



## Ascend and Descend of the British in the Malakand Zone and the Role of the Napoleon of the Pathans: A Historical Study

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### Key Words

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**Abstract** *The Siege of Malakand was the July 26 to August 2, 1897 siege of the British garrison in the Malakand region of colonial British India's NWFP. The unrest caused by this division of the Pashtun lands led to the rise of Saidullah, a Pashtun Fakir who led an army of at least 10,000 against the British garrison in Malakand. Although the British forces were divided among a number of poorly defended positions, the small garrison at the camp of Malakand South and the small fort at Chakdara were both able to hold out for six days against the much larger Pashtun army. The Napoleon of Pathans- Khan Umara Khan of Jandul's role will be put under discussion which is considered as a hub of the discussion held in this article..*

### Introduction

Though the British first set their foot in Malakand in 1895 when a relief force was sent against Umara Khan to Chitral, but it never meant that the British were unaware of the importance of Malakand. When British occupied Punjab in 1849, like all other tribal areas, the Malakand also fell into the hands of the British. Political relations with the region were administered through the Chief Commissioner in Peshawar. The policy with tribes was one of non-interference in their internal affairs. It was only on the occasion of their becoming implicated in depredations and robberies within the border of British territory and its subjects that it become necessary to take punitive expeditions against them (Military Report and Gazetteer, 1928, p.103). The first major interference on the part of the British was during the Ambyla war in 1963 against the “Hindustani Fanatics” as the

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British called them. In this war all the leading tribes and Khans of Dir, Swat and Bajure took part against the British but were defeated. Moreover, many British writers wrote research works on the political, social and religious conditions and history of the people of the region. In 1882 Dr. McNair passed through Dir and went up to Chitral. He was the first European to enter this country (MacMahan & Ramsay, 1981, p.83). With the advance of the Russians to Hindu Kush in the 80s' of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, sending of visitors to the court of Mehtar of Chitral and moving her troops down towards Pamir raised the eyebrows of the British. The British began to search for an easy and shorter route to Chitral to check the Russian influence in the Hindu Kush, Chitral and Gilgit (Durand, 1899, p.41). The only easy and shortest way to the British seemed the route via Swat and Dir to Chitral. Until the last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the "Purdah" of Dir, Swat and Bajure and the surrounding areas had been virtually un-breached. Due to the chaotic political conditions and perpetual wars among the Khan of Dir, Bajure and the Mian Gul of Swat for political supremacy prevented the British from opening up a postal route to Chitral till 1892. It was during the rule of Khan Umara Khan of Jandul that a postal route was opened up to Chitral whose rule had brought peace to the region.

### **Khan Umara Khan and the British**

Umara Khan had inherited British animosity from his grandfather Faiz Talab Khan, who had fought by tooth and nail against the British along with his contingent in the war of Ambyla (McMahan & Ramsay, 1981, p.77).

During his exile in Swat, he came under the influence of a Pir named Syed Akbar Shah. The Pir was a follower of Waliullah- a line of mysticism and thus was a staunch supporter of the Mujahidin movement against the British in Malakand. Umara Khan became his disciple and regularly began to participate in his Majlas. The Pir allowed him to practice "Silsila-e-Naqshbandia" (Halim, 1989, p.18). It was here that the spirit of Jihad against the British was instilled in his heart and mind (Asar, nd, p. 323-324).

It can be inferred safely that the capturing of his ancestral throne and the subsequent wars with the local Khans was a part of his plan to strengthen his position against the British. Being a military strategist and genius, he knew very well that until he overpowered the whole of the region, he could not contend the British. He knew it too that the Khans of the region are under the influence of the Amir of Kabul for they were the recipients of allowances from the Amir (MacMohan & Ramsay, 1981, p.80). On the other hand the Amir was a close friend of the British.

The way he started his rule after capturing the throne of Jandul clearly shows that his ultimate aim was to prepare himself against British. He convened the Jirga of the leading people of Jandul and told them, " O people of Jandul you would think that I killed my brother for the sake of a throne. Believe me throne is not my

aim but I got it as a means to achieve a great aim and the aim is to oust the Firangi Kafirs from the whole of our lands. For this great purpose to achieve, I will need your help, I will need brave men among you and I will need weapons. But first of all I will have to wage jihad against those who call themselves Muslims, but are secretly in league with the Kafirs and living on their allowances and have sold their Emans (faith) for money. Until and unless I overpower them I cannot overpower the Firangis" (Yar, P.C, January 5, 2017). The subsequent events that are the attacks on Dir, Chitral, Bajure and Afghanistan clearly confirm to the speech he delivered to the people of Jandul and reveals the real intension of Umara Khan. However, his first battle after his accession to the throne against the combined forces of his brothers and the Khan of Dir at Mayar in which he was defeated completely changed his strategy. He called a meeting of his leading men at the fort of Barwa and discussed the causes of the defeat. They finally arrived at the conclusion that main cause of the defeat was the superiority of the opponents in terms of weapons (Hussain, January 8, 2017). So, without more ado after it Umara Khan turned his attention towards building his army on modern lines and equipping them with modern weapons. He knew it that if he could not withstand an inferior army how he would be able to contest a well-organized and well equipped army like that of the British. He declared that any person who would bring a fine rifle would be taken in to his service (Halim, 1989, p.27). In a short time he obtained some rifles and organized a band of well-paid, well-drill men, among them being many deserters from Indian regiments, armed with Martinis and Sniders. He also raised a small troop of cavalry which was the first of its kind in Swat and Bajure (Thomson, 1981, p.255). The raising of the cavalry and the hiring of the deserters from the Indian regiments suggests that he was making preparation for a great future contest with the British as the deserters were not only well organized and well equipped but also knew about the war tactics of the British. Two of the ex-service men of the British named Aman Malik and Gul Wali Khan rendered great services in the organization of his army (Halim, 1989, p.103). Besides, he also built a factory at Barwa and Mistri Ghlam Rasul was made incharge of it who made two cannons and many rifles in the factory (McMahan & Ramsay, 1981, p.86). But still the existing quantity and quality of weapons was not enough because he had to deal with more powerful and dominant people like the Khans of the region, the Amir of Afghanistan and finally the British. The only way to solve this problem was to establish friendship with the British. Being a realist, he knew that without the British help and neutrality he could not subdue the neighboring Khans. By doing so he wanted to hit two birds with one stone that is to get arms and ammunitions and also trust of the British.

It was a time when Russian out posts had reached the Pamir and the British were worried about the defence of their northwest frontiers. The border between Afghanistan and British had not yet been delimited. The Khans of Dir, Swat and Bajure were under the influence of the Amir of Afghanistan, but the British did not

trust the Amir because of his book on Jihad and his involvement in the instigation of the tribal people on many occasions (Thomson, 1981, p.235). The British needed a friendly and strong man on the Malakand who had firm control over the tribes and render them help in the hour of need. Umara Khan caught the eyes of the British when he defeated the combined forces of the Khan of Dir, Nawagai and Asmar at Sadbar Kalay in 1881. The British saw in him the person who could do their help in the region if befriended.

After the battle of Sadbar Kalay, Umara Khan intensely felt the need for arms and ammunition and he extended the hand of friendship to the British and sent a delegation to the chief commissioner in Peshawar. As the British were already waiting, they accepted readily his friend request and also recognized the state of Jandul (Shahid, 2007, p.130). The British government gave him due consideration for they apprehended that an unfriendly Umara Khan might possibly be a source of trouble to them. The British gave him assurance of full cooperation (Halim, 1989, p.130). They also exchanged letters to build trust in which the government assured him the safety of his country while Umara Khan expressed his desire for getting arms and ammunition. In a letter sent by the government to Umara Khan reads, "Unless you yourself commence hostilities, the government will not take action against you" (Letters from and to Umara Khan, F. No.11. p.95). The Commissioner of Peshawar also sent him one green broad gown and one Lungi as gift (Letters from and to Umara Khan, F.No.98, p.45) From 1882 to 1884 he was busy in internal wars with the state of Dir and Swat and had occupied many parts of Dir and Swat. During this period he carried halfhearted correspondence with the Chief Commissioner in Peshawar in which he expressed his desire to obtain rifles and ammunition which the British accorded. They gave him ammunitions and also allowed him to purchase and transport arms from India. By now he had assembled enough arms and also built a strong army. In 1885 he sent his agent Sahibzada Latif Jan who waited on the lieutenant governor of Punjab at Attock. The governor satisfied him by saying that the British would never interfere in the affairs of Swat and Bajure (Letters from and to Umara Khan, F.No.98, p. 5). However in the next year, in 1886 relations between the British and Umara Khan embittered. An agent of the Amir of Afghanistan named Muhammad Syed Jan who was a resident of Munda, brought the news that the Amir was going to attack Swat and Bajure with the permission of the British (Letters from and to Umara Khan, F.No.98, p.5). This greatly enraged Umara Khan. He sent his agent to the court of Muhammad Sharif Khan, the Khan of Dir and asked him to join hands with him against the British. His plan was to invade British territory via lower Swat and Dargai, but Sharif Khan refused. As Muhammad Sharif Khan had got the throne of Dir with the help of Umara Khan on the understanding that he would help him against the British, therefore, Umara Khan entered into an agreement with some anti-Sharif Khan men and resolved that they would fight against Sharif Khan till his end (ar, P.C, January,

5, 2017). Henceforth, Umara Khan turned his attention towards Muhammad Sharif Khan and finally he defeated and banished him from Dir in 1890.

By 1890, he made himself possessed of the whole of Jandul, Dir and some parts of Bajure. He had made forts all along his dominion and garrisoned them under the command of his military commanders. After capturing Dir, he sent his agents to Chitral, Swat, Afghanistan and other petty Khans of the region to join him hands in a holy war against the British, but none of them give any satisfactory response (Khan, P.C, December 30, 2017). Because the Mehtar of Chitral had been on friendly terms with the British since 1886 and had stationed a political officer at Chitral, the Amir was also a close friend of British while the Mian Gul was angry with Umara Khan for he had occupied his territories.

But before waging a decisive war against the British, Umara Khan thought it wise to take care of the friends of the enemy. From 1890 till the Chitral campaign, he made constant attacks on the territories of Chitral, Afghanistan and Swat. During these campaigns, he never let the British know his real intentions and assured them that the aim of the attacks was to recapture those ancestral lands which had been occupied by them. This can be illustrated from a letter written by Umara Khan to the Extra Assistant Commissioner at Peshawar. The letter reads, "The areas of Barikot and Asmar was never ruled by the ancestors of the Amir and neither conquered by him, while at my part there are good grounds for my setting in these areas as these districts have always been ruled by our ancestors. These areas have been always considered as forming part of Bajure. He had no right in these areas and that he has taken it by force and oppression". (Letters to and from Umara Khan, F.No.98, p.5).

Umara Khan's wrath fist fell upon Swat. On the excuse of avenging the death of his two servants, he attacked the right bank of Swat in 1891 and occupied it. Then he proceeded downwards and captured the whole of lower Swat and Ranizai (Halim, 1989, p.40).

### **Attack at Afghanistan**

Umara Khan was looking for an opportunity to attack Asmar. The opportunity soon presented itself when a war of succession broke out in Asmar. On the death of Shah Tamas, the Khan of Asmar, his son was raised to the throne on the advice of the Amir of Afghanistan. His candidature for Khanship was opposed by his uncle Ghulam Khan and he appealed to Umara Khan for Help (Halim, 1989, p.42). In 1892 Umara Khan advanced on Asmar, captured it and installed Ghulam Khan as the Khan of Asmar and himself returned to Jandul. The Amir sent his forces under Ghulam Haider Khan and recaptured Asmar. Umara Khan sent Abdul Majid Khan with a force of 1500 men and captured Barikot, Sao, Narai, Marawar and Kunar. He then attacked Asmar but due to the reinforcement of the Afghan troops from Kabul saved Asmar (Halim, 1989, p.45). When the British came to know of it, they

got worried because the Amir was more important to them than Umara Khan. The British took it as an attack on them and warned Umara Khan to refrain from interference in the territory of Afghanistan. George Cunningham, secretary to the Government of India wrote to Umara Khan on 30<sup>th</sup> June 1892, "Information has reached the government that your army has recently attacked Afghan territory. Due to this act of yours, you should understand that the British government does not intend to save you from external aggression. When the Viceroy came to know of your aggression on the territory of his friend, the Amir of Afghanistan, he was much concerned. You are asked to refrain yourself from such aggressions" (Relations of Umara Khan with the British, F.No.10, p.6). After reading the letter, Umara Khan turned red of rage and in response wrote back to the government in stern words. In response Umara Khan wrote, "I have no concern either with the Amir or with the British government. If any one of them tries to take possession of my country, I will fight them till the last moment of my life. I will not postpone my advancement unless the government evacuate Asmar from the Amir's troops and hand it over to me" (Diary of special branch police, 1892, p.5). This letter was an eye opener for the British and the Amir for it explicitly revealed the intentions of Umara Khan to them. However at this juncture, the British could not afford open hostilities with Umara Khan because they needed a postal route to Chitral which could not be materialized without the support of Umara Khan. On the other hand, Umara Khan had also not abandoned his designs on Asmar. For the time being, he left Asmar and turned toward another friend of the British, the Mehtar of Chitral.

### **Attack at Chitral**

The strategic value of Chitral lays in the fact that it had seven fairly easy passes, leading from it into Badakhshan and Wakhan, both countries which had lately come under the influence of Russia (Thomson, 1981, p.295). When Umara Khan failed to take Asmar, he turned towards Chitral. He sent his agent to Aman-ul-Mulk, the then Mehtar of Chitral, with a message that the Mehtar had invited our enemies and made them sit on our heads. He warned the Mehtar to oust the Firangs from his country otherwise he would throw them out. Hearing this, the Mehtar filled with rage and told the messenger that had he not been a messenger he would have killed him. He told the messenger that go and tell Umara Khan that Chitral is mine and I can do whatever I wish, who you are to ask me? (Khan, P.C, December 30, 2017). As Umara Khan was looking for an excuse, he mobilized his forces and attacked Chitral. He attacked Nusrat Valley, and Mehtar's forces stationed there, surrendered the fort. Then he marched forwards and captured Arandu and Barikot (Halim, 1989, p.48). He also constructed a bridge between the villages of Arandu and Barikot over Chitral River (Bajure affairs, Encroachment by Umara Khan on Chitral, F. No.12, and p.6). Hearing this Mehtar got furious, and made a plan for revenge, however the commissioner of Peshawar refrained

him from doing so as the British still needed Umara Khan. The Mehtar postponed his plan and wrote a letter to the Government of India which stated, " Umara Khan attacked my country and took some subjects of mine as prisoners. This is much unwarranted and I hereby inform the government that Umara Khan's sincerity and loyalty is not reliable. Therefore, the government should not trust him any way (Ghufran, 1962, p.139). On the receipt of this letter, the British sent many of their spies to the region and they also took one of the confidential agents of Umara Khan, Sahibzada Badshah Jan into confidence to keep them informed of the activities of Umara Khan (Khan, P.C, December 30, 2017). This can be confirmed from the fact that one day it was brought into the notice of Umara Khan that some strangers have been seen in the bazaar of Mian Kalay and they are said to be the spies of the Firangis. Umara Khan said that whoever killed them, he will be rewarded 500 rupees and whoever brought them alive, he will be rewarded 1000 rupees. However, the spies got wind of it and fled to Chitral (Sirbiland, P.C, December 28, 2016).

### **Opening of a Postal Route to Chitral**

Though, the British had now become completely aware of the real intentions of Umara Khan through the reports of the spies, but they were not in a position to do anything against him. In this critical situation, the need for opening of a postal route to Chitral was intensely felt. Because, first there was only Russian threat but now the threat was doubled. The British realized that in any untoward situation, Umara Khan might attack the British garrison at Chitral. Secondly, as it has already been told that the British did not trust the Amir and they apprehended that the Amir had designs upon Bajure and the neighboring countries. So, it was considered advantageous to put someone in such a position that he could resist the advancement of the Amir (Bajure Affairs, F.No.11, p.9) The British wanted to play upon his weaknesses, that his craze for arms and the evacuation of Asmar from the Amir. It clearly shows that they wanted to play the Amir and Umara Khan off against each other. An accord was signed between the British and Umara Khan in 1892 according to which the British agreed to provide him with arms and hand him over Asmar. On the other hand, Umara Khan allowed the British to open a postal route to Chitral and take over the responsibility of guarding it. (Yousafi, 1960, p.316). Umara Khan appointed 265 men to escort the first post which passed through the forts of Chakdara, Barwa, Barawal, Sundrawl, Surbat, Chukyatanr, Dir and Panakot. From Panakot the post was carried to Ashrit by courier escort (Halim, 1989, p.133).

According to the agreement, the British provided him with some arms and allowed him facilities to obtain them (Relations of Umara Khan with the British, F.No.11, p. 5). However, Umara Khan was not satisfied with the quantity and quality of arms provided to him. The British gave him mostly light arms including

Sniders and Martinis (Hussain, P.C, January 8, 2017). The British knew it that arming Umara Khan with heavy and modern weapons will be akin to committing suicide. Umara Khan tried to play another card. He wrote to British, "I have a big offer from the Amir of Afghanistan and if you did not arrange something for me then I might be compelled to be with him "(Relations of Umara Khan with the British, F.No.11, P. 5). By doing so he wanted to get two purposes. Firstly, he wanted to get arms and secondly, to create rift between the British and the Amir.

## **Post Durand Line Relations**

After the signing of the Durand line agreement, the British by their actions sent the signal to Umara Khan that thenceforward conditions for friend ship will be laid by the British. This fact can be confirmed from a letter sent by W.J Cuningham, then foreign secretary to the Government of India to chief secretary of Punjab. The letter says, "The things continued down to the time Sir Martmar Durand went to Kabul; but now it is at an end. Umara Khan ought now to see that we no longer require a rival person or any other sort of potentate in his part of the country to keep the Amir of Afghanistan out, and he ought also to see that all chance of playing us and the Amir off against each other is gone, and that he must accordingly be content to accept whatever we think fit to concede to him" (Bajure affairs, F.No.11, p. 6). The gist of the letter clearly shows that all the Khans and rulers on the eastern side of the Durand line will now merely serve as vessels of the British Indian government. The tribal territory had been a constant source of trouble for the British since their occupation of Punjab. The British considered it as a part of the British Indian empire, Amir also was a claimant to it on account of patrimony, ethnicity and religion while the people and Khans and Maliks of the area considered themselves free and practically had no allegiance to any foreign authority. However, at times, the Amirs of Afghanistan used to instigate the tribal, appealing to their religious and ethnic sentiments. In the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the tribal uprisings assumed a dangerous shape, particularly in Malakand. But the immediate cause seems to be the hegemonic designs of Umara Khan on Asmar, Kafiristan and Chitral. These three areas were of great strategic and paramount importance to the British with connection to the defense of India. The enemy could exploit constant instability to its benefit. Keeping it in view, the British Indian government decided to demarcate the boundaries between British India and Afghanistan.

On 12<sup>th</sup> November, Sir Mortimer Durand, then secretary to the British Indian government for foreign affairs and Afghan Amir Abdurrahman Khan decided to demarcate the boundary between Afghanistan and the British India. This boundary was later on given the name of Durand line. According to the agreement, it was decided that Indian government will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of Afghanistan and the Amir will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying behind this line on the side of



India. The Amir agreed to cease interference in the affairs of Dir, Swat and Bajure (Caro, 1958, p.463).

The agreement fell like a thunder bolt on Umara Khan. He had been stabbed in the back. According to the agreement, the British intentionally handed Asmar, Barikot, Kunhar, Sao, Narai and Mrawara over to the Amir. Except for Asmar, the rest of the lands had been in the possession of Umara Khan which he had occupied from the Amir. (Halim, 1989, p. 135). Had the British wished, they could have easily evacuated Asmar from the Amir. They deliberately did so because they considered Umara Khan their enemy and did not want to see area like Asmar in his hands.

However, the British did not want to sever complete ties with Umara Khan, because they feared that a hostile Umara Khan may create troubles for the British. Secondly, though they have demarcated boundary with the Amir, but they knew about the uncertain nature of the Amir and Umara Khan could be used a trump card against the Amir in times of any untoward situation. On the other hand, Umara Khan was in desperate need of arms for the last and decisive battle with the British, therefore he kept the Chitral route opened. He sent a letter to the Chief Secretary of Punjab and requested him to be supplied with arms and to be permitted to purchase ammunitions from India (Bajure affairs, F.No.11, p.7). The Chief Secretary forwarded the letter to the Governor-General. The Governor-General wrote back to Umara Khan through Secretary to the Government of India, Foreign Department, "I am to say that in view of the satisfactory settlement arrived with the Amir, the Governor-General in council is of opinion that endeavor should be made at an early date to renew friendly relations with Umara Khan. He added that the Amir has definitely undertaken not to interfere there. The Governor-General in council is now prepared to arrive at an amicable understanding with Umara Khan as his relations with the Government of India are concerned. But they are of opinion that such an understanding should embodied in an agreement to the effect the Umara Khan would be under our protection and he would take no action, whatsoever, without the prior permission of the government. Should Umara Khan be willing to enter into an agreement of this kind, the Governor-General will be prepared to sanction the gift to him of 200 snider rifles, together with permission to purchase the ammunition for which he has applied, and in future any reasonable quantity of ammunition which he may desire for his own forces". (Bajure Affairs, F. No.11, p. 9). The letter seems to be sugar coated poisonous pill. The British wanted to pull Umara Khan to the snare. On the one hand, they promised him arms and ammunition but at the same time wanted to bind him in an agreement in which the gun would be in his hands with the trigger in the hands of the British. The letter also reveals that how much the British feared Umara Khan and how much important he was to them.

The letter of the Governor-General was passed through the chief commissioner of Peshawar to Umara Khan. Umara Khan gave a very diplomatic answer to the

letter and said, " Now that matters have been settled with the Amir and my country been secured from the attacks of the Amir. You need not to fear and I am content with whatever I have. But I cannot enter into an open agreement with you because my enemies may use it to their benefit against me" (Bajure affairs, F.No.11, p. 6). This letter speaks of his political and diplomatic prudence.

The British did not respond to his letter as they wanted nothing short of an agreement. They kept Umara Khan waiting for their response, while secretly entered into correspondence with Sahibzada Badshah Jan who was a confidential agent of Umara Khan, to know about his intentions. Sahibzada Badshah Jan wrote to the commissioner at Peshawar and said, "At present the Khan Sahib (Umara Khan) is exceedingly displeased with the Sarkar and is complaining much. My kind sir, it is necessary, that either Khan Sahib should be satisfied or that expectations of friendship on his part should be abandoned. He will not be satisfied unless rifles and ammunition are granted him, and if his satisfaction is not secured, the Chitral postal service will soon cease". This suggests that the British had kept a constant watch on his activities through their spies and wanted to bind him through an agreement.

As a first act of defiance, in November 1893 Umara Khan stopped the postal route through his territory (Halim, 1989, p.135). It was an intelligent step on the part of Umara Khan, because by closing the route his aim was to block the way for the British to reinforce their forces in Chitral in case of his attack on Chitral.

As the hope of getting arms and ammunition from the British dashed, as a second step he began to look for other venues to get arms and ammunitions. He secretly signed an accord with a "Scotch Firm" located in Bombay. Under this agreement he received a lot of arms and ammunition which considerably strengthened his position against his enemy (Halim, 1989, p.137). When the British government came to know of this agreement, she banned this firm and the supply of arms was stopped (Young husband, 1895, p.122). This speaks of the resourcefulness of Umara Khan that how he threw dust into the eyes of the strong intelligence and spy system of the British and transported arms and ammunitions. Besides, he also sent his agents to the then Russian government for securing their support. The Russian government gave them a warm welcome and they were allowed to go anywhere in Russia without any hindrance and they were promised that Russian government will extend her help in the hour of Umara Khan's war with the British. This is confirmed by the fact that during the cold war, whenever the Russian army went out on military operation, they used to salute the grave of Umara Khan at Kabul (Khan, P.C, December 30, 2017). But the question arises that why Russia did not come to the help of Umara Khan if she had promised to help Umara Khan? There seems to be three causes which might have kept Russia at bay. Firstly, the attack on Chitral was made in January and it is the month when the passes of Hindu Kush and Pamir are closed due to heavy snow and it was not possible for Russian troops to cross it. Secondly, the only option was the territory

of Afghanistan, but it was then ruled by an anti-Russian and pro-British Amir who would have never let the Russian army to traverse his territory. Thirdly, by that time the Russian and British government had delimited the Boundary of Afghanistan and Russia and they were relatively at peace, therefore Russia might have not considered it fit to offend the British Indian government.

As a third step, he sent his agents to Swat and Bajure with a view to induce the people of those areas to join him in a coordinated war against the British. He told them that very soon the government was going to seize their territories and before it that they could seize our territories, we should oust them from our country. But due to pressure from the British, as in the case of Thana and the appearance of Makrani Mulla on the scene again, his efforts failed. On the instigation of the Amir, the Makrani Mulla came again and issued *Fatwas*, reading that Umara Khan is a heretic and that he has killed his brother and he is not fighting for Islam but for his own interests (Yar, P.C, January 5, 2017). The Khans of Thana on the encouragement from the British, refused to join forces with Umara Khan.

In 1894, Umara Khan dispatched two consecutive expeditions to Kafiristan, but they failed. For the third time, Umara Khan led himself an expedition and after many battles occupied the whole of Kafiristan. It was the beginning of the end. When the news of the occupation of Kafiristan reached the British, Mr. Dean, the then commissioner of Peshawar wrote to Umara Khan and said, "You have attacked Kafiristan in which several men have been killed on both sides. The higher authorities were displeased with your actions. Refrain from committing unprovoked attacks upon your neighbors (Halim, 1989, p.53). In response Umara Khan wrote that, "Jihad against the Kafirs of Kafiristan had been carried out since the time of my forefathers. I myself, several times, have proclaimed Jihad against these Kafirs and captured several of their villages and converted some inhabitants to Islam. It is not correct for the government to consider these people the subjects of the Mehtar of Chitral, because, my forefathers had governed these people". (Umara Khan designs on Kafiristan, F.No.12, p. 8).

Umara Khan did not care for the warnings of the British and attacked the territory of Chitral. He invaded a village Ashreth, 20 km below from Lawari Pass (Halim, 1989,p.53) Since Umara Khan forces had fought many wars in the rugged mountains of Kafiristan and had been feeling fatigue and also been running short of arms and ammunition, therefore, Nizam-ul-Mulk's forces with the help of British garrison at Chitral, defeated Umara Khan's forces (Hussain, P.C, January 8, 2017). So Umara Khan's attack on Chitral was halted for the time being.

## **Conclusion**

Most of the materials available on Umara Khan have been written by the British writers which leave such impression on the mind of readers as if Umara Khan had been a close friend of the British and wanted them to give him power over

the whole region. There are local sources, written and oral, though scarce, but still throw enough light on the life and achievements to Umara Khan. The local sources leave a totally different impression on the mind of readers and portray Umara Khan a great enemy of the British from first to the last. If an objective and comparative study is made of both sources, one can easily arrive at the conclusion that Umara Khan was not a friend but an enemy of the British.

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