

# Why Deepmala (Diwali)?



Guru HAR GOBIND PATSHAH the 6th master was born on June 14, 1595 to father Sri Guru Arjan Dev Patshah and mother Matta Ganga Ji, in the village Vadhali. He received his religious education from Baba Budha Ji. Guru Sahib had five sons (Baba Gurditta Ji, Suraj Mal, Aani Rai, Atal Rai, and Guru Teg Bahadur Ji) and one daughter (Bhiro).

On May 25 1606 while ascended to Guru Gadhi, Guru Har Gobind Patshah changed the previous tradition of wearing a "Saeli toppi" and replaced it with wearing the "Kalgi". At the same time, he started the tradition of wearing two swords of "Miri Piri" symbolizing politics and spiritualism. In the year 1608, he constructed the Akal Takhat (Throne of the Timeless God) in front of Sri Harmindar Sahib (Golden Temple), Amritsar.

Observing the prevalent conditions of the nation at that time, Guru Sahib started organising an Army, teaching self-protection, held courts to solve problems, raised the Sikh National Flag and conducted hunting missions along side religious preaching and an intense spiritual lifestyle. Guru ji's activities began to filter through to the Mugal Emperor, Jahangir in Delhi. He ignorantly saw danger in the new developments and works of the Guru. And ordered his arrest and charged imprisonment for twelve years in the Fort of Gwalior where he had also unjustly kept 52 Hindu Rulers and Princes of various territories in Mugal India.

During the period of confinement of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib, Gwalior became a place of pilgrimage for thousands of faithful Sikhs. Due to visiting restrictions the crowds stayed outside with complete love and devotion for the True Guru. They longed for the day when Guru ji would be released. Mean while pressures were mounting on Jahangir both from the population and his own advisors who felt Guru Ji was unjustly imprisoned.

Infact, it began to emerge that Guru Ji was a victim of a conspiracy between some of the Emperors advisors. Having realised his mistake Jahangir quickly ordered the release of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. In spite of this the Guru refused to leave unless all the captive rulers and princes were also set free.



Emperor Jahangir was taken back by Guru Ji's refusal for freedom and desperately tried to convince him to leave the Fort. At last Jahangir agreed to free as many captives as who could hold on to the Guru chola (cloak). There was sudden disappointment on the faces of the downtrodden captive rulers and princes, for they knew that only a few would be released. Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji saw their sad faces and smiled and assured them with sweet comforting words that he would not leave any body behind.

After two long years of imprisonment the day had finally arrived. Crowds of thousands of Sikhs gathered around the Fort of Gwalior. The master, Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji came out amazingly followed by all 52 imprisoned rulers each holding a tassel of Guru Ji's chola which he had had specially made.

For this noble and humanitarian act, the Guru was hailed as **Bandi Chhor - the liberator**. Even to this day in the Fort of Gwalior there is a shrine with an inscription **Bandi Chhor Baba**. The news of Guru Ji's release spread like wild fire all over Northern India. Guru Ji set off to Amritsar, a 2 week journey. On the way, people sprinkled water on the dusty roads, started langars, welcomed the Guru and placed lamps in and on top of their houses at night.



Finally Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji reached Amritsar, Harimander Sahib. Countless Sikhs thronged to see him on the night of his arrival, they decorated the whole town and placed lamps in the streets, houses and shops. Sweets were distributed between families, friends and strangers. Huge fireworks displays lit up the night in Amritsar. Bhai Buddha Ji, the Head Granthi of Harimander Sahib organised DEEPMALA the illumination of Sri Harimander Sahib in honour of the master Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji's successful return.

DEEPMALA (Diwali) is a time for spiritual joy, prayers, soul searching and making decisions for the advancement of the Sikh Nation and its future. On this day step back from today's fast moving world and focus your mind and imagine Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji surrounded by thousands of humble Sikhs with tears of joy in their eyes upon seeing the master after two years. Think of the greatness of the Guru who refused to let 52 people be left waste in the jail, and secured their releases.

**DHAN SRI GURU HARBOBIND SAHIB JI**  
*6<sup>TH</sup> Guru*

**Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa... Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh!**

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