

1: Operation Blue Star - Wikipedia

The documentary Operation Blue Star "the untold story currently being aired by Chandigarh-based television station Day and Night News run by veteran Punjab journalist Kanwar Sandhu has.

Oct 02, Abhishek rated it liked it This book is written by the army official who led the very controversial assault on the Golden Temple which resulted in a long period of turbulence in Punjab and also had a major impact on the national politics. The author begins by providing a brief introduction to the Punjab scenario which culminated in this brutal assault. But it is amply clear that he tries to justify the actions of Central government wherever possible. According to the author most of the blame lies with the Akalis who manipulated the situation for their own gains but ultimately became helpless as the situation worsened. But it is also true that the Central government also played a pivotal role in fanning the violence. Only Zail Singh is blamed a bit but Indira Gandhi goes scot free. The Central government is only blamed by the author for inaction whereas this stemmed from the fact that they too played this dangerous game to gain a stronghold in the state and oust the Akalis, against whom Indira Gandhi had a personal grudge. Also it might seem from this account that Bhindranwale was a force of his own whereas it has been proved time and again that he was propped up by the central and state governments for their own gains. In order to justify his claims and the assault on the Golden Temple, the author states that all this could have been avoided had the state police taken timely action. But being such a high ranking official the author should have known that they were just a pawn in the hands of the state government and could not be expected to take independent action. Also the author blames them for intelligence failure when he should not have depended on them for the same given the ground realities. The author details the book in a very methodical manner, as is expected from an army officer. He details the challenges faced by them at the onset of the assault, especially the fortifications around the temple in a very beautiful and convincing manner. Even the entire operation is described in a beautiful way and the maps provided help the reader to understand the ground situation clearly. The author is able to provide believable justification as far as the military aspect of the operation is concerned like the use of tanks and the smoke weapons. He also emphasises time and again that the army maintained the highest standards of discipline during the assault. If nothing else it shows that the ordinary soldiers who took part in the operation were caught between a rock and a hard place and showed utmost courage in the face of adversities. But where the author fails miserably is while explaining the political aspect of the operation. He is not able to provide convincing explanation for the timing of the operation. One thing clear from all this is that even the army was a pawn in this game and were called out only when things had got out of hand completely and no other solution was possible. So when the author takes it upon him to justify certain political aspects of the operation and provide a background to the trouble, he fails as he cannot be seen blaming the central government directly. All in all this book should be read by all those who desire to get a holistic understanding of the entire episode. It should also be clear that blaming the army only for the entire situation will not provide any meaningful solution and the role of the politicians and the games they play should be account to ensure that such an episode is not repeated in India. Not with this one though, probably since it was an internal operation. Gives a deep insight into one of the most important developments in modern Indian history May 15, Prabhpreet Singh is currently reading it gg Mar 17, Anish Antony rated it it was amazing Recommends it for:

2: Operation Blue Star - The Untold Story promo(Punjabi) - Video Dailymotion

"Operation Bluestar" in the Government's term, connoting a necessary military operation to flush out terrorists and recover arms from the Golden Temple, the implication being that it was an unavoidable cleansing act of purification.

A tall bespectacled man got out. Three years earlier, DGS had raised another unit, called the Special Group or sg, for clandestine counter-terrorist missions in Punjab and Assam. For the past two months, SG personnel, all drawn from the Army, had been training in secret at a base near Delhi for a critical mission. DGS was ushered into the living room where a pensive Mrs Gandhi sat with a salt-and-pepper-haired gentleman wearing thick black glasses-Rameshwar Nath Kao, 66, the reclusive spymaster who had built the external intelligence agency, RAW, in and used it to train Mukti Bahini guerrillas during the Bangladesh war in More important, he was a key adviser on the Punjab problem. A radical group of Sikhs led by a fiery religious preacher Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, 37, had declared war against the state. His motley group of armed supporters had, by , murdered over civilians and security personnel. DGS briefed Mrs Gandhi on a surgical mission that fell short of a military strike to evict the rebels. Heliborne commandos would enter the Guru Nanak Niwas guesthouse near the Golden Temple and abduct the militant leader. The operation was so named because it was timed for past midnight when Bhindranwale and his guards would least expect it. SG operatives had earlier infiltrated the Golden Temple, disguised as pilgrims and journalists, to study its layout. Then, for several weeks, over SG commandos had rehearsed the operation on a wood and Hessian cloth mock-up of the two-storeyed rest house at their base in Sarsawa in Uttar Pradesh. Commandos would rope down from two Mi-4 transport helicopters onto the guest house and make a beeline for Bhindranwale. Once they captured him, he would be spirited away by a ground assault team which would drive in. She had just one question. She wanted to know how many civilians would die. The RAW official did not have an answer. Mrs Gandhi said no and Operation Sundown died before the first helicopter could take off. Just two months later, Mrs Gandhi ordered the Army to flush militants out of the temple. Machine guns, light artillery, rockets and, eventually, battle tanks were used to overwhelm Bhindranwale and his mini army and the Akal Takht, the highest seat of temporal authority of the Sikhs, was reduced to a smoking ruin. Three decades later, Operation Sundown resurfaced in an unexpected location-London. Festering Wound Operation Bluestar still touches a raw nerve in India and abroad. Brar, who led Bluestar, and a frequent visitor to London, survived. Two of his attackers were handed down a year sentence in December last year. The new revelations about a possible British role in the build-up to Bluestar have already inflamed passions. New Delhi has so far not responded to the revelations. Brar calls reports of sas involvement in Bluestar "utter nonsense". Retired RAW officials and former members of its secret military wing, however, tell a different story. The sas assistance was not for Bluestar, a pure army assault, they told india today. It was to vet Operation Sundown, a commando raid. As revealed by B. They briefed a senior sas officer sent by the UK to Delhi who deemed the special operation feasible. Kao who had a personal equation with several foreign intelligence chiefs. Though Sundown was aborted, some of the commandos who had trained for it spearheaded a near-suicidal frontal assault on the heavily fortified Akal Takht during Bluestar and stayed till the last militant was flushed out of the temple three days later. This is one reason those officers, long since retired, refuse to be identified. In fact, his thinking was in line with her extreme caution. Weeks earlier, RAW station chiefs in foreign capitals, particularly those with large Sikh expatriate populations, had warned Kao of the adverse fallout of a military operation to flush out the militants. Kao had personally led the parleys with overseas Sikh separatists to persuade Bhindranwale to vacate the Golden Temple. In January , the government had instituted secret talks with Bhindranwale at the behest of Rajiv. But within four months, hardliners on both sides prevailed. He also saw a slim, fair man of medium height in a white salwar kameez and sporting a flowing beard. Major General Shabeg Singh was a war hero who had trained Mukti Bahini fighters in but was stripped of his rank and court-martialled on charges of corruption just before he was to retire in Now, as the military adviser of Bhindranwale, he oversaw conversion of the five-storeyed Akal Takht into a fortress. The daylight murder of dig A. Her personal secretary and confidant R. Dhawan was present at one of those half-hour meetings. On June 2, talks with the

Akalis collapsed. She green-lit Operation Bluestar. He had briefly considered a plan to starve out the defenders but junked it fearing an uprising in the countryside. Bluestar bloodbath Shortly after They wore night-vision goggles, M-1 steel helmets, bulletproof vests and carried a mix of MP-5 submachine guns and AK assault rifles. Each commando was a sharpshooter, diver and parachutist and could do km speed marches. Some of them wore gas masks and carried stubby gas guns meant to launch CX gas canisters, a more potent tear gas. Three months before this night, the commandos had stayed around the temple and rehearsed for Operation Sundown. When the plan was called off, they returned to their base in Sarsawa. They had flown into Amritsar the previous day at the request of Lt-Gen Sundarji. They would overwhelm the enemy by sheer force of numbers. The commandos, who spearheaded the assault, made use of stealth, speed and surprise to achieve results. General Dayal, a paratrooper who had captured the Haji Pir pass in an unconventional operation in the war, immediately overruled it. The commandos were to capture the sacred building by using gas to flush out the militants, he said. The Army had clearly underestimated the defences. The rest took cover in the long gallery of pillars that led to the Akal Takht. The commandos and infantry soldiers cautiously advanced, sheltering behind rows of pillars. Those who tried to advance towards the Akal Takht were cut down on the marble parikrama. An armoured personnel carrier bringing in troops was immobilised by a rocket-propelled grenade. Attempts by the para-commandos to storm the defences were repeatedly beaten back. They lost at least 17 men, their black dungaree-clad bodies lying prone on white marble. The only openings were horizontal slots out of which machine guns poured deadly fire. The commandos neutralised two of the machine gun nests by dropping grenades into them but the Akal Takht was impregnable. They fired mm shells and knocked down the walls of the Akal Takht. Commandos and infantrymen then moved in to mop up the defenders, tossing gas and lobbing grenades inside the building. The temple premises resembled a medieval battlefield, one sg trooper recalls. Bloodied and blackened bodies lay scattered around the white temple parikrama. In the basement of the blackened, still-smoking ruin of the Akal Takht, the commandos found the body of Shabeg. The Army recovered 51 light machine guns, 31 of which had been concentrated around the Akal Takht. Shabeg, he believed, wanted to hold out until daylight in the hope that there would be a popular uprising among the people when they get to know of the army action. The former war hero had extracted a bloody price on an army he felt had wronged him. Minister of State for Defence K. Singh Deo wanted Dhawan to convey an urgent message to Mrs Gandhi. The operation was a success, he said, but there were heavy casualties-both armymen and civilians. The commanding officer of the sg contingent, a lieutenant-colonel, was seriously wounded by a sniper as he escorted President Zail Singh around the temple on June 8. Operation Bluestar inflamed Sikh sentiments and triggered a mutiny in certain Indian Army units. It also led to the death of Mrs Gandhi: Her two Sikh bodyguards gunned her down on October 31 that year. The communal holocaust in which over 8, Sikhs were murdered by mobs around the country-including 3, in Delhi-fanned another decade of insurgency in Punjab. They had plenty of time to wonder if history would have turned out differently had they been given the chance to carry out Operation Sundown.

3: Operation Blue Star – the untold story - The Hindu

The untold story before Operation Bluestar Indira Gandhi almost gave the go-ahead to a covert RAW mission to kidnap Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale months before she sent the Army into the Golden Temple in

Golden Temple[edit] The militants were able to claim a safe haven in the most sacred place for the Sikhs due to the whole or part support received by them from the key sikh religious leaders and institutions such as the SGPC , AISSF and Jathedar head of the Akal Takht. The support was either voluntary or forced by using violence or threat of violence. It also provided the militants access to new potential recruits from among the visitors. Several multi storied buildings were located around the Parikrama walkway around the reservoir of the temple that provided rooms and offices that were taken over by the militants. The temple complex also provided logistical advantage to the militants with easy access to food, water and communication lines. Further the sanctity of the Golden temple provided protection from arrests by the security forces who preferred not to enter the Temple premises so as not to hurt the religious sentiments of the Sikhs. On 13 April , the day to celebrate the birth of Khalsa , a peaceful Sant Nirankari convention was organized in Amritsar, with permission from the Akali state government. The practices of "Sant Nirankaris" sect of Nirankaris was considered as heresy by the orthodox sikhism expounded by Bhindranwale. He was viewed as a supporter of the Nirankari sect and had written several editorials that had condemned the acts of Bhindranwale. On 20 September , after absconding for several days, Bhindranwale surrendered to the police. They attacked Hindus, derailed trains, and even hijacked an Air India Plane [29] [32] He was released on 20 October after Home Minister of India declared lack of evidence. Bhindranwale had started the efforts for his demand in , and by mid had managed to gain support for his plan to divide India. The arms and ammunition used by his group were provided by ISI. He called Bhindranwale "our stave to beat the government. While Bhindranwale was openly supporting such elements. Sensing a prospect of his arrest from the hostel premises, he convinced the SGPC president Tohra to set up his headquarter in Akal Takht Shrine representing the temporal power of God in the Golden temple. Babbar Khalsa had also the support of the Congress party. Longowal by now feared for his own safety. Among the prominent ones was Giani Partap Singh, an eighty year old spiritual leaders and a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, Partap had openly criticized Bhindranwale for stocking arms and ammunition in the Akal Takht. Partap was shot dead at his home in Tahli Chowk. Other dissenters were also killed. All those who spoke against Bhindranwale were perceived as his enemies who in turn were branded as enemies of the Sikh faith. It would have caused numerous casualties as collateral damage , the Golden Temple being one of the most visited sites in Punjab. It would have also hurt the religious sentiments of the Sikhs. The government sent a team led by Narasimha Rao to try to convince Bhindranwale to back out but he was adamant. These talks ended up being futile. Bhindranwale warned of a backlash by the Sikh community in the event of an armed assault on the Golden Temple. There are many hunters after it". She was apparently led to believe and had assumed that Operation Blue Star would not involve any civilian casualties. An arsenal had been created within the Akal Takht over a period of several months. Trucks engaged for kar seva religious service and bringing in supplies for the daily langar were smuggling in guns and ammunition. The police never attempted to check these vehicles entering the Golden Temple, reportedly on instructions from superiors. During a random check one such truck was stopped and a large number of sten guns and ammunition were found. The Statesman reported that light machine guns and semi-automatic rifles were known to have been brought into the compound, [54] and strategically placed to defend an armed assault on the complex. The modern weapons found inside the temple complex later indicated that foreign elements were involved. The heavier weapons were found with the Pakistan or Chinese markings on them. Walls were broken to allow entry points from the basements in the Takht and from the rooms around the Parikrama, to the tiled courtyards. The windows and arches of Akal Takht were blocked with bricks and sand bags. Sandbags were placed on the turrets. The entire Akal Takht had been converted into a large reinforced pillbox with weapons pointing all the directions. Every strategically significant building of the temple complex, apart from the Harmandir Sahib located at its very centre had been fortified in a similar manner and allegedly defaced.

The fortifications also included seventeen private houses in the residential area near the Temple. The militants manning these vantage points were in wireless contact with Shabeg Singh in Akal Takht. The defences in the complex were created with a purpose of holding out long enough to provoke an uprising among Sikhs in the villages so that they march enmasse towards the Golden temple in support of the militants. Sufficient food that would have lasted a month was stocked in the complex. The security forces were prevented by the politicians to take actions in enforcing the law. Even self defence from the militants was made difficult. On February 14, , a police post near the entrance of the Temple was attacked by a group of militants. After twenty four hours the police responded and sent in a senior police officer for negotiation. He asked Bhindranwale in the Akal Takht to release his men and return their weapons. Bhindranwale agreed only to return the corpse of one of the policemen who had been killed. Later the remaining five policemen who were still alive were also released, but their weapons, including three sten guns, and a wireless set, were not returned. The buildings were close by and had labyrinthine passages all under the control of the militants. Militants in the temple premises had access to Langars food supplies and water from the Sarovar temple pond. Militants were well stocked with weapons and ammunitions. Any siege under these circumstances would have been long and difficult. The option of laying over a long siege was ruled out by the Army due to the risk of emotionally aroused villagers marching to the temple and clashing with the Army. The negotiated settlement had already been rejected by Bhindranwale and the only option left to the government was to raid the temple. In addition, seven editors and seven news hawkers and newsagents were also killed in a planned attack on the freedom of media house to cripple it financially. Punjab Police had to provide protection to the entire distribution staff and scenes of armed policemen escorting news hawkers on their morning rounds became common. The terror had spread to all of the countryside. The numbers of violent incidents were increasing every month. It was nine in September , in October it increased to thirty six and in May there were more than fifty violent incidents. These incidents included bank robberies , attack on police, arson at railway stations, bombings, indiscriminate shootings and killing of Hindu bus passengers forcibly taken out of the bus. The total number of deaths was in violent incidents and riots while 1, people were injured. The Sikhs from other states were moving into Punjab and the Punjabi Hindus were moving to neighbouring states in increasing numbers. New Khalistani currency was being printed and distributed. Pakistan had been supporting the militants with arms and money. Once Khalistan would have got declared, there was the risk of Pakistan recognizing the new country and sending Pakistani Army into Indian Punjab to guarantee its security. On 3 June, a hour curfew was imposed on the state of Punjab with all methods of communication and public travel suspended. The forces had full control of Harmandir Sahib by the morning of 7 June. There were casualties among the Army, civilians, and militants. Sikh leaders Bhindranwale and Shabeg Singh were killed in the operation. General Vaidya, assisted by Lt. Brar was in charge of an infantry division at Meerut. On 31 May Lt. General K S Brar had been summoned from Meerut and asked to lead the operation to remove the militants from the temple. Both of them had worked together in the Bangladesh operations. To take out the militants including Bhindranwale from the Golden Temple complex. To raid extremist hide-outs throughout the Punjab state and to mop up the militants remaining in the countryside. In addition, another critical Operation Woodrose was done, under which the army units were deployed in the border areas, replacing the pickets routinely held by the paramilitary BSF. The border pickets held by at least a company strength. At least seven divisions of Army were deployed in villages of Punjab. Army began taking control of the city of Amritsar from the paramilitary. A young Sikh officer posing as a pilgrim was sent to the temple for scouting. He spent an hour in the complex noting the defence preparations in the complex. Plans were made to clear the vantage points outside the complex which were occupied by the militants, before the assault. Patrols were also sent to study these locations. The water and electricity supply was cut off. Around young Sikhs were allowed to escape from the temple premises during this period. Most of whom were criminals and left wing extremists naxalites. The Army sealed off all routes of ingress and exit around the temple complex. Sunderji sent tanks and APCs to meet them. He was, however, unsuccessful and the firing resumed. The Golden temple complex had honey combed tunnel structures. The Army was kept under withering machine gun fire from the manholes of the tunnels. The militants would pop out of the manholes and fire machineguns and then disappear back into the tunnels.

OPERATION BLUESTAR THE UNTOLD STORY pdf

Sources mention either 42 or 74 locations. The objective of the 10 Guards was to secure the northern wing of the Temple complex and draw attention away from SFF who were to secure the western wing of the complex and 1 Para Commandos who were to gain a foothold in Akal Takht and in Harmandir Sahab, with the help of divers.

4: Operation Blue Star: The True Story by K.S. Brar

The documentary Operation Blue Star à the untold story currently being aired by Chandigarh-based television station Day and Night News run by veteran Punjab journalist Kanwar Sandhu has uncovered startling new evidence about the operation and the conduct of the militants and the security agencies since then.

June 10, September 16, The documentary Operation Blue Star " the untold story currently being aired by Chandigarh-based television station Day and Night News run by veteran Punjab journalist Kanwar Sandhu has uncovered startling new evidence about the operation and the conduct of the militants and the security agencies since then. He relates how at around 6 p. Tohra were coerced almost at gunpoint to declare the formation of Khalistan and how they wriggled out of it. Both Tohra and Longowal are not alive today, so I am saying this under a solemn oath of allegiance to the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, because I want to speak the truth. Sant Longowal kept completely quiet. This is a battle between Sant Bhinderanwale and Mrs. Indira Gandhi and that since the former is leading the battle, it will be fair to ask him to issue the statement about the creation of Khalistan. The youth then left the place and never came back. Ramoowalia also sheds light on an alleged execution of some 30 Sikh youth by the army " the certainty of which has always been speculated. Talking about events in the wee hours of 6th June, when the army was combing through the complex, the narrative states that a Major of the 9 Kumaon regiment lined up some 20 Sikh youth and mowed them down with a machine gun. Recalling the incident, Mr. An officer waved a handkerchief and they were shot dead by the Army men with bullets which were sprayed on them from left to right and then right to left. I have never seen people being killed like that, with bullets. I have been a farmer and I have cut the crop and made its bundles. The crests of these Sikh youth collapsed similarly. No one moaned or uttered anything. I know my statement will be called into questioning, but 28 years after it happened, I am going on record on this. Maybe they had lost their fellow Army men in the battle elsewhere in the Complex. This happened between 3 a. I was also told to sit down cross-legged and said my prayers. I and all these persons, who are under your custody, belong to Sant Harchand Singh Longowal. This is my identity card. Please check it up. The other Army men lowered their guns. And two to three of them came up to me" and pushed me to a side. You are not supposed to be here. He said that some Sikh youth were lined up against a wall in the Golden Temple Complex and killed with a machine gun. Sandhu has pieced together the account with the help of interviews with some eyewitnesses and officials, records from army archives, interrogation reports of captured militants and also the actual Op Instructions issued by Maj Gen Brar on the eve of the operation. If in the process it upsets any one, it cannot be helped. It exposes many fallacies like the one about arms and ammunition being planted in the temple complex by the Army. Sandhu has not only provided a rough inventory of the military hardware stockpiled inside but also detailed some instances of how they were smuggled in. His covered body lay in a room there for a whole day until the army men entered and cleared it the next day. As for Bhindranwale himself "the Sikh seminary Damdami Taksal that he headed refused to accept his death for many years " he died at 8. His body, contrary to reports of that time, was not identified by his brother Harcharan Singh Rode then serving as the subedar major in 61 Engineers Regiment in Jalandhar, but by the police and army doctors. I did not issue any contradiction because I had got to see him and paid my last respects. This series documents that they were actually discouraged from responding to the announcements being made by the district administration outside asking the pilgrims to come out. Apparently when five or six of them tried to come out with their hands in the air, they were shot down by militants from inside the temple complex. Their bodies lay near the ghanta ghar "where pilgrims wash their feet " on the morning of 5th June.

5: The untold story before Operation Bluestar

that it was an unavoidable cleansing act of purification. Where as "Ghallughara" is how the Sikhs of Punjab remember the episode, connoting aggression, massacre and religious persecution.

File photo New documentary carries testimony that executions of Sikh youth did take place and SGPC president Gurcharan Singh Tohra refused to declare Khalistan Almost three decades after Operation Blue Star "the army operation that cleared the Golden temple complex in Amritsar of Sikh militants in " a journalist has spoken to some of the surviving dramatis personae of the event to recreate almost hour by hour what happened during those fateful six days. He relates how at around 6 p. Tohra were coerced almost at gunpoint to declare the formation of Khalistan and how they wriggled out of it. Both Tohra and Longowal are not alive today, so I am saying this under a solemn oath of allegiance to the tenth Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, because I want to speak the truth. Sant Longowal kept completely quiet. This is a battle between Sant Bhinderanwale and Mrs. Indira Gandhi and that since the former is leading the battle, it will be fair to ask him to issue the statement about the creation of Khalistan. The youth then left the place and never came back. Ramoowalia also sheds light on an alleged execution of some 30 Sikh youth by the army " the certainty of which has always been speculated. Talking about events in the wee hours of 6th June, when the army was combing through the complex, the narrative states that a Major of the 9 Kumaon regiment lined up some 20 Sikh youth and mowed them down with a machine gun. Recalling the incident, Mr. An officer waved a handkerchief and they were shot dead by the Army men with bullets which were sprayed on them from left to right and then right to left. I have never seen people being killed like that, with bullets. I have been a farmer and I have cut the crop and made its bundles. The crests of these Sikh youth collapsed similarly. No one moaned or uttered anything. I know my statement will be called into questioning, but 28 years after it happened, I am going on record on this. Maybe they had lost their fellow Army men in the battle elsewhere in the Complex. This happened between 3 a. I was also told to sit down cross-legged and said my prayers. I and all these persons, who are under your custody, belong to Sant Harchand Singh Longowal. This is my identity card. Please check it up. The other Army men lowered their guns. And two to three of them came up to me and pushed me to a side. You are not supposed to be here. He said that some Sikh youth were lined up against a wall in the Golden Temple Complex and killed with a machine gun. Sandhu has pieced together the account with the help of interviews with some eyewitnesses and officials, records from army archives, interrogation reports of captured militants and also the actual Op Instructions issued by Maj Gen Brar on the eve of the operation. If in the process it upsets any one, it cannot be helped. It exposes many fallacies like the one about arms and ammunition being planted in the temple complex by the Army. Sandhu has not only provided a rough inventory of the military hardware stockpiled inside but also detailed some instances of how they were smuggled in. His covered body lay in a room there for a whole day until the army men entered and cleared it the next day. As for Bhindranwale himself "the Sikh seminary Damdami Taksal that he headed refused to accept his death for many years " he died at 8. His body, contrary to reports of that time, was not identified by his brother Harcharan Singh Rode then serving as the subedar major in 61 Engineers Regiment in Jalandhar, but by the police and army doctors. I did not issue any contradiction because I had got to see him and paid my last respects. This series documents that they were actually discouraged from responding to the announcements being made by the district administration outside asking the pilgrims to come out. Apparently when five or six of them tried to come out with their hands in the air, they were shot down by militants from inside the temple complex. Their bodies lay near the ghanta ghar "where pilgrims wash their feet " on the morning of 5th June.

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"Operation Bluestar" or "Ghallughara". Two different terms for the same episode - the Army action on the Golden Temple in June Two different meanings give to the same unprecedented event.

Citizens for Democracy "Operation Bluestar" and " Ghallughara". Two different terms for the same episode - the Army action on the Golden Temple in June Two different meanings give to the same unprecedented event. Where as "Ghallughara" is how the Sikhs of Punjab remember the episode, connoting aggression, massacre and religious persecution. The unmistakable allusion is to the killing in Punjab of tens of thousands of Sikhs by the Afgan raider, Ahmed Shah Abdali in , after which the word "Ghallughara" was coined to become an integral part of the Punjabi folklore. Duggal is an acknowledged authority on Sikh history. He used to reside in a house adjacent to the Sikh Reference Library, was present there between May 28 and June 6, and hence in his own words "an eye-witness to some of the atrocities committed by the Army during its attack on the Golden Temple". About fiftyish, Duggal now lives with his lecturer-wife in Jalandhar, where we interviewed him. His eyes become moist and his voice quivered as he described the assault on the Golden Temple. Bhan Singh- Secretary of the S. His account begins from June 3, Giani Puran Singh - one of the priests at Harmandir Sahib. Aged about 20 years, she goes to college at Amritsar. She went to the Golden Temple on May 29, , with her grand-parents and an aunt, to fulfill a vow, and was there until June 6. We met her in Amritsar in the house of a widowed victim of the November Delhi violence. Member - about years old, he would not give his name, son of a police officer, he was visiting the Golden Temple in June for the Gurupurab and was there from June 1. He was arrested by the Army on June 6 but released in October. He was rearrested soon after and had been again released a little before we met him. Remarkably calm and soft spoken, he said that there were about fighters with Bhindranwale inside the Temple Complex and less than arms, mostly, guns of the II World War. He was on duty throughout the period of the Army Operation. He narrated how he had a hair-breadth escape, even after being lined up before the firing squad on June 6, after he had been arrested, stripped naked and his hands had been tied behind his back with his turban. He showed us the bullet-ridden walls of the Akal Rest House, where we spoke to him. Joginder Singh - and employee of the S. He was on duty at the Harmandir Sahib during the Army action. He spoke to us with great conviction. Baldev Kaur - an Amritdhari woman in her mid-thirties, she had come to the Golden Temple on June 2, for the Gurupurab with her husband Puran Singh who is now in Kapurthala Jail and three children from her village Khanowal in Kapurthala district. She was so calm and fearless when she described her tribulations. With serene eyes and flowing white beard, he has an endearing touch. Born into a Hindu Brahmin family, he was orphaned at the time of partition and then adopted and brought up by Amrik Singh, the blind Head Ragi of the Golden Temple who was killed inside the Harmandir Sahib on the morning of June 5. We met him at the Information Office of the Golden Temple, and he lives just above it. It is the Jodhpur detainees who are eye-witnesses to the Army operations in Amritsar in June , not the relatives we met. But some of their evidence was passed on to their relatives in the course of brief meeting in jail from time to time. We met the relatives of: Kanwaljit Singh visited the Temple with his friend on June 2, wanted to return to Delhi the same afternoon, but found that the last train had left Amritsar. We spoke to his younger brother, Inder Mohan Singh, at Delhi. As Jasbir Singh was coming out after fulfilling his vow on June 3 at about 1: Randhir was injured by bullets on his leg. June 1, - Piecing together the evidence of various eye-witness and also second-hand sources, such as Kirpal Singh, President of the Khalsa Dewan, Amritsar and S. Bhagowalia, advocate at Gurdaspur and Vice-president for the Association for Protection of Democratic Rights Punjab , the following picture emerges as to what happened at Golden Temple from June 1, It is really amazing how, except for some minor details, the accounts of different persons interviewed separately tally so closely with regard to the date, the time and the description of incident June 1, There was no firing, from inside the Golden Temple. The firing by the C. The firing continued till about 8 p. The worst fears of the people came to the surface when on 1st June, the security forces which had besieged the Golden Temple for months together and had made strong fortification on the multi-storey buildings all around it, suddenly started firing in side the Golden Temple. The

firing started at What was worse was that Harmandir Sahib was made the main target of this firing. I took shelter along with my staff behind the steel almirahs of the Library, one of the bullets pierced through three almirahs and landed on the fourth and we had a narrow escape. When I asked some of the boys as to why they did not answer the firing, they replied that they were under strict orders of the Sant not to fire a single shot unless and until the security forces or the Army entered the holy Golden Temple. In the evening, when I heard in the news bulletin that there was unprovoked firing from inside the Temple, but that the security forces showed extreme restraint and did not fire a single shot, I was surprised at this naked lie. I asked Bhan Singh, Secretary, S. He said that nothing could be done because all links with the outside world had been snapped. She confirmed the killings - "Authorities had said none had died, but I dressed the wounds of 3 men who died later in front of me in Guru Nanak Nivas. However, most official versions maintain a meaningful silence about the happenings of June 1. June 2, - Duggal was relieved when "fortunately, on 2nd June a team of five reporters including Mark Tully of B. They were taken around the Golden Temple and shown 34 big wounds caused by the bullets on all sides of the Harmandir Sahib, some of them as big as almost 3" in diameter. A large number of Sikhs came to the Golden Temple from the surrounding areas along with their families as the next day, June 3, was Guru Parb or the martyrdom day of Shri Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth holy Guru of the Sikhs. The peace and quiet was only on the surface, because active preparations were afoot to break the peace. Kanwaljit Singh and his friend Manjit Singh from Delhi visited Golden Temple on the morning of June 2 and found that there was no restriction for pilgrims to enter Amritsar or even the Temple. But the exit doors out of Amritsar were being closed. After visiting the Temple, when Kanwaljit went at noon to the Amritsar Railway Station to catch a train for Delhi, they were told that the last train had already left and that the Flying Mail in the evening would not be leaving. In fact they were told all outgoing trains had been cancelled. Thus was Kanwaljit to miss his interview at Delhi with the Institute of Bank Management on June 3 morning and his examination with the State Bank of India the same afternoon. Although there was no formal curfew, and all visitors entering the Temple were allowed to come in without any ado, all those who left the Golden Temple on the night of June 2 were being taken into custody. About 10, people had come from outside including many women and of them were young people. Those who were inside were not allowed to go out after 10 p. The Jathas which had come mainly from Sangrur were not allowed to court arrest. But suddenly there was a curfew, so the pilgrims and the Akali workers came to participate in the Dharam Yudh Morcha and to court arrest, could not leave. The Akali Jathas consisted of about ladies, 18 children and about men and all of them along with the thousands of pilgrims were forced to stay back inside the Temple complex. No one inside the Golden Temple had yet realised the sinister plan of the authorities. Punjab had been sealed. Thousands of pilgrims and hundreds of Akali workers had been allowed to collect inside the Temple complex. They had been given no inkling or warning either of the sudden curfew or of the imminent Army attack. It was to be a Black Hole-type of tragedy, not out of forgetfulness but out of deliberate planning and design. I along with my wife were then sitting in the verandah of my house adjacent to the Sikh Reference Library. Recovering from the initial shock, we moved into the room and took shelter in one of its corners. Thereafter, every second the ferocity of firing increased and it continued unabated till the evening of the 6th June. As we were on the first floor, and our quarter was open on all sides our position was very vulnerable. The bullets hit our quarters on all sides and some of them pierced through the doors and landed inside the room. To add to our miseries the power and water supplies had been cut. Through a slit in the shutter of a window we saw a large number of dead bodies in the Parikrama of the Golden Temple. They included women and children. We could not leave our room. Coming out in the open would have exposed us to sure death. Shots were fired from all sides. But no warning was given to the people. The firing was started from all around the complex with vengeance, as if they were attacking an alien, enemy country. Her account is extremely graphic - On June 4 at about 3: Suddenly, there was a black-out in the whole of the Golden Temple complex. The devotees continued to be immersed in worship. We felt that the whole of the Golden Temple complex was shaking. I was alone on the balcony overlooking the lake or sarovar. Suddenly something roundish fell in front of me. So I gently touched it and pushed it into the water. As it fell, there was a big noise and then the water rose and splashed into the Harmandir Sahib. I started reeling, once tilting on one side and again on the other. Someone pulled me

inside. The explosions continued. I did not see any armed terrorist. The bullet marks on the walls, the doors and windows of the side rooms of the Akal Rest House bore silent testimony to the Sevadars story, as we listened to him in May, , almost one year after the shooting.

7: Operation Bluestar: The untold story

June 4, Duggal's recollection are vivid, almost photographic. "At about 4 a.m. in the early hours of the morning of June 4, the regular Army attack on the temple started with a pounder which fell in the ramparts of the Deori to the left of Akal Takht Sahib with such a thunder that for a few moments I thought that the whole complex had collapsed.

The untold story Investigation Team: Pancholi June 6, " At 2 a. They tore off all my clothes, stripped me naked, my kirpan was snatched, my head gear patta was untied to tie up my hands behind my back. I said "I am here to do my duty. I have nothing to do with all this. As my turn was coming, suddenly a Sikh Officer turned up and ordered, "Stop Shooting". Thus I was saved. At that he ordered them to lock us in a room. On 7th June the door was opened at about 8 or 9 in the morning. We had gone without water. The floor was covered in blood. I was allowed to leave. Bhan Singh picks up the thread of the story at about 4 a. We were encircled by the Army people, throughout the day from 4 a. We were taken away to the Army Camp at about 9. Tohra surrendered near Guru Nanak Niwas with about people. The terrorist opened fire at them and also lobbed hand grenades to prevent surrender. As a result, 70 people were killed including 30 women and children. Office is now located and kept there in Army custody the whole day. Neither he nor Bhan Singh talk about surrendering to the Army nor do they refer to the killing of 70 people including 30 women and children, by terrorists at the time of their surrender. On the morning of June 6, as the girl student opened the door of their small room and "came out to fetch water, what did I see but piles of dead bodies, all stacked one over the other. All I could see was a ceaseless mount of dead bodies. It seemed that all the persons who were staying in the Parikrama, not one of them had survived. The Army said later that they did not go inside the Golden Temple wearing boots. But I have seen some of the dead bodies of the Army men in uniform - they were wearing boots and belts. It is an amazing and astonishing account of how she accidentally met Bhai Amrik Singh, President of the A. She had not met him before but once he told her his name, she recognised him at once because his pictures had come out in the papers. How Amrik Singh gave her some water in a bucket which she gave to her relatives and acquaintances, but she could not bring herself to drinking it because it was red, mixed with blood. She recounts in breathtaking detail how she picked up the courage to first come out of the Complex and then bring out her relatives and acquaintances. To quote her own words - "So I decided to try to find the way out. There was a man lying dead. I had to place my foot on him. I had to move in this fashion. There is a staircase next to the Nishan Saheb outside the Akal Takht and next to it there was an iron gate, which had got twisted because of the shelling. I pulled the gate and came out, there was nobody. The place was deserted. The doors of the houses were shut and locked from outside. I was in a haze. For I saw the locks and yet I kept shouting for shelter. Then I came to my senses, realizing that the inhabitants had locked their houses and gone away. Then I broke the mud patch in the wall of a house and entered it. One of the doors of this house opened out into the Golden Temple. I went back to the temple through this door. I found a wounded man who relayed my message to my grandmother through other wounded persons, that I had managed to come outside, she should also come out. By then the room in the Akal Takht building, where I had taken shelter with my grandmother was already in flames. The people in that room came out with much difficulty and reached the place where I was. The house had been sprayed with shells and bullets and there were gaping holes in the walls. We found a water tank in that house which had escaped destruction, unlike the water tank in the Golden Temple complex. First we all drank water from that tank. We met an injured man who had also taken shelter in that house. He asked us to go with him to his house. He made us change all our blood-soaked clothes; some we washed clean. Many young people aged between 18 and 22 years were killed and so were some ladies. A lady carrying a child of only a few months saw her husband lying before her. The child was also killed on account of the firing. Many people were crying for drinking water, but they were not provided any. Some had to take water out of the drains where dead bodies were lying and the water was red with blood. The way the injured were quenching their thirst was an awful sight which could not be tolerated. The Army people were there, moving about mercilessly without showing any sign of sympathy with those injured or wounded. Those who were under arrest were not provided any facility of water or food or any other thing of

that sort. The clothes of those who were arrested were removed and they were only left with shorts-their turbans, shirts, etc. Such a brute treatment was given to them, as if they were aliens and not the citizens of the country to which the forces belonged. Four members of the family of Narinder Pal Singh, the Information Officer who also lived on the same floor as us and we five took shelter in the basement of the Information office building. On the 6th of June, between 12 noon and 5 p. This was the first announcement given since the Army operations began. All of us in the basement volunteered arrest and the Information Officer and myself showed our identity cards as employees of the S. As we were coming out, we saw that hundreds of people were being shot down as they came out. We saw many women being shot dead by the commanders. Meanwhile, we went through some devious lanes and managed to take shelter in a house which was some distance from the Golden Temple. The Army people announced that everyone should come out. So we came out. The Army made all of us stand in queue. There were 13 boys out of which three I claimed to be my brothers. I did not know them from before. I merely wanted to save them. Out of the remaining male youths, they picked out four and took off their turbans with which they tied their hands behind their backs. Then the Army men beat these 4 Sikh boys with the butts of their rifles till they fell on the ground and started bleeding. They kept telling the boys all along, "you are terrorists. You were coming from inside. You were taking part in the action. You will be shot. They looked completely innocent. They were shot before my eyes. Their age was between 18 and 20 years. I did not know who they were - circumstances had brought us together by chance. Whenever I recollect that scene, I seem to lose my bearings. I told my grandmother not to speak a word to them as they were speaking only with bullets. I asked them whether they had come to protect us or to finish us. I said my grandfather was a colonel in the Army. He told me to go away quickly. And so we were saved. Time passed and at 4: All those who had come face to face with the forces had been eliminated. We I and Gyani Mohan Singh asked all the 22 within the Darbar Sahib to surrender and told the commanding officer that two priests had stayed behind and if need be, he could send his men for them. He did not agree with them and called aloud on the speaker that we should come out with raised hands. We decided against this because if we were shot on the way it would merely be a waste. We were in the Darbar Sahib till 7: While on our way out I stopped to pour a handful of water in the mouth of the wounded member of the Jatha, who asked us to send for help. I promised to do so provided I remained alive.

8: #India “ Operation Blue Star ” the untold story | kracktivist

The Kanwar Sandhu Show with an eye witness of Sikh Violence, Sanjay Suri(Full Episode) - Duration: GlobalPunjabTV 37, views.

The untold story Investigation Team: I along with my wife were then sitting in the verandah of my house adjacent to the Sikh Reference Library. Recovering from the initial shock, we moved into the room and took shelter in one of its corners. Thereafter, every second the ferocity of firing increased and it continued unabated till the evening of the 6th June. As we were on the first floor, and our quarter was open on all sides our position was very vulnerable. The bullets hit our quarters on all sides and some of them pierced through the doors and landed inside the room. To add to our miseries the power and water supplies had been cut. Through a slit in the shutter of a window we saw a large number of dead bodies in the Parikrama of the Golden Temple. They included women and children. We could not leave our room. Coming out in the open would have exposed us to sure death. Shots were fired from all sides. But no warning was given to the people. The firing was started from all around the complex with vengeance, as if they were attacking on alien, enemy country. Her account is extremely graphic - On June 4 at about 3: Suddenly, there was a black-out in the whole of the Golden Temple complex. The devotees continued to be immersed in worship. We felt that the whole of the Golden Temple complex was shaking. I was alone on the balcony overlooking the lake or sarovar. Suddenly something roundish fell in front of me. So I gently touched it and pushed it into the water. As it fell, there was a big noise and then the water rose and splashed into the Harmandir Sahib. I started reeling, once tilting on one side and again on the other. Someone pulled me inside. The explosions continued. I did not see any armed terrorist. The bullet marks on the walls, the doors and windows of the side rooms of the Akal Rest House bore silent testimony to the Sevadar's story, as we listened to him in May, , almost one year after the shooting. According to the girl student, bullets hissed past her and her grandmother and aunt when they crawled across the bridge on their stomachs in their bid to escape from Harmandir Sahib. She managed to pick up a portion of a shell which had exploded on the bridge near Harmandir Shaib - it was marked 84 mm. The girl student provides a comparative picture of the magnitude and intensity of firing from outside the Temple and from inside. On June 1, there was absolutely no firing from inside. Whereas on June 4, the ratio was something like this - if a thousand rounds were being fired by the Army from outside, then about one or one and a half rounds were fired in reply by the armed militants from inside the Temple complex. Some of these helicopters also guided the firing squads of the Army by making circles of light around the targets. Immediately after these circles, the cannon ball would land on the target causing havoc. We saw a large number of boys blown to pieces. In accordance with the U. Charter of Human Rights, the Red Cross is permitted to go in aid of the wounded right inside the enemy territory, but in Amritsar in June the Red Cross was not allowed to enter the Golden Temple - a respected and hallowed part of our country- in aid of Indians under attack from the Indian army. It only means that the attack was so brutal and the battle scene so grisly, that there was much to hide from the public scrutiny, even if it be that of a neutral agency called the Red Cross. This also explains perhaps why Press Censorship had already been imposed, the last of the journalists were hounded away and the Press was not allowed inside the Golden Temple upto June 10 when they were taken on a guided tour of the Complex for the first time since the Army Operations began almost a week before.

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