

Hindūstānī Mujāhidīn and the British from the Annexation of Punjab to the Frontier Uprising of 1897

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Abstract

The Hindūstānī Mujāhidīn (Indian Fighters) came to the country's Northwest Frontier with Sayyid Ahmad (d. 1831) of Raebareli. After the martyrdom of their leader, they lost strength and became highly dependent on local tribes. The local chiefs used them against one another as well as against the British. After the Ambela expedition of 1863, the Mujāhidīn faced the worst time of their stay in the Indian Northwest Frontier due to their enmity with the Akhūnd of Swat and colonial checks on their supporters in India. This article contends that whenever the Mujāhidīn faced colonial troops, they suffered heavily and were compelled to wander from place to place. During the 1890s, Mujāhidīn tried to avoid confrontation with the colonial troops. For this reason, the Mujāhidīn were not involved in the Frontier Uprising of 1897.

Keywords

Hindūstān, Mujāhidīn, Ambela, British India, 1897 Frontier Uprising.

Introduction

The Hindūstānī Mujāhidīn¹ (Indian Fighters) were the companions of Sayyid Ahmad of Raebareli (d. 1831), who came to the Northwest Frontier of the Indian subcontinent (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) to wage *jihād* against the Sikhs. After Sayyid Ahmad died in 1831 in the battle at Balakot, the remaining Mujāhidīn took shelter in the nearby hills.² In

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¹ They were known among the tribes as Mujāhidīn and among the British troops as the “Badmashes (scoundrels) of Malka Sittana.” G. B. Scott, *Twenty Years on the North-West Frontier* (Allahabad: Pioneer Press, 1906), 101. They were also called Wahabis. Altaf Qadir, *Sayyid Ahmad Barailvi: His Movement and Legacy from the Pukhtun Perspective* (Delhi: SAGE Publication, 2015), 5. According to Marsden and Hopkins, they were called fanatics and the British adopted that term after their control of the frontier. Magnus Marsden and Benjamin D. Hopkins, *Fragments of the Afghan Frontier* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 80.

² For complete narratives of the origin and growth of the Hindūstānī Mujāhidīn, see Qadir, *Sayyid Ahmad Barailvi*; Sayyid Muḥammad Miyān, *‘Ulamā’-i Hind kā Shāndār Māzi* (Lahore: Maktabah-i Maḥmūdiyyah, 1977); Khān Rōshan Khān, *Yūsufza’i Qaum ki Sarguzasht* (Karachi: Roshan Khan & Co., 1986), 273-88; Muḥammad ‘Abbās, *Uwah Buzargān* [Pashto] (Peshawar: Idārah-i Farūgh-i Ta’līm, 1971), 429-51; Sulṭān Muḥammad

1832, Fatiḥ Khān of Panjtar brought them to Panjtar.³ However, differences soon developed between them, leading the Mujāhidīn to leave and later settle in Amb by their chief Pāyindah Khān.⁴ Like Fatiḥ Khān, Pāyindah Khān also exploited the presence and strength of the Mujāhidīn for his gains. Over time, a rift developed between the Mujāhidīn and Pāyindah Khān. When the latter no longer needed them, he expelled them from Amb. Consequently, the Mujāhidīn approached Sayyid Akbar Shāh and he allowed them to settle in Sittana in 1834.⁵

Though the Mujāhidīn successfully mobilized the local tribes during the Ambela expedition and offered a surprise resistance to the colonial troops, the colonial forces ultimately won the day and expelled them from Malka. The Ambela expedition created a perception that the Mujāhidīn could resist the colonial troops severely but the reality on the ground was not so. This perception led to a false judgment that the Mujāhidīn not only fought in the Frontier Uprising of 1897 against the colonial troops but also inflicted severe losses on them. This article critically evaluates the relations/resistance of the Mujāhidīn with/against the British. The article also attempts to answer the following questions: Were the Mujāhidīn powerful enough after the Ambela expedition to fight against the British? What was the response of the local tribes towards the Mujāhidīn? What was their role in the Frontier Uprising of 1897?

The Mujāhidīn and the British after the Annexation of the Punjab

After the annexation of the Punjab in March 1849, the British and the Mujāhidīn came into direct conflict during the First Black Mountain

Ṣābir, *Khpalwaki aw Pakistan* [Pashto] (Quetta: Islamiyh Press, n.d.), 113-7; Payām Shāhjahānpūrī, *Shahādāt Gāh-i Bālākūt* (Lahore: Idārah-i Tārīkh-o Taḥqīq, 1971); Khūshṭar Nūrānī, *Tāhrīk-i Jihād aur British Government: Aik Taḥqīqī Muṭāla'ah* (Delhi: Idārah-i Fikr-i Islāmī, 2004), 15-28; Sayyid Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī, *Jab Īmān kī Bād-i Bahārī Chalī*, 5th ed. (Lucknow: Maktabah-i Firdūs, 2004); Mudathar Jamāl Tōnsvī, *Tārīkh-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd* (Bahawalpur: Dār al-Baṣā'ir, 1433/2012). For the battle of Akora Khattak and the battle of Balakot, see Muḥammad Khālīd Saif, *Tadhkirah-i Shahīd* (Lahore: Maktabah-i Ghaznaviyah, 1983), 164-227; Muḥammad Ḥamzah Ḥasanī Nadvī, *Tadhkirah: Ḥazrat Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd* (Karachi: Majlas-i Nashriyāt-i Islām, 1996), 81-206. For the details of Sayyid Aḥmad's activities in the Frontier from the battle of Shaidu until his death, see Sayyid Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī, *Sīrat-i Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd*, 2 vols., 9th ed. (Lucknow: Majlas-i Taḥqīqāt-o Nashriyāt-i Islām, 2011). For the organization of the Mujāhidīn under Sayyid Aḥmad, see Ghulām Rasūl Mihr, *Jamā'at-i Mujāhidīn* (Lahore: Shaikh Gulam Ali and Sons, n.d.), 18-66.

³ Muḥammad Khavāṣh Khān, *Rū'ūdād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind* (Lahore: Maktabah-i Rashīdiyāh, 1983), 213-16.

⁴ Ghulām Rasūl Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn* (Lahore: Sheikh Ghulam Ali and Sons, n.d.), 50-58.

⁵ Khān, *Rū'ūdād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind*, 239-40; Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 109-10.

Expedition in 1852-53.⁶ In this expedition, the Mujāhidīn sided with the Hassanzai tribe and captured a small fort of Kotla in the village of Ashira belonging to the chief of Amb Jahāndād Khān. Being their ally, the British deemed it necessary to restore the fort to the Amb chief. According to Paget and Masson,

None of the tribes around, the Amazais, Mada Khels, or Gaduns, had joined the Hindustani fanatics; but the latter, in answer to the warning to them to withdraw from Kotla to their own settlements, gave no written reply, and according to some verbal reports, sent a defiance—Maulvi Inayat Ali Khan, the leader of the Hindustanis, declaring he had come to die.⁷

The Amb troops attacked the village of Ashira and secured the heights of Kotla. The British force, accompanied by Jahāndād Khān's troops, advanced from three sides. They overtook the Mujāhidīn by having the British troops cross the Indus in advance at the front, with the Amb troops cutting off the Mujāhidīn's retreat. Thus, the Amb troops killed more than thirty Mujāhidīn out of two to three hundred.⁸ After Kotla, the leader of the Mujāhidīn, Maulavī 'Ināyat 'Alī, visited Chamlah, Bunair, and Swat to gain political support. In Swat, the king was officially Sayyid Akbar Shāh but actual control was in the hands of 'Abd al-Ghafūr,

⁶ For the Black Mountain expeditions, see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "British Colonial Interference in the Affairs of the Natives: An Analysis of Black Mountain Tribes Resistance (1849-1892)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, 67, no. 4 (2019): 103-36.

⁷ W. H. Paget and A. H. Mason, *Record of the Expeditions Against the North-West Frontier Tribes: Since the Annexation of the Punjab* (London: Whiting & Co Ltd, 1884), 83; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India* (Quetta: Nisa Traders, 1979), 1:211; A. H. Masson, *Report on the Hindustani Fanatics: IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18* (Simla: Government Central Printing Office, 1895), 3. For details, see Mohiuddin Ahmad, *Sayyid Ahmad Shahid: His Life and Mission* (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1975), 325-26; Ābād Shāhpūrī, *Sayyid Bādshāh kā Qāfilah* (Lahore: Al-Badar Publications, 1981), 197; H. L. Nevill, *Campaign on the North-West Frontier* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2003), 26; *Hindustani Fanatics: India's Pashtuns, and Deobandism Connections* (Williamsburg, VA: Tribal Analysis Center, 2009), accessed September 16, 2014, <http://www.tribalanalysiscenter.com/PDF-TAC/Hindustani%20Fanatics-Deobandism.pdf>; H. C. Wylly, *From Black Mountain to Waziristan* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2003), 57. About Kotla affairs, the *Calcutta Review* asserts that Jahāndād Khān refused passage to the Mujāhidīn through his territory. At the beginning of 1852, a caravan of the Mujāhidīn was looted while crossing Amb lands. Upon this, 'Ināyat 'Alī contacted the Akhūnd and other neighbouring clans and, in a meeting, declared Jahāndād Khān an infidel. With the approval of the Akhūnd, the Mujāhidīn captured Ashira village and Kotla fort. See "The Wahabis in India-III," *The Calcutta Review* 51 (1870): 381-99.

⁸ Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 83; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:212. According to Qeyamuddin Ahmad, Mujāhidīn's casualties were about seventy. See Qeyamuddin Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India* (Calcutta: Firms K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1966), 180-81; H. D. Watson, *Gazetteer of the Hazara District, 1907* (London: Chatto & Windus, n.d.), 167.

popularly known as the Akhūnd of Swat. Due to his influence and control, Maulavī 'Ināyat 'Alī returned from Swat. On his return in April 1854, he shifted the centre of the Mujāhidīn to Mangal Tānṛa. There, he worked to ally with local tribes and drilled his Mujāhidīn daily.⁹

The Mujāhidīn and the British during the 1857 Indian Uprising

During the 1857 Indian Uprising, a detachment of the 55th Native Infantry broke into mutiny. Lieutenant-Colonel John Nicholson followed them, killed about one hundred, and captured one hundred and fifty. However, some six hundred sepoys made their escape into Swat.¹⁰ However, following the death of the king of Swat in May 1857, the Akhūnd expelled the sepoys. Many went to Kaghan, where the Sayyids of Kaghan handed them over to the British. Some of these sepoys were invited by Maulavī 'Ināyat 'Alī to Mangal Tānṛa.¹¹ At that time, the chief of Panjtar Muqarrab Khān was anti-British.¹²

In October 1856, Muqarrab Khān's cousin, Mubāriz Khān, and the Totalai *malaks* threatened to raise the whole of Khudu Khel against Muqarrab Khān if he did not expel the Mujāhidīn. They were expelled after two days.¹³ However, during the disturbances of 1857, Mubāriz Khān invited the Mujāhidīn to his village without consulting Muqarrab Khān. The Khudu Khel joined Mubāriz Khān and Muqarrab Khān remained isolated in Panjtar. At that time, some villages refused to pay revenue to the British and invited the Mujāhidīn and Mubāriz Khān to attack. Accordingly, the village of Sheikh Jana was occupied by some two hundred men from Chinglai under Bāz Khān, the nephew of Mubāriz Khān, and about fifty Mujāhidīn under Jān Muḥammad. In reprisal, the British sent an expedition on July 2, 1857, that captured Sheikh Jana and killed a considerable number of the Mujāhidīn and the local tribesmen.¹⁴

After Sheikh Jana, the Mujāhidīn resumed their activities in Naranji, with approximately 150 Mujāhidīn along with some 40 men of the 55th Native Infantry. They were joined by the fighting strength of the village of about four hundred, and forty horsemen joined them from Panjtar under the brother of Muqarrab Khān.¹⁵ On the night of July 20, 1857, the

⁹ Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujahidin*, 271; Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 326. H. W. Bellew, *A General Report on the Yusufzais* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1977), 96.

¹⁰ Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 331.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 331-2; IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, 3-4.

¹² Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 84-5.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁴ Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 85-86.

¹⁵ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 4-5; Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 86.

British force advanced towards Naranji and destroyed Lower Naranji.¹⁶ According to the official colonial records, “The people of Naranji remained stubborn, and would not expel the Maulvi, and soon afterwards a raid was made on cattle in British territory, and nothing remained to be done but to renew the attack on the place.”¹⁷ Accordingly, on August 3, the British led another expedition and destroyed Naranji in a manner that “not a house was spared; even the walls of many were destroyed by elephants.”¹⁸ However, this did not end hostilities and, at the end of October, the Mujāhidīn and the people of Chinglai, Khudu Khel, Sheikh Jana, and Naranji attacked the camp of Lieutenant Horne, Assistant Commissioner, Yusufzai. Lieutenant Horne was able to escape the attack, but five men of his escort were killed, and the assailants took all the baggage. The colonial records claim that Muqarrab Khān, Mubāriz Khān, and nearly all the *malaks* of Sheikh Jana were in league with the Mujāhidīn. The colonial authorities appointed Major-General Sydney Cotton for a retaliatory expedition to Saleem Khan on April 25, 1858.¹⁹

The people of Totalai had a feud with Muqarrab Khān and led the reconnoitring parties to Panjtar. A good number of chiefs such as Qādir Khān of Turu, Sarbuland Khān of Hoti, Khaidād Khān of Ismaila, Shahdād Khān of Hund, Ibrāhīm Khān of Zaida, two Sudhum chiefs (‘Ajab Khān and his brother ‘Azīz Khān) and almost all the chiefs of Khudu Khel marched towards Panjtar. Muqarrab Khān fled to Chinglai and the people of Totalai burnt Panjtar before the arrival of the colonial troops.²⁰ H. C. Wylly rightly observes that “the first object of the expedition was thus unexpectedly and easily attained.”²¹ On April 26, a column of the colonial force advanced to Chinglai via Daran pass. The village was occupied almost unopposed, and the troops were then detailed for the obliteration of houses, fort, and crops.²² After destroying Panjtar and Chinglai, the colonial troops returned to Saleem Khan on the following day.²³ The next target of the colonial troops was Mangal Tānṛa. Maulavī

¹⁶ Nevill, *Campaign on the North-West Frontier*, 39-40.

¹⁷ Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 88-89.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:218-19.

¹⁹ *Movements of the Hindustani Fanatics Colony*, F. F. Political Department, Bundle No. 31, Serial No. 514, at Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Provincial Archives, Peshawar; IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 6; Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 90.

²⁰ Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 336-37.

²¹ Wylly, *From Black Mountain to Waziristan*, 61-63.

²² Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 91.

²³ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 6; Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 92; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:222-3; Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 337.

'Ināyat 'Alī, the leader of the Mujāhidīn, died at the beginning of April and the Hindūstānī colony shifted to Sittana. However, it was known to the British that Muqarrab Khān had moved his family and property to the vacant fort of Maulavī Ināyat 'Alī at Mangal Tānṛa. According to the plan, the colonial force left their camp at Saleem Khan the following day. Upon reaching Mangal Tānṛa, they found the place deserted, and when they returned on April 30, Mangal Tānṛa no longer existed.²⁴

In this expedition, the only place left to be dealt with was Sittana. Accordingly, on May 3, 1858, colonial troops advanced and encamped at Kabal, an independent Utmanzai village. Ghulām Rasūl Mihr stated that four days before the attack of the colonial troops, Utmanzai attacked Sittana and killed Sayyid 'Umar Shāh, the chief of Sittana.²⁵ According to colonial records, it was at that time that the Sayyids of Sittana demanded tithe from the independent villages of Kabal and Kaya belonging to the Utmanzai tribe. Some of the Utmanzai showed resistance, while some favoured the Sayyids. Major Becher, Deputy Commissioner, Hazara, urged the Utmanzai to unite against the Sayyids and oppose them. The blockade imposed on them for the last two years would be lifted by doing so. When the Sayyids sent out their followers to cut the crops of the Kaya village, the Utmanzai brought their followers out, and fighting took place in which Sayyid 'Umar Shāh was killed, and Mubārak Shāh was badly wounded.²⁶ On May 3, the colonial troops advanced to Sittana. The following day, a substantial column moved to the left bank of the Indus to destroy it.²⁷ The Sayyids and the Mujāhidīn, being expelled from Sittana, took shelter with the Upper Jadoon. Following military pressure, the chiefs of Upper and Lower Jadoon and the Utmanzai agreed not to allow the Sayyids and the Mujāhidīn in Sittana. The objective of the expedition was thus accomplished and the force returned to Nowshera.²⁸

The Reoccupation of Sittana

After the 1858 expedition, the Mujāhidīn settled in Malka, on the north side of the Mabanr mountain given to them by the Amazai tribe.²⁹ After the death of Maulavī 'Ināyat 'Alī, his son 'Abd al-Mājid was considered

²⁴ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 6; Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 337; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:223-4; Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 93.

²⁵ Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 294.

²⁶ Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 94.

²⁷ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 7; Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 337-38.

²⁸ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 7; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:226-6; Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 96.

²⁹ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 7.

unfit to rule due to a slight stammer in his speech. Therefore, a triumvirate consisting of Maulavī Nūr Allāh, Ikrām Allāh, and Muḥammad Taqī ran the affairs of the Mujāhidīn.³⁰ In 1860, Maulavī Maqṣūd ‘Alī arrived and became the emir of the Mujāhidīn until he died in 1862.³¹ After his death, two capable men vied for leadership: Maulavī Abd Allāh, the son of Maulavī Wilāyat ‘Alī and Maulavī Muḥammad Iṣḥāq, the son of Maulavī Maqṣūd ‘Alī. The former was elected as an emir due to his long-standing experience, and the latter became second in command.³² Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh reorganized the Mujāhidīn and Malka soon flourished as a prosperous town with several large barracks accommodating some three thousand Mujāhidīn.³³

In April of 1861, the people of Kabal, Kaya, and the Jadoon allowed the Mujāhidīn to establish their colony in Siri, just over Sittana. From there, they launched several attacks on the border of the colonial British territory and kidnapped Hindu traders from Hazara for ransom, although official reports mention only one incident.³⁴ Whatever may be the actual number of kidnapping cases, the Jadoon and Utmanzai were put under blockade. As a result, the Jadoon demolished Siri and paid a fine.³⁵ In September, the Utmanzai, Sālār, and Maṣūr sections of the Jadoon signed an agreement with the British under which they bound themselves to stop the Sayyids and the Mujāhidīn from re-establishing themselves in Sittana.³⁶

³⁰ Shāhpūrī, *Sayyid Bādshāh kā Qāfilah*, 207.

³¹ Khān, *Rū‘dād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind*, 275.

³² Ahmad, *Wahabi Movement in India*, 194.

³³ Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 340. The Mujāhidīn also made an ammunition factory at Malka. See Shāhpūrī, *Sayyid Bādshāh kā Qāfilah*, 217-18.

³⁴ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 7. Also see Shahbaz Muhammad, *Da Malakand Ghazaganay* [Pukhtu] (Lower Dir: Pukhtu Department, University of Malakand, 2016), 32; Haider Ali Akhund Khail, *Bunair Khudu Khail: Tārīkhī, Tahqīqī, aur Thaqāfatī Jā’izah* (Mingawarah: Graphics World, 2008), 96-97; Masal Shah Ghulam, “Hazrat Abdul Ghafur Saib,” *Pukhtu* 13, nos. 1-2 (1982): 94. According to Mihr, outlaws from Punjab and northern districts took shelter at Siri and from there made raids on the British. Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 305.

³⁵ Lord Roberts, *Forty-one Years in India: From Subaltern to Commander-in-Chief* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1901), 281; Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 103; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:231.

³⁶ From C. E. F. Bunbury, Esquire, Deputy Commissioner Hazara, to Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, No. 676, dated Abbottabad 27 April 1896, *Syad Feroz Shah of Sitana and Malka*, F. F. Political Department, Bundle No. 18, Serial No. 287, at Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Provincial Archives, Peshawar; From C.E.F. Bunbury, Esquire, Deputy Commissioner Hazara, to Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, No. 676, dated Abbottabad 27 April 1896, *Syad Feroz Shah of Sitana and Malka*, EX-DD Files, Bundle No. 15, Serial No. 1601, at Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Provincial Archives, Peshawar.

In August 1862, the Punjab authorities claimed that the tribes had broken their agreement. While the Utmanzai confessed their weakness, the Jadoon offered no such imploration. According to Elgin, the Viceroy of India, the Amazai and Mada Khel tribes also favoured the Mujāhidīn. To disperse this colony, Lieutenant-Governor Punjab proposed to send a force of five or six thousand against them, but Elgin rejected the proposal.³⁷

Colonial records show no kidnapping case was reported from August 1862 to July 1863. However, in the spring of 1863, two murders were committed on the British border, which were attributed to the Sayyids of Sittana. On July 5, the colonial authorities claimed that the Sayyids and the Mujāhidīn had reoccupied Sittana. On investigation, the Jadoon and Utmanzai each blamed the other and both tribes were again put under blockade. As the Sayyids and the Mujāhidīn were sending threatening messages to the British feudatory chief of Amb, the colonial authorities posted a militia to protect Amb.³⁸

Mahiuddin Ahmad has asserted that, after the eviction of Mubārak Shāh from Sittana, the Utmanzai occupied the lands. For the recapturing of these lands, Mubārak Shāh first won over the Jadoon and, with their and the Mujāhidīn's help, built a fortified tower at Siri and started raids on Sittana and thus forced the Utmanzai to vacate it. Following his success against the Utmanzai, "he revived the practice of levying the Octori duty on all merchandise passing through Sittana territory."³⁹ The Deputy Commissioner of Hazara informed the Commissioner of Peshawar about a dispute prevailing among the inhabitants of Kabal and Kaya's villages belonging to the Utmanzai tribe.⁴⁰ He affirmed that the weaker party requested the Sayyids for assistance. Taking advantage of this, and with the support of some 120 Upper Mansoor Jadoon, the Sayyids, accompanied by around 500-700 Mujāhidīn, reached Sittana on June 28, 1863. On the first day of July, the Sayyids and the Mujāhidīn moved to Kaya and on the third to Kabal. After spending some days there, they returned to Sittana. Upon investigation, the Jadoon put the

³⁷ W. W. Hunter also professed that in 1862, the number of the Mujāhidīn increased and the Punjab authorities proposed another Frontier expedition. In his dispatch of April 7, 1862, the Secretary of State for India desired that sooner or later the Mujāhidīn should be expelled by force of arms as "they were a lasting source of danger so long as they remained on our border." W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (Lahore: Sang-e Meel Publications, 1999), 24.

³⁸ 126; IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 7. Also see Allāh Bakhsh Yūsufī, *Yūsufza'ī*, 2nd ed. (Karachi: Muhammad Ali Educational Society, 1960), 378.

³⁹ Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 340.

⁴⁰ See Şādiq Ḥusain, *Saiyid Aḥmad aur un kī Tāhrīk-i Mujāhidīn* (Lahore: Al-Mīzān, 2010), 540.

responsibility on the Utmanzai, who did not satisfy the colonial authorities with their reply.⁴¹ During these movements, four principal men of Kabal and Kaya of the opposed section came to Tarbela with some portion of their families.⁴² These men informed the Amb chief that, after Kabal and Kaya, Mubārak Shāh would attack him. The Amb chief became frightened and migrated to Dārband. Ghulām Rasūl Mihr has asserted that, in the case of Mubārak Shāh's attack on Kabal and Kaya, the British were not morally bound to interfere because both were independent areas.⁴³ In the opinion of Ṣādiq Ḥusain, the British, for propaganda purposes, kidnapped some Hindu merchants to gain the sympathies of the Hindu community. He further asserts that the British decided to destroy Malka as a trick to save the chief of Amb.⁴⁴

On July 15, the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab informed the Viceroy of India that the Mujāhidīn had settled in Sittana on the invitation of a section of the Utmanzai and Jadoon tribes.⁴⁵ As pressure increased, the *jargah* (council of the tribal chiefs) of the Jadoon tribe marched to Sittana on September 3, to request the Mujāhidīn to retire to Malka. This action made the situation satisfactory from the British standpoint. However, on the night of September 7, some 250 Mujāhidīn and Utmanzai, under Maulavī 'Abd Allāh, attacked the emir's camp at Topai, once again upsetting the situation.⁴⁶ Additionally, in mid-September, Hassanzai attacked Shūnglaī hamlet in the Black Mountain area, where one of the Amb outposts was placed. The Hassanzai attacked the levies of Madād Khān of Tanawal in which eight men were killed. The colonial authorities attributed these attacks to Sayyid Mubārak Shāh and the Mujāhidīn.⁴⁷ The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab recommended that a military expedition be immediately sent to compel the submission of the tribes. He emphasized that the expedition must consist of not less than five thousand infantry equipped with artillery. He hoped that the whole expedition would not last more than three weeks or a month.⁴⁸

⁴¹ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 7.

⁴² i.e., Khadī Khān, 'Azīz Khān, Ma'ādih Allāh, and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd.

⁴³ Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 310.

⁴⁴ Ḥusain, *Sayyid Ahmad aur un ki Tāhrik-i Mujāhidīn*, 540-41.

⁴⁵ *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:232-33; Hunter, *Indian Musalmans*, 25.

⁴⁶ *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:232-33; Hunter, *Indian Musalmans*, 25.

⁴⁷ *Hindustani Fanatics: An 1895 British Intelligence Report*.

⁴⁸ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 8. Also see Iltudus Thomas Prichard, *The Administration of India from 1859 to 1868: The First Ten Years of Administration under the Crown* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869), 2:47-48 and Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans, 550 B.C.—A.D. 1957: With an Epilogue on Russia*, 19th Impression (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 365.

The expedition was planned to start on October 10, 1863, and conclude on November 15, 1863.⁴⁹

The Mujāhidīn and the Ambela Expedition 1863

For this expedition against the Mujāhidīn, Brigadier-General Nevill B. Chamberlain was appointed commander of the force that arrived at Swabi on October 13, 1863. General Chamberlain ordered the movement of the troops through Surkāwī or Ambela pass on October 19, and proclaimed to the people of the Chamlah, Khudu Khel, Jadoon, Amazai, Mada Khel, and Buner tribes, which described the objectives of the expedition.⁵⁰ Shahbāz Muḥammad has maintained that the Mujāhidīn settlement at Malka provided them with the opportunity to propagate that the British intended the annexation of Buner.⁵¹ Ghulām Rasūl Mihr also asserted that the Mujāhidīn declared *jihād* against the British and sent proclamations to different *khans* and the Akhūnd.⁵²

The first major milestone of fighting was on October 30, when the Akhūnd combined with the tribes to capture Crag Picquet, the most important colonial post. Due to the situation's complexity, the British Commander-in-Chief arrived at Lahore on November 14 and directed the expedition himself.⁵³ On November 20, Crag Picquet was taken and retaken by the tribes and the colonial troops for a third time. In this contest, General Chamberlain was wounded and could no longer lead his force.⁵⁴

Along with the fighting, political activities were also in progress. On December 10, the Buner *jargah* arrived and rejected the British terms on December 14. On the following day, the colonial troops captured the village of Lālū, followed by the capture and burning of Ambela village on

⁴⁹ Sultan-i-Rome, *Swat State (1915–1969): From Genesis to Merger; An Analysis of Political, Administrative, Socio-Political, and Economic Developments* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 26.

⁵⁰ *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 241. For the details of the Ambela expedition see Ishtiaq Ahmad, "The Ambela Expedition 1863: A Military Failure but Political Triumph; An Appraisal," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 70, no. 4 (2022): 77–106, <https://phs.com.pk/index.php/phs/article/view/247/124>.

⁵¹ Muhammad, *Da Malakand Ghazaganay*, 33. For a similar view, see D. S. Richards, *The Savage Frontier: A History of the Anglo-Afghan Wars* (London: Pan Books, 2003), 68; Scott, *Twenty Years on the North-West Frontier*, 121; Adye, *Recollections of a Military Life*, 192.

⁵² Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 324–25.

⁵³ Adye, *Recollections of a Military Life*, 193.

⁵⁴ Charles E. Stewart, *Through Persia in Disguise: With Reminiscences of the Indian Mutiny*, ed. Basil Stewart (London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1911), 57.

16 December.⁵⁵ On December 15 and 16, Buner tribes did not take part in the fighting, and the Mujāhidīn alone fought against the colonial troops.⁵⁶

On December 17, the Buner *jargah* again arrived and accepted the British terms. Escorted by the tribal *jargah*, the British advanced from Ambela on December 19, and returned on December 23, after destroying Malka.⁵⁷ The expedition was originally planned as a three-week expedition. Still, it took about three months with considerably high casualties on both sides: 238 were killed and 670 wounded from the British side, while 3000 were killed and wounded from the tribes.⁵⁸ The number of the Mujāhidīn at the time of the Ambela expedition was not more than 900, half of whom were either killed or wounded. The remainder fled to the Hassanzai and Swat countries.⁵⁹ In January 1864, Major Cox, Deputy Commissioner of Hazara, succeeded in extracting an agreement from the Mada Khel and Amazai tribes, under which they bound themselves not to allow the Mujāhidīn to resettle in their areas.⁶⁰

The Mujāhidīn after the Ambela Expedition

After the Ambela expedition, the Mujāhidīn under Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh settled in the Chagharzai area, north of the Barandu River. Although they obtained lands in Tāngūr and Baṭūrāh villages from the Chagharzai there, their position was not secured. On the one hand, the people they lived with made them pay dearly for the protection they provided and for the supplies they received. On the other hand, their agents in India could not send them sufficient money.⁶¹ Furthermore, their hosts threatened them time and again with expulsion and also forcibly stopped the completion of the two towers started by Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh at Baṭūrāh. The Akhūnd also

⁵⁵ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 11. Muḥammad Shaft’ Šābir, *Tārīkh-i Šūbah-i Sarḥad* (Peshawar: University book Agency, 1986), 627; Muhammad Parwaish Shaheen, *Gulwariny Sukay* [Pukhtu] (Mingawarah: Shoaib Sons Publishers, 1989), 116-17.

⁵⁶ Scott, *Twenty Years on the North-West Frontier*, 136-37.

⁵⁷ Prichard, *Administration of India from 1859 to 1868*, 65-66.

⁵⁸ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 11; Rathbone Low, *Major-General Sir Frederick S. Roberts, Bart., V.C., G.C.B., C.I.E., R.A.: A Memoir* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1883), 92; Charles Miller, *Khyber: British India’s North West Frontier; The Story of an Imperial Migraine* (London: Macdonald and Jane’s, 1977), 141; Abdul Halim Asar Afghani, *Zamung Mujahidin* [Pukhtu] (Peshawar: Maḥkamah-i Nashr-o Ishā’at-i Qabā’il, n.d.), 2:360. From the British side, 27 officers were killed and 731 men were killed or wounded. See Sydney Cotton, *Nine years on the North-West Frontier of India: From 1854 to 1863* (London: Richard Bentley, 1868), 245. According to Shahbaz Muhmand total casualties were as follows: British 1072 (227 British), locals 3000. Muhammad, *Da Malakand Ghazaganay*, 43.

⁵⁹ *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*, 182-83, accessed on July 21, 2008, http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk/imageserver/pdf_download.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 138.

⁶¹ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 12; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:296.

did not look upon them with friendly eyes due to their so-called Wahhabi inclination and friendship with Sayyid Amīr, a rival of the Akhūnd and supporter of the opposite faction of the Būnairvāls.⁶²

In such circumstances, two of their leaders, Muḥammad Ishāq and Muḥammad Ya‘qūb, made some attempts in the autumn of 1866 to open communications with Colonel J. R. Becher, the Commissioner of Peshawar. However, the plan was frustrated by Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh. In February 1868, ‘Aẓīm Khān of Bajkata, an opponent of the Akhūnd and supporter of Sayyid Amīr, invited 400-500 Mujāhidīn to his village. He offered houses and lands to them on the condition of their permanent settlement there. The offer was accepted, and the Mujāhidīn moved from Tāngūr and Baṭūrāh to Bajkata. In April, Fīrūz Shāh, son of the last Mughal emperor, arrived at Bajkata. Although he was received by the Akhūnd at Saidū some months before, the news of his and the Mujāhidīn’s coming to Buner was not welcomed.⁶³

Without wasting time, the Akhūnd exerted his influence and arranged a *jargah* of the Buner tribes. ‘Aẓīm Khān, Navāb Khān, and Zaid Allāh Khān, the leading chiefs and members of the opposite faction, remained aloof. In this *jargah*, held on May 5, 1868, Mirji Khān, a disciple of the Akhūnd, convinced the members to oust the Mujāhidīn from Buner, as their presence not only displeased the Akhūnd but it was also contrary to the agreement of 1864. As a result, 700 Mujāhidīn along with Fīrūz Shāh and ‘Aẓīm Khān shifted to Malka, commenced construction of their houses, and arranged supplies with the Amazai. In the meantime, Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh himself visited the Akhūnd and was granted permission to resettle in Bajkaṭah. After this, many Mujāhidīn returned but were again involved in intrigues.⁶⁴

Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh soon joined a league formed by ‘Aẓīm Khān and other Buner chiefs along with the Amazai and Muqarrab Khān, the ex-chief of Khudu Khel. The core object of this league was to reduce the Akhūnd’s influence and to recover Muqarrab Khān’s former position and possession of Panjtar. According to the British records, the prime mover of this plot was Muqarrab Khān.⁶⁵ In this scenario, Zaid Allāh Khān became the first man to show his hostility and work on the plot. On 2 August 1868, he seized some Swati traders passing through his lands. The Akhūnd instantly rallied his followers and directed his faction in Buner

⁶² IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 12.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 13.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

to break the league, oust the Mujāhidīn, and exterminate the intractable chiefs. In pursuance of these orders, Zaid Allāh Khān was assassinated in his house. On August 12, the followers of the Akhūnd and the Buner tribes arrived at Bajkata and gave Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh a single day to completely remove his colony.⁶⁶ The Mujāhidīn sent their women and children in advance, followed by the rest of the colony guarded by 60 men equipped with rifles. The first few miles were undisturbed, but when they came near the pass between Baṭūrah and Bajkata, the cohorts of the Akhūnd opened fire. The main body sustained few losses, but the rear guard was destroyed. From Baṭūrah, the Mujāhidīn fled to the Chagharzai territory.⁶⁷ However, in obedience to the Akhūnd’s order, the Chagharzai expelled them, who finally reached Judba and remained there till the 1868 Black Mountain expedition.

In 1868, the Tikri, Allai, and Takot chiefs tried to establish a bond with the Mujāhidīn against the colonial troops. However, the plan never materialized due to the troops’ rapid advance.⁶⁸ After the 1868 Black Mountain expedition, the Mujāhidīn were expelled by the Hassanzai in compliance with a term in the agreement signed by the tribe with the British. From Judba, the Mujāhidīn shifted to Palosai, a trans-Indus Hassanzai village, but failed to acquire a permanent settlement there and moved to Takot. There, too, the tribes did not allow them to settle. The Mujāhidīn returned to Bihar and Judba, and when the Chagharzai declined their settlement, they finally threw themselves on the mercy of the Hassanzai and acquired some land near Palosai called Maidan, on the right bank of the Indus, and built a mud fort and some huts there.⁶⁹

In 1880, with the permission of Mada Khel, the Mujāhidīn built an outpost at a Gujar village, but the Amazai, according to the agreement of 1864, refused to allow them and they returned to Palosai.⁷⁰ After some two years, the Mujāhidīn started negotiations with the Nurzai tribe of Buner for their settlement. In their letter to the Nurzai, the Mujāhidīn stated that they wanted to raise a religious war, but according to the British “their real reason appears to be that they wanted to avoid the high rent which the Hassanzais charged them.”⁷¹ From that time until the third Black Mountain expedition in 1888, nothing special related to this study occurred.

⁶⁶ *Hindustani Fanatics: India’s Pashtuns, and Deobandism—Connections*.

⁶⁷ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 13.

⁶⁸ Paget and Mason, *Record of the Expeditions*, 157-58.

⁶⁹ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 14.

⁷⁰ *Hindustani Fanatics: India’s Pashtuns, and Deobandism—Connections*.

⁷¹ *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:299.

On June 18, 1888, two British officers, Major Battye and Captain Urmston, were murdered in the Black Mountain region. After this incident, the situation became grave, and the tribes gathered on the crest of the Black Mountain. Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh, along with some 120 Mujāhidīn from Maidan, also joined Hassanzai on the crest—however, the gathering dispersed without any demonstration. The colonial authorities blocked the Black Mountain’s clans and later included the Mujāhidīn.⁷² During this expedition, on 4 October 1888, about 100 Mujāhidīn took part in the fighting at Kūṭki (Tuwara) and lost their 48 men.⁷³ The colonial troops, as a result of the Mujāhidīn’s activities against them, destroyed their settlements at Maidan. This was the fifth occasion in the last forty years in which the Mujāhidīn clashed with colonial troops. On every occasion, they were compelled to shift their abode.⁷⁴ The colonial records affirmed:

Maulvi Abdulla personally knew the folly of resistance and is said to have advised submission, but his position on sufferance and payment for his location forced his followers to come to the front; otherwise, they would have fared badly at the hands of the Hassanzais, on whose lands they resided.⁷⁵

At the time of the Black Mountain expedition of 1888, the number of the Mujāhidīn was about 600-700, but only 100 took part in the fighting.⁷⁶ In this regard, Cunningham, the Commissioner of Peshawar, opined in his letter to the chief secretary:

They came into collision with our [colonial British] troops in 1888 at Towara on the Indus, but as they were then living among the Hassanzai they were almost under compulsion to take up arms when we invaded the country of that clan. Maulvi Abdulla himself foresaw the result more clearly than his following, and went as far as he could to induce the Hassanzai to comply with the demands of Government and to avert war.⁷⁷

⁷² Watson, *Gazetteer of the Hazara District, 1907*, 177-78.

⁷³ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 14; Khan, *Rū‘ūdād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind*, 282.

⁷⁴ From Colonel E.L. Ommanney, Chief Political Officer, Hazara Field Force, to Major-General McQueen, C.B., A.D.C., Commanding Hazara Field Force, No. 5330 P, dated Abbott-abad, 17 November 1888, *Proceedings of the Government of the Punjab in the Foreign Department for the Month of February 1889*, in Punjab Archives at Lahore [henceforward PGPF].

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ From F. D. Cunningham, Esquire, Commissioner and Superintendent, Peshawar Division, to the Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab, No. 272 Confidential, dated Abbott-abad, 21st June 1895 [henceforward From Cunningham to Chief Secretary No. 272], *Attitude of the Hindustani Colony in Amazai Territory*, Files of the Commissioner Office Peshawar, Bundle No. 19, Serial No. 613, at Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Provincial

In the fourth Black Mountain expedition of 1891, the colonial troops faced a gathering of the Būnairvāl, Jadoon, Mujāhidīn, and others. Parties of the groups came into collision with the colonial forces at several places. However, at Ghazikot, on the night of March 18, a few hundred Mujāhidīn and fifty Chagharzais attacked the British picquet. The exact number of the tribal losses was not known, but among the 25 dead bodies left in the village, 22 were of the Mujāhidīn.⁷⁸ After the expedition's termination, the Hassanzai and Akazai tribes concluded an agreement with the British at Siri under which they would not permit the Mujāhidīn to settle in their country.⁷⁹

Around 1893, the Mujāhidīn settled with Amara Khail, a subsection of Mubārak Khail, a section of the Amazai tribe. In his letter, the Nawab of Amb informed the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara that the Mujāhidīn had settled between the territories of Amazai and Amara Khail and this place, which in Nawab's opinion, was "as objectionable for their abode as the previous one, Malka and Sitana, and suggests that both clans be told not to allow this." However, the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara informed the

Archives, Peshawar. After the destruction of their fort and settlements at Miadan, the Mujāhidīn sent their families to Bagra and themselves some six hundred in number took shelter with the Chagharzai and Akhūnd Khaīl, near Kabalgram. There they settled till forth Black Mountain Expedition, 1891. Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 457; Watson, *Gazetteer of the Hazara District, 1907*, 178; A. H. Mason, *Expedition against the Black Mountain Tribes by a Force under Major-General J. W. McQueen in 1888* (Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1889), 20, 36; Ṣādiq Ḥusain, *Tāhrik-i Mujāhidīn* (Lahore: Ṣādiq Ḥusain Printers and Publishers, n.d.), 5:28-29.

⁷⁸ IOR: L/MIC/17/13/18, p. 15.

⁷⁹ A. H. Mason, *Expedition against the Hasanzai and Akazai Tribes of the Black Mountain by a Force under Major-General W.K. Elles, C.B., in 1891* (Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1894), xvi; exact same terms are also mention in the agreements of Mada Khel with the British concluded on June 3, 1891 at Seri, Appendix xiv, p. xx; the Sayyids and Chagharzai of Pariari at Oghi on 12 June 1891, also concluded an agreement with the British in which same terms has been written. See Appendix xv, p. xxii. Also see Watson, *Gazetteer of the Hazara District, 1907*, 181-82; A. H. Mason, *Note on the Black Mountain Affairs, Subsequent to the Expedition of 1891* (Simla: Printed at the Government Central Printing Office, 1892), 1. Consequently, Hassanzai, Akazai, and Mada Khel expelled the Mujāhidīn from Black Mountain. Maulavī 'Abd Allāh himself went to Amazai and Mubārak Khail territories. The former refused to give them lands and Malak Ghulām of the latter granted them the villages of Nagrai, Tilwai and Khundai where they remained till the death of Maulavī 'Abd Allāh in 1902. *Movements of the Hindustani Fanatics Colony*; Mihr, *Sarguzasht-i Mujāhidīn*, 462-66; Ahmad, *Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, 356; Khan, *Rū'ūdād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind*, 284-5; *Hindustani Fanatics: India's Pashtuns, and Deobandism—Connections*. Mawlawi 'Abd Allāh died in 1902 at the age of seventy-four and was succeeded by his son 'Abd al-Quddūs. See Khan, *Rū'ūdād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind*, 285; *Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*, 1:300.

Commissioner of Peshawar that they should take no notice of the move.⁸⁰ The Commissioner of Peshawar also stated that the Nawab of Amb's anxiety about settling the Mujāhidīn was due to his interests, as he was at enmity with the Pitau portion of the tribe.⁸¹ The Nawab of Amb further informed the Commissioner of Peshawar that the Mujāhidīn had made arrangements to settle in Kundi village with the help of Amazai and Amara Khail and laid the foundations of a mosque and houses there.⁸² During this period, Major Deane, the Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, suggested that if the Mujāhidīn settled in the outskirts of Buner, the colonial authorities should take no action.⁸³ Richard Udny informed the Chief Secretary that he agreed with Deane that, from the British point of view,

It would be better for the Hindustanis [Mujāhidīn] to establish themselves among the Amazai rather than in Swat, where they would occupy a more central position and have a wider field for stirring up the fanaticism which is the principal obstacle to our endeavours to enter into friendly relations with trans-frontier tribes. In this respect, their bad influence has been very marked on the Black Mountain tribes, and their presence in Swat might also imperil our arrangements with the Khans of Thana and Allahdand for the direct route from Peshawar to Chitral.⁸⁴

F. D. Cunningham, Commissioner of the Peshawar Division, also affirmed in 1899:

When I was Deputy Commissioner, Hazara, the orders of Government were understood to be against any arrest or detention of members of the colony. Except in time of frontier disturbances in the actual neighbourhood of their settlement they are unimportant, but as a colony they should always be kept at a distance and not allowed to settle too near to British territory, as their preaching undoubtedly affects our subjects,

⁸⁰ From Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. Hutchinson, Deputy Commissioner Hazara, to Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, No. 808, dated May 23, 1893, *PGPFD July 1893*.

⁸¹ From R. Udny, Esquire, Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, to the Chief Secretary to Government Punjab, No. 172 C., dated Nathiagali, May 30, 1893, *PGPFD July 1893*.

⁸² Extract translation of a letter, dated June 13, 1893, from the Nawab of Amb to the Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, *PGPFD July 1893*.

⁸³ From Captain A. H. Deane, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar to the Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, No. 27 C., dated June 6, 1893, *PGPFD July 1893*.

⁸⁴ From R. Udny, Esquire, Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division to the Chief Secretary to Government Punjab, No. 253 C., Camp, dated Nathiagali, July 15, 1893, *PGPFD August 1893*.

and sends scores of our villagers to fight against Government whenever hostilities break out with neighbouring clans.⁸⁵

Finally, the Deputy Commissioner confirmed the report of the Nawab of Amb about the settlement of the Mujāhidīn on the east slope of Mabanr. According to his confirmation, the Mujāhidīn were settled in Miragai, some six miles below Mangal Tānṛa and a little below Nagraī. The place was given to the Mujāhidīn by Ghulām Qādir, Malak of the Saidkūr section of the Amazai, residing in Chirurāī village. Ghulām Qādir had a private enmity with the Nawab of Amb, who, about a year ago, captured an Amazai hamlet near Chirurāī.⁸⁶ The Amara Khail were also annoyed by this settlement as that strengthened the Saidkūr section's position against the Amara Khail. Mujāhid Khān, a leading Amara Khail, told the Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar that he was ready to commence fighting against the Mujāhidīn if the British were ready to assist him.⁸⁷ On the other hand, the colonial authorities fully satisfied themselves with the new arrangements. In this regard, the Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab informed the Secretary to the Government of India:

The Lieutenant-Governor thought of warning the Amazias that they will be held responsible for the conduct of Hindustanis while the latter reside within their limits, but considering the fact that to address the Amazais at all on this matter without requiring them to act up to their agreement of 1864 may lead them to suppose that we [the British] have waived the agreement, His Honour would not give the warning, and, as recommended by Commissioner, Peshawar, His Honour would take no notice of this matter.⁸⁸

In 1895, the Mujāhidīn shifted their families and property near Chirurāī village. At that time, it was propagated that after the Chitral expedition, the colonial troops would attack their new settlement in Buner.⁸⁹ In this grave situation, Maulavī 'Abd Allāh also sent a letter to Muhammadjī in which he wrote:

When I first determined to take my abode in your country (Amazai) you took a pledge from me that I should never commit any offence in the British territory, and in agreeing to this I told you that if the Government ever interfered with us we should (be obliged to) act to the best of our

⁸⁵ From F. D. Cunningham, Esquire, C.I.E., Commissioner and Superintendent, Peshawar Division to the Chief Secretary to Government, Panjab, No. 234 C., dated Peshawar May 9, 1899, *Movements of the Hindustani Fanatics Colony*.

⁸⁶ From Captain A.H. Deane, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar to the Commissioner and Superintendent Peshawar Division, No. 31 C., dated July 12, 1893, *PGPFD August 1893*.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ From C. L. Tupper, Esquire, Chief Secretary to the Government, Punjab to the Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, No. 635, dated Simla August 4, 1893, *PGPFD August 1893*.

⁸⁹ From Cunningham to Chief Secretary No. 272.

power in self-defence. You will [sic] see that up to the present time we have kept up our promise, and although we have received several invitations from Swat and Bajaur we have not gone there. Now that a great many expeditions are being undertaken by the Government, we request you to enquire from Government whether they will leave us alone in our present abode or not, since we have devoted ourselves solely to the worship of God and have abandoned all concern in worldly affairs. . . . Please enquire from Government and let me know whether or not they will leave us alone in our present inoffensive attitude, especially when we kept to our promise and show no hostilities to the British Government.⁹⁰

In this respect, Akhūnzādah Muḥammadjī of Amazai informed the Assistant Commissioner of Mardan that they took permission from the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara and were allowed to stay. Since that time, the Mujāhidīn had done nothing wrong, despite the invitations from Buner and Swat. He requested the colonial government that “it will be generous of the Government to show kindness to them and do them no harm.”⁹¹ In reply, H. C. Fanshawe, Chief Secretary to the Government of Punjab, informed the Commissioner of Peshawar that the following reply be sent to Akhūnzādah Muḥammadjī:⁹²

The Assistant Commissioner, Mardan, can tell his correspondent to inform the Maulvi that so long as his followers remain peaceful and abstain from hostility on their part they have nothing to fear from Government. He can also remind the Amazai that so long as they give asylum to the Colony they are responsible for their behaviour.⁹³

The Mujāhidīn and the Frontier Uprising of 1897

In 1897, the British faced a severe uprising of some Frontier tribes. The role of the Mujāhidīn in this uprising is controversial. According to Muḥammad Khavāṣ Khān, the Mujāhidīn took part in the Malakand rising of 1897.⁹⁴ Similarly, Ṣādiq Ḥusain has asserted that the Mujāhidīn took part in the fighting against the colonial troops in Buner during the

⁹⁰ Translation of a letter dated Zekad [Dhū 'l-Qa'dah] 10, 1312— May 6, 1895, from Maulvi Abdulla, the Leader of the Hindustani Fanatics, to Ghulam Khan and Maulvi Muhammadji, Amazais, *Attitude of the Hindustani Colony in Amazai Territory*, Files of the Commissioner Office Peshawar, Bundle No. 19, Serial No. 613, at Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Provincial Archives, Peshawar.

⁹¹ Translation of a petition from Muhammadji (Akhūnzādah) of Amazai to the Assistant Commissioner, Mardan, n.d., *Attitude of the Hindustani Colony in Amazai Territory*.

⁹² From H.C. Fanshawe, Esquire, Offg. Chief Secretary to Government, Punjab to the Commissioner and Superintendent, Peshawar Division, No. 781, dated Simla, July 9, 1895, *Attitude of the Hindustani Colony in Amazai Territory*.

⁹³ From Cunningham to Chief Secretary No. 272

⁹⁴ Khan, *Rū'ūdād-i Mujāhidīn-i Hind*, 285.

uprising of 1897-98. There were 60 deaths from a total of 2,000 colonial troops, while only one man was killed on the Mujāhidīn's side.⁹⁵ 'Abdul Rauf, on the authority of Ghulām Rasūl Mihr, stated that "in the Frontier uprising of 1314-5/1897, they took part at the Chakdara front and caused heavy losses to the British."⁹⁶

Contrary to the above sources and the common belief that the Mujāhidīn took part in the 1897 uprising, the colonial archives present a different view. During the uprising, the colonial authorities directed 'Abd al-Qādir Khān of Jhanda to discover the attitude of the Mujāhidīn and the Khudu Khel. 'Abd al-Qādir Khān sent Ni'mat Khān of Kadra Jadoon and informed Maulavī 'Abd Allāh in a letter dated August 9, 1897, that Ni'mat Khān "has started to see you, and he will state verbally all the affairs."⁹⁷ In reply to this letter, Maulavī 'Abd Allāh stated that "the fact is that I have had nothing to do with it." He has maintained:

Some sowars and footmen with a son (of mine) have gone on account of the calling on them of the border clans. This going of theirs is simply by way of a journey, and the true state is this that until the army of the English rulers shall come by the Surkhavi or Darband roads, we shall remain where we are; and if the army shall resolve on the road of Surkhavi and Darband then we shall be in danger at our lives. For God's sake think well on this that I have never yet gone into the country of [the] English rulers to fight.⁹⁸

Maulavī 'Abd Allāh further stated that, on previous occasions, the colonial troops invaded their settlements and that they fought for their safety. He also showed his desire that if the colonial troops had not come to the place where they settled, they would have remained there without causing them any harm. He affirmed:

If this be understood that certain of my men have gone let them come back, and do you arrange this for me, and let them be informed that an army is coming to Surkhavi, and that a place for a camp is being got ready and let them all come back. But this affair must be kept quiet [confidential], and I am not able to write any true position and desire.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Husain, *Tāhrik-i Mujāhidīn*, 5:27.

⁹⁶ Abdul Rauf, "The British Empire and the Mujāhidīn Movement in the N.W.F.P. of India, 1914-1934," *Islamic Studies* 44, no. 3 (2005): 409-39.

⁹⁷ Translation of a letter dated August 9, 1897, from Abdul Kadir Khan of Jhanda to Maulvi Abdulla of the Hindustani Colony, *Conduct of the Hindustani Fanatics during the Disturbances in Swat*, Ex-DD Files, Bundle No. 18, Serial No. 2035, at Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Provincial Archives, Peshawar.

⁹⁸ Answer to the above by Maulvi Abdulla, sealed with his seal, n.d., but reached Abdul Kadir on August 11 or 12, 1897, brought back by Niyamat of Kadra, *Conduct of the Hindustani Fanatics during the Disturbances in Swat*.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh also suggested to ‘Abd al-Qādir Khān that he visit him and bring a letter from the commissioner to him then he would relate all to ‘Abd al-Qādir Khān directly. On receiving this letter, ‘Abd al-Qādir Khān again sent Ni‘mat Khān and asked Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh to tell all he knew. Ni‘mat Khān brought another letter on August 20, in which Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh again replied that if a meeting could be arranged it would be better as it was still difficult for him to write all in a letter. However, Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh stated:

The fact is this, that neither I nor my deceased father have taken any hostile action against the English rulers to date. For instance, at Malka the English ruler themselves brought their armies into Chamla with the intention (of marching on) Malka. Then I resolved in fighting and went to Chamla. In anxiety of my own life, I have lived for twenty years in Hassanzai. I have never interfered in the country of the English rulers. When the army came into Hassanzai country and advanced then to save our lives and families (we fought), for it is a well-known saying that a dying man will do anything. When the army of the English rulers came up to Baio and did not interfere with us [the Mujāhidīn], we also made no resistance.¹⁰⁰

Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh further claimed,

I have not incited the clans. Sealed letters have come from Swat and representatives have hastened to all the countries round with *qasam* [oath] and *talak* [divorce], urging a Mussalman war. To me, many letters and agents have also come. The conclusion is this, that if the English rulers pay no attention to this part of the world in which I live I also will remain the same.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

After the death of Sayyid Aḥmad of Raebareli in 1831, the Mujāhidīn became dependent on the local tribes and were exploited by different chiefs for their own ends. This is evident from the Mujāhidīn’s settlement in Panjtar and Amb in the 1830s. Both Fatiḥ Khān and Pāyindah Khān strengthened their positions with their support, and both expelled them after securing their interests. When both chiefs expelled them from their areas, they settled in Sittana. Like the previous cases, their settlement in Sittana strengthened the position of the Sayyids and Fatiḥ Khān, an earlier ally of the Mujāhidīn, who became their enemy.

With the annexation of the Punjab by the British and their expeditions in the northwest frontier region, the Mujāhidīn also encountered them. In the 1852-53 Black Mountain expedition, for the first time after the annexation of the Punjab, the Mujāhidīn and the colonial troops faced each other. In 1857, the Mujāhidīn again showed

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

some signs of resentment against the British. This time, they were in league with the Sayyids of Sittana. However, like previous occasions, they could not withstand the colonial troops and fled from one place to another. In 1863, at the time of the famous Ambela expedition, the colonial troops faced severe resistance from the local tribes and for the first time, the Mujāhidīn made a mark in the fighting on December 16, 1863. However, the Ambela expedition proved disastrous, as they were expelled from Malka and later from Buner by the Akhūnd. Their rift with the Akhūnd and their casualties in Ambela exposed their weak position to the tribes. As they lost their influence, they were not only compelled to pay rent for the land in which they resided but they were also forced to join in tribal rivalries or conflicts with the British. In the third Black Mountain Expedition 1888, the Mujāhidīn took up arms against the colonial troops but did so only because they lived with the Hassanzai against whom the expedition was directed. Similarly, in the fourth Black Mountain Expedition 1891, some of them attacked the British picquet, but this time too they were compelled to side with the tribes against whom the expedition was directed.

In 1893, the Mujāhidīn again settled with the Amazai. Throughout the 1890s, the position of the Mujāhidīn and the British was characterized by a rumour that the British would attack the Mujāhidīn's settlements at Amazai after the Chitral expedition. Maulavī 'Abd Allāh not only shifted his colony to a safe place but, in a letter to Akhūnzādah Muḥammadjī, affirmed that the Mujāhidīn had devoted themselves to the worship of God and left all worldly affairs.¹⁰² In May 1896, Merk, the Commissioner and Superintendent of the Peshawar Division, reported:

I would remark that, whatever may have been their desires and feelings thirty, or even twenty, years ago, the Hindustanis no longer covet the honor of joining a jihad. The fervour of former years is dying out, and the breech-loaders that they meet at Kot Kai [Kotki, 1888] and Ghazikote [1891] have much accelerated this process.¹⁰³

Merk's claim seems to be correct as the letters written by Maulavī 'Abd Allāh during the Chitral expedition in 1895 and the frontier uprising in 1897 attest to his weak position.

During the famous frontier uprising of 1897, the colonial authorities directed Ghulām Qādir to discover the attitude of the Mujāhidīn. In the

¹⁰² Translation of a letter dated Zekad [Dhū 'l-Qa'dah] 10, 1312—May 6, 1895, from Maulvi Abdulla, the Leader of the Hindustani Fanatics to Ghulam Khan and Maulvi Muhammadji, Amazais, *Attitude of the Hindustani Colony in Amazai Territory*.

¹⁰³ From W.R.H. Merk, C.S.I., Commissioner and Superintendent, Peshawar Division, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Panjab, No. 251, dated Peshawar 29th May 1896, *Movements of the Hindustani Fanatics Colony*.

consequent letters too, Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh stated that, despite a lot of invitations, he would not join the tribes if the colonial government left them unmolested. He affirmed that some men along with his son had gone but that was only for the excursion. We know that during the frontier uprising of 1897, the Mujāhidīn were living with the Amazai, who had declared themselves enemies of the British. They would have possibly called Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh for assistance. However, by studying the whole developments of the 1897 uprising, we know that Malakand and Chakdara were attacked on the night of July 26, and relieved on August 2. During the attacks on Malakand and Chakdara, the Buner tribes were not actively engaged. In the middle of August, the colonial troops launched a punitive expedition into Swat and the Buner tribes occupied Karakar pass and decided on its protection, but no fighting took place on the Buner front in 1897.¹⁰⁴ The Mujāhidīn may have accompanied this group, as the correspondence between Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh and Ghulām Qādir was dated from 9 to 20 August 1897. In addition, no serious fighting took place in Buner when the punitive force invaded in January 1898.¹⁰⁵ All these events negate the claim of the local writers and general perceptions about the Mujāhidīn’s participation and the severe losses of the colonial troops in the 1897 uprising.

Since 1849, the Mujāhidīn were based at the Indian northwest frontier for waging *jihād* against the colonial troops. However, their position and strength in the 1890s were not powerful enough to create trouble for the British. For that reason, Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh stated that they had devoted themselves only to the worship of God. However, in the uprising of 1897, some individuals had gone to Buner due to their settlement with and dependence upon the Amazai. However, Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh and the rest of his Mujāhidīn remained uninterested. Maulavī ‘Abd Allāh was not in favour or position to take part in it. However, he could not openly announce his friendship towards the British or non-involvement in the uprising of 1897 due to the fear that by doing so he would lose the settlement within or the sympathy of the local Pukhtun tribes. In this situation, his position was very convoluted, which is why he asked ‘Abd al-Qādir Khān to visit him as he could only tell him his position in person.

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¹⁰⁴ Ishtiaq Ahmad, “Pakhtun Resistance against British Rule: An Assessment of the Frontier Uprising of 1897” (PhD diss., Department of History, University of Peshawar, 2017), 141.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 147-52.