

HARYANA UNDER THE BRITISH RULE

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Introduction

Haryana is a state in India. Haryana takes the place of pride in Indian history. During the British period it was administered as a part of the Punjab Province. The region of Haryana was acquired by the East India company on dec. 30, 1803 from Daulat Rao Sindhia through the treaty of Sirji Anjangaon. At the time of establishment of British rule in Haryana the company was not in a mood to exercise direct control over the whole of this region then they simply took up the responsibility of directly administering only a narrow strip of land on the right bank of the Yamuna, measuring about forty miles north and south of Delhi. It was called 'Assigned territory'. The whole region was divided in to several sub-districts. A strong body of police was recruited by the British Government in different parts of Haryana, for established the law and order. A Big trouble gave to the British authorities by the people of Haryana. The British rule of half a century from 1803 to 1857 produced a great deal of discontent and disaffection among the people. Many factors prepared the ground for revolt of 1857 in Haryana. This was started at Ambala and Meerut on 10, 1857 and at Delhi on the 11th. In the beginning of June, 1857, almost whole of Haryana had become independent of the British rule. In November 1857 the British were successful in crushing the popular revolt in Haryana. Immediately after that this region was separated from the North-Western provinces and it was tagged with Punjab in Feb. 1858.

Key Words:- Haryana, British, Region, Territory , Delhi

The region of Haryana was acquired by the East India company on dec. 30, 1803¹ from Daulat Rao Sindhia whose ancestors had occupied it in the days of the decline of the Mughal Empire. The region of Haryana Daulat Rao Sindhia ceded to the British East India Company through the treaty of Sirji Anjangaon. At the time of establishment of British rule in Haryana the company was not in a mood to exercise direct control over the whole of this region then they simply took up the responsibility of directly administering only a narrow strip of land on the right bank of the Yamuna, measuring about forty miles north and south of Delhi.² It was called 'Assigned territory'. This territory was administered by East India Company's officer, called the 'Resident' and he reported directly to the Governor General. There were three reasons for taking the direct control over the Assigned Territory. The first reason this territory was very important for an effective hold over the historical city of Delhi. The second reason was this territory would provide financial provision for the royal household. Third reason was this territory was very important for security of the company from the Sikhs and the Rajputs. It was a very strategic place. Battalions of soldiers was stationed there. Assigned territory comprised the parganas of Panipat, Sonapat, Samalka, Ganaur and Haveli Palam Indri, Palwal, Nagina and Ferozpur Jhirka in the south and the rest of the region was settled with different chiefs and sardars. For example Nawab Isa Khan of Farrukhnagar and Raja Bahadur Singh of Ballabgarh were confirmed in their Jagirs,³ Faiz Talab Khan and Ahmad Baksh Khan were given the Parganas of Pataudi⁴ and Loharu and Ferozpur Jhirka⁵ respectively, an estate of 87 villages in Rewari Pargana⁶ was assigned to the Ahir chief Rao Tej Singh. Hodal and

Palwal Parganas were settled with Murtaza Khan and Muhammad Ali Khan Afrid.⁷ The Parganas of Rohtak, Meham, Beri, Hissar, Hansi, Agroha, Tosham, Barwala and Jamalpur were given to Bambu Khan, brother of notorious Ghulam Qadir Rohilla and Ahmed Bakhah, Vakil of Raja of Alwar one by one, but on account of serious opposition of the people they “resigned their uncomfortable position”.

This arrangement was not made without a struggle. Col. Burn had to fight with a number of Sikh chiefs in 1805. Rohtak and Gurgaon had also to be tackled on a military basis. Hissar was a serious trouble spot. The chiefs of Fatehabad and Rania, Khan Bahadur Khan and Nawab Zabita Khan killed the Nazim of Hissar, Ilias Beg. Hence in 1810 Edward Gardiner, accompanied by a cavalry force under Col. James Skinner, advanced to restore order, marched through Rohtak and Hissar, captured Bhiwani, defeated the refractory chiefs of Fatehabad and Rania and suppressed many fissiparous elements. But the British commanders and administrators offered the carrot with the stick and eventually pacified the chiefs, confirming of them in their jagirs. At that time Haryana was in the grip of anarchy. For some decades it had not seen any orderly government. As Metcalfe wrote, every village was a den of thieves who raided and plundered all around upto Delhi.⁸ Hence it was not easy to restore order and normalize the administration. Evidently it produced many stresses and strains and also bred discontent and unrest.⁹

After dividing the Haryana territory among some princes the company's government had thought that they would solve the problem of this region but coming events proved that they were wrong. Haryana's people, who were brave¹⁰ did not accept the new position of Haryana.¹¹ The people did not accept their new masters. The Jats and Rangharh of Rohtak, Ahirs and Gujars of Gurgaon, the Bhattis, Bishnois and Jats of Hissar, Rajputs and Sikhs of Karnal against the British rulers.¹² A Big trouble gave to the British authorities by the people of Hissar. In Fact there was no government from 1803 to 1810.¹³ At last, in 1810, Edward Gardiner was sent with a big force to restore order. He was accompanied by Col. James Skinner with a cavalry force. In the middle of march Gardiner went to reduce the Rohtak territory. After called a meeting he impressed the most important person of town to told them about the benefit of British rule. He assured them good treatment provided, they remained peaceful and came under the British protection.¹⁴ After Rohtak region Gardiner went to Hissar. When British force went to Hissar Ranghars of Hissar attacked the British force. In the village of Balliali near Hansi a bloody battle was fought. Although villagers fought bravely but they were defeated. The British forces fought with Khan Bahadur at Fatehabad and Nawab Zabta Khan at Sirsa but both were defeated and expelled from their territories.

East India Company and Administration of Haryana

East India Company took interest in the administration of Haryana region after 1810. Resident was the head of the Assigned Territory. He had powers of a Judge, Collector, Magistrate and a Police Officer. Many assistants were helped the Resident in his work. The senior most assistant was called head assistant. The whole region was divided in to several sub-districts. These divisions were called 'Tahsils' and officers called 'Tahsildars' were made incharge of them. Each tahsil was further divided in to several 'Zails' comprising a few villages. Each zail was put under the charge of a headman known as 'Zaildar' . He was usually a prominent lambardar and served as a link between the villages and the tahsildar. In the villages the administration was entrusted to the care of the headmen called lambardars or muqaddams. Their main duty was that they, along with the patwaris, should help in the collection of land revenue. The village choukidar worked¹⁵ as a peon and guard.

Police Administration

A strong body of police was recruited by the British Government in different parts of Haryana, for established the law and order because there was a lot of disorder¹⁶ in early years of the British rule. The people of village also active co-operation with the police for reducing the crimes and established law and order in region.¹⁷

Revenue Administration

The main occupation of people of Haryana was agriculture which was the chief source of income of the British Government due to this reason the British authorities were more directed towards to peasants. They also declared that the public assessment upon land had never been fixed from the earliest times. More over the rulers too have exercised and despotic authority, also the cultivators had continuously oppressed. The government there for decided to make the cultivators feel secure, to make a three years settlement with them to be followed by a settlement for the similar time period and then by one of four years.¹⁸ However this was never transformed into reality. According to regulation IX of 1805, Metcalfe riding on his elephant and surrounded by a band of troopers toured the region in 1807 and made a settlement for one year. With the passage of time longer settlements were made even three to twenty years settlements were made in 1820. The assessments were very heavy only less than fifty percent of the gross produce remained with the peasant. The payment of the revenue was replaced by prompt payment in cash.¹⁹

Administration of justice

For the administration of justice the whole territory was divided in to two parts that of the city of Delhi and countryside. In the city there were three courts for civil cases, the lowest court for petty suits of the value Rs. 100, the second court was for ordinary suits and the third and highest court was the resident's own, which have heard appeals from the lower courts.²⁰ In lower court, civil cases were conducted by pandit, qazi, Mufti, in second court cases conducted by assistants. In the villages the justice was administrated by the panchyats.²¹ The rest of the region was administrated by the local chiefs, which were essentially under the political super intendance of the resident and enjoyed the privileges on condition of fidelity and military service to the British government.²² Haryana lived in villages. The most remarkable institution in every village was its 'village community'. The village communities and the village panchayats were built up according to the requirements of the people and under them 'they felt secure and happier'. After established the British rule in Haryana the village communities was destroyed and destruction of village communities brought social instability and the people felt insecure and unhappy. How village communities worked Metcalfe is described in these words: " The village communities are like little republics, having nearly everything they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution; Hindu Pathan, Mughal, Marathas, Sikh, English are masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves; a hostile army passes through the country; the village community and devastation be directed against themselves and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance, but when the storm has passed over, they return and resume their occupation. If a country remains for a series of years the scene of continual pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away but the succeeding generation will return. The sons will take the place of

their fathers, the same for the same position for the houses, the same lands will be preoccupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated; and it is not the trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success.²³

The British rule of half a century from 1803 to 1857 produced a great deal of discontent and disaffection among the people. Their destruction of the village communities, the Panchayats and natural leaders brought social instability in the society, their economic policy of exploitation caused poverty, the work of the Christian missionaries, who were supported by the British government officials, caused consternation in the minds of the people. The regular visitations of the terrible famines and deadly epidemics had made the life of the people intolerably unhappy and miserable. These and many other factors prepared the ground for revolt of 1857 in Haryana. This was started at Ambala and Meerut on 10, 1857 and at Delhi²³ on the 11th. In the beginning of June, 1857, almost whole of Haryana had become independent of the British rule. It took almost six months for the British to take back the control of Haryana

In November 1857 the British were successful in crushing the popular revolt in Haryana. Immediately after that this region was separated from the North- Western provinces and it was tagged with Punjab in Feb. 1858. The region of Haryana was divided into two division that of Delhi and Hissar.²⁴ The Delhi division consisted of the districts of Delhi, Gurgaon and Panipat while the Hissar division consisted of the districts of Hissar, Sirsa and Rohtak. These Districts divided into tehsils, tehsils into zails and zails into villages. Since 1858, till November 1, 1966, it remained a part of Punjab.

Conclusion

In this paper we have observed the British government's policies and their effects on Haryana. The British rule of half a century from 1803 to 1857 produced a great deal of discontent and disaffection among the people. After established the British rule in Haryana the village communities was destroyed and destruction of village communities brought social instability and the people felt insecure and unhappy. The British period was the saddest and dreadful period in the history of Haryana region. The period was full of social, economic and political exploitation and that's result was revolt of 1857 was begin in Haryana. But the British government was successful in crushing the popular revolt in Haryana. After revolt of 1857 Haryana was tagged with Punjab.

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