



1857 Revisited in Jind: A Study

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ABSTRACT

As we all know that the Uprising of 1857 was a major event in the history of Haryana & India as well. The present research paper titled ‘1857 Revisited in Jind: A Study’ is divided into two parts. In the first part, the position of Jind has been discussed in historical perspective. In the second part, the role played by Raja Sarup Singh, the head of the princely state has been critically examined in the Uprising of 1857. The State of Jind was the second of the three Phulkian States namely Patiala, Jind and Nabha which was founded by Gajpat Singh, a great-grandson of Phul. He ruled as an independent Prince after conferring upon him the title of Raja. Raja Bhag Singh successor of Gajpat Singh recognized as ‘friend and ally’ by Lord Lake. After death, he was succeeded by Raja Fateh Singh, Raja Sangat Singh who died in 1834, leaving no issue. Then, Sarup Singh of Bazidpur, a second cousin of the deceased Raja succeeded the ‘gaddi’ until 1864. During the course of Uprising, he sided with the British. Raja Sarup Singh offered his troops and personal services to the British Government. He conducted his troops to Karnal by forced marches & undertook the defense of the city and cantonment. He sent a detachment of his troops to Baghpat. In the battle of *Badli -Ki- Sarai* , the Jind troops behaved most gallantly. Raja Sarup Singh was the only Prince who led his troops in person. In the Aftermath ,as per policy adopted by the British that ‘Rewards to Loyalist & Punishments to Disloyal’, Raja Sarup Singh was rewarded by granting Dadri and Kularan in recognition of his valuable services & on the condition of good behavior as a loyalist. So, he played very crucial role & supported the British during the Uprising of 1857.



The present research paper is based on primary as well as secondary sources which include *Mutiny Papers*, *Foreign Department Proceedings* lying at National Archives of India (N.A.I.), New Delhi, *Gazetteers*, L.H. Griffin, *The Rajas of the Punjab*, J. Cave Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, C.T. Metcalfe, *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*, P. J. O. Taylor (ed.), *A Campaign to the Indian Mutiny of 1857*, F.W. Rawding, *The Rebellion in India 1857*, K. C. Yadav, *The Revolt of 1857 in Haryana*, S.C. Mittal, *Haryana: A Historical Perspective* and Ram Singh Jakhar, *1857 Ki Jankranti Mein Haryana Ka Yogdan*.

It is a matter of fact that the Uprising of 1857 was a major event in the history of Haryana & India as well. The present research paper titled '1857 Revisited in Jind: A Study' is divided into two parts. In the first part, the position of Jind has been discussed in historical perspective.

During the period of *Mahabharata*, it is said that *Pandvas* here built a temple in the honour of Jainti Devi, the Goddess of victory and the place was known as *Jaintapuri* which in course of time corrupted to Jind. The place is noted for its numerous temples sacred to the worship of Shiva. Jind lies at 29°19' north latitude and 76.19° east longitude.¹

Historically, the State of Jind was the second of the three Phulkian States namely Patiala, Jind and Nabha which was founded by Gajpat Singh born about the year 1738 and grew up a fine handsome youth. He was well skilled in all military exercise.²

Gajpat Singh married in 1754, one of the widows of his brother Alam Singh, and succeeded to his estate of Balanwali. One of his daughters named Raj Kaur was married to *Sardar Mahan Singh Sukarchakia* and became the mother of *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. Gajpat Singh joined the Sikh Army in 1763 when Zin Khan, the Afghan Governor of Sarhind was defeated and slain.³

Gajpat Singh obtained title of 'Raja' from the Emperor Shah Alam under a royal *farman* in the year 1772. He then ruled as an independent Prince and coined money in his own capital.⁴ Raja Gajpat Singh was a constant ally of the Patiala chief and accompanied him on many of his expeditions.⁵ Gajpat made a fort here in 1775, part of which is now used as a jail.⁶

Raja Bhag Singh was 21 years old when he became chief. In 1786, the districts of Gohana and Kharkhoda conferred upon him in *jagir* by the Emperor Shah Alam. He also joined



the Patiala Army under the command of Rani Sahib Kaur in the attack on the Maratha Generals Anta Rao and Lachman Rao.⁷

Raja Bhag Singh was the first of all the great Cis-Satlej chiefs to seek an alliance with the British Government. In 1803, immediately after the battle of Delhi, he made advances to the British General. He then joined the English camp and his title to the estate of Gohana and Kharkhoda was upheld by General Lake and he was recognized as ‘friend and ally’.⁸ Here it is noteworthy that Raja Bhag Singh made relations with the state of Patiala and the British as well.

Raja Bhag Singh received 24 villages about worth Rs. 15,380 a year, 24 villages of Jhandiala from the same Maharaja. In April, 1807, Raja Bhag Singh readily consented to the survey of his country by Lieutenant F. White and did all he could to make the expedition successful.⁹ Raja Bhag Singh also joined General Ochterlony and continued till his arrival at Ludhiana.¹⁰ In this way, the territory of the Jind state was extended and cordial relations with the British were established.

Raja Fateh Singh succeeded after death of his father Raja Bhag Singh in 1819. The reign of Raja Fateh Singh was very short and quite uneventful. He only ruled for three years and died on the 3rd of February, 1822 at his residence of Sangrur.¹¹ He was succeeded by Raja Sangat Singh. The young Raja Sangat Singh enthroned on the *gaddi* on the 30th July 1822 at Jind in the presence of all the Phulkian chiefs, and Captain Ross, the Deputy Superintendent. In 1826, Raja Sangat Singh visited Maharaja Ranjit Singh at Amritsar.¹² He died in 1834, left no son however he married three times.¹³

Then Sarup Singh of Bazidpur a second cousin of the deceased Raja claimed for ‘*gaddi*’. Initially, he was entitled to succeed only to the territory possessed by his great grandfather. In April, 1837, Raja Sarup Singh was formally installed in the presence of all the Phulkian chiefs and the British Agent.¹⁴

The feeling of Raja was towards the British Government. In 1845, Raja Sarup Singh of Jind was asked to send 150 camels for the use of the Sirhind but this in spite of promises and repeated orders, he neglected to do and the result was great inconvenience to the troops.¹⁵

When the Second Sikh war broke out, Raja Sarup Singh offered his troops to the Government and went in person to Lahore to join the English Army. His services were



declined, as they were not needed, but he was warmly thanked for the offer and the loyalty that had prompted it.¹⁶ He tried to prove his loyalty.

During the Uprising of 1857, Raja Sarup Singh played crucial role and sides with the British. In the second part, the role played by Raja Sarup Singh, the head of the princely state has been critically discussed. On 10th May 1857, there occurred at Meerut.¹⁷ On 11th May 1857, rebel *sepoys* occupied Delhi and proclaimed Bahadur Shah II as Emperor.¹⁸ By the end of May 1857, all Haryana was practically engulfed in the mutiny¹⁹.

Raja Sarup Singh was not behind the Maharaja of Patiala in active loyalty. He was in Sangrur when the revolt took place in Delhi. He collected his troops and reached at Karnal. Here, he undertook the defense of the city and cantonments. His contingent did not exceed 800 men, but it was orderly and well disciplined and its presence at Karnal gave confidence and secured that station from plunder. From Karnal, the Raja sent a detachment to secure the bridge at Bhagpat (twenty miles north of Delhi) to enable the Meerut force to cross the *Jamuna* and join Sir H. Barnard's column. The excited state of Panipat was restored to order and the Jind force marched in advance of the British column.²⁰

Raja Sarup Singh joined the British camp at Alipur on 7th June. On the 8th June the battle of *Badli-ki- Serai* was fought. The Jind troops behaved gallantly in this fight and were complimented by the Commander-in-Chief. He sent one of the captured guns to the Raja as a present. On the 19th of June, the Jind troops aided in repulsing the Nasirabad force which attacked the camp.²¹

On 21st June the Jind troop were sent to Baghpat to repair the bridge of boats which had been destroyed. The bridge was completed within three days, but again destroyed by the mutineers who attacked the Raja in overwhelming numbers. In the meantime, Raja had to return to his own territories because of rebellious activities in Hansi, Hissar and Rohtak districts which incited Jind villages to revolt. Soon after the crushing the disturbance Raja Sarup Singh employed himself in raising recruits and purchasing horses for the British force before Dehli.²²

Raja Sarup Singh was the only chief who was present with the army before Dehli. He was more fortunate though not more loyal or courageous than the Maharaja of Patiala and the Raja of Kapurthala. They wanted to join the besieging force but their presence was considered more useful elsewhere. The administration of the district of Rohtak was made over to the Raja



Sarup Singh of Jind during the most disturbed period and the headmen of villages and the *zamindars* were directed to pay their revenue to him.²³

After the restoration of Dehli, Raja Sarup Singh returned to Safidon. He left 25 men for service at the Larsauli tehsil. He sent a detachment of 200 men with General Van Courtland to Hansi. 110 men under the command of Commandant Khan Singh sent to Jhajjar. Besides these, 250 Jind troops remained stationed at Rohtak and 50 at Gohana.²⁴ The Governor General acknowledged the services of Raja Sarup Singh through a notification issue on 5th November 1857 by saying that:

*‘the steady support of the Raja of Jind called for the marked thanks
of the Government’*²⁵

As per policy adopted by the British that ‘Rewards to Loyalist and Punishments to Disloyal’, Abdur Rehman Khan of Jhajjar, Ahmad Ali of Farrukhnagar and Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabgarh were tried before Commission for their role in the rebellion.²⁶

Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabgarh²⁷ and the Nawab Abdur Rehman Khan of Jhajjar²⁸ found guilty of charges leveled against them that they supported the revolt and helped the rebels and others in waging war against the Government which were considered heinous crimes under the provision of Act No. XIV of 1857 of Legislative Council of India. Consequently, Nawab Abdur Rehman Khan, Ahmad Ali and Raja Nahar Singh were hanged by neck until death. In the aftermath, all their property forfeited and palaces ransacked.

On the other hand, as per British policy Raja Sarup Singh received rewards. A confiscated estate from Jhajjar of about Rs. 50,000 was assigned to him. This was, however, situated a long way from Jind and would have been difficult to manage because of limited sources. Raja Sarup Singh also received 575 square miles territory of Dadri which was confiscated on account of the rebellion of its Nawab. This territory was worth about Rs. 1,03,000 per annum.²⁹

Thirteen villages in the Kularan sub-district situated near Sangrur, and valued at Rs. 13,813 per annum were also ceded to the Raja Sarup Singh in perpetuity. These villages were Bhaiapura, Alampur, Balamgarh, Kularan, Dodura, Rotli, Rangloi, Dharamgarh, Bazurg, Saipura, Mani, Karkalsh and Shahpur. The confiscated house of the rebel *Shahzadah* Mirza Abu Bakr situated in the city and valued at Rs. 6,000 was given to him. The salute of Raja



Sarup Singh was raised to eleven guns and the honorary title '*Farnad dilband rasikh-ul-itibld Raja Sardap Singh Bahadar wali Jind,*' was conferred upon him."³⁰

Later on Raja Sarup Singh of Jind received a new *sanad* granting him full sovereignty in his new and acquired possessions in 1860. Moreover, a special *sanad* was granted as per the same terms used in the *sanad* granted to Nabha and Patiala i.e. the right of adoption in case of failure of male heirs.³¹ Raja Sarup Singh had been nominated a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India in 1863 but unfortunately he died of severe dysentery at Bazidpur near Patiala before receiving the same.³²

Ram Singh Jakhar writer of '*1857 Ki Jankranti Mein Haryana Ka Yogdan*' accepted that Raja Sarup Singh of Jind sided the British³³ while only one para about Jind is given in the book. Punjab States Gazetteer described him as 'in person and presence eminently princely. The British Government has never had an ally more true in heart then Sarup Singh, who served it from affection and not from fear.'³⁴ K.C Yadav described that 'Raja Sarup Singh was a brave man with an ordinary intellect, certainly a type who would behave conservatively at the time of crisis. He chose to take sides with the British'.³⁵

So, in recognition of his valuable services and on the condition of good behavior as a loyalist Raja Sarup Singh was rewarded. He played very crucial role as he sides with the British during the Uprising of 1857. Undoubtedly, he was a loyalist, opportunist even a royal traitor who acted against the wishes of masses. There are some major points which charged Raja Sarup Singh of being a loyalist:

- a. Provided detachments to the British
- b. Personally appeared before the British
- c. Crushed the Indians during course of Uprising
- d. Estate assigned to him and accepted

Finally our sources/evidence leads us to submit that Raja Sarup Singh of Jind fought against the wishes of masses, sided the British and proved loyalist to the British and received rewards up to 1864.



References and Footnotes

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- ³ *Ibid*, p. 312.
- ⁴ *Ibid*, p. 313.
- ⁵ *Ibid*, p. 317.
- ⁶ *Jind District Gazetteer*, 1983, p.257.
- ⁷ L.H. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p.319.
- ⁸ *Ibid*, p. 320.
- ⁹ *Ibid*, p. 323.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 330.
- ¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 353.
- ¹² *Ibid*, pp. 354-355.
- ¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 360-361.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 380.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 386-387.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.389.
- ¹⁷ F.W. Rawding, *The Rebellion in India, 1857*, Cambridge, 1977, p.22.
- ¹⁸ P. J. O. Taylor (ed.), *A Campaign to the Indian Mutiny of 1857*, Oxford, 1996, p. 355.
- ¹⁹ K. C. Yadav, *The Revolt of 1857 in Haryana*, Delhi, 1977, p.108.
- ²⁰ L.H. Griffin, *op. cit.*, pp.390-391.
- ²¹ *Ibid*.
- ²² *Ibid*.
- ²³ *Ibid*, p.392./ J. Cave Brown, *The Punjab and Delhi in 1857*, Vol. II, Delhi, 1970 (First Published 1861), p.240.
- ²⁴ *Ibid*.
- ²⁵ *Ibid*, p.393.
- ²⁶ *Foreign Department Proceedings*, Despatch from the Court of Directors, No. 12, N.A.I., New Delhi, 18 March 1858/
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- ²⁸ *Foreign Department Proceedings*, Nos. 176-190, F.C., N.A.I. , New Delhi, 9 July 1859.
- ²⁹ L.H. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 393./ C.T. Metcalfe, *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*, 1974, Delhi, p.74.
- ³⁰ *Ibid*, p.394.
- ³¹ *Ibid*, pp. 397-399.
- ³² *Ibid*, p.409.
- ³³ Ram Singh Jakhar, *1857 Ki Jankranti Mein Haryana Ka Yogdan*, State Archives of Haryana, 1999, p.119.
- ³⁴ *Punjab State Gazetteers*, Vol. XVII, Part-A, 1904, p.217.
- ³⁵ K.C. Yadav, *op.cit.*, p.100