



# Sikh Research Journal

**Vol. 6 No. 2**

This article is from \*Sikh Research Journal\*, the online peer-reviewed journal of Sikh and Punjabi Studies

Sikh Research Journal \*Vol. 6 No. 2 Published: Fall 2021.

<http://sikhresearchjournal.org>

<http://sikhfoundation.org>

# **Sikh Research Journal**

**Volume 6**

**Number 2**

**Fall 2021**

## **Contents**

### **Articles**

|                                   |   |           |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------|
| <b>Editorial Team</b>             | <b>On the Farmers' Movement</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>Bikrum Gill</b>                | <b>The 2020 Indian Farm Laws in an emergent Global Financial-AgriTech Accumulation Regime</b> | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Shoma Choudhury<br/>Lahiri</b> | <b>Mending the Social? Reflections on Farmer's Agitations in Contemporary India</b>           | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Pritam Singh</b>               | <b>Farm laws, Indian capitalism and Hindutva</b>  | <b>33</b> |
| <b>Surinder Singh</b>             | <b>Farmers' Movement in Punjab: Consciousness and Politics</b>                                | <b>43</b> |

## Photo Essays

- |                     |  |           |
|---------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Diditi Mitra</b> | <b>Documenting the farmers movement with photographs from the field: An Interview with former sarpanch of Khassan, Dr. Narinder Singh Kang</b> | <b>55</b> |
| <b>Sonia Dhami</b>  | <b>Art of the Protest: A Selection of Paintings, Sculpture, Photographs, Graphics and Songs inspired by the <i>Kisan Mazdoor Andolan</i></b>   | <b>68</b> |

## Poetry

- |                          |  |           |
|--------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Gursahiba Gill</b>    | <b>Six Hundred Farmers Have Died</b>           | <b>82</b> |
| <b>Kewal Singh Ratra</b> | <b>ਸਾਡੀ ਤਾਂ ਸਬਰਨੀਤੀ/<br/>Words of Patience</b> | <b>84</b> |

## Book Reviews

- |                              |  |           |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Sarbani Bandyopadhyay</b> | <b><i>Narrating South Asian Partition: Oral History, Literature, Cinema</i> (Anindya Raychaudhuri)</b> | <b>87</b> |
|------------------------------|--|-----------|

## **On the Farmers' Movement**

**Editorial Team**

*Special Section on Farmers Movement in India*

On November 19, the day of Guru Nanak's birth anniversary, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi announced that the three agricultural laws that sparked a sustained resistance to them by both farmers and farm laborers will be repealed. Thus, today, as the editorial team prepares its second issue of *Sikh Research Journal* on the farmers movement, the struggle by both farmers and farm laborers seems to have been successful. It is a success that is borne of sustained resistance strategies that the farmers and farm laborers adopted, and their sheer grit and determination in the face of state oppression and police brutality. These are efforts that the government attempted to block, but consistently failed in the face of the farmers and farm laborers resilience in attitude, strategies, and political acumen.

Notably, movement participants and supporters, while welcoming the decision to repeal the agricultural laws, remain skeptical until the Prime Minister's words translate into action. In the words of Joginder Singh Ugrahan, President of Bharatiya Kisan Union Ekta (Ugrahan), it is important to remain vigilant of the government because the struggle is far from over.<sup>1</sup> *Samyukt Kisan Morcha*, an umbrella organization of various farmers' unions have made clear that the agitation will continue until the laws are formally repealed in the Parliament.<sup>2</sup> Movement leaders await the Indian government's response to various other farmers unions' demands, including legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) and resolution of specific contentious legal battles in favor of the farmers.<sup>3</sup> Displeasure has also been expressed at the method in which the decision to repeal the laws was communicated to the agitating farmers – through the medium of televised speech

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.newsclick.in/why-embers-peasant-struggle-burning-victory?fbclid=IwAR2F1PRmfvhjPuim40wbcNGdfmEbJwJrmMPBUj7AM9NRpycdoGCV4wXvyI4>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/samyukt-kisan-morcha-to-go-ahead-with-march-to-parliament/article37596438.ece>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/samyukt-kisan-morcha-to-go-ahead-with-march-to-parliament/article37596438.ece>

and without any face-to-face discussion with the farmers unions, a move which has been dubbed as undemocratic.<sup>4</sup>

Our goal in the second special issue on the farmers movement is to enlighten the reader about more aspects of the movement. The issue contains a range of contributions from academic analyses and photographic documentation of the movement to poetic and artistic expressions. The submissions by Bikrum Gill, Surinder Singh, Shoma Choudhury Lahiri, and Pritam Singh are academic accounts explaining various dimensions of the movement. Sonia Dhami and Diditi Mitra's essays provide a visual documentation of the movement. The issue ends with the poetry of Gursahiba Gill and Kewal Singh Ratra, inspired by the farmers movement. Do note that most of the manuscripts were prepared before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement that the laws will be repealed. Thus, not all contributions reflect that change in government policies. We hope to address this change in government intentions and other kinds of development in our future issues.

The farmers' and farm laborers struggle is far from over, but this latest victory is still cause for celebration. It reaffirms the power of grassroots mobilization and protest and provides a much-needed boost for India's battered democracy.<sup>5</sup> Yet, the victory has come at a huge cost. More than 700 protestors lost their lives in the course of the year-long agitation. We offer our current issue in the spirit of celebration as much as commemoration.

Lastly, please note a correction to one of our contributors to the previous issue. Navkiran Kaur Natt is inaccurate. The name should have appeared as Navkiran Natt.

---

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/samyukt-kisan-morcha-to-go-ahead-with-march-to-parliament/article37596438.ece>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/world/asia/india-farmers-modi.html?searchResultPosition=4>

**The Editors**

*Shruti Devgan*

*Shoma Choudhury Lahiri*

*Diditi Mitra*

*Nirmal Singh*

*Dona Suri*

*Elizabeth Weigler*