**Student Handout**

**The Namdharis:**

The Namdharis are also referred to as ‘Kukas’ due to the shrieking noises they make during their *kirtan* (singing). The Namdharis lay great emphasis on the form of the khalsa, it is very unusual to see a sahaj-dhari Namdhari, that is, a clean shaven Namdhari. Namdharis believe in the succession of human Gurus, in this aspect they are not accepted as being Sikh by the orthodox Sikhs. Guru Gobind’s successor, according to the Namdharis, was not the Guru Granth Sahib, but a man known as Balak Singh (1797-1862). Balak Singh was in turn succeeded by Ram Singh.

The present Guru of the Namdharis is Guru Jagjit Singh.

Followers are strictly vegetarian and place a great emphasis on the colour white.

They have the practice of a fire ceremony, known as *havan.* Marriages are also conducted around the fire instead of the Guru Granth Sahib.

The Namdharis place great emphasis on mediating on the *nam*, that is, the Name of God, hence the term ‘Namdharis’.