

## **GURU GOBIND SINGH**

### **Birth and Early Life**

Guru Tegh Bahadur left for Bengal along with the Raja of Jodhpur either on his own or at the behest of Aurangzeb. He left his mother Nanaki, his wife Mata Gujri who was in the family way and Kirpal Chand behind at Patna. Later on he moved towards Assam.

Mata Gujri gave birth to a son at Patna on Saturday night of 17-18 Poh of 1723 Bikarami corresponding to December, 1666. The day was still four and half hours away. He was called Gobind in deference to the wishes of his father. Many miracles are related regarding his birth, which I deliberately leave out, considering such stories to be not factual, being born out the blind devotion of the followers.

When Gobind was old enough to play with other boys, his favorite pastime was to divide them into two groups pitting one against the other in mock battles. He himself was fond of wielding the sling and the bow and arrows.

As he was the son of a Guru, people respected him. The boys also showed him great deference and he usually assumed the role of a king or a commander of the army. Sometimes, he would play the judge and dispense justice. He was skilled with the sling and made the boys familiar with its handling. When women of the neighborhood carried pitchers for fetching water, he and his boys aimed at the pitchers and broke them. The women in exasperation complained to his grandma who often reprimanded him and threatened him with punishment.

The Guru was fearless from his very childhood. A famous anecdote runs like this. One day he was playing with his band of boys. The Nawab of Patna was passing by, in precession. The mace - bearer (of the Nawab) asked the boys to salaam (salute) the Nawab. But Gobind directed his companion-boys to make faces at him, instead. The boys did so and ran away.

When Guru Tegh Bahadur returned to Punjab, he left his family behind at Patna. He founded Anandpur Sahib and later sent for his people.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was aware of the temper of the times, Succession involved strife and Jealousy. So he got his son trained in warfare and horse-riding alongwith religious instructions. He also made arrangements for his son to study Persian. Guru Tegh Bahadur's far-sighted introduction of his son to such fields of studies proved a great boon to Gobind Singh in his later life.