

# **Recent Steps taken by Govt. of India with Respect to Sikh Community**

## **1: Celebrations of 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.**

- On November 22, 2018, the Indian Union Cabinet passed a resolution to celebrate 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji within India and across the world.
- The historic town of Sultanpur Lodhi is being developed as a heritage town. The upgradation of the Railway Station and the Museum will be completed by mid-October, 2019.
- The foundation stone-laying ceremony for the heritage complex “Pind Babe Nanak Da” will be held in October 2019.
- Commemorative coins and postage stamps will be released in November, 2019. Indian Railways will run special trains to connect places associated with Shri Guru Nanak Devji.
- The 550th birth anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Devji is being celebrated in all Missions and Posts abroad. LED projection on iconic buildings in 10 identified countries around the world on the will be undertaken.
- A Center for Inter-faith Studies is being set up in Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. Besides, Chairs on Guru Nanak Devji are proposed to be set up in foreign universities including in Concordia University, Canada and Birmingham University, UK. It is proposed to have UNESCO publish the writings of Guru Nanak Devji into different languages of the world.
- Indian Council for Cultural Relations is sending Gurbani troupes and speakers/ experts on Sikhism to participate in seminars in several countries abroad.

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## **2: Development of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor.**

- The Government has started the development of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor (KSC) from Dera Baba Nanak (DBN) in Gurdaspur district up to the international boundary. Work on border infrastructure is in full swing. The passenger terminal building at Dera Baba Nanak will be completed by October 31, 2019 and a National Highway connecting the zero point to the passenger terminal building and National Highway 354 will be completed by mid-October 2019. Government has also been successful in persuading Pakistan to agree to:
  - visa-free arrangement and a substantial increase in the daily pilgrims number, and
  - Permit OCI card holders to also make use of the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor.

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### **3: Passports & Consular Services to be given to people who have not obtained foreign citizenship.**

- Grievances of the Sikh community abroad regarding denial of consular services have been systematically addressed. The redressal includes a comprehensive review and revision of travel restrictions for foreigners, as a result of which restrictions on 312 Sikh foreign citizens have been removed. Now passports and consular services will be provided to political asylees of Sikh origin as well as their family members. In cases where they have obtained foreign passports they can easily obtain necessary visa and OCI services.

### **4: Release of Sikh prisoners and action being taken on punishing those involved in 1984 anti-Sikh riots.**

- There have been long standing requests of the Sikh community and representative bodies to release various prisoners linked with erstwhile militancy currently in jails in India. These requests are under active consideration of the Government and several have been released and are being released.
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- A Special Investigation Team has been constituted to re-investigate 186 cases filed in the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, to ensure justice for the victims. The investigations have been expedited leading to charge sheets being filed in some cases, and the convictions in others. Government has also announced additional compensation of Rs.5.00 lakh each to the 3325 victims of the 1984 riots throughout India. Compensation has also been disbursed to the Jodhpur detainees.

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Consulate General of India, New York

Oct 3, 2019