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Guru Nanak Dev's 481st Death Anniversary

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Why in News

Recently, the **Jyoti Jot** (death anniversary) of **Guru Nanak Dev** (Founder of Sikhism) was observed at his final resting place **Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur** in Pakistan.

On the occasion of the **550th** birth anniversary of Guru Nanak the Kartarpur Corridor which connects India and Pakistan was opened to the public.



Key Points

- **Guru Nanak:**

- Guru Nanak, **first of the ten Sikh Gurus** in Sikhism, is believed to have died at **Kartarpur** on 22nd September 1539.
- Guru Nanak was born in **Talwandi Rai Bhoe**, near Lahore, Pakistan which was renamed later as **Nankana Sahib**.
- He was a greatest **thinker, philosopher, poet, traveller, political rebel, social leveller, mass communicator and spiritual master**.
- His political, social and spiritual beliefs were **based on love, equality, fraternity and virtue**. He is also viewed as a **symbol of peace and servicing**.
- His followers came to be known as **Sikhs**, which means a **learner or a disciple**.
- He used the **medium of music, poetry, song and speech to preach the love of God** and to **attack the socially oppressive practices of casteism** of the orthodox Brahmanical Hindu religion.

He also spoke in favour of an **equitable social status for women**.

- Guru Nanak was also a **great traveller**. He went on long journeys (called Uddasian) to far off places along with his **two companions Bhai Bala**, a Hindu, and **Bhai Mardana**, a Muslim, to hold dialogues with many saints and Sufis.

- **Teaching of Guru Nanak:**

- Guru Nanak declared that **God is one — formless** (Nirgun) and **without birth and death**. The **whole world is God's creation** i.e. **Ik Onkar Satnam**.
- According to him **all are born equal**. He also stood for **karma** as the basis of **dharma**.
- **Valued a simpler notion of truth** that was the basis of honest living.
He declared that truth has the highest value in life, but truthful living is higher still in value.
- Created awareness related to the **conservation of water**, and the **importance of a clean environment**.
- Emphasised on three things:
 - **Kirat Karni**: It means to work hard, and earn good karma and an honest livelihood.
 - **Vand Chakna**: It means to not be selfish, and share with others.
 - **Naam Japa**: It means to meditate and remember the name of god.
- Provided a practical demonstration of **building a community** based on **strong egalitarian values** of:
 - **Cooperative agricultural work**
 - **Langar** (collective cooking and sharing of food)
 - **Pangat** (partaking food without distinctions of high and low)
 - **Sangat** (collective decision making)
- His teachings are mentioned in the **Adi Granth** compiled by **Guru Arjan Dev** (1563-1606), the fifth sikh guru.

Source: IE