Guru Tegh Bahadur

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | History*

Why in news?

The Vice-President of India addressed an Interfaith Conclave in New Delhi, commemorating the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

- Guru Tegh Bahadur is the ***9th of 10 Sikh Gurus*** (1664–75).
- He was preceded by Guru Har Krishan Sahib and succeeded by Guru Gobind Singh Sahib.
- **Early Life –**
  - He was born on April 1, 1621, in Amritsar as ***Tyag Mal***, the youngest son of Guru Hargobind Ji (6th Sikh Guru).
  - He was trained in scripture, music, horse riding, and swordsmanship.

Key Contributions

- **Hymns –** His 115 hymns **(Salokas)** are included in the Guru Granth Sahib.
- He founded the ***town of Anandpur*** in 1672.
- **Nirbhau & Nirvair –** He questioned the tradition of worshipping at the graves of pirs and faqirs and urged his followers to be Nirbhau (fearless) and Nirvair (without envy).
- **Wider audience –** His sermons, delivered in a ***mix of Sadukhri and Braj languages***, were widely understood from Sindh to Bengal.
- **Concept of One God –** He often alluded to Panchali (Draupadi) and Ganika in his preaching and declared that Hindustan could regain its piety if it took refuge in one God.
- **Universal Brotherhood –** He advocated against religious discrimination, caste-based discrimination, and untouchability and promoted equality and dignity for all.
- **Religion as Duty –** Emphasised that religion is not merely a belief system but a duty to uphold justice and morality.
- He promoted the ***principle of "Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam"*** (the world is one family).
- **Execution –** During Aurangzeb's reign, Guru Tegh Bahadur resisted forced conversions of Kashmiri Pandits.
- He was arrested and brought to Delhi, and Aurangzeb ordered the *public execution* of the Guru on November 11, 1675, after he refused to embrace Islam.
- **Gurdwara Sis Ganj –** On the ***site of his execution***, Gurdwara Sis Ganj was built in 1783.
- **Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib –** Historic Sikh shrine in New Delhi, built at the site where ***his body was cremated*** after his martyrdom in 1675.

- **Titles –**
  - He earned the ***title "Tegh Bahadur"*** (master of the sword) after his valour in the ***Battle of Kartarpur (1634).***
  - Also, honoured with the title '***Hind Di Chadar***' - a universal symbol of supreme sacrifice and moral courage.
  - Preferred to be remembered as ***"Deg Bahadur"*** (master of hospitality), symbolising compassion alongside courage.
- **Spiritual Characteristics –** He emphasised non-violence and taught the importance of maintaining principles in both happiness and sorrow.
- **Cultural Impact –** He is considered a pivotal figure in preserving religious diversity. He inspired future generations of Sikhs and Indians.

Sri Gur Bilas Patshahi Dasmi is a biography of Guru Gobind Singh by Kavi Sukha Singh, written in 1797.

References

PIB | 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji

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