

Medieval Period

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Medieval Bengal

- ❑ Began in the **13th century**.
- ❑ Main feature: end of the Hindu and Buddhist rule and the establishment of the Muslim rule in Bengal.
- ❑ In **1203 A.D.** the Turkish hero **Bakhtiar Khalji** conquered **Bihar** near Bengal.
- ❑ The trained warrior chose to advance through the **jungle of Jharkhand** instead of the **mountain pass of Teliaghri**.

Bakhtiar Khalij 1203-1206 CE

- ❑ Bakhtiar Khalji conquered Bihar near Bengal.
- ❑ He divided his army into small groups to conquer Nadia.
- ❑ The people of Nadia thought that a band of horse merchant has come, so nobody stopped them.
- ❑ Bakhtiar Khalji occupied the Palace of Lakhshmana Sena; who fled to East Bengal.



Bakhtiar Khalij 1203-1206 CE

- ❑ Bakhtiar Khalji took hold of the famous capital of Sena Dynasty, Laksmanabati and renamed it as Lakhnauti.
- ❑ Established capital at Devakota (Dinajpur) and did not conquer Bengal any further.
- ❑ He failed in the expedition of Tibet and came back to Devakota.
- ❑ Died in 1206.



Ali Mardan and others

After the assassination of Bakhtiar Khalji by his own officer Ali Mardan in 1206, Bengal was administered by various Maliks belonging to the Khalji tribe till Delhi Sultan Iltutmish sent forces under his son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, to bring Bengal under the direct control of the Delhi Sultans.

Bengal Under Delhi Sultanate

Rulers of Delhi tried to control Bengal by appointing governors but most of the governors revolted against Delhi sultanate.



The Independent Sultanate (1338-1538 CE)

- ❑ Bahram Khan was made governor of Sonargaon and Satgaon. In 1338 Bahram Khan died.
- ❑ On his death at Sonargaon Fakhruddin (Armour bearer of Bahram) captured power, proclaimed independence and assumed the title of “Sultan Fakhruddin Mobarak Shah”.
- ❑ Beginning of the Independent Sultanate that continued for two hundred years



Fakhruddin

The Independent Sultanate (1338-1538 CE)

Fakhruddin Mubarak shah ruled from 1338-1349.

He extended the area of his kingdom in the North-West direction.

He conquered Chittagong and built a highway from Chandpur to Chittagong.

Gazi Shah ruled Sonargaon for three years after the death of Fakhruddin.

Iliyas Shah

- ❑ Haji Iliyas shah conquer Bengal by defeating Gazi Shah and established a Dynasty in Bengal in 1352.
- ❑ He was the founder of Ilyas Shahi Dynasty.
- ❑ Pandua was the capital of the Bengal Sultanate under his reign.

Sikandar Shah

He was the son of Ilyas Shah.

He defeated Firoz Shah Tughlaq and the later acknowledged independence of Bengal Sultanate.

Adina Mosque was built during Sikandar Shah's reign.



Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah

- ❑ He was the third Bengal Sultan.
- ❑ He established the diplomatic relationship with Ming dynasty (China).
- ❑ Ramayan was translated into Bengali by Krittibas Ojha during his reign.

Ganesha Dynasty (1414-1432/35)

- Raja Ganesha a Hindu landlord of Bhaturia and Dinajpur. Ganesha became the king of Bengal by usurping power from the weak Iliyas Shahi sultans in the early 15th century. He was the founder of Ganesha Dynasty. Gaur was the capital city.
- later his son Jalaluddin Muhammad Shah succeeded the kingdom. He contributed to the reconquest of Arakan. Fatehabad (Now, Faridpur in Bangladesh) came under his control.



❑ Iliyas shahi dynasty continued till 1497

The Habshi Rule (1487 - 1493 A.D.)

- ❑ Before the Ilyas Shahi dynasty, it was customary for Muslim rulers to purchase Abyssinian slaves and appoint them to royal palaces or important positions in the kingdom.
- ❑ Even during the reign of Jalaluddin Fateh Shah, some slaves were appointed as palace guards, who gradually increased their power among themselves. Jalaluddin tried to rein them in. But they killed the Sultan and seized the throne.

Hussain Shahi Dynasty (1494-1538)

❑ Allaудин Hussain Shah

- Bengal Sultanate-Kamata Kingdom War led to the conquer of large parts of Assam.
- After the Bengal Sultanate-Kingdom of Mrauk U War; Bengali sovereignty in Chittagong and northern Arakan was restored.
- He was famously called Akbar of Bengal.

❑ Ghiyasuddin Muhammad Shah

Factories were established in Chittagong and Hoogli after he permitted the Portuguese.

Sher Shah Suri of Sur Dynasty defeated him and his Portuguese allies in 1538.

Rule of Afghans

Rule of Afghans began in Bengal in 1538 following the fall of Hossain Shahi Dynasty. At the Beginning, the period of their rule was very short, about six months (April-September, 1538).

But the next term lasted for a long period from 1539 to 1576.

Before the occupation of Bengal by Sher Khan (Afghan) in 1538, Afghans used to serve the Sultans of Bengal. The Sultans of Bengal had appointed them in various government departments.

Baro-Bhuiyans

During the **interregnum** between Afghan rule and the rise of Mughal power in Bengal, various parts of Bengal passed to the control of several military chiefs, bhuiyans and zamindars.

These were mostly Afghan and Bengali Hindu elites, some from old ruling families and others new power grabbers.

Baro-Bhuiyans

They jointly, and more often severally resisted Mughal expansion and ruled their respective territories as independent or semi-independent chiefs. There was no central control, or if there was any, it was nominal.

Taking the whole of Bengal into consideration, the number of bhuiyans must have been many more than twelve.

Baro-Bhuiyans

Isha kha was the leader of Barabhuiyan and zamindar of Sonargaon, the low land name as 'Vati' area.

Emperor Akbar sent his soldiers several time to conquer the Bengal but they could not defeat Isha khan and zamindars.

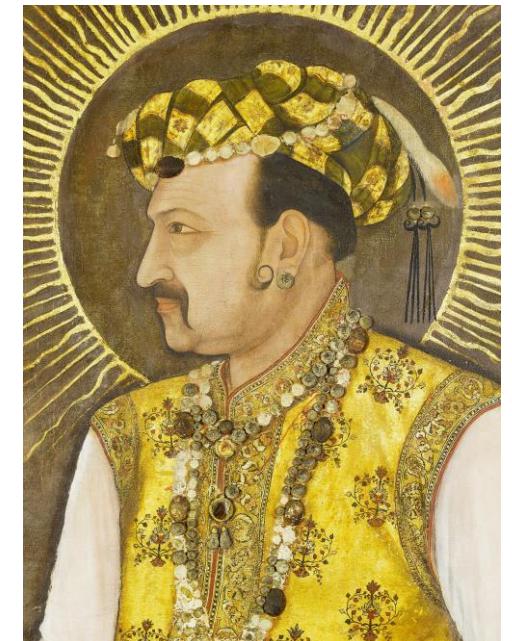


- Many Zamindars were disappointed at the surrender of Musa Khan. After that all other Zamindars pledged allegiance to the Mughals one after another. This ended the rule of the Barabhuyinas.

Mughal rule in Bengal

Finally, in 1610, the Mughal governor fought his way east to Dhaka, which he fortified and renamed Jahangirnagar after the Mughal emperor Jahangir.

He made Dhaka as the capital of Bengal, mainly because it was best positioned to suppress resistance in the delta and to check the growing power of the Portuguese and Arakanese in the southeast.



The Mughal Rule in Bengal

Mughal Rule in
Bengal

Rule of
Subadars

Rule of
Nawabs

Rule of the Subadars

- The Mughal provinces were known as „Subas“.
- Bengal became a Suba after the defeat of the Barabhuynas and Islam Khan introduced the rule of the Subadars in Bengal in 1610 A.D
- Its golden phase was from early seventeenth to early eighteenth century.
- Many Subadars ruled in Bengal, but no one could succeed before Mir Jumla's reign.

Some subadars in Bengal:

1. **Islam Khan** (1610-1613 A.D.)
2. **Kasem Khan Juini** (1628-1635 A.D.): Appointed by Emperor Shahjahan. The Portuguese increased greatly in number and eventually posed a threat to Bengal since the time of Hussain Shah. Kasem Khan suppressed them with a strong hand

Shah Suja (1639-1659 A.D.): Quite peaceful reign. The English merchants enjoyed special favours during this time, and they increased their power.



Mir Jumla (1660-1663 A.D.): As an efficient Subadar, he annexed Assam and Cooch Bihar to the Mughal Empire



Shayesta Khan (1664-1678 A.D., September 1679-1688 A.D.):

A very efficient and farsighted administrator. He drove away the Portuguese pirates and occupied Chittagong.

Towards the end of his reign, there was a dispute with the English East India Company. After a prolonged attempt he drove away the English from Bengal stopping the growth of their power



Murshid Kuli Khan (1717-1727 A.D.):

Formerly Diwan of Bengal came to power as an efficient Subadar during the reign of Emperor Farruk Shiar. Famous for the reformation of revenue system

The Rule of the Nawabs (1727-1757 A.D.)

- This period is known as the “Nawabat of Bengal”
- the post of the Subadar was called „Nazim”
- Murshid Kuli Khan was the first Nazim of Bengal.



Sujauddin Khan (1727-1739 A.D.)

Sarfaraz Khan (1739-1740 A.D.)

Alivardi Khan (1740-1756 A.D.):

Siraj-ud-Doula (1756- 1757 A.D.): Son of the youngest daughter of Alivardi Khan, Amena Begum. Was nominated by Alivardi Khan. The last nawab of Bengal, Sirajuddaula, attempted to block unauthorised trade from the region. This led to repeated confrontations with British traders and his ultimate defeat at Polashi in 1757.



*Social, Cultural, Economical, Administrative,
Religious Life of Medieval Period*

Social Life

□ Muslim Society

- ❖ Sultans had the highest social esteem and leader of Muslim society.
- ❖ Had three tiers-upper, higher middle and lower class.
- ❖ Sayed, Ulema (experienced in Islamic education) and similar classes were influential of that time.
- ❖ The sheikhs would impart the public relations and spiritual education.
- ❖ Aristocratic community-shaped themselves as an exclusive class of people.
- ❖ Social festivals- Akika, Khatna, Marriage, Milad and so on were celebrated.

- ❖ Elite Muslims eat- Kabab, rejala, roast and so on lavish foods and common people eat plain rice, fish and vegetable.
- ❖ Pajama, panjabi, pagri, tupi, lungi weared by mulim male.
- ❖ Elite leaders used various cosmetics and gold ornaments.
- ❖ Development of muktabs, madrassas and boys and girls received education from here.

Hindu Society:

- ❖ There were nothing change in the social system of Hindu society between medieval and ancient periods.
- ❖ Different occasions, caste system, food habit, dress code were similar with the ancient period but Kaulinyo system were existed.

ECONOMIC LIFE

- Main source of economic prosperity of Bengal was agriculture.
 - Common crops like rice, paddy, sugarcane, vegetables, betel nut, coconut and so on were produced.
- Maximum people were farmers. Surplus products were exported to others countries.
- Commercial activities expanded also in industries and textile, sugar industry, boat making factor were set up in Bengal.
- Clothes like moslin, silk were very famous for quality and standard.
- Sugar, molasses and shipping industry also spread widely spread in Bengal.
- Meta, goods made of iron, blacksmiths car[et, papers, steel, salt industries, crafts, conch- industries were widely used.
- Sea ports, rivers ports were built; expansion of trade and commerce, transactions of goods and money as well as keeping accoiunts.

Economic Condition (Agriculture)

Main agricultural crops in the middle age included paddy, wheat, cotton, sugarcane, jute, mustard etc.

Fruits- Mango, Jackfruit,
Banana, dates etc.



Economic Condition (Industry)

The prosperity in the textile industry was remarkable in Bengal. Cloths made here very famous for quality and standard. They had great demand in foreign countries. Example, Dhaka was famous for Moslin, a kind of very fine cloths.

Jute and silk cloths were remarkable.



Religious Life

Muslim Society:

- Eid-ul-Fitre, Eid-ul-Ajha main religious festivals.
- Muslim would perform their prayer in five times a day and recite holy Quran Hadith regularly.
- Celebrate the birthday of the Prophet(sm) with special group.

Hindu Society:

- Believe in and worship different god and goddes.
- Religious festivals like durga puja, holi, janasthami, Ganga snan and so on religious festivals were celebrated

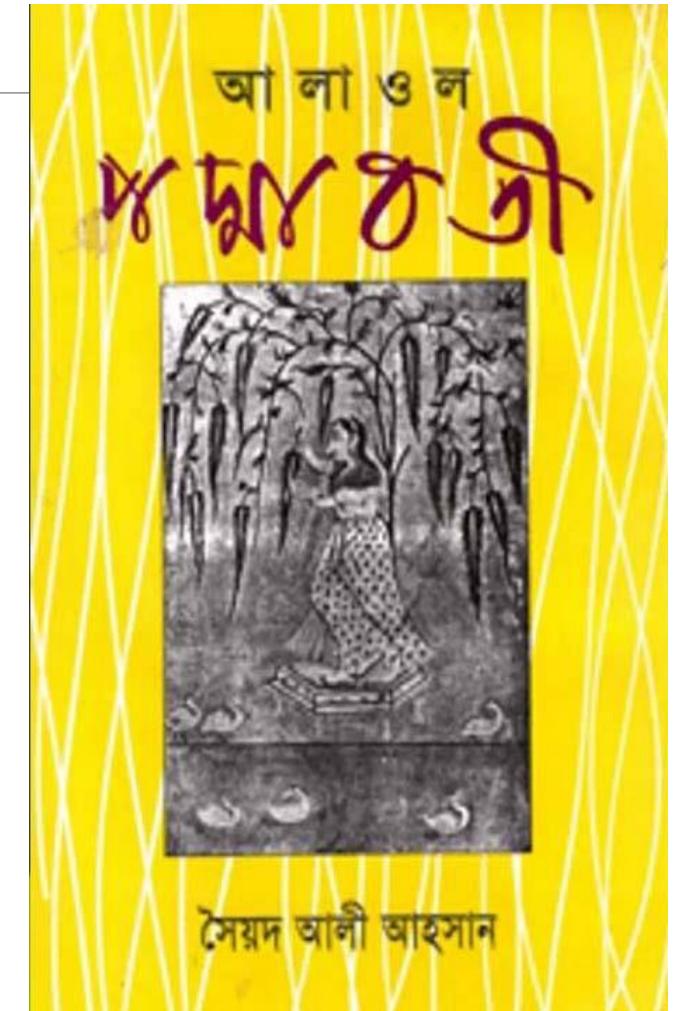
CULTURAL LIFE

Language and Literature

development of Bengali language and literature in this regime was remarkable.

Shah Muhammad Sagir wrote Yousuf Julekha, padmavati etc.

Persian and Sanskrit literature was translated.



ARCHITECTURE

The Muslim rulers built many palaces, mosques, graveyards, dargahs etc in different places of Bengal in different times in order to establish the glory of Islam and make their conquests and regimes memorable.

- For example: Adina Mosque(Gaur), Graveyard of Giyasuddin Azam Shah, Sonarga; Eklakhi mosques(pandua); Bara sona mosque(Gaur), Choto sona mosque, The Tomb of Khan Jahan Ali (Bagerhat), Shatgombuj mosque, Kadam rasul, Bara Katra(Dhaka) and so on.

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Administrative Life

- Sulatan, Subadars and Nawabs in different ruling ruler operated the region and hold the higher position.
- To protect the territory, rulers established military outposts in the border area.
- Different areas of the territory to the military chiefs for maintenance of law and order and collection of revenues. It was also their duty to look after the well being of people under their charge.
- Building a naval power.
- Introduced a welfare administration and led Bengal to prosperity.
- Abolished jizya
- Central administration consisted by Mansabdars(military administrators)

