
Survival Of Fittest: From Khalsa Identity To Military Establishment Of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh

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Abstract

Establishment of Khalsa was a turning point in Sikh History as it transformed Sikhism and its identity from a synergetic movement of monotheistic eclecticism into a fanatically anti-Mughalmilitant group. Khalsa army very gradually developed in 18th century and many changes were subsequently introduced into military organization of Khalsa. The start of 19th century brought a major change in the political scenario of the Punjab with the rise of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh. The Maharaja completely changed the outlook of Khalsa army due to his personal abilities and geneses. He realized that the Khalsa army which was very successful during chaotic and anarchic 18th century due to his mode of warfare as guerilla fighting was inappropriate to the requirements of changed time and if he wanted to establish a great rule, it is obligatory to make stronger his army and re-arranged it on the modern basis. He very eagerly observed the methodical training of the British troops and got stimulated of their discipline and sent his men to learn the British method of training and the tactics of warfare. He hired Europeans to train his military. Establishment of Infantry and artillery was another major change in existing military tradition of Khalsa. He engaged the absconders from the British East India Company to instruct the infantry platoons of Khalsa army. He modified the style of fighting and adopted the steady fire from gun and musket in place of guerilla mode of attacks. He knew very well that to survive at the time of decline the old styles of warfare are not purposeful enough against extremely trained and disciplined British army. He also strengthened another unnoticed part of the Sikh army which was artillery. He grew up its gun reserve and arranged there manufacturing on large scale. The changes under these two branches brought very obvious change in the outlook of the Khalsa army. That change was also due to the common change in the overall look of the country, as the use of the artillery by the Europeans in India and also the

employment or recruitment of the regimented military on a large scale incompetent the old strategy and methods of warfare. That's why after enchanting power, Maharaja without delay started remodeling of his forces. In the period of decay, Maharaja's kingdom survived due to his military. However, plethora of literature has been produced on this era but Maharaja still needs to be seen as military genius of his times. Rise of Khalsa army from the strength of 300 horsemen and 60 artillerymen along with a stable consisted of 800 horses under Guru Gobind Singh to the establishment of marvelous military often reached to the strength of 70,000 cavalry which well thought-out a threat to the contemporary powers, needs a thorough explanation. Therefore, the object of this paper is to analyze the development of unified Sikh army under Maharaja. It further explore and present variety of aspects of his military organization such as adoption of new methods of warfare, training, drill, manufacturing of guns, means of transport for army, regular payment system and many more. The Maharaja Ranjeet Singh gave Punjab forty years of peace, prosperity and progress of law and order which was not possible without a well-developed military.

Sikhs were very peaceful from the start of their community. Actually the basic theme of the first Guru's teachings was based on memorandum of peace and also of later Gurus including the Guru Arjan. But after this momentous even of martyrdom of Guru Arjan, a feeling of disgust was emerged among the Sikhs for Mughals as well as other powers of that time. So their sixth Guru gave them the concept of Miri and Piri (two swords wearied by him). Miri represented political authority or command of Sikhs and Piri was the sign of holy guidance. That's why he was called as master of power (Nabha 1997, 429-30).¹

According to the MohsinFani (the author of Dabistan-i-Mazahibs), who was a contemporary of Guru Hargobind, the strength of Guru's forces was 300 horsemen and 60 artillerymen along with a stable consisted of 800 horses. This was the establishment of that Khalsa army which often reached to the strength of 70,000 cavalry which has been well thought-out a threat to the contemporary powers.² Later on after a short honey moon of peaceful period under Guru HarRai, HarKrishan and TeghBuhadar, there was another event which propelled the Sikhs to be aggressive and it was martyrdom of 9th Sikh Guru TeghBuhadar under the orders of Aurangzeb Alimgir so after it Guru's son Guru Gobind Singh strengthened the Sikh army and laid the foundation of Khalsa Panth (Sikh nation). He raised the slogan "the Khalsa shall (ultimately) rule and none shall defy." He thought that "*Without state power religion cannot flourish and without Dharam all (social fabrics) gets rushed and trampled upon. No one gifts away power to another: who so ever gets it, get it by his own strength.*"³

He gave the name of Khalsa⁴ to the Sikh community which meant “the pure ones” and instructed them to use the surname Singh meaning lion with their names. In 1699, the Guru invited the Sikh Sangats or communities in Anandpurand from different parts of the country and in this way, established a close and direct relation with Sikhs. He blessed Sikhs with five K’s “Kara, Kanga, Kirpan, Kes and Kachcha.” Guru Gobind Singh strengthened the spirit of dedication, commitment and sacrifices in the hearts of his followers through his teachings. He organized Sikhs in troops, bands and supplemented them by appealing the services of professional soldiers; he also employed 500 Pathans for forming his cavalry.⁵

After Guru Gobind Singh, Banda Buhadar was chosen as the leader of Sikhs who led them to more hazardous contests. He rationalized his troops and Sikhs were now more disciplined than before. Sikh forces had fought many wars against Mughal emperor’s forces and won some of them. They were now in open insurgency against government and were not strong enough so in the end their leaders were imprisoned and slaughtered by Mughal government in 1716 A.D.⁶

Troops under Banda Buhadar were divided into three classes of men. The 1st class was consisted of those Sikhs who were devoted to their faith and fought just for the sake of their Gurus. The 2nd class was comprised of private army those who were recruited and sent to Banda Buhadar and these were fed and paid surreptitiously by those chieftains who didn’t openly like to drop court favor and their posts. The 3rd class was of those irregulars who joined Banda Buhadar’s services just for the sake of war pickings and for plundering. After the long stable fighting of twenty years (1696-1716) under Guru Gobind Singh and Banda Buhadar now stood the Sikhs were in first-rate stead when the death sentence of the Banda Buhadar left them without a widespread renowned leader. The straightforward, amateur peasants of Guru Har Gobind had now become standard, well-equipped soldiers of the Khalsa, took on in the use of weapons and skilled in the technique of guerrilla fighting. The Khalsa had further tasted the sweets of triumph and acquired a love for loot. *“The spiritual sanction for plunder was indirectly given by Gobind Singh himself: robbing the robber, he had declared, was no sin.”*⁷

Although after the death of Banda Buhadar the Sikhs were without leader and hardheartedly treated by the government but the courage in their hearts could not pack down, most of them fled towards jungles, deserts and hills of Rajputana and Bikanir and plundered the caravans and government officers for vengeance and also to meet their basic necessities of life. They always waited for their turn which they got when Nadir Shah left Punjab in confusion and it caused creation of chaos. Sikhs took full benefit of that situation as anarchy was spread throughout Punjab; they came out from the jungles, started looting and plundering of the cities and

towns. After that Ahmad Shah's attacks created worse situation and Sikhs took best advantages of that situation.⁸ Sikh forces now divided themselves in bands or *Jathas*. They joined their hands against common enemy but they were now led by their own ambitions. The weaknesses of Mughal emperor played vital role in the prosperity of the Sikh bands. This situation lasted till 1748 and then Jassa Singh Kalal (Ahluwalia) was chosen as the common leader. The weakness of Delhi Emperor played an important role in the prosperity of Sikh bands. With the war booty and plundered money, many Sikh leaders armed Khalsa army and purchased horses for them. They progressively settled in the plains near Amritsar and also captured many fortresses in neighborhood. At that time there were almost twelve most prominent Sikh leaders who established themselves as master of important principalities.

The Khalsa army was consisted of forces of different chiefs which stayed in their particular areas or territory. It was required together whole army twice a year on the time of Dassehra and Baisakhi at Amritsar as well as these forces could also called on any special occasion or in emergency by Akalis, as to fought with common danger threatened to their religion and controlled by one common leader.⁹

There was no regular payment system but the spoils and booty, which brought into common account, was distributed in whole army through their leaders. There was no specific criterion of appointments in army, every Sikh who could use arms became the member of the Khalsa army, which later on transformed into the militant Khalsa consisted of a class of professional soldiers. Council of war and Sarbat Khalsa were two important institutions. Council of war was consisted of five prominent leaders of Dal Khalsa who dealt with the common threat.¹⁰ Sarbat Khalsa was a democratic body to take common decisions after meeting at central place Amritsar. Decisions taken by Sarbat Khalsa were known as Gurmata. General Sir Charles Gough pointed out: "*Any fighting machine must have a single controlling head, whereas, the Sikh doctrines of brotherhood and equality made very chief kick at the idea of insubordination*".¹¹

The forces of different chiefs were largely comprised of cavalry, although some artillery was also maintained but it was not properly managed. Generally Sikhs wore musket, sword and spear in the war but later on they also adopted the matchlock. The Khalsa forces had no appropriate and well-mannered uniform. They were just dressed in a turban, a shirt and a pair of shorts with tight fitting slippers. Before Maharaja Ranjeet Singh there were no restricted training measures for Khalsa forces and no concept of drill. The place of discipline was filled by courage and enthusiasm and army men were familiar with this triumph over or die. There was also no system to categorize troops in battalions or regiments but it was replaced by the Misl system to some extent.¹²

Khalsa army was very gradually developed in 18th century and many changes were subsequently introduced into military organization of Khalsa. The start of 19th century brought a major change in the political scenario of the Punjab as it was the time of the rise of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh as a member of Sikh confederacy, he got power and established a Sikh monarchy and it was due to his personal abilities that the whole structure of Khalsa army was changed. Ranjeet Singh very soon realized that the Khalsa army which was very successful during chaotic and anarchic 18th century due to his mode of warfare as guerilla fighting was inappropriate to the requirements of changed time. He was only eighteen when he realized that if he wanted to establish a great rule, it was obligatory to make stronger his army and re-arranged it on the European designs. But the Sikhs were not ready to go away from their typical style or mode of fighting as they thought that they remained successful due to it and will as before. But Ranjeet Singh was very striving in this matter so he very delicately handled the situation. First of all he very eagerly observed the methodical training of the British troops and got stimulated of their discipline. He also sent his men to learn the British method of training and the tactics.¹³

Although the infantry and artillery squads are key parts of any army, they appear to have played a small role in the Sikh army. Ranjeet Singh realized the important and key role of artillery and infantry in war winning army and due to it was dominance of European forces on Sikhs so he very soon after the occupation of the Amritsar, engaged the absconders from the British East India Company to instruct the infantry platoons of Khalsa army.¹⁴ Sikhs were not by and large attracted in infantry and did not thought it as honored thing so Ranjeet Singh started hiring of Punjabi Muslims, Gurkhas and Porbias as well as Afghans from European troops on high salaries. Ranjeet Singh was among one of the first in Sikh leaders who started upholding of standing troops. He personally observed their training. This thing also motivated the Sikhs to join the services of infantry on high number.

Ranjeet Singh also modified the style of fighting as he adopted the steady fire from gun and musket in place of irregular attacks of cavalry and guerilla mode of attacks. He thought that these old styles or methods were not purposeful enough against extremely trained and disciplined British army. He also strengthened another unnoticed part of the Sikh army which was artillery. He blew up its gun reserve and arranged there manufacturing on large scale.

The changes under these two branches brought very obvious change in the outlook of the Khalsa army and the change was undeniably fundamental and it looked as all of the old bits and pieces were thrown into a melting pot and last into a new silhouette.¹⁵

That change was also due to the common change in the overall look of the country, as the use of the artillery by the Europeans in India and also the employment or recruitment of the regimented military on a large scale, incompetent the old strategy and methods of warfare so it was the reason that after

enchanted power Ranjeet without delay started remodeling of his forces. Before Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, some Indian princes like rulers of Mysor (Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan) and some Maratha chiefs adopted these methods but Maharaja adopted the chore with far greater seriousness and at last succeeded after some difficulties.

The Maharaja Ranjeet Singh’s army incorporated all three branches of army service as in modern taxonomy infantry, artillery and cavalry. According to Sita Ram Kohli, the categorization of army found in government records of Maharaja is poles apart from the contemporary concept. Records classify the army in following divisions namely Fauj-i-Ain, Fauj-i-Be-Qawaid and Fauj-i-Qilajat.¹⁶

We can understand division of military through the following diagram very clearly.

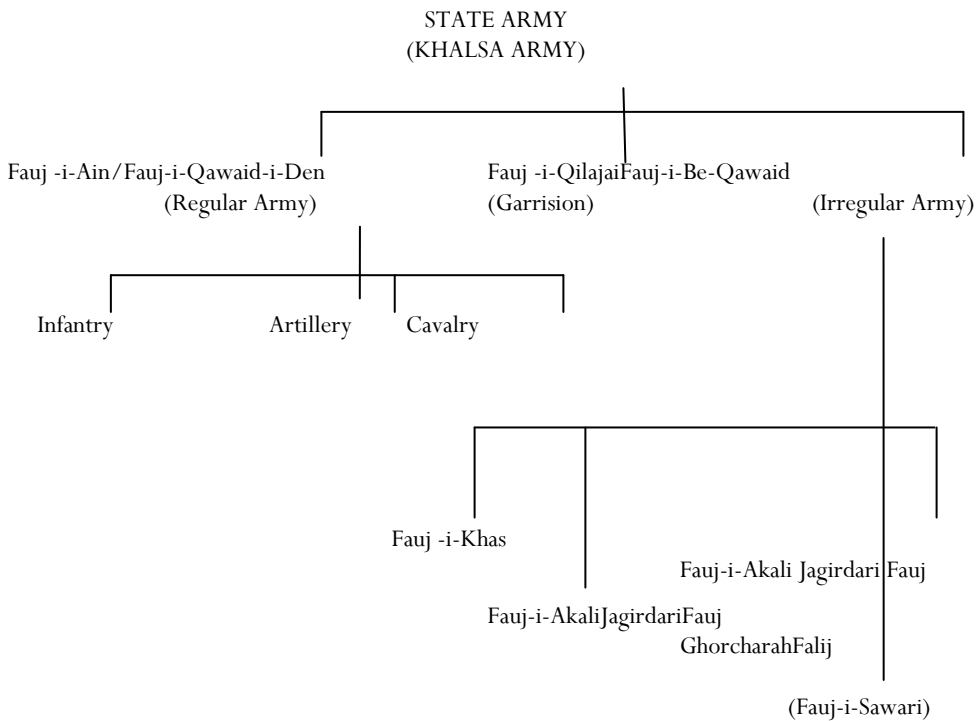


Table 3 Military organization of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh

Fauj-i-Ain (Regular Army):

Regular army or Fauj-i-Ain of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was also known as Fauj-i-Qawaid-Den. It consisted of troops trained in European methods of drill.

Fauj-i-Ain was Maharaja Ranjeet Singh's own formation, having all three branches of army as infantry, artillery and cavalry but it predominantly consisted on infantry and artillery, few regiments of cavalry (which made very tiny segment of Fauj-i-Ain) were attached with it.

Infantry – Its Development & Organization:

In India, the standing army was given very low-graded odd jobs as during war they stayed in forts and took care of women and children, door-keepers, palace guards, letter-carriers, gladiators, paliki-bearers and others similar to that. They were not assigned significant responsibilities and in the similar manner their pays were very little relatively other branches of army like cavalry or artillery. The Maharaja Ranjeet Singh first time saw a trained army of European system of drill that was well disciplined army of 5000 men and 60 guns who overpowered combined Sikh forces in 1800 A.D. under the headship of George Thomas. Later on, Along with JaswantRaoHolkar, he saw the arrangements of Lord Lake's forces. The Maharaja realized the importance of infantry and raised battalions of disciplined infantry.¹⁷

Ranjeet Singh had dual purposes behind his adoption of infantry as in one way he shall become advanced in army comparatively to other Indian chiefs and on the other hand he had been acquainted with that fact, closer or later he had to fight with British which were very close neighbor of his monarchy after peace treaty of 1809 so a little while after this treaty, the Maharaja focused to reinforce his forces had only cause to fear British.¹⁸The Sikhs were best to adopt and gain knowledge of the European methods of fighting than any other class of India.

The Maharaja chose Europeans like Ventura, Allard, Avitable and Court to train his army. As a result of his smartness Sikh army became almost unshakable and hardest army of India still faced by the British.¹⁹

According to Sita Ram Kohli,

*“thus in the absence of any direct evidence from the records of his government, although it is difficult to ascertain the exact date when Ranjeet Singh raised his first battalion of regular infantry, it may still be safely inferred that a humble beginning in this direction had been made very early in his reign by the Maharaja, probably about the year 1805 A.D.”*²⁰ *“new battalions known as platoon Najib, together with the TopkhanaKhas formed part of the force sent against Ahmad Khan of Jhang in 1803”*.²¹

It also supported SitaRam Kohli's view that Ranjeet preserved infantry battalions in very early stage of his supremacy. This information is further supported by letters of Charles Metcalfe who came to the Maharaja Ranjeet Singh's court in 1808 A.D. and saw 5 battalions in his service.

*“The pay rolls of Ranjeet Singh’s troops commence from Poh 1867 (Jan 1811 A.D) and the strength of the disciplined infantry borne on these rolls is 2500 men, they were organized into six battalions.”*²²

Infantry was divided into brigades and every brigade was composed of four battalions apiece. One or two batteries of artillery consisted of eight to ten horse-guns, a small Risalah or regiment of cavalry and a company of Beldars (suppers and miners) were attached to every brigade. Each brigade was headed by a General.²³ Some significant generals of Ranjeet Singh were Ventura, Sardar Ram Singh, Sardar Gujar Singh, Sardar Ajit Singh, Sardar Tej Singh, MianUdham Singh, Court and MisraSukh Raj.

Brigade was the main unit in infantry which was further divided into four battalions. Every battalion was restricted to 900 men who were commanded by an administrator of the rank of a commandant known as Kumedan (Commandant battalion). Kumedan was supported by an Adjutant and a Major in his functions. Moreover a Munshi, a Matassadi and a Granthi were also attached to every battalion. Munshi (clerk) was in charge to call and verify rolls, Mutassadi was an accountant whose business was to keep regimental balance sheet and Granthi was the reciter of Sikh Scripture (Granth Sahib). Granth Sahib was kept normally next to the regimental flag.

Every battalion was made by eight companies of the nominal strength of about hundred each. Each company was headed by a Subadar and these Subadars had assisted team in which two Jamadars were incorporated.²⁴

Company was additionally divided into four sections of twenty-five men; every section was headed by a Havaladar who was assisted by a Naik. The duties of Fourier and Sergeant were to help out company Commander in his managerial functions. Moreover, the Amla which was attached to every battalion was consisted on Khalsai-Saqqa (water-carrier), Sarban (Camel-driver), Beldar (Spadersmen), Gharyali, Jhanda-bardar (flag carrier), Najjar (mansons), Mistri (smiths) and Langri (cooks). There were also beasts of burden for each battalion which consisted of two camels for Commandant, one for adjutant, eight for Major, four for each company, two for Munshis and their records and one for MistriKhana. For carrying Guns and carts as well as to carry load, bullocks, he-buffaloes, and mules were employed as draught animals.²⁵

There was neither rule of set pay range during Maharaja’s era nor any hard and fast rule about promotions. But Sita Ram Kohlihas given a sheet of paper containing the Ain or rule for the starting salaries of numerous grades of officers in a battalion. According to that documentation, pay-rolls were arranged for a period of almost twenty-years. There was no rule of given pension (retirement fund) to the soldiers, they were permitted to serve up as long as they are well for it, no issue how old they were. The Maharaja Ranjeet Singh favored to disburse salaries in cash

although he could not entirely dispense with the Jagir system. In spite of salaries he repeatedly distributed offerings of money and cloths to his men with his own hands.²⁶

Artillery: Organization & Strength:

As already stated in connection with the history of infantry, the Khalsa army was fundamentally composed of cavalry although there were some verifications found about their awareness with guns and its use. They used guns at very early stage of their struggle. The opening event about which we found some indications about the use of guns was in connection with in 1701 A.D. when Guru Gobind Singh took refuge in the fort of Anandpur and was besieged by the royally armed forces of Mughals. At that time he used guns which were accumulated on the walls of the fortress and shoot from the guns. Another reference we got is the use of guns by Banda Buhadar on different events, firstly in Dec. 1710 A.D. Sikhs made out wooden guns with trunk of tarmarinal tree and fixed it on the outer hills of Lohgarh fort and same was continual in 1715 A.D. when Sikhs were besieged in Gurdaspur, they used light artillery which they had taken from Wazir Khan. These are the very early references of use of the artillery by Sikhs. After capital punishment of Banda Buhadar, Sikhs were scattered but very soon they tried to get lead of political circumstances of Punjab and organized themselves for ultimate effort. When Khwaja Obed besieged them in 1762 A.D. in fort of Gujranwala and lost, Sikhs got his luggage incorporated guns. Now Sikh chiefs raised their militia but with few guns which were small because at that time they were not habituated with heavy pieces.²⁷

Ranjeet Singh drew the attention of his community men towards the artillery and also generated consciousness in them that the cause of the European's victory in the wars was not their courageousness but the steady fire from the gun which they could directly fire on the lines of enemy. The Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was impressed with effectiveness and worth of artillery in warfare. He had become much eager about it and very motivated about keeping his artillery.²⁸ He had become greatly zealous in this regard as Mr. Charles Metcalfe wrote in one of his letters:

"The Raja's attachment to guns and his opinion of their weight, are both so great that he will never miss an opportunity of obtaining a gun. If he hears that there is a gun in any fort, he cannot rest until he has taken the fort to get at the gun, or until the gun has been given to him to save the fort. He immediately dismounts the gun from the walls and drags it after him as an addition to his field train. He has, it is said, procured three guns from Ambala. He boasted to me once that he had made the Raja of Patiala give him a fine gun which the Raja wished to rescue for rupees twenty thousand".²⁹

Same was with artillery, as occurred in the case of infantry, that Sikhs did not have required technical familiarity of gunnery and any particular regard for guns,

so Maharaja had to bring officials for his artillery from outside of his community as well as Punjab. And records had shown that most of his artillery was made by poorbias. But Maharaja was very concerned for joining up of artillery by his countrymen and he employed a number of European officers on high salaries for this reason to prepare them. Amongst them two were very prominent and of high caliber, ClaudAuguste Court and Alexnder Gardner. They were much admired among Maharaja's troops and were fully accountable for sky-scraping standing artillery of Maharaja. Maharaja's accomplishment in the field of artillery was no doubt because of these European officials. It was Maharaja's farsightedness that he had chosen best instructors for his army.

Gardener who was connected to Maharaja's court in 1832 A.D. was selected on the level of colonel of artillery and Maharaja gave him the complete command of camp of eight horse-artillery guns, two howitzers, and two mortars.³⁰ He was accountable to instruct most of the key officers of artillery who were headed by General Sultan Mahmud other colonels. Gardner observed that Maharaja was much anxious about this division of army which he showed in these words:-

*"for two or three months Maharaja Ranjeet Singh witnessed with much interest their firing of shell, shot, canister, red-hot shot etc; all receiving presents from his highness according to their proficiency and merit. The presents ranged from 500 to 5000 rupees and were usually paid, half in gold and silver and half in Pashmina (Kashmiri Shawls) etc."*³¹

Before 1810, artillery of the Maharaja was not completely developed and was small. It was divided into two parts

- a) TopkhanaKalan (heavy piece of artillery)
- b) TopkhanaKhurd (light pieces of artillery)

But in 1810 A.D. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh modified his military and restructured his artillery into a separate corps placed under an officer known as Darogha-i-Topkhana. The artillery was consisted of a primary and a little unit at that time. Principal or primary unit was known or called as Topkhana-i-Khas or Topkhana-i-Mubarak headed by Darogha-i-Topkhana (who was MianGhous Khan at that time) other part of artillery was horse drawn artillery; a separate horse battery was under the command of Mazhir Ali Beg. The Maharaja Ranjeet Singh had total thirty-nine guns from which five were under Mazhir Ali Beg and rest of thirty-nine were divided and attached to two of each platoon of the battalions of infantry. Moreover six Mortars and eighty-six Camel Swivels were attached to regular army which was dispersed in various forts of Lahore kingdom according to requirements.³²

Topkhana-i-Mubarak or Topkhana-i-Khas was additionally divided into sections. The first section was Gavi guns (driven by Bullocks) and second was Aspi

(horse driven) guns. Gavi section consisted of seventeen guns and in Aspi six were included. Mortars and Zamburaks (camel guns) formed separate units. The records of 1826 A.D. showed major transformations in artillery organization as well as in its strength. There was rapid increase in the strength of artillery. A new battery was lifted up under direction of IlahiBakhsh with fifteen horse-guns. Regular army was at that time identified as Campu-i-Mualla. After death of MianGhous Khan, Misar Diwan Chand succeeded him, later on Sukh Dial became the chief commander of artillery but was soon dishonored and son of Ghous Khan, Sultan Mahmud Khan, was put incharge of entire branch.³³

But 1827-28 A.D. disclosed additional changes and whole department was updated after General Court's selection as commander. Firstly, under Sayyad Imam Shah, a separate artillery park was placed which was consisted of twenty five guns. Secondly Topkhana-i-Khas was attached to regular army.³⁴ Thirdly artillery was re-divided into three wings:-

- a) TopkhanaJinsi (reserved artillery)
- b) TopkhanaAspi (horse driven)
- c) ZamburakKhana (camel-swivels)

These sections were further divided into batteries.

TopkhanaJinsi or reserved artillery consisted diverse batteries of Aspi (horse-driven), Gavi (bullock-driven), Hobath (howitzers) and Fill (elephant-driven). Ten to fifteen guns were attached to each one battery of Jinsi and sometimes number was bigger than it.

In TopkhanaAspi all batteries consisted six to ten pieces of guns and many were apart of irregular army.

Zamburaks (camel-swivels) contained sixty swivels. It was divided into Derahs (camps) and each Derah was further divided into Batteries. Every Battery consisted ten guns and two hundred and fifty men in which non-combatants were also included.

In all three sections, batteries were commanded by an officer of the rank of commandant and he was assisted by a Major and an Adjutant. Non-combatants attached to every battery included five JandhaBardars, five Gharyalies, ten Beldars, ten Mistries, ten Saqqas and a large number of Kamas (bullock-driven) and Taihliyas (grooms).

Batteries were sub divided into sections of two guns in each and each gun was treated as sub-unit which was headed by Jamadars with assistance of a Hawaldar and a Naik. Gunners average was eight to eleven attached to each gun or Sub-unit.

W. G. Osborne wrote in his dairy about the effectiveness of Maharaja's artillery;

"3rd June (1838 A.D)---Accompanied the Maharaja to his artillery practice ground, where we found twelve horse artillery guns, of different calibers, but tolerably well horsed and

equipped. These guns are the refuse of his artillery, and only used to accompany him when he marches. His great depot is at Lahore, and is said to be very superior, and decidedly his best arm, and the one he takes most interest in. He was trying his own shells; at five hundred yards the practice was indifferent, but at eight and twelve hundred it was excellent. Many of the shells exploded exactly over the curtain..."³⁵

Karkhanajat (Factories):

The most important workshops for the mechanized guns were located in Lahore within the fort as well as in other parts of the city and were identified by the name of those officers who headed these, e.g. KarkhanaKhalifa Sahib (Nur-ud-Din), KarkhanaJawahar Mal Mistriwala and QadiKhanwala. It was a well-recognized truth that Sikhs cast their guns in their own Karkhanajat. And these guns were much refined and in general manifestation could not be discriminated by the European guns. MianQadirBakhsh was sent to Ludhiana and in return he wrote a book entitled Miftah-ul-Qila on gunnery, it caught the greatest interest of Maharaja.

Alexander Gardner's memoirs told us about a foundry next to the Jahangir's mausoleum (Shahdara) he wrote:

*"We have been casting guns in the garden there (Shahdara) and those guns which were unfinished I buried before moving to Lahore"*³⁶

*"During the Anglo-Sikh wars, it was observed by British commanders that guns of Sikhs which were made in Lahore were much finer than of their and could fire from more distance than of their guns."*³⁷

There was also practice of naming guns as in Mughals. Guns always had their own names, e.g. Fateh Jang (victories in war), Jang-i-Bijli (destroyer like lightning), SherDahan (Tiger mouthed), Laila and Majnun etc. Sometimes they were named on founder or place as Top Dhiansinghwali or Top Nakodarwali and so on. It was also tradition of given Persian inscriptions to the outsized pieces of canons, given the name of founder, place and year of manufacture. These guns were taken into custody in a number of events during the first Sikh War in 1845-46 A.D.

According to M. Latif, Mirza Abdul Karim wrote in his book Tuhfat-ul-ahbab:

SIRI AKAL SAHAI

"This gun belongs to MisarBeli Ram. A voice from heaven gave it the name 'Victory and Triumph'. It shows forth fire and sparks of lightning. From its smoke the mornings of enemies are changed into evenings." 1840, Sambat.³⁸

*"Under orders of His Gracious Majesty the Singh Sahib, the Crown Head of the Khalsa, the King Ranjeet Singh (may his dignity last for ever) this gun, belonging to Diwan LalaMoti Ram and Ram Dial, was completed in the blessed fort of Lahore under the superintendence of MianQadirBakhsh in Sambat 1881 (1824 A.D.). the name of the gun is Fateh Jang. The work of Muhammad Hayat"*³⁹

Lieutenant Barr wrote in his book, 'Journal of a March through Punjab', about dress of artillery under Court;

*"The man dressed something like our own horse artillery, except that, instead of helmets, they wear red turbans, (the Jamadars or officers being of Silk) which hang down so as to cover the back part of the neck; white trousers, with long boots, black waist and cross belts and black leather scabbard with brass ornaments"*⁴⁰

In the artillery division pay was greatly similar as in Infantry.

Cavalry: Development & Organization

The cavalry was the well-built and developed department before Maharaja as the Khalsa army merely consisted of cavalry. When Maharaja started restructuring his army, he chose French General, Jean François Allard for a proficient course of training of his cavalry on western outline although cavalry regiments were attached to brigades of the infantry and artillery but the primary body of cavalry of Ranjeet Singh's army shaped a separate and independent service. The Maharaja showed much shrewdness in the organization of cavalry as the old Khalsa cavalry had much deep roots in the system and was not possible to abrupt it at once or replaced through the trained and centralized cavalry direct under Maharaja.⁴¹

The Maharaja was not in the safe and sound position at that time as there were many strong and influential chiefs and Sardars and the Khalsa army was divided into many camps which were headed by these chiefs and Sardars. Cavalrymen were very dedicated to their particular head, and they claimed their right of share in war pickings or booty of conquest moreover the Khalsa had glory of decisive triumph which it secured after a long struggle so Maharaja very expertly comprehended the whole scenario and considered it no harm by allowing a part of his military service to be ordered on the old mode and long-established manner. The Maharaja knows that the soldiers were not used to the strict regulations of discipline but were very enormous experienced cavalry which refined in the battlefield. So Maharaja can't afford to disregard such cavalry of extremely experienced especially at that point when he was encircled from all sides by influential Muhammadan chiefs and other antagonistic elements of Manjha.⁴²

So he accurately decided to put up with the two systems continue side by side and in this way, this body of army played their part as a connection between old system of 18th century and new military system introduced by Maharaja. Although Maharaja did not bring to an end the old system of cavalry but he put a check on it whenever it was achievable and sign up Sikh chiefs in his own service, allowed them to made their separate corps in his army so the outcome of these policies as well as broad policy of centralization of his administration and military, the old feudal tradition of Khalsa gone astray gradually. Now the Sikhs were attracted to ranks of regular paid standing cavalry force.

Cavalry under Maharaja was divided into three classes

- Regular cavalry
- GhorcharahFauj
- JagirdariFauj

The first one was included in the Fauj-i-Ain and later two were part of irregular army.⁴³

The regular cavalry of Maharaja, which was primarily trained by General Allard, was numerically made very smaller part of Maharaja's horsemen.⁴⁴ Each and every one who observed that regular cavalry regiments ought to praised Allard as, in manifestation and in equipments, it was an excellent body of men and not less than infantry and artillery in any way. Lieutenant William Barr made a depiction of Allard's cavalry in his account;

"We then reached the cavalry, the dragoons occupying the left. These were well-mounted, and form a fine body of men and horses. On their right were two regiments of Allard's cuirassiers, the noblest looking troops on parade. The men and horses were all picked, and amongst the former are to be seen many stalwart fellows, who appear to advantage under their cuirasses and steel casqued. Particular attention seems to have been paid to setting them well up, and their accoutrements are kept in the highest order. Many of the officers were brass cuirasses, and their commandant is, perhaps, the finest man of the whole body, and looks extremely well in front of his superb regiment. It used to be poor Allard's pride and amusement to review these men, and their present martial appearance is no doubt owing to that officer's constant care and superintendence."⁴⁵

It is renowned that regular cavalry was not less than company's cavalry in any characteristic like in marching past and promptness and order of the cuirassiers etc.⁴⁶Barr further portray the outfit and armaments wearied by Maharaja's cavalry;

"The dress of the dragoons consisted of a jacket of a dull red with broad facings of buff, crossed in front by a pair of black belts one of which supported a pouch and the other a bayonet, genuine dragoon equipment, in which the Sikh cavalry fought, as the old quip has it, indifferently on horseback or on foot. Round the waist the dragoons wore a kamarband, partially concealed by a sword-belt, from which hung a saber with a brass hilt and leathern scabbard. The carbine was so attached as to give it the appearance of being slung across the back of the dragoon but rested, in fact, in a bucket fastened to the saddle. The trousers were of dark-blue cloth with a red stripe, and the turbans of crimson silk, brought somewhat into a peak in front, and ornamented in the center with a small brass half-moon, from which sprang a glittering spring about two inches in height. The officers were attired from top to toe in bright crimson silk, and were armed with a saber only."⁴⁷

Due to the great attention of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, Fauj-i-Ain had become one of the very well-structured departments of the Kingdom. From

different records especially from traveler's accounts, we found Maharaja's supreme concern and it was the reason of raising the efficiency of his Fauj-i-Ain one and the same to the level of Company's troops. The credit also goes to the Punjabi as well as Sikh community who extremely sharp and in very little time become the master of European armaments and strategy of fighting. Even when in between 1842-1845, when nearly all of the European officers left service, the Sikhs and Indian officers were did well in maintaining the regulation and competence of Khalsa army which was almost immediately tested in battle field during Anglo-Sikh war in 1845-46 and proved themselves as equivalent to British. As in Cunningham's words;

*"The guns of the Sikhs were served with rapidity and precision and the foot soldiers stood between and behind their batteries, firm in their order and active with their musket. The resistance met by the English on this occasion was wholly unexpected and it was at Ferozshah for the first time that the English and British soldiers of English armies met an equal antagonist with their own weapons - even ranks and the fire of artillery"*⁴⁸

Sir G. Gough remarked;

*"Never did a native army, having so relatively slight an advantage in numbers, fight a battle with the British in which the issue was so doubtful as at Ferozshah; and if the victory was decisive, opinion remains divided as to what the result might have been if the Sikh troops had found commanders with sufficient capacity to give their qualities full opportunity."*⁴⁹

Fauj-Be-Qawaid (Irregular Army):

In the early times of establishment of Khalsa army under different chiefs, known as Dal Khalsa was a scattered army. The chiefs had their own personal interests and objectives but on different times united individual plunderers into an army against common enemy and this army disbanded after completion of the mission. This united army was paid of common fund on which all contributed. Round about 1770 A.D the more important Sikh chiefs established twelve independent Misls of Punjab, had their own terrain, cache and supporters.⁵⁰ Because of their personal jealousies and quarrels they had to maintain their military strength. That military was paid by ruin of plunder and later on got share in subjugated land. Gradually they become professional soldiers.

Three evolutionary periods⁵¹ before Maharaja Ranjeet Singh;

- Khalsa soldier struggled for his religion and being compensated out of a common account raised by loot.
- In the second phase he is fighting both for religious conviction and for stolen goods under the flag of a chieftain of his own selection and still being salaried out of the booty of subjugation.

- At last, he has adopted fighting as an occupation, that is, as a means of source of living.

Now was the time of rise of Ranjeet Singh. He very skillfully gave a definite form and direction to this movement. He could not eliminate the norm of fief at once so he adopted the strategy of discouragement where ever it is doable and established a regular paid standing army in place of a gang of supporters having only aspiration for plundering.⁵² In very initial days of his supremacy he raised a salaried regiment of GhorcharahSowar and few years later, another regiment raised known as Khas Orderlies. These two regiments served as a core of the standing cavalry which subordinately swelled into an outsized army (Maharaja's irregular cavalry was mostly consisted on the cavalry and was known and called as Fauj-i-be-Qawaid) and they may be moderately estimated about 30,000 men.⁵³

Fauj-i-be-Qawaid as exposed by the name that this piece of army didn't follow any rules and set of laws or didn't had any type of Ain. This bough of army didn't accept and follow methods of European military drill and discipline, which imposed by Maharaja.

There were many types of irregular army under Maharaja, as;

- The Akalis (Sikh fighter priests- The Guru's ladliFauj-the Remnants of the Budhha Dal from the eighteenth century-Headed by AkaliPhula Singh.)
- Fauj-i-Khass (Special force)
- GhoracharhFauj (Army of Horsemen)
- JagirdariFauj (Army of fief holders)

The Akalis: Akalis were the initiator of Sikh Khalsa army as they laid down the basis of Dal Khalsa. They were in point of fact a body of Sikh fighter priests who held charge of the temple of Amritsar at time of nationwide jeopardy. They were orthodox Sikhs. They wear special type of dress and were always prepared to lay down their lives for their holy and dignified cause. We can say that Akalis were forerunners of contemporary commandos.⁵⁴ There were no particular criteria of their enrollment. Every Sikh who had religious sentiments and was strong enough to fight and wanted to serve up his life for fortification of his religion could join Akalis. They were not paid force; they just took some for to fulfill their necessity from the common fund.⁵⁵

Fauj-I-Khas: Fauj-i-Khas was a particular force, established by Maharaja. It was ordered on the same lines as of French Legion and of recent times army's Guard Battalions. General Allard and Ventura were primarily held responsible for its perpetuation. The men of sky-scraping or better competence were chosen for this service. They also served as the personal body-guards of the Maharaja. They could differentiate by their dresses. Captain Wade writes:-

“It appears to be a remarkably fine body of men. It passing the camp of the Legion, I noticed several standards with tri-colored flag which the French officers, I find, adopted as the distinguishing ensign of their corps. The corps was extremely well equipped and very steady under arms. The battalion performed several manoeuvres executing them in a style of property that surpassed many expectations.”⁵⁶

The GhorcharahFauj: GhorcharahFauj was the foremost part of Maharaja’s irregular cavalry and distinguished from JagirdariFauj as this piece of irregular army was directly salaried from State reserves. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh had many fold purposes behind the establishment of the GhorcharahFauj as he felt it a military inevitability as well as political pragmatism. As it seemed that Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was very anxious to create feeling of love and faithfulness for his government and for his successors among the representatives of numerous powerful families of the province,⁵⁷ by the abdication of distinctions and other symbols of favors and tried to keep them near his court. So he try to won their loyalty, appreciation and gratification on any cost, as he also granted small cash allowances etc., and it was because of his conciliatory policy that many paltry chieftains and their trained warriors were willingly absorbed into the State army. In the end of the 18th century Punjab was alienated among a number of Sikh chiefs who had their own army but with the rise of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, they slowly but surely engrossed their territories into Maharaja’s dominion so their troops were automatically transferred to the Maharaja’s service.

The cavalry men thought that

“The dash of a cavalry charge and the reckless courage combined with the momentum of a rapid pell-mell assault were better calculated to overpower an enemy than the even and slow fire from infantry ranks.”⁵⁸

Maharaja did not considered it lucrative to insist on re-modeling of these troops on up-to-the-minute lines so he allowed them to hold their old organization and constitution only with very minor modifications.

GhorcharahFauj has two important parts or classes

- a) GhorcharahKhas
- b) MisaldarSowar

The basic difference between the two was that GhorcharahKhas were recruited from the aristocracy of the province and formed only regiment.⁵⁹ The purpose behind the raising of GhorcharahKhas was two-fold:

- i. Prepared body of faithful and skilled warriors encompassing Maharaja’s own person
- ii. Draw the scions of noble families to his court

On the other side MisaldarSowars were those troops which belongs to diverse self-governing chiefs of Sikhs who took up service under Ranjeet Singh with

their own bands of the horsemen. Later on another regiment was raised by Maharaja known as ArdaliKhas, paid by cash and Jagir allowances. ArdaliKhas and GhorcharahKhas were the center of GhorcharahFauj.⁶⁰

For managerial purposes the GhorcharahFauj was grouped into divisions in 1879 Sambat (1822 A.D.) and each division positioned under the charge of a noblemen. Some were Sindhanwalia, Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia, AttariwalaSardars, JamadarKhushhal Singh and Misar Diwan Chand, each commanded a division. These extensive divisions were catalogued into number of groups called Derahs. Each Derah or Camp was an absolute entity and had the regimental staff too, in which commander (chief) was head of Derah who was assisted with one subsidiary officer, a Vakil (mediator of the chief at court), a Mutsaddi (accountant), a Munshi (writer), Nishanchi (ensign), Dhownsa Nawaz (chief drummer) and one Granthi (reader of Sikh scriptures).⁶¹

A Derah was further sub-divided into several groups known as Misals (which meant equal). In Ranjeet Singh's age men didn't join army in person but as small bands or groups under the leadership of their local chief who was sometimes head of clique and in other most daring member of the group.⁶² A group was consisted on people of same clan otherwise more or less closely interrelated to each other. A missal was the subsidiary unit of Derah similar to company in a regiment. It neither had a permanent strength nor sub-divided into sections. Its strength was diverse from 16 to 70 men and most of the time they belonged to same family as brothers or cousins etc.

The service in GhorcharahFauj was not constrained to any race or creed. More or less all military classes of Punjab had representation in that branch of army. Likewise Jat Sikhs, Hindu Rajputs, MuhammadanRajputs produced large number relatively of these Pathans, Khatries and Datta Brahmins who also appeared in the army lists.⁶³

The pays of irregular cavalry were higher in contrast of regular army. In start Maharaja followed the old ritual of payment in form of Jagir but when number increased and cash payment become familiar and well-liked, he started cash payment and the preliminary salary of a trooper was between 250 to 300 rupees per annum. Before Maharaja Ranjeet Singh it was a regular practice that trooper had to arrange his own horse, arms and armor only in that case he could enrolled himself under banner of a chief. But Maharaja Ranjeet Singh provided every facility to hire by state.⁶⁴ At the time of joining, recruiter was provided with essential equipment by Government or Chief in whose Misal he joined or enrolled, and was permitted to pay the cost in painless installments.

Sir Griffin made a picture about the dressing of GhorcharahFauj in his work as:

“No uniformity was seen in the dress of Ghorcharah Fauj. Some wore a shirt of mail, along with helmet which was inlaid with gold and a heron’s plume (Kalgi). Some were gay with the many colored splendors of velvet and silk, with gold embroidered belts to carry swords and powder horn and pink or yellow muslin turbans. Small round shield was worn at back made of tough buffalo hide. Majority of them were armed with matchlocks and some with bows and arrows.”⁶⁵

It may be remarked that Maharaja Ranjeet Singh held this very well material at a relatively inexpensive cost, as it was not so much for his pay that a man attached to the Ghorcharah ranks as for the feel affection for fighting and the self-esteem attached to this branch of the militia.⁶⁶ Ghorcharah Fauj of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh represented upper classes of society, in the early days of his rule, this body of army assisted him as his right hand and with its help he was able to occupied Jammu, Kangra, Multan and Kashmir. Whenever his regular army was futile, the brave, daring and courageous Ghorcharah saved the situation. Baron Hugel said:

“I requested leave to inspect them (the Ghorcharahs) and never beheld a finer nor a more remarkably striking body of men. Each one was dressed differently and yet so much in the same fashion that they all looked in perfect keeping. The handsome Raja Suchet Singh (commander of one of the biggest division) was in a similar costume, and reminded me of the time when the fate of empires huge on the point of a lance, and when the individual whose bold heart beat fearlessly under his steel breastplate was the sole founder of his fortunes. The strange troop before me was peculiarly Indian. The uniform consisted of a velvet coat or gabardine, over which most of the tunic. A belt round the waist, richly embroidered in gold, supported the powder-horn, covered with cloth of gold as well as the Persian Katar and pistol which many of them carried in addition to those weapons. Some wore a steel helmet, inlaid with gold, and surmounted with Kulgi or black heron’s plume: others wore a cap of steel, worked like a cuirass in rings. The left arm is often covered from hand to the elbow with a steel cuff inlaid with gold. The round Sikh shield hangs on the back fastened with straps across the chest, aquiver at the right side and a bow slung at the back being carried as part of the equipment; a bag made in the belt holds the balls, and a tall bayonet, frequently ornamented with gold, held in the right hand when the man is on foot and carried over the shoulder when in the saddle, completes the dress.”⁶⁷

Jagirdari Fauj:

Although Maharaja Ranjeet Singh maintained his army on regular basis and European replica but he did not eliminate the granting Jagir. He granted Jagirs to his Sardars and courtiers to maintain the cavalry, which rose on feudal principles. A fief-holder was accountable for preparing competent and outfitted troops according to prerequisite of State. The number of soldiers was depended on assessment of Jagir which was assigned to them. These horsemen lived on their own Jagir and only required to be present in Dusshera festival for evaluation only once in year. The

Maharaja Ranjeet Singh in person reviewed parade of his whole irregular army annually either at Lahore or Amritsar.⁶⁸ It was made essential for everyone to be there. The Maharaja very strictly reviewed the troops of all fief-holders and enforced strict rules of punishment to avoid corruption within his JagirdariFauj, and took effective measures of check and control. Here was a case of punishment:

“In Sambat 1885 (1827-28 A.D.) a review of Sardar Hari Singh Nalva’s contingent was taken. It was discovered that the numbers fell short by one hundred and fifty men; since he mustered only four hundred and fifty, whereas according to the terms of the grant of Jagir—executed at the time of his going out as Governor of Kashmir—he had to maintain six hundred. Since he could not give a satisfactory explanation of his conduct, the Maharaja after ascertaining from Accounts Officer (Military Pay Office) ordered Sardar Hari Singh to refund to the State treasury a sum of rupees five lacs charged at the rate of seventy thousand per year for one hundred and fifty men. On the repeated representations of the Sardar, the amount was reduced to two lacs which he was made to pay within a short time.”⁶⁹

He well thought-out to maintained the minutes of each and every man with references to avoid any type of proxy or substitution etc. He also introduced branding of horses for this purpose. He very shrewdly adopted the policy to involve his JagirdariFauj in small expeditions in different parts of his Kingdom. The purpose behind this strategy was twofold, on one side he was clever enough to stop corruption as fief-holders had kept their men and horses active and fit all the time because of the alarm that their service could be called any time. And on the other side irregular cavalry made pleased as they realized their importance in this way.⁷⁰ The organization of this part of the army was on the same lines as of the GhorcharahFauj. People joined chiefs with their particular clans and relatives etc and same as GhorcharahFauj, JagirdariFauj kept themselves aloof of regimented and new methods. They took pride in maintaining themselves according to old practice of Khalsa cavalry.⁷¹ Very clear provisions were made by Ranjeet Singh about the number of men, their annual and monthly salary of these troopers of JagirdariFauj. He also preset their allowances for maintenance of armor, equipment and for physical fitness of trooper. Jagirdars got separate allowances. For the purpose of indemnity of renewal and augmentation of JagirdariFauj, Maharaja made frequent demand for active service and paid bombshell visit to the estates of the Jagirdars.⁷² So every chief was anxious to do his best for general outward show and efficiency of his contingent in comparison to other chiefs. Under Maharaja’s service the relations of Jagirdar with his troops was not rather than satisfaction because of following reasons;

“The rate of pay and the emoluments of the troopers were, in the majority of cases, determined by the State itself at the time of making the grant. Thus one fruitful source of irritation and discontent against the chief was removed by the very conditions of service. Secondly it was very difficult for a trooper to give up the service of one chief and join the slandered of another, if he

*did not find the condition of service agreeable to him. Thirdly, in most cases, he was a kinsman of his chief, and the pressure of social and moral opinion would, on the one hand, compel the chief to accord a good treatment to his followers and, on the other, it would equally compel the followers to obey and respect their chiefs. It is this bond, perhaps, more than anything else, which accounts for the often remarkable discipline and devotion of bands of irregular Ghorcharahs.*⁷³

The strength of Jagirdari Fauj could not accurately find out but approximately twenty thousand well equipped horsemen were probable to maintain to bring into field. This Jagirdari Fauj was the product of the hasty social and political changing in Punjab during the latter half of the 18th century.⁷⁴
Fauj-I-Qilajat (Garrisons):

It was a ritual and also important for safety that forts were built at strategic places for example Peshawar, Multan, Attock and Kashmir etc. These were self-sufficient in food-grains and war resources for long sieges. Fauj-i-Qilajat was the part of main division of Ranjeet Singh's army. It was actually irregular army chiefly comprised of artillery and infantry but in certain important forts it also supplemented with small bodies of horsemen and other regular troops. It was very simply structured body.⁷⁵ Each garrison in diverse forts was treated as separate unit and worked under the authoritative officer of the fort. Tactically important forts were provided with stores of grains and war assets which replaced by new supplies on regular basis, and these were powerfully garrisoned. And the other forts were supposedly garrisoned and strength varied of 25 to 50 men. According to SRK, 200 in time of peace total strength was almost 10,800 with estimated salary of 72, 00 per month.⁷⁶

This garrison were divided into Baradarries and known on the name of their chiefs. The head or chief of the Baradari was called as Jamadar. A garrison infantry soldiers got 5 to 7 rupees pay per month and Jamadar got double. All the Jamadars and their garrison got their salaries through Thanadar, who (Thanadar) was the head of fort and for the most part responsible for all affairs related to his garrison, he was also autonomous of the civil authorities of the district in which fort sited. He was responsible for safekeeping of the fort.

To sum up, Maharaja Ranjeet Singh was the military genius of his times. He definitely realized the coming threats and tried to organize the military on sound basis. The composition of Maharaja's military does represent the secular ideas as it was not only composed or dominated by any single religious or ethnic group but of multiple identities. The pattern of Maharaja's army marks an important landmark in history of sub-continent. It was a master piece of his skills and abilities. The Maharaja's army showered his state many-fold blessings regarding peace, prosperity and wealth. It not only help him to extend his empire but it was due to his army that he was able to encounter the utmost danger of the British. In fact, military

establishment of Maharaja proved a base upon which he erected the super-structure of his Punjab State.

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⁴ The term “Khalsa” is derived from Arabic word “Khalis” means pure. During the Mughal era this term was used for the crown land which was administered directly by the king. In the Sikh tradition, this term acquired a special connotation when Guru Gobind Singh designated this term to the Sikhs. Although, the words “Khalsa Ji” are also used loosely to address an individual but in wider perspective the Khalsa implies the collective spiritually directed community.

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⁶⁷ Baron Charles Hugel, *Trevels in Kashmir & the Punjab* (Lahore: Majlis-i-Taraq-i-Adab, 1990), p. 358.

⁶⁸ Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh*, p. 57.

⁶⁹ LalaSohanLalSuri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, eng tr. V. S. Suri, Daftar ii (Delhi: S. Chand & Co., 1961), p. 379.

⁷⁰ Fakir Waheeduddin, p. 126-7.

⁷¹ Osborne, *Court & Camp of Runjeet Sing*, p.157.

⁷² It was not at all difficult for Ranjeet Singh to take a chief by surprise, as it is a matter of common knowledge that no one could tell the destination of the Maharaja till he had actually mounted on the back of his horse and started.

⁷³ S. R. Kohli, *Army of Maharaja*, part iii, p. 189.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.196.

⁷⁵ AwatarSekhon, *The Sikh Warriors*, p. 20-21.

⁷⁶ S. R. Kohli, *Army of Maharaja*, part iii, p. 200.