Guru Ravidas ji

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance*

Why in News?

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit Punjab to mark the 649th Birth Anniversary of Saint Guru Ravidas Ji.

- **Guru Ravidas Ji –** Saint and poet of the Bhakti Movement in North India.
- **Born in – *1377 C.E***
- On a Magh Purnima in Seer Gobardhanpur, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- **Parents –** Baba Santokh Dass Ji (father) & Mata Kalsi (mother).
- **Caste –** Born in a ***low-caste (Chamar) family; worked as a cobbler.***
- **Contributions –**Advocated equality, social justice, and spiritual freedom, opposing caste- and gender-based discrimination.
- Emphasized devotion to God (Naam) over rituals, wealth, or social status, promoting personal spiritual freedom.
- Famous for poems highlighting contentment, humility, and inner devotion.
- **Key Teachings – Caste and creed are man-made –** He advocated that all can approach God irrespective of social status.
- **Spiritual wealth vs material wealth –** True happiness lies in devotion, not accumulation of riches.
- **Humility and devotion –** Vanity, pride, and high birth are obstacles to attaining divine grace.
- **Literary Contributions –**
- **Poems –** Sri Adi Granth contains 40-Hymns (one of which is a repetition) and One-Couplet of Guru Ravidass ji.
    - It was compiled by Guru Arjun Dev ji, the fifth Guru of the Sikhs, and was completed in 1604 A.D.
- **Languages -** Hindi, Urdu, Persian, and regional dialects.
- **Themes -** Love, devotion, equality, spiritual wisdom.
- **Legacy – Religion –** Influenced 21st-century followers to establish a distinct religious identity.
- **Revered in –** Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra.

- **Sacred sites –** Banaras, Chittor, Tirupati, Ellora, Junagadh.
- Guru Ravidas Ji is ***regarded as the "Sunlight of the World",*** guiding people out of the darkness of ignorance and social oppression.
- **Royal disciples –** Princess Mirabai and King Nagar Mal became disciples.
- **Guru Nanak Dev –** Influenced Guru Nanak Dev with the secrets of Naam.
- Also, influenced Sikh scriptures and philosophy.
- **Significance – Social reformer –** Challenged caste hierarchy, encouraged communal harmony.
- **Spiritual mentor –** Guided both royals and commoners with humility and grace.
- **Enduring influence –** Praised by Saints like Kabir, Tukaram, Nanak Dev Ji, Dadu, Namdev.

References

1. PIB | Saint Guru Ravidas
2. Life of Guru Ravidas Ji
3. NDTV | Guru Ravidas Jayanti

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