

## THE MAIZER UPRISING, COLONIAL RESPONSE AND THE GENERAL UPRISING IN THE NWF REGION (1896-97)-AN ANALYSIS

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### Abstract

*Tribal Areas, defined topographically as a strategic zone of defense for British India, were inextricably interwoven with the question of the overall British policy towards Afghanistan and Central Asia. For the British administrators in India the Tribal Areas were a vital and crucial part of the Great Game and its grand strategy to counter any threat to India coming from the direction of North West Frontier Region. Therefore, the British Indian Government, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, got ceaselessly involved in a series of tough and challenging military operations against the tribesmen in the Tribal belt only to control this region and crush the uprising and confrontation of the tribes. One such occurrence, in the Frontier history, was the famous uprising of 1897-8, when large-scale risings took place in the Tribal Areas/tribal belt. The uprising started at Maizer where the tribesmen killed some British officials. With astonishing impulsion, the conflagration spread and almost the entire Frontier was on fire. The British Indian administration took nearly a year to deal with the tribes that rose en masse. The British acknowledged the fighting skills of the tribesmen, accepted some of their own errors, and also the weak points of the opponent. The insurrection produced great deliberations in the British high-ups and they were forced to chalk out new plans and strategies to confront such unprecedented uprising in future. This research paper will critically evaluate motives and factors behind Maizer incident and how the British government managed to crush the insurrection and its fallout on the future relationship between the tribesmen and the British Raj.*

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**Introduction**

Frontier Wars are but the surf that marks the edge and the advance of the wave of civilization. (Salisbury, 1892). It is an incontestable fact that the British Empire had attained an unmatched and unparalleled position among all the empires of the world in the known history of mankind. Such was the length and magnitude of the empire that the famous maxim of the time ran that ‘the sun never sets on the Empire’. India formed a backbone to this empire for the part she played in providing the empire with her enormous wealth and resources. (Daud, 2012) The significance of India for the empire can be best described in these words:

“It was India’s size, manpower, resources, strategic location and glamour that made small-sized Britain the first super-power in modern times”. (Burk and Qureshi, 2011)

The mountainous region linking the fertile Indian plains to the Central Asian steppes, however, formed the most volatile and vulnerable spot paving the land-route to foreign and oft hostile influences towards the Indian sub-continent. The British, much concerned about their Indian possession not only tried their level best to preserve internal peace and harmony through political maneuvers but also focused on its defence and security. The southern advance of Czarist Russia in the early nineteenth century towards Afghan borders also compelled British India to move across the Indus and acquire firmly its northwestern regions. To stave off the further Czarist southern advance the British had formed a ‘three-fold frontier’ along the north-west frontier of India<sup>1</sup> as has been expounded by Lord

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<sup>1</sup> The first frontier was the outer edge of directly administered territory of British India, the second was indirect administered territory, i.e. Tribal area, and the third was the outer edge of the area of influence that was demarcated as linear boundary. See Warren, Alan. (2000), Waziristan, The Faqir of Ipi, and the Indian Army: The North West Frontier Revolt of 1936-37 (Karachi: Oxford University Press), pp.1-2 (it was demarcated into Settled Areas, Tribal area and the Frontier Regions. Moreover, according to 18<sup>th</sup> amendment the name of the North-West Frontier Province was changed to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).

Curzon: The Indian Empire is probably without precedent, for it gives to Great Britain not a single or double but a threefold Frontier, (1) the administrative border of British India, (2) the Durand Line, or Frontier of active protection, (3) the Afghan border, which is the outer or advanced strategic Frontier. (<https://multithinker.wordpress.com/2012/10/06/lord-curzon-once-said-frontiers-are-accessed:22/11/2016>].

This crossing of the Indus marked an epoch/era of resistance and confrontation towards the British Government of India at the hands of the *Pukhtun* tribes renowned universally for their bravery and superior marksmanship. (Baha, 1978) This tribal race or society that is split into some 400 *Khels* and *zais*<sup>2</sup> (Oliver, 1890) highly cherish their unique code of conduct namely the *Pukhtunwali* which regulates their day to day affairs through tenets like *Badal*, *Melmastya*, *Nanawatay*, *Panah*, *Nang*, *Jarga*, *Baramtah*, etc. The *Malak*, *Khan* and *Mulla* possess the regulatory influence in this society. (Sultane-i-Room, 2014)

The catastrophic lesson learnt during the First Anglo-Afghan War urged the British to maintain cordial relations with these tribes through local intermediaries like the *Malak*, *Arbab* and *Khan* etc. (Caroe, 1976). The British themselves concentrated more on the construction of defence works i.e. road-building, erecting and repairing of border posts, forts, and pickets, etc., garrisoned by military and paramilitary forces. (Wylly, 1912) This active involvement of the British within the tribal land aroused the suspicions of the tribesmen who jealously guarded their living spaces against any foreign or unfavourable influence. (Caroe, 1976)

The tribes, then, frequently desecrated the agreements signed with the British and started raids and forays into the British administered districts threatening the British infrastructure. The British in response applied corrective measures and in order to bring the restive tribe(s) back into order started coercive intervention known usually as ‘butcher and bolt’, ‘harry and hurry’ and ‘hit and run’ etc. (Mathews, 2012) The years 1849-1899 witnessed sixty-two such expeditions

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<sup>2</sup> *Zais* and *Khels* are the local terminologies given to tribal sections and sub-sections.

marked specifically by the Mohmand expedition 1851-52, the Hassanzai Campaign 1852-53, the Ambela Campaign 1863, the Black Mountain expedition 1868, the Jowakai expedition 1877-78, the Mahsud Campaign 1881, the Miranzai expedition 1892 and the Mahsud Operations in 1894, etc. (Government Record, vol. 1, 1982), hence, the statement is justified that the North-West Frontier of India was a theatre of intermittent fighting between the forces of the British Empire and the local tribesmen throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

### **The Incident of Maizer**

With respect to dealing with the tribesmen, the British Indian administration properly concentrated on the policy making which resulted in their decision to putting heavy fines on them and also sending expeditions to the tribal region/belt. In this regard, during the 1897 summer season, the entire Frontier region, was set ablaze by deploying nearly 60,000 regular forces just 'to preserve the finger of what has been assumed to be the right hand of British Imperial power in Asia'.( Ainslie T., ed. 1985).

In Tochi, in 1897, the entire Maizer villages<sup>3</sup> inclusive of all the resident tribes were at un-rest against the government authoritative stand to pay the fine assessed against them (Darpakhel, 1994) in lieu of the death of Hunda Ram, a Hindu clerk, and had not yet been paid. The year before, i.e. on 9 June 1896, the said Hindu, while taking his usual (daily) practice, was taking a bath (*Ashnan*) in the stream (*Vaila*) while the women of the village used to come, fill and carry water to their homes from that *Vaila*. This action of that Hindu clerk was against the Pukhtun code of conduct and the result of his action (Ashnan on regular

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<sup>3</sup> Maizer is the name given to a group of Madda Khel villages situated above the junction of the Shawal Alghad and the Tochi valley, and not the name of a single village. It consists of a number of broad cultivated terraces sloping down to the stream and is occupied by Drepilari, Khoji Khel, Ali Khan Khel and Macha sections of the Ger portion of the Madda Khel tribe. It lies two miles beyond the village of Sheranna, and is about eleven miles distance from Datta Khel camp. The main road to Birmal and Ghazni, which the tribe is under agreement to keep open, runs through it, and it forms part of that tract of the upper Tochi in which a more extended influence was contemplated as compared with the hill tracts of Darwesh Khel

basis in the stream) was obvious that he faced accidental death at the hands of a young villager, Mr. Waris Khan.<sup>4</sup> In this regard, the government levied a fine of Rs.1200 as penalty for the said murder which was although reduced but not paid till 9 June 1897(exactly a year after this death incident took place). (Darpakhel, 1994)

### **Events**

At 9.30 a.m. on 10 June, 1897,( Elliot, 1968) Mr. Gee, the political officer in the Tochi, arrived in Maizer, a group of small villages in the upper part of the Tochi Valley, inhabited by Madda Khel Wazirs,(Spains, nd) accompanied by a large escort, consisting of twelve Sabres-1st Punjab Cavalry, two hundred rifles-1<sup>st</sup> Sikhs, one hundred rifles-1st Punjab Infantry and two guns of the 6th Bombay Mountain Battery. All seemed normal, women and children were moving about in the fields, and as a friendly gesture the Maliks offered to provide a meal for the Mohammedan Sepoys of the escort. They chose a site under some trees; the guns were unlimbered close to a wall while the infantry, which retained their rifles, were on the outer flank. Mr. Gee, with his cavalry escort rode off to visit a neighboring village, and on their return, they took their lunch setting under the tree, and Mr. Gee asked, 'for any delegation or Jarga' to discuss the fine on the part of Maizerwals. In the meanwhile, a roaring occurred as if something was there, and a single shot was fired from the distant *burj*. The 1st Sikhs pipes had just begun to play when there was a sudden commotion in the village and two shots were fired, one of them wounding an officer. A hot fire then broke out from all sides and Colonel Bunny, 1st Sikhs, commanding the escort, was badly wounded in the stomach. The guns opened with case shot at point-blank range at a party of men who were about to charge. In a few moments all British officers were wounded, two of them mortally. The baggage mules had stampeded, so

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<sup>4</sup> According to the Pukthun code of conduct, the male members when notice that females are busy in filling water at any vailla, they avoid to go there until the females do their job. Yet, this (Hind Ram) used to take Ashnan regularly. Mr. Waris Khan was the resident who belonged to Ali Khan Khel section (sub-tribe) of Madda Khel, and he killed that Hindu clerk and escaped to Afghanistan.

that, when the withdrawal began the reserve ammunition and other equipment had to be abandoned. The guns soon ran out of ammunition and fired few rounds of blank they had brought with them.( Elliot, 1968) <sup>1</sup> There were all the makings of disaster. The staunchness of the troops under such circumstances was beyond praise and in particular, the three Indian officers of the infantry behaved with the greatest gallantry. Fighting every inch of the way the withdrawal over the first three miles took three and a half hours. At last, about 5.30 p.m., a position was found on which a stand could be made and it was here that reinforcements from *Datta Khel* arrived, but it was an hour after midnight before the rearguard was back in camp.( Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, Vol:II, , p. 433)

### **Nature of the Attack**

The necessity of that situation was to know whether the attack by Maizerwals upon the British forces was pre-planned, or, it was result of abrupt reaction. To discuss, almost every colonial and local writer viewed that the pre-emptive attack made by the locals (Maizerwals) upon the guests (Mr.Gee's escort) was against the Pukhtunwali. However, as remarked by Caroe, the locals (present-on the occasion) viewed that Mr. Gee's arrival with large escort had terrified them. Caroe refers such situation was violation their own code of honor(Caroe , 1976), i.e. after giving warm welcome to Mr. Gee and his party followed by serving with food, and then attacking the British without warning. On the aforementioned occasion, the British military officers were killed in maximum number, however, the chief along-with few of his escort managed to escape.(Spain, n.d) Laiq Shah Darpakhel argues that the villagers did not like, as it was against Pukhtunwali, the announcement of the payment in the thundering sound of beating drums. Similarly, the point has been referred to as violation of Pukthun code of conduct to open fire on the guests but Darpakhel and Muhammad Nawaz Khan Mahsud had justified the action of the tribesmen as they claim that it was against their traditions to be insulted by the aliens rather the aggressors. (Darpakhel, 1994) However, Mr. Gee's justification of his visit seems different from the

aforementioned local writers. In a telegram, he stated his own narration of the Maizer incident in the following words:

“As long-ago September 1896 I had visited Sherana and Maizer with the view of examining possible site for the Sherana levy post, and you had concurred generally with me that the post should be somewhere between Sherana and Maizer”.

Interestingly, Mr. H.W.Gee, adds the payment of fine in the objects of his visits to Datta Khel which is clear from the following statement:

“My chief object in the present visit was to select a final site for the post...I have explained the circumstances connected with the realization of the fine in Honda Ram’s case, and my intention of discussing the details of distribution with all the Maliks concerned on my visit to Maizer.”( Mr. Gee, titled: File No.60, Proceedings for July 1897 Nos. 4-62. )

Immediately, after Maizer incident, the active phase (part) started on both sides, i.e. by the British and by the Co-Tribes. The British reaction was obvious, and therefore, General Corie Bird was asked to announce the proclamation to the Datta Khel.

### **Punitive Measures**

After four days of the incident, i.e. on the 14 June 1897, appeared a general Proclamation from General Corie Bird to the tribes. It began with briefing about attack of *Madda Khels*, proclaimed that Government had ordered him to advance to Maizer with a enough and suitable force to hold its own against all corners and to ensure compliance to Government orders. General Corie Bird added, that he intended to destroy all fortified kots in *Maizer* and *Sheranna*, irrespective of the active or passive participation, and that he would stay at *Maizer* according to his and of his government’s likings.

Subsequently, he would announce the terms of punishment to the tribes which would be inflicted upon all responsible people or who took part in the attack, with whom alone he would deal. All others were warned to live in peace with Government and to avoid further obstruction...(Mills, 1996) In order to clearly understand the proclamation, it is extracted as follows:

while the British Party, ...were resting under the shade of the trees at Maizer, they were attacked in a most treacherous and cowardly manner by a large body of tribesmen, and several officers and men were killed and wounded; Now I proclaim to all concerned that I am ordered by the Sarkar to proceed to Maizer with a force sufficiently strong to hold its own against all comers and to compel obedience to the orders of the Sarkar. And I inform you that it is my intention to destroy all the fortified kots in Maizer and Sheranna... And I warn all others who wish to live in peace with the Sarakr to refrain from obstructing my force, for, depend upon it, any further unfriendly acts will be severely dealt with. (Telegram dated.25<sup>th</sup> June 1897)

The above mentioned attacks by the British forces against the tribesmen were carried out with iron hand; it involved nearly 70,000 men sent to Datta Khel (area) which compelled the Madda Khels to submit before the British forces, and also accepted the terms and conditions including giving their seventeen ringleaders, paying the compensation amount for the property taken at Maizer, and also to pay the fine (the fine imposed after the murder of Honda Ram-the principal amount of fine which has been delayed by the Madda Khels). However, it took more few years, after sending more expeditions, which compelled the tribesmen to submit and accepted almost all the terms and conditions in 1901.



### **Impact of the Incident-Motivation of the General Rising**

The British were divided over the causes of 1897 uprising. A group consisted of various British officials supported the view that the said outbreak was planned and coordinated prior to its occurrence and that it involved major efforts by the tribesmen. However, other group of officials believed that the outbreak was spontaneous and it resulted in unconnected incidents, while some experts also viewed the incident as outcome of religious fanaticism. Yet, a farsighted group of officials expressed that the incidents or risings were co-related to the British Forward movement into the tribal territory in 1890s.

This ended the active phase of the rising, but the pacification and punishment which the British felt compelled to mete out took more than three years and employed a total of more than 75,000 troops. Expeditions were undertaken against the *Mohmands*, the *Orakzai*, the *Afridis*, the *Wazirs*, and led into *Swat*. The invasion of the *Tirah* alone in 1898 employed more than 40,000 men. The Malakand Field Force of 10,000 men (now remembered chiefly for one of its least important members, a young *Subaltern* named Winston Churchill) penetrated into *Swat* and *Buner* in the face of heavy resistance. (Sultan-i-Room, 2014)<sup>2</sup> Huge fines were levied, large numbers of rifles confiscated, pickets built along the lines of march, and agreements to keep the peace extracted from such *Jargas* as could be coerced into assembling. The result of it all was a return to the status quo. (Wylly, 1912)

Strangely, the *Mahsuds*, usually ready to fight at the slightest provocation, played little part in the 1897 rising. However, under the leadership of the *Mulla Powindah*, they remained hostile and aggressive during the next three years and were finally assessed a fine of Rs.100,000 for accumulated wrong-doing. When they refused to pay this, a blockade was imposed in December, 1900. The *Mahsud* reply was the series of attacks on police and militia posts in Tribal territory and a number of raids deep into Bannu District. The retaliatory British marches into the *Mahsud* territory involved more than 12,000 men, but did little to subdue the turbulent tribesmen, although a measure of peace was re-established for a few years. (Spain, n.d.)

**Version of Mr. Gee, 19<sup>th</sup> June 1897**

While submitting his reports regarding the Maizer incident, Mr. Gee, narrated the whole episode and stated that after arriving at the Madda Khel, he and his Assistant Political Officer went to have a round of the area, and in the way he had seen and met some Malaks who were informed that his coming back (from their quick round of the area) will talk to them with respect to Honda Ram's case and discuss it detail; additionally, he ordered Sadda Khan and Alambe to stay in camp. Similarly, after his return the lunch was taken, enquired about the awaited Jirga to meet him. The Assistant Political Officer, as he was informed by Malik Sadda Khan, informed Mr. Gee that the matter has been sorted out through an amicable agreement among the tribesmen-according to Mr. Gee that was a deliberate lie on the part of Sadda Khan because the tribesmen had already refused to pay the fine.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Gee commented on the incident in the following words:

I come now to the possible reasons for this act of gross treachery, to which it would be difficult to find a parallel in frontier history, and which was contrary to all the recognized principles of Pathan honor. The first reason...was the alleged dissatisfaction of the Maizerwals and Ali Khan Khels at Sadda Khan's distribution of the fine (share) in Honda Ram's case...It is clear from the evidence of Alam Shah, the Madda Khel Havildar, a resident of Urgun, that on the 9<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> I then made enquiries as to whether the local Jirga which had been sitting under some trees near for some time were ready to come and see me, and I was told by the Assistant Political Officer that they had come to an amicable agreement by themselves and that all that was necessary was that they should come up later and make a formal statement before me. This was what Malik Sadda Khan had led Ghulam Muhammad Khan to believe; but, if the evidence available is to be trusted, Sadda Khan's statement was a deliberate lie, for at that very time the Maizerwals had refused, as they had the day before, to be bound by Sadda Khan's proposals and must have been preparing for the outbreak. Had Sadda Khan given us the slightest information of this attitude on the part of the Maizerwals, which he as well as the other Madda Khel Maliks, who had been there all day, must have been perfectly well aware of, there would have been plenty of time to prepare for an attack.

and the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> the matter was discussed in Sadda Khan's presence, and that the Maizer Malaks were extremely dissatisfied with Sadda Khan and had used threatening language towards him. It appears to me, however, quite impossible that this was the sole cause of the outbreak, for this reason that the Maizer Malaks knew perfectly well that I wanted to discuss the matter with them, and therefore all they had to do was to come to the Assistant Political Officer or myself and state their objections. Further, it must be remembered that a short time before, these very Malaks had been present at Datta Khel when the proposed distribution was put before me in Jarga, and on that occasion, they had made no protest whatever. It is probable, however, that Sadda Khan's procedure in this matter aggravated the feeling against him already existing in this portion of the tribe and made them ripe for mischief.

#### **Issue of Muzammil Khan**

There is a second cause which has since come to light, which accounts in a great measure for the active part taken by Syad Wali and other Ali Khan Khels (Waris Khan—the murderer belonged to this section) ([F. No. 22, No. 94 C., dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 1897, From H. W. Gee, Esquire, Political Officer Tochi to the Commissioner and Superintendent, Derajat Division, p. 8].<sup>6</sup>, and that is the fact that Mozammil Khan, nephew of Sadda Khan, had recently been caught out in an intrigue with Syad Wali's wife, and that his object in taking up the Jamadarship of Sheranna levies at Datta Khel was to get out of Syad Wali's way.

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<sup>6</sup> The fine imposed upon this section was Rs. 180 Kabuli, the Nazr Khel/Khizzar Khels were to pay Rs. 120 Kabuli, while the Drepilare, Khoji Khel and Macha each section had to pay Rs. 300 Kabuli, respectively. [F. No. 22, No. 94 C., dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 1897, From H. W. Gee, Esquire, Political Officer Tochi to the Commissioner and Superintendent, Derajat Division, p. 8].

Malak Salehdin, Khidder Khel, is inclined to give this as the main reason, and it is certain that the Ali Khan Khels took a prominent part in the fight. If this was the main reason, however, it is rather difficult to understand why Pyall and Namwar Khan should have made common cause with them, because the larger the share of the Ali Khan Khels in the fine the smaller their own share would be.

**Fanaticism-a possible cause**

The General dissatisfaction at Sadda Khan's management of the tribe may, however, have induced them to combine, and it is possible that there was an element of *fanaticism* also in existence, which though it did not openly show itself was ready to break out. Once the attack was commenced, it became a matter of *ghaza* in which everyone except a few of the malaks joined.

There has, however, been none of this fanatical spirit apparent in the Upper Tochi since our advance to Datta Khel, and the fact that Mulla Ghain-ud-din and his talibs who were suspected in the murder of Honda Ram, the Sheranna Muharrir, had recently come in voluntarily and submitted to an enquiry into their conduct, led me to believe that we should have no more trouble from that quarter. There had been some signs of fanaticism at Inzar Kach in the Kazha during the 'Id, but when I recently visited the Kazha with a large escort all this appeared to have quieted down.

Mr. Gee states that the reasons I have given appear quite inadequate to account for this treachery, but no other explanation is forth-coming at present, and unless fresh facts come to light, I can only conclude that it was a combination of all these causes that culminated in the outbreak. That it was planned beforehand, I think there can be little doubt and all the circumstances of its commencement point to this, and most of the Malaks whose evidence I have recorded admit that this must have been the case. All the military officers are also strongly of this opinion. It is impossible how such a well-directed fire broke-out on all sides, if we suppose that the affair began accidentally. It would not be then possible to explain why such a number of men at once appeared from all parts of the Valley. K. B. Ghulam Muhammad Khan states that as he was going down the Shawal Algad to the Tochi he saw

a hand of armed Waziris coming down from the hills in the Dotoi direction, and though they seem to have been halted for the time at the instance of Sadda Khan and Ghulam Muhammad, there is little doubt that they went on again after the party had passed out of sight.

These men could not possibly have collected in so short a time from their villages which lie some way up the Tochi unless they had been warned beforehand to be waiting in the hills close by. It has been suggested that Malak Sadda Khan's recent visit to Urgun in connection with the return of the Kabul Khel refugees may have had some connection with the outbreak. Sadda Khan had only just returned from Urgun, and I have not had at present any opportunity of finding out what took place there. It is known, however, that the Maizerwals sent messages to Khalifa Noor Muhammad in Birmal, announcing what they had done and asking for help. So far, however, whether Afghan intrigues had anything to do with the case is a matter of conjecture.

An important point is that every reason given as justification is based on estimation except the role of Sadda Khan who did not communicate actual scenario before the outbreak. Neither he had intimated the PA, nor the Mr. Gee. Likely, he ignored to win over the Madda Khels to his side or to subside them before the occurrence of the incident. Thus, the responsibility lies on Sada Khan and Mr. Gee who misunderstood the situation and underestimated the Mada Khels-in their approach towards their so-called Masters.

### **Critical Analysis**

This uprising among tribesmen was due to various factors. The British Indian Government, in the 1890s, under the impact of revitalized forward policy<sup>3</sup> began to change the climate of Frontier war and politics. (Spain, n.d.) British Power was being displayed more and more, and its tentacles were encroaching to the Pukhtun highland. The Sandeman's activity over the Gomal Pass had cut off some of the southern tribes from unimpeded access to their usual routes to Afghanistan and had re-awakened the unrest among the *Wazirs* and *Mahsuds*. However, few other reasons have also contributed in the risings in the tribal region/belt including sending expedition to black mountains in October 1890 where the British troops were driven back

by the tribesmen; in 1891, construction of pickets in Samana Range by the British troops but the Orakzais resisted the construction and drove the British troops back, and in 1894, the Durand line demarcation by the British Government provoked a large scale Mahsud uprising led by *Mulla Powindah*. This was further climaxed by the destruction of British Boundary Commission Camp at *Wana*. In the next move, the British took direct control of the *Tochi* valley inhabited by weak and willing *Dauris*. The tax on rock salt from *Kohat*, one of the Hillman's principal article of import from the districts, was raised from 8 *annas* to 2 *rupees a maund* (Approximately to 8 pounds).<sup>4</sup> Different steps were initiated by the British Government which were instrumental in bringing the government at logger heads with tribesmen, i.e. the build-up of British military, tightening of administration in the districts, and the extension of both these steps into the mountains led many of the tribesmen to believe that their hills were about to be incorporated within the framework of British India which was a threat to their very existence. In addition, the Greco-Turkish war added fuel to the fire which generated a widespread but unsuccessful Christian crusade against Islam. Another point of concern was the British refusal to return some of the captive women to the *Afridis* who had fled from the tribesmen to take refuge in the settled districts. The situation was ready to (test the military strength of *Pukhtuns* and British) who had probably realized the prevailing situation and the expected happenings.

The uprising led the British to discuss and know the causes behind this act of the tribesmen. The parliament in England also conducted discussions on this unexpected rising *en mass*. A uniform view (decision) was not made regarding this incident and divided (diverse) views were found over the causes of 1897 uprising. Some officials were of the opinion that the outbreaks all over the Frontier had been coordinated and planned as a major effort to drive the British from the area. Another group of officials believed that those were spontaneous and unconnected incidents, while some experts viewed that the incident was an outcome of religious fanaticism. Yet the farsighted group of officials expressed that the incidents or risings were co-related to the British Forward movement into the tribal territory in 1890s.

Earlier in February, the British administrators were made to investigate the matter (incident at Maizer) in precise manner, and only the Ali Khel Wazirs from Madda Khels, to which Waris Khan belonged as he was the main culprit, were held responsible to pay the fine while other sections of the Madda Khels, i.e. Nazar Khels, Khizzer Khels, Drepilaris, Khoji Khels and the Mochas were to pay amount in the share of Madda Khels. The rest of the sections were internally at loggerheads with each other due to distribution of share in amount of fine, and it could be expected that it led to lack of trust over Sadda Khan and Alambe by the Maizerwals, as they said that they were ready to pay the fine but not more than their tribal share through Shariat and tribal tradition-Shiekh Nur, Ali Khan Khel Malik said that, 'I am ready to pay my tribal share, but I object to Sadda Khan's demanding more than this'. Formerly, the Ali Khan Khel had objected, as Mr. Gee reported that, "the Maizerwals had been much irritated at the announcement that Ali Khan Khels were to pay the whole of the fine imposed in the case and had declined to pay under any circumstances".

In this case, the nature of different tribal approaches also came to the front. Some of the tribal sections tried to get their position clear before the British and managed to believe the British that they had not taken part in the Maizer incident. They also ensured their non-involvement in future regarding the Maizer incident. In this regards, Mullah Powinda, a Mahsud leader had sent a letter to the British, as reported by Mr. Gee, that they (Mahsuds) wanted to negotiate peace and had no intension to play against them. Thus, the explanation presented by some tribes before the British, and aforementioned unconditional support by tribal leaders allowed the British to initiate punitive measures against those tribesmen who refused to pay the amount of fine.

### **Conclusion**

The colonial interpretation regarding occurrence of Maizer incident is that it was a preplanned activity. The locals consider it an incident that abruptly took place. The context of the Maizer incident and its content analysis reject the colonial view. Because, if the tribesmen had made their mind to hatch a scheme of attack over escort

of Mr. Gee, it could have been easily done, and for that there could have been a suitable opportunity: that was when he went to Dotoi, just before this Maizer incident. It was known almost to everyone, that Mr. Gee, after his arrival at the site went to Dotoi along with six other men to check and select a suitable place for levy post. Secondly, Sadda Khan could also shoot him as being a tribal or even Ghulam Haider Khan could do so. Therefore, it can be clearly understood that no act of treachery had been committed. Simply, the incident was spontaneous in its nature on the part of the tribes as well as the British while as the shot was fired at Sadda Khan as proved, and so it was done to malign Sadda Khan in the eyes of his high ups, because in tribal societies it is considered very bad if someone is insulted in front of others, or, in front of guests. As he (Sadda Khan) had enmity with a member of a tribe in lieu of his nephew (Said Wali), therefore, their insult occurred to him or against him rather than against Mr. Gee and his escort. The present study suggests that had there been any chance of tribesmen turn treacherous, and as history is full of such cases, the escort of Mr. Gee could have been attacked in the middle of their way while coming to Datta Khel (Maizer ) as there would have been minimum chances for colonial forces to fight.

It is, therefore, necessary to understand the very nature of the Maizer incident and its occurrence. It aimed at defaming Sadda Khan for his enmity with other tribes. Hence, this view that the attack was planned against Mr. Gee and his escort is unjustified. The first person who fired the first shot--initiator of Maizer incident, who remained unknown, had targeted Sadda Khan rather than Mr. Gee. The second shot also missed the target, but unfortunately, hit colonel Bunny which let the cross firing begin letting them believe that the escort had been attacked and thus it added more fuel to the fire. With hitting of Colonel Bunny, it was assumed that the shot had been fired at him and other members of the escort. After thorough deliberations and various enquiries conducted against the suspected tribesmen including Sadda Khan, Ghulam Haider Khan and others, it was concluded that Sadda Khan was not found guilty for instigating the tribesmen against Mr. Gee and his escort, or, that he had any prior knowledge (news) about the expected incident. The only mistake on his part, as had been proved,



was that among the tribes there was lack of consensus on the payment of the fine—they believed that the share of payment was improper for all the respective tribes. In this regard, Sadda Khan had been warned by the tribesmen a day before the incident, however, he had failed to communicate it to Mr. Gee, or even to Ghulam Haider Khan. The reason for ignoring the tribesmen's displeasure over fine was underestimated by Sadda Khan as he believed that he will get his fellow tribesmen agreed to pay the amount of fine. Thirdly, Sadda Khan had been asked by fellow tribesmen just before occurrence of Maizer incidence to accompany them and request Assistant Political Officer, Ghulam Haider Khan to grant them some more time for payment of fine. It is interesting to note that according to tribal code, such request needed to be asked thrice. However, it was noted that before the third request was made before Ghulam Haider Khan, the shot had already been fired and the request left unattended.

Nonetheless, the Maizer incident left some unprecedented effects on relations between tribesmen and their colonial masters in future. One of the direct effects was that the entire Madda Khel were inflicted with collective punishment, i.e. their houses were destroyed and fine of Rs.10000 imposed on them (exclusive of the amount previously due on their part-of Hunda Ram's death). Secondly, an unconditional surrender was demanded, thirdly, the important ringleaders from Madda Khel were asked to be tried and, fourthly, construction of levy post got ensured in Sherana. In a nutshell, the tribal resistance met with complete failure, while the British might got more strength and value, however, they felt to think over the Frontier policy that needed to be re-shaped for future interaction with tribes. Till the end, no reason or justification for murder of Honda Ram was found, neither noted by the British authorities nor by the locals; only Sultan Mohammad Khan, the biographer of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan and Laiq Shah Darpakhel, author of *Waziristan* gave a clue that he (Honda Ram) was involved in an immoral affair in that locality where he was posted. However, that charge has not been proved on him, or, not even mentioned by another writer or narrator.

In the same manner, rising by the tribes in different areas were noticed; in July 1897, the first instance was of Mulla Mastan aka Sartor

Faqir (Mad Mulla or the bear faqeer) followed by Mulla Syed Akbar and Hadda Mulla. Interestingly, Manki Mulla, Mulla Powinda and Karbogha Mullah did not join them in the uprising, and the one-time worst enemies of the British Indian Government-the Hindustani Fanatics also remained neutral while Nawab of Dir sided with the British. Moreover, in this (Maizer) incident, the tribes also got divided and some proved loyal to the British-Khaza Madda Khel remained aloof from Ger Madda Khel. Similarly, Inayat Khan of Thana went to Chakdara Fort and offered service to the British. In Orakzi and Afridi rising, Adam Khel Khel Afridis of Kohat also refused to close the pass for British and it remained open during the uprising. This approach also justified that there was leadership vacuum in the tribal area.

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