

# The saroop of Guru Granth Sahib

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**In news-** Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri recently received the three saroops of the holy Guru Granth Sahib brought from Afghanistan. As of now, 10 out of 13 saroops in Afghanistan have been shifted to India and the remaining three would be shifted soon.

## ***About the saroop-***

- Saroop is a **physical copy of Sri Guru Granth Sahib**, also called **Bir** in Punjabi.
- Every Bir has 1,430 pages, which are referred to as Ang.
- The verses on every page remain the same.
- It was the fifth Sikh master, **Guru Arjan Dev, who compiled the first Bir of the Guru Granth Sahib in 1604**, and installed it at the Golden Temple in Amritsar.
- The tenth Sikh master, Guru Gobind Singh, added verses penned by the ninth master, his father Guru Tegh Bahadur, and compiled the Bir for the second and last time.
- It was **in 1708 that Guru Gobind Singh declared Guru Granth Sahib the living Guru of the Sikhs.**
- Sikhs believe that all the 10 Gurus were the same spirit in different bodies, and the Guru Granth Sahib is their eternal physical and spiritual form.
- Guru Granth Sahib is a compendium of hymns written by six Sikh gurus, 15 saints, 11 Bhattas (balladeers) and four Sikhs.
- The verses are composed in 31 ragas.

## ***Code of conduct to install Guru Granth Sahib***

- The installation and transportation of Guru Granth Sahib

is governed by a strict code of conduct called **rehat maryada**.

- Under ideal circumstances, five baptised Sikhs are required to transfer the Guru Granth Sahib from one place to another.
- As a mark of respect, the Bir of the Guru Granth Sahib is **carried on the head, and the person walks barefoot**.
- Whenever a devout sees the Bir of Guru Granth Sahib passing by, s/he removes her shoes and bows.
- A ceremonial whisk is waved high over the Guru Granth Sahib either on the move or while reading from it.
- Gurdwaras have a separate resting place for the Saroop, called **'Sukh Asan Sthan' or 'Sachkhand'** where the Guru rests at night.
- This takes place at the end of the day when the holy book is ceremoniously shut and rested.
- In the morning, the saroop is again installed in a ceremony called 'prakash'.

### **Where are copies of the Guru Granth Sahib published?**

- There was a tradition among Punjabis, both Sikhs and Hindus, to copy the Guru Granth Sahib by hand and produce multiple copies.
- The Udasi and Nirmla sects also played a role in making handwritten copies of the Birs until the British introduced the printing press.
- Nowadays, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has the sole rights to publish the Birs of the Guru Granth Sahib, and this is done at Amritsar.
- To prevent violation of "maryada" while transporting saroop overseas, the SGPC has decided to set up printing press units on foreign soil to print the holy scriptures.
- Besides, the SGPC will make arrangements for sending the "saroops" to different states across the country.
- Apart from the US and Canada, printing units would be

established in Europe, Australia and New Zealand.