



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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GURU NANAK

Why in the news?

Guru Nanak Jayanti commemorates the birth of Sikhism's founder and the inaugural among its nine gurus, Guru Nanak, also known as Baba Nanak. Sikhs observe this occasion with a vibrant procession named Nagar Kirtan, where congregations joyfully sing hymns and visit gurdwaras.

- **Birth and Early Life:** Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was born on Purnima Tithi in the month of Kartik in the year 1469 in Rai Bhoi Ki Talwandi, now known as Nankana Sahib in Pakistan. His teachings emphasized oneness, equality, and selfless service.
- **Spiritual Journeys:** In the first quarter of the 16th century, Guru Nanak embarked on extensive spiritual journeys, known as 'udasiya.' He traveled to various regions, including Hindu and Muslim pilgrimage centers, spreading his message of oneness and purity. His travels reached as far as Sri Lanka, Baghdad, and central Asia, with his last journey to Mecca and Madina.
- **Founding Sikhism:** Guru Nanak founded Sikhism, a monotheistic religion that blended Hindu and Muslim influences. The followers of his teachings came to be known as Sikhs. The holy text of Sikhism, the Guru Granth Sahib, preserves Guru Nanak's words in the form of 974 poetic hymns.
- **Guru Nanak's Philosophy:** Guru Nanak's philosophy centered around "Ik Onkar," emphasizing the oneness of God, equality among individuals regardless of caste or creed, and the importance of selfless service. His teachings revolved around compassion, honesty, and devotion to a righteous life.
- **Legacy and Succession:** Guru Nanak's disciples, known as Sikhs, followed a routine of early rising, bathing in cold water, reciting morning prayers, and engaging in hymns and selfless service. Guru Nanak chose Guru Angad as his successor, giving him the name Angad, meaning 'of my own limb.' This tradition continues with the practice of 'langar,' where people contribute labor to help the needy.
- **Death and Legacy:** Guru Nanak passed away on September 22, 1539. His legacy lives on in Sikhism, and his teachings continue to inspire millions, promoting a life of righteousness, equality, and service to humanity. Guru Nanak Jayanti is celebrated by Sikhs worldwide, honoring the profound impact of the first Guru of Sikhism.

Guru Nanak Dev's Relevance for Modern India:

Vision of Equality:

- Despite India's aspirations as a superpower, caste hierarchy persists in societal structures.
- Guru Nanak Dev's vision of a casteless society, exemplified by practices like Langar (collective cooking and sharing of food), Pangat (partaking food without caste distinctions), and Sangat (collective decision-making), offers a blueprint for establishing an egalitarian society.

Social Harmony:

- Rising intolerance, mob lynching, and right-wing vigilantism threaten India's secular nature and social harmony.
- Guru Nanak Dev's concept of "Jeeye kaa ik daata" promotes the idea that the entire world is God's creation, emphasizing the equality of all.
- This philosophy echoes the Sanskrit saying "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," portraying the world as one family.
- Guru Nanak Dev's teachings of forgiveness, patience, forbearance, and kindness provide a foundation for fostering social harmony.

Creating a Just Society:

- Inequality is identified as the root cause of social evils.
- Guru Nanak Dev advocated the principles of "kirat karo, naam japo, and vand chhako" (work, worship, and share), emphasizing the importance of honest labor and sharing with the needy.
- The concept of "dasvandh" or donating one-tenth of earnings to the needy reflects a commitment to social responsibility and change.
- The central role of selfless service to mankind, known as "Seva," is a guiding principle in Sikhism.

Gender Equality:

- Guru Nanak Dev challenged the oppression of women, asserting their equality by questioning, "How can women be inferior when they give birth to men?"
- He emphasized that women, like men, share the grace of God and are equally responsible for their actions.
- Guru Nanak Dev's teachings underscore respect for women and advocate for gender equality.

Bringing Peace:

- Despite India-Pakistan tensions, the inauguration of the Kartarpur corridor presents an opportunity for regional normalization.
- Guru Nanak Dev's teachings, emphasizing unity and transcending religious and national boundaries, can inspire improved relations between India and Pakistan.
- The Kartarpur corridor could serve as a catalyst for peace, not only between the two nations but also for the broader South-Asian region.

Sikh Gurus



Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

(1469 - 1539)

Guru Nanak Ji founded the Sikh Faith. He taught us about Ek Onkar, gave us "Mool Mantra". He's the one who started Langar Sewa.

Sri Guru Angad Dev Ji

(1504 - 1552)

Guru Angad Dev Ji created Gurmukhi, started the tradition of "Akhaada" and expanded on original concept of langar.

Sri Guru Amar Das Ji

(1479-1574)

Guru Amar Das ji taught the importance of gender equality. He also introduced new customs for birth and death ceremony.

Sri Guru Ram Das Ji

(1534- 1581)

Guru Amar Das ji created a town - now named as Amritsar. And it later became an important place for Sikhs around the world.

Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji

(1563 - 1606)

Guru Arjan Dev Ji completed the construction of Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar. He's also the first guru to be martyred in Sikh Faith.

Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji

(1595 - 1644)

Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji was a Saint Soldier and he developed the first Sikh army. He's the first guru in Sikh Faith to raise swords to protect the needy.

Sri Guru Har Rai Ji

(1630- 1661)

Guru Har Rai Ji maintained the Sikh army which Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji formed. He also worked on solidifying the teachings of Guru Nanak Ji.

Sri Guru Harkrishan Sahib Ji

(1556- 1664)

Guru Harkrishan Sahib Ji was only 5 when he became guru. He was also famous with the name Bala Pir. He left us when he was only 8.

Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji

(1621 - 1675)

Guru Teg Bahadur ji provided protection to both Sikhs and Hindus against the Islamic rule of that time. He also created a town Anandpur.

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji

(1666 - 1708)

Guru Gobind Singh Ji created Khalsa and gave Sikhs an eternal guru (Guru Granth Sahib Ji). He fought many wars for the righteous, gave Sikhs a proper identity by introducing Panj Pyare.

SOURCE:

[Guru Nanak Jayanti: 5 things to know about Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism | Explained News - The Indian Express](#)

Q.1 With reference to Guru Nanak, consider the following statements:

1. Guru Nanak believed in monotheism.
2. Guru Nanak laid the foundation of Khalsa Panth.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

ANSWER: A

Q.2 In the context of Guru Nanak and the inception of Sikhism, discuss the fundamental principles and teachings propagated by Guru Nanak. How did his spiritual journeys and experiences shape the foundation of Sikhism

Rishabh

