

History and Regional Setting Nahan Town

The Nahan town was founded by Raja Karam Prakash in 1621 A.D. as his capital of Sirmour State. The other story about its formation is that a saint "Bada Nanwari Dass" who lived with a companionable NAHAR on the site where the Nahan palace now stands, NAHAR means Lion and probably the town takes its name from the saint. The hub of Nahan activities is "Chougon" "Bikram-Ka-Bagh and Khadar – Ka –Bagh "Soba Rowel" who conquered and established Kingdom with the capital at Rajban (near C.C.I. factory Paonta Sahib) taking the title of "Subhans Prakash". He ruled up till 1199 A.D. Ever since the name of "Prakash" in the princely family of Sirmour continued till its last ruler. The history of ruler dynasty of Sirmour State started with Raja "Subhans Prakash"

Pre-Independence

In the old gazetteer of Sirmour (1934), it is related that in about 1097 A.D. Raja of Jaisalmer "UGER SEN", who happened to visit Haridwar on pilgrimage and on hearing the throne vacant in the nearby state sent his son

After the death of Raja Subhans Prakash (1195-1199 A.D), his son "Maha Prakash" came to power with capital at Rajban (Near Paonta Sahib). He captured all the lost territories of former Sirmour state and to extend the limits of his state. After the rule of eighteen years, he died in A.D. 1217. In the old gazetteer, genealogical tree, his name appears at serial No. 4 following "Balak Chand Prakash" and "Salvahan Prakash", but Kr. Ranzor Singh places him at serial No. 2, after "Shubhans Prakash", "Raja Udit Prakash" ascended to the throne in the year 1217 and shifted his capital from "Rajban" to kalsi (Now in Dehra Dun district of Uttranchal Pradesh). He abdicated in favour of his son "Kaul Prakash" in A.D. 1227. Kol Prakash, like his grandfather "Mahe Prakash", busied himself in the argumentation and strengthening of the pounds of his domain. He ruled till A.D. 1239 and then "Sumer Prakash" come to power in A.D. 1239. first plundered and annexed the fort and then hill state of "Ratesh", forming pat of "Keonthal" state and make it his capital. He passed away in A.D. 1248 after the region of nine years. Raja Suraj Prakash than ascended to the throne in A.D.1248, while at "Ratesh", he got a news from "Kalsi" that his subjects has risen in revolt and devastated the capital at "Kalsi" and had also attacked the palace. Accordingly to one version, his daughter played a great role in the suppression of revolt; while according to some, she died in the process. "Raja Suraj Prakash", after re-establishing order, again set out to the hills and

is said to have invaded the "Thakurs" of Jubbal, Balsan, Kumarsain, Ghund, Theog, Sairi, Rawen and Kotgarh (Now all in Shimla district) and made them to pay tribute and then returned to "Kalsi".

Raja "Suraj Prakash" ruled for eleven years and died in the year 1259. Next century from A.D.1259 to 1374 was uneventful. During this period, seven Rajas, namely "Padam Prakash", "Karam Prakash", "Akhand Prakash", "Budhi Prakash", "Aachal Prakash", "Vir Soal Prakash", and "Sat Brahmin" ruled the state. "Raja Bhakat Prakash" ruled from 1374 to 1386, the Sirmour state was made a tributary by "Firoj Shah" of Delhi. Following the death of "Raja Bhakat Prakash in A.D. 1386, "Raja Jagat Prakash" occupied the throne, he died after two years reign in A.D. 1388. "Raja Veer Prakash", son of Jagat Prakash came to power in A.D. 1388 and crushed rebellion of Thakurs. He died at Hatchet in 1398, after then years reign. "Raja Nekat Prakash" ascended to the throne in 1398. He made "Village Neri" at his place of resident and seat of Government. Ruling for fourteen years, he was followed by "Raja Garbh Prakash" in A.D. 1414. He transferred his place of residence from Neri to Jagri fort, situated in the erstwhile state of Ratesh from where he ruled for eighteen years and died in A.D. 1433, "Ratesh" at present is in the Shimla district. "Raja Braham Prakash" ascended to the throne in A.D. 1432 after the death of his father "Raja Garbh Prakash" According to "Kanwar Ranzor Singh" he made "Kot Deothal", in Sirmour his capital. He ruled for fourteen years and died in A.D. 1446. He was succeeded by son "Hans Prakash", who also ruled from Kot Deothal and after a reign of twenty five years, he died in A.D. 1471. "Raja Rattan Prakash" ascended to the throne in A.D. 1471 and ruled till A.D. 1495. "Raja Prithi Prakash" reigned from A.D. 1495 to A.D. 1522 to be followed by "Raja Bahubal Prakash". Who ruled at "Kot Deothal" till 1538, is believed to have removed his place of residence to "Kalsi" and after a reign of thirty two years, died in A.D. 1570. He was succeeded by "Raja Deep Prakash", who ruled for fifteen years and died in 1585. He was followed by "Raja Bhakat Prakash" who died at Kalsi in A.D. 1605, after a reign of twenty years. "Raja Bhadi Prakash" mounted the throne in A.D. 1605. He shifted his residence and seat of Government from "Kalsi" to "Rajpur". He died in A.D. 1615. In the list of Rajas, maintained in the state head office, the name of "Raja Bhudi Prakash" is given as "Bhupat Prakash", but in "Mahant's" list, his reign has been omitted. He was followed by "Raja Udai Prakash", who ruled for on year and died in A.D. 1616

"Raja Karam Prakash" ascended to the throne in A.D. 1616 and reigned till A.D. 1630. For the first six years, he continued to reside at Kalsi and then in A.D. 1621, he laid the foundation of the city

and the fort of "NAHAN". It is believed that formerly state was called "NAHAR", nearing lion, after the lion companion of saint who was living there. "Raja Karam Prakash" was disciple of "Baba Banwari Dass". Whose descendent still hold the temple of "JAGGANATH" at Nahan. He was succeeded by his brother "Mandhata Prakash" who was contemporary of the "Emperor Shah Jahan", he reign eight year's and breathed his last in A.D. 1647. "Raja Sobhag Prakash" ascended to throne in A.D. 1647, "Raja Sobhag" ruled for twelve years at "Nahan" and died in A.D. 1659. "Raja Sobhag Prakash" had two son's , "Bihari Mal (or Mahi Chand) and "Hari Singh". Bihar Mal succeeded his father in A.D. 1659, under the title of Budh o "Budha Chand Parkah". He was also known as Mahi Prakash in history. "Raja Budh Prakash" (Raja Budh Prakash) ("Bahi Prakash") died in A.D.1678 under the title of "Mast or Medni Prakash. In the 31st year of his reign, Aurangzeb recognized him as the "Raja of Sirmour with the title Mast Prakash". During his reign, the 10th Guru, "Guru Govind Singh" came to Sirmour state. Between the "Guru" and "Raja Bhim Chand" of Balaspur, a rift had cropped upon account of a white elephant given to the former by "Raja Man Singh" of Bangala. Raja Bhim Chand demanded the elephant, but was refused. The Raja expelled "Guru Govind Singh" from Anandpur, where upon the Guru camped in village "Mirpur Gurudwara" of tehsil Nahan. Raja Medni Prakash invited the Guru to Nahan where he stayed for some time. From Nahan, the Guru migrated to "Paonta Sahib" on Kayarda Dun" and stayed there for year's. "Raja Mast Prakash" died in A.D. 1694, after a reign of sixteen years in Nahan. In the absence of a direct made fro "Raja Mast Prakash", his uncle "Hari Singh" (brother of Raja Budh Prakash) ascended the throne under the name of "Raja Hari Prakash" in A.D. 1694. In the forty sixth year of Shah Alamgir's reign, he was recognized as the "Raja of Sirmour", he ruled for nine year's and died in A.D. 1703. "Raja Hari Prakash" was succeeded by his son "Budh Prakash" in A.D. 1703. He was honoured with a "Khillat" (An Honour), the title of "Bhim Prakash" and recognition as ruler by Shah Mohammed Moaram Bin Alamgir, Emperor of "Delhi", by a royal order. He ruled for ten year's and died in A.D. 1713. "Raja Bhup Prakash" was succeeded by his son "Biji Prakash". He married a daughter of Kalyan Chand, ruler of Kumaon. The Rani was too religious like the Raja and an idol of KALI, which she had brought with her from Kumaon, was installed in a temple, still exists as "Kalistan". She also built a large tank and a well for drinking water at Nahan. The reign of the Raja lasted for thirty-six year's and he passed away in A.D. 1749. "Partap Prakash" occupied the throne in 1749. His period was marked with revolts by many feudatories and challenged his super mercy. After eight years rule, he died in A.D. 1757, leaving behind four sons, namely "Kirat Singh", the heir-apparent, "Jiwan Singh", " Muhkan Singh"

and "Ishri Singh". "Kirat Singh" was enthroned in A.D. 1757, while he was quite young, Kirat Prakash died at "LAKAR GHAT" in shores of the "Ganga" at the age of 26 years in the year 1773. "Jagat Singh", son of Kirat Prakash ascended to the throne in A.D. 1773, under the title of "Jagat Prakash", after nineteen years reign, "Raja Jagat Prakash" died in 1792. "Raja Jagat Prakash" left no son, on that, his younger brother, "Dharam Prakash", ascended to the throne. His reign was an eventful one. A great battle ensued at the boundry of kangra and Kohlur, place named "Chararatu" in A.D. 1796, in which "Raja Dharam Prakash" fell to the gun shot of his enemy. Raja Sansar Chand wanted to take away the dead body of the fallen Raja as a trophy, but his (Dharam Parkah) men would not tolerate the execution of such a design and in an attempt to protect the body, they laid their lives on the spot. "Raja Dharam Prakash" ruled for four years till 1796 and died without a heir. Karam Singh assuming the title of "Karam Prakash", the younger brother of Raja Dharam Prakash, ascended to the throne in A.D. 1796. "Raja Karam Prakash" alongwith his family members in A.D. 1803 went to the fort of "Kangra" situated on the top of a hill in Kayarda Dun, seventy Kms. East of Nahan and began to reside there. Also "Raja Karma Prakash" was living an exiled life at "Buria" and died at Buria in 1826 A.D. "Raja Karam Prakash" had three sons name Fateh Prakash, Man Singh and Jai Singh. Since then, Rajas were brought under general protection of the British Government and Territories belonging to them were restored. But "Raja Karma Prakash" for his notorious behavior excluded from the succession and succession passed on to his eldest son "Fateh Prakash". "Raj Kumar Fateh Prakash, a child of six year's only, ascended to the throne in 1815 as "Raja Fateh Prakash" in accordance with one sanad dated 21st September, 1815. Raj Kumar was sent to Nahan under the guardianship of Rani Guleri (His mother) and captain George Birch, the Political Agent. Aziz-ullah-khan was appointed administrator of the state for the minority period of the Raja. In 1827 Raja Fateh Prakash attained majority and the British Government of India granted his full administrative and revenue powers. In the same year he also attended the "Durbar" held at Shimla by the British Government of India. To setup good relations, Rama Puran Chand of Jubbal, deputed his Wazir to the court of Raja Fateh Prakash. Raja Fateh Prakash took over the charge of the state which had fallen in a dilapidated condition without faithful officials and sympathetic relatives. But the Raja rose equal to the task. He removed all causes of mal-administration with great ability and straightened out the affairs of the state. Raja Fateh Prakash after reign of thirty five years died in A.D. 1850. Raghubir Prakash succeeded his father in A.D. 1850. In the 27th year of his age, he died of piles on the 20th January, 1856. Raja had married five Ranis. The 2nd Rani from the house of "Haithiali" had born him a son and heir

apparent, Sham Sher Singh in the year 1845. At the time of Rajas death, the Kanwars were living separately and their participation in state affairs was not looked upon with favour by the officials. Where upon a committee was set up on the 19th February, 1857 consisting of "Mehta Devi Datta" and "Moti Ram Bhandari" as administrator of the state. As both the appointees were illiterate and in competent, the administration could not be run on desired lines and ultimately the superintendent of Shimla Hill States appointed the kanwars as Judges for determination of official cases. Kanwar Surjan Singh remained an associate with state administration during the minority of Raja Shamsher Prakash. During 1857 uprising, Sirmour assisted the British in both ways by material and men power. In recognition of their services, after the revolt had been quelled, certificate and "Khillat" (a rope of honour) were granted to the Kanwars. Both, Kanwar Sujan Singh and Kanwar Bir Singh invested their capital in business and in the purchase of property.

Raja Shamsher Prakash ascended to the throne in 1856 at the age of ten and ruled till A.D. 1898 for 42 years. In lieu of his services during 1857 revolt, the British Government awarded him a costly rope and entitled him to a salute of seven guns. For his administrative skill and performance, in 1867, gun salute was increased from seven to eleven. He had married to the daughter of the Raja Keonthal. She was very adept in judicial and administrative skill and was an asset to the Raja. In her memory, Raja laid the garden known as "RANITAL BAGH" at Nahan. Once, while in Kayir-Da-Dun, the Raja had a stroke of Paralysis and continued to suffer for about two and a half years and finally ended his life on 22nd October, 1898. Tikka Surender Bikram Singh ascended to the throne on 27th of October, 1898 after the death of father "Raja Shamsher Prakash". He ruled for thirteen years. He helped with men and material, the British army in South Africa. He died on the 4th July, 1911 at "Musoorie". Maharaj Amar Prakash succeeded his father formally on 26th October, 1911. The Raja was born in 1887. His coronation ceremony was memorable. In 1910, he married to the eldest daughter of Shri Deb Shamsher Jung Bahadur Rana, Ex-Prime-Minister of Nepal. He inaugurated "Mahima Library" and got the road metalled from Nahan to Kala-Amb, which was completed in 1927. While in Europe in may 1933 for the treatment of Maharani, he breathed his last in "Vienna" on 13th August, 1933. During the absence of the Maharaja, a council was set-up to look after the administration of the state.

"Maharaj Rajinder Prakash" installed on the throne on 22nd November, 1938. The "Raj Tilak" ceremony was, however, performed on the 13th February, 1935. He was born on 11th January, 1913. His marriage alliance took place with the daughter of a princely ruler of "Nagad state" in

central India on 15th April, 1936. The history of Sirmour of the freedom movement in the erstwhile state of Sirmour came to be written during the period of “Maharaja Rajinder Prakash”.