



# Guru Nanak Jayanti

## 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** (8<sup>th</sup> month of Hindu calendar), which falls on **30<sup>th</sup> of November in 2020**.

## Key Points

### ▪ Guru Nanak Dev:

- **Birth:** In 1459 at **Talwandi Rai Bhoie 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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 10<sup>th</sup> 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 [550<sup>th</sup> 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.](#)

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