

Druva's Shining Star - Maharaja Gulab Singh (The Founder of Erstwhile the Sovereign State of Jammu and Kashmir)

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I. ANCESSION

The Jamwal Jammu Dogras has their origin to solar dynasty belonging to "Ayodhya Lord Rama's Dynasty" i.e King Bradhbal (decendent of Raghukul i.e. Ishwaku family including Dashratha the father of Lord Rama) who was killed during Mahabharata by Abhimanyu the son of Arjuna¹.

In precise from Bradhbal his descendent Agnigarbha after marrying with the daughter of king of Nagarkot (called now Kangra Himachal Pradesh) was the person from Raghukul of Ayodhya i.e from Lord Rama's lineage who entered the area of jammu after crossing River Ravi settled his sovereign reign in Kathua area with its capital at Village Airwan as Village is also as part of Nagri near Kathua. Their after their descendents settled and made capital at Jasrota, Bahu, Jammu, Babhore (now called Kishanpur-Manwal in present Udhampur District and finally again at Jammu. It was king Dhrub Dev from the aforesaid solar clan descending from the aforesaid Ayodhya based Ishwaku's origin, who established his sovereign rule of Jammu and considered to be the founding father of Jamwal Rajput King Ranjit dev, during the eighteenth century, and last there from such lineage was Raja Jit Singh who was defeated by Sikh ruler of Lahore in 1808. It may be stated that the forces of Raja Jit Singh were defeated by Hukam Singh Chimmie with the Sikh General Hari Singh Nalwa, thereby the route of Kashmir was open².

1.1 Developments after 1808 Jammu War

After the crushing defeat of Raja Jit Singh of Jammu, the Jammu Kingdom was annexed by Sikh Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, which became the part of Sikh rule. The defeated king Jit Singh being expelled, took refuge in British India and later also received in appanage the estate of Akhrota, Pathankot.

1.2 Brief Account of Dhrub Dev Dynasty

After Dhrub dev (1705-1735 AD), his son Ranjit Dev (1735-1781 AD) and then Jit Singh (1797-1808 AD), thereafter the Jammu state rained under Sikh rule upto 1822 AD³. Mian Zorawar Singh the great grandson of Mia Surat Singh, happened to be a Zagirdar of Dayavan (Dyony) from whom Mian Kishore Singh was born.

II. MAHARAJA GULAB SINGH-EARLY AGE

From Mian Kishore Singh, whose spouse's name said to be "Rani Koudi" gave three sons of valour distinction, who changed the history of Jammu and Kashmir state. Gulab Singh, the eldest one took birth on October 18th, 1792, Dhian Singh, the middle one born on 26th July, 1796 and Suchet Singh on 25th January 1801. So far as Gulab Singh is stated to be sublime and mighty, in case of Dhian Singh the cultured and angelic and in case of Suchet Singh a brave and impervious.⁴

Taalluqa Chakla Jammu was granted in from of Jagir to Mian Kishore Singh, the father of M/S Gulab Singh, Dhain Singh and Suchet Singh by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in consequence of Qabuliat or acceptance Deed⁵ dated November 30th, 1820. All the sons of Mian Kishore Singh took primary education in Dogri Language from a Brami in the face of lack of educational institutions in the locality during those days and got the training of proficiencies of war as a warrior. They joined the services of Maharaja Ranjit Singh around 1812 and by di'nt of their valour and sincerity they achieved distinctions rapidly one after another.

Mian Gulab Singh known popularly in those days as “Gulabo” initially started working as a Horse man under Jemadar Khusa Singh, a favourite of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He also sent for his brother Dhian Singh and because both personal attendants of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh at a meager allowance of rupees three per month.⁶ Suchet Singh the youngest brother of Gulab Singh also joined them and with their valour, sincerity exemplary work of warrior and midnight oil, all of them won over the confidence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Thus Gulab Singh rose to the status of Subedar (commander) of Jammu. Because of his meticulous performance and exemplary warriorship qualities was entrusted with the job of disordered Jammu region becoming trouble for him., to Gulab Singh, and he succeeded miraculously by conquering the chieftains of Jammu, Reasi and Kishtwar. He also suppressed the revolting people of Reasi and defeated Bhup Singh and Mian Dido as well. In lieu of faithful services so rendered by them (trio), Gulab Singh, Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh were favoured with Jagirs, thus all of them became most influential personalities in the eyes of the aged lion of Punjab (Maharaja Ranjit Singh till is death.⁷

III. CREATION OF JAMMU STATE IN 1822

In 1822 AD (17th June 1822), Maharaja Ranjit Singh had granted the Government of the Chakla of Jammu to Mian Gulab Singh (Then holding the status of General of Jammu under Sikh rule) and his descendants as a reward for the service rendered by his and his brothers (Dhian Singh and Suchet Singh) to the Lahore Kingdom. The transaction of Sanad dated 4th day of Har 1879 BK which corresponds to June 16, 1822 A.D. is read as;

“(Seal)”

“On this auspicious occasion, I grant Raja Gulab Singh the Government of ‘Chakla’ of Jammu, which had been in possession of his fore-fathers, in lieu of his faithful services and out of love for him. He and his brothers, Mian Dhian Singh and Mian Suchet Singh, came to serve me, when they were hardly twelve years, like their ancestors who had served my father late Mohan Singh of blessed memory. All the three have given me complete satisfaction by their prompt, devotional and submissive by their prompt, devotional and submissive services and are most faithful and devoted to me. No change has come in their devotion and service and they have shown their valour and loyalty in various campaihns and wars, such as the conquest of Multan and Kashmir, the suppression of the rebels on the other side of the river Indus and wars with the forces of Kabul. IN consideration of this, I grant the government of Chakla of Jammu to Raja Gulab Singh and his descendants. I myself mark the fore head of this devoted and faithful follower with the emblem of rulership. An in lieu of devotional and loyal service rendered by him, I also grant out of affection, the government of the Bandral territory (Ramnagar) to Raja Suchet Singh and his descendants so that he and his descendants be loyal and faithful to the (Sikh) State. It is binding on all members of this family and descendants of the Raja and Mian to be faithful and loyal to our descendants and serve them with devotion and submission as at present and be ready at the back and call of the (Sikh) state. In witness of this I grant this role with my own august hand marked with finger prints of saffron.

Written dated 4th Har, Samvat 1879”⁸

Aftermath of the execution of the Patta (Instrument) of grant of principality, with hereditary title of Raja, Maharaja Ranjit Singh also gave him traditional “Raj Tilak” on June 16, 1822 at Jia Pota under Pipal tree, on the bank of holy river Chanderbhaga, also called chinab or Aksini at Akhnoor. Upon his conferment of the principality of Jammu, Gulab Singh concentrated his might to consolidate his rule upto Pir-Panjel besides also conducted several battles for Sikhs against some rebels from Jammu. Pertinently after the Raj Tilak of Raja Gulab Singh, the heir-apparent. Ruler of Jammu (of the time so alive Jit Singh) also anointed Gulab Singh To the Raj of Jammu with his own hands by way of declaration, thereby he renounced the rights for himself and his descendants to Raj of Jammu in favour of Gulab Singh and his brothers. The English version of the Iqarnama is read as;

“ I Raja Jit Singh, grandson of Raja Sahib Ranjeet Dev Jio, on this occasion, and out of internal intention and dignified favor , in my own life-time and as token of intrinsic love and heartfelt affection, hereby renounce proprietorship to all the protected territories of my ancestors and my own inheritance, the favor of my prosperous ‘barkhudar’. Raja-i-Rajgan, Raja Gulab Singh Jio, and Raja Sahib Dhian Singh Ji, and Raja Suchet Singh Ji, by way of dharma and Niyam, mutual agreement and on oath of my predecessors and Thakurs and Gurus...”⁹

Even well before the conferment of the state of 'chakla' of Jammu, Gulab Singh in his capacity of General for Jammu region in Sikh rule, in the year 1820 AD with the assistance of Subedar (commander of Bhingarh, called Reasi) under his command, had established the Jammu and Kashmir owned Army now called The Jammu and Kashmir Rifles in 1821. Zorawar Singh after the conferment of Jammu State to Raja Gulab Singh was appointed as the General of the said state, who led daredevil compaigns in Northern Areas for unification of the state with areas like Ladakh, Baltistan, Gilgit, Hunza, Yogistan, by consolidating smaller principalities and making the northern areas a part of the expanding dominion of Gulab Singh. After the establishment of Jammu and Kashmir as an sovereign state under the British Paramountcy in 1846 A.D., these troops became the Jammu and Kashmir state forces.¹⁰

3.1 Down fall of Sikh Rule

After the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Greater Punjab also called Lahore Darbar on June 27th 1839 at the age of 59 years, Raja Gulab Singh, the ruler of Jammu state was the most clinching figure among the important personalities of Punjab, handling the affairs of its Kingdom. But after the death of the said Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Government of Lahore went on loosing the role of expected strong governance, by weakening its image, because of internecine quarrels and by factious rivalries. In 1841, the British Army suffered reverses in Afganistan and Raja Gulab Singh was deputed to help them. It was precisely the point of time that the seeds of future friendship between the Dogra polentate and the British power sown.¹¹

On April 25, 1809, the Treaty of Amritsar, i.e pact concluded between Charles T. Metcalfe, representing the British East India Company and Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the head of the Sikh kingdom of Punjab was executed, thereby the Indo-sikh relations for a generation was settled. The immediate occasion was that the French threat to north-western India, following Napoleon's Treaty of Tilsit with Russia (1807) and Ranjit Singh's attempt to bring the Sutlej State under his control. The British wanted a defensive treaty against the French and control of Punjab to the Sutlej River. Although this was not a defensive treaty, it did fix frontier of lands controlled by Ranjit broadly along the line of the Sutlej River. Metcalf's mission gave Ranjit Singh much respect for the company's disciplined troops as well determination never to cross swords with the British troops. Ranjit Singh's further conquests were to the west and north.

In precise the sovereign position of both the parties viz. the Lahore Kingdom and the East India company, in respect of their respect of their respective territories was to be maintained in a peace and harmonious state.

After the demise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, on June 27th 1839, his son Kharak Singh succeeded him but the unfortunate past of the said ill-fated Lahore Sikhs Kingdom was that said Maharaja Singh also expired on 5th November 1840 because of his illness, leaving behind Maharani Chand Kaur and only son Nonikal Singh, who sat to succeed his father Kharak Singh (Interestingly Raja Dhian Singh the younger brother of Gulab Singh who assured his father Kharak Singh (Interestingly Raja Dhain Singh the younger brother of Gulab Singh who assumed the position of Prime Minister , was also titled by the British Government to be Enlightened Minister.¹² Maharaja Nonihal Singh also fell in prey of a conspired incident of felling of projections of the palace on the fateful day of the last rites of his father Maharaja Kharak Singh on November 5, 1840, while entering the palace after performance of cremation, accompanied by Raja Udham Singh, the eldest son of Raja Gulab Singh, resultantly both Nonihal Singh and Udham Singh scummed to the injuries instantly.

Sher Singh happened to be a son of author Queen of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (namely Mohtab Kour was also killed alongwith his only son Partap Singh in a battle with the ugly hands of Ajit Singh and Lehra Singh Sindhiawalia , Pishora Singh and Kashmir Singh, also claiming to be the sons of Maharaja Ranjit Singh but their descendency was not at all recognized to be successors of the Lahore reign, in consequence of which the decks were cleared the Lahore Throne for Daleep Singh the minor son of Maharja Ranjit Singh out of Rani Jidan Kour. Accordingly Maharaja Daleep Singh was enthroned on Lahore Emperor's seat on 2nd February 1844 at the age of 5 years and Raja Hira Singh the son of Dogra, Raja Dhian Singh, the nephew of Gulab Singh as Prime Minister of the said Lahore Sikh State besides also the Reagent of the said Empire till Maharaja Daleep Singh attained the age of majority.

However because of the intra palace intrigues restlessly went escalating , resultantly under the hatched conspiracy, Raja Hira Singh, the Prime Minister of Sikh Darbar was also eliminated along with Sohan Singh the son of Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu, with ugly hands of force instigated by Rani Jidan. Thus Rani Jidhan because the Regent of Sikh rule of Lahore after Raja Hira Singh, felt obstruction in her way of working.

An unmaturing act of Lahore Darbar under the command of Maharani Jidan being pressurized by the surrounded Sikh high placed incumbents to wage a war against British by crossing the fixed boundaries of Sutlej river on December 11, 1845, but betrayal of Sikh commanders themselves being an intra-avenge, the Sikh royal forces were defeated by the British on February 15, 1846.¹³

Raja Gulab Singh considered to be pro-active feudatory of Sikh kingdom, to overcome the post battle problems, converted himself to be “intermediary” rather than even an arbitrator in the conflict. Raja Gulab Singh had also received the note of Sir Henry Lawrence i.e. for getting settlement with Lahore¹⁴ Darbar on the issue of provoked war so initiated by Sikhs and loss of expenses incurred by the British, because of the violation of 1809 treaty by the Sikh forces.¹⁵

Accordingly, Raja Gulab Singh played a key role by arriving at Kasur on Friday 14, 1846, resulting which the treaty of Lahore came to be executed between the British Government and the state of Lahore on March, 9th, 1846.

3.2 Creation of Independent State of Jammu and Kashmir

The treaty of Lahore dated March 9th, 1846 had brought the starring facts on record with the conclusions of the agreements as ;

1. The treaty of amity and concord was concluded between the British Government and Late Maharaja Ranjit Singh the ruler of Lahore in 1809.
2. It was broken by the unprovoked aggression on the British Provinces, by the Sikh Army in December 1845.
3. The territories of Maharaja of Lahore on the left bank of the Sutlej were confiscated by the British Government under Proclamation dated 13th December 1845 and were annexed to the British Provinces.
4. The hostile operation have been prosecuted by the two Government, one against other which resulted in the occupation of Lahore by the British troops.
5. That upon certain conditions, the peace need to be established between two Governments.

Thus the treaty of peace between the East India Company and Maharaja Daleep Singh was arrived at, The Members of Sikh Darbar who ratified for the minor Maharaja Daleep Singh were Bhai Ram Singh, Raja Lal Singh, Sardar Tej Singh, Sardar Chattar Singh Attaree Walla, Sardar Ranjore Singh Majeethia, Dewan dina Nath and Fakir Nur-ud Din. By Sixteen articles of the said treaty of Lahore dated March 9th, 1846, among others, the implications were ;

1. Cession of territories and rights in the Doab and country, hill and plain situated between rivers Beas and Sutlej along with all forts in favour of the East India Company.
2. Against the demands of indemnification of the expenses of war, valuing one and half crore rupees in the event of inability of Lahore Darbar to pay or to give security satisfactory to the British Government, Sikh Government, ceded its all forts, territories rights and interest in the hill countries located between the Rivers Beas and Indus including the Provinces of Kashmir and Hazara ; besides payment of Rupees fifty lakhs to British Government before ratification of treaty .
3. Reduction of forces by Lahore Government, surrender of all guns etc.
4. Control of Rivers Beas and Sutlej and control of Taxation posts etc as Judiciary of Maharaja Daleep Singh by British Government.
5. The recognition of independent sovereignty of Raja Gulab Singh for which separate treaty between British Government & Raja Gulab Singh shall be executed¹⁶.

Another Treaty of Amritsar was concluded between the British Government and Maharaja Gulab Singh on 16th March 1846, containing Articles, the implication of which are adjudged as ;

1. The transfer and making over for ever in independent possession to Maharaja Gulab Singh and his heirs male of his body all the hilly and mountainous country with its dependencies situated eastward of the River Ravi

including Chamba and excluding Lahul, being the part of territories ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State according to the provisions of Article IV of the treaty of Lahore dated 9th March 1846.

2. Maharaj Gulab Singh to pay a sum of seventy five lakhs of rupees (Nanakshahi), fifty lakhs to be paid on the ratification of this treaty and twenty five lakhs on or before the first October of current year, A.D. 1846.
3. The limits of territories of Maharajah Gulab Singh could be only changed with the concurrence of the British Government.
4. The Supremacy of British Government was retained over the state of Jammu and Kashmir territories, intoken of which Maharaja was required to present to British Government, annually, one horse, twelve perfect shawl goats of approved breed (six male and six female) and three pairs of Kashmiri shawls¹⁷.

Although Hazara, Chamba among other areas were transferred by the Britishers to Maharaja Gulab Singh under aforesaid Amritsar treaty but to make the state of Jammu and Kashmir more compact, Maharaja obtained shortly afterward Mandir, Dodhi, Kathua and Suchetgarh in exchange for Hazara and Chamba. For similar reasons the boundaries were further altered in 1857. Under the treaty Poonch had also passed to Maharaja Gulab Singh. He conferred the principality on Raja Jawahar Singh the son of Raja Dhian Singh, his brother with status of feudatory. In 1859, it passed to Jawahir Singh's younger brother, Raja Moti Singh whose descendants further stepped into shoes as Ilaqadar¹⁸.

The Agreement on Ladkah was also executed between the officers of Lahasa and Gulab Singh on the 2nd day of Assuj Svt 188, thereby arrived to an agreement by swearing on the friendship and amity and sincerity of the parties and bonds of peace and treaty and unity between Sri Gulab Singh and Lama Guru Sahib Lahasa walla on dint of clearance of heart will remain firm and coherent from this day till eternity. Upon Qou-haq-Sahib by all means no deviation disagreed and error will never occur, besides regarding the boundary of the country of Ladakh including suburbs, fixed of ancient days, we will at all have no concern and nothing to do. We will exports shawls-pashm and tea according to old tradition by way of Ladakh yearly and if any one of the enemy of Gulab Singh Raja comes to our quarters or territories we will not entertain the word of said enemies and will not give any shelter in our country to the aforesaid men. Whatever traders of Ladakh coming to our territories shall meet no hinderence. We stipulate in writing on the fact of the contract about solidarity and friendship, unity and keeping open the road for traffic in shall-Pushm and tea and shall not be infringed by us¹⁹.

Thus the way was restored with the Lhasa authorities on 24th September 1842 and the Wazir Zooking and others were had been released.

IV. DEVELOPMENT DURING MAHARJA GULAB SINGH

On his assumption of sovereignty, Maharaja Gulab Singh found that there were over 3000 Jagir grants in dharmarth and numerous other alienations. The last two Sikh Governors had very levish in making these grants. Maharaja Gulab Singh institutred an enquiry, which had the effect of setting aside some of the alienation. Maharaja also did something to alienate the misery caused by beggar (a system of corvee that had prevailed from the times immemorial). A number of men was determined in each village for beggar and everyman when on beggar duty was to be paid. Akharvar of rice per month and given food. Another reform was the rationing of rice in the valley²⁰.

The Sikh Government used to take one-half of the Kharif crops plus four tracks (one track equal to five and half seers) per kharwar (One Kharvals means sixteen tracks or eighty three seers). The village officials got in addition about a track per kharwar. Besides, nazarana and other taxes and tambol had to be paid to the Government. About two third of the gross produce was appropriated by the state in one form or the other. The collection was made in kind, and villages were farmed out. The Government had the monopoly of grain. In such circumstances, pressure had to be exercised on the peasants to keep the land in cultivation. They lived on the margin of sustenance and their condition was little better than that of serfs²¹.

Maharaja Gulab Singh established the Dharmarth Trust in 1846 A.D. i.e. immediately after formation of the Sovereign state out of his initial personal donation of Rupees five lakhs. With an objective of maintaining the temples and shrines of Jammu and Kashmir and preserving Dogra identity, ever sicne then it has not only preserved these places

of worship but also excelled in maintaining them. While retaining and upgradation to the pristine condition, run by the royal Dogra family, the trust in fact was founded by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846 to maintain temples and associated with them in Kashmir, Jammu, Himachal Pradesh Haridwar and Varanasi, but not to make it a source of profit or earning but for the public good, as social source, particularly defined in the Ainay-Dharmarth (the constitution of Dharmarth) so founded in the year 1846 and remained a sacrosanct Department of the Jammu and Kashmir state during the Dogra dynasty.

The Shawl industry in Kashmir was so important that a Government Department had been maintained for long to deal with such industry. Maharaja Gulab Singh reorganized the Department for promoting such industry to deal with the unemployment of the subjects especially from Kashmir. Before 1833, the duty on Shawls was being levied at three annas per rupee of value (i.e about 19% of the value). Afterwards a tax of Rupees Ninty six per annum per shop was fixed and extended to 1000 rupees one hundred and twenty per shop. The shawl weavers were grossly under paid and suffered under a further disability in that it was extremely difficult for them to leave their employers. On June 6th, 1847, they struck work and about 4000 shawl-makers (workers) set out for Lahore. The Maharaja promised them redress and called them back. In pressure of this promise, Maharaja Gulab Singh abolished the system of Identure under which shawl weavers worked. He further fixed minimum wages for workers, and introduced a system of taxation by which the amount was regulated in accordance with the price of shawls. He made industry and flourish the trade with the adjoining countries.

Maharaja Gulab Singh was a strong and stern ruler. But the frontiers were being in the disturbed state because of variety of reasons, thus most of his energies were spent in consolidating them. He subdued the turbulent tribes on the borders of the state, and established order of Law in his vast territories which had never been under one ruler before. In 1851, trouble arose on the Tibetan Frontier over the refusal of the Tibetan Frontier over the refusal of the zamindars of Ladakh to allow full transport to certain trade missions from Tibet. The dispute was however, settled by an agreement between the representatives of the Maharaja and Dalai Lama.

The loyal co-operation of Maharaj Gulab Singh with the British Government was a source of great strength to the latter. In 1849, Sardar Chattar Singh Attari wala who had risen against the British government, tried to enter Kashmir. Maharaja opposed it and captured him along 1000 rebels, whom he delivered to the Punjab Government. The Maharaja also treated in a similar manner Amir Dost Mohammed Khan of Afganistan and his son.²²

The state of affairs as providing in the territories of the Jammu and Kashmir state before assumptions as an sovereign Ruler of the state to which he was about to meet meticulously was that religious persecution, repine and devastation. The brief rule of the Sikhs was no better and did not improve the condition of the cultivators in any way. The conditions were unsettled and the Sikh governors had neither the time nor inclination to effect any lasting improvement in the administration Moorcroft, the first English man to visit Kashmir formed in 1824 that everywhere the people were in a most abject condition," subjected to every kind of extortion and oppression" According to him "not on-sixteenth" of the cultivable area was under cultivation". The taxation were exorbitant and corruption was universal. Another visitor, Vigne, who came to Kashmir, a decade latter, draws almost the same picture as Moorcrafts, and speaks of whole villages thrown out of cultivation."²³

All the adversities so prevailing for a long were vigorously dealt with by Maharaja with his matured but stern actions by bring the rule of law. In 1856, the Maharaja's healths begin to fail. At the outbreak of the mutiny, Maharaja Gulab Singh called his council and sent a contingent of 2000 infantry 200 cavalry and 6 guns under the command of his son and heir-apparent, Mian Ranbir Singh Ji. The mutineers who had entered the Jammu territory were delivered to the British Government.²⁴

The Jammu and State so founded by Maharaja Gulab Singh pursuant to the Treaty of Amritsar dated 16th March 1846 and other annexed territories which stood upto the 15th August 1947, contained, physical and political geography, i.e the total area of 84,471 sq. miles or 2,22,236 square kilometers lying between 32°-17' and 36°-58' North latitude and 73°-26' and 80°-30' East longitude and was the largest state in India. It was larger than Hyderabad, about as large as Mysore, Bikaner, Gwalior and Broda put together, and two thirds the size of the whole of the Bombay Presidency. It was bounded on the North by Chinese and Turkistan on the East by the Chinese, Tibet on the South by

the Punjab and on the west by the North-western Frontier Province. The territories of three powers viz. Britain, China and Russia and of the independent Kingdom of Afghanistan meet on the Northern borders of the state.

The Physical features of the state were, In addition to the small strip of land along the borders of Jammu, which is in continuation of the great plains of the plains and bleak tract adjoining the Kurakoram Mountains, the territories of Maharaja Bahadur Gulab Singh of Jammu and Kashmir state included valleys formed by the Chenab and the Jhelum and the middle reaches of the Indus. The Generally accepted geographical divisions/territories of Jammu and Kashmir as stood were:

The Sub-mountane and semi mountainous tract, consisting of the plain contiguous to the Punjab and broken Kandi country skirting the Himalayan ranges. The rivers Ravi, Chenab, and Jhelum and several perennial streams flows through the southern plain areas which borders upon several Punjab Districts Northern portion of the region called Kandi has an altitude of 2000 feet or less, Its soil is stony and sandy and cultivation depends mainly on seasonal rainfall. The area of this division is 2609 square miles or 6757 square kilometers. The population as per 1941 census was 8,14,028.

1. The outer Hills consisted of the comparatively low hills to the south of the mountain ranges. This division comprises the whole area covered by the ranges of Low hills to the South of Pir Panjal mountains, which divide the two provinces of Jammu and Kashmir, one from the other. The altitude of the greater part of this belt varies from 2000 to 4000 feet, though the hills in Bhaderwah reaches heights of over 5000 feet. On the lower level, and stretched between the hills are patches of cultivated lands or stunted forests. The higher elevation are covered with pine and deodar forests. The cultivation is greatly helped by the proximity of the Pir Panjal mountains, whose tremendous altitude causes moisture-bearing winds to deposit most of their aqueous vapours in this part of the country. The area of this Division was 9769 sq. miles or 25302 square kilometers. The Population of this area at the census of 1941 was 11,67,405.
2. The Jhelum valley consisting of the valleys that drain into the Jhelum and Kashmir Ganga rivers. The mountains enclosing this tract have an average altitude of 12000 feet. Many of the peaks rise above 14000 feet. Water for irrigation is supplied by the perennial streams which have their sources in the surroundings snow-clad mountains. The Jhelum valley situated at over 5000 feet above the sea level, and the beautiful lateral of Muzaffarabad are including in this division. The Kashmir valley is fertile and yields abundant harvests of rice, fruits of various kinds are protected wheat and Maize are grown. In Muzaffarabad district agriculture is precarious and the cultivated area is small. The area of the division is 8539 square miles or 22216 sq. kms, the population at the census of 1941 was 17,28,705.
3. The Tibetan and semi Tibetan Tract, consisting of the middle reaches of the Indus. The river has its source in Lake Manasrovar in Tibet and traverses the whole of the division running from southeast upto the bend round Nanga Parbat, where it assumes a South-westerly course. The mountains in the North Stretch up to the Pamirs and reach great heights; one of the peaks, Mr. Godwin Austin, 28,250 feet above the sea level is the second highest peak in the world. The Himalayan ranges north and south of the Indus have been described as the "Sportsman's Paradise" where ibex, markhor and ovis ammon, besides other big game, are met with. A number of mountaineering expeditions have been to these regions for exploration except in Gilgit, the ranges in this division vary from 17000 feet to 22000 feet. The cultivable area in Ladakh district is very small and the rainfall deficient and agriculture is carried on by artificial irrigation Grim (a kind of wheat) is the chief crop and is grown even at the height of 15000 feet. The small tract of Gilgit enjoys good climate and cultivation and produces wheat and other crops and fruits. The area of the whole division is 63,554 square miles or 1,64,604 square kilometers. The population is very sparse, the density at the census of 1941 was 5 persons to a square mile and the total population was 3,11,478.

The first two of these divisions formed the province of Jammu, the third was the Kashmir proper, while the fourth comprised the districts of Gilgit and frontier illaqs of Skardu, Ladakh and Kargil. The physical status of the said Jammu and Kashmir state as stood on 15th August 1947, so founded by Maharaja Gulab Singh being sovereign state since 16th March 1846 as stated aforesaid has further met with developments which can be summarized as;

1. The total area as stood on 15th August 1941 was= 2,22,226 sq kms.
2. The area fell in illegal occupation of Pakistan called as POJK. = 78,114 sq.km
3. The area of Aksai China illegally handed over by the Pakistan dispute being part of Jammu and Kashmir and in occupation of Pakistan illegal afterwards transferred to china. = 5180 sq kms. The Parliament of India by means of unanimous resolution of February' 1994 has resolved to get vacated the said area of state from Pakistan i.e 83,294 sq. kms.
4. Area in illegal occupation of China 37,555 sq. kms since the year 1962 Agression. The Parliament has in this case also passed its resolution dated 14th November 1962, thereby pledging to get back the territories illegally occupied by China to the last inch. The extract is read as

“ with hope and faith, this house affirms the firm resolve of the Indian people to drive out the aggressor from the soil of India, however long and hard the struggle may be.”
5. The Physical possession of the said territories of Jammu and Kashmir with 1,01,387 sq kms India remains as 1,01,387 sq kilometer
6. The territory of Jammu and Kashmir UT contains;

Jammu Region = 26,296 sq kms
Kashmir Region = 15,948 sq kms
Total = 42,244 sq kms
7. Territory in occupation of Ladakh UT

= 59,143 sq kms

The glantary acts of Maharaja Gulab Singh in precise can be counted as ;

- i. In 1808 following the battle of Jammu under the command of Gulab Singh on the side of Sikh rule, the Kingdom was annexed with the Lahore Darrbar, by expelling Raja Jit Singh from the State. Gulab Singh was thus appointed as the Governor for the administration of the newly conquered area which was expanded in 1819 with the annexation of Kashmir by the six forces.
- ii. In 1820, in appreciation of services rendered by his family and Gulab Singh in particular, Maharaja Ranjit Singh bestowed the Jammu region as a hereditary fief upon Mian Kishore Singh the father of Gulab Singh.
- iii. In 1821, Gulab Singh captured conquered Rajouri from Aghar Khan and Kishtwar from Raja Tegh Mohammad Singh (alias Saifullah). The same year again Gulab Singh took part in Sikh conquest of Dera Ghazi Khan. He also captured and executed his own clansman Mian Dido Jamwal who had been leading a rebellion against Sikhs.
- iv. Being Raja (Governor General / Chief) of Jammu Gulab Singh was one of the most powerful Chiefs of the Sikh Empire. Under the Imperial and Feudal Army arrangement, he was entitled to keep a personal army of 3 infantry Regiments, 15 Light Artillery Guns and 40 Garrison Guns²⁶.
- v. In 1824 Gulab Singh captured the fort of Samartah near Holy Mansar Lake.
- vi. In 1827, he accompanied the Sikh Commander-in-Chief, Hari Singh Nalwa, he fought and defeated a horde of Afghan rebels led by Sayyid Ahmed at the Battle of Shaidu.
- vii. Between 1831-39, Maharaja Ranjit Singh bestowed on Raj Gulab Singh the Jagir of Salt mines in norther Punjab²⁷, and nearby Punjabi towns like Bhera, Jhelum, Rotas, and Gujrat.
- viii. In 1837, after the death of Hari Singh Nalwa in the battle of Jamrud, the Muslim tribes of Tanolis, Karrals, Dhungs, Satis and Sudhans rose in revolt in Hazara and Poonch. The insurgency was led by Shama Khan, a Chief of Sudhan tribe²⁸ and formal confidential follower of Raja Dhian Singh²⁹. Thus betrayal of Shani Khan Sudhan against the regime was taken personally and Gulab Singh was given task of crushing the rebellion. After defeating the insurgents of Hazara and Murree Hills, Gulab Singh stayed at Kahuta for sometime and promoted disunion among the insurgents. Eventually, Shams Khan Sudhan and his nephew were betrayed and their heads were cut off during their sleep while the Lieutenants were captured, flayed alive and put to death with cruelty. The contemporary British commentators state that the local population suffered immensely³⁰,
- ix. In 1850 the fort of Chilas in Darb country was conquered.

V. ADMINISTRATION OF GULAB SINGH

Making no distinction based in religion or caste or creed, Gulab Singh upon assumption as Maharajas seat, at the first instance ruthlessly suppressed all the disorderly elements especially in Kashmir Valley involved in the corrupt activities and established peace and rule of law in the country. He rationalized the Jagir system³¹.

The Maharaja himself never remained inaccessible to the people but was always available to listen to their complaints patiently³². As most of his time was spent in Kashmir, arrangements were made to deliver his official papers from Jammu to Srinagar and back via Banihal and Verinag. The distance between Srinagar and Jammu was divided for this purpose into a number of convenient stages and at every stage two runners were posted. Travelling during the day and night, these runners carried the official papers and covered the whole distance in 100 to 140 hours³³.

Despite these measures, the British authorities in India received some complaints against the Government of Maharaja Gulab Singh which was termed to be oppressive. Although some of the British Government officials had paid short visits of Kashmir to assess the situation earlier and make report on the subject³⁴ but in January 1848, the said British authorities genuinely complemented. It also deputed some experienced officer to stay at Srinagar for three to four months for detailed study and make comprehensive report on the condition of the people of Kashmir³⁵. However subsequently, on finding that the Complaints were false and exaggerated by making mostly by some disgruntled elements, the proposed measures were dropped.

In the beginning of 1852 the British made Maharaja Gulab Singh to agree for the posting of their representative at Srinagar for the purpose of looking after the European visitors to Kashmir. The representative who subsequently came to be called as the officer on special duty, could not however stay there for more than six months during every summer season.

The Maharaja looked very carefully into the revenue administration of Kashmir. Gazing at the valley from the hills, Maharaja said that one part was mountain, another part under water while the raining third part was in hands of Zagirdars. He very soon altered this and dint of untiring industry and strict supervision of his officials, made the most of the revenues of the valley. It was the rule of one man in whom were vested all powers, legislative Judicial and executive and who in a step to stabilise his position, inflicted exemplary punishments on his erring people³⁶. The Maharaja himself could be approached by any of the subjects who sought justice at his august hands³⁷.

Maharaja must be adjudged with reference to the morality of his age and race and to the necessities of his own position. If these allowances be made Gulab Singh would be found an able and moderate man, who does little in idle or wanton spirit and who is not without some traits both of good humour and generosity of temper³⁸.

Maharaja Gulab Singh had entrusted the civil administration of the state to a Council of Ministers called as Dewans. The Ministers were headed by a Senior Minister who enjoyed an important position in the court of Maharaja. Maharaja had however retained with himself the important departments of foreign relation of the state, finance, revenue collection and taxation.

The administration of Justice was incharge of executive officers, the Maharaja being the Chief Adwalte. He vested in himself the power to hear cases in the first instance as well as in appeal against a Nazrana of rupee one presented with the petition³⁹.

The Maharaja who had divided the state of Jammu and Kashmir into three provincial divisions being Jammu, Kashmir and Frontier regions of Ladakh and Gilgit, each of them was put under the charge of a Chief Officer who was equivalent to the status of a Governor. Each division was sub-divided into district headed by a District Officer called Wazir-e-Wizarat. Kashmir division was divided into two major divisions Kamaraj and Maraj. Jammu division had four districts namely Jammu, Khupal, Kishtwar and Jasrota. The frontier area was divided into two districts ; Ladakh which was put under a local governor and Gilgit which was put under the administrative control of the commanding officer of the state troops stationed there⁴⁰.

Gulab Singh had vested in him the authority of the Government but his government did not differ in essential from other princely states. He always considered himself as the subordinate of the British. After the death of eldest son Udham Singh and the middle being Sohan Singh also, the only one, the youngest son of Maharaja Gulab Singh was left Mian Ranbir Singh. In the year 1856 when the health of Maharaja Gulab Singh began to fall, he himself by performing

Raj Tilal of his only living son Maharaja Ranbir Singh on the ruling seat of Jammu and Kashmir, State on the 8th of Phagan Samvat 1912. It was performed in the Thakur-Davara and Maharaja Gulab Singh himself marked the forehead of Maharaja Ranbir Singh with saffron “qashqal” by his own blessed hand followed by a “Darbar” held in the Mandi Khas⁴¹. At the conclusion of the celebrations of the coronation of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, the outgoing Maharaja Gulab Singh ordered the writer of the “Patta” i.e. instrument to submit some prudent counsels (as placed herein after) before the new sovereign, “May God perpetuate his prosperity” And His Highness Maharaja Ranbir Singh out of abundance of facility stood listening to the sermons with attention. A salutation cannonade announced to the people the conclusion of coronation ceremony. After attaining the retirement from the position of rulership of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja went on penance. The Instrument “Patta” as said had conferred on his son Ranbir Singh the title of Maharaja, with advisory as a sort of will, containing directions on the incoming ruler and the policies which sought to be followed⁴². The translation from percian script is read as ;

“In the name of Sri Ram ji”

[My dear obedient son Maharaja Ranbir Singh !

Let it be known to you that on this auspicious day of granting you the insignia of royalty, the following codes of conduct and advice is given to you and mustfully understand it and act upon it.

Firstly ; with all the candour of heart and perfect devotion, he should occupy all the precious time, to win the blessings of the Divine Shri Raghunath ji by regular daily worship of the divine name, and supplicate for his favour and protection in the Highways of desire and enterprises.

Secondly ; to remember that his bright fortune is a grandgift of Her Highness, the great and exalted Queen of England, May her Empire be eternal, through the medium of His Excellency Nawab Hardinge and G.C. B. Governor General Sahib Bahadur of the Indian Empire, and the dignified Sahibs, Frederick Currie Barnett Sahib Bahadur and Colonel Sir Henry Lawrence Sahib Bahadur, granted to generation, for which gratute devolves on the fortune one. It is therefore incumbent for him to think himself ever, inwardly and outwardly, indebted to the British government for this favour thirdly. The whole of the ambition should be so directed that all the people, high and low, should live in comfort and contentment, and that the power never weilds his hand of oppression on the powerless.

Fourthly ; due attention should ever be paid to the organization and equipping of the forces.

Fifthly ; the dear one (barkhur dar) should deem it most important the information about the frontier territories is always reported to him and he should deem obligatory to be informed of that.

Sixthly ; he should keep his heart pure and should avoid imitation and association of the vile which has been condemned equivocally by all the leaders of the faiths.

Seventhly : Courtesy and complaisance should be rendered towards grand Sahibs in conformity to the customs and law of this side so that : by their favour and sincere advice all the affairs get perfect order, firm regulation and good administration. Written on 8th Phagun 1912 on the auspicious day of making thy forehead with colour of royalty and installation ceremony of the heir-apparent]⁴³

The day 8th Phasun 1912 as per christen Gregorian calander works out to 20th February 1846.

After the brokeup of the darbar on the aftersaid with the offerings of “Nazars” etc. Maharaja Gulab Singh attained divorce from the attachment bondage, the sign of deliverance from the great business of the Kingdom and tumultuous affairs appeared in the most recesses of the mind.

Maharaja Gulab Singh left for Srinagar for penance, where he died on the 30th June 1857 at the age of 65, and inlast rites of Cremation performed at Rambagh Srinagar by Maharaja Ranbir Singh.

It was Maharaja Gulab Singh who developed the destination of Balwalta to commemorate the memory of his eldest son Raja Udham Singh in 1840, renamed the same by commemorating his said demised son, after his name as present Udampur in 1842 AD, which afterwards in 1865 became Army cantonment in 1865 with district headquarter. Maharaja Gulab Singh the founder of the largest princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was arguably one of the greatest personalities of 19th century, who became ruler of the modern Jammu and Kashmir state on 16th March 1846. An exceptional warrior, great leader, a brilliant strategist and statesman, above all the architect of the synergetic cultural space in multireligious state has left the foot steps of lover and fraternity for the modern socio-political society and

generations to follow. The contributions so made in different realms of our Jammu and Kashmir in general and towards restructuring the map of India are an open book of inspiration for us all, being a builder of the glorious past by unification of the Jammu and state, a pride raising distinction for Jammu Dogras. The treaties of Chushul and Amritsar are the blue prints for the fixation of the boundaries of the State in east South and West but the Northern border remained undefined.

5.1 Currency of Jammu and Kashmir state during Maharaja Gulab Singh's Reign

Gulab Singh after becoming Raja of Jammu state on 16th June 1822, under Maharaja Ranjit Singh's supremacy (Sikh Rule of Lahore), the currency during this period was in application is understood to be "Nanak Shahi" rupees quite evinced from the Amritsar treaty so executed between the British Government and Maharaja Gulab Singh on 16th March 1846 more particularly under its Article 3.

Since 1833, after taking the reign of Jammu in 1822, Raj Gulab Singh brought in currency called Harisingha Coin with its promised paying value as eight annas, which has also been discovered in Jammu. Again after formation of sovereign state of Jammu and Kashmir in 1846, Maharaja Gulab Singh brought in operation the currency in shape of silver coin called "Chilki" with promised paying value of ten annas, by succeeding old currency (of himself Raja Gulab Singh as aforesaid)

Pertinently on both these coin expression of English letters "IHS" were cast, the meaning there of could not be traced. However some people term these letters as "JHS" means Jammu His Highness's state. Some coins also contain figure 7 (U) (X) i.e. multiplier, Kashmir, and Raghunath Ji Sahai. Some of coins also contain cast words "Shri Gadha Dhar Ji Sahai (X) multiplied by Ladakh Kalmru Jammu Aai" This coin was cast when Wazir Jaharwar Singh had conquered Ladakh but Kashmir was not yet fully possessed by Jammu rule. All these coins are still available in Srinagar Repository. One coin also contain Srinagar and Raghunath Ji Sahat.

After Maharaja Gulab Singh his son Maharaja Ranbir Singh succeeded him in 1856. In 1860 Maharaja Ranbir Singh established permanent Takasal at Mubarak Mandi jammu, the structure there of is still subsisting During Maharaja Ranbir Singh's regime coins of denominations called half paisa, paisea, half anna and one anna were brought in circulation apart from the silver coin called "Chilki".

Perior to the rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh the practice of exchange of kinds was prevalent instead of purchase of commodity to meet with the domestic necessaciteis. Even the employees started getting salaries in currency circulation. Even paper currency of rupees 100, 50 and 10 denomination came in paper printed notes like British currency only in 1865. Thus all these can be counted the visting developments of the Jammu and Kashmir state during the reign of His Highness Gulab Singh both from June 20th, 1922 to 16th March 1846 as the Raga of Jammu state under the control of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Kingdom seat of Lahore besides from 16 March 1846 to 20th February 1856 as Maharaja of the Jammu and Kashmir Sovereign state with the territories so held by it and remained in physical operation upto 15th August, 1947.

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