

## HAZARDS OF TOBACCO – A WORLD EVIL

World renowned scholar, Edmund Calender has mentioned that Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji is a great Guru and such a psychologist whose every single edict needs to be deeply viewed and understood. To keep the Khalsa (his pious man) upbeat on the physical & spiritual level, Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji issued special orders on the day of Vaisakhi (The birthday of Khalsa). He issued an edict that Khalsa should keep unshaven hair, keep bracelet (Karha), a sword (Kirpan), underwear (Kachhera) & comb (Kanga) and that cutting of hair in any form is prohibited, adultery is not permitted, slowly & torturously cut meat is not to be taken and tobacco is not to be used. Guru Sahib had in full measure realized that if Khalsa has to be made distinct & virtuous then it needed to be brought into a special discipline.

### ਜਗਤ ਜੂਠ ਤਮਾਕੂ ਨਾ ਸੇਵ

(Thou shall not smoke) why was this strict order given? Why did Guru Sahib call it world refuse? Why was this taken as a taboo, a forbidden deed? These edicts will be full understood when the physical and spiritual detriments of this practice are viewed and it can be surely said that after understanding this edict, no one will every risk to smoke.

After about 22 years of research, Royal Physics Society, the prestigious society of scientists around the world, published it's findings about the ill-effects of tobacco on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1962. After reading their facts and results, our head bows in devotion to the edicts of Guru Gobind Singh ji. They have stated that the only cause of increase in death toll around the world is unabatted increase in usage of tobacco. The cause of laziness, weakness, cancer & other dangerous ailments are tobacco, cigar & cigarette. They are of the opinion that there are many dangerous outcomes of cigarette smoking.

Dr. Luther Latary, Surgeon, Public health service, USA has said that "Now there are neither two opinions nor any doubt about the dangers of smoking. There is no doubt at all of any type. Tobacco usage has a direct attack on health. Now all-out efforts need to be planned to stop it's usage. All community groups and individuals should come up to crush the head of this hydra-headed monster."

After this report was published America's former President, Johnson stopped smoking & remarked that he had never felt so healthy before.

Mahatma Gandhi in his autobiography has described tobacco consumption as the dirtiest, health spoiling, anti-social act and is such a practice in defence of which, nothing can be said. (Smoking is most unclean, unhygienic, both socially and morally indefensible).

The multi-national magazine, Reader's Digest stopped publishing any advertisement of tobacco and started a campaign to communicate about its ill-effects. Some of the findings are mentioned below:-

There is so much Nicotin in an ordinary cigar that by consuming it, an ordinary man can die. "Purusic acid" is the only substance existing which is more poisonous than it.

The blood of a tobacco user is so poisonous that by consuming it, the leech immediately dies. Not only that, in case if a room's air circulation is closed and instead fumes of cigarette are released in it and if any child is ushered in that room, he would immediately die. This finding has also come out that the increase in deaths is because of cigarette. In the recent years, 7,67,000 deaths are owed to Pneumonia. The cause of these deaths was that most of the patients being tobacco users, could not get cured.

Similarly, the society, after conducting Post mortems on corpses, has stated clearly that tobacco users have died from Tuberculosis (T.B.) in more than double numbers than non-users. On this basis, many insurance companies have stopped doing insurance of cigarette smokers. Not only the body gets weak, the courage of cigarette consumers gets diminished, the power of achievement gets kicked. The tobacco user is heading towards that destination where getting crushed with diseases is a natural thing.

A famous doctor, Dr. Woods has replied to the notion which says that tobacco is good for digestion & teeth. He says, "tobacco does not help in digestion of food. It does not save a weak person from becoming weaker and a fat person from becoming fatter. It does not support the teeth to remain stable. It generates asthma and indigestion. It can be positively said that tobacco usage generates ailments like heart diseases, diseases of the circulatory system and internal disorders. With its usage the chances of recovery from diseases is very difficult". Then the question arises that if cigarette usage is such a dangerous thing then why is the world using it? Its answer has been beautifully given by the scientists' society in its report. They have mentioned that in the last 3 years the companies have spent Rs. 53 crore as advertisements costs for tobacco propaganda. But unfortunately the amount spent on advertisements highlighting its dangers is not even Rs. 5300. This is the age of advertising, an age of propaganda. To bring out the truth also needs effort. Sri Guru Nanak dev ji went on his mission on foot. If we sit by, then this evil is likely to spread.

For the first time, Tobacco plant went from America to Spain at the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and then from Spain to other nations. In India it was brought by Portugese priests but in Jahagir's court it took importance. Once when Jahagir got sick, an English doctor Burnier asked Jahagir to intake tobacco fumes by calling it a magic plant. The addiction of this tobacco was poisonous and of temporary relief but had such a strong pungent disodour that his courtiers covered their noses with cloth. Seeing disrespect being displayed in the court

Jahagir ordered tobacco to be consumed. But when he came to know about its killing effects, he also got it stopped through issuing an order. The intoxicant being cheap, people started consuming it by and by and it started to be planted in India as well.

The Adi Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji was compiled in 1604. Tobacco came to India in 1611. So to find edicts written in Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji against tobacco was kind of impossible. Sri Guru Har Rai Sahib ji, the 7<sup>th</sup> Sikh Guru had given Bhai Hakikat Rai Shaheed's grandfather Lala Nand Lal Puri, Galotia Khurd, three orders in order to be religious. They were:

1. Do not smoke tobacco
2. Do not wear a hat
3. Do not cut hair

Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib ji, the 9<sup>th</sup> Guru of the Sikhs had dissuaded & stopped the Malwa region of Punjab from planting tobacco. Sri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib, the 10<sup>th</sup> Guru of the Sikhs, with His visionary mind and foresight, seeing its widespread ill-effects issued strict orders against consumption of tobacco. People who would smoke were called 'Kurehtias' or wrong-doers. We have seen examples and remarks of experts on the damaging effects of tobacco on the physical level but tobacco's greatest attack is on the soul or spirit. It is a sin to consume tobacco, spiritually as well.

People like Swami Daya Nand sensing his end near, called Mehta Bhag Ram and said "Cremate my body according to Vedic rituals and let no one who has ever touched tobacco, touch my body." Thinking that amongst Hindus, there would be few such people, so the Sikhs in Ajmer were contacted. The body of Swami Dayanand was bathed by (Mason) Vadawa Singh, Sardar Hari Singh, Sardar Chanda Singh, Sardar Khushaal Singh, Sardar Tehal Singh and Bhai Pal Singh. If somebody on the way wanted to help hold the body, they were informed about the will of Swami Dayanand that no one who has consumed tobacco should touch him. Swami Dayanand had died in Ajmer on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 1883.

A Sikh recites 'So-dar', both morning & evening. In the evening he recites Rehras Sahib and gets closer to 'So-dar' (Sikh hymns) and gets a glimpse of 'So-purakh' (God) with folded hands he recites 'Bentee Chaupai', receives 'Anand'(Bliss), passes through 'Mundawni' with humility and reads the Slok.. In this prayer his spirit gets refreshed. But if something snatches the 'So-dar', it is tobacco. If something detracts or holds back a Sikh from 'So-dar', it is the world-refuse tobacco. This will be read with astonishment that if there is an enemy of 'So-dar', it is tobacco.

The Tibetan scholars, with the aid of their third eye have seen and then recorded the yet to happen future events. They write that when cigarette smoking prevails in the world-at that time religion will fall, spirits of humanity

will fall and destruction will happen. Truth is that nothing else has caused so much destruction & upheavals in the world than cigarette. How it lowers one's spiritual level, the famous scholar Aldous Hunsley experimented. He planned that 'So-dar' of which all religions comment upon, be witnessed. He was told that if he consumed the essence of a particular variety of a plant 'Calotropis' found in America, he would start witnessing the 'So-dar'. He drank the essence and witnessed the 'So-dar'. What he witnessed in 'So-dar', he recorded in his book, "Doors of Perception". After spending some time in 'So-dar', he thought of exiting it. Hunsley was told that if tobacco was inhaled, the door of God could be stepped out from and his spirit could fall to a lower level. He inhaled the fumes of tobacco and the 'So-dar' experience just vanished. This incident happened in 1953.

Great are Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji (The 10<sup>th</sup> Sikh Guru) who ordered all Sikhs not to use tobacco and protected them not only from physical diseases but also from spiritual setbacks. A Sikh in his daily Nitnem witnesses 'So-dar' in the morning through Japji Sahib and through Rehras Sahib in the evening. If by chance he gets affected by fumes of tobacco, his connection with the glimpse of 'So-dar' gets cut-off. So a Sikh should strictly get this discipline implemented. Past Sikhs never used to socialize with tobacco consuming persons. It was also an edict in the Rehatnamas (Sikh code of conduct). We should endeavor to get smoking legally banned in public places. The community should do something about it.

After the successful end of the First World War, if Sikhs placed any demand with the government it was to get smoking banned in public places especially trains. The Article 110 of the Railway act was a result of this demand. There is a need to get this enforced in stricter terms even now.

The government of India has now legally enforced that on all boxes and advertisements of cigarette it be mentioned that "Cigarette smoking is injurious to Health". But it is written at such a location where there is little impact of the message. It should be written in very bold letters, like in USA it is written, "It may cause death."

*" The Sikh community, should collectively start an annual week-long campaign against tobacco consumption. Guru Sahib saved us. Now it is out turn to save the next generations."*

ਜਗਤ ਜੂਠ ਤਮਾਕੂ ਨ ਸੇਵੰ  
ਲੇਖਕ: ਸਤਿਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਿੰਸੀਪਲ

ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਕ: ਧਰਮ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਮੇਟੀ, (ਸ਼੍ਰੋਮਣੀ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧਕ ਕਮੇਟੀ) ਸ੍ਰੀ  
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ

Translated by: Kulbir Singh, 1185, E60th Avenue, Vancouver, BC,  
V5X2A6, Canada. Email: kswestcoast@gmail.com