



Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

For Prelims: [President](#), [Prakash Parv](#), [Guru Nanak Dev](#), [Sikhism](#), [Lodi Administration](#), [Nirguna School](#), [Kabir Das](#), [Sikh Guru Arjan](#), [Guru Angad](#), [Bhakti Movement](#), [Kartarpur Corridor](#), [Golden Temple](#).

For Mains: Teachings of Guru Nanak and their relevance in today's world.

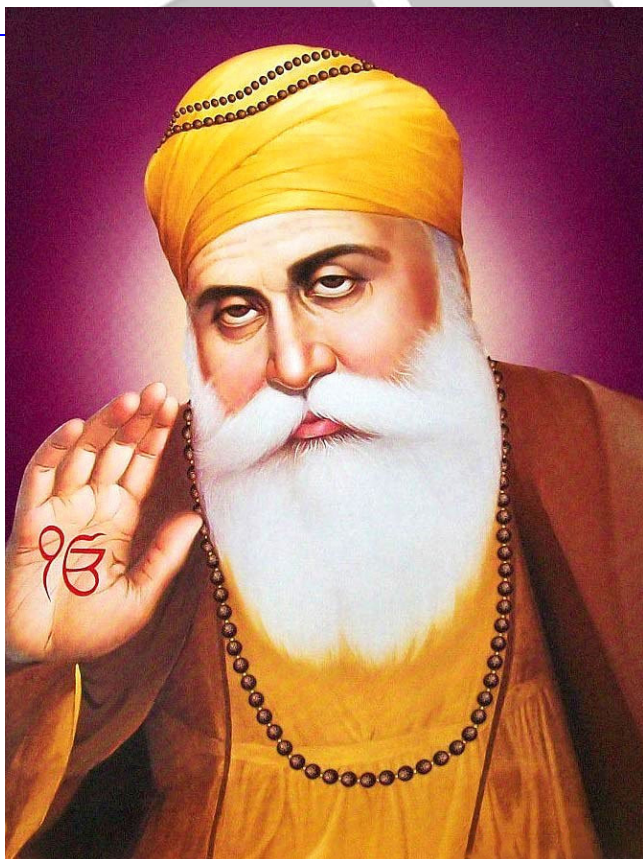
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Why in News?

Recently, the [President](#) of India greeted citizens on the eve of [Prakash Parv of Guru Nanak Dev Ji](#), urging them to adopt his teachings and promote **unity and equality** in society.

- Prakash Parv is celebrated on the **birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji**, which falls on the Kartik Purnima, 15th lunar day in the month of Kartik, according to the Hindu calendar.
- It is celebrated as **Prakash Parv** because he tried to take people from **darkness towards light**.

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What are Key Facts About Guru Nanak Dev?

- **Birth and Early Life: Guru Nanak (1469-1539)** was born in **1469** in **Talwandi village**, near Lahore in Pakistan.
 - He was the **first of the 10 Sikh gurus**.
 - He worked as a **clerk** in Sultanpur in the **Lodi administration**.
- **Spiritual Revelation:** Around the **age of 30**, Guru Nanak had a profound **spiritual experience** and a direct encounter with **God** near a river **Kali Bein**, leading him to declare, "**There is neither Hindu nor Muslim.**"
- **Philosophical Inspiration:** He was a proponent of the **Nirguna School** of the **Bhakti movement** and was influenced by **Kabir Das**. He emphasised spiritual practices like "**Nam Japna**" i.e., the repetition of God's name to experience God's presence.
- **Teachings and Travels:** He travelled extensively across **India and the Middle East**, spreading his message with his Muslim companion, **Mardana**.
 - The **hymns** composed by him were incorporated in the **Adi Granth** by the **fifth Sikh Guru Arjan in 1604**.
- **Community and Legacy:** He settled in **Kartarpur** and established the **first Sikh community** where disciples lived and worshipped together.
 - He appointed **Guru Angad (Bhai Lehna)** as his **successor** to lead the community.

Bhakti Movement

- **About:** Bhakti movement advocated **devotional surrender** to a personally conceived supreme God for attaining salvation.
- **Concept of Bhakti:** In the **Shvetashvatara Upanishad**, Bhakti simply means participation, devotion and love for any endeavour.
 - The **Bhagvada-Gita** stresses the importance of having unwavering faith in God.
- **Origin:** The Bhakti movement began in **South India** during the **7th to 8th centuries AD**, initiated by the **Nayanars** (devotees of Shiva) and **Alvars** (devotees of Vishnu).
 - The movement spread from **South India** to **North India**, aided by the use of **local languages** by saints to communicate their teachings.
- **Social and Religious Reforms:** Bhakti saints preached **equality of all human**, regardless of **caste, class, or religion**.
- **Prominent Bhakti Saints:** Saints associated with the Bhakti movement include **Ramdas, Mirabai, Tulsidas, Namdev, Tukaram, Ramanuja, Kabir, Nanak**, and others.
 - **Kabir** and **Guru Nanak** played pivotal roles in **bridging the gap** between **Hindus** and **Muslims** by drawing from both Hindu and Islamic traditions.

What are the Teachings of Guru Nanak?

- **Ek Omkar (Monotheism):** Guru Nanak emphasised that there is **one God** who is **omnipresent**, and all humans are children of this one God.
- **Naam Jap (Chanting the Name of God):** He promoted **remembering and chanting God's name** to eliminate darkness, bring peace and happiness, and instil values of **kindness and love**.
- **Working with Honesty:** Guru Nanak stressed the importance of **working honestly** and earning through **fair means**. Honest labour brings **blessings**, a sense of **satisfaction**, and **self-confidence**.
- **Wand Chhako (Sharing and Service):** He taught the practice of **sharing a portion of one's earnings** with the needy to foster societal equality and compassion.
- **Attitude Towards Other Religions:** Guru Nanak respected **all religions and believed all humans were equal**, rejecting judgement based on religious differences.
 - With a deep understanding of texts like the **Vedas, Quran, and Bible**, he showed equal respect for each faith.
- **Idol Worship:** Nanak **rejected idol worship**, believing that God cannot be found in idols. He taught that **God is infinite**, beyond human words, symbols, or forms, and cannot be defined by

man-made idols.

- Guru Nanak was the main **proponent of the Nirguna ('formless God') tradition** of the **Bhakti movement**.
- **Salvation:** Guru Nanak believed that **good deeds** help the **soul merge with the eternal soul**, while bad deeds hinder it.
 - Meditation in God's name is key to **salvation**, which means freedom from rebirth and union with God.
- **Brotherhood and Equality:** Guru Nanak **opposed** any form of **discrimination** based on **caste, religion, or class**.
 - He believed in the **inherent equality** of all people and preached that everyone deserves equal love and respect.
- **Detachment from Materialism:** He advocated against attachment to **material possessions** and encouraged **spiritual development** and devotion to God to create a just and ideal society.
- **Respect for Women:** Guru Nanak emphasised the **equality and respect of women**, standing against **gender discrimination** and advocating for their dignity and equal treatment.

Precious Words of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

- If you can keep your **mind calm**, you will **conquer the world**.
- **Speak** only that which brings you **respect**.
- **One-tenth** of your **income** should be devoted to **charity** and **one-tenth** of your **time** should be devoted to devotion to **God**.
- Always be ready to **help others** because when you help someone, **God helps you**.
- Only one who has **faith in himself** can believe in God.

Sikh Gurus and their Major Contributions		
Guru	Period	Key Contributions
Guru Nanak Dev	1469-1539	Founder of Sikhism; started GURU KA LANGAR ; contemporary of Babur ; 550th birth anniversary commemorated with Kartarpur corridor .
Guru Angad	1504-1552	Invented Guru-Mukhi script ; popularised GURU KA LANGAR .
Guru Amar Das	1479-1574	Introduced Anand Karaj Marriage ; abolished Sati and Purdah ; contemporary of Akbar .
Guru Ram Das	1534-1581	Founded Amritsar in 1577 ; initiated construction of Golden Temple .
Guru Arjun Dev	1563-1606	Composed Adi Granth in 1604 ; completed Golden Temple ; executed by Jahangir .
Guru Hargobind	1594-1644	Transformed Sikhs into a military community ; established Akal Takht ; waged wars against Jahangir and Shah Jahan .
Guru Har Rai	1630-1661	Promoted peace with Aurangzeb ; focused on missionary work.
Guru Har Krishan	1656-1664	Youngest guru; summoned by Aurangzeb for anti-Islamic blasphemy.
Guru Teg Bahadur	1621-1675	Founded Anandpur Sahib , Beheaded on the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1675 .
Guru Gobind Singh	1666-1708	Founded Khalsa in 1699 ; introduced Pahul (Baptism ceremony); last guru to pass Guruship to Guru Granth Sahib .

Conclusion

Guru Nanak's teachings on **unity, equality, and devotion** profoundly shaped **Sikhism and the Bhakti movement**. His emphasis on the **oneness of God**, respect for all religions, and social reforms continues

to **inspire millions**. Guru Nanak's legacy promotes **peace, love, and social justice**, which remains relevant today.

Drishti Mains Question:

Explain the key teachings of Guru Nanak and their relevance in contemporary society.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following Bhakti Saints: (2013)

1. Dadu Dayal
2. Guru Nanak
3. Tyagaraja

Who among the above was/were preaching when the Lodi dynasty fell and Babur took over?

- (a) 1 and 3
(b) 2 only
(c) 2 and 3
(d) 1 and 2

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q. Evaluate the nature of Bhakti Literature and its contribution to Indian culture. (2021)