

# Rise of Gulab Singh from a soldier to Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir

Dr. Kanwal Singh

Ph.D. History

Lecturer, School Education Department Jammu and Kashmir.

## Abstract:

This paper intends to draw light on the carrier of Maharaja Gulab Singh covering the span of his position from an ordinary soldier to Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. An attempt has been made to highlight the important events which have had profound impacts on the rise of Gulab Singh as Maharaja. Moreover, an attempt has been made in this research paper to present the events chronologically. The paper has been divided into sections to bring to light the journey from childhood, as a soldier, as Raja, and finally becoming Maharaja. It also throes light on the military campaigns undertaken by Gulab Singh throughout his carrier.

**Keywords:** Dogras, Lahore Darbar, Jagirs, Kingdom, British, Jammu, Panjab, Sikh army

## Introduction

Gulab Singh was born on 21 Oct 1792 in the lineage of the Dogra Royal family at a place named Anderwah near Samba in Jammu. His father's name was Mian Kishore Singh holding the jagir of Anderwah. But it was his grandfather Mian Zorawar Singh who trained him as a warrior in many arts including horsemanship and swordsmanship.<sup>1</sup> The formal education of Gulab Singh is not certain but he was able to read and write in Dogri as some original documents written by him are still available in Punjab Government Records Office at Patiala. The spiritual guru of Gulab Singh was Baba Puran Dass who lived in the Village of Surinisar and later shifted to Kana Chak. Baba had predicted his future as King and thus advised him to set off immediately in search of a fortune.<sup>2</sup>

The Jammu kingdom at that time was ruled by Dev Dynasty ruler Raja Jeet Singh. Mian Mota the administrator of Jammu was impressed by the bravery of Gulab Singh so he asked Mian Zorawar Singh to send him for his services. In 1808 Jammu was attacked by the forces of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Gulab Singh merely at the age of sixteen distinguished himself and fought courageously against the Sikh attack in defense of Jammu. However the Dogra forces were easily defeated and Jammu became the part of Sikh empire.<sup>3</sup> The Jammu forces were led by Mian Mota and Sikh forces were led by Bhai Hukuma Singh and Misr Dewan Chand.<sup>4</sup> The battle tactics and sword of Gulab Singh attracted the attention of Bhai Hukuma Singh.<sup>5</sup>

## Soldier to Raja of Jammu

After the battle, he left Jammu in the search of new opportunities. He went to Peshawar to enlist in the army of Shah Shuja the deposed King of Afghanistan who was collecting an army to recover his throne

but the plan did not materialize and came back. Then he got employment under Nihal Singh a noble of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Here he suppressed the revolt and held the fort again a local uprising led by Zamindars. This brave act of Gulab Singh highly impressed Nihal Singh and thus he sent him to Lahore for induction into the Sikh army.<sup>6</sup> In Lahore (the capital Sikh Kingdom) Gulab Singh was enlisted in the army as the commander of the regiment at a monthly salary of 275 rupees.<sup>7</sup> Up to the year 1813 Gulab Singh including his two brothers Dhyant Singh, Suchet Singh and their father Mian Kishore Singh got employed in the Lahore Darbar. Thereafter Gulab Singh actively participated in the campaigns of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the expansion of the Sikh Empire.

**Campaign of Attock:-** In the year 1813 Gulab Singh and his father Mian Kishore Singh took part in the battle against Afghan forces for the capture of the fort of Attock. Here Gulab Singh got the opportunity to show his mettle by performing with his sword.<sup>8</sup> In the year 1814 campaign was launched for the annexation of Kashmir but it proved to be a futile exercise. While retreating from the campaign Gulab Singh played an important role in protecting the Maharaja's forces from the turbulent Zamindars by taking them on a safe passage. This act of Gulab Singh earned the praise of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and was thus granted the jagirs of Khaoti and Beyol. He was also promoted to commander of twenty-two horses.<sup>9</sup> The next campaign was against Garh Dhramat fort in Jallahandar Doab and for this Gulab Singh was again rewarded the jagirs of Lala Chobra and Ramnagar. Also, the rank was raised by allowing Gulab Singh to raise his own company of two hundred horsemen.

**Siege of Multan:-** The siege of Multan is an important event in the rise of Gulab Singh. The attack on the fort of Multan was carried on under the direct supervision of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. During the campaign, one of the Sikh Sardar died while fighting and his dead body lay at the gate of the fort. The gate was well protected due to the heavy fire of cannons. Maharaja Ranjit Singh ordered his officers to bring back the dead body of his beloved commander but nobody dared to do this feat. Here Gulab Singh rose to the occasion assembled his troops and accomplished the task by bringing the dead body of the Sardar on his soldier to the camp. This act of bravery was highly appreciated by Maharaja Ranjit and increases the trust in the military capabilities of Gulab Singh.<sup>10</sup>

**Conquest of Kashmir:-** The next important campaign was the conquest of Kashmir in 1819. Gulab Singh was ordered to render full cooperation and safeguard the safe passage for the Sikh Army led by Mirs Dewan Chand. For this Gulab Singh through his diplomacy won the Raja of Rajaour (Rajouri) on his side. Gulab Singh also accompanied the Sikh forces in the conquest of Kashmir. On reaching a village Diapur Jabbar Khan Governor of Kashmir, brother of Azim Khan attacked the Royal forces. Gulab Singh retaliated and asked his soldiers to surround the enemy. After a battle, the Sikh Army defeated the Afghan governor forces of Jabbar Khan who left the valley. For the valuable services and support, Gulab Singh has rewarded the jagir of Kishtwar.<sup>11</sup>

In the same year, Gulab Singh assisted Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the conquest of Peshawar. Here also Gulab Singh played an important role which enabled the Sikh forces to defeat Yusuf Zia and occupy Peshawar an important town.

**Conquest of Kishtwar:-** Next target was a principality of Kishtwar which had been already granted to Gulab Singh on eve of the conquest of Kashmir. Now it was the time to take actual possession. The ruler of Kishtwar at that time was Tej Singh and Lakhpat Rai was his Wazir. Gulab Singh through a trick sowed the seed of mistrust between Tej Singh and his Wazir. The Wazir fled away and joined the services of

Gulab Singh. Subsequently, Tej Singh was also arrested and went on to appear in court Maharaja of Ranjit Singh which was turned down by granting a handsome pension.<sup>12</sup>

So up to the year 1822 Gulab Singh was successful in establishing sway over a vast area of Jammu. Finally, in the year 1822, Gulab Singh has conferred the title of Raja of Jammu. Accordingly, Maharaja Ranjit Singh personally came to Jammu to install Gulab Singh as the Raja of Jammu on November 30, 1820, on the bank of the Chenab River. The jagir “taalluqa of the Chakla of Jammu” along with the small states including Patti-Bhoti, Bandraltha, Chineni, and Kishtwar was granted to Gulab Singh along with his father and two brothers.<sup>13</sup> The practice of Raj-Tilak ceremony was a unique one as the saffron tilak was applied downwards on the forehead of Gulab Singh. On being asked Maharaja for the reason he replied that he had “firmly sowed the seed in the soil that it may thrive well, hold its roots strong in the earth, and last forever.”<sup>14</sup>

### **From Raja to Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir**

Soon after bestowing the raj of Jammu to Gulab Singh, he embarked upon the expansion and consolidation of his kingdom. By applying his skillful tactics he started annexing the neighboring principalities without any bloodshed. In the short span between 1820- 1827, Gulab Singh brought his sway over the principalities lying between Kashmir Valley and Jammu.

**Conquest of Rajouri:-** As it was also the wish of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to teach a lesson to the Raj of Rajouri and brought him to Lahore Darbar in chains due to his hostile attitude towards Sikh forces during campaigns of the conquest of Kashmir. Accordingly, Gulab Singh led the forces against the Raja Aghar Khan of Rajouri. The principality of Rajouri was occupied but the Raja fled away into the hills. Consequently, the search was carried and Raja was captured and sent to Lahore Darbar as a prisoner.<sup>15</sup>

**Suppressing revolt in Frontier areas:-** In the year 1826 Raja Gulab Singh was summoned by Lahore Drawbar to deal with the Azam Khan and Khilafa Saidullah of the frontier area who has raised the banner of revolt. The Governor of the frontier Sardar Budha Singh was not able to hold the ground against them. Gulab Singh without losing time sent his forces under Dewan Amir Chand. After a short period, he joined the campaign at the command of his three hundred men along with Hari Singh Nalwa. The Pathans had destroyed the bridge over Indus near Attock to make the advances of Sikh forces impossible but Gulab Singh crossed the Indus and attacked the enemy with full might. As a result, the Pathans were driven back. But during the campaign, the arm of Gulab Singh was wounded.<sup>16</sup>

The confidence and trust of Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the capabilities of Gulab Singh keep on increasing from time to time due to later’s exceptional performance in the campaigns of Lahore Darbar. Even from the year 1827 to the year 1837, he acted as the war strategist of Maharaja and thus played a crucial role in the expansion and consolidation of the Sikh Kingdom.<sup>17</sup>

**Conquest of Ladakh 1834:-** The most important achievement of Gulab Singh was the annexation of Ladakh to the Jammu Raj and subsequently to Sikh Empire. The annexation of Kishtwar brought the boundaries of Gulab Singh adjacent to Ladakh Here the main motive to conquer the Ladakh area was economic due to the vibrant shawl trade. Gulab Singh want to divert the shawl trade route to the route of

Kishtwar to Jammu and then outside the state.<sup>18</sup> Another reason is said to reach the neighborhood of Nepal.<sup>19</sup>

The difficult task was entrusted to his trusted commander General Zorawar Singh Kahluria with the title of 'Wazir'. Zorawar Singh first made Kishtwar his base for launching an attack against Ladakh. With the head of a strong contingent of 5000 soldiers, he entered Puring a province of Ladakh via Maryum La or Bhot Kol Pass. The Ladakhis offered no resistance here. Hereafter forces of Ladakh tried to stop the march of Zorawar Singh at Sanku but were easily defeated. The area of Kartse was also occupied. From Kartse the forces under Zorawar Singh marched towards Suru River where Ladakhi forces were again given crushing defeat in the plains of Pashkyum.<sup>20</sup> Next target was a fort of Sod. The Ladakhi forces held the fort for 10 days. Finally, resistance was brought down by Colonel Mehta Basti Ram who took the fort under his control.

Finally the Tsepal the Gyalpo realized that he is no match for Dogra forces and came to Bazgo to negotiate with Zorawar Singh. Gyalpo accompanied by Zorawar Singh came to Leh where he was installed as the ruler accepting the sovereignty of Gulab Singh by paying an annual tribute of rupees twenty thousand. And war indemnity of fifty thousand.<sup>21</sup> But the peace was for the short period as Gyalpo again in 1836 raised the banner of revolt against Dogras. The troops stationed in Suru were killed. Zorawar Singh losing no time rushed to Leh to control the situation and he successfully put down the rebellion. He replaced old Gyalpo with Ngorub Stanzin as the new ruler of Ladakh. Leh was fortified and a strong force was stationed there.<sup>22</sup> Again Ngorub Stanzin was provoked to revolt at the instigation of the Governor of Kashmir Mahan Singh. Zorawar Singh again removes Ngorub Stanzin and restores old Gyalpo Tsepal. After consolidating his position in Ladakh, Zorawar Singh started preparation for the next campaign for the conquest of Baltistan. He organized a Ladakhi force and attacked the fort of Skardu. The enemy forces did not offer much resistance. Zorawar Singh appoint Mohammad Shah as sultan of Baltistan.<sup>23</sup>

Campaign of Tibet:- Zorawar Singh now prepared a force comprising Ladakhis and Baltis for the conquest of Tibet. In the history of India, no one has dared to conquer such areas due to tough terrain. In May 1841 the Dogra forces captured Rudok and Garo and reached Mansar Manasarover without any tough resistance. The forces were stationed at Tirtapuri. It was here that Zorawar Singh was informed that forces from Lhasa were coming. Two small companies sent to halt their movement met with no success.<sup>24</sup> Here at this point Zorawar Singh felt no chance of return due to heavy snow and chilling cold he decided to give a tough battle to Tibetans forces. The battle lasted for three days i.e. from 10 to 12th of December in which Zorawar Singh lost his life along with soldiers.<sup>25</sup> Reinforcement was sent by Gulab Singh under Dewan Hari Chand which drove back the forces of Tibet. An agreement was signed which recognized the traditional boundaries of Ladakh and Tibet but areas around Minsar and Manasarover were retained by Gulab Singh.<sup>26</sup>

Thus it can be observed that Gulab Singh expanded the boundaries of Jammu Raj including jagirs of Reasi, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah, Padder, Chineni, Akhnur, Dnagli, and Khanput in the Hills and also some others are in plains totaling the value of Nine Lakh rupees.<sup>27</sup> Gulab Singh has also raised a strong force of three infantry regiments, fifteen light artillery, and forty heavy guns.<sup>28</sup> Along with Gulab Singh his brothers too have risen by dint of hard labor and loyal services. Dhian Singh was given the jagirs of Bhimber Poonch, Kotli, and Sunach having a total value of three Lakhs and fifty thousand while another brother Suchet Singh held Mankot, Bhaddu Bandralta, and Samba having a

value of two Lakh and Seventy-five thousands. Even the son of Dhain Singh Hira Singh was also bestowed with a jagir of Jasrota having a value of One Lakh and twenty-five thousand.

### **From Raja to Maharaja**

Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh empire died at the age of 59, on 27th June 1839. The death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh witnessed the transfer of powers into the hands of Raja Dhayan Singh, Raja Dina Nath, and Fakir Aziz-ud-Din with Raja Dhayan Singh as a chief authority. These nobles installed Kharak Singh as the new ruler of Panjab.<sup>29</sup> But in a short period he was replaced by Nao Nehal Singh as the new Maharaja of Panjab.<sup>30</sup> Nao Nehal Singh was an ambitious prince who wanted to get rid of Dogra brothers by planning their destruction and for this General Ventura (a European General in the Sikh army) was asked to attack Jammu but the plan could not be materialized. On 5th November 1840, Nao Nehal Singh too died due to the sudden collapse of the archway, along with Udham Singh the eldest son of Gulab Singh on the spot. After a bitter struggle between rival factions for succession, Sher Singh third son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh succeeded to the throne as the new Maharaja but on accepting certain conditions.<sup>31</sup> On September 15, 1844, a violent event took place. First Sher Singh and then Wazir Dhayan Singh were murdered on the same day by a faction of nobles led by Sindhanwalia Chiefs.<sup>32</sup>

The next target was Hira Singh who was made Wazir after the murder of his father. He too died fighting on 21 December 1844.<sup>33</sup> So in a short period, the entire Dogra brother except Gulab Singh was murdered in the ongoing struggle.

It was now the turn of Raja Gulab Singh. The Sikh troops were excited to attack Gulab Singh and therefore ordered to march against Jammu. Gulab Singh knew the weakness of the Sikh soldiers and distributed money among the Sikh regiments and soldiers. He promised a gratuity to the army and to pay to Panchayats of durbar the state a fine of 3,500,000 rupees. But due to some disagreement between Lahore and Gulab Singh, the promise could not be fulfilled. Again the Sikh soldiers were excited to attack Jammu. To save Jammu from being sacked he tendered his submission. After gaining the trust of two brigades, he joined their camp and arrived at Lahore early in April 1845. The Panchayats had been won by money and skillful diplomacy. Still many of the old servants of Ranjit Singh had confidence in his ability and his goodwill towards the state generally. But there was a section who could take the life of Gulab Singh. Jawahar Singh and Lal Singh exercised their influence on Queen-mother not to support any feeling in favour of Gulab Singh whose capability for dealings with the affairs of state was well-known. Gulab Singh on the other hand sensing his position in danger felt it prudent to shun his motive of the struggle for capturing power and also to remain away from Lahore for the security of life. So he accepted the order of Durbar to pay a fine of 6,800,000 rupees, to give up the districts which had been held by his family, except his suitable fiefs, and to restore his lease of the salt mines to Lahore Darbar between the Indus and Jhelum, which of course deprived him of large income. He also attended the ceremony of Jawahir Singh being made as Wazir on the 14th of May 1845.<sup>34</sup> But Army put to death new Wazir Jawahir Singh the brother of Rani Jinda Kaur on the charge of killing Peshora Singh another son of the late Maharaja Ranjit Singh. This act of the Army angered the Rani and to pacify her she was promised true allegiance to Maharaja Dalip Singh and implicit obedience to her commands.<sup>35</sup>

In the meantime, Anglo-Sikh started. The Sikh Army On December 11, 1845, began to cross the Sutlej near Hari ki Pattan to its territory on the other side of the river. In response, Governor-General Lord

Harding made an announcement of war on 13 of December 1845. In retaliation, the British Indian Government confiscated the Darbar's possessions on the left side and also gave a call for unity and cooperation from the Cis-Sutlej states in the fight against Sikh Forces.<sup>36</sup> In all the battles followed such as the Battle of Muduki, Battle of Ferozpur, Battle of Buddowal and Battle of Aliwal, and Battle of Sabaraon the Sikh forces were completely defeated.

After the battle of Sabaraon, the need for Raja Gulab Singh was felt at Lahore Darbar. Raja Gulab Singh had resolved to act with great caution and avoid mixing himself up in the quarrel. When reached Lahore he was requested by the Rani and the punches of the army to join the war but he availed himself of the excuse of wishing to act independently at the head of his troops in any work she might assign to him. These postures adopted by Raja Gulab Singh earned the praise of the British Indian Government which proved fruitful in the establishment of the Independent Dogra State.<sup>37</sup>

The Rani became worried about the British army's march into Lahore after the defeat in the battle of Sabaraon. She requested Raja Gulab Singh to seek compromise with the British. Raja Gulab Singh agreed to accept the proposal of becoming the negotiator only after the members of the Darbar, the army officers, and even punches had signed a solemn declaration that they would abide by such terms as he might determine with the British Government.<sup>38</sup> Raja Gulab Singh was given full powers to negotiate with British.<sup>39</sup>

The deputation led by Raja Gulab Singh including Chiefs Diwan Dina Nash, Faqir Nur-Din, Diwan Devi Sahai, and Sardar Gulab Singh son of Atariwala proceeded towards the British camp to meet Governor-General. Finally, they met with the Governor-General Lord Hardings. Lord Harding came out of the tent holding Raja Gulab Singh's hand and made him seated on the chair. Raja Gulab Singh and Lord Harding started negotiations to reach an agreement that could provide unity and strength to Sikh State. Lord Harding agreed on the condition of providing the indemnity of Rupees 2 crore in cash and annexation of Doab territory to the British. Raja Gulab Singh explained the incapacity of Lahore Durbar to pay such a huge amount of cash.<sup>40</sup>

At this stage, Lord Harding also played politics by alienating the interests of Raja Gulab Singh from the interests of Lahore Durbar by directly offering an independent hill state. By this, he wanted to make Raja Gulab Singh on his side. He was of the view that if Raja Gulab Singh would be annoyed he would be compelled in reviving conflict. Raja Gulab Singh made his power and prestige keenly felt at Kasur by explaining the advanced techniques of warfare to be used in the fight against the British. So Lord Harding tried his very best to appease Raja Gulab Singh.<sup>41</sup> Hung Pears in "Memoirs of Alexander Garden" remarks that the British tried their best to convince Raja Gulab Singh to bring into line with their interests. Otherwise, Raja Gulab Singh would have used his influence in creating a revolt which would have been more troublesome than the revolt of 1857, and also encouraged the other states like Nabha, Jind, and Patiala in throwing away the British yoke.

Finally, the payment of One Crore and fifty Lakhs were fixed upon to be paid in cash, and the cession of Doab territory was decided. Out of the total money to be given in cash fifty Lakhs was to be given instantly and the remaining One Crore to be given in three harvests.<sup>42</sup> Governor-General Lord Harding wished to visit Lahore to help draft a treaty based on the negotiations and agreements made at Kasur with Sikh delegation. Raja Gulab Singh made Maharaja Dalip Singh accompany Lord Harding to

the Sikh capital. Lord Harding reached Lahore on 20 Feb 1846 without any incident. The credit for safe passage to the Capital was given to Raja Gulab Singh. Seeing the success of Raja Gulab Singh in conducting negotiations one more unsuccessful attempt to murder him was made. Further Raja Gulab Singh was also dismissed from the post of Wazir and Lal Singh was again made the Wazir.<sup>43</sup>

The dismissal of Raja Gulab Singh from the post of Wazir made him aware of the precariousness of his position. Up to this stage, he had not accepted the British offer of making him Independent and remained loyal to Lahore Darbar. These acts of Rani and Lal Singh made him feel that he was sent to negotiate only to avert disaster. Instead of rewarding him, Lahore Darbar adopted a hostile attitude towards Raja Gulab Singh. He felt that still Lahore Darbar cherished violent animosity towards the Jammu family despite murdering his brothers and nephew.<sup>44</sup> However the final agreement sealed between Lahore Darbar and the British was in form of the treaty of Lahore on 9th of March 1846.

Moreover, the Rani in collaboration with Raja Lal Singh issued an order of depriving Gulab Singh as representative of Lahore durbar and empowering Raja Lal Singh as a sole representative to further negotiate with the British. Lal Singh after negotiations agreed to give the territories on that side of the Bias waters including Kangra and Kohistan regions including Kashmir, Hazara, and Chamba instead of One Crore as the treasury was empty. This was also done to deprive Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu's estate and position. On hearing about the deal offered by Lal Singh to the British, Raja Gulab Singh sent Dewan Jawala Sahai to Sir Henry Lawrence with the objective that the Jammu territory should be granted as sustenance to his dependents and permits him to leave to Banaras. Sir Henry Lawrence took matters with Mr. Currie who conveyed Dewan Jawala Sahai of having the goodwill of the British toward Raja Gulab Singh. He also gave assurance of transferring territory to Raja Gulab Singh on payment of money. It was also decided to deduct the laying wealth worth Fifteen Lakhs rupees of Raja Suheet Singh from One Crore. Also, it was conveyed to the British Government that Raja Gulab Singh was not in favour of giving over to him the possessions of the territory lying to the west of the river Beas valued at Twenty Lakhs rupees, and thus accordingly understanding was reached in form of Treaty of Amritsar.<sup>45</sup>

### **Treaty of Amritsar 1846**

This Treaty took place between the British Government and Maharaja Gulab Singh at Amritsar, on 16th March 1846. British Government was represented by Frederick Currie, and Brevet-Major Henry Montgomery Lawrence, acting under the orders of Sir Henry Hardinge, and on the other side Maharaja Gulab Singh himself. Among others the treaty includes the main following provisions;

Article 1:-The British Government transfers and makes over, forever, in independent possession, to Maharaja Gulab Singh, and the heirs male of his body, all the hilly or mountainous country, with its dependencies, situated to the eastward of the river Indus, and westward of the river Ravi, including Chamba and excluding Lahul, being part of the territory ceded to the British Government by the Lahore State, according to the provisions of Article 4 of the treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846.

Article 3:- In consideration of the transfer made to him and his heirs by the provisions of the foregoing articles, Maharaja Gulab Singh will pay to the British Government the sum of seventy-five lakhs of rupees (Nanakshahi), fifty lakhs to be paid on ratification of this treaty, and twenty-five lakhs on or before the 1st of October of the current year, A.D.1846.

So the new ally i.e. Gulab Singh was formally invested with the title of 'Maharaja' at Amritsar on the 15th of March 1846. On this occasion, Maharaja Gulab Singh stood up, and, with joined hands,

expressed his gratitude to the British Viceroy, that he was indeed a 'Zurkharid', or gold-boughten slave.

Accordingly, Wazir Lakhpat was sent by Maharaja Gulab Singh to take possession of Kashmir. Wazir Lakhpat reached Kashmir and took Hari Parbat under his control but a dispute arose between Wazir Lakhpat and Sheikh Imam-ud-din Governor of Kashmir, on the question of giving a receipt and acknowledgment of balance in the treasury and the stores. The Sheikh's attitude of refusal to cooperate led Maharaja Gulab Singh to send an additional force under the command of Wazir Ratnu to reinforce Lakhpat Rai's contingent in Kashmir."<sup>46</sup> At this stage Maharaja Gulab Singh invoked the treaty of Lahore, dated 9th March 1846 for the British help in acquiring Kashmir. Maharaja Gulab Singh also asked the Lahore Government to act against the rebellious attitude of Shiekh Imam-ud-din. Lord Harding took a serious view of this state of affairs. The British Government of India ordered, the Lahore Darbar to take action. Accordingly, The Lahore Government confiscated the Landed property of Shiekh in Jullundhar and Hoshiarpur. From Lahore, a large force was ordered to march toward Kashmir. Sir Henry Lawrence supported by a British force from Jullundhar under Brigadier Wheeler, arrived in Kashmir on 21 October 1846. Feared by the measures taken against him, Imam-ud-din surrendered and sued for peace. Diwan Nihal Chand heading royal troops entered Kashmir and occupied it. Accompanied by Sir Henery Lawrence Maharaja Gulab Singh entered Kashmir on 9 November 1846. According to Henery Lawrence, the arrival of Maharaja in Kashmir was "by no means displeasing to the inhabitants of the province, who were loud in their complaints of the tyranny and oppression of Sheikh Imamooddeen."<sup>47</sup>

Thus Maharaja Gulab Singh became the ruler of the vast territory of Jammu and Kashmir with the districts of Ladakh and Gilgit and he was recognized as an independent ruler both by the English and the Sikhs.<sup>48</sup>

It comprised three large divisions namely:

- i. Jammu-comprising the area in the South of the Pir Panjal range and Kishtwar.
- ii. Kashmir- containing the valley and the mountainous slopes encircling it.
- iii. Ladakh and Gilgit which comprised all the highlands and mountains on the northern frontier.<sup>49</sup>

## Conclusion

Gulab Singh carved an independent state for himself and became the Maharaja of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was not a simple feat to be achieved. As a soldier, he proved his military capabilities in the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and became his trusted lieutenant and a powerful feudatory. It was also the strategy of Gulab Singh to remain away from the bloody succession of Lahore Darbar in which he lost his two brothers and a nephew. Even dealing with the British was not an easy task. The British in other parts of India were engaged in annexing princely states and expanding their empire but the case of Gulab Singh was a different one. He by dint of his bravery and skillful diplomacy made the circumstances in his favor and compelled the British to transfer territories of Jammu and Kashmir to Gulab Singh and made him Maharaja. It was the mettle of Gulab Singh which enabled him to rise from the common soldier to the status of a Maharaja.

## References:

1. Singh, Dr. Karan Singh, *Heir Apparent*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1984, p.115



2. Huge Pears, *Memoirs of Alexander Garden*, written in 1875. Alexander was Colonel of Artillery in the service of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Reprinted by Alpha Edition 2019, p.31
3. Pannikar, K.M, *Gulab Singh 1792-1858: Founder of the Kashmir*, Martin Hopkinson Limited, London, 1930, p. 20
4. Nargis, Dewan Narsingh, *Gulab Charitar alias Sher Duggar-Urdu*, Chand Publications, Jammu, 1958, p.50
5. Ibid.
6. Lal, Kanihya, *Tarik-i-Panjab* (Lahore, 1877), p.465
7. Ram, Dewan Kirpa, *Gulabnama*, translated by Sukdev Singh Charak, Gulshan Publishers Srinagar India, p.272
8. Singh, Khushwant, *Fall of Sikh Kingdom*, Penguin Random House India, New Delhi, 1962. p. 150-160
9. Latif, S.M, *The History of the Panjab*, Reprinted by the Progressive books, Lahore Pakistan, 1984.
10. Ram, Dewan Kirpa, Op. Cit, p. 160-161
11. Ibid p. 90-91
12. Ram, Dewan Kirpa, Op. Cit, p. 95-97
13. Kohli Sita Ram, Catalogues of Khalsa Darbar Records, II, 1972, p.59, Gulab Nama Op.Cit. p 92-93s
14. Pannikar, K.M, Op.cit, p.32
15. Ram, Dewan Kirpa, Op. Cit.p, 111-113
16. K. M .Panikkar, Op. Cit, p.51
17. Koul, Ram Krishan and Bhatt *Political and Constitutional Development of J&K State*, Sema Publications, C-3/19 Rana Pratap Bagh, New Delhi.
18. Datta, C.L. *Ladakh and Westren Himalyan Politics*, 1973, pp.81-82
19. Charak,S.S. *Indian Conquest of Himalyan Territories*, 1978, p.74
20. Pannikar, K.M ,Op. Cit, p.77
21. Ibid, Charak,S.S., Op. Cit.,pp.75-81
22. Charak,S.S.,Op. Cit.pp.81-82
23. Pannikar,K.M., Op. Cit, p-79
24. Nargis, Narsing Das, Op. Cit, p.81
25. Pannikar, K,M, Op. Cit.p.81
26. Suri, Sat Prakash, *The Dogra Rulers of Jammu and Kashmir*, Shubi Publications, Gurgaon India, p.32
27. Cunningham, J. D., *History of Sikhs*, Forgotten Publishers, London, pp.385
28. Ibid.,p.388
29. Pannikar, K.M.,Op. Cit, p.42
30. Kohli, Sita Ram, Op. Cit, p .17
31. Pannikar, K.M.,Op .Cit. p.42-46
32. Foreign Department, Sec.23, March 1844, File No.455. National Archives of India New Delhi.
33. Pannikar, K.M. Op. Cit, p.65
34. Cunningham, J. D, Op.Cit., p. 240-243
35. Smyth, G. C, *A History of the Reigning Family of Lahore* Calcutta; W Thacker and Co., 1846, p. 167.
36. Singh, Khushwant, *Fall of Sikh Kingdom*, Penguin Random House India, New Delhi, 1962. p.46.
37. M' Gregor, M. L, *The History of the Sikhs*, Vol. 2, Reprinted 1970, Patiala, India .p. 129
38. Ibid.,

39. Ram, Dewan Kirpa. Op. Cit, p.305
40. Ibid., p-316
41. Cunningam, J.D. Op. Cit. pp 276,287,288
42. Governor General to Secret Committee, 19 Feb 1846, Bikramjit Hasrat Papers, pp. 142-143
43. Kohli, Sita Ram. Op. Cit, p. 117
44. Pannikar, K.M., Op. Cit, p. 98
45. Ram, Dewan Kirpa,Op. Cit, p.321
46. Harding to Secret Committee, Nov 21, 1846, p. 193. NAI. New Delhi
47. Harding to Secret Committee, Nov 21, 1846, p. 193. NAI. New Delhi
48. Hassnain, F.M, *Heritage of Kashmir* Gulshan Publishers Srinagar, India, 1980, p. 127.
49. Bamzai, P.N.K, *Socio-Economic history of Kashmir*, (1846-1925) Gulshan Books, Srinagar, 1987, p. 83.