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PRESS RELEASE

National Seminar to Commemorate 400th Birth Anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji 1 May 2021, Online

Sahitya Akademi organized an online national seminar to commemorate 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji on 1 May 2021. The webinar started with a mellifluous rendering of Gurubani by Ms. Nivedita Singh and troupe. In his welcome address, Dr K. Sreenivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi, highlighted the central message of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji – love, sacrifice, unity and peace. In her introductory address, Dr Vanita, Convener, Punjabi Advisory Board, Sahitya Akademi, stressed on the importance of carrying the values propounded by Guru Tegh Bahadur ji and she also recited verses from ninth granth. Prof Kapil Kapoor, eminent writer, scholar and Chairman, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla and former Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University, inaugurated the Seminar and in his inaugural address he delineated long and rich tradition in India, commencing from ancient India through Adi Sankara and Guru Nanak to modern times and how the path showed by Guru Tegh Bahadur ji is integral part of these traditions of India. Prof Kapil Kapoor also highlighted how vision of great saints of various traditions of India has been moving force of everyday culture of the land for thousands of years and praised Sri Narendra Modi ji, Honourable Prime Minister of India for leading from the front the celebrations of 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji. Prof Jagbir Singh, Chancellor, Central University of Punjab, delivered the keynote address and in his keynote address he explained how Guru Tegh Bahadur ji instilled the idea of national unity among the people through his works. He also observed that the philosophy of Guru Tegh Bahadur is integral part of great Indian tradition starting from Rig Veda that was made available easily to masses by Guru Nanak ji and Guru Tegh Bahadur's philosophy is part of this glorious tradition of Nanak. Guru Tegh Bahadur instilled this unity by asking them to love and accept everyone but to have pride in one's land and tradition and be prepared to sacrifice even oneself for the sake of Dharma. Dharma is both satya and rta. Through his philosophy Guru Tegh Bahadur ji liberated individuals and transformed the society. Prof Jaspal Singh, former Chancellor, Punjabi University, presided over the session and in his Presidential address summed up the presentations of others and then explained every single element of the central philosophy of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji through his verses. He read out the relevant verses and highlighted how the entire philosophy and life of Guru Tegh Bahadurji, was devoted to the upholding of Dharma, love, peace, unity, courage and sacrifice, This upholding of Dharma, which is universal is what is needed in every society and as such Guru Tegh Bajadiur is not only a saint for Sikhs but for the entire humanity. Sri Harwinder Singh, Member, Punjabi Advisory Board moderated the session.

(K. Sreenivasarao)