CHAPTER VIII

RELATIONS OF GUJARAT WITH MALWA.

The war of succession in Malwa:

We have already referred to the arrival of the Prince of Malwa in Gujarat. Here, since it led to a conflict between the two kingdoms, it may be given in detail.

Sultan Nasir-ud-din Khalji, the ruler of Malwa died in 1510, leaving behind three sons viz. Shihab-ud-din Muhammad Shâh or Sahib Khan and Mahmud Shihab-ud-din, the eldest son of the Sultan revolted against his father during his reign and had left for Delhi. A struggle between the brothers for the throne of Mandu followed the Sultan's death. Mahmud Khalji, the younger, succeeded in it. However, he was overthrown by Muhammad Shâh with the help of Khwajah Jahân Tawshî, a noble and Muhammad Shâh or Sahib Khan was enthroned. Mahmud sought the help of Medini Rai, the powerful Rajput chief of Chanderi. Medini Rai attacked Mandu, seized it and declared Mahâmad as the Sultan of Mandu. Muhammad Shâh fled and took refuge in the court of Sultan Musaffar Shâh.

1. All the Persian chroniclers and Shri Ojha write Medini Rai whereas Hâji-ud-Dabir writes Rai Chand as the name and Medini Rai as the title of Ross Dennison E. An Arabic history of Gujarat P-I, p.103.
Sultan Muṣṭafā Shāh sent Qaisar Khān, a noble, towards Dohad to prepare for the campaign, but the attitude and behaviour of Muḥammad Shāh and the embassy episode, together with his sudden departure led to the abandonment of the contemplated campaign.

Medini Rai’s ambitious plan:

After the enthronement of Mahmud Shah as the Sultan of Malwa, Medini Rai gradually concentrated power in his hands. Medini Rai, according to Persian chroniclers, suppressed the Muslim nobles of Malwa and appointed the Rajputs to the key posts of the kingdom. This made the Sultan a figure head while real power passed into Medini Rai’s hands. Mahmūd Shāh though allowed to live royally and treated with all courtesy, thus became virtually a prisoner in Rajput hands.

The nobles of Malwa sought the help of the Sultan of Gujarat:

It is further stated that the nobles of Malwa sought the help of Sikandar Lodī of Delhi and Muṣṭafā Shāh

2. MS - Trans (F) pp. 92-94.
3. MS - Trans (F), pp. 94-95
4. Ibid
against the increasing power of Rajputs in Malwa.\(^5\) In 1515, Habīb Khān, Chand Shaikh and other nobles came from Malwa with complaints to Muzaffar Shāh.\(^6\) These nobles are also said to have complained against Medini Rai to Sultān Maḥmūd Khaljī.\(^7\)

Medini Rai, on the other hand, did not trust the Sultan and whenever he went to see the Sultan he took five hundred body guards with himself. Pandit Ojha considers this measure of Medini Rai, as necessary and states that in midst of such an opposition it was politically sound.\(^8\)

Sultān Muzaffar after hearing the complaints against Medini Rai, determined to free the Sultān of Malwa from Rajput control.

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5. Ojha G.H. History of Udaipur State (Hindi text) p.353
6. According to the Persian chroniclers the nobles complained to Muzaffar Shāh against the religious persecution of Medini Rai in Malwa, TA - Trans - (De) writes Shaikh Jaidā instead of Chand Khān pp. 297-299.
7. TA - Trans (De) pp. 297-299. MS - Trans (I) pp.92-95.
After making necessary arrangements, and leaving his son Sikandar Khan as his deputy, Muṣaffar Shāh left Ahmedabad for Godhra via Champaner. The nobles from various places were summoned, with their contingents, to join him in the proposed expedition. Accordingly, Ṭīn-ul-Mulk, the the governor of Patan, left to join the Sultan, thus allowing Bhim Ray, the Rajput king of Idar, to lay waste the country as far as east of Sabarmati. This incident caused some delay in the march to Malwa.

Then, army advanced to the boundary of Malwa. Qiwām-ul-Mulk moved towards Dhar, and after returning from there described the beauty of "Deer Park" to the Sultan. At this the Sultan desired to visit the "Deer Park" and encamped near Dhar.

Niẓām-ul-Mulk, a deputy of Idar, with some soldiers went towards Na'loha and while on his way back, a band of Purabiya Rajputs attacked him. At this early reverses, Sultan Muṣaffar gave up the proposed march and returned to Champaner.

Sultan Muṣaffar suddenly retreated from Dhar to Champaner and the historians do not account for it. From

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9. "Deer Park" was famous for its beauty and constructed by Sultan Qiyāṣh-ud-din of Malwa.
10. TF - (Text) -IV, II, p. 407.
the description of the march, it appears that the Sultan was assisted by a well-equipped army and Sikandar Khan, his son, was in charge of the administration of Gujarat. Thus there was no apparent reason which made the Sultan to retreat from Dhar.

The Persian chroniclers write that the Sultan decided to return to Champaner after Nizam-ul-Mulk's reverse at the hands of Purabiya Rajputs. It is likely, that this incident might have led him to believe that his preparations were not adequate, for the attack on the Rajputs. He also, might have considered the possibility of joint Rajput front against himself made of Medini Rai and Rana Sanga of Chitor.

Secondly, in 1515, Raja Bhim Singh of Idar died and his death was followed by a succession dispute between Bharmal, the son of late ruler and Raimal, the cousin of Bharmal. Raimal, being the son-in-law of Rana Sanga, was favoured by the latter, and was placed on the throne of Idar. This was sufficient to alarm Muzaafar Shah, for the dominance of Rana Sanga in Idar, led to an apprehension of Rajput invasion of Gujarat. To meet this danger, it was necessary for the Sultan to consolidate his defences. Later incidents indicate this fear regarding Rana Sanga on the part of the Sultan. Hence this could also have led to a retreat from Dhar to Champaner.
Two years had passed without Muzaffar Shah's taking any further steps in Malwa. Mahmud Shah in the meanwhile became tired of the domination of the man, who had raised him to the throne and he decided to escape. One day he proceeded far from Mandu, and at night took the way to Gujarat.

On arrival at Dohad, he was received by Qaipar Khan, the "Thangar" of Dohad, with due honours and the Sultan was informed about the same at Champaner. Muzaffar Shah proceeded towards Dohad to meet the Sultan of Malwa.

Muzaffar Shah, now, possibly thought it proper to declare war on Medini Rai. Together with the Sultan, he marched towards Dhar, leaving behind his son Sikandar Khan, as his deputy in Gujarat, and the remaining two sons Bahadur Khan and Latif Khan accompanied the Sultan to Malwa.

On the receipt of the news of the advance of the army of Gujarat towards Mandu, Medini Rai leaving the defence of the fort in charge of his son Rai Pithora and other Rajputs, left to seek the help of Rana Sanga.

11. MS - Trans (F) pp. 97-99.
The Gujarat army reached Mandu and besieged the fort. Meanwhile, the Rajputs in the fort requested Sultan Muṣaffar Shāh to allow them a month's time, to evacuate the fort and hand it over. The Sultan allowed this probably because the Rajputs had in their possession the harem of Sultan Mahmūd. 12

Nizām-ud-dīn writes that Rai Pithora had received a letter from Medini Rai to retain fort for one month because by that time he expected to reach Mandu with Rana Sanga. Therefore, to await Medini Rai's return with reinforcement Rai Pithora asked the Sultan for this time. 13

After some time it was reported to the Sultan that Medini Rai had himself gone to seek the help of Rana Sanga. Realising the plan of the Rajputs, Muṣaffar Shāh ordered Qaisar Khān and Khudawand Khān, two of his

12. Nizām-ud-dīn writes that Muṣaffar Shāh sent many presents to the Sultan of Malwa to make him cheerful, but Mahmūd was unhappy, because his whole harem was in possession of Medini Rai. – TA – Trans (De) III, pp. 301-303.
13. TA – Trans (De) III, p. 303.
generals, to attack the fort. ʿAṣṣil Khan Ḍāruquī, the Sultan of Khandesh, by this time had also joined the army, in Mandu.

The Sultan sent Qiwām-ʿul-Mulk against the Rajputs and ʿAṣṣil Khan was instructed to keep watch on Medini Rai and Rana Sanga. Mahmūd Khaljī pressed the attack from Shahpur Gate, Qaisar Khān from the Delhi Gate and Malik-ʿus-Sharq Imaḍ-ʿul-Mulk from the Sari Gate.

On Ṣafar 2,924/February 25, 1518 Mandu was carried by assault, after the rites of Jauhar had been performed inside the fort. The Gujarat army occupied the fort and the Rajputs were killed in large number. Among were, Medini Rai's son and other leaders. After this victory, the Sultan ordered the customary tower of skulls to be built.

Rana Sanga, and Medini Rai, while at Ujjain, received the news of the defeat of the Rajputs, Medini Rai was deeply hurt but Rana Sanga consoled him and both retreated to Chitor where the Rana appointed him to Chanderi.

While Rana Sanga and Medini Rai were retreating towards Chitor, 'Adil Khān of Khandesh, sent earlier against them, requested leave to attack the Rajputs. The Sultan satisfied with the victory at Mandu, refused permission and 'Adil Khān returned with his force.

Muzaffar Shāh invited to a grand entertainment:

The fort of Mandu was handed over to Mahmūd Khaljī. A few days later he invited Muzaffar Shāh to a sumptuous banquet in his honour in the fort. Firishtah states that Sultan Muzaffar Shāh was treated with utmost respect by the ruler of Malwa. Sultan Mahmūd requested the Gujarat Sultan to take his seat on the throne and himself stood before him. The royal dignitaries who accompanied the Sultan in the campaign also attended this function.

Sikandar has given a long description of entertainments which followed. The palace was illuminated and decorated with precious things. " Miṣām-ud-dīn, gives shorter description of these celebrations which took place after the victory of Mandu.

Firishtah describes the event as follows "After the feast was over, two thousand beautiful women of his seraglio

17. TF (Text) IV, II p. 410.
18. LB - Trans (F) pp. 100-120.
gaily dressed and adorned and carrying plates of gems and golden ornaments, were presented before the royal guest, and their master declared that, they and all he had, were at Sultan Muṣṭafar Shāh's disposal. The Sultan of Gujarat thanked him and expressed the desire to be allowed to retire."

It seems that since Mahmūd Shāh, so he arranged this entertainment to do him honour. The description given by the Persian chroniclers seems to be exaggerated. The long description given by them, and this indifference to beautiful women was probably meant to indicate the strength of Muṣṭafar Shāh's character and also his piety. Therefore, we may hardly take this description as literally correct though it may be substantially true.

After visiting the principal buildings of Mandu, Sultan Muṣṭafar left Mandu for Gujarat. Sultan Mahmūd accompanied him as far as Deolah on the border of Mandu. Asaf Khān was ordered by Muṣṭafar Shāh to assist Sultan Mahmūd.

Final attempt of Rajputs to recover Mandu :-

The year following i.e. 925/1519, Sultan Mahmūd

decided to invade the jagir of Medini Rai Asaf Khan, an envoy of Gujarat at the court of Mandu advised him against it but Mahmud Shah did not listen.

In 925/1519-20, Sultan Mahmud Shah marched against the holder of Gaughroan (in Kota, District) whose name is given as Hemkaran or Bhimkaran. In the battle, which followed the Rajputs were defeated.

On hearing this, Rana Sanga, marched towards Malwa. Mahmud Shah also moved to meet the invader. A severe battle took place between the two near Gaughroan. In this engagement Asaf Khan's son was together with his followers from Gujarat and a number of Malwa nobles was killed.

Sultan Mahmud was wounded and he fell into the hands of the Rajputs. Rana Sanga took him to his capital and gave him the care and attention he needed and treated him with due distinction till he recovered. Then he sent

20. Ojha holds the view that Mahmud Shah was advised not to invade the territory of Medini Rai whereas the Persian chroniclers are silent about this. Ojha G.R., History of Udaipur State (Hindi Text) pp.354-355.

21. The Persian chroniclers mentioned this place as Kakoran or Karwan.
Mahmūd Shāh back to Mandu with one thousand Rajputs and restored him to his throne, keeping back one of his sons as hostage.

All writers praise the chivalrous conduct of Rajputs' chief, Sikandar, however, remarks that this generous action was dictated by the fear the Rajput leader felt on account of the Muslim states around Malwa. This remark betrays both the ignorance of the author regarding the Rajputs, as also his prejudice. Had Rana Sanga been so afraid, he would hardly have imprisoned Sultan Mahmūd or carried him to Chitor. Thus, his policy was mainly to establish Rajput ascendancy in Malwa but not to do away with its ruler. Therefore, he was chivalrous with his "guest" and restored him to the throne - an act of gallantry not unmixed with political motives.

The Persian writers, it will be noted, emphasize the religious aspect of these events but minimise the role of other forces, namely the political and strategic considerations.

Religion was undoubtedly, a factor in these transactions. Religious affinity brought the two Sultāns of Gujarat and Malwa together against the Rajputs. But this was not the only factor. Since the time, the two kingdoms, the Sultanate of Gujarat and the Sultanate of Malwa
had come into being, changes in the one had reactions in the other. And therefore, the Sultan of Gujarat could not afford to remain indifferent to the changed situation in Malwa - religious preferences notwithstanding.

Besides, the emergence of Rana Sanga as the powerful leader, who had united the whole of Rajasthan posed a serious threat both to Gujarat and Malwa. Therefore, the extension of Rajput influence in Malwa alarmed Muzaaffar Shah and he moved to counteract the danger. In 1315 Rana Sanga had established his nominee on the throne of Idar. Thus it was necessary for Muzaaffar Shah, the most powerful ruler, to safeguard the interest of the two Sultans in this region.

The sense of danger which Muzaffar Shah felt is indicated by the arrangements he made to defend his kingdom before marching to Malwa and by number of soldiers, regular and irregular who marched with him.23

Thus, it was not purely a religious conflict as the chroniclers make it out to be nor can Rajput action be called as "an action against Islam." In its essence it was a political conflict though religion was an important factor.

After the recovery of Malwa annexation was suggested to Sultan Muzaffar by his nobles. The Sultan turned down this as "an action against Islam."

It was not due to the religious affinity that the Sultan refused to annex Malwa. The political changes that were taking place in Rajasthan also prevented the annexation of Malwa. Since Malwa was surrounded by Rajput feudatories and Rana Sanga had brought them under his leadership, it was difficult for Muzaffar Shah to control this hilly areas from the plains of Gujarat. Therefore the opinion of the Persian writers is misleading and cannot be accepted as the whole truth.