage makes the mode of men's thought progressive and paradigmatic, genuine and pure novel in approach while the sense of its inferiority and pettiness becomes a stumbling block in nations advancement. This is the reason that despite their prosperity Punjabis are not so developed in the human sense. Because of the green revolution improvement and increase in the means of irrigation and migration of rural people to foreign lands the air of the so called modernity has reached the Punjabi villages too.

I really feel impressed at the sight of a speaker or a man of personality but I am deeply convinced of the varied talent of men like Dr. Sardara Singh Johl, Novelist Kanwal and S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal. Jassowal's worlds are worthy of being caught from a well-set stage. In respect of his family, before going further, I will mention a few unpleasant things about Jassowal.

He trusts everybody, can't distinguish the good from the evil. Despite knowing the people selfish he does not turn his back upon them. The crowd of self styled headmen have diminished and not increased, the number of his friends by bedimming his loving eyes; well, leave this topic.

One day he went to Chandigarh to do some one's errand and pressed me, too to accompany him. Suddenly he exclaimed, "Oh! I am undone! ruined!...let us return to Ludhiana, at once. After showing perturbation for sometime he said I have left the key of my almirah in the lock! My servant Baljeet will do me harm". When asked he said, there are khoas laddus in my Almirah but the fact is... Please take me immediately to Ludhiana lest any trouble befall me." When they reached home, he lastly said to his wife, "Where is Baljeet the servant?" I don't see him anywhere?" She said he has gone to the market to buy good stuffs and vegetables." Oh! undone!...thank God, we are saved the key is in the hole of the almirah!" Then he said well, "was there any phone call for me?" Nearly forty phone calls since morning. Who rang me up?" I don't know the answer. "They rang and then stopped automatically.".....Didn't any visitor come? only one visitor came." who was he?" This I don't know but he looked like soma, the son of Somma of our village. "The illiterate one of the district. How can I search for him in whole world. How can I know he is Somma and who is Somma like? It is only I who have spent my whole life in a family like this lad where been some one else,.....There are many other things linked with the life of Jassowal, I will

mention them sometime hence. Now I will only say that S. Jassowal is the emblem of friendly love. May he enjoy a long life and distribute, in the light of Punjabi Culture the fragrance of Punjabi, Punjabi identity.

## Oceanic like Heart

**Kanwaljit Singh Sankar**

I have seen many people but seldom seen a man like S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal who has so deeply impressed me. He has a quick understanding of the human heart. From the visitors foot falls Jassowal readily understands for what purpose the man has come. And for this capacity of understanding human heart Jagdev Singh is not river like but oceanic of heart. For he can thoroughly feel the pulse of the people. I came in contact with S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal some twenty years back, and since then Surinder Chhinda, Sardul Sikandar, Noori, Hans Raj Hans, Mohammad Sadiq and Ranjit Kaur, Gurdas Maan, Manmohan Waris, S. Jagjit Singh Zirvi, Harbhajan Maan and many other singers, Rebeck players, poets, men of letters, artists and photographers have been honoured by S. Jassowal. Only Jassowal had the virtue to accord honour to these varied artists; for he has honoured even those people who had never been honoured by any other patron. They possessed art and skill. Nobody had detected it only Jassowal brought into relief their art and gave it due value.

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal keeps sitting by his sacred fire like that mendicant who remains in different to his visitors and does not bother to know who has come and who has departed; who remains oblivious of his votaries and himself. Ofcourse some of his disciples and devotees are such as raise funds in mutual co-operation and offer him a car as gift. Thus his friends are both rich and poor, but for Jassowal they are all alike, equally deserving of his consideration. He makes no difference between the rich and the poor. For this very reason Jassowal is a friend of his friends. For Jassowal showers upon them affectionate love like a father or a brother. He is cordial to all held from place to place literary fairs dedicated to some artist or art. All these fairs are the hybrid fairs of Prof. Mohan Singh fair.

Prof. Mohan Singh Memorial fair has started the flow of cultural stream in the Punjab. In the same way in every district are being held cultural fairs from place to place, both good and bad. It depends upon the organisers to decide of what standard the fair ought to be. It was S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal who laid the foundation of these fairs. That is why S. Jagdev Singh is called some times the "Ambassador of Punjabi Singers" sometimes their governor and sometime their president. These worlds have not been applied to any other leader than Jassowal.

Prof. Mohan Singh fair is the birth place of many new singers and artists. Those singers who had never been allowed to perform from the stage were patronised by S. Jassowal and allowed to sing from the stage of the Mohan Singh fair and make a name for themselves. They are today,

strutting about with pride. In this Mohan Singh fair S. Jassowal also awarded honours to many Singers and artists like late Narinder Biba, Lal Chand Yamla Jat, Jagmohan Kaur, Jagat Singh Jagga, S. Sohan Singh Seetal, S. Jaswant Singh Bhawra, Surjit Bindrakhia. Besides these there are Surinder Kaur, Gurmeet Bawa also.

Now decide for your self from much I know S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal alias Jathedar alias the Governor of musicians that I may write an article on him. So my friend, please note that I am not capable of writing this article.

## A Great Son of The Mother Tongue

**Ishar Singh Sobti**

Punjab Remained a slave of foreigners for centuries. First Percians, Pathans, Mughals and later the Britishers established their firm hold on this land of five rivers. The influence of the state is bound to fall upon literature and the tongue. So under the shade of the love for him has ever been on the increase and not diminished. Who can forget S. Jassowal, particularly his gift of Punjabi Culture to the society? How in the dark days of militancy he not only kept aflame the taper of punjabi culture amidst storms and whirlwinds of political uplevel but even set up a flow a river of Punjabi Culture and their by made not only his country men but even the people abroad aware of the rich legacy of Punjabi Culture handed down by the past generations. Though every body knows prof. Mohan Singh, the pole star of Punjabi poetry, yet respecting his wishes S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal not only proved that he was a friend of the living but also a trust worthy companion of the dead and deceased. Prof. Mohan Singh memorial fair did not remain a mere fair but became such a place where not only every artist but every Punjabi who loves his mother tongue pays a visit and by attending its function regards it as the fulfilment of a sacred duty like the visitor to Gugga's orchard who regards as a sacred function, to dig up earth there. Countless fairs came to life. People had grown sick of the seeds of hatred sown in to these fairs. Every body felt all on this account. S. Jassowal is a character of many layers. You can't look at only one aspect of his personality. Now he no longer needs any introduction. He is known to all in the government and the court. Even in foreign countries Prof. Mohan Singh fair has become quite famous. In the cultural field he has not been forgotten by anybody. When ever he attends a cultural fair, from a distance they judge from his massive physique and elephantine gait that he is S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

## May you live long for ages four!

**Amarjit Sherpuri**

To

S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal

S. Jassowal, I implore to God to grant you along life of ages four!

1. You are the Sun Spreading your light all around; So as to dispel all darkness around. While visiting villages and towns you spread such a radiance there.....

May you live long for ages four!

2. Working day and night you pushed on so nicely.

As to bring genial smiles to the weeping Punjabi, eyes' Re-kindling dying tapers in every hearth and home you raised the amount of happiness galore. May you live long for ages four!

3. You are the king of fairs; of tourney's monarch! You brought such a fusillade of musical notes!

Who can forget your tradition setting approach?

May you live long for ages four!

You display a verve, mountainous in calibre.

You faced storms and tempests so fierce in character;

Also courted grievous illness but never got despaired;

May you live long for ages four!

5. You, a saviour of peace, a votary of love!

You carried this message from door to door.

So 'Sherpuri' Prays for your life more and more

May you live long for ages four!

## Gatha Jagdev Singh Jassowal

**Malkit Singh Gowbra**

With words sweet, pleasing wit he enthralled one and all

Brought every undertaking to its proper logical end

Labour in Public Service he never left ignored.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

1. When arrived the day of April 30, In the year Nineteen thirty five.

He took his birth as Jassowal in Kartar Singh's house

his mother was called Amar Kaur whom we all revere.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal

2. He got Primary teaching in the native village school;

And from Arya College Ludhiana B.A.'s degree and all.

Then went to Mohindra College at Patiala for learning

more and got Master Degree with honour due.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

3. Passion for Public Service his mind never ignored;

after B.T. and law he got into political fold;

While people enter Politics for material gains and lure.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

4. Then came Assembly elections in year 1980

He won the seat, put it into congress fold.

They said he should be raised to municipal committees chair.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

5. His role as a chairman lauded one and all;

And he was made the Vice-President of Congress there.

He well honoured the chair with all for years three or so;

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

6. Honoured the Seats he held, never he disappointed.

When Gurnam Singh became the C.M. he fell into his view;

He chose to promote him as political secretary.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

7. He was also entrusted with the task of forestry;

Honour of state council citizen too, he came by;

The task of youth welfare was also entrusted to his care.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

8. Punjab university, too, honoured him like all,

by offering him the honoured chair of its fellows

And lovers of arts at Chandigarh never him forgot;

They chose to appoint him as adviser of the board of languages.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

9. Next, he became president of Guru Gobind Singh Foundation.

as well as the chairman of Mohan Singh Foundation.

He also put his hand upon the theatre & culture.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

Men of arts and letters are all the wealth he holds;

To help support culture Virasat Bhawan at Ludhiana he built;

And in the memory of Prof. Mohan Singh he conducts annual fairs.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

11. In the cause of Punjabi Suba he courted jail life two years;

And during congress Satya-Graha again went to jail.

The post of General Secretary of Akalis;

Too, he held, before all public eyes these various posts he held.

Let us relate to you the gatha of Jagdev Singh Jassowal.

## S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal Friend of Friends

**N.S. Nanda**

I know S. Jagdev Singh Jassowal for the last five decades, when he

