

His Highness Alhaj Sir Nasirul Mulk

His Reign & Achievements.

WAZIR ALI SHAH
CHITRAL.

The late H. H. Sir Nasir-ul-Mulk was the eldest son of the illustrious Ruler of Chitral, Late Alahazrat Sir Shujaul Mulk KCIE, from his first wife who was daughter of the Raja of Yasin in Gilgit Agency. He was born on 29 Sept 1897, and was fostered in his childhood by Bushe tribe of Kushum and Sheghnie tribe of Kuh. After preliminary education in the local Madrassa at Chitral he was sent to the Islamia College Peshawar for higher education. He made his mark in the College as one of the most brilliant students in the studies as well as in other activities. He was elected President of the Khyber Union during the years 1922—24. He graduated from the college in 1924 with flying colours having received the Chelmsford Gold Medal.

During the period following his graduation he was provided with frequent opportunities to be associated with state affairs both in civil and military spheres and thus got intensive training in administration etc. The first test came during the Afghan War 1919 when he was placed at the head of Chitral State Forces engaged in the defence of the southern borders of Chitral against invasion by regular Afghan Forces and Afghani Laskhars. Fighting in close co-ordination with the British Indian Army Units, he not only threw back the enemy on slaughts but, by a surprise encircling movement through the Bashgal (Nuristani) area, stormed and captured the strong Afghan defence at Birkot along with large number of war booty including two cannons. His services were highly appreciated by the British Commander, Col. Sambre Pamer.

He was appointed Governor of the Mastuj province of Chitral State in 1925 and held the post until his accession in 1936. But his services were also utilized in other positions from time to time. He acted as Regent during the late Alahazrat's absence from the State in 1924-25 when he later went for Hajj. He was member of Indo Afghan Boundary Commission in 1932. As the Heir apparent i.e. Wali Ahad of Chitral, the Govt. of British India was interested in his further training. He was therefore given an honorary commission in the Indian

Army and served as Captain for some years. This was followed by his appointment to the PCS and he served as Assistant Commissioner in various stations in NWFP for some years.

Back at home he was working as President of the State Judicial Council and remained associated with all spheres of State Administration.

Thus when, on the death of his father, Alahazrat Sir Shuja-ul-Mulk, in October 1936, he ascended the throne of Chitral at the ripe age of about 40 years, the H. H. Sir Nasirul Mulk had deep knowledge of the affairs of the State as well as experience in every sphere of administration not only in the State but also in the province.

He therefore immediately embarked upon the reformation of the State machinery and also to make solid and constructive effort for the uplift of the people of the area and development of the State. First step was the setting up of a State Administration on modern lines. For the first time post of Wazir Azam was formally set up and he appointed his uncle, Khan Bahadur Mehtarjau Dilaram Khan, as the first Wazir Azam. Ministers for Trade, Industries and Revenue were appointed besides other officers. He made an extensive tour of the state and acquainted himself with local problems of the area and considered plans to meet them.

To give impetus to the trade of the State he sent, with Govt.'s permission, a delegation to Kabul for talks with the Afghan Govt. regarding opening of R. Kabul for floating of timber from Chitral to NWFP through the said river. The delegation, led by his brother Shahzada Hissamul Mulk, Governor of Drosh and including Khawaja Mir Ghiasuddin, Wazir-e-Tijarat, returned after successful conclusion of a treaty allowing floating of Chitral timber in R. Kabul with certain conditions. At the same time he made efforts in other directions to increase the income of the State and in this connection he was able to get the subsidy given by Govt. of India increased from Rs. 60000/- to Rs 180000/- per annum. Mining of antimony ore in the State was also started.

His next important step towards development of the State was the introduction of modern education. In the past there were local Madrasahs at important villages where Persian and Arabic and theology were taught. It was for the first time that a regular Middle Standard School was opened at Chitral in Sept. 1939, and some primary schools were started in the interior. With this modest beginning made by late Sir Nasirul Mulk, today Chitral can boast of a Degree college, about 20 High Schools and hundreds of Middle, L. Middle and Primary School for both boys and girls.

The most outstanding achievement of his time was however the removal of the Indian Army detachment, stationed in Chitral and Drosh since the end of siege in 1895 and their replacement by the newly raised Chitral Scouts, manned by the inhabitants of Chitral itself. This force was set up in 1941-42 following long negotiation between the late H. H. Sir Nasirul Mulk and the Govt. of India. This brought a sense of relief to the entire population as it on the one hand, brought to an end the sense of alien occupation and on the other hand raised the moral of the people by placing the responsibility of defence of the borders in their own hands. Who could better defend the borders of Chitral against the enemies except the local people themselves. The raising of the force also provided big opportunities of employment to the people of the area and helped them improve their economic and social conditions.

He was fond of construction but restricted it to only important ones which were really needed. He constructed pucca buildings to house the offices of state departments such as Malia, Trade, Body Guard barracks and armouries and Judicial Council (Court) hall. The building now housing the Govt. High School Chitral was also constructed by him. He also constructed bungalows at Garam Chashma and Birmoghlasht besides a small bungalow at Chitral Gol near Chitral. Another useful building constructed by him is the Maj. Mallam Ward for Notables of Chitral at the Civil Hospital, Chitral which is a valuable addition to the accommodation available for patients at the hospital. The Irrigation channel from Nirdat Gole constructed by him has helped the people of Danin village to meet their requirement of water for their cultivation. His Highness used to personally supervise the work and would sit on the sites for hours mixing freely and in friendly manner with the labourers. In this context it is worth noting that for the first time he fixed monthly wages to the "boldoyus" who were, otherwise according to rewaj, required to work without any remuneration for a month in a year. He ordered that they be issued free rations besides payment of monthly salaries whenever they came for their duties.

During the war years he mobilized the resources of the state and kept the defence forces in readiness to meet any emergency in case Chitral's borders were endangered. In recognition of his services during the war he was made a K.C.I.E. and an Honourary Colonel in the Indian Army.

In 1938 he performed Hajj and on return journey visited other holy places.

The magnitude of his services to the state and its people can be better appreciated from the fact that he fell ill, following an attack of paralysis in

June 1937 and though improved first enough to move about, he remained an invalid for the rest of his life. It was in this condition, with one side of the body almost not working, that he continued to carry on his mission for the protection of the rights of the people of the area and make efforts for their welfare and uplift.

This great and, undoubtedly, one of the ablest sons of Chitral died on 29 July, 1943 following a sudden and fresh stroke of paralysis. He left two daughters but had no sons. A son was born in 1937 out of marriage with the daughter of Nawab Shah Jahan Khan of Dir but he did not survive.

The late Sir Nasirul Mulk was also a literary figure of reknown. His Sahifatul Takveen, a persian work in verse is recognized as an outstanding work of scientific and philosophical value. His other persian works, Tohafatul Abrar and Mashriqul Anwar, and other pamphlets are also of great literary and religious interests. The History of Chitral, published in Urdu by Mirza Ghulam Murtaza in 1961, had also been edited and improved by additions of authentic references and valuable historical and geographical facts by the late Sir Nasirul Mulk.

The political farsight and love and zeal for the cause of Muslims of the sub-continent is recognized by all. He had cordial relations with late Allama Mohammad Iqbal by whom he was greatly impressed. In 1941, shortly after the Pakistan Resolution was passed, he visited Delhi to see the Viceroy. On this occasion he met Qaid Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and other muslim leaders and also Late Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru. It is reliably understood that he was the first among ruling princes of the sub-continent who had full faith in the just cause of Pakistan, demanded by the Muslims of the sub-continent under the leadership of Qaid Azam and assured him of his whole hearted support as early as in 1941. On his return to Chitral he prepared a flag of Pakistan made in metal and placed it at the entrance to his palace. This flag is still there as a living monument to the political wisdom and the staunch faith in the destiny of the muslims of that great ruler of the mountain kingdom of Chitral.

Chitral and its people can be justly proud of this great son of theirs.

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More on Nasirul Mulk

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