

SIKH CALENDAR

GURMIT SINGH*

Guru Nanak Sahib, the Founder of Sikh Religion was born in 1469 AD at Rai Bhoi Ki Talwandi, now famous as “Nankana Sahib” which is about 65 Kms. southwest of Lahore in Pakistan. Prior to 15 August 1947, the said region was known as Hindustan / Punjab / Indian Continent, when ruled by the Afghans/Mugals/Maharaja Ranjit Singh /British. Due to different dates as mentioned below, Sikh Nation is still unable to determine the exact Date of Guru Nanak Sahib’s Birth Day for its Calendar:

27 March 1469	S. Pal Singh Purewal (Canada)
14 April 1469	Institute of Sikh Studies including PS Purewal
15 April 1469	Late Karam Singh, Bhai Kahn Singh, Prof. Sahib Singh, Dr. Gopal Singh, Dr. Ganda Singh, Khushwant Singh, Dr. Hari Ram Gupta, Principal Satbir Singh, Patwant Singh, Encyclopaedia of Sikhism by Punjabi Uni Patiala
20 Oct 1469	Dr. Tarlochan Singh and Dr. Harjinder Singh Dilgeer
Puranmashi of Karitka month]	Under the guidance of SAD / SGPC and their Officials, Birthday of Guru Nanak Sahib is celebrated on Puranmashi, which falls after Diwali. Different dates under Nanakshahi Calendar, are indicated below: 19 Nov 2002; 8 Nov 2003; 26 Nov 2004; 15 Nov 2005; 5 Nov 2006; 24 Nov 2007; 13 Nov 2008, 2 Nov 2009

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Since Sikhs are now spread all over the world, there is a dire need to determine the exact Date out of the above-mentioned dates so that all Sikhs know the Foundation Day of Sikh religion.

The current Nanakshahi Calendar introduced from Vaisakhi 2003 is nothing but the mixture / imitation of the Indian National Calendar based on Saka/Bikrami or say Lunar and Solar {at page 134 of The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Volume Four, Ed. 1998 published by Punjabi University, Patiala) it is stated that... "The solar Bikrami year commences on the first day of Baisakh, whereas the lunar year begins on the day following no-moon (amavas) of Chet". Only difference is that Nanakshahi Calendar is advanced by

7/8 days, though most of the past Historical dates have been distorted under the pretext of Gregorian calendar's adoption in September 1752. Whereas the past Historical dates for the period from 1469 to 1752) can't be altered by anyone.

The well-wishers of the Sikh Nation may like to look at the Indian National Calendar as reproduced on the other page.

Subject to the determination of the exact date, let us assume 20 October 1469 as the origin of Sikh Religion, we could have continued to remember / celebrate / commemorate the following Sikh Historical events as follows:

1469 Oct 20	Foundation Day of Sikh Religion as well as Gurgaddi Day / Parkash Divas of Guru Nanak Sahib
1539 Sept 7	Guru Angad Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1552 March 29	Guru Amardas Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1574 Sept 1	Guru Ramdas Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1581 Sept 1	Guru Arjan Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1604 Aug 16	Pehla Parkash of Granth Sahib at Darbaar Sahib, Amritsar
1606 May 30	Guru Arjan Sahib's Martyrdom Day & Guru Hargobind Sahib's Gurgaddi Day, though he was selected on 25 May 1606
1644 March 3	Guru Har Rai Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1661 Oct 6	Guru Har Kishan Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1664 March 30	Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1675 Nov 11	Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib's and Martyrdom Day of other three Sikhs, as well as Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's Gurgaddi Day
1699 March 30	Selection of <i>Panj Pyaras</i> and First Amrit Initiation Ceremony through Khandaiy Dee Pahul at Anandpur Sahib
1704 Dec 22	Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh's Martyrdom Day

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National Calendar

At the time of independence, the Govt. of India followed the Gregorian calendar based on the Christian era.

The National Government adopted the recommendation of the Calendar Reform Committee that the Saka era be adopted as the basis of the National Calendar. The Saka year has the normal 365 days and begins with Chaitra as its first month. The days of the Saka calendar have a permanent correspondence with the dates of the Gregorian Calendar, Chaitra 1 falling on March 22 in a normal year and on March 21 in a Leap Year. The National Calendar commenced on Chaitra 1 Saka, 1879 corresponding to March 22, 1957 A.D.

The months of the National Calendar, with their days and the dates of the Gregorian Calendar corresponding to the first day of the Saka month are given below:

Calendar	
Saka	Gregorian
1 Chaitra 30/31 days	March 22/21
1 Vaishaka 31	April 21
1 Jyaishta 31	May 22
1 Asadha 31	June 22
1 Sravana 31	July 23
1 Bhadra 31	Aug. 23
1 Asvina 30	Sept. 23
1 Kartika 30	Oct. 23
1 Agrahayana 30	Nov. 22
1 Pausa 30	Dec. 22
1 Magha 30	Jan. 21
1 Phalguna 30	Feb. 20

Nanakshahi Calendar
from 2003

14 March
14 April
15 May
15 June
16 July
16 August
15 September
15 October
14 November
14 December
13 January
12 February

- 1704 Dec 27 Sahibzadas Zoravar Singh and Fateh Singh's Martyrdom Day
 1708 Oct 7 Guru Granth Sahib's Gurgaddi Day – Perpetual Guru of Sikhs
 1716 June 9 Bahadur Banda Singh's Martyrdom Day
 1738 June 24 Bhai Mani Singh's Martyrdom Day
 1745 July 1 Bhai Taru Singh's Martyrdom Day

As well as subsequent Historical events.....

The Sikhs should also understand that Guru Nanak Sahib is not born every year. He was born once in 1469 only either on the 27th of March or 20th of October. Hence Calendar should commence from that Date, which appears to be more accurate. Similarly, martyrdom dates of Guru Arjan Sahib (May 30) and Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib (11 November) or Khalsa Day (March 30) can't be changed by anyone.

However, SGPC is free to introduce any Almanac Jantri for the Sikhs under its jurisdiction – Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh. But it won't apply to the Sikh Diaspora or in other Indian States, being not covered by the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925.

Let us wait and watch whether SGPC will also introduce "Nanakshahi Sikka, i.e., Sikh Coins and Currency Notes, and Nanakshahi Clocks, Time-pieces and Watches based on - "*Vasuay Chaseaan Ghareean Pahraan Thithee Vaareen Maahu Hoaay*" - (Sohila)