



India – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 2 May 2017

Any information available on the Babbar group in India and in particular in Punjab and whether there are any reports of attacks or threats carried out by them.

A report from the Mackenzie Institute, in a paragraph headed “Leadership”, states:

“Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) was founded in 1978 by Talwinder Singh Parmar (born February 26, 1944) and Jathedar Sukhdev Singh Babbar (born August 9, 1955). Born in India, Parmar later immigrated to Canada and became a naturalized Canadian citizen. He was widely regarded as an influential spokesperson for Sikh independence and remains a celebrated figure to this day within the Canadian-Sikh community. Parmar continued to lead BKI activities while residing in Canada, which included terror financing, recruitment and radicalization, small arms and explosives procurement, and the development and coordination of terrorist attacks. Parmar eventually returned to India where he was killed in a police encounter in 1992. Wadhawa Singh is the current leader of BKI, which is now based in Pakistan.” (The Mackenzie Institute (12 April 2015) *Babbar Khalsa International (BKI)*)

An undated document published by the South Asia Terrorism Portal, in a paragraph headed “Formation”, states:

“Even after the terrorist-secessionist movement for Khalistan was comprehensively defeated in 1993, there remain a handful of terrorist outfits chiefly supported by Pakistan and some non-resident Indian Sikh groups who continue to propagate the ideology of Khalistan. One of the most prominent among them is the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). It is among the oldest and most organised Khalistan terrorist groups.

The BKI traces its origin to the Babbar Akali Movement of 1920 and is believed to have assumed its present form after the Baisakhi 1978-clashes between the Akhand Kirtani Jatha and Nirankaris and more particularly when some followers of Bibi Amarjit Kaur brought out some leaflets styling themselves as Babbar Khalsa after the killing of Nirankari chief Gurbachan Singh, on April 24, 1980. Subsequently, the outfit started targeting all those who sympathised with the Nirankaris.

Sukhdev Singh Babbar and Talwinder Singh Parmar were the founding members of this organisation. The first unit of the BKI was founded in Canada in 1981 under the leadership of late Talwinder Singh Parmar. The outfit at present is active in the USA Canada, the UK, Germany, France, Belgium, Norway, Switzerland and Pakistan. Talwinder Singh Parmar, a co-founder of the BKI, formed the Babbar Khalsa (Parmar) faction in 1992, when he split from the BKI after serious differences erupted between him and its leadership

of. The Parmar faction has a presence in the UK, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland.” (South Asia Terrorism Portal (undated) *Babbar Khalsa International*)

Also attached is a South Asia Terrorism Portal document listing the alleged activities of the Babbar Khalsa International during 2015.

A report from the South Asia Terrorism Portal states:

"It is significant however, that despite these many deficits and defects, the Sikh extremism and terrorism that had ravaged Punjab in the late 1980s and early 1990s finds no resonance on the ground today. Indeed, the two major attacks that have been executed in the State in 2015-16 are the work of Pakistan-backed Islamist terrorists. This is despite the fact that Pakistan has done all it could have to keep the Khalistani movement alive, providing safe haven and funding to the surviving leadership and cadres in Pakistan, and also vigorously supporting and directing the activities of subversive elements across the world. Despite pressure from Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), however, these groups have failed to mount any significant operation on Indian soil in recent years. The last recorded major terrorist attack attributed to the Khalistanis in Punjab dates back to October 14, 2007, when seven persons were killed and another 40 were injured in a bomb blast inside a cinema hall in Ludhiana. While there has been no definitive identification of the group responsible, Police sources and contextual information suggest that this was the handiwork of a Sikh terrorist formation based in Pakistan.” (South Asia Terrorism Portal (11 January 2016) *Punjab: Increasing Vulnerabilities*)

An article from the Hindustan Times states:

“Police on Monday arrested a Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) militant near the Rahon bus stand here. The militant, identified as Surjeet Singh, hails from Batala. He is a close associate of BKI's Arvinder Singh, alias Mitha Singh, who was arrested on May 24 from Nawanshahr. Surjeet's arrest is a result of revelations made by Mitha, say cops. Surjeet was produced in a local court that sent him to a five-day police remand. Sources said Surjeet and Arvinder had held several meetings to expand the terror cell by roping in Sikh youths. Surjeet had recently visited the UAE.” (Hindustan Times (31 May 2016) *Nawanshahr cops arrest Babbar Khalsa militant Mitha's aide*)

An article from the Times of India states:

“The Punjab Police have arrested a man who had recently returned from Qatar, claiming that he is a member of terror outfit Babbar Khalsa and was conspiring to wage war against the country and indulging in terrorist activities. Police said they received a tip-off that Arvinder Singh was a member of Babbar Khalsa and was trying to recruit youth for the organization. "He is conspiring to wage a war against the country. He has formed a group and is also having arms and ammunition which can be used against a particular community for firing or blasts which can damage the public and can also trigger communal riots," the police said.” (Times of India (25 March 2015) *Suspected Babbar Khalsa terrorist arrested in Punjab*)

A Gulf News article states:

“After intelligence agencies warned the state government about as many as 12 terrorists of dreaded ‘Babbar Khalsa’ militant outfit managing to enter Punjab, the police have gone on high alert expecting subversive activities ahead of state elections. A high alert has been sounded and the state police has stepped up vigil around vital installations across the northern state of Punjab. Sources in the police department believe the militants may try to disrupt the election related activities in the state. According to intelligence sources, the warning came after the interrogation of suspected terrorist Kamaldeep Singh, who was arrested from Punjab on October 23.” (Gulf News (27 October 2016) *Babbar Khalsa militants sneak into Punjab*)

A Hindustan times article states:

“Infighting among the top leadership of banned Khalistani terror group Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) has intensified. The Pakistan-backed outfit is now reportedly on the verge of a split. BKI terrorist Jagtar Singh Tara, 42, who recently confessed to his role in former Punjab chief minister Beant Singh's assassination on August 31, 1995, has issued a three-page handwritten letter through his lawyer, Jaswinder Singh. The letter, written in Gurmukhi, states that he was arrested at the behest of Wadhawa Singh, the present chief of the Babbar Khalsa now based in Pakistan. Tara states that Wadhawa Singh was aware of his presence in Thailand, and hence, only he could have got him arrested.” (Hindustan Times (31 December 2016) *Terror outfit Babbar Khalsa headed for split*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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