



History

From Fa-hien downward all pay tribute to the Lohanas as brave. A possible reason for the bravery is that they had placed themselves for centuries in the direct path of invaders from northwest like Persians, Macedonians, Huns, Mughals, etc.

Ruling in Afghanistan for many centuries they braved onslaughts of invaders looking for converts in India. From 7th to 11th century A.D., living on the small hills in the northwest which saw hordes of Muslim invaders at the gates of India, the Lohanas fought bravely against these invaders.

*They held their grounds for long in northwest but finally had to fall back and moved initially to the Sindh province of today's Pakistan. Meanwhile, Prophet Mohammed established Islam. His followers spread out in different directions to preach His religion and in due course they turned towards India too. When these hordes reach northwest, they had to contend with the brave Lohanas and were held back for many years. **But finally they lost when one Kuainger of Narsvat community (the Brahmins who performed rites for the Lohanas) betrayed Loharana king Chahir Ray. So Sindh fell to Muslims and Lohanas disintegrated into small segments.***

But the saga of this brave community did not end there. After the community split, they found a new leader. He was Veer Jashraj, who is revered as Dada Jashraj, who was born in the city of Loхар (today's Lahore in Pakistan), which was the capital of Lohargadh. His domain extended from Lahore to Multan (also in Pakistan today).

स्मृक्लृप्ति सदा चलिआई।
प्राण जाइ बरु बचन न जाई॥

As the story goes, Mongol invader Changez Khan, attacked Multan and was killed by Dada Jashraj, Rana of Lohargadh. **A plaque in Chinese language on the great Khan's grave says " Killed by Rana Jashraj of Lohergadh".** This finds mention in folklore, which say, " King of Mongols was killed by Mirana, the tiger of Multan fort".

His descendants who proudly carry the surname of 'Mirana' preserve the memory of this great warrior king. *He was treacherously killed when only 28 - a life so short but full of heroic deeds.*

*After the death of Dada Jashraj, the decline of Lohanas began and their reign at Lohargadh ended. At this time, king Dahir ruled at Naryankot (today's Hyderabad in the Sindh province of Pakistan). Disunity among Lohanas weakened his kingdom and he died in a fight with Muslims. **The Muslims took over Narayankot and Sindh and the mighty Lohanas fell to a hard time, many***

મજલબ એ અલ્લાહનો પ્રકાશ માર્ગ છે.
ધર્મ એટલે મોશનો ભવ્ય માર્ગ છે.

of them having been converted to Islam.

But again a new ruler came to their aid. His name was Uderalal who is revered as Dariyalal. His father was Ratnarai Thakur, who lived in Nasarapur, about 90 miles from Hyderabad (Pakistan). Uderlal fought with the Muslim chief Markah and initiated him into the truth of religion. He won freedom for Hindus from Muslims and devoted the rest of his life in the service of humanity. At last he disappeared, entering the earth. Even today he is revered both by Hindus and Muslims who visit the site of his samadhi. In Gujarati, Lohanas performing the puja (ritual worship) of Dariyalal are known as Pujaras and Dariyalal's descendants as Ratnani.



The Lohanas felt their identity was increasingly threatened in Sindh and they began to migrate towards Kutchchh, Saurashtra and Gujarat. Famous warriors once, they took to trade and business. Their instincts of the warrior past were tested in 1764, when Gulam Shah Kora attacked Kutchchh and they had to account for themselves in the battle of Zora. Lohana women fought alongside their men in this battle and the land of Kutchchh is strewn with memorial stones marking the deaths of brave Lohanas. *A saying in Gujarati eulogies Lohana women thus: Only Rajputani, Loharani and Miyamai bring forth gem of children.*

Lohanas are still to be found in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which are now Islamic states. In Afghanistan, they still maintain their religious identity and are known as *Lokhathra*. The Lohanas who keep their Hindu identity in *Sindh* are known as *Sindhi Lohana*.

Those Lohanas who were converted to Islam are known as Khojas. Many of them retain their Hindu names. The most celebrated among them was the creator of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Zinnah, whose father's name was Jinabhai Thakkar.

A few names of the long list are *Shri Guru Nanak, Saint Jalaram, Saint Lal Bapu, Yogiji Maharaj, Bhikshu Akhand Anand, Maharishi Priyanath, Thakkar Bapa, Shree Nanjibhai Kalidas Mehta, Seth Shree Virjibhai Maskai, Madhvanis, Vajubhai Kotak, Smarat Ranmal Lakha, Dada Jashraj.*



Praising Lohanas, Akha Bhagat said:

***"Thakkars went for name, not for money
Worked in front for fame, and did not fail."***

Original article by : Babubhai T.Thakkar