BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS THE PATHANS AND THE
PINDARIS IN CENTRAL INDIA, 1805-1818
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PUNTHI PUSTAK
CALCUTTA-4 : INDIA : 1966
TO
MY FATHER,
LATE DEBENDRA NATH GHOSH
PREFACE

This book is the revised version of my thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of London in June 1964. This is neither a complete history of the Pathans and Pindaris nor a compact analysis of British policy in Central India, but a study tracing out the gradual evolution of British policy towards those plundering hordes in Central India; though the latter cannot be successfully traced out without having a proper consideration of the two former issues.

I am sorry that owing to press difficulties and my inability to go through the proofs of the entire manuscript there are some mistakes in the body of this work, though, I hope, the errata would largely make up the deficiency.

I would take this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtedness to Dr. P. C. Gupta, under whose guidance I first started working on the Pindaris in 1959. Even in London his letters from Calcutta inspired me more than anything else in completing this work. I also record my gratefulness to my learned tutors in the University of London, Dr. K. A. Ballhatchet and Mr. J. B. Harrison. Without their methodical guidance, the thesis would never have been completed. I would never forget the valuable suggestions I received from Professor A. L. Basham. I would remain ever grateful to him. I also express my sincerest thanks to Mr. J. K. Banerji, Principal, Uluberia College, whose advice and help would remain ever fresh in my mind. I am also thankful to my friends, Sri Subhendu Sekhar Mukherji and Sri Sobhan Basu, for the assistance I received from them while I was working in Calcutta on that subject. I express thanks to my friend, Mr. J. Gupte, who helped me in reading the Marathi materials. Sm. Arati Ghosh, my wife, prepared the Index. Thanks are also due for all troubles she took.

Finally, I am much obliged to Sri S. K. Bhattacharya, of Punthi-Pustak, who kindly agreed to publish this book.

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The 5th August, 1966

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the early nineteenth century we meet with a body of mercenaries or freebooters called the Pindaris who achieved considerable military and political importance both in their own right and in the service of the Marathas and other powers of Central and Western India. These Pindaris consisted of men of many races and religions and are to be identified by their being detached from any settled home territory or fixed alliance. They were a shifting collection of mercenaries ready to take the pay of anyone with sufficient money in his purse, and to move against any territory worth the plundering.

The Pindaris were mentioned as having served the Marathas as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1705 as soon as Zulifiqar Khan arrived at the Imperial camp, Aurangzib ordered him to march against the Marathas and the Pindaris, who were then ravaging the Mughal territories south of the Narmada. At that time their most notable leader was Ponapa. They also assisted the Maratha forces in plundering the Carnatic and occupying Vellore early in the reign of Shahu.¹

We also here in Manucci’s Storia do Mogor of the Mughal armies being accompanied by such plundering hordes. “Along with the armies there march privileged and recognised thieves called Bederia, these are the first to invade the enemy territory, where they plunder everything they find. The handsomest items are reserved for the general; the rest they sell on their own account. Prince Shah Alam, when he was within the territories of Shivaji, near Goa, had in his army seven thousand such [Bidari]”.² In the footnote Irvine has categorically pointed out that these Bidaris cannot be “confounded with

the Pindarries". But it may not be overlooked that these Bidaris bear a strong resemblance to the Pindaris in some respects. Both the Pindaris and the Bidaris were auxiliaries, of the Marathas and the Mughals respectively, and their services were utilised by their respective masters in ravaging and plundering enemy territories. The Pindaris had to pay one-fourth of their booty to their masters, while the Bidaris gave to the Mughal generals the choicest items they plundered in their campaigns. "It may not therefore be altogether unreasonable, though the objections of so great an authority as Irvine cannot be lightly rejected, to suppose that the Pendharis of the Peshwa army had their prototypes in the Bidaris who followed the Mughal forces".

Besides the usual payment of the tax called Palpatti, which amounted to 25 percent of their booty, the Pindaris sometimes had to pay a tent tax at the rate of 3 to 5 Rupees per tent for permission to live in the Maratha camps. It would seem from the evidence available that the Maratha control of their auxiliaries was rather closer than that of the Mughals, for we do not hear of any precise orders for the distribution of booty, or for taxation in camp in the case of the Mughals and their Bidaris.

We may now ask whence these freebooting bands were recruited, and why they appeared, and when they did? The answer seems to be in the progressive breakdown of the Mughal administrative structure in the provinces. During Shahjahan's reign nobles of the first rank ruled in almost all the provinces, and because of large armies they had under their control, security and peace in general had been maintained. The people were not only saved from any external danger, but also they were free from the oppression of the imperial officers. But the situation became altogether different

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5. S. N. Sen, *Administrative System of the Marathas*, p. 583
during the last few years of Aurangzib’s reign. After the death of Rajaram and his son, Karna in 1700, Tarabai, Raja-ram’s wife crowned her son, Shivaji, and immediately made a bold plan of ravaging the Mughal territory in the Deccan. Khafi Khan, as quoted by Raghubir Sinh, states that “she took vigorous measures for ravaging the Imperial territories and sent armies to plunder the six subahs of the Deccan as far as Sironj, Mandisor and the subah of Malwa”. Not only were the Marathas thus frequently raiding the newly conquered territories in the Deccan, but also the provinces in many cases were held by the nobles of inferior rank, who were unable to maintain a sufficient number of troops, as the troops were more urgently needed in the far off frontier of the empire to fight the Marathas, the Rajputs and others. “The best soldiers, the ablest officers and all the collected revenues were sent to the Deccan. Time and again orders were sent for the enrolment of soldiers and for sending them to the Deccan, and no regard was paid to the fact that in some cases the forces were needed in that province too”. As a result the question of internal security was neglected. This also led to the disobedience of mansabdars and officials to the Subadars in the provinces. The zamindars refused to obey the Faujdars who had insufficient troops under their control, and became careless in their revenue payment. Again, “this diminished income forced the Governors to keep fewer men in their pay”. “Except some, who had ancestral estates, viz., Rao Dalpat, Ramsingh Hada and Jai Singh Kachhawah”, states Sarkar, “I have not come across a single noble, who kept even a thousand troopers in his contingent”. The perpetual

8. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 107  
9. Raghubir Sinh, Malwa in transition, 1698-1765, p. 55  
11. Raghubir Sinh, op. cit., p. 41  
12. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 107  
13. Raghubir-Sinh, op. cit., p. 17  
warfare that Aurangzib had to sustain against his enemies put a heavy pressure on the royal treasury to which the supply must come from the zamindars. But in their turn “the Jaghrdars could not get possession of the Jaghires for want of troops, and if they did, their holding them for any time was so uncertain, that they did not consider the case of the farmers, but oppressed them for money by every mode that avarice could devise”. The condition was further aggravated because only too often when in the newly conquered territories of the Deccan Aurangzib appointed a Jagirdar, the Marathas also appointed [their] man to collect chouth. Kahfi Khan then says, “they [the Maratha commanders] divided all the districts (Parganahs) among themselves and, following the practice of Imperial rule, they appointed their Subahdars (provincial Governors), kamavishdars (revenue collectors) and rahdars (toll-collectors).” In this way many places came under two masters at the same time, who exacted money from the people by every means of oppression and many of the poor farmers under the oppressions of both the masters “left off cultivating more ground than would barely subsist them, and in their turn became plunderers for want of employment”.

The failure of provincial control and order was not confined to the newly annexed Deccan. In North India, Afghans and Sikhs, in Agra, Jats, in Awadh Rohillas, all contributed to disorder and the impoverishment of ruled and rulers alike. The Pindaris were well known as an assemblage of all tribes and religions. But it is almost certain, as all the accounts agree, that both their rank and file and their leaders were at all times mostly dominated by the Pathans whose ancestors seemed to have been settled in the districts about Bijapur and Hyderabad. On the dissolution of the last Muslim dynasties of the Deccan, under whom they seemed to have served, a

15. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 107
16. Ibid.
17. Kahfi Khan, quoted by Raghbir Sinh, op. cit., p. 56
18. Ferishta, op. cit., p. 108
vast number of people were thrown out of employment.\textsuperscript{19} It is stated that "in the countries dependant on Hyderabad and Beejapore which before their conquest maintained above two hundred thousand horse, there were not now stationed above thirty four thousand".\textsuperscript{20}

The Marathas at that time were systematically harassing the regular Mughal armies by their well known desultory mode of warfare in which most of these unemployed soldiers are supposed to have been readily absorbed. The Maratha way of fighting and the prospect of gaining rich plunder in Mughal territories were more attractive than the fixed wages for regular soldiers in the Mughal service. They served their new masters in more than one capacity. Their employment at first was "to accompany the Bheeneewallah or quarter-master general, to go out with foraging parties, and to assist in supplying the Bazar with grain, besides performing other services of a plundering body suited to the maxims of a predatory warfare".\textsuperscript{21} In their system, ever since the days of Shivaji and Santaji Ghorpada, the Marathas had always maintained a class of "unpaid auxiliaries" attached to the different chiefs' fighting quota. Besides other functions their foremost duty was "to step in the moment the battle ended and finish the enemy by seizing his property and camp equipage and [destroying his power of recovery."\textsuperscript{22} It may be noted that these "unpaid auxiliaries" attached to the different Maratha chiefs' had certain common features with the Pindaris of the nineteenth century in their activities and ways of living.

The "unpaid auxiliaries" of the Maratha chiefs, as Grant Duff says, "set off with little provision, no baggage except the blanket on their saddles, and no animals but led horses, with bags prepared for the reception of their plunder. If they halted during a part of the night, like the Pindharees of

\textsuperscript{19} Memorandum prepared by Jenkins in 1812, Military Records, Vol. 212, p. 28

\textsuperscript{20} Ferishta, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 107

\textsuperscript{21} Memorandum prepared by Jenkins, the Resident at Nagpur, in 1812, Military Records, vol. 212, p. 29

\textsuperscript{22} Sardesai, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III. p. 477
modern times, they slept with their briddles in their hands... during that time their swords were lain by their sides, and their spears were generally at their horses’ head stuck in the ground. ...The great object of this class was plunder; and the leaders and their troops, though they generally rendered a partial account to the head of the state, dissipated or embezzled the greater part of their collection.”

Similarly the food of the Pindaris on the march in the nineteenth century was practically nothing “more than corn plucked from the fields as they pass and separated from the chaffs [sic.] by rubbing between the hands, this and a drink of water are perhaps the only nourishment they can procure, till they attain some place of comparative security.”

To them tents or baggage of any description were an unnecessary burden. They carried with them practically nothing except their arms, and their saddle cloths were their bed. They had neither encampments, nor regular halting places. Their principal weapons were long spears and swords. They were in general mounted upon small strong horses. They could march without halting for a long time, if they halted during the night they slept “with briddles in their hands.”

Their main occupation was plunder and the fourth part of their plunder was regarded as the property of the Government employing them.

Hence it appears that these “unpaid auxiliaries” were no others but the forefathers of the Pindaris of the nineteenth century. In the progress of conquest by the Marathas, particularly during the time of Bajirao I, the Pindaris found wide employment and not unfrequently they accompanied

24. Some accounts of the habits of the Pindaris, collected by Captain J. S. Williams, B.P.C. 1 March, 1817, No. 16
26. Observations on the habit of Pindaris by Captain J. S. Williams, B. P. C. 7 April, 1817, No. 38
27. Memorandum prepared by Jenkins, the Resident at Naghpur, in 1812, Military Records, Vol. 212, p. 28
him in his expeditions into Hindusthan. They jointly with their Maratha masters ravaged and plundered the rich Mughal territories and enhanced their own power. A body of the Pindaris under Ghazi-uddin Khan rendered services to Bajirao I in his campaign in Hindusthan in 1735 and in recognition of their services, the Peshwa granted a portion of land of the Narmada at Kanouga to their leader. Ghazi-uddin Khan left two sons, the eldest of whom, Gardi Khan, attached his and his followers’ fortune to the cause of Malharrao Holkar, while the younger Shah Baz Khan with a part of his father’s division entered the service of Ranaji Sindia. Thereafter it appears that the whole body of the Pindaris came to be divided into two distinct groups, viz. Holkarshahi and Sindiashahi.

The Pindaris did not, however, cut any significant figure till 1761 when the Maratha in the Panipat campaign were harassing their enemies by cutting off their supplies and interrupting their foraging parties. Here the Pindaris proved very useful to the Maratha chiefs as they were constantly active in roaming round the enemy camps and carrying away horses, camels and even elephants. They attended the Maratha army under Sadasheo Bhau and suffered greatly in the common ruin of the army. Again in the crisis of the first Anglo-Maratha war the Pindaris were engaged to help the Maratha fighting forces at Talegaon. Parasuram Bhau, the Peshwa’s minister, detached a body of 4000 Pindaris to assist the Maratha soldiers in the field. They were also no less active in the battle of Kharda in 1795. When the Nizam’s defeat was nearly complete, a large body of the Pindaris were let loose to attack the baggage of the Nizam’s armies. The Nizam finding himself

29. G. E. Fitzelaurence of Munster, *Journal of a route across India...*
31. J. Grant Duff, *op. cit.*, vol. III, p. 326
32. T. S. Shejwalkar, *Panipat, 1761*, p. 66
no longer able to maintain his position, fled to the fort of Kharada leaving his artillery and other military stores which the Pindaris immediately plundered.\textsuperscript{35}

Thus the Pindaris were “a convenient ingredient of the system of warfare developed by the Marathas”,\textsuperscript{36} and were closely connected with their rise during the eighteenth century. The Marathas utilized their services, for which they did not pay them. On the other hand they found a source of income in the Pindaris.\textsuperscript{37}

If initially the Pindaris had been jackals to the Maratha tigers, feeding at their kill, later when the tigers turned upon one another, the jackals were to crack even Maratha bones.

Initially the Pindaris had been content to plunder enemy territory in the wake of the Maratha regular armies. When however Maratha cohesion broke down, and the ministers who had succeeded to the power of the ruler found themselves unable to control the great military feudatories, the Pindaris were able to join, as auxiliaries, in the internecine wars of the Maratha chiefs. Conflict between Maratha and Maratha proved to be as lucrative as Maratha-Mughal warfare to the Pindari freebooters.

The moment when such internal conflict became crucial to the Maratha empire was, of course, after the death of the Peshwa, Madhavrao II on 27 October 1795, when there took place immediately a scramble for power centering on the question of succession. The late Peshwa left no issue. Madhavrao I’s uncle, Raghunathrao, had two sons, Bajirao and Chimnaji and an adopted son, Amritrao. They were therefore the surviving members of the Peshwa’s family.\textsuperscript{38} Daulatrao Sindia, a boy of 14 years, who had inherited control of the powerful army established by the late Mahadji Sindia,\textsuperscript{39} saw an opportunity in the Peshwa’s death to gain a dominating

\textsuperscript{35} Daulat Rao Sindhia to the Governor-General, 5 May, 1795, P. R. C. Vol. VIII, No. 13
\textsuperscript{36} G. S. Sardesai, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 477
\textsuperscript{37} Supra, p. 2
\textsuperscript{38} Uthhoff to Shore, 29 Oct., 1795, P. R. C. vol. II, No. 263.
\textsuperscript{39} Malet to Shore, 14 Feb., 1794, P. R. C. Vol. II. No. 209.
position in Maratha politics. With that aim in view he imme-
diately espoused the cause of Bajirao. But on the other hand,
Nana Phadnis, the late Peshwa’s minister, was disinclined to
accept Bajirao’s succession because he apprehended that
Bajirao would destroy his influence by becoming the Peshwa.
He was even afraid for his personal freedom and life. He
secretly visited Azim-ul-Umrah, the Nizam’s minister in im-
prisonment at Poona and lavishly distributed money in order to
seduce Sindia’s army and officials. Being apprehensive of
Sindia’s approach he forthwith despatched his family to the
fort of Raigad and he himself requested British protection at
Velas, a village in the Company’s district of Fort Victoria Nana
did not stop there. He opened secret negotiations with
Bajirao and, somehow, managed to have a private interview
with him, in which Bajirao being assured of the succession,
agreed to retain Nana at the head of administration. This
only in a way hastened the crisis. Sindia became furious, as
the settlement took place without his knowledge. He
immediately marched upon Poona and encamped about a
mile in front of Bajirao in his route to Satara. On 17 April
1796 Sindia accompanied by a large body of horse and foot
proceeded to Bajirao’s tent and arranged his soldiers in such
a manner that he could easily overpower the adherents of
Bajirao and Nana Phadnis, Sindia, taking post in one of
Bajirao’s outer tents, opened negotiations with Bajirao in
which the latter had to sign a paper of assent to all of
Sindia’s requisitions including the exclusion of Nana from
future power either in the procurement of the khilat of Peshwa-
ship or the administration subsequent to its procurement.

While Sindia remained the sole architect of the Maratha
empire, Nana’s fortune seemed desperate. Meanwhile Nana
reached the villages of Mahad and took much care to put the

40. Malet to chairman, Court of Directors, 13 March, 1796, P. R. C.
vol. II, No. 286
41. Malet to the Governor-General, 18 March, 1796, P. R. C. Vol. II,
No. 288
42. G. S. Sardesai, op. cit., vol. III, p. 315
43. Malet to Shore, 18 April, 1796, P. R. C. Vol. II, No. 292
fort of Raigad in the best possible state of defence. Besides the garrison of Raigad, he had collected a force of 1,200 horse and 5,000 foot and was recruiting more troops daily. On the other hand by intrigues and stratagems he tried to enlist the sympathy of other Maratha chiefs. He succeeded in securing the support of Tukoji Holkar, Baba Phadke, Raghiji Bhosle and others. However, after a period of confusion, suspicion and intrigues prevailing at Poona between the various parties Bajirao was ultimately vested with the robes of the Peshwa on 4 December 1796.

But immediately after this patched up affair, the dissensions were resumed. Bajirao had yet to be settled firmly on the throne. He could not trust Nana and played into Sindia’s hands who still continued to hold the real power in the state. The secret plan of Bajirao and Sindia was not only to terminate Nana’s influence, but also to effect his arrest. For his own security Nana then desired that the Peshwa should not transact any business without his consent and Sindia’s troops should also be removed from guarding the Peshwa.

The situation was further aggravated by Tukoji Holkar’s death on 15 August 1797, who left behind him four sons, Kashirao, Malharrao, Vithoji and Yashvantrao. Sindia immediately espoused Kashirao’s cause, as he thought that Malharrao, though not a man of good character, possessed some abilities which would prove prejudicial to his own interest. So Sindia ordered his troops to remain prepared for marching. These preparations were for the purpose of seizing Malharrao, whose cause, again, was supposed to have been taken up by Nana Phadnis. Malharrao on the other hand began to prepare himself for the ensuing combat. He encamped at a distance from his brother and maintained a distinct establishment. In his camp strict vigilance was observed and piquets.

44. Watkins to Uhthoff, 16 June, 1796, P. R. C. Vol. II, No. 312
45. Uhthoff to Shore, 6 Dec., 1796, P. R. C. Vol. II, No. 341
46. P. C. Gupta, Baji Rao II and the East India Company, p. 14
48. Uhthoff to Shore, 16 Sept., 1797, P. R. C. Vol. VI, No. 25.
were posted in the direction of Sindia’s expected attack. On 14 September 1797, a scuffle took place, in which Malharrao with some of his adherents were killed. Yashvantrao, who was at that time in Malharrao’s camp, received two wounds in that scuffle and fled from the field in disguise. His determination was now to avenge the wrong. With this intense spirit of revenge he reached Shujalpur in Bhopal where he met Amir Khan, the Pathan leader.

Amir Khan was born in Sambal in Rohilkhand in 1769 and at the age of 12 years he left his home in search of fortune. He first approached Sindia’s general, De Boigne and expressed his inclination to serve under him. But he was refused on the ground of his tender age. He then arrived at Jodhpur and entered the Raja’s service. After a few months he received his dismissal and visited Surat and Baroda to secure a new job. At last he arrived at Bhopal in 1795 and served the rival factions for power alternately till 1798.

Amir Khan, who had already heard from his vakil, Ghulam Khan, that Yashvantrao was “the son of a chief of high dignity, through him there will be a road opened to the management of great affairs even to the very highest from behind the curtain”, readily agreed to enter Yashvantrao’s service. Their united force then proceeded towards Malwa. They invested Ujjain and levied a contribution from that place. Against them Sindia immediately sent his general, Major George HESSING with a large force and a body of Pindaris. Yashvantrao supposing his army not sufficient to meet Hessing in the field, precipitately retreated.

49. Uthoff to Shore, 12 Sept., 1797, P., R. C. Vol. VI, No. 23
50. Uthoff to Shore, 19 Sept., 1797, P., R. C. Vol. VI, No. 26
51. Memoirs of Mohammad Amir Khan, pp. 9, 13, 17, 20
This was originally compiled in Persian by Busawun Lal, an inhabitant of Belgram in Oudh. He was in Amir Khan’s service for the last twelve years in the capacity of Naib Munshi. He took this task at the instigation of Amir Khan’s eldest son, Nawab Vizir-ud-Daula Muhammad Vizir Khan. This was translated into English by H. T. Prinsep and was published in 1832.

52. Ibid., p. 95
to Huri near Satwas; there he fell on two of Sindia’s battalions and dispersed them. These two battalions were coming to reinforce Hessing’s army. Because of this development Sindia thought his own presence necessary in that quarter. Accordingly, Sindia reached Hindia and on the south bank of the Narmada he surprised Yashvantrao. In the action Holkar was defeated and fled towards Indore where he carried on depredations along with Amir Khan. But there he could not continue his predatory activities for long, because Sindia sent a force under Sharzarao Ghatge and Sadasheorao, and a body of the Pindaris under Karim Khan and Chitu Khan against him. There took place an action in the vicinity of Indore on 14 October 1801, in which the combined force of Yashvantrao and Amir Khan was routed. After this defeat they fled towards Kushalgarh. The Pindari leaders, Karim Khan and Chitu Khan, were asked to plunder the camps of the defeated enemies. The Pindaris attached to Holkar were also not inactive. Their leaders, Imam Baksh and Kadir Baksh were engaged to harass Sindia’s soldiers who were in pursuit of Holkar.

Thus the central Maratha authority was almost broken. The Maratha chieftains were engaged in squabbles. There was nothing to control such forces as the Pindaris who could only gain in chaos and confusion, whether in enemy territories or in the territories of their own masters. The Resident with the Peshwa reported that the country surrounding Poona was “harassed by freebooters in almost every direction, conducted by leaders in the service of or subject to the state.” The Peshwa with the approach of Amir Khan at the head of a large body of the Pindaris and his own Pathan followers retired in a southern direction leaving the people to

53. Collins to Wellesley, 29 July, 1801, B. P. S. C. 14 Aug., 1801, No. 27
54. Collins to Governor-General, 30 Oct., 1801, P. R. C. Vol. IX, No. 33; Amir Khan’s Memoirs. pp. 140, 143
55. Ibid.
56. Palmer to Wellesley, 13 Feb., 1801, P. R. C. Vol. VI, No. 396
be helplessly ravaged by the Pindaris. He halted at the small fort of Hurni, on the sea side near Lavendrug. Then the Resident reported, "I cannot describe to your Lordship the melancholy scene which this place at present exhibits......The inhabitants fly towards the neighbouring hills in the hope of securing their property, but on the road they are again met by the Pindaris, who plunder, abuse them and send them back." So the Pindaris themselves not only took the initiative to gain by plundering the unprotected Maratha territories, but the Maratha chiefs themselves used the Pindaris in ravaging the territories of their rival Maratha chiefs.

Hitherto the Pindaris, though useful auxiliaries of the Marathas, had been a negligible force in the general politics of India. Both the Pathans and the Pindaris still could not claim any separate existence to be reckoned with, without the support of the Maratha armies. But with the outbreak of the Anglo-Maratha war (1803-1805) they not only emerged as a useful body against British armies, but under Amir Khan they achieved a distinct position in the general politics of India.

The treaty of Devgaon concluded by the British with Bhosle on 17 December and the treaty of Surji-Anjangaon concluded with Sindia on 30 December 1803 only closed the first phase, but immediately after opened the next phase of the war. Holkar till now had kept himself aloof from the war. While Sindia and Bhosle were fighting the British forces, he was neither disposed to combine with them, nor inclined to maintain an indifferent attitude for long. He knew that war with the British Government was inevitable in the immediate future, but his rivalry with Sindia stood in the way of his taking the side of Sindia and Bhosle. Even before the outbreak of the war in August 1803 he had therefore asked Amir

Khan to join him at Aurangabad and to make hasty preparations for eventual hostilities. 59

This information induced Major-General Wellesley to consider Amir Khan’s proposal of entering the Nizam’s service as an opportunity of weakening Holkar’s strength. Amir Khan had made this proposal in April 1803, and correspondingly it was reported that “he has written to Holkar to desire leave to quit his service”. 60 So Arthur Wellesley pressed the Resident with the Nizam to accept Amir Khan’s proposal. 61 Colonel Stevenson, the commanding officer of the subsidiary force at Jalna, had a long discussion with the Nizam’s minister, Mohipatram, on this subject. The Nizam was not unwilling to employ Amir Khan and his followers in his service, but Mohipatram pointed out the Nizam’s financial inability to maintain the entire burden alone. He hoped that the British Government or the Peshwá would defray one half of the expense which might be incurred in engaging Amir Khan’s services. 62 He argued that such was the multitude of troops in Amir Khan’s party that without the assistance of the British Government the Nizam was unable to bear the whole expense. 63 But Stevenson was neither empowered to consent to assist the Nizam financially, nor disposed to advise Mohipatram to close negotiations with Amir Khan. He, however, reported the whole situation to Arthur Wellesley”. 64

However, the Governor-General thought that “the importance of detaching that partizan [Amir Khan] from the service

59. Collins to Wellesley, 2 May, 1803, B. P. S. C., 22 June, 1803, No. 141
61. Kirkpatrick to Major-General Wellesley, 10 May, 1803, B. P. S. C., 22 June 1803, No. 100
62. Stevenson to Major-General Wellesley, 28 May, 1803, B. P. S. C., 21 July, 1803, No. 41
64. Stevenson to Major-General Wellesley, 28 May, 1803, B. P. S. C., 21 July, 1803, No. 41
of Jeswunt Rao Holkar is considerably increased by the prospect of immediate hostilities between the British power and the confederated Mahratta chieftains”. He, therefore, deemed it highly expedient that every facility should be afforded to the successful conclusion of the negotiations between the Nizam’s court and Amir Khan. In consideration of the importance of weakening Holkar’s military strength the Governor-General signified his consent to bear half of the expense of entertaining Amir Khan, if the Nizam could not be otherwise induced to accept Amir Khan’s offer. But the Governor-General further expressed the wish that “this charge on the finance of the Hon’ble Company should cease with the exigency of the occasion”, and at the same time it should be signified to the Nizam that he should agree to the “gradual liquidation of the expense thus incurred by the British Government”.

Not only had Amir Khan with his Pindaris and Pathans proved Holkar’s useful partizan, but the British Government had realised the importance of detaching him from his association with Holkar. The ready response from the Nizam’s court and the British Government to his proposal had only enhanced his importance in the Maratha camp. As is evident from the course of subsequent events, he was not at all sincere in his proposal; his main object was to convince Holkar of his importance as an ally, thereby to bargain with the Maratha chief from an advantageous position. General Wellesley in September, expressed his doubts whether “Meer Khan was ever serious in his intention to enter the Nizam’s service, and even supposing that he was so formerly, whether he would quit the service of Jeswunt Rao Holkar, having received from that chief the reward of his services, and a Jagheer for the maintenance of his troops within Halkar’s territories”.

66. Edmonstone to Kirkpatrick, 27 July 1803, B. P. S. C. 11 Aug., 1803, No. 3
Meanwhile Yashvantrao Holkar had taken his position near Ajmere and Amir Khan had encamped between Malwan and Bandli on the north of the Narmada.\textsuperscript{68} Amir Khan’s force had recently been largely increased by a body of the Pindaris amounting to 15,000 under Karim Khan.\textsuperscript{69} It was supposed that his intention was to effect an irruption into Bundelkhand. He crossed the river on 15 May 1804 and five days after he marched towards Kunch.\textsuperscript{70} Facwett who had recently been entrusted with the management of affairs in Bundelkhand after the death of his predecessor, Polhill, had already taken his position at Kunch. Before Amir Khan’s arrival in that quarter, he detached a battalion of native infantry and a body of artillery under Captain Smith against the fort of Betwa which was 10 miles distant from the main body under Facwett.\textsuperscript{71} An advanced party of artillery and 2 companies of native infantry under Captain Facade was sent by Smith to a village immediately under the walls of the fort. Amir Khan with a force numbering 5000 horse attacked the party in the village, which being unprepared and left unsupported by Captain Smith was destroyed. Captain Facade and all the other Europeans of his party amounting to fifty men were killed.\textsuperscript{72} Being emboldened by this success Amir Khan rapidly advanced towards Kalpi on the river Jumna. His intentions were to plunder Kalpi and cross the river for the purpose of committing depredations in the Doab. The precautionary measures adopted by Captain Jones, stationed in the fort of Kalpi with 2 companies of native infantry defeated his views in regard to both these objects and ulti-

\textsuperscript{68} Elphinstone to Wellesley, 16 March, 1804, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1804, No. 49

\textsuperscript{69} Facwett to Herward, 24 May, 1804, B. P. S. C. 21 June, 1804, No. 86

\textsuperscript{70} Facwett to Herward, 22 May, 1804, B. P. S. C. 21 June, 1804, No. 81

\textsuperscript{71} Lake to Wellesley, 1 July, 1805, B. P. S. C. 19 Sept., 1805, No. 47

\textsuperscript{72} Facwett to Herward, 22 May, 1804, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1804, No. 81; Monson to Murray, 18 June, 1804, B.P.S.C. 24 Jan. 1805, No. 126
mately he was obliged to retreat. During his flight from Bundelkhand he was attacked in the neighbourhood of Kunch by a body of irregular troops under Control Sheppard. They defeated him and finally expelled him from Bundelkhand.

During the rainy season Amir Khan moved southward and encamped in Sindia's territory at Bhilas. Thence he returned towards Bundelkhand and arrived at Saugar. But finding the territories strongly guarded by British forces he advanced precipitately towards Bharatpur and joined Yashvantrao Holkar in January 1805.

Meanwhile, Amir Khan had addressed the Raja of Nagpur with the intention of reviving the Maratha confederacy against the British Government. He told the Raja, "I took on myself as one of your attendants and on account of my faithful attachment, I consider myself as one of your adherents." He then deputed Haibatrao to the Raja with some verbal communications, the object of which was evidently to induce the Raja to side with Yashvantrao Holkar. His invitation was also accompanied by threats to the Raja. In the absence of the Raja's favourable response, Amir Khan warned that he would take the side of the Nawab of Bhopal against the Raja. In order to put further pressure upon the Raja he even, in fact, detached a body of the Pindaris into the Raja's territory. The Pindaris besieged Phirye and plundered the surrounding villages.

But the Raja was not only against Amir Khan's idea of a

73. Facwett to Herward, 23 May, 1804, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1804 No. 83; Monson to Murray, 18 June, 1804, B.P.S.C. 24 Jan, 1805, No. 126
74. Monson to Murray, 18 June 1804, B.P.S.C. 24 Jan, 1805, No. 126
75. Murray to Webbe, 16 July 1804, B.P.S.C. 6 Sept. 1804, No. 32
76. Murray to Webbe, 12 Oct. 1804, B.P.S.C. 29 Nov. 1804, No. 40
77. Lake to Wellesley, 1 July 1805, B.P.S.C. 19 Sept. 1805, No. 47
78. Meer Khan to Ragogee Bosla, undated, B.P.S.C. 29 Nov. 1804, No. 176
79. Elphinstone to Wellesley, 12 Nov. 1804, B.P.S.C. 31 Jan. 1805, No. 96
80. Elphinstone to Wellesley, 20 Dec. 1804, B.P.S.C. 31 Jan, 1805, No. 117
combination against the British Government, but also he was
thinking of asking for "assistance of the Hon’ble Company
against Meer Khan, particularly if the operations of that
freebooter should press upon him, and if his troops should
approach to Nagpoor." 81

Sindia had accepted the treaty of Surji-Anjangaon, but
was in no way reconciled to his position. He still cherished
hope of a united stand against the British Government. In
fact, Sharzarao Ghatge, Sindia’s minister and father-in-law
addressed Holkar and Amir Khan “proposing and promising
the active co-operation of Sindia’s military force in the
prosecution of hostilities against the British power.” 82 On
27 December 1804, the camp of the British Resident with
Sindia was surprised and overpowered by a body of the
Pindaris “who wounded and murdered every person near the
tent, and succeeded in carrying off in money and other articles
of booty of about twelve thousand rupees.” 83 The Resident
supposed that this act of violence was done at the instigation
of Sharzarao Ghatge and launched a strong protest against
this action. He demanded that Sindia should take measures
“to discover the authors and instigators of that transaction,
and that they should be delivered up to me, together with
the whole of the property which had been plundered.” 84

However, in reply, Sindia’s minister, Annah Ramchandra,
visited the Resident and assured him that Sindia would take
every measure to give him the fullest satisfaction. “Whoever
might be the perpetrators exemplary punishment should be
inflicted upon them.” 85

81. Arthur Wellesley to Elphinstone, 19 Dec. 1804, B.P.S.C. 2 May,
1805, No. 114
82. Edmonstone to Close, 4 Dec. 1804, B.P.S.C. 27 June, 1805,
No. 67B
1806, No. 7; Jenkins to Edmonstone, 7 Jan. 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March,
1805, No. 61
84. Jenkins to Edmonstone, 7 Jan. 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805,
No. 61
85. Ibid.
Again, on 25 January 1805 the Resident's camp at Saugor was overwhelmed and plundered by a large body of the Pindaris. Doctor Wise and Lieutenant-General Green were wounded in this action which took place within about a mile from Sindia's camp. The Resident strongly remonstrated against this action. He apprized Sindia that "it is a notorious fact that the Pindaries were ordered to attack by Serje Rao Ghatka" and demanded his immediate punishment. In reply Sindia expressed his "utmost sorrow and regret, and promised to restore the whole of the property."

Sindia on both the occasions thus expressed his regret and assured the Resident that he would punish the culprits, so as to give the impression that the Pindaris were not under his control and acted on those occasions without his order. Who was then Sharzarao Ghatge? Was he not responsible for his minister's action? It is difficult to believe that the Pindaris would venture to attack the Residency within about a mile from his camp without his instigation. In fact, Sindia's attitude was distinctly hostile. The Resident shortly after this incident secured by secret intelligence copies of two letters despatched by Sindia to Holkar and Amir Khan. The Resident considered those copies "authentic." The letter written to Holkar intimated Sindia's intention "to collect his troops at Saugor and to proceed by the way of Bundelcund for the purpose of taking possession of that country and of joining Holkar, requesting at the same time that Holkar would order Ameer Khan to unite his forces with Daulat Rao Sindia at Saugor." The letter addressed to Amir Khan contained an invitation to that chief "to join the army of the Maharajah [Sindia] whom he was to consider the ally of Holkar, and mentioning that a confidential person should be despatched to settle the matters with him." Accordingly Sindia's vakil,

86. Jenkins to Edmonstone, 26 Jan., 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805, No. 73
87. Ibid.
88. Jenkins to Edmonstone, 8 Feb., 1805, B. P. S. C. 28 March, 1805 No. 76
Ramchandra Prabhu, proceeded to Amir Khan’s camp. Notwithstanding his assurances, to dismiss Sharzarao Ghatge, and to check the depredations of the Pindaris, Ghatge remained at the head of Sindia’s Government and the Pindaris continued to ravage the Peshwa’s territories.

Nevertheless Sindia still entertained a hope of reconciliation with the British Government in the event of their complete success against Holkar. This was probably why Sindia pretended that the Pindaris acted without his knowledge and assured the Resident with apparent sincerity that he would punish the culprits. He hoped that his relations of friendship with the British Government would receive no diminution and the Resident would promote the mutual interests of the two states without admitting the late transactions to interrupt the confidence.

Amir Khan’s arrival in the neighbourhood of Bharatpur was important in so far as the immediate operations of the siege of Bharatpur were concerned. He would afford to Holkar additional means of harassing the foraging parties and cutting off the supplies. So Lake detached one battalion of infantry and three regiments of cavalry under Major-General Smith to follow Amir Khan’s movements. On 23 January 1805 this detachment succeeded in overtaking Amir Khan. In the skirmish that followed he lost four guns and some of his horse.

Amir Khan then moved towards the Jumna and on 7 February crossed into the Doab at the ford of Garia about 12 miles from Mathura. Smith immediately marched in his

89. Ibid.
90. Jenkins to Edmonstone, 25 March, 1805, B.P.S.C., 20 June, 1805, No. 24
91. Jenkins to Lake, 7 March, 1805, B.P.S.C. 20 June, 1805, No. 14
92. Jenkins to Close, 6 March, 1805, B.P.S.C. 20 June, 1805, No. 12
94. Jones to Jenkins, 30 Jan., 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805, No. 31
95. Seton to Elliot, Magistrate at Barelli, 10 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 444
pursuit. He crossed the Jumna at Mathura on 9 February and pressed so closely on the rear of Amir Khan’s army that they were rendered incapable of committing depredations in the territory through which they passed.96

Amir Khan then moved towards the Ganges, which he crossed on 14 February at the Kimadi Ghat and advanced into the province of Rohilkhand. He attacked the house of the Collector, Leycester, at Moradabad.97 However, his attack was repulsed by the garrison which Leycester had with him.98

In Rohilkhand Amir Khan tried to foment a general revolt against the British Government. His agents in different places of the province were active in exciting the people to join his standard.99 In a letter to Nasrulla Khan, the Nawab of Rampur, he expressed his intention of restoring Afghan rule and expelling the British Government from Rohilkhand. He observed that the Rohillas, though divided, were nevertheless of one mind and would assist him unitedly against the British Government.100 Amir Khan himself moved from Shahjahanpur to Pilibat in Rohilkhand partly in order to elude the pursuit of Smith and partly to increase the number of his supporters. “He is now proceeding to the parts of country where he may expect to be joined by numbers of his own tribe. Peeleebut abounds with them and it is said that Shahjahanpore contains not less than 20,000 fighting men.”101

Seton, the Resident at Delhi, secured certain letters addressed by Amir Khan to some of the influential inhabitants of Rohilkhand. He believed that those letters and Amir Khan’s

96. Lake to Wellesley, 1 July, 1805, B.P.S.C. 19 Sept., 1805, No. 47
97. Seton to Edmonstone, 17 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805,
No. 445
98. Seton to Edmonstone, 18 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805,
No. 446
99. Ibid.
100. Nussur Colla Khan to his vakeel at Barellee, 17 Feb., 1805,
B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 447; Seton to Edmonstone, 18 Feb., 1805.
B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 446
101. Seton to Edmonstone, 21 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805,
No. 451
movements "proved beyond a doubt that the object of his present irruption was not that of merely enriching himself by plunder, but that of exciting the Rohillas to a general rise, exterminating the British power in this province and upon its ruins, raising that of the Rohillas or the Patans.\textsuperscript{102} He considered it "an event of sufficient importance, to merit the attention of the Government and call forth the exertion of its utmost energy."\textsuperscript{103}

The Resident immediately issued a proclamation stating that since the acquisition of Rohilkhand the British Government had been endeavouring "to prevent oppression, to administer justice impartially according to the habits and religious persuasions of the inhabitants, as also in the course of time, to provide and secure a maintenance for every class thereof. The said Government has in return, a right to expect that the inhabitants will on all occasions evince their attachment, and do nothing to disturb the tranquillity of the country, and above all, that they will not join the enemies of the Government."\textsuperscript{104} Seton took further measures. He invited the respectable Muslim gentlemen, supposed to be loyal to the British Government, to meet him and discussed with them the possible means of counteracting Amir Khan's plan. He encouraged them to entertain a certain number of followers and to keep watch in their respective localities.\textsuperscript{105} He also took steps to raise a body of Rajputs. He hoped that "by entertaining these Rajpoots, we shall be enabled to keep a friendly intercourse with the bulk of the inhabitants and as the bravery of the Rajpoots is well known, I thought they might form a counterpoise to the combination which Amir Khan is endeavouring to raise among the Mohammedans." With

\textsuperscript{102} Seton to Edmonstone, 20 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 452
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} A Proclamation Circulated throughout Rohilkhand on 19 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 450
\textsuperscript{105} Seton to Edmonstone, 20 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 449
this view he authorized a Rajput zamindar, Gurun Singh, to entertain four thousand men of his own tribe.\textsuperscript{106}

However, though the Governor-General subsequently approved the Resident's action in issuing a proclamation, disapproved the other two measures. According to him it was not expedient to place individuals at the head of bodies of armed men. "If there was reason to apprehend a combination in favour of Meer Khan among our Mohammedan subjects the encouraging them generally to arm was in fact facilitating the execution of the plans which were to be accomplished by that combination." The Governor-General observed that the arming of a whole country was a measure which itself led to a state of agitation and confusion ultimately.\textsuperscript{107} As regards the formation of a Rajput army under Gurun Singh the Governor-General entertained considerable doubts of the justice of policy of arming one description of subjects against another. "Finding that a body of Hindoos had been raised to coerce them [the Muslims] their fanaticism would have been excited, a religious contest might have ensued and the support of the cause of Meer Khan might have been clouded with the cause of fanaticism."\textsuperscript{108} The Governor-General was of opinion that it would have been sufficient to have encouraged the inhabitants generally without discrimination and without forming them into association to defend their villages against Amir Khan's plundering parties, and to convince them of the danger of their combining with Amir Khán.\textsuperscript{109}

Amir Khan's failure to excite a general revolt against British rule in Rohilkhand was more due to his own activities than to the Resident's preventive measures. It would have been politic on his part to style himself the partizan of one of the Rohila chieftains of high descent. But instead of doing that he in a manner assumed the rights of sovereignty himself

\textsuperscript{106} Seton to Edmonstone, 20 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 449

\textsuperscript{107} Edmonstone to Seton, 30 April, 1805, B.P.S.C. 16 May, 1805, No. 369

\textsuperscript{108} Edmonstone to Seton, 30 April, 1805, B.P.S.C. 16 May, 1805, No. 369

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
by bestowing lands and by appointing public officers to the charge of districts. Such conduct in a mere soldier of fortune could not fail to inspire indignation in the minds of the old ruling class.\textsuperscript{110} Nawab Nasrulla Khan at Rampur had evinced his sincerity to do everything in his power to prevent Amir Khan from entering Rampur. He adopted all the measures suggested by Seton. This kind of antagonistic attitude on the part of the Muslims of high descent had produced consequences of a disastrous nature for Amir Khan, as from Rampur, a predominantly Muslim inhabited area he secured little co-operation.\textsuperscript{111} Again, he had not altogether discounted the co-operation of the Hindu population. He granted an influential Hindu chief, Bhowani Singh, a \textit{Sanad} for certain lands in the Pargana of Reher. Bhowani Singh had probably succeeded in enlisting the active support of a section of Hindus for Amir Khan, but on the other hand it had alienated the Muslim population of that area.\textsuperscript{112} In short, “Ameer Khan is despised by all the Rohillas of rank and character as a man of low birth, as a freebooter and as a fugitive”.\textsuperscript{113} “By the Hindoos he is both feared and hated”. He only succeeded in enlisting supporters from among the Muslims of the lowest rank. This aid was again limited by the fear of British arms.\textsuperscript{114} The presence of a detachment under Smith in Rohilkhand checked the spirit of revolt more than anything. He was forced to fly from place to place by the unremitting pursuit of Smith and at last was compelled to seek a temporary refuge in the jungle of Swampi in the neighbourhood of the mountains.\textsuperscript{115} But a few days obliged him to quit the woody

\textsuperscript{110} Seton to Edmonstone, 31 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 451

\textsuperscript{111} Seton to Edmonstone, 21 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 451

\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{113} Metcalfe to Armstrong, 23 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 216

\textsuperscript{114} Seton to Edmonstone, 25 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 16 May, 1805, No. 337

\textsuperscript{115} Seton to Edmonstone, 22 Feb., 1805, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1805, No. 452
country because no requisite subsistence was available there.\textsuperscript{116}  

Realising his failure to excite revolt, Amir Khan proceeded in the direction of the Ganges. He was closely pursued by Smith, who at length succeeded in coming up with him and forcing him to an action near Afzalgarh on 2 March 1805. Amir Khan’s army was defeated and dispersed.\textsuperscript{117} After this defeat he fled by the route of Moradabad to Chandansi, forty miles to the westward of Barelli. There he demanded three lakhs of rupees as the ransom of the town.\textsuperscript{118} He addressed letters to many of the principal inhabitants, calling upon them to bestir themselves in his favour. In that case, he assured them, the town would be spared, adding that in the event of contrary conduct on their part, he would give up the place to pillage.\textsuperscript{119} At last he told them that in consideration of Chandansi being situated near Sambal, the place of his nativity, he would reduce the amount to the one-third of his original demand, which he wanted to treat as Nazar. In this dilemma the merchants and bankers at length succeeded in raising the sum of 24,400 rupees, which they presented to Amir Khan, who found no other alternative but to accept it.\textsuperscript{120} He was hard pressed by a detachment of infantry under Colonel Burns. This detachment, stationed on the western bank of the Ganges, crossed the river and by a rapid march came up with the rear of Amir Khan’s army which they destroyed, and took possession of their baggage.\textsuperscript{121}  

After this disaster Amir Khan recrossed the Ganges and fled across the Doab, towards the Jumna which he likewise

\textsuperscript{116} Seton to Collins, 4 March, 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805, No. 135  
\textsuperscript{117} Seton to Collins, 4 March, 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805, No. 135  
\textsuperscript{118} Seton to Collins, 6 March, 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805, No. 142  
\textsuperscript{119} Seton to Collins, 7 March, 1805, B.P.S.C. 28 March, 1805, No. 144  
\textsuperscript{120} Seton to Edmonstone, 30 April, 1805, BPSC 20 June, 1805, No. 406  
\textsuperscript{121} Lake to Wellesley, 1 July, 1805, BPSC 19 Sept. 1105 No, 47
recrossed below Mathura and finally left the British territory. With the broken and disheartened remains of his force he re-joined Yashvantrao Holkar who at that time continued in the vicinity of Bharatpur. 122

Thus in conclusion it may be noted that the Pindaris and the Pathans had originally emerged as the auxiliaries of the Marathas and still in 1805 they continued to be so under Amir Khan, Karim Khan and Chitu Khan, but evidently not the same body of auxiliaries as they had been throughout the previous century. Their further growth, and that of British policy towards them between 1805 and 1818 are yet to be seen.

122, Lake to Wellesley, 1 July, 1105, BPSC 19 Sept, 1805, No, 47
CHAPTER II

EMERGENCE OF THE PATHANS AND THE PINDARIS
AS A DISTINCT POLITICAL FORCE, 1805-1809

In the late eighteenth century the Pathans and Pindaris had been mere auxiliaries, assisting the regular armies of Holkar and Sindia. After Wellesley’s Maratha campaigns they emerged as principals, stronger in organisation and numbers, and as Elphinstone, the Resident at Nagpur, reported, with their new way of fighting and mode of arming “able to act without the support of any other power.”¹ Yashvantrao, the Nagpur minister, likewise commented in 1805 that the Pindaris were rapidly assuming an organised form and gaining an independent power and position.²

In their overall organisation, however, the Pindaris still betrayed their origins as auxiliaries either of Sindia or of Holkar. One group under Karim Khan and Chitu Khan, the Sindia-shahi Pindaris turned their plundering attention on Nagpur and Hyderabad, the other, the Holkar-shahis under Amir Khan and his Pathan followers exploited the situation in Rajputana created by the rivalry between Jaipur and Jodhpur. It will be necessary to study their fortunes separately.

SECTION I

The treaties of Devgaon with Bhosle on 17 December and of Surji-Anjangaon with Sindia on 30 December 1803 marked the highest peak of Wellesley’s success in India. But this success was shortly after marred by the outbreak of war with Holkar in April 1804. “Monson’s defeat near Kotah and

¹. Elphinstone to Wellesley, 17 June, 1805, B.P.S.C. 5 Sept., 1805, No. 34
². Elphinstone to Cornwallis, 22 Aug., 1805, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec., 1805, No. 1
retreat to Agra, the siege of Delhi, and above all Lake's failure to storm Bharatpur broke the spell of Wellesley's magic.\textsuperscript{3}

These failures only provided the immediate cause to the Company and the ministry in England for withdrawing the support which they had offered to Wellesley in the early stages of his policy in India. Their attitude towards Wellesley’s policy had already undergone a change because of the alarming increase of the Company's debt and the renewal of the Napoleonic war in 1804. Wellesley had not only attacked the Company's monopoly of trade, but also had given them much less by way of investment goods than they expected. “Throughout his Governor-Generalship he had received from them not less than a million sterling annually, which was intended to reduce the Indian debt, but which he used to develop an external policy to which they were by conviction sincerely opposed. As a result of his Governor-Generalship the Indian debt had increased by almost £20,000,000—a rate of increase which frightened the Home Government.”\textsuperscript{4} This not only irritated the authorities in England, but also had an impact on the usual flow of bullion to India. In a despatch drafted on 8 November 1805 they stated that “the strained condition of our finances at home, will not permit us to hope that we shall be enabled to continue in the ensuing season the same ample supplies of Bullion which have been annually sent to you in the last three years; and the difficulties arising from the situation of our funds will be increased by the present extended state of war in Europe.”\textsuperscript{5}

The renewal of the French war in 1804 entirely engaged the attention and resources of the Home Government: fully occupied in Europe, “Britain could not afford an indefinite Indian war”. No money and men would be available for Wellesley’s forward policy in India.\textsuperscript{6} Not only was Britain threatened with invasion, but also her empire in the East faced similar

\textsuperscript{3} The Oxford History of India, Ed. P. Spear, p. 556
\textsuperscript{4} C. H. Phillips, The East India Company, 1784-1834, p. 142
\textsuperscript{5} Board’s draft of Sec. Despatch to Bengal, 8 Nov., 1805, No. 15, Vol. 3
\textsuperscript{6} The Oxford History of India, Ed. P. Spear, p. 558
danger. Because of their information that the Toulon fleet, consisting of eleven French and five Spanish ships had sailed from Rochefort, the Home Government grew apprehensive about India's safety. The Board's draft despatch of June 1805 anxiously considers the weak points open to the French in India—though it concludes that "Bombay and Ceylon are the only points in India where the enemy by Coup de main could hope to establish a place d'armes capable of effectual defence, and from whence they might afterwards act according to circumstances." 

Reasonably they thought it prudent to call a halt to Wellesley's seemingly interminable Indian war and to free the local government to engage its available resources against this impending danger. So their advice to the local authorities was to mobilise resources to ward off the immediate threats.

A diversion of effort to local defence might serve to meet the French naval threat, but only the removal of Wellesley seemed likely to end the forward policy of the Indian Government. For this the despatch of Cornwallis as Governor-General appeared the solution. With his arrival in India for a second time, a sudden change was felt in British policy towards the Indian states. His uniform object, as he stated, was "to cultivate the friendship and confidence of surrounding states by abstaining from any encroachment upon their rights, privileges, and independence and from all interferences whatever in their internal concerns and in their transaction with each other." 

He expressed this sentiment in his letter to the Courts of Gwalior, Hyderabad, Poona and Berar. Furthermore he proposed to revise the treaty of Surji-Anjangaon with Sindia and at the same time instructed Lake to bring about a settlement with Holkar. He resolved upon making the Jumna the boundary of the Company's territories;

7. Board's draft of Sec. Despatch to Bengal, Bombay, 4 June, 1805, No. 11, Vol. 3
8. Ibid.
9. Cornwallis to Sindia, 18 Sept. 1805, quoted in the despatch to Bengal, 20 Feb., 1806, pp. 399-400, Vol. 44
for that purpose he proposed to dissolve the Company's alliances with the petty states west of the Jumna. But none of these objects was fulfilled because of his sudden death on 5 October 1805.

Barlow, the senior member of the Governor-General's Council, who thereupon succeeded to the management of affairs in India, expressed his determination to pursue the same policy of his immediate predecessor. Almost at the same time the Home Government, in their long despatch of 30 October 1805, once again expressed their dislike of the policy of extending "the British power not only over all the Marhatta states, but over the irregular powers bordering on the north and west of that empire as far as the Indus." They spelled out their doubts and fears of what Wellesley had done. "We doubt the policy of having required from Sindia the extensive cessions made by him in the north of Hindustan to the west of the Jumna, which by falling under our administration, at once introduced us into the interior of the Maratha empire. The country in question had no military feature, as a possession, to recommend it, it could be considered in no shape material to us upon any principle of defensive policy, except so far as that object was to be pursued by reducing essentially the general power and resources of one of the leading Marhatta states." They further argued that "the policy of having endeavoured to associate our interests with the variety of petty states in that quarter of India, from the majority of whom the leading Marhatta chiefs had been long in the habit of exacting revenue indispensable to the maintenance of their respective states, from the first appeared to us a very hazardous expedient.

11. They expressed this similar sentiment in their earlier despatch of 6 March, 1804, Board's draft of Sec. despatch, No. 2, Vol. 3
12. Board's draft of Sec. despatch to Bengal, 30 Oct., 1805, No. 15, Vol. 3
13. Board's draft of Sec. despatch to Bengal, 30 Oct., 1805, No. 15, Vol. 3
Such alliances may in the first instance, have afforded facilities in conducting the war, but they have increased, in a much greater proportion, the difficulties of a settlement with the more considerable states, and multiplied the change of future misunderstanding with them. They, besides, give a complexity to our external relations, which it is always desirable to avoid."


Negotiations had already been opened in September 1805 on Cornwallis’s orders between Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm, the Governor-General’s agent, and Munshi Kamalnayan, the person deputed by Sindhia. On 23 November 1805 a new treaty was concluded in which the British Government engaged “to enter into no treaty with Rajahs of Oudeypore and Jodhpore and Kotah or other chiefs, tributaries of Doulat Rao Sindhia situated in Malwa, Mewar or Marwar.”

Sindhia’s affairs once settled, it did not take long to reach agreement with Yashvantrao Holkar. Since the conclusion of a treaty between the British Government and the Raja of Bharatpur on 10 April 1805 Holkar’s position had become desperate. In September he had marched towards the Punjab with the object of forming a junction with the Sikh Raja Ranjit Sing, and the Afghan ruler, Shuja-ul-Mulk. Vakils from the Sikh Raja and the Afghan ruler visited Holkar at his request. The Sikh Raja’s vakil urged Holkar “to march into the Punjab in order to join the Sikh chieftain,” while the vakil from the Afghan chief advised him “not to think of opposing the English till he should be joined by the Afghan ruler.”

But these assurances did not produce anything material. The Sikh Raja agreed only to maintain his neutrality and Holkar’s hope of organising a common front against the British Government was disappointed. Moreover, being hard

14. Ibid.
15. Aitchison, A collection of Treaties, Engagements... Vol. IV, p. 243
17. Ibid.
pressed by Lake, who had pursued him into the Punjab, Holkar was driven to extreme distress. Finding no hope of resisting the British army, Holkar deputed his agents to Lake's camp on the Beas, \(^1\) and on 24 December 1805 a treaty was concluded with Holkar. By it the British Government engaged "to have no concern with the ancient possession of the Holkar's family in Mewar, Malwa and Harrowtee, or with any of the Rajahs situated to the south of the Chumbul." \(^1\) These two treaties concluded with the two Maratha chiefs received the immediate sanction of the higher authorities in England. \(^2\)

A radical change thus took place in the attitude of the British Government in Calcutta towards the Indian states; a totally new atmosphere was created. Amir Khan who had been closely watching the movements of affairs congratulated Lake. He realised that the new political situation required a reconsideration of his own attitude towards the British Government. In his letter to Lake, Amir Khan tactfully tested the ground. "As universal peace and concord amongst the sons of men is the most grateful homage which they can pay to the Divinity," he wrote, "it is a duty incumbent upon all mankind to cultivate as far as may be in their power the friendship and good will of each other; in conformity to these sentiments it was always the first wish of my heart to be upon terms of friendship and harmony with all around me, but more especially with the British Government, its allies and dependants." \(^2\) He continued that hitherto he had been unable to maintain good relations with the British Government, as he has "hitherto unfortunately been prevented from acting according to my wishes, and desires, in these matters, by the strict observance which I was bound to pay to those engagements into which I had entered with others." \(^2\)

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3. Despatches to Bengal, 30 July 1806, para 1, p. 576, Vol. 45
4. Meer Khan to Lake, 4 Feb., 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1805, No. 33
5. Meer Khan to Lake, 4 Feb., 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1806, No. 33
His real motive behind his opening this correspondence with Lake was not far to seek. In his letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm, he requested him "to prevail upon his Lordship to assign me in Jagheer the Pergunnah of Sambhul which is the place of my nativity, I candidly acknowledge that I have no hereditary claims to support my pretensions in this instance, but when you consider that thousands have been exalted to power and authority as a reward for services performed to the British Government perhaps it will not be unreasonable if I offer in pledge the future services of my life, should my request be complied with in this particular and I am ready to enter the duties of a faithful and attached servant to the Hon'ble Company whenever you shall command." But Amir Khan was disillusioned by the evasive replies that he received from both Lake and Malcolm. His request was neither discussed between them, nor did they think it important enough to claim the Governor-General's consideration. In their letters they only expressed their sincere hopes that the treaty concluded with Holkar would be beneficial to each of his adherents like Amir Khan, but they were silent regarding his desire to gain a Jagir.

This was the first occasion when Amir Khan had offered his services to the British Government. In 1803 however, he had offered similar services to the British ally, the Nizam. But the events had then proved that he was not sincere in his proposal; his object at that time was to enhance his importance in Holkar's camp. Had he the same object in his mind in making his present proposal? In October 1806 the Resident at Delhi reported that for some time past the confidence and cordiality which had once subsisted between Holkar and Amir Khan had been greatly diminished. The Pathan chief openly complained that after the conclusion of peace, Holkar had not kept promises he had earlier made to

23. Meer Khan to Malcolm, undated, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1806, No. 34
24. Lake to Amir Khan, 6 Feb., 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1806; No.37 ; Malcolm to Amir Khan, undated, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1806, No. 38
25. See Chapter I, p. 18
him. Again, if it is assumed that he was sincere in his proposal to Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm, he obviously made it before he knew Jaipur and other states west of the Jumna were to lose their British protection.

While Amir Khan was making these approaches, Barlow was planning to dissolve the Company's alliance with Jaipur. In January 1806 in his letter to the Jaipur Raja he summed up the reasons for his decision. In concluding the defensive alliance with the Raja, he wrote, it had been the sincere desire of the parties concerned that in case of danger to one party, the other would come forward to assist and "the cause of both." The Governor-General contended that these obligations had no meaning, if they ceased to be reciprocal. When Holkar invaded Jaipur the British Government had detached a force for the Raja's assistance and consequently, the territory of Jaipur had been saved from the molestation of Holkar. But in the late Maratha war, the Governor-General added, while British troops were actively operating against Holkar, and when they were badly in need of the Raja's assistance "the forces of Jeynagur remained entirely inactive, no part of them joined the British army and no assistance of any kind was afforded by the state of Jeynagur in distressing the enemy." On the contrary, the Governor-General concluded, "you dispatched, a large army towards Oodypore and you suffered the enemy to pass through your country without molestation." Upon these grounds the Governor-General had decided to dissolve the alliance with the Raja. The Governor-General in his letter further expressed his determination to observe the principle of non-interference in the internal concerns and mutual transactions

26. Seton to Edmonstone, 22 Oct., 1806, B.P.S.C. 6 Nov. 1806, No. 72

Edmonstone in 1814 referred, in rather vague terms, to promises of lands which Holkar had made to Amir Khan. Minute of Edmonstone 29 April 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June 1814, No. 5

27. Governor-General to the Rajah of Jeynagur, 3 Jan. 1806, B.P.S.C. 13 Feb., 1806, No. 67

28. Ibid.
of all the states. The British Government's attention would henceforth be exclusively limited to the internal prosperity of the Company's territory.  

But Lake, who did not want the Governor-General to adopt this kind of attitude to the Jaipur Raja, argued that though the movements of the Raja had not been in conformity to the conditions of the alliance, the importance he attached to the Raja's aid during Holkar's march through Jaipur in October 1805, had led him not only to pass over that conduct, but to excite the Raja to assist the British forces by repeating the assurance of British protection and friendship. Lake was happy to confess that "his representations were ultimately attended with complete success, and from the supplies drawn from his country and the aid given by his officers, a British army was enabled at the opening of the present campaign to maintain a position which I deemed of the greatest importance to the success of my operations."

Lake strongly believed that the Marathas had at last abandoned their object of obtaining further possession in Hindusthan and of attacking the territories of the British Government or its allies. As long as the petty states enjoyed British protection, they could be attacked neither by Sindia nor by Holkar. But Lake expressed his view that "the proposed arrangements respecting the petty states west of the Jumna" would induce the Marathas to attempt their conquest, and that eventually the British Government would be driven to interfere, and that such interference would "probably terminate in a renewal of hostilities under circumstances of the most serious disadvantages."

Notwithstanding Lake's objection the Governor-General abrogated the company's previous engagement with Jaipur.

29. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
On 13 February 1806 Sturrock, the Resident at Jaipur, was directed to obtain his dismissal from the Raja. Ratanlal, the Raja's vakil, however, visited the Resident and launched a strong protest against the Governor-General's resolution. He was greatly agitated at "the want of regard shewn by the British Government to the Rajah". The vakil further stated that if the Governor-General's intention had been known to the Raja some time ago, he could have availed himself of the opportunity of conciliating the Maratha chiefs.

The step taken by Barlow may appear impolitic as far as India was concerned, as the withdrawal of the British alliance from Jaipur freed Amir Khan and the Marathas from any apprehension they had hitherto felt in their mind about plundering Jaipur and threatening peace in other quarters of India. But in withdrawing the alliance from Jaipur Barlow was obeying authorities in England whose action had its justification in the European and Imperial situation. Both Britain and her empire were threatened with French invasion. The short term considerations outweighed long term disadvantages. The real question is, did Barlow's policy save British India from avoidable expense and military action during the years of danger from Népoleon? The answer is in the affirmative. Till the outbreak of the Nepal war in 1814 the British Government judiciously avoided any situation which could involve them in a major crisis in India. So Barlow's policy may have been worth it.

In December 1806 Amir Khan, disappointed of any British grant or of service under Holkar, was compelled by the turbulence of his soldiers, occasioned by his inability to pay them, to take shelter in a fortress in Jaipur state. From there he negotiated with the Jaipur Raja with the object of gaining the means of subsistence for himself and for his followers.

34. Edmonstone to Sturrock, 13 Feb., 1806, B.P.S.C. 13 Feb., 1806, No. 66
35. Sturrock to Edmonstone, 18 March, 1806, B.P.S.C. 10 April, 1806, No. 5
The situation in Rajputana when Amir Khan took refuge there was singularly favourable for a freebooter, being full of conflict. Both Man Singh, the Jodhpur Raja and Jagat Singh, the Jaipur Raja, were determined to gain the hand of Krishna Kumari; the daughter of the Udaipur Rana.\textsuperscript{37} Man Singh, who had succeeded his brother, Bhim Singh as Raja of Jodhpur, asserted the legality of his claim, arguing that the Princess of Udaipur had previously been betrothed to his brother and that he could not give up this claim.\textsuperscript{38} But according to the Jaipur Raja, this claim had no foundation. He stated that he himself had been preparing for several months for the celebration of his marriage with the lady. This fact, he argued, had been publicly known, but Man Singh at that time had not raised any question regarding the legality of this claim on Krishna Kumari. Man Singh only raised his objections when he came to know that the infant son of his elder brother had been given asylum in Jaipur.\textsuperscript{39} This infant son was none other than Dhonkul Singh, the posthumous son of the late Bhim Singh. Man Singh had succeeded to the throne promising that should any of his brother's wives have a son, he would resign in his favour. This promise he set down in a "written engagement confirmed by an oath."\textsuperscript{40} Now Man Singh, ignoring his previous engagement, was prepared to maintain his position on the throne of Jodhpur. The Rathore chiefs who wanted Dhonkul Singh to succeed to the \textit{Masnad}, sought the assistance of the Jaipur Raja, Jagat Singh.\textsuperscript{41} Moreover, Dhonkul Singh's mother was the sister of Jagat Singh. Naturally he was in an advantageous position. His sympathy for Dhonkul Singh gained for his cause the

\textsuperscript{37} Malcolm wrongly calls Man Sing "a distant relation" of Bhim Singh. \textit{Memoir of Central India,} Vol. I, p. 330

\textsuperscript{38} Sturrock to Malcolm, 26 Jan., 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1806, No. 41; Letter from the Rajah of Jeypoor, B.P.C. 4 Aug., 1807, No. 50

\textsuperscript{39} Sturrock to Malcolm, 26 Jan. 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb., 1806, No. 41

\textsuperscript{40} Letter from the Rajah of Jeypoor, B.P.S.C. 4 Aug. 1807, No. 50

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ibid.}
Raja of Bikanir and a section of the Rajput chiefs and their connections.42

Thus the Rajput states became once more divided by these two questions viz. the rivalry between Man Singh and Jagat Singh to gain the hand of Krishna Kumari and the rivalry between Dhonkul Singh and Man Singh to gain the Masnad of Jodhpur. So the tension rose very high and actual hostilities between these two Rajput states, Jaipur and Jodhpur became probable. Both the Rajas became very zealous in enlisting supporters. Man Singh, who hoped for British help, proposed in a letter to the Governor-General to send his vakil to conclude a defensive alliance with the British.43 The Governor-General in his reply reminded the Raja that "the British Government has no other object than to maintain and confirm the relations of friendship as these at present exist with you and with all the chiefs in Hindostan". However, he requested the Raja to send his vakil to Seton, the Resident at Delhi.44

Meanwhile, Seton was instructed that in advancing the vakil of Jodhpur visiting him, he should remember that "by the 8th article of the treaty concluded with Daulat Rao Scindiah in November 1805, the British Government is pledged not to contract any treaty with the state of Jodhpur, but independently of that consideration, the system of policy which is adopted by the British Government with regard to all the chiefs, and states with which we are unconnected by defensive alliances, oppose the expediency of extending our connections with any of those chiefs and states beyond the limits of more amity and concord."45

In February 1807 Fatehram Beas, the Jodhpur vakil, visited the Resident at Delhi and expressed his desire that the dispute

43. Man. Sing to the Governor-General, Encls, in a letter from Mercer, 29 May, 1806, B.C. Vol. 202/4583, p. 11
44. To Rajah Man Sing, 20 June, 1806, B.C. Vol. 202/4583, No. 12
45. Edmonstone to Seton, 26 June, 1806, B.C. Vol. 202/4583, p. 18
between his master and the Jaipur Raja "could be brought to an amicable termination by the friendly interposition of the British Government." 46 But the vakil was given the cold answer, that though the British Government would be glad to see the conflict peacefully resolved, it had made it a policy "to avoid all mediatorial interference with foreign states, excepting only when such interference was conformable to treaties". 47 The further request of the Jodhpur Raja for an alliance against the Marathas was likewise turned down. The Resident, acting on instructions, expressed himself "in such a manner which was calculated rather to repress, than to encourage a hope of such a proposal being accepted." 48

The Company's allies in Rajputana, 49 the Rao Raja of Machedi and the Raja of Bharatpur had also been urged by both Jodhpur and Jaipur to join them in their conflict. The Rao Raja visited Seton and wished to know the line of conduct that would be proper for him to pursue. 50 He was told that "as he had no quarrel or cause of dispute with either of the contending Rajahs, he could not be expected to take part in the war." 51 He was further reminded that under the terms of his alliance with the British Government he could have no concern with either of these Rajas. It would be proper for him to observe strict neutrality. 52

The British attitude was thus cautious in the extreme: They were determined to avoid any situation which was likely to involve them in the affairs of the states which were not allied with them. Non-interference may have been essential at that juncture and a policy sincerely held. But its immediate

46. Seton to Edmonstone, 26 Feb, 1807, B.P.C. 12 March, 1807, No. 26

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Barlow had not dissolved the alliances with these states only because he could find no excuse in their conduct. Malcolm, The Political History of India, from 1784 to 1823 Vol, I, p. 373

50. Seton to Edmonstone, 28 Dec. 1806, para 6, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, P. 37

51. Ibid.

52. Edmonstone to Seton, 15 Jan., 1807, B.C. Vol, 212/4727, p. 39
effect was disastrous to the states which were excluded from alliances with the British Government. The Pindaris and the Pathans under Amir Khan, and the Marathas became free from any apprehension they had hitherto felt. Soon they would appear to ravage and plunder those two states and threaten the peace in general, raising the question—was it really possible for the British Government to withdraw its alliance further from any other state, in accordance with the Directors’ despatch of 30 July 1806 in favour of “the relinquishment of our alliances with several petty chieftains in the north of Hindostan”?  

While conducting negotiations with the British, Man Singh also looked to Holkar for help. Man Singh, who had assisted Holkar in the late Maratha war, had reasonable grounds to think himself sure of his active assistance. On 21 December 1806 Man Singh’s vakil visited Holkar, and strongly urged him to support his master by force. But Holkar at this stage probably did not want to lessen his general influence over the Rajputs by taking a decided part with either of the rival Rajas. He thought it prudent to remain silent and to observe Sindia’s conduct and movements. So Man Singh finding Holkar still undecided whether to assist him, appealed to Sindia for assistance, but here also he received a very disappointing reply. It was merely of “a friendly nature, but unaccompanied by any specific promise of aid”.

On the other side the Jaipur Raja was not idle. He also was exploring all the available sources of help. He had already taken into his service the Hyderabad Pathans formerly in Holkar’s service. The Jaipur vakil visited Sindia and entreated him to take his master’s side actively. But an advance of money had been demanded by Sindia, which perhaps stood in the way of the Raja’s coming to any settlement with him. The Raja had also opened a correspondence with Holkar,

53. Despatches to Bengal, 30 July, 1806, para r, p. 577, Vol. 45
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Mercer to Barlow, 25 Dec., 1806, B.P.C. 15 Jan., 1807, No. 31A-
and requested him at least to remain neutral and not to disturb his marriage with the Udaipur princess. He also opened negotiations with Amir Khan, whose camp had long been pitched in the neighbourhood of Jaipur. He sent his vakil to Amir Khan’s camp to induce him to enter his service.  

However, in January 1807 Holkar’s vakil visited Jaipur to renew negotiations with the Raja regarding his master’s monetary demands. The Raja proposed that in the event of Holkar’s not taking any part in the conflict he would pay him four lakhs of rupees, as the price of his neutrality. Holkar, perhaps dissatisfied with this offer, publicly declared that he could not forget the cause of Man Singh who had rendered him valuable services in the late Maratha war. The Jaipur Raja still hoped to induce Holkar to remain aloof from the present conflict. So when a fresh proposal came from Holkar, offering to remain neutral, “provided the Rajah of Jeypoore would pay him three lacks of rupees on commencing his march, three lacks more on his reaching Shahpoora, and three lacks afterwards”, the Jaipur Raja, finding no alternative, acceded Holkar’s proposal. 

In the event of Holkar’s relinquishing all interference in the conflict between the two Rajput rulers, Sindia thought it wise to come to a settlement with the Jaipur Raja. In fact, an understanding took place that the Raja would pay him ten lakhs of rupees “on the sole condition of Scindiah’s not assisting Raja Man Sing.” 

Thus the probability of interference on the part of the two Maratha rulers in the conflict between the two Rajput Rajas had eventually been eliminated. But Amir Khan’s stand was rather different: he secured money from both of them, not as the price of neutrality, but as a reward for the active assistance

58. Seton to Edmonstone, 28 Dec., 1806, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 35
60. Letter from the Resident at Delhi, 2 Feb., 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4787, p. 83
61. Mercer to Barlow, 6 Feb., 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, pp. 90-91
that he rendered sometimes to the cause of Jaipur and sometimes to that of Jodhpur.

The Jaipur Raja had already received Amir Khan with signal honour and distinction, and had made a liberal offer to him. Holkar, however, did not want him to espouse the cause of Jaipur. Holkar's wish was that his Sardars should assist Man Singh and put pressure on Jagat Singh, so that he could secure more money from him. But Amir Khan was reluctant to oblige Holkar. He arrived in the vicinity of the Jaipur camp at Rehelani and received one lakh of rupees from the Raja on 25 February 1807. On the following day, he had a confidential meeting with Rai Chand, the Raja's Dewan, regarding the military arrangements.

Amir Khan had pitched his camp midway between those of Jagat Singh of Jaipur and Man Singh, the former still continuing at Rehelani and the latter in the vicinity of Rupnagar. In March 1807, the Raja of Jaipur ordered him to be supplied with cash so that he might march without delay into Jodhpur with his followers to plunder and ravage that country.

Thus actual hostilities between the two states began. In the conflict Amir Khan now actively interfered not in the character of a Sardar attached to Holkar's interest, but as an independent chief at the head of his Pathan soldiers and a few thousand Holkarshahi Pindaris. Their number had very recently been augmented by the retrenched and starving soldiers of Holkar and by a group of Karim Khan's followers after the latter's discomfiture by Sindia. While Amir Khan was thus adding to the number of his followers, he was asked by Holkar, what is the object of these new levies? Amir Khan replied, "Men of high ambition never abandon their

62. Mercer to Barlow, 14 Jan., 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 41
63. Seton to Edmonstone, 6 March, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 124
64. Seton to Edmonstone, 7 March, 1807, B.P.S.C. 25 March, 1807, No. 1
65. Seton to Edmonstone, 12 March, 1807, B.P.C. 26 March, 1807, No. 37
66. Infra, p. 82
67. Memoir of Amer Khan, p. 309
purpose;...God is the dispenser of bounties and the disposer of all events. Recollect when you yourself first met me, what then was the condition of your army and of your resources? The glory and the state you have attained have been the gift of God, as the reward of your high ambition and pertinacity of purpose. It is now my turn to see what Providence has in store for me."68

Meanwhile, an action had taken place between the armies of Jaipur and Jodhpur, who were within a few miles of each other. In this action the Jodhpur forces were driven from their defensive positions, and further harassed by the plundering of Amir Khan's Pindaris, fell back.69 The Jaipur army followed up its early success with an attack on Man Singha's camp, in which they overwhelmingly defeated Man Singh and drove him in headlong flight to Miruth.70 He was so closely followed by Amir Khan's followers that his guns and baggage fell into their hands. After successfully eluding his pursuers Man Singh reached Miruth attended only by five hundred horse on 14 March and shortly afterwards he again resumed his flight towards Jodhpur.71

In April 1807 Man Singh reached Jodhpur and exerted himself in collecting new adherents and in raising money by every means in his power. Ultimately he managed to assemble about 12,000 men of all descriptions.72 Then he received the information that his enemies were fast approaching Jodhpur. He called upon his Sardars to declare whether they were ready to espouse his cause. His Sardars expressed their determination to stand by him and confirmed their assurance by an oath.73

68. Ibid.
69. Letter from the Resident at Delhi, 1 March, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 119
70. Seton to Edmonstone, 18 March, 1807, B.P.C. 2 April, 1807, No. 60
71. Seton to Edmonstone, 21 March, 1807. B.P.C. 9 April, 1807, No. 27
72. Letter from the Resident at Delhi, 11 April, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 153
73. Ibid. p. 154
Meanwhile, Amir Khan at the head of his own followers and the Jaipur army was marching on Jodhpur. As he approached, he succeeded in winning over the influential Sardars and establishing Dhonkul Singh’s authority. The Amil of Miruth had already surrendered and agreed to pay Dhonkul Singh 1,35,000 rupees as a token of allegiance. The Jaipur army reached Jodhpur and erected their batterays. Sawai Singh, a Rathor chief of considerable influence, who joined the Jaipur Raja in support of Dhonkul Singh, was very helpful in inducing the Rathor Sardars to desert Man Singh’s cause.\(^7\)

After a resistance of fifteen days the town of Jodhpur surrendered, but Man Singh and his adherents still continued to hold out in the fort of Jodhpur.\(^7\) The victorious army under Amir Khan and Chand Singh, the Jaipur general, while besieging the fort of Jodhpur, also sent a detachment to occupy the fort of Nagore.\(^7\)

So far the situation was developing in the way that was expected by the Jaipur Raja and his adherents. But after the surrender of the town of Jodhpur, the situation suddenly took a different course. Sindia’s generals, Raja Ambaji and Bapuji Sindia were advancing to the Jaipur camp to collect the money promised by the Raja to Sindia in the event of the latter’s remaining neutral.\(^7\) But on their way they began to plunder and raise contributions on the villages of Jaipur. This conduct on the part of Sindia’s soldiers afforded the Raja an excuse for withholding the payment of the promised sum.\(^7\)

Holkar for his part still continued encamped on the left bank of the Chambal; thence he kept a close watch on Sindia’s movements. He also renewed his monetary demands on the Jaipur Raja and openly declared his intention of crossing the river, if the Raja did not comply with his demands.\(^7\)

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74. Letter from the Resident at Delhi, 11 April, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 155
75. Seton to Edmonstone, 24 April, 1807, B.C. Vol, 212/4727, p. 163
76. Mercer to Barlow, 14 April, 1807, B.P.C. 7 May, 1807, No. 33
77. Mercer to Barlow, 8 May, 1807, B.C. Vol, 212/4727, p. 167
78. Ibid, p. 168
79. Seton to Edmonstone, 24 May, 1807, B.C. Vol 212/4727, p. 176
To the further embarassment of Jaipur Amir Khan now decided to change sides. It was not prudent to see Man Singh either destroyed completely or driven, to accept terms. Man Singh had taken refuge with no more than a few hundred adherents in the fort of Jodhpur. His position within the fort was not satisfactory, as he was daily losing his adherents. He had already opened negotiations with Sawai Singh and it was not improbable that he would ultimately be forced to accept his terms, such an outcome Amir Khan thought by no means desirable.

Amir Khan had already been greatly annoyed by the Jaipur Raja, who had directed him to deliver up the property he had plundered when in pursuit of Man Singh. Amir Khan, counter claiming that the promise made to him by the Raja had not been fulfilled, was committing every sort of depredations in Jaipur. This conduct Amir Khan justified upon the ground that the Raja had not paid him the sum which had been agreed upon. The position of the Jaipur Raja the ostensible victor thus became critical. He was daily loosing his ground. The Rathors who had allied themselves with him, were shocked to see their country being plundered and ravaged by the invaders. On the other hand, Man Singh determined to fight out his cause from the fort of Jodhpur, was gaining new adherents daily. The Raja of Jaipur was therefore reduced to the fatal necessity of furnishing Amir Khan with Tankhwa's or pecuniary orders upon certain districts in Jaipur. Emboldened with this sanction for extortion Amir Khan's men visited Kushalgarh and Hindown and exacted 16,000 and 10,000 rupees from these places respectively. These concessions failed to satisfy Amir Khan; on the contrary, they enflamed his greed. The petty Rajput chiefs who were under the protection of the

80. Mercer to Barlow, 8 May, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 169
81. Ibid. p. 170
82. Seton to Edmonstone, 23 March, 1807, B.P.C. 9 April, 1807, No. 25
83. Seton to Edmonstone, 6 July, 1807, B.P.C. 23 July, 1807, No. 30
84. Seton to Edmonstone, 6 July, 1807, B.P.C. 23 July, 1807, No. 30
85. Seton to Edmonstone, 24 July, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 190
Jaipur Raja, fearing that the Raja had no longer the power of protecting them from the molestations of the Pathans and the Pindaris, sought security in British protection. Suraj Mal, the uncle of the Rao Raja visited Seton in order to sound him as to the possibility of the British Government’s taking under its protection three petty Rajput chiefs, namely, Rao Jawhar Singh of Patun, Bharat Singh of Garh and Azmat Singh of Kote-Benower, who were the dependants of the Raja of Jaipur. Suraj Mal argued that if protection were given to them, not only would the field of Amir Khan’s depredations be limited, but they would be glad to pay handsome tributes to the British Government. But British policy was not to extend their political relation further, and the Resident thought it needless to enter into any discussion on the subject.

Amir Khan was far from being satisfied with the concessions that the Raja of Jaipur had made him. He therefore planned to go and plunder the town of Jaipur. The Jaipur Raja was still engaged in the siege of the fort of Jodhpur. But when Amir Khan set off for Jaipur, he detached a force under the command of Sheolal to resist him. On 3 August an action took place near Kishengarh between the Raja’s army under Sheolal and Amir Khan’s armies, in which the latter were defeated and put to flight. Amir Khan’s defeat made his enemies jubilant. Amir Khan, for his part, could not forget the humiliation. He immediately began to reorganise his soldiers and enlist the sympathy of the Rathors; and in August 1807 he marched to meet Sheolal at Madurajpur, where an action took place in which the Jaipur army was defeated.

Amir Khan’s victory caused considerable consternation in Jaipur. The Rani had openly declared her intention to deposit all her valuable articles in the mint for coinage; in addition she was taking measures to encourage the inhabitants and to

86. Seton to Edmonstone, 23 July, 1807, B.P.C. 11 Aug. 1807, No. 4
87. Seton to Edmonstone, 24 July, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 189
88. Ibid., 190
89. Seton to Edmonstone, 9 Aug. 1807, B.P.C. 1 Sept, 1807, No. 6A
90. Seton to Edmonstone, 15 Aug. 1807, B.P.C. 1 Sept, 1807, No. 14
91. Seton to Edmonstone, 21 Aug, 1807, B.P.C. 8 Sept, 1807, No. 13A
organise them for the defence of the city. But however elated Amir Khan might be by his victory over the forces of Jaipur, he realised that it was not wise to try to plunder the town of Jaipur. He knew that to defeat a disorganised army under the command of a man of limited ability and to defeat people who were grimly determined to save their property and honour were two different situations. So for the time being he gave up his hope of plundering the city of Jaipur and proceeded towards Kishengarh.

Meanwhile, the Rathor chiefs who were willing to submit to the control of Sawai Singh, had left the Jaipur camp in disgust and proceeded towards Kishengarh. There they met Amir Khan with whom they had a long discussion, in which Amir Khan was told of their determination to join Man Singh. He decided to leave Kishengarh and go with them towards Miruth. The relations between Man Singh and Amir Khan were already becoming friendly. Man Singh and his party had been greatly elated by accounts of Sheolal's defeat which they thought would oblige the Raja of Jaipur to retreat to his own capital and Man Singh had despatched a message congratulating Amir Khan on his victory.

Amir Khan reached Miruth on 21 September. On his arrival he was received by Man Singh with signal honour and distinction. They had a long discussion regarding the future course of action. Amir Khan proposed that their united force should proceed to Nagore to attack the Jaipur Raja and other adherents of Dhonkul Singh. When Man Singh declared that he could not do so because of want of money and supplies, Amir Khan replied that with enemies at his door, the Raja must find some means to remove them.

93. Ibid.
94. Seton to Edmonstone., 8 Sept, 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 227
95. Seton to Edmonstone, 19 Sept., 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 233
96. Seton to Edmonstone, 2 Sept., 1807, B.P.C, 21 Sept, 1807, No 43
97. Seton to Edmonstone, 8 Oct., 1807, B.C. Vol. 212/4727, p. 245
He then requested the Raja to send Induraj Singh, the Raja’s principal Bakeshi, to him at Miruth.  

Whatever financial difficulties Man Singh might have Amir Khan’s assistance was essential to him. He could neither rely on Sindia, nor put any faith in the words of Holkar. The British Government had made it clear that they would not interfere. At last therefore Man Singh agreed to pay Amir Khan four and a half lakhs a month of the maintenance of his army, to give his son a Jagir producing an income of four lakhs of rupees a year and to take into his service a brigade of Amir Khan’s, at the rate of thirteen lakhs of rupees a year. So Amir Khan became Man Singh’s partizan, and marched towards the town of Jodhpur. He sent a letter to the British Resident at Delhi openly declaring his newly established friendship with Man Singh and expressing his determination to bring an end to the struggle between the two Rajput states.

Meanwhile, Dhonkul Singh had been proclaimed the Raja of Jodhpur at Nagore with due ceremony. Soon afterwards the Jaipur Raja quitted Nagore and proceeded to his own capital. Dhonkul Singh was placed under the protection of Sawai Singh and Bapuji Sindia. But he was gradually losing his hold on the situation. The Rathers who had so long fought for his cause now remained neutral; and he could expect little from Bapuji Sindia. Sawai Singh was the only faithful supporter who remained with him. But their joint strength was no match for the combination of Amir Khan and Man Sing. Filled with anxiety they thought it wise to address the British Resident at Delhi. They urged the British Government to send troops in support of Dhonkul Singh. Their agent, Srinuwas Pandit, visited the Resident and pleaded in favour of his master. He suggested that if the

98. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Seton to Edmonstone, 8 Oct, 1807, B.C. Vol, 212/4727, p. 247
102. Seton to Edmonstone, 24 Dec, 1807, B.C. Vol, 247/5579, p. 16
British helped Raja Dhonkul Singh, they could be rewarded in the following way.\footnote{103}

1. The Raja would pay the British Government the sum of twelve lakhs of rupees in cash.

2. The Raja would assign them five \textit{Parganas}, namely Sambar, Nanwan, Koli, Parbatsir and Didwanah.

3. He would take into his pay four battalions of British infantry and four regiments of cavalry.

This was nothing but a request to enter into a subsidiary alliance with the British Government. But true to the policy of non-alignment the Resident replied to Raja Dhonkul Singh’s agent in the same tone and spirit in which he had replied to Raja Man Singh’s agents. The agent, Srinuwas, was told that the British Government had no intention of extending its territories or making “encroachments on its neighbours but on the contrary was occupied in improving the dominions which it already possessed, and in providing for the protection, security and happiness of its subjects of all ranks, descriptions and religious persuasions.”\footnote{104}

After settling his monetary demands with Man Singh, Amir Khan with his force and accompanied by the Jodhpur general, Anandraj Bakshi, pitched his camp near Nagore. There his first object was to separate Bapuji Sindia from Dhonkul Singh. He immediately opened negotiations with Bapuji Sindia to induce him to retire from Nagore. Bapuji Sindia was quite ready to retire leaving Dhonkul Singh to his fate, if Amir Khan secured for him a reasonable amount of money from Man Singh.\footnote{105} But Man Singh pleaded his inability to find any considerable sum of money in his present crisis. However Amir Khan brushed aside this difficulty categorically expressing his determination to recover the fort of Nagore even ‘if he had to face the combined forces of Dhonkul Singh and Bapuji Sindia.\footnote{106} Bapuji Sindia was

\footnote{103} \textit{Ibid.}

\footnote{104} Seton to Edmonstone, 14 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5579, p. 15

\footnote{105} Mercer to Minto, 30 Jan., 1808, B. P. C. 29 Feb., 1807, No. 77

\footnote{106} \textit{Ibid.}
aware of the inefficiency and the limited number of his soldiers and he had recently written to Sindia for immediate reinforcement. Seeing that Sindia was not ready to send any aid, seeing that Man Singh had not got the means to buy him off, and that Amir Khan was not only in earnest but also in superior force. Bapuji finally decided not to risk an engagement, and in February 1808 he withdrew from Nagore, leaving Dhonkul Singh to his fate.107

So Dhonkul Singh's position at Nagore was gradually changing from bad to worse. Sawai Singh, to whose guardianship Dhonkul Singh had been committed, did not think it prudent to remain inactive, when the latter's safety was obviously at stake.108 He opened negotiations with Surat Singh, the Raja of Bikanir, to induce him actively to espouse the cause of Dhonkul Singh or at least to secure from him a promise of asylum for Dhonkul Singh if the safety of his person were endangered.109 Even Sawai Singh had gone as far as to think of procuring Amir Khan's assistance or at least his peaceful retirement from Nagore by making a liberal offer. Just at this time the proposal came from Amir Khan that he himself and Sawai Singh, the leaders of the opposing sides should meet to discuss their relative situations. He invited Sawai Singh to his camp which was about 9 miles from the fort of Nagore, and Sawai Singh readily accepted the invitation.110 Early in April he reached Amir Khan's camp. But "as soon as Sawai Singh repaired to the camp, Amir Khan in base violation of his solemn oath ordered his person to be seized. This gave rise to an affray in which Sawai Singh was murdered".111 For Dhonkul Singh the death of his determined supporter, meant the death of his

109. Ibid.
110. Seton to Edmonstone, 8 April, 1808. B.P.C. 25 April, 1808, No. 44.
111. Seton to Edmonstone, 8 April, 1808, B. P. C. 25 April, 1808, No. 44.
cause, and an abrupt end to his struggle for the Massnad of Jodhpur.\textsuperscript{112} Amir Khan obtained possession of Nagore. But Dhonkul Singh had been previously carried off by his attendants to Bikanir.\textsuperscript{113}

As already observed, Amir Khan agreed to help Man Singh to get rid of his enemies. But it is not known whether Sawai Singh's murder formed a part of their agreement. Man Singh's vakil visited Seton immediately after this event. On being asked by Seton, the vakil admitted that "Amir Khan, despairing of being able either, to take the fort of Nagore or to induce Thakoor Sawey Singh to deliver it up, formed a plan for obtaining possession of his person which was approved by Raja Man Singh."\textsuperscript{114} Still the confusion remained. No doubt, Amir Khan's design to seize the person of Sawai Singh had been approved of by Man Singh, but that did nor necessarily mean that the murder of Sawai Singh had been included in the plan, or that Amir Khan had obtained Man Singh's previous sanction for this foul act. When the Resident categorically asked the vakil to clarify this point, the vakil admitted that the plan of seizing Sawai Singh's person had been approved of by the Raja, but denied that Sawai Singh's murder formed a part of that plan. Furthermore the vakil did not hold Amir Khan directly responsible for Sawai Singh's murder. He "ascribed the blood which had been shed, to the tumult of the moment, and to the impossibility, upon such occasions, to limit mischief or to restrain licentiousness".\textsuperscript{115} So it is not safe to lay the entire blame for the murder even on Amir Khan.

In February 1808, Kashirao Holkar died, and for some time thereafter there was continued unrest in the southern parts of the Holkar dominions. Yashvantrao was believed to have caused his elder brother Kashirao's death. Dadhu Khan,

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{113} Mercer to Minto, 18 April, 1808, B.P.C. 16 May, 1808, No. 76.
\textsuperscript{114} Seton to Edmonstone, 9 April, 1808, B.P.C. 25 April, 1808, No. 46.
\textsuperscript{115} Seton to Edmonstone, 9 April, 1808, B.P.C. 25 April, 1808, No. 46.
a partisan of Kashirao, in collaboration with Kashirao's widow challenged Yashvantrao's authority. They put forward Mohipatrao's claim to the inheritance of Tukoji Holkar, as the legitimate son of Ranoji, Tukoji's full brother. Against these confederates Yashvantrao despatched a part of his forces in March 1808. His troops were defeated and driven back by Dadhu Khan, however, and Yashvantrao, in alarm wrote "in a pressing manner to Ameer Khan, requiring his immediate attendance at Bhanpoora with all his troops."

Amir Khan was thus presented with an alternative hunting ground to that of Rajputana. He could foresee that Holkar's ill-health, the decaying condition of his government, and the intrigues in his darbar might soon open up very profitable opportunities for his intervention. Immediately after Sawai Singh's murder, therefore, he despatched four battalions and two thousand horse to assist Yashvantrao Holkar.

In taking this step Amir Khan was probably also influenced by the more threatening turn of events in Rajputana. When Sindia heard that Bapuji Sindia had retired from Nagore and that Chaturbhuj, the Jaipur minister, had repudiated all Sindian monetary claims upon him, he immediately ordered his general Jean Baptiste and Sharzaroa Ghatge to unite their forces with Bapuji Sindia so as to put effective pressure upon the Jaipur Raja. Clearly if Raja Jagat Singh were to capitulate and come to a settlement with Sindia, the combined forces of the latter would then be free to march upon Nagore, which must in that case slip from his hands. It was wise, therefore, to make some gesture at least of aiding Yashvantrao Holkar.

116. Seton to Edmonstone, 28 March, 1808, B.P.C. 18 April, 1808, No. 44
117. Seton to Edmonstone, 27 March, 1808, B.P.C. 11 April, 1808, No. 34
118. Seton to Edmonstone, 1 April, 1808, B.P.C. 18 April, 1808, No. 45
119. Lucknow Persian News Paper, 30 April, 1808, B.P.C. 9 May, 1808, No. 68
so as to have a second source of employment available should the Rajputana adventure come to an end.

In the event the Jaipur Raja did not capitulate to Sindia. Rather he ordered his general Chand Singh to clear Sindia’s marauding troops from Jaipur.\textsuperscript{120} On 26 June 1808 in a well contested action near Naseridah, Chand Singh defeated them, inflicting heavy loss.\textsuperscript{121} However, only two days later, Chand Singh was in his turn defeated and driven to take shelter in Todri fort, wherein he was promptly besieged by Bapuji Sindia.\textsuperscript{122} Even after receiving this alarming news, Raja Jagat Singh did not give up hope. He assembled further forces for the defence of his capital and looked around for allies.\textsuperscript{123}

His first move was an offer of fifteen lakhs to Holkar for his active assistance. This Holkar would have been glad to accept, for he had no wish to see Sindia left free to exploit the situation alone. But however anxious to accept, his own position was too precarious, with Dadhu Khan making alarming progress in the Deccan, to permit him to do more than despatch four battalions and one thousand horse towards Mokundra, on the road to Jaipur.\textsuperscript{125} Raja Jagat Singh sought therefore to free his hands by coming to a settlement with Jodhpur, and he deputed his confidential servant Dinaram to the Jodhpur Court. There Raja Man Singh consulted with Amir Khan, who agreed to send his munshi and his father-in-law upon a return embassy to Jaipur.\textsuperscript{126} They were cordially received by Raja Jagat Singh, who was greatly encouraged by the news that Amir Khan was prepared to render service to

\textsuperscript{120} Seton to Edmonstone, 28 June, 1808, B.P.C. 10 July, 1808, No. 32
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} Seton to Edmonstone, 30 June, 1808, B.P.C. 18 July, 1808, No. 33
\textsuperscript{123} Elphinstone to Minto, 5 July, 1808, B.P.C. 8 Aug, 1808, No, 12
\textsuperscript{124} Seton to Edmonstone, 28 June, 1808, B.P.C. 10 July, 1808, No. 32
\textsuperscript{125} Close to Edmonstone, 20 July, 1808, B.P.C. 15 Aug, 1808, No.18
\textsuperscript{126} Seton to Edmonstone, 12 July, 1808, B.P.C. 1 Aug., 1808, No.4
his cause, and that, leaving three thousand horse and foot in the service of Man Singh, Amir Khan had marched out in the direction of Jaipur.\textsuperscript{127}

So far Jagat Singh had received only promises of aid from Holkar and Amir Khan, but little more, the Rajput chiefs had not rallied to his cause, and meanwhile Sindia had renewed his predatory activities in the territories of Jaipur with much vigour. Bapuji, Jean Baptiste and Sharzarao Ghatge had united their forces and proceeded to lay waste the Jaipur territories, town after town falling to them.\textsuperscript{128} When the strong fort of Suma fell to them late in July, they openly boasted that the town of Jaipur would be their next victim. Jajat Singh felt compelled once again to seek British assistance.\textsuperscript{129}

The Raja's minister, Chaturbhuj, vigorously pressed the point that "the country would never be properly protected until a party of the British troops were subsidised".\textsuperscript{130} In mid-August Bal Mukand, the Jaipur vakil, accordingly visited Seton with an urgent plea for a renewal of the defensive alliance with the company. "The actual power as well as the dignity of the ancient sovereigns of India were now possessed by the British Government," he said, "the weaker states when oppressed had a sort of right to look up to it for protection."\textsuperscript{131} But Seton reminded Bal Mukand that the British policy was one of non-interference, from which there could be no deviation. When the vakil was convinced that there was little hope of securing British protection, he asked at least for the "mediation of the British Government to procure a fair and amicable adjustment of the differences between him and Scindiah." Seton replied that even mediation would be a deviation from non-intervention to which the Company could not agree.\textsuperscript{132}

\textsuperscript{127} Elphinstone to Minto, 5 July, 1808, B.P.C. 8 Aug., 1808, No. 12
\textsuperscript{128} Seton to Edmonstone, 20 July, 1808, B.P.C. 15 Aug., 1808, No. 18
\textsuperscript{129} Close to Minto, 14 July, 1808, B.P.C. 29 Aug., 1808, No. 22A
\textsuperscript{130} Seton to Edmonstone, 18 July, 1808, B.P.C. 8 Aug., 1808, No. 26
\textsuperscript{131} Seton to Edmonstone, 17 Aug., 1808, B.P.C. 12 Sept., 1808, No. 28
\textsuperscript{132} Seton to Edmonstone, 17 Aug., 1808, B.P.C. 12 Sept., 1808, No. 28
This refusal of British aid was to be Amir Khan's opportunity, for the despairing Raja now turned to him. Amir Khan was approaching the Jaipur country in great haste: in mid-August he reported his arrival at Sambar. The Raja immediately sent his agent to meet Amir Khan and with him the gift of a lakh of rupees. Amir Khan was not satisfied; he pressed for more and while negotiations were going on, allowed his Pindaris to plunder the surrounding villages. Amir Khan may well have secretly wished to allow the whole situation to drag on, so as to extort more money from the Raja, for his real object was not to retard Sindia's operations, but to secure money. Indeed he thought it expedient to keep on good terms with all the parties concerned. While he was giving the Raja of Jaipur his clear assurances of assistance, in correspondence with Bapuji Sindia he was promising to arrange a settlement of Sindia's just demands,—if need be by joining him in coercing Jagat Singh—if only Bapuji would in the meantime cease to molest Jaipur territory.

By September, however, Jagat Singh had become aware of Amir Khan's deceit and had decided that his very presence in Jaipur was incompatible with its tranquillity or with the successful conclusion of any settlement with Sindia. It would be cheaper to purchase Amir Khan's retirement from Jaipur than his assistance, for the Pindaris were still ravaging Jaipur and their leader pressing his financial demands. Finally Amir Khan agreed to withdraw upon payment of seven lakhs of rupees, and early in October the Raja paid him four lakhs in cash and two in jewels.

Amir Khan was the readier to come to terms with Jaipur because his attention for some time had been diverted to the situation in Holkar's camp. Holkar for a few months had been suffering from mental derangement with occasional...
vals of recovery. The affairs of the Government were conducted by a Sardar, Yamuna Bhaul, and Tulsibai, Holkar's wife. Tulsibai, feeling her position insecure, urgently sought Amir Khan's presence in Court.\textsuperscript{188} Amir Khan did not take much time in deciding to push on to Holkar's court. To cover his change of plan and avoid misunderstandings with Sindhia, and with those of Holkar's ministers, who were not favourably disposed to his interference in the affairs of Holkar's state, he publicity declared that he was going to Holkar's camp at Kumkerar simply to look after Holkar's health.\textsuperscript{139} He set off in January 1809.\textsuperscript{140}

SECTION II.

It was pointed out earlier in this chapter that the Pindaris, assuming a more independent role after the Maratha wars of Wellesley, still showed in their division into Holkarshahis and Sindiasahis their origins as auxiliaries of these two Maratha powers. The activities of the Holkarshahis have been discussed; it is time to turn back now to a review of the Sindiasahis under their leaders Karim Khan and Chitu Khan. What effect in freeing Amir Khan's hands the British withdrawal from its Rajput alliances had has been clearly seen. It is necessary now to consider what effect a purely defensive policy had in Central India.

At the beginning of 1806, Sydenham, the Resident at Hyderabad had declared that it no longer seemed necessary to maintain British forces on the northern frontiers of Hyderabad. Barlow agreed. His one doubt had been about the danger of Pindari attacks upon the Nizam's territories, but he believed that the good relations established with Sindia and Holkar would prevent any such attempt.\textsuperscript{141} Sydenham further reassured him that if the Pindaris should attempt any:

\textsuperscript{138} Close to Minto, 30 Oct., 1808, B.P.C. 28 Nov. 1808, No. 1
\textsuperscript{139} Seton to Edmonstone, 19 Dec., 1808, B.P.C. 16 Jan. 1809,
No. 93
\textsuperscript{140} Close to Edmonstone, 5 Jan., 1809, B.P.S.C. 20 Feb. 1809,
No. 25
\textsuperscript{141} Sydenham to Barlow, 12 Jan., 1806, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb. 1806,
No. 42
incursion "the troops of His Highness fully capable of encoun-
tering the Pindaris and of preserving the security of the
frontier". Barlow therefore directed Sydenham to order the
commanding officer of the subsidiary force to march back to
the Godavari and canton his troops.142

The Nizam’s ministers, Munir-ul-Mulk and Raja Mohi-
patram, when informed of this decision and asked to take
effective measures themselves to defend Hyderabad territories,
showed at once that they disagreed with Sydenham’s assump-
tions. They declared their readiness to make every effort to
repel Pindari incursions, but also their belief that they could
not succeed "without some assistance from the subsidiary
force." If the assistance of two battalions was available,
then, they declared, the Nizam’s contingent, so supported,
"would be perfectly sufficient to defend the frontier".143
Sydenham, in reply, expressed his belief that the Nizam’s
troops were quite capable of destroying any plunderers disturb-
ing the tranquillity of the Nizam’s territories. The ministers
politely agreeing, nevertheless renewed their request for the
two battalions, declaring that "the mere name of any detach-
ment of the British troops would prevent the Pindaris from
repeating their incursion."144

The Resident, with "a peculiar degree of judgment and
address" in the Governor-General’s opinion,145 replied that
the Nizam’s troops "must be taught to consider themselves
capable of defending their own country, from such attacks,
and that they would not have that confidence, which they
ought, in themselves as long as they were always assisted with
British troops. That the Nizam’s troops had distinguished
themselves very much, and particularly against the Pindaries,
that they had acquired a name, and that if that name were
not sufficient to restrain the incursions of the Pindaries, they
ought to establish it themselves in the first encounter with

143. Ibid.
144. Ibid.
145. Edmonstone to Sydenham, 24 March, 1806; B.P.S.C. 27 March,
1806, No. 87
those marauders.”146 Sydenham then concluded by referring to the principles and objects of the Company’s alliance with the Nizam. “The manifest intention of that alliance was that the Subadar’s Government should in the first instance make every possible exertion to defend and preserve the tranquillity of the country and that in cases of necessity clearly made out and substantiated, when its own resources might be insufficient, the British Government was bound to employ the subsidiary force, in assisting and supporting the Nizam’s Government. On the present occasion it did not appear to me that a case of necessity did exist, and therefore there could be no substantial objection to the cantoning of the force.”147 Though British troops would not be present in Berar, they would occupy “an advanced and central position on the river Godavary” and on “any important occasion” in collaboration with the Poona force, could readily advance to the frontier.148

The Governor-General in Council not only approved the judgment of the Resident, but trusted that his reference to the principles of the alliance had produced “a correct comprehension” in the minds of the Nizam’s ministers, as to the British attitude.149 The defensive policy of Barlow’s Government required that the troops of their allies should henceforth be entrusted with the responsibility of repulsing the plundering incursions of the Pindaris. Sindia and Holkar were now on friendly terms with the British and their allies, and since the Pindaris without the support of the Maratha armies had not yet been a major menace, the assistance of British forces seemed uncalled for. Moreover the withdrawal of the forward British troops could be justified not only by such military assessments but on the wider consideration that withdrawal in itself would reduce tension and create just that atmosphere of tranquillity which a policy of non-interference required.

Barlow’s decision was soon tested. In February 1806 a

146. Sydenham to Barlow, 12 Jan. 1806, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb., 1806, No 42
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid.
149. Edmonstone to Sydenham, 24 March, 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 March, 1806, No. 87
rumour was strongly current that the Pindaris under Karim Khan were making preparations for an attack on the Nizam’s territory. The Governor-General naturally thought it proper to direct Mercer, the Resident with Sindia, to make a representation to that chief on the "apprehended inroads of the Pindarries into the territory of the Soubadar of the Deckan and suggest to him the expectation of the British Government that he will employ the efforts of his authority and power in restraining the irregularities of the Pindarries."\footnote{Edmonstone to the Resident with Scindia, 24 March, 1806, B.P.S.C. 27 March, 1806, No. 87A} This, in mid-April, Mercer did.\footnote{Mercer to Edmonstone, 19 April, 1806, B.P.S.C. 15 May, 1806, No. 21}

Sindia, in reply, declared his "readiness to take any measures in his power" against the Pindaris, and that he had directed that letters should be written to their different leaders "strictly prohibiting them making incursions into the territories of the Soubadar of the Deckan, and threatening them with punishment in the event of their disobeying this order."\footnote{Harkaras conveyed Sindia's orders to Chitu Khan and Karim Khan and gave them his letters directing them not to enter the Nizam's territories. The Governor-General expressed himself as entirely satisfied with Sindia's readiness "to exert his authority in restraining the Pindarries from incursions into the country of Soubadar."} Harkaras conveyed Sindia's orders to Chitu Khan and Karim Khan and gave them his letters directing them not to enter the Nizam's territories. The Governor-General expressed himself as entirely satisfied with Sindia's readiness "to exert his authority in restraining the Pindarries from incursions into the country of Soubadar."

The Harkara returned in June 1806 and reported that the Pindaris were neither making preparations to plunder the Nizam's territories at present, nor they had any intention to do so in future. And when they came to know Sindia's orders the several chiefs at once "promised obedience to the orders delivered to them."\footnote{Mercer to Edmonstone, 4 June, 1806, B.P.S.C. 26 June, 1806, No. 35}

The principal body of the Pindaris
under Karim Khan was cantoned between Bhopal and Ujjain. Chitu Khan with his followers had crossed the Narmada at Hindia, but he had no intention of proceeding for plunder. He was stationed at Satwas, to the southward of the Narmada.\(^{155}\)

The implication of the British approach to Sindia was that the Pindaris were subject to Sindia and that the responsibility of preventing them from plundering the territories of the British allies lay with him. Sindia by his readiness to restrain the Pindaris, not only once more asserted his authority over them, but also admitted his responsibility. Henceforth this kind of representations and remonstrances to Sindia’s court formed a major part of British policy in seeking to curb the Pindaris.

The Pindaris did remain silent during the remaining months of 1806. But was it wholly due to their implicit obedience to Sindia and was Barlow justified in his policy? It seems more probable that it was Pindari weakness that had rendered them inactive. In fact, one or two leaders of the Sindia-shahi Pindaris individually had enhanced their power and position, but the division as a whole had recently been weakened by the outbreak of a fratricidal conflict between them. The whole body of the Sindia-shahi Pindaris had been divided into two camps.\(^{156}\) The two Leaders, Chitu Khan and Karim Khan were at variance, and a scuffle had recently taken place between these two leaders. Chitu Khan, though he was assisted by Vizir Muhammad Khan of Bhopal, had been no match for Karim Khan, who defeated him and plundered his camp in a battle at Chinipurbari.\(^{157}\) But this was not an end of their conflict. Both leaders were preparing for further battle and collecting new adherents.\(^{158}\) Chitu Khan after his defeat escaped to Sindia’s camp, where he

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\(^{156}\) Letter from Mohipatram, undated, B.P.S.C. 28 Aug., 1806., No. 45.

\(^{157}\) Letter from Mohipatram, undated, B.P.S.C. 28 Aug. 1806., No. 45

\(^{158}\) Mercer to Edmonstone, 4 June, 1806, B.P.S.C. 26 June, 1806., No. 35.
was asked to settle all his differences with Karim Khan. But he ignored Sindia’s wish and prepared to meet Karim Khan in the field.\textsuperscript{159} From this circumstance, Mercer observed, “it may be reasonably hoped that the Pindaris will not at present attempt any incursions into Berar more particularly should they find the Nizam’s troops in a state of preparation to oppose them.”\textsuperscript{160}

Before the subsidiary force withdrew to the Godavari, a large force of the Nizam’s cavalry and infantry had been stationed on the Berar frontier.\textsuperscript{161} But had the Pindaris ignored these forces and committed depredations in Hyderabad, it seems very probable that Sindia’s orders to respect the Nizam’s territories would have been no better obeyed than was his command to Chitu to settle his differences with Karim Khan. Sindia had in fact weakened his control by his involvement in Rajput affairs,\textsuperscript{162} and though he had himself advanced to Udaipur and seized the gates of that city, he felt it necessary to withdraw again while he attended to the offers made by the Rajas both of Jaipur and Jodhpur.\textsuperscript{163} Had the Pindaris ever really intended to invade Hyderabad, it was not fear of Sindia’s power to punish which had deterred them, but their own internal dissensions.

Those dissensions led indeed to a trial of strength between the Pindaris under Karim Khan and their nominal master Sindia. They were tempted to the trial by the continued mutual rivalry of Sindia and Holkar.\textsuperscript{164} In September Holkar addressed to the British Resident at Delhi complaints of Sindia having violated the tranquillity and peace of his territories. “I have lately heard that Daulat Rao Scindiah has raised disturbances in my country. This intelligence has

\textsuperscript{159} Mercer to Edmonstone, 19 April, 1806, B.P.S.C. 15 May, 1806, No. 21.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{161} Edmonstone to Mercer, 12 May, 1806, B.P.S.C. 15 May, 1806, No. 22.
\textsuperscript{162} Mercer to Edmonstone, 19 April, 1806, B.P.S.C. 15 May, 1806, No. 21.
\textsuperscript{163} Mercer to Barlow, 1 June, 1806, B.P.S.C. 26 June, 1806, No. 34.
\textsuperscript{164} Mercer to Barlow, 30 Aug, 1806, B.P.S.C. 25 Sept. 1806, No. 41.
astonished me, more especially from the circumstances of Mr. Mercer being with him. Daulat Rao Scindiah has collected nearly five lacs of Rupees of my public revenue from Malwa and has not yet made the compensation which he agreed to make, nay in addition to this he meditates further injuries.\(^{165}\)

In this dispute between the two Maratha rulers, Karim Khan had become involved. Already in April 1806, Karim Khan had opened negotiations with Holkar and expressed his desire to secure his assistance.\(^{166}\) Holkar not only agreed to assist him against Chitu Khan but also instigated him to resist Sindia’s monetary demands upon him. Later that summer Karim Khan’s relation with Sindia rapidly changed from bad to worse.\(^{167}\) A certain Muhammad Shah Khan, commander of a brigade under Amir Khan, had seized certain of Sindia’s districts in Sironj and Bhilsa, and he refused to deliver them to Sindia’s officers. Karim Khan had earlier helped him out of financial difficulties, and now he took him temporarily into his service. This further evidence of Karim Khan’s disloyalty further angered Sindia.\(^{168}\) Ultimately it was rumoured that Karim Khan intended to change his attachment from Sindia to Holkar. Yashvantrao, the minister of Nagpur, who visited the Resident early in September, confirmed this rumour to be true.\(^{169}\)

Further trouble arose, when Sindia renewed his monetary demands and asked Karim Khan to come to his camp for an adjustment of all matters which seemed to have created a breach into their relations.\(^{170}\) Karim Khan accepted this invitation with much hesitation, for the veterans among his followers who had heard and seen much of Maratha politics,

\(^{165}\) Jeswunt Rao Holkar to Seton, 24 Sept, 1806, B.P.S.C. 16 Oct., 1806, No. 47

\(^{166}\) Mercer to Edmonstone, 19 April, 1806, B.P.S.C. 15 May, 1806, No. 21

\(^{167}\) Mercer to Barlow, 30 Aug., 1806, B.P.S.C. 25 Sept. 1806, No.41

\(^{168}\) Mercer to Barlow, 30 Aug. 1806, B.P.S.C. 25 Sept. 1806, No. 41

\(^{169}\) Elphinstone to Barlow, 10 Sept. 1806, B.P.S.C. 9 Oct. 1806, Nos. 69 and 70

\(^{170}\) Mercer to Barlow, 12 Oct. 1806, B.P.S.C. 6 Nov. 1806, No. 75
were uneasy over his decision. But the vain-glorious Pindari leader confident of his growing strength attached little importance to their timely warnings, though he himself was no less suspicious of Sindia’s recent conduct. In October 1806, accompanied by 3000 Pindaris he marched towards Sindia’s camp.\(^{171}\)

Meanwhile Sindia marched towards Bhopal and on 20 November encamped near Sakunbari, a small fort belonging to the Grassias.\(^{172}\) He employed his soldiers in reducing this fort, which Sindia at once promised to deliver over to Karim Khan.\(^{173}\) Sindia’s plan was complete. The allurement of the newly acquired fort of Sakunbari was enough to dispel suspicion from Karim Khan’s mind. On 23 November, he reached Sakunbari and on the following day he visited Sindia to receive the charge of the fort. This opportunity to seize his person was at once taken by Sindia: Karim Khan with a few of his followers were captured and an immediate attack upon his camp was ordered. His 3000 followers made some resistance, but too feeble to foil Sindia’s plan. They were dispersed.\(^{174}\)

Two things followed from this coup. Sindia’s efforts to keep the Pindaris in subjection to him were successful: Karim Khan’s capture created consternation among the Pindaris, the division which he had personally trained and organised to some perfection crumbled, and the Pindaris’ rapid advance towards the states of an organised, independent force was temporarily arrested. The second change which followed the coup was in the internal politics of the Sindia-shahi Pindaris. With Karim Khan’s sudden elimination from the picture,

\(^{171}\) Mercer to Barlow, 24 Oct. 1806, B.P.S.C. 20 Nov. 1806, No. 31

\(^{172}\) "The word Grassiah is derived from Grass, a Sanskrit word, which signified a mouthful; and has been metaphorically applied to designate the small share of the produce of a country which these plunderers claim."


\(^{173}\) Mercer to Barlow, 22 Nov. 1806, B.P.S.C. 18 Dec. 1806, No. 33

\(^{174}\) Mercer to Edmonstone, 24 Nov. 1806, B.P.S.C. 18 Dec. 1806, No. 34
the internal strife which had broken out in the previous year, greatly weakening their organisation and restraining them from their usual activities, came to an end. Chitu Khan, Karim Khan’s rival, had a free hand to organise his own division and to think of a bold plan of ravaging the Nizam’s territory. Sydenham’s confidence in the Hyderabad defences was about to be tested.

Chitu Khan celebrated the new year, 1807, by making a dash to Malkapur in north-western Berar. His advanced party of 3000 Pindaris was soon engaged in a skirmish with Aseer-ud-daula, the Nizam’s commanding officer at Malkapur. In this engagement, which took place on 22 January, the Nizam’s troops were overpowered and compelled to retreat, the Pindaris capturing their camp and plundering it. Thence they pushed on eastwards to Pripulconta and Balapur which they ravaged and plundered. Five hundred Pindaris, detached from the main body to plunder the village of Oligram failed in their attempt on that village because of the vigilance of the Nizam’s troops posted there. But another body of five hundred men which entered the pargana of Bhir was successful. The Amil of Bhir drew out a small party and asked the people to oppose the Pindaris, and for a week he saved the pargana from their molestations; but the Pindaris in a second attempt made on 5 February, broke the inhabitants’ resistance and succeeded in plundering the pargana. They took terrible revenge on the people who had opposed them. From Bhir, one hundred and fifty miles deep into Hyderabad territory they turned back with their plunder. On their way to the Godavari

175. Usser-ood-Daulah to Gholam Sumdane Khan, 22 Jan. 1807 B.C. vol. 213/4736, p. 13
176. Ibid., p. 14
177. Russell to Sydenham, 28 Jan. 1807, B.P.C. 26 Feb. 1807, No. 118
176. Ibid.
179. Russell to Sydenham, 10 Feb. 1807, B.P.C. 5 March, 1807, No. 80
Ghat they made an unsuccessful attack on Nuligram, and then, crossing the river, pushed for the passes, north of Aurangabad. These they now found held in force, particularly their most easy line of retreat via Malkapur, the garrison of which had been strengthened by a Hyderabad force under Samdani Khan. There was also a force of the Nizam’s troops busily marching upon their tracks. The Pindaris therefore wasted no time in further plundering, but withdrew so fast that the pursuing force could not come up with them, and eluding the frontier guards, escaped with their booty into Sindia’s territories round Burhanpur.

The advance of the Pindaris from Sindia’s territory into Hyderabad, and their retirement to Burhanpur with their booty raised again the whole question of their relations with the Maratha chief. As Edmonstone pointed out to Mercer at Gwalior, events had seemed to confirm the supposition “that the Pindarries belong to the Government of Scindiah.” Moreover, Chitu Khan was known to be on close terms with Sindia. A year earlier, when Chitu Khan had been defeated by Karim Khan he came to Sindia who supported him, and later seized and confined his rival. Had Sindia seriously wished to prevent the raid into the Nizam’s territory Chitu’s dependence on his favour, and the warning example of Karim Khan’s imprisonment, would surely have been sufficient. But Sindia may well have felt in turn indebted to Chitu Khan who, when his chief was in financial straits, had “consented to give a Nuzurance of three lacs of rupees”. As Russell, the political Agent in Berar, pointed out, Chitu Khan had “probably determined to remunerate himself at the expense of the Nizam”—and the indebted Sindia may have deliberately turned a blind eye.

180. Sookroodar to Gobind Buksh, 6 Feb. 1807, B. P. C. 12 March, 1807, Nos. 6 & 7
181. Russell to Sydenham, 10 Feb. 1807, B.P.C. 5 March, 1807. No. 80
182. Russell to Sydenham, 16 Feb. 1807, B.C. Vol. 213/4736, p. 17
183. Edmonstone to Mercer, 12 Feb, 1807, B.C. Vol. 213/4736, p. 18
The Governor-General, at least, believed that Sindia could have controlled Chitu Khan had he wished, for Mercer, the Resident with Sindia, was directed to launch a strong protest to Sindia against Chitu Khan’s action in the Nizam’s territory: “you should state to Daulat Rao Scindiah the just expectation of the British Government that he will adopt measures for punishing the late outrages of the Pindarries in the person of their leaders and that he will form such arrangements as may be calculated to prevent a repetition of them”.\footnote{185} Mercer in March 1807, accordingly pressed upon Sindia the “impropriety of people who were supposed to be under his influence and control being permitted to commit these depredations” and that he ought to restrain them. The persons responsible for the depredations ought to be punished and any repetition prevented.\footnote{186}

To Mercer’s remonstrances were also added those of the Raja of Nagpur, whose vakil also visited Sindia, with whom he had a long discussion regarding the recent activities of the Pindaris. The vakil informed him of the Raja’s apprehension that the Pindaris would enter his country during the approaching winter and the Raja’s expectation that Sindia would adopt measures against them, so that the Raja’s territories might not be molested by them.\footnote{187}

Thus Sindia had to face great pressure, both from the British Government and the Raja of Nagpur, which it was not easy for him to ignore. Moreover, apart from the external pressure, Sindia himself was interested in punishing the Pindaris and in bringing them under his subjection, as his hold on them had evidently been weakened for some time. He therefore appealed to the Raja for his active co-operation\footnote{188} and set his troops in motion. Sindia’s force amounting to 8000

\footnote{185} Edmonstone to Mercer, 12 March, 1807, B.P.C. 12 March, 1807.
\footnote{186} Mercer to Edmonstone, 13 March, 1807, B.C. Vol. 213/4736.
\footnote{187} Mercer to Edmonstone, 13 March, 1807, B.C. Vol. 213/4736.
\footnote{188} Ibid.
men under Gopalrao’s command was already encamped at Esura to the south of the Narmada. The Raja of Nagpur also detached a force under Sadeq Ali Khan to co-operate with Gopalrao. Early in April 1807, in the neighbourhood of Chouragaon Sadeq Ali Khan had an engagement with Chitu Khan in which the latter was defeated. More than fifty Pindaris including Chitu’s son Ramzan Khan were killed, while Chitu Khan was captured, handed over to Sindia’s army, brought to Sindia’s camp under guard, and there confined. In August both the principal leaders, Karim Khan and Chitu Khan hitherto confined in Sindia’s camp, were sent under guard to the fort of Gwalior.

There were many who breathed a sigh of relief. Mercer, the Resident at Sindia’s court expressed to Government his belief that “as both the principal leaders of the predatory bands were now in Scindiah’s power it may be reasonably hoped that a repetition of the outrages complained of may for a certain time, at least, be prevented”. The Resident at Hyderabad echoed the hope that “the late measures adopted by Daulat Rao Scindiah would prevent the Pindarries from repeating their outrages in the province of Berar”. No doubt so did the Raja of Nagpur.

But only for a few months were all these hopes fulfilled. During the rainy season it was not the Pindaris’ usual practice to make plundering incursions, as the condition of the village-roads and the rivers did not permit them to make the long marches which were essential for the success of their expeditions. It was natural, therefore, that Jenkins, in August 1807 could report that “the Pindarries have been entirely quiet

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189. Russell to Sydenham, 28 Jan., 1807, B.P.C. 26 Feb, 1807, No. 124
190. Jenkins to Barlow, 9 April, 1807, B.P.C. 30 April, 1807, No. 70A
191. Mercer to Edmonstone, 16 April, 1807, B.P.C. 14 May, 1807, No. 48
192. Close to Minto, 20 Aug. 1808, B.P.C. 12 Sept, 1808, No. 35
193. Mercer to Edmonstone, 1807, B.P.C. 14 May, 1807, No. 48
194. From the Resident at Hyderabad, 7 June, 1807, B.C. vol. 213/4736, p. 35
since the commencement of the rains." 195 But as the winter approached, the Pindaris started preparations for fresh raids. Namdar Khan, the adopted son of Karim Khan, became the leader of Karim’s division and the two Rajun brothers, Bara Rajun and Chota Rajun, became the leaders of Chitu’s division. They immediately took steps to organise the scattered Pindaris. In November both Raja Gobind Baksh and Mir Alam, the Nizam’s ministers had become so alarmed at the news of Pindari preparations, that they felt it necessary to communicate to Doveton, Commander of the Subsidiary Force, their apprehension that “the province of Berar will be disturbed by the Pindarries during the approaching cold season.” 196

After the raids of 1806-07 Russell, the political agent in Berar, had explained the Pindari success as due to “the mutilated state of the military establishment and the deranged condition” of the province’s administration. He had likewise excused the withdrawal of the Subsidiary Force from Berar by arguing that it had not been any lack of numbers of Hyderabad guard forces but their lack of spirit which had permitted the Pindari success. 197 Now Sydenham, the Resident at Hyderabad, with the same easy confidence, told the Calcutta authorities that he did not believe that “the Pindarries will again venture to pass the Nizam’s frontier in any considerable body”. If they did, he thought that “the Nizam’s troops are perfectly capable of defeating and expelling such parties of marauders as may occasionally extend their depredations to the north-eastern part of Berar.” 198

However Doveton, like the Nizam’s ministers, was not so confident and he therefore asked to be equipped with “specific instructions for the guidance of his conduct” should the Pindaris again spread their depredations into the territory of

195. Jenkins to Barlow, 1 Aug. 1807, B.P.C. 25 Aug. 1807, No. 31
196. Sydenham to Edmonstone, 20 Nov. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 5
197. Russell to Sydenham, 16 Feb. 1807, B.C., vol. 213/4736, p. 17
198. Sydenham to Edmonstone, 20 Nov. 1807, B.C. vol. 2 47/5581, p. 5
the Nizam.\textsuperscript{199} This request elicited from the Resident a long despatch, showing to what lengths a defensive non-interference should be carried. The British Government, he stated would normally expect that “the Nizam’s troops should be left to defend His Highness’s territories from the incursions of all free-booters”, and that “without the assistance or co-operation of any part of the Subsidiary Eorce” they should think themselves quite capable of tackling the Pindaris.\textsuperscript{200} The Resident added that there might arise a “situation of real necessity” which would justify the Nizam’s Government in requesting the assistance of the subsidiary troops, and he proceeded to give an example of such a situation. If the Pindaris made an extension of their ravages to Berar, Raja Gobind Baksh should in the first instance adopt every measure to repel them. If it was required, Doveton could “suggest such measures to the Rajah [Gobind Baksh] respecting the movements of the troops, the co-operation of different detachments and the instructions to be given to the Nizam’s military commanders” as appeared necessary.\textsuperscript{201} But only if the Nizam’s troops should be unexpectedly defeated in their engagement with the Pindaris, and the Pindaris endeavoured to “extend their ravages to the southward”, would “a situation of real necessity” be deemed to have arisen. Doveton could thereupon make use of the Subsidiary Force in measures which even then should in no way be “offensive operations”. The force would be used firstly to intimidate the Pindaris, and secondly to give confidence to the Nizam’s troops.\textsuperscript{202}

The Governor-General in Council thought these instructions “to be judicious” and signified an approval of their tenor to the Resident.\textsuperscript{203}

Such was the position when in November 1807, the Pindaris numbering between 3000 and 4000 men under two Rajun

\textsuperscript{199} Sydenham to Edmonstone, 20 Nov. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 6
\textsuperscript{200} Sydenham to Doveton, 20 Nov. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 8
\textsuperscript{201} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{202} Sydenham to Doveton, 25 Nov. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 10
\textsuperscript{203} Pol. Letter from Bengal, 2 Feb. 1808, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 1
brothers entered the territory of the Raja of Nagpur. Advancing up the Tapti from Burhanpur they crossed the hills into Nagpur at Multai. There they broke into two bodies, each of about 1500 horse. One party under Chitu's son swept down from the hills in a dash for the city of Nagpur, and taking advantage of the absence of the Raja's troops, carried devastation to within seven or eight miles of the city. There was the greatest alarm within the city, and the Raja desperately tried to prepare troops for a pursuit. But the soldiers "ill paid and little inclined to do anything", had neither the mind to march nor the physical fitness required to tackle the Pindaris.

Happily for the Raja the Pindaris had advanced into Nagpur mainly so as to turn the defences of Nizam's territory and their plundering of Nagpur was only incidental to their advance into Berar. On 24 November, the Pindaris now 3000 strong turned south into Berar by the Sindjoma Ghat. "They were well mounted, though mostly armed with spears and swords, and more uniformily dressed than is usual amongst the native troops". They carried with them eight standards, "four of them were red, with a white snake in the centre and four were yellow and white".

To oppose this irruption Nawab Salabat Khan, the commander of the Nizam's army, immediately sent of an advanced party, followed by a larger body of seven hundred horse under Fateh Singh. But though Fateh Singh set off on 23 November his movements were so slow that when he reached Sindjoma the advance guard had already been overpowered by the Pindaris. A pitched battle followed Fateh Singh's arrival, and in the hand to hand fighting he lost "upwards of 300 killed and wounded" being thoroughly defeated. After his success the Pindaris were able to cross the Wardha

204. Jenkins to Minto, 28 Nov. 1807, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1807, No. 4
205. Jenkins to Russell, 1 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 21
206. Doveton to Sydenham, 3 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 15
207. A letter from Drew, 25 Nov. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 31
208. Doveton to Sydenham, 3 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 15
unopposed near Amnair, plundering and ravaging as they went, on their way back into Nagpur territory.\textsuperscript{210} This rapid retreat of the Pindaris from the Nizam's territory was to be attributed to the additional measures that had been taken under Doveton's supervision. For in addition to Fateh Singh's movement to Sindjoma, two other corps consisting of 1300 horse and 400 foot had been ordered to march towards that place.\textsuperscript{211}

On 26 November, the retreating Pindaris approached to within ten miles of the city of Nagpur, but their attempt to penetrate into the city failed because of the vigilance of the Raja of Nagpur's troops posted within the city. Being unable to plunder the city, they ravaged the surrounding villages, and after collecting a rich booty, moved off south-west of Nagpur.\textsuperscript{212} From Nagpur they attempted another dash into Berar recrossing the Wardha on 4 December and approaching to within ten miles of Amrauti. But the Nizam's force posted there was strong enough to check their attempt,\textsuperscript{213} and realising the situation was unfavourable the Pindaris retreated north-westwards and evacuated Berar. They had covered some three hundred miles in their two week incursion.\textsuperscript{214}

The Nizam's officers thought that the Pindaris had left the Nizam's territory for good, and they became less vigilant. The Pindaris who were kept well informed by their own intelligence thought it a favourable moment to make another raid.\textsuperscript{215} Striking south across the Tapti, a body of 4000 Pindaris, belonging perhaps to Karim Khan's division, suddenly appeared before the Ajanta Ghat late in December 1807. Pushing on through the pass they fell upon the village of Chikhli, plundering its inhabitants and finally burnt it: all this despite the presence of some three thousand Hyderabad

\textsuperscript{210} Doveton to Sydenham, 3 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 16
\textsuperscript{211} Doveton to Sydenham, 3 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 16
\textsuperscript{212} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 17
\textsuperscript{213} Doveton to Sydenham, 5 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 22
\textsuperscript{214} Doveton to Sydenham, 20 Dec. 1807, B.P.C. 4 Jan. 1808, No. 9
\textsuperscript{215} Sydenham to Edmonstone, 30 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/5581, p. 39
horse at Malkapur, a day’s march to the north.\textsuperscript{216} From Chikhli the main body returned, but some fifteen hundred Pindaris moved westwards by forced marches and, owing to the “culpable negligence of the Nizam’s forces”\textsuperscript{217} were able to plunder the surroundings and finally enter the city of Aurangabad. They spent three or four days plundering the city—too long, for on their way back they were interrupted by a body of the Peshwa’s troops under the Vinchurkar chieftain, who, after a struggle in which many Pindaris were killed, retook nearly all their booty.”\textsuperscript{218}

Meanwhile, until April 1808, the body of Pindaris belonging to Chitu Khan’s division remained in the neighbourhood of Nagpur, encamped near Soangarh. The ultimate objective was supposed to be Nansari. However, the Brahmin in charge not only rallied the inhabitants in taking precautionary measures\textsuperscript{219} but wrote at once for aid. Sadeq Ali Khan, who commanded the Raja’s army at Maltoi, at once marched towards Nansari with 4700 horse. The Pindaris, coming to know of the approach of the Raja’s forces, made no attempt on the thana but turned off suddenly into Berar. Sadeq Ali Khan wished by forced marches “to pursue them into Berar in order to attack them wherever they could be overtaken,”\textsuperscript{220} and he immediately informed his Government that if the situation required, he would cross the Wardha and enter Berar in their pursuit, as he could not otherwise expect to bring them to action.\textsuperscript{221}

Yashvantrao, the Raja’s minister, visited Resident Jenkins and acquainted him with Sadeq Ali’s intention. The Resident argued that such a step must have ill consequences and would create much discord in the existing relation between the two Governments. Nevertheless, as he reported to Sydenham at

\textsuperscript{216} Sydenham to Edmonstone, 30 Dec. 1807, B.C. vol. 247/558\textsuperscript{i}, p. 39

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid., p. 40

\textsuperscript{218} Pol. letter from Bengal, 2 Feb, 1808, B.C. vol, 247/558\textsuperscript{i}, p. 4

\textsuperscript{219} Tudor to Keith, 9 April, 1808, B.P.C. 16 May, 1808, No. 68

\textsuperscript{220} Jankins to Sydenham, 23 April, 1808, B.P.C. 18 July, 1808, No. 14

\textsuperscript{221} Jenkins to Minto, 15 June, 1808, B.P.C. 18 July, 1808, No. 12.
Hyderabad, he did not think that this step was "connected with any suspicious motive on the Raja's part, but was rather to be attributed to the Raja's sincere desire to protect his country from the Pindaris. Yashvantrao continued to press his point with Jenkins. He was convinced that the Pindaris had entered Berar with the intention of following the course of the Wardha, intending to take advantage of the unprotected condition of the frontier along its lower course. To defeat this intention the Raja was sending a detachment from Nagpur, and as the minister pointed out, Sadeq Ali Khan would then have the advantage of being in the rear of the Pindaris.

Jenkins was sufficiently won over by these arguments to report to the Governor-General that he believed that the Raja was sincere in his intentions. But since he still believed that Sadeq Ali Khan's proposed pursuit would produce much alarm in the Nizam's mind, and that "the entrance of the Rajah's troops into Berar could not but be considered as extremely disrespectful to His Highness the Nizam and would likely to involve, other consequences of an unpleasant nature," he addressed the minister not to enter Berar without securing the Nizam's permission. He therefore urged upon Yashvantrao that "an immediate order should be issued to recall the troops which might be supposed to have entered Berar and ensure their instant return within the Rajah's frontier."

Meanwhile, the Pindaris had succeeded in eluding Sadeq Ali Khan, by passing into Berar. Since there was no Hyderabad force to resist them, they were able to rest for two days, before again crossing the Wardha into the Raja's territory. They then turned back towards Nagpur intending to do mischief in the city. Sadeq Ali Khan was obliged to alter his.

223. Ibid.
225. Ibid.
original plan of following them through Berar, and instead he marched down the Wardha to throw himself between the Pindaris and the capital. He wanted to bring them to a decisive action near Chanda and with this intention he had already requested the Raja to send a force to co-operate with him. But the Pindaris without giving any further trouble, left the Raja’s territory with precipitation.\textsuperscript{227}

A close study of the events of 1807 and 1808 reveals two things. First that where the troops of the Nizam or the Raja were alert and vigorous in their reactions the Pindaris were unwilling to face them, rapidly retreating without any attempt to plunder. (Conversely where they were slack, as at Sindjoma and Chikhli the people suffered heavily). Second that however vigorous was the defense against the Pindaris it could not be effective without an active co-operation and understanding between the forces of the Nizam and of the Bhosle, and again it has been seen that the Pindaris, pursued by the Raja’s troops, successfully eluded action by entering the Nizam’s territory, or conversely pressed by the Nizam’s forces found refuge in Nagpur. Neither the soldiers of the Nizam nor those of the Raja could act effectively against them if the soldiers of one state were not permitted to pursue them through the territories of the other.

It was the Raja of Nagpur who first realised this problem and took the initiative to solve it. He urged upon Jenkins that an agreement should be concluded between the Nizam and the Raja, by which either his troops should be permitted to pursue the Pindaris through the Nizam’s territories or the Nizam should adopt certain measures to prevent them from retiring through his territories when pressed by the Raja’s troops. In both cases the Raja declared that his troops would act in concert with those of the Nizam. He would also be glad, he said, to allow British or Hyderabad troops to march through his territories, if required, in pursuit of the Pindaris.\textsuperscript{228} He urged that no measure for the security of

\textsuperscript{227} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{228} Jenkins to Sydenham, 27 June, 1808, B.P.C. 18 July, 1808, No. 15
both countries from the depredations of the Pindaris would be successful without the active co-operation of the soldiers of both. Jenkins promised to open a correspondence with Sydenham at Hyderabad on the points he had raised, and this in June 1808 he did.\textsuperscript{229}

In September 1808, Sydenham the Resident at Hyderabad held conversations with Mir Alam, the Nizam’s minister, on this subject. Mir Alam promised that every measure would be taken by his Government to chastize the Pindaris. But he proved “extremely reluctant to consent to the proposition of granting a free passage to the Raja of Nagpore’s troops in pursuit of the Pindarries through the territories of the Nizam.”\textsuperscript{230} This objection to the Raja’s proposal was to be attributed to Mir Alam’s apprehension that if such permission were once granted to the Raja’s soldiers, they would enter the Nizam’s territories and themselves commit depredations there. Mir Alam therefore argued that it would be better for each Government to employ its soldiers for the defence of its own possessions and that “the troops of the one should not be suffered to enter into the territories of the other.”\textsuperscript{231}

Sydenham, still hoping that the Nizam’s Government could be persuaded to agree to the Nagpur proposals, then asked if Mir Alam would be satisfied by an undertaking from the Nagpur Raja that his troops would not “commit any depredations on the Nizam’s possessions and that should not enter the Nizam’s territories excepting in pursuit of the Pindarries”. He also expressed the hope to Jenkins that the Bhosle would not object “to make good such losses as might be sustained by the inhabitants of these territories from the passage of the Bhooslaha’s troops”.\textsuperscript{232} He did see difficulties however in distinguishing between the depredations committed

\textsuperscript{229} Jenkins to Sydenham, 27 June, 1808, B.P.C. 18 July, 1808, No. 15.

\textsuperscript{230} Sydenham to Jenkins, 15 Sept, 1808, B.P.C. 10 Oct. 1808, No. 64.

\textsuperscript{231} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{232} Sydenham to Jenkins, 15 Sept, 1808, B.P.C. 10 Oct. 1808, No. 64.
by the Pindaris and damage done by their pursuers, the more so as the Nizam’s Government would be tempted to “ascribe all their losses” to the Raja’s troops by the greater likelihood of securing payment from the latter.233 As Sydenham feared, when Jenkins put these plans to the Bhosle, the Raja refused to promise the Nizam that he would compensate him for all the losses sustained by his people. He did not wish to expose himself to the unpleasant situation that would be created by the “readiness of the Nizam’s officers to seize every ground of complaint against his troops”. He therefore declined the option of permitting his soldiers to march through the Nizam’s territories upon such terms.234

By the end of 1808, the Pathans and Pindaris had emerged as a distinct force in the politics of India. Though they had not relinquished all connection with their original masters Holkar and Sindia, since it gave weight and consideration to them, they were quite ready to act independently of them, as Amir Khan had done in Rajputana, and Chitu Khan in Berar and Nagpur. Sindia had attempted to re-establish his control of his erstwhile auxiliaries—effectively in the case of Karim Khan’s division, but otherwise little had been done to check the further growth of Pindari power. Holkar was crippled by the internal dissensions of his state. The British Government refused all aid to the Pindaris’ Rajput victims, and by withdrawing the Subsidiary Force to the Godavari threw Hyderabad upon its own resources. As for Nagpur and Hyderabad, their mutual suspicion and distrust prevented the sensible proposals for military co-operation made by the Bhosle Raja from taking effect. What the results were of such general failure to curb the Pindari menace will be the subject of subsequent chapters.

233. Ibid.
CHAPTER III

THE PATHANS AND THE PINDARIS UNDER AMIR KHAN INVADER NAGPUR, 1809-1810

IN January 1809, Amir Khan reached Holkar’s camp at Kumkerar, 16 miles east of Ujjain. His declared aim, was to enquire about Holkar’s health, his real aims secretly to ascertain the actual state of Holkar’s army and to sound the views of Holkar’s Sardars. In short, he wanted to gain an ascendancy at Holkar’s court and to make his position stronger financially and militarily. To that end he immediately started fomenting intrigues and conspiracies against the ministers, Chimnaji Bhau and Balaram Seth, who were ill-disposed to his presence at the court. They for their part were determined not to yield anything to Amir Khan’s pressure.

From time to time he pressed the ministers for money, but with little effect. He realised that in order to gain ascendancy over the administration and so control finance he would have to secure a change in the ministry. Two men ready to work in his interest were Bhau Bhaskar and Pentu Ali. Both had been in Holkar’s service, but some time ago had been compelled to leave it. Amir Khan now exerted his influence for their return to Holkar’s service, and ultimately they were re-admitted to the ministry. The rivalry between Amir Khan and the old ministry did not stop when this point has been gained, but rather was intensified. Ministers like Chimnaji Bhau and Balaram Seth openly expressed their dislike for his interference in the administra-

1. Close to Edmonstone, 5 Jan, 1809, B.P.S.C. 20 Feb, 1809, No. 24
2. Close to Edmonstone, 17 Feb, 1809, B.P.S. 27 Feb, 1809, No. 44
3. Ibid.
4. Close to Edmonstone, 9 March, 1809, B.P.S.C. 10 April, 1809, No. 7
5. Close to Edmonstone, 23 March, 1809, B.P.C. 10 April, 1809, No. 60
tion, and complained bitterly against his frequent attempts to extort money from the treasury. They frankly asked him to move towards Udaipur to collect tribute, so that they would be saved from his irksome presence at the Darbar.  

However, Amir Khan, a master of stratagem, did not take much time to bring the hostile ministers to their knees. He produced before Tulsibai a forged letter and charged Balaram Seth and Chimnaji Bhau with opening a correspondence with the commanding officer of the British force at Talnair. From this letter it appeared that the ministers had invited the British force to advance and assume the direct management of all the affairs of Holkar’s Government. Amir Khan added the further charge that the late rebellion of Dadhu Khan and his partisans in support of Mohipatrao was to be ascribed to the treacherous conduct of these ministers. Both Chimnaji Bhau and Balaram Seth were summoned to explain their conduct. As soon the letter was shown to them, they declared it a “malicious forgery”, and challenged Amir Khan to prove that they had written it. If it was found that the letter had really been written by them, they boldly declared, Amir Khan might blow them from the cannon’s mouth. However, Amir Khan did not think it prudent to pursue the matter further. He assured the ministers that if they could administer the affairs of the Government satisfactorily and supply money for his troops regularly, the question of the letter might be ignored. Nevertheless, the pressure so applied was sufficient to give Amir Khan the appearance of being de facto ruler of the state during Holkar’s madness. He superintends, Close, the Resident with the Peshwa, reported, “the affairs of his (Holkar’s) Government, reproving the ministers when their efforts fail to supply his.

6. Sydenham to Moncton, 21 March, 1809, B.P.C. 10 April, 1809, No. 78
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. A Paper of Intelligence from Holkar’s camp, 21 March, 1809, B.P.C. 10 April, 1809, No. 79
wants, or their measures in general prove unsatisfactory to him,...he charged the ministers with incapacity and threatened to remove them." 10 His monetary requisitions were also successful. The ministers provided him immediately with two lakhs of rupees. But he complained that his soldiers were clamorous and behaving in an outrageous manner; this amount of two lakhs was not enough for their payment. 11 The ministers, at the instance of Tulsibai, then agreed to gratify him with another sum of the same amount. 12 In addition to this, he was authorised not only to collect the tribute from Udaipur amounting to seven lakhs of rupees on account of the last three years, but also to appropriate whatever he might levy from Jaipur for the payment of his followers. 13

Thus the ministers in order to relieve themselves from his embarrassing presence at the court, gratified him with four lakhs of rupees and promised much more when he agreed to march towards Udaipur and Jaipur. But after receiving the money, he did not show any inclination to move in either direction. 14 On the contrary his troops were allowed to behave in the "most licentious manner, plundering and destroying the country of the Maharajah [Holkar]." All the complaints and remonstrances of the ministers against their outrageous conduct produced little or no effect. Amir Khan not only disregarded the existing laws of the state and the ministers' complaints, but also made his frequent demands for money "in the style of a superior." Balaram Seth, not only had frequently to repair in person to his camp to make excuses, but had to endure their being received with haughtiness and contempt. 15

Tulsibal was another who became disgusted and alarmed

10. Close to Sydenham, 7 April, 1809, B.P.C. 29 April, 1809, No. 86
11. A Paper of Intelligence from Holkar's camp, 30 March, 1809, B.P.C. 29 April, 1809, No. 161
12. Close to Sydenham, 7 April, 1809, B.P.C. 29 April, 1809, No. 86
13. A Paper of Intelligence from Holkar's camp, 30 March, 1809, B.P.C. 29 April, 1809, No. 161
14. Close to Minto, 10 April, 1809, B.P.C. 29 April, 1809, No. 119
15. Seton to Edmonstone, 10 May, 1809, B.P.C. 3 June, 1809, No. 52
at Amir Khan’s "arrogant encroachments". Perceiving her position not safe at the court and fearing that Malharrao would not be able to inherit the masnad after his father's death, Tulsibai had sought Amir Khan's presence at the court. But she certainly had not intended him to assume the entire authority, leaving for her nothing to do but to obey him.\textsuperscript{16} But affairs at court would not yet permit her to antagonise Amir Khan and to depend on the co-operation of the ministers and soldiers of the state. The ministry was riddled with intrigues and conspiracies and the ministers were more anxious to move in their own interest than in those of the state. The state forces were always mutinous and tumultuous for want of pay. An incident in April revealed the wretchedness to which the state had been reduced and the extent to which the ministers and the ruler were dependant on Amir Khan. A Muslim faqir of some note had assured the ministers that he could restore Yashvantrao Holkar to sanity, and for some time he was allowed to continue his efforts. But eventually he began to despair of effecting Holkar's recovery. This failure, the faqir stated, was due to the negligence of the patient's attendants, who allowed Holkar to indulge in a mode of life not at all conducive to his cure.\textsuperscript{17} The faqir, thereupon combined with the troops of the state, who suddenly assembled, insulted the ministers, and forcibly removed Holkar to the artillery Park, where they accommodated him in a tent.\textsuperscript{18} The ministers, greatly alarmed, fled for their lives to Amir Khan's camp. Thence they directed the insurgents to restore Holkar to his former situation, which the soldiers refused to do. At the ministers' request, Amir Khan then threatened to attack them. His threats, combined with the dismissal of some of the civil officers who were obnoxious to them, had an effect on the soldiers, and after the payment of a portion of their arrears, they were ultimately persuaded to restore Holkar and to return to their duty.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16} Seton to Edmonstone, 10 May, 1809, B.P.C. 3 June, 1809, No. 52
\textsuperscript{17} Close to Minto, 12 May, 1809, B.P.C. 3 June, 1809, No. 20
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Close to Minto, 12 May, 1809, B.P.C. 3 June, 1809, No. 20
Such was the state of affairs prevailing at Holkar’s court. There was no authority which could hold together all the different elements in the state. Tulsibai was ruling in her husband’s name, but her personality was too weak to control the ministers and the soldiers. She had therefore to depend either on the ministers’ assistance or on Amir Khan’s military strength. Since the ministers seemed to be insincere in their regard for her interest, she found no other way but to depend on that crafty chief. Consequently, Amir Khan was able to exploit the resources of the state for his own ends and to gain an ascendency over the administration.

However, in April 1809, Amir Khan desided to move towards Bhopal, leaving Gafur Khan, his brother-in-law, at Holkar’s court to superintend affairs on his behalf. He arrived at Shahjahanpur; from there he declared his intention of enforcing Holkar’s monetary demands, which had so long been deliberately evaded by the Raja of Nagpur. If the Raja refused, he would assist the Nawab of Bhopal in expelling the Raja’s troops from his territory, and if necessary, he would even advance to Nagpur with the Nawab.

The situation which Amir Khan now threatened to exploit had its origins in events occurring as early as 1800. In that year, acting it seems under the threats of the Peshwa and Daulatrao Sindia, the Bhoole Raja had put Yasvantrao Holkar under arrest. Then, it was alleged, the Raja had seized Yasvantrao’s jewels and other property. Ever since then Holkar had continued to press claims for compensation, to the amount of one crore of Rupees. Late in 1807, for example Umaji Pathel had been sent by Holkar to Nagpur with the specific purpose of collecting the money from the Raja. The agent could secure nothing but evasive replies and friendly professions from the Raja. A regular corres-

20. Ibid.
21. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 3, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, No. 6
23. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 1, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, No. 6
pondence followed between the two Governments, but consisted merely of reproaches and threats of revenge on Holkar’s part, if his just demand should still be evaded, and of evasion and procrastination on the part of the Raja.24

Bhopal was involved because the Raja of Nagpur was actively seeking to regain possession of the districts of Hoshangabad and Shivni, earlier occupied from Nagpur by the Nawab.25 In mid 1807 the Bhosle Raja joined forces with Sindia, who had his own differences over unpaid tribute from Bhopal, in an attack upon the two districts. Hoshangabad fell to their joint forces at the first attack.26 This success greatly encouraged the Bhosle, and whetted his appetite for more. Sindia, for his part agreed to leave the Nawab in possession of his other strongholds if he were granted Islamabad—and the Nawab agreed with this offer, handing over the fort.27

Since the commencement of this war the Nawab had been trying to gain new allies and in particular had opened a correspondence with Amir Khan. But the latter at that time was engaged in the affairs of Rajputana with wider prospects in mind. But when in 1809, Amir Khan abandoned Nagore and turned to Holkar’s court, the appeals of the Nawab found a readier hearing. Amir Khan was already moving against the Nagpur Raja to enforce Holkar’s long-standing claims for restitution of the property taken in 1800. He was able at the same time to make use of Bhopal’s quarrels with the Bhosle and with Sindia. Bhopal would be a useful and doubtless a grateful ally.

The prospect of Pindari help led the Bhopal Nawab to undo the settlement achieved with Sindia by an immediate attack upon his troops. A detachment of Sindia’s troops was routed early in May 1809, while Amir Khan was still on his

24. Ibid.
25. From the Resident with Scindiah, 18 May, 1807, p. 19, B.C. vol. 237/5460
26. Ibid.
27. Pol. letter from Bengal, 8 Feb. 1808, para 88, p. 10, B.C. vol. 237/5460
way. Early in June their junction was effected, Amir Khan pitching his camp to the south of Bhopal, on the north bank of the Narmada. He had with him a force of 8,000 cavalry and 3,000 infantry, and he had already invited the leaders of the Sindiasahi Pindaris to collect and hold in readiness as large a force as possible. As we have seen, because of the imprisonment of their two leaders, Karim Khan and Chitu Khan, these Pindaris had been considerably weakened and disorganised. Until February they had been hovering near the frontier of the territories of the Nizam and the Raja of Nagpur; now their principal chiefs, the two Rajun brothers and Namdar Khan visited Amir Khan’s camp and agreed to act under his leadership. At last both the Pindari divisions—Sindiasahi and Holkarshahi—were going to be united under a single leader.

The Raja of Nagpur was alarmed by Amir Khan’s approach, the gathering of Pindaris and the defeat of Sindia’s troops. But he still continued his procrastination towards Amir Khan and to gain time decided to send a vākil to his camp. Accordingly on 6 June, Bapu Ghorpade and Kashirao started for Amir Khan’s camp. The Raja at that time was vacillating between possible courses of action in this crisis. Two ways were open to him—either to comply with the monetary demands made by Amir Khan in Holkar’s name, or to resist his march towards Bhopal. If he adopted the former, complying with Amir Khan’s demands, he would set a precedent which would encourage both Holkar and Sindia to exact money again and again. If he chose the alternative of resistance, however, he risked a total defeat. The Raja could not forget the disorganized state of his Government and the

28. Close to Minto, 15 May, 1809, B.P.C. 3 June, 1809, No. 30
29. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 13, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, No. 6
30. Sydenham to Montresor, 16 Feb. 1809, B.P.C. 6 March, 1809, No. 77
31. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 5, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, No. 6
32. Ibid, para. 4
discontent and disheartened condition of his troops. Dare he try to resist on army led by “so enterprising a chief as Meer Khan”, accustomed to warfare and flushed with the hopes of a rich harvest of plunder from a wealthy and populous capital? The Raja thought not. But his mother and Nana Sahib, his brother, advised him to resist Amir Khan, urging immediate measures to reform the military establishments, and to pay the arrears of the troops, who should be made to understand that the safety and existence of the state were dependant on their valour and boldness.

The Raja at last decided to take the risk of resisting. He summoned his soldiers to assemble, made some distributions of money and promised shortly to liquidate their arrears. A body of 600 Arabs lately discharged, were readmitted into service; the soldiers posted at Chinipurbari, the principal Nagpur conquest in Bhopal to the northward of the Narmada were directed to cross the river leaving only a detachment at that place; another body of 400 men was left to garrison the fort of Hoshangabad.

The first test of the Bhosle’s determination came when in July, after the Nawab of Bhopal had met and concerted plans with Amir Khan for a joint attack, the Pindari leader summoned the Raja’s qiladars to surrender the forts of Chinipurbari and Choukigarh. Both places had been seized by the Bhosle from the Nawab, but neither was particularly strong; Chinipurbari, though a place of considerable extent, had been taken in three days, and Choukigarh, a nearby hill fort, after sixteen days. Nevertheless Amir Khan’s demands for their surrender was rejected with contempt, though he threatened their commanders with a regular siege.

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33. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 8, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, No. 6
34. Ibid., para 9
35. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 15, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, No. 6
36. Jenkins to Minto, 6 July, 1809, para 2, B.P.C. 5 Aug., 1809, No. 42
37. Ibid., para 5
For the moment, however, the monsoon prevented any major effort, and Amir Khan moved to Jubbulpore to canton his troops for the rains. From thence small parties only were sent out foraging and plundering in Shivni and Chapara south of the Narmada, and ravaging Deori and Saugor north of the river. They also levied contributions on such of Sindhia’s territories as lay at hand, demanding contributions from Garhakota in Holkar’s name. Against these exactions, Sindhia in June made strong remonstrances to Holkar’s Government, but without result. Sindia’s darbar therefore began to plan an attack upon Amir Khan, in which the Nagpur Raja was duly invited to join. In July attempts were also made to detach the Nawab of Bhopal from Amir Khan. Sindia sent a vakil to Zalim Singh of Kotah to seek his assistance in winning over the Nawab, and also in securing a settlement between the imprisoned Pindari leader Karim Khan and Sindia, by negotiations with his mother and son. The hope was that Karim Khan might agree to serve Sindia in return for his liberty, and that the union of Pindari forces under Amir Khan would be destroyed. Unfortunately this plan of Sharzarao Ghatge met with opposition from Sindia, who was determined to hold Karim Khan, and the negotiations came to nothing.

Sindia’s darbar was, in fact, very reluctant to risk any serious conflict with Amir Khan. They argued that the resources of the state were not adequate to the prosecution of two such objects as his expulsion from Bhopal and the achievement of the security of Sindia’s territory from the depredation of the Pindaris. It was not wise to pursue both objects at the same time, particularly when the Government was confronted with many problems created by the impoverished state of its finances.

38. Ibid., para 3
39. Jenkins to Minto, 12 June, 1809, para 7, B.P.S.C. 8 July, 1809, no. 6
40. Close to Minto, 7 July, 1809, B.P.C, 29 July, 1809, No. 14
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
The arguments of his *darbar* were accepted by Sindia, who made no further move against Amir Khan. Bapu Malar, the Bhosle's *vakil*, visited Sindia on several occasions and earnestly remonstrated with him on his neglect of his engagements to join with Nagpur against the Pindaris. But Sindia refused to move, excusing himself with the argument that "the present disputes do not relate to the conquest and partition of Bhopal but have arisen solely from the persecution of Holkar's former demands on the Rajah of Berar." 43 By early in October Sindia's mind had been finally made up by the receipt of a conciliatory letter from Amir Khan. Amir Khan was anxious to detach Sindia from the Bhosle, and he therefore wrote in a submissive tone, openly disclaiming any intention of offending Sindia and giving an undertaking that his territories would no longer be molested by his Pindaris. 44 He even went so far as to call himself Sindia's servant and to claim that he was as devoted to Sindia's as to Holkar's service. All he asked in return was that Sindia should not interfere in the contest in which he was now engaged with the Nagpur Raja. 45

Sindia did assume the indifferent attitude requested. Does it mean that Amir Khan had succeeded in winning him over? It would seem not. Sindia had many reasons to be jealous of Amir Khan. Not only had he usurped the entire power at the court of one of the great Maratha chiefs and plundered Sindia's territories in the area of Bhilsa, he had also helped the Nawab of Bhopal, one of Sindia's tributaries, to emancipate himself from his state of dependence. He had further offended by taking Nagore from the Raja of Jodhpur, from whom Sindia still thought himself entitled to claim tribute or to make any kind of exactions. Sindia's withdrawal from the conflict was due entirely to the impoverished state of his finances, the need to avoid any arduous struggle with Amir Khan, and the desire to save his territory from the molestation of Amir Khan's Pindaris.

43. Close to Minto, 6 Oct, 1809, B.P.C. 24 Oct, 1809, No. 33
44. *Ibid*.
45. *Ibid*. 
So far Amir Khan has been seen acting within a purely Indian setting. With the intrigues of Holkar’s court, or the means of securing the alliance of Bhopal and of avoiding the enmity of Sindia he was on home ground. But his movement against Nagpur territories around Jubbulpore brought him closer to British possessions and interest in Bundelkhand. In August and September 1809, therefore, Amir Khan was to be busy in ascertaining British reactions to his plan of campaign and in making sure that he did not bring on any conflict with the one or other power besides Sindia which could ruin him.

The possibility of conflict first arose when in July Amir Khan threatened Binakráo, the Nana of Kalpi’s Amil at Sauger that he would plunder his charge, if he was not brought off. Amir Khan’s approach to the neighbourhood of the British dominion in Bundelkhand, alarmed Richardson, the agent to the Governor-General. He reported that if Amir Khan continued to plunder and levy contributions in Sauger and on the other frontier chiefs, there was every reason to conclude that “such excesses so very near our borders may lead to confusion and disorder and consequently affect the peace and tranquillity of our own territories.” He therefore took certain military precautions and asked the Government

46. Towards the end of Shahjahan’s reign Champat Rai, a chief in Bundelkhand, asserted his independence. This was followed by the foundation of a new dynasty by his son, Chhatarsal in the eastern part of the province. Chhatarsal sought the assistance of Bajirao I against the invasion of Muhammad Khan Bangash, and in return Bajirao was adopted by Chhatarsal as his son, and given a portion of territory in Bundelkhand, which was considerably extended by subsequent conquests. In 1803 the British Government by the treaty of Bassien acquired territory in Bundelkhand yielding 36,16,000 rupees a year. Bundelkhand from its situation in the neighbourhood of the British territory on the Jumna was extremely important to the British. C.U. Aitchison, A Collection of treaties and Sanads...

47. Richardson to Edmonstone, 14 July, 1809, p. 16 B.C. Vol.

48. Ibid., p. 17
what he should do if Amir Khan actually penetrated into Bundelkhand. 49

Edmonstone replied, on 29 July that “the general principle which the Government is solicitous to maintain is to protect from insult and aggression our own territories and those which by engagements or by circumstances we are bound to defend and to avoid all interference in the differences and disputes in which other states and chieftains may eventually be involved.” 50 He therefore instructed Richardson not to interfere in the affairs of the Nana of Kalpi and neither to support nor oppose Amir Khan’s monetary exactions. Interference in that question would involve a “departure from the fundamental principle of policy so frequently disclosed and uniformly observed by the British Government with relation to states unconnected with us by the ties of defensive engage-
ments” 51.

Bound by this clear restatement of the Company’s policy of non-interference, Richardson could do nothing to save the Kalpi territories. On 11 September Richardson reported to Jenkins at Nagpur that the Nana had verbally intimated that: Binakrao finding no means of escape, had been forced to comply with Amir Khan’s demands, and had agreed to pay Rs. 1,60,000 to escape molestation of Saugor. 52

Though Saugor had been abandoned to his demands, Amir Khan was sufficiently aware of Richardson’s reactions to write to him on 7 September 1809, asking for a clarification of the British position. He asked Richardson to point out the territories under the protection of the British Government. He asserted that his main anxiety was to avoid any unpleasantness accidentally arising, since “between the Right Hon’ble the Governor-General and myself there is strictest friendship.” 53 He also took the occasion to remind Richard-

49. Ibid.
50. Edmonstone to Richardson, 29 July, 1809, p. 34. B.C. vol. 309/7075
51. Ibid.
52. Richardson to Jenkins, 11 Sept. 1809, para 5, B.P.C. 19 Sept. 1809, No. 34
53. Amir Khan to Richardson, 7 Sept. 1809, p. 50, B.C. vol. 309/7075
son that "at the time of forming the treaty between Jeswunt Rao Holkar and the Governor-General, the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General engaged and promised on his part, that in disputes and differences with the Nagpore-Wallah and the other Rajahs and also in the private and internal disputes of Holkar, the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General would take no part but leave the parties to adjust their own disputes. Now as there are some impending matters respecting Nagpur, it is proper that at all times, you look to, and remember existing treaties and engagements, and not let the representations of any self-interested persons, induce you to break the bonds of friendship. You are arbiter of the future. It was proper to give notice of the above particulars."

Richardson in his reply stated that Raja Bhakat Singh of Kotar, Raja Kishore Singh of Jaipur, Thakur Durjan of Maihar, Suranj Singh of Nagod, Lal Amar Singh of Birsingpur, Raja Mohan Singh of Barghar and Kursan Shah of Rajnagar, whose territories were so intermixed that disturbances in one would affect the tranquillity of others, all enjoyed British protection, and that any attempt by Amir Khan to molest their countries would be repulsed by the British Government. He also took the occasion to point out that the territories of Sheorao Bhau, the Subadar of Jhansi, and of Parpat Bahadur, the Raja of Datia, away to the North, were also under British protection, since there existed "treaties of friendship and amity in which the British Government have engaged to protect their dominions from any unjust molestations from other chiefs and states." The Government of India, later in September, confirmed and approved the stand thus taken by Richardson.

Amir Khan had the political sagacity to realise that in his conflict with the Nagpur Raja there were two powers which

55. Richardson to Amir Khan, 8 Sept. 1809, p. 54, B.C. vol. 309/7075.
56. Ibid, p. 55
57. Lushington to Richardson, 19 Sept. 1809, B.P.C. 8 Sept. 1809, No. 38 18 Sept. 1809
could effectively interfere in support of the latter. One power was Sindia, for some time an ally of Nagpur. The Bhosle's troops had assisted Sindia in chastizing and capturing the Pindari leader Chitu Khan, Sindia and the Bhosle had collaborated in the invasion of Bhopal. But Amir Khan, by adding the Sindia shahi Pindaris to his own Holkar shahis had made himself too formidable for an impoverished Sindia, who had been constrained therefore to allow Amir Khan a free hand in Nagpur. The other power was that of the Company. It had stood aloof while he ravaged Jodhpur and Jaipur. Richardson had confirmed that it would stand aloof again so long as he respected the territory of states in treaty relations with the Company. It was with a free mind, therefore, Amir Khan could prepare to invade Nagpur.

How the forces were built up on either side for the coming campaign it is possible to watch in the reports of Jenkins, the Resident at Nagpur. Amir Khan was the first to move, pushing south east from Saugar and to within a few miles of Tejgar, guarding the road from Saugar over the Bhanrer hills to Jubulpore. There he was joined by the zamindar of Dhanmani, at the head of 4,000 armed followers, an aggrieved feudatory of the Bhosle. The amils of Saugar and Garhakota having paid their tribute to Amir Khan also agreed to send quotas of five hundred horse apiece to join his army.

On the Bhosle's side stupendous preparations were made to defend Garhamandla, where Ghatge's forces were reinforced by a detachment under Ramchandar, which brought the force to nearly 4,000 horse, 4,000 infantry and 16 guns. The other forces of the state were distributed as follows:

59. Ibid.
60. Jenkins to Richardson, 31 Aug, 1809, B.P.C. 19 Sept. 1809, No. 33
61. Enclo. in a letter from Jenkins, 8 Sept., 1809, B.P.S.C. 24 Oct. 1809, No. 33
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Infantry</th>
<th>Guns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nagpur</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—do—</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirmagar</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chouragarh</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jubbulpore</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—do—</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taraghat</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinipurbari</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>18,300</td>
<td>13,750</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These dispositions had been made before the end of August, but September saw negotiations rather than action. The Bhosle had not yet given up hope of obtaining an amicable adjustment with Amir Khan. Narain Singh, the Raja’s vakil, was deputed to Kotah to try and gain the mediation of Zalim Singh in his present contest. 62 Other vakils, Bapu Gorpade and Kashiraao were also sent direct to Amir Khan’s camp in order to seek agreement. But nothing came of either manoeuvre. 63 This was scarcely surprising, for the Raja’s minister Yashvantrao had disclosed to Jenkins that the object of these negotiations was “merely to gain a little time and if possible to defer the period of actual hostilities until Dusserah, when the arrangements entrusted to Sudeck Alee Khan, and the preparations in this quarter would be completed”. 64 On Amir Khan’s side, too, negotiations were continued without any serious intent, mainly because the lateness of the monsoon rains precluded the rapid cavalry movement upon which the Pindaris relied for their success.

Late in September, Amir Khan moved. From before Tejgarh he made a wide circuit to the east, crossing the upper Bearma, so that by the 27th, having skirted the Bhanrer Range, he was at Katangi, some twenty five miles from

62. Close to Minto, 13 Sept. 1809, B.P.C. 3 Oct. 1809, No. 28
Jubbulpore. The Nagpur commander, Ghatge, encamped before Jubbulpore sent urgently for reinforcements. On receipt of this appeal, the Bhosle held discussion with Sridhar Pandit and his other ministers and decided to move with the main army up the Kanhan river to Warengaon, nine miles from Nagpur and there to assemble all his forces to protect the capital, if Ghatge were defeated.65 To this cowardly abandonment of Ghatge, some 160 miles to the north, Yashvantrao raised strong objections. He pointed out that while Ghatge with so small a force was exposed to the enemies, and while his defeat in the first instance would dishearten and discourage the rest of the troops, a considerable number of soldiers under Sadeq Ali Khan was kept waiting near Nagpur, which was too far to be of any service to Ghatge.66 Eventually the decision was taken to reinforce Ghatge, and Raghunath Bakshi was directed to march to his aid. But the decision was too late to render any relief to Ghatge, who had already been surrounded by Amir Khan’s soldiers. Raghunath Bakshi after several days’ forced marching arrived at Telwari Ghat, across the Narmada from Jubbulpore.67 But on 29 September, a detachment of Amir Khan’s force had fallen on Ghatge, and after a well-contested battle Amir Khan had gained a decisive victory. Ghatge himself was wounded, four guns, two elephants and 200 horse fell into the hands of the Pindaris and of the Raja’s infantry about 150 were killed and wounded.68 The Pindaris immediately after the battle plundered and sacked the town of Jubbalpore. Amir Khan then appointed Sankar Shah to the Thanadari of the town, with orders to collect the arrears of rent from the zamindars for his new master.69

Amir Khan’s victory aroused great consternation among.

66. Jenkins to Minto, 28 Sept. 1809, para 4, B.P.S.C. 31 Oct. 1809, No. 4
67. Jenkins to Minto, 6 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 7 Nov. 1809, No. 17
68. A Paper of Intelligence, 3 Oct. 1809, B.P.C. 31 Oct. 1809, No. 15
69. Ibid
the people, and dismay in the army of the Raja. Yashvantrao expressed his fear that Amir Khan would now cross the Narmada, as soon as it became fordable. The Raja had frequent meetings with his ministers and prepared for the worst. Sadeq Ali Khan had already been directed to take up a position between the capital and Amir Khan’s camp.\textsuperscript{70}

Now the Raja made preparations for the eventual removal of his family and everything valuable from Nagpur. This induced the British Resident to commence similar arrangements with regard to the effects of the Residency in order to be able to remove the valuable articles of public property at a moment’s warning.\textsuperscript{71}

But Amir Khan hesitated to cross the Narmada, fearing that the Raja under the pressure of this circumstance might be induced to invite the British force to his aid. So he thought it prudent to open a correspondence with the Raja, urging him to come to a settlement immediately, as only a settlement “could prevent the troops from proceeding to act still more disrespectfully with regard to His Highness.”\textsuperscript{72}

At the same time he took the precaution of reminding the British Government that by treaty it was denied the right to interfere between Holkar and the Raja. Through Kandu Pant, Holkar’s vakil at Poona, he reminded Close, the British Resident with the Peshwa that “some time ago an union was formed between Sreemunt Subadar [Holkar] on the one part and the Right Hon’ble Lord Lake and the Right Hon’ble the Governor-General on the other, and that at the period when friendship was reestablished between them, it was stipulated that the (British Government) should not interfere in the claims against the court of Nagpore nor with the contributions to be exacted from the different Rajahs of whatever rank.”\textsuperscript{73}

He further added that in consequence of his advance towards Nagpur and of his determination to realise Holkar’s just

\textsuperscript{70} Jenkins to Minto, 6 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 7 Nov. 1809, No. 17
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{73} Meer Khan to Candoo Punt, received 11 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 21 Nov, 1809, No. 34
monetary claims, the Raja might try to induce the British Government to come to his assistance. "I therefore write to desire that you who are acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, will explain them to Colonel Close, and get him to write positive instructions to the subordinate officers of the British Government upon this subject. Let it not happen that he for want of information, should afford assistance to the Rajah Ragojee Bhooslah, and thereby create a misunderstanding between the two states and violate the treaty of peace." At the same time he also addressed the Resident, requesting him to issue "orders to the officers in that direction, directing them in conformity to the treaty of peace to abstain from espousing the cause of the Rajah of Nagpore and other Rajahs." The Resident immediately transmitted this letter to the Governor-General for his consideration.

Hitherto, the British Government's policy towards the Pindaris had been one of indifference. This was more so in the case of Amir Khan whom it considered not an independent chief but a servant of Holkar. Two years before while Amir Khan was exploiting the resources of Rajputana, taking advantage of the conflict between Jaipur and Jodhpur, the British Government had neither interfered in support of these two countries nor even thought it prudent to offer mediation in their mutual disputes. The British Government's attitude towards Amir Khan had been influenced by two considerations—his position as Holkar's servant and its own policy of non-interference. But now the union of the Pindaris under Amir Khan, his conquest in Garhamandla and his declared intention to march towards Nagpur raised larger issues.

On 16 October 1809, Minto set out the problem posed by Amir Khan's success, and by his assemblage of so large a force of Pindaris, whose habit of indiscriminate plunder had already been generally felt by both Berar and Nagpur. In

74. Ibid.
75. Meer Khan to Close, received, 11 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 21 Nov. 1809, No. 34.
76. Close to Meer Khan, 11 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 21 Nov. 1809, No. 34.
77. Minute of the Governor-General, 16 Oct, 1809, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 2.
the first place his conquest in Garhamandla and manifest intention of further conquest ultimately threatened the safety and tranquillity of Hyderabad, for "the utter inability of the Rajah Ragojee Bhooslah to oppose an effective resistance to the military power of that active and enterprising chief" was very evident. 78 But more important was the character of Amir Khan and his ultimate aims. In disputes between the Maratha states the British Government had no interest, but Minto refused to accept that "the late measures and transactions of this enterprising chief were connected merely with the demands which in the name of Holkar he has made upon Rajah Ragojee Bhooslah." 79 But if Amir Khan was acting solely in his own interests, then to ignore him would be short sighted indeed, for, as Minto pointed out, "the weak and inefficient military powers in India (that of the British Government excepted) have afforded an ample field for the prosecution of what I conceive to be the primary object of Meer Khan's ambition to become the founder of the new Mussalman power in India. The danger to which the security and tranquillity of the British Empire in India would be exposed by its accomplishment is too obvious to need illustration." 80 The Governor-General concluded, "the question therefore which we have to decide, is not simply whether it is just and expedient to aid Rajah Ragojee Bhooslah in the defence or recovery of his dominions, but whether an enterprizing and ambitious Mussalman chief at the head of a numerous army irresistible by any power but that of the Company shall be permitted to establish his authority on the ruins of the Rajah's dominions." 81

Minto decided that Amir Khan's progress must be checked not merely by defensive posting of troops, but by active operations to halt his move on Nagpur and drive him from...

78. Ibid.
79. Minto to Lumsden, 18 Oct. 1809, para 2, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 1
80. Minute of the Governor-General, 16 Oct. 1809, para 4, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 2
81. Ibid.
the Bhosle territories. Such just and timely measures would preserve British interests in the Deccan and prevent the destruction of the Nagpur state. As Edmonstone pointed out to Jenkins, the Bhosle had suffered very severely by the result of the war of 1803, more so comparatively in point of territorial cession than either Sindiah or Holkar, by the result of their contest with us. We have often expressed our regret for his losses, and our readiness to avail ourselves of any favourable opportunity to repair them.” This was that opportunity.

The Governor-General accordingly resolved, with the entire agreement of his Council to assemble a field force on the eastern frontier of Berar. A considerable force was also to be mobilised on the south-western frontier of Bundelkhand to protect the province from Amir Khan’s depredations and to disperse his army on its return from the Deccan. At the same time Minto in his letters to the Nizam, the Peshwa and Holkar acquainted them with his resolution of resisting Amir Khan’s ambitious projects. The Resident with Sindia was likewise directed to communicate to him the British Government’s resolution to check Amir Khan’s further progress and to expel him from the Raja’s territory. On the same day Minto wrote to the Raja of Nagpur stating that the British Government had received the information of Amir Khan’s invasion of the Raja’s territory and his intention of crossing the Narmada with extreme concern, and that “on the

82. Edmonstone to Sydenham, 15 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 44
83. Edmonstone to Jenkins, 1809, para 13, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1809, No. 7
84. Minto to Lumsden, 18 Oct. 1809, para 8, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 1
85. Governor-General to the Nizam, 16 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1809, No. 8
86. Governor-General to the Peshwa, 16 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. No. 9
87. Governor-General to Holkar, 16 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 5
88. Edmonstone to Close, 16 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 7
grounds of the subsisting cordial amity between the two states, as well as on general principles of proper precaution, I have resolved in concert with the allies to assemble a considerable force on the eastern side of Berar and to oppose the execution of Meer Khan's improper designs or to compel his retreat if he should actually have advanced to the southward of the Narmada.”

The position of the British Government was also set out in the clearest terms to Amir Khan, in a letter despatched on 16 October, the date of all the other communication. The Governor-General made it plain that, “in a case of this kind, the interests of Maharajah Bhooslah and those of the British Government and its allies are one and the same.” They were united in their resolution to resist his “design of endeavouring to subvert one of the principal states of the Dekkan and to establish your own power on its ruin”. The Governor-General was not ready to admit the plea that Amir Khan was “acting under the order of Maharajah Jeswunt Rao Holkar, because it is impossible to suppose that the Maharajah could......authorise the prosecution of measures directed to the subjugation of one of the greatest chiefs of his own tribe”. So, the Governor-General added, “I must consider your late measures and your present views as proceeding entirely from yourself”. Minto concluded by demanding that Amir Khan gave up his plans for the conquest of Nagpur and retire forthwith from the Bhosle's territories.

Two days later Colonel Close was directed to assume the command of the army, consisting of one regiment of European light dragoons, a troop of horse artillery, five regiments of native cavalry, one regiment of European infantry

89. Governor-General to Bhooslah, 16 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809; No. 6
90. Governor-General to Meer Khan, 16 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 4
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Minto to Close, 18 Oct., 1809, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov, 1809, No. 5
and seven battalions of native infantry, with a body of Mysore Siladar horse. Colonel Close was also vested with political and military powers on all points connected with the proposed operations.\textsuperscript{94}

One year before the official sanction to his measure, Minto received a private letter from Dundas, the President of the Board of Control, in which the latter entirely welcomed the measures as the only alternative that could be adopted under the circumstance to save British interest. He wrote, “from all that has been stated of the character of Ameer Khan, there can be no doubt that the establishment of his power on the ruins of that of the Rajah of Berar, would have been only the first step in the progress of his ambition.”\textsuperscript{95} He argued that in that case not only British interest in the Deccan would have been endangered, but also in the first instance “our alliance with the Nizam would not have survived such an event.” So the interposition of the British power “is certainly consistent with the spirit at least of the law and the orders from home since it was a measure purely defensive.”\textsuperscript{96}

However, on 18 September 1811, the Home Government in a despatch expressed their entire satisfaction with “the prompt and vigorous measures” the Governor-General had adopted to crush Amir Khan’s ambitious project in the Deccan. They continued, “we do not hesitate to admit that your determination to interpose the power of your Government in protecting the dominions of the Rajah of Berar was a measure of defensive policy, and cannot therefore be deemed a violation of the law, or a disobedience of our orders.”\textsuperscript{97}

The reactions of the Bhosle to this sudden change of policy by the British Government, and to its preparations for despatching military aid, even without his having directly asked

\textsuperscript{94} Edmonstone to Jenkins, 18 Oct. 1809, B.P.S. 14 Nov. 1809, No. 7
\textsuperscript{95} From Dundas, 3 Sept. 1810, No. 23, Minto Papers. M 172
\textsuperscript{96} From Dundas, 3 Sept. 1810, No. 23, Minto Papers. M 172
\textsuperscript{97} Board’s Draft of Sec. Despatch to Bengal, 18 Sept. 1811, ‘para.’ 9, No. 76, vol. 4
for it, was not at all what had been expected. Instead of gratitude he displayed suspicion. As Jenkins reported to Minto, the Raja first reacted by protesting that his own forces now assembled on the Narmada were quite capable of chastizing Amir Khan, whose success in Garhamandla had been due rather to his treachery in negotiations than to his military power.\(^98\) The Raja had then revealed his real reason for receiving the proffer of aid so coldly: he had deliberately not asked for British aid because he had thought it unobtainable without “some conditions advantageous to the British Government, either in territorial or in other respects and perhaps burthen some to his own.”\(^99\) However, as the Company “of its own accord [and merely actuated by sentiments of the purest friendship and good will towards him] offered an unconditional assistance, he welcomed it. Even so, as subsequent conversations with the Raja and his minister revealed, the Governor-General’s letter had failed to produce “that unmixed satisfaction which it was calculated to impress upon a mind less suspicious and distrustful than that of the Rajah.”\(^100\)

Jenkins tried to meet these suspicions by argument. If the British Government had had any intention of claiming territory or money as a reward for aid, surely it would have waited until the necessity had driven the Raja to seek its aid on whatever terms the Company might impose.\(^101\) But though the Raja admitted that it was improper to seem suspicious, still “he did not seem satisfied.” At last the minister hinted that the Raja desired to be assured by the Governor-General personally that the aid was free from any demand, pecuniary or territorial, by a letter of the Governor-General addressed

\(^98\) Jenkins to Minto, 4 Nov. 1809, para, 4, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 24
\(^99\) Jenkins to Minto, 29 Oct. 1809, para, 14, B.P.S.C. 28 Nov. 1809, No. 32
\(^100\) Jenkins to Minto, 4 Nov. 1809, para, 4 B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 24
\(^101\) Jenkins to Minto, 29 Oct., 1809, para 7, B.P.S.C. 28 Nov. 1809, No. 8
to the Raja.\textsuperscript{102} The Resident replied that the Governor-
General “would certainly have reason to feel some displeasure”
when he learnt of the Raja’s doubts inspite of his declaration
that the assistance was gratuitous and of the Resident’s
categorical reaffirmation. Nevertheless he forwarded the
request to Minto.\textsuperscript{103}

That the Bhosle did not reject British aid—but merely
distrusted the altruism of the offer is clear from his general
behaviour. His preparations to abandon Nagpur should
Amir Khan advance, testify to his little faith in his own
military resources. Moreover he had made several soundings
of the Resident, through his minister, to see if British help
would be forthcoming in the event of a Pindari advance on
his capital. Thus as early as 28 September, Jenkins reported
a visit by Yashvantrao, and a discussion with him filled with
significant pause, “seemingly with the expectation of some
remark from me.”\textsuperscript{104} He was sure that “it was expected of
me to say something which should have the appearance of an
offer of aid from the British Government. The manner of
Jeswunt Rao’s delivery, as well as the matter of discourse,
seemed to me to authorise this idea, and I was therefore the
more guarded in my reply.”\textsuperscript{105} The Resident had made no
move, so that the arrival of Minto’s letter offering assistance,
had been quite unheralded. The unexpected generosity may
well have made the Bhosle suspect that this was a disguised
attempt to induce him ultimately to accept a subsidiary alliance
which he had hitherto strongly resisted.

To eliminate suspicion the Resident suggested that the
Raja should immediately return an answer to the Governor-
General’s letter and that the Governor-General in his reply
would confirm the assurance of assistance and clarify its

\textsuperscript{102} Jenkins to Minto, 4 Nov. 1809, para 5 B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809,
No. 24

\textsuperscript{103} Jenkins to Minto, 4 Nov. 1809, para 11, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809,
No. 24

\textsuperscript{104} Jenkins to Minto, 28 Sept, 1809, B.P.S.C. 31 Oct. 1809, No. 4

\textsuperscript{105} ibid.
nature. The Raja approved of this expedient and ordered his minister to prepare a letter immediately, wherein he expressed his satisfaction with the measures the British Government proposed to adopt “for the purpose not only of preventing Meer Khan from crossing the Nerbudda, but of expelling him from the territory of Jabbalpore and restraining him from the further prosecution of his unwarrantable proceedings.”

The Governor-General in a reply, dated 28 November assured the Raja, “your Highness has been frequently assured that the British Government would with pleasure avail itself of any opportunity of promoting the welfare of your Highness’s Government. That opportunity has occurred in consequence of the injury to which your Highness’s territory and dominion are exposed by the proceedings and meditated project of Ameer Khan, and I have availed myself of it to offer your Highness the aid of the British arms in repelling that chief’s invasion without demanding any compensation on the part of your Highness.”

Meanwhile, Amir Khan crossed the Narmada at Telwari Ghat and marched towards Sirmagar where Sadiq Ali Khan was encamped. When Sadiq Ali Khan learnt of Amir Khan’s approach he asked the Raja for immediate reinforcements. The Raja immediately directed Amritrao to march towards Sirmagar. It was expected that when these two armies were united their total number would be a little less than 15,000 men. Until he could come up, Sadiq Ali Khan, in order to gain time, renewed negotiations with Amir Khan. In fact, there took place a settlement. Hostages were exchanged between Amir Khan and Sadiq Ali Khan.

106. Jenkins to Minto, 4 Nov. 1809, para ii, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 24
107. Bhooslah to the Governor-General, received, 18 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1809, No. II
108. Governor-General to Bhooslah. 28 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 26 Dec. 1809, No. 33
110. Jenkins to Close, 30 Oct. 1809, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 2
111. Jeswunt Rao to Jenkins, undated, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 10
It was agreed that the Raja should pay Amir Khan eleven lakhs of rupees in return for his quiet retreat from the Raja's territory.\(^{112}\) Amir Khan accordingly recrossed the Narmada with all his force at Telwari Ghat on 31 October and thence moved to Jabbalpore. On 13 November, he recrossed the Hirannadi, and encamped at Katangi, some twenty miles to the northward of Jubbulpore. From thence he started on 16 November for Jabri Ghat always sending his baggage one day in advance together with his infantry and the greater part of his guns.\(^{113}\)

When Jenkins heard of Sadiq Ali Khan's negotiations with Amir Khan he had asked Yashvantrao what were the Bhosle's intentions. He was assured that peace with the Pindaris was "entirely out of question."\(^{114}\) The present negotiations, the minister explained, had two objects—firstly, to amuse Amir Khan with a deceitful offer until Amritrao could join Sadiq Ali Khan, and secondly to win over one of his chiefs, Sahamat Khan who had earlier expressed a wish to desert to the Bhosle's service.\(^{115}\)

The success of these manoeuvres was now seen. Sadiq Ali Khan, having joined forces with Amritrao, pushed through Jubbulpore to Katangi in close pursuit of Amir Khan. On 17 November Sadiq Ali Khan, with his full force of infantry and artillery, achieved the surprise he had hoped for. He fell suddenly on Amir Khan who at that time had with him only his picked horse and five small guns.\(^{116}\) Amir Khan successfully stood against this attack for a few hours, but towards evening when the action became close and general he left by Sadiq Ali Khan in possession of the field, abandoning four elephants, nearly 1000 horse and many standards.\(^{117}\)

\(^{112}\) Jenkins to Close, 12 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 16
\(^{113}\) Jenkins to Close, 22 Nov. 1809, para 10, B.P.S.C. 9 Jan. 1810,
No. 5
\(^{114}\) Jeswunt Rao to Jenkins, undated, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 10
\(^{115}\) Jenkins to Close, 2 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 28 Nov. 1809, No. 37
\(^{116}\) Jenkins to Close, 22 Nov. 1809, para 10, B.P.S.C. 6 Jan. 1810,
No. 5
\(^{117}\) Ibid
It is time now to consider why Amir Khan had abandoned his invasion of Nagpur. Apparently the Raja, by false promises had persuaded him to retreat. But was the agreement not rather the consequence than the cause of his resolution to retire? Certainly that was the judgement of the Governor-General, Minto, who attributed Amir Khan's retreat "partly to our military preparations in Berar, of which the intelligence must previously have reached him, and partly to the late revolution at the durbar of Holkar, which menaced the subversion of his control over the administration of that chief." 118

It may be remembered that Gafur Khan had been left at Holkar's court by Amir Khan to superintend the affairs of the Government in his absence. But Gafur Khan, by his frequent interference in the administration only antagonised the ministers and other officials, both military and civil. 119 Dharma Kunar and Sobharam, two influential officers of Holkar's Government used the opportunity provided by Amir Khan's absence to re-establish their power and position. Dharma Kunar gained over the infantry by intrigues and artful promises, and Sobharam by similar means enlisted the sympathy of the greater portion of the artillery. 120 The immediate consequence of this development was the division of Holkar's ministry into two distinct parties—one headed by Gafur Khan, Tulsibai, Bhau Bhaskar and Pentu Ali, and the other by the Balaram Seth, Dharma Kunar and Sobharam who were supposed to entertain the hope of placing the nephew of Yashvantrao Holkar on the masnad after the latter's death and removing the other party from power. 121 It was reported that in September an unusual attempt had been made on the life of Tulsibai. She was given poisoned betel-nut, but the peculiar flavour which the poison added to it aroused her
suspicion. After examining it, she refused to take it and thus saved her life.122 Again a counter-plot had been laid against Balaram Seth. It was discovered, but Balaram Seth became determined to punish Bhau Bhaskar, who was suspected of being the main spring behind the plot. But in turn Balaram Seth was opposed by Gafur Khan and the immediate consequence was the interference of the infantry and artillery under Dharma Kunar and Sobharam respectively in support of Balaram Seth.123 The troops demanded Gafur Khan’s expulsion from Holkar’s court as the condition of their return to obedience.124 Early in November Gafur Khan was expelled, and power at Holkar’s court passed into the hands of Amir Khan’s enemies.125 This revolution had a considerable impact on Amir Khan’s military operations in Nagpur. The immediate effect of this change was the stoppage of the material support of the Government. But the party in power also struck at his moral position by declaring that he was acting independently of the Government, and clearly directing him not to do any wrong to the Raja. It must have been obvious to Amir Khan that his presence was urgently needed at Holkar’s darbar.

However, before attributing to the crisis at Holkar’s Court Amir Khan’s decision to abandon his Nagpur campaign, it is necessary to consider the possible influence of the British moves. It may be noted that Amir Khan had throughout kept a close watch on the movements of the British Government. Since his appearance in Bhopal he had repeatedly reminded the British Government of its existing treaty with Holkar, and that any kind of interference on its part in his dispute with the Raja would be a violation of that treaty. This he did both before his conquest in Garhamandla and on the eve of his

124. Ibid.
125. Edmonstone to Lushington, 13 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 4.
crossing the Narmada. It is evident that he greatly feared lest his advance should lead the British to join the Bhosle in defiance of the treaty. Presumably, therefore, when he did hear of the Governor-General's resolution to aid the Bhosle and of the military preparations being made by Colonel Close, he must have been under great pressure to renounce his plans of conquest in favour of a compromise settlement or outright retreat. However the Harkara bringing the Governor-General's letter dated 16 October, only reached Amir Khan's camp on 2 November when he was encamped north of the Narmada at Telwari Ghat, having crossed the river on 31 October.126

Does this mean that his move was unrelated to the British threat after all? No—for the Governor-General's decision had first been communicated to the Bhosle by Jenkins on 28 October. Between 28 October and 31 October "there was certainly time for Sudeko Alee to receive the intelligence" of the Resident's conversation with Raja, and the Resident learnt that Sadiq Ali Khan had showed Amir Khan a letter from the Raja mentioning the British Government's offer. The Resident concluded that Sadiq Ali Khan probably so explained the offer as to let him realise that in the event of his refusal to accept the terms, the Raja would throw himself on the protection of the British Government. This might well have induced Amir Khan to come to a settlement with the Raja.127

Amir Khan sent two letters to the Governor-General. In his second letter he stated that he had retreated in order to meet the latter's wishes. "Having come for the purpose of attacking the troops of the Raja of Nagpur, they proposed a payment of eleven lacs and a half of rupees which I was not disposed to accept, but in the meantime your Lordship's letter having arrived, a desire to comply with your Lordship's wishes induced me to accept that sum and consequently, I took hostages and retreated delivering over the Rajah's places to his officers." But the Raja, as Amir Khan continued, in...

1: Jenkins to Close, 27 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 26 Dec. 1809, No. 3
1: Ibid.
violation of this engagement, ordered his soldiers to attack his army while he was crossing the Narmada.  

However, it may be noted that when Amir Khan replied to the Governor-General's letter, he sent two letters consecutively. His first letter was received on 13 November, and his second on 15 December. The tone and tenor of his first letter did not indicate that he would honour the Governor-General's desire. On the contrary it challenged the right of the British Government to interfere in the dispute between the Raja and Holkar. "At the period of the conclusion of the treaty of peace [with Holkar] the British Government was precluded from interfering with the concerns of several states of Dekkan. That the British Government therefore should wilfully disregard the obligations of that treaty is not right." He argued that it was a "domestic dispute"—a matter involving merely the two states, which had brought him to that quarter. It could be settled even without the British Government's intervention. He realised that "the states of the Dekkan are indissolubly united." But as it was not his business to see whether they were united or divided, the British and their allies in the Deccan also had no right to meddle with his affairs. He asked them to remember, "my policy is merely to mind my own business." He failed to understand the logic of the Governor-General's observations that "the approach of a numerous army to the confines of the territories of the allies of the British, that is to say of His Highness the Nabob Assof Jah Bahdur, [the Nizâm] and others, would require the adoption of measures of vigilance and security." He argued, "my friend, how is it possible that I should attack the dominion of His Highness, the Assof Jah who is of my own tribe, and the British Government being in alliance with the Sirkar Sreamunt Soubadar Bahadur [Holkar] I view it in the same light as I do the latter."  

128. Ameer Khan to the Governor-General, received, 15 Dec. 1809, B.P.S.C. 16 Jan. 1810, No. 30  
129. Meer Khan to the Governor-General, Encl. in a letter from Jenkins, 13 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1809, No. 16
further assured the Governor-General that "no injury will be done to the territories of the British Government or of its dependants and allies, not even a blade of grass will be touched. On this point let your Lordship rest perfectly satisfied." 130 Regarding the Governor-General's apprehension that he would subvert the Raja's dominion and ultimately establish his own on its ruin, he declared it a result of idle reports "merely based on the authority of Akbars." He questioned the arguments the Governor-General employed in his letter, in drawing the inference that he was acting entirely from his own authority. He asserted that his action in realising the money from the Raja of Nagpur had the requisite sanction of his Government. "My friend the circumstances of the above dispute and my connection with the Sirkar of Sreemunt Bahadur [Holkar] and dependance on it, are well known to all the English gentlemen." 131

Again in a letter addressed to Jenkins at the same time, he practically gave a warning to the British Government that if it ignored the existing treaty, and interfered in the dispute, "the flames of the war will be rekindled to the injury of both parties, for my own part, I have neither country nor Jaggeer. Food, however, is necessary for the support of a large force. My troops draw their subsistence from the southern chiefs. Do not you gentlemen, therefore, prevent them from obtaining their supplies, otherwise on the principle of being one tribe, they will all unite and carry disorder and confusion into British territory. What advantage can there be in involving yourselves unnecessarily in trouble, and in bringing the distress of others upon your own shoulders." 132

Why did the first letter differ so much in tone and spirit from the second? In fact, both the letters vainly tried to conceal the two different situations in which he was placed

130. Ibid.
131. Meer Khan to Governor-General, Enclo, in a letter from Jenkins 13 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1809, No. 16
132. Meer Khan to Jenkins, received, 13 Nov. 1809, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1809, No. 17
before and after his engagement with the Raja. After crossing the Narmada he was greatly alarmed by the certain information of the British Government's military preparations. He was convinced that any further operations on his part in the Raja's territory would cause the military intervention of the British Government. So there was no other alternative but to retreat from the Raja's territory. But he required a plea in which he could conceal his exact situation. Now the renewal of negotiations on the Raja's part gave him that plea. He agreed to accept the terms. Hence in his first letter to the Governor-General, as well as in his letter to Jenkins, he tried to convince his enemies that his retreat was not owing to the British Government's military preparations. He was neither afraid of the British Government, nor inclined to surrender to the Governor-General's desire. Thus in Amir Khan's mind the engagement served as a plea for retiring from the Raja's territory under the knowledge of the British Government's resolution, and his first letter was merely an attempt to cover his fear and alarm owing to the military preparations of his enemies.

But he failed to detect that his engagement with the Raja was a false arrangement. On 17 November, when the rear of his army was suddenly attacked by Sadiq Ali Khan, his consolation of knowing that he had extorted something from the Raja had been shattered. Consequently, he seemed disillusioned. In his second letter, which appears to have been written after 17 November, he made another attempt to conceal his state of disillusionment and made a false statement that the Governor-General's letter had induced him to come to a settlement, otherwise he would not have accepted it. This he did according to the needs of the situation. He perhaps thought that if the British Government agreed to put pressure upon the Raja he would be able to secure the money the Raja had promised to pay him. So in his second letter he appealed to the Governor-General's judgement that "as it is incumbent upon the just to punish a breach of faith, I hope that your Lordship will be pleased to bring the Rajah to a right understanding and to procure me redress by causing
the stipulated sum to be paid according to the agree-
ments."¹³³

But his appeal failed to produce any result. The
Governor-General did not think that Amir Khan had any just
demand against the Raja, or any right to seize his country
and subsist on his resource.¹³⁴ The main reason the Governor-
General adduced in support of this view was a letter from
Yashvantrao Holkar. In this letter to the Governor-General
Holkar clearly repudiated Amir Khan’s claim that he was
acting in Nagpur under the sanction of his Government. The
Maratha ruler stated that “a friendship and fraternity have
also long subsisted between me and His Highness Raja
Raghojee Bhosslah in the spirit of the utmost degree of
cordiality. Accordingly, when the Nabob Ameer-ood-Daulah
Bahadur [Amir Khan] crossed over into the Rajah’s territories,
I issued order previously to my receipt of your Lordship’s
letter, directing him not only to abstain from doing any kind
of injury to His Highness’s territory, but to endeavour to
extend his protection to them. Now, however, that I have
been favoured with your Lordship’s kind letter, I have des-
patched successive letters to the Nabob repeating [repeating]
my former orders in the most peremptory manner.”¹³⁵

Accepting the statement from Holkar’s Court that Amir
Khan had acted in defiance of orders in attacking Nagpur,
and that he had been serving his own and not Holkar’s ends
in so doing, the Governor-General argued, “you cannot there-
fore but admit the justice of the expectation expressed in my
first letter that you should retire and refrain from any further
molestation. The injury which you have already done must
have occasioned the loss of lacks of Rs. to the Rajah.”¹³⁶

¹³³. Ameer Khan to the Governor-General, received, 15 Dec. 1809,
B.P.S.C. 16 Jan. 1810, No. 30
¹³⁴. Governor-General to Ameer Khan, 16 Dec. 1809, B.P.S.C. 16
Jan, 1810, No. 31
¹³⁵. Holkar to the Governor-General, received, 9 Dec, 1809,
B.P.S.C. 26 Dec, 1809, No. 38
¹³⁶. Governor-General to Ameer Khan, 16 Dec. 1809, B.P.S.C. 16
Jan, 1810, No. 31
Amir Khan, unable to resist British pressure any longer, giving up his supposed project of subverting the territory of Nagpur and his hope of extorting money from the Raja, marched for Sironj, accompanied by his Pathans and Pindaris. Sironj, assigned to him by Holkar as a Jaidud, was considered to be his stronghold. From its very situation Sironj helped him to maintain the ascendancy he had acquired in Bhopal and to prosecute his plan of invading Nagpur. He arrived at Sironj on 23 January 1810, and immediately after his arrival, he levied a contribution, which were distributed among his followers.

After Amir Khan’s retreat from the Raja’s territory, British policy towards him had been reconsidered. At the initial stage of intervention, the British Government’s primary purpose had been to expel him from the Raja’s territory. But with the achievement of that object the Governor-General thought that “the time is now arrived at which it becomes necessary to determine the further measures and arrangements to be adopted with reference to the proceedings of Amir Khan and of Holkar’s durbar.” In a minute of 12 December 1809, Minto raised the question whether measures should not be adopted to dispossess Amir Khan of Sironj, and by the interposition of British power to reduce to order the confused state of Holkar’s Government by extinguishing Amir Khan’s ascendancy in the durbar. In putting forward these far bolder schemes Minto may have been strengthened by two considerations. Firstly he had originally asserted “as a principle of action that the designs of Ameer Khan against the state

137. Close to Edmonstone, 19 Jan, 1810, B.P.S.C. 13 Feb, 1810, No. 25

138. An assignment of the revenues of a tract of land for the maintenance of an establishment, or of troops, granted for life. Wilson, *Glossary of Indian terms.*

139. Close to Edmonstone, 20 Dec, 1809, B.P.S.C. 9 Jan, 1810, No. 26

140. Martindell to Close, 27 Jan, 1810, B.P.S.C. 6 March, 1810, No. 51

141. Minute of the Governor-General, 12 Dec, 1809, B.P.S.C. 9 Jan, 1810, No. 2
of Nagpur were undertaken by him with views of personal
ambition and independently of the suggestion or control of
Holkar’s Government.”142 Were that the case no action
against those designs could be considered as affecting the
relations existing between the two Governments. This pre-
sumption had been proved to be true with the arrival of
Holkar’s letter. The Governor-General hoped therefore that
any further measure against him would be supported by
Holkar’s Government.143 Secondly though Amir Khan had
retreated from the territory of Nagpur, his letters made it
clear that he had a revengeful attitude to the Raja as well as
to the British Government. There was every possibility of
his renewing operations against the Raja, unless his power was
-crushed.144

However, in a subsequent minute of 30 December 1809,
the Governor-General relinquished the whole idea either of
dispossessing Amir Khan of his territory at Sironj or of
intervening for the settlement of the distracted state of
Holkar’s Government.145 Instead the Governor-General
instructed Close “to consider his views to be limited to the
objects of compelling Ameer Khan’s retreat from the frontier
of the Rajah of Nagpore’s dominions and of forming such
a disposition of troops as would deter him from resuming
his project of incursion.”146 In explaining his altered-
decision Minto stressed the danger that the attempt to
dispossess Amir Khan of Sironj and to destroy his
influence at Holkar’s darbar might lead “to the extension
of military operations in such a manner as to render it
impracticable for the British Government to avoid a direct

142. Ibid.
143. Minute of the Governor-General, 12 Dec, 1809, B.P.S.C. 9 Jan.,
1810, No. 2
144. Ibid.
Jan. 1810, No. 45
146. Edmonstone to Close, 30 Dec, 1809, para 5, B.P.S.C. 23 Jan.,
1810, No. 46
interference in the affairs of Hindostan." 147 Several factors may have tipped the balance in the psychological struggle between the wish to overthrow Amir Khan and so end his threat to Nagpur and the fear of involvement in the affairs of Hindusthan. One may have been the determined tone of Amir Khan’s renewed threat. “Let it remember that an ant may sting an elephant’s foot. The loss must be exclusively yours, for I am free from the encumbrance of lands, money or forts, while the British Government is abounding in riches. I hope therefore the British Government will act in conformity to the obligations of the treaty concluded by the Right Hon’ble Lord Lake.” 148 Again, the Governor-General’s disinclination to pursue Amir Khan further had reasons in “the resumption of the designs of France against the British possessions in this quarter of Globe”, 149 and also in Sindia’s attitude. 160 However, Close having been apprized of the Governor-General’s views was left to exercise his own discretion according to the needs of the situation. 151

When afterwards these two minutes came under discussion by the Home Government, Dundas both in his private letter 152 and in an official despatch 153 expressed his dissatisfaction with the alteration in Minto’s policy between 12 and 30 December. He asserted that “as a general principle of Indian policy, I should be extremely reluctant to draw our sword, but quite determined if practicable to crush and

1810, No. 45
1810, No. 22
1810, No. 45
150. Infra, pp. 146-149
152. From Dundas, 3 Sept. 1810, No. 23, Minto Papers, M 172
153. Board’s draft of Sec. Despatch, 18 Sept. 1811, para 17, No. 76, vol. 4
demolish any enemy that chose to attack us." 154 In spite of his being averse "to any schemes of conquest or any wars undertaken for that object", he declared that he could never "admit the expediency of abstaining from disabling any power against whom we may have been compelled to take up arms, from renewing its aggressions." 155

For his part Amir Khan had not been idle at Sironj. He had taken new steps to organise a combined front against the British. He wrote a letter to Sindia, in which he tried to convince the latter that the British Government not only aimed at his ruin but also wanted to subjugate Holkar and Sindia, it would be unwise on his part to remain silent. He appealed to Sindia to come to his aid actively otherwise he would ultimately meet the same fate. 156 Amir Khan also deputed his vakil, Himmat Rai, to Sindia's camp evidently for the same purpose of gaining his assistance. 157

Amir Khan may have been the more hopeful because Sindia for some time had ignored Amir Khan's earlier attacks upon his territories, and had assumed a curiously detached air of deliberate indifference to the Pindaris' threat to Nagpur. Whether it was relief at seeing Amir Khan turn his attention elsewhere, Sindia adopted the attitude that Amir Khan was acting merely as Holkar's servants in order to settle Holkar's old monetary dispute. Certainly when Mercer, the Resident at Sindia's Court conveyed to Sindia the Governor-General's conviction that Amir Khan was acting independently in his own interest, with the ultimate object of establishing an independent Muslim state on the ruins of Nagpur, Sindia showed little wish to act against him. He was even reluctant to admit of measures being taken by the British Government against Amir Khan. He proposed that he should "write to Holkar upon the subject adding that he would let [the Resident]  

154. From Dundas, 3 Sept. 1810, No. 23. Minto Papers, M. 172  
155. Board's draft of Sec. Despatch, 18 Sept, 1811, para 17, No. 76 vol. 4  
156. Mercer to Minto, 2 Feb. 1810, B.P.C. 20 Feb. 1810, No. 19  
157. Mercer to Minto, 20 Feb. 1810, B.P.C. 13 March. 1810, No. 10
know the result of his communication". From the manner in which this was spoken, Mercer gathered the impression that Sindia expected the British Government to suspend its decision, until the result of his proposed communication with Holkar should have been signified to the Resident.\textsuperscript{158}

The reasons which induced Sindia to assume this attitude were not far to seek. Firstly, he held that the responsibility for punishing Amir Khan should lie with Holkar, whose servant he was, and that any attempt on the part of the British Government to punish him would be an encroachment upon Holkar’s sovereign rights. Mercer reported that his conversation with Sindia made him think that he was “not altogether devoid of a groundless jealousy on account of Meer Khan’s punishment having been undertaken by the British Government”.\textsuperscript{159} Secondly: and more important, Sindia could not easily accept the Governor-General’s protestations that the military preparations were merely for Amir Khan’s expulsion from the Raja’s territory. “It had been seriously urged in Sindia’s Durbar”, Mercer reported “that it was improbable that your Lordship would employ so considerable a force for the sole purpose of expelling Ameer Khan from the Nagpore territory, and that the strength of the armies evinced your Lordship’s views to be of a much more extensive nature”.\textsuperscript{160} This had been clearly revealed in the Resident’s conversation with Atmaram, Sindia’s minister. Moreover when the Resident, informed by Close of his intention to cross the Narmada in Amir Khan’s pursuit, had made the request to Sindia that in the event of the British forces marching through Malwa, Sindia’s Amils should be directed to give them every assistance, Sindia not only showed reluctance to give consent to a march through his territories, but brusquely commented that he did not see any point in sending troops

\textsuperscript{158} Close to Minto, 15 Nov. 1809, para 5, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1809, No. 38

\textsuperscript{159} Ibid., para 7

\textsuperscript{160} Mercer to Minto, 20 Feb. 1810, para 5, B.P.C. 13 March, 1810, No. 10
to that quarter. It was quite clear that Sindia was more afraid of the military actions of the British Government than of Amir Khan's invasion of Nagpur.

Sindia's dislike of British interference in the internal relations of Hokkar and his subordinate Amir Khan, found further expression when in February 1810, Amir Khan's vakil came to Gwalior. The Resident, Mercer, remonstrated against Sindia's intention of receiving him, urging upon Atmaram that Sindia should consider "how much a measure would affect his own interest and character elsewhere, that Amir Khan had been and was still acting in open hostility to him, and had even demanded a contribution of three lacks of rupees from Oujein, with a threat of plundering that city...Under such circumstances His Highness receiving a vakil from Ameer Khan on a friendly footing would I conceived be deemed rather derogatory to his own dignity and credit and that these were my sincere sentiments on the subject, which I requested Atmaram to report distinctly to His Highness". Sindia rebuffed this interference, received the vakil, and had a conference with him, though nothing significant passed between them.

Amir Khan's vakil left Gwalior on 26 February 1810, and went on to visit the courts of Jaipur and Jodhpur. There too, however, his visit did not produce anything favourable for his master. Amir Khan even went as far as to open a friendly correspondence with Sridhar Pandit, the Bhosle Raja's minister. Obviously his object was to detach the Raja from his association with the British Government. He dramatically posed as an innocent person, having no demand upon the Raja's territory. "My friend! the fact of your having called in the English which I have learnt from the

162. Mercer to Minto, 27 Feb. 1810, para 3, B.P.C. 20 March, 1810, No. 2
163. Mercer to Minto, 7 March, 1810, para 2, B.P.C. 3 April, 1810, No. 62
164. Ibid.
public papers of intelligence has exceedingly surprised me." As a well-wisher, having a common interest with the Raja, he thought it a duty of friendship to acquaint the minister with the probable danger in the Raja’s acceptance of help from the British Government.165 "My hunger was merely what has been stated in the letters which passed between me and Sudeck Aly Khan, but their hunger exceeds conception. The adoption of such a measure would then have been expedient when some one was aiming at the sovereignty. I, who now wished to take a little money only, might at some other time have been of service to you. But as for them, you have yet to see what they will do. You will reap the fruit of this sometime hence. Whoever has once formed a connection with them has undone himself. It is thus that all the states of the Dekkan have become the sport of the wind."166

But while seeking the support of other powers against the British Government, Amir Khan was losing even that of Holkar, Thakur Das, the newwriter of the British Government in Holkar's camp, had a talk with Balaram Seth and Dharma Kunar. They declared that Amir Khan had no claim over Sironj, though this place has lately been assigned to him by Holkar as Jaidad. They argued that at any moment he could be dispossessed of Sironj. In support of this view, they produced proof that the Pargana of Jawra, though lately assigned to Gafur Khan, had been resumed by Holkar's Government. They further added that their Government was thinking of directing Zalim Singh of Kotah to discontinue the payment of tribute to Amir Khan.167 Subsequently, Holkar's Court addressed a letter to the Governor-General, expressing a desire that "Seronge may be taken under the protection of the British Government."168

165. Meer Khan to Sreedhar Pundit, received, 10 Jan. 1810, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb., 1810, No. 12
166. Ibid.
This letter helped Close to come to a decision about dislodging Amir Khan from Sironj. He wrote late in February to Lieutenant-Colonel Martindell, the commanding officer in Bundelkhand, expressing the hope that the request of Holkar's Government might "possibly be acquiesced in by the Governor-General", and without waiting for the Governor-General's further direction, Close ordered his troops to march towards Sironj. When Amir Khan learnt of the march of his enemies he abandoned Sironj and set out for Sirgarh where his family was living, with the intention of starting thence for Holkar's camp, which was at that time pitched at Sadri, twenty five miles from Chitore. Thus ended in full retreat Amir Khan's Nagpur campaign.

Amir Khan had throughout asserted that he had no territorial ambitions; that the simple reason for his presence in Nagpur was the need to force the Raja to come to a settlement regarding Holkar's monetary claim. But if that were the case why had he taken so much care to break Sindia's association with the Raja and to make sure that the British Government would continue to follow the same policy of non-interference? He had not only tried to isolate the Raja, but had been particular to gather as many soldiers as possible. Besides his own Pathan followers, he had united the two divisions of the Pindaris and assembled the troops of the zamindars of Dhanmani, Garhakota and Saugor under his banner. "The soldiers gathered under him," Sydenham had reported, "cannot be estimated at less than 25,000 horse, 10,000 foot and 80 guns." Besides that he had had the active co-operation of the Nawab of Bhopal, whose troops were estimated at 6,000 horse, 2000 infantry and 10 guns.

169. Close to Martindell, Feb. 1810, B.P.S.C. 6 March, 1810, No. 52
170. Jenkins to Edmonstone, 2 Feb. 1810, B.P.S.C. 27 Feb. 1810,
No. 45
171. Close to Edmonstone, 18 Feb. 1810, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1810,
No. 19
172. Sydenham to Edmonstone, 15 July, 1809, B.P.C. 31 July, 1809,
No. 6
1810, No. 8
Never before had he led such a large number of soldiers. Jenkins rightly observed that "it seems by no means probable that he is assembling such a force for the mere purpose of extorting money from the Rajah."\(^{174}\) Of course, before the commencement of actual hostilities there had been no want of negotiations between him and the Raja, but that had been mainly owing to the Raja's wish to gain time, as the Raja's minister had disclosed to Jenkins.\(^{175}\)

Amir Khan further had claimed that his actions in Nagpur had the requisite sanction of Holkar's Government. But in fact Tulsibai had not wanted him to revive the old dispute with the Raja. She had certain obvious reasons for this. Firstly, Holkar was mentally deranged and unable to lead his army, so that a major conflict with the Raja was not desirable. Secondly, she was anxious to secure the sympathy of all the neighbouring rulers, and more particularly of the Maratha chiefs, for Malharrao, whose claim to the masnad was not certain to be accepted. Report had it that "she had done everything in her power to prevent his [Amir Khan's] improper proceeding but that he had disregarded her counsel and had done all this mischief".\(^{176}\) As has been seen, she had wanted him to go Udaipur and Jaipur to collect tribute for Holkar. That Amir Khan's invasion had not been ordered was more clearly revealed in Holkar's letter addressed to the Governor-General, in which he explained that he had asked Amir Khan not to do any harm to the territory of the Raja, with whom he had friendly relations.\(^{177}\) Amir Khan had not only disregarded the wish of his master, in whose name he claimed the money, but had also revived the old dispute at a time when the Raja was engaged in a war with the Nawab of Bhopal. Hence, it is difficult on many counts to accept Amir

\(^{174}\) Jenkins to Minto, 8 Sept. 1809, para 74, B.P.S.C. 24 Oct. 1809, No. 33
\(^{175}\) Supra, p. 119
\(^{176}\) A Paper of Intelligence from Holkar's camp, 21 Feb. 1810, B.P.S.C. 17 April, 1810, No. 8
\(^{177}\) Supra, pp. 141-142
Khan’s statement that his object in Nagpur had been merely to settle the monetary dispute of Holkar with the Raja.

What then was the real object of his invasion of Nagpur? Amir Khan himself, two months after his retreat from the Raja’s territory requested Irtiza Khan, a respectable citizen of Delhi, to tell Seton, the British Resident at Delhi, that he wanted “either to obtain a territorial provision through the medium of the British Government, or to be permitted by that Government to conquer for himself a territory in the Deccan”.\(^{178}\) Again, one month later, in May 1810, Seton reported the arrival of Shahib Khan as a vakil of Amir Khan, who stated that his master expected a provision from the British Government or an assurance that “it will not oppose his endeavours to acquire territory by conquest”. The vakil further added that his master presented his demand “as a soldier of fortune, and not as a partizan of Holkar”.\(^{179}\) Almost at the same time the vakil declared that his master wanted to make some distant conquest which would not interfere with the plans or wishes of the British Government. He concluded by mentioning Sind, as a country which answered to that description.\(^{180}\)

These demands fit well with the pattern of growing independence shown in Amir Khan’s activities in Rajputana and Central India, for real independence would require a territorial base to support it. He had already acquired from Holkar places like Tonk, Sironj and Jawra which yielded about four lakhs of rupees annually. Besides that, Holkar’s share of the tribute due from Kotah, amounting to about 15,000 rupees per annum, had been made over to him.\(^{181}\) In 1808, he had acquired Nagore from the Raja of Jodhpur as a Jaidad. The policy of acquiring territory either by rendering

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178. Seton to Edmonstone, 25 April, 1810, B.P.S.C. 15 May, 1810, No. 2
179. Seton to Lushington, 28 May, 1810, B.P.C. 16 June, 1810, No. 40
180. Conversation between Seton and Sahid Khan, 28 May, 1810, B.P.C. 16 June, 1810, No. 41; B.C. vol. 335/7664, p. 30
181. Ibid. p. 29
service or by conquest had already taken a definite shape. It is significant that immediately after his conquest in Garhamandla, he had urged the Raja to come to a settlement. Even before his conquest at that place, he held out to the zamindars of Saugor and Garhakota the prospect of a permanent settlement in Garhamandla, and it was reported to Jenkins that the Pindaris were greatly elated at the prospect of acquiring so fertile and rich a place. It seems certain that his object was more than to settle Holkar’s monetary dispute with the Raja, even if at first it did not extend to the establishment of an independent state on the ruins of Nagpur, but only the acquisition of Garhamandla.

Nonetheless, the situation prevailing in India in 1809 had undoubtedly been such as to encourage a more ambitious project. The Bhosle Raja was unable to resist Amir Khan, his soldiers were not regularly paid, and their obedience to the Raja was doubtful; the ministers were divided. Sindia seemed to have taken no interest in Nagpur, deliberately maintaining an attitude of indifference to the whole issue. The party of Amir Khan was in power at Holkar’s court, so that the entire resources of that Maratha state came into the hands of his own men. Above all the policy of the British Government was one of strict non-interference. If after his conquest in Garhamandla and the declaration of Amir Khan’s intention to cross the Narmada, there had been no change at Holkar’s court, no intervention of the British Government in support of the Raja, it is not very difficult to guess to what the Pindari invasion of Nagpur would have led. A few days before Amir Khan’s conquest in Garhamandla the Resident at Nagpur had concluded that should Amir Khan advance “the Raja’s troops would be defeated with little difficulty and serve, I have no doubt, to swell the ranks of Meer Khan in the hopes of pay and plunder. The Rajah would

182. Supra, p. 121
183. Jenkins to Minto, 8 Sept. 1809, para 49, B.P.S.C. 24 Oct. 1809, No. 33
be forced to quit the open country and fly to Chanda or some other strong place."185 It would have been easy under such circumstances for Amir Khan to have carved out a principality for himself in northern Nagpur. That no such consequences followed his victory in Garhamandla the major credit must be given to a last-minute reversal of British policy. Amir Khan’s ambition, roused by British non-intervention, was thwarted by Minto’s decision to act.

185. Jenkins to Minto, 8 Sept. 1809, para 26, B.P.S.C. 24 Oct. 1809, No. 33
CHAPTER IV.

THE PATHANS AND THE PINDARIS ATTEMPTED TO REGAIN THEIR POWER, 1810-1812

The imprisonment of two such major leaders as Karim Khan and Chitu Khan was a blow to the Pindaris as a whole, particularly to the Sindia-shahi Pindaris, to which division those two leaders belonged. Before they could recover from this wound they had to face the further disaster of the failure of Amir Khan's expedition against Nagpur. In the face of the British army moving towards Sironj they became disorganised and scattered all over Bhopal and Kotah. In the period with which we are concerned in this chapter, they were seeking to regain their lost power and position. But their attempts were divided; while Amir Khan at the head of the Holkar-shahi Pindaris and his Pathan followers endeavoured to extend his influence over the Rajput states, the Sindia-shahi Pindaris under Karim Khan made another attempt to extort funds from Nagpur. The success of these ventures will be studied in two separate sections.

SECTION I.

After his defeat by the Bhosle Raja's army while retiring from Nagpur, Amir Khan had thought that he would at least find relief from the pursuit of the British troops under Close in Holkar's camp, and if circumstances favoured, revive his power by re-establishing his ascendancy over Holkar's army, finance and Government. But he found much opposition to him there. The military faction under Dharmaji Kunar and Sobharam had grasped authority, while Balaram Seth, who seemed to have no influence over the military, secretly headed the group.1 Their immediate object was to foil Amir Khan's intention of entering Holkar's camp and so

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1 Sydenham to Lushington, 28 Dec. 1809, B.P.C. 16 Jan. 1810, No. 8
to prevent him regaining his ascendancy there. Balaram Seth, no less shrewd a politician than Amir Khan, realised that their object could only be achieved if they could win Tulsibai's confidence.²

In the past Balaram Seth, Sobharam, Dharmaji Kunar and their party had been reluctant to support the cause of Malharrao. Their reluctance had been due, however, rather to Tulsibai's choice of Amir Khan as her champion, for they were openly hostile to the Pathan chief.³ Tulsibai, for her part, had risked their hostility, not from any particular enmity towards Balaram Seth and the others, but because he had believed Amir Khan's powerful aid to be essential to Malharrao's claim to his father's masnad. Amir Khan's defeat in Nagpur, and the exclusion of his agent Gafur Khan from Holkar's court, made it possible for both parties to reconsider their alliances. In December 1809, they effected a reconciliation and agreed upon mutual co-operation.⁴

The basis of co-operation was laid by the promise of the military group to respect Tulsibai's authority while Holkar lived, and to support Malharrao and place him on the masnad on Holkar's death. In this they hoped for help both from Sindia and the British Government.⁵ Tulsibai for her part having had the bitter experience when working with Amir Khan of seeing him usurp the entire authority of the state, leaving her with no more than a nominal headship of the state, agreed to join Balaram Seth and his allies in resisting Amir Khan's attempt to regain his influence at the Darbar.⁶ Preparations were carried on with that object in view. The ministry decided to swear the Sardars of the army to fidelity to Malharrao's cause and to oppose Amir Khan should he attempt anything against the ministry. An advance party had

2. Ibid.
4. Seton to Lushington, 4 Dec. 1809, B.P.S.C. 26 Dec. 1809, No. 11
5. Enclo. in a letter from Sydenham, 18 March, 1810, B.P.C. 3 April 1810, No. 54
6. Seton to Edmonstone, 22 March, 1810, B.P.C. 10 April, 1810, No. 7
already been directed to guard the ways leading to Holkar's camp at Banpura. 7

Meanwhile, early in March 1810, Amir Khan reinforced by a body of 10,000 horse under Gafur Khan 8 had entered Holkar's territory and come within twelve miles of Holkar's camp. He had already informed the ministers of his intention to pay his respects personally to Holkar. But the ministers realised that his motive in coming to court was to re-establish his ascendancy, and that if he succeeded their lives would be endangered. So with much firmness they withheld their assent. 9

Amir Khan was thus convinced that his intention to regain ascendancy at Holkar's court would be strongly opposed by the ministry. Still this was the only place that could save him in this crisis. Driven as he had been from his Jaidada district of Sironj and distressed as he probably was for want of money, it must have occurred to him that by regaining his ascendancy at Holkar's darbar, he would at once acquire an army and the resources, which alone could save him in this crisis. In the next place, he knew that the British army was in close pursuit of him, from which he could be saved by his presence at Holkar's court.

He decided to send one of his officers to Holkar's camp with good wishes for the Maratha chief. On 17 March, Mir Sayid-uddin arrived at Holkar's court and had a conference with the ministers. He informed them of his master's sincere desire to see the Maharaja, after which he would return to his own camp. 10 The ministers refused to comply with his desire. They replied that Amir Khan had already ravaged the Maharaja's territory, the Maharaja himself was destitute of money, and his attendance at court would be both

7. Mercer to Close, 19 March, 1810, B.P.C. 10 April, 1810, No. 14
8. Enclo. in a letter from Close, 13 March, 1810, B.P.S.C. 17 April, 1810, No. 8
9. Close to Edmonstone, 24 March, 1810, B.P.S.C. 2 May, 1810, No. 8
10. Seton to Edmonstone, 25 March, 1810, B.P.S.C. 10 April, 1810, No. 18
unwelcome and fruitless. The vakil then stated in a threatening manner that either Amir Khan should be permitted to visit Holkar, or they should give him a written declaration under their master’s seal dismissing Amir Khan from his service.\textsuperscript{11} However, the vakil was presented to Tulsibai, who recommended him to advise his master to proceed to Jaipur and dismissed him with gentleness.\textsuperscript{12} It seems that Tulsibai was reluctant to discharge Amir Khan outright from Holkar’s service, since the state still relied on Amir Khan’s military strength and his general influence among the soldiers. Moreover though she had been antagonised by his usurpation of all power at court, she now had similar reason to be dissatisfied with the present ministers who were reducing her to a merely titular head of Government.

After a few days Amir Khan again despatched a letter to the ministers urging the necessity of an interview with Holkar and offering in that case to limit his escort to ten horsemen. But this time also he was told that his presence at the darbar was no longer required, and advised to go to Jaipur.\textsuperscript{13} When his peaceful attempts to see Holkar failed, Amir Khan decided to push on towards Holkar’s camp—even without the Government’s sanction. On the way he was opposed by the advance guard of Holkar’s army, but in the skirmishes that took place between them, Holkar’s troops were defeated and driven towards Chitor.\textsuperscript{14} Amir Khan thereby advanced one step further towards his objective. Nevertheless he hesitated to come to a major action with Holkar’s army. He turned again, therefore, to negotiations and urgently requested Tulsibai and the ministers to consent to his having an interview with Holkar. This their natural distrust of him induced them again to decline. Once more he refused to accept the rebuff, and deputed his vakil to Tulsibai. From 23 to 30 March 1810, the vakil practised all the arts of intrigues to

\textsuperscript{11.} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{12.} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{13.} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{14.} Mercer to Close, 30 March, 1810, B.P.C. 17 April, 1810, No, 18; Sir John Malcolm, \textit{Memoir of Central India}...vol. 1, p. 269
persuade her to consent to the interview.\textsuperscript{15} He demanded the immediate dismissal of Sobharam and Dharmaji Kunar, which Tulsibai refused. The \textit{vakil} also tried to establish relations with the Muslim soldiers of Holkar’s army and to a certain degree succeeded in influencing them in his master’s favour.\textsuperscript{16} Moreover, Amir Khan came closer to Holkar’s camp and directed his Pindaris to plunder and ravage Holkar’s territories and to occasion the maximum alarm among his ministers and officers.\textsuperscript{17} In the words of the British Resident, “during all this time the utmost distress was experienced in Holkar’s camp, in consequence of the ravages of Amir Khan’s Pindaries, whose depredations were so complete and destructive and whose vigilance was so alert, that no supplies were suffered to approach. Grain could with difficulty be obtained at the almost unheard of rate of 3 seers per rupee, and no forage of any kind was procurable.”\textsuperscript{18}

At length Tulsibai, torn between rival hopes and fears, and in terror at the desolation caused by the Pindaris, decided to yield to Amir Khan’s pressure. On 29 March, she sent for all the officers except the heads of the several departments and desired them to take an oath of fidelity and obedience to the Government. She then directed them to confine Dharmaji Kunar and Sobharam.\textsuperscript{15} On the following day a deputation of officers was sent to Amir Khan to require from him a similar oath of fidelity. He was informed that on his compliance with the desire of Tulsibai, he might proceed to Holkar’s camp for the purpose of concerting with her such measures as would serve the interest of the state.\textsuperscript{20} Tulsibai had agreed to comply with his demands not because Amir

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\item[15.] Seton to Edmonstone, 7 April, 1810, B.P.C. 24 April, 1810, No. 36
\item[16.] \textit{Ibid}.
\item[17.] Seton to Edmonstone, 23 March, 1810, Minto Papers, M 383, Pol. Pro. 10 April, 1810, No. 11
\item[18.] Seton to Edmonstone, 7 April, 1810, B.P.C. 24 April, 1810, No. 36; Memoirs of Ameer Khan, p. 391
\item[19.] \textit{Ibid}.
\item[20.] \textit{Ibid}.
\end{enumerate}
Khan had gained her confidence, but because she could no longer withstand the distress and suffering to which Holkar’s camp and country were reduced. In any case to her the acceptance of Amir Khan was but a choice between evils. If she disliked Amir Khan’s presence at court she was equally unwilling to see Dharmaji Kunar, Sobharam and their allies assume the entire authority of the state.

But Amir Khan was far from being satisfied. He demanded the complete extermination of his enemies. He doubtless realised that as long as he was present personally at the darbar, his enemies would remain silent, but that as soon as he left they would regain their influence. Only the death of Sobharam and Dharmaji Kunar could pacify him. On 31 March 1810, Tulsibai directed Dharmaji Kunar and Sobharam to be conveyed to Hinlajgarh, a hill-fort. At the same time she secretly ordered the commanding officer of the escort to put them to death in a retired part of the hills, through which they would necessarily pass. This inhuman order was obeyed: the horsemen to whom its execution was entrusted returned in the course of the night and reported its fulfilment.²¹

It may be noted that all was done in such a manner as to give the impression that Amir Khan had no hand in it. Before 31 March, he had neither had conference with the Bai, nor interview with Holkar, and had remained encamped at a distance of two miles from Holkar’s camp. He deliberately avoided any direct participation fearing that it might have a bad effect on Holkar’s infantry and artillery which Dharmaji Kunar and Sobharam had respectively commanded. Presumably he thought it prudent for the same reason to use the Bai as an instrument, and the Bai agreed to act because of the necessity of her situation. Mercer, the Resident with Sindia, reported that the murder had been committed “solely upon the order of the Bye, but for the purpose of conciliating Meer Khan.”²² Seton, the Resident at Delhi, observed, “this

²¹. Seton to Edmonstone, 10 April, 1810, B.P.C. 24 April, 1810, No. 39
²². Mercer to Close, 8 April, 1810, B.P.C. 24 April, 1810, No. 8
murder is solely to be attributed to Amir Khan, who was known to be the enemy of these persons. The Bye was the mere instrument of that blood thirsty adventurer, and her former character and conduct render it probable that she acted with reluctance, and in a manner from the necessity."  

With the extinction of his two arch enemies Amir Khan re-established his absolute authority over Holkar's Government. On 2 April, he visited Holkar, offering a nazār of five gold mohars, and thereafter paid his respects to Tulsibai and Malharrao, to whom he gave ten gold Mohars each. He then withdrew and proceeded to the camp where he cordially received the ministers and the principal public officers. On 6 April, accompanied by the Pindari leaders, Iman Baksh, Dost Muhammad and others he again visited Tulsibai. At his suggestion the Bai presented the Pindari leaders with a khilat of five pieces of cloth each, they returning the compliment with a nazār of a gold Mohar. He then directed the ministers to settle upon them as a Jagir the four Paraganas of Burania, Khane, Kahanpur and Sulauni, which belonged to Holkar, in addition to the regular monetary grants made to others of the Holkar-shahi leaders. The Pindaris were thus rewarded for the services they had rendered not to the cause of Holkar but to that of Amir Khan.

It may be noted that the two powers, Sindia and the British Government, which could probably have successfully resisted Amir Khan's design at Holkar's court, remained silent observers of the bloody drama. When in December 1809 Balaram Seth, Dharmaji Kunar and Sobharam had sought to form an alliance with Tulsibai, they had not only promised their own support to Malharrao, but had brought on Sindia

23. Seton to Edmonstone, 10 April, 1810, B.P.C. 24 April, 1810, No. 39
24. Enclo. in a letter from Close, 23 April, 1810, B.P.C. 29 May, 1810, No. 113
25. Enclo. in a letter from Close, 25 April, 1810, B.P.C. 29 May, 1810, No. 117
26. Seton to Edmonstone, 6 May, 1810, B.P.C. 29 May, 1810, No. 86
also. At a conference at Ujjain between Balaram Seth and Sindia's minister, Ana Ramchandra, it had been agreed that Sindia should try to procure from the Peshwa the investiture of Malharrao. This Sindia did, actively pressing the claim of Holkar's infant son to the mausad. Yet when Amir Khan at the head of a few thousand Pathans and Pindaris advanced on Holkar's camp and ultimately gained the ascendancy over Holkar's Government, Sindia not only seemed to view his activities at Holkar's court with indifference but was at pains "to obviate the necessity of a rupture with him." Sindia's minister, Atmaram Pandit, told the Resident that although his master "very much regretted the success of Meer Khan in obtaining the administration of Holkar's affairs, yet he had no quarrel with Holkar's Government, nor any wish to enter into hostilities against it, and that he should be obliged to use temporizing measures with Meer Khan whilst he continued to superintend it."

Why did Sindia take up this attitude? His own territories had frequently been ravaged and only a few months earlier Amir Khan had demanded a contribution from his territory in Ujjain. Sindia knew that an enterprising soldier like Amir Khan, who but for the timely intervention of the British Government might recently have overthrown one of the Maratha states, might go on to more ambitious projects which would be detrimental to his own interest. If Amir Khan were allowed to consolidate his position at Holkar's Court, he could command the resources of Udaipur, overawe Jaipur, Kotah and Bundi, and establish a permanent influence in Jodhpur. In Jodhpur he had already so far progressed that in 1808 the Raja had bestowed Nagore upon him as a Jaidad and agreed to maintain a portion of Amir Khan's force in his service. Still Sindia's attitude was conciliatory to Amir Khan. While the Pindaris were ravaging his province of Mandasaur on their way to Holkar's camp, Sindia not only

27. Mercer to Minto, 3 Jan, 1810, B.P.C, 23 Jan, 1810, No. 38
28. Mercer to Close, 5 April, 1810, B.P.C, 24 April, 1810, No. 5; Seton to Edmonstone, 7 April, 1810, B.P.C, 24 April, 1810, No. 36
29. Mercer to Minto, 16 April, 1810, B.P.S.C, 8 May, 1810, No. 12
did not order Bapu Sindia, who was in that area, to march against them, but on the contrary instructed him to confer with Amir Khan and agreed to pay him 75,000 rupees on condition that he left Mandasaur. Several reasons suggest themselves for Sindia’s behaviour. He may have felt militarily too weak to prevent Amir Khan’s predatory incursions, or to risk a full scale conflict with him. His success against the other Pindari leaders, and Amir Khan’s defeat at the hands of Nagpur tend, perhaps, to weaken that argument. Sindia may rather have acted out of resentment at British interference in Maratha affairs and a wish to avoid serving British interests by crushing Amir Khan, and so making British influence supreme both in Nagpur and in Indore. Finally Sindia may have been influenced by the consideration that in a major crisis, with the British or any other power. Amir Khan’s military services would be indispensable. The present sacrifice he made because he wished to retain the hope of using Amir Khan in future.

The British acquiescence in the re-establishment of Amir Khan’s power in Holkar’s darbar also seems to require an explanation. When Amir Khan invaded Nagpur and thereby threatening the tranquillity of British territory in Bundelkhand and that of their ally in Berar, the British Government vigorously interfered, harrying Amir Khan from Nagpur and Ujjain. Why, having pursued him to Ujjain did they not go on to prevent him recapturing power in Holkar’s Darbar? There was good reason for doing so; the military faction under Balaram Seth, Dharmaji Kunar and Sobharam after their reconciliation with Tulsibai, was reported by Close to be “hostile to Meer Khan, and warmly attached to the British interests, the whole of them are anxious that young Mulhar Rao should receive a khelat of confirmation from the Peshwa, through the influence of the British Government.”

30. Mercer to Close, 23 March, 1810, B.P.S.C. 28 May, 1810, No. 9
31. Pol. letters from Bengal, 1 March, 1812, B.C. vol. 393/10017, p. 2
32. Close to Edmonstone, 18 Feb. 1810, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1810, No. 19
In his letter of 18 February Close pressed the advantages of the situation upon the Supreme Government, considering it "a favourable situation for giving substance to Holkar's Government by establishing young Mulhar Rao on the Musnud, and pursuing such other measures as may be deemed expedient to demonstrate that the British Government takes a decided interest in the security of Holkar's state, against the undue interference and encroachments of Meer Khan. Should it be decided that Holkar's Government is not sufficiently settled yet, to admit of a British gentleman being placed as Resident at his Durbar, a capable native might be employed as an agent with his minister, to serve as a medium of communication between them and the British Government."33 Close hoped that "such an arrangement would naturally add to the efficiency of Holkar's Government and tend to discourage Meer Khan from making further attempt to reduce the ministers and their power."34 That this was not mere wishful thinking on the part of Close was shown by his receipt in March of a letter from the hard pressed ministers, inviting him in the name of Holkar to send a detachment against Amir Khan, which would be joined and aided by the troops of Holkar.35 Seton, the Resident at Delhi, strongly supported the pleas made by Close for intervention. On 24 March he wrote to the Supreme Government that it was a matter of regret that "the non-interfering system of the British Government does not admit our adopting even in the camp of Holkar, such measures of counter-action, as might be calculated to preserve the family, and protect from dismemberment, the country of that chief, to maintain general tranquillity and so to circumscribe the power of Ameer Khan as to deprive him of the means of doing future mischief. In my humble opinion these important objects might now be completely attained by declaring the

33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Seton to Edmonstone, 23 March, 1810, Mito Papers, M 383, Pol. Pro, 10 April, 1810, No. 11
British Government the protector of the family of Holkar, and the guarantee of the integrity of his dominions."

But both Close and Seton, in the excitement of action, and viewing affairs from a local angle only, oversimplified the question of interposing the British power to settle the confused state of Holkar's affairs. By declaring the British Government the protector of Holkar's Government and state, Amir Khan's influence in Indore could certainly have been destroyed and his power of disturbing the peace in other quarters reduced. But would intervention not involve the British Government directly in all the affairs of Hindusthan? Would it not bring a radical change in British relations with the other Maratha chiefs? Would it not recreate the situation under which the late Maratha war of 1803-1805 had taken place and so give rise to yet another struggle with the great Maratha chiefs? Such a situation could only be averted, if the British Government, in intervening, could do so jointly with other Maratha chiefs against Amir Khan. But that was not possible. Inspite of his usurpation of power at Holkar's court Amir Khan was still tolerated by Sindia as a potential ally against the British Government. Sindia would probably be more jealous of British intervention than of Amir Khan's influence over Holkar's affairs.

These wider considerations were noted by the Supreme Government, which poured cold water on its enthusiastic subordinates. The Governor-General in Council, Seton was told, did not consider "the exigency of the occasion to be such as to warrant the adoption of proceedings necessarily involving an arduous and extensive system of military and political operations which if once undertaken cannot be expected to terminate until by alliance or by arms the whole peninsula of Hindosthan should be subjected to the control of the British power." The Government was not disposed

36. Seton to Edmonstone, 24 March, 1810, B.P.S.C. 10 April, 1810, No. 16

37. Edmonstone to Seton, 29 May, 1810, B.C. vol. 335/7664, pp.12-13; B.P.S.C. 29 May, 1810, No. 31
to change established policy, "notwithstanding Ameer Khan's recovery of his power and influence at Holkar's Durbar. The contest with that chief therefore must be considered to have terminated with the accomplishment of its original object of defeating his designs against the Raja of Nagpore." 38

Not content with thus leaving Amir Khan to pursue his schemes undisturbed at Holkar's court, the Supreme Government proceeded to undo some of the actions taken by Seton while it still seemed that non-intervention had been abandoned, at least towards Amir Khan. To emphasize that unless directly provoked by Amir Khan, the British would not show themselves hostile to him, the Government ordered Seton to hand over some Rs. 17,871-11-8 to Amir Khan. This sum, the produce of the jagir of Kunch granted by treaty to Holkar's daughter, had been withheld by Seton when it was demanded in her name. 39 As he stated, he had thought it his duty "to suspend the payment, since, under existing circumstances the amount would inevitably fall into the hands of Ameer Khan." 40 It seemed as though the Government was reverting to the same rigid policy of forbearance which had been followed in the years immediately after 1805.

The Board of Control commenting a year later agreed with Minto in not finding any immediate danger to British interests in Amir Khan's recovery of power at Holkar's court. "In assuming the direction of Holkar's resources Ameer Khan has rather contracted than extended his means of subverting any of the established Governments of India." 41 But nonetheless, the Board directed, it was incumbent upon the Governor-General to keep a watchful eye upon his conduct, and if he should provoke another contest, "it should not be

38. Ibid.
39. Edmonstone to Seton, 29 May, 1810, B.P.S.C. 29 May, 1810, No. 31
40. Seton to Edmonstone, 10 April, 1810, B.P.C. 24 April, 1810, No. 39
41. Board's Draft of Sec. Despatch, 18 Sept. 1811, para 24, No. 76, vol. 4
relinquished until you have exerted your best endeavours to accomplish the destruction of his power.”

The ministerial enemies of Amir Khan had been destroyed by March 1810, and by April not only had Tulsibai and Balaram Seth capitulated to his demands, but in effect Sindia and the British Government did likewise. Amir Khan was able to proceed to the establishment of his absolute authority over the finance, the army and the administration of the Indore state, which could be questioned by nobody, not even by Holkar himself. By June, Seton was reporting to Calcutta, “he appears, however, to consider Holkar’s presence or orders, as no longer necessary to give a sanction to his measures.” He desired that in his absence from Court, Holkar and Tulsibai should remain in the fort of Chitor and directed Balaram Seth to accompany him. He also desired to be attended by Thakur Das, the newswriter of the British Government in Holkar’s camp. The Resident rightly concluded that Amir Khan “in expressing a desire that Thakoor Das should accompany him, intended the presence of that person in his camp, to lend a supposition that the British Government not only considered the power of the Maharajah as partly transferred to him, but to a certain degree, gave its sanction to his usurpation.” The Resident therefore directed Thakur Das to remain with Holkar.

At the beginning of June, feeling that he could now safely leave Holkar’s camp without fear of any overthrow of his power there, Amir Khan publicly announced his intention of marching towards Udaipur and Jaipur to collect tribute for Holkar, one moiety of which he intended to appropriate to the payment of his own troops, with or without Holkar’s sanction.

42. Board’s draft of Sec. Despatch, 18 Sept. 1811, para 24, No. 76, vol. 4
43. Seton to Edmonstone, 5 June, 1810, B.P.C. 30 June, 1810 No. 42
44. Seton to Edmonstone, 5 June, 1810, B.P.C. 30 June, 1810, No.42
45. Ibid; Sir John Malcolm, Memoir of Central India, vol. 1, p. 273
But at the same time he thought it wise to feel the pulse of the British Government. From his recent experience he was "sensible that the only serious obstacle to the prosecution of his views is to be apprehended from the British power", with which he thought it prudent "to be on terms of amity." 46 By the end of May he had therefore deputed Shahid Khan as a vakil to the Resident at Delhi: The vakil began by bluntly asking "whether it was the desire and determination of the British Government to destroy Ameer Khan?" He made it clear that his master was "always anxious to evince his readiness to comply with the wishes of the British Government and even to have himself desired of its favour and protection." 47 And, in an effort to disarm British hostility, the vakil produced a letter to Seton, evidently inspired by Amir Khan, though under the signature and seal of Yashvantrao Holkar, stating that "my brother the Nabob [Amir Khan] and myself are so closely knit together that we are, as it were two bodies, animated by one soul....The relations of amity and friendship between the British Government and myself, are everyday increasing, and by the blessing of God, they will ever continue to increase. It is worthy of the sincere friendship, which exists between the British Government and myself, that the foundation of friendship between that Government and my brother should be strengthened, which would be a source of the highest gratification to me." 48

To these enquiries and manoeuvres the Resident was advised to reply that "the cause of our military equipments having been removed by Ameer Khan's desisting from his unjust and unwarrantable design of disturbing the peace of the Dekkan by the prosecution of his views against the state of Nagpore, the British Government had abstained from

46. Edmonstone to Seton, 16 June, 1810, B.C. vol. 335/7664, p. 41
47. Conversation between Seton and Shahid Khan, 28 May, 1810, B.C. vol. 335/7664, p. 27
48. Holkar to the Resident at Delhi, 27 May, 1810, B.C. vol. 335/7664, p. 35
further hostile operations against him." 49 But at the same time he was to be apprized that the British Government could not "commit itself by a distinct definition of the extent to which Ameer Khan may pursue his plans of ambition or rapacity without our opposition." 50 The British Government wished for friendship with all states and "had no intention of molesting Ameer Khan", but it would always be prepared to foil "violence, injustice and ambition on the part of any state or leader calculated to expose to danger the tranquillity and security of our dominions or those of our allies." 51

British policy towards Amir Khan was thus one of restricted forbearance. They would not interfere in Holkar's confused affairs, because that would involve them in the affairs of all Hindusthan, but they were not prepared to give Amir Khan a guarantee of non-intervention. This attitude not only rendered Amir Khan cautious in his future movements, but also dependent more on negotiations than on force in his dealings with the Rajput chiefs.

In June 1810, leaving Gafur Khan in Holkar's camp to supervise affairs in his absence, Amir Khan moved towards Udaipur. On his way there he was visited at Chatpara by Sangram Singh, the vakil of Udaipur. The vakil was promptly told that the Raja's agreement with the late Dharmaji Kunar for a payment of five lakhs of rupees was at an end, and that Amir Khan demanded sixteen lakhs as tribute for the last four years. A refusal to satisfy that demand would be followed by the destruction of his master's country. 52 This was not Amir Khan's only demand: the Raja must also take into his service a body of Pindaris, just as the Jodhpur Raja had accepted those under Muhammad Shah Khan. The vakil was also told that Amir Khan proposed to visit the Rana personally. 53

49. Edmonstone to Seton, 16 June, 1810, B.C. vol. 335/7664, p. 43.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Seton to Edmonstone, 19 June, 1810, B.P.C. 7 July, 1810, No. 37
53. Ibid.
The Rana, "from his knowledge of the faithless character of Meer Khan, is said to have refused his visit," and to have directed his soldiers to guard the different passes to prevent his approach.\textsuperscript{54} Amir Khan, a true strategist replied not with force but diplomacy. He first deputed Lal Singh, one of his confidential followers, to the Rana, who tried to reconcile the Rana to a meeting with his master, by declaring that "they were all his servants." To this, however, the unfortunate prince replied that "he was not accustomed to have the service of strangers forced upon him."\textsuperscript{55} Amir Khan, undeterred, then utilised Balaram Seth's influence with the Rana. Balaram Seth visited the Rana, soothed his mind and gave him assurances of safety. With much hesitation the Rana agreed to meet him at Champabagh, a villa at Udaipur, on 11 July. In order to reduce the tension Amir Khan called himself a servant of the Rana and presented him with a nazadar consisting of eleven trays.\textsuperscript{56} He had a long discussion with the Rana, whom he persuaded to agree to the establishment of a bridge under Lal Singh at Udaipur which would be paid by the Rana in cash.\textsuperscript{57} Besides that the Rana agreed to give him a banker's security for the payment of two lakhs of rupees.\textsuperscript{58} In return, Amir Khan's forces immediately joined those of the Rana in besieging the fort of Kambalnir, which belonged to Udaipur but had been seized by Sindia. The fort commander was loyal to Sindia's cause, and was expected to make a stout resistance, but when his appeals to Sindia for help against his two besiegers went unheeded, he capitulated.\textsuperscript{59}

Amir Khan, by threats, diplomacy and the minimum of service thus secured two of his objects, ready money, and the

\textsuperscript{54} Mercer to Minto, 9 July, 1810, B.P.C. 6 Aug. 1810, No. 70
\textsuperscript{55} Seton to Edmonstone, 8 July, 1810, B.P.C. 6 Aug. 1810, No. 77
\textsuperscript{56} Seton to Edmonstone, 27 July, 1810, B.P.C. 16 Aug. 1810, No. 54
\textsuperscript{57} Metcalfe to Minto, 10 Aug. 1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1810, No. 54
\textsuperscript{58} Seton to Edmonstone, 17 July, 1810, B.P.C. 6 Aug. 1810, No. 78
\textsuperscript{59} Metcalfe to Minto, 28 Aug. 1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1810, No. 64
installation of a part of his forces under Lal Singh in Udaipur, to be maintained at the Rana's expense.

To complete his mastery of Rajputana Amir Khan now only needed to reduce Jaipur to subordination. He declared his intention of marching on Jaipur to collect the tribute payable to Holkar, as the first step to that end. The British Resident, Metcalfe, rightly observed that "Meer Khan having been successful in quartering a part of his army upon each of the Rajahs of Oedeypoore and Joudpoor will probably endeavour to extend his plan to Jeypoor and fix a portion of his troops with that chief also. In that event of such a plan taking effect, he will naturally acquire a complete control over these three important states, and will be able always to maintain in that quarter of India an army regularly paid, with the advantage of considerable resources."

When Amir Khan declared his intention of marching towards Jaipur, the Raja naturally became alarmed. Realising his helpless position and finding no other way to resist him, the Raja late in August 1810, deputed his vakil to the British Resident at Delhi to seek the protection of the British Government. The vakil lamented his master's wretched condition. "The situation of the Rajah was much worse than at any former period, and promised to become more desperate every day, in proportion as Ameer Khan increased in power. There was no end to the rapacity of that person, and of those who acted under him, that the more the Rajah conceded the more oppressive their demands became." He continued that "this season promises to be productive almost beyond example, and were our husbandmen but permitted to carry on their agricultural occupations without molestations, the country might be partly indemnified for its past sufferings. But this is not the case, sometime they are forcibly carried away from their tillage, and sometime their ripening crops are destroyed.

60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. Seton to Edmonstone, 1 Sept. 1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1810, No. 107
by the wanton incursions of predatory horse.”

But to all this passionate pleading, Seton merely replied that the British Government “consistently with the nature of its system, could not take any part in the affairs of other states, unless when called upon so to do by existing treaties”. The Resident did add, however, that for its own security, the British Government was in a state of constant preparedness for war not only to repel, but also to punish aggression. The moment might come, as in Nagpur, when aggression upon a state not allied to the Company seemed to threaten British interests and demand British intervention.

Seton solemnly assured the vakil that “the vigilance of the Governor-General would enable him to perceive that moment, if ever it should arrive.” Meanwhile the Resident hoped that the vakil would be “sensible, that though the Governor-General desired the happiness of the Rajah and the prosperity of his country. His Lordship was not bound by any existing treaty to take any part in the troubles to which he evidently alluded.” Once more the British Government had asserted its determination to uphold its established policy of non-interference. Nevertheless, the admission that aggression, even upon those not in alliance with Company, might affect British interests and call for British action does indicate a weakening of the resolve to remain indifferent to the appeals of the weak for protection against the Pathans and Pindaris.

If outside assistance from the British Government was not forthcoming, neither could the Jaipur Raja expect much support from his own ministers and feudatories. At the beginning of 1810 the Raja had come to suspect that his minister Kusháliram was attached to the cause of Man Singh, the Raja’s cousin and rival, and that it had been through his instrumentality that Man Singh had been conveyed from

63. Ibid.
64. Ibid.
65. Seton to Edmonstone, 1 Sept. 1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept, 1810, No. 107
Jaipur to Sindia’s territory. Suspected by the Raja of harbouring some “deeper and more extensive designs.” Kushaliram was told to leave Jaipur. On 30 May, accompanied by a number of sardars with about 3,000 troops, the minister had left Jaipur and moved to Machedi. The ruler of Machedi, the Rao Raja had readily offered him asylum. Thence he had opened a correspondence with Sindia, urging him to support his cause. The Raja had installed his favourite Thakur Megh Singh as minister, in place of Kushaliram, but he was a man of limited ability and his promotion merely served to alienate the old officials, one of whom, Shivanarain, proceeded to invite Amir Khan to support their cause.

The Sardars were thus conspiring against the Government and moving in their own interests, when the country badly needed their co-operation and unity. They were inviting the assistance of the very chiefs who by their late activities had proved themselves the greatest enemies of Jaipur and its people. Seton rightly observed, “from these events, it appears probable that on his arrival at Jaipur, Ameer Khan will find two parties, a circumstance which must facilitate the success of his endeavours to raise contributions.”

Despite these favourable circumstances Amir Khan thought it prudent to depend on negotiations in the first instance. In August, he deputed his vakil to the Raja’s court. The Raja had already been informed by Muhammad Shah Khan, Amir Khan’s general in Jodhpur, that he must subsidise a part of Amir Khan’s army at the rate of 50,000 rupees per month. The vakil reiterated this and further informed the Raja of his master’s monetary demands, amounting to thirty lakhs of rupees for arrears of tribute.

66. Seton to Edmonstone, 16 Jan. 1810, Minto Papers, M 379, Pol. Pro. 6 Feb. 1810, No. 2
67. Seton to Edmonstone, 5 June, 1810, B.P.C. 30 June, 1810, No. 42
68. Mercer to Minto, 20 June, 1810, B.P.C. 7 July, 1810, No. 40
69. Seton to Edmonstone, 5 June, 1810, B.P.C. 30 June, 1810, No 42
70. Memoirs of Ameer Khan. p. 405
71. Seton to Edmonstone, 1 Sept. 1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1810, No. 107
AND THE PINDARIS IN CENTRAL INDIA, 1805-1818

The Raja, quite unable to resist Amir Khan by force, could not ignore his vakil, and so entered into negotiations with him in the hope at least of gaining time. Since Amir Khan, encamped at Nuwal some 36 miles southwest of Jaipur, was anxious to secure his ends by negotiations rather than by force, the negotiations were prolonged. Indeed, despite the mediation of the Raja of Jodhpur, the direct negotiations ultimately broke down, in March 1811, six months after they had opened.

However, a settlement could not much longer be delayed. On 28 March the Raja’s vakil, Chaturbhuji accompanied by some servants of the Raja of Jodhpur repaired to the camp of Muhammad Shah Khan. There they continued negotiations till 11 April, 1811, when a settlement was patched up at sixteen lakhs of rupees, ten to be paid to Amir Khan and six lakhs to Muhammad Shah Khan.

Originally Amir Khan came to Jaipur with two objects in his mind, firstly, to realise the tribute in the name of Holkar and secondly, to induce the Raja to subsidise a part of his army. While his former object was now almost realised, nothing had been settled regarding the latter. Worse still though after a few weeks, he had been informed that the Hundis for ten lakhs of rupees had been prepared, the Raja late in May suddenly suspended their delivery in order to obtain some security from him for the release of his country from further depredations.

But though the setback seemed serious, Amir Khan remained reluctant to take extreme measures. The reason of the failure of his late operations in Nagpur seemed to be fresh

72. Seton to Edmonstone, 19 Feb. 1811, B.P.C. 15 March, 1811, No. 61
72. Metcalfe to Hewett, 30 March, 1811, B.P.C. 19 April, 1811, No. 16
74. Delhi Resident to Edmonstone, 24 April, 1811, B.P.C. 17 May, 1811, No. 53; To the Court of Directors, 11 June, 1812, Pol. letters received from Bengal, vol. 9, p. 140
75. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 29 May, 1811, B.P.C. 14 June, 1811, No. 17
in his mind. He realised that British intervention was probable even if the country on which he waged war were unconnected with the British Government by any defensive alliance. This conviction had been strengthened by a recent conversation with the Resident at Delhi; when Amir Khan's vakil had sought an assurance that the British Government would not "interfere with his master's operations against countries not in alliance with our Government" he had been told that "such a general assurance was impossible, as his operations might perhaps tend to our injury in which case we should be under the necessity of interfering". The vakil had then proposed that the Resident should point out what countries his master might attack and what not. The Resident replied that he "could not do so for two reasons, first, that my doing so would be unfriendly towards particular countries, with whom we are at amity, by directing his attacks against them, and second, that our interference would depend on circumstances affecting our interests of which Government would judge at the time of their occurrence".

The Resident's conversation with Amir Khan's vakil was warmly approved: in the Governor-General's opinion the whole spirit of his discourse was "proper and judicious and in strict conformity to the instructions of the Government". Once again, as in Seton's conversations with Amir Khan's vakil in 1810, there was visible a slight, but important shift away from the strict doctrine of non-interference. Compared with the replies given to Amir Khan in 1809, the shift was indeed quite pronounced.

Meanwhile, there took place a change in the Government of Jaipur. Thakur Megh Singh, who was always in favour of appeasing Amir Khan by making concessions, was removed from his position. The other ministers found themselves unable to cope with the crisis and advised the Raja to call in

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76. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 29 May, 1811, B.P.C. 14 June, 1811, No. 17

77. Ibid.

78. Edmonstone to Metcalfe, 14 June, 1811, B.P.C. 14 June, 1811, No. 18
Kushaliram. The Raja accordingly wrote Kushaliram requesting him to take the charge of the administration,\textsuperscript{79} which he did late in July 1811.\textsuperscript{80}

Kushaliram realised the unprepared condition of the state and thought it prudent to follow a policy of double-dealing sending a \textit{vakil} to Amir Khan’s camp to renew negotiations while in Jaipur he took measures to avert a crisis if Amir Khan should march towards the capital. He exerted himself to assemble the dispersed and disorganised army of the state,\textsuperscript{81} paid them a part of their arrears, and made them realise that the honour and safety of their country were dependent on their valour and boldness. Negotiations were begun with the neighbouring chiefs and tributaries of Jaipur, who seemed well disposed to co-operate with the army of the state against the Pindaris.\textsuperscript{82}

Amir Khan still was encamped close to Jaipur, and it was in this threatening position that the \textit{vakil} of Jaipur resumed negotiations. Ultimately a contribution of fifteen lakhs, to be paid by three instalments, seemed to be agreed upon, until in mid-August the arrival of Muhammad Shah Khan with the ex-minister, Thakur Megh Singh, put a stop to execution of the agreement.\textsuperscript{83} Muhammad Shah Khan remonstrated against the terms and raised the demand to twenty lakhs to be paid in two instalments. Amir Khan had resigned the management of the matter to Muhammad Shah Khan and confessed to the Jaipur \textit{vakil} that his soldiers were “much more under the influence of Mohammad Shah Khan than his,

\textsuperscript{79} Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 6 July, 1811, B.P.C. 26 July, 1811, No. 55
\textsuperscript{80} Strachey to Edmonstone, 31 July. 1811, B.P.C. 23 July, 1811, No. 15
\textsuperscript{81} Strachey to Hewett, 27 Aug. 1811, B.P.C. 20 Sept. 1811, No. 10
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Ibid.} To the Court of Directors, 11 June, 1812, Pol. letters received from Bengal, vol. 9, p. 140
\textsuperscript{83} Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 17 Aug. 1811, B.P.C. 20 Sept. 1811, No. 12
and that he could not execute any agreement without the consent of the latter.\textsuperscript{84}

Thus the negotiations again came to a fruitless end. Muhammad Shah Khan threatened to enforce an instantaneous compliance with his demands, and the Pindaris were ordered to ravage the Jaipur territories. The Rajputs prepared to resist and in skirmishes which took place between the two parties, the Rajputs initially gained the upper hand.\textsuperscript{85} They were successful in cutting off supplies from the enemies' camp and in plundering their foraging parties. A body of Amir Khan's infantry was defeated and was said to have lost a number of guns to the Raja's army.\textsuperscript{86}

Though these actions were not important, yet they deprived Amir Khan of the advantageous position of being able to dictate terms to the Raja. But more important than any possibility of renewed energy in the Rajputs, Amir Khan was compelled to seek an early settlement by news from Indore. Yashvantrao Holkar died on 27 October 1811, and Amir Khan realised that this demanded his presence at Holkar's Court.\textsuperscript{87} It was not unlikely that in his absence Daulatrao Sindia might be inclined to interfere in the affairs of Holkar's state, and in fact the British Resident at Gwalior reported that Sindia's \textit{Darbar} had several secret consultations to decide the measures to be pursued in the situation occasioned by Holkar's death.\textsuperscript{88}

The only wise step that Amir Khan could adopt under these circumstances was to come to a final settlement with the Raja of Jaipur. He therefore accepted the Raja's offer to pay seventeen lakhs of rupees. Eleven lakhs were discharged, including deductions on account of exactions, by

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid. To the Court of Directors, 11 June, 1812, Pol. letters received from Bengal, vol. 9, p. 141

\textsuperscript{85} Pol. letter from Bengal, 1 March, 1812, B.C. vol. 394/10018, p. 2

\textsuperscript{86} Strachey to Hewett, 5 Oct, 1811, B.P.C. 25 Oct, 1811, No. 41

\textsuperscript{87} Strachey to Edmonstone, 31 Oct. 1811, B.P.C. 15 Nov, 1811, No. 7

\textsuperscript{88} Strachey to Hewett, 8 Nov. 1811, B.C. vol. 393/10017, p. 23
**Hundis** payable on his departure from the Jaipur frontier. The other six lakhs were to be paid in six months time. Amir Khan withdrew his troops and guns from their advanced position and went to Holkar's camp, where on 10 January 1812 he arrived, and was received with "every mark of public honour and respect."  

**SECTION II.**

Till April 1810, the Sindiashahi Pindaris acted unitedly with the Holkarshahi Pindaris under Amir Khan. They had joined him in his late expedition against Nagpur excited by the prospect of plundering the wealthy city of Nagpur and acquiring a territory in Garhamandla, and incidentally of avenging the death of Chitu's son, Ramzan Khan, at the hands of the Raja's army in 1807. But with the failure of the expedition, they were left with no more than certain parsonas west of Bhopal, settled on them by Amir Khan, after establishing his ascendancy at Holkar's court. On their way to these acquisitions they plundered several villages of Holkar's territory where "no remnant of civil Government" existed, but for the time being the rainy season kept them immobile and unable to prosecute any further campaigns.

However, with the approach of the winter their forces were set in motion creating alarm in the minds of both the Nizam and the Raja of Nagpur. Late in October Conran, the commanding officer of the subsidiary force at Jalna, informed Russell, the Resident with the Nizam, that a body of the Pindaris had ascended the Kasabari Ghat about seventy miles to the westward of the Ajunta Ghat, probably intending to make an incursion into the territories either of the Nizam or of the Raja of Nagpur.

89. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 7 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 29 Nov. 1811, No. 16
90. Pol. letter from Bengal, 1 March, 1812, B.C. vol. 394/10018, p. 3
91. Mercer to Minto, 16 May, 1810, B.P.C. 5 June, 1810, No. 58; Seton to Lushington, 21 May, 1810, B.P.C. 5 June, 1810, No. 55
While making his report Conran appealed for general instructions as to what he should do if they invaded Berar. He was told, in the usual formula that “it is a principle repeatedly laid down, that the troops of His Highness the Nizam must rely upon their own exertions for the protection of His Highness’s territories, and that they must not look to the support and assistance of the British force. This principle extends to foreign freebooters as well as internal enemies.” The absolute nature of the orders was modified, however, by the further statement that “if the Nizam’s troops should unexpectedly be defeated in their engagements with the Pindarries and if they should be extending their ravages in formidable force to the southward, there may not perhaps be any serious objection to your making a movement calculated to intimidate the Pindarries and to give confidence to the troops of His Highness the Nizam, or even to the employment of a detachment against them.”

Since these instructions were approved by the Governor-General in Council, it appeared that the British Government had resumed its former policy towards the Pindaris, pursued since the conclusion of the late Maratha war, with merely an interruption to deal with the Pindaris united under Amir Khan in invading Nagpur—a policy of relying upon the troops of their allies to guard their respective frontiers. The Pindaris alone had not yet become a menace which could justify the employment of the subsidiary force against them.

In mid-November 1810, a body of Pindaris amounting to about 10,000 men, said to belong to the divisions of Karim Khan and Chitu Khan advanced towards the Peshwa’s territory. They crossed the Godavari Ghat at Faltamba and penetrated with much rapidity as far as Sangamnair, an open town, only seventy miles from Poona. Taking advantage

94. Russell to Conran, 7 Nov. 1810, B.P.C. 30 Nov. 1810, No. 64
95. Ibid.
96. Edmonstone to Russell, 30 Nov. 1810, B.P.C. 30 Nov. 1810, No. 68
97. Russell to Minto, 17 Nov. 1810, B.P.C. 14 Dec. 1810, No. 25
of the unprotected state of the town, they easily plundered and sacked it and then moved towards Nasik; but as the town was defended by a party of the Peshwa’s horse, they did not venture to assault it. Rather they made off precipitately towards one of the Ghats in the Chandore range of hills, to the East.  

At the end of the year another body crossed the Narmada at Baglatir Ghat and by an overnight march reached the neighbourhood of Nagpur city. There they split into different parties and plundered almost all the open villages. In the words of the Resident at Nagpur, “there is scarcely a village or a hamlet in the neighbourhood of Nagpur, or for many miles around it, which had not been visited by these freebooters on this occasion. From thence they made a dash to Girpar, twenty miles south of Nagpur, a place held in veneration both by Hindus and Muslims, and which the Pindaris themselves had hitherto scrupulously honoured. But on this occasion “they distinguished their entrance into the place with the most savage outrages on the inhabitants, who had flocked thither from all the neighbouring villages, and particularly on the women, several hundreds of whom are said to have destroyed themselves, and many to have been carried off by those merciless ruffians.”

It was thus laden with rich booty that the Pindaris retired from the Peshwa’s territory and from Nagpur, without having been even slightly resisted either by the Peshwa’s troops or by the Raja’s. When the accounts of these unfortunate events reached Poona, it was already too late to think of taking any step to defend the country. It is true that after a short deliberation the Peshwa desired his ministers to detach a party of troops under Trimbakji Dengle and to order the Jagirdars to send forward as many of their troops as they could

98. Ibid.
99. To the Court of Directors, 1 March, 1812, Pol. letters received from Bengal, vol. 8, p. 172
100. Jenkins to Minto, 27 Dec. 1810, B.P.C. 9 Feb. 1811, No. 45
101. Ibid.
assemble, but as Russell reported, the Government was so indolent that "although these orders were given a fortnight ago, the apparent step that has yet been taken towards fulfilling them, on the part either of the ministers or of the Jagheerdars, is the pitching of three or four small tents outside the city." In fact, the Peshwa himself was indifferent to the security of the plundered districts, which had been granted out in Jagir and therefore did not yield any immediate revenue to him. As for the Jagirdars themselves, so blind were they to their own immediate interests, and so callous to the dangers which did not immediately stare them in their faces, that in Russell's words they would "rather allow their country to be plundered of a lack of rupees than lay out ten thousand to defend it against the plunderers."

The Raja of Nagpur was even more shortsighted in his attitude towards the Pindaris. Instead of taking vigorous measures to save his country, the Raja was more disposed to adopt his old policy of purchasing the Pindaris' forbearance by conferring on them a Jagir. In fact, early in 1811, he opened negotiations with the Pindari chieftain, Dost Muhammad, to the effect that in the event of his not molesting Nagpur territory, he would be given a Jagir on the northern side of the Narmada.

The incompetent and docile character of the Government of the Indian rulers had contributed considerably to the success of the Sindia shahis' plundering incursions, but they had also been emboldened by the prospect of the release of their celebrated leaders, Karim Khan and Chitu Khan. They had deputed their vakils to Sindia's camp, and through the mediation of Zalim Singh of Kotah had opened negotiations for their release. It was suggested that Sindia would release the Pindari leaders, if Zalim Singh stood security for the payment of ten lakhs of rupees as ransom and for their

102. Russell to Minto, 17 Nov. 1810, B.P.C. 14 Dec. 1810, No. 25
103. Ibid.
104. Russell to Minto, 17 Nov. 1810, B.P.C. 14 Dec. 1810, No. 25
105. Russell to Minto, 2 March, 1811, B.P.C. 22 March, 1811, No. 25
106. Metcalfe to Minto, 3 Dec. 1810, B.P.C. 20 Dec. 1810, No. 8
good behaviour towards Sindia in future. Zalim Singh agreed
to stand security for the payments of the money, but showed
himself reluctant to be responsible for their future good
behaviour. During the negotiations with the vakils, the
two Pindari leaders were brought from Gwalior to Sindia’s
camp, and though they were kept under guard, the rigour of
imprisonment was relaxed, and their irons were struck off.
The rulers of Central India, particularly the Raja of
Nagpur, whose country had been the scene of their frequent
incursions, had good grounds for alarm at the prospect of the
release of Karim Khan and Chitu Khan. The Bhosle
reasonably apprehended that if the Pindari leaders obtained
their release, his country would be the first victim of their
attack. Not only would its unprotected condition tempt them
to plunder, but the wish to revenge the death of Chitu’s son
would be an additional incentive to push matters to extre-
mities. The Resident at Nagpur rightly observed that
“the release of Kurreem and Cheetoo is certainly a subject
of natural anxiety both to the Rajah and to the powers whose
territories are exposed to the annual ravages of the Pindarries.
As the seizure of Kurreem and Cheetoo and of their forts,
and territory, broke or dispersed the power of the freebooters
at a time when they were advancing gradually to a kind of
organised state, so it may be expected, that under chieftains
of extensive sway amongst them, and with circumstances
still more favourable to their increase, both in numbers and
strength, arising from the daily augmenting weakness of
the surrounding states and their inability to maintain even
their present reduced military establishments, the Pindarries
will shortly become more than formidable.” The Raja’s
vakil therefore remonstrated with Sindia against his impolitic
intention to release the Pindari leaders, but in vain.

308. Ibid.
310. Jenkins to Minto, 6 Jan. 1811, B.P.C. 9 Feb. 1811, No. 46
The British Government was no less concerned with Sindia’s intended measure. But because of the existing treaties it could not go beyond expressing its disapproval through the Resident; “this Government at the same time has not overlooked the imprudent measure of liberating the Pindaree leaders, Cheetoo and Kurreem. If the terms of subsisting treaties could have been construed to confer a right on the British Government to oppose the release of these chiefs, orders on that subject would have been conveyed to you......It may be proper however to express to Sindiah the sentiments of the British Government on the subject.” ¹¹²

What had compelled Sindia to make this move? The answer seems to be that for some time past Sindia’s Government had suffered much from financial stringency. The army was constantly clamouring for arrears of pay. In September 1810, the battalions on duty with Bapu Sindia had quitted their positions in defiance of orders and marched towards Sindia’s camp to enforce payment of their arrears. Consequently, his camp had become a scene of alarm and confusion, and Sindia had taken precautions for his personal safety, preparing to send his family, his private treasury and all his valuable property into the fort of Narwar.¹¹³ His financial difficulty had been aggravated by Amir Khan’s proceedings in Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur, which threatened to exclude him from any future participation in the tribute to be exacted from those countries.¹¹⁴ Under these circumstances Sindia’s Council had been occupied with plans for raising money to enable the Government to come to a settlement with the army. For this purpose it had been decided in December that forty lakhs of rupees should be raised, in the following manner: ten lakhs would be secured from the Pindari leaders for their release, ten would be collected from the Subadar of Gwalior, ten would be lent by Sindia from his private treasury

¹¹². Edmonstone to Metcalfe, 2 Oct. 1810, B.P.C. 19 Oct. 1810, No. 52
¹¹³. Metcalfe to Minto, 2 Oct. 1810, B.P.C. 19 Oct. 1810, No. 52
¹¹⁴. Metcalfe to Minto, 28 Aug. 1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1810, No. 64
and the remaining ten lakhs would be supplied by the ministers by exactions from the neighbouring chiefs, a heavy assessment on the district of Narwar and other miscellaneous arrangements. On this plan, Sindia gave his consent to the release of the Pindari chiefs in April 1811. That he did this under the pressure of the distressing state of his public finances is evident. But was it the only reason that induced him to release them? Probably not. The fact was that while Sindia was engaged in negotiations with their vakhils, the Pindaries were almost freely plundering his territory in Ujjain. They seized upon Sarangpur, in the neighbourhood of Ujjain, and cut up Sindia's garrison which was posted there. They were expelled shortly after, but they continued to commit depredations in the neighbourhood of Ujjain. This circumstance may have contributed to Sindia's decision to release their leaders and to conciliate them. Furthermore in June 1810, Sindia had expressed the desire to renew his operations against Bhopal. But the difficulties which continued to be felt in collecting money for the discharge of the arrears due to the troops prevented his immediately prosecuting this measure. Sindia may well have hoped that the release of the Pindari leaders would ensure their active support against Bhopal, without incurring any additional expenditure. It may be remembered that Sharzarao Ghatge had advised him to release them, considering that their services were likely to be available against Bhopal; only the want of proper security for their good behaviour had prevented him from taking this measure at that time. However, when Zalim Singh agreed to stand security for their ransom and behaviour, no cause for hesitation remained. In fact, Chitu Khan did co-operate with

115. Metcalfe to Minto, 3 Dec. 1810, B.P.C. 20 Dec. 1810, No. 8;
1810, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1810, No. 64
117. Metcalfe to Minto, 2 Oct. 1810, B.P.C. 19 Oct. 1810, No. 52
118. Mercer to Minto, 3 June 1810, Minto Papers, M. 389, Pol. Pro.
21 June, 1810, No. 10
Jagu Bapu in his operations against Bhopal shortly after his release.¹¹⁹

Immediately after their release in April 1811, Karim Khan and Chitu Khan moved to the Bhopal-Hindia area and joined their respective divisions. They were also visited by other Pindari chiefs who showed their respect and assured them of their co-operation in reorganising their divisions.¹²⁰ Karim Khan’s foremost business was to reorganise his followers and to infuse confidence into their minds by acquainting them with his plan of plundering Nagpur next winter. He continued to raise infantry and to cast brass guns at a foundry recently established at Satwas.¹²¹ He then took steps to unify the different chiefs with their followers under his leadership. His nephew, Namdar Khan, was sent to Chitu Khan, Imam Baksh, Saheb Khan, Tuku and others, requesting their co-operation in plundering the territory of Nagpur. With the exception of Chitu Khan and the two Rajun brothers, almost all the leaders of the Sindiaashahi Pindaris assured him of their obedience to his command,¹²² and proceeded to join his division at Sekharpur, on the north of the Narmada. Chitu Khan, though reluctant to work under him, was said to have “made many assurances of his disposition to be on friendly terms with his brethren”.¹²³

Thus once more a formidable combination of the Pindaris was organised under Karim Khan with the intention of plundering Nagpur. In this crisis the Raja seemed to have pursued the double policy of preparing for defence of his country on the one hand and buying off Karim Khan by making some

¹¹⁹. Strachey to Warden, 11 March, 1813, B.P.S.C. 26 March 1813, No. 5
¹²⁰. Jenkins to Elphinstone, 12 April, 1811, Jenkins MSS.; Jenkins to Hewett, 13 April, 1811, B.P.C. 3 May, 1811, No. 37
¹²¹. From the Resident at Poona, 10 Aug, 1811, B.C. vol. 394/10025, p. 44; Jenkins to Hewett, 21 Aug, 1811, B.P.C. 13 Sept, 1811, No. 15
¹²². Enclo. in a letter from the Resident at Hyderabad, 9 Dec, 1811, B.P.C. 13 Dec, 1811, No. 10
¹²³. Ibid. Sir John Malcolm, Memoir of Central India..., vol. I, p. 456
concessions on the other. By December the troops had been summoned to take their posts. A part of their arrears had been satisfied and the Raja promised to make further payments shortly after. Batteries were erected at different points round Nagpur, and barricades erected on all the roads leading to the capital. Sadiq Ali Khan left Nagpur for Sirnagar, and encamping on his way at Garwareh, was united with an army under Yashvantrao Dattaji, amounting to about 4000 horse, 200 infantry, and 12 guns. An advanced party of about 1800 horse and 500 infantry was posted at the same time at Tejgarh on the frontier of Garhamandla. Another party of about 500 horse, an equal number of infantry and 2 guns was in a state of preparation near Sulagarh towards the fords of the Narmada. The Raja himself had moved towards Warengaon with a force of 4000 horse, 500 infantry and 8 guns.

But for all this military display the Raja was more inclined to his traditional policy of appeasing the Pindaris with money and land. Udaji Naik, a person formerly employed by the Raja in his negotiations with the Pindaries, was deputed to Karim’s camp at Khera about twenty kos north of the Narmada. The vakil was told that the Pindaris would not plunder Nagpur, if the Raja agreed to sanction either a contribution of fourteen lakhs of rupees in cash or a jagir, yielding four lakhs of rupees per annum with an additional denceur of two lakhs. If the Raja agreed to these demands he was ready to send his vakil, Khan Muhammed, to the Raja’s court to finalise the matter; if not, he warned the vakil, then his master’s territory would be plundered by the Pindaris.

While negotiations continued, the crafty Pindari chief gave

125. Russell to Edmonstone, 9 Dec. 1811, B.C. vol. 394/10025, p. 55
126. Jenkins to Hewett, 2 Dec. 1811, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1811, No. 47
127. Jenkins to Hewett, 15 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 6 Dec. 1811, No. 9
128. Ibid.
129. Jenkins to Hewett, 15 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 6 Dec. 1811, No. 9
130. Jenkins to Conran, 28 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1811, No. 45
weight to his arguments by directing a part of his force under the joint command of his three relations to move towards Nagpur and to ravage the Raja’s villages on their way, while he himself prepared to move down to the Narmada. His advance force was so emboldened by the Raja’s weakness and the prospect of plunder, that they pressed right on to the neighbourhood of the Raja’s capital.\textsuperscript{131} They plundered and burnt the villages and in the morning of 17 November they appeared close to the British Residency in considerable numbers. A skirmish took place between them and the Raja’s party of horse and infantry under Amritrao Bakshi, who was wounded in the shoulder.\textsuperscript{132} The Pindaris, however, succeeded in getting into a quarter of the town, called Mangalwari, and set fire to it. They carried away three elephants and a rich booty from the town, which a party of the Raja’s horse attempted in vain to recover.\textsuperscript{133}

The Bhosle Raja thus suffered the disgrace of witnessing a quarter of his capital attacked and set fire to. The very methods which his Maratha ancestors had used against other in the 17th and early 18th centuries, in collecting \textit{chouth} were now being used against him. Like the Marathas, they demanded the contribution from the Raja not because they agreed to render any service to him against his enemies, but in consideration that they themselves would not molest his territory.

The Pindaris by their first raids seemed to have prepared the ground for more decisive and daring attempts in future against the Raja’s country. The raids had also again showed how ineffective the Raja’s military efforts were against the attack of the emboldened and combined Pindaries. Of this the British Resident, Jenkins, had been made very much aware, for the clash with Amritrao took place within a gun shot of the Residency. He had seen in action “the whole Pindary force which on the most moderate computation, could not

\textsuperscript{131} Jenkins to Hewett, 18 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 13 Dec. 1811, No. 8
\textsuperscript{132} To the Court of Directors, 1 March, 1812, Pol. letters, received from Bengal, vol. 8, p. 178
\textsuperscript{133} Jenkins to Hewett, 18 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 13 Dec. 1811, No. 8
have been less than 4000 horse”.

Since this was known to be only a detachment of Karim Khan’s force, Jenkins commented, “it is therefore a formidable specimen of the numbers with which, if united, the Pindarries could invade a country, and which when joined to infantry and guns, will soon become irresistible by any native power.”

He was sufficiently alarmed by this evidence of Pindari power to write to Russell at Hyderabad, addressing him to take precautionary measures. He argued that if the Raja purchased Karim Khan’s retreat by giving him money, the Nizam’s territory in Berar would be “exposed as his next object”. Even in the event of his defeat by the Raja’s army, he would seek for indemnification somewhere else, and Berar was the country most immediately within reach. Jenkins was aware that “the Government does not consider the subsidiary force to be intended to rest against the Pindarries”, but he was doubtful of the ability of the Nizam’s force to protect Berar from Karim Khan’s molestations. He argued, “if it appears that a great independent Government like that of the Rajah cannot oppose an effectual resistance to them, ...... and if these plunderers under their principal leader invade the territory of our ally I am inclined to think that it will become necessary for us to co-operate with the troops of that ally in preventing such an invasion.”

Immediately after the receipt of this letter Russell ordered the subsidiary force at Jalna to march towards Elichpur on the northeastern frontier of Berar. The troops under Conran by a forced march reached Elichpur on 8 December 1811, and Raja Gobind Baksh, the Governor of Berar, was also requested to co-operate with the Subsidiary force. These precautionary measures taken by Russell in consultation with Jenkins

134. Jenkins to Hewett, 18 Nov, 1811, B.P.C. 13 Dec. 1811, No. 8
135. Ibid
136. Jenkins to Russell, 26 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1811, No. 44; Pol. letter from Bengal, 1 March, 1812, B.C. vol. 394/10025, p. 5
137. Ibid.
138. Russell to Edmonstone, 13 Dec. 1811, B.C. vol. 394/10025, p. 64
139. Conran to Russell, 8 Dec. 1811, B.C. vol. 394/10025, p. 66
were approved by the Governor-General in council. He considered the circumstances described in Jenkins' letter "to be such as to render the march of the Subsidiary force of Hyderabad to the eastward highly expedient."\[140\]

This was not the end of British reactions to Karim Khan's incursions. Late in October 1811, diplomatic pressure had also been supplied to Sindia to secure his aid in curbing the Pindari menace. Strachey, the Resident at Gwalior was instructed to "claim from Sindiah the utmost practicable exertion of his military power to arrest the progress of their meditated depredations since he had essentially contributed to the increase of their activity and their number, to the improvement of their organisation by that shortsighted, injudicious and injurious policy". For the losses other states might sustain from their depredations Sindia "might justly be rendered responsible".\[141\] This vigorous attempt to press Sindia into taking action to restrain Karim Khan, coupled with the readiness to move the Hyderabad subsidiary force to action stations revealed once again that the Supreme Government had recognised the united Pindaris as a menace which must be dealt with.

Sindia's policy towards the Pindaris had undergone a similar evolution. He had released Karim Khan and Chitu Khan partly to solve an immediate financial problem, but partly in the hope of thereby saving his own country from molestation. This calculation proved totally incorrect. Immediately after his release in April 1811, Karim Khan let his followers overrun Sindia's territory in Ujjain and accumulate a rich booty. In June, disregarding the pledge given to Sindia at the time of his release, he ventured to lead a campaign against Shujalpur, a place once again assigned to him by Sindia as a Jagir, but resumed in 1806.\[142\] Shujalpur

\[140\] Pol. letter from Bengal, 1 March, 1812, B.C. vol. 394/10025, p. 7; Edmonstone to Jenkins, 21 Dec. 1811, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1811, No. 48
\[142\] Strachey to Hewett, 14 June, 1811, para 5, B.P.C. 5 July, 1811, No. 43
was easily occupied. There was also news of Gwalior troops under Jotiba Munehah being attacked by Pindaris near Saranghar. This wanton violation of the pledge led Sindia to call upon Zalim Singh, in strong terms, to oblige the Pindaris to retire, throwing out a sort of threat against Zalim Singh in case they should continue their depredations. Sindia’s remonstrance with Zalim Singh did not produce any result.\textsuperscript{143}

Sindia’s policy of appeasing the Pindaris by releasing their leaders to save his own territory from their depredations was thus unsuccessful. Even from the pecuniary point of view, the money he gained from Karim Khan and Chitu Khan at the time of their release was perhaps outbalanced by the booty they accumulated from his territory. In the past Sindia had often squeezed money from the Pindaris by various means. But how could his demands now be met except by depredations either in Sindia’s own territory or in the unprotected lands of the Nizam, the Raja of Nagpur and the Nawab of Bhopal? Sindia’s short-sighted policy was itself an inducement to the Pindaris to commit depredations in his territory.

By August 1811, Sindia had realised the necessity of exerting himself against the Pindaris, and he confided to Strachey his intention of uniting his armies from Udaipur and Baptiste’s corps with the troops in Malwa under Jagu Bapu to act against the Pindaris.\textsuperscript{144} When at the end of November Strachey conveyed to him the Governor-General’s demand that he reversed his policy towards the Pindaris, he was able to reply that his orders had already been issued to Jagu Bapu, Baptiste and Yashvantrao Bhau to march against Karim Khan.\textsuperscript{145}

While the British Government and Sindia were thus preparing themselves against the Pindaris, the negotiations between the Raja and Karim Khan had come to an unexpec-

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid., para 6
\textsuperscript{144} Strachey to Hewett, 27 Aug. 1811, para 6, B.P.C. 20 Sept. 1811, No. 10
\textsuperscript{145} Strachey to Edmonstone, 2 Dec. 1811, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1811, No. 40
tedly abrupt end. On 2 December, Jenkins reported that the vakil Udaji Naik had been imprisoned in Karim Khan’s camp.\footnote{146} Any notion that this was intended to provoke a breach seems beside the mark. Karim Khan had taken the initiative in opening the negotiations by the despatch of his vakil, Khan Muhammad, to Nagpur.\footnote{147} He was anxious to secure a peaceful settlement and quickly too, for circumstances were not entirely favourable. He had not been able to secure unity among all sections of the Pindaris. Chitu Khan though not actually hostile, could not forget his defeat by Karim Khan in 1806 and was not favourably disposed to his project. Secondly, Sindia was not in favour of his activities in Nagpur and had strongly urged Rana Zalim Singh, who had stood security for Karim’s good conduct, to restrain him. Lastly, Karim Khan was well aware that Amir Khan’s armed invasion and his forceful occupation of Garhamandla had provoked British intervention in support of the Raja. News of the movements of the British force from Jalna to Elichpur in the following week must have made him all the more keen to gain his objects through negotiations.

What led Karim Khan to take action against Udaji Naik seems to have been the latter’s success in fomenting divisions among the Pindaris. Jenkins had reported on 15 November, “it seems to have been the Rajah’s policy to take advantage of the divisions, which have subsisted between Kurreem and Seeto [Chitu] since their release and to prevail upon the latter by bribes and promises to oppose the designs of the former, or at least of his followers.”\footnote{148} Udaji Naik, while living in Karim’s camp had kept a close contact with Chitu Khan; the Raja’s minister. Yashvantrao told Jenkins that the vakil had succeeded to a certain extent in winning over Chitu Khan.\footnote{149} However, Karim Khan detected this dangerous game on the
Raja's part, and stopped it by placing Udaji Naik under confinement in his camp.

Udaji's imprisonment hastened the onset of actual hostilities. At the end of November Karim Khan crossed the Narmada with his division. Besides the advanced party which had already been hovering in the Rajas territory, Karim Khan had with him "two battalions of infantry said to be two thousand strong disciplined and commanded by an European of the name of Ball, fourteen guns of different calibres, and six or eight thousand horse." Chitu Khan at that time was encamped on the south of the Narmada at Nil about eight miles from Satwas, with 8000 horse, 1000 infantry and 8 guns, but he showed no inclination to join Karim Khan.

The forces which entered the Bhosle's territories split up to despoil it. Some who had come down through Nagpur in mid-November, entered the town of Chanda and plundered a part of it, without meeting any resistance. Another body of 500 Pindaris remained in the neighbourhood of Girpar and Bissi within twenty miles of Nagpur. A third body amounting to 6000 men, encamped at Adigram near Narmada in the Jubbulpore direction, and thence plundered places like Shivni, Chapara and Garhamandla.

Though Karim Khan had no difficulty in plundering the Raja's territory, as the Raja's preparations for defence were still imperfect, he soon heard that his enemies were gradually becoming more active and moving in a concerted way to capture him. On the one side Sindia's force and on the other, the Raja's army were gradually moving towards his camp. Alarmed at this development, he strengthened the garrison at Shujalpur and then moved off in the direction of Rajgarh, an independent principality, nearly surrounded by Sindia's territories, belonging to Raja Jai Singh of Rewa

150. Jenkins to Conran, 28 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 21 Dec. 1811, No. 45
151. Ibid.
152. Jenkins to Conran, 11 Dec. 1811, B.B.C. 3 Jan. 1812, No. 58
153. Ibid.
155. Strachey to Minto, 30 Dec. 1811, B.P.C. 17 Jan. 1812, No. 27
The first forces to clash with Karim Khan's Pindaris were those of Sindia's general Jagu Bapu, who assaulted Shujalpur late in December 1811. His skirmishes with the part of the Pindaris posted to defend that place were successful and Shujalpur was forced to surrender.  

156 Karim Khan, meantime, with the main body of the Pindaris had advanced rapidly from Rajgarh towards Kotah and on reaching Munohar Thana, sixteen miles from Shujalpur, he halted to give battle to Jagu Bapu, advancing fast upon him after occupying Shujalpur.  

157 The action was apparently begun by Karim Khan with an attack on Jagu Bapu, which was repulsed. In the counter-attack which Sindia's soldiers launched, the Pindaris were routed, and fled in all directions. Some joined Chitu Khan, some fled to Dost Muhammad and others towards Bhopal; many were eventually scattered to the southward of Kotah in the hilly tracts east of the Chambal.  

158 Karim Khan with a small party of his cavalry pushed towards Shergarh, fifty miles south-east of Kotah, one of the principal fortresses belonging to Rana Zalim Singh.  

159 Karim Khan thus came within Zalim Singh's reach. The Resident with Sindia thought this an opportunity to capture Karim Khan and immediately addressed Zalim Singh, stating that "Kurreem, after his defeat has sought refuge near your fortress, Sheergar, into which I know you to be too prudent to admit him with any other view than that of securing his persons".  

160 He continued, "this Pindarrah chief is now entirely in your power, and I have no doubt that I shall soon have the satisfaction of hearing that your troops have intercepted him in his predatory career".  

161 When nine days later

156. Strachey to Minto, 9 Jan, 1812, B.P.C. 8 Feb, 1812, No. 24  
157. To the Court of Directors, 1 March, 1812, Pol. letters received from Bengal, vol. 8, p. 181  
158. Strachey to Minto, 19 Jan, 1812, B.P.C. 8 Feb, 1812, No. 24  
159. Strachey to Edmonstone, 1 Jan. 1812, B.P.C. 17 Jan. 1812, No. 28 ; Sir John Malcolm, Memoir of Central India,.....vol. r, p. 457  
160. Strachey to Zalim Sing, 2 Jan. 1812, B.P.C. 17 Jan. 1812, No. 30  
161. Strachey to Zalim Sing, 2 Jan. 1812, B.P.C. 17 Jan. 1812, No. 30
Zalim Singh replied on 11 Jan. 1812 he excused himself by stating that Karim Khan had not stayed long enough to permit him to satisfy the Resident’s desire. Considering his presence not safe at Shirgarh Karim Khan “continued his flight in consequence of the overthrow which he had received from Jagoo Bapoo.”

The Resident was not inclined to accept the excuse. “There are many reasons,” he wrote to Minto, “to apprehend that the escape of Kurreem was secretly connived at by Zalim Sing.” Sindia’s Darbar also had its doubts about the Rana’s conduct on this occasion, and the intelligence that reached the Resident from that quarter contained “reports respecting Zalim Singh’s conduct tending to corroborate the above assertion.” From his subsequent conversation with the Rana’s vakil the Resident was led “to believe Zalim Sing to have been averse to take a decided part against Kurreem.”

It may be remembered that Zalim Singh of Kotah for some time past had maintained a close contact with the Pindaris. In 1810 he had agreed to stand security for Karim’s good conduct and for the ransom that Sindia demanded for his release. During Karim Khan’s invasion of Nagpur, Zalim Singh gave shelter to his family at Kotah. It may again be remembered that in 1809 Amir Khan left his family under Zalim Singh’s protection when he led his campaign against Nagpur. Zalim Singh’s attitude was therefore friendly towards the Pindaris. But that does not mean that the Rana was necessarily sincere in wishing them well, for the Rana’s position would scarcely admit of his pursuing any policy towards the Pindaris other than one of apparent friendship. Situated immediately between the powers of Sindia, Holkar and the Pindaris, the Rana had no other alternative but to continue with the policy of keeping on good terms with them all.

164. Strachey to Edmonstone, 7 Feb. 1812, B.P.C. 21 Feb. 1812, No. 15
Zalim Singh himself in 1810 had clearly set this out in a letter to Hursuk Rai, *Khazanchi* of the Resident at Delhi. He wrote, “in consequence of my having temporized with the Nabob Ameer Khan the British Government is displeased with me, and deems it strange, that one, who like me, was considered as an adherent of that Government should have kept up a friendly intercourse with Ameer Khan. The temporizing conduct on my part and my having taken the case of Ameer Khan’s family, were the means of preserving my country for a time, from disturbance. But when Colonel Close approached Seronj with his army I felt confident, that I should be protected from the effects of the hostility of Ameer Khan, and I accordingly sent away his family.” He further continued that “at present the British armies having retreated and from my having sent away Ameer Khan’s family, he has it in contemplation to invade my country.” He then requested Hursuk Rai to take the advice of the Resident as to the line of conduct he was to pursue. The Resident replied to Hursuk Rai, “you may add in your letter to Rana Zalim Singh that the British Government is too well convinced of the good intention of that chief to entertain any doubts on the subject, and that this favourable opinion will run no risk of being shaken by his adopting such temporizing measures for the protection of his country, as circumstances may render advisable until the British Government shall have made an effectual arrangement for the maintenance of general tranquillity.”

Evidently Zalim Singh’s policy of collaborating with the Pindaris shows no more than that he was ready to co-operate with any power which might threaten his destruction. Zalim Singh’s conduct was one more example of the impracticability of the British Government’s continuing with the policy of:

165. Zalim Sing to Hoorsook Rai, received, 14 April, 1810, B.P.C. 2 May, 1810, No. 38
166. Ibid.
167. The Resident at Delhi to Hoorsook Rai, 14 April, 1810, B.P.C. 2 May, 1810, No. 39
non-interference. In the absence of any guarantee of British protection, the petty chiefs like Zalim Singh not only had to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the Pindaris as an expedient to save their countries, but also were forced to co-operate with them in plundering other territories.

However, Karim Khan could not elude capture for long. Before the end of January 1812, he reached Holkar’s camp at Banpura, where he was promptly seized and sent to the fort of Hinglazgarh into confinement.\footnote{Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 31 Jan, 1812, B.P.C. 21 Feb. 1812 No. 18; To the Court of Directors, 11 June, 1812, Pol. letters received from Bengal, vol. 9, p. 143}
CHAPTER V

RE-THINKING OF BRITISH POLICY IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW SITUATION, 1812-1814

In the last months of 1809, and the first of 1810, the prime preoccupation of the Government of India was with the near mutiny of the officers of the Madras army, which at one point reached such a pitch that Colonel Close sent to assume command of the subsidiary force at Hyderabad was met by the whole force in arms, while the detachment at Jalna actually quitted its station in readiness to march on Madras.¹ So serious did the situation become that Minto, the Governor-General felt obliged to go in person to Madras in September 1809, to reinforce the authority of the Governor, Sir George Barlow, and to supervise the restoration of discipline.²

In 1810 and 1811, internal order having been restored, the attention of the Government was again turned outside India upon the French threats to British interests in the East. The danger of any direct French attack upon India had disappeared as Napoleon became inextricably involved in a dragging war in Spain, in a new Austrian campaign, and finally, in 1812, in fatal conflict with Russia. But the French in the East were still capable of inflicting serious loss on British shipping from their island bases in the Western Indian Ocean,³ and Napoleon was steadily strengthening the French grip upon Java. Against this enemy Minto delivered four successive strokes. Early in 1810, the Moluccas were annexed; in the late spring and autumn, acting on his own initiative he mounted successful expeditions against the Isle of Bourbon and the Isle of France respectively—expeditions in which

¹ Lord Minto in India, p. 216
² For the bitter controversy within the Court of Directors over this question, see C. H. Philips, The East India Company, 1784-1834, pp. 169-175
³ Lord Minto in India, p. 242
some 10,000 troops were employed— and finally in 1811, he accompanied the expedition to Java which destroyed the French forces in that island and temporarily brought it under British rule.

While mutiny and overseas expeditions successively locked up large forces and placed a considerable strain upon an Indian treasury already burdened by the despatch of bullion to London to the value of nearly two million sterling. Minto could not do much more in Central India than stand upon the defensive. In the main he had to rely upon the Nizam, the Peshwa or the Raja of Nagpur to defend their own territories, encouraging them to do so by moving British troops to positions of support. The one positive forward move made in 1810. by Colonel Close was halted at Ujjain for lack of consistent support by the home authorities. by a realization of the risks of an extended conflict, and the overriding demands, military and financial, of the Java campaign, upon which Minto himself was absent from India for most of 1811.

Not until 1812, therefore was there any such comparative lull in Indian affairs as would permit a rethinking of British policy towards Central India. When the opportunity came, first Minto, and then Moira who succeeded him, gave serious consideration to schemes for active intervention against the Pindaris. It is this movement away from a passive policy, which was only halted by the outbreak in November 1814 of a severe struggle with Nepal, which forms the subject of this chapter.

When late in 1811, Minto returned to Barrackpore to review the backlog of correspondence piled up during his absence, he must have found three reviews of the Central

4. Ibid., p. 244
5. C. H. Philips, op. cit., p. 179
6. For the attitude of Dundas at the Board of Control, see C. H. Philips, op. cit., p. 177
7. Sir John Malcolm, The Political History of India from 1784 to 1823, vol. II, appendix VII.
Indian problem, and of new measures called for by the undiminished power of Amir Khan and the Pindaris. The first, dated 19 November, was from Strachey at Gwalior. He pointed out what an accession of strength for Amir Khan must follow from Yashvantrao Holkar’s death, and the establishment of the Pathans’ ascendancy at the court of the young Malharrao. For months Amir Khan’s troops had been in a state of mutiny, but henceforth, “this check on his schemes of conquest and plunder will find relief and he may acquire a substantial and permanent source of supply for the prosecution of that desultory sort of warfare, heretofore dependant on his own exertions and enterprize.” In the past, despite inadequate payment of his troops he has never lacked support—“his advancement, and increase of resources will facilitate his levies.” Moreover, Strachey pointed out, “part of the Pindarries were intimately connected with Geswunt Rao Holkar—under the influence of Ameer Khan that connection is likely to improve.” It would be inconsistent with his habits and principles for him not to use such power to shatter the tranquillity of Hindusthan. To meet the danger Strachey urged “the forming a connection with the state of Holkar.” “The more intimate the proposed connection the greater it is presumed would be the benefits that would result from it. An alliance of a subsidiary nature offers a fair prospect of entire security and permanent advantage.” Such an escape from Amir Khan’s dominance would be welcomed by Holkar’s family. Amir Khan would obviously be hostile, but as Strachey pointed out, “he has declared himself unable to oppose the British Government openly, and it will be remembered that he has more than once expressed a wish to place himself in the situation of a

8. Strachey to Edmonstone, 19 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 6 Dec. 1811, No. 11; B.C. vol. 393/10017, para. 5, p. 34
9. Ibid., p. 35
10. Ibid., para 8, p. 37
11. Ibid., para 10, p. 38
dependant on it.”

He might be won over by his recognition as a dependant of the Holkar state, and the danger of his becoming a rallying point, centrally placed, for the enemies of the Company thus avoided.

Sindia might well object, “from a motive of jealousy of the extension of the British influence.” But Strachey argued, would he not also recognise the threat to his own power and existence in the combination of Amir Khan’s forces and those of Holkar, and so acquiesce?

A few weeks after Strachey thus urged the advisability of a treaty of subsidiary alliance with Holkar, Edmonstone wrote a note arguing for the conclusion of such a treaty with the Bhosle. There had been negotiations in 1810, for the permanent posting of British troops in Nagpur, the Raja to be responsible for paying their field allowance or batia only, but they had petered out because of the tardiness of the Raja’s asent and Minto’s preoccupation with the Java expedition.

However the Home Authorities had decidedly approved of the negotiations, declaring explicitly that the determination of the Governor-General in council “to interpose the power of the Government in protecting the dominions of the Rajah of Berar was a measure of defensive policy, and, therefore, could not be deemed a violation of the law......prohibiting interference in the disputes of foreign states.” They went on to the general statement that “the permanent security of the British interests in India does not depend upon any supposed balance of power among the native states; it is like the naval

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12. Ibid., para 13, p. 40

In the autumn of 1812 two leaders of Amir Khan’s camp, Muhammad Shah Khan and Lal Singh approached the British Government, expressing the wish “to exchange their present restless and unsettled life for a settlement under the Hon’ble Company’s protection”. [Browne to Edmonstone, 27 Aug. 1812, B.P.S.C. 11 Sept. 1812, No. 26

13. Strachey to Edmonstone, 19 Nov. 1811, B.P.C. 6 Dec. 1811, No. 11; B.C. vol. 393/10017, para 13, p. 41

supremacy of this country; our power...ought to be paramount over all".15

Edmonstone argued that though the introduction of a subsidiary force into Nagpur might not seem so natural a move as it would have done in 1809-10, when Colonel Close drove Amir Khan from Sironj, the measure was more than ever necessary. "During the last two years", he observed, "a material change has taken place in the condition of affairs in Hindostan,...two predatory powers neither great nor formidable at the commencement of that period have now become so, whether considered separately or in a state of practicable combination. It is necessary consequence of the reduced condition of the Governments of Holkar and Scindiah, and of the weakness and disjunction of the petty states of Hindostan".16 The Bhosle, aware of this, now seemed ready to accept the conditions of a subsidiary alliance...and from the British point of view such a protective arrangement is essential, for to permit the collapse of Nagpur would be "to favour the extension of anarchy, the increase of danger, and its approximation to the territories which we are bound to protect".17

But, Edmonstone asked, will a treaty of subsidiary alliance with Nagpur be enough? With vigour and prescience he argued that it would not. "The three subsidiary forces of Poona, Hyderabad and Nagpore will certainly prevent the Pindarries from establishing themselves, in the territories of those states; but cannot protect their country from devastation. The increase in the number of the Pindarries must render their incursions more numerous and more frequent and states of the troops of our allies, our own must be employed in the harassing duty of pursuing those predatory bodies, not however with the slightest hopes

See also Sir John Malcolm, Political History...pp. 406-7
17. Ibid.
of destroying or even essentially injuring the power of the
Pindarries..."

"A defensive system indeed is but a palliative and in its
operation a temporary expedient, for we can scarcely expect
to keep within the bounds formed by the long line of the
Dekhan and by our own frontier the predatory hordes com-
posed of the Pindarries and the forces of Ameer Khan and
his associates. If......the Dekhan can be effectually protected
these bands of plunderers may be expected to burst upon our
own provinces".

Edmonstone then proceeded to follow out the logic of his
argument, that the effective destruction of the Pindari power
must involve the most widespread operations. They are a
military force that "can exist to all the purposes of annoyance
independently of territorial dominion". Could Sindia be
expected to remain indifferent to a British advance into the
heart of Hindostan? Could Amir Khan? The answer
clearly must be no; there is a choice between a purely defen-
sive policy or a massive military and political effort to put
down the predatory powers in Hindusthan. "The latter
would obviously involve a plan for the restoration and future
support of the regular and established states of that now
distracted region under our paramount protection and
control."  

Neither of the suggestions for subsidiary alliances
were in fact put into execution, for the arrival of Amir Khan
in Holkar's camp in January 1812, and the defeat of Karim
Khan and lifting of the pressure upon Nagpur for the moment
altered the whole situation. But the defeat and imprison-
ment of Karim Khan seemed to have little effect on the

19. Ibid.
21. The Raja of Nagpur, once freed from the Pindari danger,
promptly turned his attention to a renewal of his attacks on Bhopal,
encouraged thereto by Sindia. Jenkins to Minto, 14 Feb. 1812, B.P.C.
13 March, 1812, No. 29
activities of the Pindaris. Chitu Khan and the Rajun brothers, who had stood aloof from the attack on Nagpur, turned upon Bhopal, while Karim Khan’s dispersed followers found new leaders in Dost Muhammad and Wasil Muhammad, who led them in plundering around Jubbulpore. These two brothers had originally served with their father Hiru Muhammad in the service of Mahadji Sindia, had then in 1809 rendered valuable service to Amir Khan, and in 1811 to Karim Khan, and now emerged as independent leaders. The infantry disciplined by Karim Khan, and his artillery had no doubt been destroyed, but his cavalry, to the number of 12,000 horse, remained at their service, “the most destructive part of their force.”

In March the brothers turned suddenly from Jubbulpore towards Maher district, plundered seventeen villages, and after collecting a rich booty, advanced North East towards Rewa. Passing unopposed through Rewa, the Pindaris entered British territory by way of Kotra and marched direct upon the town of Mirzapur. They divided into several parties, spread themselves all over the district and on their way “plundered and set fire to many villages, killing and wounding a number of the inhabitants”. The British authorities at Mirzapur, taken completely by surprise, and with only a handful of troops at their disposal, since the cavalry were not yet returned from the siege of Kalinjar, could do no more than hold the town. The Pindaris, therefore, were able to sack the Company’s factories, loot the neighbourhood, and pass on unopposed to plunder the Gharwal and Saktigarh areas, and the town of Bijoygarh, before returning unmolested

22. Jenkins to Minto, 20 March, 1812, B.P.C. 10 April, 1812, No. 16
23. Strachey to Minto, 11 July, 1812, B.P.C. 31 July, 1812, No. 8
24. Brooke, the Magistrate at Banares, to Baillie, 14 March, 1812, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1812, No. 1. Jenkins at Nagpur reported that not a whisper had been heard of plans for the raid on Mirzapur. Jenkins to Minto, 15 April, 1812, B.P.C. 8 May, 1812, No. 36
by the Rewa route. Edmonstone's fear had soon been realised.

This sudden, unexpected and entirely successful raid into British territory naturally led to much controversy and discussion. It may be, that the Pindari's original intention had been to assist Chattar Sal, the kiladar of Kalinjar, but what was quickly seized upon were the reports of complicity between the Pindaris and the Rewa ruler. Captain Whitehead reported on 12 March, that in confidential talks near Rewa the Raja had agreed to let the Pindaris pass unopposed through his territory in return for their agreement not to molest Rewa. Richardson, the Governor-General's Agent in Bundelkhand, promptly took up reports of a grand Rewa reception for the Pindaris' vakil, of the provision of Rewa guides, and of the active encouragement to the Pindaris to sack Mirzapur given by Dilgun Singh, a relative of the Raja, and coupling these with the absence of any resistance to the Pindaris in Rewa, charged the Raja directly with "an improper collusion with them on your part". Two days later Richardson authorised British troops to enter Rewa or other states in pursuit of the Pindaris, and if their entry were opposed to overcome such resistance by force.

These impulsive actions of the alarmist Richardson received little support from Government. Edmonstone pointed out that the Rewa Raja had always been friendly towards the Company, while Minto made the obvious point.

25. Wood, Commander at Benares to Fagan, Adjutant-General 14 March, 1812, B.P.S.C. 26 March, 1812, No. 21
27. Richardson to the Rajah of Rewa, 18 March, 1812, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1812, No. 8. Richardson acted largely on information supplied by a feudatory of the Rewa Raja named Jag Mohan Singh but as Brooke at Benares pointed out on 14 March, the man was a known enemy of the Raja. B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1812, No. 1. Likewise Dilgun Singh, though a relative of the Raja, was a rebel, and in no sense the Raja's agent.
28. Richardson to Edmonstone, 21 and 24 March, 1812, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1812, Nos. 7 and 9.
that the reason for his "improper collusion" with the Pindaris was his evident inability to protect his own country from their depredations. "That the Rajah of Rewah has abstained from every endeavour to oppose by force the progress of the Pindarries thro' his country is certain and that he agreed to grant them a free passage thro' it seems highly probable. His Lordship in Council however is not disposed to ascribe his conduct in this respect to a spirit of hostility towards the British Government, but rather to his inability to oppose them either from the deficiency of the force at his command or from the insubordination of his chiefs and Jageerdars who as well as himself might also have been led to purchase the exemption of their lands and villages from plunder and devastation by abstaining from any opposition to the progress of the Pindarries". 29

Nevertheless two general points for consideration arose from the events in Rewa. In the past, when petty chiefs had appealed for British protection they had been met with a restatement of the British policy of non-involvement. Some, such as Zalim Singh of Kotah, or the Nawab of Bhopal had then chosen to join the Pindaris in plundering the territories of others as the best means of saving their own. But on this occasion the complicity of the Rewa Raja had been at the expense of British territories. The reaction of Richardson had been both to threaten the Raja and to suggest to Government that "it would be an object of policy to enter into some such engagement of friendship, or alliance, with the Rajah of Rewah, as might entitle us to expect, or demand, his co-operation, or his opposition to such freebooters passing through his country to ours". 30 Edmonstone replied to this suggestion by stating that Government had already decided to consider the conclusion of an alliance with Rewa. 31

29. Edmonstone to Richardson, 3 April, 1812, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1812, No. 11.
30. Richardson to Edmonstone, 16 March, 1812, B.P.S.C. 26 March, 1812, No. 11.
The second point, raised by Richardson's authorization of the pursuit of the Pindaris through the territory of Rewa and other local states, was taken up in an elaborate letter from the Adjutant-General Fagan, asking for the Governor-General's guidance."

"The first point is the extent to which pursuit should be carried, whether it is to be confined to the expulsion of the plunderers from the British territories or those of the Rajah of Rewah, which we have recently engaged to protect, or to be continued... through the territories of neutral or friendly states, provided such continued pursuit afforded a reasonable prospect of overtaking the Pindarries without incurring any considerable risk." If discretionary authority were given, clearly the local chiefs and rulers would need to be warned, and their consent secured. But until necessity finally prove that British security required the Pindaris "to be effectually crushed," such powers of pursuit would only be exercised defensively."

Secondly, the question was asked whether, during any future incursion, the Pindaris should be allowed the usual rights of war. "An enemy of no ordinary character", committing "wanton, unprovoked and insulting aggression... among an unarmed population", ought they not to be treated as common enemies, with no claim to mercy? The Commander-in-Chief suggested the "setting by public proclamation a price on the heads of all the leaders," who, if captured should be summarily tried and executed, as "a species of moral obligation.""

To the queries the Government replied on 30 October 1812. Pursuit into neighbouring states they authorised; military considerations alone were to be the guide, since "the condition of the countries into which our troops might have occasion

33. Ibid.
to pass is not with reference either to their internal Government or to their subjection to other states, such as to require that we should apply to them those practical rules of delicacy which we have a right to expect......”  

35. If any advance beyond British frontiers should take place the Residents with Sindia and Bhosle would inform them.

As for outlawing the Pindaris and “treating the Pindary leaders as public robbers and plunderers and the common enemies of all legitimate Governments”, considerations of expediency suggested forbearance. It would not always be easy to define guilt “in these mixed transactions of robbing and petty war”, and there would also be the danger of provoking retaliation and increased blood thirstiness.

36. In due course the Commander-in-chief issued his instructions to his subordinate commanders, permitting them, where opportunity of delivering an effective blow existed, to pursue the Pindaris into neighbouring states. He reminded them that “the object of the recent measures and movements is purely to defend the British territories and those of our allies and dependants” but it is obvious that the notion of defence had by now taken on a new and more elastic meaning. From a readiness to leave defence entirely to its allies, the Government had step by step advanced, first using its subsidiary forces in support of those of its allies, in 1809-10 offering their aid gratuitously to Nagpur, until after feeling the Pindari-scurge upon its own territory, the point was reached when defence included active pursuit.

To the Government of India it was clear that the Pindaris, augmented in number, improved in organisation, and excited by their success, were a serious danger both to Nagpur, Poona and Hyderabad, and to British territory itself. To Jenkins in

37. From a readiness to leave defence entirely to its allies, the Government had step by step advanced, first using its subsidiary forces in support of those of its allies, in 1809-10 offering their aid gratuitously to Nagpur, until after feeling the Pindari-scurge upon its own territory, the point was reached when defence included active pursuit.

38. To Jenkins in

December 1812, and to the Home Authorities in February 1813, Minto made it plain that the Pindari menace was now such as “to render the adoption of an extensive and energetic system of measures for their suppression, a matter which presses with increased urgency on our attention, and will become an early object of our concern.”

Minto’s recall prevented any large scale action on his part. As he said “such a system requires the most mature deliberation, and much laborious arrangement and combination, political and military.....”, and all he could do was to press the point of recent events “as forming a powerful argument in favour of the establishment of a British force on the Nerbudda”. Nevertheless he had prepared the stage. Malcolm’s verdict is worth recall: “The government of Lord Minto had no result more important than the impression it conveyed to the authorities at home, of the utter impracticability of perseverance in that neutral policy they had desired to pursue......”

The Pindari raid on Mirzapur naturally attracted most attention, and caused the liveliest concern. Yet in 1812 and 1813 other problems, of considerable ultimate significance, made themselves felt. One, comparatively minor, was raised by the complete prostration of Rajputana, and particularly of Jaipur. That state was successfully harried by Amir Khan, Mahammad Shah Khan and Lal Singh, and the people by the impoverished court. In August 1812 Metcalfe reported that the so oppressive had the “state become that “many of the respectable inhabitants of Jeypoar have sought a refuge at Dehlee, Mutra and other places in the British dominions.”

42. Ibid. p. 440
43. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 6 Nov. 1812, B.P.C. 4 Dec. 1812, No. 14
44. Metcalfe to Edmonstone, 13 Aug. 1812, B.P.C. 4 Sept. 1812, No. 40
The weakness of Jaipur also tempted others—including two dependent allies of the British, the Rajas of Machedi and Bharatpur—to seize its territories. Metcalfe urged, “the Rajah has a right to our protection against the aggressions of our allies and dependents”, and he put pressure on Machedi and Bharatpur to restrain them. But, he asked, was such pressure reasonable, while the policy of British non-intervention in Rajputana was still adhered to? “They see a fine country parcelled out among Banditti, who have no sort of claim to it, and they may not give way to the tempting opportunity of taking their share.” The proper solution, Metcalfe implied, was to give Jaipur that British protection which it desired.\textsuperscript{45}

The second question [turned on the possibilities of establishing a British force on] the Narmada, which Minto had declared to be so important. The whole of the middle Narmada had long been a scene of continuous disorder, used by the Pindaris as their base and by the Bhopal Wazir Muhammad, and by Sindia and the Bhosle as a battle ground. The part played by Wazir Muhammad in Amir Khan’s attack on Nagpur has already been noted: from mid 1812 Nagpur troops under Sadiq Ali and Gwalior troops under Jagu Bapu replied with an increasingly close siege of Bhopal.\textsuperscript{46} Bodies of Pindaris were busily engaged on either side, Chitu Khan with Sindia, who had given him the districts of Five Mahals, and Durjan Lal and Dost Muhammad, and behind them Amir Khan on the side of Bhopal.\textsuperscript{47} As a result the whole area was desolated, for neither Jagu Bapu nor Sadiq Ali Khan were paid by their masters, rather they were expected to live by plundering districts already impoverished by the Pindaris.\textsuperscript{48}

After two attacks on Bhopal, in December 1812

\textsuperscript{45} Metcalfe to Adam, 26 Dec. 1812, B.P.C. 15 Jan, 1813, No. 6
\textsuperscript{46} Strachey to Minto, 22 April, 1812, B.P.C. 8 May, 1812, No. No. 39; Jenkins to Minto, 23 June; 1812, B.P.C. 10 July, 1812, No. 18; also see Sir John Malcolm, Memoir of Central India.....vol. i, pp. 391-414
\textsuperscript{47} Strachey to Minto, 11 May, 1812, B.P.C. 29 May, 1812, No. 6
\textsuperscript{48} Jenkins to Minto, 28 Aug. 1812, B.P.C. 25 Sept. 1812, No. 18
and January 1813 had both failed, Holkar intervened with Sindia, and his appeals being little heeded, prepared to use force on Wazir Muhammad’s behalf, Amir Khan using all his influence to recruit Pindari support for Bhopal.\textsuperscript{49} A little later, Wazir Muhammad appealed to the Company for aid against his malignant enemies.\textsuperscript{50}

His appeal was, for the moment disregarded as was the appeal made by Wauchope, the Agent in Bundelkhand, on behalf of Nana Govind Rao, the chieftain of Saugor, threatened by Sindia, using the Pindaris under Dost Muhammad and Dal Khan as his agents. Wauchope had made the point that though Sindia’s right to demand tribute was covered by the British policy of non-interference, what was on foot was an inroad of Pindaris. He asked how far non-interference ought to go “when the lawless habits of these freebooters, and Scindiah’s confessed inability to control them, are considered?”.\textsuperscript{51}

For the time being, however, the attention of the Government was concentrated upon the prevention of any new incursions into British territory, and their hopes upon securing a treaty of subsidiary alliance with Nagpur. In this latter design, broached informally by Jenkins to the Bhosle in October 1812,\textsuperscript{52} and urged upon Jenkins in formal terms by the Supreme Government in December 1812,\textsuperscript{53} there was little progress once the immediate threat to Nagpur had been lifted. But both in the autumn of 1812 and of 1813 the defensive measures taken by the Government prevented any new incursion into British territories. It became known that a body of the Pindaris under Dost Muhammad was meditating an incursion into the Company’s territories in Gaujām and

\textsuperscript{49} Strachey to Minto, 23 March, 1812, B.P.C. 9 April, 1813, No. 18
\textsuperscript{50} Enclo, Adjutant General to Secy. of Pol. Dept. 5 April, 1813, B.P.C. 21 May, 1813, No. 25
\textsuperscript{51} Wauchope to Adam, 7 Feb, 1813, B.P.S.C. 11 Feb, 1813, No. 9
\textsuperscript{52} Jenkins to Edmonstone, 25 Oct. 1812, B.P.S.C. 18 Dec. 1812, No. 24
\textsuperscript{53} Adam to Jenkins, 18 Dec, 1812, B.P.S.C. 18 Dec. 1812, Nos. 25 and 26
Cuttack. The Madras Government was immediately advised to take steps to resist their probable incursions.\textsuperscript{54} Similarly, the Bombay Government apprehended that the Pindaris under Chitu Khan were moving towards Gujarat and took measures to ward them off. The Governor-in-Council immediately directed the detachment posted there to be alert and wrote to the Resident at Hyderabad, requesting the co-operation of a regiment of cavalry from Jalna.\textsuperscript{55} As a result the Pindaris' plans for raids on Cuttack and Gujarat were abandoned, and Chitu Khan who in October 1813 had moved south across the Narmada with 14,000 men,\textsuperscript{56} abandoned any plans for plundering Nagpur and Hyderabad territory, and swept instead over the Godavari into the Peshwa's territory,\textsuperscript{57} plundering all the villages towards Nasik and the defenceless pilgrims assembled on the banks of the Godavari.\textsuperscript{58} On his return, with rich booty, to Hindia Chitu Khan did discuss a concerted raid with Kushal Kunar into the Nizam's territory, after the Muharam,\textsuperscript{59} but a conflict between the two Pindaris ended that scheme,\textsuperscript{60} while Chitu's attempt to raid Berar in January 1814 was repulsed by the Nizam's forces.\textsuperscript{61} For the one season at least a defensive policy by the Company based upon their splendid intelligence network seemed to have been entirely effective.

Yet, if British territory had been preserved, the Pindaris had been successful in greater or lesser degree in ravaging the territories of the Company's allies, the Nizam and the Peshwa, those of Nagpur, and of course of those other states in

\textsuperscript{55} Warden to Russell, 18 Aug. 1813, B.P.C. 1 Oct. 1813, No. 34.
\textsuperscript{56} Russell to Adam, 23 Oct. 1813, B.P.S.C. 12 Nov. 1813, No. 5.
\textsuperscript{57} Russell to Rumbey, 23 Oct. 1813, B.P.S.C. 12 Nov. 1813, No. 6; Russell to Adam, 30 Oct. 1813, B.P.S.C. 19 Nov. 1813, No. 15.
\textsuperscript{58} Elphinstone to Minto, 23 Oct. 1813, B.P.S.C. 19 Nov. 1813, No. 20.
\textsuperscript{59} Jenkins to Russell, 1 Jan. 1814, B.P.S.C. 31 Jan. 1814, No. 7.
\textsuperscript{60} Enclo. in a letter from Strachey, 15 Jan. 1814, B.P.C. 4 Feb. 1814, No. 36.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
Rajputana and Central India who had appealed in vain for British protection. Many of the Pindari leaders were nominally or effectively the subjects and agents of Sindia. The British Government was therefore forced to consider once again the equivocal relations of the Pindaris and that Maratha chief.

When the Pindaris raided Mirzapur rumours became current that the change of direction from Nagpur to Mirzapur made by them was at the order of Sindia—and this was plainly stated by a Pindari captured and examined by Colonel Martindell. Richardson was half inclined to believe this, Lock, the Magistrate at Mirzapur was convinced of Sindia's complicity. Edmonstone discounted the story as mere country rumour, and he poured particular scorn on Lock's notion of some conspiracy hatching between Sindia and Amir Khan: "the combination which you have supposed between Scindiah and Ameer Khan may be pronounced absolutely impracticable, excepting under a total revolution in the state of political affairs in Hindostan." Strachey in his reply to Richardson was equally emphatic. He pointed out that Dost Muhammad "although he calls himself a servant of Scindiah has been guilty of repeated acts of hostility against the latter." Again, Sindia, at the urgent request of the Government, had exerted himself greatly in overthrowing Karim Khan, the Pindaris' most efficient leader. Even Chitu Khan, who aided Sindia against Karim Khan, and in 1812 joined Jagu Bapu in the siege of Bhopal, had previously committed great ravages in Sindia's Malwa territories. Chitu and his fellows "act or not with Juggoo Baupoo as

62. Martindell to Richardson, 30 March, 1812, B.P.S.C. 17 April, 1812, No. 7
63. Richardson to Strachey, 3 April, 1812, B.P.S.C. 24 April, 1812, No. 5
64. Edmonstone to Lock, 4 April, 1812, B.P.S.C. 10 April, 1812, No. 5
65. Ibid.
66. Strachey to Richardson, 7 April, 1812, B.P.S.C. 24 April, 1812, No. 6
suits their convenience.” “Sindia is aware”, Strachey wrote, “that it is his interest to keep down the power of the Pindarries and he long ago offered part of them a grant of the district commonly called the five Mahauls to induce them to settle and to relinquish their predatory habits. This district however is still in Scindiah’s possession and both parties, the Maharajah and the Pindarries have equal distrust of each other.”

Edmonstone and Strachey were thus both emphatic about the absence of any effective link between the Gwalior state, the Pathans and the Pindaris. However, by 1811 Sindia had already granted *jagirs* north of the Narmada to a number of Pindari leaders.

**To Chitu Khan**

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<td>Shadhowrah</td>
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**To Dost Muhammad**

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**To Karim Khan**

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Does this suggest that Sindia wanted their total destruction? Was this an expedient to save his territories from Pindari molestation? Or did he have some deeper political motive?

When Lock had suggested that Sindia and Amir Khan were drawing together in alarm at the British seizure of

67. Strachey to Richardson, 7 April, 1812, B.P.S.C. 24 April, 1812, No. 6

68. General Statement of the Jagheers held by the Pindaris at the end of 1811, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 2
Kalinjar, Edmonstone, as has been seen, described such a union as impossible. But almost as he wrote, Amir Khan’s vakil was being despatched to Sindia’s Court, and by July Strachey was reporting determined efforts by Yashvantrao Senapati “to bring about a more friendly intercourse than now exists between His Highness and Ameer Khan,” efforts which resulted in an invitation being sent by Sindia to the Pathan leader.69 Little positive seems to have been achieved by the interchange, but the peculiar nature of the Maratha-Pindari relationship is perhaps illustrated by the negotiations. Each side alternately saw the other as a necessary friend or potential enemy.

The pattern was constantly repeated. In August 1812, Sindia’s general Jagu Bapu was reported as anxious to capture Namdar Khan, Karim Khan’s nephew and his fellow Pindaris.70 In October, Pindaris of Dost Muhammad “fell in with two hundred of His Highness’s cavalry upon which an action commenced which ended in the entire defeat of the latter” [Sindia’s troops].71 In December Strachey reported that the murder by one of Jagu Bapu’s troops of a Pindari leader, and an attack on the Holkarshahi Pindaris, led Chitu Khan to prepare for a full scale attack on the Sindia’s troops which was only narrowly averted by the diplomacy of the Nagpur general Sadiq Ali Khan.72 Ten days later Wauchope reported that contingents of Dost Muhammad and Qadir Baksh were preparing for an expedition into Sindia’s territories, and had only been restrained when Dost Muhammad was threatened by Sindia with the loss of his jagir of Bagrode.73 In February 1813 Sindia’s general Lal Khan suddenly attacked Dost Muhammad.74 The latter, reinforced

69. Strachey to Minto, 11 July, 1812, B.P.C. 31 July, 1812, No. 8
70. Strachey to Edmonstone, 29 Aug. 1812, B.P.S.C. 25 Sept. 1812, No. 17
71. Strachey to G. Nugent, 12 Oct, 1812, B.P.S.C. 30 Oct. 1812, No. 25
72. Strachey to Minto, 4 Dec. 1812, B.P.C, 26 Dec. 1812, No. 10
73. Wauchope to Adam, 14 Dec, 1812, B.P.C. 26 Dec. 1812, No. 9
74. Strachey to Minto, 18 Feb, 1813, B.P.C. 5 March, 1813, No. 36
by his brother promptly moved to counter attack Lal Khan who fled, abandoning all his spoils. 75 However in May, by which time a number of Dost Muhammad's adherents had quitted him for Amir Khan, and had plundered Sindia's territories. Strachey reported "there appears to be an intention on the part of the Maharaja [Sindia] to engage Dost Mohamed to act against them, as well as to employ him in aiding the present operations of Bapitiste". 76 In June 1813 Chitu Khan who had long accompanied Jagu Bapu in the siege of Bhopal, withdrew. He had been offended by the occupation of villages allotted to him by the Nagpur Government, and recouped his loss, with "ample vengeance", by plundering Nagpur territory along the Narmada. 77 Next month Sindia's general Baptiste, on orders from Gwalior, marched to take Chitu's jagir of the five Mahals, "the latter having entirely relinquished his obedience to the Maharajah". 78 In October, Baptiste marched to expel Amir Khan's Pindaris from Sindia's Malwa possessions, but was ordered to abandon his campaign against Chitu Khan and restore his jagir. "Sindiah having reason to apprehend an irruption from Cheetoo". 79 Baptiste did not obey these orders—and Pindari vengeance followed. "The Pindarries have executed the threat which they held forth against the Maharaja's territory on his resumption of the grant which he had made to Cheetoo. Many of His Highness's possessions to the southward of the Nerbudda have been laid waste, chiefly by the Pindariah and his adherents, a large body of whom are still carrying on their depredations in the Deckan. Dost Mohamed by the last accounts was near Seronje. On his march thither he

75. Strachey to Minto, 25 Feb. 1813, B.P.C. 12 March, 1813, No. 23
76. Strachey to Minto, 12 May, 1813, B.P.C. 4 June, 1813, No. 29
77. Those who had abandoned Dost Muhammad were of Karim's party, under his son Kusbal Kanar.
78. Jenkins to Minto, 20 June, 1813, B.P.C. 9 July, 1813, No. 24
79. Strachey to Minto, 6 July, 1813, B.P.C. 23 July, 1813, No. 34.
plundered and burnt about 30 villages of that district and the adjoining ones belonging to Scindiah”.

It would seem remarkable that after such inroads any cordial relations should exist between Sindia and the Pindaris. Nevertheless, Sydenham in November reported that the Pindaris intended “to establish a large portion of their force in the districts of His Highness Daulat Rao Sindia in the neighbourhood of Asseer and Boorhanpoor near which are ranges of hills that would afford them secure positions for cantoning their troops.” Sydenham then made the general comment, very important for an understanding of the Pindari attitudes to the established powers, that “the Pindarries seldom establish their families where they have no prospect of a permanent residence themselves, nor can they fix them in places of security without the consent of the power to whom the country in which they may be situated belongs.” An established ally was an essential for the roving Pindari bands.

But what motives could lead Sindia to allow such a development as a Pindari base in Khandesh? This was a question which the British Political Agents had now to answer, for a Pindari base in the Asirgarh area would be a great threat: “Berar will be exposed to constant danger and its northwestern frontier in particular would probably soon become desolate....They could enter the province in two marches and would be able to commence their operations after the rainy season much sooner...” “...their neighbourhood will be equally prejudicial to the Company’s territories in Gujerat and to the Nizam’s and the Peshwa’s northern districts of Hyderabad.” On 26 November 1813 Strachey, at Gwalior was ordered to put pressure on Sindia, “to use every effort to restrain the Pindarries from establish-

81. Sydenham to Russell, 3 Nov. 1813, B.P.S.C. 26 Nov. 1813, No. 11.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.
84. Russell to Adam, 9 Nov. 1813, B.P.S.C. 26 Nov. 1813, No. 10.
ing themselves permanently in a new position.” He might also offer Sindia “the co-operation of the subsidiary force at Jaulna and a portion of the troops of His Highness the Nizam”85 were he to show himself willing to act effectively against the Pindaris. (It may be noticed that at virtually the same time the Peshwa was complaining that Sindia had given Bagrode, Dhamnode and Terode to Dost Muhammad who had been responsible for raiding the Peshwa’s territories, and through the British agents was seeking to oblige Dost Muhammad to restore territory he had occupied.)86

Early in 1814 Strachey raised the matter with Sindia’s ministers, pointing out “the danger which impended over the territories of our allies, the Peswa, the Nizam, the Guickwar as well as our possessions under the Government of Bombay”, if the Pindaris moved from their present exhausted area to a new base near Asirgarh and Burhanpur.87 Since such a move would also expose Sindia’s own territory to their ravages, “it was reasonable to expect that His Highness would exert himself to expel them from thence, and compel them to recross the Nerudda to their former stations”.88

The minister Gopal Purak agreed that the growth of Pindari power was a menace to all, and with indignation pointed out the complete devastation to which they had reduced those districts of Sindia’s which they had lately occupied. When asked to use troops to expel them from the south, the minister replied that the Government “was perfectly disposed to exert itself”, but added that “it might be necessary for all the powers to unite, particularly mentioning that of Holkar”, and asked what the British Government proposed to do.89 Strachey replied that though they were ready for every contingency, in this case it was Sindia who should act: “it ought to be satisfactory to the Maharajah to relieve himself

85. Adam to Strachey, 26 Nov. 1813, B.P.S.C. 26 Nov. 1813, No. 12.
86. Strachey to Moira, 27 Nov. 1813, B.P.C. 10 Dec. 1813, No. 77.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid.
from the reputation of harboring them, were it in his power
to do so".  

In a second interview Atmaram Pandit assured Strachey
that "the Maharajah was ready to do anything in his power
for the suppression of this universal evil". But he pointed
out "the difficulties of troops being enabled to bring them to
action, and the consequent uncertainty of the success of any
such direct measures against them", and he revealed that
letters had been despatched to the Pindari leaders, calling
upon them to cease their depredations in the Deccan, and in
effect holding out the expectation of grants of territory "on
condition of their remaining quiet".  

Thus though Sindia's minister recognised the dangers of
allowing Pindari strength to grow, and in abstract agreed that
they ought forcibly to be suppressed, their actual policy was
still one of temporizing with them. Strachey remonstrated
against any negotiations with the Pindaris, and pointed to the
futility of past attempts to settle with them. Atmaram politely
agreed, but when Strachey suggested that "it might perhaps
be useful to threaten Cheetoo's favourite post at Sutwas, and
possibly that of Dost Muhammad at Bagrode", he made it
clear that Sindia was determined first to try negotiations.  

It will be remembered that though Sindia had acted against
Karim Khan in 1806, and imprisoned him, had attacked
Chitu Khan in 1807 and ultimately captured him, and in 1811
had sent Jagu Bapu against Karim Khan and dispersed his
followers, he had never finally destroyed any of them. He
had on each occasion acted under the pressure of strong
protests launched by the British Resident and the vakils of
other Indian rulers, and he had proceeded only so far as was
necessary to exert his control. Sindia's attitude throughout
seemed to have been that the Pindaris might eventually be-

90 Ibid.
91 The leaders written to were Chitu Khan, Dost Muhammad and
Namdar Khan.
92 Strachey to Moira, 8 Jan. 1814, B.P.S.C. 28 Jan. 1814, N9, 8
93 Ibid.
used by him as auxiliaries in some future crisis. The reduced state of his cavalry, gradually declining since the peace in 1805, may have encouraged him to believe that the increasing power of the Pindaris would be useful. Moreover, to the Marathas, the predatory forces still had much day to day utility. Thus the Pindaris especially Chitu Khan had rendered valuable services to Sindia first against Karim Khan and then against Bhopal. In fact, the Pindaris still constituted a part of Sindia’s military resources; he therefore preferred to see his own revenues suffer from their incursions, rather than the extinction of such aid as the Pindaris might render to his cause. It must be added, however, that Sindia may well not have been able to destroy the Pindaris. His own troops were frequently mutinous for want of pay, and the skirmish of his general Lal Khan with the Pindaris shows that the latter were a formidable foe, given the limited means possessed by Sindia. As Strachey concluded, “A complete reduction of the Pindarries by Daulat Rao Sindia, or by any native power, may be regarded as impracticable.”

Nor, perhaps, should Sindia be blamed for his half-heartedness, when the Governor-General’s reply to Strachey’s above-quoted despatch denounced Sindia’s “supineness and indifference”, urged Strachey to press Sindia to drive Chitu Khan north of the Narmada, but warned Strachey not to raise any hope that the British Government would join in any wider measures for the destruction of the Pindaris. The Government of India was still in essence standing on the defensive, as supine and indifferent as Sindia. So when Captain Popham reported the mustering of 10,000 horse, 2,000 matchlock-men and 5 guns for an attack of the town of Saugor, and appealed for permission to post a small British detachment there as an effective deterrent pleading that otherwise fearful sufferings would be inflicted “on the numerous and comparatively helpless population of

94. Strachey to Moira, 8 Jan. 1814, B.P.S.C. 28 Jan. 1814, No. 8
that city", he was firmly told that British policy warranted no such action.

The situation occasioned by the incursion of the Pindaris into the Mirzapur district, by their plans to form a new base near Burhanpur, and by Sindia's half-heartedness in face of this new threat to the territories of the Company and its allies, was made yet more complex and alarming by a return of Amir Khan to the Nagpur side.

Throughout 1812 and 1813 Amir Khan had been busy in enhancing his own power and position at the court of the young Malharrao Holkar, at the expense of the prince's nominal guardian Tulsibai and minister Balaram Seth. The completeness of the dominance he exercised, either in person, or through his agent Gafur Khan, is well illustrated by an extract from a news-letter from Holkar's camp, which Strachey forwarded: "The Nawab Ameer Khan desired that Toolsi Bye should have nothing to do with the transactions of military or civil matters, she should only concern herself with domestic affairs....he also desired that four or five Mahals should be set apart for jaidad to the Silladars.......That a document be given in the name of the Nawab Ameer Khan under the seal of Maharajah Seway Mulhar Rao Holkar Bahadur, constituting the Nawab Ameer Khan absolute manager on the part of the Holkar state of all concerns, whatever he may advise being approved of."

The power so acquired he had used, throughout 1813, in Rajputana. For much of the year he was in Jaipur territory, with Lal Singh, awaiting a settlement by the Jaipur Government of his claim upon them, and meanwhile continuing his harassing warfare. The Jodhpur Raja first tried his hand

96. Phipham to Wauchope, undated, B.P.S.C. 11 Feb. 1814, No. 11
as mediator, in March a group of Jaipur nobles sought to take the matter out of the Raja's hands and made a conclusion with Amir Khan so as to free the state, while the Raja, for his part even appealed to Sindia for help. There was a moment's relief early in April when Jean Baptiste's threat to Pindari positions near Sironj led Amir Khan eastwards to their support, but thereafter, with Muhammad Shah Khan he was busy in Rajputana, putting pressure upon Jaipur, until in July 1813 they agreed to pay him 12 lakhs to go away. He thereupon entered the state of Bundi, and besieges one of its principal places. In January 1814, however, Metcalfe had to report that troops of Amir Khan and Muhammad Shah Khan were still carrying on their depredations in Jaipur, and that in consequence the Raja had renewed his pleas for British protection. Notwithstanding every discouragement these were renewed in February, and accompanied by offers to cede territory, or pay an annual subsidy in return for the aid of a body of British troops. A month later similar requests and offers were made by the Rana of Udaipur, while less than a week later the agent

100. Strachey to Minto, 18 Feb. 1813, B.P.C. 5 March 1813, No. 36.
101. Strachey to Minto, 23 March 1813, B.P.C. 9 April 1813, No. 18.
102. Wauckope to Martindell, 8 April, 1813, B.P.S.C. 23 April 1813, No. 11.
103. Strachey to Minto 25 July, 1813, B.P.C. 13 Aug. 1813, No. 12. One interesting feature of Amir Khan's activities was connected with the seizure from Jodhpur by the Amirs of Sind, of the desert fortress of Umarkot. In August 1813, Cornac, the Resident at Baroda, reported that Amir Khan had been placed in command of the Jodhpur force preparing to retake the town, and that he had threatened war, if it were not handed back by the Amirs. Se Cornac to Warden, 5 Aug. 1813, B.P.C. 1 Oct. 1813, No. 15.
107. Metcalfe to Adam, 29 March, 1814, B.P.C. 15 April, 1814, No. 38.
of the Raja of Jodhpur asked that the alliance proposed by Lord Lake should now be given effect to.\textsuperscript{108} All these requests Metcalf refused. Happily for Rajputana, Amir Khan, having at last come to terms with Jaipur, drove his fellow Pathans before him, returned to Holkar’s camp, and prepared for new action against Nagpur.

In preparation for this new venture Amir Khan sought to co-ordinate the whole power of the Pathans and Pindaris, and such other allies as Zalim Singh of Kotah.\textsuperscript{109} One of his first acts was to arrange for the release of Karim Khan, still a prisoner in Holkar’s camp. The proposal drew vigorous protest from the British Government,\textsuperscript{110} from Sindia, whose minister foresaw the greatest difficulty “in effecting his reduction should he rejoin his horde”,\textsuperscript{111} and from the Peshwa.\textsuperscript{112} Amir Khan also sent the \textit{vakil} to Chitu Khan’s camp near Hindia to induce him to take part in an expedition against Nagpur.\textsuperscript{113} (Chitu Khan had become a very considerable figure, and in January 1814 the Peshwa, Sindia and the Raja of Berar were all seeking his friendship, the Peshwa with offers to restore his \textit{jagirs} near Gwalior, the Raja with the offer of a \textit{jagir} worth two lakhs a year.\textsuperscript{114} Amir Khan also sought to compose the differences between Kushal Kunwar\textsuperscript{115} and Chitu Khan, and so far succeeded that the former was induced to send his agent to Chitu’s camp and open negotiations for a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{108} Metcalf to Adam, 3 April 1814, B.P.C. 22 April, 1814, No. 11.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Strachey to Moira, 15 Jan. 1814, B.P.C. 4 Feb, 1814, No. 36.
\item \textsuperscript{110} Metcalf to Adam, 21 Feb. 1814, B.P.C. 11 March, 1814, No. 19.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Strachey to Moira, 12 Feb. 1814, B.P.S.C. 4 March, 1814, No. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{112} Elphinstone to Moira, 26 March, 1814, B.P.C. 6 May, 1814, No. 25.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Jenkins to Russell, 10 Feb. 1814, B.P.S.C. 4 March, 1814, No. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Sydenham to Russell, 31 Jan. 1814, B.P.S.C. 25 Feb. 1814, No. 19.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Strachey reported to Jenkins on 15 January 1814, that Kushal Kunar had declared his intention of attacking Chitu, and was actively seeking allies, B.P.C. 4 Feb, 1814, No. 36.
\end{itemize}
composition of their past differences. At the same time the Holkarshahi Pindaris under Qadir Baksh and Tuku were directed to join Amir Khan without delay.\textsuperscript{116} Chitu Khan for his part also interviewed Dost Muhammad at Bagrode, after both had suffered at the hands of Nagpur forces, presumably to concert their actions.\textsuperscript{117} The total of all these chiefs’ forces was extremely formidable, as a review by Sydenham, at Hyderabad reveals: “I have received a letter from my principal Hurkurra mentioning the design of Meer Khan to invade the territory of the Raja of Berar with an army consisting of 2 Campoos or Divisions of Infantry, 40,000 horse and forty guns in concert with Wazeer Mohamed Khan [of Bhopal] and the Pindarries whose differences he is endeavouring to reconcile and that Meer Khan has sent a Vakeel to Cheetoo to persuade that chieftain to enter cordially into his views. He states the amount of Cheetoo’s force to be ten thousand horse, one thousand infantry and four guns, and of Khooshal Koonwar and Namdar Khan’s between four and five thousand horse”\textsuperscript{...}

“Meer Khan if left free to exercise his commanding influence with Holkar’s Government, the state of Bhopal and the Pindarries will, there is little doubt, be able to effect the release of Kerreem Khan, reconcile the differences between the divisions of that leader and Cheetoo Khan, and with the aid of Wazeer Mohamed Khan, the parties of Dost Mohamed and other jemedars connected with him, be at the head of a formidable force.”\textsuperscript{118} By late March, Amir Khan had moved off from Holkar’s camp, taking Karim Khan with him, and his army had advanced several marches towards the South-East.\textsuperscript{119}

All these events combined to raise the greatest alarm in the neighbouring states. Strachey reported that Sindia was busy.

\textsuperscript{116} Newswriter, 1 Feb. 1814, Bom. B.C. 9 March, 1814, pp. 1011/2, vol. 49.
\textsuperscript{117} Wauchope to Adam, 20 Feb. 1814, B.P.S.C. 4 March, 1814, No. 25.
\textsuperscript{119} Strachey to Moira, 28 March 1814, Bom. P.C. 27 April 1814, p. 1880, vol. 51; B.P.S.C. 15 April, 1814, No. 3.
“blocking up the route to the Deccan”, and issuing orders to his officers at Asir and Burhanpur, while the Nagpur court discussed the rival advantages of raising more troops, enlisting the aid of Sindia’s Commander Baptiste, or of appealing to Holkar.\(^{120}\) The Supreme Government, its Residents and Agents were likewise driven to look to their defensive arrangements. No less important, the threat occasioned a wide revaluation of the policy hitherto adopted in Central India.

The first to consider the wider implications of the attempted Pathan-Pindari concentration was Jenkins, who drew the contrasts with 1809. He assumed that though Amir Khan’s pretended object was “the prosecution of Holkar’s ancient claim on the state of Nagpore and the enforcement of the pecuniary engagement concluded by Suddeck Ally Khan in the Rajah’s name in 1809”, yet his ulterior object was “the subjection of the Rajah and the conquest of his capital and dominions”.\(^{122}\) Amir Khan’s forces in 1809 had consisted of about 21,000 horse, 73,000 infantry and 46 guns (including Muhammad Shah’s infantry). But he then had only part of the Pindaris behind him, and he did not so undisputedly commanded the Holkar armies. To-day he could put 30,000 horse into the field, exclusive of Holkar’s forces.\(^{122}\) Moreover Jenkins wrote, “for his allies Meer Khan expects to have the Nabob of Bhopal and the chief of Gurrakota, each looking up to him as their protector against the ambitions of the court of Nagpur.” Against this the Bhosle can assemble 9,740

\(^{120}\) Jenkins to Moira, 23 March 1814, B.P.S.C. 15 April 1814 No. 7.

Jenkins at Nagpur pointed out, “the ravages of the Pindarries have been of late more frequent and destructive than ever, in these territories. Such is their confidence of not being molested by the Rajah’s troops, that they now carry off cattle and grain from the villages and they have distinguished the sack of some rich places, which endeavoured to repulse them, by massacres and by cruelties, the most brutal that their wanton vengeance could suggest.” Jenkins to Moira, 23 March 1814.

B.P.S.C. 15 April 1814 No. 7.

\(^{121}\) Jenkins to Adam, 3 March, 1914, para. 3 B.P.S. C. 25 March, 1814 No. 9

\(^{122}\) Ibid.
horse, 3,500 infantry and 59 guns, and can perhaps hope for Chitu Khan’s assistance, since he is enemy to Karim Khan. Any application for the services of Baptiste’s efficient forces would involve the Bhosle in tedious and vexatious pecuniary negotiations with Sindia—"who may wish to turn Baptiste against Rajputana, now Amir Khan is out of the way. Nagpur, apart from the city, therefore lies at Amir Khan’s feet, unless the British Government chooses to intervene".

Presumably the arguments which in 1809 led the Government to come forward "as the protector of the balance of power in India and of the tranquility of the Deccan" still apply. The question then is, when should the Company act. In 1809 its aid had been freely given to Nagpur, and a British force on the Narmada proposed to prevent any recurrence of the evil. "But the Rajah for whose immediate benefit it was intended showed the greatest ingratitude and the most offensive jealousy and would not accede to the measure." The Government thus finds itself in the same position as in 1809, but with this difference that now Amir Khan "is taking every means to prevent his proceedings from being disavowed as formerly by the Government of Holkar and from being fettered by any other considerations than those of his own interests or ambition."

To delay until the Bhosle is driven by immediate danger to accept a subsidiary force is an uncertain policy: indecision will raise the insolence and confidence of Amir Khan, endanger the safety of British allies, and in any case the Bhosle "has always been too much impressed with the idea that he may depend upon our assistance in the moment of need." Jenkins then made his own proposals, diplomatically couched as possible courses of action. They were for

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123. Ibid.
124. Ibid.
126. Ibid.
127. Ibid.
the Government to ignore the Bhosle, and the question of a subsidiary treaty, and to consider what measures were needed either to defeat Amir Khan, or to ensure his entire destruction and that of the Pindaris. For either end the Government should declare its intention of “settling the countries on the north bank of the Nerbudda”, by the conclusion of alliances with Bhopal and Saugor. These would be barriers against any future Pindari incursions, or “points of useful support” if the Government should proceed to a general campaign for their extermination.128 Jenkins’ proposition in essence, was thus to ignore any possible irritation in Nagpur and Gwalior, and to “declare Bhopal and Saugor under the British protection, annex to those territories such lands as are at present held by the Pindarries on the north bank of the Nerbudda, and station in the most convenient position the force we destined for the Rajah.”129

To these reflections of Jenkins, the Supreme Government had already in part made answer in instructions given to Russell which had laid down that the safety of the Nizam’s territories must override any wish to put pressure upon the Bhosle by delaying the forward movement of troops in Bundelkhand.130 The chief secretary now repeated to Jenkins that defensive arrangements had been made, to cover Berar and Bundelkhand, with discretionary power to Russell and Elphinstone to move the forces at Jalna and Sirur. In view of the lateness of the season no more comprehensive move was necessary, or would be undertaken. However, the Governor-General in Council was “not the less impressed with the importance of taking an enlarged and comprehensive view of the question.” and deliberations would soon begin.131

The first to express his views was Edmonstone, the vice-President of the Council. He set out the wisdom of the past

128. Jenkins to Adam, 3 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 25 March, 1814, No. 9
129. Ibid.
130. Adam to Russell, 26 Feb. 1814, B.P.S.C. 4 March, 1814, No. 8
131. Adam to Jenkins, 25 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 25 March, 1814, No. 10
policy of non-intervention and the need to hold to it. The expensive defensive measures adopted since the Mirzapur raid had owed their success "rather to the terror of our military power and activity than to the physical efficacy of the protective arrangements." It would be very unwise therefore to put British power to the test by embarking hurriedly upon active offensive operations. Nor was it necessary to do so—Amir Khan’s heart was set on an attack on Nagpur, but not during the present season. So, though "the introduction of an authoritative influence and control... over all the substantive states of Hindostan by the establishment of new and extended political relations", was the only permanent remedy to disorder in Central India, it was not practical politics now. It had been painful to witness the miseries and distresses caused by non-interference, and to resist the appeals of Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kotah and Bundi, but it would be folly to believe the policy could be reversed without a major upheaval. War against Amir Khan must involve control of the Holkar state, and the position and relationships of Indore are such that control of that one state would surely lead to such difficulties, "probably even of extended warfare," as could issue only in the establishment of a "general system of paramount control and ascendancy."

Moira replied to Edmonstone in a long minute of 3 April 1814. He accepted, as Edmonstone had done, the necessity of defending Nagpur. He accepted Jenkins’ view that even the near approach of danger would not make the Bhosle from a subsidiary alliance with the Company: "The Rajah has just sagacity enough to comprehend that we cannot see with indifference the spoliation of his territories made the means of consolidating a force already so constituted and disposed as to give us incessant jealousy." But he did not

132. Minute of Edmonstone, 31 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 1
133. Ibid.
134. Ibid.
135. Minute of Moira, 3 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 4
accept the conclusion that all that the British Government could do was to advance an army to the Nagpur frontiers every time that Amir Khan chose to make a demonstration. Neither treaties nor policy barred an active policy against the Pindaris—"an association which professes that its hand is against every man, and which avows the principle of subsisting by plunder." In complete terms Moira declared, "I have no scruple in saying decidedly that we are even now at war, and legitimately so, with the Pindarries." That there has been no active campaign against them in earlier years had been "a mere matter of convenience," for except under the view that the Pindaris were a common enemy why should the past campaign have been taken to save Nagpur, with which there was no other engagement than a simple treaty of peace?

The suppression of Pindaris being necessary for British safety, the question is only whether the present time is propitious. "That the Governments of the Paishwah, Holkar and Scindiah have been in the habit of looking to the Pindarris as an eventual resource in certain contingencies, is well understood by us." But at the moment this feeling is at a low ebb, so that the expulsion of the Pindaris from their present positions would be comparatively easy. It would also be possible to prevent the reorganisation of the Pindari forces by annexing to the dominions of Bhopal those Nagpur territories lying north of the Narmada in return for a treaty of subsidiary alliance and the obligation to oppose any Pindari incursions.

But, Moira argued, this would be to take the narrow view, and he proceeded to set out his own view of the very nature of the British presence in India. To defeat the Pindaris would involve the destruction of Amir Khan, and his defeat would mean the dissolution of Holkar's Government. "The

136. Ibid.
137. Ibid.
138. Minute of Moira, 3 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 31 June, 1814, No. 4
139. Ibid.
Paishwah and Scindiah would each have pretensions to the territories so thrown at large. Are we determined on the policy of augmenting the power either of them? If we are not, what disposition can we make that shall not excite more than the jealousy of both of them.”

Since an alliance with Bhopal would also have made the Bhosle an inveterate enemy, the result would be to create a circle of enemies only waiting for British involvement with some major enemy “to seize the opportunity of striking at you with a chance of success.”

The real problem was “the want of definition in our relations with the powers around us,” who are neither given “spontaneity of action as independent rulers” nor the duty of “obedience as feudatories.” That in turn, flows from the unpremeditated expansion of British power in India. “The treaties which we made with different sovereigns in reference to our humbler fortunes, do not square with the interests of that elevation which we have since attained and from which we cannot descend. We have negotiated and contracted with those princes severally on the footing of equality. But we have multiplied our engagements till they cross...”

The result is involvement in every quarrel in India, authoritarian intervention to settle them, accusations of bad faith, and further interference to prevent dissatisfaction expressing itself in hostile measures.

How then to escape this dilemma?—“It should be our policy to bring the native states to acknowledge a sort of feudal duty to us.” Is this impracticable?—not if tactfully done. “Were we to tell them that they must become vassals, their pride would revolt....Should we on the contrary display to them the plan of a confederacy of which we should only be the head from being acknowledged the principal
power in the league, many obvious advantages to themselves in such an arrangement would incline them to concurrence..."146 As members they would owe only two duties: not to make war on each other, but rather to accept the arbitration of the head of the confederacy, and to accept the right of that head to call for their military forces as exigency shall require.147

If the protected members of the confederacy still had the sovereign right to make war on those not in the confederacy, a state like Nagpur which under our present treaty "might lose everything and could gain nothing" would soon apply for membership.148 Acceptance would depend upon willingness to subsidise a portion of the general defence force. "None but Scindiah and Holkar, to whose mode of existence it could not be reconcilable would have the folly to remain out of the pale of security."149

To Moira's review Edmonstone replied in the same month of April, opposing both his practical proposals and his general philosophy. "The increase and consolidation of the dominion of the chief of Bhopal, the guarantee of his territory and formation of defensive arrangements with him are all no doubt necessary," he argued, but he did not hesitate to express "considerable doubt both of the justice and policy of diminishing the dominion of the Rajah of Nagpore."150 He was at liberty to accept or decline a subsidiary alliance, and surely not liable to penalty for refusing a benefit which he did not demand. After all "the defence of his territory is a part of the system which our own interests involve."151

Moreover the proposal for an alliance with Bhopal was based on the mistaken belief that the power of Amir

146. Ibid.
147. Minute of Moira, 3 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 4
148. Ibid.
149. Ibid.
150. Minute of Edmonstone, 29 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814,
    No. 5
151. Minute of Edmonstone, 29 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814.
    No. 5
Khan and the state of Indore were one. But before Yashvantrao’s madness Amir Khan, feeling himself ill rewarded, had already separated himself from Holkar, “who indeed no longer required his services and felt him to be a burthen.” Yashvantrao’s madness and Malharrao’s youth had allowed Amir Khan to achieve an ascendency at that court, but, argued Edmonstone, “secret overtures have more than once been made to the British Government for the interposition of its power to relieve the Government of Holkar from this oppressive thraldom.” 152 In 1809-10 Holkar had gladly seized the opportunity to disavow Amir Khan—and would do so again. Edmonstone pointed out, Jenkins rightly “regards the destruction of his power only as a favourable opportunity for the establishment of a subsidiary force of British troops for the protection of Holkar’s Government.” Sindia and the Peshwa would not therefore oppose Amir Khan’s destruction, though they might be jealous of British ascendency at Indore. 153

As for the Governor-General’s wider idea of a confederacy that “appears to be founded on a presupposed analogy between the states of India and the states in Europe.” That analogy is false. There is no Indian concept of international law, of a balance of power. 154 Such an idea demands that the states “should be willing to cultivate the arts of peace and to attend only to the internal improvement and prosperity of their respective dominions. That a regular constitution and a system of administrative law should exist within their territories, that the subjects of each should form as it were a nation connected by mutual relations and actuated by a feeling of patriotism. In short that civilized society and civilized dominion should already have been implanted within them....” Not possessing these attributes the Indian states

154. Minute of Edmonstone, 29 April, 1814, B.P.S.C, 21 June, 1814, No. 5
could not discharge their functions as members of the league.\textsuperscript{155}

Edmonstone then proceeded to reinforce his argument which, as has been seen, was that also of Minto and the Home Government—by pointing to Wellesley’s experiment, the subsidiary alliance with the Nizam, the Peshwa, the Raja of Mysore and the Gaikwad of Baroda, which Wellesley had planned to extend to all India, witness the former treaties with the Rajput states. Wellesley, too, had asked that these states recognise the two feudal duties set out by Moira. That experiment had been shown to work very inefficiently.\textsuperscript{156} So would its proposed extension, for success “requires a total change in the moral and political principles, character and habits, I might add the religious pretensions and prejudices of the nations of India.” Holkar and the Rajput states would welcome protection, “but the vital spirit of the projected league would be wanting in these states, as it was and is in the states of Hyderabad and Poona.”\textsuperscript{157}

Sindia could not be persuaded to enter such a league, for “it is not apparent in what way he could be in the slightest degree benefited by the arrangement.” So, too, with the Bhosle, “we have nothing to offer or propose to him as an inducement into the league but the protection which he rejects.” Rather if a confederacy were established, a rupture with Sindia must follow “for it is expressly prohibited by our treaty with him,” and he would not allow the net to be drawn round him without a struggle.”\textsuperscript{158} Hence, Edmonstone argued, the conclusion voiced in the earlier minute, that to attack Amir Khan and the Pindaris must involve a “great and complicated system of military and political arrangements.”\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} Minute of Edmonstone, 29 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 5
\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.
The Governor-General replied to Edmonstone on 15 May. He began by denying that there was an essential difference in the principles upon which Indian or European acted; the feelings involved are to be found in man “whatsoever be his state of society.” He then restated his case that the need to suppress the Pindaris was urgent, the deterrent, the fear of a general war, that such a war would be the consequence of princely dissatisfaction, and that dissatisfaction the result of ill-defined relations “we exacting submission to our influence in a degree deemed humiliating by them, whence irritating misunderstandings have continually arisen.” It was over the proposal to reshape British relations and so eliminate humiliation and misunderstanding that Edmonstone principally disagreed. But Moira asked, given the need to improve relations with the Princes, was there any other instrument available than such a league as he had proposed?

As for the injustice to Nagpur of an alliance with an augmented Bhopal, if he upon the selfish and dishonest belief that the Company will shield him, seeks to burden the Company with all the expenses of protecting his dominion, “he is to that extent hostile,” and deserving of penalty. The Company may rightly appeal to “the law of self-preservation, out of which necessarily arises the right of forestalling danger by measures of precaution, although they may affect the convenience of another,” the more so as it is the Raja’s inaction which puts the Company in peril.

Edmonstone made his rejoinder a fortnight later, but confined his argument to a rebuttal of the Governor-General’s claim that Amir Khan and the Holkar state were so much one that the destruction of the former would involve that of the latter, and that Tulsibai had herself said as much. In 1809 Amir Khan had been expressly disavowed, and he would be now but that “Toolesee Bye is compelled to write what he

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160. Minute of Governor-General, 15 May, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 6
161. Ibid.
162. Ibid.
dictates."\textsuperscript{163} Amir Khan's army may give him control of the Holkar Court but "it is still a Marhatta Government and Marhatta officers superintend all the districts," "There cannot be any sympathy between an ancient Marhatta Government and an upstart Mussalman adventurer." If that be the case, as Jenkins at Nagpur believes, then "the destruction of Ameer Khan's power would be, not the subversion, but the renovation of Holkar's Government."\textsuperscript{164}

Finally Seton, the other member of Council offered his judgment upon the opposed views expressed by Edmonstone and the Governor-General. On the whole he agreed with the former. With Edmonstone he believed that the time was not ripe for an attack upon Amir Khan and the Pindaris—for that "the present exhausted state of our treasury would alone be sufficient to furnish an irresistible argument."\textsuperscript{165} Were the treasury full, it would still be necessary to improve the efficiency and cordiality of the Company's alliances before engaging in hostilities of unknown duration and extent.\textsuperscript{166}

While he agreed with the Governor-General that could a federal union be formed it would effectively preserve the general tranquillity, he added, "I am, however, disposed to think with Mr. Edmonstone, that it would be found a measure of most difficult execution." With Edmonstone again, he believed, from experience as Resident at Delhi, that the Holkar court "longed for release from the galling thraldom of the Pathans," though now an army would be required to effect such a liberation.\textsuperscript{167}

Seton therefore proposed for the present merely to continue defensive measures against the Pindaris, meanwhile soliciting the instructions of the Court of Directors. For the future

\textsuperscript{163} Minute of Edmonstone, 30 May, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 7
\textsuperscript{164} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{165} Minute of Seton, 21 June, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 10
\textsuperscript{166} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{167} Minute of Seton, 21 June, 1810, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 10
the Company should seek to strengthen and extend its alliances. 168 Sindia should be induced "to relinquish the right to fetter our political relations with the Rajpoot states", the Company guaranteeing to him and to Holkar the future payment of their tribute. Finally should the Bhosle continue unco-operative the Company should clearly announce to him its intention to enter into a treaty with Bhopal. 169

With the Council thus agreed in wishing to see the Pindaris crushed and the Raja of Nagpur linked by a treaty of subsidiary alliance with the Company, but sharply divided as to the way of achieving these objects, the matter, for the moment dropped. 170 By the end of March there were already signs of deep dissension among the Pindaris, in April this broke into open conflict, and by May all fear of any major attack on Nagpur was at an end, and with it the need for an immediate policy decision by the Governor-General and Council.

This was a conclusion which proved to have the approval of the Board of Control, whose views on the policy conflict of 1814 were given in 1815. Buckinghamshire took very much the Edmonstone line. On the Bhosle's attitude he wrote "the question of a subsidiary alliance with us was one upon which he was perfectly at liberty to judge for himself and however impolitic and unwise we might think his rejection of that alliance, it afforded us no pretence whatever to deprive him of any part of his dominions." 171 As for the contemplated operations against the Pindaris, the Board believed that it contained the germs of a general war with the Marathas, which made it unduly dangerous: "if we could entertain a hope that by any military or political operation on our part, the Pindarries could be expelled from Hindosthan without involving us with the Marathas, we should for the sake of the

168. Ibid.
169. Ibid.
170. Lieutenant-General Nugent, though a member of the Council, produced no minute of his own upon the subject.
general tranquillity approve of such an operation, but we are not willing to incur the risk of general war for the uncertain prospect of reducing or removing these predatory bands."\(^{172}\)

It remains briefly to consider why Amir Khan’s plans to unite his forces and the Pindaris for an invasion of Nagyur did not come to fruition. Amir Khan seems to have seen in Karim Khan the key to a reunion of the different divisions of the Pindaris, and he accordingly released him from his imprisonment in Holkar’s camp and took him with him on his march south.\(^{173}\) But the protests against Karim Khan’s release were so bitter and universal as has been seen, that unexpectedly Amir Khan was forced to hand Karim Khan over, and return him to confinement. The hope of reconciling the party of Karim Khan, headed by Kushal Kunwar and Namdar Khan, with Chitu Khan, the betrayer of Karim Khan, thereupon faded. By the end of March Sydenham reported that the two groups were massing for a contest.\(^{174}\) In April Strachey could give definite information of a series of heavy skirmishes and engagements between Chitu Khan and Kushal Kunwar, ending with a night attack by Kushal, in full force, upon the camp of Chitu Khan who was forced, with considerable loss, to fly.\(^{175}\) Dost Muhammad had also been invited in April to join Amir Khan with his forces,\(^{176}\) but he became deeply involved in a contest with Appakanda Rao, a tributary chief of Sindia, north of the Narmada, and he replied that until the quarrel was settled he could not spare troops for

\(^{172}\) Ibid., para 50

\(^{173}\) Sydenham to Russell, 26 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 15 April, 1814, No. 6

\(^{174}\) Sydenham to Russell, 26 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 15 April, 1814, No. 6. Sydenham, at his own request, had been transferred from Aurangabad to Sandurgaon, a place further north and near the Pindari settlements, so that he could obtain fuller and quicker accounts of their doings. See M. S. Mehta, Lord Hastings and the Indian States, P. 33

\(^{175}\) Enclo. from Strachey, 22 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 6 May, 1814, No. 17

\(^{176}\) Wauchope to Jenkins, 23 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 6 May, 1814, No. 22
any other operation. Wauchope reported in May that the quarrel still continued, that Dost Muhammad's brother had been wounded, and that no accommodation seemed likely.\textsuperscript{177} By mid-April Jenkins concluded that "the disputes of the Pindarries amongst themselves, and with the petty chiefs in their neighbourhood" had made any extensive campaign unlikely.\textsuperscript{178} In May, the Governor-General thankfully concluded "the dissensions which have blazed forth and led to actual combat between the Pindarry hordes of Cheetoo and Kureem have extricated us most unexpectedly from an embarrassment."\textsuperscript{179}

To the difficulties created for Amir Khan by dissension among his possible allies was added unanimity among his enemies in opposing him. He attempted to forestall British opposition by securing the most complete authorization for his actions from Holkar's Government in the form of a document under Holkar's seal "constituting Nabob Ameer Khan absolute manager on the part of the Holkar state of all concerns".\textsuperscript{180} Nevertheless he saw the subsidiary force at Jalna, and that at Sirur set in motion, and a field force directed to take position on the frontier of Bundelkhand.\textsuperscript{181} He also heard, through Holkar's \textit{vakil} at Nagpur, that the Bhosle showed an unusual anxiety to appear "on the most cordial terms" with the representative of the British Government. (Jenkins reported, "within the last month I have been invited five or six times to partake with His Highness in the amusements of his court and on every occasion he has been unusually civil and affable.")\textsuperscript{182} Narayana Pandit, the Raja's minister made it known, not only to Jenkins, but also to the Peshwa,

\textsuperscript{177} Wauchope to Major Stafford, 3 May, 1814, B.P.S.C. 13 May, 1814, No. 18
\textsuperscript{178} Jenkins to Russell, 18 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 6 May, 1814, No. 15
\textsuperscript{179} Minute of the Governor-General, 15 May, 1814, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1814, No. 6
\textsuperscript{180} Enclo. from Strachey, 15 Jan. 1814, B.P.C. 4 Feb. 1814, No. 36
\textsuperscript{181} Adam to Wauchope, 25 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 25 March, 1814, No. 17
\textsuperscript{182} Jenkins to Moira, 23 March, 1814, B.P.S.C. 15 April, 1814, No. 7
Sindia and Holkar, that "the question of applying to the British Government for aid against Meer Khan was actually in agitation."^{183}

The Peshwa and Sindia, who had both protested vigorously against the release of Karim Khan, also took active military steps to curb any move south by Amir Khan and his augmented forces. Sindia had already ordered the closing of the Asirgarh passes towards the Deccan, in April he informed Strachey that he was preparing an expedition against the Pindaries, to be commanded by Baptiste and a Maratha officer of rank. At the same time he called upon Zalim Singh of Kotah, whose troops were well paid and efficient, for an auxiliary force.^{184} In May Elphinstone at Poona received a vakil from Holkar, sounding out the possibility of a joint campaign with Sindia, the Peshwa and the Company against Chitu Khan's force.^{185} Two days later, Jenkins was reporting from Nagpur that the Bhosle had been informed that the Peshwa had protested to Holkar against any move upon Nagpur. "If in spite of the Peshwa's remonstances, that chief should persist in his designs, His Highness may rely upon his being chastised by the united forces of the Peshwa and the British Government."^{186} Similar assurances had also been given by Sindia that Baptiste, who had been nominated to command against the Pindaris "would co-operate with His Highness's forces against Meer Khan, should he dare to attempt anything against Nagpur." Yashvantrao, the Bhosle's distinctly pro-British minister, accordingly told Jenkins that "the Rajah was now perfectly at his ease about Meer Khan's intentions."^{187}

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183. Jenkins to Moira, 13 May, 1814, B.P.S.C 3 June, 1814. No. 5
184. Strachey to Moira, 17 April, 1814, B.P.S.C. 29 April, 1814, No. 2
185. Elphinstone to Moira, 11 May, 1814, B.P.C. 10 June, 1814, No. 25
186. Jenkins to Moira, 13 May, 1814, B.P.S.C. 3 June, 1814. No. 5
187. Ibid.
CHAPTER VI

AMIR KHAN IN RAJPUTANA AND BRITISH POLICY
TOWARDS HIM, 1814-1816

In May 1814, it might have seemed that two years of Pindari alarms, and two years of British diplomatic and military efforts had led to no real advance towards a solution. But minor, significant, changes had occurred. In the military sphere passive defence of British frontiers had been replaced after the Mirzapur raid, by a doctrine of active if limited pursuit into neighbouring territories; in the political, Rewa, by treaties of June 1813 and March 1814, had been placed in the category of a protected state. The advance of the British line in Rewa was a direct outcome of the needs of British defence as the Pindaris threatened to enlarge the area of their raiding. The move was also a pointer towards the much larger objective of including Nagpur in the British system. That had been the subject of one British diplomatic effort in 1809-10, and of another from 1812 to 1814. Late in 1812 the Resident Jenkins had such high hopes of concluding a treaty of subsidiary alliance that a draft treaty was prepared for his use. But, as has been seen, by mid-1814 all hope of securing a treaty with Nagpur seemed at an end.

Jenkins, therefore, turned the attention of the Supreme Government to the alternative of an alliance with Bhopal and Saugor, two territories close to the heart of Pindari activity at that time. Moira readily took over Jenkins’ argument and hopes. In July it was made clear that this alternative also might fail, in view of negotiations between Sindia and the Bhosle for a renewal of their joint assault upon Bhopal. To

1. Aitchison, A Collection of Treaties, etc., Vol. V. pp. 243-5; 246-9
4. See Chapter V, p
prevent any second check to his plans for a forward British post against the Pindaris in Malwa, Moira thereupon instructed Metcalfe at Delhi to take up a request he had just received from Wazir Muhammad of Bhopal for an alliance with the Company. Metcalfe was to offer the Bhopal vakil a treaty of defence in return for permission for British troops to enter Bhopal and eventually from a permanent force there. At the same time, Wauchope in Bundelkhand was ordered to offer similar terms to Govind Rao of Saugor. Strachey at Gwalior and Jenkins at Nagpur were warned to be ready to break the news to Sindia and the Bhosle, as soon as the treaties had been accepted. To forestall any counter-moves by the two Maratha rulers, British troops, and the Hyderabad subsidiary force were moved to positions of support.

The military movements were significant, for they showed the degree to which, for Moira, the particular problem of the Pindaris and Pathans was seen as part of the wider problem of Central India and of Maratha relations with the Company. Earlier chapters have shown the uncertain nature of the relationship between the Pindaris and the great Maratha chiefs, as auxiliaries to whom they had commenced their plundering career. The opposition to Moira’s plans by Edmonstone and Seton, discussed in detail in the previous chapter, had turned in part upon opposition views of the closeness of the links between Amir Khan and Karim Khan’s Pindaris and the Holkar darbar, and upon the honesty of Sindia’s offers to check any Pindari move towards and settlement in areas south of the Narmada. The veto on Moira’s plans imposed by the Home Authorities had likewise stemmed from their dislike of any move which might widen operations against the Pindaris into war with the Maratha states.

10. Fagan to Adam, 26 Nov. 1814, B.P.S.C. 28 Feb. 1815, No. 14
But both Kaye and Mehta have shown the considerable influence exercised upon Moira’s thinking by Metcalfe, the Resident at Delhi. Metcalfe’s view was that both the Pindaris and the Maratha states were enemies to be crushed: “With regard to all the great military states, and all the predatory powers, it is clearly our interest to annihilate them, or to reduce them to a state of weakness, subjection and dependence.”\(^{11}\) These views became Moira’s, and he convinced himself that war with Sindia and Holkar was inevitable, even though he ostensibly based his hope for a league or confederacy of states under the Company’s headship upon the possibilities of persuasion and evident self-interest.\(^{12}\)

One result of such an attitude of mind was that Daulatrao Sindia came to appear a much more formidable and hostile figure than he ever was in reality. Moira, having decided that Sindia must be crushed, treated all his actions with an unjust an exaggerated suspicion. To Moira, as Mehta has pointed out, Sindia “more by his free position than by his actions” came to appear the chief obstacle to the establishment of British supremacy in western India.\(^{13}\) It is not the purpose of this thesis to examine British attitude towards the Maratha state, for that would greatly extend its scope, but Moira’s linking of the Pindari problem with that of British-Maratha relationships\(^{14}\) makes it necessary to take some note of the line pursued with Sindia.

While military preparations to support Bhopal against Gwalior and Nagpur continued, Wauchope entered into direct negotiations with Wazir Muhammad. The latter expressed his general agreement with British proposals for an

\(^{11}\) J. W. Kaye, *The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, vol. I, p. 434


\(^{13}\) M.S. Mehta, *op. cit.*, p. 27

\(^{14}\) Moira later called Sindia “the most powerful and the most decided supporter of the Pindaris.” Moira to Court of Directors, 1 Mar. 1820, Home Misc. vol. 516A, p. 386
alliance, and Wauchope, unduly optimistic of the outcome of the negotiations, reported to Strachey that the treaty would be accepted by Wazir Muhammad. Strachey thereupon informed Sindia that Bhopal was now under British protection and that Baptiste must cease his movement against Bhopal.15

At a conference on 29 November 1814 Sindia’s ministers made their anticipated protest in vigorously bitter terms, claiming that Bhopal was a dependency of Gwalior, and by the terms of the treaty of 1805, therefore, outside the scope of British interference.16 Arthur Wellesley had certainly assumed in 1805 that Sindia had claims over Bhopal, and probably over Saugor also,17 and Malcolm likewise recognised a special relationship between Gwalior and Bhopal.18

These claims the Governor-General rejected, and intensified the already extensive military preparations to protect Bhopal, despite the outbreak of a full scale conflict with Nepal. Wauchope was asked to meet Wazir Muhammad’s remaining objections to a treaty,19 and a draft was sent for his use, complete with secret articles by which the Company promised to recover for Bhopal lands earlier lost to Sindia and the Pindaris.20 However all the Governor-General’s diplomatic efforts, and military preparations ended in a fiasco. Wazir Muhammad, having saved himself from the expected Maratha attack by his apparent readiness to enter into an alliance with the Company, saw no reason to abandon his independence by actually concluding a treaty.21 Moreover by signing a document to Baptiste wherein he stated that “he had always faithfully discharged the military service

15. M. S. Metha, op. cit., p. 42
16. Strachey to Moira, 30 Nov. 1814, B.P.S.C, 20 Dec, 1814 No. 33
19. Adam to Wauchope, 6 Dec, 1814, B.P.S.C. 29 Dec, 1814, No. 11
20. Adam to Wauchope, 6 Dec, 1814, B.P.S.C 29 Dec, 1814, No. 12
21. Adam to Wauchope, 29 March, 1815, B.P.S.C. 2 May, 1815, No. 57
which he owed to the Maharajah", he cut the legal ground from under Moira's feet. In March 1815, Strachey, the Resident at Gwalior, was asked to inform Sindia that negotiations for alliances with Bhopal and Saugor had been abandoned. Wazir Muhammad's duplicity was blamed for the breakdown of the negotiations, and the Supreme Government with a final touch of defiance, declared that it retained the right to reopen the negotiations and that it still did not admit any claim of Sindia's over Bhopal.

Eventually, however, Moira had to abandon even this position, for the Home Government expressed much dissatisfaction with his Bhopal and Saugor negotiations. The Secret Committee made it plain that they saw no reason to change the settlement established by Cornwallis and Barlow, under which "our possessions have for ten years continued in a state of tranquillity" and they added, "we desire that no further steps may be taken for the purpose of concluding the engagement". Moira, upon receipt of these orders, instructed Close at Gwalior to assume henceforth that the Company would not interpose between Sindia, or any other chief, and Bhopal.

It is unnecessary to pursue the matter further for, as will be seen, the area of operations of Amir Khan and of the Pindaris shifted from Malwa to Rajputana and to the Deccan respectively. But it is necessary to note one outcome of the Bhopal affair: British hostility led Sindia to draw closer once again to the Pindaris. The various measures to curb Pindari activities, detailed in the previous chapter, taken by Sindia in co-operation with the other powers in Central India were not pursued. Rather Baptiste concluded written engagements

22. Ibid; M. S. Mehta, op."cit., p. 54
23. Adam to Strachey, 29 March, 1815, B.P.S.C. 2 May, 1815, No.60
24. Adam to Wauchope, 29 March, 1815, B.P.S.C. 2 May, 1815, No. 57
25. Adam to Jenkins, 29 March, 1815, B.P.S.C. 2 May, 1815, No. 63
27. Adam to Close, 5 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 6 April, 1816, No. 14
with the Pindari leaders, who were given *jagirs* in return for a promise to respect Sindia's possessions and to maintain bodies of cavalry attached to Sindia's army. Under these agreements Chitu Khan received five, Namdar Khan three, and Wasil Muhammad seven *mahals.*

From his repeated failures in the territory of the Raja of Nagpur Amir Khan learnt that the British Government though not in alliance with the Raja would not tolerate the subversion of the Raja's territory or his ultimate settlement there. So he decided to move once more towards Rajputana, as a safer place for his enterprising career. With authority from Holkar's Government to collect tribute from Jaipur and strengthened by a body of Holkar's army he set off for Jaipur in August 1814. On his way he had a secret conference at Ajmer with two of his generals, Muhammad Shah Khan and Lal Singh, and the Pindari leaders, Rajun Khan and Dost Muhammad whom he had also invited to meet him there. These two agreed to act in conjunction with him, and they moved with some 10,000 Pindaris to a camp ten miles north of Ratlam on their way to Ajmir. But Chitu Khan, when he too was invited to join Amir Khan, hesitated. The difficulty was that Karim Khan's division under Kushal Kunwar was already serving with Amir Khan, and the long standing enmity between the two groups, reinforced by the conflicts in the summer of 1814 made any cordial co-operation against Jaipur as impossible as it had been against Nagpur.

28. Close to Moira, 20 May, 1815, B.P.S.C. 6 June, 1815, No. 6
30. Metcalfe to Adam, 16 Nov. 1814, B.P.S.C. 6 Dec. 1814, No. 102
31. Metcalfe to Adam, 14 Feb. 1815, B.P.S.C. 28 Feb. 1815, No. 22
33. Metcalfe to Adam, 14 Feb. 1815, B.P.S.C. 28 Feb. 1815, No. 26
his minister to negotiate with him on his monetary claims he would destroy the entire cultivation. Powerless to resist, the Raja despatched his minister Shivnarain to Amir Khan’s camp. There were long discussions, in which Shivnarain displayed much firmness, and he so far convinced Amir Khan that his original demands were beyond the capacity of the state, that the latter eventually agreed to be satisfied with one and a half lakhs—25,000 rupees to be paid immediately, and the remainder by instalments in the course of a year. Amir Khan made it clear however, that the minister would have to pacify his Pindari chiefs, some of whom were accordingly sent to him. Shivnarain was able to persuade them also that there was little to be hoped for from Jaipur.

The moderation of the settlement seems to have owed much to the rumours that the Raja was about to renew his appeal for a British alliance. As Metcalfe reported, Shivnarain had busily endeavoured “to establish a belief that the British Government was willing to extend its protection to that state.”

Amir Khan attempted to ascertain the truth of these assertions, and to ward off British intervention, by instigating Holkar’s Government to write to the Resident at Delhi, addressing him to remain on his guard against “the mischievous disposition of the Court of Jaipur.” A clear hint was also given to Metcalfe that British interference for the protection of Jaipur might be “attended with dissensions with the Court of Holkar.” Metcalfe, believing it “neither necessary nor desirable” to reply to the letter, left Amir Khan in suspense as to the real intentions of the Company.

34. Metcalfe to Adam, 8 March, 1815, B.P.C. 28 March, 1815, No. 26
35. Metcalfe to Adam, 28 March, B.P.C. 18 April, 1815, No. 56
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid. In fact the Secret Committee had issued instructions in 1813 for the conclusion of a subsidiary alliance, (Board’s Draft of Sec. Despatch, 23 Dec. 1813, No. 90, vol. 4) but this had been set aside during the long Council debates of 1814 until a general settlement of Central India could be agreed.
38. Metcalfe to Adam, 28 March, 1815, B.P.C. 18 April, 1815, No. 5
39. Ibid.
It was almost certainly the threat of an appeal to the Company, and the doubt about the Company’s attitude which saved Jaipur from utter desolation. It was equally the case that had the possibility of British interference not existed nothing could have prevented the Pathan leader from subverting the Raja’s authority and becoming master of Jaipur, had he so wished.

In mid-July, immediately after this settlement, Amir Khan had to march to Miruth where Muhammad Shah Khan was seriously ill. Two days after his arrival Muhammad Shah Khan expired in his camp.\(^{40}\) Though Amir Khan lost one of his most able friends in Muhammad Shah Khan’s death, the event seems to have had no effect on his military strength.\(^{41}\) Amir Khan placed his minor son Uzir Khan in nominal command of Muhammad Shah Khan’s army, under the guidance and actual command of Lal Singh with the assistance of Fuzulla Khan and Muhatab Khan.\(^{42}\) As a commander Lal Singh had already acquired a good reputation, and Metcalfe’s comment on Amir Khan’s dispositions was that “the union of the forces under the actual command of Lal Singh with the name of Meer Khan’s son seems to be the best arrangement that could have been made for Meer Khan’s interests.”\(^{43}\)

After thus settling Muhammad Shah Khan’s affairs, Amir Khan announced his intention of marching his forces towards Jodhpur, and asked the Raja to give him an interview to discuss the settlement of his monetary claims, consisting in part of arrears due to the late Muhammad Shah Khan, and in part of payments for his own forces. He reached Jodhpur in mid-September and was warmly received.\(^{44}\) After only a short discussion it was agreed that the Raja would pay eighteen lakhs of rupees, in three instalments.\(^{45}\)

40. Metcalfe to Adam, 16 July, 1815, B.P.C. 9 Aug. 1815, No. 29
41. Metcalf to Adam, 27 July, 1815, para 1, B.P.C. 23 Aug. 1815, No. 20
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid, para 3
44. Metcalfe to Adam, 23 Sept. 1815, B.P.C. 20 Oct. 1815, No. 44
45. Metcalf to Adam, 3 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 20 Oct. 1815, No. 47.
Whatever the reasons for Raja Man Singh's ready acceptance of Amir Khan's terms, his ministers did not approve of them. They found no justification for accepting Amir Khan's claims in full, while his armies had been and were still plundering Jodhpur and its people. They therefore suggested that the offer should be reduced to eight lakhs, on account of the advances made to the late Muhammad Shah Khan, and the damage caused by Amir Khan's troops. They seemed quite ready to face the consequences and strongly advised the Raja to desire Amir Khan to leave Jodhpur. The crafty Pathan chief of course did not refuse to do so, but demanded an immediate settlement of his monetary claims.

At last, in mid-October, it was agreed that Qutb-ud-din Khan and Muhammad Sayyid Khan, with an escort, of fifteen Pathans should meet Deonath and the minister Singi Induraj in the fort at Jodhpur finally to adjust Amir Khan’s monetary claims. The meeting duly took place, but ended in the murder of Deonath and Induraj. The explanation given to Metcalfe was that when the Patan commanders joined Bukhshee Singee Induraj, the Bukhshee opined that their money should be paid in 3 instalments, the first after one month, the 2nd after five months, the 3rd after eight months. The commanders replied that in this mode nine months would elapse before the payment of the whole, a delay which they could not agree to and proposed to allow some deductions.

46. Among the reasons may have been the wish to retain his good will in the Jodhpur-Sind struggle over Amarkot. In April 1814 the Amirs of Sind had tried hard to secure the assistance of Amir Khan, or at least his neutrality. Enclo. in letter from Strachey, 3 May 1814 Bom P.C. 4 June 1814, p. 2501, vol. 52

47. Col. Tod's description of the conflict of Raja Man Singh and his leading nobles with his overmighty minister Induraj and Guru Deonath may also have a bearing. See Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, vol. II p. 827 and 1091 (1920 ed.)

48. Sir John Malcolm, Memoir of Central India,.... vol. i, p. 343

49. Metcalfe to Adam, 21 Oct. 1815, B.P. C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 16

50. Metcalfe to Adam, 21 Oct. 1815, B.P. C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 16
on the condition of getting ready money. The Bukshee then said, he would go to the Maharaja and return immediately with his orders on the case. As he was rising to go, the Patans seized him by his garments; and both he and Deonath expressing their indignation at this insult a scuffle ensued in which words and firearms were used and the Bukshee and the Gooroo and some others were immediately put to death.\textsuperscript{51}

Immediately after this event Amir Khan wrote to the Raja and his ministers in a palliative tone that “what has happened was unpremeditated and accidental.” He stated his readiness to administer extreme punishment to the culprits, though pointing out that punishment would not restore the Guru and Bakshi to life, while it would increase mutual hostility.\textsuperscript{52} The Raja for his part issued a declaration that “no good could now be done by the death of the Pathans, and that he intended to send them under guard to Amir Khan’s camp,\textsuperscript{53} thus foiling the attempt to secure revenge by the sons of the dead Guru and minister.\textsuperscript{45}

Metcalf, the Resident at Delhi, did not consider that the event was as simple as Amir Khan wanted others to believe; neither “unpremeditated nor accidental.”\textsuperscript{55} Subsequent intelligence from Amir Khan’s camp suggested that the Pathan leader in all his meetings with the Raja had betrayed a personal fear, which to Metcalfe seemed the sign “of a man bent on some treacherous villainy.” More than once meetings were prevented or hastily broken off by his alarms or suspicions.\textsuperscript{56} Again; his enmity to the ministers was publicly known, and Metcalfe noted that “the persons sent to camp with the ministers were fit for the murderous part they performed, but not for the amicable conduct of a money negotiations.”\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{51} Metcalfe to Adam, 28 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 17 Nov. 1815, No. 29
\textsuperscript{52} Metcalfe to Adam, 28 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 17 Nov. 1815, No. 29
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{54} Metcalfe to Adam, 2 Nov. 1815, B.P.C. 25 Nov. 1815, No. 31
\textsuperscript{55} Metcalfe to Adam, 21 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 16
\textsuperscript{56} Metcalfe to Adam, 27 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 17 Nov. 1815, No. 26
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
However, if Amir Khan was suspect of complicity in the crime, so Metcalfe thought, was the Raja. The escape under safe conduct of the murderers could only suggest "that they must have been protected by some powerful party in the fort." In November 1815, the veil of darkness around the murder was lifted, and Metcalfe's suppositions confirmed, when the Raja's vakil, visiting Delhi, confessed that his master had instigated the murder of the minister Singi Induraj. He said that "the Rajah had for some time been displeased with Singee Induraj but that the latter was supported by the Raja's Gooroo and the power of the Gooroo over the Raja from religious influence, was such as to prevent the Raja from offering any lesson to Singee Induraj. That if the minister had been confined, a threat from the Gooroo of considering himself also in confinement, would have been sufficient to ensure the release of the minister." Therefore, the vakil continued, "to get rid of Singee Induraj the Rajah made use of Meer Khan, who would not be under any apprehension from the religious power of the Gooroo. That the Rajah did not mean to have the Gooroo murdered, but that he fell in the scuffle from his zeal to support the minister".

It is difficult to say whether Amir Khan gained or lost in character by the revelations. He was freed from the charge of instigating murder, but acquired the infamy of acting as a hired assassin. Instead of being the villain of the drama, he became merely the second murderer. But murderer or not, he had acquired a new dominance at the Jodhpur court. The new minister was appointed under his influence and his demand for quick delivery of the money received more attention. It was settled that the amount of 22 lakhs would be paid, of which 5 lakhs had already been paid, 2 lakhs more would be paid immediately and the remainder after the Rabi harvest.

59. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Nov. 1815, B.P.C. 8 Dec. 1815, No. 15.
60. Ibid.
61. Metcalfe to Adam, 2 Nov. 1815, B.P.C. 25 Nov. 1815, No. 31.
While events had been moving to this very satisfactory conclusion in Jodhpur, Amir Khan had already turned his attention again towards Jaipur. His excuse was the Raja's failure to fulfil his recent bargain, his aim to profit from the internal disputes in the Jaipur court at a time when the Company was deeply involved in the Nepal war. Early in October therefore he had directed the infantry under Lal Singh to march toward Jaipur.

The feuds of which Amir Khan sought to take advantage were those which surrounded the chief minister Shivanarain. He had created many enemies at court, who opposed his intention of saving Jaipur by an alliance with the Company even at the cost of Rajput independence. In September 1815, his removal from office by his enemies seemed certain, and to save himself from this disgrace and its consequences he committed suicide. However, after his death, his son, Ganeshnarain, was appointed minister and continued his father's policy. By mid-September the Resident at Delhi had already "received from him pressing applications for the protection of the British Government."

The enemies of the father resumed their plotting against the son, with the indirect support of Amir Khan, who was obviously anxious to prevent a British alliance. Rao Chaturbhuj, a former minister, for some time past living in exile at Brindaban, returned to Jaipur hoping for a restoration to power, and he was joined by Raja Lakshman Singh and Misir Lakshman Narain, the nephew of the late Shivanarain. On the other side Bakshi Manju Das, Raja Ubhe Singh and others supported the cause of Ganeshnarain. That party which was led by Rao Chaturbhuj was in favour of negotiating

63. Metcalfe to Adam, 30 Oct. 1815, B.B.S.C. 17 Nov. 1815, No. 3.
65. Metcalfe to Adam, 9 Sept. 1815, B.P.C. 27 Sept. 1815, No. 29.
67. Metcalfe to Adam, 2 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 27 Oct. 1815, No. 24
68. Metcalfe to Adam, 15 Oct. 1815, para 3, B.P.C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 13
with Amir Khan, thereby saving the country from his molestations; the other, headed by Ganeshrarain wished to achieve the same end by an alliance with the British. 69

For some time the influence of the two parties over the Raja seemed equally balanced, but on 15 October 1815 Metcalfe reported the victory of Rao Chaturbhuj, who was restored to office, and the flight from Jaipur of Ganeshrarain with his allies and such of the Jaipur forces as would follow them. 70 Nothing now seemed to stand in the way of Amir Khan’s ambition in Jaipur. His influence at court was increased by the predominance of Chaturbhuj. 71 In the country side, “while dissensions occupied the court of Jaipur, the Patan chiefs introduced their thannas into several places within a few miles of the city”, and three of the armies under Amir Khan’s control were “plundering and taking possessions of different districts, in the Jeypoor country, viz. one under Lal Sing, another under Muhatab Khan and a third under Jamshed Khan.” Metcalfe concluded that when on his arrival from Jodhpur Amir Khan applied his whole force, the Jaipur state must succumb to his “unbridled ambition.” 72

While Amir Khan advanced towards Jaipur, the new ministry, under the influence of Chaturbhuj prepared to purchase peace. Rao Harnarain, the nephew of Chaturbhuj was accordingly deputed to open negotiations with the Pathan leader. 73 Wellesley, the acting Resident at Gwalior, wrote despairingly to Calcutta that the Raja’s only duty seemed to be to approve of the views of the new ministry. The Raja, he reported, “as if unconscious or callous to the derangement of his affairs, seems to consider that the most important business of his state consists in processions, entertainments, and such

69. Ibid.
70. Ibid.
71. Metcalfe to Adam, 19 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 10 Nov. 1815. No. 15:
Wellesley to Adam, 28 Nov. 1815, Bom. B.P. 20 Dec. 1815, p. 5676, vol. 2, Range 384
72. Metcalfe to Adam, 15 Oct. 1815, B.P.C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 13
73. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Nov. 1815, B.P.C. 8 Dec. 1815, No. 16
display, on the outside of the city gates and almost within their view, foreign bands established their posts, live on the resources of the country." 74

Then, at the end of 1815, there occurred another dramatic change in Jaipur's fortune. The new ministry had despatched Chand Singh at the head of an army to attack the party of the ex-ministers, at that time engaged in the siege of Kandela. But Chand Singh instead of attacking opened secret negotiations with Bakshi Manju Das, and plotted with him to capture power at court. At the head of a part of the Jaipur army and the majority of the Shekwati chiefs the new allies marched towards the capital, 75 and expelled Chaturbhuj and his party from office. The chiefs connected with this new change were Lakshman Singh and Thakur Megh Singh, besides Maju Das and Chand Singh. To this party Ganeshnarain and Raja Ubhe Singh also belonged. 76 Metcalfe delightedly reported, "the present arrangement, however, has the appearance of a union of the most respectable chiefs of the state." Immediately after regaining power, they directed their vakil at Delhi to ask the Resident for the protection of the British Government. 77 Amir Khan's hopes of controlling the Jaipur Government and extorting the twenty-two lakhs of tribute seemed at an end.

This was not, of course, the first time that a Jaipur vakil had lamented to the British Resident at Delhi his master's helplessness before the Pathans and Pindaris. Since 1807, as has been seen, the vakils of the three Rajput states had repeatedly protested their master's desire to enter into alliance with the Company. But hitherto their overtures had been met with a refusal and a polite restatement of the British policy of non-interference. What was now, in 1816, was that

75. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Jan. 1816, para 3 B.P.C. 3 Feb. 1816, No. 18
76. Ibid. para. 6
77. Ibid.
the Governor-General welcomed the chance to curb the rapid growth of the Pindaris and Pathans by concluding a treaty with Jaipur.

Moira's views, outlined in the Council debates of 1814 had been strengthened by his long conversations with Metcalfe, summoned to his camp from Delhi at the end of that year. Metcalfe's minute of December 1814 had painted an imperial picture. "There is Meer Khan within a few marches of the Delhi and Agra frontier. There are Scindiah and the Raja of Nagpore settling whether they shall attack us or not, and thus virtually menacing our frontier from Agra down to Kuttack. There are the Pindaries ready to pour themselves into every defenceless country...", and there, by contrast are the "petty states ..subject to the continual plunder and oppression of the two former classes". 78 He had prescribed an imperial remedy—the petty, plundered states must be taken under British protection, and the military and predatory powers driven back upon themselves. "They must then devour each other, or waste away, or attack us". Such attack, when it came should be welcomed as the means of incorporating Central India in British territory, thereby linking the Presidencies and shortening the military frontier. "So far, therefore, from contemplating an increase of territory as an evil to be avoided, we ought to desire it, whenever it can be justly obtained, as the source of safety and power". 79 Moira's own long minute of 1 December 1815 written after Amir Khan had driven Jaipur once more to plead for British protection, reflects much of Metcalfe's attitude, which fitted so well with his own.

So, where earlier the Governor-General had acquiesced in Amir Khan's plundering of Jaipur, in the name of Holkar, using the tribute extorted merely for his own subsistence, Moira looked upon Amir Khan as the prospective builder of a

79. Ibid.
new independent power in India. "All Asiatic history from the earliest era affords traces of similar predatory associations. Many of them have been crushed before they attained any considerable degree of strength by the sagacious jealousy of powerful neighbours, many of them have gradually been dissolved from internal feuds, from dislike to new hordes, or from the want of supplies of men to fill the chasms occasioned by times or service, many have been involved or extinguished in the defeat of some chiefs to whom they had hired their temporary aid or have been absorbed into the population of territories gained with their assistance by some fortunate adventurer". But many plundering hordes, the Governor-General continued, had been "the acknowledged origin of powers which after having in the shape of vast armies overrun more ancient establishment now rank among the nations of the earth"—witness the Turks and the Marathas.

Already, Moira argued, the Pindaris could bring into the field, "at the lowest computation twenty thousand horse of good quality" and could attract many more. Recently they had built forts, held by cavalry, infantry and artillery. What they most needed if they were to embrace more ambitious projects was leadership. That Amir Khan could supply. "Concerning his qualification as leader, I believe there is no difference of opinion. His courage, his address and his activity are generally acknowledged, and favourable events might therefore readily elevate him to power." He had already made attempts to acquire a territorial base, and as a result, Moira pointed out, "we have twice had to assemble armies for the purpose of opposing the attempts of Meer Khan to subvert the state of Nagpore and to erect a predatory power on its ruins." Even if the Pin-

80. Minute of Moira, 1 Dec. 1815, para 21, B.P.S.C. 15 June, 1816, No. 1
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid. para 22
83. Minute of Moira, 1 Dec. 1815, para 24, B.P.S.C. 15 June, 1816, No. 1
84. Ibid.
85. Ibid. para 25
daries were exterminated, the problem would not be solved, for "the force of Amir Khan was itself competent to serious enterprize."  

How then should this threat be met? The territories of the Company and its allies had been constantly exposed to the ravages of the Pindaris, but experience showed that "a mere defensive warfare against such an enemy is ruinous". The frontier defenses of the British territories were too readily forced by such troops as the Pindaris and once passed, the open towns and villages of the interior were ill able to protect themselves. Moreover their effective pursuit and punishment was no easy task, for the Company's infantry and cavalry were "ill adopted to compete with the rapid movements of their enemies."  

Nor could any reliance be placed upon Sindia and Holkar, for many attempts had already been made without success to induce them to act against the Pindaris and Amir Khan. But far from opposing, they had showed an inclination to preserve them. Moira argued that the secret of their dubious attitude was that they were aware of the importance of the predatory forces, Pathan and Pindari, for their eventual conflict with the British Government. Their great errors, the Marathas "conceive to have been the abandonment of the usual system of Maratha warfare in their late contests with the British power and they are not without hopes that they may succeed better in future, by reverting to their hereditary habits". It would be for the Company, then, to destroy the

86. *Ibid*, para 26  
87. Minute of Moira, 1 Dec. 1815, para 50, B.P.S.C. 15 June, 1816, No. 1  
88. *Ibid*, para 55  
89. *Ibid*, para 56. This was a prejudiced view. Both in Minto's day and in his own there had been effective action both by Holkar and by Sindia to curb the Pindaris, as in the attacks on Karim Khan and Chitu Khan, and to prevent Pindari settlement near Burhanpur and to dissuade Amir Khan from attacking Nagpur in 1814. Moira wilfully ignored what did not suit his argument.
Pindaris, and even if this should involve war with the Marathas that would be better than a prolonged, expensive and ineffective defensive effort.\(^90\)

But the war would not be against the Pindaris as individuals, but against the system under which they flourished. Moira argued that "the existence of any power acting on a predatory system was incompatible with the security which we require. The Pindarries and the Patan forces therefore ought to be extinguished as predatory associations but if these powers can be converted into peaceable communities or settled under the Governments of other powers, relinquishing entirely their predatory habits and furnishing us with good security for their inoffensive conduct, there would be nothing incompatible with our views in such an arrangement. We should not war against the individual but against the system."\(^91\)

A first step towards the destruction of the existing and imposition of a new political system would be to disavow the treaty of 1805: "It would be a fundamental part of this plan, that we should be liberated from those restrictions which now prevent our interference with some of the petty states".\(^92\) This would permit an alliance with Jodhpur, Udaipur and the minor Rajput states, "our natural allies and the natural enemies of the Marathas".\(^93\) To save them from the Pathans and Pindaris, Moira argued, was not only lawful, but a bounden duty." I am almost convinced that we are guilty of dereliction of the duty imposed on us by the supremacy of our power in India in permitting the predatory system to devastate so many countries and oppress so many states which

\(^90\) Ibid., para 71
\(^91\) Minute of Moira, 1 Dec. 1815, para, 88, B.P.S.C., 15 June, 1816, No. 1

It will be recalled that two Pindari chiefs had applied to Browne for service under the British in 1812, but had been brusquely turned away. But Metcalfe, in his minute had suggested that Amir Khan and Muhammad Shah Khan might be provided for if they would disband their troops. Edward Thompson, op. cit., p. 157

\(^92\) Ibid., para 115
\(^93\) Ibid., para 84
supplicate our protection and to which it ought to be extended". 94 Never before had the petty states of India been so cruelly subjected to uncontrolled oppression of plunderers. "And to what is this dreadful calamity to be attributed, to the selfish policy of the British Government which possessing the power has not the will to protect the weak and defenceless, which can coolly look on and see countries, at its door mercilessly laid waste." 95

Here were combined moral duty and political need, and another chance, like that unhappily lost in Nagpur, Bhopal and Saugor, to protect the weak while strengthening the British strategic base against Amir Khan and the Pindaris. He concluded by urging that "we should comply with the pressing application of the Rajah of Jeypoer, and conclude an alliance with that court without further delay." 96

In March 1816 peace was concluded with the Government of Nepal, 97 and on 13 April Moira pressed upon his Council that the question of an alliance with Jaipur should now be treated as urgent, requiring an immediate decision. "If we are to act at all for the rescue of Jeypoer, we must act instantly for it is on the brink of perdition. There is no time for asking orders from home." 98 His plea for action was reinforced by the receipt of a further request from the Maharaja on 15 March 1816, and by the consideration that even if protection of Jaipur led to a war with Amir Khan, it would

94. Ibid., para 98
95. Minute of Moira, 1 Dec. 1815, para 98, B.P.S.C. 15 June, 1816, No. 1
96. Ibid., para 349
97. Governor-General's Minute, 6 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 16 March, 1816, No. 1
98. Minute of Moira, 13 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 1

Between 4 February 1816, when Buckinghamshire died from a fall and 24 June 1816, when Canning was appointed President of the Board of Control, there was an interregnum under an acting President. Of this period C. H. Philips comments, "no business of any importance was discussed; the machinery of home government of the East India Company came almost to a standstill." (op. cit., p. 208)
be "a preferable branch of the alternative" to cope with him before he had mastered Jaipur and drawn other Indian chiefs under his standard.99 He argued that "the dissipation of the Pindariry association from any internal causes, after they had attained such extent and consistency, is quite out of the chances." Rather, the impunity with which they had conducted their recent enterprises, and the magnitude of the booty gained, would attract "multitudes of the loose spirits" recently discharged by Hyderabad, Kurnul and Poona, so that "the rank of the freebooters will be filled, the quality improved and the character heightened."100 If Amir Khan were allowed his way in Jaipur, besides having Holkar's army and resources at his disposal, he would not waste a moment in assembling these further forces under him. Sindia would also in that case find himself in a dilemma. Either he must let his troops go over to the more active and alluring service of the Pindaris, or crush them by force. The latter being impossible, it would seem "he will prefer yielding to their forward will and assimilate himself to them."101 "The political interest which turns on the fate of Jeypoor" he declared "is very important." "It would be erroneous in the extreme to say what matters it whether the present Rajah or Ameer Khan shall fill the Musnud of Jeypoor," erroneous because Amir Khan would "as sovereign add to the native strength of Jeypoor an army better composed, higher disciplined, and more fashioned to service than is possessed by any other chieftain in India."102 These arguments of the Governor-General initiated another series of minutes from the members of the Council, both upon the particular issue of a treaty with Jaipur and upon its wider implication.

Edmonstone opened on the 16th April with a minute in which he admitted "the expediency and the obligation of undertaking at a proper season, measures calculated to

99. Minute of Moira, 13 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 1
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.
102. Minute of Moira, 13 April, 1816 B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 1
suppress the evil of the predatory incursions of the Pindarries”, but denied that protection of Jaipur had any “immediate connection with that object.” His argument was that there existed a fundamental difference between Amir Khan’s Pathans and the Pindaris.103 “Although the term predatory powers of Hindostan has frequently been employed to designate the organised troops of the Patan leaders as well as the Pindarries, yet they are in essential respects widely different. The former consists chiefly of infantry and artillery regularly formed and disciplined, to which are added cavalry such is usually found in the ranks of the native armies.”104 Some of the principal Pindari leaders might have “some small bodies of infantry and some guns,” but for all that they were “mere mounted robbers without organisation or discipline.” Amir Khan’s troops had been constantly employed in intimidation of and extortion from the states of Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaipur, but exaction of tribute and outrages were systematically employed by all native forces.105 Moreover in Udaipur and Jodhpur the troops of Amir Khan and of the late Muhammad Shah Khan were regularly stationed in “the assumed character of subsidiary forces,” while in Jaipur Amir Khan’s forces extorted money from the state partly under the denomination of tribute due to Holkar and partly on the plea of providing for their own subsistence.106 Edmonstone allowed that there were Pindari leaders attached to Amir Khan and acting under him, and these might be termed “predatory troops”—but not the Pathans. Therefore an alliance with Jaipur which was calculated only to affect the interest of Amir Khan but not of the Pindaris, was not “a necessary step in an expedition against the latter.”107

103. Minute of Edmonstone, 16 April, 1816, para 3, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 2
104. Ibid.
105. Minute of Edmonstone, 16 April, 1816, para 3, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 2
106. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
The other point that Edmonstone made was that the Governor-General's minute revealed that what was really in contemplation was no mere check to Amir Khan in Jaipur but the imposition of his scheme for a confederacy. Such a political reorganisation was contrary to the orders of the Secret Committee of 29 September 1815, already referred to, which laid down that affairs were "to be maintained in the same relative state under which our possessions have now, for ten years, continued in a state of tranquillity."\textsuperscript{108}

Edmonstone in declaring that an attack on Amir Khan by protecting Jaipur would have no connection with the suppression of the Pindarises was on weak ground, as he was in believing that peace in India could be secured by the suppression of the Pindarises alone. Amir Khan had too often taken lead in attempting to subvert existing governments, and had regularly enlisted Pindari support, as in his 1809 and 1814 attempts upon Nagpur. However Moira was scarcely sounder when on 24 April he agreed that the organisation of the Pathans and Pindarises was dissimilar, but argued that the fundamental principles of their associations and activities were the same.\textsuperscript{109} By suggesting in his minute of 1 December that Amir Khan might be offered a settlement, he had tacitly admitted that he was something more than a mere freebooter.

Edmonstone's second ground for opposing Moira, that he was proposing a radical political rearrangement was, however unanswerable. It was taken up even more forcibly by Dowdeswell. He disagreed completely with the project of taking Jaipur under protection, because "this measure proposed must necessarily involve us in the first instance in hostilities with Ameer Khan",\textsuperscript{110} and then "eventually lead to an extended state of war" with the Marathas. That would be entirely at variance with the moderate and pacific course

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{109} Minute of Moira, 24 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 May, 1816, No. 1
\item \textsuperscript{110} Minute of Dowdeswell, 19 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. No. 5
\end{itemize}
of policy hitherto pursued by the British Government, so wisely and judiciously.\footnote{Minute of Dowdeswell, 8 May, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 May, 1816, No. 2}

The third member of the Council, Seton, had opposed the Jaipur alliance in 1814, but in his minute of 17 April 1816, he showed that he had come round in the main to Moira’s view. His “decided opinion is that in conformity to the proposition of the Governor-General, our alliance with Jaipur should be renewed and that in consideration of the present critical state of that country, it is extremely desirable that the preliminary measures necessarily connected with the arrangement, should be adopted with the least practicable delay.”\footnote{Minute of Seton, 17 April, 1816, B.P S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 3} Since “sooner or later we must check the progress of Ameer Khan”, the only problem is “whether we can oppose him with greater effect before he becomes master of Jeypoor, or after he shall have established himself in that country, and possessed himself of its resources,—a question which in my judgment, admits only of one answer.”\footnote{Ibid.} However he shared with Edmonstone and Dowdeswell the wish to avoid provoking a clash with the Marathas. He pointed out that Amir Khan, who still called himself a partisan of the House of Holkar, might in that capacity plead the right of Malharrao Holkar to exact tribute from Jaipur.\footnote{Ibid.} He recalled that while Resident at Delhi he had discussed the subject with the vakils of Jaipur and Jodhpur. They had not denied the right of Sindia and Holkar to money payments as a species of tribute. But what they bitterly complained of and with too much cause, was that under the pretext of levying this tribute, armies were stationed in their masters’ dominions.\footnote{Minute of Seton, 17 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 30 April, 1816, No. 3} He therefore suggested that the British Government should guarantee to Holkar and Sindia the payment of tribute, if admitted by the Maharaja. This would satisfy Jaipur, but avoid a rupture with either of the Maratha
powers. The weakness of the argument lay in its estimation of Sindia's reactions. Sindia was as keen to maintain his claim on Jaipur as he was jealous of any British re-establishment of a subsidiary force.

Edmonstone, in a second minute, took up this point. He believed that an alliance with Jaipur, a departure from established British policy, would cause a general alarm and combination against the Company. An alliance with Jaipur must cause a rupture with Amir Khan and Sindia, and the Governor-General was wrong in thinking otherwise. Sindia, "who for some time past has afforded unequivocal indications of the fear which he entertains of our power and our design, cannot but contemplate with apprehension our deviation from the principles of that policy which was observed by this Government during so considerable a period of time subsequent to the close of the Marhatta war, in the renewal of the alliance with Rajah Jugjet Sing." He cannot but suppose the British Government's views to be still more extended, and naturally anticipate the "ultimate subjection of his own state to our progressive supremacy." Edmonstone also made the point that with the burden of expenses of the Nepal war still to be shouldered, the Company's finances, as well as policy, required that nothing ought to be done likely to provoke further war.

To the objections of Edmonstone and Dowdeswell that an alliance with Jaipur would lead to wider conflict, Moira replied on 24 April. Dowdeswell, he said, argued that it would be impolitic to prevent Amir Khan's subjugation of Jaipur because he would "resist by force our alliance with

116. Ibid.
117. Minute of Edmonstone, 22 April, 1816, para 48, B.P.S.C. 15 June, 1816, No. 4
118. Ibid.
119. In 1814 Sindia's vakil had declared that the British alliance then proposed with Bhopal must be only a step to further aggrandizement. Strachey to Moira, 2 Dec. 1814, B.P.S.C. 20 Dec. 1814, No. 34
120. Minute of Edmonstone, 22 April, 1816, para 48, B.P.S.C. 15 June, 1816, No. 4
that state." But war with Amir Khan, now merely a matter of "vague possibility", would be certain if he were allowed to acquire Jaipur: "He could not abandon his conquests and that struggle would be certain which is now at most problematical."\textsuperscript{121} Moira then restated emphatically his belief that even war with Sindia and Amir Khan would be preferable to forbearance in the face of Pindari oppression of the defenceless inhabitants either of British or Indian territory. "I request Mr. Edmonstone and Mr. Dowdeswell to ask themselves why we have not crushed the Pindarries long ago and precluded the enormous barbarities of their two last expeditions across the Nerudda. Their answer would be that we should have done so had we not been convinced that the Pindarries would be supported by Scindiah and Holkar. Indeed! Why then are we not at war with Scindiah and Holkar?"\textsuperscript{122}

After these sharp arguments, Moira's view was carried by a majority vote, and the decision taken to take up the Maharaja of Jaipur's request for a protective alliance.

Before seeing the outcome of this Council decision, it is necessary to see how far Moira's proposals had the support of the Home Authorities. In December 1813, the Board of Control under Buckinghamshire had consented to Minto's taking Jaipur under British protection. The Raja appeared to them "to have been reduced to a deplorable state of weakness, and to have been in danger of succumbing under the weight of his difficulties."\textsuperscript{123} They also noted that "there are circumstances peculiar to the cause of this chieftain which dispose us to afford him the benefit of our interposition, 1st the proximity of the state of Jeynaghar to our frontier post of Rewaree and to the territories of our allies, the Rajahs of Macherry and Bhurtpore; 2ndly, a reference to our former connection with the Rajah and to the circumstances under

\textsuperscript{121} Minute of Moira, 24 April. 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 May, 1816, No. 1
\textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{123} Board's Draft of Sec. Despatch, 23 Dec. 1813, para 5, No. 90
which that connection was broken off and 3rdly, the competency of the British Government to renew the connection without any breach of its subsisting treaties with other states."124 However they were careful to advise Minto to secure Sindia's co-operation in concluding the settlement, and if required "sacrifices ought to be made to obtain his concurrence."125 For this purpose they suggested that Minto might take up either of the two plans proposed to Seton, the Resident at Delhi by the Jaipur vakil in 1810. He had suggested that the Company should mediate a treaty between Jaipur and the Maratha states by which the Raja should pay an annual tribute to them through the hands of the Company in return for a Maratha agreement not to enter Jaipur.126 If that were not possible then the Maratha tribute should be done away with and Jaipur given British protection in return for a similar tribute.127 The Board agreed to a settlement on either of these terms, with the important stipulation that the Raja "should constantly retain in his service a specified number of irregular cavalry, to be employed when we may deem their co-operation necessary, for the defence of the frontier, and that he shall be further called upon to contribute by a small subsidy towards the expense of the force that may be stationed by us for affording adequate protection to his territories."

It may be noted that in agreeing to Minto's proposal the Board were not aiming to diminish Amir Khan's power and were unwilling to permit the measure if there were any risk of war with the Marathas. Moira, however, in view of the crisis occasioned by the Nepal war, and of his belief that a Jaipur alliance would probably "produce the affects of embroiling us with Sindia", decided to postpone any negotia-

124. Ibid.
125. Ibid, para 8
126. Seton to Edmonstone, 10 Feb. 1810, para 3, B.P.C. 6 March, 1810, No. 15
127. Ibid, para 4
128. Board's Draft of Sec. Despatch, 23 Dec. 1813, para 7, No. 90, vol. 4
tions. The Board signified that it was prepared to “acquiesce in the postponement of the negotiations with Jeynagar”, and, rendered cautious by the reverses of the Nepal war prohibited Moira “from making any change in the system of our political relations without special authority from home”. This despatch Moira interpreted, however, in the Council debates of April 1816, as permissive; “when they expressed their acquiescence in the postponement of a treaty with Jeypoor under the then existing circumstances (the embarrassment of the Goorkha war) they mean to imply their expectation that their instruction will be resumed as early as an altered state of affairs will allow.” With this interpretation he felt justified in negotiating a treaty with Jaipur.

The Resident at Delhi was accordingly directed to utilise the renewed solicitation of the Jaipur court as “the most natural basis of the proposed negotiations,” for a subsidiary alliance. The Raja should be reminded of the importance of this alliance “nay even its necessity for his existence as a Prince.” He should accept the treaty with a firm resolution to adhere to the advice of the British Government in all events, and be guided by it in all his political measures. In return he could depend on the British Government for his permanent security against those dangers which had nearly ruined his country and shaken his Government to its foundation.

The Resident was further instructed that immediately after the conclusion of the treaty Amir Khan should be distinctly apprized of the alliance and the implied obligation of the British Government to save Jaipur from any external

129. Board’s Draft of Sec, Despatch, 19 May, 1815, para 3, No. 104, vol. 5
130. Board’s Draft of Sec. Despatch, 29 Sept, 1815, para 9, No. 107, vol. 5
131. Minute of Moira, 13 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 1
132. Adam to Metcalfe, 20 April, 1816, para 4, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 6
133. Ibid.
danger. "As the British Government pledges itself not to suffer the continuance of any foreign troops within the dominions of the Rajah of Jeypoor, he [Amir Khan] must necessarily withdrew his forces beyond those limits, within which he can have no claim to remain either on his own account or on that of Holkar who renounced all pretensions to tribute from Jeypoor by the treaty of 1806." However, at a proper time the British Government would not be unwilling to listen to any reasonable claim which Holkar's Government might produce. Again, in adverting to Holkar's "supposed claim" it would be proper to avoid anything that could be construed into an admission of Amir Khan's right to negotiate on the part of Holkar, a right which had never been recognised by the British Government.

Evidently, the British Government was disposed to acquiesce in Holkar's monetary claim upon the Raja and prepared to see the tribute regularly paid to Holkar's Government. Its objection was to Amir Khan's exploiting Jaipur in the name of Holkar, thereby increasing his own power. The Governor-General therefore instructed Ochterlony, commander of the force destined to enter Jaipur, that the meditated treaty had three main functions. Firstly, "the clearing the country of Ameer Khan and his Pindarries by whom it was now overrun; next the settling the Raja's Government and country and finally the establishing within his territory the subsidiary force." The Governor-General did not think that Amir Khan would venture to oppose the British force, but if he or any of his chiefs persisted in opposing the projected alliance, "they must be attacked, dispersed and driven from the country."

134. Adam to Metcalfe, 20 April, 1816, para 28, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 6
135. Ibid. para 29
136. Adam to Ochterlony, 20 April, 1816, para 2, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 7
137. Adam to Ochterlony, 20 April, 1816, para 2, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 7
138. Ibid. para 6
Close, the Resident with Sindia was directed to inform him that the Government of Jaipur after many years of suffering from the ravages and extortions of predatory leaders had renewed with increased earnestness its applications to the British Government for protection.\textsuperscript{139} The British Government mindful of its former friendship and considering itself and the Jaipur Government equally at liberty to make what arrangement they might deem consistent with their respective interests, had listened to the Raja’s solicitations and resolved to extend its protection to that Prince.\textsuperscript{140} The Resident should argue that as the late treaty with Jaipur was concluded in 1803—that is to say, before the conclusion of the Peace with Sindia and Holkar in 1805—and as the British Government had of its own volition dissolved that alliance in 1806, there could be no reasonable objection if it now chose to renew the former alliance.\textsuperscript{141} Moreover should the Jaipur Government agree to pay a fixed tribute to any state, the British Government would “not only not obstruct the payment of such tribute but on the contrary render the performance of the engagement more secure.” Such a state would now have “the security of the British Government for the punctual discharge of their demands instead of being obliged to enforce them by the sword at much trouble and expense.”\textsuperscript{142}

It is clear that in applying his plan Moira had taken due note both of the objections of members of his Council, and of the orders issued by the Board of Control, and that while curbing Amir Khan’s power the attempt was made to conciliate Sindia, and avoid any rupture with him. Yet Moira’s real hopes—that a rupture might occur, and the chance of a final forcible settlement of all Central India thus arise—seem

\textsuperscript{139} Adam to Close, 20 April, 1816, para 7, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 9

\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{142} Adam to Close, 20 April, 1816, para 7, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 9
to be revealed by the very elaborate military measures which he ordered while Metcalfe was negotiating. In all some 40,000 infantry, 12,000 cavalry with artillery and state troops support were ordered to assemble, with two strong forces at Rewari and Muttra, a reserve corps at Cawnpore, and the subsidiary forces of Poona, Hyderabad, Boroda and Nagpur, and the troops of Bundelkhand all moving to forward positions.\textsuperscript{143} Moira clearly believed that Sindia, though he stood to gain from a check to the rival power of Amir Khan, would really resent the growth of British power in India still more.

In fact, for some years past Sindia seemed to have lost interest in the affair of Rajputana. While in 1810 and 1811 Amir Khan had been increasing his own strength at the cost of Udaipur and Jaipur Sindia had neither opposed him, nor launched any protest with Holkar’s court.\textsuperscript{144} This may be ascribed to his preoccupation with the conquest of Bhopal or perhaps to consciousness of his inability to contest the united forces of Amir Khan and Holkar. In 1812 an attempt was made by Yashvantrao Senapati, the father-in-law of Sindia’s daughter, to effect a compromise between Amir Khan and Sindia.\textsuperscript{145} But this attempt failed to yield any positive result. Rather, Amir Khan’s declared intention to support the Nawab of Bhopal and to invade the territory of the Raja of Nagpur in 1814 led to Sindia’s active opposition. But after British negotiations had brought Sindia’s operation in Bhopal to an end, and after Amir Khan had begun to intervene in Jaipur in 1815, Sindia’s attention was turned again to the Rajput states.

When Amir Khan began his march towards Jaipur, the Maharaja not only addressed appeals to the Company; he also opened negotiations with Sindia, through his \textit{vakil} at Gwalior, Ramkishen.\textsuperscript{146} The stage seemed set for a renewal

\textsuperscript{143} Adam to Ochterlony, 20 April 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 7
\textsuperscript{144} Strachey to Hewett, 8 Nov. 1811, B.C. vol. 393/10017, p. 23
\textsuperscript{145} Strachey to Minto, 11 July, 1812, B.P.C. 31 July, 1812, No. 8
\textsuperscript{146} Metcalfe to Adam, 23 Sept. 1815, B.P.C. 20 Oct. 1815, No. 45
of the Sindia-Holkar rivalry in Rajputana. Bapu Sindia with a small party of horse moved to Ajmer, and assured the Maharaja of Sindia’s support.\textsuperscript{147}

Amir Khan, however, showed that he wished to avoid open hostilities with Sindia. When his general Jamshed Khan wrote to him that Bapu Sindia had been dislodging his thanas in Udaipur and installing his own and asked Amir Khan to attack him, Amir Khan directed Jamshed Khan to remain entirely on the defensive.\textsuperscript{148} A few days later he wrote personally to Sindia requesting him “to order his officers not to invade Meer Khan’s possessions, and promising that his dependants in that case shall not disturb the Maharajah’s territories”.\textsuperscript{149}

For his part, though Sindia accepted the opportunity to pose as the protector of Jaipur, and so ultimately to exploit her, he was too prudent rashly to commit himself to an active struggle with Amir Khan. Bapu Sindia reported that the Raja of Jaipur and his minister Manju Das had expressed their determination to resist Amir Khan\textsuperscript{150} and that “they are accordingly collecting their troops and have summoned their feudatories”. But when he declared that “if Meer Khan’s ruin is desired by the Maharajah, he must send him [Bapu Sindia] reinforcements without delay or the moment will be lost”,\textsuperscript{151} he was cautioned by Sindia to await “some solid proof of the Jeypoer spirit” before taking any part in the contest.\textsuperscript{152}

It was clear that neither Sindia nor Amir Khan wanted to be involved in open hostility with the other. Their main object was to exploit the resources of Jaipur, Amir Khan by

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{148} Metcalfe to Adam, 15 Oct. 1815, para 13, B.P.C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 13
\textsuperscript{149} Metcalfe to Adam, 19 Oct. 1815, para 13, B.P.C. 10 Nov. 1815, No. 15
\textsuperscript{150} Metcalfe to Adam, 23 Sept. 1815, B.P.C. 20 Oct. 1815, No. 45
\textsuperscript{151} Wellesley to Adam, 1 Feb. 1816, para 8, B.P.C. 2 March, 1816, No. 116
\textsuperscript{152} Ibid. para 9
means of threats, Sindia by posing as the protector of the Raja.

Their caution was only reinforced, when they learned of the Company's decision to take Jaipur under its protection. Amir Khan at once addressed a letter to Sindia couched in conciliatory terms and expressive of his anxiety at this undesirable development of the situation. He stated that his object was to find means to maintain his troops and not to excite Sindia's jealousy or push the Raja into an alliance with the British Government.  

Sindia, for his part, hastened to warn Bapu Sindia against pressing Jaipur and so driving the state to seek British protection. Bapu was directed to "conciliate the Rajputs by every means in his power and not to discourage them by any conduct which may interrupt the harmony that Scindiah wishes to preserve with them."  

The Raja's vakil at Sindia's court was strongly assured that in the event of the Raja's actual hostility with Amir Khan, Bapu Sindia would take the field against Amir Khan. To prove the reality of his promise Bapu Sindia was directed to move towards Jaipur, to be ready to protect him. However, Close was convinced that Sindia had no real wish to clash with Amir Khan, and that Bapu Sindia's advance had no other purpose than to dissuade the Jaipur Raja from accepting British protection out of fear of Amir Khan.

Amir Khan was no less earnest in his attempts to prevent a British alliance. In the middle of May he wrote to Zalim Singh of Kotah to say that he would soon be repairing to Shigarh, and in the first days of June to the Jaipur Raja,

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153. Close to Moira, 9 May, 1816, para 2, B.P.S.C. 25 May, 1816, No. 32
154. Ibid., para 3.
155. Ibid., para 4.
156. By 22 May some 6,500 further troops had been sent to join Bapu Sindia's original 3,000. Close to Moira, 22 May, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 June, 1816, No. 28
158. Close to Metcalfe, 19 May, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 June, 1816, No. 27
assuring him that he had no intention of seizing Jaipur territory. "It was far from being his wish," he wrote, "to involve his Government in any serious distress." Negotiations thereupon began for his restoration of the places he had occupied in Jaipur, and for his withdrawal. In return, as Metcalfe subsequently learnt, "the Rajah of Jeypoor agreed in his negotiations with Meer Khan to discontinue his negotiations with us [the British Government]."

Amir Khan followed up these moves by directing Holkar's vakil at Delhi to find out British intentions regarding Jaipur. On 12 June Metcalfe reported to the Governor-General that he had informed the vakil that "no change had yet taken place in our relation with Jaipur. That if we should at any time determine to protect that country, he should receive timely notice, and that with regards to the movements of troop corps lately employed in the Nepal war, were moving to their proper stations and these movements gave rise to various reports." Amir Khan was not reassured, however, by Metcalfe's bland lies, and he wrote to Balaram Seth at Holkar's court of his fears that the British troops moving from Delhi to Rewari would advance to attack him. He therefore asked Balaram to remonstrate with the Resident's news-writer at Holkar's court. Tulsibai did send for the news-writer and demanded information about the march of the troops, while Balaram Seth declared that if the British army advanced against Amir Khan, Holkar's Government would release Karim Khan to lay waste British territories and send troops for his safety. After retiring from Jaipur Amir Khan himself addressed the Resident at Delhi, saying that the British Government was said to have intended to assist the Raja and asserting that "by treaty with Holkar we [the British Govern-

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159. Close to Metcalfe, 4 June, 1816, B.P.S.C. 22 June, 1816, No.25
160. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Aug. 1816, para 71, B.P.S.C. 7 Sept. 1816, No. 5
161. Metcalfe to Adam, 12 June, 1816. B.P.S.C. 29 June, 1816, No. 1
162. Ibid.
163. Metcalfe to Adam, 12 June, 1816, B.P.S.C. 29 June, 1816, No.12
ment] were bound not to do so.” The Resident replied that “it was true that the Rajah of Jeypoor had applied for our assistance, but that nothing had yet been settled on that subject, that, however, we were perfectly at liberty to take Jaipur under our protection, whenever we might choose to do so, as the treaty, with Holkar so far from preventing it, left Jeypoor on our side.”

Meanwhile, since June, Metcalfe had been busy in negotiations with Sankar Das, the vakil specially deputed by the Jaipur Raja for the purpose. The principal subject of controversy was the amount of the subsidy to be paid by Jaipur for the British protective force. Metcalfe began by asking for twenty five lakhs of rupees a year. Later he realised that this was too large a sum, and beyond the capacity of Jaipur either under the present circumstances or in future. So the Resident, having settled in his own mind that fifteen lakhs was a sum which the Government of Jaipur would be able to pay, when security and prosperity should be established in the country, proposed that sum to the vakil. For the first year nothing was to be paid in consequence of the ruined state of Jaipur, for the second and third years, five lakhs, for the fourth and fifth years ten lakhs and fifteen lakhs annually thereafter. But then, when everything seemed decided, the vakil “started a secret preposterous proposition” that the British Government should deliver up Tonk and Rampura to them and urged it as a sine-qua-non. Consequently the entire situation was altered. The Resident was not disposed to listen to this proposal and endeavoured to show him the absurdity of it.

The Jaipur vakil had appeared to consider that the negotiations had been brought to a successful termination and con-

164. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Aug, 1816, para 91, B.P.S.C. 7 Sept. 1816, No. 5
165. Ibid. para 92
166. Ibid.
167. Metcalfe to Adam, 3 July, 1816, B.P.S.C. 3 Aug. 1816, No. 3
168. Ibid.
169. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 July, 1816, B.P.S.C. 3 Aug. 1816, No. 4
gratulat[ed the Resident on the conclusion of a treaty, which by saving Jaipur from destruction and restoring that country to her ancient respectability, would bring immortal honour to him. He also expressed his belief that the treaty, though concluded with Jaipur only, would by natural consequences effect the protection of other states also.\textsuperscript{170} But Metcalfe refused to accept the demand for Tonk and Rampura, both long in the possession of Holkar, and under him, of Amir Khan. He made it clear that if Holkar and Amir Khan agreed to the treaty there could be no question of their dispossesion, for the two areas had been restored to Holkar by the Company in 1806.\textsuperscript{171} When the vakil refused to accept the Resident’s arguments and declined to sign a treaty without a satisfactory promise with regard to Tonk and Rampura, Metcalfe broke off the negotiations.\textsuperscript{172}

Why had the negotiations broken down, ending as those with Bhopal has done, in a fiasco? The answer seems to be, as it had been in the case of Bhopal, that the mere knowledge that negotiations were taking place, had been sufficient to save the threatened state. Though Metcalfe was directed to inform the Jaipur Raja that his delusive conduct entitled him to no consideration, and that “the character and honour of the British Government require that he should be distinctly apprised of the impression which his conduct has made on the mind of the Governor-General in Council”,\textsuperscript{173} it was clear that once Amir Khan had lifted his siege of Jaipur and marched away, the Jaipur Raja was no longer interested in surrendering his freedom by entering into a treaty of subsidiary alliance.

As at Bhopal in 1814, so at Jaipur in 1816, events had ended in a stalemate. Amir Khan and the Pindaris had been denied their prey, Moira his treaty, or perhaps his war. Yet

\textsuperscript{170} Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Aug. 1816, para 33, B.P.S.C. 7 Sept. 1816, No. 5
\textsuperscript{171} Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Aug. 1816, para 45, B.P.S.C. 7 Sept. 1816, No. 5
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{173} Adam to Metcalfe, 18 July, B.P.S.C. 3 Aug. 1816, No. 5
the political and military measures of the Company had served to save Jaipur from impending calamity. Amir Khan’s envoy on a subsequent visit to the Resident at Delhi admitted that “it was the belief of the actual approach of our [British] troops which induced Meer Khan to patch up an agreement with Jeypoor, and retire, as he was aware that no one could cope with our [British] power, though if attacked he must of necessity do his best.”

He further informed the Resident that “the Rajah had sent Meer Khan, a Persian paper with an English signature said to be mine [Metcalfe’s], engaging that our [British] troops should speedily advance to Jeypoor.” The Resident commented that this was either a “falsehood” on the part of the agent, or a “forgery” on that of the Raja, but, forgery or falsehood, it was clear that the British Government’s decision to take Jaipur under its protection had alone been responsible for Amir Khan’s voluntary retreat from Jaipur.

It may also be argued, as Mehta has argued, that the successive failures of Moira’s efforts to bring Nagpur, Bhopal, Saugor and Jaipur within the Company’s orbit and so to drive the Pathans and Pindaris back upon themselves were not complete failures. The very attempts marked a decisive break with the policy of absolute non-interference, and there had been a distinct shift in opinion both in London and within the Council at Calcutta. “After more than ten years of break and reaction following Wellesley’s period, Moira could not be expected to start building where his great predecessor had left off. The first two years and a half were naturally occupied with these attempts, which certainly succeeded in preparing the ground for his measures, in warning the Indian Princess, in trying to convert his employers in England and his colleagues at Calcutta, and in infusing a new spirit into the political outlook of the Bengal Government.”

175. Ibid.
176. M. S. Mehta, op. cit. p. 65
CHAPTER VII.

REVERSAL OF BRITISH POLICY, 1815-1817

It was the threat in 1814 of an effective union between Amir Khan and the various Pindari groups which led the British Government to make such strenuous efforts to bring first Nagpur and then Bhopal under its protection. In 1815 the disunity and conflict among the Pindaris removed that danger, so that with Amir Khan's advance into Jaipur. British interest could be turned from central to western India. In 1816 and in 1817, however, the Pindaris by a startling outbreak into the Deccan were to recall the full attention of the Company and provoke a radical change in its policy.

From 1812 onwards the successes the Pindaris had gained in both the Company's territories and those of other Indian rulers had attracted "multitudes of the loose spirits" of India to their camps. But with the augmentation of their numbers, dissensions and quarrels became more frequent among them. Karim Khan's imprisonment, Dost Muhammad's death on 7 February 1815, in his cantonment near Bhilsa, and Amir Khan's return to Jaipur intensified their disunity while new leaders—Namdar Khan, Kushal Kunar and Wasil Muhammad—struggled to the fore.¹ Throughout most of 1815, therefore, their forces were widely scattered. While a part of Karim Khan's division was acting under Amir Khan in Rajaputana, Namdar Khan and Wasil Muhammad had attached themselves to Yashvantrao Bhau, a revolted chief of Sindia,² Kadir Baksh and Tuku of the Holkarshahi Pindaris were sometimes serving the zamindars of Chandia and Kawjira in Rewa and sometimes plundering the unprotected districts of the Rewa territory.³

This Pindari disunity and dissension might be looked upon in some degree as a counteraction to the malignity of the evil

¹. Strachey to Moira, 14 Feb. 1815, B.P.S.C. 7 March, 1815, No. 56
². Strachey to Moira, 18 April, 1815, B.P.S.C. 9 May, 1815, No. 83
³. Higgott to Adam, 28 April, 1815, B.P.S.C. 2 May, 1815, No. 4A
supplied by the evil itself. They had tended more than anything else to cramp Pindari operations and clog their progress towards the assumption of a more formidable character. Nevertheless the evil was neither diminished in its total size nor at a stand but increasing. All that was needed was someone to give it shape and purpose. By the end of 1815, the Pindari groups had recognised the need for unity, and Chitu Khan had emerged as the only leader possessed of the qualities required to organise their scattered forces. As Wellesley, the acting Resident with Sindia, observed, "If then Cheetoo entertained ambition to aspire to the post, he might very possibly constitute himself chief leader and director of the movements of Pindararhs, and as far as my means of observation enable me to judge, few men would be found better calculated for the office. His name and character stand high in their estimation, he is enterprising in his projects, and cautious in the time and mode of executing them, and he is gifted with a considerable share of political sagacity and artifice." Accordingly the agents of Namdar Khan and Wasil Muhammad visited Chitu Khan and proposed that he should lead a joint expedition to the Deccan immediately after the Dassara festival. He agreed, and it was determined that on 14 October 1815, the three divisions under Chitu Khan, Wasil Muhammad and Namdar Khan amounting to 16,000 men would cross the Narmada at Baglatir Ghat and raid the Nizam's territory. They had already procured information from two fakirs that the country was clear of the Nizam's troops as far as Bidar. The Pindaris, reunited under one leader, thus prepared to emerge from their spell of inactivity.

In October the Pindaris duly entered Berar, plundering the villages of Malkapur [on their march towards Nagpur."

4. Wellesley to Adam, 28 Dec. 1815, para. 11, B.P.C. 20 Jan. 1816, No. No. 45
5. Ibid.
They met with one early reverse, when Fraser of the
Hyderabad subsidiary force, with two companies and five-
hundred Mysore solladar horse fell upon them,8 inflicting
considerable casualties, but their advance was not checked.9
They pressed on plundering dispersedly by Balkunda and
Nirmal, to the Wardha river.10

From there one detachment, five thousand strong, made
a dash to Ramtek, a place of Hindu devotion, twenty-five-
miles south-east from Nagpur, which they attacked and
plundered.11 Thence they pushed on to Pauni and Hinganghat
two commercial towns, still further south, both of which they
plundered and sacked.12 Another body of the Pindaris under
Wasil Muhammad came up the Ajunta Ghat, crossed the
Godavari to the east of Toka and plundered "a great deal of
the Nizam’s country and the districts on the south-east of the
Peshwa's."13 They afterwards broke into three divisions, one
of which advanced to Purbanpur on the upper Bhima and
plundered the villages round that city, while another swept
over the district of Ahmadnagar to within a few miles of the
Sirur, forty miles from Poona.14

This last division, after plundering the Peshwa’s territory,
marched rapidly south and by mid-February had reached
and crossed the Krishna.15 On 10 March 1816, they entered
the British district of Guntur and plundered almost all the
villages, committing acts of horrid violence against both men
and women. All sorts of atrocities were committed, children
were thrown into wells, women’s breasts were cut off, in.

9. Sydenham to Russell, 28 Oct. 1815, B.P.S.C. 25 Nov. 1815,
No. 36
10. Jenkins to Adam, 17 Nov. 1815, B.P.S.C. 8 Dec., 1815, No. 4
11. Ibid
12. Jenkins to Adam, 21 Nov. 1815, B.P.S.C. 8 Dec. 1815, No. 5
13. Elphinstone to Moira, 10 Dec. 1815, B.P.S.C. 13 Jan. 1816,
No. 83
14. Ibid.
15. Russell to Doveton, 120 Feb. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Sept. 1816,
No. 9
order to extort the villagers' hidden wealth. The extent of the devastation they caused and the magnitude of their atrocities is revealed by the returns of the collectors of the three districts affected, Guntur, Masulipatam and Chuddapah.

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<th>villages or miles</th>
<th>Persons killed</th>
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If the losses suffered by British territories at the hands of the Pindaris were worse than ever before, so were those of the Company’s allies, the Peshwa, the Nizam and the Bhoisle. “Their depredations in the Nizam’s country”, wrote Russell from Hyderabad, “have this year been extensive and destructive beyond all former examples.”

Hitherto their Irruptions had generally been confined to Berar and the Peshwa’s northern districts, but on this occasion they not only crossed the Godavari and ravaged the districts of Dharur and Bhir, but had even passed within a few miles of Bidar.


and penetrated to the south of the Krishna, to Guntur and Nellore.

No less important, on their sweep across the Deccan, though opposed by armies of the great states, and by the subsidiary forces, they had eluded pursuit and escaped without loss. Russell in November had ordered Colonel Doveton, commander of the subsidiary force in Hyderabad to pursue the raiders, but his force could never overtake them in the "rugged, hilly, and unfavourable country" to bring them to action.19 The local authorities in Guntur were not only unprepared, but lacked the means to oppose the Pindaris, except for a detachment of irregulars hurried up from Madras.20 Even where troops were ordered out, in Masulipatam, they could achieve little. Major Lushington was there told, "your first object will be to prevent them from plundering either the Company's or the Nizam's territories, your second object will be to make a signal example of them; and if you should be so fortunate as to come up with any of their parties, I trust that you will inflict as severe a punishment upon them as you can."21 But in mid-March Russell had to report to Calcutta that "Major Lushington was not so fortunate as to overtake the Pindaries with the main body of his regiment, although the sharpness with which they were pursued probably defeated some of their designs and compelled them to retreat without having done so much mischief as they might otherwise have effected."22 Nor was the pursuit of the Pindaris in the Peshwa's territory more successful. Three detachments of the subsidiary force at Sirur were sent after them, but, "although one party went 180 miles from Seroor and the two others from 80 to 100 miles, they were-

21. Russell to Lushington, 8 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 30 March, 1816, No. 49
22. Russell to Adam, 18 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 15 April, 1816, No. 27
not so fortunate as to meet any of the enemy. The Pindaris
did not approach the Ghauts occupied by the troops from
this subsidiary force."

When the pursuit of the Pindaris proved unsuccessful, it
was decided to try to check their return to their camps on the
north bank of the Narmada. The body which plundered
Guntur, recrossed the Krishna at Chittral, and was known to
be moving precipitately northwards. To intercept their
retreat measures were immediately taken to occupy the ghats
through which they were expected to pass: Elphinstone
had sent a battalion of infantry with one thousand of the
Peshwa’s force to occupy the Unki-Tunki Ghat and a similar
force to occupy the Kasbari Ghat. Doveton was advised by
Russell to post his soldiers covering the range of Ghats east
of Ajunta, while Raja Gobind Baksh, the Nizam’s officer
occupied the ghats near Aurangabad. Major Lussington and
Colonel Mariott were given orders to pursue, regulating their
march according to the movements of the Pindaris.

Elphinstone and Russell had great hopes that these exten-
sive dispositions would prevent the return of the Pindaris to
their cantonments, and permit such an exemplary punishment
to be inflicted as would deter them from any further attempt
upon the south eastern Deccan. But by early April 1816,
it was clear that the attempt at interception had failed. After
crossing the Krishna the Pindaris encamped between Mangral
and Saligao for a few days. Then while Namdar Khan
led his division by the Tumri Ghat to his camp at Shujalpur,
Chitu Khan “crossing the Nizam’s territory over some rugged
heights, had proceeded in a direct line for the Ajunta Ghat.”

23. Elphinstone to Moira, 21 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 18 May, 1816,
No. 18
24. Russell to Adam, 18 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 15 April, 1816, No. 27
25. Russell to Doveton, 19 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 6 April, 1816,
No. 6
26. Russell to Doveton, 27 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816,
No. 65
27. Doveton to Russell, 12 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 May, 1816,
No. 24
But, becoming aware of British soldiers there, they turned immediately, with great precipitation towards the Hindia Ghat, which they passed over safely to their camps at Nimawar.\footnote{28} The division under Wasil Muhammad also successfully crossed the Narmada at Bharkas Ghat near Hindia and returned to camp at Bagrode.\footnote{29}

The British officials attributed their failure to intercept the Pindaris to two main causes. One was the quite extraordinary speed and hardiness of the raiders. To Dalzell, the Magistrate of Guntur, a Pindari prisoner disclosed that their average march was forty miles in a day but “if occasion requires 100 miles.”\footnote{30} No regular cavalry could hope to match such speed—and as Lushington discovered, no regular troops could tackle the wild and rugged hills which the light Pindari horse crossed. The other cause was political. When the retreating Pindaris found the passes they had intended to use on the way back across the Narmada held by British troops they were able to turn aside into Sindia’s territory and cross at Hindia and Bharkas Ghat. These the British could not and Sindia did not care to hold against them, so that the Pindaris escaped with all their plunder.

Sindia had been requested to act. Close had remonstrated strongly with his Government about the depredations of Pindaris who issued from his territories into the districts of the Company and its allies. The Minister, Atmaram Pandit had been pressed to take vigorous measures for their suppression: as Close said, the rulers whose territories were frequent victims of the Pindaris had “a right to demand from His Highness the utmost exertions of his Government to crush the plunderers.”\footnote{31}

Sindia was confronted with great conflicts of interest and feeling. If he were seriously to restrain the plundering

\footnote{28. News writer at Hindia, 24 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. I June, 1816, No. 7}

\footnote{29. Jenkins to Doveton, 4 May, 1816, B.P.S.C. 18 May, 1816, No. 15}

\footnote{30. Examination of Mukum Pindari before Dalzell, 13 March, 1816, Home Misc. vol. 601, p. 320.}

\footnote{31. Close to Adam, 19 March, 1816, B.P.S.C. 6 April, 1816, No. 11}
incursions of the Pindaris, the effect must be to turn them loose on his own possessions. Again, should he confess his inability to act against them, not only would his pride be injured, but the probable consequences of such a confession were alarming. Should he honestly concur and co-operate with the British Government in their extermination, he would lose the aid of a powerful body against his enemies. On the other hand should he ignore the protests of the Resident, he would incur the displeasure of the neighbouring rulers and the British Government. Sindia’s reply, therefore, was to maintain his usual countenance and declare that he was thinking to adopt some measures against them.

Atmaram accordingly visited the Resident in April 1816 and assured him that Sindia would take effectual steps against the Pindaris; but he was reluctant to disclose the particular plan Sindia decided to adopt. Two months elapsed, and still Sindia had not moved against the Pindaris, though they had returned to their usual stations within Sindia’s territory. Since their return had “excited no kind of uneasiness or concern” in Sindia’s mind, the Resident again remonstrated with Sindia’s court against its deliberate forbearance. In June 1816, he visited the court and had a long discussion with Atmaram Pandit, demanding to know the reason for Sindia’s “supineness in doing nothing to restrain them.” Sindia should realise the wisdom of acting against the Pindaris whose existence was equally injurious to the Company’s and Sindia’s territories. “All the neighbouring states looked towards Scindia,” Close declared, “to suppress an evil that took its rise within his own territories.” Atmaram replied that “the Maharajah had in his own mind formed the resolution of acting with effect against the Pindarries.” He would take measures against their crossing the Narmada to the Deccan.

32. Close to Moira, 3 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 21
33. Close to Adam, 25 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 May, 1816, No. 12
34. Close to Moira, 8 June, 1816, para. 4. B.P.S.C. 22 June, 1816, No. 26
35. Ibid.
through the ghats between Hindia and Hoshangabad belonging to Sindia's territory.\textsuperscript{36} His other plan was "to resume all the grants held by the Pindarries and to seize their leaders." so that "the Pindarries would then be obliged to disperse and retire from the field."\textsuperscript{37}

Thus Sindia under the pressure of the Resident's repeated protests agreed to certain positive measures, though from past experience he doubtless knew that they would have little permanent effect. He cannot, indeed, have been very hopeful of carrying them through, for his best force had for months been employed in attempting to suppress the rebel Raja of Raghugarh, and only the previous month Close had been writing to Moira of "the pecuniary difficulties, the mutinies and the numerous embarrassments to which this Government [of Sindia] continues to be subject."\textsuperscript{38} And if he did resume all the lands held by the Pindarlis and seize their leaders he would only provoke them to plunder his own territory for their subsistence, while nothing was to hinder their appointing new leaders if their old ones were seized.

Again two months later, in mid-August, the Resident met Atmaram Pandit and enquired whether Sindia had taken any measures according to his promises. The minister replied that Sindia had been waiting for the rainy season, which was the proper time to act against a body like the Pindaris, and since the rains had just started Sindia would act within a few days. These assurances the Resident opined as insincere, and only to "be considered as evasive of the subject."\textsuperscript{39} It may be noted however, the British Government was little more forthcoming. In April Close had reported hints being thrown out by Sindia's ministers about British co-operation against the Pindaris,\textsuperscript{40} and there was further discussion in August—but no positive British response was given.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., para 5
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Close to Moira, 9 May, 1816, B.P.S.C. 25 May, 1816, No. 32
\textsuperscript{39} Close to Moira, 13 Aug, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 Sept. 1816, No. 92
\textsuperscript{40} Close to Moira, 25 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 11 May, 1816, No. 12
\textsuperscript{41} Close to Moira, 13 Aug. 1816, B.P.S.C. 7 Sept, 1816, No. 9
With the approach of the campaigning season, indecision became less tolerable. Early in September Jenkins heard and reported, "Seetoo is meditating a new expedition after the Dusserah and he is collecting boats on the Nerudda with a view to make an early irruption into the territories south of that river." The threat was obviously to Nagpur and to the whole of the Deccan so successfully plundered the previous season.

There was, however, one important change in the situation. On 22 March 1816, Raghují Bhosle of Nagpur had died and had been succeeded by a son, Parsoji who was sick, mentally and physically. After a struggle for power the young Raja's cousin, Mudhoji Bhosle, or Appa Saheb, had secured the regency, as the heir presumptive. To strengthen his position Appa Saheb had in great haste and secrecy opened negotiations through Jenkins for a subsidiary alliance with the Company, meanwhile deceiving the other ministers into thinking he would uphold the neutral policy of Raghují. On 27 May 1816, the treaty was concluded and in June a subsidiary Force under Colonel Walker advanced to Nagpur. As a result any threat by Chitu Khan to Nagpur was much easier to counter. When the Raja asked the British Government to ensure the safety of his territories Colonel Walker was ordered to advance the subsidiary force to Hoshangabad. Since Hoshangabad lies close to Hindia and the normal Pindari ford across the Narmada and opposite Nimawar Chitu's cantonment, the British forces were at once in a stronger position to check Chitu Khan than before. At the same time an additional regiment of native cavalry with a light corps of infantry was ordered to keep watch on the passes in the range of hills running along the Raja's northern frontier. The subsidiary forces at Jalna and Sirur were

43. M. S. Mehta, op. cit., pp. 78-82.
also ordered to remain alert against any impending Pindari incursions.\(^{47}\)

It remained to secure like action from Sindia. On news of Chitu's plans Close sent for Atmaram Pandit, reported the Pindaris' intentions and urged that Sindia be persuaded of the necessity of preventing it. "This was expected of him as the Pindarries lived with their families in his dominions and always found refuge in them after their plundering expeditions, that the whole world therefore looked upon them as dependants of His Highness and that they themselves openly professed their obedience to Scindia and asked for and received, his orders."\(^{48}\) He reminded Atmaram that his repeated remonstrances had had no effect on Sindia's mind. On every occasion Sindia had made quick promises, but none had been fulfilled. Atmaram replied that on account of "some pressing circumstances" Sindia could not devote undivided attention to the question, and abandoning appearances, he confessed that "as to the subjugation of the Pindarries to Scindia's authority, it was well known to what degree it extended, and what little discrimination was shown by them in their plunder, as they spared His Highness's no more than others."\(^{49}\) Atmaram added that although the Pindaris were at one time servants of Sindia, given lands for their support, they had for some time past ceased to be so. "They had become too powerful to pay obedience to anyone."\(^{50}\)

The question may be asked whether the Pindaris had really thrown off their dependence. Thanks to the superlative British intelligence system much evidence to the contrary existed. Thus Close knew that a few months earlier Munna Lal, the vakil of the late Dost Muhammad, had visited Sindia and presented a nazár, requesting that Sindia invest the son

\(^{47}\) Ibid.

\(^{48}\) Close to Adam, 19 Sept. 1816, para 2, B.P.S.C. 12 Oct. 1816, No. 21

\(^{49}\) Close to Adam, 19 Sept. 1816, para 4, B.P.S.C. 12 Oct. 1816, No. 21

\(^{50}\) Ibid.
of Dost Muhammad with a *khilat* of succession.\(^{51}\) Now, with Colonel Walker advancing on Hoshangabad and so threatening their encampments Chitu Khan and other leaders were turning to Sindia for advice and protection. "They profess their readiness to obey His Highness in everything", Close reported, "either to ravage the Nagpore territories or to abstain from crossing the Nerudda as he may desire."\(^{52}\) Chitu Khan in a letter to Sindia regretted that "what concerns me, is to find that our master is ready to assist in our destruction and has not consulted the advantage of his own dominions. All the Jemadars of the Pindaries in this quarter regard your Highness as their sovereign and master, and having now consulted together they have despatched several letters to the Presence, and they will devote themselves to the execution of whatever orders may be issued in consequence."\(^{53}\)

Chitu Khan, again, in a letter to Hindurao Ghatge stated that British troops were advancing to attack the Pindaris. "I am ignorant whether all this is known to the Presence,... We are now without remedy, let his Highness's commands be made known to us that we may obey them." He then requested that negotiations might be entered into with the English, so that the attack could be averted.\(^{54}\) Namdar Khan after stating that British troops accompanied by the Nizam's soldiers were advancing to attack them, represented to Sindia that "if orders are given me, I will engage the enemy, or if I am desired, I will march and lay waste and destroy their country....Our troops are in your favour and exaltation, because you are our master and we your servants are obedient to your commands. On this subject whatever advice or orders

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51. Enclo. from Close's letter, 18\(^{1}\) March, 1816, B.P.C. 30 March, 1816, No. 73
52. Close to Adam, 16 Nov. 1816, para 3, B.P.S.C. 30 Nov. 1816, No. 7
you may give, your slaves will carry execution."\(^{55}\) Chitu Khan, writing again to Sindia said, "the troops of the Europeans as yet remain at their former encampment, and from Hircarrahahs who were sent to procure intelligence I learn that they are enquiring about the Ghaouts and the means of guarding them, and that they are preparing to cross the river.... Your slave too has not hitherto departed a moment from your commands or delayed to execute them, and my horses are now ready for plunder and devastation.... If your Highness desires that they shall not be molested, and if you will settle matters with them, it is well, or if you wish, we are ready to oppose them."\(^{56}\)

To Hindurao he wrote "that the present is by no means a fit season to break with the English is well. In whatever light the Huzoor views this it must be correct and proper, but if such a favourable opportunity as the present is allowed to slip out of hand it will not readily occur.... Please God, in a very short time the English shall be reduced to such extremities that Sirkar shall learn it and will then be sensible of the zeal of his slaves. But until a place of refuge for the families of your slaves is in our hands we are helpless, but having this, it will then rest with me to carry to the environs of Calcutta rapine and devastation."\(^{57}\)

This mass of intercepted correspondence might seem to implicate Sindia in the Pindari schemes, and show that they still were his dependents. To accept such a view unreservedly would however be to confuse appearance with reality, as it would be to read political subordination into the Company's practice of striking rupees in the name of the Mughal emperor. Sindia may well have wished to preserve the Pindaris but he was not prepared to risk involving himself in an open clash with the British and their allies. In the past he

55. Namdar Khan to Sindia, 8 Nov. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 2
56. Chitu Khan to Sindia, 10 Nov. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 8
had sought to curb Pindari depredations either by grants of land, or by despatching troops against them, but without intending to do more than was needed to placate the neighbouring rulers who had been their victims. But at this juncture such temporizing measures were not possible in the face of the Resident's protests and the pressure of British military preparations. He had now to choose, either to take up the cause of the Pindaris openly and risk involving himself in a clash with the Company, which his position would hardly allow him, or to keep himself detached from the interest of the Pindaris, at least in appearance. Sindia chose to expose his weakness and lower the Maratha pride and prestige by abandoning the Pindaris. So he wrote to Chitu Khan, "your letter mentioning the approach of the English together with the troops of His Highness the Peshwa and those from Hyderabad and Nagpore and likewise your being prepared to oppose them, has reached the Presence", but refused to give him any orders or advice. Instead he declared, "strictest friendship subsists between the Hon'ble Company and the Presence, all which must already be known to you. It is therefore written that you have no concern with the Presence and that you are at full liberty to do whatever you please." 58 He replied in similar terms to Namdar Khan: "Did you not know how strongly I was united in friendship with the English...It is therefore written that you may now do whatever you think proper. The Presence has absolutely no concern with you." 59

What the consequences of trying to detach himself from the Pindaris would be Sindia clearly recognised. In saving himself, he was condemning them; for once he admitted that they were not his servants, the Company was freed from any fear that in attacking the Pindaris they would provoke a Maratha war. He admitted this to Chitu Khan, writing on 17 November, "If I were now to take any part in your concerns,

58. Sindia to Cheetoo, 17 Nov. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 6
59. Sindia to Namdar Khan, 21 Nov. 1816, B.P.S.C., 28 Dec. 1816, No. 6
it would produce a quarrel with the English, and again, if I abstain from doing so your Durrah would be ruined. All this gives me uneasiness." But the only alternative would have been to accept the Pindaris’ professions of obedience, to order them not to molest British and allied territory, and so invite them to plunder his own possessions, since as an association they could not subsist except by plundering others. Hitherto Sindia had been prepared to preserve them, even at some cost to himself, since though his own districts were looted, he could also expect some share in the booty taken from others, in the form of nazaranas to their ‘liege lord’. But as more states received British protections and the military preparations against the Pindaris were strengthened such an alternative policy became self-defeating. There existed a hope that somehow a solution might occur, and Sindia therefore refused to declare positively against the Pindaris. He therefore wrote to Chitu Khan, asking him to “continue to send me particular accounts of your situation, but do not expect that I shall write to you. Hindoo Raw will, however, give you the news of this place. In a month or two you shall be written to as the state of affairs may require.” Nevertheless he feared the worst, and prepared to abandon the Pindaris. As Close reported on 26 November, there was a common belief at Sindia’s court that “some strong measures against the Pindarries were resolved in our [the British] councils, and it had been expected that some unpalatable proposals would be made to this Government [of Sindia] upon the subject.”

In December 1816, Moira again raised the Pindari-question in his Council. Hitherto the British Government had been prevented by the Home Government from taking any drastic action against the Pindaris which “may give umbrage to Doulat Row Scindia.” But at this juncture Sindia seemed to be wavering, disinclined to so desperate a step as to oppose

60. Sindia to Cheetoo, 17 Nov. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 8
61. Ibid.
the British Government's decision for their extermination. The Governor-General therefore pressed for "such a vigorous resolution as may make Scindia see a safer policy in adhering to us." Moira recalled the many occasions on which "invasions of our territory, with circumstances of atrocious, had been perpetrated by armed bodies residing and marshalled within the dominions of Scindia." On such occasions the Resident's remonstrances at his court had produced no result beyond vague promises. Now Sindia had been forced by circumstances to confess that "he has no rule over these predatory hordes." Here was the opportunity, Moira urged, "to claim his co-operation, on the footing of the amity pledged between us, in the extirpation of the gangs which prostitute the appearance of his protection and convert the privilege of his dominion into a source of desolation for our territories."

Moira requested his Council to consider how easily the Pindaris had recently passed through an interval of ninety miles between Colonel Walker's two posts, before any information could reach either, and how readily they had returned by another similar opening after having performed their work of devastation." The Council must decide whether they were still prepared to continue with the same ineffective defensive measures and to see their own subjects being plundered and ravaged by the Pindaris or whether they would act instantly for their destruction. There was no middle course. His answer was to adopt vigorous measures immediately against the Pindaris for their destruction.

Edmonstone fully agreed with the Governor-General about the ineffectiveness of past defensive measures and the necessity of adopting offensive measures against the Pindaris. But to

63. Minute of the Governor-General, 6 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 9
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
him the problem was still not so urgent as to warrant any modification of the restrictive orders of the Home Government relative to the Pindaris. 68 He suggested that the whole question, with Sindia’s modified attitude, should be referred to the home authorities. Once apprized of the atrocities recently committed by the Pindaris on British subjects, they would surely “acknowledge the indispensable necessity of a vigorous effort for the suppression of the Pindarries,” the more so when “we have tried the experiment of defensive measures and found them to be unavailing.” 69 He was therefore in favour of adopting offensive measures against the Pindaris next winter, by which time the sanction of the higher authorities would have reached India. 70

Where Edmonstone really differed from Moira was in his attitude to Sindia, whose co-operation he wished to invite. Moira, in his minute of 6 December had declared, “it will not do to sound Sindia. I will not stain the character of my country so much as to try his dispositions....” 71 Yet in November Close had reported the despatch of a letter from Sindia to Chitu Khan, forbidding him to molest any country, and professing friendship for the Company—and Close had added that the letter gave “a true and correct insight into His Highness’ feelings.” 72 Again in a despatch of 26 November Close had reported that Sindia’s minister had raised the question of co-operation against the Pindaris again, 73 and Elphinstone reported that Close believed that if he were asked Sindia would at once agree to join in crushing

68. Minute of Edmonstone, 7 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 10
70. Minute of Edmonstone, 7 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 10
71. Minute of the Governor-General, 6 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 9
72. Close to Moira, 4 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 17 Dec. 1816, No. 4
73. Close to Adam, 26 Nov. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 7
the Pindaris.”

Knowing this, Edmonstone pressed for negotiations with Sindia. “If we would not obtain his cooperation, we might at least secure the neutrality of Scindia.” At the same time every practicable means should be employed “to cause it to be understood and believed not only by him but by all other native powers that our views had no object beyond our relief and the relief of our allies as well indeed as that of all established states from the intolerable scourge of these organised plunderers.”

Seton, on 8 December, not only supported the Governor-General’s plan of adopting vigorous offensive measures immediately, but sounded a warning that any further tolerance of their depredations would inspire “those freebooters to carry havoc, desolation and murder into some of the fairest and most productive provinces of the Presidency of Bengal.” “Unless we seek the Pindaries they will again seek us,—will seek us in the very heart of our fairest and most productive provinces. I say again, because we know to our cost that they have already sought us. We now no longer have the option of forbearance.” He argued that it would be a crime if the British Government remained blind to “those monsters having cut off breasts of women, immediately after having offered the most horrid violence to their persons, as if their brutal appetite would have been but imperfectly satisfied, unless sated with the blood of their victims.” If the lateness of the season were to be considered as sufficient ground for postponing offensive measures until the next winter, he urged that at least “not a moment is to be lost in adopting those vigorous measure of a preventive character.”

75. What Edmonstone did not know was that Moira in his Private Journal hoped for war with Sindia. “It is far better if he be resolved to risk his existence for the support of the Pindaries.” vol. II, p. 154.
76. Minute of Edmonstone, 7 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 10
77. Minute of Seton, 8 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 11
78. Minute of Seton, 14 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 15
79. Minute of Seton, 8 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 11
80. Ibid.
Dowdeswell, on the tenth, showed himself to be in a dilemma. He would deprecate “any measures likely to lead to an extended state of War”, yet he could not “but feel most sensibly the urgency which exists both on grounds of policy and humanity for the adoption of vigorous measures in the present season.”\(^{81}\) However, once he was convinced that Sindia was unlikely to oppose the British Government’s decision by force, he felt little hesitation in expressing his “concurrence in the course proposed to be pursued for the suppression of this serious and growing evil.”\(^{82}\) He left to the discretion of the Governor-General whether the measures should be adopted forthwith or in the next winter.\(^{83}\)

Thus in the long run the Council had come to accept the Governor-General’s view of the urgency of the situation, and on 21 December unanimously resolved to arm him with the power to suppress the Pindaris at the earliest opportune moment. Before he had acted, however, further instructions reached him from the Board of Control.\(^{84}\)

On 8 March 1816, a new President, George Canning, had taken office. However, since he was anxious to conciliate the Directors, much angered by his predecessor Buckinghamshire, his appointment did not lead to any change of the attitude towards the problem created by the Pindaris. Those whom he consulted, Company’s officials, the Secret Committee, and Wellesley and Wellington agreed in the main that though the Pindaris were a menace, Moira’s plans of crushing them and effecting a political rearrangement of Central India were dangerous. Canning accepted their views.\(^{85}\)

\(^{81}\) Minute of Dowdeswell, 10 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 12

\(^{82}\) Minute of Dowdeswell, 14 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 16

\(^{83}\) Minute of Dowdeswell, 10 Dec. 1816, B.P.S.C. 28 Dec. 1816, No. 12

\(^{84}\) Minute of the Governor-General, 21 Feb. 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March 1817, No. 1

In February 1817, therefore, Moira received Canning’s first despatch on the question, dated 5 September 1816, which while acknowledging the Company’s duty to protect British and allied subjects from Pindari aggression, prohibited him “from undertaking extensive operations with the view of remodelling our political relations” and repeated that “we are unwilling to incur the risk of a general war for the uncertain purpose of extirpating altogether the predatory bands.”

The new suggestion was that the disunity of the Pindaris might be exploited: “You may from time to time obtain a partial co-operation from one or other of those chiefs according to the degree in which the peculiar interests of each may be affected by any incursion of the Pindarries, and that you may even derive from some of the Pindarry leaders themselves occasional aid against such of their associates as they appear to regard as rivals.”

It can be seen that the Board had failed to recognise the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of purely defensive measures or of reliance upon Sindia’s readiness to act effectively against the Pindaris. Nor was their one positive proposal very helpful, for though one party of Pindaris might conceivably have been employed to suppress another, the problem of how to provide for an essentially predatory ally would still remain to be solved: the Company would have found itself in the same predicament as Sindia. The crux of the matter was that the Board had not only “overrated the strength of Maratha opposition,” but firmly believed that there would be a war with the Marathas in the event of action against the Pindaris. What they failed to anticipate was that if a general war with the Marathas was certain, their defeat was also a foregone conclusion. That being so, war was preferable because the Pindari problem would be

86. Boards draft of Sec. Despatch, 5 Sept., 1816, paras, 20, 21, No. 218, Vol. 5
87. ibid., para 22
88. C.H. Philips, op. cit., p. 216
solved permanently, and British subjects, and the subjects of their allies and other established Governments would be saved once for all from the cruelties perpetrated by the Pindaris.

The Governor-General's Council proceeded to discuss the Board's despatch—and all agreed that it could not be considered to convey a prohibition of the measures recently determined upon against the Pindaris. Edmonstone argued that the Board had only been unwilling to suppress the Pindaris for fear of a general war. Their instructions "not only do not oppose but distinctly authorise the undertaking, provided only it be not likely to produce a general war." But apprehension of being entangled in a general war with the Marathas had been nullified by the latest information from Sindia's court. For Close, after a long discussion with Atmaram, reported that Sindia was now "at least extremely anxious to preserve a good understanding with the British Government and impress upon the Governor-General's mind a belief that he is serious in his intention of co-operating with his Lordship against the Pindarries." Sindia was not only reluctant to be involved in a war with the British and their allies, but realising that the Pindaris could not be preserved wished to "take a share in expelling those ruffians for the sake of securing to himself the lands they at present occupy."

Any hesitation which the Council may still have felt was ended when they received a second despatch from the Board.

89. Minute of the Governor-General, 21 Feb. 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March, 1817, No. 1; Minute of Edmonstone, 26 Feb. 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March, 1817, No. 2; Minute of Seton, 3 March, 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March, 1817, No. 3; Minute of Dowdeswell, 4 March, 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March, 1817, No. 4
90. Minute of Edmonstone, 26 Feb. 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March, 1817, No. 2
91. Close to Adam, 7 Feb. 1817, B.P.S.C. 1 March, 1817, No. 1
92. Minute of the Governor-General, 21 Feb. 1817, B.P.S.C. 8 March, 1817, No. 1
dated 26 September 1816. This had been written after the news of the raid into Madras had reached London. It noted that the Pindari expedition of 1816 had been of “an infinitely more audacious character than any of which we had previously been apprized. On former occasions parties of the Pindarries have extended their incursions with temporary success into British territory; but we have not before had notice of an invasion so systematically directed against our provinces, so disastrous in its effects, and perpetrated with such entire impunity. They admitted that the measures adopted for punishing the invaders had been “disappointed and ineffective.” while the dreadful cruelties committed by the Pindaris had excited their “warmest indignation.” No apprehension of inconvenience could justify their leaving the duty of protecting those peaceful inhabitants against such outrages unperformed. So, while they reminded the Governor-General of the distinction “between a plan of policy essentially warlike, or directed to objects of remote and contingent advantage, and a vigorous exertion of military power in vindication of the honour of the British name, and in defence of the subjects who look up to us for protection”, they assured him of their approbation for any measures for “punishing and chastising the invaders.”

It may be that the Board’s directions about “punishing and chastising” the Pindaris still fell short of a determination to set about their complete extirpation. If so, the Pindaris themselves prepared their complete destruction by renewing their depredations after the Dassara festival. In October 1816, a body of four thousand Pindaris under Chitu Khan crossed the Narmada at Baglatir Ghat, and dividing into small parties from one to five hundred men proceeded by

93. Board’s draft of Sec. Despatch, 26 Sept. 1816, para 2, No. 119, vol. 5; Despatches to Bengal, 26 Sept. 1816, para 2, p. 867, vol. 73
94. Ibid, para 22
95. Ibid. para 24
96. Jenkins to Adam, 1 Nov. 1816, B.P.C. 16 Nov. 1810, No. 19
different routes towards Nagpur. Colonel Walker, who was on the march to Hoshangabad, was timely informed of their movements by Jenkins, and with a light detachment immediately dashed to the Baglatir Ghat to surprise them. But the Pindaris had already left the Baglatir Ghat, and passing by a different route they reached the southern districts of Nagpur. There they encamped and plundered the surrounding villages till 4 December, when Colonel Scott was sent to oppose them. Without giving time for Scott to come up with them they passed to Adilabad, a town in the Nizam’s territory, some fifty miles to the northward of the Godavari, which they plundered and burnt. While returning to Nirmal, they were opposed by a small detachment from Doveton’s camp at Jalna, but could not be prevented from plundering the inhabitants of almost all the villages on their route to the Godavari.

Chitu Khan then penetrated into the Peshwa’s territory and encamped at Sogaum, near Pandharpur. But they were surprised by a regiment under Lushington, and for once the success was proportionate to the troops’ exertion: “the Pindarries were on their horses, and flying in various directions, 700 or 800 killed and wounded, together with a great number rendered incapable of pursuing their plundering excursions, by the loss of their horses.” The scattered Pindaris while moving northwards through the Nizam’s territory were again intercepted by Macdowall of the subsidiary force at Jalna, though Chitu Khan on this occasion successfully made his way to his camp at Nimawar, with only minor loss.

While Chitu Khan was plundering the Deccan, Wasil Muhammad with his division had crossed the Narmada on 9

97. Walker to Jenkins, 5 Nov. 1816, B.P.C. 23 Nov. 1816, No. 15
98. Walker to Jenkins, 6 Nov. 1816, B.P.C. 23 Nov. 1816, No. 16
100. Russell to Adam, 17 Dec. 1816, B.P.C. 11 Jan. 1817, No. 37
101. Lushington to Elphinstone, 27 Dec. 1816, B.C. vol. 683/18879, pp. 7-11
November 1816 and moved in an easterly direction. They reached Ganjam in Orissa and as Woodcook, the Magistrate reported, "with a very few exception, all the villages between Gopalpoor to south Rambah to the north, and Askash to the west have been plundered" and "by far the greater portion has been reduced to ashes." The cruelties they committed at Ganjam surpassed any they had previously committed. In the words of the Collector, "infants were torn from the arms of their mothers and thrown into wells or dashed to the ground, while there is one instance of a child having been thrown into the air and nearly divided by a swordsman while in the act of falling. After leaving Ganjam, they retired by way of Chattisgarh, Sohagpur and Chanda.

Moira's letter of 21 December 1816 carrying the story of these new cruelties inflicted on British subjects reached the Board on 23 May 1817. Any lingering reluctance they may have felt, vanished and in a despatch of 4 June 1817 they unequivocally declared, "we entirely approve of the resolution of 21 December 1816 which you have reported to us, and that we leave to your judgment and discretion, not only the defence of the territories under your charge against the aggressors, and the adoption of such measures as may tend to the ultimate suppression of their power...you should feel yourselves entirely unshackled in the pursuit of that course of proceeding which you had resolved to pursue."

103. Jenkins to Adam, 15 Nov. 1816, No. 22
104. Woodcock to the Commanding Officer at Cuttuck, 29 Dec. 1816, B.P.C. 11 Jan. 1817, No. 135
CHAPTER VIII

ISOLATION AND SUPPRESSION OF THE PINDARIS,
1817-1818

By December 1816 the British authorities had resolved finally that the Pindaris must be eradicated as soon as opportunity offered. The need to crush the Pindaris was more than ever obvious. Nagpur had accepted an alliance, Amir Khan had again shown that he would not directly oppose the Company, and Sindia had proclaimed his neutrality. Those in London or Calcutta, who had opposed Moira’s plans as likely to produce a general war, were now ready to support him in a campaign against the Pindaris.

Efforts were therefore concentrated upon clearly detaching Sindia from the Pindaris, and if possible, Amir Khan also. So, in January 1817 Close, the Resident at Gwalior was ordered to put Sindia’s proclaimed abandonment of the Pindaris to the test. On 27 January Close met Atmaram and apprized him of British territories again being plundered by the Pindaris and British subjects made victims of their atrocities. It was a matter of grave concern, he said that “British territories had been invaded by a large force of the Pindarries collected and prepared for the purpose within His Highness’s dominions and under leaders who called themselves His Highness’s servants, that moreover the prisoners who had fallen into our hands uniformly declared that they were the Maharajah’s servants, and that they acted in obedience to his orders.”¹ This circumstance, the Resident continued, “compelled the Governor-General to demand an explanation and that in His Lordship’s name I now requested His Highness to state whether he had made war on the British Government.”²

¹. Close to Adam, 31 Jan. 1817, para 1, B.P.S.C. 15 Feb, 1817, No.4: 2. Ibid. para 5
Bapu Chitnavis, Sindia's minister, listened silently to the Resident's observations, and then asked, in tones of surprise, how the Governor-General could believe that Sindia wanted a rupture with the British Government. Nothing was farther from Sindia's thought; he was now on terms of friendship with the Company; and had resolved to inflict "the severest chastisement on the Pindaris." Only a week later Atmaram visited the Resident to give proof of Sindia's sincerity. A force consisting of five thousand horse and six battalions of infantry had been ordered to march under Balarao Ingle, who from his experience in that kind of service seemed best qualified for the post. He further reported that Sindia's officers in Burhanpur and other parts of his dominions would be simultaneously ordered to co-operate with Balarao by attacking such Pindaris as might come their way, and if the force should prove insufficient, Baptiste would also be ordered to join them. In addition, he said, Sindia was determined "on sequestrating all the lands of the Pindarree leaders; not to allow a Pindaree to remain in his dominions, and of course neither to enter into any compromise with them nor to show them any sort of indulgence as formerly."

It seems clear from Sindia's letters to the Pindaris of November 1816 and from intercepted letters of the Pindaris of the spring of 1817 that Daulatrao had determined to break with the Pindaris. His ministers, however, continued to hedge, either from a genuine difference of policy, or from a desire to maintain their own reputations with the Pindari leaders. Thus in a letter of 31 March, Chitu Khan complained to Hindurao Ghatge that the mahals once bestowed on him by Sindia had suddenly been given to Sindia's general, Jacob Saheb. He also expressed his failure to understand why Sindia had decided to employ Balarao against him: "if this is done entirely to please the English....Or to save appearance merely, it is well, the slave is but the instrument:

3. Ibid, para 6
4. Close to Adam, 7 Feb. 1817, para 1, B.B.S.C, 1 March, 1817, No.1
5. Ibid, para 2
6. Close to Adam, 7 Feb. 1817, para 2, B.P.S.C, 1 March, 1817, No.1
of the wishes of the exalted. But if otherwise, recollect when we are extinguished, how long will you be saved?...The slave only looks to the signal of the Huzoor, or otherwise in a short time, the whole country of the English would be given to fire and plunder." Hindurao replied, acknowledging "your letter giving accounts of your welfare mixed with complaint to this effect, that Sununds of the Mahals in your possession had been granted to Jacob Sahib. The matter is this. At that time it was written in the Akhbars that English troops had crossed the Nerbuddah, and had taken possession of your Mahals which are certainly the property of the Maharajah. For this reason the Sununds have been granted to Jacob....Do you retain no fears whatever. By all means consider the Huzoor as your friend in every way." He further assured Chitu Khan that though Sindia was now displeased with the Pindaris and had decided to employ Balarao Ingle, he should not be worried, because "what is requisite to be said to the Huzoor on your account shall be done." Balarao also wrote in similar, "certainly what you write concerning the English is perfectly correct, and on this point Hindoo Row and other Sirdars have urged the Huzoor but they fail in making any impression on him. As for myself whatever may be resolved in regarding you, shall have my kind consideration and at the time of and previous to my departure to the extent of my power I shall interest the Maharajah in your favour." The evidence does not permit it to be said with certainty that in the spring of 1817 Sindia was deliberately playing a double game, deceiving the Company by his military measures and so trying to avert vigorous action on their part, and while publicly threatening the Pindaris, privately con-

7. Cheetoo to Hindoo Row, 31 March, 1817, B.P.S.C. 10 May, 1817, No. 45
8. Hindoo Row to Cheetoo, 17 April, 1817, B.P.S.C. 10 May, 1817, No. 48
9. Ibid.
10. Hindoo Row Inglia to Cheetoo, 10 April, 1817, B.P.S.C. 10 May, 1817, No. 47
ciliating them. It may well be that Sindia’s court was divided—certainly the commanders of the forces he sent against the Pindaris quarrelled violently among themselves.\textsuperscript{11} By July 1817, however, Sindia certainly seemed to have become more hostile to the British moves against the Pindaris. Close reported, five months had now passed since the Maharajah expressed in warm terms his zeal for the destruction of the Pindarries. He sent in all haste for Bala Row Inglia and declared to me that a large force of horse and foot should immediately march under his orders, but I would beg to know what had yet been the effect of it. His Highness seemed to have grown perfectly cold on the subject and had greatly shaken my confidence.”\textsuperscript{12} The explanation for this coldness is probably to be found in events outside Central India, events tracing their origin to the rise of Trimbakji Dengle as the favourite of the Peshwa Bajirao and to Trimbakji’s murder of Gangadhar Shastri in July 1815. Trimbakji, imprisoned by the British, had escaped in September 1816, and with the Peshwa’s connivance had been gathering forces in the hills. In April 1817 Hastings\textsuperscript{13} made use of the Peshwa’s complicity to enforce upon his much harsher terms of subordination, including renunciation of his headship of the Maratha Confederacy and of all his rights in Malway and Bundelkhand, and the surrender of the fortress of Ahmadnagar.\textsuperscript{14} The Peshwa signed the new treaty on 13 June 1817,\textsuperscript{15} but he was active in seeking to stir and unite the Maratha chiefs against the Company.\textsuperscript{16} Appeals to Sindia to support a common Maratha front were also renewed

\textsuperscript{11} Tod to Adam, 9 June, 1817, B.P.S.C. 28 June, 1817, No. 3
\textsuperscript{12} Close to Hastings, 9 July, 1817, B.P.S.C. 25 July, 1817, No. 24
\textsuperscript{13} The Earl of Moira had been created Marquis of Hastings on 13 Feb. 1817 in recognition of his services in the Nepal war, D.N.B.; (1891) vol. 25, p. 119
\textsuperscript{14} Adam to Elphinstone, 7 April, 1817, B.P.S.C, 7 April, 1817, No. 10
\textsuperscript{15} Elphinstone to Adam, 14 June, 1817, B.P.S.C. 5 July, 1817, No. 24
\textsuperscript{16} Jenkins to Hastings, 30 May, 1817, B.P.S.C. 21 June, 1817, No. 2
from Appa Saheb,\textsuperscript{17} the ruler of Nagpur after Parsoji Bhosle’s assassination in February 1817, who by the summer of 1817 was anxious to free himself from the subordination he had sought in 1816 as the price of personal power.

One sign of Sindia’s wavering was his virtual abandonment of military measures against the Pindaris. Another was his giving an audience to an agent of Karim Khan.\textsuperscript{18} It appeared that the agent was sounding Sindia’s court about the possibility of assistance, and Close reported that he had secured the release of Karim’s brother Hiru Khan, and a promise that Sindia’s fort of Islamnagar would be available to the Pindaris in any crisis.\textsuperscript{19} “An unusual access”, he wrote, “has been lately allowed to the Pindarries into that fort and it was certainly believed that Sindiah intended to resign it to the Pindarries.”\textsuperscript{20} Atmaram, when confronted by Close’s intelligence reports flatly denied that there was any foundation for my [the Resident’s] surmise respecting Islamnagar and said that His Highness would never be guilty of so gross a violation of his promises and of such a dereliction of his declared resolution to employ his force against the Pindaries. He said, he knew nothing of the Agent I had alluded to but I expressed my firm conviction if he did not then His Highness assuredly must.\textsuperscript{21} The Resident no less flatly complained that no one instance of Sindia’s conduct could support the assertion of his proposed intention against the Pindaris. On the contrary Sindia’s permission had been “tacitly allowed them of raising men herefrom amongst the Mewattes, some hundreds of whom have within the last few months left this province for the Pindarry camps and the similar permission allowed them on their agents to purchase up horses, especially those hard working ponies

\textsuperscript{17} Jenkins to Adam, 9 May, 1817, B.P.S.C. 24 May, 1817, No. 11
\textsuperscript{18} Close to Adam, 30 July, 1817, B.P.S.C. 22 Aug. 1817, 1817, No. 34
\textsuperscript{19} Close to Hastings, 29 Aug. 1817, B.P.S.C. 12 Sept. 1817, No. 18
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
which abound in all Maratha camps and are so admirably suited for the purposes of the Pindarries. 22

By September 1817, however, Hasting's military preparations had been completed, and a force some 1,15,000 strong stood ready on the borders of Central India and Rajputana to hunt down the Pindaris. 23 The time when Sindia could safely prevaricate, abandoning the Pindaris in his avowals, but practicing his old forbearance to their taking shelter in his forts and territories, was at an end. It was not possible for Hastings to permit the Pindaris to split up and disperse themselves through Sindia's territories when they should have been defeated elsewhere, nor to allow them to enlist under Sindia's officers, many of whom were evidently favourable to their cause: From Cawnpore, therefore, Hastings sent a set of conditions, outlining the part Sindia was required to play in the Pindari campaign. This was to be put to him for acceptance: if he refused he would be treated as hostile. 24

In giving these orders Hastings ignored the directions of the Home Authorities that no new political arrangements should be made, as he had done in imposing a new treaty on the Peshwa. 25 The belief that the Pindari problem could be handled as a single and isolated measure, thanks to Sindia's neutrality, which had persuaded the waverers in the Calcutta Council to support Hastings, was also set aside. The reasons given for imposing a new treaty upon Daulatrao Sindia were those of military necessity, and these were supported by papers of intelligence, one from Chitu Khan's camp which stated that Sindia's officers secretly desired the Pindaris to realise

23. M. S. Mehta, op. cit, p. 104
25. The Board had not wholly ruled out the possibility of new political engagements arising unavoidably from the action against the Pindaris. Board's draft of Sec. Despatch, 4 June, 1817, para 3, No. 127, vol, 5; Despatches to Bengal, 4 June, 1817, para 3, pp. 347-8, vol. 76
their danger and to unite against their enemies, 26 and another letter from a Pindari vakil at Sindia’s camp, telling Chitu’s agent that he had seen Lala Ram Baksh and Daji Deshmukh, Sindia’s ministers, who promised help: “The Sirkar had written to Jeswunt Rao about giving his assistance. Orders have been given to him. Let the Pindaries consider this. Communicate this to Nabob Chitu Khan.” 27 The unspoken reason was that Hastings saw the opportunity to complete his grand political design, and meant to take it.

Close was, therefore, ordered to tell Sindia of Hasting’s plans against the Pindaris—“All India demands their suppression, and all India will be put in motion to effect it”—and then set out the conditions he must accept. 28 Sindia must employ his troops against the Pindaris in such manner as might be counselled by British officers. He must engage not to permit Pindaris to be enrolled in his army or harboorded and protected by his officers. 29 He must raise no fresh troops without permission, and must hand over the forts of Asirgarh, Hindia, Nimawar and Chanderi for the duration of the campaign. He must himself remain at Gwalior or such other place designated by the British Government. 30

On 6 October 1817 the Resident accordingly met Atmaram and formally acquainted him with the demands of the Governor-General. 31 But, in addition to the military measures already outlined, Close went on to declare that Sindia’s conduct “had been such as to dissolve the treaties subsisting between the two states.” As the purpose of the treaty of 1805 had been to establish peace; and as that peace had not

26. A Paper of Intelligence from Seetoo’s camp, B.P.C. 4 Nov. 1817, No. 43


28. Adam to Close, 28 Sept, 1817, para 21, B.P.S.C. 28 Oct. 1817, No. 4

29. Ibid, para 24

30. Ibid, para 49

been preserved with the British Government, the treaty therefore fell to the ground.\textsuperscript{32} The Governor-General therefore felt himself free to enter into treaty relations with those states west of the Chambal hitherto excluded by clause eight of the 1805 treaty.\textsuperscript{33}

To this ultimatum Atmaram replied by reporting his earlier assurance of Sindia’s resolution to act according to the Governor-General’s wishes. “He talked much of Scindia’s being determined himself to attack the Pindarries”\textsuperscript{34} He argued that no charge of violating the existing treaty could be levelled against Sindia, though “he fully admitted the neglect of which His Highness had been guilty towards us.”\textsuperscript{35} The Resident replied that the Governor-General had anxiously desired to see the Pindaris destroyed by Sindia and Holkar, but after waiting so long in vain for the realization of those expectations, he had now advanced to the frontier and “had incurred a heavy expense in collecting one army of nearly 50,000 men in the Deccan, and another of about 30,000 men on the neighbouring frontier.”\textsuperscript{36} It was clear therefore that “His Highness’s assent or dissent was of little moment to the Governor-General’s designs which would at all events be carried into execution.”\textsuperscript{37} Nevertheless Close pointed out, by concurring with the British Government Sindia would not lose an acre of land, on the contrary he would recover what he had lost, while “by opposing us the certain consequences would be the loss of all his rights over

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. para 6

\textsuperscript{33} On 10 October Hastings took upon himself “unparticipated responsibility” for these wider political measures, declaring his “settled conviction that no system of measures which did not comprehend the reform of the greater States of Central India and the revision of our relations with them all would affect the extirpation of the predatory system.” Minute of 10 Oct. 1817, B.P.S.C. 28 Oct. 1817, No. 1

\textsuperscript{34} Close to Adam, 11 Oct. 1817, para 6, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 56

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid. para 7

\textsuperscript{37} Close to Adam, 15 Oct. 1817, B.P.S.C, 14 Nov. 1817, No. 67
the western states, of the lands now in the occupation of the Pindarries and of the money he received from the British Government. 38

On 15 October Atmaram visited the Resident to report Sindia's concurrence in all the articles of the proposed treaty except that for the surrender of Asirgarh, which was "very much against his inclination, as it would detract so much from his dignity." 39 The Resident countered this plea for consideration by asking, "why His Highness should not himself be the first to declare to the world what his fixed resolution was in regard to the Pindarries. That to effect it he had joined the English and still further to forward our joint operations that he had willingly given up Asseergurh to serve as a depot for our troops engaged in the war." 40 A solution was found by allowing Sindia's flag to be kept flying in the fort, and his kiladar to remain with a small guard, whilst British officers retained the actual command of the place. 41

Shortly afterwards the Governor-General's ultimatum reached Gwalior in the form of a letter addressed to the Resident. "Having now crossed the Jumna it is necessary that I should take my line decidedly. No further wavering or procrastination on the part of His Highness Doulat Row Sindiah is admissible and I must learn at once whether he be a friend on whom I am to place reliance or whether I must resort to the procedure which his standing in the light of an enemy would impose on me." 42 This hastened the conclusion of the negotiations, and on 5 November 1817, Sindia signed the treaty. 43

38. Close to Adam, 15 Oct. 1817, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 67
39. Close to Adam, 16 Oct. 1817, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 69
40. Close to Adam, 24 Oct. 1817, para 2, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 74
41. Close to Adam, 20 Oct. 1817, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 72
42. Hastings to Close, 26 Oct. 1817, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 9. The Resident was asked to submit a translated copy of this letter to Sindia,
43. From Hastings, 6 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C. 21 Nov. 1817, No. 13
Sindia's detachment from the interest of the Pindaris was more necessary than his active support. A glance at the twelve articles shows how well understood this was and what care the British Government took to ensure that separation. So Sindia "engages never to readmit the Pindarries or any other predatory bodies into his territories, or in any manner to give them the smallest countenance or support, or to permit his officers to do so." His role in the war was the negative one of abstaining from actions. The suppression of the Pindaris was thus not the effect of the treaty of Gwalior, of 5 November, but its cause.

If one result of the Pindari campaign was to deprive Daulatrao Sindia of his old auxiliaries and to put a stop to his campaigns against his neighbours, another, no less inevitable result of the destruction of the Pindaris, and their entire predatory system, was the isolation and transformation of Amir Khan. Amir Khan had not only maintained an intimate relation with the Pindaris throughout his career, but frequently had united the Pindaris under him to invade the territories of the Raja of Nagpur or the Rajput rulers, so that he looked upon them as a part and parcel of his military strength. It was natural therefore that he should have been jealous of any British movement against the Pindaris, and that he should offer all possible assistance to them in their present crisis. This was evident from the letters exchanged between him and the Pindari leaders early in 1817. Chitu Khan in a letter to Amir Khan sought his advice and assistance. "At present I am looking out for a place of strength and difficult access and being unsuccessful elsewhere, have addressed the Rajah Maun Sing of Jodhpur. I am confident that on this subject you will also address him to this effect, that the place which was formerly assigned for residence of the family of Maharajah Holkar should be appointed for us and that you will soon intimate to me its success, that from it my heart may be set at ease and that I may face the English with confidence.

44. A copy of the treaty with Scindia, B.P.S.C. 21 Nov. 1817, No, 16
Then for once by the blessing of God...to the environs of Calcutta the tumult shall be spread. The whole country shall be consigned to ashes, and to such distress shall they be reduced that the accounts will not fail to reach you. But at present this must be delayed for want of a place of refuge."  

Amir Khan failed to secure a refuge for them in Jodhpur, instead he advised Chitu Khan and Wasil Muhammad to build their cantonments in his own territory of Sironj, as "the tracts round Seronj are so intersected by rivers that no secret attack can be made, and the ground in the rains about is too much cut up to be practicable for the advance of guns." To his manager at Sironj he wrote, "the affairs of the Jemadar [Wasil Muhammad] and my brother Cheetoo are mine, there is no point of difference or separation of them. Whatever place they may fix for a cantonment, do you make no objection, but on the contrary on whatever business aid can be given by you, do so." He then addressed Wasil Muhammad telling him to "canton in the district of Seronj at Lesree, and preserve the strictest vigilance. It is the intention of the British to attack you after the rains. You will then place your camp followers in a place of safety. In case you ascertain that the English are positively coming against you, you will then spread tumult and confusion on all sides. In prosperity or adversity I am your friend, make no hesitation about staying in this Ellakah [area] and be vigilant, I have procured certain intelligence of the determination of the English, and it is their intention to make an attack upon you." Wasil Muhammad in reply expressed his gratitude to Amir Khan and acknowledged him as his master. "We will move our place of retreat into your territories, and will issue from thence and commit depredations in British terri-


46. Meer Khan to the Manager or Seronge, Enclo. in a letter from Close, 21 June 1817, B.P.S.C. 7 July, 1817, No. 7

47. Ibid.

48. Ameer Khan to Wasil Mohammad, undated, B.P.S.C, 18 July, 1817, No. 8
tory. ... The English army is now on the opposite side of the Neruddah. I shall throw every obstacle in my power in their way to prevent their crossing to this side of the river. If they succeed you must succour me.”

Amir Khan’s relations with the Pindaris as late as mid-1817 seemed close and sincere. But regard for their fate could not blind him to his own. He had always been an opportunist par excellence, ready to betray his allies if yesterday’s enemies seemed likely today to become useful friends. And he had always been a shrewd and cautious judge of what could and what could not be done. He had taken the maximum advantage of the British policy of non-intervention during the governor-generalships of Barlow and Minto, but he had early realised that Moira was determined to act in defence of Nagpur or Jaipur, and had abandoned his plans against them. The Pindaris had been his strength, Holkar and his tributary states his resource, but he saw in 1817 that both were at an end.

Fortunately Amir Khan knew what was to be done under such circumstances. In March 1817 he despatched his agent Niranjan Lal to the Resident at Delhi with certain definite proposals. The agent stated that having arrived at the age of sixty five, his master’s objects were rest and a tranquil settlement for the remainder of his days in order that he might prepare for the next world. He therefore wanted the guarantee of the British Government for territories he had already acquired from Holkar and the Rajput states. In return he agreed not only to surrender his artillery “which he estimates at three hundred pieces”, but also to co-operate against the Pindaris. In addition, Metcalfe reported, “an offer has been made of the services of Meer Khan for the purpose of establishing our influence at the court of Holkar, with a subsidiary alliance on the same footing with our alliances with the

49. Wasil Mohammad to Ameer Khan, undated, B.P.S.C. 18 July, 1817, No. 8

50. Metcalfe to Adam, 22 March, 1817, para 5, B.C. vol. 68/8901.

51. Ibid. para 4, p. 30
Poona, Hyderabad and Nagpore courts.” Metcalfe did not put much faith in these offers of submission and aid. “To have Meer Khan as an instrument for the extension of British influence over India and the establishment of peace and prosperity in the room of anarchy and devastation,” he said, “seems so improbable an event, that one cannot listen to such proposals without extreme distrust.” However, though the Governor-General, too, was sceptical, he thought the proposed surrender of artillery “offers certainly the object which the Governor-General in Council would consider the most desirable to be obtained to any arrangement with that chief.” Governor-General therefore suggested that it might be worthwhile to keep the discussion open without giving any positive encouragement to the agent’s overtures.

While thus negotiating Amir Khan had no hesitation in maintaining his usual correspondence with the Maratha camps. He wrote in July to Khandu Pant, Holkar’s vakil at Poona. “This is the state to which the British Government has brought the Peshwa. [Bajirao had just signed the humiliating treaty of 13 June.] Now let all chiefs unite. I have written to Maharajah Doulat Row Sindiah not to put any trust in the negotiations of the British Government, and to recommend that all unit and arrange matters in concert, as otherwise the fate of all will be like that of the Peshwa.”

This letter was seen by the Peshwa, who in reply sent his two agents, Govind Pandit and Ramkishen to Amir Khan’s Camp. They proposed that Amir Khan should go to Poona with his force, the Peshwa paying his expense. Amir Khan did not, however, accept, since he had received favourable accounts from his agent at Delhi of the progress of his negotiations with the British Government. Yet again, a month later he

52. Ibid., para 2, p. 29
53. Ibid., para 3, p. 29
54. Adam to Metcalfe, 7 April, 1817, B.C. vol. 689/8901, p. 37
55. Ibid.
56. Metcalfe to Adam, 22 July, 1817, B.P.C. 15 Aug. 1817, No. 4
57. Metcalfe to Adam, 10 Aug. 1817, B.P.C. 30 Aug. 1817, No. 35
58. Metcalfe to Adam, 7 Sept. 1817, B.P.C. 26, Sept. 1817, No. 35
reported to Holkar’s Government, “the Resident at Delhi has bribed my agent Nerunjun Lal and has sent him to me, with offers of a territory if I will separate myself from everyone else, and take service with the English, I have replied that I have no intention of taking service and that I have at my command fifty thousand horse and [foot, three hundred guns and thirty thousand Pindarries.”

Such was Amir Khan. He was sincere to nobody, but to his own interest. His conduct was mainly guided by the principle of selling himself to whichever of the parties concerned would pay for his services at the highest rate. His established relation with the Pindaris and the Marathas might tempt him to join them in opposing the British Government, as might the offer of the Peshwa, but his respect for British power ultimately drew him to seek British protection and support for what he had already acquired.

In August, therefore, Amir Khan, again sent his agent to the Resident at Delhi. In addition to the proposals already placed before the Resident, the agent now stated that his master wished for “an estate in Rohilcund free from the operation of our [the British] courts of justice,...and expected pecuniary assistance to enable him to discharge superfluous troops.”

As hostages for his fidelity in the intended engagement Amir Khan agreed to send his family to reside at Delhi. To the renewed negotiations the Resident was more receptive and he sought fresh instructions from the Governor-General. Early in October the instructions arrived authorizing the Resident to conclude a treaty with Amir Khan. The Governor-General did not find any objection to guaranteeing to him and his family in perpetuity the places which he had already acquired in Holkar’s territories, up to the value of ten or twelve lakhs of rupees per annum. “Nothing can be more just than that the power which has raised him to the

58. Metcalfe to Adam, 13 Aug. 1817, B.P.S.C. 5 Sept. 1817, No. 39
60. Ibid., para 13.
baneful eminence on which he stands should bear the expense of reclaiming him to quiet and inoffensive pursuits.”

But because of the intention of re-establishing peace in India and of restoring the “pacific states” as nearly as possible to their former efficiency, the Governor-General held the grant of an estate in Rohilkhand to be “nearly impracticable and extremely undesirable.”

Otherwise if Amir Khan would disband his battalions and deliver their arms to the British Government at a fair valuation, maintain only a limited number of troops, separate himself from the Pindaris and do nothing to violate the general peace of India, he might be granted a territorial settlement.

On these terms Metcalfe concluded a treaty with Amir Khan, who became the respectable Nawab of Tonk. The treaty was ratified by the Governor-General in Council on 15 November, and Amir Khan in a letter to the Resident virtually ratified it also on 3 December 1817. If the treaty of Gwalior with Sindia had been a prerequisite for success in the operations against the Pindaris, the treaty with Amir Khan was a major part in the destruction of their system. For Amir Khan to have renounced his predatory life was half the battle. “All that we should require from Ameer Khan,” the Governor-General declared, “would be his relinquishing his predatory life, and ranging himself on the side of civilized Government and tranquillity. With this view he must be required to withdraw his forces from the territories of the Rajput states, and restore the forts and lands in them held by his officers, and to engage never to interfere with them again, to fix his residence at some principal town within his territory.”

62. Ibid. para 25
63. Ibid. para 29
64. Metcalfe to Adam, 9 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C. 28 Nov. 1817, No. 16
65. Adam to Metcalfe, 15 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1817, No. 26
66. Metcalfe to Adam, 3 Dec. 1817, B.P.S.C. 26 Dec. 1817, No. 73
It will be remembered that in March 1817 Amir Khan had offered to use his influence to bring Holkar's state into alliance with the Company. Since that offer was rejected it may be worthwhile to note the ultimate fate of the state in which Amir Khan had played such a powerful role. By the autumn of 1817 with Amir Khan withdrawn from its affairs, the Indore state lacked any effective government, since Tulsibai was unable to control the mutinous soldiery and the Pathan auxiliaries. On 1 October, however, Hastings demanded of the Holkar government that it restored order in the state and assist in the destruction of the Pindaris. If it would not, it must be treated as an enemy, if it could not then it must accept British protection and control. It was also ordered to accept the Company's settlement with Amir Khan.

Tulsibai would have been glad to accept an alliance, but on 6 November the Peshwa and on 26 November Appa Saheb of Nagpur opened war upon the Company. The Peshwa's appeal for Holkar's support was heard by the Pathan chiefs, headed by Gafur Khan, who seized and murdered Tulsibai and declared war. Near Ujjain at Mahidpur on 21 December, Holkar's forces met the British army, and were destroyed. Malharrao Holkar, then eleven years old, fell into Malcolm's hands. He was made to pay heavily for the Pathan chiefs' folly. By a treaty signed on 6 January 1818 he agreed to "the confirmation of Amir Khan's independence and his engagement with the British, the cession of Holkar's claims on the Rajput states, the gift to Raj Rana of Kotah of the four districts which he had rented from Holkar, and lastly, the cession in perpetuity of the whole of Holkar's possessions to the south of the Satpura Range, including Khandesh."

68. Ibid.
69. Metcalfe to Adam, 17 Oct, 1817, B.P.S.C. 14 Nov. 1817, No. 48
70. Metcalfe to Tod, 21 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1817, No. 109
71. Adam to Metcalfe, 3 Dec. 1817, B.P.S.C. 26 Dec. 1817, No. 4
72. M.S, Mehta, op. cit., p. 115
73. Malcolm to Adam, 7 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb. 1818, No. 94; M. S. Mehta, op. cit., p. 116
It remains to consider the conduct of the campaign against the Pindaris themselves. For this an elaborate military preparation had been under way since May, with Hastings himself preparing to lead the centre division, and Sir Thomas Hislop, Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army in charge of the Deccan army, with Malcolm as his political agent. Their aim was to make a concerted sweep against the Pindaris after the rains.

In the face of these massive preparations the Pindaris made their own arrangements for a united stand. In June, taking advantage of a revolt of Holkar’s constantly starving forces, and consequent chaos and confusion in his camp, Karim Khan effected his escape and rejoined his old division. Holkar’s vakil later reported to the Delhi Resident that Gafur Khan had received “a bribe from the Pindarrah chief, Kurreem Khan, and connived at his escape.” Karim Khan’s return emboldened the Pindaris, and also solved their problem of leadership. Their squabbles and dissensions had continued, Chitu Khan remaining irreconcilable, even in the face of British preparations. But in July, soon after his escape, Karim Khan invited Chitu Khan to visit him, called likewise upon Wasil Muhammad and Namdar Khan to unite under his command. He himself set about entertaining new infantry and cavalry, at the rate of a rupee a day per man, and attended to the organisation and discipline of his division. The Pindaris were further heartened in August when Karim Khan reported that because of the rapidly worsening relations between the Peshwa and the British they could soon expect help from that quarter: Trimbakji had

74. Minute of the Governor-General, 10 May, 1817, B.P.S.C. 10 May, 1817, No. 1
75. Metcalfe to Adam, 22 June, 1817, B.P.C. 15 July, 1817, No. 8
76. Metcalfe to Adam, 24 June, 1817, B.P.C. 15 July, 1817, No. 10
77. Close to Adam, 20 July, 1817, B.P.C. 8 Aug. 1817, No. 49
78. A Paper of Intelligence, 18 July, 1817, B.P.C. 15 Aug. 1817, No. 16
79. A Paper of Intelligence, 22 July, 1817, B.P.C. 5 Sept. 1817, No. 43
assured him that "they need not be afraid of want of funds, as they will be supplied by the Sirkar."\(^80\) Karim Khan was also no less emboldened by Sindia's letter that he would conciliate all the principal zamindars in their favour, set off his principal chief to join them and supply them with money.\(^81\) In mid-September Karim Khan, Chitu Khan and Wasil Muhammad, the three topmost leaders of the Pindaris, met at Gyaraspur, between Bhopal and Saugor. They had by now reconciled their differences\(^82\) and after three days of earnest deliberations they agreed to organise "a joint and desperate stand" against the attacks they were now sure would be launched against them by the Company's troops.\(^83\) At the end of their consultations the three chiefs took an oath upon the Quran to preserve their unanimity.\(^84\)

But with Sindia's and Amir Khan's acceptance of the terms offered or imposed by the British Government, and with the Peshwa's defeat in November 1817,\(^85\) their confidence and plans for making a bold stand disappeared together. As the encircling British forces moved in upon them they abandoned their cantonments and set off to the hills north-west of Bhopal with their families and everything of value they possessed.\(^86\)

The British plan had been for a simultaneous attack upon the three main Pindari positions, that of Wasil Muhammad at Gyaraspur, of Karim Khan at Berasia and Chitu Khan at Paperthun, all of them some twenty or thirty miles to the north of Bhopal.\(^87\) Malcolm was entrusted with the move-

80. Metcalfe to Adam, 10 Aug. 1817, B.P.C. 30 Aug. 1817, No. 35
81. A Paper of Intelligence, 25 Sept. 1817, B.P.C. 7 Nov. 1817, No. 34
82. Metcalfe to Adam, 11 Sept. 1817, B.P.C. 3 Oct. 1817, No. 21
83. Wauchope to Adam, 22 Sept. 1817, B.P.C. 10 Oct. 1817, No. 35
84. A Paper of Intelligence, 25 Sept. 1817, B.P.C. 7 Nov. 1817, No. 34
85. Hastings to Hislop, 21 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1817, No. 3
86. Hastings to Hislop, 21 Nov, 1817, B.P.S.C. 12 Dec. 1817, No. 2
ment of the Deccan army across the Narmada in three columns, the right under Adams, the centre under his own control, and the left under Marshall.\textsuperscript{88} Hislop remained with his headquarters and a reserve striking force, south of the river.\textsuperscript{89} The crossings took place on 14, 15 and 16 November, the right column moving on Raisen, the centre on Ashta and the left on Unchand, in a front extending roughly a hundred miles from the east of Bhopal almost to Indore. Meanwhile, from the north, Major-General Donkin had taken his position on the Upper Chambal to close the ring around them.\textsuperscript{90}

By 22 November Malcolm’s three columns had reached their front, the Pindaris retreating, much encumbered, before them. From Ashta Malcolm drove on towards Shujalpur to the northward, pausing only to leave a detachment to surround the fort of Talem where Wasil Kunar, Chitu’s adopted son had taken shelter with a small party of horse. By the 26th they had surrendered.\textsuperscript{91} From Shujalpur Malcolm pushed on after Chitu Khan’s division, said to be marching towards Jaipur.\textsuperscript{92}

Meanwhile Karim Khan and Wasil Muhammad with their Pindaris had set off to take refuge in Harauti. But on ascending the Lohari Ghat, ten miles north of Shahabad, they were driven back by a British force posted there.\textsuperscript{93} Unable to cross the Chambal, held by General Donkin’s forces and hotly pursued by Adams they doubled back hurriedly towards the south-west by way of Shirgarh and Chapara.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{88} Hislop to Hastings, 14 Nov. 1817, para 12, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1817, No. 76
\textsuperscript{89} Hastings to Hislop, 25 Nov. 1817, para 7, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1817, No. 78
\textsuperscript{90} Hislop to Hastings, 26 Nov. 1817, no. 31, Hastings MSS. (EUR. D. 463); Hislop to Hastings, 14 Nov. 1817, para 12, B.P.S.C. 19 Dec. 1817, No. 76
\textsuperscript{91} Malcolm to Hislop, 26 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C, 24 July 1818, No 229
\textsuperscript{92} Tod to Adams, 7 Dec. 1817, B.P.S.C. 9 Jan. 1818, No. 53
\textsuperscript{93} Tod to Donkin, 13 Dec. 1817, B.P.S.C. 23 Jan. 1818, No. 13
\textsuperscript{94} Marshall to Brown, 22 Dec. 1817, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb. 1818, No. 43
to join Holkar at Pratabgarh, just west of Mandasaur, in the greatest alarm, and having thrown away every particle of baggage because of the rapidity of their flight.\textsuperscript{95} Karim Khan’s family and baggage with a guard of some 250 Pindaris, which had been left encamped at Barode had meanwhile been surprised by Donkin’s forces, and Lalki Begam, the wife of Karim Khan had been captured.\textsuperscript{96}

At the end of December Chitu Khan also came in to join Karim Khan and Wasil Muhammad near Mandasaur.\textsuperscript{97} But the defeat of Holkar’s army at Mahidpur, and his acceptance of British terms, by the treaty of Mandasaur, on 6 January 1818 made any hope of a concerted stand there impossible. The combined Pindaris therefore took the direct route to Sirur, only to be overtaken and defeated by Donkin’s column on 2 January 1818.\textsuperscript{98} This was the beginning of the end. Karim Khan entered Sindia’s territory of Jawad, reportedly with the connivance of Yashvantrao Bhau, Sindia’s commander there. But after encamping close to the town for three days he was driven off by Yashvantrao, who was himself under the pressure from Captain Caufield, posted there to keep watch on Yashvantrao’s division.\textsuperscript{99} Captain Caufield had immediately drawn up several manifestos in the name of Yashvantrao Bhau calling upon the inhabitants of Jawad to attack the Pindaris wherever they might appear. He warned the village headmen of the district that any kind of help to the Pindaris would cause their own destruction.\textsuperscript{100}

Despairing of any help from Yashvantrao Karim Khan rapidly proceeded towards the thick jungle between Satola and Sadri, but on his way he was met and pursued by Major Clarke, who successfully surrounded his force then amounting to three thousand men, killing and wounding nearly a

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\textsuperscript{95} Tod to Adam, 2 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb. 1818, No. 50
\textsuperscript{96} Donkin to Hastings, 18 Dec. 1817; B.P.S.C. 16 Jan. 1818, No. 21
\textsuperscript{97} Hislop to Hastings, 3 Jan. 1818, Hastings MSS, (Eur. D. 463). No. 47
\textsuperscript{98} Adam to Donkin, 4 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb. 1818, No. 29
\textsuperscript{99} Caufield to Adam, 6 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 30 Jan. 1818, No. 46
\textsuperscript{100} Caufield to Malcolm, 8 Jan. 1818; B.P.S.C. 30 Jan. 1818, No. 51
thousand of them. Karim Khan, Wasis Muhammad and Namdar Khan with a selected band of followers got through in secret to Rajgarh. Karim Khan there decided to surrender himself to the British Government, as the only way of saving himself from complete annihilation. He immediately despatched Sheikh Hussain with a letter to Malcolm stating his intention to submit, and his readiness to serve the British Government provided he were pardoned for his past conduct. In reply Stewart, Malcolm's assistant, addressed a note to Karim Khan, Namdar Khan and the other Pindari chiefs stating that "the British Government have no occasion whatever for your services as soldiers. But if you will come and throw yourselves on the generosity of the Most Noble the Governor-General and engage to abandon your present mode of life and employ your influence with your followers to do the same, you will be well received and provided with the means of future subsistence. The Sirdars who may surrender will be allowed to retain their horses and arms but all others must deliver them up." On 27 January, the Nawab of Bhopal at Stewart's instance, also wrote to the Pindari chiefs, urging them to submit to the British Government and saying that if they were willing, they might come to him and then proceed to Stewart's camp to settle their affairs.

On receipt of the letter Nizamuddin, Namdar Khan's father-in-law, visited the Nawab of Bhopal and informed him of Namdar Khan's desire to surrender to the British Government, provided he would not be sent to Europe. In reply Stewart assured him that Namdar Khan would not be deported.

101. Clarke to Henley, 14 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 3 April, 1818, No. 17
103. A note addressed by Stewart to Kureem, Namdar Khan and others 25 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818, No. 76
104. Nabob of Bhopal to Kureem, Namdar Khan, 27 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818, No. 70
to Europe.  

He then spoke of Namdar Khan’s followers who expected to be paid for their horses. This Stewart “distinctly declared to be totally inadmissible......whatever might be given to them to enable them to gain a subsistence would be the free gift of the Governor-General and not the price of their arms or horses.”

Shortly afterwards on 2 February Namdar Khan with a small party of hundred Pindaris surrendered to Colonel Adams. In Adam’s camp he was sympathetically received and assured that his past conduct would be forgotten; by his good behaviour he was now to “promote the welfare of his adherents and at the same time advance his own character.”

Namdar Khan’s submission and the sympathetic reception he received at Adams’s camp were a signal for others to follow suit. Two days later a first group of Karim Khan’s division surrendered themselves to Adams, and after a few days Shahmat Khan, Karim Khan’s son with two hundred Pindaris submitted to Zalim Singh of Kotah. Karim Khan himself was still wavering, moving among the hills near Kotah, sick and in fear of being seized. He expressed his intention to submit to the British Government, but still he could not believe in the assurances that his past conduct would be pardoned. While resting, because of illness, in a poor villager’s house, Mirzafar Ali, Malcolm’s agent met him and advised him to surrender. On 15 February 1818 Karim

105. Stewart to Malcolm, 1 Feb. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818, No. 71
106. Ibid.
108. Col. Adams to Adam, 3 Feb. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818, No. 71
110. Adam to Tod, 12 Feb. 1818, B.P.S.C, 13 March, 1818, No. 78
111. Malcolm to Hastings, 17 Feb. 1818, B.P.S.C. 17 April, 1818, No. 60
Khan, who was “poorly dressed, looked fatigued and depressed in spirits” reached Malcolm’s camp and surrendered “on a general promise of pardon and future subsistence.”

Wasil Muhammad with his followers had left the other leaders and proceeded to Sindia’s camp at Gwalior. There he surrendered himself, expressing the hope that he would be protected by that Maratha chief. This was another problem for Sindia: if he held sincerely to the treaty of Gwalior, he ought to prevent Wasil Muhammad’s coming to his camp, and certainly not offer his protection to the Pindari chief, on the other hand he must feel some “disgrace in giving up this chief who had sought his protection.”

However, information of Wasil Muhammad’s arrival at Sindia’s camp soon reached Stewart, the acting Resident, who immediately remonstrated with Sindia against his giving protection to a Pindari leader. He observed that though it was far from his intention to subject Sindia to any unnecessary humiliation, yet he could not ignore the fact that when “the flames of the system of violence and rapine which had so long laid waste this country” had hardly yet been extinguished, the protection of a Pindari chief by Sindia would excite the hope of reviving that system in the minds of all the turbulent Pindaris still hiding in the hills and jungles. Sindia realised the impossibility of protecting Wasil Muhammad and at last decided to deliver him up to the Resident. On 24 May at about midnight the Pindari chief was brought a prisoner to the Residency.

Chitu Khan’s fate proved even worse than that of Karim Khan and Wasil Muhammad. In January 1818 being separated from the main body he turned towards Udaipur. At

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112. Malcolm to Lushington, 17 Feb. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818 No. 8
114. Ibid.
116. Ibid.
Dhara, he encamped for rest without realising that the Gujarat force under William Keir was closely following him.\textsuperscript{117} The surprise was complete and his defeat by the Gujarat force broke his power altogether.\textsuperscript{118} He was thenceforth a fugitive, his followers flying in all directions while he himself with a small party of the Pindaris turned back towards Bhopal.\textsuperscript{119} In March he informed the Nawab of Bhopal of his intention to submit to the British Government on condition that he would be allowed to retain all the horse he had with him and further to have a Jagir near Hindia.\textsuperscript{120} The Nawab was incensed at these extravagant conditions, and ordered the seizure of their horses. However, the whole party mounted their horses in an instant and started off towards their former haunts near the Narmada.\textsuperscript{121} There Chitu Khan met Appa Saheb, the Raja of Nagpur,\textsuperscript{122} who gave him confidence and hope of fighting their common enemies.\textsuperscript{123} This may explain Chitu’s negative attitude to Malcolm’s offer of terms. Malcolm in a letter to Chitu Khan stated that “some time ago you had proceeded to Bhopal to deliver up yourselves to the British Government. I was extremely gratified. I subsequently heard that you fled from Bhopal because you thought troops were moving against you.” Malcolm then invited Chitu Khan to see him without

\textsuperscript{117} Caufield to Adam, 6 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 30 Jan. 1818, No. 46.
\textsuperscript{118} Caufield to Close, 9 Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 30 Jan. 1818, No. 53.
\textsuperscript{119} Letter from Blacker, 4 Feb. 1818. B.P.S.C. 17 April, 1818, No. 50.
\textsuperscript{120} Henley to Adam, 25 March, 1818, B.P.S.C. 1 May, 1818, No. 25.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{122} Appa Saheb was defeated in the battle of Sitabaldi on 26 November 1817 and forced to accept terms on 16 December. He was formally restored to his former position on 8 January 1818. But he continued fomenting intrigues against the British Government, as a result he was again captured and on 3 May sent to Allahabad under strong guard, but on his way he managed to escape to the hills between Nagpur and Narmada.
\textsuperscript{123} Malcolm to Henley, 30 March, 1818, B.P.S.C. 24 July, 1818; No. 383.
fear, assuring that no attack would be made on him. "If either this night or tomorrow you deliver yourselves up to me, your life shall be safe, and for the support of yourselves and families you shall have either a monthly sum of money or lands granted you in some of the towns, districts of provinces of Hindoostan that are subject to the British Government....But if you will not come in, troops from all quarters shall do their utmost to destroy you."  

No response to this offer ever reached Malcolm. The Governor-General directed Malcolm to renew his vigorous and active pursuit of Chitu Khan, and detached parties began to move all over the adjoining jungles of Asirgarh, though in vain. At last, in February 1819, his head and a part of his body together with his weapons were found near a tiger's den. These were brought before his son, Muhammad Punja, who instantly identified them as those of his father. The last of the great Pindari leaders had been accounted for.

125. Ibid.
126. Adam to Malcolm, 11 April, 1818, B.P.S.C. 1 May, 1818, No. 27.
127. Watson to Henley, 27 Feb. 1819, B.P.C. 3 April, 1819, No. 59,
CHAPTER IX

SETTLEMENT OF THE PINDARIS AND PATHANS, 1818

Section I.

By the beginning of 1818 the campaign against the Pindaris was virtually ended, their military system had been destroyed their leaders had surrendered, and the individual troopers were accepting by the hundred the British assurance of pardon. The Pindari problem was dead and only awaited burial. Discussion within the Council, and with the political agents in the field, turned therefore upon the manner of interment, and on how best to ensure that nothing should ever wake the deal.

One solution, that which individual Pindari leaders had suggested as far back as 1812, would have been to employ the Pindaris as irregulars in the Company's armies. That was rejected. Their employment, as Adam warned Malcolm, would afford an example and a cloak to other states "who might still retain a secret disposition to support the predatory system for sheltering and protecting and even publicly upholding bodies of marauders."¹ That had been the reason for compelling Sindia, by the treaty of Gwalior, to renounce the right of taking any Pindari into his service, and why he had been compelled to surrender Wasil Muhammad when he had sought refuge with him.²

What was required was that the Pindaris should be reabsorbed into civil life, the leaders as respectable zamindars, their followers as industrious members of the settled population. It might have been feared that their reckless and predatory habits would have destroyed those qualities required for leading a peaceful and inoffensive life.³ But in fact it

². See Chap. VIII, p. 370.
³. Adam to Stewart, Jan. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818, No. 70.
was known that the lands occupied by the Pindaris themselves, before they had been driven from their haunts, had been in general well cultivated, and that those who had abandoned their predatory habits and settled in Bhopal had become useful and industrious subjects. 4 "These circumstances," it was argued, "afford reason to hope that with proper encouragement and management accompanied by a vigilant superintendence and prompt suppression of any symptom of recurrence to their former habits, a considerable portion of their persons will ultimately betake themselves to industrious and peaceful pursuits." 5

The question then became, where should the Pindaris be settled? Two main principles were laid down. The first was that the Pindari leaders must be removed altogether from Central India, the second that for the mass of troopers it was only necessary that the areas chosen should be accessible open country, and that in no case should they be allowed to settle with their leaders. 6 The size of the problem was uncertain, for many Pindaris were still hiding in the hills and jungles in fear of punishment, and when they would surrender, and in what number was unknown. But it was anticipated that having been cut off from their leaders, they soon lose their former spirit, 7 so that they might "for the most part be suffered to mix with the mass of the population with which they must gradually assimilate when the means of pursuing their former predatory courses are cut off." 8 It was suggested to Malcolm, therefore, that the Pindaris might be settled in southern Malwa, and if the Nawab of Bhopal or Zalim Singh of Kotah agreed, they might be assigned waste lands in those states, though subject there either to British official supervision.

5. Ibid.
or that of the ruler. But they must not be allowed in country of any natural strength or difficult of access: "In this view their establishment in the strong country between the Nerbudda and the Ghauts is decidedly objectionable."

Further, more detailed instructions followed in February, by which it was laid down that land for the Pindaris should in the first instance be allotted rent free, but on the understanding that after a certain period it should become liable to assessment. Pecuniary assistance was also to be afforded at the outset to enable them to buy cattle, ploughs and other agricultural stock. It was also realised that immediately after their surrender many Pindaris would be without any means of subsistence. It was suggested by Colonel Adams that some temporary relief would thus be "indispensably necessary in the case of a considerable portion of the Pindarries who from various accidents during their late flight have become entirely destitute." Since, however, it would be necessary to identify Pindaris so as to prevent persons who had never been Pindaris claiming the allowance, it was proposed that except for recognized leaders no one coming into surrender should receive subsistence until the expiration of some two weeks. The daily rate of subsistence proposed was as follows:

1. Horseman being of the Pindari tribe by birth or by long adherence ...
   2 annas
2. Thokdar of less than 100 horse ...
   4 annas
3. Thokdar of less than 200 horse ...
   8 annas
4. Chief of each division ...
   1 rupee 8 annas

10. Ibid. para 8.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
These suggestions were accepted, and it was also laid down that the temporary allowance should continue till the end of December 1818 when they would harvest their first Kharif crop. ¹⁵

At the same time arrangements for their permanent settlement were made. With the exception of the Principal leaders, the Pindaris were divided into three classes and provision was made according to their rank, and influence. A Pindari horseman received from 25 to 30 bighas of lands, and the two classes of Thokdar from 30 to 50 bighas and from 50 to 70 bighas respectively. ¹⁶ Cash payments were made to each for the purchase of cattle, agricultural implements and seed corn. A Pindari horseman received an advance of 50 rupees, an inferior Thokdar 125 rupees and a superior Thokdar 300 rupees. ¹⁷ The extra allotment of land and cash allowances to the Thokdars or minor Pindari chiefs was regarded as a useful means of getting them to give a lead. It was "a matter of policy to hold out to them an adequate encouragement." for with a body of such unprincipled individuals as the Pindaris, a good example set by contented leaders would be invaluable. ¹⁸

In the event the response to the measures was very encouraging. In Bhopal for example the Nawab had charged Shahzada Mussia with the allotment of lands to the Pindaris, and it was decided to build some thirty Pindari villages. In July it was reported by Henley, agent for Pindari affairs, that they had been "furnished with the best lands in the country" and that twenty two of the villages had already been built and work upon the remaining eight commenced. ¹⁹ By the end of 1818 he was able to tell the Governor-General of "the rapidly increasing prosperity of the district of Shujal-

¹⁵. Proposed arrangement submitted to the Nawab of Bhopal by Henley, 11 March, 1818, B.P.S.C. 1 May, 1818, No. 20
¹⁶. Proposed arrangement submitted to the Nawab of Bhopal by Henley, 11 March, 1818, B.P.S.C. 1 May, 1818, No. 20
¹⁷. Henley to Adam, 13 March, 1818, B.P.S.C. 1 May, 1818, No. 20
¹⁸. Ibid.
¹⁹. Henley to Adam, 26 July, 1818, B.P.S.C. 29 Aug. 1818, No. 89
poor, all the villages of which are now reoccupied. The town is also becoming an emporium for trade of the surrounding country. Bankers and merchants are repairing to it from all quarters.”20

The same principle of providing the means for resettlement in civilian life was applied to the Pindari chiefs, their families and immediate dependants. But in their case it was thought essential to move them out of Central India, though “without imposing any further restraint on their personal freedom.”21 In choosing the area to which they were to be removed it was necessary to avoid placing them among people whose character and nature were similar to their own. For this reason the districts west of the Jumna, as also Rohilkhand and Farukhabad were regarded as unsuitable. There was no objection to fixing their residence in populous cities, if they preferred a money pension, but in that case Benaras, “which was already too much the resort of persons standing nearly in the same relation to Government as the Pindary chiefs will be”, should be excluded. Patna or Tirhut, where they would find little encouragement to their usual pursuits, would be more suitable.22 If, as the Government anticipated, the leaders preferred a landed provision to a pension, then allotments of land could be conveniently made in Gorakhpur and the northern Doab, and officers dealing with the Pindaris should encourage them to select those areas.23

There were three notable exceptions to this general rule. The first was Amir Khan, Nawab of Tonk. It may be argued that he was exempted because with considerable shrewdness he had avoided direct conflict with the Company. However that was certainly not true of the second case, that of his brother-in-law, Gafur Khan who despite his part in Holkar’s resistance, was created Nawab of Jaora.24 It would

22. Ibid., para 9.
23. Ibid., para 11.
seem that in their cases the very real difference between the Pathans and Pindaris, denied by Hastings, was yet recognised. The third case, however, was that of Namdar Khan, a true Pindari leader, who was allowed to settle in Bhopal. The Nawab of Bhopal made the most earnest request that Namdar Khan be allowed to settle in his territory, and offered to be responsible for his conduct and such of his dependants as might remain attached to him.  

Henley pointed out to the Nawab that it was a primary condition that the Pindari leaders were to be removed to a distance from their former haunts and Namdar Khan ought certainly not to remain in Bhopal while the general mass of the Pindaris were settling there.  

Nevertheless, since the Nawab was eager to stand security for him, and “in consideration of his early surrender thro’ the medium of the Nabob of Bhopal and of his former service to that state”, Namdar Khan was allowed to reside in Bhopal as “a special indulgence” on the part of the British Government.  

This special favour shown was approved by the Governor-General, though he made it clear that such indulgence should not be extended to other chiefs.  

Henley therefore laid it down that while living at such place in the town of Bhopal as the Nawab might decide, Namdar Khan was to be as much under the Nawab’s control as all his other subjects. He was granted a pension of 8,125 rupees per annum, commencing from 1 February 1818, the date of his surrender. This was to be applied solely to the support of Namdar Khan himself and his family, consisting of his wife, 2 sons and 120 dependants; and no part of it might be disposed of in any other way, either in presents to

27. Statement regarding Namdar Khan’s settlement; Enclo. in a letter from Henley, 17 April 1818, B.P.S.C. 29 Mav 1818, No. 61.  
28. Adam to Henley, 10 May, 1818, B.P.S.C. No. 3.
or maintenance of any other person, of whatever description.\textsuperscript{29} Subsequently, the Nawab requested Henley to make provision for Shujabat Khan, Namdar Khan’s younger brother, aged 17 years, who had never been associated in any predatory excursion and who long ago had surrendered in Kotah. Since Henley now thought Namdar Khan’s pension none too large, he proposed that a stipend of 2000 rupees per annum should be sanctioned to Shujabat Khan, commencing from the date of his arrival at Bhopal, and to be paid to Namdar Khan on his account.\textsuperscript{30} These arrangements were approved by the Governor-General in Council,\textsuperscript{31} and in October 1818 sanads were issued to Namdar Khan and his brother laying down that the nearest political agent should pay the money in quarterly instalments as follows:\textsuperscript{32}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>2,125 rupees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and to Shujabat Khan 500 rupees each quarter.\textsuperscript{33}

Both the wisdom and the expediency of the exceptional and generous treatment of Namdar Khan may perhaps be questioned. He had not been a major figure, and though nephew and adopted son of Karim Khan, had led only part of his division. He had been of assistance to the Nawab in defending Bhopal against the armies of Sindia and Raghunji Bhosle, but his had been the mercenary role of a Pindari, seeking his own profit and ready to plunder friend and foe alike. Again his early surrender had been a useful example, but it was scarcely a positive merit in a defeated man. There thus seemed little ground for permitting him to stay in Bhopal or

\textsuperscript{29} Statement regarding Namdar Khan’s settlement, Enclo. in a letter from Henley, 17 April, 1818, B.P.S.C. 29 May, 1818, No. 61.
\textsuperscript{30} Henley to Adam, 17 April, 1818, B.P.S.C. 29 May, 1818, No. 61
\textsuperscript{31} Adam to Henley, 10 May, 1818, B.P.S.C. 29 May, 1818, No. 3
\textsuperscript{32} Draft of Sunnund [to Namdar Khan, Enclo. in a letter from Henley, 15 Oct. 1818, B.P.S.C. 7 Nov. 1818, No. 85.
\textsuperscript{33} Enclo. in a letter from Henley, 15 Oct. 1818, B.P.S.C. 7 Nov., 1818, No. 86
for making a separate allowance to his brother—and, as soon appeared, there were many objections.

Karim Khan, on his surrender, had been told that he was to go to Gorakhpur. When he heard that Namdar Khan was permitted to stay in Bhopal, he at once declared that “though he considered Namdar Khan as his son, no circumstance would reconcile him to the latter being treated with more liberality than was shown him.”34 He demanded justice from the British Government. Malcolm replied that such an expression of pride was quite out of place in his present condition: “He must recollect that he was to receive his provision as a grant from the liability not the justice of the British Government.”35 It was “not without some difficulty”, however, that Malcolm made him sensible of the generosity of the proposal for sending him to Gorakhpur. Yet he was offered lands there equal in value to Rs. 16,000 a year for the support of his family and immediate dependants, and an allowance of Rs. 1,000 a month until he was settled there, with an immediate advance of four months allowance for the expenses of his journey.36 Moreover, at Karim Khan’s request Malcolm agreed that Kadir Baksh, a principal of the Holkar-shahi Pindaris and a regular companion on his expeditions should be allowed to live with him in Gorakhpur. Kadir Baksh had commanded 2,000 horse, 800 infantry and four guns, virtually a separate division, and he was accordingly granted an advance of Rs. 1,200 for the journey, with a suggested provision of land worth Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 a year for his permanent support.37

Malcolm was upheld in the course he had taken. The Collector of Gorakhpur, Ricketts, was directed to secure land yielding between Rs. 3,500 to 4,000 annually for Kadir Baksh, who was given a monthly allowance of Rs. 300. Both in his

35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
case, and that of Karim Khan, the cash allowances were to continue until the end of 1818 or until the first harvest after they came into possession of their lands.\textsuperscript{38} Malcolm felt that he had been generous, and also right: “this arrangement is consonant to the wish of the Governor-General and the best as far as I can judge in every view for the public interests. It carries this popular chief of freebooters and his immediate adherents to a great distance from Malwa, and consequently from those scenes and recollection which would keep them continually on the feet and dispose them on the occurrence of any changes to revert to their former courses.”\textsuperscript{39} Hastings agreed. “The Governor-General cannot allow the jealousies and unreasonable pretensions of Kurreem Khan to oppose the concession of a special indulgence in any other case that may on peculiar grounds be deemed to merit a more favourable consideration.”\textsuperscript{40}

Nevertheless, shortly afterwards, Karim Khan made a further request for a provision either in land or in money for his sons. “As my sons, Shahmat Khan, Shumsher Bahadur, Kooshau Khan and Rustam Khan gave up their Jageers to throw themselves upon the protection of the British Government,” he wrote, “I hope that a Jaidad or provision will be assigned for them also, on which they may be enabled to maintain themselves living in submission and obedience to the Hon’ble Company.”\textsuperscript{41} He then submitted a list of the jaidads that his sons had held.\textsuperscript{42}

\textsuperscript{38} Adam to Ricketts, 10 April, 1818, B.P.C. 1 May, 1818, No. 29
\textsuperscript{39} Malcolm to Adam, 23 March, 1818, B.P.S.C. 24 July, 1818, No. 367
\textsuperscript{40} Adam to Malcolm, 10 May, 1818, B.P.S.C. 29 May, 1818, No. 2
\textsuperscript{41} Copy of an Arzee from Karim Khan, B.P.C. 10 July, 1818, No.45
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Income per annum</th>
<th>Names of the rulers from whom they gained the Jaidads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shahmat Khan</td>
<td>26,000 rupees</td>
<td>Zalim Singh of Kotah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samshir Bahadur</td>
<td>10,000 , 6,000</td>
<td>Holkar, Zalim Singh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kushal Khan</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>Vizir Muhammad of Bhopal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rustam Khan</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>Sindia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, besides the advance of Rs. 4,000 that Malcolm had already made to him,Karim Khan asked for a further Rs. 10,000 for his support during the rainy season.\(^4\^3\)

The reply to Karim Khan’s application for an advance of Rs. 10,000 was that an advance to that extent was inadmissible. But in order to enable him to complete the arrangements connected with his arrival and establishment in Gorakhpur and to bring his family and dependants there the British Government agreed to a further advance of his stipend to the extent of Rs. 4,000.\(^4\^4\) His request for a separate provision for his sons was denounced, however, as “extravagant,” and based on “an entirely erroneous conception of the relation in which the submitted Pindarries stand towards the British Government.” He was advised to recollect the circumstances under which his sons had received the pardon and favour of the British Government.\(^4\^5\) “The lands which may have been heretofore held by them were not only voluntarily relinquished by them but had been resumed and that they cannot on any consideration be resolved nor can their former possession of them under very different circumstances be regarded as giving them any title to an equivalent now.\(^4\^6\) He was further reminded

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43. Ibid.
44. Adam to Stoneham, 20 June, 1818, B.P.C. 10 July, 1818, No. 46
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
that the permanent provision of land worth Rs. 16,000 a year fixed by Malcolm for his maintenance was distinctly declared to be for the support of his whole family and their immediate dependants and had been so accepted by him.\textsuperscript{47}

It is clear what difficulties the generous treatment of Namdar Khan had caused, and clear too that Karim Khan had some reason for feeling aggrieved. While he was a prisoner in Holkar's camp his three sons, Shahmat Khan, Shamahir Bahadur and Kushal Khan, better known as Kushal K\textsuperscript{umar}, had led their father's division jointly with his adopted son Namdar Khan. Yet while the first three now received no separate allowance, not only Namdar Khan but his young brother both received generous pensions. This was the more galling when it was noted that Karim Khan, with some five hundred and ninety souls dependant on him received Rs. 16,000 a year, while Namdar Khan, with one hundred and twenty three received Rs. 8,125.\textsuperscript{48}

Aggrieved though they may have felt, in June 1818 Karim Khan and Kadir Baksh, with a portion of their families and dependants, quietly made their move to Gorakhpur.\textsuperscript{49} The Collector had bought the taluqs of Ganeshpur for Kadir Baksh and Buraipur for Karim Khan,\textsuperscript{50} and they were shortly put in possession the Magistrate being directed to provide police protection against any outrage by the ousted proprietors or

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{48} Enclo. in a letter from Malcolm, 23 March, 1818. B.P.S.C. 24 July, 1818, No. 368
\textsuperscript{49} Adam to Stoneham, 10 June, 1818, B.P.S.C. 26 June, 1818, No. 34.
\textsuperscript{50} Colebrook to Adam, 5 June, 1818, B.C. vol. 729/19772, p.7. Lands proposed to be given to the chiefs Gorackpore Collectorship, 8 May, 1818, B.C. vol. 729/19772 p. 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estate</th>
<th>Value of lands in cultivation</th>
<th>Value of lands fit for cultivation</th>
<th>Value of Total waste lands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ganeshpur</td>
<td>1,738.0</td>
<td>913.14</td>
<td>1,181.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buraipur</td>
<td>5,084.13</td>
<td>4,291.2</td>
<td>6,029.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
villagers. They the Pindari chiefs, with their families and numerous dependants settled down, and built their houses living seemingly contented under the care and supervision of Henry Cock, who had been appointed Superintendent of the Pindari chiefs. It was not until 1826 that Karim Khan began voicing complaints about the inconveniences and disadvantages of his estate, and begged repeatedly for permission to return to his own country. But the old chief had not long to live, for on 13 May 1827 he died at his house at Sriganga. On his death the estate of Buraipur valued at Rs. 12,000 was made over in perpetuity to his four sons, subject to the payment of a quit rent of Rs. 600 per annum. The monetary allowance of Rs. 4,000 paid to Karim Khan to make up his original grant of Rs. 16,000 ceased from the date of his death.

The other leading Pindari for whom arrangements had to be made was Wasil Muhammad. He had failed to surrender himself to the British in response to their offers of pardon, and instead had sought refuge with Sindia, who handed him over as a prisoner, under pressure from the Resident. The Governor-General held that by his actions Wasil Muhammad had forfeited his right to any indulgence. But, in view of the known principle that the war had been against a system rather than the individual, and that the individual was to be rehabilitated to prevent any revival of that system, the Governor-General decided not to impose on Wasil Muhammad "any further degree of personal restraint than the restriction of his residence to a particular place where he will receive an allowance sufficient for his maintenance in suitable comfort." Furthermore he was informed that when his family joined him and if his conduct hereafter should merit the

51. Ricketts to Adam, 25 June, 1818, B.C. vol. 729/19772, p. 77
52. From the Vice-President in Council, 14 Sept. 1826, B.R.C. 19 Oct. 1826, No. 33
53. Cock to Swinton, 14 May, 1827, B.R.C. 31 May, 1827, No. 280
54. Prinsep to Tilghman, 28 June, 1827, B.R.C. 28 June, 1827, No. 54
55. Adam to Stewart, 1 June, 1818, B.P.S.C. 28 June, 1818, No. 11
indulgence, his case would be considered more favourably. But, as it was not thought advisable to settle Wasil Muhammad near Karim Khan, the Governor-General chose Ghazipur as the place where Wasil Muhammad should reside under the observation of the Magistrate.\textsuperscript{56}

With the offer of future favours and with Ghazipur, Wasil Muhammad seemed dissatisfied: “he expressed particular anxiety to know his future fate,” observing that “no human being was exempt from sin, and that evil should not be returned for evil.”\textsuperscript{57} However, in July 1818 he arrived at Ghazipur where the Magistrate settled his residence close to the principal thana in the town, and granted him a temporary monthly allowance of Rs. 200.\textsuperscript{58} He was at the same time assured that “in order to encourage him to enter on industrious pursuits and to collect his family and immediate adherents” a jagir capable of yielding an annual income of between Rs. 4,000 and 6,000 would be assigned to him as soon as a suitable estate could be obtained.\textsuperscript{59} But none of the measures seemed to cheer Wasil Muhammad, rather he “manifested a degree of restlessness and dissatisfaction”, which made the Magistrate apprehensive of some attempt on his part to escape.\textsuperscript{60} Additional precautions were therefore taken. The front door of his house was immediately opposite a police thana, and consequently secure, so a man was appointed secretly to watch the rear of the house at night. On 9 October, the night watchman saw the back door slowly opened and a person slip out; he was challenged, and hastily retreated into the house.\textsuperscript{61} The Police Daroga was called, entered the house, and found Wasil Muhammad dead. His body was immediately examined by the civil surgeon who signified to the Magistrate his conviction that “the death of the deceased has been caused by swallowing arsenic.”\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{56.} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{57.} Monckton to Adam, 29 June, 1818, B.P.C. 17 July, 1818, No. 24
\textsuperscript{58.} Bird to Adam, 23 July, 1818, B.P.C. 14 Aug. 1818, No. 147
\textsuperscript{59.} Adam to Bird, 14 Aug. 1818, B.P.C. 14 Aug. 1818, No. 148
\textsuperscript{60.} Bird to Adam, 30 Oct. 1818, B.P.C., 7 Nov. 1818, No. 54
\textsuperscript{61.} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62.} Ibid,
It appears that Wasil Muhammad had never settled to a peaceful life, cut off from his old haunts and old associates and subject to supervision by the police. But what probably moved him to seek to escape was the false information which he somehow heard that "Ameer Khan had renounced the Jageer bestowed upon him by the British Government and had committed himself to the fortune of the field." It was thus the mirage of the old predatory life, under the leadership of the Pathan chief, which led Wasil Muhammad to his death.

Section II.

Had Wasil Muhammad made his escape, he would have found that his hope of resuming the old predatory life under Amir Khan was quite delusive. Once he had decided that his safety and best prospects lay in coming to terms with the British, Amir Khan does not seem to have wavered. He took some time to ratify the treaty, but as General Donkin commented, "the delay on the part of Meer Khan does not imply treachery as a matter of course, although it would facilitate his practising it were he so disposed." In fact since during the interval Amir Khan saw first the Peshwa and then the Bhosle take up arms against the Company, his eventual ratification was evidence rather of a steadiness of purpose. Again, when called upon by Donkin to attack any Pindaris who crossed the Chambal, he promptly expressed his thanks for "an opportunity of evincing his zeal and attachment to the Company", and despatched a force under Raja Bahadur and Akbar Muhammad to guard the passes. He also showed himself anxious to play his part in the affairs of Holkar. He blamed Gafur Khan, and declared that if he had been at Shirgarh he would have called Gafur Khan to him, and

63. Bird to Adam, 30 Oct. 1818, B.P.C. 7 Nov. 1818, No. 54
64. Donkin to Matcalfe, 30 Nov. 1817, B.P.S.C, 26 Dec. 1817, No. 42
65. Donkin to Swinton, 28 Dec. 1817, B.P.S.C. 6 Feb. 1818, No. 33
67. Donkin to Swinton, 31 Dec. 1817, B.P.C, 6 Feb. 1818, No. 74
made him account for his share in the "ill-advised rupture of Holkar with the British Government," which he thought would bring certain ruin on that prince.  

68. Amir Khan to Donkin, 4 Jan. 1818, B.P.C. 6 Feb, 1818, No. 75
69. Adam to Metcalfe, 8 Jan. 1818, para. 2 B.C. vol. 715/19521, P. 24
70. From Amir Khan, received 6 Jan. 1818, B.P.C. 20 Feb. 1818, No. 61
71. Adam to Metcalfe, 8 Jan. 1818, para. 3, B.C. vol. 715/192521, P. 25
72. Adam to Metcalfe, 8 Jan. 1818, para 3, B.C. vol. 715/19521, p. 25
73. Ibid. para 5, p. 27
of three thousand of his best horse, at Amir Khan's usual rates of pay, and to consider whether a few of his infantry battalions, together with their artillery, could be entertained in the same way. The infantry he hoped might some be employed with Ochterlony's division, and some in the 'internal duties of the assigned territory.'

This accommodating attitude of the Governor-General failed to satisfy Amir Khan to the extent expected. The reason however, was not far to seek: he had not been prepared for the treaty of Mandsaur with Holkar which, in fact, took him by surprise. To his annoyance not only had the settlement been made with Holkar's court without his assistance, thus virtually extinguishing his influence there, but his former servant Gafur Khan had secured to him a jagir and independence of him." He particularly complained against the twelfth article of the treaty of Mandsaur by which "the districts of Jaroa, Baroda etc., in all seven Mehals have been bestowed in hereditary possession on Gafur Khan in lieu of the services of 600 cavalry." He argued that "in compliance with the Bye's request, I deputed Ghuffoor with artillery and everything requisite to remain with her and those Mehals were in consequence settled by her on me." As an instance of a similar arrangement, he pointed out to Metcalfe that his jagir of Sironj had for many years been held in the name of the manager he appointed to that district.

The Governor-General did not think that Amir Khan's claim ought to be lightly rejected without enquiry from Holkar's Government, and on 7 February he directed Malcolm to

74. Ibid. para 7, p. 29
75. Metcalfe to Adam, 8 Feb. 1818, para 22, B.P.C. 6 March, 1818, No. 85
76. The seven districts, with a total revenue of Rs. 305,000 were Sunjít, Mulhargarh, Tal and Mundowai, Jaroa, Baroda and Piploida.
77. Amir Khan to Ochterlony, received, 2 Feb. 1818, B.P.C. 6 March, 1818, No. 106
78. Amir Khan to Ochterlony, received, 2 Feb. 1818, B.P.C. 6 March, 1818, No. 106
79. Metcalfe to Adam, 14 Feb. 1818, B.P.S.C. 13 March, 1818, No. 93
investigate the claim. On 14 February, Malcolm submitted his report that Amir Khan’s arguments were unfounded. He stated that the districts which now formed Gafur Khan’s jaidad had been given to him about nine years ago to maintain a thousand horse, at an average of Rs. 22 each per month. He was to account to Holkar’s government for any increase of revenue that he might receive from the assignment. Malcolm agreed that at this period Gafur Khan had been Amir Khan’s agent at Holkar’s court, but he had also been one of Holkar’s “comrades”. “It was in the latter capacity that he received the Jaidad which is now granted to him and his heirs”. As final proof of the falseness of Amir Khan’s claim he said, “there can be no fact more certain than that he has no grants for the districts which from the Jaidad of Ghaffoor Khan, a fact which appears at once to settle the question.

To this Amir Khan replied in a further arzi or petition to Ochterlony. In this he made two principal points. Firstly he asserted that Gafur Khan had been his agent. Secondly he explained that though he himself could produce no written grant for the lands in question that was entirely understandable in view of the sincere friendship between him and the House of Holkar. In the existing degree of friendship between them, he never requested “a written grant in his own name, but even considered it as unbecoming his situation...... he never demanded grants in his own name, but obtained them in the name of his officers, Jumshed Khan, Mohammad Shah Khan, Ghaffoor Khan and others”.

Ochterlony vigorously supported these arguments against Malcolm’s. He admitted that Gafur Khan received those lands nine years ago, but argued that they were bestowed on him because he was Amir Khan’s agent. “A reference to

81. Adam to Malcolm, 14 Feb, 1818, B.P.S.C. 24 July, 1818, No. 344
82. Ibid.
83. Urzee of Ameer Khan’s vakeel, received 6 March, 1818, B.P.C.
10 April, 1818, No. 45
84. Ibid.
85. Ochterlony to Adam, 7 March, 1818, B.P.C. 10 April, 1818, No. 45
the state of that court at that period will shew that Ghuffoor Khan could not have obtained a village without the aid and influence of Ameer Khan, which was then at its height and I can easily conceive that he would prefer their being held nominally by Ghuffoor Khan, which was a distinction without a difference to him, to the odium of seeming to grasp at all for himself.”

Gafur Khan, if he spoke truly, would have to admit that though he had held and collected the revenues in question, he considered them as a part of the jagir of Amir Khan; for most of the nine years, he added, Gafur Khan could not have held them an hour had he affected to consider them in any other light. “It is notorious that it is only within three years, and since Ameer Khan has been distant that he has possessed a separate influence, or pretended to a distinct interest from his principal”. Lastly, he agreed with Malcolm that Amir Khan had never obtained a grant of the possessions now guaranteed to Gafur Khan, but then, “were we to adhere strictly to the letter of the treaty Meer Khan would be left without a bigha of land, for he has not a grant to shew for a single place, tho’ fortunately for him, it is notorious that he held many of them by unwritten gift of Holkar.”

The Governor-General also examined the question and came to “a conviction of the insufficiency of the arguments advanced by Ameer Khan in support of his right to the lands held by Ghuffoor Khan.” He did not doubt that it was as Amir Khan’s servant that Gafur Khan had attained the influence he now possessed at Holkar’s court. “Although this was the origin of the grant, however, there seems abundant ground for believing that it was a grant bonafide to Ghuffoor Khan and that he held it at least of late years.”

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86. Ibid.
87. Ochterlony to Adam, 7 March, 1818, B.P.C. 10 April, 1818, No. 45
88. Ibid.
89. Adam to Ochterlony, 30 June, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July, 1818, No. 29
nor-General therefore decided that the arrangements made under the treaty of Mandsaur should remain unalterable.\textsuperscript{90}

The fact was that neither Amir Khan nor Gafur Khan had possessed any written grant for those lands which now formed their respective \textit{jaidads}; nor had the British Government had any legal right to recognise Amir Khan as the owner of territories given to him by Holkar's Government in lieu of military service, before the Company had signed the treaty with Holkar's government. The British Government had justified its action by arguing that Holkar had been responsible for Amir Khan's baneful activities, and that it was right therefore that Holkar's territories should be utilised to reclaim him to a peaceful life. But, if Amir Khan could be recognised as the owner of Holkar's lands in order to induce him to give up his predatory life, on the same principle Gafur Khan could also be granted a \textit{jaidad}, without entering into any controversy as to who was the actual owner of those lands.

Amir Khan's claim to the lands of Gafur Khan's \textit{jaidad} was not his only grievance. When his agent Niranjan Lal had first discussed the terms of a settlement, in November 1817, he had asked that a compact territory might be settled on his master. Metcalfe had left him with some hope, by assuring him that once peace had been restored, the question would be considered by the Government.\textsuperscript{91} Hastings, indeed, thought it "extremely desirable" to accomplish the object by a system of exchanges with the Governments of Sindhia, Holkar and Jaipur.\textsuperscript{92} On 29 March 1818, Niranjan Lal raised the matter again, asking for a compact territory in place both of the scattered territories granted by the treaty and of his claims to tribute from Kotah, Jaipur and Jodhpur.\textsuperscript{93} But again the Company's reply was that though a compact

\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{91} Metcalfe to Adam, 11 Nov. 1817, para 10, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1818, No. 32
\textsuperscript{92} Adam to Metcalfe, 8 Jan. 1818, B.C. vol. 715/19521, P. 35
\textsuperscript{93} Memorandum on the part of Ameer Khan, 29 March, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July, 1818, No. 27
territory was desirable, it was not yet possible to arrange it. 94

The other demand, for the tribute Amir Khan had levied, was rejected outright. To have accepted it would have been to recreate the very system of interference in the Rajput states which the late campaign had been designed to end. The agent was therefore advised to remember his previous discussions with Metcalfe when the same claim had been "distinctly rejected by Mr. Metcalfe and relinquished by the agent". No argument for reviving it could be admitted. 95 The agent was further told that "Holkar possessed no legitimate tributary claim on Jeypoor, and if he had, they would have been precisely in the same situation as the Kotah tribute, under the terms of the treaty of Maundissoor. His connection with Jodepoor was of the character of a subsidiary engagement, and Ameer Khan's claim on that state ceased with the dissolution of that engagement." 96

In his memorandum the agent further requested that "the authority and control over the 3,000 horse and 8 battalions of his master's troops that had been entertained by the British Government in its service should remain in Amir Khan's hands". These troops would be held ready to take the field on the requisition of the British Government. 97 This request, too, was rejected, because its acceptance would "defeat every purpose of the arrangement". The agent was distinctly requested to remember the terms of the treaty and the discussions with Metcalfe prior to the conclusion of that treaty, in which no hope was given that such a request would be accepted afterwards. 98

One further demand or grievance was raised by Niranjan Lal, which this time, after some hesitation was met. This was

94. Adam to Ochterlony, 30 June, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July, 1818, No. 29
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. Memorandum on the part of Ameer Khan, 29 March, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July, 1818, No. 27
98. Adam to Ochterlony, 30 June, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July, 1818, No. 29
for a jagir in Rohilkhand to be settled on Vizir-ud-daula, Amir Khan's son, which he said, had been promised by Metcalfe. The matter had been raised just before the conclusion of the treaty with Amir Khan, when Metcalfe, though not willing to meet the demand, had not thought it necessary "to crush the hope entirely for the future". When this had been referred to the Governor-General, he had expressed grave doubt "as to the expediency of establishing the son of Ameer Khan in Rohilkhand where if he could not be rendered an instrument in the hands of the Governments for conciliating the minds of inhabitants of that province, which is not likely, he might be converted into a rallying point for disaffection." The Governor-General, however, was prepared to grant him a Jagir in some other part of the British territories.

When in March 1818 the agent renewed the claim, Hastings maintained his objection to a jagir in Rohilkhand, addressing Ochterlony to grand Vizir-ud-daula the district of Palwal instead, as a jagir for life. In the end, however, Ochterlony granted a monthly pension of Rs. 12,500 in lieu of the revenues of that district.

The final settlement with Amir Khan thus consisted of the following districts, yielding a total revenue of Rs. 5,70,000 a year in 1817, and a monthly allowance of Rs. 12,000 to his son:

99. Memorandum on the part of Ameer Khan, 29 March, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July, 1818, No. 27
100. Metcalfe to Adam, 11 Nov. 1817, para 10, B.P.S.C. 5 Dec. 1817, No. 32
101. Adam to Metcalfe, 8 Jan, 1818, para 12, B.C. vol. 715/19521, p. 32
102. Adam to Ochterlony, 30 June, 1818, B.P.C. 31 July 1818, No. 29
103. Metcalfe to Ochterlony, undated, B.C. vol. 715/19521, p. 116
104. Ochterlony to Metcalfe, 8 Sept. 1818, B.C. vol. 715/19521, p. 138
Pirawa
Nimahera, near Chitor
Gogul Chapera, north-west of Raghugarh
Sironj
Tonk-Rampura

Rs. 70,000
Rs. 50,000
Rs. 50,000
Rs. 2,00,000
Rs. 2,00,000
Rs. 5,70,000

With this the final pacification of Central India can be said to have been completed. The whole circle of substantive states had been brought into treaty relationships with the British Government, which thus achieved that headship of a system of subordinate states for which Hastings had always worked. The claims of the Maratha states upon their neighbours had been extinguished, and their instruments, and later rivals in the collection of tribute, the Pathans and Pindaris had been swept away, as an organised predatory force at least. The Pindaris, both leaders and troopers had been granted the land and allowances to enable them to settle down as respectable landowners or inoffensive and industrious members of the civil population, though with every precaution to prevent “the symptom of recurrence to their former habit.”

The more highly organised Pathans had also been rendered harmless. With every precaution against a reversion to his old life, Amir Khan had been guaranteed a settled respectability as Nawab of Tonk. Three thousand of his cavalry and eight infantry battalions had been absorbed into the Company’s army—no Pathans were individually provided for with land or allowances as the more loosely organised Pindaris had been—while others were maintained by Amir Khan within his own territory.

With such a mixture of generosity and of precaution had the settlement been made, that of the Pathans and Pindaris who for twenty years had been a terror from Rajputana to the eastern Deccan, Malcolm could write in 1823, “other plunderers may arise from distempered times; but as a body, the Pindaris are so effectually destroyed, that their name is almost forgotten, though not five years are passed since it spread terror and dismay over all India.”

CONCLUSION

From 1784, when the India Act warned the servants of the East India Company in India that further conquests would be “repugnant to the wish, the honour and the policy of the British nation,” to 1818 when “the Marathas had ceased to exist as a political force, and all the principal states of India had been brought into agreement with the Company, which thus became the paramount power in India,”¹ there occurred a series of dramatic shifts in British policy in India. These sharp changes of British course were accompanied by much controversy. There were deep differences of opinion about the nature of the Indian states, the purpose of British power in India, and about the way in which the British interests there should be secured.

The basic issue was whether anything less than a British hegemony of the states in India would safeguard British commercial and political interests. After the conquest of Bengal Clive had declared that “it was his resolution and hope always to confine our possessions to these provinces”, and Verelst agreed that to carry conquest further would be to “exceed the bounds of good policy.”² Warren Hastings rejected their views. Instead he sought, through treaties with the neighbouring powers which offered protection in return for their maintenance of British subsidiary forces, to create a British power invulnerable to any Indian combination formed against it. The outcome of his endeavours was a desperate war with the Marathas, from 1776 to 1782. His search for security had provoked that combined hostility of the Indian powers which he had feared, had burdened the Company with debt, and prevented the peaceful exploitation of the rich commerce of Bengal.

There followed the directive in the India Act of 1784, and Lord Cornwallis and Sir John Shore turned back to earlier

¹ C. H. Philips, op. cit., p. 218
² A. T. Embree, Charles Grant and British rule in India, p. 62.
views and pursued a policy of non-involvement. Spear has summed up the reasoning behind this policy: "It was believed that the Indian powers were not in themselves aggressive and if left to themselves they would, as it were, sort themselves out and thereafter strike a balance with the British power in India.... Thus tranquillity of a sort would be restored and trade would proceed. There was the further consideration that all danger from France or other European powers had now been removed. A trading company had no business to rule for the sake of ruling provided that it could make its profits without it." These were certainly the views of Sir John Shore, who had denounced Hastings' Maratha war as "useless impolitic absurd," and the views of the Home Government, given their most vigorous shape by the Director Charles Grant.

Nevertheless, from 1798 to 1805 Wellesley again chose to seek security for the Company not in self-containment but in the reduction of all the major Indian powers to subordination. "The kingdom of Mysore was swept away; the Nizam's French-trained battalions were broken up; the Company took over the complete control of the Carnatic, Tanjore and Surat; Oudh was shorn of her valuable north-western provinces; the Peshwa was bound by subsidiary alliance to the British power; Sindia and Berar were vanquished in brilliant campaigns and mulcted of important territories." He gave various grounds for this sweeping disregard of instructions. He believed that the French, locked in the Napoleonic conflict with Britain, would ally themselves with any major Indian power not brought into dependent relationship with the Company. He argued that the "restless spirit of ambition and violence characteristic of every Asiatic government" was itself a threat to British possessions, as well as

the source of anarchy which it was a humanitarian duty to quell. He even argued that conquest would prove economically profitable since trade would best expand under a single Indian government.

But despite the brilliance of his achievement and the long run of his success, Wellesley was eventually driven to resign by the opposition of the Court of Directors and the doubts of the Home Government. The main charge against Wellesley was that his external policy had been wrong, wilfully wrong. Philip Francis attacked its morality, pointing out that since the prohibitory Act of 1784, there had been nothing but wars and conquests, and that "almost all these wars are supposed to originate in acts of provocation and aggression committed by the weak against the strong."  Of the treaty of Bassein Grant wrote indignantly, "we are chargeable with all the guilt of it, the bloodshed, miseries and devastations which it has occasioned". Castlereagh denied the necessity for the alliance with the Peshwa: "in no quarter can the exertion of France be made with so little rational hope of success as in the East"; and he denied its utility: "the benefit as well as the necessity of a Maratha connection has for the last few years been in my conception always overrated". There he went to the heart of the matter by challenging the belief that a restless spirit of ambition and violence in the Marathas made them a danger. The Peshwa he believed to be militarily feeble, and he pointed out that the Marathas "have hitherto respected our territory" and "have never in any instance commenced hostilities against us." Grant carried this further, arguing that it was the system of treaties which provoked war. In June 1804, he denounced the treaty of Bassein as an act of hostility against Holkar, "Who had neither committed nor threatened any aggression against the British government;"
in September news reached London that war with Holkar had broken out.

The argument about the nature of the Indian states system was at the heart of the dispute with Wellesley. Lord Cornwallis, sent out to India in 1805 for a second term of office, was therefore charged with reversing the forward policies of Wellesley, disentangling the Company from alliance which involved British interference between and within states, and husbanding the Company’s resources by a peaceful cultivation of its territories. On arrival in July he found the treasury empty, the army’s pay much in arrears, and an “almost universal frenzy... for conquest and victory, as opposite to the interests, as it is to the laws, of our country.”

Before his early death on 5th October 1805, he had prepared to restore Gwalior and Gohad to Sindia, and to relinquish all territory west of the Jumna, Agra excepted. This policy his successor Sir George Barlow continued, for though he retained Delhi and the Doab, and maintained the subsidiary treaties with the Nizam and the Peshwa, he restored considerable territories to Holkar and Sindia, ended the treaty with the latter, and by declaration abandoned British protection of the states west and south of the river Chambal. As the Chairman of the Court of Directors put it, “he followed rigorously the steps of his excellent predecessor in prosecuting the great work of the pacification of India, the retrenchment of expense and the restoration of the finances.”

So whereas Wellesley had added nearly £20,000,000 to the Indian debt, Barlow was able to show a surplus and carry the Company safely through a most difficult phase of the war with Napoleon.

As has been seen, Barlow pursued his rigidly defensive policy of cutting clear of all entanglements against the active protest of General Lake and the Political Agents, who appealed

in particular for the continued protection of certain of the Rajpur states. Barlow replied to such appeals by restating the Company’s policy of looking to the well being of its own territories, and leaving all other states to settle their differences in their own way. The feasibility of such a policy was to be tested by the emergence of the Pathans and the Pindaris as a distinct political force in Central India.

Their opportunity had been created by Wellesley’s Maratha campaigns, which destroyed the regular forces of the Maratha chiefs, drastically curtailed their revenues, and “broke down authority in central India without putting anything in its place.”15 The importance of these freebooters increased as the Marath chiefs sought to recoup their losses, by intensifying plunder, while the Company’s policy of non-interference gave them a free field in Malwa and Rajputana. By 1807 Amir Khan was able to interfere in the mutual disputes of Jodhpur and Jaipur, with his Pathans and the Pindaris, without needing either the sanction or the support of the Maratha chiefs whose nominal auxiliaries they were.

The initial British reaction to the emergence of the Pindari plunderers, and the homeless military state of Amir Khan was a purely negative one. The appeals of the Rajputs for protection against Amir Khan went unheeded, as did appeals for British arbitration in their reckless feuds. Similarly, when the Pindaris in 1807 and 1808 raided Berar, Hyderabad and Poona, the Company not only refused to advance its own troops from their defensive positions in British territory, it even avoided the employment of the subsidiary forces with the Nizam and Peshwa. The Residents at Hyderabad and Poona were instructed to encourage their Indian allies to undertake the defense of their territories with their own forces. In this Minto was guided by three considerations, the first that the strength of the Pindaris did not yet seem formidable, the second that they were still the servants of Sindia and Holkar and so open to British pressure upon their

masters, and the third that there was a continuing need for economy for the permanent restoration of the Company's finances.

In 1809, however, the situation was given a new turn by Amir Khan's invasion of Nagpur at the head of a large body of Pathans and Pindaris. His declared object was no more than to realise Holkar's monetary claims on the Raja of Nagpur, and he came in the guise of agent of Yashvantrao. But Minto's government refused to believe his pretensions. Rather, taking his real purpose to be the overthrow of the Bhosle and the erection of his own independent power in Nagpur, they offered unconditional aid to the Raja, so compelling Amir Khan to come to terms and withdraw.

Why did they act so? When Amir Khan had earlier sounded out the British authorities through the British Agent in Bundelkhand, he had been assured that the Company was not concerned by his attack on states not in treaty relation with the Company. So, when gratuitous aid was given to Nagpur, a state without any treaty claim to protection, Amir indignantly threw the treaties of 1805 and 1806 in the face of the British authorities and asked with what justification they prevented him from pressing Holkar's just demands.

Minto's explanation took various forms. The technical one was that Amir Khan's actions were in fact disavowed by Holkar's government. The moral one was that the Bhosle had suffered very severely by the result of the war of 1803 and deserved gratuitous help from the British Government. The practical one was that with Amir Khan established in Nagpur, the Nizam's territories and British Bundelkhand, then barely reduced to order, would be in danger. Two other arguments are perhaps of greater interest. The one was based upon the fact that Amir Khan was a Muslim, who once established on the border of Muslim Hyderabad, might concert a Muslim bid to re-establish their power in India. 16

16. Edmonstone to Jenkins, 18 Oct, 1809, B.P.S.C, 14 Nov. 1809, No. 7. Minto wrote, "the field of his (Akir Khan's) meditated achievements is contiguous to the territory of an ally of the British Govern-
The other argument was the political danger of allowing the destruction of "one of the substantive Powers of the Deccan." Minto declared, this would alone "in my judgment demand an active interference,"\textsuperscript{17} In defending Nagpur Minto therefore acted to preserve the existing balance, and his reason for not permitting Colonel Close to complete the annihilation of Amir Khan was that it would involve political rearrangements destructive of that balance.

After Amir Khan's retreat from Nagpur, the British Government reaffirmed its defensive policy of non-interference in the affairs of the independent states. Nevertheless the tone of its pronouncement and the manner in which the policy was pursued underwent a change. Instead of leaving the states to find their own level, and to strike a new balance of power, the Company seemed prepared to intervene to maintain the \textit{status quo}. Amir Khan returned to Rajputana in 1810, and his establishment of what were in effect subsidiary forces in Jodhpur and Udaipur, and the establishment of his authority at the Darbar of the young Malharrao Holkar, made the creation of a new state system in that whole area seem likely. But when he took the precaution of consulting the Resident at Delhi, his vakil was refused any British guarantee of non-interference should Amir Khan invade states not in alliance with the Company, and the Resident, with a veiled threat, made it clear that the possibility of British action to preserve the balance of power could not be ruled out.

At the same time the Company showed itself more active in assisting its allies against the growing strength of the

Minto to Duncan, 25 Oct, 1809 B.P.S.C. 21 Nov. 1809, No. 11. The Vellore Mutiny of 1806 had been attributed by some to Muslim plotting by the sons of Tipu Sultan.

17. Minto to Lumsden, 18 Oct, 1809, B.P.S.C. 3 Nov. 1809, No. 1.
Pindaris. In 1811, when Karim Khan led plundering raids into Nagpur, the Resident at Hyderabad was ordered to move the subsidiary force forward in support of the Nizam’s troops, while British forces were also alerted in Bundelkhand.

This change in British policy, which limited the areas open to plunder, coincided with a growth in Pindari numbers. As a result in 1812, the Pindaris made their first attack upon British territories with a raid to Mirzapur. The British response was to move from the defensive to the offensive. The officers commanding detachments were directed not merely to remain prepared to hold the British frontier, but also to pursue the Pindaris into independent states’ territories, if the need arose. Two states, Rewa and Orchha were also at this time drawn, unwillingly, under British protection. Secondly British pressure was applied to Sindia to control the Pindaris. He did take measures to prevent a Pindari settlement south of the Narmada, near Asirgarh and Burhanpur, but he was otherwise half-hearted in his response. His solution was to offer Jagirs to the Pindaris in areas north of the river. It should be noted that British indignation at Sindia’s policy went with a clear recognition of his real military weakness by the Company’s diplomats, with a refusal to act upon his hints that he would welcome British aid in dealing with the Pindaris, and with an indignant rejection of the appeals by two Pindari leaders of Amir Khan’s camp for settled employment under the Company.

Nevertheless while Minto was in office it remained the policy of the Home Authorities and of the Government of India that the Company should pursue a policy of self-containment. The major change came with the arrival in India on 4th October 1813 of New Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, the Earl of Moira. Soon after his arrival the threat again arose of an invasion of Nagpur by Amir Khan supported by some of the Pindaris. The question was thus again posed whether non-British India should be left to find its own balance, or whether the attempt should be made to ensure order by imposing British paramountcy.
Moira said, "we do not, in fact, at present, possess any complete system, but parts of two very incongruous systems and most of the inconveniences we experience are occasioned by the discordancy of the two." His solution was soon decided upon, it was to complete Wellesley's work and establish the Company's hegemony.

From that moment onwards the problem of suppressing the Pindaris and Pathans was entangled with that of a wider political rearrangement. In Moira's mind the need to suppress the Pindaris, on which all were agreed, became the excuse for destroying the Marathas. The interest of the years 1814 to 1818 lies in observing the way in which Moira used the Pindari outrages to win over his Council and the Home Authority to his wider views.

The immediate danger to Nagpur in 1814 was averted by dissensions among the Pindaris, which kept them busy with their internal quarrels until 1815, and by Amir Khan's withdrawal in face of the threat of British intervention, and of the remonstrances of Sindia and the Peshwa. The episode made it clear once again that Amir Khan would not risk any clash with the Company, and that the Maratha powers themselves were anxious to keep the Pindaris within bounds. Nevertheless Moira persisted in actions which though nominally moves to curb the Pindaris could not but provoke fear and hostility in the Maratha powers. The first was a sustained attempt in 1814 to persuade the Raja of Nagpur to enter into a subsidiary alliance with the Company, while he was threatened by Amir Khan. The attempt failed. The Bhosle showed that he was prepared rather to risk fighting in his own defence or to appeal to Sindia than to be submerged in the British system. Moira then turned to Bhopal, currently threatened by Sindia and the Bhosle and by the Pindari leader Chitu Khan, and only rather inadequately supported by Amir Khan and certain Holkarshahi Pindaris. Again while the importance of Bhopal as a territory planted

near the heart of the Pindaris' cantoning area was stressed, Moira also saw Bhopal as a key point against the Marathas, dividing and exposing them. This diplomatic campaign also ended in failure. Moira had assembled massive forces for a blow at Sindia, could he be provoked by this interference with a state over which he had longstanding claims, but in the outcome Wazir Muhammad of Bhopal made a mockery of the preparations by refusing to conclude a treaty.

In 1815, Amir Khan moved to Rajputana, plundering the territories of Jaipur and besieging the capital. Once again he appealed to the treaties of 1805 and 1806 as sanction for his actions, but on this occasion he was met not with hints of British displeasure, but by an active British effort in 1816 to conclude a subsidiary treaty with Jaipur. If the policy of non-interference had been murdered at Bhopal, it was now buried at Jaipur. But as in Nagpur and at Bhopal the announcement that a treaty was being negotiated was enough to lift the Pathan-Pindari threat, and, as in the previous cases, once that was removed the threatened ruler showed himself in no way willing to lose his independence by accepting the position of British client ruler.

Moira had interfered in Jaipur arguing that if the Pathans and Pindaris under their resourceful leader Amir Khan were allowed to increase their power further at the cost of the Rajput states they might emerge as an independent power. Should they then unite with the Marathas, British supremacy in India would face a serious challenge. Yet he himself knew that the danger he raised was in the military sense unreal.\textsuperscript{19} It was equally unreal in political terms. No real union was possible between the Marathas and the Pindaris, for the latter could only gain strength by preying as, they constantly did, upon the former. Nor was any lasting agreement likely between Amir Khan and Sindia, for the former inherited the old rivalry of Holkar with the latter. It was only in the face of a British threat that they were ready to combine, as they

\textsuperscript{19} "Our means are ample against any combination." Minute of Moira, 13 April, 1816, B.P.S.C. 20 April, 1816, No. 1.
did in 1816 to persuade Jaipur to refuse a British alliance. Indeed, had Moira wished to enlist Sindia’s help in rooting out the Pindaris, that help might have been obtained, for even as late as December 1816 Close, the Resident at Gwalior, reported that Sindia was anxious to break the independent power of the Pindaris and was friendly disposed to the Company. But as has been seen Moira refused to seek Sindia’s co-operation, though he was urged to do so by the Board of Control and by Edmonstone. He hoped, instead to drive Sindia into the arms of the Pindaris and to destroy both together: “It is far better,” he wrote in his Private Journal, “if he be resolved to risk his existence for the support of the Pindaries.”

Until 1816 Moira was unable to win either his Council or the Home Authorities to his view. Edmonstone believed that in the prosperity of the Company’s territories was to be found its true security; he believed that Sindia was genuine in his desire to break the Pindari power; he was opposed to any scheme which would involve conflict with Holkar and Sindia. The Secret Committee was also clearly still committed to non-intervention: “We are unwilling to incur the risk of a general war for the uncertain purpose of extirpating altogether those predatory bands, extended political or military combinations, therefore, for that purpose we cannot at the present moment sanction or approve.”

If Hastings did finally secure approval for his plans it was because it became increasingly difficult on humanitarian grounds to refrain from interference in oppressed Central India and Rajputana, and because from 1816 onwards the Pindaris turned with growing daring and savagery not only upon the territories of the Company’s allies, but upon British territory too. The failure of conventional military defence against the light Pindari horse made counter-attack essential;

a belief that Sindia would acquiesce in such counter-measures made them acceptable.

In 1817-1818 the Pindaris were accordingly crushed and Amir Khan's Pathans were rendered innocuous. But Hastings also had a part of his other wish, for the Bhosle and the Holkar government were provoked into war, defeated and reduced to impotence and the Peshwa was driven into exile and his territories annexed. Only Sindia escaped, for though the terms of the treaty of Surgi-Anjangaon were one-sidedly abrogated by Hastings and humiliating restraints were placed upon him for the duration of the war, he chose to give no excuse for his destruction and emerged with his state intact.

Were these the necessary consequences of measures to destroy the acknowledged menace of the Pindaris? It would seem not. No genuine effort had been made to enlist the weakened Maratha powers' co-operation, upon terms agreeable to their pride. Again no effort had been made to induce the Pindaris and the more regular forces of Amir Khan to settle down, though there had been several hints that such an approach would have been welcome. Amir Khan at least had always shown himself keenly aware of the superior power of the Company, and he was easily induced, without a blow struck against him, to exchange his wandering career for a settled existence at Tonk. The repeated attempts to bring the states of Central India into the British system had all been resisted, by Nagpur, by Bhopal, by Saugor and Jaipur. As in Wellesley's day a treaty with the Peshwa designed to disarm the Maratha confederacy and establish a British peace served, together with the subsidiary alliance with Appa Saheb, to provoke war.

The history of the Pathans and the Pindaris, of a state without a territory, and of armies without masters, forms in itself an extraordinary and exciting subject. Their relations with the East India Company also form, however, an instructive chapter in the wider story of the expansion of British power in India.
Abbreviations

Home Misce.......................... Home Miscellaneous series.
Enclo. to Sec. letters........... Enclosures to Secret letters received from Bengal.
B.P.C................................. Bengal Political Consultations.
B.P.S.C............................... Bengal Political and Secret Consultations.
B.C.................................... Board’s collections.
M.P.C................................. Madras Political Consultations.
B.R.C................................. Bengal Revenue Consultations.
P.R.C................................ Poona Residency Correspondence.
Board’s Draft of Sec. Despatch. Board’s Draft of Secret Despatches to Bengal.
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