

# **The Sixth Nanak - The Eighth Nanak**

Guru HARGOBIND Ji, Guru HAR RAI Ji, Guru HAR KRISHAN Ji

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# 1. Early Life

Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji was born at village Guru Ki Wadali, Amritsar on June 19, 1595. He was very handsome and the only son of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib ji and Mata Ganga Ji. Physical and spiritual training of Hargobind Singh Ji took place under the able supervision of Baba Buddha ji and Bhai Gurdas ji respectively. Baba Buddha ji taught him martial arts making him an expert in the use of weapons and horse riding. Bhai Paraga and Bhai Ganga Sehgal taught him the art of warfare. They were great warriors themselves. Later, both joined Guru ji's army and laid their lives for the Guru.

Guru Arjan Dev entrusted the leadership of the Sikhs to Sri Hargobind and said, "Never show a miracle, sit on the seat of the Guru donning the weapons, raise a big army and stand up resolutely to face tyranny." Guru Arjan Dev ji was martyred at Lahore on 30th May 1606, after a lot of torture. Guru Hargobind was only eleven at that time. In Spite of this tender age, he was resolute and fearless.

Martyrdom of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji created a crucial moment for the Sikhs. It infused a new vigor in the minds and bodies of the Sikhs. They began to think seriously to find ways to counter the high-handedness of the mighty and tyrannical Muslim Empire. Sikhs adopted both spiritual and political means. This policy suited well to all the social and economic segments of the Sikhs.

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## 2. Temporal and Spiritual Guru

On the day of installation of Har Gobind ji as the Sixth Nanak, congregation (*Sangat*) experienced mixed emotions. They were happy to witness Har Gobind become the Guru. However, there was sadness for the torture Guru Arjan Dev Ji had suffered at the hands of the Mughals. They were keen to find out the direction Guru Hargobind Ji would provide to his Sikhs. The congregation (*Sangat*) was stunned when Guru ji asked for a sword. When Baba Buddha Ji gave him a sword, the Guru ji asked for another one. Baba Buddha Ji gave him a second one. Now Guru Hargobind Ji was donning two swords one each on either side.

The congregation looked at Guru Hargobind Ji in surprise and confusion. No other Sikh Guru had conducted himself in this manner. None had worn a sword. The Gurus were not warriors or kings, they had been the spiritual Gurus of the Sikhs.

Guru Hargobind Ji looked at the congregation. He knew Sikhs would have questions. He stood up and picked up the swords with ease. 'From today', he said, 'I will carry two swords'. People looked at each other. Why two swords? What was he meaning of this act? What was the new Guru trying to convey? People began to whisper to each other.

The Guru looked at his followers. He raised one sword and said, 'This sword is the sword of Peeri (bhakti).' Next, he raised the other sword high in the air and continued, 'this sword is the sword of Meeri (shakti). We are a peace-loving people and follow the teachings of Guru Nanak and the Gurus after him. But we also have a responsibility to defend ourselves and to not be tyrannized. Sikhs have to learn to protect themselves from injustice, and as your leader I assume the responsibility of ensuring your safety and prosperity.'

This came to be called *Meeri-Peeri*. *Meeri* comes from the Persian word that relates to worldly power and prestige that accrues to a prince, governor or ruler. It represents the power of the rulers on their subjects in their kingdoms. *Peeri* is also a Persian word and means the power of the holy men on their followers. My *bhakti* sword represents *Peeri*, and my *shakti* sword represents *Meeri*. Henceforward, I will provide both political and spiritual directions.

After the installation ceremony, the Guru addressed the assembled devotees, "From this day on, bring good weapons and horses as offerings to the Guru's institution. We have to raise an army that can stand up to the tyranny of the rulers. Come to me prepared to join the army and seek the blessings of the Guru."

The message of the Guru spread rapidly. Devotees obeyed without hesitation and started bringing weapons and horses as offerings. Sikhs came from everywhere to join the Guru's army. Sikhs were provided two meals a day and a dress after six months. The Guru started warfare practice in front of Harmandir Sahib after the morning recitals. He motivated the poets to write ballads of the martyrs (*Vaar*) and singing these in heroic

tunes of 'Dhad and Sarangi' (musical instruments). Martial songs like 'Vaars' were sung daily by the Dhad-players in the court of Guru Sahib to inspire the Sikhs. The public which had been suffering oppression and tyranny realized the significance of their lives. Warriors felt elated in wielding weapons in the battlefield.

A chronicler states that Guru Sahib kept seven hundred cavaliers and sixty artillery men. There was a band of Pathan mercenaries. Painda Khan was designated its chief. Riding, hunting, wrestling and many other martial sports were introduced. The Guru Sahib himself was healthy and strong in body and mind. He himself learned the use of different weapons, besides riding, wrestling and hunting.

Guru Sahib erected a wall around Amritsar city and constructed a small fort named 'Lohgarh' on the outskirts of the city. Guru Sahib also constructed Sri Akal Takht Sahib in 1609 in front of Sri Harmandir Sahib. It is known as Akal Bunga (Timeless Throne). This place became the seat of preaching and praying in due course. Here, Guru Sahib used to give sermons to the Sikhs and discussions were held on the problems facing the Sikhs. Sikhs were encouraged to settle their own disputes. Martial sports were performed in the open courtyard across Akal Takht. These actions led to cohesion and consolidation of the Sikhs. Sikhs called Guru Sahib, 'The True Emperor' (*Sacha Patshah*). Sikhs enthusiastically accepted the judgments and decisions taken at Sri Akal Takht Sahib.

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# 3. Bandi Chhor Diwas

As the Guru's popularity spread far and wide, it caused anxiety in the Mughal ranks. Some of them went to Emperor Jahangir and told him, 'Guru Hargobind is trying to undermine your authority as the Emperor of India. He has established Akal Takht for this purpose. Why should Sikhs have their own private court when they have your Mughal court to come and seek justice?'

Emperor Jahangir believed them. He started thinking to do away with the Guru. He did not want to kill Guru Hargobind Ji because Guru Arjan Dev Ji's martyrdom had cost the Mughals a lot of damage. After his death, the Sikhs had become more powerful and strong.

Instead, Jahangir asked Guru Hargobind to pay the fine that Guru Arjan Dev Ji owed the Mughal emperor. The Guru declined to pay the unjust fine, so he was sent to jail at the Gwalior Fort.

Guru Sahib was detained in the fort for three years, from 1609-1612 between the age of 14 and 17. At the Gwalior Fort there were several other Hindu rulers who had also been imprisoned on flimsy charges.

Guru ji began to hold morning and evening congregations inside the fort. Rajas (already imprisoned in the fort) and fort-officials began to seek spiritual bliss. Sikhs outside the fort were desperate for the glimpse of their Guru. Sikhs in Amritsar used to travel on foot four hundred and fifty miles for an audience with the Guru. Unable to see Guru ji, they would pay obeisance to the walls of the fort and return to Amritsar. Seeing such love and devotion of Sikhs for the Guru, saint Mian Mir went to Agra and requested Jahangir for the release of the Guru. When Jahangir heard the praise of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Hargobind from saint Mian Mir, he issued orders for the release of Guruji. Guru Sahib conveyed to Jahangir that he would leave the fort only if all fifty-two Hindu Rajas were also released along with. Jahangir agreed on the condition that anyone who could hold Guru's dress would be free to go out with him. Jahangir thought that only 5-6 Hindu rulers would be able to leave this way. The gate of the prison was a narrow one, and no more than 5-6 rulers would be able to hold on to the Guru's cloak.

Guru ji ordered a special dress made with 52 corners. Each ruler held one corner and came out of the fort along with Guru ji. This happened in the year 1612 and Guru Sahib affectionately came to be addressed as "Bandi Chhor Baba" (Liberator of the prisoners). He is still remembered by this name.

Guru Sahib reached Amritsar on the day of Diwali, a popular Indian festival. This was a big occasion for the Sikhs. It is said that Baba Buddha Ji illuminated the entire city of Amritsar with lights. The Sikhs celebrated this occasion enthusiastically. Sikh Nation

celebrates this day as “ Bandi Chhor Diwas ”. Sikhs celebrate this festival at Amritsar and all over the world every year.

*Diwali is an old Hindu festival of India also known as the Festival of Lights. Per Hindu mythology it was first celebrated when Lord Ramchandra of Ayodhya returned from exile of fourteen years. Ramchandra had defeated demon king Ravana during the exile. The people of Ayodhya welcomed his arrival with lights and fire-works.*

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# 4. True King

Attitude of Jahangir and his empire towards Guru Sahib changed considerably and remained favorable and friendly till his death. It was the outcome of the noble interceding by the religious, secular and political personalities like Saint Mian Mir Ji, Nizam-ud-Din and the Governor of Lahore, Wazir Khan.

Jahangir was greatly surprised to hear praises of Guru Arjan Dev ji and Guru Hargobind ji from Saint Mian Mir. He realized that he had committed a blunder by putting Guru Arjan Dev to martyrdom and imprisoning Guru Hargobind. He ordered Wazir Khan to go to Gwalior and bring Guru Hargobind with him to Agra with great respect, so that he might behold the holy-person with divine knowledge, for whose audience the followers went and returned after bowing to the walls of the Gwalior fort.

As ordered by Jahangir, Wazir Khan accompanied Guru Hargobind ji from Gwalior and went to see the king at the Agra fort. Jahangir sat the Guru by his side on a sandalwood seat. Seeing the Guru's royal splendour, his donning two swords indicating temporal and spiritual authority, the king's doubts were cleared that Guruji could not be intimidated or cowed down. Jahangir was greatly impressed by the saintly nature and royal lifestyle of the Guru. He persuaded the Guru to stay for some days with him. One day, Jahangir asked the Guru, "Why do people call you the true king while I am called king only?" The Guru replied, "I do not say anything to anybody. People only call us the way they see us." Jahangir was not satisfied with this reply.

Next day, the Guru and Jahangir went hunting. At noon, the Guru stopped under a tree for rest. Jahangir camped under another adjoining tree. A grass-cutter had heard that the Guru has come to the jungle for hunting. Taking Jahangir to be the Guru, he placed a bundle of grass and two cents before him and prayed, "O True King, please take care of me at the last hour." Jahangir said to him, "I am the king of this world. I can bestow worldly things but cannot help you at the last hour. Your true king is there under that tree." Hearing these words of Jahangir, the grass-cutter took the coin, lifted the grass-bundle and went before the Guru where he placed his presents and offered his prayer. After this, Jahangir was never in doubt, why the Sikhs called Guruji the true king.

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# 5. Visiting Punjab & Kashmir

Shortly after release from Gwalior Fort and having cordial relations with the state, Guru Sahib started to re-consolidate the Sikhs. He modified the concept of Charanamrit, (system of initiating people into the fold of Sikhism). It was being misused and exploited by the selfish and corrupt Masands for their own interests, whilst Guru Sahib was in Gwalior prison. He tried his best to dissuade Meharban (son of Prithi Chand) from nurturing hostile designs against Sikhs and Sikhism.

Guru Sahib undertook Dharam Parchar (religious preaching) tours to spread Sikhism. He started from Amritsar and covered thousands of miles in India. In Punjab he visited Kartarpur and made it as the headquarters of Sikhs. In 1621, he also visited several adjoining villages like Bara Pir, Mukerian and laid the foundation stone of Sri Hargobindpur town (the original name of this town was Gobindpura) near river Beas. Guru Sahib also covered the 'Malwa' region of Punjab. Here, the cult of Hindu Goddess and "Sakhi Sarwar" had fascinated the lowly and simple people. Guru Sahib admitted the people of the villages: Darauli, Mehraj, Damru, Dabwali, Sidhwan, Siddhar, Lopo, Zeera, Katra and Gillan into Sikhism. The entire Malwa region embraced Sikhism and this went a long way in integrating the Sikhs. This was a major achievement of Sri Guru Hargobind Ji.

Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji visited an old Sikh religious preaching center - Nanakmata (Gorakhmata) located in the present Pili Bhit, Northern India. Guru Nanak Sahib had established this place. Hindu Yogis ousted Almast (a pious Sikh preacher, deputed by Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji to spread Sikhism) from the gurdwara and desecrated the place by cutting the historical peepal tree, under which Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji used to have discussions with yogis.

Guru Hargobind Sahib reached Nanakmata along with some saint-soldiers. Seeing Guru Sahib on the scene, yogis fled and never came back or interfered in the religious affairs of Almast. Guru Sahib returned to Amritsar via Darauli. En route, Guru Sahib also held a detailed cordial discussion on spiritual and religious issues with a maratha Saint Ramdas Samrath, at Srinagar (Garhwal).

Guru Sahib visited Kashmir in 1620. Some chronicles state that Guru Sahib went there at the invitation of emperor Jahangir, who was recuperating thereon the advice of his personal physician, after a prolonged illness. Jahangir and his party also paid a visit to Goindwal Sahib and reached Amritsar via Taran Taran. The emperor offered financial assistance for the construction of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, but Guru Sahib declined the offer politely.

Some sources describe the visit to Kashmir as a part of Guru Sahib's preaching campaign. Guru Hargobind Sahib patronized Sewa Das for preaching Sikhism. He and his mother Bhag Bhari served Guru Sahib with zeal and devotion. Guru Sahib held a short meeting with his many devoted Sikhs and a preacher Kattu Shah (a convert from Islam). Guru Sahib visited Sialkot, Wazirabad, Mirpur, Bhimbar Rehran, Baramulla, Uri and Muzaffarabad. He also appointed Bhai Garhia to preach Sikh religion. Many Kashmiris (both Hindus and Muslims) embraced Sikhism due to devoted and committed preaching by Guru Sahib. Guruji married Bibi Marwahi Ji (Mata Mahadevi Ji), the daughter of a devoted Sikh couple Daya Ram Ji and Bhagan Ji at village Mandiali.

Guru Sahib returned home via Baramulla and proceeded further to Gujrat (near Sialkot) where he met Saint Shah Daula who appreciated Guru Sahib's spiritual status and mode of living with splendor. Guru Sahib also visited Rai Bhoedi-Talwandi (the birth place of Guru Nanak Sahib), Mange and Madai in Lahore district. He also traveled to Kurukshetra and established a Sikh preaching center (now in Haryana State).

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## 6. Bibi Kaulan

In 1629 Mukhlis Khan became the Governor of Lahore. He and Qazi Rustam Khan were good friends. According to some historical accounts Kaulan (Mata), a Hindu lady, was forcibly abducted by Qazi Rustam Khan in her childhood and was made a maid servant. She was treated like a slave. At a young age, she got influenced by the teachings of Saint Mian Mir. She also began to take part in the religious services of Guru Sahib and became an ardent and pious follower.

Upon noticing this behavior of Kaulan, Qazi became harsher towards her. As a Qazi, an extreme fanatic personality, he could not tolerate her deep and devotional interest in Sikh religion. Due to Qazi's harsh treatment she sought the help of Mian Mir, who deputed his disciple Abdullah (Abdul Yar Khan) to escort Kaulan safely to Amritsar. She was treated kindly by Guru ji. She was provided a safe and separate lodging near a pond. Later it was converted into a tank and named Kaulsar, after Mata Kaulan. She was a pious disciple of Guru Sahib and an ardent follower of Sikhism. She began to arrange religious congregations on Sikhism and Gurbani at her residence. Within a short span of time she became popular among Sikh masses. She won the respect of the Sikhs who began to address her as Mata (mother) Kaulan. She breathed her last on 4th July 1629 at Kartarpur (Jalandhar) while serving the Sikh Nation.

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# 7. Five Battles of Sikhs

## ***First Battle*** (year 1621)

When Shah Jahan succeeded the throne after the death of his father Jehangir, Qazi Rustam Khan lodged a complaint with the new emperor. Shah Jahan had already been provoked by fanatic Muslims against the Sikhs and Guru Sahib. Shah Jahan entertained the complaint and reversed his father's policy of reconciliation towards Guru Sahib. Shah Jahan created an environment of conflict. Guru Sahib fought and won five battles during the regime of emperor Shah Jahan.

A small conflict at Rohilla near Sri Hargobindpur was fought in 1621. It was the first armed clash between local muslim ruler of Jalandhar and Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji.

Near the site of new town Hargobindpur, Bhagwan Das and his hired bullies tried to take land from Sikhs. They wanted to develop a new township. In the ensuing small clash Bhagwan Das and his supporters were killed. Following this incident, Rattan Chand (son of Bhagwan Das) and Karam Chand (son of Chandu Mal) complained to local muslim ruler against Guru Sahib. Abdulla Khan, the local muslim ruler, dispatched ten thousand soldiers. They were intercepted by the mighty and devoted Sikh saint-soldiers at Rohilla Ghat on the bank of the river Beas. The Mughal army met a crushing defeat. There was an immense loss of life and material on both sides. Besides Rattan Chand and Karam Chand, Abdullah Khan, his two sons and five commanders were also killed. Guru Sahib sacrificed saint soldiers like Mathura Bhat (son of Baba Bhikha), Bhai Nanu, Bhai Saktu, Bhai Jattu, Bhai Pirana, Bhai Paras Ram, Bhai Jagannath and Bhai Kalyana.

## ***Second Battle*** (April 1634)

The second and the most serious conflict between Guru Sahib and the Mughal forces happened in April 1634. Sikhs were hunting in Gumtala Village near Amritsar. Coincidentally, imperial soldiers of Shah Jahan were also hunting in the same area. A royal hawk fell in Sikhs' hand. Imperial army asked Sikhs for the hawk. Sikhs, who were hunting there, refused. This led to a small violent conflict between the two parties. Guru Hargobind Sahib was not directly involved in his clash.

This incident enraged emperor Shah Jahan. He ordered Mukhlis Khan with 7,000 soldiers "to teach a lesson" to Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. Fortress of Lohgarh was attacked. Sikhs, though small in number, gave a stiff resistance. Guru Sahib and the whole family had to hurriedly move to Chabal, to solemnize the marriage of Bibi Veero

Ji (the daughter of Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji). The attackers had an upper hand over the Sikhs on the first day of the battle. They looted and plundered the property and holy residence of Guru Sahib. Next morning, the Sikhs consolidated their position, retaliated with a vigorous attack on the sleeping Mughal forces. Mukhlis Khan, the commander and most of his leading lieutenants were killed. Guru's army also suffered a heavy loss of life and property. This was the first major armed clash between the Mughals and the Sikhs.

### ***Third Battle*** (Dec 16, 1634)

Guru Hargobind proceeded towards Malwa and reached village Sudhar. He was preaching Sikhism in the villages and towns along his way. At Sudhar, Guru ji met devotees from Kabul. Bhai Karori from Kabul requested, "Respected Guru, I was coming with two fine horses from Kabul as an offering for you. When I entered Lahore, Inayat Ullah, the Governor of Lahore happened to see them. He asked me the price of the horses. I told him that the horses were not for sale. He forcibly snatched and took away both."

The Guru told Bhai Karori, "Consider it your offering has reached me. I shall get the horses from the Governor myself." The Guru called Bhai Bidhi Chand who was serving in the Guru's institution. He had been a great robber before coming in the service of the Guru. The Guru blessed him and sent him to Lahore to get those horses.

Reaching Lahore, Bhai Bidhi Chand dressed as a grass-cutter, stood in front of the royal stable with a bundle of fine grass. Impressed with the fine grass, the stable-keeper employed him to look after the horses. One dark night, Bhai Bidhi Chand got the watchmen intoxicated with drinks. He mounted one of the two horses and jumped over the wall of the fort. He brought the horse to Guru ji. To get the second horse, Bhai Bidhi Chand disguised himself as a fortune-teller and said to the stable-keeper, "If you show me the place from where the horse was taken, I can tell you where your horse is." The keeper fell for the ruse and took Bhai Bidhi Chand to the stable. Bhai Bidhi Chand mounted the second horse, took it to the wall of the fort and said, "I took the first horse and I am also taking the second horse to Guru Hargobind." Saying this, he jumped into the river Ravi alongwith the horse.

Governor dispatched Lalla Beg and Kamar Beg with an army of ten thousand to recover the horses from the Guru. Kabli Beg also joined them on the way. Guru ji took up positions near village Nathana by the side of a pool which had natural fortifications in the shape of big sand mounds on three sides. The royal army was quick to reach the pool, but their supplies could not reach due to rain. The royal soldiers started taking well-water to quench their thirst. The brackish well-water upset their stomach. Royal soldiers were sick and shivering with cold. On the other hand, Sikhs had all arrangements of food, water and had warm clothes. Royal army could not fight the Sikhs. Kabli Beg, Kamar Beg and Lalla Beg were killed. Leaderless, the royal army deserted and fled towards Lahore.

### ***Fourth Battle (April 26, 1635)***

After these successful encounters Guru Sahib retired at Kartarpur (Jalandhar) along with his warriors. Painda Khan Pathan a commander in Guru's army and childhood friend, deserted him later and joined the Mughal camp after some altercation with the Sikhs and Guru Sahib on some petty issues. He and Kalay Khan (brother of slain Mukhlis Khan), along with imperial army made an attack on Guru Sahib at Kartarpur on 26th April 1635. The Sikhs having a nominal strength of 5000, fought with rare courage and valour. Teg Bahadur Ji (Guru), Baba Gurditta Ji and Bhai Bidhi Chand Ji showed great feats of bravery. Painda Khan and Kala Khan were killed. Several Sikh Saint Soldiers were also martyred.

### ***Fifth Battle (April 29, 1635)***

After the battle of Kartarpur, Guru Sahib moved onwards to Kiratpur, which was under the rule of Raja Tara Chand (a hill state chief). Guru Sahib's entourage was suddenly ambushed by a contingent of state forces under the command of Ahmed Khan in the village Palahi near Phagwara town on April 29, 1635. Many soldiers from the Guru's army lost their lives. Bhai Dasa and Bhai Sohela (sons of Ballu Bhat, and grandsons of Mula Bhat) sacrificed their lives for the Guru.

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## 8. Kiratpur as Residence

Guru Sahib crossed the Sutlej River and reached Kiratpur Sahib where he established another spiritual and preaching center of the Sikh Nation. He spent the last decade of his life (from 1635 to 1644) at Kiratpur Sahib, which is situated in the hill state of Hadur (Nalagarh), founded by Baba Gurditta Ji (Guru's son). It is said that Raja Tara Chand donated land for this purpose. Guru Sahib devoted most of his time in reorganizing the Sikh Nation and updating the preaching centres by establishing a new system called Dhunas. Baba Gurditta Ji was made in charge of religious affairs and he further appointed four head preachers according to areas: Almast, Phaul, Gonda and Baba Hansa. Guru Sahib also reconciled with Udaasi sect headed by Baba Sri Chand. Guru Sahib's religious tours and preaching made Sikhism more popular in different parts of India.

Guru ji breathed his last on 28th February 1644 (some chronicle records the date as 3rd March 1644). It is believed when Guruji's body was placed on fire, and the flames rose high, many Sikhs tried to immolate themselves on the funeral pyre. Har Rai Sahib ji (Guru) dissuaded them. Before his death Guru Sahib had nominated his grandson Har Rai (the second son of Baba Gurditta Ji) as his successor (Seventh Nanak).

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# 9. Highlights of Guru Hargobind ji

## {1595 - 1644}

<b>Born on:</b>	19th June, 1595
<b>Born at:</b>	Village Guru Ki Wadali (district Amritsar)
<b>Parents:</b>	Guru Arjan Sahib and Mata Ganga Ji
<b>Brothers &amp; Sisters:</b>	
<b>Children:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bibi Viro Ji (daughter)</li> <li>● Baba Gurditta Ji (son)</li> <li>● Suraj Mal Ji (son)</li> <li>● Ani Rai Ji (son)</li> <li>● Atal Rai Ji (son) and</li> <li>● Tegh Bahadur Ji. (son) - became Guru in 1664</li> </ul>
<b>Accession to Gurgaddi:</b>	1606, age 11 years.
<b>Joti Jot:</b>	March 3, 1644
<b>Bani:</b>	None.
<b>Special Contributions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Concept of Meeri-Peeri, raising the first Sikh army.</li> <li>● Constructed Akal Takhat in front of Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar. (Year 1609).</li> <li>● motivated poets to write ballads of the martyrs (<i>Vaar</i>) and singing these in heroic tunes of 'Dhad and Sarangi' (musical instruments).</li> <li>● helped release of 52 Hindu kings from Gwalior fort. The day is famous as Bandi Chor Diwas (year 1612).</li> </ul>

# **The Seventh Nanak**

Guru HAR RAI JI

# 10. *Early Life*

Guru Har Rai Ji was born on Jan 16, 1630 at Kartarpur. He was the son of Baba Gurditta Ji and Mata Nihal Kaur Ji (also known as Mata Ananti Ji). Guru Ji married Mata Kishan Kaur Ji (Sulakhni Ji), the daughter of Sri Daya Ram of Anoopshahr (Bulandshahr) in Uttar Pradesh. He had two sons: Sri Ram Rai Ji and Sri Har Krishan Sahib Ji (Guru).

Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, before his departure for heavenly abode, nominated his grandson, Har Rai Ji at the tender age of 11, as his successor (Seventh Nanak), on 3rd March 1644. Guru Hargobind ji always kept him by his side and imparted the knowledge of scriptures and weapons to his grandson. Whenever Sri Har Rai got a chance to serve in the Guru's institution, he did so with great enthusiasm.

Sri Guru Har Rai Ji was a man of peace but he never disbanded or discharged the armed Sikh warriors (saint soldiers), who had been raised and maintained by his grandfather (Sri Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji). He further boosted the military spirit of the Sikhs, but never himself indulged in any direct political or armed controversy with the contemporary Mughal Empire. He maintained twenty-two hundred horsemen, well trained and fighting fit. He constructed Patalgarh fort near Kiratpur in which arms and ammunition were stored. In the afternoons, the Guru would ride and go hunting in the forest accompanied by Sikhs so that the hill people might become fearless seeing them fully armed and also recognize their identity. Once at the request of Dara Shikoh (the eldest son of emperor Shahjahan), Guru Sahib helped him escape from the bloodthirsty hands of Aurangzeb's armed forces during the war of succession.

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# 11. Guru's Dispensary

The Guru opened a big dispensary in Kiratpur in which he employed able physicians and procured medicines from all over the country. Every needy person was given free treatment. In the Udasi hermitages and other places of worship where meals were being provided, the Guru ordered free clinics to be run. In this way, the dispensary of Kiratpur became famous throughout the country.

Shah Jahan had great love for his elder son, Dara Shikoh. It was very hard for his younger son, Aurangzeb, to bear it. To finish off Dara Shikoh, he conspired with his cook to administer a tiger's whiskers in his meals which upset his stomach. Despite the best treatment by the royal physician he did not get well. The physicians suggested Shah Jahan to get medicine from the dispensary at Kiratpur. Shah Jahan said, "How can I ask for medicine from those against whom I have been sending armies?" Pir Hassan Ali said, "Guru Nanak's institution bears no enmity towards anybody. They always do good to others. Please send for medicine from there to save the life of Dara Shikoh." Shah Jahan wrote a letter to the Guru and sent it through a special messenger to Kiratpur. On the receipt of that letter, Guru ji provided the necessary medicine which promptly cured Dara Shikoh. He was saved from the cruel jaws of death by Guruji's Medicine. Dara Shikoh himself came to Kiratpur with valuable gifts to thank the Guru. The emperor, whole heartily thanked and wanted to grant some "Jagir", which Guru Sahib never accepted.

Guru Sahib also established an Ayurvedic herbal medicine hospital and a research centre at Kiratpur Sahib. He also maintained a zoo there.

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## 12. Sikhs' Love toward Guru ji

One day, on his hunting trip, Guru Har Rai stopped before a hut. Mai Taabo, an old woman, came out. The Guru said to her, "I am very hungry. Please serve me whatsoever you have cooked for me." Mai Taabo served the Guru, sweet pancakes that she had already made for him. The Guru unwrapped the pan cakes from the cloth and started eating. Mai Taabo stood there in great wonder. Handing over the cloth to Mai (mother) Taboo after taking the food, the Guru said, "Mother, the pancakes were delicious"

The next day, when the Guru went hunting, a Sikh packed some food and took it along. He thought that the Guru asked for food from that woman the previous day because he felt hungry. In due time, the Sikh requested the Guru to take meals. The Guru said, "Meals are taken in the community kitchen and not in this way. There are some principles which are to be followed when having food." At this, the Sikh asked respectfully, "Yesterday, you took food on the horseback without even washing your hands." The Guru said, "That was due to the love of that old woman who had prepared and kept the food for me and was waiting. Bound by her affection, I went and asked for that food."

In those days, while there were adorers of the Guru's institution, there were others who were jealous. Guru Ji was visiting Kartarpur. There, one day a Brahmin's son died. His parents and relatives started crying. Dhir Mal, the elder brother of the Guru was living there who had used various foul means to become the Guru but failed. He said to the Brahmins, "There is no need to cry. Guru Har Rai, who is bestowing life upon people, is currently in your town. You should visit and request him to revive your son."

That Brahmin carried the corpse of his son to the Guru's camp. The Brahmin requested the Guru to revive his son. The Guru reasoned with the Brahmin, "Everyone should abide by the will of God. Life and death are ordained by God alone. All that are born must die one day."

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# 13. Eternal Happiness

Shah Jahan shifted his capital from Agra to Delhi on 8th April 1648, which brought him 125 miles nearer to Punjab where his favourite son Dara Shikoh was the Governor. Shah Jahan fell seriously ill in December 1657. He made up his mind to hand over his kingdom to his eldest son, Dara Shikoh. Aurangzeb was in Deccan (South India) when he got this news. He said to his other brother Murad, who was Governor of Gujarat, "I do not want that a Sufi (liberal saint) like Dara Shikoh should become the king. If he is given the chance, Islam will be finished in the country. I want you to be the king. I have no desire for the throne." Murad was taken in by this deceit of Aurangzeb. They marched towards Agra with their combined forces. They encountered the forces of Dara Shikoh at Shamugarh near Agra. Dara Shikoh was defeated. Reaching Agra, Aurangzeb imprisoned his father Shah Jahan, in the fort, on June 18, 1658. He then came to Delhi and proclaimed himself as the king on July 31, 1658. Finding no more use of Murad, he had him poisoned to death.

Dara Shikoh fled to Punjab with the royal treasures before the arrival of his brothers at Delhi. He was not brave and cruel like other kings, despite being in possession of treasure and forces. The company of the saints had made him compassionate like them. He was a follower of Pir Shah Muhammad who was a disciple of Sufi Mian Mir. Dara Shikoh loved the company of saints like Sarmad who had given up everything he had. It was usual for him to come to the Guru's institution.

On his way to Lahore, Dara Shikoh stopped at Goindwal on July 11, 1658. to meet Guru Har Rai. The Guru asked Dara Shikoh, "I can get you the throne of Delhi if you wish." He replied, "O true king, what shall I do with the throne of Delhi where there is always intrigue and fighting? You have cured me of my physical ailment previously. Please give me enlightenment so that I can be cured of all spiritual ills and can attain bliss." The Guru said, "Spiritual bliss lies in bowing to the will of the Lord. Submission to 'His will' is possible only if you love Him. Love should be such that you offer your severed head on your palm to Him." Listening to these words of the Guru he said, "I have got whatever I had come to you to seek." After that he proceeded to Lahore.

Dara Shikoh was not cunning or deceitful. As such the garrison commanders of Lahore and Multan did not stand by him. From Multan he proceeded to Sindh where Malik Jiwan, a chief arrested him and his son from Juna Nagar and produced them at Delhi. On the day of Id, August 30, 1659, Aurangzeb beheaded him and sent his head on a platter to his father as an Id present in prison.

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# 14. Invitation from Aurangzeb

Sri Guru Har Rai Ji faced some serious difficulties during the period of his guruship. The corrupt masands, Dhir Mals and Minas always tried to hinder the progress of Sikh religion. After the death of Shah Jahan, the attitude of the state headed by Aurangzeb turned hostile towards the non-muslims.

Governor of Lahore sent Nahar Khan of Saharanpur to march on to Kiratpur. On the way, cholera broke out among his forces. A large part of his army fell prey to the epidemic. When the rest of the Army realized that this affliction was the result of marching on to the Guru, they refused to go further. No general agreed to mount an attack on Kiratpur after that. They had all heard from the sikhs that at the time of installing Guru Har Rai as the Guru, Guru Hargobind ji had blessed, "Whosoever marches on you, will be destroyed on the way." The words of the Guru were coming true.

Aurangzeb realized that it was not possible to bring Guru Har Rai to Delhi by force. He ordered Diwan Shiv Dayal who was a devotee of the Guru, to go to Kiratpur, request the Guru and bring him to Delhi. Reaching Kiratpur, Diwan Shiv Dayal prayed to Guru Har Rai, "Please come to Delhi to give audience to the devotees and stop Aurangzeb from committing tyranny and instead show him the path of truth." The Guru said to the Diwan, "I have resolved not to go before the king, so I cannot go to Delhi, but I shall send my elder son, Ram Rai, as my representative to accompany you." Before sending his eleven-year-old son to Delhi with the Diwan, the Guru said to him, "Stand firmly on your faith. Whatever you wish will happen."

Although Baba Ram Rai was eleven at the time of departure for Delhi, he was well learned and quite witty. Before seeing him off to Delhi, Guru Har Hai bestowed him with powers of the Guru's institution and sent wise sikhs like Bhai Gurdas, Tara, Punjaba and Zokl Khushali for consultation along with twenty-two horsemen. On their arrival, they were housed at Majnu Ka Tilla.

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# 15. Desertion of Ram Rai

Ram Rai Ji appeared in the court on behalf of Guru Sahib. He tried to clarify some misunderstandings regarding House of Guru and Sikh faith, created by Dhirmals and Minas. Yet another trap, which he could not escape, was to clarify the meaning of the verse "The remains of the Muslim fall into the potter's clot, it is then molded into pots and bricks, and they cry out as they burn".

Ram Rai, to please the emperor and gain more sympathy replied that the text had been needlessly corrupted by some ignorant person and replaced the word Musalman with the word Beimian (dishonest). (The actual meaning of the verse is that the human soul is not bound to the physical structure or the body of a person. The physical material of the bodies of both Hindus and Muslims face the same fate and this is a universal truth. The soul leaves the body immediately after death and it does not remain in the grave waiting for doomsday. And the earth consumes the body-material in due course of time). It is a rational and scientific view of Sikhism.

On orders of Aurangzeb, Diwan Shiv Dayal, one day presented himself in the court with Baba Ram Rai. Aurangzeb was amazed to see the natural splendor of Baba Ram Rai. Aurangzeb sat him by his side and asked some questions to which he replied very tactfully. This type of ready with answers amazed Aurangzeb absolutely. Aurangzeb saw him off to his camp with great respect. After some meetings, Baba Ram Rai forgot that the respect he was getting in the court was due to the blessings of the Guru. He felt that his honor was because of his own qualities.

One day, Aurangzeb asked him to show some miracle. He did so without any hesitation. He forgot that In the Guru's institution, showing a miracle was like becoming a rival of God. Miracles take one away from truth. To please Aurangzeb, he showed seventy-two miracles. Aurangzeb used to enjoy the Juggler's tricks and gave valuable gifts to Baba Ram Rai. He started acknowledging Baba Ram Rai as a true saint. The royal Maulvis (Muslim priests) began to fear Baba Ram Rai after seeing his miracles.

When Sri Guru Har Rai Ji was informed about this incident, he wrote a letter to Ram Rai saying, "You are not to show me your face as you have changed the true word of Guru Nanak to please the king. Carried away by the greed of riches and honor, you have forsaken truth and taken support of falsehood. You were bestowed with powers of the Guru's institution and sent to Delhi so that you might show the path of truth to Aurangzeb and not that you adopt falsehood. Now, you are no longer fit to protect and propagate the true principles of Guru Nanak."

For this reason, Ram Rai was excluded from the Sikh Panth, even though he pleaded repeatedly for forgiveness. Thus, Guru Sahib established a strict rule for the Sikhs against any alteration of original verse in Guru Granth Sahib and the basic conventions set up by Guru Nanak.

Baba Ram Rai felt great repentance. Thinking of meeting the Guru to seek forgiveness, he came near Kiratpur and wrote a letter to the Guru. The Guru sent back the reply, "Go in the direction, you are facing. You need not come to me." When Baba Ram Rai received the Guru's letter, he was facing towards Lahore. Accepting Guru's instructions, he went to Lahore. The Guru wrote to the devotees at Lahore, "No Sikh should offer paisa (money) to Ram Rai." Baba Ram Rai said to the devotees of Lahore, "The Guru has forbidden from offering paisa. You may give Mohars (gold coins)." Coming to know this trick of Baba Ram Rai, the Guru wrote to the prominent Sikhs, "No Sikh should welcome Ram Rai nor offer him anything. He has changed Guru Nanak's true word to please the king." Guruji said, "He who has changed the true word of Guru Nanak, cannot be forgiven."

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# 16. Passed on the Spiritual Light

Having foreseen the time of his merger in God was approaching, Guru Har Rai ji decided to hand over the leadership of the Sikhs to Sri Har Krishan and sent orders to leading Sikhs and Masands (keepers who used to collect tithe and offerings from the Sikhs) to collect at Kiratpur. After the recital of Asa- di Vaar, Guruji addressed the congregation and said, "**The Guru is not a body. It is a light.** From today, I am placing that spiritual light in Sri Har Krishan." After that he sat his younger son, Sri Har Krishan, (only five at that time), on the seat of Guruship. Guru Har Rai paid obeisance to him and instructed the Sikhs in waiting. "From today onwards, you have to render this service to him." Bhai Gurditta, son of Baba Budha ji performed the other rituals of ceremony of Guruship. To follow, the rest of the congregation, obeying the command of Guru Har Rai paid obeisance to Guru Har Krishan, placing their offerings before him and gave him all the respect, thus, accepting him as their Guru. Having passed over the responsibility of leading the Sikhs to Guru Har Krishan ji, Guru ji merged into the Supreme Being on the 6 October 1661. He was cremated at Patal Puri.

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# 17. Highlights of Guru Har Rai ji

{1630 - 1661}

<b>Born on:</b>	Jan 16, 1630
<b>Born at:</b>	Kartarpur
<b>Parents:</b>	Baba Gurditta Ji and Mata Nihal Kaur Ji (also known as Mata Ananti Ji)
<b>Brothers &amp; Sisters:</b>	
<b>Children:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sri Ram Rai Ji</li> <li>• Sri Har Krishan Sahib Ji (Guru)</li> </ul>
<b>Accession to Gurgaddi:</b>	March 3, 1644., age 14 years.
<b>Joti Jot:</b>	October 6, 1661
<b>Bani:</b>	None.
<b>Special Contributions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opened a big dispensary in Kiratpur, employed able physicians and procured medicines from all over the country. Every needy person was given free treatment.</li> <li>• established an Ayurvedic herbal medicine hospital and a research center at Kiratpur Sahib.</li> <li>• did not pass on Guruship to older son - Ram Rai for altering one word of SGGS. Instead, bestowed Guruship on younger son - Har Krishan ji.</li> </ul>

# **The Eighth Nanak**

Guru HAR KRISHAN JI

# 18. Guru is a light, not a body

Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji was born on July 7, 1656 at Kiratpur. He was the second son of Guru Har Rai ji and Mata Krishan Kaur Ji (Sulakhni Ji). Ram Rai, the elder brother of Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji was expelled and disinherited due to his hostile activities towards the Guru's institution. Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji, at the tender age of five years, was declared the Eighth Nanak by his father Sri Guru Har Rai Ji before the latter merged with the Supreme Being, in 1661. He addressed the congregation, "The Guru is a light, not a body. From Today, I am placing that spiritual light in Sri Har Krishan."

This act inflamed Ram Rai with extreme jealousy. He complained to emperor Aurangzeb about his father's decision. Aurangzeb said, "I cannot make you Guru of the sikhs because it is for Sikhs to decide in whom they have faith and who do they accept as their Guru. However, I will grant you some land due to our close relationship". Aurangzeb granted him seven villages where the city of Dehradun is situated these days.

Brahmins had doubts about Guru Har Krishan Sahib ji as being the Guru of the sikhs because of his tender age. They believed that spiritual powers came with age. They completely misunderstood why Guru Harkrishan ji had been bestowed with the responsibility of Guruship.

One day, a Brahmin - Lal Chand asked a Sikh, "Anybody can call himself Krishan. Does he have the qualities of Krishan?" The Sikh took that Brahmin to the Guru.

Lal Chand said to the Guru, 'You have named yourself Krishan. You know that Lord Krishna had imparted knowledge of Gita. Can you tell the meaning of a single couplet from Gita?' The Guru said to him, "You will not be satisfied, even if I tell you the meaning. If you want to see the blessings of the Guru's institution, go and bring anyone from the town. The person you choose would explain the meaning of Gita." Lal Chand, acting clever, brought an illiterate water-carrier named Chhajju. With the blessings of the Guru, Chhajju replied Lal Chand's questions like a scholar and explained the meanings of different verses from the Gita. Seeing this miracle, Lal Chand fell at the Guru's feet begging forgiveness and became a devout sikh.

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# 19. Request for a Glimpse

When Guru Harkrishan ji reached Delhi, he was greeted with great fervor and full honors by Raja Jai Singh and the sikhs of Delhi. Guru Sahib was lodged in the palace of Raja Jai Singh. People from all walks of life came to have a glimpse (Darshan) of Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji. In his first meeting with Raja Jai Singh, the Guru told him; "I have been drawn to Delhi by the love of the devotees of this place, but, under no circumstances shall I come face to face with Aurangzeb."

Mirza Raja Jai Singh went to Aurangzeb and told him what the Guru had said. Aurangzeb was surprised to learn that the Guru did not wish to see him while he was sending invitations for a meeting. Aurangzeb sent precious stones, pearls, clothes and a rosary as presents through his courtier. The Guru kept the rosary only and returned the rest of the valuables. The return of the precious gifts convinced Aurangzeb that the Guru could not be tempted by worldly goods nor had any fear of the emperor.

Everyone spoke very highly of the Guru's intelligence. To test 'The Guru' Aurangzeb thought, "I could go dressed as a saint and meet with the Guru. He might not be able to recognize me. His resolve of not seeing me shall be broken. I would then be able to tell his followers that this Guru has no spiritual powers. But before I do this, it would be better to test the Guru." Aurangzeb suggested to Mirza Raja Jai Singh he test the Guru ji by asking him to recognize his queen, to be sent disguised as a servant. Obeying the command of Aurangzeb, the Raja dressed his queen as a maid to work with servants. Then he invited the Guru to his palace. Guru ji placed his cane on the head of the queen and said, "Why is a queen dressed as a maid servant?" The queen was greatly embarrassed at this.

Aurangzeb's plan to go to the Guru in disguise failed. He sent his son, Prince Muazzam Shah, who was the same age as the Guru, to meet Guru ji. Prince was impressed to see the royal splendor and perpetual running of the community kitchen (langar) by Guruji's followers. Prince requested Guru ji to meet with the emperor. The Guru replied, "I do not consider a person alive if he does not keep God in his mind. He merely breathes. All the food and drink are unlawful for him." The Prince said, "Please write it down and give it to me for the king." The Guru wrote this hymn and gave it to the prince.

*What good is the food and what good are the clothes.  
If the True One is not in your mind.*

*(Vaar Majh Mahala 1, p. 142)*

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## 20. Humanitarian Work

Prince Muazzam Shah after seeing the Guru, returned and had this to say to Aurangzeb,” The glory of the Guru’s court is greater than a king’s. A force of armed horsemen is always ready in attendance; food is continuously served to whosoever comes for the Guru’s Darshan. Patients are cured just by a glimpse of the Guru. God’s words (gurbani) is recited all the time. When I asked him to see the king, he said,” I do not wish to meet with a king who rules by cruelty and he gave me a letter for you.”

On hearing the praise of the Guru from his own son, Aurangzeb went to see the Guru, but Guruji did not agree to give him an audience.

Within a short span of time, Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji created a bond with the common masses. Many in the capital became Guru ji’s sikhs. At this time, an epidemic of cholera and smallpox broke out in Delhi. The young Guru attended to the sufferers irrespective of their caste and creed. The local muslim population was very much impressed with the sincere humanitarian deeds of Guru Sahib and nicknamed him, Bala Pir (child prophet). Even Aurangzeb chose not to disturb Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji. However, he never dismissed the claim of Ram Rai.

Whilst serving the people suffering from the epidemic, day and night, Guru Sahib contracted the disease himself. He came down with high fever. The severe attack of smallpox confined him to bed for several days. When his condition became serious, he called his mother and told her that his end was drawing near. When asked to name his successor, he merely exclaimed ‘Baba Bakala’. These words were meant for the future (Guru) Teg Bahadur Sahib, who was residing at village Bakala near river Beas in Punjab province.

Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji wished that nobody should mourn him after his death. He instructed everyone to sing the hymns of Gurbani. Thus the ‘Bala Pir’ passed away on 30th March 1664, constantly reciting the word “Waheguru” till the worldly end. He maintained his promise of not seeing the king, (as told to him by his father).

Tenth Nanak, Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji paying tribute to Sri Guru Har Krishan Ji stated in “Var Sri Bhagauti Ji Ki”. “Let us think of the holy Sri Harkrishan, whose sight dispels all sorrows...”

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# 21. Highlights of Guru Har Krishan ji

## {1656 - 1664}

<b>Born on:</b>	July 7, 1656
<b>Born at:</b>	Kiratpur Sahib
<b>Parents:</b>	Guru Har Rai Sahib and Mata Krishan Kaur Ji ( <i>Sulakhni Ji</i> )
<b>Brother:</b>	Ram Rai (elder)
<b>Children:</b>	None
<b>Accession to Gurgaddi:</b>	1661 ( <i>age 5 years</i> )
<b>Joti Jot:</b>	March 30, 1664
<b>Bani:</b>	None
<b>Special Contributions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proved that Guru is a light not a body.</li> <li>● Set an example of humanitarian work despite knowing the deadly consequences.</li> </ul>

Some **significant world events** around the period of Guru Hargobind - Guru Har Krishan Ji are as follows:

1593	In Italy, Galileo develops the first thermometer.
1600	Queen Elizabeth of England charters the British East India Company to compete with the Dutch, who control the trade in nutmeg from the Banda Islands
1602	The Dutch government (United Netherlands) grants the Dutch East India Company a monopoly to pursue trade in Asia.
1607	A London company sends three ships and a small group to what is today the state of Virginia, and there, in the spring, on an island in a river, a settlement is founded, the river to be named after King James, as is the town – Jamestown.
1609	Henry Hudson, employed by the Dutch East India Company, anchors off Manhattan Island and trades with local Indians.

1616	William Shakespeare dies.
1621	The Pilgrims in Massachusetts have a meal with the Wampanoag chieftain, Massasoit, and more than ninety of his warriors. The Pilgrims have been struggling and are thankful. The comes to be celebrated in the United States as Thanksgiving Day.
1629	In the Holy Roman Empire, hundreds are being burned as witches.
1632	Galileo publishes his ideas about the universe.
1641	A fort is founded at what today is Montreal.
1642	Wealth in India is not being invested in commerce to the extent that it is by the Dutch. The Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan, has the Taj Mahal built for one of his wives.
1658	In India, Aurangzeb, son of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, has defeated his brother, the crown prince, Dara Shikoh. Aurangzeb imprisoned his father and his other brother, Murad, and he crowns himself, taking the title Alamgir (Grasper of the Universe). He is to prohibit Hindu fairs and festivals, to re-institute the tax on non-Muslims that his great grandfather abolished; and to end the semi-independent status that had been given to Hindu kingdoms within the Mughal empire.
1665	Extensive use of the microscope has begun. Robert Hooke, an English natural philosopher, finds in cork and live plants what he calls cells.
1667	It has been two years since the first successful blood transfusion – dogs kept alive by transfusion of blood from other dogs.
1670	On the Atlantic coast the Carolina colony, Puritans found Charles Town (Charleston) named for Charles II.

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