

Historical Study of Ishaqani Rind Baloch Tribe

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Abstract

This analytical study expresses the history and contribution of the Sakhani Baloch Tribe. Historically this was among the prominent tribes who established their small states before the battle of Intra-Baloch tribal wars. The son of Mir Muhammad Ishaq Khan-1 from Rind Baloch established his government initially in eastern Balochistan and northern Derajat before the famous battle of Nali between Rind and Lashar Tribes. This battle of Nali not only marginalized the authority of Lashar tribes but also divided the strength and power of Rind which had united against Lashar during thirty years war. After this war the Baloch tribes migrated from Balochistan to Punjab and Sindh and lost the glorious status of the past due to the anarchy among Baloch tribes for political supremacy. This research article explains and highlight the history and contribution of Ishaqani Baloch Tribe which is famous now as Sakhani Baloch.

Keywords: Baloch, Balochistan, History, Ishaqani, Migration, Rind, Tribe, Settlement. Wars.

Review of Literature

Review of literature is the most important component of this research and different sources have been used for this research. Therefore, for this study the most relevant material has been consulted as Tareekh-e-Balochistan¹, Baloch Qaom aor Uski Tareekh², Tuhfat-ul-Kiram³, Ahsan-ul-Biyan⁴, Murqa Dera Ghazi Khan⁵, Musilman Races⁶, Gulbahar⁷, Tawareekh Zila Dera Ghazi Khan⁸, Tareekh-e-Taunsa⁹ and Tareekh-e-Rajanpur¹⁰ are most remarkable.

Research Methodology

This is an analytical study which deals the history and contribution of the Baloch Sakhani Tribe from Balochistan to Punjab since fifteenth Century A.D. The topic covers the history of a tribe and relays on the existing documentary material having primary and secondary sources. These sources explore and highlight the history and contribution of this tribe from

its settlement in Balochistan and then Balochistan to Derajat and Punjab. With documentary material the old statements through verbal Gazette and poetry with ancestry tree is also included. The interviews of the tribal legends are also a sources of information in the context of this research.

Discussion

This analytical study explores the history of Sakhani Tribe that what is the origin of this tribe? The study explored the history of Sakhani tribe from the migration and settlement of the tribe from Balochistan to Dera Ghazi Khan. The historical evolution of the Sakhani Baloch tribe, it becomes clear that this tribe, which belongs to the Rind Baloch branch, is originally linked to Mir Ishaq-I. His descendants initially lived in Sibi, but later they settled across Eastern Balochistan and up to the Suleiman Mountains.¹¹ Sardar Amir Jalal Khan Baloch had four sons: Rind, Korai, Lashar, and Hot. Later, from the lineage of Rind was born Mir Ishaq-III Rind, son of Mir Hasan a great and noble figure of the Baloch nation and He was the son of Sardar Amir Ishaq-II son of Sardar Amir Rind, son of Sardar Amir Rind, son of Sardar Amir Jalal Khan Baloch.¹²

Baloch race is considered an important in Pakistan and probably they migrated from Iran and initially settled at Makran under the leadership of Mir Jalal Khan. Baloch were prominent force during 13th century in Balochistan and they pushed the natives and occupied Makran to the areas of Sewi and Dhadhars. At that time all the tribes were united under Mir Rind the great son of the Mir Jalal Khan who was the leader of Baloch tribes migrated from Kirman to Makran.¹³

Dera Ghazi Khan is home to various tribes and clans, with a large Baloch population. Among these tribes Sakhani tribe is one of the old tribe who settled in this region early 15th century. In Tehsil Taunsa, another tribe known as Nutkani is also quite prominent. When examined in the light of historical facts and records, this region presents fascinating information drawn from ancient sources. Most tribes in Taunsa believe that the Nutkani is an independent tribe, while many historical sources are evidence that various tribes are the branches of Sakhani except Ghulam Ali Nutkani. Upon closer study of the facts, it becomes evident that Ishaq Khan I, the son of Mir Ahmad, had descendants known as the Ishaqani. The lineage of Mir Ishaq, seven generations back, traces directly to the Rind tribe. Mir Ishaq had two sons Mir Hasan and Mir Muhammad. Amir Muhammad named his own son after his father, calling him Mir Ishaq. However, Ghulam Ali Natkani consciously referred to this Mir Ishaq the brother of Mir Aali as the ancestor of the Sakhani, which is historically inaccurate. The same author distorted historical facts by not giving due recognition to Ishaq Khan's brothers among them Ali Notak, Miro, and Bahadur and instead, apart from mentioning Mir Ali Notak's settlement in Harand, he wrongly claimed that the rest were part of the Natkani tribe. In reality, during that period, the tribe was still known as Sakhani, and they even held the governorship of Siwstan. Therefore, claiming that the Nutkani were an independent tribe does not seem historically accurate. After Mir Ali Notak's death, according to tribal law, Mir Malgh Khan became the head of the family and successor of Notak. He migrated from Harand to what is now Tehsil Taunsa. However, Notak Khan's other son, Karat Khan, also claimed to be the rightful successor. A struggle then ensued between the descendants of Malgh Khan and Karat Khan, which eventually ended in the victory of Karat's lineage. The descendants of Karat now

call themselves Nutkani, while the Malghani (descendants of Malgh Khan, the lawful heir of Notak Khan) consider themselves distinct from the Nutkanis all that is a historical error which fabricated by the immaturity of the local author who dealt the historical event perjuringly and partiality. Sakhani which is Ishaqani related to its forefather Ishaq Khan-II and it was the major tribe before the separation of Shehik when he occupied the leadership against the tribal tradition from his brother Mir Hasan and nephew Mir Ishaq-III. The conflict was in progress and abruptly Mir Shehik appointed his son Mir Chakar as the head of the Rind Tribes in his life to protect the chieftain for his son against his brothers. Ishaqani was largest tribe and all the branches related to Rind rather than Shehik and Chakar are the branches and clans of Sakhani tribe according to the historical record of the Baloch history.¹⁴

After the battle of Nali the crises between Chakar and his cousin Mir Muhammad raised again and Mir Chakar succeeded to kill Mir Muhammad, his brother Ibrahim and Miro in a 10 years' war with the help of Haji Khan and Langah forces of Multan. At that time Mir Muhammad Khan Ishaqani was the head of all Rind tribes of Balochistan and he was killed through a trap.¹⁵

Later all these events Ishaqani did not follow Mir Chakar due to his prejudious attitude and his one man show in the rind tribes. He moved to Punjab and settled there.

The debate regarding the origin and history of Sakhani tribe is primarily begins from Mir Ishaq-II and therefore Sakhani were originally known as Ishaqani, but the term Sakhani itself is quite ancient in origin. For this reason, various historians have been unable to clearly explain its exact derivation. Hayat Muhammad Khan, referencing Tuhfat al-Kiram, writes that this was an influential tribe, and that Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sakhani was appointed by Prince Muazzam as the administrator of Sewistan when the region was troubled by frequent uprisings. However, Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sakhani, being a capable and wise man, successfully restored peace and stability in Sewistan.¹⁶

The Sakhani tribe has produced many notable personalities throughout different periods of history. These individuals have played an important role not only in the development of their own tribe but also in the progress of the entire Baloch society and Pakistan. Their bravery, leadership, and public service will always be remembered. Preserving the history and culture of the Sakhani tribe is not only important for them but for the whole nation as well.

Sakhani tribe is linked to Mir Jalal Khan, the renowned ancestor of the Baloch nation. Mir Jalal Khan was a prominent leader whose descendants later founded various Baloch tribes. The Sakhani tribe descends from his son, Mir Rind. Among Mir Rind's descendants was Mir Ishaq, whose progeny were known as the Ishaqani. Over time, the Ishaqani lineage divided into different branches one of which became known as Sabagani, and later Sakhani, eventually evolving into the Sakhani name. As for how the name Sakhani originated, there are several traditions. Others suggest that the name may have been influenced by a geographical area or a specific historical event. Today, the Sakhani tribe is spread across all four provinces of Pakistan, but the largest concentration is found in the Dera Ghazi Khan Division. Significant Sakhani populations live in Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, and Muzaffargarh districts. In addition, members of the tribe are also settled in Sindh and Balochistan particularly in Quetta, Nasirabad, and Jhal Magsi. Throughout history, the Sakhani tribe has played an important political and social role.

During the battle of Rind Lashar wars Ishaqani as a Rind supported Mir Chakar Rind although both were in tribal conflict of leadership issue because Ishaqani Chief Mir Muhammad Khan

was also the claimant for the chief of Rind tribe which was illegally occupied by the Father of Chakar as there the father of Chakar Shehik Khan became the head of Shehkani tribe of Rind Baloch. Mir Ishaq –III and his sons continued their struggle against Mir Shehik but during Rind Lashar wars Ishaqani as a large and powerful Rind tribe supported Chakar against Mir Gauhram Lashari. A temporary cease-fire between Chakar and his cousins continued till the end of the Battle of Nali and with the support of Mir Muhammad Chakar was victorious in most of the Rind Lahar wars. After the battle of Nali the unrest started again. But it is clear that Mir Muhammad Ishaqani was the supporter of Chakar in these intra-tribal wars.¹⁷

The origins of the Sakhani tribe, the word Sakhani is actually derived from Ishaqani. Ishaq Khan I was a famous Baloch chief. He and his brother Shehik were well-known figures. His descendants were called Ishaqani, and among them, his grandson Ishaq II had established authority in Eastern Balochistan. Later, Ishaq II's son, Sardar Mir Muhammad Ishaqani, supported Chakar and fought alongside him in the Battle of Nali.¹⁸ When Chakar and other tribes migrated east of the Suleiman Mountains, much of the region up to Koh-e-Suleiman was under the control of Amir Muhammad. However, due to disagreements with the Dodai tribe, the Dodais settled near the Indus River. Mir Muhammad's brothers and their descendants began settling to the north and east of Koh-e-Suleiman as well. When Chakar-e-Azam went to Delhi, Mir Muhammad, responding to his call, also marched toward Delhi with a large army. However, when Mir Muhammad Khan Ishaqani wanted to return to Balochistan, his eldest son and heir, Ishaq Khan-IV, became the head of the tribe after Mir Muhammad's death at Harand.¹⁹ The descendants of Sardar Amir Ishaq were called *Ishaqani*, and later they became known as *Sakhani*. From them, several tribes and clans emerged.

After Mir Muhammad Khan Ishaqani's death, the tribe was spread from Harand to the Indus River and had a large population. Mir Muhammad had six brothers who each established their own settlements. His younger son, Mir Ali, established relations with the Dodais and received land from them, thus separating from his ancestral tribe. Consequently, the *Bahadurani* and *Merwani* groups also became distinct tribes. When Ishaq Khan III's brothers separated, the Dodai chief mockingly said, "You are no longer Ishaqani but *Sakhani*," and over time, *Sakhani* evolved into *Sakhani*. In this way, the descendants of Ishaq Khan I changed from *Ishaqani* to *Sakhani*, and finally to *Sakhani*, dispersing in the process.

Ishaq Khan III had many sons and daughters. According to the author of *Dastan-e-Rind Balochistani*, Ishaq Khan had fourteen sons and six daughters. His descendants settled throughout Dera Ghazi Khan, intermarried with other tribes during the 14th century, established strongholds in northeastern Sanghar, becoming a powerful force. Later, more branches of the tribe emerged. Mir Ali Khan, Ishaq Khan's brother, sought refuge with the Sakhani tribe in the north after conflicts between the Dodais and the Nahrīs and, together with the Sakhani, conquered several new areas. On his way to Kalat, Mir Ali Khan died in Harand, and his descendants became known as *Malghani*, after his son. The *Bahadurani* and *Merwani* families also lived alongside the Sakhani. The Sakhani was a large and influential tribe, and due to its authority, Prince Muazzam assigned several members important administrative responsibilities. Among them was Nawab Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sakhani, who was appointed governor of Sewistan. His rule is remembered as a period of peace and prosperity.²⁰

Later, Ghulam Shah Kalhoro pushed the Sakhani tribe from the south, but they resisted.

However, during the reign of Ranjit Singh, they were defeated by the forces of the Nawab of Bahawalpur. They also supported Muzaffar Khan in his conflict against the Sikhs in Multan, which caused tensions. The Sakhani were a well-armed tribe, but during British rule, much of their land was confiscated and many of their titles were revoked because of their anti-government stance.

After Sardar Allah Bakhsh Khan Sakhani and Dalil Khan Sakhani, Sardar Ghulam Hassan Khan Sakhani became the head of the panchayat with the rank of *Paggar Posh*, but all these honors were renounced during the *Turk-e-Mawalāt* (Non-Cooperation Movement).

The people of the Sakhani tribe were not only warriors and brave fighters, but they also played a significant role in the fields of education, culture, and social service. They established madrasas and educational institutions in their areas where the younger generation received both religious and worldly education. The culture of the Sakhani tribe is an important part of the broader Baloch culture. They speak the Balochi language, which is a key element of their identity. The people of the Sakhani tribe hold their traditions, customs, and cultural heritage in high esteem. Their weddings, festivals, and other social events are celebrated in accordance with Baloch traditions. The Sakhani people are known for their hospitality and for their deep sense of honor and tribal pride. Tribal unity and solidarity hold great importance among them, which is why they always stand together for the interests and dignity of their tribe. In the present era, the Sakhani tribe is spread across different regions of Pakistan. Many of its members have achieved distinction in education, politics, the military, and various other fields. The younger generation of the Sakhani tribe, through acquiring modern education, has been contributing actively to the development and progress of the country.

Sardar Haji Ghulam Hassan Khan Sakhani is considered one of the most distinguished He was a renowned Baloch chieftain and social leader, who worked tirelessly for the development of his tribe and the rights of the Baloch nation. He made significant efforts to promote education and healthcare in his region. He was an exceptionally brave and wise leader, regarded as a true asset of the Sakhani people. The exact date of his birth is not known, but according to oral history, he was born in 1875 in the Sakhani settlement near Pir Adil, and many other places of Dera Ghazi Khan. At that time, his grandfather was one of the most respected elders and tribal leaders in the area. He is honored for having participated in the 1914 meeting of the Educational Association of Dera Ghazi Khan, which was established in Jampur, and for having contributed a donation to it. At that time, the Sakhani settlements in Kot Dawood and Marhata were densely populated. In the 1945–46 elections, he fully supported the Muslim League and instructed his tribe to vote for the party. He had a deep admiration and love for Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. During the Ayub Khan era, he was greatly concerned about internal conflicts within the Sakhani tribe.

Today, the Sakhani tribe has become disorganized, and despite having thousands of votes, it has remained indifferent to political dominance. After 2008, Khalid Bilal Khan Sakhani was elected as the chief. Under his leadership, the tribe gained significant representation in local government elections. A *Majlis-e-Amilah* (Executive Council) was also formed for the Sakhani tribe, where instead of appointing traditional hereditary Baloch chiefs, a system of elections and merit-based leadership was adopted as part of the tribe's new constitution.

Conclusion

Dera Ghazi Khan, which is basically a plural society and where many Baloch tribes have been living for centuries according to their own society norms and culture. It is also home to a famous tribe of the past, the Sakhani tribe which has been playing a special role in the social and political development of this region for centuries. Analyzing into the beginning and the evolution of the Sakhani tribe, it is a branch of the Baloch which is related to Rind tribe. The Baloch have been migrating to different places while living a nomadic life. Similarly, the Sakhani along with other Baloch tribes also came to Dera Ghazi Khan from the Balochistan from Harand. Analyzing into the origin of the Sakhani tribe, it is the lineage of Mir Ishaq Khan. Initially, this tribe was named after its ancestor and was called Ishaqani while after some time it was known as Sahakani, Saakhani, and Sakhani. Thus, the Sakhani is also in the view of the rural and unfamiliar people. This was a powerful tribe of the Majhi and their armed men were largest in Balochistan. The Sakhani were extremely brave, courageous, and warlike with a strong government. This study has further discussed Islamic conquest and tribal dynasties which marked a remarkable turning point for Baloch people. This chapter further highlighted the colonial era and British influence which affected Balochistan's socio-political dynamics. Further, it has discussed Baloch tribal wars after post-Arab role where tribal unions developed. The chapter most importantly discussed Baloch migration phases, the reasons for their migration and their settlement in various regions after migration. The study has also discussed the Baloch settlement in the plain areas of Sindh and Balochistan where the small tribes of Baloch of Rind and Lashar settled. It has discussed the different groups of Baloch including Sulaimani and Makrani Baloch who are settled separately analyzing the different groups of people living in those areas. It has discussed their tribal structure. Further, the study explored about the Baloch in Kirman where it analyzed how Baloch conquered Kirman and also discussed the strength of Baloch in Kirman. It has also included the native land of Baloch where they occupied the territory from 10th to 16th Century AD, during the migration in east and west Balochistan, Sindh, and Punjab. Moreover this study has discussed major and minor Baloch tribes with their social, cultural, and political role in their tribe. It has discussed about the settlement of the tribe in different areas after the war where the tribe members were forced to move as they needed better place to settle their life where they can easily manage their job and family. It has also discussed the different names of the Sakhani tribe that how it was finally known as Sakhani today when the name derived from Sakh or Sakha which was the name of a holy or respected figure in ancient times. According to some historians the name may be attributed to a geographical area or a specific event. Not only this chapter discussed its settlement but also discussed its origin, its evolution, and from where the name derived and who was the forefather of this tribe and from which branch this tribe actually belongs to. This discussion has also analyzed the tribe interaction with other tribes during migration as there were disputes with Sikhs so they formed union to make their position stronger. This migration also led to cultural exchange. The tribe remained the powerful tribe of the past where their bravery is well noticed no matter it is dispute from Nawab of Bahawalpur or coming to Nawab Muzaffar Khan during the siege of Multan. Moreover, it also analyzed tribe strong role in politics and its political downfall as well where the Sakhani were attacked. It also analyzed tribe's modern history with main areas of the tribe including past to present

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