

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts Regional Centre Vadodara

Date: 29th October 2020 (3:30 pm to 5:00 pm)

Event Type: Webinar

Title: *Significance of Shabad Kirtan and Teachings of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji - II*

Speakers: 1. Dr. Devendra Kaur, Professor, Musicologist, Educationist and Poetess.

2. Shri Deepak Mahan, an eminent TV Professional from Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Gurbani Singers: 1. Giani Gurmeet Singh, Jaipur 2. Bhai Rajendra Singh (Tabla)

Chairperson: Sri. S. Gurucharan Singh Gill, Member of Steering Committee, The Commemoration of 550th Birth Anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Celebration Series, IGNC A & Ex. Advocate General, Rajasthan.

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Regional Centre Vadodara, conducted the third event and second webinar to mark the 550th Birth Anniversary Celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev Ji at IGNC A, Regional Centre, Vadodara. This webinar was conceived considering the sacred and religious significance of *Gurbani* and its benefits on the mind and body. The webinar commenced with introductory remarks by Dr. Ayswaria Wariar, Regional Director, IGNC A, Regional Centre, Vadodara.

In furtherance of the theme of our first webinar held on 19th September 2020, this webinar too aimed to explore the meaning, beginning and traditional practices of *Gurbani* in light of the philosophy and teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. The webinar included two speakers and a Gurbani recital. The first Speaker – Dr. Devendra Kaur is a Professor, Musicologist, Educationist and Poetess. In the webinar, Dr. Kaur spoke on the topic: *Gurmat Sangeet Tradition: A Theoretical Survey (with special reference to Guru Nanak Dev ji)*. In her talk, she elucidated the meaning, beginning and theoretical aspects of *Gurmat Sangeet*. *Gurmat Sangeet* is *Gurbani* or ‘*Guru ki baani*’ sung systematically and principally. It is based on hymns only from the *Guru Granth Saahib*. Though it has its roots in the Indian Classical musical traditions as it is based on *Ragas*, in *Gurmat Sangeet*, the inherent meaning of the *shabads*, play a predominant role; the raga is subservient to *baani*. In *Guru Granth Saahib*, there are 31 *Ragas* and each has 31 subtypes. Further, each *Shabad* is based on a *Raga* of a corresponding nature and meaning which can never be altered.

Dr. Kaur narrated some of the principles of *Gurmat Sangeet* such as: it is sung in a group and never individually; *Rabaab* was used in the earlier times as the key instrument; Just like the *Ragas*, *Gurmat Sangeet* too has specific *shabads* dedicated for all morning and evenings or various occasions; the ‘manner of singing’ - once a *shabad* has started, it can neither be stopped in between, nor left incomplete for the lack of time. Dr. Kaur further explained the meanings and significance of other commonly occurring signs and indications in *Gurmat Sangeet* such as *Ghar*, *ank*, *Mehla* and *Rahaao*. *Ghar* refers to the *taal*. There are 17 *taal* in *Guru Granth Sahib*. *Ank* refers to the numbers which means *shabads* have to be sung in between the corresponding numbers, without stopping. *Mehla* though literally means ‘lady’, but in *Guru Granth Sahib*, *mehla* tells about the composer (*the Guru*) of the *Bani*. The word

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'*Rahaao*', which has only been used in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, literally means *Rukna*, taking time to pause in between singing. As *Gurmat Sanget* started with Guru Nanak Dev Ji, all *bani* is dedicated in his name and is still being kept alive by the *Radhi, Bhabi and Dhaadhi* traditions.

The second speaker - Mr. Deepak Mahan is an eminent TV Professional from Rajasthan. Besides being a documentary film-maker and TV Anchor, he is a well-known author. Mr. Mahan in his talk elaborated the relevance of *Shabad Kirtan* but greatly emphasised on the uniqueness of the philosophy of Guru Nanak Dev ji. He perceives Guru Nanak and *shabad Kirtan* as truly divine subjects that are beyond complete comprehension by humans. Explaining the uniqueness of the philosophy, Mr. Mahan shared that Guru Nanak regarded man and woman as compatible and part and parcel of the universe; giving us the first glimpses of secularism in this world. When he attained enlightenment, his first sentence was '*Na hum hindu, na hum musalman*'. He was the first person in the world who said, '*We are all one; these class distinctions are all manmade*'. Unlike other saints who preached their God, Nanak accepted all Gods and discovered *shabad kirtan* as the medium to let his thoughts reach out to the world. He did not make *shabad kirtan* as a performing art, but as a part of a common man's daily life ritual and a living experience. Nanak regarded Guru and God as one. He called God *Nirankaar* – 'formless' and believed in *Prakaash*. He started the tradition of *Langar* which means sharing and eating. He believed everything in the world is *Guru prasaadi*, given to us by Guru. Mr. Mahan concluded his talk by stating the crux of Nanak's teachings as - work, worship, service and sharing, where *seva bhaav* is foremost as it teaches one to surrender. Nanak regarded *Shabad Kirtan* only as a *tirth yatra* or pilgrimage. It is a journey within oneself. The more one worships, paths become clear, eyes open, and *gyan* follows. This opens the gates to *moksha* and one would be freed from all the desires.

After his talk, Mr. Mahan also welcomed Giani Gurmeet Singh ji. Giani Gurmeet Singh is one of Rajasthan's well-known *Shabad* singers. He has been singing for over three decades and currently heads the oldest Gurudwara in Jaipur. He is also a visiting faculty of *Gurmukhi* language at a College in Jaipur. Giani Gurmeet Singh ji was accompanied by Bhai Rajendra Singh on the tabla; the two have been performing together for many years. The webinar included two *shabads* by them. The first *shabad* was - '*Bahuta bolan jhhakkhan hoi*'. Mr. Mahan explained the essence of this *shabad* as 'far too many words are being spoken. Nanak says the more words you speak, the more you lead to strife, stress and problems. The five senses given to man are blessings to enjoy human form but must not be indulged in sensual pleasures. Instead, they should be used for performing *seva, langar*, and doing good for the mankind. *Parmatma*, wants submission of our five senses'.

The second *shabad* was – '*main kya Maangu*'. Mr. Mahan explained that 'we have a huge shopping list for God. Nanak believes that all I have is *Guru prasaadi*. Whatever is bestowed upon me is the best for me. Other things are temporary and wont aid in salvation. So Nanak

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requests God to give his name which as one worships, would help to attain *moksha*. This is the grace of the almighty which is going to take him away from the clutches on all times’.

To sum up the webinar, the Chairperson: Shri Gurucharan Singh Gill began by singing a few verses from the Gurbani. He then shared introspective comments and more insights on *shabad kirtan* and philosophy of Gurunanak Dev ji. Following this, Dr. Ayswaria Wariar then shared more thoughts on Gurbani and concluded the webinar. The votes of thanks was delivered by Dr. Kanika Mondal, Project Associate, IGNC, Regional Centre, Vadodara. The details of the webinar were uploaded on IGNC web portals and social media platforms. It was attended by 25 - 30 attendees and conducted on Zoom platform of the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India (NeGD).

E-Invitation



 Constitution of India, Article 51 A (f)
To value and preserve the rich heritage
of our composite culture
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 IGNC



Under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India,
IGNC, Regional Centre - Vadodara

As a part of the Commemoration of 550th Birth Anniversary of
Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Celebrations

Cordially invites you to a
WEBINAR
ON
"Significance of Shabad Kirtan and Teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji" - Part II

29TH October 2020
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Chairperson: Sri. S. Guru Charan Singh Gill, Member of Steering Committee, The
Commemoration of 550TH Birth Anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji
Celebration Series, IGNC & Ex. Advocate General, Rajasthan

Speaker:

1. Prof. (Dr.) Devinder Kaur - Musicologist, Educationist and Poet.
Topic: Gurmat Sangeet Tradition - A theoretical survey (with special reference to
Guru Nanak Dev ji)
2. Shri. Deepak Mahaan - Documentary film-maker, TV Anchor, and Author.
Topic: Shabad Kirtan, their Background and Significance of the Teachings of
Guru Nanak Dev Ji
3. Giani Gurmeet Singh, Renowned Gurbani Singer, Jaipur, Rajasthan.

Webinar link to join and register: https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/WN_JRSHKCIWQDGCf9qT7e7Xg

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Webinar Photographs



Image 1: Dr. Devinder Kaur - Speaker; Dr. Ayswaria Wariar, Regional Director, IGNCA, RC Vadodara; Giani Gurmeet Singh (Gurbani Singer with Ms. Deepak Mahan (Speaker)); Shri Gurcharan Singh Gill, Chairperson and Dr. Kanika Mondal, Project Associate, IGNCA, RC Vadodara, during the webinar (Clockwise from top left window).



Image 2: Giani Gurmeet Singh, Gurbani Singer (left) with Bhai Rajendra Singh (right) on the tabla performing during the webinar