Chapter-III

Pradesh And The Revolt of 1857
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Himachal Pradesh And The Revolt of 1857

In 1857 A.D., a great upheaval took place in India. This has been called as "Sepoy Mutiny" by the English scholars. But the Indian scholars proclaim it "The First War of Independence". It originated from the political, social, economic, religious and military grievances that had been accumulating for quite sometime, and needed only a spark to take an explosive turn. This was provided by the mishandling of the 'greased-cartridge' affair. The revolt began first at Barrackpur, where the discontentment of the sepoys was marked by the out-break of incendiary fires. The open revolt and disaffection soon spread to the north-western India.

In the north-western India the first military station to feel the spread of the mutiny was Ambala. Besides being a large cantonment, this city was also one of the three Musketry Depots to which detachments from different regiments in the Punjab and the North-Western Provinces had been detailed for training in the use of the 'notorious' Enfield rifle.

1857 and Himachal

In 1857, Simla and Kangra were two districts in Himachal region; the former was included in the Cis-Sutlej division and the latter in Trans-Sutlej division. The rest of the area was held by the petty chiefs, Rajas, Ranas, Thakurs etc. Bushahr, Kangra, Mandi, Sirmaur, Bilaspur, Keonthal, Chamba and Suket were some of the important erstwhile states.

Ever since the advent of the British, the people in Himachal Pradesh had been harbouring great deal of resentment against their rule for the
interference in their political and economic affairs. The people were also opposing the interference of the Government-supported Christian missionaries in their religious affairs. On the eve of the outbreak of the uprising in 1857 Captain Briggs, the Superintendent of the Hill Roads, Sirmla actually saw the entire hill-population seething with the feeling of revolt. He received warnings at several places from hill-people the "no Feringhee would remain alive to the north of Ambala".

**British Reaction**

The British authorities took a serious view of the whole matter. They at once took necessary measures to meet any dangerous situation. Consequently when the outbreak of the uprising took place in May, 1857 they were found ready to face the challenge. At the very outset they issued a proclamation that civilians, *faqirs, gosains*, etc. were not to wander about the country, as they were liable to be apprehended and respectable men might, from not being known, be treated roughly as suspected persons (connected with the rebels). The roads, ferries and *nakas* or hill passes were heavily guarded. Travelling passes were issued to the ordinary travellers. The temples, mosques, *takkias*, etc., the usual resting places of such wanderers, were watched in the large town and all the new arrivals were brought before the Deputy Commissioner of the district concerned. At the same time the *daks* of the people were censored and examined in the post offices and all the letters of doubtful or mischievous tendency received for the regiments or inhabitants of the districts were suppressed.

Despite all these measures, the revolt did take place, though not to that extent as at other places in Hindustan, where the British hold was not
so tight. The cantonments in the Himachal region viz., Simla, Kotgarh, Kasauli, Dagshai, Subathu, Jutogh, Kangra and Nurpur being situated on the Himalayan spurs, were inhabited by the British regiments; only a few Indian sepoys were kept there for duties. There was a full regiment the Nasiri Battalion at Jutogh and troops, only at Kasauli, Kangra and Nurpur.

**Mutiny At Jutogh**

The news of the Meerut and Delhi massacres reached Simla on the night of the 13th May, 1857. At that time the 1st and 2nd Fusiliers and the Gurkha regiment known as the Nasiri Battalion were stationed in the hill cantonments along with General Anson, the British Commander-in-Chief and his staff. Immediately after hearing the news of the outbreak of mutiny at Meerut, General Anson, ordered the Nasiri Battalion to march from Jutogh to Ambala, preparatory to moving on to Delhi. But the Gurkhas had used language of a very insubordinate and mutinous character with their officers and they had declared their determination not to move a step from Jutogh.

The fearful intelligence from the plains, the very questionable fidelity of the Nasiri Battalion and the unprotected State of the Simla station naturally produced the great alarm amongst the British residents. On the morning of 14th May, 1857 some of European residents applied to Colonel Chester, Adjutant-General of the Army, and obtained an order on the "Jutogh Magazine" for a supply of muskets and ammunition. A meeting of the British residents of Simla was also called for the purpose of taking measures for the protection of their life and property.
Mutiny – Role of William Hay

The main object of the Britishers was to get the Nasiri Regiment out of the hills and this William Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Simla, hoped to do, though requiring upwards of 700 coolies for the transport of its baggage, the following day.

On 14th May, 1857 a meeting was organized by the British resident of Simla at Mr. Peterson's house (now Grand Hotel). It was attended by 120 Europeans. In this meeting a committee of Safety had been appointed and a sort of militia organized. Arms and ammunition as could be procured were distributed. In short, every thing was done to protect the station against all contingencies.

On 15th May, 1857, William Hay rode towards Jutogh cantonment and just as he got about three-quarters of a mile from Simla, a most unexpected sound of shouting and violent altercation fell on his ears. He observed natives flying in every direction; some, chiefly coolies, to the tops of the neighboring hills; others, mostly banias and traders towards Simla. After seeing this situation he comes to the conclusion that the Nasiri Battalion had mutinied.

Thus, in Simla this mutiny started on the 15th of May, 1857. When the baggage of the regiment was about to be loaded, one of the sepoys cried out, "They are taking away our magazine. What shall we do without our magazine?" It seemed a reasonable query to his fellow-sepoys and they answered it by rising into an open mutiny. The coolies were ordered to leave their loads and were driven out of the place with blows. The sepoys demanded with the most angry demonstrations that General Anson,
Commander-in-Chief should be given up to them and made to answer with his blood for the attempts which had been made to interfere with their religion and destroy their caste. The European officers were abused and a section of Sepoys even conceived of plundering the stations of Jutogh, Simla and Kasauli and putting their European residents to death. But they were dissuaded from such an action by their senior and elderly fellow-soldiers.

William Hay had only about 80 Europeans on whom he could really rely, and they were only partially armed and had very little ammunition. At this juncture William Hay knew that danger was to be apprehended not only from the mutineers of the Nasiri Regiment, but also from the inhabitants of the Simla. At this critical moment Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Simla, sent Mian Rattan Singh, uncle of the Raja of Mandi, to the mutinous sepoys to assure them on his behalf that his Government did not have any evil design to harm them in any way, religiously, economically or socially but rather to redress their grievances within the purview of his power. His mission did not succeed.

William Hay, now, sent a letter through Gurkha-looking individual into the cantonment to Major Bagot requesting him to come and speak to him. The messenger entered the cantonment, and after few seconds of his entrance the sound of voices, which had continued for several hours without interruption, suddenly ceased. Shortly after, pale and exhausted, Major Bigot, accompanied by Gurkha sepoys, deputed by the rest of the men, from the Jutogh cantonment came to William Hay, Deputy Commissioner of Simla. These two Gurkha sepoys at once commenced a detail of their alleged grievances. They complained that by relieving their guard over the Treasury,
by taking their arms and ammunition, by establishing patrols, the European residents at Simla had shown a want of confidence in them which was not deserved. They also said that the introduction of the greased cartridge, the distribution of attah adulterated with bone dust, the establishment of tolls, and the promulgation of certain orders related to their pay were indications of change of policy which boded nothing but evil to them and religion.\textsuperscript{14}

After hearing their grievances, William Hay, assured them that British government did not have any evil design to harm them and their religion. They were also promised that their musket and ammunition would be given back and their guards would be restored. He promised further that he would give them the advance pay they required. Such measures cooled off the agitated minds of the sepoys and they returned to their duty quietly.\textsuperscript{15}

**Mutiny At Kasauli**

There was serious trouble for some time at Kasauli. There was regiment of the guards at Kasauli. The headquarters were at Jutogh. On May 16, 1857 rumours reached Kasauli that the Gurkhas had revolted at Jutogh and they had occupied Simla too. Captain Blackall, Officer Commanding the Station, one time deemed it expedient that the treasury guards consisting of a detachment of the Nasiri Battalion be replaced by the European Soldiers, but his anxiety for the unprotected State of Simla, which he believed was menaced by the Nasiri Battalion, predominated, and he prevented his men firing. On the other hand he advised the removal of the treasury to the European barracks.\textsuperscript{16}

Accordingly Captain Blackall removed the first installment of rupees 40,000 from the treasury and took it to the European barracks. The Gurkhas
felt offended and when he again came to take the second installment, they refused to give him the treasure. This confused, nay paralyzed the authorities. Nothing, however, was done to overawe the Gurkhas.

In the night the Gurkhas plundered the treasury consisting of about fifteen thousand three hundred and twenty five and proceeded towards Jutogh by the high road to Simla. At Haripur they burnt a few tents of the Commander-in-Chief and looted his baggage. At Syree they stopped and robbed a few English officers and ladies, who were going to the plains and intercepted and destroyed a post bag containing the outgoing letters. The sepoys of Nasari Battalion had everywhere told the inhabitants of the hills that the British rule was over, and that if they heard of any of assisting the British or performing any duty for them, they would have him shot.

At about 10 miles from Jutogh (or about midway between Haripur and Syree) they met Captain Briggs, Superintendent Hills Roads. He enquired from them as to where they were going. They replied, "Go along and don't speak to mutinous sepoys. Didn't the Europeans fire upon us yesterday, and would have shot us all if they dared? But we can fight too, and see! We go about with loaded muskets. The Commander-in-Chief had undertaken before leaving England to destroy all castes (literally to make Hindus and Muslims one). But we would have his blood and that of the authorities. All it (Government) cared about was to make money". It is (the Government) a "banchute bunyah bakkal Sirkar". With considerable difficulty Briggs managed to get away from the Nasiri Regiment. One sepoy among the regiment told him that if he went to Jutogh he should have a ball through him, and another was restrained from shooting Briggs by a comrade saying, "It
was not worth while as it was only one life." Another sepoy called out that he should find few Europeans in Simla, and that next day they would be killed all that remained and their places would be burned down.22

When the sepoys reached near Jutogh, they were apprehended by their own brethren who had turned loyal by then. A sum of rupees 7,000 were collected from 46 men and they were put in the regimental quarter guards. Subsequently, however, two sepoys Munhir Sahai and Seeladhar were tried by court-martial for having spoken against the school of Musketry men and were dismissed from he service. After a short while all captured sepoys of the Nasiri Regiment of Kasauli were sent to Ambala and were severely dealt with.23

**Panic at Simla**

There was a great deal of chaos and disorder at Simla too. When the European Population of the Simla heard that the Gurkhas were on their way to Simla, they became nervous. They dreaded the same fate that had befallen their brethren at Meerut and Delhi.24

Some of the English army officers also failed to show the courage expected of them and fled away to the neighboring hill states.25 Many Europeans underwent great hardships, while a few met with severe Injuries. But the English fugitive received much kindness from the hill chiefs.26 Simla was deserted, its residents and visitors wandering in the neighboring hills for safety, betraying a feeling of insecurity and panic, altogether new to the hill people and most destructive to the British prestige. In the words of captain Briggs, "Simla had the appearance of a city of the dead."27 The deserters
returned after a few days when it was explained to them that Nasiri battalion had come back to their allegiance.

**Loyalty of Hill Chiefs**

During the revolt of 1857, most of the hill chiefs remained loyal to the British. Bilaspur State sent 50 well-armed soldiers and they were posted near the Boileagangaj Bazar. Sixty, Sirmauri soldiers under the command of Kanwar Bir Singh, the uncle of the Raja of Sirmaur, were posted in Bara Bazar, and sixty men furnished by the ranas of Keonthal, Dhami and Bhajji, were stationed in the immediate neighbourhood of Deputy Commissioner's house. Besides, Mian Jai Singh of Baghal, the ranas of Keonthal, Dhami, Koti and Jubbal with about 250 followers remained in Simla to render their services at a moment's notice. In a few weeks time order was restored, people returned to their houses, surprised to find their houses and property intact, for notwithstanding the dire confusion, it was astonishing that no robberies took place although houses having been left open and unprotected.

**Disturbance in Hindoor (Nalagarh)**

The news of the mutiny at Jutogh and Kasauli also spread through Hindoor or Nalagarh State. Taking advantage of worsening law and order situation at Simla, there had been some disturbances in Nalagarh state, which, it was apprehended, might be extended to the Ropar tehsil. Fearing lest the arms etc., should fall into the hands of the Gurkhas and other disaffected persons, the zamindars of Malaun seized them and refused to allow the party in charge of the armoury to proceed. Deputy commissioner Simla, Lord William Hay, at once deputed Mian Jai Singh, brother of the
Rana of Baghal to the disturbed area. He was able to restore law and order in the area with his native wisdom.^

At the same time, Jalandhar mutineers, about 600 in number reached Baddi in Nalagarh. They remained there for a very short time. On hearing of the approach of the British party, they struck their camps, followed the seaside line of road through the Shivalik Range, and then made the best of their way to the Yamuna, across which they escaped.

**Measures for Preventing the Jalandhar Mutineers from entering the Hills**

On the 10th of June, 1857 news reached Simla that the Jalandhar troops had mutinied, and on the 11th, that portion of them was crossing the Sutlej at Mukowal and heading towards Pinjaur. Captain D. Briggs, Superintendent Hill Roads, at once started to Nalagarh with the intention of preventing the mutineers entering the hills. Within 24 hours the Rana of Baghal furnished 150 matchlock men, the Raja of Bilaspur 250, and the State of Nalagarh, which had lapsed to the British government, a few months earlier 100 men. These were all very badly armed and deficient in ammunition.^

Before British troops reached Pinjaur on the 12th of June 1857, the mutineers had passed through Baddi, and left the Pinjaur. In passing through Nalagarh they had taken 200 rupees from the tehsildar, and would probably have pillaged the place but for the adroitness of some of the relatives of the late raja. After holding Nalagarh for a few days, and placing a small garrison in the fort of Plassia (in Nalagarh), in case of any other detachments of
In this expedition the hill people were found very willing to co-operate, but with the indifferent arms they possessed they naturally dreaded encountering the well-armed sepoys in the plains.

**Ram Parshad Bairagi**

About the time, when a slight disturbance took place at Nalagarh, one Ram Parshad, a *bairagi* of Subathu, was suddenly arrested on a charge of being the writer of certain seditious letters. These letters were three in number, though full of the most seditious expressions. The supposed writer's name and address was also given at full length on the envelop of each of them. The letters were forwarded through the post at a time when it was notorious that native letters were subjected to the strictest examination.

Two of the letters were addressed to a *subedar* of the Nasiri Regiment, then doing good service at Saharanpur, and the third was directed to the care of the Raja of Patiala's *Vakil* in attendance on the Commissioner. The contents of this letter were especially calculated to excite suspicion that it was not written by the person whose name appeared outside. It called upon the Raja's *guru*, mentioning him by name, to exert himself in the cause of the mutineers. Thus, such a man was so daring, so reckless, so utterly indifferent to consequences as to commit to paper such unqualified sedition with his name attached at full length, and transmit the same through the Post Office, when every letter was searched, such an individual would not be likely to exercise much control over his tongue or
activities. Thus, Ram Parsad Bairagi was arrested and conveyed to Ambala, where he was executed.\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{Revolt of 1857 and Bushahr}

During the great revolt of 1857 Raja Shamsher Singh of Bushahr is believed to have acted in a way hostile to the British. It is difficult to assess the material at our disposal as to what extent he was sympathetic towards the rebels or how much was he inclined to be independent. All we know is that he kept back his tribute, offered no aid, treated officials travelling through his territory with discourtesy, and refused the ordinary supplies. Lord William Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Simla and also the Agent for the Hill States, proposed to send a force to Rampur to coerce him, but there were no troops available. Consequently nothing was done. However, after the great revolt, Lord William Hay recommended that the raja be deposed and the state taken under the direct management of the Superintendent, Simla Hill States. But this was not deemed advisable by Sir John Lawrence, the then Chief Commissioner of the Punjab and the raja's behaviour during the great revolt was overlooked.\textsuperscript{36}

\textbf{Trans-Sutlej Events}

It was of the last importance that the peace of Trans-Sutlej division should be preserved, as it formed the medium through which the supplies and troops from the whole of the Punjab proper had to pass in order to reach Delhi. It was likewise, important, for containing the strong forts of Phillaur, Govindgarh, Kangra and Nurpur, the Sanitaria of Dharamsala and Dalhousie. This division was also the supply depot of a large portion of the carriage
(mules and vehicles etc.) used in the transport of the troops and stores to Delhi.

**Kangra and Nurpur**

The peculiarities of Kangra district are its mountainous nature, the number of rivers and streams that traverse it, and the number of petty chieftains and hill forts which are dispersed over its area. The first two causes combine to make communication difficult and uncertain, and the last render it imperative, especially in times of anxiety.

In northern region, next only in importance to Phillaur was the fort of Kangra. A wing of the 4th Native Infantry under the command of Major Pettenson held the fort of Kangra. The other wing of this regiment held the sister fort of Nurpur. On the 16th May, 1857 Captain Younghusband, commanding Police Battalion, came to Dharamsala and showed Major Reynell Taylor, Deputy Commissioner, Kangra, letters detailing the first events of the outbreak at Meerut and Delhi. Major Taylor immediately made arrangements for bringing into the citadel of the fort of Kangra all the available men of Captain Younghusband's Police Battalion and if necessary, to the garrison of the Kangra fort. This step was taken early on the morning of May 16th, 1857 when captain Younghusband marched with three hundred Sher Dil (Punjabi police) into the citadel. This was further defended by a howitzer taken from the fort below. The bulk of the treasure was at the same time sent into the citadel, and remainder lodged in the newly fortified police station. This strong fort was thus secured and the wing of the 4th Native Infantry were effectually controlled, as their lines were commanded by the citadel. Every house in Dharamsala was guarded by a police battalion or
new levies, a part of which was also detached as the jail guard. The post-office was brought under a strict surveillance, the ferries and nakahs or hill passes were guarded, and all vagrants seized and brought before the magistrates for examination.\(^3\)

Major Taylor, the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra, was compelled to entertain a very large number of men to watch the ferries and the nakahs, and his anxiety was further increased by the manifestation in two instances of an uneasy feeling among the Hill chiefs. The first was by Raja Partap Chand of Tira, who seemed inclined to raise troops on his own account. Major Lake, Commissioner and Superintendent, Trans-Sutlej States, with great promptitude removed the Katoch thanadar of Tira, who was one of his (Partap Chand) adherents, and substituted a Muslim, who had since afforded constant and true information regarding the Raja's movements.\(^4\) The second was, however, one petty rising by Mian Partap Singh of Kullu, under the impression that British power was annihilated.\(^5\)

On July 11\(^{th}\), 1857 when information of the mutinies of the native troops at Jhelum and Sialkot reached Kangra, Major Taylor, Deputy Commissioner, Kangra, and captain Younghusband, Commanding officer, disarmed the left wing the 4\(^{th}\) Native Infantry with the aid of the men of the Sher Dil police battalion. At this time captain Younghusband had only at his disposal some 3 hundred men of the Police Battalion, a large number of whom were employed as guards and sentries, and while the bells of arms were at some distance from his men, they were quite close to the lines of the Purbias sepoys. Under these circumstances disarming was a critical operation, but owing to the skilful arrangements of captain Younghusband,
the active co-operation of Major Taylor and good feeling of the sepoys of the 4th Native Infantry, no disturbance took place. The arms were taken and placed in the citadel.\textsuperscript{42}

**Nurpur and the 4\textsuperscript{th} Native Infantry**

A wing of the 4th Native Infantry held the fort of Nurpur with a small guard of 1 Havildar and 8 men of the police battalion in the tehsil. There was nothing to protect the British officers, treasury and town if the regular regiment became mutinous. Some years ago 1857 the 4th Native Infantry had been in open revolt regarding Scinde allowances. This circumstance did not augur well for the future conduct of the regiment.\textsuperscript{43} Thus, the position of Nurpur was often a matter of anxiety to the British.

Due to the exposed state of Nurpur, the British proposed to raise 50 men under Chowdhary Tek Chand of Nurpur to assist in collecting the revenue, to strengthen the hands of the Civil officers and enable them to lend some efficient assistance, and in times of unfortunate circumstances to protect the lives of the European officers.\textsuperscript{44} This step was taken to suppress the mutinous feeling of the regiment as well as of the people of Nurpur.

Immediately after the disarming of Native troops at Kangra on July 11, 1857 Major Taylor on the same night marched with 100 men of the Police Battalion to Nurpur, a distance of 34 miles of hill road. Before Major Taylor reached the place, Major Wilkie, the commanding officer of the right wing of the 4th Native Infantry at Nurpur had disarmed the wing very easily. His sepoys even carried their arms to his bungalow themselves on the other side of the town through the Bazar.\textsuperscript{45} Major Taylor did, however, excellent service
at this juncture by organizing lines of posts for intercepting the Sialkot fugitives. 46

In Kangra 4th native Infantry in the fort of Kangra and Nurpur were disbanded. These were entirely precautionary measures. In the Kangra hills the mass of population had exhibited friendly feelings towards the British and a spirit of loyalty towards the British government. In the Nurpur direction the hill people signalized themselves by capturing the fugitive mutineers of the Sialkot Brigade. It appears strange on the face of the fact that Nurpur was the principal scene of Ram Singh's rebellion in 1848-49. The raja of Chamba afforded protection to the English ladies and children in the sanitorium of Dalhousie. He also captured thirty of the Sialkot mutineers and made them over to the local authorities of Kangra. Raja Ram Singh of Siba and Raja Jodhbir Chand of Nadaun went in person to meet Major Edward Lake, Commissioner and Superintendent, Trans-Sutlej States and to tender offers of assistance as soon as the mutiny started. 47

At the request of Major Edward Lake, the Commissioner, Trans-Sutlej States, Wazir Gosaon of Mandi supplied 125 matchlock men to the local authorities of Hoshiarpur and sent some 50 men with him to Jallandhar. The wazir, in compliance with the expressed wishes of the Chief Commissioner, had made arrangements for furnishing a large number of men, if any need arose for their services. In the event of any local insurrection in Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur, the fidelity of the Mandi men might have been depended upon as having no sympathy with the population of the plain portion of the Jalandhar Doab. 48
Rebellion of Mian Partap Singh

Mian Partap Singh49 of Kullu was very happy to learn of the outbreak of revolt of 1857. He harboured a great deal of hatred for the British rule. Early in June 1857 Partap Singh, with the help of his brother-in-law Bir Singh attempted to induce the people of Siraj in Kullu to rise in rebellion against the British Government. Partap Singh also sent written message to the headmen of the province, in which he told them and their followers to come quickly and to come armed. He reminded them of the hereditary claims of his family to their loyalty. Partap Singh also told the people of Kullu that such an opportunity was not likely to occur again and he appealed to their religious feelings to rise in his favour. Besides that, he got the news circulated far and wide that the British rule was at an end and all the Europeans at the large stations in India had been massacred.50

Partap Singh claimed to be lineal hereditary descendant, the rightful chief of Kullu in super-session of Rai Gyan Singh, who was illegitimate son of Thakur Singh the previous raja of Kullu. British Government, while continuing the jagir, changed Gyan Singh's title to 'Rai' and withdrew all political powers, also reserving the right to fell and sell timber in the jagir. Moreover, Gyan Singh's father Thakur Singh had been recognized as Raja by the Sikh Maharaja Sher Singh. Thus, Partap Singh claimed that the illegitimacy of Thakur Singh was in itself sufficient to bar Gyan Singh's claims to succeed to a principality of Rajput among whom bastards are never allowed to succeed to property.51

Early life of Partap Singh was not a happy one. In his youth he took to the profession of arms and held a high rank in the military service of the
Sikhs under Maharaja Sher Singh and fought against the British in the first Anglo-Sikh War of 1845-46. He was supposed to have been killed in the battle of Aliwal. On such a belief a handsome provision was made for his widow by the British Government. Nothing was heard of Partap Singh from 1846 to 1855. Suddenly in 1855, after a lapse of 10 years, Partap Singh appeared in the garb of a fakir and set faith that he was the missing Partap Singh, that he had been severely wounded at Aliwal but had been treated for his wounds in one of the Sikh dispensaries on leaving which he wandered about as a fakir. On reaching Kullu he put forward his claims for the gaddi of Kullu once again. But the British Government did not accept his demand.  

Partap Singh took up his abode in Siraj, an area in the proximity of Kullu. He gathered around him a small retinue and lived with princely splendour. His influential personality soon made him popular and won unofficial recognition of his right to rule over the Kullu State. Several villagers along with the Negis of Siraj refused to pay revenue to Rai Gyan Singh and paid to Mian Partap Singh. On two previous occasions Partap Singh led popular demonstrations in his favour. The British government took exception to such attempts on his part and warned against making any public appeal of this nature. Further, he was asked to part with the armed retinue and extravagant mode of life, as they did not suit his position. He was further warned that he would only be tolerated provided he lived peacefully. A strict watch was posted on his proceedings.

The British government intercepted a lot of seditious correspondence. Oral and written evidence was also collected from various sources; and after it become perfectly clear to the British authorities that Partap Singh kindled
the flames of sedition throughout the Kullu region. Not only that, he had also drawn within his influence several of the neighbouring chiefs, and the whole district was in danger, a danger which was only averted by the timely discovery of the whole plot. This plot was promptly detected and suppressed with great caution and tact. Partap Singh was arrested along with his brother-in-law Bir Singh and were immediately sent off to Kangra where they were tried by a commission composed of Reynall Taylor, the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra and his two assistants. Partap Singh and his principal adviser, Bir Singh, were found guilty and received the extreme penalty of Act XIV of 1857 - death by being hanged. The other 7 chief followers were punished with following terms of imprisonment. The rest of the followers whose guilt could not be proved were acquitted after witnessing the execution.

A large repository of arms, matchlocks, swords, zumboorahs, etc. together with a large store of powder and lead, was found in Kullu. The powder had been destroyed and the arms broken up. The jagir and pension of Rani Runputtu, wife of Partap Singh, were confiscated. A small pension, just sufficient to keep her and her infant son safe from starving, was given to her. Besides that, she was removed from Kullu and the house in which Partap Singh lived was raised to the ground so that its ruins might remain as a monument of his unsuccessful attempt of rebellion. Such measures cooled off the agitated minds of the people of Kullu and thus, the British were able to restore law and order in the Kullu region.

The only other incident connected with the mutiny is the arrest of a party of fugitive sepoys in Spiti. Those few of the Sialkot mutineers who got
away from the field of Trimu ghat on the River Ravi, fled into the Jammu hills. A small body of them, in the attempt to avoid British territory and return by a circuitous route to India, made their way through the mountains to Ladakh, and thence to Spiti, which they reached in a miserable plight. The Spiti men detained them, and sent notice to Mr. G. Knox, the Assistant Commissioner of Kullu, who came at once with a few policemen and arrested them.⁵⁷

Epilogue

The uprising fizzled out in the hills with the fall of Mian Partap Singh. Although the people of Himachal had a mind to rise against the British and throw off their oppressive yoke once for all, but they could not do so. There were many reasons for it. Firstly, the British government had taken adequate defensive and preventive measures. Secondly, the people did not get leaders who could organize and lead them to fight against the British. Here the majority of the population was of Rajputs. They looked up to Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu as the recognized leaders of all the rajputs north of the river Ravi and the Katoch raja of Kangra as their local leader. Both of these chiefs took their stand with the British. Thirdly, the whole of the region of Himachal Pradesh was divided into upwards of two scores of petty states and the mutual jealousies of their rulers rendered any combination very improbable. On the contrary, they extended all sorts of help to the British in crushing down the uprising. In recognition of their loyal services during the revolt the hill chiefs were later on handsomely rewarded by the British government. Raja Hira Chand of Bilaspur was honoured with a salute of 11 guns and a valuable khillat and other gifts. Rana Sansar Sen of Keonthal
and Rana Kishan Singh of Baghal were rewarded with the hereditary title of "Raja" and a valuable khilat. Thakur Jograj of Balsan was made a 'Rana', and also presented a valuable khilat in public durbar. Rana Goverdhan Singh of Dhami was rewarded by a remission of half the tribute for his lifetime. Similarly, many other petty chiefs were also rewarded by the British. Unfortunately, despite sufferings and sacrifices on the part of the people of Kangra, Nurpur, Nalagarh, Simla and the chief of Kullu, no positive results could be obtained, partly due to alertness and resources of the British and partly due to the lack of leadership and loyalty of the hill chiefs towards the British.
Notes and References


3. These districts were governed by Deputy Commissioner; William Hay was incharge of Simla and Reynell Taylor of Kangra. *Ibid.*, pp. 57 and 147.


25. Among those who sought safety at Keonthal state were Major-General Penny, Lt. Colonels Keith Young, Greathed, Thos Quin, Colyer, and seven other officers. The other European inhabitants of Simla took refuge at Junga., the residence of the Rana of Keonthal, other stayed with the Thakurs of Koti and Balsan States. Some others sought safety in the hill cantonments of Dagshai; Subathu and Kasauli. See Keith, Young, *Delhi 1857* ed. by Henry Norman and Mrs. Keith Young, (London, 1902),p 323.


28. Soon after the transfer of hill areas from the Sikh to the British most of the hill chiefs resigned to their fate. At the same time due to the geographical and other factors they were quite unaware of the political developments in the plains. It is not surprising therefore that most of the leading hill chiefs did not allow their subjects in the great revolt and remain loyal to the British.
29. In 1858, William Hay, the Deputy Commissioner of Simla reported that 'Simla was the safest place in India during the mutinies of 1857'. See Foreign Political Consultations, dated 12th November, 1858, Nos. 266-70. See also Mian Goverdhan Singh, op.cit., p. 179; also see Edward J. Buck, op.cit., pp. 58-60.

30. Nalagarh was bounded on the north by the Bilaspur State and Hoshiarpur district (modern Una district of Himachal Pradesh), on the east by Mahlog and Baghal States, on the south by Patiala and the Kharar tehsil of Ambala district, and on the west by the Ropar tehsil of Ambala. Its area was 256 square miles and Nalagarh was the capital of State. See Gazetteer of the Simla Hill States 1910, Nalagarh State, (New Delhi, reprint 1995), p. 3.

31. Punjab Government Records, op. cit., p.70

32. Ibid., p.139.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid., pp. 70-72, 79; also see Himachal Pradesh Ke Swatantrata Sanani, (Pratham Khand), (Shimla,1985), p. xvii.


37. "He who holds the fort holds the hills", was a common saying of the people of Kangra.


40. Ibid., pp.208-09.

41. A full account of the revolt of Partap Singh has been given after few pages.


44. Ibid., p. 211.
45. Ibid., p. 215. Also see J. Cave-Browne, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 32.
46. Some 30 sepoys and 60 camp followers were apprehended in the Kangra district, and some 30 individuals were seized in Chamba, half of whom were sepoys. Punjab Government Records, op. cit., p. 158.
47. Ibid., pp. 146, 161.
48. The wazir of Mandi also contributed a lakh and quarter of rupees towards the Punjab 6 per cent loan, besides which some ten thousand rupees had been contributed by the several hill chiefs and other parties. See Ibid., pp. 160-61.
49. The other spelling given in various sources reads like Pertab or Partab.
50. Foreign Secret Consultations, dated 25th Sept. 1857, Nos. 33-36; See also dispatch to secret committee, No. 59 of 1857, NAI, New Delhi.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid., See also Punjab Government Records, op. cit., p. 212.
55. Surdool-14 years; Kashi & Thulla-12 years; Man Dass-10 years; Surat Ram-8 years; Kashub Ram-4 years; Devi Dutt-3 years.