

# Green Imperialism: A Case Study of Saharanpur Botanical Garden (1850-1947)

**SUMMARY**

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## SUMMARY

Botanic gardens today play an important role in conservation by encouraging people and fostering an interest in nature and its preservation. Botanic gardens also play an important role in increasing awareness about the environmental issues, which includes the loss of genetic variety. As a result, botanic gardens serve a dual purpose of conservation and education. Each year, it is estimated that 100 million people visit botanic gardens around the world. Botanic gardens, with their living collections, seed banks, and trained specialists and scientists, are like an insurance policy mechanism that protects species from extinction.

One of the human race's redeeming characteristics is its continued desire to create gardens and grow plants for pleasure rather than utility. Many of the beautiful gardens of the past are said to have perished without a trace, but this is an attempt to examine the loveliness and most fragile history of the best among the vanished and nearly vanished, as well as current gardens. Many of the spectacular gardens that can be found in South Africa, North and South America, Latin America, and the Caribbean are descended from previous gardens. The words grove, paradise, park, landscape, wilderness, and orchard are all used to describe gardens.

In 1793, William Roxburg (1751-1815) became the first salaried Superintendent. He developed a huge herbarium and laid the groundwork for taxonomy in India, in addition to his interest in the growth of the Garden. He published *Hortus Bengalensis* (1814) and *Flora Indica* during his stay (1820-24). As a result, he is rightfully known as the "Father of Indian Botany."

The Indian botanical garden and its network of experimental gardens are considered the country's primary conservation centres. Calcutta Botanical Garden, Saharanpur Botanical Garden, Lalbagh Botanical Garden, and Ootacamund Botanical Garden were all founded by the

British in India. The primary goal of these botanical gardens was to encourage the growth of exotic and hybrid trees while also increasing the productivity of Indian agriculture.

The fundamental goal of this research is to bring the history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden to light, as it has never been researched from a historical perspective before. Saharanpur is a town located in the upper Gangetic plain at 29°58' N latitude and 77°33' E longitude. The Saharanpur botanical garden, presently known as the Horticultural Experiment and Training Centre, Saharanpur, began in 1779 when Muslim monarch Zabita Khan opted to spend the earnings from seven villages on the upkeep of the Saharanpur garden. The East India Company purchased Saharanpur Garden in 1817, and Sir George Govan was appointed as its first Superintendent. The introduction of tea plants from China was one of the garden's most notable accomplishments. The Saharanpur Botanical Garden became a major site for taxonomical research during the British Empire. It also became a key scientific agency in the United Provinces for experimental investigations on a variety of crops and timber species. It now has over 235 trees, shrubs, and climbers.

The proposed study attempts to capture the history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden and the role of the British Empire in making it. As Richard Grove said, “The colonial rule has introduced several innovations in terms of horticulture, agriculture and crops.” In this study an attempt is made to document the role played by Saharanpur Botanical Gardens in shaping agricultural science.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study aims at documentation of a brief history on Saharanpur Botanical Garden and other botanical gardens that have evolved.

This study documents what are the botanical gardens. What are the objectives of botanical gardens, how botanical gardens emerge at world perspective and how they emerged by colonial scientists, botanists and Britishers in India and how they evolved at regional level.

This study also analyzes the nature of biological experiments by Saharanpur Botanical Garden and it explains the role played by Saharanpur Botanical Garden in the development of new agricultural varieties and their promotion This study narrates the involvement of colonial scientists engaged with Saharanpur Botanical Garden. This study explores the experiments of Saharanpur Botanical Garden in promoting varieties of Sugar cane, Wheat, and Mustard etc.

The fact, however, is that it is not an easy task to document history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden of India. It is on account of the fact that the literature emerged on the environmental history of India is not only vast but also extremely complicated. On account of these complexity limitations of this study needed to be repelled very clearly Firstly, this study does not claim that it would offer a compressive review of history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden, rather it takes certain popular samples in the form of books and articles. On account of its nature it does not depend upon primary sources, rather uses the published source of environmental history, Botanical Science and environmental science. Another limitation is that on account of the vastness of topic we do not offer to elaborate the various experiments of Saharnapur Botanical Garden and the import and export of various species of exotic plants which are being used in enhancing the productivity of Indian agriculture. In short this study is an

attempt to propose a brief history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden, which has not been documented in the existing literature.

## **CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

When different foreign companies established different colonies, at development stages of Renaissance, Humanism, Scientific Revolution, Imperialism, Commercialization, Mercantilism, Capitalism and Colonialism. In order to get maximum profit from these colonies at this stage of colonisation, the British established different companies in India and other colonies, keeping in mind the objective to profit Britishers started Deforestation and promotion of agricultural and commercial Crops after that emergence of different land settlement systems arose.

Deforestation results in a bad impact on Ecology and Environment and thus colonies face a lot of problems. The colonial scientist, Environmentalist, Botanist and Doctors pays attention to this side to protect themselves from criticism caused by this harm; they had enforced Forest Protection Act, Laws and Amendments. In this direction they promoted different Botanical Gardens in India, out of them the first Botanical Garden is Calcutta Botanical Garden, and on the basis of this garden another Botanical Garden is built naming Saharanpur Botanical Garden. Different Commercial Crops and plant species are planted here according to environment and another purpose of impact and exploration in different Colonies. Most important Crops among them are Jute, Tea, Silk, Fruit varieties and different species and different varieties of plants

Firstly, the Botanical Garden becomes a medium of profit for colonists and then becomes a medium of Conservation of Ecology, varieties of plants and Botanical but it is observed that historical stages scientific development results in conservation and a hub of

Botanical research development of agriculture and agricultural crops. It plays an important role in agriculture based countries like India is benefited a lot by these Botanical Gardens.

One of them is Saharanpur Botanical Garden located in north India plays an important role in context to Botanical Garden study.

It is noticeable that agricultural science plays a significant role in shaping the destiny of the Nation. Particularly, a country like India, which is heavily dependent upon agriculture and its Innovations. In this context, a study on the history of botany and botanical garden is useful in tracing the roots of modernization of Indian agriculture initiated by the British. This study thus focuses on the history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden and its significance in shaping the agriculture of Northern India.

In given Research, we will observe how science and technology development in the world served in promoting food production and horticulture. Due to which the second green revolution took place in India and in context to this many scientific institutions were established.

In this Research these scientific institutions are the medium to explain history creation: history of science and botany, environmental history and history of Botanical Garden. Beneath of which many public policies were formed in India which are useful in development of science and agriculture.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To document the history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden.
2. To analyse the nature of biological experiments undertaken by the Saharanpur Botanical Garden.

3. To understand the role played by Saharanpur Botanical Garden in the development of new agricultural varieties and their promotion.
4. To narrate the involvement of colonial scientists engaged with Saharanpur Botanical Garden.
5. To explore the experiments of Saharanpur Botanical Garden in promoting varieties of sugarcane, wheat, mustard etc.

### **ASSUMPTIONS**

1. Saharanpur Botanical Garden played a significant role in modernising agriculture in North India.
2. Colonial state promoted exotic plants and promoted them in enhancing the productivity of Indian agriculture.
3. Saharanpur Botanical Garden played a unique role in meeting the requirements of the Empire by the way of understanding several experiments that had not been due to other Botanical Gardens.

### **METHODOLOGY**

An Analytical, Scientific, Descriptive, Historical methodology will be used in present study. Moreover we have used different approaches for collection of data which are described briefly as follows:

#### **Primary data:**

The study is based on historical method. Primary data will include Archival material, particular of Surgeon General Records, Board of Revenue Proceedings of United Provinces, Saharanpur Gazette, and district level records of Saharanpur (Experimental Report, Reports of Seeds, Plants, Vegetables, and Fruit, Agricultural Reports, Annual Reports, Maintenance Reports, Textiles

Reports, Improvement Reports, Fodder Reports, Report on the Management of the Provincial and District Gardens from the year (1905-1915), and General Administration Reports) , texts, newspapers, and administrative reports so on.

**Secondary data:**

The secondary data will consist of the relevant books, dissertations, articles and papers both published and unpublished in various journals and magazines.

**CHAPTERISATION OF THE STUDY**

In order to narrate the narrative of the history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden in India, this study has been organised into the following chapters:

**Chapter-I: Introduction**

This first chapter of this study entitled introduction deals with the introductory aspects of the study. A systematic and modest narration has been an attempt on the context of the study, objectives of the study, hypothesis, and review of the literature and Chapterisation of the study. The main objective of this chapter is to explore the thematic illustration of the study and various aspects to it.

**Chapter-II: The Idea of Botanical Garden in India**

The Second Chapter of this study entitled the idea of Botanical Garden in India deals with what is botanical garden, its definition and objectives and evolution of the idea of botanical garden in global perspective (Modern) India perspective and regional perspective (Saharanpur Botanical Garden).

### **Chapter-III: Functions, Scientist Contribution and Experiments of Saharanpur Botanical Garden**

The Third Chapter of this study entitled functions of botanical garden in India and Biological experiments undertaken by Saharanpur Botanical Garden deals with factors for establishment of Saharanpur Botanical Garden, Experiment of Seeds (listing of seeds, method of experiments) , Experiments on plants (food crops, commercial crops, horticulture crops etc) , advocacy to farmers, Uniqueness of Saharanpur Botanical Garden.

### **Chapter-IV: Conclusion**

The fourth chapter highlights the entire study in the form of a summary followed by a rational conclusion and the main findings of my study indicating scopes for further research in this area. The conclusion is very brief and reflects the major and most important findings of the history of Saharanpur Botanical Garden written by environmentalists, environmental scientists, environmental historians, botanists with their methodology and approaches. It is expected, the outcome of the study will serve the same purpose for which it has been undertaken.