

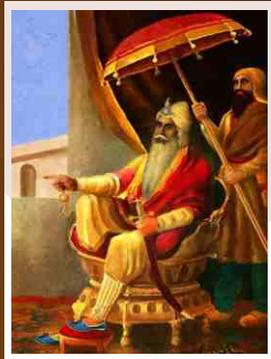


NAAC
GRADE A+
ACCREDITED UNIVERSITY

One-Day

International Conference on

REVISITING MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH AND HIS TIMES



March 13, 2026

Venue: Mahapragya Seminar Hall and
APJ Abdul Kalam Seminar Hall

Organised by

**CENTRE FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES AND
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LANGUAGES
DESH BHAGAT UNIVERSITY
MANDI GOBINDGARH, PUNJAB**

ABOUT DBU:

Desh Bhagat University derives its foundational spirit from freedom fighter Sr. Lal Singh Ji, who made significant contributions to India's independence. In recognition of his dedication to social service and his role in the freedom struggle, he was honoured with the "TamraPatra" by the Government of India in 1972. The University has been established with the noble mission of pursuing excellence in higher education by providing students with a distinctive blend of academic, professional, and personal development. The campus is spread over a large area with state-of-the-art facilities, including a lush green Wi-Fi-enabled environment, smart classrooms, modern computer laboratories, well-equipped digital libraries, separate hostels for boys and girls with all amenities, faculty housing/guest house, seminar and conference halls, a fully functional auditorium, and a dedicated fleet of buses for transportation. The University employs highly qualified, experienced, and research-oriented faculty members. Desh Bhagat University is approved by the UGC and accredited with an A+ grade by NAAC.

About the International Conference

The man who nurtured the idea and consciousness of regional nationalism and forged the unified and independent sovereign state in 19th Century India was Ranjit Singh. He harnessed restless anger of the Sikhs and the Punjabis to liquidate the local kingdoms, i.e., the Misls, to upscale and conquer the neighbouring states with the aim to establish the Historical Khalsa State. Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780–1839) was the founder of the Sikh Empire and one of the most important rulers who not only occupied the Kashmir, Multan and Peshawar but reverse the course of history and plugged the Khyber Pass. He did not sit on the Throne and his government was called Sarkar-i-Khalsa. Maharaja Ranjit Singh is known for founding the Sikh Empire by uniting the Sikh misls into a powerful state, capturing Lahore in 1799 just in the age of 19 he becomes the Maharaja of

Punjab and making it his capital, building a strong and modern army with the help of European officers, ruling as a secular and tolerant leader who appointed Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims to high positions on the merit, restoring and gold-plating the Golden Temple in Amritsar and give liberal donations to Hindu and Muslim religious places, maintaining Punjab's independence from British rule during his lifetime and establishing a just and stable administration in Punjab for about forty years, which earned him the title "Sher-i-Punjab" (Lion of Punjab). The geographical reach of the Sikh Empire under Ranjit Singh included all lands north of Sutlej River and south of the high valleys of the Himalayas. The major towns at that time included Srinagar, Attock, Peshawar, Bannu, Rawalpindi, Jammu, Gujrat, Sialkot, Kangra, Amritsar, Multan and Lahore. Muslims formed around 70%, Hindus formed around 24% and the Sikhs formed around 6-7% of the total population living in the Khalsa State.

The State under Ranjit Singh focused primarily on the military and on the political administration and had paid less attention to the taxation system to end the land abuse and on introducing uniform laws in his state and on improving internal trade and merchants. However, the inhabitants, by and large, were prosper with goods social and economic structure. In the history of the Punjab, no man has excited the imagination of the people as much as Ranjit Singh. His looks contributed little to his popularity. However, his character, virtues, attitude and values added to his power and popularity. The factor which contributed most to Ranjit Singh success was his respect for other faiths. The court of Ranjit Singh reflected the secular pattern of the State. His prime minister was a Hindu dogra, his foreign minister was Muslim, his finance minister was a Hindu Brahman along with a number of Sikh, Muslim and Hindu Generals. This attitude won the loyalty of all of his subjects and helped to forge the

resurgent feelings of nationalism into a powerful weapon Punjabi imperialism. The contemporary Sikh/Punjabi historians such as Ratan Singh Bhangu, Kanhiya Lal, Sohan Lal Suri, Tota Singh and other have enormously praised Ranjit Singh as Maharaja as well as the Khalsa State. However, the contemporary Muslim historians such as Ghulam Muhiuddin, Khafi Khan, and others have criticized the rule of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The British historians of late 19th Century have attempted to present Ranjit Singh in the critical historical perspectives. The modern historians such as Ganda Singh, Hari Ram Gupta, Khushwant Singh, and J.S. Grewal have presented detail accounts on the life and times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh depicting him as the most benevolent king of his times. As such, much have been written on Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times. However, as cited above the different historians hold divergent views on many historical incidents related to his life and reign. There is much space to rewrite and to revisit the times of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Sarkar-i-Khalsa on the basis on the new found sources, new found historical research methodology as well as to re interpret the existing historiography on his times. It is with this background that the Centre for South Asian Studies and Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages will organize an One-Day International Conference on “Revisiting Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Times” on 13.03.2026. This International Conference will provide an opportunity to the historians, scholars and young delegates to explore further and to encourage scholarly research on Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times.

Main Theme of the International Conference:

Revisiting Maharaja Ranjit Singh and His Times.

Sub-Themes of the International Conference:

- Politics and Society of Punjab During the late 18th Century
- Foundation of the Khalsa States and its ideology
- Historical Geography of Military Expansion of the Sikh State
- Military organization and reforms under the Sikh Empire
- Political consolidation and administration under Maharaja Ranjit Singh
- Diplomacy and relations with the British, Afghans, and neighbouring States
- Court politics, nobles, and administrative Elites of the Sikh Empire
- Society, Culture and Religion during the Sikh Empire
- Economy, agriculture, trade, and commerce during the Sikh Empire
- Art, architecture, literature and patronage during the reign of Ranjit Singh
- Role of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in shaping Punjabi and Sikh identity
- Decline of the Sikh Empire after Maharaja Ranjit Singh's death
- Historiography on Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times.
- Recent historiographical trends and new sources on Maharaja Ranjit Singh.
- Any other sub theme related to the main theme of the Conference

Key Objectives

- To critically examine the life, achievements, and legacy of Maharaja Ranjit Singh
- To discuss and analyse different historical interpretations and debates related to his reign
- To encourage new research and fresh perspectives on political, social, and military aspects during the Sikh Empire
- To provide a platform to scholars and researchers to share their findings and ideas
- To promote interdisciplinary and international academic dialogue on Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times
- To identify gaps in the existing historiography and to explore trends for further research on Maharaja Ranjit Singh and his times

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Vice Chancellor, Desh Bhagat University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab

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Dr Ram Singh Gurna

Professor, Department of History, Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages

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- **Ms Rajwinder Kaur**, Teaching Assistant, Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages

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- **Mr Manveer Singh**, Office of Pro-Vice Chancellor
- **Ms Jyoti Sharma**, Office Assistant, Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages
- **Ms Amarjeet Kaur**, Office Assistant, Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages

Registration Fee for Delegates

Particulars	Amount
University/Collage Teachers	Rs. 1000/-
Research Scholars/Students/Others	Rs. 500/-

The Delegates are welcome to participate in both ways i.e. offline and online.

Mode of Payment:	Mode of Payment:
Bank Name:	Indian Overseas Bank
Account Holder Name:	Desh Bhagat University
Bank Account No.	028401000035040
IFSC:	IOBA0000284
Branch Address:	SCO 26, Sector-7, Chandigarh-160019

Call for Papers

- Research papers are invited for the One-Day International Conference on "REVISITING MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH AND HIS TIMES"
- Papers may be written in English, Hindi or Punjabi.
- English papers must be typed in Times New Roman, font size 12 with 1.5 line spacing.
- Hindi papers must be typed in Unicode (Mangal font preferred), font size 14 with 1.5 line spacing.
- Punjabi papers must be typed in Unicode (Raavi font preferred), font size 14 with 1.5 line spacing.
- All submissions must follow the APA 7th edition referencing style for Social Sciences and MLA 9th Edition style for English Literature and be sent in MS Word format to

internationalconferenceRMRST@deshbhagatuniversity.in

- The last date for submission of abstracts is 5th March 2026
- Selected papers will undergo review by the Seminar Review Committee and will be published in the seminar proceedings with an ISBN number.

Link For Registration:

<https://forms.gle/2TeVEaHvxdzaSGaa6>

