

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION

23-190

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

November 5, 2019

To recognize the 550th Anniversary of Gurburab, the birth anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder and first Guru of the Sikh faith.

WHEREAS, November 12, 2019, will be the 550th Anniversary of the birth of the founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak Dev Ji, also known to Sikh followers as Gurburab;

WHEREAS, Guru Nanak was the first of 10 Gurus, whose teachings became the core values and tenets of Sikhism, developed in the Punjab region of the Indian Subcontinent at the end of the 15th Century;

WHEREAS, the main tenet of Sikhism is embodied as 'Ik Onkar,' or Oneness, which is explained as one creator of the world and equality of all as all are one, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity, gender, or caste;

WHEREAS, the 3 core principles Guru Nanak promoted and remain the central values for the Sikh religion are 'Naam Jappo', meaning remembrance of God by repeating and meditating on His name or identity, 'Kirt Karo', meaning earn your living honestly, and 'Vand Chakko', meaning share with everyone;

WHEREAS, Sikhism is the 5th largest religion in the world with over 25 million followers worldwide and over 750,000 followers in the United States;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department was the first police department in the nation to allow Sikhs to serve with features of their faith, including their beards and turbans;

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia is home to Sikh Gurdwara DC temple, located at 3801 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., which opened its doors in 2005, and is a place of worship, reflection, and community gathering, open 7 days a week, to people of all faiths, race, or ethnicity;

WHEREAS, Sikh Gurdwara DC will celebrate the 550<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Guru Nanak's Gurburab on Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 P.M. and invites the greater Washington, DC community to attend, learn, and celebrate;

WHEREAS, Sikh Gurdwara DC offers many services for the public, including religious services, Punjabi language classes, Indian drum and other instrument lessons, and hosts the National Library and Museum of Pingalwara;

WHEREAS, Sikh Gurdwara DC's 'Sangat' or congregation prepares and serves full meals called 'Langar,' after religious services to anyone who comes to the temple, as a means of 'Seva' or selfless service to the community;

WHEREAS, the provision of the 'Langar' meal is an important component practiced by all Sikh temples as an act that embodies all of Guru Nanak's core values; in fact, the Golden Temple, the most prominent Sikh temple in the world, feeds over 50,000 visitors and local community members every day;

WHEREAS, Sikh Gurdwara DC donates money collected by the temple to the Pingalwara Charitable Society, which serves the less fortunate who are sick, disabled, forlorn, suffering, and in efforts to promote college education, gives 2 annual awards to students on the basis of merit and need;

WHEREAS, per a 2017 National Public Radio article about Sikhism, 60% of Americans know nothing about Sikhs;

WHEREAS, Sikhs have often been targeted in hate crimes, particularly after the September 11, 2001 attacks due to the use of turbans in their religious garb; and

WHEREAS, education and awareness about other cultures and faiths can help to achieve a greater appreciation for our diversity.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "550th Gurburab Celebration Recognition Resolution of 2019".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes the 550th Anniversary of Gurburab as an opportunity to expand education and awareness of the District's growing Sikh community.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.