

Websites

<http://www.sikh-history.com/sikhhist/warriors/banda.html>

<http://allaboutsikhs.com/warriors/>

Further Resources

- Books about Sikh Martyrs, Sikh History, (Ganda Singh's *Banda Singh Bahadur*, *A Short history of Sikhs* by Teja Singh & Ganda Singh etc.)
- Harish Dhillon "The legend of Banda Bahadur"

Bandā Singh Bahādar's Martyrdom

The Sikh forces were ultimately besieged by overwhelming number of Mughal forces in the fortress of Gurdās Naṅgal (ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਨੰਗਲ). The Sikhs fought valiantly under the leadership of Bandā Singh Bahādar inflicting heavy casualties on the Mughal army. However, due to prolonged encircling of the fortress by superior number of forces, the Sikh forces were left with no rations. They were forced to eat tree leaves to sustain themselves. Due to this, they became too weak to fight the enemy.

Ultimately, the brave Sikh general Bandā Singh Bahādar was arrested along with seven hundred Sikh soldiers and brought to Delhi, where they were mounted on ponies, insulted and paraded in the Bazars of Delhi.

The Sikhs were offered amnesty if they accepted conversion to Islam. Not one among them accepted this offer of lease of life. As such they were tortured and done to death publicly. They died in high spirits, sticking to their faith.

Finally before Bandā Singh Bahādar was butchered most mercilessly by the tyrant rulers, his four year old son was put to death in front of Bandā Singh Bahādar by cutting open his abdomen. His heart was taken out and thrust into the mouth of Bandā Singh Bahādar. But even this most inhumane and cruel act of tyrants failed to break Bandā Singh Bahādar's resolve and determination. He remained composed as ever. Finally, he was put to death most mercilessly by pinching the flesh from his body, bit by bit, by means of heated pincers.

Thus came to an end and eventful chapter of Sikh History when the tyrant Moghul rulers tasted defeat after defeat for a number of years at the hand of Sikhs under the leadership of the first Sikh General Bandā Singh Bahādar. The Guru thus demonstrated to the people the true strength of mind and body of those who had partaken Amrit and how a Bairagi who was notorious and aimless, could turn out to be a brave person with credible achievements.

Example of Young Sikh

Khāfi Khān (ਖਾਫੀ ਖਾਨ) illustrates the resolute will and complete devotion to their cause displayed by those Sikhs by telling us about one young prisoner who was about to be called up from the line. This boy had been newly married and had been hauled in by Zakarīā Khān's (ਜ਼ਕਰੀਆ ਖਾਨ) soldiers on the way, only to swell the number of captives for the pleasure of Farūkh Siyār (ਫਾਰੂਖ ਸਿਯਾਰ). He was the only son of his widowed mother, who had hurried to plead her case before the Emperor. She said that her son had been beguiled into joining the Sikh bands, but was not a Sikh at heart. On that ground, the Emperor wrote out the order of pardon for the boy, and the mother had hurried with that note and handed it to the officer-in-charge of the executions. The officer read out the pardon and the youth shouted out, "My mother has lied. I am a Sikh of my Gurū in body and soul. Do not separate me from my departed friends. Please hurry so that I can join them now." Saying this he left the guards dumbfounded and rushed away to the front of the queue again. He lowered his head before the executioner and refused to budge until the sword had descended and cut him into two.