

fourth Episode
Auditions for Sikh of America World Competition 2019

(Give all answers in complete sentences)

Jassa Singh Ahluwalia

Q-1 How was Sultan Ul Quam Nawab Jassas Singh Ahluwalia?

A-1

Sultan ul Quam Nawab Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (1718-1783) was a prominent Sikh leader during the period of the Sikh Confederacy. He was democratically elected as the supreme military commander of the Sikh Confederacy on March 29, 1748 - on Baisakhi, this appointment is considered to be one of the greatest honours ever bestowed, in the 18th century, to any Sikh.

Q-2 What title was he given and at where?

A-2

He was further honoured by the Sikh Confederacy with the title of 'Nawab', at Amritsar in 1754, after the passing of Nawab Kapur Singh in 1753. He was also the Misdar (Chief/Baron) of the Ahluwalia misl or army group. This period was an interlude, lasting roughly from the time of the death of Banda Singh Bahadur in 1716 to the founding of the Sikh Empire in 1801. The period is also sometimes described as the Age of the Misl. He was the also the fourth jathedar (leader) of Buddha Dal.

Q-3 Where was Sultan ul Quam Nawab Jassa Singh Ahluwalia born?

A-3

Maharaja Jassa Singh Ahluwalia (1718-1783) Sultan ul Quam Nawab Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was born at the village of Ahlu, in Lahore district of Punjab, (Majha region), in the year 1718. Ahlu village was established by his ancestor, Satta Singh, a disciple of the sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Har Gobind. Hence, the name Ahluwalia (meaning from Ahluwal). His forefathers were landlords who were rewarded four villages ahlo hallo toor chak for their bravery in war.

Q-4 When did Jassa Singh's father pass away?

A-4

At the tender age of 4, Jassa Singh's father, Sardar Badar Singh passed away (1723 A.D). There after his mother moved them to Dehli where they stayed and performed Kirtan of the highest order. Mata Sundri Kaur ji was much pleased with the young Singh and bestowed upon him great blessings. After seven years in Dehli, at the age of 12, Jassa Singh and his mother moved back to Punjab at the insistence Jassa Singh's uncle - however not before Mata Sundri would make a prophecy - that Jassa Singh would become a ruler of men.

Q-5 Where did S.Jassa Singh and his mother settle at?

A-5

S.Jassa Singh and his mother settled in the vicinity of Jalandhar and began performing Kirtan in the early mornings (Jassa Singh was a great Rabab instrumentalist and 'Kirtan Kaar', who later patronised the Kapurthala Rababi Gharana). On one Gurburb, along with Singh's uncle, mother and child went to visit Nawab Kapur Singh in Kartapur. While singing the hymns of Asa di Var in the early morning, the Nawab Kapoor Singh was so impressed with the melody of Kirtan, that he persuaded them to stay for one month. After this period,

Q-6 Who recognised the potential of Jassa Singh?

A-6

the Nawab recognised the conduct and potential of Jassa Singh, hence requested the uncle and mother that they leave the boy with him to adopt. It should be noted, that Nawab Kapoor Singh was the leader of the Khalsa Panth for a reason; he was a true Sikh of the Guru; both incredibly brave and spiritual while remaining humble. From this moment, Jassa Singh's tutelage began under the great Nawab Kapoor Singh.

Q-7 What did Jassa Singh undertake?

A-7

Jassa Singh undertook each task designated to him with commitment like no other. One account recites that on one stormy night in torrential rain, the Nawab would call out to the watch guards, asking who was on duty - on each occasion, the steadfast Jassa Singh's voice that was heard alone. Jassa Singh also began his training in the art of war, and became adept in horse riding, sword play and archery.

Q-8 Until when where the Sikh forces divided into 65 jathas?

A-8

The formation of the Dal Khalsa and the Misls Until 1745, the Sikh forces were divided into 65 jathas(bands). Baron Nawab Kapur Singh reorganised them into eleven bands, each of with its own name, flag and leader. These Armies or jathas, which came to known later on as Misls (literally "equal", also "an example") together were, however, given the name of the Dal Khalsa (or the Army of the Khalsa).

Q-9 What was Baron Jassa Singh Ahluwalia nominated of?

A-9

Baron Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was nominated as the Supreme Commander of the Sikh Confederacy in addition to being Baron of the Ahluwalia Army (misl). Nawab Kapur Singh appointed him as his successor on the eve of his death in 1753. Elated at his successful helmsmanship, the Khalsa honoured Jassa Singh with the title of Sultan-ul-Qaum (King of the nation), when they captured Lahore in 1761. He has been credited for rebuilding the present day holy Harmandir Sahib, in the year 1764, which was destroyed, during the Afghan Invasions.

Q-10 Who succeeded the throne of Afghanistan?

A-10

The raids of Ahmed Shah Abdali Ahmed Shah Abdali, Nadir Shah's seniormost general, succeeded to the throne of Afghanistan, when Shah was murdered in June, 1747. He established his own dynasty, the Sadozai, which was the name of the Pashtun khel to which he belonged to. Starting from December, 1747 till 1769, Abdali made a total of nine incursions into India .

Q-11 What destroyed the Mughal administration?

A-11

His repeated invasions destroyed the Mughal administration of the Punjab and the rest of Northern India. At the Third Battle of Panipat, he dealt a dripping blow to Maratha pretensions in the North. Thus he created a power vacuum in the Punjab, which was filled by the Sikhs.

Q-12 When was the Sixth Afghan Invasion?

A-12

The Sixth Afghan Invasion, 1762: The Great Holocaust On February 5, 1762, the Sikhs were especially the target of Ahmad Shah Abdali's sixth invasion into India. News had reached him in Afghanistan of the defeat of his general, Nur-ud-Din Bamezai, at the hands of the Sikhs who were fast spreading themselves out over the Punjab and had declared their leader, Baron Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, king of Lahore.

Q-13 What did he do to rid his Indian dominion?

A-13

To rid his Indian dominion of them once and for all, he set out from Kandahar. Marching with alacrity, he overtook the Sikhs as they were withdrawing into Malwa after crossing the Satluj. The moving caravan comprised a substantial portion of the total Sikh population and contained, besides active fighters, a large body of old men, women and children who were being escorted to the safety of the interior.

Q-14 What did the Sikhs do when suprised by Ahmad Shah?

A-14

Surprised by Ahmad Shah, the Sikhs threw a cordon round those who needed protection, and prepared for the battle. In this formation and continuing their march, they fought the invaders and their Indian allies (The Nawabs of Malerkotla, Sirhind, etc.) desperately. Baron Charhat Singh Sukerchakia (the grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh), Baron Hari Singh Dhillon and Baron Jassa Singh Ahluwalia led their forces with skill and courage. Jassa Singh sustained sixty-four wounds on his body, but he survived. Baron Charhat Singh rode to exhaustion, five of his horses one after another.

Q-15 Do Ahmad Shah succeed?

A-15

Ahmad Shah succeeded, in the end, in breaking through the cordon and carried out a full scale massacre. His orders were for everyone in native dress to be killed at sight. The soldiers of Malerkotala and Sirhind were to wear green leaves of trees on their heads to distinguish themselves from the Sikhs. Near the village of Kup, in the vicinity of Malerkotla, about 20,000 Sikhs died at the end of a single day's action (February 5, 1762). This battle is known in Sikh history as the Wadda Ghalughara (The Great Holocaust).

Q-16 How many wounds did Jassa Singh reported to have?

A-16

During the course of the Battle, Jassa Singh was reported to have had 72 wounds on his body but still survived, as did his counter paths from the other Sikh misls; Charat Singh Sukerchakia for example rode five horses one after the other to exhaustion and Jassa Singh Ramgharia sustained injuries to his body . Upon verbally challenging Ahmed Shah Abdali himself, Jassa Singh is known to have almost killed the Shah, narrowly missing him and killing his horse instead.

Q-17 Under who were they able to defeat the Afghan faujdar of Sirhind?

A-17

The Battle of Amritsar Despite the Ghalughara disaster, by the month of May, the Sikhs were up in arms again. Under Jassa Singh, they defeated the Afghan faujdar of Sirhind, Zain Khan at Harnaulgarh in revenge for aiding Ahmed Shah Abdali in the holocaust. Instead of killing him, thy accepted his tribute of a large sum of money as they desprately needed the money to repair the Harimandir Sahib, however they promised the faujdar that his time would come (Zain Khan was later killed by Jassa Singh's men in a battle under the ramparts of the Sirhind citadel.)

Q-18 By when did the Sikhs regain enough to confidence to celebrate Diwali?

A-18

By autumn, the Sikhs had regained enough confidence to foregather in large numbers at Amritsar to celebrate Diwali. Abdali made a mild effort to win over them and sent an envoy with proposals for a treaty of peace. The Sikhs were in no mood for peace and insulted the emissary. Abdali did not waste any time and turned up at the outskirts of Amritsar. The Second Battle of Amritsar (October 17,1762) was fought in the grey light of a sun in total eclipse.

Q-19 When did it end?

A-19

It ended when the sunless day was blacked out by a moonless night with the adversaries retiring from the field: The Sikhs to the fastness of the jungles of the Lakhi (the forests of a hundred thousand trees located in Central Punjab) and Abdali behind the walled safety of Lahore. It was the first major battle against the Sikhs that the Shah was himself present (excluding the Great Holocaust) and ended

Q-20 Who captured a large portion of Ahmed Shah Abdali's troops?

A-20

in total disaster for the Afghan army, Jassa Singh captured a large portion of Ahmed Shah Abdali's troops and forced the very hands that had caused big damage to the holy Sarovar of the Harimandir Sahib to repair and renovate it. After this Jassa Singh, in the greatest gesture of chivalry released the prisoners, warning them not to return to Punjab, many seeing the high character of the Sikh Nation, many Afghans, became Sikhs.

Q-21 When was the Eight Afghan Invasion?

A-21

The Eight Afghan Invasion, 1766 In November 1766 Abdali came to the Punjab for the eight time with the avowed object of "crushing the Sikhs". The Sikhs had recourse to their old game of Dhaiphut ('hit, run and turn back to hit again') tactics (later made famous at the Battle of Chillianwala against the British). They vacated Lahore, but faced squarely the Afghan general, Jahan Khan at Amritsar. Inflicting a humiliating defeat, and forcing him to retreat, with five thousand Afghan soldiers killed. Jassa Singh Ahluwalia with an army of about twenty thousand Sikhs roamed in the neighbourhood of the Afghan camp, plundering it.

Q-22 When was the ninth and last invasion?

A-22

Death Jassa Singh continued with his campaigns. After Abdali's ninth and last invasion in 1769, Jassa Singh wrested Kapurthala in 1774 from Rao Ibrahim Bhatti and made it his headquarters. Jassa Singh died in Amritsar in 1783 AD. Being without a son (but having two daughters), he was succeeded by Sardar Bhag Singh Ahluwalia, whose son, Fateh Singh became a close collaborator of Ranjit Singh. Like the other Misldars, Jassa Singh also established a Katra or colony for his misl in Amritsar, which was later named Katra Ahluwalia in his honor. He, like many other Misldars also fortified the city of Amritsar for protection against the enemies of Sikhism.

Q-23 What was his fort and residence known as?

A-23

His fort and residence is known as Qila Ahluwalia and had unfortunately today fallen in bad shape. He spent his last days greatly renovating the city of Amritsar and reforming Gurdwara management as well as developing the city greatly. Because of his many sacrifices and his great love for the Sikh nation, he was cremated within the Precincts of the Harimandir Sahib, which he fought so hard to protect (considered a great honor in Sikh tradition). A commemorative postage stamp on 'Baba Jassa Singh Ahluwalia' was issued by Government of India on April 04, 1985. Baron Sultan ul Quam Nawab Jassa Singh Kalal was also known as 'Guru ka lal' (the beloved son of Guru). Succeeded by Akali Nihang Baba Naina Singh Ji, as the next Jathedar who had lived upto a very old age.

Q-24 What year did Sultan Al Qaum Jassa Singh Ahluwalia die?

A-24

Aftermath After the death of the great Sultan Al Qaum Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, In the year 1783, The year when the Sikhs marched on Mughal Delhi, capturing the Shahi Lal Qila, the royal palaces of the Mughals, and hoisting the Nidhan Sahib, and throwing away the Mughal flag down, It was also the time when the 11 Sikh Kingdoms, known as Misls, started waging war against each other, to take more power for themselves. From 1783 until 1799, the power of the Sikh Sovereignty started declining and dismantled, with Zaman Shah, the Afghan ruler of Afghanistan, marched on Sikh territories and took Lahore In 1798 seeing the weakness of the Sikh power, but In 1799,

6

Q-25 Who was Ranjit Singh?

A-25

Ranjit Singh, a young Sikh Chieftain, from Gujranwala, marched on Lahore, capturing the City without a fight, Zaman Shah fled back to Afghanistan, fearing he might lose. From 1799-1839, the Sikh power once again started becoming more powerful, which led the Sikhs from 1801-1834, to become the most powerful nation in all of Asia. The borders extended from Khyber Pass, and Sind, to Kashmir and Tibet, and the Hazara province. But In 1846, the Sikh power declined as the Sikhs fought against the Invading British, losing many wars, Weapons, Treasury, Territories. In 1849, The Falling Sikh Empire was annexed to British Empire. Reference