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Songs and Poems of the Farmers' Protests

The following compilation consists of the lyrics of two songs and the text of three poems. The songs are in Punjabi, and have been transliterated here, as well as translated. No doubt, the transliterations and translations can be improved, but are hopefully good enough to convey meanings adequately. Both songs have video versions, and the music and video are important parts of the experience and impact of each song, of course.

The version of *Ailaan* here is from October 2020, early in the protests. It was subsequently banned by the Indian government. In February 2021, a new version of the song was posted, with the same music and refrain, but very different words. The transliteration was done from a Punjabi (Gurmukhi) text of the lyrics.

Teer Punjab Ton does not seem to have a Gurmukhi text. Transliterations are available, and have been modified to correct inaccuracies, based on listening to the song, but it is possible that inaccuracies remain. Both songs have a similar tone, and have multiple references to Sikh history and values.

Sabh Ton Khatarnaak is also in Punjabi. Only selections from the poem are presented here. The author was a prominent left-wing poet, and was assassinated by militants in 1988. According to news stories, his poem has inspired some of the protestors, and the title is used as the beginning of contemporary comments on the situation leading to the protests.

The Bani of Protest is in English, but has phrases from Sikh sacred writings and Sikh meditative practice. It was written in December 2020.

Finally, *Khauf kyon hai itna hamaaraa* is in Hindi, with strong elements of Urdu vocabulary. It was written in December 2020, and is also available as a recitation with an accompanying video. Readers may find it interesting to compare it to the two Punjabi songs.

In brief, these pieces contain ideas of human rights, the special nature of farming for food production, struggles against oppression, lessons of history, and various dimensions of identity (national, regional, and religious, among others). These multiple identities are not seen as in opposition to one another. Of course, readers can find much more information about the selections presented here, as well as other poems and songs and their authors on the Internet

Ailaan (October 2020)

Vari Rai (Lyrics)

Bhai Manna Singh (Composer)

Kanwar Grewal (Singer)

Koi khande tikhe koi kirpan karoogaa
Tainoon dilliye ikath pareshaan karoogaa
Teraa faaide naalon ziaadaa nuksaan karoogaa
Par fasalaan de faisale kisaan karoogaa

Ihnaan 'katiaan de eke 'ch karor honge
Teri dhauñ de jo manke maror honge
Assi varhe diaan baabian ton lai ke thaaparaa
Tainoon jang daa ailaan naujavaan karoogaa
Tainoon dilliye ikath pareshaan karoogaa
Par fasalaan de faisale kisaan karoogaa

Bas char panj ghanṭiaan di vaat dilliye
Tainoon yaad karvaa diyaange aukaat dilliye
Teri hikk utte charh ke jaikaare launge
Saadi haunslaa afazai asmaan karoogaa
Tainoon dilliye ikath pareshaan karoogaa
Par fasalaan de faisale kisaan karoogaa

Asin haq di larai haq naal laraange
Asin jitaange te deg teg fatih parhaange
Sanoon maan vari rae itihaas de utte
Baaki dudh paani jang daa maidaan karoogaa
Tainoon dilliye ikath pareshaan karoogaa
Par fasalaan de faisale kisaan karoogaa

Proclamation

Some will sharpen a khanda, some a kirpan
Delhi, we will worry you as one
Greater than your gain will be the harm done
But matters of crops the farmers will decide

Individuals uniting will become millions
The beads on your neck will be twisted
Eighty-year old elders will strike you
The young will proclaim war on you
Delhi, we will worry you as one
But matters of crops the farmers will decide

Just a few hours journey, Delhi
We will remind you of your limits, Delhi
Climbing on your chest we will cheer
We will be encouraged by the sky
Delhi, we will worry you as one
But matters of crops the farmers will decide

We will fight the battle for rights with our rights
After winning we will offer charity and protection
We are proud to have the judgement of history
Let truth win on this battlefield
Delhi, we will worry you as one
But matters of crops the farmers will decide

Teer Punjab Ton (January 2021)

Navi Bassi Pathana and Varinder Sema (Lyrics)

Jazzy B (Singer/Composer)

Desh layi jehdhe faansi chadh gaye
Oh vi si Punjabi
Desh layi jehdhe London vadh gaye
Oh vi si Punjabi
Desh layi borderaa utte mar gaye
Oh vi si Punjabi
Dheeyaa bachaa leyande si gajniyo
Baaraa baje Punjabi

Fer vi launa painda sanu hak apne layi dharna
Gal sun lai kann khol ke dilliye
Sade naal je ladhna
Udheya teer Punjab to tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa
Udheya teer Punjab ton tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa

Attwaadi jihnu kehndi dilliye
Khoon de ne sab daani
Chaar vaar sarbans baar
Os kaum di hai nishaani
Saade guraaana ne sikhaayaa
Haq apne layi khadhnaa
Udheya teer Punjab ton tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa
Udheya teer Punjab ton tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa

Peheli sadhe choor hoyegi
Hath jatta de pakke
Saambh ni hone tetho kidre
Khoon khol gaye tate
Godi teri pattni bodi

Gal vich paa ke parna
Udheya teer Punjab ton tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa
Udheya teer Punjab ton tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa

Tu pehal kari asi khatam karaange
Chalne ni tere takey
Seva de vich KhalsaAid Singh Guru de pakke
Bassi Pathana kaihnda Varinder
Pair pachhaa ni tarna
Udheya teer Punjab to tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa
Udheya teer Punjab to tikhaa
Phadhlo jihne phadhnaa

Arrow from Punjab

For the nation, those who went to the gallows
They too were Punjabi
For the nation, those who went to London
They too were Punjabi
For the nation, those who died on our borders
They too were Punjabi
Those who would rescue our daughters at the stroke
Of midnight were Punjabi

Still to defend our rights we have to protest
Listen to our message with open ears, Delhi
If you want to fight with us
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want

Those you call terrorists, Delhi
They have given their blood
Four times – the whole family –

That is the mark of our community
Our Gurus have taught us to
Stand up for our rights
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want
First we will have to be overcome
The hands of the Jatts are firm
You cannot contain us
If our blood is up
We will strike back
You will suffer the consequences
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want

You started this but we will finish it
Your blows will not succeed
In service, KhalsaAid are true Singhs of the Guru
Bassi Pathana and Varinder say
Take your feet away
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want
A sharp arrow has flown from Punjab
Catch it if you want

Sabh Ton Khatarnaak (1987)

Avtar Singh Sandhu ('Paash')

Kirat di lutt, Sabh ton khatarnaak nahin hundi
Police di kutt, Sabh ton khatarnaak nahin hundi
Gaddaari-lobh di muth, Sabh ton khatarnaak nahin hundi

.....

Kapat de shor vich
Sahi hundia vee dab jaana, Bura taan hai
Kise jugnoo di lo vich padan lag jaana, Bura taan hai
Sab ton khatarnaak nahin hundaa

Sabh ton khatarnaak hundaa hai
Murda shanti naal bhar jaana
Na hona tadap da, Sabh sehan kar jaana
Ghar ton niklana kamm,
te kamm to ghar aana
Sab ton khatarnaak hundaa hai
Saade supniyaan da mar jaanaa

The Most Dangerous

Looting of one's labor is not the most dangerous
Beating by the police is not the most dangerous
The fist of treacherous greed is not the most dangerous

.....

In the din of deceit
To be oppressed while staying true is certainly bad
To read by the light of a firefly is certainly bad
But these are not the most dangerous

The most dangerous is
To be filled with the peace of a corpse
To have no feeling and bear everything
Leaving home for work
Coming from work to home
The most dangerous is
Our dreams dying

The Bani of Protest (December 2020)

Madhu Raghavendra

To the farmers marching towards
justice as effortlessly
as the lotus eyed feeds
on sweet rice made by Yashoda

crossing barricades and trenches
thrust by the police on orders of the State,
the way the ultimate truth arrives
on tractors and on feet
with a sickle and a plough

feeding those who come
their way with both hands
under their tents of fearless feast —
carrying us on a boat across the hunger sea

reminding the system
bhukhi-aa bhukh na utree
jay bannaa puree-aa bhaar

and reclaim justice singing
waahay guru, waahay guru,
waahay guru, waahay jeeyo.

Khauf kyon hai itna hamaaraa (December 2020)

Parakram Singh

Khauf kyon hai itna hamaaraa
Ki aavaaz bhi sunanaa chaaho na tum
Jab haq ki baat kareyn ham yoon
To beaavaaz karnaa chaaho tum
Ab jo aazaad desh hai hamaaraa
Phir kyon tum angrezi hukumaton se lagte ho
Jo buland ho kar keh rahe hain ham baat hamaari
To ham par lathiyaan chalaao kyon tum
Us desh ke naagarik hain jahaan 'Jai Javaan, Jai Kisan' kaa naara diya gayaa
Ab chaahе tum paani ki topon se hamein roknaa
Yaa laathion ke khauf se hamein daraanaa
Lekin ham to vaise hi khoon-paseene ke vafaadaar hain
Ye cheezein hamein kaise tarpaaengi
Mausam ki beruki sardi bhi ham kheton ke jotne vaalon ko kaise daraaengi
Are ye jo tumaari aasuon ki gas hai, ye hamein kyaa rulaaengi
In aakhon mein pehle hi aansoo sookh chuke hain
Rakh lo inhe
Kisi aur virodh ko beaavaaz karne ke liye tumhare kaam aayengi
Kis chiz ke gunehgaar hain ye to zaraa batlaate
Naa hi chor hain naa hi farebi
Tumhaare liye anaaj hain ugaate
Agar insaani haq ki baat karna gunaah hai to un hukoomaton se fareb ki boon aati
hai
Kisi avashya beriyon men hamein jakarne ki anthoni si nazar aati hai
Jo kar sako hamaare liye kuchh to hamaare saath aapni bhi aavaaz buland karnaa
Baat rakhne kaa hamein bhi mile haq ye farmaan nazar karnaa
Phir se poochh rahaa hoon
Khauf kyon hai itna hamaaraa
Ki aavaaz bhi sunanaa chaaho na tum
Jab haq ki baat kareyn ham yoon
To beaavaaz karnaa chaaho kyon

Why so much terror of us?

Why so much terror of us
That you don't even want to hear our voices?
When we are speaking of rights
Then you wish to silence us
Now this is our free country
Then why adhere to methods of colonial authority?
We are speaking based on our values
Then why are you hitting us with long staffs?
We are citizens of the nation where "Hail to the soldier, hail to the farmer" was
the cry given to us
Now if you stop us with water cannons
Or use the threat of long staffs to frighten us
In any case we are committed to our lives of blood and sweat
How can these things cow us down?
The nonstop cold of winter, how can it frighten those who work the fields?
Oh, your tear gas, how can it make us cry
When in these eyes, the tears have already dried out?
Keep it
It will be useful for silencing some other opponent
What was our wrongdoing? You should have told us that
We are not thieves or cheats
We grow grain for you
If speaking about human rights is wrong, then these displays of power smell of
hypocrisy
It can certainly happen that we will be confined and chained – what might have
been unimaginable
Those who can do something for us, raise your voices along with us
To speak our piece, give us, too, that right – make that decree public
Again, I ask
Why so much terror of us
That you don't even want to hear our voices?
When we are speaking of rights
Then you wish to silence us