GS-I: Sultanpur Lodhi

News

A town in Punjab’s Kapurthala district, Sultanpur Lodhi, is at the centrestage of the 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak Dev, founder of the Sikh religion.

The Guru Nanak Dev link:

- It was in Sultanpur Lodhi that the Sikhism founder is believed to have attained enlightenment.
- The janamsakhis depict the birth stories or biographies of Guru Nanak Dev written towards the end of the 16th century.
- It is said that he was a changed man after he took a dip in the rivulet Kali Bein that flowed through the middle of the town, and disappeared for three days.
- The Guru said that he had seen the “navkhand”. Those days, geographers had divided the earth into nine continents.
- It is after this episode in Kali Bein that Guru Nanak said he had seen all the nine continents.

Legacy

- Historians say it was in Sultanpur Lodhi that Guru Nanak came into intimate contact with Islam.
- The janamsakhis depict the tension between a section of the clergy and Guru Nanak following his enlightenment.
- His utterances were not received kindly by the qazi.
- He complained to Daulat Khan Lodhi (then governor of Lahore) that Nanak was being blasphemous.
- Janamsakhis claim Daulat Khan Lodhi became very fond of Nanak and defended him against critics.
- Today the town is home to several gurdwaras in the memory of Guru Nanak.
- Most of them were commissioned during the Khalsa empire when the Sikh rulers staked out the places associated with Guru Nanak and built gurdwaras there.

Architectural history:

- Sultanpur Lodhi was a major centre of Buddhism from the first century to the sixth century when it was called Sarwmanpur.
- In the 11th century, the town was founded by Sultan Khan Lodhi, a general of Mohammad Ghaznavi.
- Sikander Lodhi, assigned the construction of Sultanpur to Daulat Khan in the 15th century.
- It was the central point in the trade route between Delhi and Lahore.
- A footnote in Babarnama, the autobiography of Mughal emperor Babur, mentions Daulat Khan Lodhi as the founder of the town.