

# Nankana Sahib

July 18, 2020

The main accused in the recent incident of vandalism at Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in Pakistan has been arrested and charged with the anti-terrorism act

## About Nankana Sahib

- Gurdwara Nankana Sahib, also known as Gurdwara Janam Asthan, is a site near Lahore where the first Guru of Sikhs, Guru Nanak, was born.
- Gurdwara Janam Asthan is built over the site where Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was believed to be born in 1469.
- It is located in Pakistan's Punjab province
- The city was **previously known as Talwandi, and was founded by Rai Bhoi**, a wealthy landlord. **Rai Bhoi's grandson, Rai Bular Bhatti, renamed the town 'Nankana Sahib'** in honour of the Guru. 'Sahib' is an Arabic-origin epithet of respect.
- Nankana Sahib also has several important shrines, including Gurdwara Patti Sahib, Gurdwara Bal Leela, Gurdwara Mal Ji Sahib, Gurdwara Kiara Sahib, Gurdwara Tambu Sahib – all dedicated to stages in the life of the first Guru.
- It also **has a Gurdwara in memory of Guru Arjan (5th Guru)** and Guru Hargobind (6th Guru). Guru Hargobind is believed to have paid homage to the town in 1621-22.

## Who constructed Janam Asthan shrine?

It was constructed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, after he visited Nankana Sahib in 1818-19 while returning from the Battle of Multan.

What was the status of **Janam Asthan during British rule?**

- During British rule, Janam Asthan was the **site of a violent episode** when in **1921**, over **130 Akali Sikhs** were **killed after they were attacked by the Mahant of the shrine**.
- The incident is regarded as one of the **key milestones in the Gurdwara Reform Movement**, which led to the passing of the **Sikh Gurdwara Act in 1925** that ended the Mahant control of Gurdwaras.