

Sikh killed in clash with Dera followers in Haryana

A Sikh youth was killed in a clash between followers of the Dera Sacha Sauda sect and Sikh activists here Friday, police said.

About 10 Sikh activists tried to stop a 'naam charcha' (prayer meeting) of the Dera followers in this town in Sirsa district, about 350 km from state capital Chandigarh.

The sect followers retaliated by pelting stones and one of the Sikh activists, Mandar Singh, was killed in the violence that ensued. Police said he had sustained a head injury.

District officials and police reinforcements rushed to the spot to maintain law and order. The police were put on alert in Sirsa town, where the headquarters of the sect led by Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh is located.

The sect chief has been involved in a controversy with the Sikh community since May last year after he attired himself like 10th Sikh guru, Gobind Singh, during a religious ceremony. This led to violence in Punjab, Haryana and several other states as Sikhs objected to his actions and demanded his arrest.

More recently, the hostility between the sect and Sikhs was re-ignited when a private security guard of the sect chief killed a Sikh youth outside a [Mumbai](#) mall last month when some Sikhs protested against the Dera chief's presence there.

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