

# HOME NEWS

GLASGOW HERALD SATURDAY MARCH 11 1989

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# Killer Sikh extremists jailed for life

A FANATICAL Sikh extremist last night faced 30 years in jail for leading the slaughter of a religious leader and his followers at a London meeting.

But last night it was revealed that he may base an appeal on the Judge's remarks about "murderous Sikhs" and "nignogs" at a formal dinner during the trial.

Rajinder Singh Batth and fellow gunman Mangit Singh Sunder chanted "God is great — victory to the God" as they

were led to the cells at the Old Bailey.

The Recorder of London, Sir James Miskin sentenced both to life, with a recommendation that Batth serve a minimum of 30 years and Sunder at least 20.

Mr Anup Sing Choundry, solicitor for Batth, said he had applied for a retrial.

"The Sikh community felt the Judge's reported words implied the whole Sikh nation and the defendant in particular are murderous," he said yesterday.

Sir James made his remarks during a speech on the criminal justice system the day after the trial began. The 64-year-old Judge, the most senior at the Old Bailey, has since apologised.

The court was told that the two men had taken part in a planned slaughter which started with the killing of religious man Mr Mahraj Dhashan Das at a prayer meeting in Southall.

Mr Das, 34, was shot through the back of the head in

November, 1987. Three of his followers who rushed to his aid were also gunned down, and two died.

Batth, 39, unemployed, of Southall, was found guilty of murdering Mr Das, the manslaughter of Mr Satwar Singh Panesar and wounding Mr Dharan Singh Brimbrah.

Sunder, 26, admitted taking part in Mr Das's murder and the manslaughter of Mr Jaga Singh.

The gunmen were fundamen-

talists who decided Mr Das, leader of a breakaway religious group, Shahkand Nanak Dhan, should be executed because he had criticised the extremist Sikh separatist movement which wants an independent state in India.

The Judge said that he took into account that things Mr Das had written could deeply upset orthodox Sikhs.

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