

Names: Guljeet Singh and Sardar Singh

Interviewed 14/4/23, Vancouver, Canada

Job: Greek medicine shopkeeper

I am Guljeet from Nangarhar province and I had a Greek shop in Dasht Barchi and I was very satisfied with the people there and the people were also satisfied with us. I had many millennial customers and people believed in me and were very happy with the medicine I gave them. I have been working in this field for more than 15 years and I had a Muslim student in my shop and I had taught it from my teacher, even now when I am not there, people come to my shop and take medicine from my student and in some cases that And he does not know which medicine to give, he calls me and I guide him to which medicine is useful for that patient. When we came to Canada, I handed over my shop to my student and he sends monthly rent. My family is in India and 272 of us Sikh Afghans were accepted by the Canadian government when Taliban entered Kabul. I am from the Sigs who came from Pakistan and was in Sandal for 4 months. And we used to go to Nankane Sahib to Pakistan many times and during the Karzai government there were less problems traveling to and from Pakistan. Many times during the time of Vaisakhi and the birth of Guru Nang, people who had financial resources went to Taba. 100 years ago, we also had group weddings like Muslims and we went freely to every province. It cannot be denied that all people are the same and everywhere has its good and bad. They used to commit suicide among Muslims and Hindus, but when Taliban came back to Afghanistan, it was not a problem for us people, but we did not believe their words. And all our people slowly became discouraged from being in Afghanistan. Our children mostly went to private schools because they were harassed and cut their hair in public schools. Most Hindu people live in Khost. And I travelled in every period, and I went to Jackmania, which was in our district, and to Kunduz, in the center of the city. We even went to the house of the chowker in Darmsal Karte Parwan, where he was martyred in a suicide accident, to Shulgareh Fateha. We have many friends from Muslim people and they are good. During the government of Najibullah and Zahir Shah, there were many Sikhs in every province, but after the suicide bombers, people left. During Ashraf Ghani's rule, there were 2000 Sikhs, but now there are 9-10 people left. There were two gurdwaras in Charikar and there are many Charikaris in London and they have their own dharamsal, they opened restaurants and there are many of our people in London and according to themselves they settled a small Kabul. Those who were 5 years old when they left Afghanistan are now 30 years old in those countries and spent their entire lives abroad.

There is a lot of work in London and all our people are there. There are 15 or 30 families here, and an interview of a Sikh from Badakhshan caused Manmit Sig to sponsor Afghan Sikhs to Canada, and first they sent Sikhs from Helmand and Kandahar to India, and later they all came, and this lawyer had the intention, and all Sikhs sponsored Afghanistan and the Canadian government also helped.

In Afghanistan, all the drams were in our own hands for many years, and Mila Jund was fasting, but here we go to the Punjabi dharamsal, eat a langar and then leave.

It was different in Kabul, Vaisakhi, and we used to go out to Checker and go towards Bagh Bala and Qargha, and until Ghazni and Nangarhar, it was a feast day.

In terms of religion, we are the same as the Sikhs of Punjab, but we are different in customs, for example, we Afghans celebrate Vesak at home after Dharamsal, but this is only during Dharamsal.

Here, life is like a machine and we have Muslim friends, but they are few, but we also know relatives from Pakistan. Afghans are very affectionate and friendly with everyone.

We who came here think that we are bound to learn properly. In our homeland we were very free. We were together on Eids, we went to Muslim homes and they invited us to weddings, we went to Fatiha in Barchi, where I had a good relationship with my business partner, and I went to his house on every occasion. In Ghazni, there are now 4 dharamsals and one temple, and during the time of the current Taliban, 8 or 9 of us who are there honoured Guru Govind Singh in the dharamsal. One is in Manar city, the second is in the old city, the third is in plan three, and the fourth is in Shamin Sahib. And it has a choki, and we give mash to it.

We the people did not betray Afghanistan even as much as the head of a needle.

Sardar Singh: I am actually from Gardiz, and after Najibullah's period of war, we migrated to Ghazni and lived there for 12 years. We came to Kabul during Karzai's first term and I had a simsari shop in old Makroyan and sold furniture and I was satisfied with the good work. I had a lot of customers and people have credit on us. Before that, I had a shop in Sarai Ahmad Shahi, there were 1200 shops in Mandavi and they sold various items. There were also many Sikhs and Muslims used to come to us to buy their weddings. I could not go to school, but we studied in the Gurudwara. Udar Sikh, who was a parliamentarian, used to teach us in Dharamsal, and the people of Gardiz went to Ghazni after Dr. Najib's course and then came to Kabul. Ghazni was also good, my father had a Greek shop there.

We were chatting among ourselves in Hako language. My children don't know how to use Greek medicine because they ate it.

Here at home in Vaisakhi, we cook in our own system, we Afghans we go to Punjabi dharamsal.

We invited a lot of guests and government officials also came. At the end of the comment, less guests d We were swinging.

In Kandahar, the Hindu people help us to maintain the temple.

We used to celebrate Vaisakhi in every province and in Sultanpur it was magnificent. In Afghanistan, all ethnic groups have been oppressed and we were no exception.