

7. MOHYAL CONFERENCE

A Mohyal conference, generally held annually, used to be a very significant and popular event among the whole Bitadari. Why were the Mohyal 'masses' so entwined with it?

The organization set up by the Founding Fathers, viz. the General Mohayl Sabha, was envisaged to be a democratic, social movement involving the entire Mohyal community from its *decision-making* stage. As they started, the leaders 'identified' the problems, outlined possible solutions but *did not take any decisions* about their implementation. They wanted to involve the whole community in the decision making. Probably because of the logistics of hosting a large gathering (of unpredictable strength) for a few days, it took then almost a decade to arrange the first such conclave, called Mohyal Conference, in 1902 at Lahore, to assemble, discuss and decide. Later, in the Conference of 1906, it was specifically resolved that "Follow up action should be taken on all decisions taken at a Conference": possibly there was some laxity by the Office Bearers in pursuing some decisions taken earlier. From the subject-wise narration above, it will be noticed that the problems came up for consideration and, after prolonged discussions, the Conference i.e. the General Body of Mohyal community, gave directions for action. The progress, or problems in their execution, continued to be monitored at the subsequent Conference: the issue of a Boarding House of Mohyal Ashram remained under the radar from the beginning till its final completion in 1927 – and its proper functioning, probably later also. That is why a Mohyal Conference was such an important event for the community and was held annually

With this we wind up our narration of the pre-Partition history of the General Mohyal Sabha. A dedicate *vidvan* studied the *available* copies of Mohyal Mitter up to 1927 and prepared a summary. We owe a debt of gratitude to him for the *facts* used here: comments are our own. Unfortunately, he stopped his exercise for lack of encouragement from higher ups. If a more knowledgeable person wants to make any amends, the initiative is welcome. The past is a guide to the future.