



Guru Nanak Jayanti

Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of the Sikh faith was born in 1469 A.D. in the village of Talwandi in Lahore, Pakistan. Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti marks the birth anniversary of the founder of the Sikh religion. Sikhs do not worship idols and believe that God is formless. They celebrate the birth anniversaries of 10 Sikh gurus as Gurupurabs with devotion and dedication.

Guru Nanak Jayanti is marked by prabhat pheris or early morning processions that begins from the gurudwaras and then moves to different localities singing hymns or shabads. The celebration lasts for three days.

Usually two days before the birthday of Guru Nanak, 'Akhand Path' or forty-eight hour non-stop reading of the holy book of the Sikhs, Guru Granth Sahib is carried on at the gurudwaras. A procession is carried out on the day before his birthday which is led by the Panj Pyaras (Five Beloved Ones).

Sikh flag, or the Nishan Sahib and the palki or the palanquin of Sri Guru Granth Sahib is taken out in the procession. The procession also includes a group of singers singing hymns in praise of Guru Nanak and Gatka teams displaying their showmanship through martial arts. The leaders of the procession also spread the message of Guru Nanak.

Gurupurab day begins early with the singing of the Asa-di-Var (morning hymns) and hymns from the Sikh scriptures. It is followed with Katha or the exposition of the scriptures along with poems and lectures in praise of Guru Nanak. Langar or special community lunch is prepared at the gurudwaras. The langar along with 'Karah Prasad' is offered to men and women of all communities.

The birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev - the first or the founder guru of the Sikhs, is celebrated with great fervor on the full moon day of Kartika. Guru Parab, also known as Jyototsava is one of the most sacred festivals of the Sikhs.

At Nankana Sahib (the birth place of Guru Nanak now in Lahore), there is a beautiful Gurudwara, and a holy tank or sarovar. On Guru Parab, a grand fair and festival is held here, and Sikhs in thousand congregate here from India and abroad.