

Prelims Master Program (2023-24) – Ancient, Medieval, Art and Culture

Handout 23 / 5 : Mughal Empire (1526-1857)

Three broad segments:

- 1526-1540: Babur, Humayun
- (Suri Dynasty: Afghan Interregnum)
- 1555-1707: Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb
- 1707-1856: Later Mughals (lesser Mughals)

The name Mughal/Mogul - has come from Mongol. On his mother's side, Babur came from Chingiz Khan. On father's side from Amir Timur. This dynasty was Chaghtai Turk in origin and called themselves Khandan-e-Timuriya (descendants of Amir Timur) or Gurkanis (in-laws of Chingiz Khan) and the country they ruled as Hindustan.

Important Persian Sources:

Tuzuk-i-Babari (Baburnama)	Autobiography of Babur in Chaghtai Turkish Translated and illustrated during the reign of Akbar (Painda Khan and Abdul Rahim Khan-e-Khanan)
Qanun-e-Humayuni	Khwandamir.
Humayunnama	Persian Biography of Humayun, written by Gulbadan Begum.
Tazkirat-ut-Waqaiat	Jauhar Aftabchi
Tarikh-i-Shershahi	Chronicles of Sher Shah's reign in Persian, by Abbas Khan Sarwani
Tarikh-e-Alfi	It is still untranslated and is overshadowed by later Akbarnamah
Akbarnamah	Chronicle of Akbar's reign in Persian, by the Abul Fazl Third volume - Ain-e-Akbari. It deals with Akbar's administration, household, army, revenue and the geography of the empire, Indian traditions and culture, Statistics regarding crop yields, price, wages, revenue, Akbar's Theory of Kingship, Doctrine of Sulh-i-kul.
Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh	By Badayuni in Persian (unofficially/secretly) It covered Akbar's reign but is critical of his policies, especially religious policy, tolerance towards Rajputs. According to him, Akbar's power hungry-attitude drove him to proclaim secular policy, undermining the Ulema's authority.
Tabaqat-i-Akbari	By Nizamuddin Ahmed in Persian
Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri	Autobiography of Jahangir
Padshahnama	Chronicles of Shah Jahan's reign by Abdul Hamid Lahori in Persian (pupil of Abul Fazl). Shah Jahan Nama - Illustrated copy by Inayat Khan
Alamgirnama	Muhammad Kazim, first 10 years of Aurangzeb
Muntakhab-ul-Lubab	Khafi Khan
Futuh-e-Alamgir	Ishwar Das Nagar during Aurangzeb
Nuskha-e-Dilkhusha	Bhimsen Saxena (Burhanpuri) during Aurangzeb
Masir-e-Alamgiri	Saqi Mustain Khan
Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh	Surjan Rai Khatri

European Travellers

Anthony Monserrate and Aquaviva	Portuguese and Jesuit missionaries, who visited Akbar's court from Goa. Their account sheds light on the Early Portuguese struggle in India against the natives and other European powers.
Ralf Fitch	First English traveller. Visited during Akbar's reign. He has described life and prominent cities, such as Delhi Agra and Surat. According to him, although the government was not secular, the degree of religious freedom enjoyed by the subjects was greater than any European country or other Islamic empires, such as Turkey.
Captain Hawkins	
Francisco Paelert	Dutch
Jean Baptiste Tavernier	French jeweler who made 6 Overseas voyages, the last 5 being to India, during Shah Jahan's reign. He has praised the Mughal crown jewels, including the King's Peacock Throne. He visited Golconda and has given a first-hand account of its gold and diamond mines.
Francois Bernier	French physician who entered Mughal service and became part of Dara Shikoh's retinue. After Dara Shikoh's death, he also served Danishmand Khan during Aurangzeb's era. He has described the Battles of Dharmat and Samugarh. He also talked about Indian textiles and their manufacturing in Mughal Karkhanas (state-run workshops) run by Diwan-e-Saman. He has thrown light on the ustad-shagird tradition of craftsmanship. He has also talked about the desperate condition of Indian peasants. (hints at agrarian revolts in north India during Aurangzeb era)
Peter Mundy	Italy
Niccolao Manucci	Italian doctor, arrived in India in 1656 at the age of 17 at Surat and joined the Dara Shikoh's forces. He has given a first hand account of Dara Shikoh's defeat and execution. Name of his book: Storia do Mogor
Jean Thevenot	French

Zahiruddin Babur (1526-30, a very short period)

Tuzuk-e-Babari (Waqai – events)

- It was his diary/journal from youth to his final days but only 18 years of his life survived in the work.
- It was written in *Chagtai Turkish* originally and was translated into Persian during the era of Akbar.
- The language used is simple yet incisive.
 - Babur has written about himself with great candour, directness and unemotional way. He has not tried to hide his shortcomings. Neither did he try to hide his father's weakness.
 - He was also a keen naturalist.
- Other than being an important source of history, it is considered to be a literary marvel in its own right.

The work may broadly be divided into 3 parts.

First part: It deals with his formative years and youth.

- Babur informs us that he was born in 1483 in Ferghana valley.
 - He was the eldest son of a Timurid chief Umar Sheikh Mirza. His mother was a direct descendent of Changez Khan.
 - Babur inherited his principality of Farghana at the age of 12.
- This part also covers his struggle and defeat to his rivals in Central Asia and Afghanistan.
 - This was the era when the constant struggle was going on in Central Asia between three groups – Timurids, Mongols (Sinkiang) and Uzbegs (growing power).
 - For the **next 10 years**, there are constant battles for Babur.
 - The main prize for Babur is the capital **Samarkand**, which was the capital of Taimur. He managed to control Samarkand for a brief period of time twice. But eventually Uzbeg leader Shaybani Khan forced Babur out of Farghana valley.
 - Babur informs us of his mistakes that led to the losses and his ultimate expulsion from Samarkand.

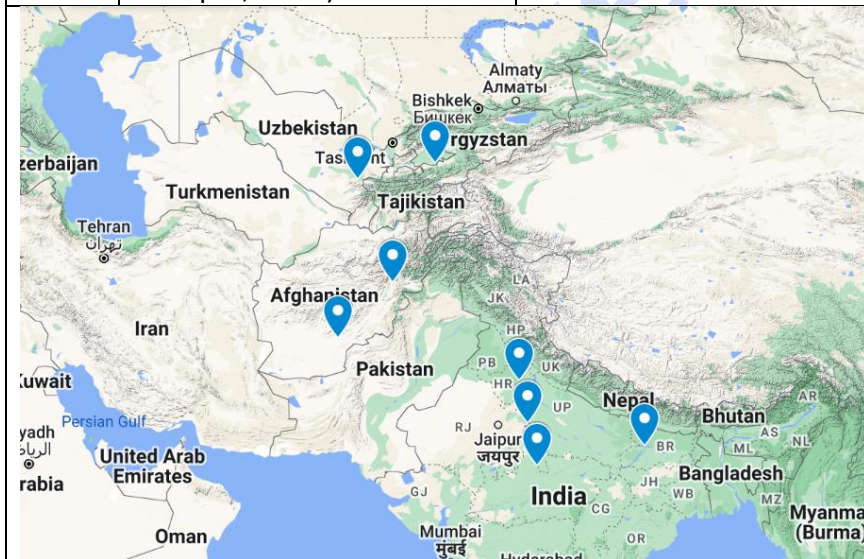
Second Part: Afghanistan years

- In 1504, with around 300 lightly armed men Babur reached Kabul which was part of Timurid empire. He then conquered Kabul (1504).
- For the **next 20 years**, Babur remains in Kabul.
 - He conquered Kandahar (1522).
 - His control over Afghanistan was only in pockets and never extensive.
- He kept on trying to retake the Farghana valley but couldn't succeed.
 - Eventually he realized that he would not be able to get it back because of growing power of Uzbeks.
 - Afghanistan was also not a place to start a great kingdom because revenue sources were meagre.
- Finally, he started claiming right over Punjab as a descendant of Timur (his interest in India).

- It is the time when Sikandar Lodhi shifted the capital to Agra and there was inner turmoil within the Lodhi sultanate. This turmoil helped Babur.
- He informs us that he was invited to India by the disgruntled nobles of Ibrahim Lodhi and other Indian rulers such as,
 - Daulat Khan Lodhi
 - Adil Khan Lodhi
 - Dilawar Khan Lodhi
 - Rana Sangha
- Babur took multiple expeditions in Punjab.
 - In the first 4 expeditions, by 1520s, he controlled the region upto Chenab river.
 - In the 5th and final expedition he conquered the Lodhi sultanate (**First battle of Panipat in 1526**)

Important battles in India: Four Victories of Babur

Year	Battle	Belligerent
1526	Battle of Panipat (Haryana)	Ibrahim Lodhi
1527	Battle of Khanwa (Bharatpur district, RJ)	Rana Sanga heading Rajput Confederacy (Babur declared jihad to enthuse demoralized troops when he was greatly outnumbered.).
1528	Battle of Chanderi (MP)	Medini Rai, another Rajput chief
1529	Battle of Ghaghra (near Chhapra, Bihar)	East Indian Afghans, mainly led by Mahmud Lodhi Sultan Nusrat Shah of Bengal Sultanate



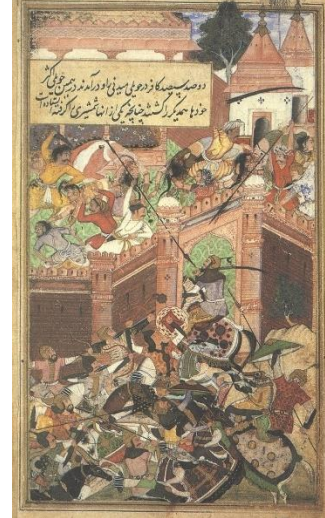


- Ferghana
- Samarkand
- Kabul
- Kandahar
- Panipat (1525)
- Khanwa (1527)
- Chanderi (1528)
- Ghaghra (1529)

These four victories laid the foundation of the Mughal empire in India. He won primarily because of his technological superiority.

Babur informs that he ensured two major stratagems to ensure his victory.

1. Rumi - fortified battlefield artillery formation.
2. Tulghuma

		
<p>The battle of Panipat and the death of Sultan Ibrahim</p>	<p>Babur's army in battle against the army of Rana Sanga at Khanwa</p>	<p>Mughal Army of Babur sacked Chanderi, capital of Medini Rao.</p>

Third Part: Description of Hindustan

Sikandar Lodi had moved the capital to Agra in the early 16th century. Babur, wrote in his memoir soon after he had defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526: "The capital of all Hindustan is Delhi". Clearly, the association of Delhi with power was stronger than Agra, even two decades after the shift of the capital.

Babur talks about Indian rulers and Babur's clashes with them. Babur has mentioned a few Indian rulers:

- Ibrahim Lodhi - Delhi (Babur has praised him, but also called him novice.)
- Five Muslim sultans:
 - Gujarat (Muzaffar Shah III and his son Bahadur Shah)
 - Malwa (Mahmud Khilji)
 - Bengal (Nusrat Shah fought in Ghagra)
 - Jaunpur (Mahmud Lodhi fought in Ghagra)
 - Bahmani sultanate
- Some Hindu Rulers
 - Rana Sanga – Mewar
 - Medini Ray - Chanderi
 - Raja of Vijayanagara

'Conspectus' or summary description of the conquered territory

- It began from the western trans-Sutlej region and extended east into today's Bihar.
- He recorded the aggregate at 520 million *tankas*.

Here, Babur discusses India, its flora, fauna, climate, people and diverse culture. He appears to be an accomplished writer in this part.

- Term *Hindi*: for all people of the subcontinent both Muslims, Hindus and others. But for Hindus, he uses to term *Hindus*.

- Descriptions
 - Babur says, *"once the water of Sind is crossed, everything is in the Hindustan way: land, water, tree, rock, people and horde, opinion and custom."*
 - "Most of the inhabitants of Hindustan are unbelievers. They call an unbeliever a Hindu. Most Hindus believe in transmigration of soul. All artisans, wage-earners and officials are Hindus"
- Animals and birds of India
 - He is pleased with India's animals, especially the elephant which he encountered for the first time.
 - Rhinoceros
 - Several kinds of monkeys
 - Several types of Parrots
 - Allegators, crocodiles, dolphins
- Praise
 - He was very fond of mangoes. He describes it as the best fruit of India.
 - He was surprised to see India's wealth, and used the terms "lakhs", "crore", and "arabs" to describe it.
- Criticism (**Title: Defects of Hindustan**)
 - Central India has 4 seasons but India has only 3 – summer, rainy and winter (no spring here). However, he did not like India's hot and humid climate.
 - He points out the defects of the rainy season in these words: *"During the rainy days, the air becomes very soft and damp. A bow of those countries after going through the rains in Hindustan, may not be drawn even, it is ruined, not only the bow, everything is affected, armour, book, cloth and utensils, all; a horse even does not last long."*
 - *"Not only in the rains, but also in the cold and the hot seasons, the airs are excellent; at these times; however, the north-west wind constantly gets up laden with dust and earth. It gets up in great strength every year in the head... so strong and carrying so much dust and earth that there is no seeing one another. People call this wind **Andhi** – Darkener of the sky."*
 - People
 - *"Hindustan is a country of few charms. Its people have no good looks; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits there is none; of genius and capacity none; of manners none; in handicraft and work, there is no form or symmetry, method or quality. There are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, musk melons or first-rate fruits, no ice or cold water, nor bread or cooked food in bazaars; no hammams, no colleges, no candles, torches or candlesticks."*
 - According to him, Indians lack a sense of fashion, and they 'roamed around naked'. He mentions langota being worn by people of low level.
 - He says that Indians were dull and lacked glow of intellect on their faces.
 - He considered Indians to be very brave but says that they lack understanding of strategy and generalship. (Among the Indians, he was most impressed with the bravery of Rajputs)
 - Gardens, flowers and wine

- He says that Indian cities did not have gardens like those in Central Asia and Persia.
- He also misses his favourite flowers, the Jasmine and the Rose.
- He was extremely displeased with the lack of quality wines in India.
- Despite all these problems he liked India because, *“Pleasant things about Hindustan is that it's a large country and has masses of gold and silver... Another good thing about India is that it has endless and innumerable workmen of every kind. There is a fixed jati for every sort of work and everything....”*

Babur never at home in Hind, he died dreaming of his boyhood city of Kabul. (Stephen Dale)

“Sometimes, like madmen, I used to wander alone over hill and plain; sometimes I wandered in gardens and suburbs, lane after lane... My roaming was not of my choice; nor could I decide whether to go or stay. Nor power to stay was mine, nor strength to part; I became what you made of me, oh thief of my heart.” – Baburnama

Babur's letter to Humayun (11 Jan 1529)

“Oh, my son! The realm of Hindustan is full of diverse creeds. Praise be to God, the Righteous, the Glorious, the Highest, that He hath granted unto thee the empire of it. It is but proper that you, with a heart cleansed of all religious bigotry, should dispense justice according to the tenets of each community. And in particular refrain from the sacrifice of cow, for that way lies the conquest of the hearts of the people of Hindustan; and the subjects of the realm will, through royal favour, be devoted to thee. And the temples and abodes of worship of every community under Imperial sway, you should not damage. Dispense justice so that the sovereign may be happy with the subjects and likewise the subjects with their sovereign. The progress of Islam is better by the sword of kindness, not by the sword of oppression. Ignore the disputations of Shias and Sunnis, for therein is the weakness of Islam. And bring together the subjects with different beliefs in the manner of the Four Elements, so that the body politic may be immune from the various ailments. And remember the deeds of Hazrat Taimur Sahib Qiran so that you may become mature in matters of Government. And on us is but the duty to advise.”

Nuruddin HUMAYUN (1530-1540 & 1555-1556)

First Phase

- 1532 - he defeated the Afghans near Allahabad.
- 1534/35 - he defeated Bahadur Shah of Gujarat
- 1534 - built Dinpanah
- 1539 - he was defeated by Sher Shah Suri at the Battle of **Chausa** (Bihar)
- 1540 - he was defeated again by Sher Shah Suri at the battle of **Bilgram** (Kannauj)

SHER SHAH (1540-45)

- Born as **Farid Khan**. He was given the title Sher Shah by an Afghan nobleman, Bahar Khan Nuhani.
- He was the minor Mughal jagirdar of Sasaram (Bihar), and he also briefly served in the Mughal army.
- His chronicles have been recorded in the **Tarik-i-Shershahi** by **Abbas Khan Sarwani** in Persian. He was waqia-navis under Akbar in 1580.
- He was thought to have combined the qualities of fox (cunningness) and lion (bravery).

Military conquests

- He took over the rule of **Bihar** and **Bengal** by 1539.
- In the Battle of **Chausa** (1539) and **Kannauj** (1540), he **defeated Humayun**.
 - In 1540, he took control of Delhi and proclaimed himself as Sher Shah Suri.
 - Drove his foes from **Hindustan**, and the **Punjab**
- Suppressed the **Baluch chiefs** on the northwestern frontier.
- Captured **Gwalior** and **Malwa**
- Killed during the siege of **Kalinjar**

Organized a long-lived bureaucracy responsible to the ruler and created a carefully calculated revenue system.

Land Revenue Reforms

- An elaborate system for land revenue administration known as **Zabti** was introduced.
- Purpose
 - To ensure regular flow of revenue
 - To remove Afghan legacy of decentralization and introduce royal supremacy.
- Details
 - Estimation
 - It involved **survey and measurement**. The estimated production (yield) was adjusted to the **quality of land**.
 - The rate of tax
 - It fixed at 1/3rd of the produce.
 - Tax was to be paid both in both cash and kind. For cash conversion, **Sher Shah's Ray** (price list) was prepared.

- It was applied uniformly throughout the empire.
- Peasants needed **protection**. They were most oppressed by the lower level govt functionaries. So, he introduced two legal documents to protect peasant rights.
 - '**Patta**' (title deed - recognized right over land to cultivate it. So, a deed of ownership)
 - '**Qabuliyat**' (deed of acceptance or memorandum of agreement)
 - In villages, the state used **intermediaries for collection** by giving them a **commission**, usually 10% of collected revenue.
- Additional taxes
 - **Jaribana** – surveyors fee
 - **Muhasilana** – tax collector's fee
 - **Dhai Seri** – emergency tax
- **Sondhar**
 - In the event of crop failure, Sondhar loans were given to peasants by the state.

Central and provincial administration

- **Central**
 - Abolished the old practice of **hereditary offices**
 - Started to pay **cash salaries** in place of landgrants.
 - Re-organized **spy system** to keep an eye on important nobles.
 - Introduced **checks-and-balances**
- **Provincial administration**
 - Re-organized entire **hierarchy of administration**.
 - He didn't introduce regular Suba but he began appointing/promoting his **own muqtis**
 - **Re-organized sub-provincial administration**
 - **Wilayat** (Province) by Muqti/Wali
 - Also known as **Khitta**.
 - **Sarkar** (earlier known as Shiq/Shiqdar) by Shiq-e-Shiqdaran and Munisf-e-Musnifan.
 - There were 66 sarkars in Sher Shah's domain.
 - **Paragana** by Shiqdar and Munsif
 - Other officers:
 - Qanungo (record-keeper)
 - Khazandar/Poddar/Fotedar (treasurer)
 - **Gao**
 - Traditional village headmen (**muqaddams, patwaris**) continued to exercise the powers.
 - A **more direct relationship** was established between them and the centre.
- During his reign, **criminal law** was **harsh**, and punishments were severe. He introduced the concept of **local responsibility for local crime**. Thus, village headman was responsible for any crime committed locally.

Currency:

He established the tri-metal coinage system: Mohur (Gold), Rupaya (silver) and Dam (copper)

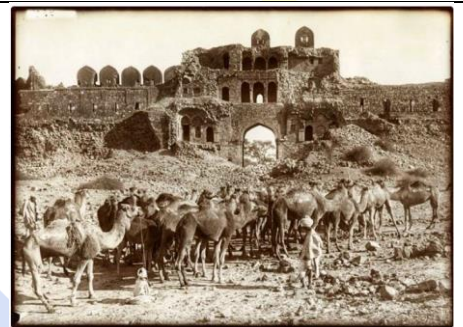
- Gold coin weighing 169 grains.
- Rupiya weighed 178 grains (11 grams)
 - It replaced the billon tanka.
 - It was inscribed with Islamic kalima and also carried the names of four Khalifas.
 - Few Rupees also had Devnagari script.
- Several provincial mints were set up, which continued coinage of his predecessors as well.
- Initial coins were mintless. Only from 1541 CE onwards names of mints were included.



Promotion of Trade

- He restricted collection of taxes on articles of trade only at two places: frontiers (entry) and points of sale. This allowed quick and reasonable movement of the goods.
- He made efforts to standardize weights and measures.

Along from standardized rupya, these initiatives helped in the growth of trade.



A collection of camels near Lal Darwaza of Shergarh, across Purana Qila in Delh

Roads and Sarais

- Sher Shah built **four major long arterial roads** in India including:
 - Sonargaon (Bengal) to Peshawar
 - Attock-Multan
 - Agra-Jodhpur-Chittorgarh
 - Agra-Burhanpur (MP)
- On each road, **trees** were planted for shade.
- At a distance of every 2 Kos (18 Kilometres) a **Sarai** was built.
 - These Sarais served multiple **purposes**.
 - Each sarais had a **Shahna** (custodian) and **Barid**
 - Each Sarais also had a well provisioned stable and **Dak Chowki**.
 - Feeding
 - Each Sarais had **2 chefs**, one Brahmin and the other Muslim.
 - Food was provided free of cost for boarders. The sarais also had facilities for **feeding and watering horses**.
 - Each Sarai had a **water well**, which **attracted locals**. This resulted in the roads and sarais becoming **safer**.
 - Gradually sarais started to serve as a **marketplace (mandi)**, which eventually evolved into **towns**. Thus, they helped in the growth of the market economy and contributed to **urbanisation**.

Sur's dynasty died very soon after him.

HUMAYUN (Part 2)

While Sur dynasty was falling apart, Humayun was in Persia.

15 years Exile in Persia:

- 1541 - he fled towards Rajasthan and married **Hamida Banu Begum**, a Persian lady, who gave birth to Akbar at Amakot (Sind).
- After this, Humayun fled to Persia where he was given **refuge to Shah Tahmasp I.**
- He conquered **Kandahar** (1545) and seized **Kabul** three times from his own disloyal brother, Kamran, the final time being in 1550.

Back to India - Mughal Restoration

- 1555 - Humayun returned to India with Persian help. First he captured **Lahore**.
- 1555 - **Battle of Sirhind** - Humayun **defeated Sikandar Shah Suri**
 - Humayun now recovered **Delhi** and **Agra**.
- However, he could **only rule for 10 months** before dying accidentally.

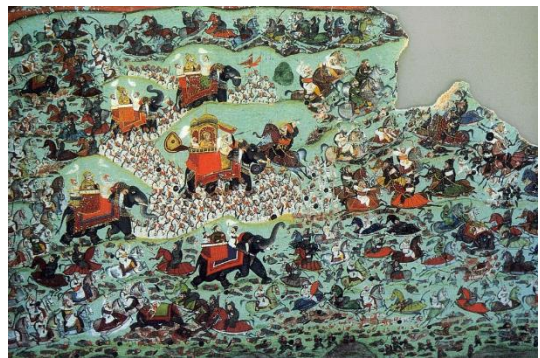


Jalaluddin AKBAR (1556-1605)

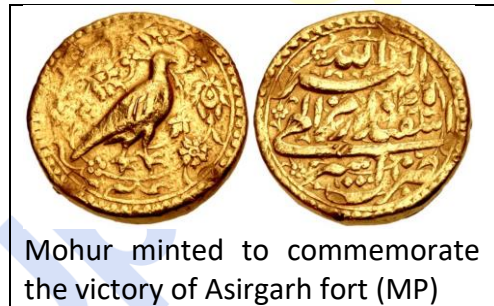
The seat of Delhi was again lost after Humayun's death. But it was soon retrieved by Akbar. It was during his reign that the Mughal Empire was truly established. Before him, Mughals were military-men, men of fortune, looting and sharing spoils. It is Akbar who created the **institutional structure** and laid the **foundations** of the empire.

Important political events

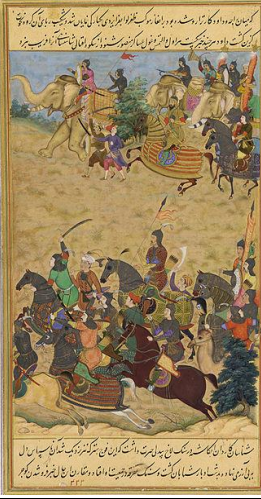


- 1556 - coronation at **Kalanaur** (Punjab)
 - The year also saw a rebellion by **Hemu** (a former Hindu general of the Suris).
 - **Sher Shah** (d. 1545) → his son **Islam Shah Sur** (d.1543) → **Adil Shah Sur**
 - **Hemu** who was Wazir of Adil Shah Sur, carved out an independent principality to the north of Delhi and styled himself Vikramaditya. He gathered a huge army and clashed with Mughals at Panipat. His army was defeated in the **Second Battle of Panipat in 1556**.
 - After the battle, Hemu was beheaded by Akbar at the instance of Bairam Khan and thus he adopted the **title of Ghazi**.
 - He then had a victory tower erected with the heads of captured/surrendered army of Hemu, like Taimurlang or Nadir Shah would do.
- In 1560 Akbar came to **Delhi** from **Agra**.
 - When he was 16/17, he took the power in his hands, **removed Bairam Khan** (regent) from his position as Wakil-us-Sultanat.
- In 1568, Akbar attacked and besieged **Chittorgarh** for many months and captured it.
 - **Uday Singh** was the ruler (son of Rana Sanga and founder of Udaipur)
 - This battle was declared as **jihad** by Akbar – **Fathanama**.
 - After capture, he ordered a general **massacre** of 30,000 people in the fort.
 - After victory, he walked **barefoot to Ajmer Dargha** as he had promised.
- 1568 - **Fatehpur Sikri** building started (continued till 1585)
- 1572 - Akbar attacked and **conquered Gujarat**.
 - Now he built the **Buland Darwaza** (Fatehpuri Sikri 1571-73) to commemorate his victory.
- 1574-75 - conquered **Bengal**
- 1576 - Mewar, under the leadership of **Maharana Pratap**, had declared independence.
 - Maharana Pratap had ascended to the throne in 1572.
 - The **Battle of Haldighati** was fought between Maharana Pratap on one side, and the Mughals. Akbar by himself was not present. Maharana Pratap was defeated in the battlefield.
 - Mughal commanders **Abdul Fazl and Raja Man Singh** (Rajput chief of Ajmer)
 - Maharana Pratap's resistance was led principally by a Muslim, **Hakim Khan Sur**.



- Maharana Pratap escaped and continued the resistance through **guerilla warfare**.
 - After the rebellions in Bengal/Bihar, the Mughal pressure on Mewar relaxed. Soon, Akbar sent Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan to invade Mewar but he stopped at Ajmer.
 - In 1582, Maharana Pratap re-occupied the Mughal post of Dewair in the **battle of Dewair**. This led to the reconquest of large part of Mewar.
 - Soon, Akbar moved to Lahore and stayed there for a few years and there was no expedition to Mewar. Taking advantage of this, Maharana Pratap recaptures large area of Mewar but never Chittorgarh. He rather built a new capital at **Chawand**. He died in 1597.
- 1581 - conquered **Kabul**.
- 1585 - Akbar moved to Lahore and stayed there to deal with Uzbek tribes.
 - From 1585-1598, Lahore served as the capital of Mughal empire.
- 1586 - conquered **Kashmir**
- 1591 - conquered **Sindh**.
- 1601 - The Battle of Asirgarh (to annex **Khandesh**)
 - Akbar quickly occupied Burhanpur and then Farooqi Sultanate came to end.
- 1602 - Abul Fazl was killed by Bir Singh Bundela behalf of Prince Salim.



During Akbar's long reign of almost half a century, he expanded his empire continuously and transformed it from north Indian principality into a pan Indian empire, stretching from Afghanistan to the Deccan and from Bengal to Sindh.

		
<p>Young Akbar leads the Army during the Second Battle of Panipat, against Hemu.</p>	<p>The defeat of Hemu at the Second Battle of Panipat</p>	<p>The court of young Akbar, age 13, showing his first imperial act: the arrest of Bairam Khan.</p>
		
<p>Bairam Khan is Assassinated by an Afghan at Patan (Tulsi)</p>	<p>Akbar shoots the Rajput commander, Jaimal, using a matchlock (Chittore)</p>	<p>Akbar's triumphal entry into Surat, 1572</p>
		
<p>Akbar directing construction of Fatehpur Sikri</p>	<p>Akbar inspecting Fatehpur Sikri construction work</p>	<p>Akbar prays after Bengal victory</p>

Heroic death in battle of Rani Durgavati

- She was the Chandel ruler of the Gond Kingdom of Middle India, from 1550 to 1564
- Her forces were defeated by the overwhelming size of the Mughal army.

EXPLAINED HISTORY

RANI DURGAVATI GAURAV YATRA IN MP: WHO WAS THIS GOND QUEEN

RISHIKA SINGH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 26

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi will be in Madhya Pradesh today, for the conclusion of the Rani Durgavati Gaurav Yatra launched on Thursday (June 22). Home Minister Amit Shah had inaugurated the rally in Balaghat.

The yatra is being seen as part of the BJP's larger tribal outreach, with Madhya Pradesh going to polls later this year.

Rani Durgavati

Rani Durgavati is said to have been born in 1524, in Mahoba's Chandela dynasty, known for building the famous Khajuraho temples. Her father was Raja Salbahan of Rath and Mahoba. Durgavati was married to Dalpat Shah, the son of the Gond King Sangram Shah of the kingdom of Garha-Katanga. This kingdom included the Narmada Valley and parts of northern MP. She was widowed in 1550, a few years after her marriage. Her young son Bir Narayan was on the throne in name and she ruled the kingdom.

Historian Satish Chandra, in his book *Medieval India*, describes her as a good marksman, skilled at using guns, bows, and arrows. It was noted that she was so intent on hunting tigers that "whenever she heard a tiger had appeared she did not drink water until she shot it."

The Mughal attack

According to government documentation of the region's history, Durgavati and her generals managed the kingdom for 16 years. Abul Fazl, the court historian of Akbar who chronicled these years in *Akbarnama*, described Durgavati as a combination of "beauty, grace and man-like courage and bravery". He added that



A painting by Beohar Rammanohar Sinha shows Rani Durgavati gearing up for battle. *Wikimedia Commons*

the prosperity of the kingdom was such that people paid their taxes in gold coins and elephants.

The Mughal governor of Allahabad, Asaf Khan, decided to attack Garha-Katanga attracted by the tales of the queen, writes Chandra. Other historians say Akbar ordered the attack. Khan then went to the region with 10,000 cavalry, and was joined by several semi-independent rulers.

The queen situated her troops in Narhi, which was located in a thick forest reached after crossing rivers, and was naturally difficult to breach. They allowed some Mughal forces to come through the narrow ravines peculiar to the region before surrounding them. The first battle was therefore won by the Gond queen.

However, soon the Mughals fortified the area and overwhelmed the Gonds. The queen was struck by two arrows and it is believed she stabbed herself to not surrender to the Mughal forces.

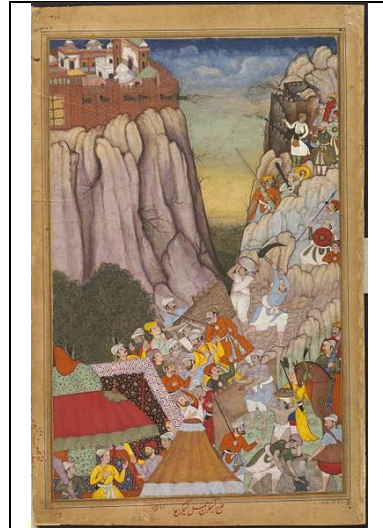
It took Khan nearly two months to consolidate his victory. Akbar later asked him to restore the kingdom to Chandra Shah, the younger son of Sangram Shah, after he accepted Mughal suzerainty.



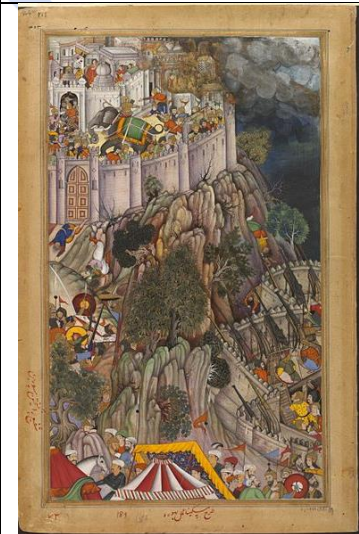
(1) Rajput Policy

Akbar's Rajput policy involved **collaboration and compromise**. It is characterized by carrot-and-stick policy.

- **Objectives:** It was an outcome of his **imperialistic ambition**.
 - He wanted to establish a **pan-Indian empire** and realised its difficulty, if the Rajputs remained hostile to Mughal rule.
 - Further he wanted to use them as his empire's **sword arm** to overcome other opponents in important military conquests.
- **Elements/features:**
 - Akbar entered several **matrimonial alliances** with the Rajputs.
 - Important Rajput chiefs were given **high ranks** within the Mughal military aristocracy (**Mansabdari**).
 - They were the *only group* within the Mughal nobility to be given **Watan Jagirs**, apart from normal jagirs.
 - Eg Amer was the watan-jagir of Kachhawahas.
 - They were given **important posts** within the officialdom and **leadership** of important campaigns.
 - Complete **religious freedom** was also granted to them.
- **Outcome**
 - Akbar's Rajput policy was **highly successful**.
 - He was able to **avoid large-scale war** against them, except for Mewar.
 - Rajput soldiers and commanders played a major role in **expansion of the empire**.
 - Thus, using this policy, Akbar could transform formidable opponents into loyal collaborators.



Siege of Ranthambore by Akbar himself, 1568 shows construction of Sabats (covered way) going close to the walls.



Abu'l Fazl notes that the only other Muslim conqueror of Ranthambhor, Alauddin Khalji, had taken a year to achieve in 1303 what Akbar's forces accomplished in a month.

(2) Religious Policy

Akbar wanted to create a wide social base for the empire. Thus, his religious policy was characterized by pluralism, freedom of religion, tolerance and the idea of universal brotherhood.

This was outcome of Akbar's

- **Personal views:** He held liberal religious beliefs under the influence of Sheikh Salim Chishti, Abul Fazal and Faizi.
- **Political calculations**
 - Since a majority of his subjects were non-Muslim, he realised secular policy would allow him to win the loyalty of a wide spectrum of his subjects.
 - He also wanted to secure Rajput support, for which a liberal policy was imperative.

Evolution of Religions Policy and Initiatives:

First phase

- 1562- he abolished the practice of **forcibly converting** prisoners of war.
- 1563- he abolished the **Pilgrimage Tax**.
- 1564- he abolished the **Jizya**.
- Tried to remove **Sati** practice.
- Akbar clamped down on **slavery**.
 - First he closed the slave markets in Indian cities.
 - He then released all his slaves as free.
- On request by Jains, Akbar **banned cow slaughter**.
- 1573 - Suppressed **Mahadwi movement** during Gujarat campaign
- 1575 – Akbar was impressed with Sangam at Prayag (for both religious as well as strategic significance) and founded a city called Illahabas

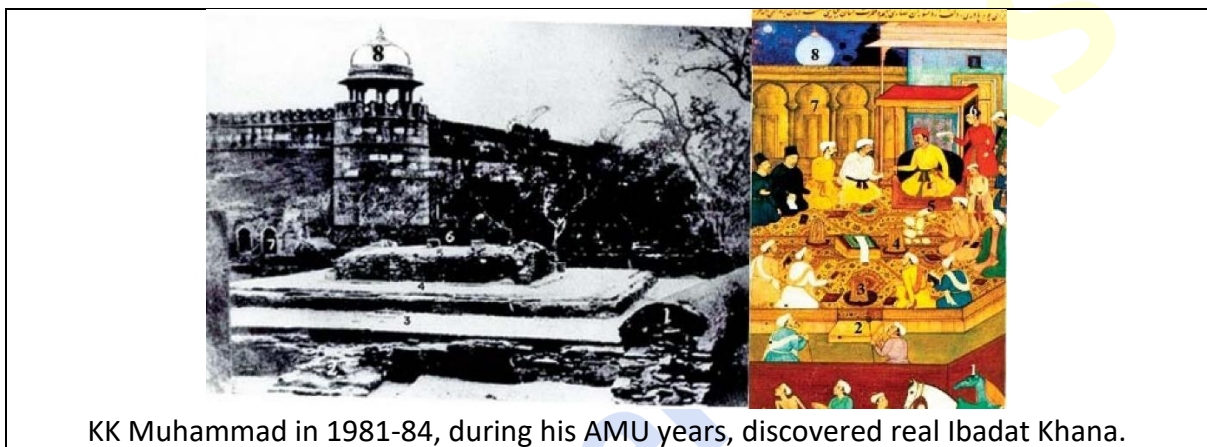
Second phase: 1575-1582

Ibadatkhana discussions (Fatehpur Sikri)

- Objective
 - Akbar wanted **clarity** on the finer points of religious philosophy.
 - He was also looking for ways **to end the influence of the Ulema** (Islamic clergy) in political affairs.
- For this, he invited religious scholars from **different sects of Islam** and later **different faiths** (Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism etc) to the Ibadatkhana and held discussions with them.

Rodolfe Aquauuia, Antoine de Monserrate, Francois Henriques	Portuguese Jesuits
Hira Vijaya Suri (Jagatguru title)	Jain scholar, Akbar's friend.
Purushottam and Devi	Hindu scholar
Makhdum-ul-Mulk, Sheikh Abdul Nabi, Abdullah Sultanpuri	Orthodox Islamic scholars
Abul Fazal and Faizi	Liberal Islamic scholars
Maharaji Rana	Parsi scholar

- **Proceedings of Ibadat Khana:**
 - **Akbar was not fully satisfied** with the explanation offered by the experts of any single religion.
 - The **petty recriminations** of the ulama disgusted the emperor.
 - He also got tired of the debates because most priests would try **to assert their own views superiors** and **focus on converting Akbar** to their own religion.
- **Conclusions:**
 - Akbar concluded that **the basic truth of all religions is the same** and **no single religion has monopoly over the truth**.
 - Simultaneously, he concluded that religious scholars tend to be partisan and often give imperfect interpretations, and hence, should not be allowed to do so.



1579 - Akbar issued the '**Mahzarnama**' (Infallibility Decree), through which he declared himself the **chief interpreter of the faith and the Caliph**. It was prepared by Sheikh Mubarak.

- He adopted two titles (traditionally given to Prophet of Islam)
 - **Insan-e-Kamil**: most accomplished perfect man
 - **Imam-e-Adil**: leader of justice
- With this, Akbar became Khalifa of the age, a rank higher than Mujtahid (authority on Islamic law). Thus, in case of difference of opinion among Mujtahids, Akbar can choose one as valid.
- Thus,
 - It allowed him to **cement his position** as not only the secular leader but also the empire's religious head.
 - Akbar was able to **oust the Ulema influence** from politics.
 - Among prevailing **sectarianism** in Islam, it helped **stabilize the situation**.
 - Eliminated religious position of **Ottoman Khalifa** over Indian Muslims.
 - Many modern scholars consider the Ibadatkhana discussions and Mazharnamah to be an **expression of secularism as well as despotism**.
- Response
 - Mahzar was signed by **Makhdum-ul-Mulk** and **Abdun Nabi**, though they were known to be bitter critics of Akbar's liberal religious policy.
 - There were many Fatwas against Akbar as well rebellion.
 - Akbar crushed the opposition ruthlessly.

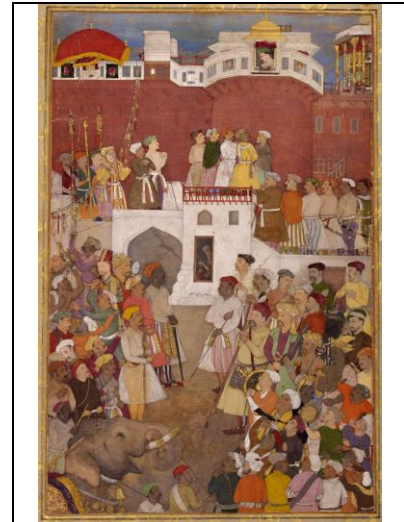
Phase 3

Tauheed-e-ilahi or Din-e-Ilahi (1582)	Sulh-i-Kul
<p>It was a syncretic creed intended to merge the best elements of various religions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In contrast to popular view, most historians consider it not as a new religion. It lacked the traditional characteristics required to qualify as a religion. It was characterised by monotheism, tolerance, the spirit of kindness, sun worship, ahmisa. It prohibited the sins of lust, pride and slander - essentially an ethical system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In its ritual, it borrowed heavily from Zoroastrianism, making light (Sun and fire) an object of divine worship. Akbar also recited, as in Hinduism, the 1,000 Sanskrit names of the Sun. It also absorbed Sufi elements from Ibn al-Arabi in Spain. <u>All of these are mixed up selectively as per Akbar's personal belief system.</u> There were some ceremonies like <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiation ceremony Confirmation ceremony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accept and publicly recognize Akbar as Pir/Guru and become devoted disciple. Disciples were not to eat non-veg/meat, to give party/alms on Akbar's birthday. There were four grades of devotion: <u>Tark-e-maal-o-jan-o-namus-o-din.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More trust and support of emperor. Thus, it was an <u>ethical/moral compact between Akbar and his individual followers.</u> The acceptance of the Din-i-illahi did not grant any special privileges. In fact, only a few of his important Rajput nobles ever accepted it. (total 19 adherents). Eg Man Singh, who was very close to Akbar, never accepted din-e-Ilahi. Only Hindu who converted to it was Birbal. So, it never became nor was it intended to be a mass religion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It formed the essence of Din-e-Ilahi, a general principle of administration and central pillar of his theory of kingship. Rather, it was the guiding principle of Akbar's Religious philosophy. It refers to the doctrine of universal peace. According to it <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Akbar was a universal agent of god, and so his sovereignty was not bound to any single faith. All religions had equal rights to prosper and flourish within the empire. If rulers discriminate on religious basis, then they were not fit to be agents of god. It was the emperor who was holding the empire together, and in his absence, various religious communities would descend into communal violence. Thus, it was designed to achieve stability and religious peace and harmony of plural India, as well as to reinforce the despotic authority of the emperor.

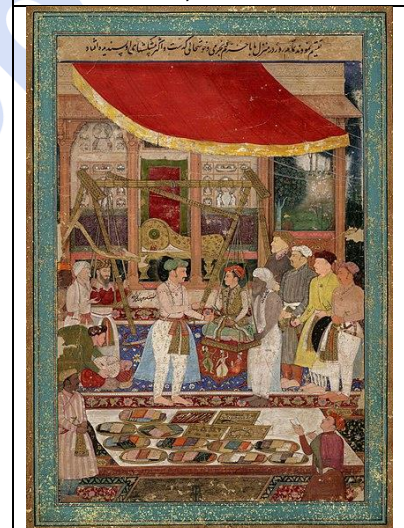
(3) Central Administration

Kingship

- The Mughal Polity was based on the idea of **absolute monarchy**, wherein the emperor was the fountainhead of all authority (legislative, judicial, executive)
- Akbar introduced the element of **semi-divine kingship**, by introducing concepts such as:
 - **Titles**
 - **Farr-i-Izidi** (Divine light) and title of **Zill-i -Ilahi** (shadow of God)
 - **Insan-i-kamil** (Best among all men)
 - **Imam-i-Adil** (Leader of Justice)
 - Akbar Also introduced some **new practices** to emphasise the Emperor's semi-divine status:
 - **Sijda** - prostration
 - **Paibos** - kissing on emperor feet
 - **Navroz** - Festival to celebrate the Persian new year
 - **Tuladan**
 - **Jharokha Darshan**
- **Succession** - there was no fixed rule of succession
 - The rule of primogeniture was not followed and succession was decided by competition between contenders for the throne, leading to frequent and destructive war of succession.



Emperor Jahangir at the jharoka window of the Agra Fort, c. 1620



Jahangir weighing prince Khurram (later Shah Jahan) against gold and silver

Nature of the State

- **War State** - most historians classify the Mughal State as a war state.
- **Paper State** - The Mughal State was also a paper state (bureaucratic state)
- **Portfolio** system of administration
 - Akbar had a council of ministers and officers to assist him. These ministers were heads of different departments.
 - Akbar held important meetings in Diwan-i-Khas.

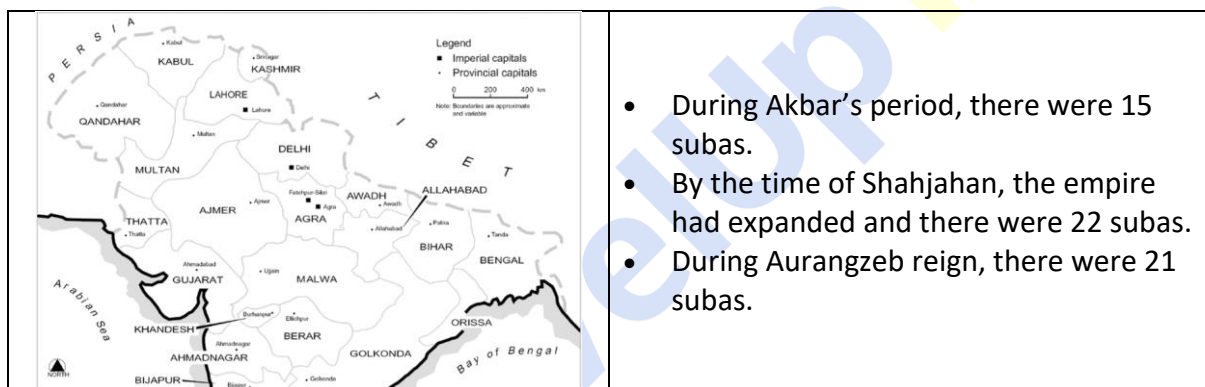
DEPARTMENT	HEADS	IN CHARGE OF
Diwan-i-Wazirat	Wazir/Diwan	Revenue Department
Diwan-i-Arz	Mir Bakshi	Military Department
Diwan-i-Rasalat	Muhtasib	Foreign affairs and censor of public morals
Diwan-i-Quza	Qazi-ul-Quzzat	Judiciary
Diwan-i-Insha	Mir Manshi	Government papers and royal correspondence
Diwan-i-Saman	Mir-us-Saman	Imperial household and Mughal karkhanas
Sadr-us-Sudur	Sadar-i-Jahan	Supervisor of stipends and grants: Waqf (charitable land grants) and wazifa (charitable cash donations)

(PS: Prime Minister (called *Vakil*) was also there but it was largely a ceremonial head. He was largely an advisor to the king rather than holding effective power.)

(4) Provincial Administration

By and large, Akbar continued the basic idea from Sultanate/Sher Shah era but modified it with Subah, and check-and-balances.

- **Subas (Provinces)**
 - Akbar established a centralized bureaucratic administrative system in the suba.
 - Headed by the **Subedar/ Siphasalar** (Provincial governor), whose main duty was to maintain law and order. He was a high-ranking official.
 - Akbar introduced **checks and balances** through **separation of power**. So, there were other officers too and the imperial control over Suba remained stringent.
 - **Diwan** was the chief provincial finance officer.
 - **Bakshi** was the chief military official.
 - **Qazi** oversaw the judicial administration.



- **Sarakars (Districts)**
 - Each suba was divided into compact Sarkars.
 - Headed by **Faujdar** responsible for the maintenance of law and order, to oversee general administration.
 - **Amalguzars** were in charge of revenue administration.
- **Praganas (Revenue Circles)**
 - Revenue units headed by **Shiqdar** responsible for the maintenance of law and order
 - **Amil/ Karori** was in charge of revenue collection.
 - **Fotedar** was the treasury official.
- **Gaon (Village)**
 - **Zamindars** (local landowners) acted as **intermediaries** between the state and the villages.
 - State co-opted them, gave commission, tax exemptions.
 - However, they were not part of Mughal bureaucracy. They remained local agents but outsiders.
 - They collected **revenue** in exchange for a commission and enjoyed tax exemptions.
 - As Chowdharys, they also had **policing** powers.

(5) Revenue Administration

Diversity: Different systems of land revenue assessment and collection were used in different parts of the Mughal empire. This was done to account for the vastness of the empire and its geographical and cultural diversity.

Nasq/ Nasaq	The revenue demand was raised on the basis of <u>rough calculation</u> based on the <u>previous year's collection</u> . No survey or measurement carried out.
Batai/ Galla Bakshi	Revenue was collected, based on the <u>current year's production</u> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Khet Batai - Standing groups were divided. (before harvest, in the field) • Lank Batai - Harvested, bundled, stacked/stocked before being divided • Ras Batai - Grain was threshed/beaten and collected before being divided.
Zabti	Introduced by Sher Shah Suri. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under this system, revenue was <u>estimated</u> on the basis of measurement of sown area and assessment of the quality of land. It was called Jama, while Hasil was the realised revenue.

The difference/fluctuation between Jama and Hasil was a major concern for the state. Thus, **Ain-i-Dahsala** system was established by Todar Mal which was the upgradation of Zabti in order to minimize the gap between Jama and Hasil. It is also known as **Todarmal Bandobast**

Features:

- The system was based on the **survey** and **measurement** of the sown area.
 - The average production of the previous 10 years was taken to estimate the current year's production.
 - Land was divided into following **categories** and **average production** was taken to make estimate

Cultivation Frequency		Soil Fertility			Average
		Good	Middle	Bad	
	Polaj - cultivated every year.				(G+B+M)/3
	Parauti - left fallow of 1- 2 year after crop				(G+B+M)/3
	Chachar - left fallow for 3-4 years				(G+B+M)/3

- Revenue Rate
 - The rate of land revenue was fixed at **1/3rd** of the estimated production
 - Multan 1/4, Kashmir 1/2 - regional variation
 - A peasant was allowed to leave up to 12.5% of his total land uncultivated. This land was known as **Nabud**. Land Revenue was not demanded by Nabud.
- Demand calculation
 - Revenue was collected in **cash**.
 - He created **Dasturs** (regional price circles and not entire empire) to convert the revenue demand into cash form.
 - Price lists called the **Dastur-i-Amal** were created for each Dastur by taking an average of the prevailing price over the previous 10 years.

- Akbar continued the policy of issuing **Patta** and **Qabuliyat** to farmers.
- **Incentivised** the **expansion** of agriculture
 - 5 years **tax holiday** was given for Banjar land (culturable wasteland).
 - Further, at least 50% of **donated** land was to be **Banjar land**.
 - **Sondhar** loans were given to farmers in times of famine.
- Additional taxes
 - Dah-e-seri - **emergency tax**

Significance

- The Ain-i-Dahsala System provided certain **stability to the empire**.
- It allowed Akbar to maintain a **large standing army** which could be used to expand the empire and maintain border security. It also allowed the state to undertake **massive construction projects**
- It helped in the **integration of zamindars into the state**, thus, reducing the possibility of rebellion. However, the **breakdown of the compact between the state and the peasantry** due to the sudden rise in revenue burden later led to frequent agrarian revolts by groups such as the Jats, Sikhs, Satnamis.

Akbar's calendar: Tarikh-e-Ilahi

The months of the lunar Hirji calendar, which were introduced by the Muslims in India, were not connected to the agrarian rhythm. Thus, Akbar introduced Fasi calendar by solarizing the lunar Hirji calendar. It started from the date of Akbar's coronation. (1556 CE)

(6) Mansabdari System

Objectives

This system was originally created by Chengis Khan and was modified for Indian conditions by Akbar. Its objective was to

- Provide effective administration.
- Streamline both military and civilian administration.
- Arrange Mughal aristocracy and bureaucracy into fused merit-based hierarchy.
- Strengthen the emperor's centrality and increase control over officials.

This system created the bedrock of the Mughal administration and decay in its quality contributed to the decline of the Mughal empire.

Elements

- It was a **dual rank system**, that is, each Mughal official was assigned 2 ranks. It fixed the status, salary and military duty.
 - **Zat** - it denoted the **personal rank** of mansabdar, varying from 10 to 5000. It determined the Mansabdar's seniority and salary.
 - **Sawar** - It represented the **military duties** of the Mansabdars in terms of the number of horsemen they maintain, ranging from 10 to 5000 (original range)
 - During Akbar's reign, **33 grades** of Mansabdars were arranged in a hierarchy of 10/10 to 5000/5000.
 - Each zat rank had 3 grades

- Sawar rank = Zat rank
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Zat rank < Sawar rank < Zat rank
- Sawar rank < $\frac{1}{2}$ Zat rank
- **Dah-Bishti System** (10-20) - It was used to ensure military readiness and to determine the ranks of common cavalymen.
 - On average, each unit of 10 cavalymen was supposed to have 20 horses.
- **Salaries** - Mansabdars could either be paid in **cash or jagirs** - land revenue assignments.
 - Those paid in cash were called **Naqadi** mansabdars.
 - While those who paid through jagirs (land revenue assignments) were called **Jagirdar**.
 - Kinds of **Jagirs**
 - **Tankha** Jagirs
 - **Watan** Jagirs
 - **Al Tamgha** Jagir
 - **Mashrut** Jagir
- **Perspective**
 - The system strengthened the Emperor's position by ensuring the loyalty of the nobility.
 - The success of system depended upon
 - Emperor's personal qualities
 - Constant expansion of empire
 - The Mughal Mansabdari was quite **heterogeneous**
 - Turanis (Turkish noblemen belonging to Central Asia)
 - Iranis (Persian nobleman)
 - Duranis (Afghans)
 - Hindustanis/ Shaikzada (Indian Muslim converts)
 - Deccanis
 - Rajputs

Changes after Akbar

- During Akbar's reign the Mansabdari had only **5000** members, with very few having ranks more than 1000. By the time of Shahjahan, the total number of Jagirdar had increased to **14,000** and were being given ranks as high as 40,000 Zat - 40,000 Sawar. This led to an increasing shortage of Jagirs which gradually precipitated the Jagirdari crisis.

To address this issue, some innovations were introduced

- **Du-Aspa — Si-Aspa** (2 horse- 3 horse)
 - Under Jahangir, some Mansabdars were given an **additional rank** of Du-Aspa — Si-Aspa and would have to maintain **twice or thrice horses** customarily required.
 - This was done so that a large number of horses could be **maintained without giving a higher Zat rank** to Mansabdars.
 - **Additional cash payment** was made to provide for the added expense.
- **Monthly Scale**

- Introduced by Shahjahan, under which Mansabdars were categorised as **6 months, 9 months or 12 months Jagirdar**.
- Jagirs were assigned **proportionally reduced Sawar duties**.
- However, the problem assumed crisis proportions during Aurangzeb's reign and ultimately led to the empire's disintegration.

Cultural Aspects

Akbar and Languages:

• **Persian**

- In 1582-1584 an administrative decree was issued by Raja Todar Mal to ensure that only Persian was used for all revenue related work throughout the Mughal empire.
- Thus, during Akbar's reign, Persian rose to become the dominant language of the Mughal government.

• **Maktab Khana (bureau of translation)**

- Akbar invited well-known Sanskrit scholars from different parts of the empire and selected some of his learned courtiers to fuel the translation process. Naqib Khan, the theologian; Sheikh Sultan Thanesari, an eminent philosopher; Mulla Sheri, the court poet and the well-known historian **Abdul Qadir Badauni** were some of them.

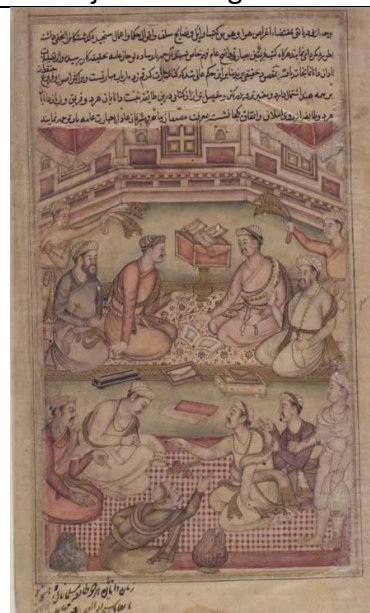
- Baburnama by Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan
- Mahabharata (Razmnama)
- Ramayana
- Singhasan Battisi (Khurd Afza)
- Upanishads
 - E.g. Atharvaveda by Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi
- Pancha Tantra
 - Anwar-i-Suhaili by Mulla Hussain Waiz
 - Anwar-e-Sadat by Abul Fazl
- Yogvashishtha – by Nizamuddin Panipati
- Rajatarangini

• **Braj bhasha**

- It is the language around Brindavan for Vaishnavites which was followed by many Rajputs in the court of Akbar. Akbar also liked to listen to Braj poetry, especially during Dhrupad. So, Braj bhasha received

Akbar's Navaratnas

- Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana
- Abul-Fazl
- Faizi
- Fakir Aziao-Din
- Mulla Do-Pyaza
- Raja Todar Mal
- Raja Birbal (Mahesh Das)
- Tansen
- Raja Man Singh I



Muslim and Hindu scholars discuss the translation of the Mahabharata, Maktab Khana, c. 1599.

royal patronage (not from Muslim Turani/Irani elites as much but from Rajput nobles like Todarmal).

Akbar and Music. Akbar was also a great lover of music.

- Abul Fazal gives us a list of 36 singers and performers on various instruments.
 - **Baz Bahadur**, the ex-king of Malwa, was appointed a Mansabdar of 1,000 and described as a singer without rival.
 - **Mian Tansen** was the best singer of Akbar's time.
 - Abul Fazal says of Miyan Tansen, "A singer like him has not been known in India for the last thousand years. He was by far the best of the group of musicians of the imperial court of whom at least 36 are enumerated in history."
- Abul Fazl also mentioned many instruments which had two Indian instruments: **Veena** and **Swara Mandal**.
- Akbar used to play **Naqara**
- The Ain-i-Akbari contains details of the daily routine of performances by the palace band.

Dance

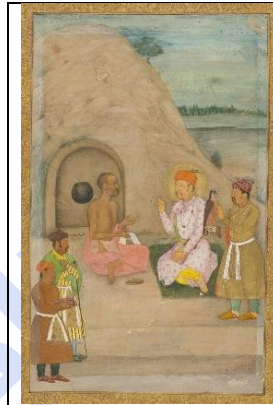
This was the time when **Kathak** became popular. Abul Fazl mentions Vallabh Das dancer in the court of Akbar.

Salimuddin JAHANGIR (r. 1605-1627)

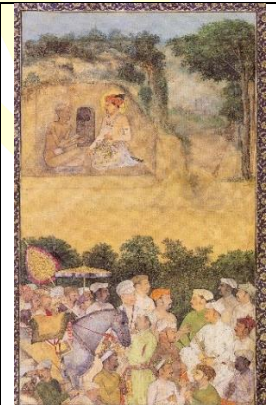
- Towards the end of Akbar's reign, Jahangir **rebelled** and established a **parallel court** at **Allahabad**. But the emperor and prince reconciled before the former's death. Jahangir was finally crowned in 1605.
- He began his reign by issuing **12 Firmans** (Royal edicts/ ordinances) for the **general welfare** and better government.
 - One of them banned the consumption of alcohol.
 - He ordered the preparation of the fabled '**Zanjir-i-Adl**' to hear public grievances against the high handedness and oppression of government officials.

Religious Policy

- He adopted our **liberal policy towards Hindus**, by continuing to celebrate Hindu festivals, banning cow slaughter in some parts, and continuing the ban on Jizya.
 - He met Jadrup Gosain (Chitrap Gosain)
 - The meeting with Jadrup had a profound impact not only on Akbar, but also on his Jahangir. Jahangir documented his spiritual encounters with the saint, both visually and verbally, in his memoirs, the Jahangirnama. He clearly says Tasawwuf and Vedant are the same things.
- He allowed Bir Singh Deo Bundela, to whom he owed the throne, the opportunity to rebuild the Keshava Deva temple. (estimated cost of 3.3 crore rupees)
- However, his court became a little bit more orthodox than during the age of Akbar.
 - In 1620, the famous **conquest of Kangra fort** by Jahangir after killing the Katoch king. After the conquest, he slaughtered a bull at the site and a mosque built inside it.



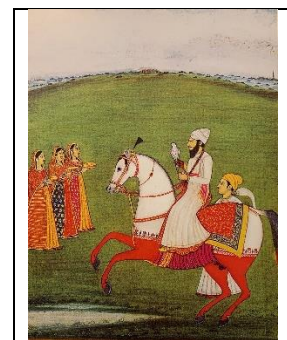
Akbar and Jadrup Gosain



Jahangir and Jadrup Gosain

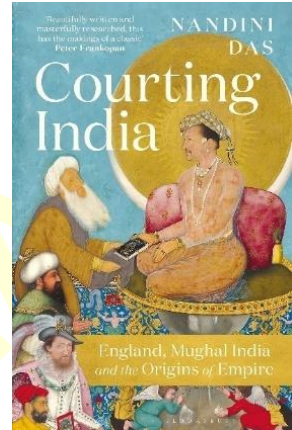
Important Political Events

- **Breach with Sikhism**
 - The Mughal-Sikh conflict started under Jahangir for the first time. Jahangir ordered the **execution of 5th Sikh Guru Arjun Dev**.
 - Debate is framed in various ways today:
 - Mughal Apologists emphasize on the *political* story: Jahangir's son **Khusro** rebelled against him and fled to Punjab. Jahangir suspected that Khusro was given **refuge/blessing by Guru Arjun Dev**, and thus arrested and tortured the Guru, leading to his death. Khusro was also arrested and blinded.



Guru Arjun Dev

- Jahangir himself framed this issue in terms of *religious* antagonism. He called Guru Arjan as a Hindu usurper creating trouble and capturing simple-hearted Hindus and Muslims. He didn't refer to him as a Sikh.
- Sikh Traditional view: Guru's execution was a *part of the ongoing persecution of the Sikhs* by Islamic authorities in the Mughal Empire, and that the Mughal rulers of Punjab were alarmed at the growth of the Panth.
 - Guru's execution led the Sikh Panth to become armed and pursue resistance to persecution under the Mughal rule.
- Long running **conflict with Malik Ambar** in Deccan
 - Malik Ambar was a regent in Deccan supporting Nizam Shahi in Ahmadnagar.
- In 1614, **Mewar**, the most difficult Rajput state, joined hands with the Mughal Empire through diplomacy. Its king, **Rana Amar Singh** accepted Mughal terms and conditions.
- In 1608 and 1615, to English EIC representatives, **Captain William Hawkins** and **Thomas Roe** visited Jahangir's court respectively.
 - Thomas Roe was the official ambassador of the British monarch during Jahangir's time - James I.
 - Roe was in the court of Jahangir from 1615-19. He wanted to have a trade agreement which didn't happen although Jahangir did allow English to setup a factory in Surat.



The Mughal camp was effectively a large traveling city of hundreds of thousands of humans and perhaps as many animals. The movements of this nomadic city would have drawn food and water from far afield.

- In 1610, the English merchant **William Finch** described the Mughal camp on campaign.
- The English traveler **Thomas Coryat** also described Mughal camp near Mandu.
- **Sir Thomas Roe** has given details of Jahangir's camp in 1616. He was amazed at the rapid installation of large bazaars every day.

- **Relations with Persia**
 - In 1622, **Kandahar** was lost to the Persians.
 - In a letter, Jahangir calls Safavid ruler Shah Abbas his brother.
 - Jahangir rejected the possibility of triple alliance of Sunni powers against Persia.
- **Internal affairs**
 - In 1622, Jahangir was arrested by the rebellious governor of Bengal, **Mahabat Khan**.
 - In 1624, **Khurram** (later Shahajahan) rebelled.

Nur Jahan's Junta

- 10th and favourite wife, Padshah begum
- She was the only queen in the Mughal empire who issued her own coins, in her own name.
- She clearly had a strong influence in the court along with her father and brother.
 - Father Itimad-ud-daula, Brother Asaf Khan



Khurram SHAH JAHAN (r. 1628- 1658 CE)

Important Political Events:

- 1631 - Shahajahan fought a battle against **Guru Hargobind Singh** at Kartarpur, following which, the guru retreated to the Kashmir hills.
- 1632 - He **ousted the Portuguese from Hugli** and occupied it.
- 1636 - Notable success in Deccan
 - **Ahmednagar** was annexed by Aurangzeb (then governor of Deccan).
 - **Bijapur** and **Golconda** accepted Mughal overlordship.

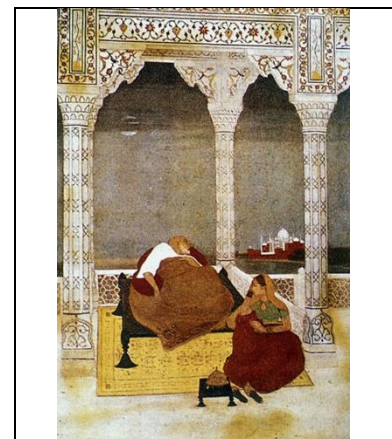
Northwest Policy

- 1638 - Re-capture of **Kandahar**
- 1646 - **Balkh** campaign
- By the late 1640, the Mughals had to recede from the Northwest.
 - Attempts to reconquer Balkh in 1649, 1652, and 1653 failed.
 - The Persians reconquered Kandahar in 1649.
 - His NW expeditions brought the empire to the verge of bankruptcy.
- 1648 - Moved the capital from Agra to **Shahajahanabad**
 - Here, he built many beautiful buildings, including Moti Masjid and Jami Masjid.



Shah Jahan's reign was also a period of great literary activity, and the arts of painting and calligraphy were not neglected. His court was one of great pomp and splendour, and his collection of jewels was probably the most magnificent in the world. However, his **religious policy** was marked by a mixture of liberalism and orthodoxy.

- He **banned mixed marriages** in **Kashmir**, between Hindu and Muslims. (they were considered valid only if re-married on sharia custom)
- He reimposed the **pilgrimage tax** but withdrew it upon opposition by Hindus.
- A **ban** was imposed on the construction of **new temples**, but it could not be strictly implemented.
- **Still some patronage to Hindus**
 - He continued a practice of appointing **Hindu Mansabdars**:
 - **Mirza Raja Jai Singh** was appointed as governor of Agra.
 - **Jaswant Singh** was appointed as joint governor of Ajmer.
 - **Panditraj Jagannath** (poet and musician)
 - Wrote Bhamini Vilasa, Ras-Gangadhar etc.
 - Famous poem – Ganga Lahari
 - Title Panditraj was given by Shah Jahan
 - Between the years 1651 and 1657, Shah Jahan lavished **Kavindracharya Saraswati** of Benares



The passing of Shah Jahan
by Abanindranath Tagore
(1902)

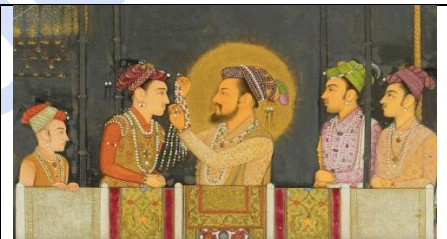
with valuable rewards, on more than a dozen occasions.

- He successfully convinced Shah Jahna to rescind pilgrimage tax on travellers to Kashi and Prayag
- He continued giving **grants** to Hindu institutions such as the Vaishnava Temple at **Vrindavan**.

In 1657 he fell ill, triggering the war of succession. In 1658 Aurangzeb dethroned Shah Jahan despite his recovery from illness and confined him in Agra Fort until his death in 1666.

War of Succession (1657-59)

- No established **rule of primogeniture** but customary practice of fratricidal succession wars.
- In 1657 - when news of Shah Jahan's illness reached different parts of the empire, a bitter war of succession broke out among four princes.
 - **Dara Shikoh** - Shah Jahan's eldest son and appointed successor.
 - **Murad** - Second eldest and governor of Gujarat.
 - **Moinuddin Muhammad** - Third eldest son, and governor of Deccan then Gujarat and then Balkh. (later Aurangzeb)
 - **Shah Shuja** - governor of Bengal. He had commissioned many construction projects in Dhaka.
- Although the war was between all four, the **real battles were between Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb**,
 - It had ideological undertones as well.
 - Dara Shukoh was a liberal scholar, carrying forward the legacy of Akbar.
 - Aurangzeb was an orthodox Muslim. His belief rested on Ulema's Quranic interpretation of Islam.
 - Beyond ideology, the loyalties of officials and their armed contingents were motivated more by their own interests, the closeness of the family relation and above all the charisma of the contestant. Muslims and Hindu officials were not divided along religious lines.
- This war of succession had some famous battles:
 - Battle of **Dharmat** (1658)
 - Combined army of Aurangzeb and Murad defeated Dara Shikoh's forces, which were led by **Jaswant Singh**.
 - Battle of **Samugarh** (1658)
 - This battle also tilted in favor of Aurangzeb and Murad Baksh.
 - Battle of **Deorai** (1659)
 - Finally, Aurangzeb defeated, arrested and executed **Dara Shukoh** for apostacy, with public humiliation.
- **Shuja** fled to Bengal and was killed by locals while fighting the Arakanis.
- **Murad** was held under charge of murder, tried and executed in 1661.



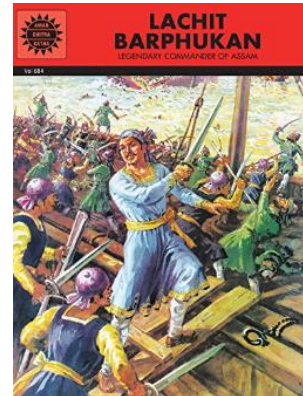
Shah Jahan ties a sehra on Dara's turban on his wedding day. The other sons are present.

Moizzuddin Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir (1657-1707)

- After assuming power, he was **coronated twice**, first at Agra (July 1658) and then at Delhi (June 1659).
- He adopted the titles of **Alamgir** (Conquer of the World) **Badshah** (Emperor) and **Ghazi** (Holy Warrior).

Important Political Events:

- 1659-1669
 - During this period, he was much occupied with safeguarding the northwest from Persians and Central Asian Turks
 - Shivaji twice plundered the great port of Surat (1664, 1670).
 - Shivaji was defeated, called to Agra for reconciliation (1666), and given an imperial rank. The plan broke down, however; Shivaji fled to the Deccan and died.
- From 1669-70 onwards, Aurangzeb's reign underwent a change of both attitude and policy.
 - Hindus were given subordinate status.
 - 1674 - Imprisoned and executed **Guru Teg Bahadur** (9th Sikh Guru).
 - 1674 - His interference in the **succession issue at Jodhpur**, that is, his refusal to recognise late Jaswant Singh's posthumous son, Ajit Singh, as his legal heir, led to a prolonged war between the Mughals and combined forces of Mewar and Marwar.
- **Ahoms**
 - 1671 - Battle of Saraighat
 - 1682 - Battle of Itakhuli
- After 1682, **Deccani Campaign**



Religious Policy

The religious policy of Aurangzeb represented a marked departure from the liberal policy of his predecessors. He was much **more orthodox** than his predecessors and he made an attempt to fashion Mughal empire as a Muslim empire and not a plural empire with ruler who happens to be a Muslim.

S A A Rizvi: "Aurangzeb's reign was marked by a gradual departure from Akbar's policy of coexistence".

Steps taken:

- 1659: he ordered the **demolition** of a few Hindu **temples**.
- 1665: He banned cremations of the dead on the banks of the Yamuna.
- 1665: He introduced differential custom duty on imports.
 - Hindu traders to pay double the rate payable by Muslims.
 - Two years later, Muslims to pay no customs duty.
- 1669: He issued a general order for the demolition of Hindu schools and temples.

- **Saqi Mustaid Khan** had given details in his **Maasir-i-Alamgiri**, a Persian-language chronicle written shortly after Aurangzeb's death in 1707.
- 1679 - Reimposed **Jizya**
- He **abolished un-Islamic court rituals** such as Tuladan, Jharoka Darshan, Sijda, Paibos and Navroz. He also prohibited the celebration of Holi and Diwali.
- He banned **music** and **miniature painting** from his court. Overall patronage to art suffered in the Mughal court during his reign.
- He forbade the **cultivation of bhang**.
- He abolished the practice of issuing **Zawabits/Urfi**
- He began appointing **Muhtasibs** (censor of public morals) to ensure that things forbidden by Sharia were not done.
- He appointed a board of Ulemas to compile the '**Fatwa-i-Alamgiri**' (law digest).
- In an attempt to bring the state's **taxation policy** in line with the Sharia
 - Thus, he abolished Rahdari (inland transit duties), Pandari (octroi) and Abwabs (illegal cesses)
- He discontinued the practice of **inscribing Kalima on coins** because he did not want it to be trampled underfoot.

Shivaji's letter to Aurangzeb

"To the Emperor Alamgir:

This firm and constant well-wisher Shivaji, after rendering thanks for the grace of God and the favours of the Emperor, which are clearer than the Sun, begs to inform your Majesty that, although this well-wisher was led by his adverse Fate to come away from your august presence without taking leave, yet he is ever ready to perform, to the fullest extent possible and proper, everything that duty as a servant and gratitude demand of him [...] It has recently come to my ears that on the ground of the war with me having exhausted your wealth and emptied your treasury, your Majesty has ordered that money under the name of jaziya should be collected from the Hindus and the imperial needs supplied with it. May it please your Majesty!

That architect of the fabric of empire, [Jalal-ud-din] Akbar Padishah, reigned with full power for 52 (lunar) years. He adopted the admirable policy of universal harmony (sulh-i-kul) in relation to all the various sects, such as Christians, Jews, Muslims, Dadu's followers, sky-worshippers (falakia), malakia, heathens (ansaria), atheists (daharia), Brahmans and Jain priests. The aim of his liberal heart was to cherish and protect all the people. So, he became famous under the title of Jagat Guru, 'the World's spiritual guide.'"

(Sarkar, Jadunath (1920), History of Aurangzib: Based on Original Sources. Longmans, Green and Company).

Deccani ulcer: Aurangzeb spent nearly 25 years in Deccan fighting Marathas (1682-1707).

- 1686-87- He annexed **Bijapur** and **Golconda**.
- Marathas
- By this time, Maratha power had emerged as a force under Shivaji (d. 1680)
- 1689 - He brutally executed **Sambhaji**, the son of Shivaji.

- Sambhaji became a martyr and a symbol of sacrifice and valour. All Marathas now united and the Maratha rebellion now took a popular character.
- Impact of Deccani campaign was ruinous on Mughal Empire.
 - He spent billions of rupees in Deccan fruitlessly. There was the wastage of valuable resources and men. The rest of Aurangzeb's life was spent in laborious and fruitless sieges of forts in the Maratha hill country.
 - During his long campaign to defeat Marathas, Aurangzeb neglected the North Indian affairs.
 - All of this led to frequent agrarian revolts in other parts of the empire, which harmed the empire's stability.
 - It left the treasury drained, army exhausted and empire unstable that rapidly fractured post-Aurangzeb.

Rebellions against Aurangzeb:

Jats	Under Gokal, Rajaram and Churaman successively	Resulted in the formation of a new state, a small Jat kingdom called Bharatpur.
Satnamis	By the followers of Birbhan.	Satnamis were offshoot were Kabir panthis, majority of them belonged to lower caste. They were aggrieved because of tax increase.
Sikhs	Simmering for long time. After the execution of Guru Teg Bahadur, it led by Guru Govind Singh, who formed Khalsa.	Later Banda Bahadur formed a short lived Sikh state.
Marathas	After torture and execution of Sambhaji.	Shivaji's Swarajya spread outside Maharashtra and under Peshwas it became the most potent challenger to Mughal empire.
Marwar, Mewar		Due to undue intervention in the succession issue in Marwar. Mewar got entangled into it later on.
Bundelas	Led by Champat Rai and Raja Chhatrasal	Political interference, religions interference, demands for excessive revenue. Received support from Peshwas.

DOWNFALL OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

The Mughal empire had reached the high-watermark of its territorial extent under Aurangzeb. However, it started crumbling after his death, in the first half of the 18th century. The empire eventually shrank to a few square miles around Delhi and by 1803, the EIC had captured Delhi and reduced the Emperor to a mere pensioner.

This decline of the erstwhile glorious empire can be attributed to the following:

I. Mistakes of Aurangzeb – Aurangzeb possessed great ability. However, he undermined the great empire of his forefathers due to his lack of political, social and economic insight, and his refusal to subordinate his religious zeal to the art of statesmanship.

- **Religious orthodoxy** –
 - Aurangzeb abandoned Akbar's policy of religious tolerance, thus alienating the support and sympathy of Hindus.
- **Rajput policy** –
 - Aurangzeb abandoned close relations with the Rajputs, who had been loyal allies of the Mughal empire so far.
 - His interference in the succession dispute at Jodhpur and demand of Jizya from Mewar led to a costly dispute with the Rajputs, lasting more than 20 years.
 - It also revived the political consciousness of Rajputs.
- **Deccan Campaign** –
 - Aurangzeb was bent upon crushing the Marathas and dominating the Deccan. Thus, a futile and arduous campaign ensued, in which he was not able to get a success.
 - Moreover, in pursuance of his Deccan policy, Aurangzeb was absent from the north for over 25 years, resulting in –
 - Deterioration in Mughal central administration.
 - Undermining of military prestige.
 - Neglect of vital northwestern frontier, and
 - Emergence of local provincial leaders to defy central authority, especially in Bengal and Awadh, who wanted to establish their autocracy.
- **Sikh policy** –
 - Aurangzeb's execution of Guru Teg Bahadur led to the alienation of the Sikhs.
 - They became a strong military power under Guru Gobind Singh and were ultimately able to drive the Mughals out of Punjab.

II. Crisis of Personality –

- The **Mughal empire was top heavy and highly centralized**, needing an emperor with qualities of a skilled general and an able administrator. Aurangzeb's successors lacked both.
- Aurangzeb maintained strict personal supervision over the entire administrative machinery, depriving his sons of the necessary training and practical experience required in the art of administration.

- Moreover, due to absence of a law of primogeniture, frequent and ruinous wars of succession occurred after Aurangzeb's death. **Within 50 years, 9 Mughal emperors** occupied the throne in quick succession without being able to provide effective governance.

III. Mansabdari Crisis / Degeneration of Nobility –

The mansabdari system was introduced by Akbar as a means to organise his nobility into a merit-based hierarchy to provide effective military and civil administration. The mansabdari crisis refers to the problems created by **rising factionalism and group politics** amongst the Mughal nobility.

- The nobility was **heterogeneous**, composed of Iranis, Turanis, Hindustanis, Rajputs, Deccanis and Afghanis. Its success depended upon –
 - **Constant expansion** of the empire's resources through conquests.
 - **Functional relationship** between the emperor and the mansabdar.
- As the empire **stopped expanding**, Aurangzeb's **weak successors** fell prey to court politics. It created **factionalism** between different **ethnic groups** within the court. This weakened the empire from within creating chaos and confusion.
- The nobility also gradually became a **closed corporation** as other classes had no opportunity of promotion and offices became **hereditary**.
- Marathas and Afghans took advantage of this and started to interfere in court politics.

IV. Jagirdari crisis –

- It refers to tensions within the Mughal empire due to the shortage of Jagirs.
 - Mughal territory was classified into –
 - Paibaqi lands – distributed as jagirs
 - Khalisa lands – crown's land.
 - There were 2 kinds of Mughal mansabdars – Naqdi and Jagirdars.
- Despite the **increase in the number of higher officials** looking for jagirs, there was no commensurate increase in the land mass.
- The system was also marked by **unequal distribution** – 16% of the jagirdars held 61% of jagirs.
- The shortage of jagirs reached crisis proportions when, after annexing **Bijapur** (1686) and **Golkonda** (1687), **Aurangzeb categorised their entire territory as khalisa**.
 - While the local nobility was incorporated into the empire, there was no growth of jagir lands. This increased the sense of competition and insecurity amongst the nobility.
- As the shortage of Jagirs intensified, the gap between **jama** (estimated revenue) and **hasil** (actual revenue) widened.
 - Due to this shortfall, the jagirdar was unable to perform his military functions and be remunerated for his services, leading to **military weakness**.
 - Jagirdars also began extracting **Abwabs** (illegal cess) from the peasants.

V. Agrarian Crisis –

It refers to **increasing frequency and intensity of agrarian revolts** during the 18th century in the Mughal empire, as a result of the **exploitative practices of the Mughal state** and its functionaries.

- The **burden of taxation** on peasants had increased greatly.
 - Jagirdars had started collecting **abwabs**.
 - The state also **increased the revenue demand** to fund the Deccan campaign.
 - The **Ijaradari system** (revenue farming) had been introduced by Aurangzeb's successors.
- The growing religious intolerance served to further mobilise the peasants.
- **Zamindars** who had caste and religious affiliations with the peasants emerged as their **natural leaders** in these revolts.
 - A few prominent examples included the revolts of the Sikhs, Satnamis and Jats.
- The Jats were even able to carve out their own kingdom at Bharatpur, which was a huge blow to the Mughal empire.

VI. Technological Backwardness –

- Since the 16th century, Indian knowledge of science and technology had stagnated.
- States used **outdated weapons and systems of warfare**, along with heavy dependence on cavalry. The **neglect of naval development** proved suicidal in the face of European powers who were experts in naval tactics of war.
- On the other hand, Europe underwent the Age of Enlightenment accompanied by tremendous scientific discoveries and inventions.
 - The greatest benefit of this progress was derived by the European military and industry. By the 18th century, the Europeans held a significant technological edge over the Indians.
- Thus, the Europeans were able to easily defeat large traditional Indian armies due to their technological superiority.

VII. Foreign Invasions –

- The easy victory of Nadir Shah and the repeated invasions of Ahmed Shah Abdali exposed the weaknesses of the Mughal military.
- They emboldened other challengers such as European companies.
- All this led to a further drain of Mughal resources, thus restricting its ability to provide effective government and defend its subjects.

VIII. Emergence of New Powers –

- The 18th century also witnessed the emergence of powerful challengers such as the European companies and domestic powers such as Sikhs and Marathas.
- The greatly diminished Mughal empire could not withstand these challenges.