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**Guru Arjan Dev Ji Shaheedi Divas**

***The Supreme Sacrifice for Faith and Humanity***

**Introduction**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji (1563–1606) was the fifth Sikh Guru and a profound spiritual leader, poet, and compiler of the Adi Granth (the precursor to the Guru Granth Sahib). His martyrdom is commemorated annually as **Shaheedi Divas** (Martyrdom Day), particularly in June, according to the Nanakshahi calendar. This day holds deep significance for Sikhs around the world, symbolizing courage, devotion, and the defense of truth.

**Life and Contributions of Guru Arjan Dev Ji**

**Spiritual Leadership and Teachings**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji became the Guru in 1581 at the age of 18. He was known for his humility, wisdom, and poetic genius. He composed over 2,000 hymns that are included in the Adi Granth, which he compiled in 1604, making it the first holy scripture of Sikhism. He built the **Harimandir Sahib** (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, designing it with four entrances to signify openness to all religions and communities.

**Social and Political Impact**

During his leadership, Sikhism grew significantly in spiritual, social, and political influence. His following included not just Sikhs but people from different faiths who admired his universal message. His rising influence, however, alarmed the Mughal rulers, particularly Emperor Jahangir, who saw him as a threat.

**Martyrdom and Shaheedi**

**Reasons Behind the Persecution** Guru Arjan Dev Ji was arrested by Jahangir in 1606 under accusations of supporting rebel prince Khusrau and spreading a “new religion.” Despite having no political ambitions, Guru Ji was subjected to brutal torture for refusing to convert to Islam or stop preaching Sikh values.

**The Supreme Sacrifice**

According to historical accounts, Guru Ji was made to sit on a burning hot plate and had hot sand poured over his body. Even under such torture, he remained calm and recited the **Sukhmani Sahib**. On 30 May 1606 (as per the traditional date), he peacefully immersed himself in the waters of the Ravi River in Lahore and passed into divine light.

**Legacy and Significance**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji became the **first Sikh martyr**, setting a powerful example of **spiritual resilience and non-violence**. His martyrdom marked a turning point in Sikh history, inspiring Sikhs to stand against oppression. It laid the foundation for the militarization of the Sikh community under his successor, Guru Hargobind Ji.

Today, his Shaheedi Divas is observed with **recitations of Gurbani**, **Langar seva**, and **acts of charity**, especially cold water and chabeel (sweetened water) distributions in the summer heat—symbolizing his enduring compassion.

**Conclusion**

Guru Arjan Dev Ji's martyrdom is not just a tragedy but a triumph of faith, dignity, and universal love. His life and teachings continue to guide millions towards truth, equality, and devotion. Shaheedi Divas serves as a reminder that standing for righteousness may demand sacrifice, but such acts shape the course of humanity.

**References**

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2. Dhillon, Dalbir Singh. *Sikhism: Origin and Development*. Atlantic Publishers, 1988.