

# GURMAT STUDY

Using Technology, To Spread the message of Sikhism  
Gurmat | Education | Youth | Community Development & Welfare  
**Website:** [www.GurmatStudy.com](http://www.GurmatStudy.com) **E-mail :** [gurmatstudy@gmail.com](mailto:gurmatstudy@gmail.com)

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## **ABOUT NANAKSHAHI CALENDAR**

### **Sikh calendar**

The Nanakshahi calendar is a solar calendar that was adopted by the Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandak Committee (SGPC) to determine the dates for important Sikh events. It was designed by Pal Singh Purewal to replace the Hindu calendar and is in use since 1998-99. The epoch of this calendar is the Prakash of the first Sikh Guru, Nanak Dev Ji in 1469. Sikh New Year's Day falls on March 14<sup>th</sup> as per the Gregorian (Western) calendar.

### **Features of the new calendar**

- A solar calendar
- Called Nanakshahi after Guru Nanak Dev Ji (founder of Sikhism)
- Year One is the year of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birth (1469 CE)
- Uses most of the mechanics of the Western calendar
- Year length is same as Western calendar (365 days 5 hours 48 minutes 45 seconds)
- Contains 5 months of 31 days followed by 7 months of 30 days
- Leap year every 4 years in which the last month (Phagun) has an extra day

### ***Creation of the Calendar***

The Nanakshahi Calendar was developed by a Canadian Sikh, Pal Singh Purewal, a retired Computer Engineer. He started work on the new calendar in the 1960's. A committee, under the aegis of the Institute of Sikh Studies, Chandigarh was formulated to study and recommend the proposals put forward by S. Pal Singh Purewal. These were formally accepted, in principle, in a larger meeting in which about 40 eminent scholars, from universities and other institutions, participated.

### ***The need for Sikh Calendar***

A unique calendar is vital for the integrity of the Sikh religion. All communities and faiths have their own calendar as a mark of their distinct cultural identity. Just as the Islamic world has the Hijri calendar and Hindus have Bikrami calendar, the Sikhs have a Nanakshahi calendar along with the common era (CE) calendar which is in use throughout the world.

Earlier, many anti-Sikh institutions would use this point that Sikhs use the Hindu – Bikrami Calendar as they are part of Hindus. With our own calendar in place we can clearly declare our independence from any other religion.

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## WHY NANAKSHAHI CALENDAR ?

Bikrami Calendar is Hindu calendar which was used by the Sikhs for a very long period, resulting in different dates of same Gurburab or an event occurring every year. Basically there are two problems with the Bikrami calendar. Firstly, because it is based on the length of sidereal year (based on movement of stars & moon) its months wander in seasons - the relation of the months with seasons as given in Gurbani is changing. Secondly, since the Gurburabs are celebrated according to the lunar dates of the Bikrami calendar, these occur on different dates of the Common Era calendar from year to year.

Both these problems have been resolved in Nanakshahi Calendar. Its year is based on the length of the tropical year - the year which is based on Gurbani. Therefore, its months will always maintain the present relationship with seasons, and will stay according to Gurbani.

Also, since the Gurburab dates have been fixed according to the solar dates, and since Common Era Calendar is also based on the tropical year, Gurburabs will always occur on the same dates of the Common Era Calendar, and will not shift from year to year. For example In 1998 CE the Prakash Purab of Guru Gobind Singh Sahib occurred twice according to Bikrami Calendar, and did not occur in 1999 CE at all. The same situation was repeated in 2003 CE and 2004 CE. In Nanakshahi Calendar there is no such anomaly. Guru Gobind Singh Ji Prakash Gurburab shall always occur on 23 Poh (Nanakshahi) / 5 January CE.

## Some Other Features

- ❖ Fixed number of days in the months as follows:  
Chet 31, Vaisakh 31, Jeth 31, Harh 31, Savan 31, Bhadon 30, Asu 30, Katik 30, Maghar 30, Poh 30, Magh 30, Phagun 30/31
- ❖ Fixed beginning of the months in relation to the Common Era calendar as follows: Month begins on Chet - 14<sup>th</sup> March, Vaisakh - 14<sup>th</sup> April, Jeth - 15<sup>th</sup> May, Harh - 15<sup>th</sup> June, Sawan - 16<sup>th</sup> July Bhadon - 16<sup>th</sup> August, Asu - 15<sup>th</sup> - September, Katik 15<sup>th</sup> - October, Maghar - 14<sup>th</sup> November, Poh - 14<sup>th</sup> December, Magh- 13<sup>th</sup> January, Phagun - 12<sup>th</sup> February.

With the above scheme, any given date of any month of the Nanakshahi calendar will always occur on the same date of the Common Era calendar, except in the month of Phagun in a leap year when the corresponding dates of Phagun from March 1 to March 13 will differ by 1 day from those of the same month in non- leap years. This is a simple scheme, easier to remember; and the calendar is good forever so that a particular month will have the same season always.

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## GURPURABS AS PER NANAKSHAHI CALENDAR

Guru Sahib	Prakash	Gur Gaddi	Jyoti Jyot
Guru Nanak Dev Sahib	1 Vaisakh 14 Apr	- -	8 Asu 22 Sep
Guru Angad Dev Sahib	5 Vaisakh 18 Apr	4 Asu 18 Sep	3 Vaisakh 16 Apr
Guru Amar Das Sahib	9 Jeth 23 May	3 Vaisakh 16 Apr	2 Asu 16 Sep
Guru Ram Das Sahib	25 Asu 9 Oct	2 Asu 16 Sep	2 Asu 16 Sep
Guru Arjan Dev Sahib	19 Vaisakh 2 May	2 Asu 16 Sep	2 Harh 16 Jun
Guru Har Gobind Sahib	21 Harh 5 Jul	28 Jeth 11 Jun	6 Chet 19 Mar
Guru Har Rai Sahib	19 Magh 31 Jan	29 Phagun 11/12 Mar	6 Katik 20 Oct
Guru Har Krishan Sahib	8 Savan 23 Jul	6 Katik 20 Oct	3 Vaisakh 16 Apr
Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib	5 Vaisakh 18 Apr	3 Vaisakh 16 Apr	11 Maghar 24 Nov
Guru Gobind Singh Sahib	23 Poh 5 Jan	11 Maghar 24 Nov	7 Katik 21 Oct

### Other Important Events

Gurpurabs and Important events	Vaisakhi Date
Compilation of Guru Granth Sahib	1 Bhadon (16 August)
First Prakash Adi Granth Sahib	17 Bhadon (1 September)
Guru Gaddi of Guru Granth Sahib	6 Katik (20 October)
Creation of Khalsa	1 Vaisakh (14 April)

The Bikrami calendar has an error of 1 day in about 71 years. The proposed Nanakshahi calendar will reduce this error to one day in about 3,300 years, Further to this, whenever there is a correction made in Common Era calendar, Nanakshahi calendar will automatically get updated.

The new Nanakshahi calendar is simple, rational, more accurate than the Bikrami calendar, and conforms to Gurbani. Sankrantis will occur on the same dates in the CE year, every year. All Gurpurabs will also occur on the same dates every year, with one exception noted above. There will not be any need to consult Jantri publishers to find out when a Gurpurab is to occur. SGPC made announcement in October 1997, that it would adopt this calendar and implement it in the historic year of 1999 CE, when Khalsa Panth celebrates its tercentenary.

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