Sikh Disinformation Lab

FALSE

Bhaskar English 'Spy Files' account of Lahore ISI killing is dramatised narrative, not verified reporting

A Bhaskar English "Spy Files" instalment presents a detailed account of an ISI agent shot nine times in Lahore and a linked "Khalistani network" operation. The Lab's review finds the piece is a novelistic reconstruction whose central operational claims are not independently corroborated, and rates it Disinformation.

PUBLISHED
31 August 2026

SOURCE POSTED
28 August 2026

NARRATIVES
Claiming Pakistan Controls Sikh Political Activism

OUR ASSESSMENT

Limited credibility as hard fact, it is primarily dramatic narrative/historical reconstruction, not verified contemporary reporting. It is written in novelistic style (detailed scenes, dialogue, internal thoughts) and includes AI-generated images of officers. The article itself references G.B.S. Sidhu's book The Khalistan Conspiracy as a source. Specific operational details (exact dialogue, the precise "Operation Hornet" sequence, the 9-shot Lahore killing of a named ISI agent in the manner described, internal RAW memos torn up, etc.) are not independently corroborated in open, mainstream historical records or declassified documents available to the public. They appear to be reconstructed or dramatised from intelligence memoirs and secondary accounts. Treat this as entertainment-style intelligence storytelling grounded in a real historical backdrop, not as a rigorously sourced factual report

THE CLAIM

Spy Files'Dear Sophie... don't betray me':ISI agent shot nine times in Lahore; Khalistani network hit | Part 1

THE ANALYSIS

What was published

On 28 August 2026, the Indian outlet Bhaskar English (bhaskarenglish.in) published an instalment of its "Spy Files" series under the headline: "'Dear Sophie... don't betray me': ISI agent shot nine times in Lahore; Khalistani network hit | Part 1".

The piece appears in the outlet's "Originals" section and is framed around intelligence operations connected to a "Khalistani network" and the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

What it claims

The article presents a sequence of specific operational events as historical fact. Among them, the post asserts the killing of a named ISI agent in Lahore, shot nine times, and describes this as part of a broader operation against a Khalistani network. It sets out a named operational sequence — "Operation Hornet" — along with exact dialogue between participants, the internal thoughts of officers, and incidental details such as internal RAW memos being torn up.

The article itself cites G.B.S. Sidhu's book *The Khalistan Conspiracy* among its sources.

What the review found

The Lab's analyst assessed the item as Disinformation, with the verdict nuance recorded as False and a severity rating of 3 out of 5.

The basis for that assessment is the gap between the article's presentation and its evidentiary support. The piece is written in a novelistic style — reconstructed scenes, verbatim dialogue, and the interior monologue of intelligence officers — and is illustrated with AI-generated images of officers. That combination signals dramatisation rather than documentary reporting, but the article is published in a news format and reads as though the events are established.

The specific operational details carry the weight of the piece, and it is those details that cannot be verified. The exact dialogue, the precise "Operation Hornet" sequence, the nine-shot killing of the named ISI agent in Lahore as described, and the destroyed internal RAW memos are not independently corroborated in open mainstream historical records or in declassified documents available to the public. They appear to have been reconstructed or dramatised from intelligence memoirs and secondary accounts.

The review notes that the article does sit against a real historical backdrop. The period, the institutions and at least one cited source are genuine. What is not genuine is the article's implied evidentiary standing: the reader is given the texture of a verified account without the sourcing that would support one.

The analyst's conclusion is that the piece should be treated as entertainment-style intelligence storytelling grounded in a real historical setting, not as a rigorously sourced factual report.

Context

The Lab has catalogued the item under the Claiming Pakistan Controls Sikh Political Activism narrative.

The difficulty with content of this kind is not that historical reconstruction is illegitimate. Memoir-derived narrative has a place, and the article's reference to a published book is a form of disclosure. The problem is presentational. When reconstructed dialogue and unverifiable operational specifics are published in a news section, under a news headline, with generated imagery of the people involved, the reader is not given the tools to distinguish what is documented from what is imagined.

That matters more where the subject matter concerns Sikh political history and allegations of "Khalistani network" activity. Claims in this area are routinely recirculated stripped of their original framing, at which point a dramatised scene can be quoted as an established fact about identifiable groups or individuals.

The Lab's assessment is limited to the evidentiary status of the claims described above. The review makes no assertion about the intent of the author or the outlet, and no finding on the accuracy of *The Khalistan Conspiracy* itself, which is a separate published work.

Readers encountering this article, or excerpts from it, should not treat its operational specifics as documented history. The article is Part 1 of a series; the same caution applies to subsequent instalments unless they are supported by identifiable primary or declassified sources.

SOURCES

01 https://www.bhaskarenglish.in/originals/news/isi-agent-shot-lahore-khalistani-network-indira-assassination-story-138862952.html

02 The Lab's analyst review record, the Claiming Pakistan Controls Sikh Political Activism narrative (verdict: Disinformation; nuance: False; severity 3)

03 G.B.S. Sidhu, The Khalistan Conspiracy — cited within the flagged article as a source

Sikh Disinformation Lab

About Sikh Disinformation Lab

Sikh Disinformation Lab is an independent, evidence-based programme founded and hosted by the World Sikh Organization of Canada. It monitors, analyses and publicly documents disinformation affecting Sikhs.

The Lab examines claims against evidence, publishes assessments with that evidence attached, and tracks coordinated campaigns over time. Every published assessment names what was claimed, where it appeared, what the review found, and what that assessment rests on. Where an item makes several distinct claims, each is assessed separately.

Assessments are made against the methodology framework in force at the time of publication. That framework is public, versioned, and reviewed at each phase gate; a material change produces a new version rather than a silent edit. The full method is published at sikhdisinfolab.ca/method.

Corrections are dated entries, never silent edits. Where a published assessment is found to be wrong or incomplete, the correction is recorded against it and listed at sikhdisinfolab.ca/corrections. If you believe something published here is inaccurate, write to the programme and it will be reviewed.

Assessments are the responsibility of Sikh Disinformation Lab.

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