

# Nanded gearing for tercentenary fete of Guru Granth Sahib

*35 'langars' which can feed about 5 lakh people a day now functional*

*Baba Ranjit Singh sports 200-metre long turban*



**CELEBRATING SIKHISM: Punjabis arrive at the 'Gurta Gaddi' at Nanded with their families on Sunday.**

NANDED (MAHARASHTRA): Centred around the Sikh shrines here, the most sacred of them being the Takhat Sachkhand Shri Hazur Abchalnagar Sahib Gurudwara, the growth of Nanded city has remained steadfast for the last 300 years as was visualised by Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of Sikhs. He had christened Nanded as 'Abchalnagar' or the steadfast city in October 1708 at the time of elevating the Adi Granth, the holy book of Sikhs as their perpetual Guru.

A steady flow of devotees and pilgrims from all over the world is flooding the city, now hosting the tercentenary celebration of this event and also the one marking the departure of Guru Gobind Singh to his heavenly abode on November 3, 1708.

Guru Gobind Singh had also raised the status of the gurudwara at Nanded to that of a Takhat or throne symbolising the seat of authority. The Sachkhand Hazur Sahib Gurudwara became one of the five Takhats, the others being the Akal Takhat at Amritsar's Golden Temple complex, Takhat Keshgarh Sahib at Anandpur, Takhat Damdama Sahib in Talwandi Sabo and Takhat Patna Sahib. The first three are in Punjab and the Takhat Patna Sahib, the place of birth of Guru Gobind Singh is in Bihar.

pdfMachine

**A pdf writer that produces quality PDF files with ease!**

Produce quality PDF files in seconds and preserve the integrity of your original documents. Compatible across nearly all Windows platforms, if you can print from a windows application you can use pdfMachine.

Get yours now!

The Hazur Sahib Gurudwara with the golden dome and intricate art work, was built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh between 1830 and 1835. Nanded also has 10 other gurudwaras that have historical importance for Sikhs. The Nagina Ghat, Bandh Ghat, Maltekdi, Heera Ghat, Mata Saheb, Shikar Ghat, Sangat Sahib, Ratangarh, Gobind Bagh and Damdama Sahib (Basmat) are located in the vicinity of Nanded. The Nanaksar, Langar Sahib and Bhajangarh Sahib were later additions to the list of pilgrim sites.

Nanded had been a part of the Hyderabad State ruled by the Nizam until 1948 when Hyderabad was liberated following the famous police action. It went into Maharashtra in 1956 when the reorganisation of States on linguistic basis was done.

### Community kitchen

One of the unique aspects of the Sikh way of life like the 24-hour 'langar' or community kitchen is on display here. Among other things, the system of 'langar' envisages doing away with class and status within the community.

The NRI langar facility, opened on Saturday, serves to enhance the overall capacity to feed pilgrims during the tercentenary of the elevation of the Adi Granth. There are some 35 'langars' functional here with a cumulative capacity to feed about 5 lakh people per day.

The tradition of 'langar' was started by the third Sikh Guru, Amardas, and it has come to be one of the main activities at community level for the Sikhs. Irrespective of the social status people eat seated on one plane that symbolises equality among the members of the community.

The 'langar' cannot be run without the active participation of the sevadars or volunteers who also signify the importance attached to community service. The volunteers not only manage the kitchen and serve the food but also clean the utensils and eating plates.

The Langar Sahib Gurudwara here is the largest of such facilities and in Nanded, which can accommodate about three lakh people every day. There are others that have been set up by people and organisations from Punjab.

### Long turban

It is simply a matter of routine for Baba Ranjit Singh, an ageing Nihang Singh of the Buddha Dal of Sangrur district in Punjab who ties his 200-metre-long turban twice every day. The bulky turban, known as the 'sava man da damla,' weighs about 40 kg.

The Baba is in Nanded to participate in the tercentenary celebrations. He was spotted sauntering towards the Nagina Ghat Gurudwara on the banks of river Godavari on Sunday, sporting on his head the traditional but formidable head gear.

The Nihang Singhs comprised the army of Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Guru of Sikhs and were known as Guru di ladli faujan, the beloved soldiers of the Guru. They continue with the tradition of wearing the blue uniform of which the blue or saffron turban forms a part. Some Nihangs wear the huge sava man da damla following an incident from the life of Guru Gobind Singh's sons.

According to Nanded journalist Ravinder Singh Modi, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh, the second son of Guru Gobind Singh was denied participation in a battle by his elder brother Sahibzada Ajit Singh on the grounds that the former was too 'small' or young for it. Sahibzada Jujhar Singh tried to convince his brother that he was eligible to fight alongside by tying a huge turban that made him look taller than Sahibzada Ajit Singh. The Nihangs have since then sported the larger head gear as a tribute to the young Sahibzada.

pdfMachine

**A pdf writer that produces quality PDF files with ease!**

Produce quality PDF files in seconds and preserve the integrity of your original documents. Compatible across nearly all Windows platforms, if you can print from a windows application you can use pdfMachine.

Get yours now!

Baba Ranjit Singh bathes and washes his hair twice daily after which he ties the long turban after combing the hair. He then attaches the small versions of the arms that are carried by the Nihangs. There are nine small and one big khanda, eight small kirpans, half a dozen small spears and one simran mala or rosary visible on the turban. He also has five small arms or shastras besides two small combs tucked inside the turban. "

## Now, Guru Granth Sahib in Spanish

Hazur Sahib, October 26

It was the last wish of Baba Jee Singh, a Spanish-converted-Sikh, who suffered from cancer, to accomplish the sacred task of translation of Guru Granth Sahib in Spanish before his death.



It took him and his wife, Bibi Gur Amrit Kaur, also a Sikh convert, several years to complete the translation of the holy book, which has been published in four volumes. To fulfil the last wish of her husband, Gur Amrit brought four volumes of Guru Granth Sahib, with Gurmukhi, English and Spanish transliteration/ translation, for their release here to mark the tercentenary of Gurta Gaddi Diwas.

The Jathedar of Akal Takht, Giani Gurbachan Singh, who attended a function organised by the Guru Ram Das Sikh Mission of the US and the Sikh Dharma International here, appreciated their work. Gur Amrit reached Nanded along with Bibi Inderjit Kaur, wife of late Harbhajan Singh Yogi, and Satpal Singh, chairman of the mission. She said her husband joined Sikhism in the seventies under the guidance of Yogi Harbhajan Singh. Today, more than a million people speak Spanish as native language. Spanish or Castilian is an Indo-European language that originated in northern Spain and gradually spread to the Kingdom of Castile and other parts of the world.

Bhai Satpal Singh said the translation of Guru Granth Sahib in Spanish would be instrumental in spreading Sikhism all over the world. The mission had opened its chapter in Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and other Latin American countries. The authenticity of the Spanish translation of the holy book had been checked by former Jathedar of Akal Takht, Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, and other Sikh scholars. The mission would also present copies of the Spanish translation of Guru Granth Sahib to the Golden Temple authorities.

Meanwhile, the mission brought a kalgi (plume), studded with jewels on gold. It has been made with the donations from foreign Sikh sangat. It would be presented to Jathedar of Hazur Sahib and other high priests for preserving it at the Takht.

pdfMachine

**A pdf writer that produces quality PDF files with ease!**

Produce quality PDF files in seconds and preserve the integrity of your original documents. Compatible across nearly all Windows platforms, if you can print from a windows application you can use pdfMachine.

Get yours now!

## The eternal Sri Guru Granth Sahib

*The Guru Granth Sahib is the eternal guru of the Sikhs. Its sacred verses are called Gurbani, the Guru's word or the song message enshrined in it.*



Golden Temple in Amritsar (Getty Images)

The Granth was composed in poetry perhaps to both prevent alterations or adulterations, and to reach out to human hearts.

The fifth Sikh guru, Guru Arjan Dev, first compiled the Guru Granth at Amritsar and the tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh, prepared the second edition at Damdama. Since then, his authorised version has been transcribed and printed numerous times; it always conforms to the Damdama edition in every respect.

Guru Arjan's compilation contained the hymns of the first five gurus along with most of the saints and holy men of medieval India and the Far East. He installed this scripture in the Golden Temple's Hari Mandar. Guru Gobind Singh in his final sermon conferred permanent gurudom on the Damdama version of the Granth. Since then the Granth has come to be known as Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Of the 5,894 hymns, Guru Arjan contributed the largest number. The Guru Granth includes hymns of many others whose compositions tallied with the gospel of the Sikh faith. Here, the Hindu and Muslim and others meet in the same congregation of holy souls to create a truly universal scripture.

The hymns are set to ragas, useful not only in preserving the originality of the composition, but more so to provide divine experience through the medium of music and the sounds of God's creation. Whilst a great deal of it is cast in traditional verse forms like shlokas and paudis, and could best be understood in the context of the well-known classical ragas, several hymns and songs make use of popular folklore and meters. The inner and integral relationship between music and verse has been maintained with scholarly rectitude and concern. The complete musicalisation of thought was accomplished in a scientific and scholarly manner so that it makes for the unusually vigorous yet supple discipline of the Granth's own metrics and notations.

The Guru Granth verses are often sung in kirtan. In this process true meaning is revealed directly to the Surat consciousness and awareness through cosmic vibrations. The body's energetic vibrations from our voices bond us to the spiritual light of universal intelligence. As we chant the verses the universe speaks to us in metaphoric images. To

**pdfMachine**

**A pdf writer that produces quality PDF files with ease!**

Produce quality PDF files in seconds and preserve the integrity of your original documents. Compatible across nearly all Windows platforms, if you can print from a windows application you can use pdfMachine.

Get yours now!

see a Sikh congregation chant the sacred hymns in unison is to see massed spiritual energy bubble before your eyes. This is how the ordinary words change into the logos and become auspicious.

Reading of the scripture, Gurbani paath, is a sacred rite that permits a connection to the Guru for spiritual guidance. It is more than a simple ritual or a complex scholarly endeavour; intellectual deliberation is engaged to seek wisdom while faith is cultivated in the process to receive the inner light. Reading the rhythmic poetry of Guru Granth is considered by some as healing in itself. Its chant is frequently prescribed to patients for relief of their symptoms and to reduce illness. It seems to facilitate understanding of pain and pleasure by "mindfulness" or "being in the moment".

For the most part the Guru Granth employs the idiom of the common people, and draws its imagery and metaphors from the home, the street and the workplace. The hymns use current figures of speech apart from their metrical richness and sweetness.

The Guru Granth is completely free from bias, animus and controversy. It formed the first interfaith and still universal scripture.

## **After Independence first Sikh religious procession from Pakistan crossed over to India**

Saturday, 25 October 2008

ATTARI (AMRITSAR) : First time after independence in the history of India and Pakistan, a religious procession of 370 Sikh devotees of Pakistan nationals including from others foreign countries crossed over to India from Pakistan.

Religious procession crossed over to Indian to participate in the Guru Ta Gaddi Diwas (religious functions over tri century of Guru Granth Sahib) being observed at Takht Hazoor Sahib at Nanded in Maharashtra. Procession was led by the five beautifully dressed up Sikh Priests as per the Sikh tenets.

It may be mentioned here that in Sikh religion Guru Granth Sahib is not mere holy and religious scripture but also treated as living Guru.

On reaching at Indian Territory procession was accorded warm welcome by the Shriomani Gurdwara Pharbandhak Committee (SGPC), Cabinet minister of Punjab Government Gulzar Singh Ranikay, troops of BSF and Punjab Police and senior police officers and officer from civil administration.

On this occasion at Attari border hundreds of Sikh devotees who had arrived to receive the religious procession from Pakistan, showered rose petals and Band troops of BSF and Punjab police played beautiful religious tunes on this occasion.

Guard of honor was also given by the BSF and Punjab police to Guru Granth Sahib at international border. Langar (Community Kitchen) was also organised at border for 370 Pakistani devotees by the SGPC.

Religious procession crossed over to India was led by the acting President of Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Pharbandhak Committee (PSGPC) Bishan Singh along with five Executive members.

**pdfMachine**

**A pdf writer that produces quality PDF files with ease!**

Produce quality PDF files in seconds and preserve the integrity of your original documents. Compatible across nearly all Windows platforms, if you can print from a windows application you can use pdfMachine.

Get yours now!

Sawroop of Guru Granth Sahib was also brought from Pakistan with utmost respect being escorted by the five Sikh priests amidst the rain of rose petals.

After the immigration and custom clearance procession of Pakistani Sikh devotees was taken to Golden Temple by the SGPC in special buses amidst the religious slogans 'Boley So Nihal Sat Sri Akal'.

Later talking to the media Bishan Singh said that this is first time in the history of India and Pakistan whereupon both the government agreed on religious procession from Pakistan to India along with the sawroop of Guru Granth Sahib and other religious material. He said SGPC has played significant role in getting permission for the procession from Pakistan.

Bishan Singh said that before coming to India, a big religious function was also observed in Pakistan which was largely attended at Gurdwara Nanakana Sahib (birth place of founder of Sikhism Guru Nanak Dev). The function remained continued for three days which was also attended by senior Government functionaries besides politicians, Sikhs all over the Pakistan, Hindu and Muslims too.

**pdfMachine**

**A pdf writer that produces quality PDF files with ease!**

Produce quality PDF files in seconds and preserve the integrity of your original documents. Compatible across nearly all Windows platforms, if you can print from a windows application you can use pdfMachine.

Get yours now!