

VISIT TO GURDWARA JANAM ASTHAN, PUNJAB PAKISTAN

Under the celebrations of world Harmony week, a delegation from Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan visited the historical and religious *Gurdwara of Baba Guru Nanak*, at *Nankana Sahib* on Sunday 30, January 2022. More than 140 academics i.e. 80 M.Phil. Scholars and 50 M.A & BS students, and teachers of Department of Islamic Studies, Ghazi University were among the delegation.

Baba Guru Nanak is considered the founder of Sikhism. The fundamental beliefs of Sikhism, articulated in the sacred scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*, include faith and meditation on the name of the one creator; unity of all humankind; engaging in selfless service, striving for social justice for the benefit and prosperity of all; and honest conduct and livelihood while living a householder's life. The *Guru Granth Sahib* is worshipped as the supreme authority of *Sikhism* and is considered the final and perpetual *Guru* of *Sikhism*. As the first *Guru* of *Sikhism*, *Guru Nanak* contributed a total of 974 hymns to the book.

The delegation was warmly welcomed by Sikh community and briefly introduced the *Guru Granth Sahib* that is the central holy religious scripture of *Sikhism*, regarded by Sikhs as the final, sovereign and eternal *Guru* following the lineage of the ten human gurus of the religion. The text consists of 1,430 *angs* (pages) and 5,894 *shabads* (line compositions), which are poetically rendered and set to a rhythmic ancient north Indian classical form of music. The bulk of the scripture is divided into 31 main *rāgas*, with each *Granth rāga* subdivided according to length and author. The hymns in the scripture are arranged primarily by the *rāgas* in which they are read. The *Guru Granth Sahib* is written in the *Gurmukhi* script, in various languages, including *Lahnda* (Western Punjabi), *Braj Bhasha*, *Kauravi*, *Sanskrit*, *Sindhi*, and *Persian*. Copies in these languages often have the generic title of *Sant Bhasha*.

The delegation head *Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed* said on the occasion, the motives behind this visit to learn and see the basics of *Sikhism* and Sikh-Muslim relations obviously cannot be ignored. And this is just for refashioning established community identities and building bridges between spiritual traditions provides a valuable lesson for contemporary efforts at inter-religious dialogue and understanding.

Later on, Sikh community at *Gurdwara of Baba Guru Nanak* acknowledged the efforts of department of Islamic Studies, Ghazi University, Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan and his Chairperson, Prof. Dr. Arshad Munir regarding interfaith harmony and the Sikh community expressed a desire to build a new and brighter chapter in religious harmony and relations.