CHAPTER II

SARANG KHANIS

In this chapter we propose to discuss the Sarang Khani Afghan chiefs. Although they are believed to have belonged to the Lodi clan of the Afghans, yet, for want of definite evidence about their being Lodis, we have treated them separately. However, we have not been able to trace any Afghan clan known as Sarang Khani. It seems that Sarang Khani was a title conferred upon one of the Afghan chiefs whose descendants came to be known as Sarang Khani, as suggested by I.H. Siddiqi.

During the period under review we come across four Sarang Khani chiefs, namely, Tatar Khan Sarang Khani, Taj Khan Sarang Khani, Firoz Khan Sarang Khani and Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, Sarang Khani. To begin with, we first give below the account of Tatar Khan Sarang Khani.

TATAR KHAN SARANG KHANI

Tatar Khan Sarang Khani was one of the descendants of Sarang Khani family and a son of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani. When Babur occupied Agra, Tatar Khan


Sarang Khani was in possession of Gwalior. Although he had been professing his loyalty to Babur, but was reluctant to wait on him or surrender the fort. But with the occupation of Kandahar by Rana Sanga (July-August, 1526) and his advance on Biana (October-November, 1526) when Raja Dharamkot, one of the rajas of Gwalior, began to create trouble in the vicinity of Gwalior, pressing hard on the fort, Tatar Khan Sarang Khani could not help but seek Babur's help, and was ready to surrender the fort to Babur. Babur on his part readily availed this opportunity. In spite of the fact that the core of Babur's army was then away on various expeditions, i.e.


against Hamid Khan in Hisar Firoza, against Biana and with Humayun in the east\(^1\), Babur did not hesitate in making best out of the occasion and somehow managed to send a contingent consisting of the soldiers from Bhira and the Lahoris under the command of Rahim Dad to Gwalior, simultaneously assigning them parganas in Gwalior\(^2\). Shaikh Ghuran and Mulla Apaq were also sent with the expedition with instructions to return after

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1. Babur writes that when Tatar Khan Sarang Khani asked for help most of his braves were away on various raids. Of the possible raids or expeditions other than that of Humayun in the east, can be the one employed against Biana and another one sent to Hisar Firoza to curb the uprising of Hamid Khan Sarang Khani. The presence of Shaikh Ghuran and Mulla Apaq in the contingent despatched to Gwalior rules out the possibility of the braves being away on an expedition to Sambhal. Shaikh Ghuran and Mulla Apaq who were sent to Sambhal must have returned to Agra by now to be able to accompany Rahim Dad to Gwalior. Beside Biana and Gwalior expeditions, we know of no other expedition sent by Babur about this time. But if we take into account the expedition to Hisar Firoza which was sent on November 15th, 1526, the sending of the expedition to Gwalior and its capture will have to be placed after November 15th so as to leave for Babur's braves to be away on various "raids"—at least two, one to Biana and the other to Hisar Firoza (apart from Humayun's expedition)—and would place submission of Nizam Khan of Biana about the time of Hamid Khan Sarang Khani's rebellion, i.e., not before the 2nd fortnight of November which date correlates with the events in Biana and the submission of Nizam Khan of Biana.

having established Rahim Dad at Gwalior. By the time Rahim Dad reached Gwalior, Tatar Khan changed his mind, perhaps, for the reason that the immediate threat of the raja was over and therefore he would, now, not welcome Babur's forces. On the other hand, he also entertained a move against the Mughals. But Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior who was a pious man and who, perhaps, considered it a deceit on the part of Tatar Khan, sent a message to Rahim Dad from inside the fort warning him of the evil intentions of Tatar Khan and assuring him his support in order to get him into the fort. On learning of Tatar Khan's designs Rahim Dad took to a strategem. He prayed Tatar Khan that he was in danger from the raja and be granted refuge with some of his followers. Tatar Khan eventually agreed to it and permitted him to enter the fort. During the night Rahim Dad got the gate of the fort opened and brought all of his troops posted outside the gate into the fort.


Taken to surprise by this manoeuvre, Tatar Khan Sarang Khani was forced to surrender the fort to Rahim Dad and come to Agra to wait upon Babur who conferred upon him the pargana of Biawah (Bianwan?) with 20 lacs towards his wajh we istigamet. Gwalior thus passed under the possession of Rahim Dad.

In April-May, 1527 Tatar Khan Sarang Khani rendered military service to Babur along with several other Hindustani amirs, namely Malik Dad Karrani, Ali Khan Farmuli and Shaikh Muhammed of Shaikh Bhakhari(?) against Mien Bibban Jilwani who had besieged Lakhnur, before the battle of Kanwah.

It may be noted that in the above context Tatar Khan is mentioned by Babur as Khan-i Jahan. This is the last reference to Tatar Khan in our sources in the period under review.


2. Baburnama, op. cit., p. 582; B. M. MS. Or. 3714, ff. 460b-461a; Akbarnama, op. cit., p. 267.

Taj Khan Sarang Khani

Taj Khan was another Sarang Khani chief. He was also son of Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani, and thus a brother of the above mentioned Tatar Khan. Sultan Ibrahim Lodi had entrusted the fort of Chunar to him. He was in occupation of Chunar till after Babur's occupation of Agra. He came in contact with Babur only when the latter marched against Sultan Mahmud, son of Sultan Sikandar, who had taken possession of Bihar in the beginning of 1529, when Babur was encamped at Koh(?) he received a dutiful letter from Taj Khan Sarang Khani through which he sent a message that Sultan Mahmud Lodi's army had fled away.

On March 21, 1529 when Babur was camped at Nanapaur during his eastward campaign, Taj Khan Sarang Khani came from Chunar with his two young sons and waited upon Babur. Babur then visited the fort of Chunar. On March 25th, 1529 when Babur wished to go for hunting in the jungle of Chunar, Taj Khan Sarang Khani brought

1. Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh, Eng. tr. Ranking, vol. i, p. 470; see also I.H. Siddiqi's article, "The Composition of the Nobility under the Lodi Sultans, Medieval India: A miscellany, vol. iv, p. 30; see also his appendix A. B. Sr. No.23, p. 56.
4. Ibid., p. 657; B. M. MS. Or. 3714, f. 523a. British Museum, MS. Writes Baqi Khan which is obviously a transcriptional error.
the news that Sultan Mahmud was near the Son river.¹

On June 1st, 1529 when Mian Bibban and Sheikh Bayzid fled towards Dalmau, Taj Khan Sarang Khani was appointed by Babur along with other begs to block enemy's way near Chunar².

On June 8th, 1529 Babur assigned Chunar to Sultan Junaid Barlas³ and Melik Sharq was appointed to get the fort of Chunar vacated from Taj Khan⁴. Our sources do not mention the reason as to why Taj Khan was required to vacate the fort of Chunar. But it seems that Chunar continued to remain in possession of Taj Khan Sarang Khani during the remaining part of Babur's reign, for in the beginning of Humayun's reign we find Chunar still held in possession of Taj Khan Sarang Khani.⁵

FIROZ KHAN SARANG KHANI

Firoz Khan was also a member of the above mentioned Sarang Khani family. He was the son of Ahmad

2. Ibid., pp. 681-82; B. M. MS. Or. 3714, f. 516a.
3. Ibid., p. 682; B. M. MS. Or. 3714, f. 516a.
4. Ibid., p. 683; B. M. MS. Or. 3714, f. 516a-b.
5. We are told by the author of Tarikh-i Ser Sahi that Sher Khan took possession of Chunar fort from the widow of Taj Khan Sarang Khani. Tarikh-i Ser Sahi, Eng. tr. Ambashthya, pp. 201-206; see also Stewart, History of Bengal, p. 136.
Khan and, thus, a grand son of Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani. Firoz Khan Sarang Khani was earlier in the service of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and had rendered military service to him along with Mustafa Farmuli, and, later on, with Shaikh Bayzid Farmuli against the rebellious Afghan amirs of the east, namely Nasir Khan Nohani, Maruf Farmuli and Fath Khan Sarwani.

Soon after Babur's occupation of Agra, Firoz Khan Sarang Khani came and joined Babur's service along with several other Afghan amirs, namely Shaikh Bayzid Farmuli, Mahmud Khan and Qazi Jia. Babur favoured Firoz Khan Sarang Khani by assigning him 1 crore 46 lacs and 5,000 tankas from Jaunpur.

In August, 1526, when Babur sent a military expedition against Qutab Khan of Etawa, Firoz Khan Sarang Khani, along with several other Hindustani amirs was...

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1. See I.H. Siddiqi, Mughal Relation with the Indian Ruling Elite (New Delhi, 1963), p. 22.
3. Baburnama, op. cit., p. 527; Persian version has given only "one crore and something", see B. M. MS. Or. 3714, f. 417a; see also Akbarnama, Eng. tr. H. Bev., vol. i, p. 253; Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh, Eng. tr. Ranking, vol. i p. 444; Tarikh-i Firirshah, Eng. tr. Briggs, vol. ii, p. 32; Tabaqat-i Akbari, Hindi tr. Rizvi, Mughal Kalin Bharat, Babur, p. 428; Tarikh-i Alif, Hindi tr. Rizvi, Mughal Kalin Bharat, Babur, p. 638. This assignment was most probably made towards the end of the year 1526 i.e. after Humayun had overrun Jaunpur, see Baburnama, p. 544.
appointed in this expedition. But later on this expedition was recalled by Babur and ordered to join Humayun in his expedition against the eastern rebellious Afghan chiefs, namely Nasir Khan Nohani and Maruf Farmuli. Thus, Firoz Khan Sarang Khani also served in the expedition of Humayun against the eastern Afghans. Firoz Khan Sarangi Khani died in the beginning of the year 1528.

HAMID KHAN KHASA KHAIL

Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, was another prominent Sarang Khani chief. His relationship with the preceding three Sarang Khani chiefs is not ascertain. At the time of Babur's crossing Sutlej river in 1526 he was the Shiqdar of Hisar Firoza. In February 1526, when Babur was encamped near Banur and Sanur he heard the news that Sultan Ibrahim Lodi had sent Hamid Khan Sarang Khani, the Shiqdar of Hisar Firoza to oppose him. On February 25th 1526 when Babur reached near Ambala, he appointed Humayun against Hamid Khan Sarang Khani, along with

2. Ibid., p. 531; B. M. MS. Or. 3714, f. 421a-b.
3. The date of his death is given as 3rd January, 1528 in the inscription on his tomb at Rohtak, see Epigraphia Indica (Arabic and Persian Supplement) edited by Dr. Z.A. Desai, Calcutta, 1966, p. 57, as quoted by I.H. Siddiqi in Mughal Relation with the Indian Ruling Elite, p. 22.
several other amirs\(^1\). On February 26th 1526 Humayun marched swiftly against Hamid Khan and he defeated him after an encounter, killing several Afghans, and brought 100 of them as prisoners together with 7 to 8 elephants\(^2\).

On March 5th, Babur ordered Ustad Ali Quli and the match-lockmen to shoot all the prisoners as an exemplary punishment\(^3\). Babur also assigned Hisar Firoza to Humayun as reward for his victory over Hamid Khan.

In November, 1526, Hamid Khan Sarang Khani collected 3 to 4 thousand Afghans, including Pani Afghans, in the neighbourhood of Hisar Firoza and started trouble for Babur. Therefore, on November 15th, Babur appointed Chin Timur Sultan against Hamid Khan along with several Hindustani amirs like Malik Dad Karrani and Mujahid Khan of Multan. The expeditionary forces suddenly fell on Hamid Khan Sarang Khani and defeated them\(^4\). Although a number of Afghans were killed, yet Hamid Khan Sarang Khani seems to have escaped and is never heard of again.


\(^3\) Baburnama, op. cit., p. 466; Muntakhab-ut Tawarikh, op. cit., p. 439; Akbarnama, op. cit., p. 241.

\(^4\) Baburnama, op. cit., p. 540; Tarikh-i Firishta, op. cit., p. 34; Tarikh-i Alfi, Hindi tr. Rizvi, Mughal Kalin Bharat, Babur, p. 639.
As discussed above, we notice that only four Sarang Khani Afghan chiefs were active during the period under review. Excepting Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, Sarang Khani, we have definite evidence that the other three Sarang Khanis were related to each other. It seems that the Sarang Khanis held trusted positions under Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. Three out of the four Sarang Khani chiefs whose biographies we have worked out held territorial assignment at the time of Babur's final invasion of Hindustan as is evident from the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name of the pargana/territory held at the time of Babur's invasion</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hamid Khan</td>
<td>Hisar Firoza</td>
<td>B.N.II/465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarang Khani</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tatar Khan</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>B.N.II/523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarang Khani</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Taj Khan</td>
<td>Chunar</td>
<td>Tarikh-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sarang Khani</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ser Sahi,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>p. 200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Sarang Khanis seem to have remained loyal to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, for we do not come across any Sarang Khani chief in rebellion against Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. Firoz Khan Sarang Khani had in fact rendered military service to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi along with
Mustafa Farnuli against Nasir Khan Nohani and Maruf Farnuli who had raised the standard of revolt in the eastern part of the Lodi empire. Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, Sarang Khani was among those Afghan chiefs of the region to the north-west of Delhi who had remained loyal to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi even in the event of Babur's occupation of the Panjab. It was Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, Sarang Khani who was sent by Sultan Ibrahim Lodi to oppose the advance of Babur in Sirhind in February 1526.

Passing on to Babur's relations with the Sarang Khani Afghans, it may be mentioned that none of the Sarang Khani chiefs allied himself with Babur till his authority was firmly established in Agra. Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, Sarang Khani who first came in contact with Babur, in fact never submitted to him. As mentioned above, he was sent by Sultan Ibrahim Lodi to check Babur's advance. Although he lost to Babur, yet he did not submit to him. He did not submit to Babur even after the latter's occupation of Agra, when most of the Afghan chiefs who were even loyal to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi were obliged to submit to Babur. In November-December, 1526, Hamid Khan even mobilized a body of his own Afghans and the Panni Afghans to the number of 3,000 to 4,000 and created disturbances for Babur near Hisar Firoza. Babur was obliged to send an expedition against him under the command of Chin Timur Sultan. Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail,
Sarang Khani was defeated once again, but he managed to escape and never surrendered to Babur.

Among the other Sarang Khanis it was Firoz Khan Sarang Khani who first submitted to Babur; and he submitted voluntarily. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, he came and waited upon Babur sometime in May-June 1526 along with other Afghan chiefs, namely, Mahmud Khan Nohani, Shaikh Bayzid Farmuli and Qazi Jia. He was then given an assignment of 1 crore 46 lacs and 5,000 tankas from Jaunpur.

The Sarang Khani chief of Gwalior, Tatar Khan Sarang Khani, tried to evade submission to Babur even after Babur's occupation of Agra. He was, however, forced to submit to Babur and surrender the fort of Gwalior towards the end of the year 1526 in the circumstances mentioned earlier in his biography. Taj Khan Sarang Khani also seems to have evaded submission to Babur till the beginning of 1529. But when we first notice him in 1529, we find him in allegiance to Babur, for it was he who reported to Babur about the movements of Sultan Mahmud Lodi, the son of Sikandar Lodi. Apparently, he too must have submitted to Babur under the fear of Sultan Mahmud Lodi. His sons also submitted to Babur and waited upon Babur along with him in March 1529.

Those of the Sarang Khani chiefs who submitted to Babur were favoured by him with territorial assignments. We are told that Firoz Khan Sarang Khani was given an assignment of 1 crore 46 lacs and 5000 tankas from Jaunpur. It may be noted that Firoz Khan Sarang Khani held Jaunpur under Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. But he must have lost Jaunpur to Maruf Farmuli and Nasir Khan Nohani, who, as Babur tells us, had over-run the whole country from Bihar to Qanauj and were encamped near Qanauj at the time of his occupation of Agra. However, the Mughals, after driving Nasir Khan Nohani and Maruf Farmuli as far back as Bihar, made a revenue assignment to Firoz Khan Sarang Khani from the territory which he had earlier held. Tatar Khan Sarang Khani too was assigned the territory of the value of 20 lacs, from Bianwan(?). It may be noted that Tatar Khan Sarang Khani was not allowed to retain Gwalior which he was holding at the time of Babur's occupation of Agra. We shall discuss the reasons for the change in his assignment in the concluding part of this work. As far as Taj Khan Sarang Khani was concerned, he was allowed to retain Chunar till June 1529, when it was assigned to Sultan Junaid Barlas. But it seems that Chunar remained in possession of Taj Khan Sarang Khani throughout Babur's reign, for we are

told that it was captured by Sher Khan Sur from Taj Khan Sarang Khani's widow during the reign of Humayun. The following table spells out the assignments made by Babur to the Sarang Khanis.

Table No.II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No.</th>
<th>Name of the pargana holder</th>
<th>Name of the pargana/ territory</th>
<th>Value in tankas</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Firoz Khan Sarang Khani</td>
<td>Jaunpur</td>
<td>1 48 5</td>
<td>B.N.ii/527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tatar Khan Sarang Khani</td>
<td>Bianwan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>B.N.ii/540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Taj Khan Sarang Khani</td>
<td>Chunar</td>
<td>value not mentioned</td>
<td>B.N.ii/654</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the Sarang Khani chiefs who submitted to Babur rendered him military services on various occasions. Tatar Khan Sarang Khani served Babur in the military expedition against Mian Bibban Jilwani in April-May 1527 along with a number of other Hindustani amirs. Taj Khan Sarang Khani also rendered military service to Babur against Mian Bibban Jilwani and Shaikh Bayzid Farmuli in June 1528, while Firoz Khan Sarang Khani was also appointed by Babur in Etawa expedition in August 1526 and later served under Humayun against Nasir Khan Nohani and Maruf Farmuli, as can be seen from the following table.
Table No.III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Military service rendered against</th>
<th>Date of military service</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Tatar Khan Sarang Khani</td>
<td>Against Mian Bibban Jilwani who had besieged Lucknur before the battle of Kanwah</td>
<td>April-May B.N.ii/56 1527</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Taj Khan Sarang Khani</td>
<td>Against Mian Bibban Jilwani and Shaikh Bayzid Farmuli near Chunar</td>
<td>June 1st, B.N.ii/66 1529</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Firoz Khan Sarang Khani</td>
<td>In the Etawa expedition and later under Humayun against Nasir Khan Nohani and Maruf Farmuli</td>
<td>August-December, B.N.ii/56 1526</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the three Sarang Khani chiefs who submitted to Babur, Firoz Khan Sarang Khani pre-deceased Babur, while Taj Khan Sarang Khani survived Babur. As far as Tatar Khan is concerned, he is last mentioned in our sources in April-May 1527. Hamid Khan, Khasa Khail, Sarang Khani, of course, remained unsubdued.