The seed of Charhdi Kala which Guru Nanak disseminated in the hearts of the Sikhs was made by the Perfect Spiritual Master from God’s storehouse of ‘naam’ and ‘sabada’. It had been nurtured with such a skill and craftsmanship that it soon became a big shady spiritual tree during his lifetime. It was constantly watered and taken care of by the lineage of Great Gurus after the Guru and even after the Gurus by their devoted disciples. Those who sat under this tree, enjoyed its spiritual shade of ‘naam’, relished its tasty fruit of ‘naam-ras’ and the most delicious and sweet nectar of ‘sabada’. Guru injected the divine nectar of spiritual ‘naam’ in the minds of his disciples which purified their minds and made them ready for spiritual flights and brought them in Charhdi Kala. The opening of tenth gate of the body by controlling the other nine gates ushered in new spiritual experiments, novel revelations and a rapturous world of Charhdi Kala blessed them with inner awakening. The Guru turned them into unique renouncers who were instructed not to renounce the world and were given the message of ‘naam japo’ ‘kirat karo’and ‘vand ke shako’. It was a unique renunciation wherein they were told to live in the world in such a way as if they did not live in it. He gave a new meaning to the term ‘Yog’ and preached his disciples to practise the ‘Yoga’ of remaining detached amidst worldly attachments. He made his followers spiritually energized by the spiritual armoury he gave them in the form of ‘naam and ‘sabada’, regular meditation, love and devotion and enriched them with fellow feelings, humanistic values, and philanthropic attitudes. The
Gurus composed spiritual poetry in the form of Gurubani which opened new spiritual vistas and established spiritual values for them based on virtues. An in depth study of Guru Nanak Bani reveals that the Guru was conscious of the inherent weaknesses of the prevalent system and “attempted at changing the total value system of the contemporary society” by giving a new set of values.

The new set of values the Guru gave, was that of universal brotherhood, truth, fearlessness, love and the grace of the Spiritual Master and the God. This spiritual armour of the new scale of values helped in the inner as well as outer growth of Charhdi Kala consciousness from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh and onwards. According to Dr. Trumpp, “The doctrines once uttered by Baba Nanak were taken up by the following Sikh Gurus without any perceptible deviation; and after the volume of the Granth had been collected by Guru Arjan Dev, they were never called into question, the Granth being held as an immediate divine revelation.”

The spiritual armoury of Charhdi Kala with which Gurus blessed their Sikhs, turned them into a ‘sachiar’ society of saints. “The Beloved God, the pardoner came to abide in their minds through ‘sant-sangat’ i.e. the society of saints.” The Guru also calls it ‘sant-sabha’, the society of the saints. The Guru’s instruction is to “speak God’s Name through the Word of the Guru and search for this Nectar in the society of saints.” We find the saints-in-making in the disciples of Guru Nanak. We find the Gurus addressing his disciples as saints. The Guru says, “O Meeting thou in the society of saints, deliberate over the True Name. Gather thou the viaticum of True Name for thy soul which shall be with thee here and the here-after.” The Guru’s stress is on ‘aethe-outhe’ i.e. “here and here-after” which means this world as well as that world. Both the worlds will have to be equally cared for. His message of ‘naam japo’, ‘kirat karo’, and ‘vand ke shako’ looks after the welfare
of his disciples in both the worlds. The Guru’s path is actually the path of the saints as Guru Arjan Dev preaches us that “by travelling on the path of the saints a lot of impure ones will get salvation.”7 Dr. Sher Singh is right when he says, “Guru Nanak aimed at training people to find God from within. He wanted, in other words, to teach the steps in order to reach the height where he himself stood.”8 The Guru gave his disciples the wings of God’s Name so that they could fly to heights of Charhdi Kala. He injected the spiritual power of ‘sabada’ in his disciples in the form of an ascending force to reach and scale those heights. He gave them the technique to obtain and enkindle the Charhdi Kala stage in them and this was well followed by rest of the Gurus who successfully carrying the message of the first Guru, went on inculcating the Nectar of Charhdi Kala to his disciples. To quote Dr. Darshan Singh, “Guru Nanak wanted his Sikh to be a sachiar, (Sachiar transformed himself into a saint-soldier at the time of tenth Guru), to be internally solid and strong, while standing upon some principles and thereby to attain supremacy in all other areas of life. Therefore, economic gains are required for reasonably good subsistence. The real power is within oneself and it must be realised.”9 What Dr. Darshan Singh calls “the real power” is actually the power of Charhdi Kala which the Guru blessed their disciples to turn them into perfect individuals.

The Second Apostle of Charhdi Kala:

Guru Angad Dev is well-known for starting Gurmukhi script and getting the life stories of Guru Nanak written under his supervision. He also started the ‘langar’(community-kitchen) of ‘Ghiali Khir’ i.e. the porridge in clarified-butter and a wrestling-arena for physical exercise to lay stress on maintaining good physical health. This was an indication that both spiritual and physical, i.e. inner and outer strength were required to be in Charhdi Kala but it was also important to kill one’s
ego and practise humility. The Guru said, “Our ‘houmein’ (ego) is a chronic disease which has the remedy in itself to control it. If the God be gracious, He makes us listen to the ‘shabada’ of the Guru which brings us in Charhdi Kala.\(^{10}\)

The second Guru made us conscious of the factors which could lead to our fall and said, “If man does not concentrate his mind in God’s Name and remains busy doing millions of deeds, he will go to hell.”\(^{11}\) It means that the central point is the love for the God’s Name. The second Guru was a great proponent of service to the spiritual Master. “The disciple who sells his mind to the Guru, gets Chardi Kala in work and deed and remains successful.”\(^{12}\) Charhdi Kala, according to second Guru, lies in total submission to the God. “One who compares himself with God under the influence of ego, forefeits his due in the next world.”\(^{13}\) “One should praise the God who gives everything to eat. One can’t give order to the God, only prayer and submission can help in this field.”\(^{14}\)

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Angad revealed to his disciples the mysteries of the body and its role in bringing us to Charhdi Kala. He said, “Body fortress contains nine visible doors, the mysterious tenth is hidden. The hard door of ignorance doesn’t open. It is the Guru’s Word which opens it.”\(^{15}\)

**Third Apostle of Charhdi Kala:**

Guru Amar Das carried Guru Nanak’s message to the disciples by emphasising the need for looking into one’s body. He said that, “the human body is the God’s Temple in which emerge the precious diamonds of knowledge to bring us in Charhdi Kala.”\(^{16}\) “With great luck one gets this body”\(^{17}\)—the body which is extremely sacred.\(^{18}\) The Guru wanted us to look within the body, sit in meditation, and start a search for the God within. Giving us the accurate method of God’s worship to come to Charhdi Kala, the Guru addresses us as saints and
says that “God’s worship is rare to find and inexplicable O’ saints.”

“In the body lies the God who nourishes all.”

“The Guru-ward beings make a search within their body to come to Charhdi Kala, others are mistaken.”

Charhdi Kala is impossible without realizing the mystery of one’s body. Those lovers of God “are pure who realize themselves.”

“Everything has come out of the God’s Name.”

“Those who absorb themselves into the ‘sabada’ and practise the art of dying alive into the ‘sabada’, are complete. The brave Guru reveals the art of listening to the sound-current of ‘sabada’ to bring them in Charhdi Kala.”

“Those who search the God outside their body, do not get the God’s Name but waste their time in utter frustration and grief.”

Only ‘naam’ was supreme. “Without Name all are of low castes worth the worms of filth.”

“If we know the taste of the word, we get self-knowledge.”

Nine outlets of the body cannot give the taste of ‘naam’ which lies in the tenth door. “Nine doors are visible and the tenth is invisible.”

The institution of ‘langer’ symbolising the concept of equality flourished at the time of the third Guru. Even emperor Akbar had to humbly sit in a queue to take ‘langer’ in Guru’s community-kitchen.

The third Guru was a living example of Charhdi Kala who announced that the “Guru-ward beings who were blessed with inner knowledge and inner enlightenment, never become old.”

In his old age the Guru lovingly offered such services to his Satguru, which were otherwise impossible for an old-man to perform. The Guru performed humblest kind of work such as bringing the water daily from a distance of three miles from Beas river for the morning bath of the Guru.

The Guru was seventy-three when he became the Guru. In his spiritual reign of twenty two years, he gave exemplary spiritual leadership to the Sikhs to bring them to Charhdi Kala. He organized a lot of social reforms and welfare activities such as the construction of the ‘bouli’ i.e. well with eighty-four steps at Goindwal for the use of
visitors, abolition of ‘sati’ and ‘purda’ by women. We get a glimpse of his organizational craftsmanship in his institution of ‘manjis’ i.e. dioceses, each one placed separately under the charge of bishops which increased the followers in great numbers and led Sikhism to Charhdi Kala. To quote Max Arthur Macauliffe, “It was Guru Nanak who had sowed the seed from which it sprang. In Guru Angad’s time its trunk towered on high, and its roots penetrated the earth, while during Guru Amar Das’s spiritual reign it put forth its widely spreading branches in every direction.”

The Guru breathed his last at the age of ninety-five and while dying, he gave such dictates to his followers which immensely revealed his state of Charhdi Kala while departing from this world. The Guru ordered not to perform any mournings after his death and remain in Charhdi Kala by obeying the will of the God. Macauliffe picturises the last words of the Guru in the following strain: “When I have gone, sing God’s praises, read God’s word, hear God’s word, and obey God’s will. . . . Perform no obsequies for me, place not a lamp in my hands during my last moment.”

**Fourth Apostle Of Charhdi Kala:**

Guru Ram Dass came as an ordinary disciple to the third Guru. The Guru was so much impressed by his humble service for the Guru that he accepted him as his son-in-law. Guru Ram Dass never behaved like a son-in-law. He became humbler, loved his Guru more and remained more in the service of the Guru than before. When came the time of choosing a successor, a patience-test was conducted. The Guru ordered him to make the platforms at the ‘bouli’ and went on rejecting the platforms every time fourth Guru made it. So great was fourth Guru’s patience that he went on making the platforms without uttering even a single word. So pleased and impressed was the third Guru with fourth Guru’s humility and patience that he said, “Obeying my order,
seven times hast thou built the platform, so seven generations of thine 
shall sit the Guru's throne."32

While discussing fourth Guru's philosophy of Charhdi Kala, it would be interesting to note the terminology symbolic of an ascending order used by the Guru in one of his couplets. The fourth Guru compares human body to a horse on which human soul mounts to cross the rough sea of the world. "This body is created by the God himself. This body horse should be decorated with a saddle to find the supreme God. One should mount upon this horse to cross the rough seas which has innumerable waves. It is the Guru which helps in crossing it. The lucky ones cross it by boarding the God's ship by steering it with the 'Chappu' i.e. raft of Guru's word."33 Giving supreme importance to the body which has provision for charhdi kala, the Guru says, "In the body-city abides the Supreme-Master-God who is fearless, without enmity and formless.

Guru Ram Dass was a great proponent of service to the Guru which purifies the mind and leads to Charhdi Kala. The Guru's service, he said, "is pure and the pure ones perform this service."34 "Sitting or getting up one should devote oneself to the Satguru's service which will bestow one with peace of mind."35 "God's Name is precious fortress which is lying hidden in the fort temple of the body."36 "One can search it out if one meets the Guru after which, the light of our souls merges into the eternal light to become one."37 He addresses his followers as saints and says, "By raising his arm the Guru is calling them. They should listen to Guru's call."38

Service without question to Guru and humility are the great virtues to obtain Charhdi Kala and these are the virtues we get from the life-stories of the fourth Guru. As mentioned earlier the incident of construction of the platforms at the site of 'bowli' i.e. the water-spring, reveals volumes of selfless love the Guru, his patience and his service to
the Guru which are the great qualities of Charhdi Kala of the Guru to be emulated strongly by his followers. When Baba Sri Chand asked the fourth Guru as to why he had grown such a long beard, the Guru replied that he had grown it to wipe the feet of holy man like Baba Sri Chand and actually started wiping his feet. The fourth Guru founded Amritsar in 1570 which is symbolic of the Charhdi Kala of the Sikhs.

**Great Martyr Of Charhdi Kala:**

A great organizer, a great poet, a zealous preacher, editor, seer and the greatest of the martyrs, the fifth Guru was an embodiment and a living example of Charhdi Kala. The word Charhdi Kala in ‘Ardas’ appears to be taken from the couplet of the fifth Guru in which we find the words Charhya and Kala used together in a single couplet for the first time. The Guru said, “If sixteen virtues or forces are enkindled perfectly, the God with His endless forces ascend within.” These sixteen virtues are: knowledge, meditation, good attributes, determination, abstinence, religion, donation, education, concentration, love, celibacy, spiritual faith, truth, kindness, regularity and perfection.

The fifth Guru was a strong advocate of singing God’s attributes, which help on the path to Charhdi Kala. “Those who sing God’s attributes are supreme.” “Nanak lives only by relating God’s attributes which bring in innumerable ecstatic delights and spiritual raptures.” The instrument within plays eternal melody which daily keeps the mind in spiritual rapture symbolizing Charhdi Kala. It helps the mind to eschew the wayward ego. “Nanak prays the God to take the soul into His shelter and bestows the mind with love for the company of the True and the Pure Master.”

The great citadel of Charhdi Kala formed by Guru Nanak was practically highlighted by the fifth Guru, who not only propounded the philosophy theoretically but gave it a practical shape by laying down his
life for the concept of blissful ‘Bhana’ i.e. the Guru’s will.”

Whatever pleased the God was acceptable without any questionings. The Guru did what he had predicted that he “will sacrifice for Thy will.” His sacrifice was a great living example of Charhdi Kala. The foundation stone of Harimander Sahib and the compilation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib were the great citadels for an ever-lasting and never dying Charhdi Kala of the Sikhs.

The concept of relying upon God’s Will and the concept of Charhdi Kala appearing simultaneously at the concluding portion of the Sikh litany, were practically established by the fifth Guru who was against performing any self-willed miracles against the God’s will. The Guru said, “What pleases God’s will is the real pleasure and honour.” “It is greatest of all the truths that nothing is greater than God’s will.”

Any wayward personality, cannot obey the will the God. “Only Thou can help to obey Thy Will through Thy graciousness.” “Only they are the devotees whom Thou liketh and who obey Thy will. Nanak can always sacrifice for such lovers of God’s will.” The Guru says, “I have got this knowledge from the Guru that whatever God does should be obeyed as good.”

The fifth Guru was a practical mystic who wanted to preach more by example than by precept. The concept of martyrdom became a practical example when the Guru preached that it was all in the God’s will. If the God’s will is to sit on the burning hot plate, one should happily accept it. We find that the concept of martyrdom and God’s will appear frequently in the writings of the great martyr himself. The fifth Guru was perhaps born to bear the brunt of the burning fire on his own self, so that the world may live in peace. It was the concept of dying while living. In order to have one’s God, it was important to kill one’s mind in the mind itself.
First Turning Point In Sikh History:

The martyrdom of the fifth Guru is a first turning point in Sikh History. It created circumstances which gave a militant, martial colour to a spiritually coloured, other-worldly people. The Sikhs for whom their True Master was dearer than anything else in the world, were never ready to accept their True Master’s martyrdom. What pained them more was that their Master was mercilessly tortured to death. The fifth Guru was made to sit on big hot bread-baking iron plates and the burning sands from a parcher’s furnace were poured on his bare body. After such inhuman tortures the Guru was taken to the Ravi for a bath where he was said to have mysteriously disappeared into the Ravi.

All this was too much for the Sikhs. The blood-curdling tortures meted out on their beloved Guru made their blood boil. They sat brooding waiting for vengeance. In meditation, they prayed to the God for help. The great principles of Charhdi Kala stood by them. The ideals of devotion, love, humility and complete surrender to the will of the God (‘Bhana’) and finally forgiveness were at test. It was a unique predicament. Their question to the God was “Is it possible to forgive the inhuman cruelties meted out to their Father?”

A Living Example of Charhdi Kala:

The martyrdom of the fifth Guru was a great living example of Charhdi Kala. Sitting on the hot ferrous sheet, the Guru remained in Charhdi Kala and went on smiling gracefully and repeating the holy Name of the God, “Thy will is sweet, O, God; Nanak asks only for Thy Name.” The Guru practically lived by what had been composed in His Bani, “What pleases Thee, is acceptable. I sacrifice myself at Thy Will.” Acceptable are those people who believe in the God’s Will. “Bear God’s will as a final truth and live eternally forever and forever as a result.” The Guru means to say that a cheerful acceptance of the
God’s will ushers in Charhdi Kala forever and forever in the house of the God.

‘Naam-simran’ and ‘shabad-abhias’ are the mystic forces which germinate the spirit of Charhdi Kala within and from where emerge the force to rely on God’s will. The Guru said, “This is the instruction of the Perfect Master to meditate on God’s Name. In the God’s will, one does the contemplation, practice austerities and keeps abstinence and in the God’s will is one released.”

Fifth Guru’s whole Bani reveals his total reliance on God’s will and we find his martyrdom becoming a living example of accepting God’s will with smiles. There is an anecdote that the Muslim saint Mian Mir, who was an ardent follower of the Guru and who had laid the foundation stone of the Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar, was so perturbed to see the tortures meted out to the Guru that he offered to use his spiritual power to punish Jahangir but the Guru stopped him and ordered him to obey the God’s will. To quote Max Arthur Macauliffe, “The Guru requested him to cast his eyes towards heaven. On doing so, it is said, Mian Mir saw angels begging the Guru’s permission to destroy the wicked, the proud, and perverse....To Mian Mir who was wonderstruck with such heavenly sights, Guru replied, “I bear all this torture to set an example to the teachers of the True Naam, that they may not lose patience or rail at God in affliction.” The true test of faith is the hour of misery. Without examples to guide them, ordinary persons’ minds quail in the midst of suffering. To set aside by the exercise of supernatural power the law of nature which applieth to all things perishable and thereby to engender pride in the heart, would be supreme folly.’ Mian Mir on the hearing this departed commending the Guru’s fortitude and singing his praises.”
The Guru had set an example of remaining undetered in any eventuality whatsoever which the Sikhs vehemently followed after his martyrdom. They became a race of spiritualists, martyrs and warriors who always remained in *Charhdi Kala* in all situations.

*Sri Guru Granth Sahib: A Source of Charhdi Kala:*

Fifth Guru’s greatest contribution was his editing and compilation of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* which contains the teachings in the form of spiritual verses composed not only by Sikh Gurus but by some Hindu and Muslim saints as well which gives it a universal appeal. It is a permanent source of *Charhdi Kala* for the Sikhs which blesses them with an everlasting, ever-fresh, multi-faceted inspiration from *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. It is an unending reservoir of spirituality, a perennial source of ‘Gur-Sabada’ appearing as Guru’s Word and Order i.e. ‘Hukamnaama’ receiving and imbibing which mind blooms and utters, “My God is Ever New, Always, Always Great Giver.”

**Amritsar and Charhdi Kala - A Historical Perspective:**

A great monument which became a great source of *Charhdi Kala* in the course of history is Harimandir Sahib at Amritsar. The story of the miracle of black crows turning into white swans after the dip in ‘sarovar’ and the final recovery of the leper became so popular that the Mughal rulers started having an eye on Amritsar ‘sarovar’ as they started feeling that ‘sarovar’ was responsible for the rising power, i.e. *Charhdi Kala* of the Sikhs. The desecration of the Amritsar ‘sarovar’ became the chief aim of the Muslim rulers and they always conspired to destroy the source of the Sikh power. There have been many instances in history when the Muslim rulers desecrated the Amritsar ‘sarovar’ by putting dead cows’ intestines in it. Their only aim in doing so was to check and destroy the source of *Charhdi Kala* of the Sikhs. Ahmed Shah Abdali even went to the extent of destroying the whole Temple. To quote Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, “To further punish the Sikhs, he
attacked them at Amritsar on the eve of the Baisakhi festival i.e. 10th April, 1762, when the thousands of them gathered for a bath in the holy temple. They of course dispersed at his approach, and he took the occasion to blow up their sacred temple with gun-powder. The bungas or rest-houses meant for pilgrims were destroyed and temple after being desecrated with the blood of cows, was filled with refuse and debris.  

History is witness to the fact that whosoever tried to desecrate Amritsar, has suffered a lot or met some tragic end. Even Ahmed Shah Abdali had to bear the brunt, a fact which has not gone unnoticed by historians. To quote Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, “As the buildings were being blown up, a flying-bat is said to have struck the Shah on his nose and inflicted a wound from which he never recovered.”  

Sikhs have never left the atrocities meted out on their person go unavenged. To quote Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, “On 17th Oct, 1762 was the Diwali festival and about 60,000 Sikhs had assembled on the occasion at Amritsar, with the resolve to avenge the insult inflicted upon their temple and retrieve the loss of national honour suffered in the great Holocaust. Receiving news of this gathering, the Shah who had returned from Kalanaur to Lahore and had no sufficient reserves with him thought of averting a clash by resolving to diplomacy…. Finding all efforts at peace unavailing, the Shah marched from Lahore and reached Amritsar on 16th Oct, the day before Diwali. Early next morning, the Sikhs drew up their reserves and made a desperate attack on the enemy. The Afgans fought with equal energy during the whole day of the ‘Amavasya’, which was darkened by a total eclipse of the sun, but they could produce no impression on the Sikhs. The tact and skill of the military genius of the time of Asia gave way before the zeal and determination born of religious fervour and sacrifice. The Shah was compelled to withdraw his forces and escape to Lahore under cover of
The defeat of such a big army of Ahmed Shah Abdali at the hands of the Sikhs was a major great event of history.

History reveals that the Mughals always thought of desecrating the Amritsar Harimandir as they believed that the Sikhs received their spiritual force of *Charhdi Kala* from Harimandir’s sacred pool. The Sikhs always showed their unparalleled strength of *Charhdi Kala* in all such situations and always gave suitable replies to the Mughals. Inhuman cruelties were meted out to the Sikhs to tarnish their morale. The Sikhs did not bend and stood all the inhuman treatments given to them. They always remained in *Charhdi Kala* and went on punishing those responsible for the desecration of the temple. One such example was that of Sukha Singh, Mehtab Singh who disguised themselves as Muslims in August 1740 (when temple was converted into a stable and the sanctum sanctorum into a dancing place for public girls by Massa Ranghar) and entered the temple under the pretext of paying land revenue. They beheaded Massa Ranghar in broad day light for desecrating the temple, held his head on a ‘neja’ (the long spear) and displayed it in the streets to show the punishment they would give to those responsible for desecrating the temple and to show they were in *Charhdi Kala* even in worst times.

‘Sacha Padshah’ of ‘Miri-Piri’:

The arrival of Guru Hargobind Sahib on the religio-socio-political scene of India was a consequential climacteric, which for the first time, transformed the Sikh character and the Sikh ethos from the purely spiritual to the martial. It was for the first time that the Sikhs took to sword -- not just one sword but the two: ‘miri’ symbolizing temporal power and ‘piri’ symbolizing spiritual power. By doing so the Guru mingled martial arts with religiosity, temporal with the spiritual, and ‘bhakti’ with ‘shakti’. It was an attempt at giving a practical shape to the ideas already given by the first Guru. It was a practical move in the darkness.
making of recluse in the house-hold itself. The aim was wholeness in
*Charhdī Kala* in both the spiritual and the temporal. “In the Guru’s
house religion and worldly enjoyment shall be combined with cauldron
to supply the poor and needy and the scimitar to smite oppressors.”  

The Guru “issued an encyclical letter to the masands to the effect that he
would be pleased with those who brought arm and horses instead of
money.”  

The ‘masanads’ who did not relish Guru’s call for arms
because of obvious reasons complained to the Guru’s mother, The
preceding five Gurus never handled arms. If Jahangir heard of our
Guru’s doings he will be angry; and where shall we hide ourselves?

“The Guru’s mother replied, ‘Have no anxiety. Guru Nanak’s hand is on
my son’s head. The Guru ever liveth. Bhai Budha’s words, that Har
Gobind shall be a temporal as well as spiritual ruler and shall wield two
swords, are about to be fulfilled.’”  

A peep at the daily life of Guru Har Gobind especially
immediately after the martyrdom of the fifth Guru, injects a lesson of
*Charhdī Kala* in our minds. The Guru took the reigns of spiritual
ministry at a time which was full of challenges. The Guru was only
eleven years old when his father, Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth beloved
Master of the Sikhs was martyred. It was a period of great shock, a
period which was not merely a test for the Guru but for the whole Sikh
community. The martyrdom of the great Apostle who taught philosophy
of living in God’s will, will have to be accepted as the will of the God.
The first great deed the Guru did, was to preach his disciples to remain
cool in the hours of sorrow. For regular ten days went on the recitations
of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.  

It was on eleventh day that the eleven year old Guru was made to sit on a specially erected platform for the
Guru’s coronation at Sri Akal Takath Sahib. When Bhai Budha offered
him the ‘seli’, a woollen cord worn round the neck as a mark of
Guruship, “Guru Har Gobind ordered that ‘seli’ should be placed in the
treasury, apparently because it was not suited to the altered political condition of the Sikhs. He then addressed Bhai Budda, 'My endeavours shall be to fulfill thy prophecy. My 'seli' shall be a sword-belt, and I shall wear my turban with a royal aigrette.' He then sent for his arms, and arrayed himself in martial style so that, as the Sikh chronicler states, his splendour shone like the sun.\textsuperscript{66}

It is the great glimpse of Charhdi Kala we get at the coronation ceremony of the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. The Guru girded two swords of 'miri' and 'piri' symbolizing temporal and the spiritual power and ordered for the militarisation of the Sikhs for the protection of the weak and the poor. The regular practice of martial arts started to train his followers militarily. Wrestling, equestrian, tent-pegging and hunting became the order of the day for the Sikhs. The Guru felt happy at the offerings in the form of arms, horses and weaponry. The Sikhs rejoicing at the happiness of their Guru brought these offerings in large numbers. "Physical strength and athletic constitution found as much favour with the war-like pontiff as the highest piety or the deepest learning."\textsuperscript{67} The Guru enrolled 52 stout Sikhs as his bodyguards. Another five hundred rushed to the Guru from the regions of Majha, Malwa and Doaba and offered themselves for any service and sacrifice for their Guru. The Guru gave them horses, weapons and the training both spiritual and martial. They, thus, formed the first army of the Sikhs. The city of Amritsar was fortified into a Lohgarh where the military and martial training to the Sikhs was given. 'Akal Takhath' which means the Throne of the Almighty became the seat of the temporal authority. The Guru daily sat on the 'Takhath' to give sermons to his Sikhs. In the courtyard before the 'Akal Takhat', the Guru received the visitors, listened to their complaints and resolved their disputes. The Sikhs from far and wide started flocking to the Guru in large numbers to seek spiritual as well as temporal guidance. Hunting expeditions were
organized, wrestling matches were held, and martial poetic symposiums with martial music in the form of ‘vaars’ were organized, which reflected a warlike atmosphere in the Guru’s camps and a lot of hustle and bustle in Amritsar. “Under Guru Hargobind was also established custom, which still continues, of choirs moving nightly round the Golden Temple and, with the blare of trumpets and flare of torches, singing hymns in stirring tunes. All these programmes put a new life into the drooping hearts of the Sikhs who as the Sikh chronicle records, began to revive like vegetables in the raining season. This was all a training for the spiritual as well as the martial charhdi kala of the Sikhs. The “new life” Teja Sigh and Ganda Singh talk of, was in the form of a spirit of Charhdi Kala the Guru instilled in the minds of his disciples.

Guru Saves Emperor By Killing The Tiger:

The news of the great Charhdi Kala of the Guru and his warlike preparations spread all around. It flustered the sinner Chandu, the pitcher of whose sin of having a hand in martyrdom of the fifth Guru, brimmed to the full. Chandu reported warlike preaparations combined with the establishment of the true throne at ‘Akal Takhat’ to the emperor who, alarmed at the news, sent Wazir Khan and Kind Beg as his emissaries to summon the Guru to his presence. Wazir Khan who was a Sikh at heart, told the emperor, “The Guru hath no desire for empire. His wealth increaseth of itself by the powers of his repetition of God’s name. When he arrives here, thou shall be well pleased with him.”

The emperor received the Guru with utmost respect and asked him a lot of questions on spirituality and the worldly matters which included the essential difference between the Hindus and the Muslims, the order of the world, the methods of purifying the mind, who were holier, the Hindus or Muslims and what were the duties of a monarch? The Guru cited excerpts from Guru Granth in the form of his answers. So
enchanted was the emperor with Guru’s answers that he invited the Guru to accompany him on a hunting expedition which was gladly accepted by the Guru. “When in the forest, a tiger issued forth and rushed at the Emperor. Elephants and horses took flight, and the beaters who accompanied the party loudly shouted in distress. Bullets and arrows were discharged, but went right and left of the tiger. The Emperor almost paralysed with fear called upon the Guru to save him. The Guru alighted from his horse, and taking his sword and shield ran between the Emperor and the tiger. As the tiger was going to spring upon, the Guru dealt him a blow with his sword, and he fell lifeless to the earth. The emperor thanked his destiny that he was saved from the jaws of death by the Guru’s hand.”

The True King:

The incident of saving emperor Jahangir from the jaws of the tiger by the Guru left a mark of Guru’s Charhdi Kala on the emperor and both became good friends. In the heart of his heart, the emperor felt jealous also of Guru’s Charhdi Kala. He was scared of Guru’s great physical strength and craftsmanship. Once when they were hunting, the emperor asked the Guru, “O, Guru, my ministers and staff tell me that, although thou oughtest in reality to have no connection with worldly affairs, yet thou callst thyself the true king of the world, and thy Sikhs call me who am descended from emperors, who am the God of many lands, and cherisher of my subjects, a false king.” The Guru replied that it was the cord of love between the Guru and the disciples which binds the Sikhs in love-cord with the Guru. Guru is the Saviour. Guru is the True king and the true government for the disciples. The God, the Creator was the Truest of the True and the King of all kings.

The Great ‘Bandi-Chhor’:

The sinner Chandu who was scared all the more at the Guru’s Charhdi Kala and his friendship with the emperor, bribed the emperor’s
astrologer to advise the emperor to send a holyman like Guru Hargobind to Gwalior to do the penance for the emperor to save him from the ill-effects of Saturn. On the advice of pro-Chandu ministers, the emperor "mentioned his decision to the Guru; the later accepted it without hesitation."72

The Sikhs were perturbed at the decision but the Guru advised them to remain in Charhdi Kala. The Guru knew that God's will was the salvation of 52 kings detained by the emperor in Gwalior jail. Guru's company and his message brought them in Charhdi Kala and they started sitting in meditation regularly. The emperor who was never happy at his bitter decision of sending the Guru to Gwalior jail, ordered for his release but the Guru put a condition that he would accept to be released if 52 kings detained in Gwalior jail were also released alongwith. The emperor agreed and the 52 'rajas' also got their release. The Guru came to be known as a great 'bandi-chhor'; in spiritual meaning, the one who gave a release from the bondage of birth and death.

**A Practical Sermon of Charhdi Kala to Ramdass:**

The anecdote of Guru's encounter with Goswami Ramdass Samrath, Shivaji's Guru and a sage of Maharashtra during his visit to Srinagar Garhwal and his message to the Maratha saint, can be said to be a milestone in framing the theory of Charhdi Kala. The Maratha saint who was surprised to see the Guru on the horse-back wearing two swords alongwith an army, asked the Guru, "I hear that you are the successor of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak had renounced the world while you wear the sword, keep horses and army and people call you 'Sacha Padshah'. What kind of a 'sadhu' are Thou?" The Guru replied, "Saintliness is within. Sovereignty is external."("Batan fakiri, Zahir miri")73 The Guru's answer contains the hidden treasure of Charhdi Kala in it which reveals out the secret of life to the Maratha saint who
received the message to preach the gospel in Maharashtra. This message which led to the rise of personalities like Shivaji. “(I display royalty only from outside; inwardly I am detached like a fakir. Guru Nanak had abandoned Maya (i.e. attachment of the world), not the world itself.) Swami Ramdas was much pleased at this reply and said, “yeh (bat) hamare man bhavti hai.” (This reply satisfies us) And he changed thereafter the course of his instruction and on his return to Maharastra, instructed Shivaji, his pupil, that the age-old lesson of renunciation imparted by our ancient teachers had been misconstrued by the Hindu race, thus leading to their political slavery of foreign hordes.” It was a practical sermon of Charhdi Kala which later on was to change the course of Indian history.

**Message Of Charhdi Kala to Shah Daula:**

While the Guru was returning from his tour of Kashmir, he came across an eminent Muslim Fakir Shah Daula, the conversation with whom happens to delineate the practical aspects of life in our study of the philosophy of Charhdi Kala, the records of which are found in the works of many historians. The Muslim Fakir asked the Guru, “How can rearing of children in family and longing for the God, wealth and renunciation, love for wife and spirituality can go together and how can a Hindu be a fakir also? The Guru’s reply forms the basis for practical use in the life of a house-holder practising the philosophy of Charhdi Kala: “The children secure the sign of our reminiscence, a wife symbolize man’s conscience, wealth gives sustenance and a fakir is neither a Hindu nor a Mussalman.” The Guru’s answer is an extension of the philosophy of Charhdi Kala propounded by the great first Guru of the Sikhs who propounded ‘raj-yog’ to Sikhs.

**An Apostle of Victories:**

The historical records reveal that the Guru had to fight four battles with the royal armies which were all won by the Guru who emerged as a
great apostle of victories for the Sikhs. The Sikhs don’t believe in miracles and rely on God and be happy in what the God keeps them. A handful of followers of the Guru standing to face the military might of the most powerful force of the world, was no less than a miracle. These battles were actually the victories of the philosophy of *Charhdi Kala* propounded by the Guru.

**Battling For *Charhdi Kala*:**

A bird’s eye-view to have a closer perusal of these battles reveal that these were the battles of *Charhdi Kala* and for the *Charhdi Kala* of the Sikhs. The Guru in the battles looked exactly like the Guru in ‘sant-sabhas’ and ‘satsangs’ giving sermon to his disciples. We find the Guru taking the real battles sportingly as if teaching even his foe as how to attack, especially in duels. We find the Guru rejoicing, accepting and defending the attacks of the foe and smilingly advancing in attack like a teacher and teaching at the same time that “this and not that” was the technique to be adopted in attack. These battles witnessed the Guru standing for the ethical values practically even in the battlefield as we find him practically sticking to the principle of fighting for self-defence only. The Guru did not go in for taking the territories after the victories nor created any terror in the minds of the foe nor did he allow the loot after the victories. He made it mandatory to his soldiers not to attack from the rear on the foe fleeing after leaving the battlefield. He also taught not to attack on the soldier rendered weaponless in the battlefield.

So, we conclude that these were the battles of *Charhdi Kala* for the sake of *Charhdi Kala* only. They were fought because they were forced upon the Sikhs. It would have been cowardly to see the ‘bouli’ of the fifth Guru being demolished and reconstructed into a mosque. The Guru was not against the mosques. History is witness to the fact that he built one himself for his Muslim workers and soldiers at Hargobindpur. These battles were fought in self-defence to check and
crush a hydra-headed monster which was out to kill and devour everybody in the way to spread its progeny. They were the prelude to what Tenth Guru was to proclaim in the times to come as ‘dharam-yudh ka chau’.

**Seventh Apostle of Charhdi Kala:**

Guru Hari Rai’s was the period of *Charhdi Kala* in peace, philanthropy, propagation and practice of ‘naam-simran’ and ‘shabad-abhias’. It was a period of travel and conversions when the Guru’s word reached far and wide into the divergent regions of Malwa and Doaba. Sikh conversions reached not merely the down-trodden outcastes but rich landlords as well, which included Bhai families of Kaithal and Bagrian, who were allocated the task of missionary groundwork between Sutlej and Jamna. Bairagi monk Bhagat Gir was renamed Bhagat Bhagwan after conversion and sent to East to spread Guru’s creed in the East. “It is said that Bhagat Bhagwan was such a powerful preacher that he established a *Bakhashish* (bounty) in Hindustan with 360 centres or gaddis most of which are still extant.”\(^78\) Bhai Sangatia was renamed Pheru and was sent to bari Doab to spread Sikhism where he spread another *Bakhshish*. Bhai Gonda was sent to Kabul to preach Sikhism. Guru’s blessings of *Charhdi Kala* were given to Kala and Phul during his tours of Malwa while the Guru stayed at Nathana and blessed the descendents of Phul who later on became Phulkian chiefs. Works of philanthropic zeal were organized. Medicine centers having the reputation of being the best in India, were opened where even the family of the emperor preferred to take treatment. We find a testimony to this fact as “Guru Hari Rai’s relations with Shah Jahan improved considerably after he supplied some rare herbs for the recovery of his favorite son, Dara Shukoh sometime in 1652. Thereafter, Guru Hari Rai started moving into central Punjab and beyond without being disturbed.”\(^79\)
After Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb adopted a policy to suppress all non-Muslim movements and his attention was naturally drawn to the Sikhs. He ordered for the Guru to be summoned to Delhi. “Two of his messengers carrying summons for the Guru died, one after the other, on the way. That forced Aurangzeb to tone down the contents of his summons. He also asked for the Guru’s presence to explain the main tenets of Sikhism.”80 The Guru wrote to the emperor, “I am sending my elder son Ram Rai alongwith some missionaries to remove your doubts and misgivings about Sikh Religion.”81 Quite satisfied on receiving Guru’s letter, Aurangzeb remarked: “There is no doubt in Hari Rai being a mere fakir”.82 Ram Rai was given an extra-ordinary welcome as he fell into the trap of showing miracles much against the teachings of the Gurus and even misinterpreted the text of Guru Granth Sahib only to please the emperor: By doing so Ram Rai pleased the emperor with astute cleverness who, in turn, gave Ram Rai the area of Dera Doon in grant as a reward for his knowledge and craftsmanship. It annoyed his father and the Guru found the change in the text of Guru Granth by his son against the very principles of Charhdi Kala on which the grand citadel of Sikh philosophy was raised. “Though Aurangzeb and his ‘ulema’ were satisfied, the Guru on hearing the reports was very upset. He said, “Ram Rai was genuine claimant for my throne. But Guruship is like the milk of a tigress which can be contained only in a cup of gold. Now, Ram Rai shall never see my face again.”83 The incident is specially important from the viewpoint of principles of Charhdi Kala wherein only the ‘sach-kala’ i.e. power of truth prevails and where there was no scope for foxy somersaults of the type practiced by Ram Rai. It also reveals that the stand taken by the Guru was in accordance with what the third Guru had said about the path of Charhdi Kala: “This path is sharper than the dagger’s and finer than the hair.”84
The Child-Saint of Charhdi Kala:

The eighth apostle of Charhdi Kala was the child-saint whom Bhai Gurdass Singh calls “ashtam balbirra” (eighth apostle) in pauri 22 of “Ramkali Var Patshahi Dasvin Ki” and about whom tenth Guru said in ‘Var Sri Bhagauti Ji Ki’ which we daily read in our prayer: “Contemplate on Guru Harkishen seeing whom all woes vanish.” According to Sikh chronicle, the Guru was extraordinarily prodigious—“an exceptionally bright boy” the anecdotes of whose precocious Charhdi Kala were already around even before he was bestowed the throne of Guruship. He was often seen imparting spiritual instructions to the elderly Sikhs about the purpose of human life, its transient nature and “resolve their doubts and lead them on the way to salvation.”

History reveals the birth of a miraculous child to Mata Sulakhani on the ‘naumi saun vadi’ of samat 1713, who had an illumined attractive face blooming like a lotus. So impressed was the family ‘prohit’ seeing the child that he announced the child to be named Hari Krishan as the child, to him, was a reincarnation of God Krishna. We find so much of praise and love for the child recorded in Sikh chronicles that the child can be visualized as Charhdi Kala reincarnated. The ‘sangat’ used to love and worship him as Hari Krishna even before he was made the Guru. Once the child was made to sit on the throne in love. The whole ‘sangat’ paid him obeisance. His ‘darshan’ made the anguish to flee as the hound of deer flees to see a lion. There was no comparison of this child on earth. He was like himself only.

On the occasion of his coronation, the seventh Guru moved thrice around Guru Hari Krishan to take his ‘parikarama’, paid obeisance with coconut and five ‘paisa’ and ordered the ‘sangat’ that Guru Hari Krishan will be their eighth Guru. Guru Harkrishan remained mostly in Kiratpur for over two years where he delighted the ‘sangat’ with
spiritual discourses, ‘darshan’, ‘naam-simran’ while imparting Guru’s message of Charhdi Kala to the ‘sangat’.

In the march of Charhdi Kala, we find some important incidents during the brief period of eighth Guru i.e. the Guru’s march to Delhi on the invitation of the emperor, his brief halt at Panjokhara near Ambala where the Guru made an illiterate water carrier Chhajju to interpret Gita to humble a haughty Brahmin Lal Chand who had come to challenge the Guru to interpret Gita, Guru’s interaction with devotees on the way and his brief stay at Delhi before he caught the small-pox.

The Guru was made to stay in the banglaw of Raja Jai Singh. Though Ram Rai showed outward happiness to meet his younger brother, he tried his best to confiscate the Guruship with the help of the emperor. “The disputes between the two brothers ran high, and the decision was at last referred to the emperor. Aurangzeb may have been willing to allow the Sikhs to choose their own Guru, as some accounts have it, but the more cherished tradition relates that, being struck with the child’s instant recognition of the empress among a number of ladies similarly arrayed, he declared the right of Har Kishan to be indisputable, and he was accordingly recognized as head of the Sikhs: but before the infant apostle could leave Delhi, he died of small pox in 1664, at that place.”

The Second Turning Point in Sikh History:

The two martyrdoms of the great Sikh Gurus in Sikh history have been the two crucial turning points in the annals of the Charhdi Kala of the Sikh history which resulted in the arrival of two great militant prophets in Sikh history and turned the Sikhs into saint-soldiers. The Sikh Gurus have been real source of Charhdi Kala for the Sikhs. Gurus first became the living examples of sacrifice. They taught the Sikhs by way of example so that they may not be shaken by adverse
circumstances and should be ready for what the tenth Guru said: “When comes the time to end thy life; let I fall in a mighty combat.”

“Some traditions state that his courage in battles against Mughal forces had earned him the name Teg Bahadur, ‘brave sword’, to replace his reputed name Tyag mal.”

Guru Teg Bahadur used to be very serene, saintly, pensive, deeply meditative, and philosophic in his childhood. At the age of five only he used to sit for hours together in meditation in which he never moved and talked very little. Seeing the serene nature of the child Mata Nanaki expressed her worry to Guru Har Gobind who replied, “This son of ours is to perform a great task in the times to come for which he has started preparations from now only.”

Guru was at village Bakala when the eighth Guru left his corporeal frame. While dying he had taken five paisa and a coconut in his hand and uttered “Baba Bakale” which meant that his successor was in the village of Batala. How Makhan Shah Lubana helped the Sikhs to discover the Ninth Successor is a story widely known to the Sikh masses.

The notable events during the period of the ninth apostle after coming to Punjab need to be studied. He made extensive tours of rural Punjab leading to huge conversions to Sikhism which made Aurangzeb jealous of him. We find that even some prominent Mohammedans such as Saijuddin and Pathans of Garhi near Samana were also converted to Sikhism.

The most crucial event of Sikh history has been misrepresented and misinterpreted by some historians especially Trump and Cunningham who relying on communally-afflicted Syed Ghulam Hussain’s Siyar-ul-Mutaakhrin, have tried to prove that the Guru was arrested not because of his religious beliefs, “but because he, with his armed followers, had begun to live on plunder. A Muslim fakir, Hafiz
Adam, also joined the Guru in that programme of plunder and rapine. Where these two historians failed to reach the obvious truth of history, was meticulously understood by Max Arther Macauliffe who writes, “The Muhammadan author of the Siyar-ul-Mutaakharin states that Aurangzeb had the Guru’s body cut up into pieces and suspended in different parts of the imperial capital. Whether this be true or not, it is certain that the other circumstances related by Muhammadan writer are utterly incompatible with the whole tenor of Guru Teg Bahadur’s life and writings and cannot be accepted as an approach to history.” It is important to further take notice of the footnote given by Macauliffe on page 392 which reads, “The Siyar-ul-Mutaakharin contains many obvious misstatements regarding the other Gurus also.” Communal hatred sometimes leads to the creation of historical sketches aiming at nothing except vilification with some obvious political motive. Siyar-ul-Mutaakharin also appears to be the one.

We find the great moments of Charhdi Kala in the events leading to martyrdom of the Ninth Apostle of Charhdi Kala. When Kashmiri Pandits were sitting with the Guru, the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala who was only a nine year old child and playing in the nearby hall, came to his father. Seeing him pensive and thoughtful, he asked for the reason. The Guru replied, “The matter on which the Kashmiris have come is of vital importance. The world is grieved by the oppression of the Turks. No brave man is now to be found. He who is willing to sacrifice his life shall free the earth from the burden of the Muhammadans. The child replied: ‘For that purpose who is more worthy than thou who are at once generous and brave?’

“When Guru Teg Bahadur heard this from his child’s lips he divined everything that was to follow. He told the Kashmiris to go in a body to Dihli and make the following representation to the Emperor: ‘Guru Teg Bahadur, the ninth Sikh is now seated on the throne of the
great Guru Nanak, who is protector of faith and religion. First make him a Musalman and then all the people, including ourselves, will of our own accord adopt the faith.' They obeyed the Guru and proceeded to Dihli to urge his self-sacrificing proposal.96

The spirit of Charhdhi Kala sweeps the mind seeing Gobind’s answer to his father and the ninth Guru’s decision to offer himself for the sacrifice, twinkles with the message of ‘sarbat-da-bhala’ we daily sing in chorus alongwith Charhdhi Kala.

The Guru reached Delhi preaching, holding ‘satangs’ and ‘sant-sabhas’ and imparting the message of Charhdhi Kala to the masses on the way. In Emperor’s court, Guru’s straight refusal to show the miracle to Aurangzeb or to accept Islam and his ultimate execution, are the living examples of Charhdhi Kala.

Correlation of Martyrdom And Charhdhi Kala as Concepts:

The Lexical usage of the word ‘martyr’ takes us to its origin in Greek which literally means ‘witness’. A martyr is the person who voluntarily suffers death as a penalty for witnessing to and refusing to renounce his religion. A martyr is one who sacrifices his life or something of great value for the sake of principle.97 The word ‘shaheed’ which is its parallel in the vernacular, has its origins in Arabic from where it has travelled to Urdu and Punjabi, “which literally signifies the same, that is, witness. Both in classical Greek and Arabic, the formulation of these parallel terms, each of which is built round the same image, would indicate the history of the moral and spiritual struggle of races and tribes sharing common cultural tradition in the lands inhabited by the races known as the Semitic.”98

The fifth apostle of Charhdhi Kala, the greatest of all the martyrs in the history of the world, who initiated the foundation of martyrdom in Sikhism by offering himself for a cause, knew well that a time was fast
approaching when the Sikhs will have to be taught to be martyrs by way of example.

In order to correlate martyrdom and Charhdi Kala as concepts, we will have to go to the concept of death which has spiritual connotations in Sikhism.

In Sikhism we find two possibilities of a life after death. One is the death that comes to a ‘Gurumukh’ and the other is the one that comes to a ‘manmukh’. A ‘Gurumukh’ goes to the lap of God with the help of his ‘Sabad-Satgura’ and gets liberated from the cycle of birth and death. A soul of a ‘manmukh’ moves from birth to birth according to his ‘karma’ in accordance with the law of the transmigration of the soul. ‘Manmukh’s soul can move to lower forms such as animals, birds, insects etc. or may be thrown in hell according to his deeds. Dying for the Guru is great reward for the Gurumukh who has already learnt to die daily as part of his spiritual practice. We witness this when Tenth Apostle asks for heads at the time of the foundation of the Khalsa.

A ‘Gurumukh’ dies daily into the ‘sabada’. Death comes as a delight to a Gurmukh. It ushers in the final union with the Perfect Supreme God. A ‘Gurumukh’ opens his tenth door by dying into the ‘sabada’ and by the art of reverse ascension and practices true ‘yog’ or the path by which he practices death daily while he is alive. The reverse ascension finally takes us to ‘sunn-smadh’ about which the Guru says, “When one is absorbed in the God’s love in the profound trance in ‘sun-smadh’ and reflect over nothing else but Name in concentration; one finds that there is no water, land, earth and sky in that place and the Creator all by himself remains.” In ‘sunn-smadh’ the body is benumbed and can be mistaken to be the body of a dead man. History stands witness to the fact that Ram Rai, was cremated in trance, mistaking him to be dead. To quote Macauliffe, “Some time after the Guru’s visit Ram Rai fell into a trance, and in that state was cremated.
by the ‘masands’ in defiance of the prayers and entreaties of his wife Punjab Kaur. We find that the mystic concepts of remaining in God’s will, love for the Guru, dying to live, reverse ascension, ‘sunn-smadh’, tenth door etc. help to correlate the concept of martyrdom with that of Charhdi Kala. A Guru’s Sikh is always in Charhdi Kala with the grace of the Guru. It may be a battlefield or the field of meditation, it may be dying to live or dying for the Guru, a Guru’s Sikh is always ready and remains in Charhdi Kala with the grace of the Guru.

In ‘sunn-smadh’ when soul travels upward vacating nine doors of the body, one looks like a dead man physically though one is very much alive. Travelling into upper ethereal regions leaving the body behind was an ordinary sight in Sikh mystics. They call it ‘surat charhga’ which means “the soul has ascended upwards”. It is from this usage that originally the term Charhdi Kala appears to have been framed. The practice was common in some Hindu sects especially Gorakh-panthis and some ‘yogis’ who called it ‘turyia-awastha’ the references of which are found in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. It is a stage in spirituality which makes us other-worldly, a delicate point in spiritual journey which led to the renunciation of the world in Hinduism. The Guru accepted it for spiritual advancement leading to union with the God but totally rejected the idea of renunciation of the world and redefined ‘yog’ with new meaning of “anjan-mahe-niranjan” to bring us in Charhdi Kala.

Effects of Martyrdom:

History is witness to the fact that the largest martyrdoms for the sake of ‘dharma’ and for the love of the Guru have occurred in Sikhism. When Banda Singh Bahadur was arrested, “the Sikhs vied with one another” to take their turn first for the sacrifice to imbibe the ‘shahidda-jaam’ in love for the Guru. Macauliffe says, “The members of an English mission who went from Calcutta to Dihli in 1715 to petition the Emperor for certain privileges, have left the record that they saw a
procession of eight hundred Sikh prisoners with two thousand bleeding heads borne aloft on poles. The Sikhs vied with one another for precedence in death.”

The greatest effect of the martyrdom of the Nineth Apostle of Charhdi Kala was that it converted the Sikhs into a society of martyrs, “changed the appearance of the Sikhs now into fiery ones seeing which the people were scared and finally led, to what Bhai Rattan Singh Bhangu says in Sri Guru Panth Parkash:

“Henceforth did the empire of Delhi start disintegrating
Henceforth did the power of Mughals start declining.”

Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala:

The tenth Guru was himself Charhdi Kala reincarnation. We find the spirit of Charhdi Kala always moving in living form around this greatest prophet of Charhdi Kala on earth. There was a halo of Charhdi Kala around his head which only some curious eyes full of love for the God could see clearly. Seeing the tough challenges faced by him and the great spirit of Charhdi Kala with which he handled those challenges looks so miraculous that we are almost constrained to say that there is no parallel to him in the history of the whole world. There might have been great prophets whose wonders we might have seen in the annals of history or whom we might have revered as Gods in history or mythology, but they did not pass through such circumstances out of which the tenth prophet of Charhdi Kala had to and emerged victorious. It was only Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala who could turn sparrows into hawks and enforce them to go hunting for the hawks, it was only the Tenth Apostle of Charhd Kala, who could provide baptism of steel to his Sikhs and then imbibe it himself at the hands of the Sikhs.

The base of the spirit of Charhdi Kala which always occupied the mind of the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala lies in the words of the Ninth Apostle of Charhdi Kala who says: “One who does not terrorise others nor yields to terror committed by others, Nanak says, Listen O,
mind, proclaim such a one to be the enlightened one. History records the communication of some messengers between the Ninth Apostle of Charhdi Kala when he was in Aurangzeb's custody at Delhi at the time of his martyrdom and the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala who was at Anandpur at that time and very much in touch with the happenings at Delhi. When Ninth Guru wrote Saloka no 53 which reads, “Strength is exhausted, bondage and chains are there and there appears to be no solution in sight; Nanak says, now God is my refuge who will succor me as he once did the elephant.” The Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala replied in a note in his characteristic Charhdi Kala, “Strength has arrived, the bonds are cut asunder and all solutions have started appearing and all efforts have begun to avail; Nanak says, all is Thy power O, God, only Thou will assist me.” “The Guru was very pleased at receiving this slok and message from his son, and remarked that he was fit for Guruship.” The Ninth Apostle of Charhdi Kala dispatched Salok no 56 along with “five paise and the coconut to be forwarded to him in token of his appointment to the Sikh spiritual sovereignty.” The fifty sixth saloka reads, “The God’s Name remains, the saints remain and Guru Gobind remaineth; Nanak says, few in this world follow the Guru’s Word.”

The spirit of Charhdi Kala emanates from the bold words of tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala which in itself is the best historical commentary on the martyrdom of the Ninth

“The potsherd of his body on the head of the
monarch of Dehli,
He departed for God’s Celestial Realms—
None ever performed a mighty deed like Teg Bahadur.”

Glimpses of Charhdi Kala in Dasam Granth:

We find the philosophy of Charhdi Kala as propounded in Guru Nanak Bani and Sri Guru Granth Sahib being extended to Dasam
"Granth" by the tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala. The basic structure of Jaap Sahib is that of Japuji Sahib and even embellished with the beauty of terminology used by Guru Nanak in Japuji. It is the same spiritual philosophy of Charhdi Kala expounded somewhat extensively by the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala for the understanding of his Sikhs. The 'jaap' of the fourteen hundred names of the God in Jaap Sahib brings us in 'charadi kala'. It makes us reach the heights of spiritual aesthetics when after eulogizing the God with fourteen hundred names given in Love, we find the Tenth Apostle calling Him 'aname'.

'Satnaam' becomes 'sada-sachidanand' in Jaap Sahib which means Eternally True in Truth who is a Replica of Enlightenment and Bliss. We find 'satnaam' turning into 'anaame' in Jaap as the Nameless God. The 'karta' factor finds its parallels in 'jagtein-kriti' i.e., the Creator of the universe, 'sarab-karata' in Akal Ustat and 'sarab-bisav-rachio-suambhav' in Jaap i.e. the Self-existent God who has created the entire universe. The same expressions have been used by the Fifth Apostle of Charhdi Kala in Sukhmani Sahib where the Guru says, "The All-Powerful in 'sarab-kala' plays the play. If He wills, He expresses Himself in expanse and if He wills He becomes the One alone i.e. 'ekankaar'. His power is vast. It is 'anik-kala' which is inexplicable. It is the same type of expression when fifth Guru says, "The God is the Player of the play who plays His play at His Will to see it Himself. When the God winds up the play at His will, He is one again O! Nanak." He is 'anad-murat-ajon-purkh' and 'udhar-murat-ajon' i.e. the God who is Beginningless Being and beyond the limits of birth or death, and is the Embodiment of Compassion not born from the womb. We find 'ajuni-sarupein' and 'ajoni-ajohien' in Bachitar Natak. 'Se-bhang', a derivative from 'sve-bhu' meaning 'from-Himself-only' or 'Himself-self-existent' is defined as 'suambhav' by Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha while giving its meaning. Bhai kahan Singh
appears to have taken this meaning from *Jaap Sahib* in *Dasam Granth* e.g. ‘sarab-bisav-rachia-suambhav’. It is the Self-existent God who is Holy and who has created the whole world. A beautiful usage of ‘suambhav’ is found in *Thirty-Three Swaiyyas* where the Guru asks the ignorant mind as to what evil influence it has taken that it has forsaken the All-wise, Self-existent Treasure. The ‘aad-anil-anaad-anahat’ of *Japuji* is artistically penned in *Thirty-three Swaiyyas*.

*Zafar Nameh* starts as a beautiful eulogy of the great attributes of the *Charhdi Kala* of the Ever-New Timeless God and then proceeds as a memorandum to Aurangzeb giving the details of Mughal atrocities and Aurangzeb’s betrayal and a glimpse of only forty Sikhs fighting imperial forces at Chamkaur. It is a reminder to the Emperor of his failure to conquer the Guru despite his best efforts. It clearly highlights Guru’s winning spirit of *Charhdi Kala* reflected through these words, “what if four children are killed, the coiled snake (in the form of Khalsa) is still there.” And then emerges the roaring, thundering tone of the Tenth Apostle of *Charhdi Kala*, “It is not brave to put out a few sparks and enrage a mighty fire instead.” It is a clear warning to Aurangzeb that the Khalsa will emerge in the form of a huge movement which will settle the scores with Mughals in the times to come, a fact we have witnessed in history. *Zafar Nameh* is a historical monument actually revealing the mysteries of the universe and the God. It teaches not only Aurangzeb but the whole world a message of love but justifies the sword as the Saviour when other methods of arriving at peace fail: “When all other methods of saving the ‘dharma’ exhaust, it is righteous to put hand on the sword’s hilt.”

**Tenth Guru’s Purpose of Life:**

Tenth Guru’s purpose of life flowers petal by petal on the cores of our heart in the form of ‘chradi kala’ in Guru’s own words in *Bachtar Natak*: “For this the God sent me into this world: to spread his religion
all over the world and to destroy the evil-doers and tyrants. Let all holymen understand this in their mind that I have taken the human form for this task alone: to spread religion, to protect the saints and to destroy root and branch all the wicked ones.\textsuperscript{132}

Revealing his life-story, the Guru relates the eastward religious tours of the ninth Guru and Guru Teg Bahadur’s charitable deeds at ‘Triveni’, “There I was conceived and and later took birth in the city of Patna.”\textsuperscript{133} The Guru also reveals as to how he was protected after taken to Punjab, his upbringing, “education, training, and instructions in every branch of knowledge.” The Guru also reveals the death of the ninth Guru, “When I was barely of the age to perform the religious deeds, my father left for the heavenly abode.”\textsuperscript{134}

The Arrival of ‘Shahzada’ in Punjab:

Aurangzeb was so infuriated to see the regular defeats of Mughal forces at the hands of the Guru that he sent an expedition under his son to Punjab.\textsuperscript{135} Prince came to Lahore and dispatched a large expedition under Mirza Beg who punished the hill-chiefs but did not touch the Guru because of Bhai Nand Lal, a Mir Munshi who as a teacher of Prince Muazzam prevailed upon the Prince not to fight with saintly beings. Here we find the Guru predicting agony for the detractors of ‘Guru-ghar’: “They who run to their homes without permission, don’t find any fulfillment. They do not find refuge in Guru’s house nor find abode with the God. They face desperation at both the places.”\textsuperscript{136} Guru’s hint is to those Sikhs who betray the Guru and run away in hours of crisis.

Founding of the Khalsa:

The founding of the Khalsa by the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala is one of the major incidents in our march from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh and onwards. On 29\textsuperscript{th} March, 1699, the auspicious day of Baisakhi. The Great Apostle of ‘charadi kala’ convened a grand
assembly of Sikhs at the site now known as Keshgarh Sahib. It was customary among the Sikhs to visit Ananadpur on the day of Baisakhi to pay homage to the Guru and harvesting after his ‘darshan’. But this time it looked all unique and special. There was a clarion call by the Guru to all the Sikhs to assemble at Anandpur as if something great was going to happen. So, there was a huge gathering which “was attended by as many as 80,000 men.”137 that unfolded on that day is too well known. The inspired among huge gathering, offered their heads as demanded by the Guru. They were the first ‘Panj Pyaras’ (beloved ones) initiated by the Guru as the first members of the Order of the Khalsa. They were ready for any sacrifice at the call of the Guru and the living models of Charhdi Kala for the world. They were made fearless by this ‘amrit’ and made capable to teach a lesson to the contemporary tyrant who was out to erode the very base of ‘dharma’. They were the Guru’s product in the form of ‘akal-purakh ki fauj’, an army of the Timeless God to protect the saints and to punish the wicked for which, as the Guru says, he has taken the human form.

Practical Shape to Guru Nanak’s Philosophy of Charhdi Kala:

Let it be clear here that there is nothing unique or novel in Guru’s asking to the Sikhs for heads for sacrifice to the Guru. The Tenth Apostle has only given a practical shape to the theoretical concept that already existed in Sikhism. It is the concept of complete surrender to the Guru. The base of this concept lies in the words of First Apostle of Charhdi Kala who says, “If thou are enthusiastic to play at love, come to my lane placing thy head on the the palm of thy hand. While putting thy feet on this path, lay down thy head (in complete surrender) without being crooked or making a mention or show of it and without minding what the people say.”138 The Guru was preparing the ‘mar-jeevras’, a sort of self-denying and self-sacrificial personages who were to lay down their lives for the panth in the form of suicide squads as we
witness it in the history. Though the concept of laying down of one’s head at the feet of the Guru is symbolically imbued with spiritual connotations, it has helped to transform the Khalsa into a confederacy of the martyrs with the passage of time which we have already discussed in martyrdom in Sikhism.

Sparrows Hunting the Hawks:

The baptism in steel was also a preparation of the sparrows for the hawk-hunt. The popular words of the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala which have turned into a folk-lore lovingly sung in the lanes of Punjab, resound in our ears, “Unless I raise one against ‘sawa-lakh’, enforce sparrows to hunt for hawks, and inspire jackals to kill the lions, only then shall I deserve to be called Guru Gobind Singh.” The baptism in steel was actually a baptism in Charhdi Kala. It was a solution to the problems facing the people and answer to the cruelties inflicted upon the innocent, weak, down-trodden Hindus by the cruel Muslim monarch. The Guru turned the sparrows into hawks, nay, the double hawks who were instilled with such a courage that they would go in for the hunt of hawks i.e. hunting the tyrants who were out to trample the very base of Indian culture.

‘Aappe-Gur-Chela’:

The founding of the Khalsa by the Guru has one unique feature which has occurred for the first time in the annals of history and that is that after establishing the ‘panj-piaras’ in the form of the Khalsa, the Guru himself gets baptised with ‘khande-ki-pahuT at the hands of ‘panj-piaras’. Here the Guru is getting initiated into the Khalsa after creating it himself. This particular incident appealed to Guru’s poet Bhai Gurdas—the second, so greatly that he composed a beautiful poem on the Guru in unparallel verse, “Great, O great is Guru Gobind Singh; He, the Guru himself is the disciple.” This particular incident is treated as the merging of the Khalsa with the Guru and vice versa, leading to the
creation of the confederacy of the five beloved ones. After the Guru, we will find both temporal and the spiritual powers coming to the Khalsa leading finally to the establishment of the ‘Khalsa-raj’.

Battles of Anandpur and Chamkur are a lesson in courage, fortitude and perseverance as to how a Sikh should act under most trying circumstances. The annals of Sikh history are replete with many more incidents where the inspiration of the guru kept the Sikhs in ever rising spirit against all odds.

Charhdi Kala in Adversity:

One of the chief attributes in Charhdi Kala is that it keeps the person in high spirits even in the most adverse circumstances. The reader witnesses this aspect of ‘chardi kala in the Tenth Apostle in the jungles of ‘Machiwara’ lying on the ground composing beautiful verse in love of the God, “With Thee, O, Love, I’d prefer to sleep on the bare ground. Cursed is the living with those whom one loves not.” Guru’s time spent in the jungle of Machhiwara was perhaps an example for the Sikhs to remain in Charhdi Kala in the most severe situations of adversity. That was the reason that in the post-Banda period when the Sikhs had to pass through the most tough periods of history, they did not stumble and remained in Charhdi Kala in toughest of the situations. In the jungles of Machhiwara, the Guru was recognized by Nabi Khan and Gani Khan, two Muslim friends of the Guru who not only provided protection to the Guru from imperial forces who searched for the Guru all around but also escorted in a litter on their own shoulders in the guise of ‘Uchh ka Pir’. The Guru took shelter with Qazi Pir Mohamad of Saloh, his old Persian teacher from whom he had studied Kuran also in earlier days. From here he went to Dina where he wrote the famous Zafar Nama, a letter of victorious spirit to Aurangzeb the contents of which are a living replica of Charhdi Kala even in the moments of crisis.
Battle of Khildrana-The Miracle of ‘Chardi Kala:

This was the last battle of the Guru won by him, the brunt of which was “borne by those forty Sikhs who had signed a disclaimer at the second siege of Anandpur”\(^{142}\) and who sacrificed their lives for the Guru but succeeded in defeating the Mughal forces and thus became ‘chaali-muktas’. The Guru felt so pleased with them that he asked them for any boon and granted them ‘mukti’. Khidrana was named Mukatsar to commemorate those forty brave Sikhs who proved the Guru’s words that he would produce Khalsa wherein the single warrior would be injected with such courage as to be made able to fight with ‘sawa-lakh’. This was the second miracle of Charhdi Kala in which forty brave Sikh warriors defeated a huge Mughal army.

The Guru at ‘Guru Ki Kashi’:

The Guru moved to Talwandi Sabo also known as Damdama as it finally provided resting abode to the Guru. It is also called Guru Ki Kashi or Guru’s Banaras as the Guru recalled his learned Sikhs here and resumed religious propaganda, re-edited Sri Guru Granth Sahib and incorporated the ‘Bani’ of the ninth Guru alongwith “a single hymn of his own”.\(^{143}\) It is particularly significant to note here the equipoise of the Great Apostle of Charhdi Kala who had sacrificed everything for the Charhdi Kala of the Sikhs. The Guru was joined by his wives Mata Sundri and Mata Sahib Kaur here. “When they asked the Guru where the young sons were, the Guru replied, pointing to his followers: “For these thousands, I sacrificed the other four. So long as these sons of mine are alive, I will not consider the death of four sons in vain!”\(^{144}\) This was a reply which only a great Apostle of Charhdi Kala could give and which becomes an ever-new source of Charhdi Kala for his Sikhs.

Guru’s Thunder Of Charhdi Kala:

History reveals that the Guru got an invitation from the emperor which was accepted by the Guru and the Guru accompanied the
Emperor in his friendly tour of Deccan. The Guru and the Emperor had amiable proximity since the time when he was a prince and was sent to suppress the Guru but because of his ‘sufi’ inclinations and because of the influence of his teacher and Mir Munshi, Bhai Nand Lal, he had rather sent his forces to crush the enemies of the Guru.

Once the emperor and the Guru were together along with some courtiers when a learned Sayyed from Sirhand asked the Guru a question on performing a miracle to which the Guru answered that the “Emperor himself was a miracle-maker. He can raise the humble and demolish the high ones.” The questioner persisted, “Sir, what you speak is true but I want to know if your holiness can perform a miracle.” The Guru kept his cool and took a gold coin and said, “Look, it is a miracle. It can buy anything in the world.” “Yes, your holiness. But I wanted to know what miracle you can perform?” The Guru thereupon, drew his sword and thundered: “This sword is my miracle. I can chop off the head of anyone who dares challenge me.” The questioner was dumbfounded at Guru’s thunder of Charhdi Kala especially when it appeared in the presence of the Emperor. But the emperor who was listening to it carefully, reprimanded the questioner and address the Guru, “No, No Your Holiness, you should not mind the impertinence of this foolish courtier.” Guru’s thunder was in itself a miracle which could emerge from an Apostle of Charhdi Kala only.

Banda Of the Guru:

In our march of Charhdi Kala from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh and onwards, we reach a period when we find Banda Singh Bahadur emerging as Guru’s messenger of Charhdi Kala. Guru’s tour of Deccan along with the Emperor appears to have a specific purpose. It was perhaps a part of the Guru’s search for his Sikh, for his Banda.
When Guru and the Emperor reached Nanded, the Guru visited the ‘dera’ of a Bairagi named Madho Dass well-known for his miracles around. The Bairagi had a specially embellished, magically charmed couch to topple over anyone who sat on it. The Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala went to Bairagi’s ‘dera’ particularly at a time when he was not in the ‘dera’. The Guru went directly in and sat on the couch but to the utter amazement of Bairagi’s followers, the couch did not topple over the Guru. When Banda came back, his followers who were already stunned at the couch for not being toppled, came running to report it to their mentor. He sat outside for a while trying his magic charms and miracles on the Guru but when he totally failed to topple the couch, he went straight to the Guru. He asked the Guru as to who he was and his purpose for coming to him. The Guru told him that he was Guru Gobind Singh and he was there for his Banda. Banda, though amazed as he was, he looked straight into the Guru’s eyes with inquisitiveness. And lo! When his eyes met the Guru’s, Banda experienced the spiritual flash within. He fell to the Guru’s feet saying, “I am Your Banda, O! God.” The Guru hugged him and initiated him to the path by himself administering Banda the baptism of steel and hence, making him a part of the Khalsa brotherhood. The Guru converted Banda into a Banda Singh Bahadur. The Guru gave him his seal, his Sword, five arrows from his quiver, and a Nishan Sahib, a flag pole symbolizing the Charhdi Kala of the Panth and instructed him to observe chastity, remain humble in victory, love his fellows as brothers as he was initiated into the Khalsa and never command them like a superior but as the one who was one of them. The Guru blessed him with a special mission of Charhdi Kala to Punjab i.e. to raise the poor and the down-trodden and to punish the wicked. Five blessed Sikhs of the Guru Bawa Binod Singh, Kahan Singh and Bhai Bhagwan Singh, Koer Singh and
Baz Singh were ordered by the Guru to accompany Banda Singh Bahadur “to provide a corporate leadership to the Khalsa.”

**Light Mingles The Light:**

The Guru did all that in a planned way as if he knew that the time for the light of the Great Apostle of Charhdi Kala to get finally mingled into the eternal light had arrived. It was the same evening when he dispatched Banda to Punjab, he was visited by two Pathans, one of whom was deputed by Wazir Khan, Subedar of Sirhand to assassinate the Guru. He was afraid of the talks between “the Guru and Emperor Bahadur Shah who according to Khalsa Namah of Bakath Mai had already issued a firman, imperial orders to pay Guru Gobind Singh a sum of Rupees 300 per day.” One of the assassins Bashal Beg remained outside Guru’s tent while Jamshed Khan, a hired assassin stabbed the Guru twice. The Guru drew his sword and killed the assassin. The one outside was killed by the Sikhs. Guru’s wounds were stitched up. The Guru knew that the time had arrived for light to get finally mingled in to the eternal light from which it had emanated. He “passed on the Spiritual Guruship to the Adi Granth and transferred the corporate Guruship to the Khalsa.” The Light completed the assigned task and went back to become the Eternal Light itself leaving behind the Eternal Reflections in the form of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and Sri Dasam Granth Sahib which, to quote Dr. Dharam Pal Singhal, “reflected with astute craftsmanship of great warrior, protector of the Hindus, liberator of the down-trodden, and a destroyer of the wicked” in the Tenth Apostle of Charhdi Kala.

**Banda’s Feats In Charhdi Kala:**

Banda Singh Bahadur’s arrival on the political scene of Punjab was like a huge storm which came and went all of a sudden. Banda’s silence for about a year after he was sent on mission to bring the down-trodden to Charhdi Kala was the lull before the arrival of the proverbial
storm. The Sikhs in Punjab were in great rage for the destardly act of cruelty meted out by the Mughal regime to the Sikhs especially for bricking alive two innocent sons of the Guru. They who were already waiting for the vengeance, needed a leader of Banda’s calibre. When Banda gave a clarion call to the Sikhs to join him, they came running as if they were already longing for such a call. Soon he collected a huge army of the lovers of Guru to punish the wicked. Banda rasacked state treasury at Kaithal and stormed Samana on Nov. 26, 1709 leading to huge massacres of the oppressors of the Guru at Sandhura, Mustafabad and Kapuri. The notorious Usman Khan who had tortured Pir Buddu Shah for his role in Guru’s escape from Machhiwara to Malwa was the target of Banda’s ire. Here even those who took shelter in Pir’s house were also massacred and place came to be named ‘katalgarhi’. From here the storm of Banda moved to Kiratpur for preparations of a planned attack on the Wazir Khan, the Subedar of Sirhind against whom the Sikhs had a special grudge for meting out cruelties on the Sikhs and the ‘Guru-ghar’. Wazir Khan raised the cries of Zihad, a religious war against the Sikhs. Both the forces met at Chapar Chiri and a fierce battle followed in which Wazir Khan was killed. Banda moved to Sirhand to ransack Sirhand and a general massacre occurred in which Sirhand reeled under Banda’s militant feet.

‘Raj Karega Khalsa’:

The Sikh litany to the Almighty got an addition of ‘raj karega khalsa’ as Banda established his headquarters at Mukhispur laying the foundation of the Sikh rule after taking almost whole of the Panjab, parts of Gangetic valley where Nanak-parsati Gujjars rose to support Banda. Banda was the master of the area from Ravi to Jamuna. “He introduced a new calendar dating from his capture of Sirhand and struck coins as a mark of Sikh sovereignty.” He appointed Sikhs from low classes “a low scavenger or leather dresser, the lowest of the low in Indian estimation”
as Irvine puts it, as thanedars and tehsildars in his parganas. He abolished Zamindari—the institution of absentee landlordism and made tillers of the soil, the proprietors."\textsuperscript{150}

Banda was a living example of what the Saints could do when they became soldiers. He was the \textit{Charhdi Kala} in flesh and blood which moved in north India to punish the ‘dokhis’ of ‘Guru-Ghar’. “The contemporary Muslim historians, though full of choicest invectives against the Sikhs as “wretched and worthless dogs”, “infidels”, “fanatical ruffians”, and Banda Singh himself as a “veritable monster”, the vocabulary which we find throughout the Muslim writings on the Sikhs in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century, were high praise for their reckless bravery.”\textsuperscript{151}

“Ghulam Mohyuddin author of \textit{Futuhat Nama-i-Samadhi} (1722-23) who fought against Banda’s forces and calls them “devils incarnate” and “a calamity on earth” testifies that Banda ruthlessly annihilated social inequalities born out of caste prejudices, enforced rigid abstinence of the Sikhs from adultery, and otherwise adopted codes of conduct for his forces “to present themselves as embodiment of moral values.”\textsuperscript{152}

\textbf{Always In \textit{Charhdi Kala}}:

And this is \textit{Charhdi Kala}—the \textit{Charhdi Kala} of sticking to the moral values. All days have never been the same with the Sikhs. Rise, then fall and rise again, has been the lot of the Sikhs. What sustained them was their ever-rising spirit of \textit{Charhdi Kala}. Even Banda’s good days were over when the God willed it. Such was Banda’s terror that a heavy iron-cage was built to keep him after his arrest. Despite merciless tortures and killings of the Sikhs, they always remained in \textit{Charhdi Kala}. The author of \textit{Ibratnaama} says, “Such a crowd in the bazaars and lanes had rarely been seen. The Mussalmans could hardly contain themselves with joy. But the unfortunate Sikhs, who had been reduced to that conditions, were quite happy and contented with their lot. Not the slightest sign of dejection or humiliation was visible on their faces. In
fact, most of them, as they passed along on their camels, seemed to be happy and cheerful, merrily singing their sacred hymns. If anyone from the lane called out to them that their own excesses had brought them where they were, they quickly retorted that it had been so decreed by the Almighty, and that their capture and misfortune were in accordance with His will. And if anyone said, "Now you will be killed", they shouted, "Do kill us. When were we afraid of death? Had we been afraid, how could we have fought so many battles with you? It was merely through want and hunger that we fell into your hands; otherwise you know already what deeds of bravery we are capable of."153

Charhdi Kala In Persecution:

History reveals the post-Banda period was full of persecution of the Sikhs. Such was the Charhdi Kala of the Sikhs in the midst of the toughest of the adversities that even their sworn enemies hurling out invectives at them were forced to praise their high moral certitude and bravery and Charhdi Kala. Zakaria Khan, his son Yahiya Khan who persecuted the Sikhs in first 'ghalughara', Ahmad Shah Abdali who persecuted the Sikhs in the second holocaust, and Mir Mannu, were the persecutors of the Sikhs who wondered at their Charhdi Kala even in persecution. The Sikhs could withstand such worst periods of history because of the force of Charhdi Kala blessed to them by the Gurus. They had to live in jungles and survive by eating the leaves and barks of the trees, but remained in Charhdi Kala. The worst time in Sikh history was witnessed when the rulers announced high prices for their heads. Ultimately they had to resort to 'guerilla' fights and made their households on the saddles of their horses. Once they attacked and plundered the convoy of Nadir shah who was returning after plundering Delhi. He asked Zakaria Khan about the whereabouts of the people who attacked him. Zakaria answered, "They are unique people who are neither Hindus nor Muslims. They live in the forest. Their houses are
the saddles of their horses. They sleep while standing and eat while walking. We are tired of persecuting them. The more we torture and prosecute them, the more they flourish and are developing rapidly.” Nadhir Shah replied “Then you should be scared of them. The time is not far off when they will rise and become the rulers of this country.”

Here, Dr. Ganda Singh comments on their Charhdi Kala, “Though such storms of persecution always hovered on the heads of the Sikhs but they never accepted defeat in any circumstances. The Khalsa always kept the state of their mind in Charhdi Kala and never lost heart in any type of situations.” They made a mockery of their persecution by Mannu by coming out proudly: “Mannu is our sickle, ho! And we the fodder for him to mow

The more he cuts the more we grow.”

The persecution of the Sikhs by Ahmed Shah Abdali, led to the framing of such proverbs: “Eat drink and be merry, ho!
The rest to Ahmed Shah doth go.”

The Sikhs went on flourishing till they reached a period of Sikh confederacies in the form of Misals and finally the Sikh rule under Maharaja Ranjit Singh which was spread as far as the interiors of Afganistan where even today we find Afgani mothers coaxing their kids to sleep lest Hari Singh Nalwa should come. Even enemy was forced to praise the bravery and Charhdi Kala of such saint-soldiers as Baba Deep Singh, Bhai Mani Singh and Akali Phoola Singh. Even after the the rule of Maharaja, we find the Sikh forces teaching memorable lessons to the British in the battles of Feroze Shah and Sabraon despite the desertions by their generals: “The cry of “India lost” was heard from one commanding officer as he tried in vain to rally his men” Sikh generals themselves dreaded the victory of the Khalsa and worked for the defeat of the Sikh army. “Whilst many amongst the rank and file were eager to push on at once, and overwhelm the weak British force at
Ferozepore, others, stimulated by Lal Singh and Tej Singh, who dreaded a victory of Khalsa over the British, and whose main object was the destruction of the army which threatened them. Contemporary Muslim poet Shah Mohammad says, “The Singhs squeezed the blood of the Britishers in the battle as if they were squeezing lemons.” The poet laments at the absence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the battle, derides at the desertions of the Sikh generals but praises the bravery of the Sikhs forces and declares these battles as the ones which were lost after winning.

We have seen the Sikhs in Charhdi Kala both in adversity and prosperity through the pages of history. They were always in Charhdi Kala, they will always be in Charhdi Kala, they are in Charhdi Kala at present with Guru’s grace despite the recent events leading to the storming of the Golden Temple by the Indian forces and the organized riots against Sikhs after Mrs Gandhi’s assassination.

“The Situation today of the Sikhs is bad and it makes one truly sick at heart but it is not as potentially death-dealing as the situation, when the tenth Guru was assassinated or when the British took over the kingdom of Lahore or when, in the 1890’s, the Singh Sabha revived the faith or when the holocaust and genocide of 1947 fell upon us. From 1847 to 1984 to the present day this storm and crisis has hardly abated. Perhaps the darkness may have to last as long as the one that started in 1708 and went on until the armies of the Khalsa had stopped the invasions from Iran and Afghanistan and secured the mountain line. But the purpose of the Guru cannot be thwarted, not even by our human stupidity and short-sightedness. We must remain ready and prepare ourselves and our children for the road ahead.”

The situation is truly not hopeless as Noel Q. King, the noted scholar of Sikh religion and history observes. The Sikhs were in Charhdi Kala, they are in Charhdi Kala and will remain in Charhdi
Kala for ever. This is the Charhdi Kala of the Sikhs. Herein lies Charhdi Kala.

References & Footnotes (Chapter 4)

1. श्रीम हेमेंद्रसिंह दवीन्द्र सेतु नृत्ययोग भाटोके॥
   (भवल-1, पृष्ठ-730)


4. मंड मंडाडि भक्त मष्ट पुष्प पीयुष स्वर्गमंडु॥
   (भवल-5, पृष्ठ-49)

5. वच सि बुद्ध बचनी बोली॥ मंड मंड भक्त मष्ट बुध देंखे॥
   (भवल-1, पृष्ठ-1030)

6. मंड मंडाडि भक्त मष्ट बुध बुध सवर्गमंडु॥ डैए बैलो बीन दर अंगे सिद्ध देंखे॥
   (भवल-5, पृष्ठ-49)

7. मंड मंडाडि भक्त मष्ट बुध देंखे भक्त मंडाडि देंखे॥
   (भवल-5, पृष्ठ-1122)


10. उद्धि सीधाड़ देखि है बुधु की ढिंग मंडु॥ विभक्त बाँधे ते न आपदी का बुधु का मंडु स्वर्गमंडु॥
    (भवल-2, पृष्ठ-468)
11. नम भगवान मोह कि धर्म सत्स भरे। बैठि ब्रह्म वदुः तत्त्व सचि।
   (भक्ति-5, धर्म-240)

12. भूत वेदां मनोज्ञत प्राप्त ह्यमि। निम्न मेहन वे ब्रह्म ग्राम मिते।
   (भक्ति-5, धर्म-286)

13. भूमि वेदे धर्मरी मन्त्र तैविति अंदरि वागि। इहूह अन्यायं भाला भूहे
   (भक्ति-2, धर्म-474)

14. भान मन विद्वं धर्मं निम्न भूमी मन्त्रमि। तत्वं सूक्तं ह वसिति रूपि।
   भूमि वेदे अन्यायमि।
   (भक्ति-2, धर्म-474)

15. दृष्टि रागते बनाइमं वेदं वे वमते गुरुः वर्जिते। बनात वुप्तं ह कृत्तिते
   (भक्ति-2, धर्म-954)

16. दृष्टि गत्तेय गतदीये वे विवेकान्तं वारस वेदें।
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-1346)

17. दृष्टि गतां विवेक तत्त्व सचि।
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-1065)

18. दृष्टि वरिष्ठं धर्मं हि वर्षीय। (भक्ति-3, धर्म-1065)

19. धर्म से भूमि चुंबन करते हैं कृत्ति वेदं वदुः न सचि।
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-910)

20. धर्मम् अन्यायं सर्वाचित्रं दुःपपं वे महात वद भूमिभाषन।
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-754)

21. तृप्तमृत्ति वै तै बनाइमं भूमि पक्षेत्र मद्य वालभि हुलाही।
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-754)

22. मे सभू विवेकान्तं मन्त्र सत्स भुवम्
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-1046)

23. नभू वे संस्कृत विभो धर्मं मनोज्ञत प्राप्त न सचि।
   (भक्ति-1, धर्म-753)

24. मर्यम भवे मेरी नति पुत्रा। मनोज्ञत भाविष महान्ते मुरु।
   (भक्ति-3, धर्म-1046)
25. मलीकांले लक्षण के अधिक आते। रूप र ले याथूँ आजादितले दुःख भएते॥
   (ऋग्व-3, धेरा-124)

26. बिन्न तत्त्व सब तीर्थ मानिएँ हि शिमला का बीजा तेंदूं॥
   (ऋग्व-3, धेरा-426)

27. मगरें मस्तू मातृदिव उ अभ्यु ग्रहादिव॥ (ऋग्व-3, धेरा-115)

28. तिथि हृदात्म धकाहू तीप दमह बृहस्पति॥ (ऋग्व-3, धेरा-922)

29. कर्मभूषि कुंभे बने तारी मिला आंतकित मूर्ति विवाहू।
   (ऋग्व-3, धेरा-1418)


33. बैजी देनार्देव ताजिक दृष्ट्वेयमें कम॥ चंदा देनार्देव बैजी विख्यात स्थाने
   शिवुं श्रमिष्ठार्दिक किरातरिन॥ देव पासी नीति वृषि चैत्र मंग॥ चंदा श्रंग नी
   विख्यात दृष्ट्वेयमें कम॥ विख्यात दृष्ट्वेयमें अत्तर उद्विग्न श्रमिष्ठार्दिक
   स्थाने॥ चंदा कैविविच चंदा वद्याजी लोके बापु भेंट भवधि उद्विग्ने॥
   (ऋग्व-4, धेरा-575)

34. मलिकांभर ली मेंरा तिकाली तिकाल मनु वेदिम न मेंरा भवधि॥
   (ऋग्व-4, धेरा-304)

35. शुद्दा भेंटो मलिकांभर मेंरा सिगुर सेषिखे शरीर वाणी॥
   (ऋग्व-4, धेरा-572)

36. रूप रूप रूप बैल्कन बैल्कन शेश शेश लुकाली॥
   (ऋग्व-4, धेरा-1178)

37. मलिकांभर धिले उ पेशीले धिले शेषी मेंरा मारी॥
   (ऋग्व-4, धेरा-1178)

38. मलिकांभर मलिकांभर मध्य नाथ ब्राह्मण ब्राह्मण मारी॥
   (ऋग्व-4, धेरा-1326)
39. मैंने स्त्री संयुक्त दलितों। आज़ाद बल वादिता धार्मिक।
(भवल-5, भल-1081)


41. तिम मे धुरी जात के भाँड़ दुरु घड़े हुए घड़े॥ वध राजक मेठी रुप सुकुमा से पृथ्वी के बुरे बाधे॥
(भवल-9, भल-831)

42. मुथ मदन आराम्भ बीतने राजन तारी उत्तर तुलन रसायन॥
(भवल-5, भल-826)

43. तिम आराम्भ रसायन बीतने मे पर्व भि की विनाशकी। विनाशकी राजन
महिला मुखाम मन्त्रीनक भिन लागी।
(भवल-5, भल-864)

44. वेस बीमा भीठा लाज॥
(भवल-5, भल-394)

45. तिम हुए बाचे मे धुरी जात॥
(भवल-5, भल-676)

46. तीसे बाचे मे बुनवाक॥
(भवल-5, भल-676)

47. तिम मुथ हिया चिन्ताहरी मे बुड़ि सी भि काही॥
(भवल-5, भल-838)

48. बाले नेहें धुरी जात की पर्व मन्त्र मुरिदिशा॥
(भवल-5, भल-1093)

49. तीस बाला दुःख आराम्भ निरा है विपद चिन्ताहर॥
(भवल-5, भल-747)

50. मेठी बलात मे हुए बाचे॥ तवार विगित दे मय बुनवाक॥
(भवल-5, भल-1271)

51. तिम हुए वीर मे बल मन्त्रिनक देव मुखाम हे पाठी॥
(भवल-5, भल-1299)

52. तीस बीमा भीठा लाज॥ उत्तर लाभ धरण तुलन भरी॥
(भवल-5, भल-394)

53. तिम हुए बाचे मे धुरी जात॥ तीसे बाचे मे बुनवाक॥
(भवल-5, भल-676)
54. सुंदर या दस्ता मंडित वर्ति मंगल। हीरो। हीरो।
   (भाग-5, भंडू-1138)

55. रवि रघु पिपिश्चै गुप्त गुप्त मंडित गद्य। कहै सध उध मंगले। कहै ती
   लौच तिहै।
   (भाग-5, भंडू-963)


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65. Sukhdial Singh (Dr.). Punjab Da Itihas. “Guru Kaal 1469-1708.”


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77. Gopal Singh (Dr.) 226.
78. K.S. Narang & Hari Ram Gupta (Dr.) 123.
80. Sangat Singh 49.
81. Sangat Singh 49.
82. Syad Muhammad Latif 258.
83. Gopal Singh (Dr.) 226.
84. श्री संगत सिखी इतिहास दसम गुरु साहिब जी (मोंठ-3, गोल-918)
85. K.S. Narang & Hari Ram Gupta (Dr.) 125.
86. Sir Gokal Chand Narag 68.
88. J.D. Cunningham 56.
89. सब भावजी भावी भिन्न हैं भट्टाचार्य वी आप मे उस नूठ भों।।
90. W. Owen Cole & Piara Singh Sambhi 34.
91. Kartar Singh (Prof.) 303.
92. K.S. Narang & Hari Ram Gupta (Dr.) 131.
93. K.S. Narang & Hari Ram Gupta (Dr.) 132.
    Massachusetts: Merriam Webster Inc. 1988. 730
Piara Singh Padam writes about this Slok, “प्राचीन लिखित वीरे विच हिम देवें तार ‘म:९०’ लिखित। इसका खलना वै देवें वालकों दी हिम मोर्चें न करवा लीणे वै है।” (Piara Singh Padam 48).

In his footnote about this Slok, Macauliffe writes, “This couplet is the only composition of the tenth Guru found in the Granth Sahib.”

(Macauliffe Vol IV 385.)
114. यहूदी मुहूर्त महत्त्व प्राप्त || वंत 188.
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 10).

115. नया मंच फैलाएं मइं धूपगी || वंत 198.
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 10).

116. यहूदी मुहूर्त महत्त्व प्राप्त || वंत 188.
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 10).

117. बिन मनंड दिवंती दैं || वंत 106. (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 6).

118. मत्व बलवा मत्व उवाग मत्व ले अलबा ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 29).

119. मत्व विश्व उद्दिष्ट महज़ बाज़ुल बाज़ुल ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 5).

120. मत्व बलवा वढ़ि भेले भेल ||
       (भाषा-5, रंग-294).

121. निमु बढ़े उं बढ़े धिमवाज || निमु बढ़े उं देक्तेलाज || मात्राव बलवा लेली तर
       नाटि ||
       (भाषा-5, रंग-294).

122. अहुत भें अविक वटी टें || भें लंकेच उड्ठी तलव टें ||
       (भाषा-5, रंग-294).

123. आपि बुध आराधि पुलिंड आतिंति धुध अध्याय ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 4).

124. आपि पुलिंड दिपाल भूपिंड आतिंति आपि भाषा ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 4).

125. सत्व टेंल नेंगार महत्त्व प्राप्त ल्यावे || ल्यावे || बुध अलेली अलेल ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 39).


127. मत्व विश्व उद्दिष्ट महज़ बाज़ुल बाज़ुल ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 05).

128. बिन प्रजानाल मुनाल मुहज़ बाज़ुल बेरी बेर बर जिपाल हुलवाल ||
       (Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 713).
129. भाषि मात्रि अतिशि अतिशि भाषि भाषि अतिशि भाषि है जि
(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 712).
130. दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन
(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 1390).
131. दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन
(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 57-58).
132. दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन
(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 59).
133. दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन
(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 71).
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(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 71-72).
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136. दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन दिन
(Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Ji 71-72).
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145. Gopal Singh (Dr.) 317-318.
146. Sangat Singh 75.
147. Sangat Singh 76.
148. Sangat Singh 76.
150. Sangat Singh 84.
151. Sangat Singh 83-84.
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155. Ganda Singh (Dr.) 58.
156. मद्दत मकरः रणवीर आमिर जूठे से मिले 
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157. धारा धीरा रुपे रा 
       दीर्घिता अभिलस्त माने रा।
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