



Guru Nanak Jayanti

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Why in News

The President of India has greeted the citizens on the occasion of **Guru Nanak Jayanti**.

It is a sacred festival of the Sikh community and is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of **Guru Nanak Dev**, who is believed to be born on **Poornima** (full moon) of the **Kartika** (8th month of Hindu calendar), which falls on **30th of November in 2020**.

Key Points

- **Guru Nanak Dev:**

- **Birth:** In 1459 at **Talwandi Rai Bhoi** village near **Lahore**, which was later renamed as **Nankana Sahib**.
- He was the first of the **10 gurus** of **Sikhism**.
- **Contributions:**
 - Initiated **inter-faith dialogue** way back in the **16th century** and had conversations with most of the religious denominations of his times.
 - Wrote compositions which were included in the **Adi Granth**, compiled by **Guru Arjan** (1563-1606), the **fifth Sikh guru**.

This came to be known as **Guru Granth Sahib** after the **additions made by the 10th sikh guru Gobind Singh** (1666-1708).
 - Advocated the '**Nirguna**' (devotion to and worship of formless divine) form of bhakti.
 - Rejected **sacrifices, ritual baths, image worship, austerities**.
 - Set up rules for **congregational worship (*Sangat*)** involving collective recitation.
 - Gave the basic mantra of '**Ek Onkar**' to his followers and insisted on treating all human beings equally, without discriminating on the **basis of caste, creed and gender**.
- **Death:** In 1539 at **Kartarpur, Punjab**.

- **Relevance of Guru Nanak Dev for Modern India:**

- **Building an Egalitarian Society:** His idea of **equality** can be deduced by the following innovative social institutions, as given by him:
 - **Langar:** Collective cooking and sharing of food.
 - **Pangat:** Partaking food without distinctions of high and low caste.
 - **Sangat:** Collective decision making.
- **Social Harmony:**
 - According to him, the whole world is God's creation and all are born equal. There is only one universal creator i.e. **"Ek Onkar Satnam"**.
 - Apart from it, forgiveness, patience, forbearance, and kindness are the core of his teachings.
- **Creating a Just Society:**
 - He placed the motto of **"kirat karo, naam japo and vand chhako"** (work, worship and share) before his disciples.
 - He stood for karma as the basis of dharma, and he transformed the idea of spiritualism into the ideology of social responsibility and social change.
 - He advocated the concept of **"dasvandh"** or **donating one-tenth of one's earning** among needy persons.
- **Gender Equality:**
 - According to him, **"Women as well as men share the grace of God and are equally responsible for their actions to him."**
 - Respect for women and gender equality is perhaps the most important lesson to be learnt from his life.
- **Bringing Peace:**
 - According to Indian philosophy, a Guru is the one who provides illumination, dispels doubt and shows the right path. In this context, the ideas of Guru Nanak Dev can help **promote peace, equality and prosperity across the globe.**
 - In 2019, the **550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev** was celebrated and the **Kartarpur corridor** was inaugurated, which is an important step towards easing the **tensions between India and Pakistan.**

Source:PIB