

## 2016 UPDATE

### **Baba Nanak Educational Society** serving Punjab's most suicide-affected area

On behalf of more than 500 suicide-affected families, the Baba Nanak Educational Society thanks everyone who has come forward to help during the past year. Your contributions have made the difference between hope and despair for destitute rural families.

Your support has enabled us to ...

- Fund the school education of 1470 children
- Provide college scholarships to 570 boys and girls
- Keep families from starvation thereby reducing the temptation to commit suicide
- Continue on-going suicide documentation and verification
- Approach courts to get government relief for suicide-affected families
- Mount campaigns to spread awareness about pension problems
- Combat indifference to rural suicides through mail and media

Here are the highlights of 2016

● Pritam Singh Jagpal of Morestown, New Jersey, USA has funded the construction of a 400-seat auditorium ► for Jasmer Singh Jaijee College at Gurney Kalan (district Sangrur)  
He has also adopted 28 families and provided six college scholarships and four school scholarships



● Sanjh, a California-based charitable society, increased its commitment and now supports 75 families. In addition, Sanjh has provided eight college scholarships

● Shivinderpal Kaur of Patiala has adopted 40 families and has funded the creation of five vocational centres

● FC Sondhi & Co of Jalandhar (supporters of BNES from the beginning) increased its commitment and now supports 18 families.

● Arvinder Singh of Auckland, New Zealand adopted 10 families.

● Navdeep Singh of Cambridge, Ontario, Canada adopted 5 families.



Some of the adopted families ▲

●A team of doctors from Cornell University ► visited the BNES villages. One of the team, Dr Melanie Witte, will be returning in 2017 for an extended stay to analyse the causes of rural suicide,



●For years BNES has been calling attention to the large number of bodies that float down the Bhakra Mainline Canal. Three to four bodies are observed at the Khanauri barrage *daily*. Many bodies simply rot in the water with no attempt to identify them or provide last rites consonant with human dignity.

Early last year, a case was filed in this connection with the National Human Rights Commission and evidence was submitted in the form of a video of the bodies.



The NHRC washed its hands of the issue, citing a letter from a Punjab Addl Director General of Police who declared that all necessary steps had been taken and there was nothing further to do. BNES disagrees. The video film, which was uploaded on YouTube ►, succeeded in attracting media attention. Many more people are now aware of the situation but it cannot be said when effective measures to address this problem will finally be taken. A mortuary has yet to be set up at Khanauri

● Harpreet Kaur and Manmeet Singh, reputed documentary film makers (their award-winning film, A Little Revolution, focused on the problem of suicide in our area) have donated a video camera to the college. They and their friends are also supporting more than 50 suicide families



●Noted Russian film-maker Konstantin Belyaev and his crew spent a week in the BNES villages shooting for a documentary. His film, *H<sub>2</sub>Woe: India's Water Woes* ► was aired on Russia TV.



◀Dr Gurdeep Kaur has succeeded Dr Iqbal Singh Tiwana as principal of Jasmer Singh Jaijee College

## A glance at the work of the Baba Nanak Educational Society

**BABA NANAK EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY** is a non-profit, non-sectarian, non-political charitable organization registered under the Societies Registration Act. Our aim: **RESCUE & REVIVAL THROUGH EDUCATION**

### **BNES works to ...**

- Ensure that children of suicide victims stay in school by financially assisting their families
- Provide higher education to a distressed area through Jasmer Singh Jaijee College



### **AREA OF WORK**

Revival Mission looks after families in 110 villages of Sub-Divisions Andana, Lehragaga, Sunam, Dirba and Budhlada. Blue indicates area with high rate of rural suicide

As on December 31, 2016	
<b>Villages</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Beneficiary families</b>	<b>504</b>
<b>Suicide cases (1990 to 2016 (Dec))</b>	<b>2451</b>
<b>Panchayat affidavits</b>	<b>2291</b>

### **Coverage:**

In 2016 R&RM supported 504 families with a monthly assistance of Rs 1000 to Rs 1500 (depending on family size) on the condition that children remain in school

# **BNES HAS FOUR OBJECTIVES**

## **Immediate Assistance**

The aim of Rescue & Revival is to keep children whose parent(s) have committed suicide in school by providing their families monthly financial assistance



## **Documentation**

R&RM investigates and fully records cases of rural suicide taking affidavits from village panchayats for verification of debt-related suicide



## **Facilitation**

Availing of government help is difficult for many persons. We help victim families to get state welfare pensions to which they are entitled. Although these pensions are small, even small amounts can mean the difference between hope and despair and save a family from the trauma of second or even third suicides.



## **Advocacy:**

R&RM pressures state and central governments to rehabilitate families of suicide victims and remove the causes of rural distress that drive people to take their own lives



## **Special Assistance:**

The number of families in need of help exceeds the number of donors. BNES provides special assistance to many of yet-to-be adopted families. This assistance sometimes takes the form of quilts and warm clothing.



**Jasmer Singh Jaijee College,** founded by Aman Sidhu in 2004, has expanded steadily. Before 2004 Moonak & Lehra Subdivisions of district Sangrur had no degree college. The college functions in a newly constructed building on a 10-acre campus just outside Gurney Kalan. Out of a student body of some 1000 students, 570 are on various scholarships. Fees are waived for children of suicide victims. Some donors are directly providing scholarships for nursing training and law college.

JSJ College is affiliated to Punjabi University and offers BA, B Com, MA, MSc-IT and diploma in computer sciences.

Harman Kaur Sharda (left) is college director and Dr Gurdeep Kaur (right) is principal.



**JSJ College results for exams of May 2016  
(final year students)**

<b>BA III</b>	<b>60.29</b>	<b>MSc(IT) II</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>BCA III</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>BCom III</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>PGDCA</b>	<b>89.74</b>	<b>MA II</b>	<b>72.73</b>
<b>MSc(IT) II LE</b>	<b>83.33</b>		

**Not just academics!  
Students participate in a wide range of activities**



## **BNES works with . . .**

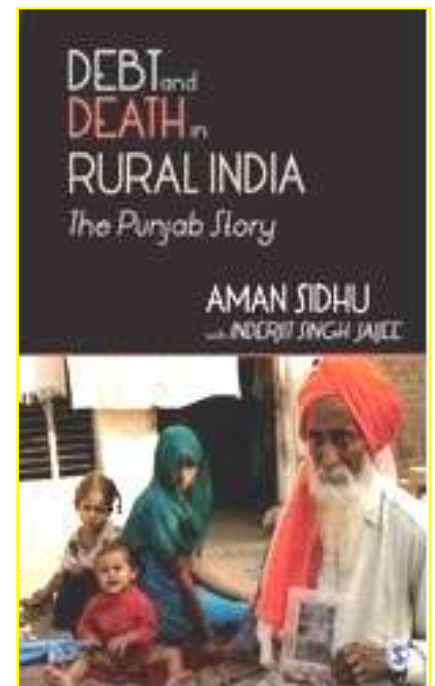
### **Building Bridges India ►**

This organization headed by Rasil Basu, retired Director of UN Human Rights Division, has launched 10 vocational training centres for women in ten villages of Sangrur district. The centres teach tailoring and embroidery. Operational management is in the hands of Ghazala Khan.

BBI conducts regular medical check-up camps. One such camp provided cataract surgery and follow-up treatment to more than 100 persons

### **NAVDANYA ▼**

Navdanya gives vegetable seeds for kitchen gardens to distressed families. A BNES extension officer provides gardening guidance. Navdanya, started by Dr Vandana Shiva, works for sustainable agriculture and healthy environment



## **. . . for in-depth analysis**

### **Debt & Death in Rural India, the Punjab Story**

by Aman Siddhu and Inderjit Singh Jaijee;  
2012, Sage Publications, New Delhi

<http://www.sagepub.in/productSearch.nav?siteId=sage-india&prodTypes=Books&q=debt+and+death+in+rural+india>



**Risaldar  
Mohinder  
Singh**

**Satbir  
Singh**

**Surjit  
Singh**

**Inderjit  
Singh  
Jaijee**

**Ramdayal  
Singh**

**Ranbir  
Singh**

**Prof  
Aman  
Singh**

**BNES  
FIELD  
TEAM**

## You can be part of the activities of BNES

Aid to the Rescue & Revival Mission means adopting a widowed mother and her children. To ensure continuity, we ask you to commit assistance for one full year. This comes to a donation of Rs 14,400. This sum pays for the children's education and provides sustenance to the family. Of this, 20 per cent go for administrative costs.

Donations may be sent by crossed cheque/bank draft/electronic transfer in favour of Baba Nanak Educational Society:

**For Foreign Exchange:** STATE BANK OF INDIA, Sector 17 Branch, Chandigarh  
(Branch Code 0628) IFSC Code: SBIN0000628  
Saving Bank Account No.11304008448

**For Electronic Transfer:** instruct your Bank as under:

For Foreign Exchange:

SWIFT Code No. SBININBB141 (Branch: SME , STATE BANK OF INDIA, Bank Square, Sector 17-B, 3rd Floor, SCO:43-48 Chandigarh 160017

For Local Donors: STATE BANK OF INDIA, Jakhal Branch, Haryana (IFSC Code SBIN0002365)

Saving Bank Account No.30300348884.

Donations are eligible for Tax Relief u/s 80G(5)(vi) of the Income Tax Act

### Contact us:

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inderjitsinghjajjee@yahoo.com

### About Baba Nanak Educational Society & the Rescue and Revival Mission

The Rescue & Revival Mission is a branch of the Baba Nanak Education Society. BNES was set up in 2004 under the Punjab Registration of Societies Act. It submits audited accounts to the Registrar annually and its books are open to inspection.

Donors adopt specific families and are given the contact addresses so that they may personally visit or write to the families if they wish. A bank account is made for every recipient family and monthly assistance is routed through the bank.

RRM field workers remain in contact with the families and monitor children's progress.

See our website [www.bnespunjab.org](http://www.bnespunjab.org)

#### Members of the Society



**Justice Ajit Singh Bains**



**Inderjit Singh Jaijee**



**Gur Partap Singh, IRS**



**Harman Kaur Sharda**



**Baljit Kaur**



**Gursharan Singh Jaijee IPS**



**Kamaljit Kaur**



**Harbhajan Singh**



**Col Amarjit Singh**



**Simrat Kaur**



**Tirlochan Singh, IAS**



**Dona Suri**

#### Advisors

**Lt Gen Kartar Singh Gill**



**M.S. Vohra**



**B.S. Bala**



## LEARN MORE ABOUT PUNJAB'S RURAL SUICIDE PROBLEM

*These documentaries tell the story*

### ***Harvest of Grief***

Directed by Anwar Jamal

Produced by Rasil Basu

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGjrEfvv5ag>



### ***A Little Revolution***

Directed by Harpreet Kaur & Manmeet Singh

Produced by Sach Productions

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7sDBLDdk\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7sDBLDdk_Q)



### ***Plight of Indian Farmers (Insights, special edition)***

Directed by Tamul Mukherjee

for Channel News Asia (Singapore)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ae3EM3qV9A8>



### ***Special Report: Situation of Farmers in Punjab***

Anchored by Sham Sundar

Rajya Sabha Television

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MltSyjOVRPA>



### ***H2Woe: India's Water Crisis***

Scripted & directed by Natalya Kadyrova

Anchored by Artyom Vorobey

Russia TV

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0hk\\_5Plv5U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0hk_5Plv5U)

