

The Foundations

The Founders and 1959

(Compiled by Dr Jashanjot Singh, S-52,1967)

A.

Below is an excerpt from the minutes of a meeting of “Committee for administration of PWSR Fund” of which Governor was the Chairman and Chief Minister a member. This document is part of the personal file of Lt Gen Kalwant Singh in 1959. It mentions the first formation of committee for starting Sainik School.

Item No. IX (Establishment of a School or College on the model of Doon School; involving an initial outlay of Rs. 39 lacs from the Punjab PWSR Fund to be set aside as Endowment Fund of the School).

The Scheme for a Sainik School as formulated by the **G.O.C.-in-Chief, Western Command** was approved in principle. A sub-committee of the undermentioned individuals, was appointed for the purpose of

- (a) **selecting** a suitable location for the School out of three places viz., Nabha, Malerkotla and Kapurthala,
- (b) **choosing** a competent Headmaster as early as possible
- (c) **preparing** a detailed prospectus and curricula for the school in consultation with the Headmaster-designate and
- (d) finalising other details of the Scheme:-

- | | | |
|--|-------|----------|
| 1. General Kalwant Singh | | Chairman |
| 2. Col. Naunihal Singh Mann | | Member |
| 3. Nominee of the C.M. Punjab (most likely to be a representative of the Education Department of the Punjab Govt.) | | Member |
| 4. Nominee of the G.O.C.-in-C, Western Command (most likely to be G.I. Education). | | Member |
| 5. Honorary Secretary Punjab PWSR Fund, Secretary to Governor | | Member |

B. Historical Document

In absence of any proper records(from either school or PWSR Fund which has been wound up) the loose paper below from the file of Lt Gen Kalwant Singh of 1959 maybe taken as

retrospective evidence of the sequence of events that occurred before the school was set up. It is not clear who has written this to who but it appears to have been copied to Gen Kalwant Singh

“In para 13 of my letter No. F.N. 11/59, dated **3rd August 1959**, I made a mention of the quarterly meeting of the **Punjab Post War Services Reconstruction Fund** held on the **25th July**. A copy of the agenda and proceedings of that meeting had also been enclosed for your information. One of the main decisions taken in that meeting was to set up a Doon type school for which a sum of **Rs. 39 lakhs** was to be endowed by the Fund. **A Sub Committee with Lt. General Kalwant Singh as Chairman** had been appointed to decide where the school should be located and to select a suitable Headmaster. The Sub Committee considered several alternative sites in capitals of former Princely States as well as Kunjpura near Karnal and finally **recommended that the school should be located at Nabha**. For this purpose, they suggested that the **New Secretariat building as well as the Guest House and the land attached** to it will be required. This recommendation has been unanimously approved of by the Committee of Administration of the Punjab Post War Services Reconstruction Fund in their meeting held on the **9th of November**. **The Chief Minister, Punjab, who is a member of this Committee has made a commitment on behalf of the Punjab Government that the required buildings will be placed at our disposal by the 1st of January next**. As for the post of a Headmaster, the Sub Committee interviewed over 20 candidates out of nearly 80 who applied in response to an advertisement in leading newspapers of Ambala, Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The Sub Committee has recommended the names of **Sarv Shri J.K. Kate**, at present Bursar of the Lawrence School at Sanawar **and H.S. Kashyap**, Vice Principal of the Delhi Public School in the same order of preference. **The Committee of Administration have approved of the selection of Shri J.K. Kate** and a request is being made to the Chairman, Board of Governors of the Lawrence School, Sanawar (Shri K.G. Saiyidan, Secretary, Ministry of Education, Government of India) for permission to **Shri Kate** to take up this appointment. I am glad that this ambitious scheme is showing promise of early fruition mainly due to the **enthusiastic support of our Chief Minister and the initiative, energy and drive of Lt. General Kalwant Singh who has evinced very zealous interest in carrying out this scheme**.

C. The First Members of the Sub Committee for Sainik School Nabha were as mentioned below in one of the meeting documents.

Proceedings of the first meeting of the Sainik School Sub Committee of the Post War Services Reconstruction Fund held at Chandigarh on the 5th September 1959,

Present:-

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------------|
| 1. | Lt Gen Kalwant Singh | -Chairman |
| 2. | Lt Col Naunihal Singh Mann | - Member |
| 3. | Major J.B. Bhagat Officiating SOI (Edn), | |
| 4. | HQs Western Command Simla | -Member |
| 5. | Shri H.S. Achreja, IAS | - Member Secretary |

(Secretary to Government, Punjab, Education Department, who had been nominated as his representative by the Chief Minister, Punjab was unable to attend).

Those who envisioned, conceived, planned and executed to bring into existence The Sainik School, Nabha (PPS)



The Board Members and Founders with Board Secy, JK Kate (extreme right) on First Founders Day, 1961. Col NS Mann is in centre, Lt Gen Kalwant Singh between JK Kate and Col Mann.

FOUNDER MEMBERS OF PPS NABHA

CHAIRMAN

H.E. V N Gadgil, Honourable Governor of Punjab

MEMBERS

Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon, Chief Minister, Punjab
Shri E.N. Mangat Rai, ICS, Chief Secretary, Punjab
Lt Gen Kalwant Singh, GOC-in-C, Western Command
Chaudhary Raghuvinder Singh, Member, PWSR Fund
Brig Gurkirpal Singh, Sub Area Commander, Punjab
Col Naunihal Singh Mann, Member, PWSR Fund

MEMBER SECRETARY Shri J K Kate, Headmaster



President Dr Rajendra Parsad- on his right is the Governor VN Gadgil; on his left are CM, Pratap Singh Kairon, Lt Gen Kalwant Singh and Col NS Mann. Mr JK Kate is at the podium. Included are Chief Secy Mangat Rai, GOC-in-C western Command and Raghuvender Chowdhary (First Founders' Day)

The man without whom there would have been no Sainik School, Nabha (PPS)

Sardar Pratap Singh Kairon (1901–1965)



Pratap Singh Kairon (1901–1965) was the Chief Minister of the Punjab province (then comprising Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh), and is widely acknowledged to be the architect of post-Independence Punjab Province (or Punjab, Haryana and Himachal as of today). Moreover, he was an Indian Independence movement leader. He was jailed twice by the British Empire, once for **five years** for organising protests against British rule. His political influence and views are still considered to dominate Punjabi politics, sometimes called the "*father of modern Punjabi politics*".

Early life

Pratap was born on October 1, 1901, into a Dhillon Jat family of the village of Kairon in the Amritsar district, province of Punjab during the British Raj. His father, Nihal Singh Kairon, was a pioneer in initiating women's education in the province. Pratap studied at the Khalsa College,

Amritsar and then went to the U.S., where he supported himself with work on farms and factories. He did his Masters in political science from the University of Michigan. He also did his Masters in Economics from University of California at Berkeley before going to Michigan. He was influenced by farming methods practised in the U.S.A and hoped to replicate the same in India later.

Political career

Entry into politics and contribution to Indian Independence Movement

Kairon returned to India in 1929. On April 13, 1932 he started an English weekly paper *The New Era* in Amritsar. He joined politics and the newspaper eventually shut down. He was at first, a member of the Shiromani Akali Dal and later of the Indian National Congress. He was jailed in 1932 for five years for participating in the *Civil disobedience*. He entered the Punjab Legislative Assembly as an Akali nominee in 1937, defeating the Congress candidate, Baba Gurdit Singh of Sarhali.

From 1941 to 1946, he was the general secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, a period of acute crisis in the freedom struggle. He was jailed again in the 1942 *Quit India Movement* and was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1946. He was president of the Punjab Congress from 1950-52; a member of the Central (All-India) Working Committee from 1945, and was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1946.

In Power

After Independence in 1947, Pratap Singh Kairon held various offices in the elected state government including Rehabilitation Minister, Development Minister (1947–1949) and Chief Minister (1952–1964).

Much of his work in the government was concerned with vital details, the removal of hurdles, the creation of opportunities, and the psychology and will for work, and the belief in change. Several of his programmes carried the mark of his individuality.

Minister for Rehabilitation

As Minister for Rehabilitation in the days immediately after the Partition, Kairon ended the chaos and confusion and handled the tough task of resettlement of millions of refugees who had migrated from West Punjab. Over three million people were re-established in East Punjab in new homes and often in new professions, in a very short period of time.

Pratap Singh took up the consolidation of land holdings, which was made compulsory by law, and by completing the operation at a high speed, laid the base on which was founded the spurt in production on farms in the 1960's. He belonged to, and was of, the Punjab village which ensured for him strong mass backing. He experimented, worked, and tried everything that was new and possible. He became the tornado round which the new and the old clashed in contradiction and

friction, and yet merged briefly and decisively in action, He certainly changed the administrative structure and methods of decision-making inherited from the British system.

Chief Minister

Pratap Singh Kairon was a man of vision. He laid the base on which Punjab prospered. Pratap Singh was deeply influenced by the American way of life. Mile upon mile of oranges, grapes and peaches he saw in California, planted in his mind the vision of a fruit-laden Punjab. He believed that affluence on farms was within reach of the Punjabi villager only if he had an independent and vital government. Pratap Singh evolved a pragmatic, determined approach to political, economic and social issues. In his role in implementing land reforms, the late leader established the Punjab Agricultural University, which played a key role in the Green Revolution. He also placed Punjab on the industrial map of the country. He was behind the creation of the city of Chandigarh and the industrial township of Faridabad (in present-day Haryana). Kairon made primary and middle school education free and compulsory. He opened three engineering colleges in the State and a polytechnic in each district. He was responsible for establishing much of the state's basic infrastructure in terms of irrigation, electrification and roads. Punjab was the first state in the Indian Union to have all its villages electrified.

Demise

In 1964, following the publication of the report of the commission of enquiry which had exonerated him of the bulk of the allegations made against him by his political adversaries, Pratap Singh Kairon resigned from his position as chief minister of the Punjab. On February 6, 1965, he was assassinated by Sucha Singh, in his car on the main highway (the G.T. Road) from Delhi to Amritsar. Sucha Singh was later hanged.



S Pratap S. Kairon flanked by Mr & Mrs Kate in front row, listening to the President.

**LT GEN KULWANT SINGH,
FORMER GOC-IN-C, WESTERN COMMAND**



Lt. General Kalwant Singh

Lt. General Kalwant Singh was born on 23rd of April 1905 at Rawalpindi. He was the son of the Late Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sant Singh, of village Zaffarwal, Tehsil Raya, District Sialkot, now ShriI Khupura district, West Pakistan. Sardar Sant Singh joined the Punjab Civil Service in 1890

and had a very distinguished career. His outstanding work was as E.A.S.O., during the Rawalpindi Settlement, as Assistant Colonisation Officer, Lyallpur and as President Council of Regency, Kalsia State. He was keenly interested in the education of the Sikhs, was a prominent member of the Chief Khalsa Dewan and was a member of the Court of the Hindu University, BENARAS. He was granted the title of Sardar Bahadur in 1913, and a Sword of Honour in 1918. His premature death in 1919 was a great loss to the Govt and the Sikh Community.

In 1923, Lieut General Kalwant Singh was selected by the Govt of India for the Royal Military College; Sandhurst. He was commissioned in 1925 and was attached for one year to 1st Bn, The Gordon Highlanders at Secunderabad, Deccan.

In 1926, he was posted to 2nd Bn 1st Punjab Regt. at Kohat, NWFP.

In 1935, he took the Staff College entrance examination and secured a competitive vacancy thus having the distinction of being the first Indian to have passed into the Staff College, by competition. He was the youngest Officer in his division at the Staff College. He did the prewar two year course. During the first year of the course the Chief Instructor at the Staff College, Quetta, was Colonel B.L. Montgomery. Col. Montgomery's uncle Colonel J.A.L. Montgomery, CSI, at one time Financial Commissioner in the Punjab, was an old and great friend of General Kalwant Singh's family. Col. BL Montgomery, therefore, took more than the usual interest in General Kalwant Singh's training while at the Staff College.

In 1937 he passed out of the Staff College and after a few months service with his Bn – 2nd Bn 1st Punjab Regt at Multan, he was appointed as a staff officer at Bannu, NWFP. For his work at Bannu, he was recommended for accelerated promotion to Brevet Major. The Area Commander in his recommendation said, "Capt Kalwant Singh is exceptional amongst officers of his age and seniority".

In 1938, he was appointed Staff Captain to the newly raised Brigade at Thal, Kurram, NWFP.

In 1939, he got married to a daughter of Sardar Bahadur S.S. Gyani, Indian State Railways.

In 1940, he was promoted Brigade Major of the same Brigade. At the time when he was Brigade Major, during World War II, there was a threat of invasion of India by the Germans, coming through Afghanistan and the Kurram valley N.W.F. and therefore, extensive defences were prepared in the Kurram Valley. General Kulwant Singh as Brigade Major took a prominent part, in the planning and sitting of these defences. His work as Brigade Major was appreciated by the then GOC-in-C and the then Governor of the NWFP.

In Jul 41, he was selected to be an Instructor at the Staff College, Quetta. He added another 'First' as he was the first Indian Instructor at the Staff College.

In 1943, he had a serious riding accident and was placed in low medical category for almost a year. On leaving the Staff College, therefore, he was appointed Assistant Quarter Master General (Operations) HQ Northern Army, Rawalpindi. After a few weeks in that appointment he was asked for by name to be Assistant Quarter Master General (Plans), Indian Expeditionary Force, a special Combined Operations Army which was raised for the recapture of Burma under General Sir George Giffard, GCB. But as General Kalwant Singh was keen to see active Service, as soon as he was medically fit, he applied to revert to regimental duty. He asked for a Battalion of his own Regiment in Burma but was given command of 7th Bn 1st Punjab Regt at Razmak, NWFP. After commanding the battalion for 1 ½ years, he was specially selected by the then C-in-C for training in Jungle Warfare in Burma, with a view to early promotion to the rank of Brigadier.

In May 1945, whilst serving in Burma he was recalled to serve as a member of an Enquiry Committee appointed by the then C-in-C to look into the grievances of ex P.O.W. Viceroy's Commissioned Officers from Italy.

In July 1945, after two terms of training attachments in Arakan and Burma he was appointed Second – in – Command (Colonel) of 114 Indian Infantry Brigade (7 Indian Infantry Division) in Burma.

In Sep 45, as officiating Brigade Commander, he took this Brigade by Air from Rangoon to Bangkok, Siam. In Siam he was Commander of the troops in Bangkok and in addition to the task of commanding the troops, he was entrusted with the disbandment of the Japanese 18th Area Army which he did very well.

In Nov 45, he was posted as Deputy Director Resettlement, Welfare General's Branch at General Headquarters, Simla. In Jan 1946, he was given command of 20 Indian Infantry Brigade (10 Indian Infantry Division) at Rawalpindi. Shortly afterwards his Brigade was selected to be the first experimental Brigade to recommend new organization and equipment for troops to fight in the Mountains against guerrilla enemy. In December 1946 he was ordered to take his Brigade to Oghi, District Hazara, NWFP to punish the Black Mountain tribesmen who had raided Oghi and Batal and had burnt, looted and kidnapped non-muslims from those places. His Brigade Group consisted of 17 units – the biggest command given to any Indian Officer so far. On the successful conclusion of this operation his work was appreciated by the NWFP Govt. The Government of NWFP asked the GOC-in-C Northern Command, Rawalpindi to convey their thanks to "The Brigade Commander and the troops who participated in quelling the disorders and restoring confidence".

In March 1947, his Brigade Headquarters was moved from WAH, District Campbellpur to Nowshera, NWFP where the Pir of Manki Sharif was trying to create trouble. By his firm handling of the Internal Security situation at Nowshera, he saved that town and the Cantonment.

In May 1947, he was appointed to the very important appointment of Brigadier General Staff, Northern Command, Rawalpindi, adding yet another 'First' as an Indian had never held such an appointment before.

On attainment of Independence, he was appointed Director of Military Training at Army Headquarters, New Delhi. A good deal of pressure was put on him to stay on in the Pakistan Army but as Lord Birdwood in his Book "A Continent Decides" on page 88 says "Had he remained he would certainly not have been alive ---".

In October 1947, General Kalwant Singh was appointed officiating Chief of the General Staff, Army Headquarters vice General K.M. Cariappa, on leave. It was at this time that raiders sacked Domel and were advancing on Srinagar. The Government of India decided to go to the aid of the Maharaja of J&K on 27 Oct 1947. General Kalwant Singh as Offg Chief of the General Staff had to organize the dispatch of troops by air to Srinagar. There was no previous plan to send any troops to the aid of the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir. It, therefore, required organizational ability and capacity and he carried it out, as is well known, very successfully.

On 1st November 1947, he was to take over as GOC UP Area but was appointed GOC JAK Division instead. This was a new Divisional Headquarters raised for Jammu and Kashmir.

On 4th November, he was ordered by the Govt of India to go to Kashmir and to re-capture Baramula. He went to Srinagar without a proper HQ and a few staff officers only. On arrival in Srinagar after studying the situation he decided to go on to the offensive immediately and clear Kashmir Valley of the raiders. On 7th November, he fought the battle of Shelatang, the most decisive battle of J&K Operations. Having served for so many years on the North West Frontier he understood the tribesmen and their characteristics extremely well and was best qualified to deal with them. He had, in a written appreciation for the then C-in-C General Sir R. Lockhart started that knowing the tribesmen as he did, he felt that they would spend 24 – 48 hours in looting Baramula which would help us to send sufficient troops to Kashmir and thereby save Srinagar. He received the appreciation of the Prime Minister and others. General Bucher, the then C-in-C placed on record his high appreciation of the very great military qualities possessed by Major General Kalwant Singh. The appointment in Jammu and Kashmir was literally thrown at him when the military situation there was indeed serious.

The Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir in his farewell address to General Kalwant Singh said "In bidding farewell to you today, we are sorry to part with a friend who came amidst us at a time when the enemy was battering at the gate of Srinagar And no sooner had you set your foot on our soil then the situation compelled you to go into action.

The enemy was driven back; Pattan and Baramula were re-captured and the front advanced to URI. This is an achievement of which you, your officers and men under your command may justly feel proud

The Public Relations handout in 1949 about General Kalwant Singh says “was the organizing genius of the Jammu and Kashmir force that stemmed the first treacherous assault of the raiders”.

Mr. V.P. Menon, on page 411 of his book “The Integration of Indian States” says “Major General Kalwant Singh left Kashmir on 1 May 1948 to take the appointment of Chief of General Staff. Before his departure, the Jammu and Kashmir Force was spilt into two divisional commands. The six months of Major General Kalwant Singh’s command were perhaps the most crucial in the history of Kashmir operations. He had to handle an extremely difficult situation, which he did with the utmost skill and credit leaving a secure and stabilized military position for his successors”.

Lord Birdwood in his book “Two Nations and Kashmir”, says, “This fine officer in May 1955 had moved on to take charge of India’s Western Command with his Headquarters in Simla”.

Shri Prabodh Chandra in his book “Pilgrims Progress”, on page 44 says “Maj Gen Kalwant Singh, GOC J&K Force had to build up a fighting machine from scratch, even while he fought a well prepared and resolute enemy. Now he gradually geared that machine for planned offensive operations”.

The Sikh and Hindu refugees of Poonch at a Dewan in the Gurdawara at Jammu presented General Kalwant Singh with an address and a sword.

His name was mentioned in Despatches for “distinguished and gallant services rendered as Commander JAK Force during operations in 1947-48”.

In May 1948, he was appointed Chief of the General Staff, Army Headquarters at a very difficult period in the history of the Indian Army. J and K operations were still on. During this tenure as C.G.S. the Indian Army was re-organised. The Hyderabad Police action was planned and mounted during the summer of 1948, the protection of the border in East Punjab, was put on a better basis and the integration of the State Forces with the Indian Army was carried out.

In 1950, he was selected for command of a Corps, with the rank of Lieut General. He raised the Corps in 1950 and trained it. The C-in-C held Exercise VIJAY, in May 1953 for his Corps. It was the biggest exercise ever held East of Sues. Over 50,000 troops took part in it. At the conclusion of the Exercise the C-in-C publicly congratulated General Kalwant Singh for his tactical skill and administrative knowledge and ability and for so well handling the Corps.

In 1950, he was appointed a member of a Government of India Committee and again in 1952 on the Reorganisation Committee set up by the then Defence Minister in 1952.

In 1955, he was appointed General Officer Commanding – in – Chief, Western Command, the most important operational Command in India..

General Kalwant Singh was Colonel of the Dogra Regiment and Colonel Commandant of the Army Ordnance Corps. He was a member of the Himalayan Club having been very much interested in Mountaineering.





Mrs Kalwant Singh, who became member of the Board of Governors of PPS after Gen. Kalwant Singh's demise. She served on the board till her last.

Col Naunihal Singh Mann



(1899-1989)

A life less ordinary: Naunihal Singh Mann, Founder Board Member of PPS, Nabha

Born in 1899, in Sheikhpura district of united Panjab, Naunihal Singh Mann was a scion of affluent and powerful landed gentry. Early education was at home, through tutors, with emphasis on languages and communication skills. Later, understanding the functioning of the Administration and Law Courts – essentials for a future hereditary magistrate; daily regimen included games and riding; finished college at F.C. College, Lahore excelling in languages.

Politics and campaigning was part of daily life and soon after finishing college he was elected one of the younger MLAs to the State Assembly, and worked under some of the country's most powerful leaders. This exposure vastly broadened his horizons and thinking and, being in a position of power, fuelled his constant desire for **change and betterment of the underprivileged**. Election to the Assembly was not enough and very soon, he along with a handful of friends, took the plunge to join the army on an '**honorary**' **commission**. Training, though staggered over two years, was demanding and many dropped out. He graduated with a **King's Commission** and joined a unit incharge of recruitment and training.

He worked and interacted with a diversity of people including civil servants, politicians, professionals, captains of industry, ruling princes, governors, feudal lords et al and, with missionary zeal, campaigned for the education of the masses as the only way to progress. It is said his personality was overpowering, and ability to empathise with all ages and levels made him unforgettable. He was at ease dealing with anyone **from the Viceroy to a patwari**.

The early 1930's were the good years; meeting and working with powerful, affluent close friends to build a new order for the enhancement of the state and country through creating educational institutions; mechanising agriculture; upgrading canal systems; improving roads and connectivity. He was also inducted into the **Service Selection Board (All India)**. This hectic activity was interspersed with '*shikar*' parties in UP and Panjab in winter, and 'garden' parties in Simla and Gulmarg in summer.

1936 saw him foray into the sugar industry helping a close friend set up Simbhaoli Sugar Mills in UP. Two years later, in 1938 when the maiden dividend was declared he suggested they celebrate by attending the coronation of the King & Emperor in Britain. It was on this, his first trip abroad, that he met Louis Mountbatten, the future Viceroy and visited Germany with its enormous industrial and military might.

1939 saw the start of World War II, an inflection point in world history. Not to be missed as an opportunity to help in the war effort, he was drafted fulltime and while recruiting and training on a huge scale, mostly the Panjabi '*musalman*' and sikh, was elevated to the '**Viceroy's Defence Council**'. As a member of the Defence Council he extensively toured Mesopotamia (Iraq), North Africa and Burma where Indian troops were concentrated; back home he organised assistance and camps for families of serving / retired servicemen. He was also a **senior member of the Civil Services Selection Board (Precursor to UPSC)**, Dehi and the **Defence Services Selection Board, Dehra Dun**.

For his services in the "War effort" he was honoured with MBE by the queen.



Founder Member of PPS **Col Naunihal Singh Mann** being interviewed by Chronicle editorial board 1967 from left **Gurmeet Kanwal (J-68, 1968)**, **Rupinder Chhachhi(S-77,1968)**, **Shreesh Kathatvate(S-108,1968)**, **Vijay Kanwar (Beas-113,1967)** and **Gurinder Chhachhi (S-76,1967)**

During his visits to Delhi to attend the meetings of the 'Council' he was able to use his clout in the administration, as well as, military **to bring succour and hope to millions** affected by the ongoing war. It was here in Delhi that he met and interacted with almost all important political leaders of diverse political parties and civil servants. He was a witness to the interactions and goings on leading to India's independence from three points of view, Hindu, Muslim and British, having close friends and confidants with players on all sides. During one of Viceroy Wavell's Banquets the Vicereine introduced him to the most successful and biggest 'builders' of Delhi; they became friends and later his eldest son was married to the builder's eldest daughter.

1947 saw the Independence of India, a great event; however, this came with a heavy price – 'Partition'. He **vehemently opposed partition** to the very end being very close to key players from west Panjab including the Governor Sir Evan Jenkins, Sir Khizr Hayat Tiwana and others. What eventually ensued was the largest forced migration in human history and under horrific conditions uprooted millions of people and lost countless lives. Overnight he found himself without any assets, generations of toil lost and a majority of friends on the wrong side of the border, an extended family to look after and the bleak prospect at starting from scratch. However, an iron will and ethos remained and a great opportunity presented itself – **to help millions of displaced and needy**.

The Viceroy, Field Marshal, Ministers, Civil Servants etc were met immediately and appointments regularised: **Chairman of the Defence Services Selection Bd, Member UPSC, Resettlement Commissioner under the Prime Minister**. This was followed by various state boards and commissions for Ex-Servicemen and families, Housing, Transport, Development, Education and many more. While interacting with the Prime Minister as a part of the 'resettlement commission' **alongwith the Panjab Chief Minister**, the two were able to convince the PM to do something substantial for the refugee settlers; eventually the efforts bore fruit into building **dams and a city like no other in the country**.

Life was harsh, but there was no time to waste brooding and so much had to be done for so many worse off - most of whom were in refugee camps. At home 'partition' was never ever mentioned and children grew up as if little had ever changed – the emphasis, to build a value system coupled with integrity and capacity for selfless hardwork. Family values remained intact even though all material assets were lost.

The sustained, selfless effort to help ex-servicemen in particular brought him into close proximity of the Panjab Govt. where the largest numbers of servicemen were located; in addition he had close bonds with Ministers (former colleagues), ICS & Defence officers (**many who he had recruited**) and ofcourse the Princes – in short all that mattered to get things moving.

*While travelling from Simla to Delhi he encountered Pratap Singh Kairon, Chief Minister of Panjab, whose car had broken down and offered him a lift to Delhi. During the drive he suggested putting up a public school in the best tradition of fine schools – the CM agreed on the condition that he devotes time to the project and be personally involved in its formation and running. **He agreed and the rest is PPS history.***

There are many anecdotes told by various people regarding him, the man as was his wont: of the person who went to meet him for a single bus permit, when he discovered he was a fellow refugee he gave him two bus permits and asked him to come back for more if he ran the buses honestly – that helped the family eventually become a major force in politics; or the small town mechanic who met him for

assistance in bettering his lot, he was told that while I can do little for you I can make your son an army officer, bring him to me in four years- he made it to Brigadier; or the person with a tremendous reference to join the army, he was told you would be a misfit in the army so I will make you a civil servant where you will do exceedingly well- he went on to become the Foreign Secretary.

The twilight years were spent writing (to friends in India and abroad), bridge (avid player), travelling abroad and catching up with friends –Evan Jenkins, Louis Mountbatten, H. Seaward (former commissioner Lahore with whose family he shared a special fourth generation relationship), at their estates in UK, Count Gratry in Geneva, Golfing upto his 89 birthday with people often twenty years his junior. He was never in hospital and his mind was alert and clear when he passed away at age 90.

The Man who prepared the final Model of Sainik School, Nabha

Gen. Pran Nath Thapar

(May 23, 1906 - June 23, 1975)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



(Picture of a portrait courtesy Lt Gen TK Sapru from Western Command office)

General **Pran Nath Thapar** (May 23, 1906 - June 23, 1975) was the **fifth Chief of Army Staff** of the Indian army.

Personal life

General Pran Nath Thapar was born on May 23, 1906 into a prominent Punjabi family. He was the youngest son of Diwan Bahadur Kunj Behari Thapar of Lahore. After graduating from Government College, Lahore, he trained at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. His wife Bimla Thapar (née Bashiram), whom he married in March 1936, was the eldest daughter of Rai Bahadur Sahgal Bashiram and grand daughter of Rai Bahadur Ramsaran Das. General Thapar had four children, including the veteran journalist Karan Thapar. The historian, Romila Thapar is his niece and the conservationalist and tiger expert, Valmik Thapar is his great nephew. The writer, Nayantara Sahgal was his sister-in-law, the second of the three daughters born to Jawaharlal Nehru's sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. His grandson, the gay and race activist, Siddo Deva, lives in Oxford.

Career

He was commissioned into the 1st Punjab Regiment in 1926. He did his regimental duties with the 1st Punjab Regiment for ten years and later attended the staff courses at Quetta and Minley Manor in England. He served in Burma during the Second World War in 1941 and later in the Middle East and Italy. He was appointed as Assitant Military Secretary in 1945. He commanded 1st Battalion of Punjab Regiment in Indonesia in 1946 and later went on to serve as the Commander of the 161 Indian Infantry Brigade in East Bengal. During the Partition of India, Thapar officiated as the Director of Military Operations and Intelligence. In November 1947, he was promoted to the rank of Major General. He served as the Chief of the General Staff for a few months and later as Military Secretary till August 1949. He was appointed Master General of Ordinance on August 1949. He commanded an Infantry Division for four years till 1954 and was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General in 1954 as Commander of a Corps. He was selected to attend the Imperial Defence College, London in 1955. After successful completion of the course, he was appointed General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command. He became General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Western Command in 1959. Thapar took over as Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army on 8th May 1961 and served till 19th November 1962. He was also Colonel of the Rajputana Rifles.

Later life

After retirement he was appointed as Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan from August 1964 to January 1969. He died on his farm in Chhattarpur, New Delhi on 23rd June 1975 at the age of 69.

What's in a name?

The name changeth to “The Punjab Public School, Nabha”

(Selected minutes have been taken)

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors, The Sainik School, Nabha held at 12:00 noon on 19th July 1960 at Raj Bhawan, Chandigarh. The following were present

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Shri N.V. Gadgil | Chairman |
| 2. | S. Gurdian Singh Dhillon | |
| 3. | Lt. General Kalwant Singh | |
| 4. | Lt. General P.N. Thapar | |
| 5. | Shri E.N. Mangat Rai, ICS | |
| 6. | Dr. A.C. Joshi | |
| 7. | Brig. Gurkirpal Singh | |
| 8. | Lt. Col. Naunihal Singh Mann | |
| 9. | Lt. Col. F.A. Von Goldstein | |
| 10. | Rao Bahadur Choudhary Lal Chand | |
| 11. | Shri V.P. Gautama, IAS | |
| 12. | Shri J.K. Kate | Secretary |

The following main decisions were taken in the meeting:-

Vide Item 8: The Board decided to charge non-refundable registration fee of Rs. 5/- per boy.

Vide Item 9: The Board considered the scholarship scheme submitted by the Headmaster and appointed a Sub Committee consisting of the following members to finalise the scheme:-

1. Lt. General Kalwant Singh
2. Sh. E.N. Mangat Rai
3. Dr. A.C. Joshi
4. Shri J.K. Kate
- 5.

Vide Item 11: The Board decided to appoint M/s A. Ferguson & Co. as School Auditors provided they did not charge more than Rs. 1000/- as Audit fees.

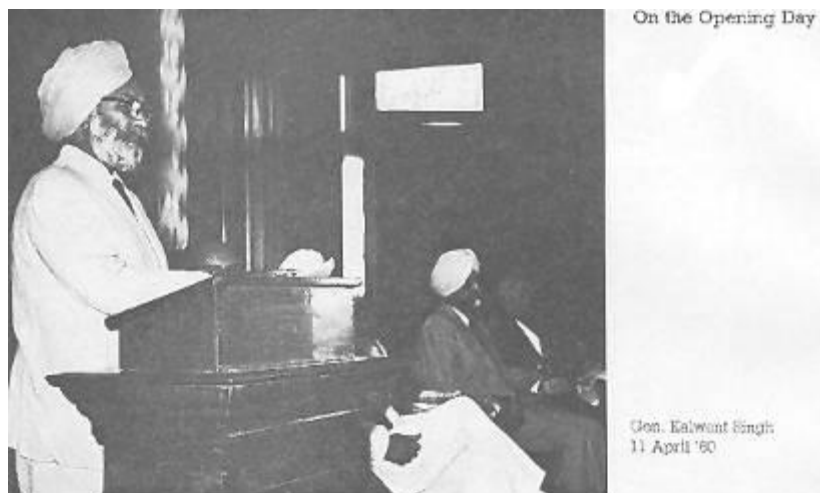
Vide Item 12: The Board Decided to **Change the Name of the School from “The Sainik School” to “The Punjab Public School”.**

Sd/- J.K. Kate

Secretary

Sd/ N.V. Gadgil

Chairman



SPEECH BY LT. GEN KALWANT SINGH on Day One of PPS April 11, 1960

I am here today, at the request of and on behalf of the Chairman, Board of Governors of the School – The Governor of the Punjab to preside at the beginning of this term – which is really the start of this School.

A year ago, our Chief Minister, at a meeting of the Post War Reconstruction fund at Raj Bhawan, Chandigarh, suggested the starting of a School in the Punjab on the lines of the Doon School. I fully supported him. I was asked to formulate a Scheme to start this School. I gladly accepted this undertaking as I felt there was a definite requirement for a School, run on Public School lines for the sons of serving officers, J.C.Os., and O.Rs. as also the Retired officers, J.C.Os and O.Rs.

I was particularly interested in the Scheme as the bulk of the money which has been set aside for this School by the P.W.R.F Committee had been put into a Fund during Second World War for the collective benefit of the O.Rs. , who had served during that War, or their dependents. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that this School should be started as a sort of a memorial to those belonging to the Punjab and who served during the Second World War.

I mentioned earlier that a year ago the decision was taken to start the School. It is no ordinary achievement I must express our gratitude to the Chief Minister and the Punjab Government who had given the School these palatial buildings as also the Guest House. My successor in Western Command – **Lt. Gen. P.N. Thapar** is to be thanked for getting the Scheme for the establishment of the School worked out. I had only given the outline plan to the S.O.I. Education – **Col. Mukand**. He worked out the plan in detail. I am so happy that I have been able to implement it. I was assisted by my old friend **Col. S. Naunihal Singh Mann, Mr. Achreja**, Secretary to Governor, and **Major Bhagat**, officiating S.O.I Education, in selecting the Headmaster and to select the site.

We owe it to him and to his staff who has been here since 1st Jan, who have been assisting him to get the show going. I know the amount of work he has put in, initially single-handed, to start the school. For example he has had to get each and every bit of furniture that we are using today. I would like to thank him very much indeed for what he has achieved in such a short time with a limited number of staff.

Now, the AIM of the School; it is to provide a Public School education to deserving sons of ex-servicemen, serving personnel of the Defence Services and civilians, with a view to developing them in body, mind and character and preparing them academically for entry to the National Defence Academy or for any other suitable career. Another object of the School is to instill in its students a spirit of loyalty, devotion and patriotic service to the country, and to inculcate qualities of leadership, personality, and discipline and team- spirit.

Military bias is intended to indicate that joining the NCC is compulsory for all boys. We will prepare you to take your place among the leaders of the future and will try to equip you for the Battle of Life. **You are free to choose a Military Career if you want to.**

You, my young friends, especially those who have been awarded scholarships, must work hard and take full advantage of the opportunity you have been given. In our country there is a great requirement for young men to come forward and help in the development plans being initiated by our Government.

I hope you will have a pleasant stay here and you will take full advantage of the facilities being made available not only as far as studies are concerned but also hobbies, games and outdoor activities.

Thank you very much, Mr. Kate for the welcome you have given to my wife and me.

D.

Correspondence between IJS Arora (J-40, 1967) and Ex-English BS Bhatnagar who later served as Headmaster in famous schools.

Dear friends, I trust with the Golden jubilee coming close, a lot of action plans must be moving forward. I had a subject on my mind for quite some time. A few days back I was in NY and having lunch with **VP Bindra (my class mate)** and the subject was again touched. **VP** as you all know is a virtual walkie-talkie encyclopedia of history from the school days! So it was good that this subject again came up. And the subject: **General Kulwant Singh** and his role in the very formation of our school in particular and the Sainik Schools in the erstwhile Punjab. If one of the very efficient and largest armies in the world has so many Generals hailing from PPS and the main command of the Navy the Western Command is under an ONA it is a matter of pride to all

of us. We all owe so much to our education. But I wonder if the man behind all this has somehow been forgotten.



Lt Gen Kalwant Singh (cup in hand) and Col NS Mann (tall with white turban) interacting with a school child

Gen. Kulwant Singh's vision and forethought and far reaching recognition of the middle level and lower level echelons of the army and the desire to see that the grateful nation should pay homage to them by educating their children proved correct. A large number of us rose from those middle-class roots to higher levels to serve our nation. I wonder if many of us are aware of the General's role. As we plan the table top books and mementos, I would suggest and submit that this subject be taken as a research project funded by our ONA philanthropists **and a suitable way of recognizing the General's services be found.**

After all, what binds us all as ONs? Where does the spirit come from? What is the fountainhead of this inspiration? Most of us are nostalgic about our days in Nabha and quote from our wise teachers. There is a presumption of greatness, quality and good inherent in age. That historic association binds us. It nourishes the bond and inspires us to continue to do well and serve the nation in our own ways. "...inspired by glories past...." So why we are stuck to the past is because the past has the retaining power, is a proof of our capacity to overcome adversity and

march on to greater glory. It is wisdom born of experience. Somewhere in our past **General Kalwant Singh** played a major part. It was he who picked the bursar of Sanawar as our first HM and so on...

I would like to leave this thought with you all. And of course request my friend VP to contribute further to this thought process. And then let us see how we can respect our past and the General's contribution to this cause.

Sincerely,

IJS Arora (J-40, 1967)

Dear Inderjit,

It was a pleasure to read your mail to the members of ONA in response to Dr Jashanjot's invitation to the ONA Day celebrations. With regard to your comments on **General Kulwant Singh**, I could not agree more with you. I would give all help and support - material or otherwise - to the PPS alumnus who takes up the task of writing about the General. In fact, I would dare to suggest that the fittest tribute to this great personality would be to name the Senior School auditorium as **General Kulwant Singh Hall** at the Golden Jubilee celebrations next year. Blessings and best wishes to you all.

Yours affly.

B S Bhatnagar

(Former Ravi Housemaster-PPS; Headmaster, St Paul's School, Darjeeling; Principal, The Daly College, Indore; Headmaster, The Lawrence School, Lovedale; Founder-Principal (1991-2005) and, later, Director, The Indian School, Muscat, Oman; and, presently, its Director Emeritus)