

Bibi Sahib Kaur Phulkian was a Princess of Patiala. She led armies into many battles and was the only woman in the Indian subcontinent to win a battle over a British General.

Bibi Rajinder Kaur was also a Princess of Patiala who displayed her chivalry in numerous battles.

Sikh Women in Modern History

1954 **Rajkumari Amrit Kaur**: First Indian Woman Union Health Minister

1970 **Kamaljit Sandhu**: First Indian Woman to win an Asian gold

1974 **Kiran Bedi**: First Indian Woman IPS Officer

1994 **Harita Kaur Deol**: First Indian Woman to perform a solo flight

Bibi Jagir Kaur - First woman President of the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandak Committee (similar to the Vatican church)

1997 **Dr Kalpana Chawla** was the first Indian woman to go in Space. She had no interest in make-up, hairstyle or cooking like her contemporaries. When her elder sister got married, she wore the same suit for three consecutive days saying " it did not matter at all." Her aunt, Amrit Kaur, is proud of her year-and-half rigorous training regime at NASA

Snatam Kaur Khalsa was a New Age Grammy Award Nominee for her Spiritual music and is a world renowned peace activist promoting harmony through music

Dr. Bibiji Inderjit Kaur Khalsa – the wife of the famous Yogi Bhajan is now the Bhai Sahiba of Sikh Dharma of the Western Hemisphere and continues to inspire Sikhs worldwide of the beauty of the Guru's teachings.

Gurmukh Kaur Khalsa is director of Golden Bridge in Los Angeles. She is the author of The Eight Human Talents; Bountiful, Beautiful, Blissful: A Spiritual Path to Pregnancy and Birthing; and three DVDs on Kundalini Yoga and pre- and postnatal yoga.

Siri Sikdar Sahiba Guru Amrit Kaur is the joint head of 3HO Healthy, Happy and Holy organisation which teaches shares Sikh spiritual technologies with people from all walks of life.

Conclusion

Sikh dharma has a rich history, both old and modern, of Sikh women who have shaped Sikh history, were presidents, rulers and were in the military.



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Famous Sikh Women

Sikh Dharma

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Introduction

Sikh dharma is the world's first spiritual tradition to start the movement of gender equality 500 years ago. There have been many famous Sikh women throughout history up to the present day. This essay looks at some of the achievements of these brilliant women.

Women Who Shaped Sikh History

Mata Nanaki was Guru Nanak's sister and perhaps the first Sikh. She played a vital role in sustaining and spreading Guru Nanak's spiritual message.

Mata Tripta was Guru Nanak's mother and encouraged Guru Nanak to pursue his life long mission.

Mata Khivi was Guru Angad Dev's wife and she occupies a special place in Sikh history. She played a critical role in the second Guru's life. Her most important contribution is that she made the concept of langar (community kitchen), a reality. She helped create a new social consciousness in Sikh women.

Mata Ajit Kaur was the wife of Guru Gobind Singh. She nurtured and guided the Khalsa for forty years after the Guru's death. She was deeply spiritual, as well as intellectual, and was responsible for making scholarship a central part of Sikh life. She helped provide leadership for the Sikhs in a very difficult and tumultuous time following the passing away of Guru Gobind Singh. She also helped to maintain the sanctity of the Guru Granth Sahib as the successor of Guru Gobind Singh and dealt strictly with pretenders and other aspirants of Guruship.

Mata Gujari was an illuminating force behind her husband Guru Tegh Bahadur (the ninth Guru) and her son Guru Gobind Singh (the

tenth Guru). After the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Mata Gujari guided and inspired her son Guru Gobind Singh. She was responsible for the training of the Sahibzadas (the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh) who gave up their lives for Sikh dharma while they were still very young. Mata Gujri was an inspiring force during one of the most difficult times in Sikh history.

Mata Sahib The Spiritual Mother of the Khalsa. During the first Amrit ceremony of the Khalsa on Vaisakhi 1699, She added sugar wafers (Patasae) in the preparation of the Holy nectar (Amrit) in order to infuse mercy and benevolence into the preexisting properties (courage and strength) of the Amrit. Sikh Women are vital to the foundation and the future of the Sikh way of life. On this auspicious occasion, let us be inspired by Mata Sahib Kaur's courage and compassion and continue to stay involved in our communities.

Bibi Bhani has a unique position in Sikh history. She was the daughter of the third Guru (Guru Amar Das), wife of the fourth Guru (Guru Ram Das), and mother of the fifth Guru (Guru Arjan Dev). Bibi Bhani was an inspiration during the formative period of Sikh history and symbolizes responsibility, dedication, humility and fortitude.

Sikh Women Presidents and Rulers

Rani Desa of Nabha and **Daya Kaur** of Ambala were exceptional rulers of their kingdoms. Daya Kaur, wife of Gurbakhsh Singh, ruler of Ambala, succeeded to her husband after his death. In the words of Lepel Griffin, *"She was an excellent ruler and her estate was one of the best managed in the protected territory. These ladies were well known for their administrative acumen, grasp of political situations, and dexterity in handling arms and organising defence."*

The Patiala Sikh Queens: From the Patiala house also many names like that of **Rani Fato**, wife of Baba Ala Singh, **Rani Ranjinder Kaur**, **Rani Aus Kaur** and **Rani Sahib Kaur** may be mentioned. In the words of Lepel Griffin. *"Rani Rajinder (Kaur) was one of the most remarkable women of her age. she possessed all the virtues which men pretend are their own—courage perseverance and sagacity—without mixture of weakness which men attribute to women."* **Sahib Kaur** was proclaimed as Prime Minister of Patiala at the age of 18. She managed the affairs, both in office and in the battle-field, wonderfully well.

Sikh Women in the Military

Sada Kaur is described as a first woman commander-in-chief and a leader of unprecedented qualities. She along with her son in law Ranjit Singh defeated Zaman Shah, son of Abdali near Amritsar and established the Khalsa Kingdom. She became a young widow when her husband was killed in battle.

Rani Jind Kaur was married to Maharaja Ranjit Singh, mother of Maharaja Dalip Singh, first female freedom fighter in the struggle to drive out the British from India. She tried her best to stop British from annexing her kingdom.

Mai Bhago Fought side by side with Guru Gobind Singh and was the lone survivor of the battle in which the 40 liberated souls defeated the Mughals. She led and fought in many battles for Guru Gobind Singh, and also served as his bodyguard. She led a battalion of 40 men in the battle of Muktsar. Mai Bhago Kaur survived to remain a member of the Khalsa army.

Bibi Khem Kaur was a general of the Sikh forces that supported a revolt against British in 1849.