

Chapter II

HISTORY

THE ANCIENT PERIOD

Nothing much is known about the ancient history of the areas comprising the Gurgaon district but it seems always to have been held under the sway of the rulers of Delhi. According to tradition, Yudhishtira gave the village of Gurgaon as a gift to his guru, Dronacharya, and it can thus be surmised that the Pandavas held the region. The Bhadanakas obviously connected with the ancient Bhadras are referred to in the *Mahabharata* as a republic or oligarchy which Karna conquered in course of his expeditions. These Bhadanakas can be located in Rewari-Bhiwani region where Bhadavasā, a village 8 kilometres to the south of Rewari, seems to attest their existence.¹ And according to Dasharatha Sharma, the Bhadanaka territory "comprised the present Rewari tahsil, Bhiwani and its adjoining villages and a part of Alwar State".²

It can be assumed on the basis of the extent of the Maurya empire that the region was held under effective Maurya control. After the break-up of the Maurya empire, inroads of the foreign invaders, like the Bactrians, Greeks, Parthians, Scythians and Kushanas, spread confusion in the region. But soon the Yaudheyas rose up and repelled the rule of the Kushanas from the region between the Satluj and the Yamuna.³ They were first subdued by the mighty Saka Satrap Rudradaman, then by Samudragupta, later by the Hunas who were overthrown by Yasodharman Vishnuvardhana of Mandasor, and lastly by Yashovarman, the king of Kanauj.⁴

The area of Gurgaon also formed a part of Harsha's empire in the first half of the seventh century, and then of the Gurjara-Pratiharas. The Tomaras

1. Buddha Prakash, (Ed.), 'The Bhadanakas of Hariyana', *Glimpses of Hariyana*, 1967, p.30.

2. Ibid, *Early Chauhan Dynasties*, 1959, p. 82.

3. Buddha Prakash : 'An outline of the History and Culture of ancient Hariyana', *Glimpses of Hariyana*, 1967, p. 14.

4. Saleatore, Bhasker Anand, *Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions*, 1963, pp.533-34

who were earlier the feudatories of the Pratiharas and later became independent, laid the foundation of Delhi, then called Dhillika in A.D. 736,¹ and the Gurgaon region was under them till Visaladeva Chahamana conquered Delhi about A.D. 1156.

The country of Bhadanakas, although not precisely identified, yet probably comprising the modern Rewari tahsil, Bhiwani and its adjoining villages, and a part of the old Alwar State was invaded by Prithviraja Chauhan (Chahamana) sometime before A.D. 1182. The chief of the Bhadanakas resisted the Chauhan (Chahamana) king with his powerful elephants but was severely defeated.²

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

THE PRE-MUGHALS

During the early Muslim invasion, the people of the region would appear to have experienced vicissitudes of fortune at the hands of the incoming Muslim invaders. Their resilience in fighting for their political independence was as remarkable as their adhesion to their earlier way of life even after their conversion to the religion of the rulers of Delhi. The history is replete with struggles between the central power at Delhi and its difficult and recalcitrant neighbours to the south. For nearly two centuries the people of the region sturdily resisted the Muslim domination and the history of the region is a record of incursions on the people of Mewat area which included districts of Gurgaon, Mathura (including parts of former States of Alwar and Bharatpur (Rajasthan) into Delhi territory and of punitive expeditions undertaken against them.³ The region was finally subdued after the defeat of Prithviraja Chahamana by Muzz-ud-din Muhammad Ghuri in A.D. 1192. In the reign of Qutb-ud-din Aibak (A.D. 1200-1210), Hemraj, son of Prithviraja, invaded the Mewat from Alwar, but he was defeated and slain. Aibak then despatched Sayyid Wajih-ud-din who was slain and it was reserved for his nephew Miran Hussain Jang to subdue the Meos, who agreed to pay *jazia*, while some accepted Islam.⁴

1. R.C. Majumdar, *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Volume IV, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, 1964, p. 111.

2. Ibid, Volume V, *The Struggle For Empire*, 1966, p. 107.

3. *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab*, Volume I, 1908, pp. 265-66.

4. H.A. Rose, *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province*, 1970, Volume III, p. 82.

Mewat was again turbulent following the death of Shams-ud-din Iltutmish in A.D. 1236. However, the Moes of the Gurgaon district attracted much attention under the rule of Ghias-ud-din Balban, first as the prime minister of Nasir-ud-din Mahmud who ruled from A.D. 1246 to 1266 and later as Emperor (A.D. 1266-1287). It was in A.D. 1249, for the first time that Balban was employed in chastising the people of Mewat.¹ In this campaign, about two thousand Moes were killed.² During the Mongol invasion of Punjab in A.D. 1257-58, the Moes were again in revolt and carried off a large number of Balban's camels, without which the army could hardly have taken the field.

The struggle against the Moes continued. Balban inflicted a crushing defeat upon them in A.D. 1260. "For twenty days the work of slaughter and pillage continued, and the ferocity of the soldiery was stimulated by the reward of one silver *tanga* for every head and two for every living prisoner. On March 9 the army returned to the capital with the chieftain who had stolen the camels, other leading men of the tribe to the number of 250, 142 horses, and 2,100,000 silver *tangas*. Two days later the prisoners were publicly massacred. Some were trampled to death by elephants, others were cut to pieces, and more than a hundred were flayed alive by the scavengers of the city. Later in the year those who had saved themselves by flight returned to their homes, deterred on reprisals by infesting the highways and slaughtering wayfarers. Then, having ascertained from spies the hunts and movements of the band, surprised them as before by a forced march, surrounded them, and put to sword 12,000 men, women and children."³

In spite of these invasions and slaughter of the population *en masse*, it appears that during the period of early Muslim rule, the area known as Mewat was never permanently conquered.

The depredations of Moes, extended at times to the walls of Delhi and beyond the Yamuna into the Doab. Subsequent events even support the view that the various claimants to political power in Delhi took refuge in and sought help from the chieftains of Mewat. Thus Khan Jahan, the powerful and cunning minister of Firuz Shah Tughlaq (A.D. 1351-1388), having

1. Wolseley Haig, *The Cambridge History of India*, Volume III, *Turks and Afghans*, 1958, pp.67, 72, 88.

2. Elphinstone, *History of India*, 1916, p. 371.

3. Wolseley Haig, *The Cambridge History of India*, Volume III, *Turks and Afghans*, 1958, p. 73.

failed in his scheme to capture the throne, fled to Mewat, seeking shelter with its chief Koka Chauhan, but he was seized and killed. This happened about the year A.D. 1387. During the reign of the feeble successors of Firuz Shah, the nominal allegiance of Mewat was transferred from one prince to another. The caprice of the local chieftains determined how their own interests would be served in the long run. The depredations of the Moes again extended across the Yamuna into the Doab, and northward even into the streets of Delhi. Bahadur Nahar, whose tomb still stands at Alwar and who ruled Mewat at the time of Timur's invasion at the end of the 14th century, was one of the most powerful Meo chiefs in the neighbourhood of Delhi.¹ He belonged to the Jadu Got of the Meos. His original name is said to be Sambar Pal. When he killed a tiger by his sword, Firuz Shah Tughlaq gave him the title of 'Bahadur Nahar'. He was given a jagir in the Mewat area where he built a fort known as Kotla Bahadur Nahar. He embraced Islam and so did some other Meo chiefs of his caste and they become known as Khanzadas.² Kotla Bahadur Nahar is now known as Kotla on the Kotla Jhil.

1. R.C. Majumdar, *The History and Culture of the Indian People*, Volume VI, *The Delhi Sultanate*, 1967, pp. 97, 110-12, 121, 125. *The Cambridge History of India*, Volume III, *Turks and Afghans*, 1958, pp. 194, 199, 201, 205, 515.
Ishwari Prasad, *History of Mediaeval India*, 1952, pp. 336-39.

2 According to the Editor of *Tarikh-i-Meo Chhatrī*, Khanzadas were really Khan Jadas. Jadu is a Got of the Meos and Bahadur Nahar belonged to this Got. They had been rulers in Mewat for a long time and they embraced Islam. The word "Khan Jadu" distinguished them from the Hindu Judus. Gradually, they adopted a superior attitude towards the other Meos and ultimately disclaimed their Meo ancestry.

The following extracts taken from *Gazetteer of Ulwar*, 1878, (pages 2—3, 40—1), are also relevant :—

"The mass of the population of Mewat are called Meos; they are Musalmans, and claim to be of Rajput extraction (see Meos). They must not, however, be confounded with the Mewatti chiefs of the Persian historians, who were probably, the representatives of the ancient Lords of Mewat. These Mewattis were called Khanzadas (see Khanzadas), a race which, though Musalman like the Meos, was and is socially far superior to the Meos, who have no love for them, but who in times past have united with them in the raids and insurrections for which Mewat was so famous, and which made it a thorn in the side of the Delhi emperors. In fact, the expression "Mewatti" usually refers to the ruling class, while "Meo" designates the lower orders. The latter term is evidently not of modern origin, though it is not, I believe, met with in history, and the former is, I think, now unusual, "Khanzada" having taken its place."

x x x x

"That these Lords of Mewat were of the Jadu Rajput clan, would appear from the fact that local tradition declares it, and from converted Judus being called by the old Musalman

Bahadur Nahar at first supported Ghias-ud-din Tughlak Shah II (A.D. 1388-89), the grandson of Firuz Tughlak and was sent with an army, along with the Wazir, Malik Firuz Ali Khan, against Prince Muhammad, son of Firuz Tughlak. Ghias-ud-din was killed in a conspiracy and his cousin Abu Bakr was put on the throne February 19, 1398. A conspiracy between Islam Khan, the Commander of the household troops, and Muhammad so alarmed Abu Bakr that he left Delhi and fled to Mewat to seek the help of

historians "Mewattis", a term Chand applies to a Mewat chief of the Lunar race, of which race the Jadu Maharaja of Karauli calls himself the head."

x x x x

"This Bahadur Nahar, a Jadu Rajput by birth, is the reputed founder of the Khanzada race, which became so prominent in the history of the empire."

x x x x

"In speaking of Islam Khan, the Mewatti or Khanzada chief who was Babar's great opponent, one Muslim historian states that his family had enjoyed regal power up to the time of Firoz Shah, when Bahadur Nahar perished. Tradition tells of old Jadu chiefs of Tijara, in the neighbourhood of which we first hear of the Khanzada family. Babar, however, says that Hasan Khan's ancestors had governed Mewat in uninterrupted succession for nearly two hundred years; evidently dating the importance of the family from the time of Bahadur Nahar. It is, therefore, most probable that Bahadur Nahar was a member of a royal but fallen Jadu family, as the Khanzadas themselves relate, and that he or his father became a Musalman to gratify the Emperor Firoz and obtain power."

x x x x

"What was said of the Khanzadas in the historical sketch was based on the Persian histories, the most reliable sources of information. But the Khanzadas produce family histories and genealogies of their own, on which, however, much dependence cannot be placed; for they do not bear the test of comparison with the Persian histories. According to these family traditions, one Adhan Pal, fourth in descent from Taman Pal, Jadu chief of Biana (see Karauli Gazetteer) established himself on the hills separating Tijara and Firozpur (Gurgaon), at a spot Durala, of which the ruins still are to be seen. Thence he was driven to Sarehta, a few miles to the north in the same hills, where there are considerable remains (see Sarehta); and his grandson Lakhon Pal became, in the time of Firoz Shah, a Musalman, and established himself at Kotla. He held all Mewat, and even districts beyond its limits. His sons and grandsons settled in the principal places, and it is said that 1484 towns and villages (kheras) were under their sway, in some of which tombs and ruins exist which are said to have belonged to them.

"The term Khanzada is probably derived from Khanzad, for it appears that Bahadur Nahar, the first of the race mentioned in the Persian histories, associated himself with the turbulent slaves of Firoz Shah after the death of the latter, and, being a pervert, would contemptuously receive the name of Khanzad (slave) from his brethren. The Khanzadas themselves indignantly repudiate this derivation, and say the word is Khan Jadu (or Lord Jadu), and was intended to render still nobler the name of the princely Rajput race from which they came."

1. Prince Muhammad was once the joint ruler with his father under the title Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah, but was driven away and was then residing at Sirmur and making preparations to contest the throne.

Bahadur Nahar. Taking advantage of the absence of Abu Bakr, Muhammad occupied Delhi, and ascended the throne at Firuzabad under the title of Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah on August 31, 1390.

In 1393, Bahadur Nahar rebelled and began to make ~~move~~ to the environs of Delhi. The Sultan himself proceeded to Mewat to quell the rebellion and, having laid waste the country, proceeded to Jalesar. There he fell ill. Bahadur Nahar, taking advantage of the situation, plundered the country up to the gates of Delhi. But the Sultan, though still suffering from fever, pursued Bahadur Nahar to Kotla and totally defeated him.

On the fall of Delhi to Timur¹ in 1398, during the reign of Mahmud Tughlaq (A.D. 1395-1412), a number of prominent nobles like Masnad Ali, Khizr Khan, Mubarak Khan and Zirak Khan took shelter in the hills of Mewat² which, as usual, became a sancturay for the fugitives flying from Delhi. Timur called upon the Mewati Chief, Bahadur Nahar, to submit and surrender all ~~the~~ fugitives who had taken shelter with him. In response, Bahadur Nahar sent a very humble reply to the effect that he was "one of the very insignificant servants of the Amir and would proceed to his court to wait upon him". He also sent as tribute "two white parrots which could talk well and pleasantly."³

On January 1, 1399, when Timur marched from Delhi to Wazirabad, where he crossed the Yamuna into the Doab, Bahadur Nahar arrived in his camp with valuable gifts and made his submission. He was shown "due courtesy" and was honoured.⁴

1. The account of Timur's dealings with the Mewati Chief is mostly taken from an article entitled "Did Timur send an Embassy to Bahadur Nahar Mewati" by B.S. Mathur (*Journal of Indian History*, Volume XLII, Part II, August 1964, pp. 371-75).

2. *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*-Translated by Basu, p. 172; *Zafar-Nama* pp. 121-23 (Calcutta Edition)

3. *Malfuzat-i-Timuri*, Elliot & Dowson, *The History of India As Told By Its Own Historians* Volume, III, 1970, p. 449.

4. Ibid. [Regarding the treatment afforded to the Mewati Chief, Yahyabin-Ahmad (*Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*) informs us that Bahadur Nahar, along with Delhi nobles who had taken refuge in Mewat and had accompanied the Mewati Chief to the presence of Timur, "save Khizr Khan were enchained." Badauni also agrees and says that orders were issued to make the Mewati Chief a prisoner, (*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Volume I, p.271.)

From these two statements, it appears that the invaders probably did not extend courteous treatment to Bahadur Nahar. But the evidence of 'Malfuzat' given above in the text, is more trustworthy.]

Nusrat Khan, a son of Fath Khan, the eldest son of Firuz Tughlak, came from Mewat to Delhi in 1399 and proclaimed himself king under the title of Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah. He was defeated and driven away by Mallu Iqbal Khan, the minister of Sultan Mahmud. Nusrat Khan took refuge in Mewat, his old home, where he died soon after.

On his expulsion from the governorship of Multan in 1395, Khizr Khan, the founder of the Sayyid dynasty, had also taken shelter in Mewat. Later, he made his submission to Timur and was left by him as his Viceroy at Lahore. In December 1413, Khizr Khan won the support of Jalal Khan who had succeeded Bahadur Nahar. Having defeated Daulat Khan Lodi, he entered Delhi in triumph on June 6, 1414, but his hold beyond Delhi extended only over Mewat and a portion of the Doab.

In 1421, the last year of his reign, Khizr Khan marched into Mewat to assert his authority in that province, captured and destroyed Kotla, the former stronghold of Bahadur Nahar, and received the submission of most of the inhabitants.

Khizr Khan was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah (A.D. 1421-1434) whose interests over Mewat clashed with those of Ibrahim, the Sharqi ruler of Jaunpur, who had become very powerful and ambitious.

Almost throughout Mubarak's reign, Mewat remained unsettled and rebellious. The Sultan marched into Mewat towards the close of the year 1424 with the object of crushing an insurrection there, but the rebels laid waste their villages in the plains and retired into their hill fortresses. The king was obliged to return to Delhi. Next year (1425), the Mewatis rose again under their twin leaders, Jalal Khan and Abdul Qadir (or Qadr Khan), nicknamed Jallu and Qaddu, grandsons of Bahadur Nahar. Mubarak followed them into the hills, drove them from the stronghold of Andur which he dismantled and pursued them to Alwar where they surrendered. Jallu escaped but Qaddu was arrested and carried as a prisoner to Delhi and after some time was put to death on charge of conspiracy with Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpur.

The execution of Qaddu led to a fresh rebellion in Mewat, headed by his brother Jallu. Sarvar-ul-Mulk, the minister who was appointed to suppress it, followed the rebels into the hills in which they had, in their time-honoured way, taken refuge. He returned to Delhi on their paying empty compliments of formal submission to his master,

wholly or partly, the following Sarkars and Dasturs' :—

Subah	Sarkar	Dastur	Mahal or Pargana
Delhi	Delhi	Palwal Jharsa	
	Rewari	Bahora Taoru Rewari Sohna (Kohana or Lohana)	
Agra	Suhar or Pahari Tijara	Hodal Tijara	Indor Ujina Umri-Umra Pinangwan Bisru Bhasohra (Bichor) Jhamrawat Khanpur Sakras Santhwari Firozpur Kotla Ghasera Nagina

During the flourishing times of the Mughal empire, Gurgaon was not in the limelight of history, but with its decay, mention of the district is again found in historical writings. In 1685, Aurangzeb had to send a powerful army under the command of Raja Jai Singh to Mewat area against Ikram Khan who had started giving trouble to the Mughal administration. Heavy casualties

were inflicted on his followers and the fort of Alwar was captured from the rebels.¹

THE LATER MUGHALS, MARATHAS AND JATS

During the period of the decline of the Mughal empire after the death of Aurangzeb, the district was torn between several contending powers. In the north were the Nawabs of Farrukhnagar, a principality founded in 1713; in the centre an independent Badgujar Rajput power had risen at Ghasera; Rewari was held by an Ahir family with forts at Gokulgarh and Guraora while from the south the great Jat ruler Suraj Mal of Bharatpur was extending his dominions. In due course, he captured Ghasera and Farrukhnagar; but after his death in 1763, Farrukhnagar returned to its former rulers. A great part of the tract was, however, recovered for the Mughal empire by Najaf Quli Khan.

Under the Marathas, the greater part of the district was held by Generals De Boigne, Perron and Bourquin. Begum Samru owned the pargana of Jharsa or Badshahpur, and George Thomas had that of Firozpur assigned to him in 1793. George Thomas once plundered Gurgaon but could not retain this possession. In Rewari, Tej Singh established himself in power by allying himself with the Marathas.²

The exploits of Balram Jat, popularly called Balu, came to prominence in the fifties of the 18th century. Balu was the son of a petty revenue collector of Faridabad.³ Supported by his family connection with Badan Singh, the Jat Raja of Bharatpur, (d. June 7, 1756), he extended his power by seizing the neighbouring villages and ousting their lawful owners and the local magistrates. He killed Murtaza Khan, the local Mughal Government Officer at Faridabad who had once imprisoned his father. He practically closed the Delhi-Agra Road. He took full advantage of the ascendancy of the Bharatpur chiefs with the Mughal court. In 1739, Muhammad Shah, the Emperor gave the titles of Naib Bakshi and Rao to Balu. When after Muhammad Shah's death in 1748, Balu expelled the imperial outpost at Shamspur, Safdar Jang, the Wazir of the new Mughal Emperor Ahmed Shah, sent a force there which was boldly resisted by Balu. Thereupon, Safdar Jang himself marched against him. The Wazir had only reached Khizirabad (probably on June 30, 1750) when Balram in terror came and made his submission through the Maratha

1. Hashim Amir Ali, *The Meos of Mewat*, 1970, p. 28.

2. *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab*, Volume I, 1908, p. 266.

3. *Delhi District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 212.

envoy. He was sent back to his home after a few days, on his promising to be the Wazir's follower. He had built a mud fort in about 1740 and named it Ballabgarh.¹ (8 kilometres south of Faridabad), and by taking the lease of revenue collection of Palwal and Faridabad (which lay in the Nizam's jagir) soon made himself a district governor and noble (rai).²

Balu then participated actively in the imperial politics. In 1752, when acute differences arose between the Wazir and the all-powerful eunuch Javed Khan, paramour of the Queen mother, Udham Bai or Nawab Qudsia Begum, Javed employed Balu to create disturbances. Balu attacked Sikandrabad across the Yamuna, 51 kilometres south east of Delhi, expelled the local Faujdar, and plundered the city. Balu accompanied Suraj Mal to Delhi when the latter was called for counsel and assistance by Safdar Jang on the occasion of the murder of Javed Khan on August 27, 1752, by the Wazir.

Then began a civil war. Ahmed Shah dismissed Safdar Jang and appointed Intizam-ud-daulah as new Wazir. Safdar Jang revolted and decided to try his strength. The Emperor was supported by Intizam-ud-daulah and Mir Bakshi, Imad-ul-mulk. The Ruhelas led by Najib-ud-daulah as well as the Marathas joined the Emperor. In his struggle against the Emperor, Safdar Jang won over Suraj Mal and Balu to his side. The civil war lasted for a year and a quarter. The city of Delhi, its environs, and the regions of Faridabad and Ballabgarh were the scenes of fighting. Safdar Jang established his headquarters at Sikri, 5 kilometres south of Ballabgarh, and with his Jat allies put up a stout resistance. However, after having been defeated, he fled to Avadh in November 1753. Imad-ul-mulk then tried to gain possession of the lost areas from the Jats.

Imad's chief agent, Aqibat Mahmud Khan, son of Martaza Khan (who had been killed by Balu) opened the campaign of re-conquest on Faridabad side. Here the leading disturber of law and order was Balu. When Aqibat came with 500 Badakhshis and 2,000 Marthata troopers and demanded the revenue of the district and the tribute due to the Emperor, Balu offered fight.

1. The name is probably a corruption of Balramgarh, the fort of Balram, its founder. Balu had built this fort to celebrate his acquisition of the titles of Naib Bakshi and Rao in 1739.

(Delhi District Gazetteer, 1883-84, pp. 212-13.)

2. *Tarikh-i-Ahmed Shahi*, ff. 226-23a; *Delhi Chronicle* (a diary of events written in Delhi from 1738 to 1798). But *Chahar Gulazar-i-Shujai* of Harcharan-das (f. 402 a) differs.

Imad sent 7,000 more troops and 30 pieces of light artillery with rockets to Aqibat to match the guns of Ballabgarh. After some fighting Balu made his submission, saw Aqibat and agreed to pay the rent and tribute due from him. Then Aqibat advanced to Palwal, about 23 kilometres south of Ballabgarh, but found the peasants afraid to pay him rent lest Balu should demand it again. The revenue collector of the place, whom Balu had ousted, told Aqibat that unless he captured Ballabgarh and killed Balu, he would fail to get control over the administration of the area. A *thanedar* sent by him to Fatehpur village was turned out at Balu's bidding. Aqibat, therefore, marched back to a plain near Ballabgarh and asked Balu to come and settle the revenue demand. Balu arrived with his Diwan, one son and an escort of 250 men. Aqibat demanded payment. The Jat chief replied defiantly, "I have not brought the money in my pocket. I only promised to pay the tribute after collecting the rent. If you want to wrest this tract from me, you will have to fight for it." High words were exchanged and Balu in anger laid his hand on the hilt of his sword. But the Badakshis surrounding Aqibat's *palki* fell upon Balu and slew him with his son, his Diwan and nine other men (November 29, 1753).¹ The garrison of Ballabgarh kept up fire till midnight after which they evacuated the fort. Aqibat took possession of it with all its artillery and armament and gave up the other property within to plunder by his soldiers. The areas were then conferred upon Imad.

Aqibat quickly followed up this success in other directions. In the following week, he sacked the walled villages of Mithaul and Hathin (19 kilometres south and south-west of Palwal), where refractory peasants had fought all day and had fled away at night. He also attacked the small mud forts of the Jats all around Palwal and brought them under his rule. Then after a visit to Delhi, he started (December 27) again for Faridabad, taking Khandoji Holker and his troops to assist him in the campaign. But could not control this tract, as his soldiers refused to obey his agents, and the Jats seized the opportunity to expel the outposts set up by him at Hathin and other newly conquered places. So he appealed to his master to come in person and Imad marched from Delhi to Ballabgarh.

Khandoji Holker son of Malhar Rao Holker had encamped at Hodal (27 kilometres south of Palwal) and sent detachments which plundered the

1. *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi*, ff. 89a-92a.

Khawajah Aftab Khan, the Jamadar of Badakshis, who had cut off Balu's head, was rewarded with two pearl pendants taken from the Jat's ears. The head was exposed on a pillar by the roadside near Faridabad (Ibid, ff. 92b, 98b). Ballabgarh was named Nizamgarh after Imad's new title Nizam-ul-Asaf (Ibid, f. 106b).

Jat villages all around, even as far as Barsana (19 kilometres) and Nandgaon (27 kilometres) south of Hodal, ousting Jawahir Singh, Suraj Mal's son from these and establishing Maratha posts there (end of December 1753). This strengthened Aqibat's position and he sacked the Jat village of Ghangaula (14 kilometres south-west of Ballabgarh) belonging to a brother of Balu and planted his own *thana* there (January 5, 1754). On January 8, Imad advanced from Ballabgarh to Palwal and got into touch with Khandoji at Hodal. The fort of Ghasera (24 kilometres west of Palwal) had been wrested by Suraj Mal from Bahadur Singh Bar-Gujar, the Faujdar of Chakla Koli (Aligarh).¹ On April 23, 1753, after that chieftain had slain his women and rushed to death in battle at the head of 25 desperate followers, Imad appointed Bahadur's son, Fath Singh, master of his father's fort, which the Bharatpur garrison had evacuated in terror. Thus a mortal enemy of the Jats was planted there with orders to attack their hamlets around.

In short, most of the Jat homes on both banks of the Yamuna now fell into Imad's hands and his rule was established even as far south as Mathura and Agra from where the Jats had fled away. Another officer expelled the Jat force that had seized Koli (Aligarh) and Jalesar. Imad sent his men to restore the civil administration in all long disturbed places and to induce the peasants to return to cultivation. Soon afterwards the Marathas laid siege to Kumher in Bharatpur and he was called there.² In February 1754, Aqibat squeezed the peasants of Rewari and other places. But shortly afterwards, the Jats again began to assert themselves and recovered their power to a large extent.

During his fourth invasion in 1756, Ahmed Shah Abdali encountered Marathas at Faridabad and sacked and burnt the town. In 1757, Ahmed Shah Abdali marched down the west bank of the Yamuna, by way of Khizrabad and Badarpur, to a place about 10 kilometres south of Ballabgarh. His objectives were Suraj Mal's strongholds of Kumher and Dig. At first he left Ballabgarh untaken in his rear. But as his foragers, spread over a vast area, approached this place, the Jat garrison attacked them, slaying and wounding many. Therefter fort of Ballabgarh was attacked and captured. After the capture of Ballabgarh, Ahmed Shah Abdali set forth for Mathura still held by the Jats under Suraj Mal.

Abdali's second visitation of the district was in 1760 during his fifth invasion of India. After his victory over Dattaji Sindhia at Barari Ghat north

1. *Bharatpur District Gazetteer*, 1971, p. 64.

2. *Tarikh-t-Ahmed Shahi*, ff. 93 b, 94b, 102a, 104b, 107a.

of Delhi, on January 9, Abdali skirting the city of Delhi, which was then without a ruler, instead of entering it, encamped at Khizrabad, south of Delhi, on January 14. Thirteen days later, he marched south through the Gurgaon district to Dig (in Bharatpur) against Suraj Mal. He invested this fort, but not earnestly. Moving through Mewat, he reached Rewari on February 18, chasing in vain the Marathas under Malhar Rao Holker. Abdali then started for Delhi, reached Dhankot (32 kilometres south-west of Delhi) on February 27 and Khizrabad on February 29 without having achieved anything. Soon after he shifted to Aligarh. He remained there till he again marched towards north through the Doab, crossed the Yamuna and defeated the Marathas in the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761.

Meanwhile, the Mewatis had been robbing the disturbed country around Mewat. For some years past, Suraj Mal had also been engaged in conquering that region and establishing his own administration there. He had seized Palwal on September 27, 1754, recovered Ballabgarh and reconquered Ghasera in November 1755. He had taken the imperial fort of Alwar, which dominated the district (March 1756), and built another fort at Kishangarh, 32 kilometres northwards.¹ On June 12, 1761, after the defeat of the Mahrattas he captured Agra fort by bribery, after less than a month's blockade. In 1762, Kishan Singh and Bishan Singh sons of Balu were restored the fort of Ballabgarh and nominated *killadar aur nazim* of the pargana under the Bharatpur ruler.² In the course of his gradual occupation of Mewat, particularly after Abdali's departure from India in 1761, whenever Jawahir Singh, the son and ultimately the successor of Suraj Mal, heard of any Mewatis practising highway robbery, he used to track them by their footmarks and sternly put them to death. But a most notorious culprit of the place defied him. A Meo named Sanulba, with his gang of ten mounted brigands, used to make long night marches from his lair, and loot caravans near the fort of Dig or between Hodal and Barsana. The people were helpless against his oppression. He fixed his residence in the fort of Taoru (tahsil Nuh), the seat of Asadullah Khan Baluch, with whom he used to share his booty, (as the price of his protection). Jawahir found that Sanulba would not be expelled from his refuge unless his protectors were attacked. Suraj Mal called upon the Baluch chief to drive Sanulba out. He refused to lose such a profitable agent in crime, and Jawahir led an expedition against him. All the Baluchis under Musavi Khan of Farrukhnagar, the head of their clan,

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume II, (1754-1771), Third Edition, 1966 (Orient Longman's 1st impression, 1971), p. 314.

2. *Delhi District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 213.

opposed him, and the expedition had to return unsuccessful. This repulse only served to rouse Jawahir's spirits. A second and stronger expedition was organised. Najib, the Afghan Commander-in-Chief of Abdali wrote to Suraj Mal asking him not to touch the Blauchis who were his proteges. Suraj Mal replied by pointing out that those who harboured highway robbers deserved punishment.

Jawahir Singh advanced upon Farrukhnagar, destroying the villages on the way. Suraj Mal followed with reinforcements and a train of big guns, and in less than two months the fort was taken (c. December 12, 1763). Suraj Mal left a strong garrison in Farrukhnagar and Jawahir Singh in its neighbourhood, and marched with the rest of his army rapidly to the Doab where he was killed (December 25, 1763) in a battle with Najib on the banks of river Hindan.

Jawahir Singh (d. August 1768) recovered the Jat posts in the middle Doab (April 1764), which had been seized by Najib after his victory over Suraj Mal. He strongly reinforced with more artillery and munitions the fort of Ballabgarh which was to serve as his base of operations against Delhi which he bombarded in November 1764. He made friends with the Sikh hordes of Punjab in order to harass Najib by getting his dominions invaded by them. A vast Sikh force led by Jassa Singh made a lightning raid on Rewari (in the jagir of Diwan Nagar Mal) towards the end of October 1765, plundered and burnt that town, dug up the floors of the houses and took away prisoners.

Following the death of Najib-ud-daulah in 1770, his son Zabita Khan (d. January 1785) had occupied the districts around Delhi in the name of Emperor Shah Alam II who was in exile at Allahabad. But on the occupation of the capital and the Red Fort by the Marathas in February 1771, Visaji Krishna was appointed by Mirza Jawan Bakht, the Crown Prince, as Collector of the districts around Delhi, especially to the north, which Najib had so long appropriated to himself.¹

Mirza Najaf Khan was appointed Second Paymaster General of the Mughal empire on June 5, 1773.² He set himself to raising a new army for the Emperor, with his usual energy. The response for recruits was prompt and ample in the country around Delhi, especially the Baluch colonies in Mewat. But the main difficulty was how to feed and equip this force. An attack upon

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume III, (1771-1788), 1964, p.21.

2. Ibid, p. 62.

the Jat Raja of Bharatpur, known to be the richest vassal in the north, was decided upon as the only course left. Against such an adversary, the Jats were hopelessly outclassed. They were already torn by family dissensions between Nawal Singh, the regent of the minor ruler, Kesri Singh, and his brother, Ranjit Singh. Balu's sons had also defected as the Jat Government had dismissed them from service and wrested their fort. Although they died just at the same time, their successors nursed a deep grudge against the Bharatpur ruler.

The Mughal general set out from Delhi on September 24, 1773. He had already captured the mud fort of Maidangarhi (c. August 17), 21 kilometres south of Delhi. His lieutenant, Najaf Quli Khan, had deflated and despoiled the Jat detachment which, issuing from Farrukhnagar, had attacked the *garhi* of Harsaru, west of Gurgaon. Marching by way of Barapula and Badarpur, Najaf Khan reached Ballabgarh. Here he received a highly important accession to his strength in the person of Ajit Singh son of Kishan Singh and Hira Singh son of Bishan Singh, the dispossessed heirs of Balu.¹ They offered to assist the imperial forces with their local knowledge and influence if Najaf Khan would promise to restore their patrimony to them after it had been wrested from the Jat Raja's agents. The defection of such men at the very outset of the campaign "broke the waist of Nawal Singh's resolution", and he fell back from his first post of Bawnikhera (Bamnikhara) (about 10 kilometres south of Palwal) to Banchari, about 15 kilometres further south, where he entrenched his camp. While Mirza Najaf himself halted at Sikri-Fatehpur Biluch, 8 kilometres south of Ballabgarh and about 15 kilometres north of Palwal, Najaf Quli Khan who had just arrived from his successful operations on Rewari side, was sent off with the vanguard (October 8) to clear the way. Najaf Khan advanced, daily fighting skirmishes and driving back the Jat patrols. Nowhere was any stout defence offered, and the villages in the north of Jat territory lay helpless before the imperial army.

So greatly were the Jat troops demoralised by the example of their craven chief that one day (October 11) they abandoned their camp at Banchari in a ridiculous panic. While they were at their midday meal, they mistook a dust cloud on the west for the approach of Najaf Khan's army and fled away in fear, leaving their entire camp as it was. The cloud moved like a spiral. The villagers of Banchari, on seeing the helpless condition of the fugitives,

1. *Delhi District Gazetteer*, 1883-84, p. 213 : Hira Singh is said to be the son of Rao Kishan Dass, which is apparently wrong. He was the son of Bishan Singh. It has also been wrongly recorded that the sons of Balu were dismissed from service in 1774. This surely took place in 1773.

looted their camp. On the news of this reaching Najaf Khan's encampment in the rear, every man went out of it and looted what remained of the Jat camp, and at night fell back to their own base. Nawal Singh took refuge near Kotvan, about 7 kilometres south of Hodal (and 13 kilometres south-east of Banchari) amidst its abundance of jungles and broken ground.

After skirmishes for ten days, a decisive battle was fought on October 30, midway between Sahar and Barsana. Najaf Khan's superior generalship gave him victory over the Jat chief. In the strategic moves before the battle of Barsana, the imperialists had marched southwards along the eastern route from Hodal by Chhata and Sahar, leaving Kotvan untaken behind them. Kotvan which was held by Sitaram, the father-in-law of Nawal Singh, was also taken by the end of November 1773. Agra fell on February 18, 1774. The fort of Ballabgarh was captured from the Jat Raja's garrison on April 20, 1774, and Farrukhnagar on May 6. Ajit Singh and Hira Singh were restored the pargana of Ballabgarh, Ajit Singh was formally entitled 'Raja' and Hira was called 'Raja' as also 'Salar Jang'.

Meanwhile, Abdul Ahad Khan, the Deputy Wazir, after gaining unrivalled sway over the Emperor's mind, was playing a double game. He pointed out that all the conquests made by Mirza Najaf had merely strengthened him without bringing the least gain in territory or revenue to the Emperor, though the Emperor's personal troops had cooperated with Najaf's in making those acquisitions. The Emperor's poverty had, in fact, only deepened in consequence of Najaf's adventures. The districts round Delhi, north and west, which had formerly belonged to the Emperor's privy-purse, as well as the recent conquests from the Jats to the south-west of Delhi and in the mid Doab, had all been appropriated by Mirza's officers on the plea of providing their soldiers pay. His lieutenant, Najaf Quli Khan, had occupied Mewat and Rewari. With all such arguments, Abdul Ahad tried to set the Emperor against Mirza Najaf and his intrigues continued for quite a few years while the Mirza was again campaigning against Bharatpur (1775—77) and Alwar (1778). Abdul Ahad pointed out that not a single pice of revenue had been paid to the Emperor. No share of the spoils of war had also been credited to the public treasury. If the Emperor himself marched into Rajputana, the rajas and chiefs were sure to present themselves and offer tribute. The Emperor yielded to his exhortations and leaving Delhi on November 10, 1778 for Jaipur, reached Rewari in the third week of December. Mitrasen Ahir of Rewari was interviewed and saddled with a tribute of Rs. 1,25,000. The Emperor returned to Delhi in April 1779.

The history of the two years and a half after the death of Mirza Najaf Khan on April 6, 1782, is a story of dissolution and formation of new groups among his four lieutenants, viz. Afrasiyab Khan, Mirza Muhammad Shafi, Najaf Quli Khan and Muhammad Beg Hamadani.¹ There was chaos everywhere. Shafi came to Delhi from Karnal. Najaf Quli Khan marched from his fief of Shekhawati and Mewat (with its centre at Kanaud, the present Mahendragarh) towards Delhi, apparently to join Muhammad Shafi, but Afrasiyab intercepted him at Gurgaon on July 17, won him over by personal entreaty, and brought him to Delhi the next day. Ultimately Shafi was made Mir Bakshi and Regent on September 15, 1782.

Only a month after his appointment as Mir Bakshi, Muhammad Shafi had to flee away from the capital. The fugitive with his own troops rode hard from Delhi to Ballabgarh and thence to Kosi where he gained the adhesion of Muhammad Beg Hamadani. Here all the former captains of Najaf Khan vowed to recognise Shafi as their master. Then the two set their faces (November 6) towards Delhi, expelling the imperial collectors in Hodal district and camping on arrival at Faridabad.²

The close proximity of the rebel generals alarmed the Emperor who was persuaded to march against them (November 12). Thereupon, the rebels sent their envoys to him (November 14) to offer their protestations of loyalty and to seek his pardon and restoration to their former offices and honours, which was allowed by the Emperor.

About the end of May 1783, a detachment from Muhammad Shafi's army was fighting the Alwar Raja's troops near Firozpur Jhirka; Shafi went to their aid and began to bombard the strong fortalice of Kumari-Pahari (Pahari-Kandla). But soon afterwards he went southwards to meet Mahadji Sindhia on the Chambal to seek his aid against Hamadani with whom he had quarrelled and by whom finally, he was murdered on September 23, 1783.

In December 1784, Mahadji Sindhia was appointed Regent of the empire. As the Mewatis were disturbing the countryside, he made a march in their direction and reached Nandgaon about December 10, 1786. Shortly afterwards, he marched northwards into Mewat in order to overawe the rebels there, especially Murad Beg, a Mughal officer of Najaf Khani service, whom Sindhia wanted to remove from the possession of Kishangarh fort (21 kilo-

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume III, (1771-1788), 1964, p. 158.

2. Ibid, p. 171.

metres west of Firozpur Jhirka) and the governorship of Mewat. This having been peacefully effected, he turned north to Pingor (tahsil Palwal), 13 kilometres north of Hodal (c. December 30), to be nearer to Delhi. In the neighbourhood of Hodal, Sindhia lay encamped for the next two months. Here he received his two Delhi agents — Shah Nizamudin and Ladoji Deshmukh, whom the Emperor had sent (February 6, 1787) to dun him for his outstanding allowances, amounting to Rs. 8,40,000 which Sindhia had to pay. It was no easy matter for Sindhia to find a such sum, and he detained the envoys for three weeks, after which he sent them back (February 17) with bankers' bills for two lakh payable at sight, assignments for five lakh on the revenues of Meerut and other *mahals*, and a promise to pay up the balance of 1,40,000 in two months. His subsequent campaign against Jaipur to raise money resulted in his ignominious retreat from Lalsot to Dig in August 1787, after the disastrous battle of Tunga fought on July 26.

The audacious attack of Ghulam Qadir Ruhela, grandson of Najib, on Delhi early in October drove the Emperor into making frantic appeals to Mahadji Sindhia to come to his rescue. So leaving Alwar on October 28, Mahadji arrived between Rewari and Pataudi (November 4) and here he was brought to a halt for a month. He made a vain attempt to bring the Emperor over to his own side by sending Ambaji Ingle as an embassy. His enemies at Delhi gained complete control over the feeble Emperor and secured an order forbidding him to approach the Court (November 15), and Sindhia could do nothing but wait passively for reinforcements to arrive. He made another equally futile effort to raise the siege of Agra by Ismail Beg Hamadani, nephew of Muhammad Beg Hamadani, who had been killed in the battle of Tunga while fighting against Mahadji. At last, abandoning all field operations north of river Chambal, Mahadji retired beyond that river (December 20). The siege continued till June 1788, when Mahadji regained the upper hand and Hamadani was defeated and fort relieved.

Ismail Beg had put his father Munim Beg in charge of Gokulgarh fort near Rewari in November 1788 when he was working under Sindhia's orders. When Ismail quarrelled with Sindhia, Munim Beg began to carve out an independent estate for himself round Rewari.¹ Joined by Gulab Singh, the son of Mitrasen Ahir (the dispossessed zamindar of Rewari), he began to plunder the wayfarers and tax-collectors and invade Kot Putli and other *mahals* where he levied contributions. At this time, Sindhia was too busy fighting the Jaipur and Jodhpur Rajas to send an adequate force against Munim Beg. Two

¹ Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume IV, (1789-1803), 1972, p.46.

battalions under a clerk of his service occupied Rewari, but they were defeated and captured by Munim Beg and deprived of all their weapons and guns. This victory emboldened him to increase his force by enlisting the adventurers who flocked to his side. Like the robber barons of medieval Italy, he made his castle a centre of lawlessness in the country around and of insecurity to traders on the highways.

Towards the close of the year 1790, the battles of Patan and Merta had been won by Sindhia against the Rajas of Jaipur and Jodhpur respectively. Mirza Ismail Beg had been forced to flee to Gujarat and Mahadji was master again. Being himself still engaged in the campaign in Rajputana, Sindhia arranged that Najaf Quli Khan and the Raja of Alwar should undertake the suppression of Munim Beg with their own contingents. Najaf Quli Khan who was now anxious to conciliate Sindhia, arrived at Bharawas near Rewari, with a contingent of 4,000 men under the Alwar Diwan Ramsevak, about the middle of December. Gulab Singh who offered them battle was defeated and driven back to Gokulgarh. The siege of this fort was protracted for more than six months, partly because a personal quarrel between the Alwar Diwan Ramsevak and the commander-in-chief Hushdar Khan paralysed the forces of that State, but mainly by reason of Najaf Quli not really wishing to see Gokulgarh taken by Sindhia. At the end of February 1791, it was reported that the siege was still going on, but there was no food in the fort and parties of its defenders were coming out in despair; the garrison had sunk to a thousand Mughal and five hundred men of Gulab Singh, but "the roads were unsafe, as the peasants were up in arms on all sides."

Soon after reinforcements arrived from Alwar and the siege trenches were advanced to the wall of the fort. But Najaf Quli secretly used to send provisions to Munim Beg and thus put off its fall, though increasing numbers of defenders deserted to Sindhia's side. Early in July, the garrison had sunk to five hundred men, and Mahadji wrote to Najaf Quli warning him against his double dealing. This letter and the approach of Sindhia's own army forced the hand of Najaf Quli. On July 16, 1791, he secured the capitulation of the fort. By Sindhia's orders, Munim Beg was confined in the Agra fort.

Najaf Quli in fear of punishment for his treachery fled away from Rewari. Illness overtook him and after a halt for treatment at Kot Qasim (end of July), he reached his refuge in Kanaud, where he died on August 23, 1791. Shortly afterwards Mirza Ismail Beg also sought shelter at Kanaud.

On the fall of the fort of Kanaud to the Marathas in the middle

April 1792, Najaf Quli Khan's junior widow had appealed to Col. De Boigne (a general under Mahadji Sindhia), who held the parganas of Palwal, Hodal and Sohna with cannon foundries at Hodal and Palwal to become the protector of Mirza Ismail Beg and of Najaf Quli's family, and offered him her foster-child, Moti Begam, who had been brought up in music and dancing. The Savoyard general accepted the virgin tribute and Moti Begam was betrothed to him on April 20. He later settled three villages near Palwal out of his jagir, on the widow for her support, besides giving money to the Mirza when he happened to pass through Agra next time, where the Mirza was he as a prisoner and where he was put to death in February 1794.

Apa Khande Rao, the Maratha governor of the Mewat country, v of Delhi, engaged George Thomas (c. October 1793) and placed a battalion of sepoys under him. Of all European military adventurers in India, George Thomas lived a life of most romantic interest, marked by the brilliancy and briefness of a meteor. His tall manly form, wild courage, inborn power of command and Irish humour and generosity soon made him well known as a good fighter. He worked for Apa Khande Rao for four years from 1793 to 1797.¹

Early in the year 1794, Thomas was raising fresh troops, collecting revenue by force from the ever-refractory peasantry of Mewat, and (in April) supporting his unpaid soldiery by looting Gurgaon and two other villages in the jagir of Begum Samru. As Apa Khande Rao enlarged the contingent of Thomas, he assigned to him Tijara, Tapukra and Firozpur Jhirka as fiefs for the maintenance of his troops, and he had to fight repeatedly before he could impose his authority on the wild unruly peasantry—² (March-July). Soon afterwards Jhajjar (District Rohtak), Pataudi and the neighbouring villages were added to his jagir, raising his income (on paper) to 1.5 lakh of rupees a year.

Among other things Mahadji's leadership in North India suffered a decline owing to his financial distress. His death in 1794 threw responsibility on the shoulders of a much less competent successor in the person of

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume IV, (1789-1803), 1972, p.233.

2. George Thomas defeated Bakhta, the rebel Zamindar of Rewari, made raids near Delhi (September 1794) and forced the nephew of Ganga Vishnu Ahir, another rebel to surrender his fort of Belji (October).

(*Dillyyehil Marathyan chin Raj-Karanen*, Volume II, pp.120, 128-29, 136; edited by D.B. Paransis, 1913-14.)

Daulat Rao Sindhia. His unwisdom to fight with Holker in the first place and later on with the British, toppled the political structure which Mahadji had built in North India.

In 1797, Thomas's fortune took a turn for the worse. He had so long managed somehow or other to get on with Apa Khande Rao, in spite of Apa's jealousy, failure to keep his promises, and even a treacherous plot against his life. Apa died on June 25, 1797, and his nephew Vaman Rao succeeded to his governorship and continued to keep Thomas in his service only for some time, i.e. up to the end of 1797.

George Thomas had been a regular servant of some lawful authority or other till 1797. But when Apa Khande Rao's successor terminated his services, Thomas became a private robber-captain for his living.¹ Early in 1798, he occupied Hansi and made it the capital of his kingdom extending from Ghaggar river in the north to Rewari and Pataudi parganas in the south.

Sombre, another adventurer, the husband of the well known Begum Samru, had obtained the pargana of Jharsa or Badshahpur.²

THE MODERN PERIOD

Within two years of the abandonment of his dominion by George Thomas in 1801, the rising power of Daulat Rao Sindhia in North India was completely broken by the British forces under General Lake in the Second Maratha War. The Gurgaon district, with other possessions of Sindhia, west of the Yamuna, passed on to the British East India Company by the Treaty of Surji Arjungaon signed on December 30, 1803.

At the time of annexation in 1803, the district (exclusive of the pargana of Pali which was transferred to Delhi in 1863), consisted of 11³ parganas, viz. Jharsa, Sohna, Nuh, Hathin, Palwal, Hodal, Punahana, Firozpur, Bahora, Rewari, and Shahjahanpur. At that time it was a principle of British policy to make the Yamuna as far as possible, a limit of actual British possession, and to interpose between that border and foreign territory a buffer of semi-independent States; and in consequence of the effect given to

1. Jadunath Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume IV, (1789-1803), 1972, p. 236.

2. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 20.

3. Actually taking into account Taoru, the total number of parganas should be 13. On its annexation in 1803, Taoru was conferred upon the Raja of Bharatpur and it remained with him till 1826. (*Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 186).

that policy, it was only gradually that the greater part of the district came under direct British rule.

During the decay of the Mughal empire, the district was torn between contending powers. In the north was the Nawab of Farrukhnagar, a principality founded in 1732. It was ruled by Nawabs until the reigning Nawab, Ahmed Ali Khan, was hanged for participation in the Uprising of 1857 and the estate was confiscated by the British.

Ghasera along with 11 villages including Nuh and Malab was granted by Aurangzeb to Hathi Singh, a Bar-Gujar Rajput. He was succeeded by his son Rao Bahadur Singh, who extended his rule over the parganas of Indor, Kotla, Ghasera and Sohna.¹ Ghasera was besieged by Suraj Mal, and after a heroic defence, the fort was captured. Bahadur Singh and all his family, except one grandson Bhagwant Singh,² perished. Bahadur Singh's wives blew themselves up with the magazine when no hope of victory was left. Thus Ghasera was taken by Suraj Mal in 1753.³

Rewari was held by an Ahir family with forts at Gokulgarh and Guraora. After the cession of Delhi territory in 1803, Rewari was made over to the rulers of Bharatpur, but was resumed three years later. Tej Singh was allowed to retain 87 villages as an *istamarari* jagir in perpetuity. In 1857, Rao Tula Ram represented the family. He harboured a grudge towards the British, who had reduced his State to a petty *istamarari* jagir. In May 1857, he proclaimed himself ruler of the parganas of Rewari, Bhore and Shah-jahanpur with his headquarters at Rampura, 1.5 kilometres south-west of Rewari.⁴ Rao Tula Ram was defeated by the British and his estate was confiscated.

Firozpur Jhirka and Punahana along with Loharu were granted by the Alwar Raja and the British to an agent of Alwar Raja, Ahmed Baksh Khan.

1. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, pp. 19-20.

2. This appears to be wrong, Bahadar's son, Fath Singh was then in Delhi and thus escaped the massacre of his family. He naturally joined Suraj Mal's enemy, Imad-ul-Mulk and recovered Ghasera with Mughal help in January 1754. (See Jadunath Sarkar : *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Volume II (1754-1771), 1971, p.313).

3. The year 1767 given in the *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, seems to be obviously wrong for Suraj Mal, was killed in battle in December 1763. So he could not be alive in 1767. Moreover, the year in the Gazetteer is shown as corresponding to 1810 Sambat but this can only correspond to 1753 and not 1767.

4. Buddha Prakash, (Ed.), *Glimpses of Hariyana*, 1967, pp. 101-02.

His son, Nawab Shams-ud-din, was executed on account of his complicity in the murder of William Frazer, the Resident of Delhi in 1835,¹ and the parganas of Firozpur and Punahana were annexed by the British.

The Ballabgarh estate had been transferred by Delhi Emperor to Ajit Singh in 1775. His son Bahadur Singh was recognised as Chief of Ballabgarh by the British in 1803. He also received the pargana of Pali Pakhal the following year. This pargana was resumed in 1832. Raja Nahar Singh, the reigning ruler in 1857, was implicated for his correspondence with the freedom fighters. He was hanged and the estate was confiscated.

Pataudi territory was granted in perpetuity in 1806 to Feroz Talab, a descendant of Afghan family of Samana (Punjab). He was employed in the Maratha service but on their defeat in 1803, he was employed under Lord Lake who granted him Pataudi territory. The Nawab Pataudi behaved loyally towards the British during the 1857 Uprising.

These grants and estates except Pataudi were eventually resumed and came under the direct management of the British. The Nawabs continued to rule Pataudi till after Independence in the State was merged with the Gurgaon district.

UPRISING OF 1857

By 1857,² the life in the district seemed to have settled down to a peaceful and quiet routine. The feudatory races had betaken themselves to agriculture, the higher castes to trade and British service. The old feuds, if not extinct, were at least dormant. When in May 1857 the freedom fighters from Meerut entered Delhi, W. Ford of the Bengal Civil Service, was the Collector and the District Magistrate of Gurgaon.³

The proximity of the district to the imperial capital was to play a major role in shaping its destiny. Its chiefs and people, especially the former,

1. K.C. Yadav, British Rule in Haryana, 1809-1856 : A study of People's Reaction To A Foreign Order, *Journal of Haryana Studies*, Volume IV, Nos. 1-2, 1972, pp. 37-8.

2. The Gurgaon district, in 1857, formed a part of the Delhi Division of the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal presidency. The Delhi Division also comprised the imperial city of Delhi, a district of the same name, and the districts of Hisar, Panipat and Rohtak.

3. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 23.

threw in thier lot with the representative of the House of Timur. Its destiny was thus linked with that of Delhi.¹

Gurgaon was attacked on May 13, 1857, by a large party of the 3rd Light Cavalry troopers who had come through Delhi. Ford, with the assistance of a body of Pataudi sowars who were in attendance him, drove off these troopers and seized their 10 men and 20 horses.² also suppressed an outbreak in the jail. But eventually he was compelled to leave the station, which was thereupon plundered and burnt. Accompanied by four or five clerks and some officers, he fled away to Mathura via Jundsi, Sailani and Palwal, picking up the Customs Officers of all these places. He reached Hodal on May 14 and Mathura on May 15.³ No symptom of the British authority was to be seen throughout the length and breadth of the district.⁴

The complete political vacuum thus caused the people to believe that the British rule had ceased to exist. The atmosphere of the people of the Gurgaon district in the Uprising of 1857 is described below.⁵

"The Mewatis rose up at once in great numbers. Their natural leaders and chaudharis addressed letters to Bahadur Shah, acknowledging him the emperor of Hindustan and began to conduct the administration of their villages and localities in accordance with his instructions.⁶

"In the last week of May, when almost the whole of the rural Mewat had come under the rule of emperor Bahadur Shah, the urban Mewat still owed allegiance to the British through their "native officials" and wealthy persons, on whom the favours had been showered by the government earlier. Large gatherings of Mewatis attacked such towns. They did not meet any opposition at Taoru, Sohna, Firozpur Jhirka, Punahana and Pinangwan, and easily reduced them to subjection. A great deal of plundering and destruction also took place. The town of Nuh proved to be a hard nut to crack. The

1. Kaye and Malleeson, *History of the Indian Mutiny of 1857-58*, Volume VI, 1896, p. 139.

2. Ibid, Volume V, 1896, p. 357.

3. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, p. 23.

4. Jawala Sahai, *The Loyal Rajputana*, p. 260.

5. Buddha Prakash, (Ed.), *Glimpses of Haryana*, 1967, pp. 85-9.

6. File R/269; *Trial of Bahadur Shah*, 118; *Sultan Akbar*, June 10, 1857.

local police and the "Loyal Khanzadas", gave a stiff battle to the Meos. But soon they were overpowered by the superior numbers of the latter. The Khanzadas suffered heavy casualties.² After the Khanzadas of Nuh, the Rawat Jats of the region near Hodal and the Rajputs of Hathin, "who were supposed to be on the part of the (British) Government", were attacked by a large gathering of Surot Jats of Hodal, Pathans of Seoli and the Meos. The fight continued for several months and the 'loyalists' suffered heavy losses.³ On receipt of the S.O.S. signal from the Rawats, the British authorities at Delhi despatched a small force to Hodal to help their supporters. The loyalists and the British troops fought well, but they were completely routed by the Mewatis.⁴

"In the middle of June Major W.F. Eden, the Political Agent at Jaipur, happened to pass through Mewat at the head of a big force comprising about 6,000 men and 7 guns. He was going to Delhi, intending Mewat, intervening between him and Delhi, in a "most deplorable state of anarchy," he thought it advisable to settle it before going to Delhi, for its "turbulent population" could at any time pose a serious danger to the forces before Delhi.⁵

"Major Eden's contingent force met stiff opposition at the hands of the thousands of armed men from the villages between Taoru and Sohna. Had he not been in possession of the artillery guns, his force would have experienced heavy losses.⁶ He destroyed many villages. He halted at Sohna for three days. Ford⁷ and thirty European officers came down from Mohena

1. They are an allied caste of the Meos, and consider themselves to have sprung up from the Rajputs of the Yadava clan. For details see Sharaf-ud-din, *Muraqqa-i-Mewar*, pp. 79-134; *Gazetteer of Ulwar*, 1878, pp. 40-1 (Extracts given on pages 38-9 of this Chapter.)

2. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, pp. 5-6.

3. *Ibid*, p. 24.

4. *Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, records this episode thus (at p. 24) : "... Suddenly a strong hostile force of mutineers appeared. Our (British) troops had to retreat and many Rawats were surprised and killed."

5. Jawala Sahai, *The Loyal Rajputana*, pp. 258-59.

6. Jawala Sahai describes it thus : "Major Eden's artillery opened fire in different quarters, burnt villages and destroyed a number of the Meos."

7. Accompanied by four or five Englishmen and one hundred Bharatpur Horse, Ford had come to Hodal from Mathura on May 20. He stayed at Hodal till May 29 when he started for Palwal, accompanied by some European customs officers and others. On May 30, the party proceeded from Palwal to the ferry over the Yamuna at Chaensa, intending to cross over to Bulandshahr. Hostile demonstrations on the Bulandshahr side of the river prevented this and the party then proceeded to Mohena where they were hospitably entertained by Mir Hidayat Ali, *Risaldar* of the 4th Bengal Irregular Cavalry. They left for Sohna on June 8 and joined Eden on the following day finally Ford returned to Gurgaon on October 13.

(*Gurgaon District Gazetteer*, 1910, pp. 23-4.)

and joined him there. After that, his force moved towards Palwal^e and remained between that place and Hodal for a long time. But sickness, discontent and growing spirit of revolt among his troops obliged him to return to Jaipur in August 1857.¹

"The departure of Major Eden's force led to further deterioration in the situation. Even the fall of Delhi on September 20, 1857 did not effect any improvement in the situation. Consequently, on October 2, a strong column of 1,500 men with a light field battery, a few 18-pounder guns, and 2 mortars, was sent under Brigadier-General Showers to punish the turbulent Meos, Gujars, Ranghars, Ahirs and 'the rebel princes'; and to settle the Gurgaon district. Throughout the month of October, the Brigadier General laboured hard to realise his aims. He seized the Nawabs of Jhajjar, Dadri, Farrukhnagar and the Raja of Ballabgarh, dispersed their troops and took their forts.² In the settlement of Mewat, his work was shared by Clifford, the Assistant Collector of Gurgaon. Clifford's sister was "stripped naked at the palace, tied in that condition to the wheels of gun-carriages, dragged up in the 'Chandni Chowk' or Silver Street of Delhi and then, in the presence of King's son, cut to peices". Clifford "had it on his mind that his sister, before being murdered, was outraged by the rebles". Naturally he had a fire of revenge burning violently in his heart. He burnt village after village and destroyed the countryside with. In his own words, "He had put to death all he had come across, not excepting women and children.³ But he could not carry on his ruthless campaign for long, for he was killed by the Meos of Raisina and Muhammadpur.⁴

"Brigadier-General Showers carried fire and sword far and wide. All the villages between Dharuhera and Taoru were indiscriminately burnt and their inhabitants were shot down ruthlessly. At the deserted town of Taoru some 30 persons were killed. A few miles short of Sohna, his column met a stiff resistance at the hands of the inmates of a Meo village who killed about 60 sepoys of General Showers' column in a hand-to-hand fight. Describing the strife of a brave Mewati, an eye-witness observes : A Mewati, a

1. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos.440-52, Dec. 18, 1857.

(National Archives of India, New Delhi).

2. *Punjab Government Records*, VII-II, 209.

3. Griffiths, *A Narrative of the Siege of Delhi* (with an account of the Mutiny at Ferozpur in 1857), 1910, pp. 96-7.

4. *Punjab Government Records*, VII-II, 209, File/R 188, p. 19, File R/194, pp. 89-90.

huge fellow, armed with shield and sword, was put up half way down the *khud* (pit) at our feet. Twenty shots were fired; but no, the bold fellow held steadily on, springing from rock to rock, descending to the bottom of the den, and then mounting the opposite face. The braveman, who put up this heroic show for quite a long time, was ultimately put to death by the Guides.¹

"The column, having cleared the area around Sohna and Taoru and leaving it in the charge of a Gorkha detachment of the late 22 N.I. under Captain Drummond, went to Delhi via Ballabgarh.² An account of his experiences in the district of Gurgaon by Brigadier-General Showers is worth noticing : "From the time I entered the Gurgaon district, I was in enemies' country, that in all encampments and during every march I was exposed to the attacks of the enemies horsemen.....I had to anticipate attack from every village that I passed, where I had to be continually on the alert against an enemy."³

"In the third week of November 1857, Captain Drummond received intelligence through the "native officials" of Sohna, Hathin, and Palwal that "several thousand Meos and a few hundred cavalry were congregated about Kot and Rupraka" and had been attacking the "loyal Rajput villages" for several days. Besides, they were also intent on plundering the Government treasury at Palwal.⁴ Captain Drummond with a small force comprising a detachment of Hodson's Horse, another of Tohana Horse, and some 120 men of the Kumaon Battalion, at once proceeded to Rupraka. On the way, he was reinforced by a company of the 1st Panjab Infantry (Coke's) from Ballabgarh.⁵

"Captain Drummond's force burnt all the Meo villages on the Sohna-Rupraka route and destroyed their crops. Panchanka, Geopur, Malpuri, Chilli, Utawar, Kot Mugla Mitaka, Kululka, Guraksar, Malluka, Jhanda, etc. were among these unfortunate villages.⁶ When the column reached Rupraka, 3,500 Meos and others drew up in front of the village, and gave them a tough fight. Though the Meos fought heroically and lost 400 men,

1. Ball, Charles, *The History of the Indian Mutiny*, Volume II, p. 58-9

2. Ibid, p. 59; *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 21-27, January 31, 1858.

3. File R/191.

4. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 21-27, January 29, 1858.

5. Ibid, *Records Intelligence Department* (N.W. Provinces), II, 220.

6. *Foreign Secret Consultations*, Nos. 21-27, January 29, 1858.

the day went to the British who possessed superior fire power.¹ The action at Rupraka, says Captain Drummond, was very important in the way that "not only have the Meos been defeated, their villages and property burnt and destroyed, but the friendly Jat villages, who have hitherto been kept in a state of siege by constant aggression on the part of their enemies, are relieved."²

"On November 27, 1857, another rebel force commanded by a Meo leader Sadar-ud-Din attacked the pargana of Pinangwan.³ A British force under Captain Ramsay from Palwal and Gurgaon was despatched at once to meet the danger. The force reached Pinangwan on November 29.⁴ But the rebels were then at a small village called Mahun. They made for that village next day and reached there at 7 A.M. The Meos took the defensive in the village. Exchange of shots continued till mid-day. Then the British troops bombarded the village with guns. Three Gorkha regiments advanced upon the village from three directions, and they seized the village in a short time.⁵ The entire village was destroyed by fire. They cut down 28 Meos in the village including Sadar-ud-din's son, and 42 more in the neighbouring villages.⁶ Making an assessment of the whole affair, Macpherson, the Joint Magistrate of Gurgaon, and the chief actor in the action at Mahun, observed: "Altogether I look upon it as a most successful affair, I should say about 70 rebels killed The whole number of the rebels assembled was so small that their resistance was to me a subject of the greatest surprise."⁷

"Having crushed the last of the risings in Mewat, the column effected its retreat, but not before making a clean sweep of the villages and people suspected to have taken part in the Uprising. The villages of Shahpur, Bali Khera, Kherla, Chitora, Nahirika, Gujar Nagla, Baharpur, Kheri, etc., were set on fire and wiped out of existence.⁸ After some time, many more villages

1. Ibid, *Records Intelligence Department* II,220.

2. *Foreign Secret Consultations* Nos. 21-27, January 29, 1858.

3. *Delhi Division Records*, Military Department, Case No. 1 of 1858, Report by Mr. Macpherson, Joint Magistrate of Gurgaon (State Archives, Patiala).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

in the neighbourhood of Pininghwan met the same fate for assisting the rebel leader Sedar-ud-Din and refusing to pay revenue to the British Government.¹

"The landed property of several of the villagers, chaudharis and lambar-dars was confiscated in accordance with the Acts XXV of 1857 and 1858 for their rebellious acts and failure to extend any help to the British at the time of sore need. The villages of Jharsa, Kheri, Jalalpur, and Davela in the Jharsa pargana and Shikrawah and Ghaghus Kheri in the pargana of Nuh, suffered confiscation of the entire landed property of theirs. Bhaktawar Singh of Jharsa and Udampur, Ilahi Bax of Badhsahpur and Dhanuspur, Mirkhan of Naurangpur and Abu of Bhora and Binola in the Jharas pargana, Brijia Nand of Shahjahanpur, Ramjas and Hamza Ali of Chhajunagar, Jaffar, Nurkhan, and Ghariba of Rasulpur in the pargana of Palwal got their shares of landed property confiscated.² Besides that, 235 persons were hanged and many more got long term imprisonments for taking part in the rebellion. Heavy fines were imposed on the individuals and rebel villages."

Besides the Mewatis, the Ahirs of Rewari also played a significant role. With the Uprising in 1857 and the cessation of all effective British authority, Rao Tula Ram of Rewari, at once assumed the government of the parganas of Rewari, Bahora and Shahjahanpur and made his headquarters at Rampura, 1.5 kms. south west of Rewari. His fort of Rampur was equipped with eighteen guns and a good many standard arms and other ordnance stores. He had also a gun foundry in which brass guns were neatly turned out.³

Tula Ram was directed by the emperor Bahadur Shah to collect the revenue of his area and revenue collectors in other areas received similar instructions.⁴ Tula Ram paid forty thousand rupees to the king's treasury and obtained a patent conferring Rewari in perpetual jagir on him.⁵

Although the sepoys as well as the people in general were true to the cause of national liberation, records have brought to light certain facts which

1. Ibid.

2. File/R/194, pp. 240-41 : Statement of the landed property confiscated during the Mutiny.

3. S.B. Chaudhari, *Civil Rebellion In the Indian Mutinies*, 1857-1859, 1957, p. 239.

The Bombay Overland Times (November 1857, pp. 201-02).

4. Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-Seven*, 1957, p. 91.

5. S.B. Chaudhari, *Civil Rebellion In the Indian Mutinies*, (1857-1859), 1957, p.68. Tula Ram also received the jagir of pargana Bahora and Shahjahanpur. The patent was granted on August 11, 1857. (cf. *Tarikh-i-Meo Chhatri* : 1974, p. 466.)

indicate that some of the chiefs and leaders were in most cases playing a double game. The king, his chief queen Zinat Mahal and the princes were also intriguing with the British. In the month of June when the sepoys were fighting for the defence of Delhi City, the king was offering to admit the British troops there by a secret gate.¹ Nor was the conduct of the other associates of Bahadur Shah above suspicion.

The suspicion of the sepoys was quite justified as proved by the secret intrigues disclosed by British records. The proverb, 'Like master, like servant', was perhaps nowhere better illustrated than by the conduct of the chiefs who joined the Uprising of Delhi. Many of them were playing a double game like Bahadur Shah. Raja Nahar Singh sent supplies and men to Delhi to support the Uprising but assured the British also of his staunch friendship. The Nawab of Jhajjar did the same. Some of the chiefs joined or utilised the Uprising to serve personal ends. Munshi Jiwanlal records (July 31) that Nawab Ahmed Ali Khan, Chief of Farrukhnagar, complained to the emperor that Tula Ram was going to attack him. At the same time a letter sent by Tula Ram to Ghulam Muhammad Khan, a relative of the Nawab, was read with the words : 'Are you intoxicated that you think the English are going away from Hindustan? They will most assuredly return and will destroy you. Yet Tula Ram paid *nazar* and lip allegiance to the king.'² Thus while only a few showed any inclination to support the Uprising, even the Chiefs of Jhajjar and Ballabgarh, are definitely known to have been playing a double game as mentioned above.³

After the fall of Delhi, the British led by Brigadier Showers marched to Rewari. They had light skirmishes with Rao Tula Ram's forces. The British proceeded and the fort overlooking town of Rewari was taken

1. S.B. Chaudhari, *Civil Rebellion In the Indian Mutinies (1857-1859)*, 1957, p. 73.

R.C. Majumdar, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*, 1957, p. 122.

2. According to Kirpal Chandra Yadav, Tula Ram's letter was forged one. Tula Ram besides maintaining law and order in his territory, consistently helped the emperor. The money that he sent was received at a very crucial time. On August 24, the emperor sent a request for the supply of opium for his soldiers. It appears probable that some opium was sent. Later on, Tula Ram sent 2000 sacks and 43 carts of grain to Delhi. He also paid visits to Delhi in July.

(Buddha Prakash, (Ed.), *Glimpses of Hariyana*, 1967, pp. 104-05.)

3. R.C. Majumdar, *The History And Culture of the Indian People*, Volume IV, *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part I, 1963, pp. 512-13.

without opposition.¹ Rao Tula Ram and his cousin Gopal Deo disobeyed the summons to attend the British Camp and fled. Showers stayed at Rewari for a week and settled the villages around it. He left this place on October 12. Loaded with immense booty he went to Jhajjar and Kanoud and again passing through Rewari returned to Delhi in November 1857.

At Showers' approach to Rewari, Tula Ram had retired to Jaipur territory in Shekhawati. There he was joined by the Jodhpur Legion, which was on its way to Delhi to fight against the British. On hearing the news that Showers had gone back, Tula Ram along with the Jodhpur Legion reoccupied Rewari and Rampura.

This caused an alarm in Delhi. The British authorities immediately organised a strong column under the command of Lt. Col. Gerrard and despatched it to punish Tula Ram. Tula Ram's agent conveyed this news to him at Rewari. As this place was not fortified now, he retired to Narnaul, a strategically better place, 48 kilometers to the west of Rewari. Here he was joined by two other rebels of note, Abdus Samad Khan of Jhajjar and Prince Muhammad Azim of Bhuttu. The Jodhpur Legion was already with him. Thus Narnaul became a insurgents den, containing large multitude of them numbering above 5,000.

"Gerrard, marching from Delhi, the 10th of November, reoccupied Rewari on the 13th and pushed on to Narnaul,....."² In the battle of Narnaul that followed, the freedom fighters were defeated. On the Indian side, the number of dead in the battle was supposed to have gone beyond many hundreds. Rao Kishan Gopal, Ram Lal, Samad Khan's son and many other top-ranking officers were killed in the action. The British took 9 Indian guns and many other standard arms. The total loss on the British

1. Ibid. The fort of Rampura was captured on October 6, 1857. The court building at Rampura (near Rewari) was shelled by the forces from Neemuch under Brigadier Showers which recaptured Rewari. All the main gates of the defence-wall and the racks were completely razed to the ground. The balconies and the roof of the main court room were also blown off. The main roof was reconstructed after World War I about the year 1920. The new roof can still be clearly distinguished from the old building and a number of cracks, in the old thick walls, caused by shelling, are still visible.

The fears and suspicions of the British Government about the loyalty of this area were set at rest only after a very large number of recruits had been supplied during World War I.

2. Malleson, G.B., *The Indian Mutiny Of 1857*, 1912, p. 319.

side was 70 killed and 45 wounded. They lost their commanders, Col. Gerard and Captain Wallace, while Lieuts. Graje, Kennedy, Peaise and Humphreys were wounded in action.¹

The battle of Narnaul was one of the decisive battles of the Uprising of 1857. The British felt jubilant over their success in this battle for it resulted in the complete rout of three powers, viz. Tula Ram of Rewari, Samad Khan of Jhajjar and the Jodhpur Legion. It marked the close of the crucial period of struggle in the Delhi Division and northern Rajasthan and the restoration of the British supremacy in this region.²

Hakim Abdul Haq, one of the foremost leaders of the Gurgaon district, was executed on November 2, 1857.³ The Nawab of Jhajjar and the Raja of Ballabgarh were hanged on December 23, 1857 and April 21, 1858 respectively.⁴ The Nawab of Farrukhnagar was also executed on January 23, 1858. The States of the three chiefs of Jhajjar, Ballabgarh and Farrukhnagar were confiscated. Rao Tula Ram died as fugitive and his Rewari *istamarar* was confiscated.

AFTER 1857

After 1857, the British Government followed a relentless policy of harshness. No steps were taken to develop Gurgaon region, educationally and economically. Though situated in the immediate neighbourhood of Delhi, the district was deliberately kept backward. Under the Minto Morley Reforms, as embodied in the Indian Councils Act, 1909, the District Boards and other local bodies of the Gurgaon, Rohtak and Hisar districts were constituted into an electoral unit to elect a member to the Punjab Legislative Council. This election was held after every three years. The policy of ignor-

1. Buddha Prakash, (Ed.), *Glimpses of Hariyana*, 1967, pp. 109-10.

2. Ibid, p. 110.

3. S.B. Chaudhari, *Civil Rebellion In the Indian Mutinies (1857-1859)*, 1957, p. 239.

4. "Both of them had tendered their homage to the King and associated themselves with the Mutiny, but both of them had kept correspondence with the other side. The Raja had in the early days of the outbreak extended his hospitality to English fugitives, and if he had been tried a year later when it was realised that a policy of relentless vengeance could not be continued for ever, his life might have been spared. But for the discovery of his correspondence in the palace after the fall of Delhi, the Raja's double-dealing would never have been brought home to him."

(Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty Seven*, 1957, p. 111.)

ing the district was slightly modified after World War I in which the people of the district contributed liberally in men and money.

The total number of men from the district who served during World War I (1914-18) was 20,181, out of which 17,700 were enlisted during the war; the relative position of the district in the then province of Punjab in these respects was 9th and 10th respectively. The district registered 314 fatal casualties. Pataudi, which was then a separate small State, contributed 450 persons, this being 14.5 per cent of the eligible males, which was about the same as in the Gurgaon district (14.2).¹ The villages Uton, Khandsa, Biser, Akbarpur and Khotala Serai in the district gave practically every able-bodied man and boy.²

GROWTH OF POLITICAL STRUGGLE

During World War I (1914-18), Indians had helped the British Government freely with men and money. After having done all that, they could hardly be happy at what was offered to them by the Rowlatt Committee Report of 1918. It is, therefore, no wonder that strikes and other disturbances became frequent. To combat seditious crimes, the Government, in spite of opposition from all quarters, passed in 1918 the Rowlatt Act arming the executive with special powers to deport individuals, to control the press and set up special tribunals for the trial of political offenders without juries.

The year 1919 was an important landmark in the history of India's struggle for freedom. With the advent of Mahatma Gandhi into the arena of Indian politics, there came a new technique and new orientation of spirit. The people were called upon to disobey the repressive laws by non-violent methods. Mahatma Gandhi declared 'March 30, 1919' as the day of hartal all over India. Later on it was postponed to April 6. The districts responded to the call of hartal.

Hartal was observed at Rewari on March 30, 1919. Then on April 3 and 4, a few persons, both Hindus and Muslims, came to Rewari and again spread an idea of hartal in the town. There was thus a complete hartal on April 6, 1919. The people were restless and moved about in crowds. Rumours were set afloat that Mahatma Gandhi and a few other leaders were shortly expected at Rewari. Some people gathered in Birham Garh near the great tank to prepare a rostrum. The main crowd reached the

1. M.S. Leigh, *The Punjab and the War*, 1922, pp. 61-2.

2. *Ibid*, p. 118.

railway station and forced the refreshment rooms to be closed. A meeting was held in the evening at Birham Garh and several people delivered lectures; but there was disappointment as no important person had come from Delhi. At Ballabgarh and Faridabad, shops remained closed for a couple of hours on April 6. Emissaries from Arya Gurukul at Khawaja Sarai in the Delhi territory kept coming to the Ballabgarh tahsil to induce the local zamindars to refuse to pay land revenue. A meeting was held at Molarband just on Delhi border in this connection.

At Palwal, complete hartal was observed on April 6. A meeting was held and a collection was raised for defence of those who might be prosecuted.

Hearing of the trouble in Punjab, and on the invitation of Satyapal and Swami Shraddhananda, Mahatma Gandhi started for Delhi on April 8. On April 9, he was served with an order at Palwal to reside within the Bombay Presidency and was thus prevented from entering Punjab or Delhi. On his refusal to obey the order, he was arrested and turned back from there by a special train to Bombay on April 10. Hartal was, therefore, renewed at Palwal on that day (April 10) and continued for three days.

At Hodal, a meeting was organised on April 11 and hartal was observed for one day. At Hassanpur too hartal was observed the same day. At Firozpur, Nagina, and Taoru there was a hartal on April 13. At Nuh there was hartal on April 13 and 14. Partial hartal was also observed at Gurgaon on April 10. At night a large meeting was held in which it was decided to hold hartal on the following day and on the last Saturday of every month till the Rowlatt Act was repealed; the latter suggestion was not carried out. As decided, hartal was continued on the 11th, and a Hindu-Muslim meeting was held in the Araianwali Mosque.

Section 15 of the Indian Police Act, 1861, was proclaimed in the district on April 17, 1919.

The Rowlatt Act, Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Martial Law in the then Punjab and the procedure adopted by the Hunter Committee, whereby Martial Law prisoners were excluded from giving evidence before it, shattered Mahatma Gandhi's faith in the goodwill of the British Government. The Congress then appointed its own committee of which Mahatma Gandhi was member to inquire into the Punjab incidents.

Mahatma Gandhi was still debarred from visiting the Punjab in person. On October 15, 1919, the order of exclusion was cancelled and he arrived at

Lahore on October 24, 1919, to undertake an extensive tour of the province which was still licking up its wounds of the Martial Law regime. The Muslims were then getting agitated over the Khilafat issue. After the Amritsar Congress Session in December, Mahatma Gandhi continued his Punjab tour and elaborated his triple theme of Satyagrah, Hindu-Muslim unity and the use of Swadeshi cloth. The province was passing through very excited days. The findings of the Hunter Committee, published on May 28, 1920, greatly dissatisfied the people. On the other hand, the report of the Congress Inquiry Committee published earlier and the Minority Report of the Indian Members of the Hunter Committee severely criticised the actions of the Punjab Government authorities and the public feeling ran very high. There was widespread discontentment amongst the people all over the province. Mahatma Gandhi supported the Non-Cooperation Programme approved by the All India Khilafat Conference, Bombay, held in February 1920. The 19th of March was observed as a mourning day throughout the country against the dismemberment of Turkey. There was complete hartal in all the towns of the province; but there was no disturbance. The Khilafat agitation was being intensified by holding numerous meetings in which fiery speeches were delivered as also by an intensive press propaganda. Mahatma Gandhi visited Punjab in July 1920, in the company of Shaukat Ali. Again there was a complete hartal on August 1, 1920, but there occurred no major incident. With the approval of the Congress in its session held at Nagpur in December 1920, Mahatma Gandhi formally launched the non-cooperation movement. It was in full swing in 1921. Mahatma Gandhi made an extensive tour of Punjab in February-March visiting *inter alia* Bhiwani and Kalanaur in Haryana. Hartals were repeatedly observed in April in the towns of all the districts including Gurgaon. Congress Committees had been established in almost all the towns of the district and so the movement was well-organised. Many volunteers were arrested for civil disobedience, picketing of liquor shops and defying law in various ways. Persons cooperating with the British administration were boycotted. Bonfires of foreign cloth were made on August 1. On November 24, 1921, the provision of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, XIV of 1908, Part II, were extended to the Gurgaon district also. All volunteer bodies were declared unlawful. Many persons were arrested and lodged in the police station which was then attacked by a crowd numbering two to three thousand. The police opened fire killing 3 and wounding 29. The situation was saved by the timely arrival of some troops of Alwar State. Then occurred the violence at Chauri Chaura in Bihar on February 5, 1922, and the movement was withdrawn by Mahatma Gandhi, who was himself

arrested in March and sentenced to 6 years' simple imprisonment.

All India Meo Panchayat was founded in Alwar and in 1932, at Nuh, the Meos were advised to pay no interest on loans to the Hindu *sahukars*. Conferences were held in the Gurgaon area in sympathy with the demands of the Meo population in Alwar state. British officers in India were unhappy with the Alwar ruler and therefore, they instigated the agitation against him. The Meos were already seething with discontent and with the help of the Unionist. Par in the Punjab, a large-scale movement was started against the Maharaja. Finally in May 1933, the Alwar ruler was asked by the British Government to leave the state within 48 hours and not to return till normal conditions had been restored. To the Meos, the movement represented a fight for the independence of Mewat as a consolidated and autonomous State under the British crown. With the appointment of a British political agent at Alwar, the movement fizzled out.

By and large, during the thirties and forties of the 20th century, the Meos in the district supported the Unionist Party in the Punjab. This was a party of the landed aristocracy of the Punjab who irrespective of their caste and religion championed the cause of the Zamindars as against the town dwellers.

In the Congress session held at Lahore in December 1929, complete independence for India was adopted as the goal of their movement. January 26, 1930, was observed all over India as the day of Independence. The historic Dandi March from Sabarmati Ashram on March 12, 1930, by Mahatma Gandhi was signal for a nation-wide mass civil disobedience movement. The people of the Gurgaon district also participated in it and several arrests were made. Almost all the people arrested were released early in 1933. The district also participated in the individual civil disobedience movement started by Mahatma Gandhi towards the end of 1940. Many persons were arrested. The Quit India Movement of 1942, the last struggle before the attainment of Independence, had also its impact on the district. Several arrests were made and fines were imposed.

Besides internal disturbances, the British Government had to face a serious threat from without. The battle of Indian freedom was now being fought in a different quarter and under different leadership. Subhash Chander Bose had organised Indian National Army (INA) outside India. Many a personnel of the INA were from the Gurgaon district.¹

1. According to the records maintained by Capt. Mehtab Singh, President, INA Association, Rohtak, 1,317 persons (223 Officers and 1,094 other ranks) belonged to the Gurgaon district.

Meanwhile, ever since 1940, the activities of the All India Muslim League under Muhammed Ali Jinah were becoming more and more aggressive. The ruling Unionist Party in the Punjab under the leadership of Sikandar Hayat Khan and Chhotu Ram kept an effective check on communal activities. However, the sudden death of Sikander Hayat Khan on December 26, 1942 and of Chhotu Ram on January 19, 1945, strengthened the influence of Jinah in the province. Communal tension increased in 1945-46 and this had its repercussions in the Mewat area of Gurgaon also. A branch of the All India Muslim League was established there and a large number of Meos joined it. In the 1946 Elections to the Punjab Legislative Assembly, two Muslim Leagues were returned as members from this area. In 1947, a scheme of organising Mewat into a separate Meo province was mooted,¹ and it had the sympathies of the All India Muslim League. Meanwhile, the country was partitioned and India achieved Independence on August 15, 1947.

One of the most significant political changes that have taken place after the Independence, has been the formation of Haryana as a separate State on November 1, 1966. Gurgaon became one of the districts of the new State.

1 *Alwar District Gazetteer*, 1968, pp. 93-6.

Hashim Amir Ali, *The Meos of Mewat*, 1970, pp. 30-2.