



GS FOUNDATION BATCH FOR CSE 2024

**Ancient, Medieval & Culture - 10
(Mughals)**

Mughals/ Timurids (1526-1857)

Sources

- **Tuzuk-i-Babari**
 - Autobiography of Babur in Chagatai Turkish.
- **Humayunnama**
 - Biography of Humayun in Persian, written by **Gulbadan Begum (sister)**.
- **Tarik-i-Shershahi**
 - Chronicles of **Sher Shah Suri's** reign in Persian, by Abbas Khan Sarwani.
- **Akbarnamah**
 - Chronicle of Akbar's reign in Persian, **by Abul Fazl**
- **Muntakhab-ul- Tawarikh**
 - By **Badayuni** in Persian.
 - It covered Akbar's reign but is critical of his policies, especially religious policy.
- **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.
- **Shah Jahan Nama**
 - Illustrated chronicles by **Inayat khan**.
- **Jean Baptiste Tavernier**
 - **French jeweller** 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 Aurangzeb.
 - He has described the Battles of **Dharmat and Samugarh**.
- He also talked about **Indian textiles** and their manufacturing in Mughal Karkhanas (state run workshops).
 - He has thrown light on the '**Ustad-Shagird**' tradition of craftsmanship.
- He has also talked about the desperate **condition of Indian peasants**.
 - According to him, there was extreme inequality for which he blames the heavy burden of taxation.

BABUR (1526-1530)

Tuzuk-i-Babari/ Baburnama - It is the autobiography of Babur, written as a journal in Chagatai Turk.

- It was translated into Persian by two scholars.
 - **Painda Khan**
 - **Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana**
- Only 18 years of his life are covered in the work.
- The language used is simple yet incisive.
 - Babur has written about himself with great candour.
 - He has not tried to hide his shortcomings.
 - Neither did he try to hide his father's weakness.
- Other than being an important source of history, Baburnamah 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.
- He inherited his kingdom at the age of 12.
- This part also covers his **struggle and defeat to his rivals in Central Asia**.
 - The battles of **Samarkand** and **Bukhara** have been mentioned.
 - Babur, informs us of his mistakes that led to the losses and his ultimate expulsion.
- He also tells us of his **conquest of Kabul (1504) and Kandhar in (1522)**.
- 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

Second Part-

- It talks about Indian rulers and Babur's clashes with them.
- Babur has mentioned 5 Indian rulers:
 - **Ibrahim Lodhi- Delhi** - Babur has praised him, but also called him novice.
 - **Bahadur Shah- Gujrat**
 - **Nusrat Shah- Bengal**
 - **Rana Sanga- Mewar**
 - **Krishna Deva Raya- Vijayanagara** - Babur has praised him the most, and called him the ablest administrator and best general among all Indian kings.

Third Part-

- Here, Babur discusses **India, its flora, fauna, climate, people and diverse culture**. He appears to be a better writer in this part.
 - He is pleased with India's animals, especially the elephant which he encountered for the first time.
 - He was very fond of mangoes.
 - He was surprised to see India's wealth, and used the terms "lakh", "crore", and "arab" to describe it.
 - However, he did not like India's hot and humid climate.
 - According to him, Indians lack a sense of fashion, and they 'roamed around naked'.
 - 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

Important battles in India-

- **1526** - Battle of **Panipat** against **Ibrahim Lodhi**.
- **1527** - Battle of **Khanwa** against **Rana Sanga**, near Fatehpur Sikri (declared as jihad).
- **1528** - Battle of **Chanderi** against **Medni Rai**, another Rajput chief.
- **1529** - Battle of **Ghaggar** (Bihar) against the **Afghans**, mainly led by Mohammed Lodhi.

HUMAYUN (1530-1540 & 1555-1556)

Sources

His biography '**Humayun Nama**' was written by sister Gulbadan Begum in Persian, during Akbar's reign.

Important events

- 1532 - he defeated the Afghans near Allahabad.
- 1534 - he defeated Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, and built Dinpanah - A new city at Delhi.
- 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)
- 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 Tamas I.
- 1555 -he returned to India with Persian help and recovered Delhi. However, he could only rule for 10 months before dying accidentally.

SHER SHAH SURI (1540-45)

- Born as Farid Khan.
- He was given the title Sher Shah by an Afghan nobleman, Bahar Khan Nuhani.
- He was the 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.

Administrative Reforms

- An elaborate system for **land revenue administration** known as **Zabti** was introduced.
 - It involved **survey and measurement**.
 - The rate of tax was fixed at 50% of the produce.
 - The system also **accounted for soil fertility**, according to which, land was categorised as **good, average or bad**.
 - The estimated production was adjusted as per the quality of land.
 - The Zabti System also provided for '**Patta**' (title deed) and '**Qabuliyat**' (memorandum of agreement) between the state and individual peasants.
 - Kind to cash conversion was done on the basis of **Ray** (Price list), applied uniformly throughout the empire.
 - In villages, the **state used intermediaries for collection** by giving them a commission, usually 10% of collected revenue.
 - **Zaribana**
 - A tax on the measurement of land, collected in kind at 2.5% of the total production.
 - It was stored in the village and acted as an emergency tax.
 - **Muhasilana**
 - A cess (tax on the collection of tax).
 - It was collected in kind at 5% of the produce.
- In the event of crop failure, **Sondhar loans** were given to peasants by the state.

Roads and Sarais

- Sher Shah Suri built long **arterial roads** in India including:-
 - Sonargaon to Attock

- Agra to Chittorgarh via Jodhpur
- Multan to Attock
- Agra to Burhanpur
- On each road, **trees** were planted for shade.
- At a distance of every 2 Kos (18 Kilometres) a **Sarai** was built.
 - Approximately 1700 such Sarais were built.
- These Sarais served multiple purposes.
 - Each sarai had a **Barid** (intelligence officer)
 - Each sarai also had a well provisioned **stable and Dak Chowki**.
 - According to Sarwani a message could be relayed from Bengal to Agra in a single day.
 - Each Sarais had **2 chefs**, one Brahmin and the other Muslim.
 - Food was provided free of cost to boarders.
 - The sarais 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**, which eventually evolved into **towns**.
 - Thus, they helped in the growth of the market economy and contributed to urbanisation.

AKBAR (1556-1605)

Sources

- ‘Akbarnama’ by **Abul Fazl** (court historian) is a chronicle of Akbar’s reign. It is divided into 3 volumes-
 - Part 1- Akbar’s ancestors (Amir Timur to Humayun)
 - Part 2- Important events of Akbar’s reign.
 - Part 3- **Ain-i-Akbari**, it gives details about-
 - Akbar’s administration, household, army, revenue.
 - Geography of the empire.
 - Indian traditions and culture.
 - Statistics regarding crop yields, price, wages, revenue, etc.
 - Akbar’s Theory of Kingship
 - Doctrine of Suh-i-kul.
- **Muntakhab-al-Tawarikh-** by Badayuni, who wrote it in secret.
 - He criticises various policies of Akbar especially his tolerant policy towards Rajputs.
 - According to him, Akbar’s power hungry-attitude drove him to proclaim-secular policy, undermining the Ulema’s authority.
- **Tabaqat-i-Akbari-** A Persian chronicles by **Nizamuddin Ahmed**
- **Ralph Fitch** - an English traveller who visited India during Akbar’s reign.
 - He has described life in 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.
- **Monseratte and Aquaviva** - were Portuguese 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.

Important events

- **1556 - coronation at Kalanaur.**

- The year also saw a **rebellion by Hemu** (a former Hindu general of the Suris).
- Sher Shah Suri had died in 1545, and was succeeded by his son, Islam Shah Suri, who adopted the practise of promoting Hindus to important positions.
- In 1543, Islam Shah died and Adil Shah came to power.
- Hemu carved out an independent principality to the north of Delhi.
- He was executed after being defeated in the **Second Battle of Panipat** in 1556.
- In **1560** Akbar came to Delhi from Agra, and removed **Bairam Khan** from his position as regent and **Wakil-us-Sultanat**.
 - He was arrested but later released. On the way to perform Hajj, he was assassinated. This marked Akbar's real ascension to power.
- **1568** - Akbar attacked and **besieged Chittorgarh**.
 - This battle was declared as jihad by Akbar.
- **1572** - Akbar attacked and **conquered Gujarat** and built the **Buland Darwaza** (Fatehpur Sikri) to commemorate his victory.
- **1574-75** - **conquered Bengal**
- **1576** - Mewar, under the leadership of Maharana Pratap, had declared independence.
 - The **Battle of Haldighati** was fought between Maharana Pratap on one side, and the Mughal commanders Abdul Fazl and Raja Man Singh (Rajput chief of Ajmer)
 - Akbar by himself was not present.
 - Maharana Pratap was defeated.
- **1585** - **conquered Kabul**
- **1586** - **conquered Kashmir**
- **1601** - The **Battle of Asirgarh** - Allowed the Mughals to annex **Khandesh** (present day MP)

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.

Rajput Policy

His Rajput policy involved **collaboration and compromise**.

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.

Elements

- Akbar entered several **matrimonial alliances** with the Rajputs.
- Important Rajput chiefs were given **high ranks** within the Mughal military aristocracy (**Mansabdari System**) and **important posts** within the officialdom.
- They were also given **leadership of important campaigns**.
- They were the only group within the Mughal nobility to be given **Watan Jagirs**.
- **Complete religious freedom** was also granted to them.

Outcome

- Akbar's Rajput policy was **highly successful**-
 - He was able to avoid any 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.

Religious Policy

Akbar's religious policy was characterised by

- pluralism,
- freedom of religion,
- separation of religion from politics,
- religious peace and 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 Fazl and Faizi**.

- The latter 2 were brothers and poets who followed the liberal Sufi tradition of Islam.

- **Political calculations**

- Since a majority of his subjects were non-Muslim, he realised that a 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.

Religious Policy Initiatives

- **1562-** he abolished the practice of **forcibly converting prisoners of war**.
- **1563-** he abolished the **Pilgrimage Tax**.
- **1564-** he abolished the **Jizya**.
- **1575-1582- Ibadatkhana discussions** (Fatehpur Sikri)
 - 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 faiths to the Ibadatkhana and held discussion with them-
 - **Aquaviva and Monasratte**- Portuguese Jesuits
 - **Hira Vijaya Suri** - Jain scholar, who became Akbar's close personal friend. Akbar conferred the title of 'Jagat Guru' on him.
 - **Purushottam and Devi** - Hindu scholars
 - **Sheikh Abdul Lavi and Abdullah Sultanpuri** - Orthodox Islamic scholars
 - **Abul Fazl and Faizi** - Liberal Islamic scholars

- **Maharaji Rana** – Parsi scholar.
- Akbar was **not fully satisfied** with the explanation offered by the experts of any single religion.
 - Thus, he 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 give partisan and often imperfect interpretations**, and hence, should not be allowed to do so.
- **1579** - he issued the '**Mazharnama**' (Infallibility Decree), through which he declared himself the **chief interpreter of the faith and Caliph**.
 - Thus, he was able to oust the Ulema influence from politics.
 - It also allowed him to cement his position as not only the secular leader but also the empire's religious head.
 - Many modern scholars consider the Ibadatkhana discussions and Mazarnama to be an **expression of Akbar's secularism as well as despotism**.
- **1582** - Akbar introduced the **Din-i-Illahi/ Tauheed-i-Illahi** , a syncretic creed intended to merge the best elements of various religions.
 - It was characterised by monotheism, tolerance, the spirit of kindness and sun worship.
 - It prohibited the sins of lust, pride and slander.
 - In contrast to popular view, most historians don't consider it to be a new religion.
 - Rather, according to them, it was an ethical moral compact between Akbar and his followers.
 - It lacked the traditional characteristics required to qualify as a religion.
 - There was **no religious scripture**

- There was **no clergy** (priestly hierarchy)
- There was **no scared place of worship or pilgrimage**
- There were **no rituals and ceremonies** through which it could be practised
- It was **never imposed** or officially promoted by Akbar

- Volunteers who accepted it **recognised Akbar as their Pir/Guru** and would observe **complete devotion**, including sacrifice of property, life, honour and even religion, in service of their Guru.

- The acceptance of the Din-i-Illahi **did not grant any special privileges**.
 - In fact, only 15 of his important Rajput nobles ever accepted it.

Sulh-i-Kul

- It was the guiding principle of Akbar's Religious philosophy. It refers to the doctrine of **universal peace**, and also served as an essential pillar of his theory of kingship.
- According to it-
 - **All religions had equal rights** to prosper and flourish within the empire.
 - There was to be **no discrimination** on the basis of religion.
 - **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** as well as to **reinforce the despotic authority of the emperor**.

Central Administration

Kingship

- The Mughal Polity was based on the element of **absolute monarchy**, wherein the emperor was the fountainhead of all authority.

- Akbar introduced the element of **semi divine origin of kingship**, by introducing concepts such as-

- **Farr-i-Izidi (Divine light)** - According to him, the emperor's heart was the repository of divine light. Thus, he assumed the title of '**Zill-i-Ilahi**' (Shadow of God)

- **Insan-i-Kamil** (Best among all men) - this notion emphasises that the Emperor has extraordinary capabilities, and is superior to the other man.

- **Imam-i-Adil** (Leader of Justice) - The Emperor is inherently a fair and just ruler.

- Akbar Also introduced some **new practices** to emphasise the Emperor's semi-divine status, such as:
 - **Sijda** - prostration
 - **Paibos** - kissing the emperor's feet
 - **Navroz** - Festival to celebrate the Persian new year
 - **Tuladan** - Borrowed from the Krishnite legends - on special occasions, the emperor was weighed against different things to be distributed among the poor.
 - **Jharoka Darshan** - Borrowed from Hinduism, the king would appear in his window every morning and bless his subjects.

- **Succession** - there was **no fixed rule** of succession.
 - The rule of primogeniture was not followed and succession was decided by competition among contenders for the throne, leading to frequent and destructive war of succession.

Nature of the State

- **War State**
 - Such a state is built by conquest and preserved by armed might.
 - It has a large military establishment and there is no distinction between civil and military officials. The same official performs both duties.

- **Paper State**
 - The large empire required a large efficient bureaucracy to manage its affairs.
 - Official business was conducted through written documents, records of which were meticulously maintained.

- **Portfolio system of administration** - Different subjects of administration were placed under different departments.

DEPARTMENT	HEADS	IN CHARGE OF
Diwan-i-Wazirat	Wazir/Diwan	Revenue
Diwan-i-Arz	Mir Bakshi	Military
Diwan-i-Rasalat Muhatsib	Muhtasib	Foreign affairs and censor of public morals
Diwan-i-Quza	Qazi-ul-Quzat	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	Charitable and religious endowments (ecclesiastical department)

Provincial Administration

- **Subas (Provinces)**
 - They were headed by the **Subedar/ Sipahsalar** (provincial governor), whose main duty was to maintain law and order.
 - **Diwan** was the chief finance officer.
 - **Bakshi** was the chief military official.
 - Judicial administration was overseen by the **Qazi**.

- **Sarakars (Districts)**

- Headed by **Faujdars** responsible for the maintenance of law and order.
- **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. His responsibility was to oversee the smooth remission of the revenue collected to the imperial treasury.

- **Gaon (Village)**

- **Zamindars** were local landowners who acted as **intermediaries** between the state and the villages.
- They **collected revenue** in the exchange for a commission and enjoyed tax exemptions.
- As Chaudhris they also had **policing powers**.
- However, they were **not part of the Mughal bureaucracy**.

During Akbar's period, there were 15 subas. By the time of Shahjahan, the empire had expanded and there were 22 subas. During Aurangzeb's reign, there were 21 subas.

Revenue administration

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 previous year's production.
- **Batai/ Galla Bakshi** - Revenue was collected, based on the current year's production.
 - **Khet Batai** - Standing groups were divided.

- **Lank Batai** - The crops were harvested and stocked before being divided
 - **Ras Batai** - Grain was beaten and collected before being divided.
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- **Zabti** - Introduced by Sher Shah Suri.
 - Revenue was estimated on the basis of **measurement of sown area and assessment of the quality** of land.
 - **Jama** was the estimated revenue while **Hasil** was the realised revenue.
 - The fluctuations between Jama and Hasil was a major concern for the crown.

Todarmal Bandobast/ Ain-i-Dahsala

Akbar introduced the Todarmal Bandobast/ Ain-i-Dahsala designed by Raja Todarmal to minimise the gap between Jama and Hasil.

The Features of this arrangement were-

- The system was based on the **survey and measurement** of the sown area.
- The rate of land revenue was fixed at **half of the estimated production**.
- Revenue was collected in **cash**.
- The **average production of the previous 10 years** was taken to estimate the current year's production.
- Land was divided into **3 categories on the basis of frequency of cultivation** –
 - **Polaj**- Cultivated every year
 - **Parauti**- left fallow of 1-2 year after every crop
 - **Chachar**- left fallow for 3-4 years after every crop
- Each of these categories was subdivided into **three subclasses of Good, Average and Bad, based on soil fertility**.
 - The **average production** from these subclasses was applied to make an estimate of production.

- **Dasturs** (regional price circles) were created 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.
- Ain-i-Dahsala- System **incentivised the expansion of agriculture**
 - 4-5 year 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.

Significance

- The Ain-i-Dahsala System 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**, further, 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.

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 by **arranging Mughal military aristocracy and bureaucracy into merit based hierarchy**.
- It was also designed to **strengthen the emperor's centrality and streamline military administration**.

Elements

- It was a dual rank system, that is, each Mughal official was assigned 2 ranks

- **Zat**- it denoted the **personal rank** of the 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 maintained, ranging from 10 to 5000.
- During Akbar's reign, 33 grades of Mansabdars were arranged in a hierarchy of 10 Zat - 10 Sawar to 5000 Zat to 5000 Sawar.
- Each rank had 3 grades-
 - Sawar rank = Zat rank
 - eg. 5000 Zat - 5000 Sawar
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ Zat rank < Sawar rank < Zat rank
 - eg. 5000 Zat - 3000 Sawar
 - Sawar rank < $\frac{1}{2}$ Zat rank
 - eg. 5000 Zat - 2000 Sawar.
- **Dah-Bishti System** - It was used to determine the ranks of common cavalrymen/ footsoldiers.
 - On average, each horseman had to have two horses, to ensure a contingency mount.
 - There were three ranks for every unit of 10 cavalrymen-
 - Seniormost three soldiers had to maintain three horses each.
 - Intermediate 4 soldiers had to maintain two horses each.
 - Junior-most 3 soldiers had to maintain one horse each.
 - Thus, there were to be 20 horses for 10 men.
- **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 were called **Jagirdar**.
 - Jagirs were of two kinds-
 - **Tankha Jagirs** – It was non- hereditary and non transferable, and always situated outside of Mansabdar's jurisdiction.
 - **Watan Jagirs**- It was hereditary and transferable, and situated within the Mansabdar's jurisdiction.

- These were exclusively given to Rajput.
- The Mughal Mansabdari was quite **heterogeneous**, consisting of several ethnic, religious and linguistic groups, such as-
 - Turanis – Turkish noblemen belonging to Central Asia
 - Iranis – Persian nobleman
 - Afghans
 - Hindustanis/ Shaikhzadas – Indian Muslim converts
 - Deccanis
 - Rajputs
- The system strengthened the Emperor's position by ensuring the loyalty of the nobility.
 - All important assignments, transfers, promotions, demotions and dismissals were done by the emperor.
- The success of system depended upon-
 - The Emperor's personal qualities
 - The constant expansion of empire so that more land could be distributed as jagirs
- 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 increasing shortage of Jagirs which gradually precipitated the Jagirdari crisis.
- To addresses 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 with reduction in Sawar duties.
 - However, the problem assumed crisis proportions during Aurangzeb's reign and ultimately led to the empire's disintegration.

Mughal Currency

- **Rupaya** – it was a silver coin which served as a standard Mughal currency. It was initially issued by Sher Shah Suri
 - **Muhar**- It was the Mughal gold coin. 1 Muhar = 10 Rupaya.
 - **Dam**- It was made of copper and bronze. 40 Dams = 1 Rupaya.
 - **Adhela**- It was a silver coin. Adhela = $\frac{1}{2}$ Rupaya.
 - **Ana**- It was a copper or bronze coin. Ana = $\frac{1}{16}$ of a Rupaya.
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- The Mughals issued coins which carried not only **verses from the Quran** , but in some cases, **symbols and portraits of rulers**, along with their **names** and **date of issue**.
 - A unique feature of Mughal coins was the **depreciating value**, that is, recent coins were worth more than older coins, which were worth less due to loss of weight and defacement.
 - This state maintained strict control over the issue of coins, which were minted in heavily regulated royal mints at Agra and Delhi.

JAHANGIR (1605-1627)

- **Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri** - the autobiography of Jahangir is an important source for learning about the history of Jahangir's reign.
- Towards the end of Akbar's reign, **Jahangir rebelled** and established a **parallel court** at Allahabad.
 - It is reported that the emperor and prince **reconciled** before the former's death. Jahangir was finally crowned in 1605.
- He began his reign with issuing **12 Firmans (Royal edicts/ ordinances)** for the general welfare and better government.
 - One of them **banned the consumption of alcohol**.
 - He was the first Mughal emperor to do so.
 - 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 ordered the **abolition of inhumane corporal punishment** and ordered the preparation of the fabled '**Zanjir-i-Adl**' (the chain of justice, made off pure gold) to hear public grievances against the high handedness and oppression of government officials.

Important Political Events

- His son Khusro, rebelled against him and fled to Punjab, where he was given refuge by Guru Arjun Dev, the 5th Sikh Guru.
 - Jahangir arrested and tortured the Guru, leading to his death, while Khusro was arrested and blinded.
- 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 condition-
 - In return, Jahangir honoured his son, Karan Singh by making him a Mansabdar of 5000 Zat — 5000 Sawar.
 - The Chittorgarh Fort, which was previously under Mughal control, was returned on the condition that it would not be repaired.
 - Further, Jahangir did not insist on Amar Singh personally attending his court .
- In 1608 and 1615, to English EIC representatives, Captain William Hawkins and Thomas Roe visited Jahangir's court respectively.
- In 1622, Kalandar was lost to the Persians.
- In 1622, Jahangir was arrested by the rebellious governor of Bengal, Mahabat Khan.
 - Nur Jahan negotiated his release.
- In 1624, Khurram (later Shah Jahan) rebelled.

SHAH JAHAN (1627- 1657CE)

Sources

- Padshahnama-
 - Chronicles of Shah Jahan's reign by Abdul Hamid Lahori in Persian.

- **Shah Jahan Nama**
 - Illustrated chronicles by **Inayat khan**.
- **Jean Baptiste Tavernier**
 - **French jeweller** 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.

His **religious policy** was marked by a **mixture of liberalism and orthodoxy**.

- He **banned mixed marriages in Kashmir**, between Hindu and Muslims.
- He **reimposed the pilgrimage tax, but withdrew it** upon opposition by Hindus.
- He **continued giving grants to Hindu institutions** such as the Vaishnava Temple at Vrindavan.
- Ban was imposed on the **construction of new temples** but it was **never strictly implemented**.
- **Ravindra Acharya**, a Banarsi Hindu scholar was his close friend.
- He continued a practise of appointing **Hindu Mansabdars**:
 - Jai Singh was appointed as governor of Agra in 1631.
 - Jaswant Singh was appointed as joint governor of Ajmer.

Important Political Events

- Shajahaan fought a **battle against Guru Hargobind Singh at Kartarpur in 1631**, following which, the guru retreated to the Kashmir hills.

- He ousted the Portuguese from Hugli and occupied it in 1632.

- 1636 - Ahmednagar was annexed by Aurangzeb (then governor of Deccan)
 - Bijapur and Golconda accepted Mughal overlordship.

War of Succession (1657-59)

- In 1657 - when news of Shah Jahan's death reached different parts of the empire, a bitter war of succession broke out among four princes –
 - **Dara Shikoh** - Shah John's eldest son.
 - He was a liberal scholar who authored the 'Majma-ul-Bahrain'
 - **Murad** - Second eldest and governor of Gujarat
 - **Moinuddin Muhammad** - Third eldest son, and governor of Deccan (later Aurangzeb/Alamgir).
 - **Shuja** - governor of Bengal

This war of succession had two famous battles-

- **Battle of Dharmat (1658)** - Aurangzeb defeated Dara Shikoh's forces, which were led by Jaswant Singh.
- **Battle of Samugarh (1659)** - Aurangzeb defeated, arrested and executed Dara Shikoh.
- Shuja was killed in Bengal while fighting the Arakanis.
- Murad was defeated and died in captivity.

- **Francois Bernier**

- French physician who entered Mughal service and became part of **Dara Shikoh's retinue**. After Dara Shikoh's death, he also served Aurangzeb.
 - He has described the Battles of **Dharmat and Samugarh**.
- He also talked about **Indian textiles** and their manufacturing in Mughal karkhanas (state run workshops).
 - He has thrown light on the **ustad-shagird** tradition of craftsmanship.
- He has also talked about the desperate **condition of Indian peasants**.

- According to him, there was extreme inequality for which he blames the heavy burden of taxation.
- **Niccolo Manucci**
 - An Italian soldier, who 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.

AURANGZEB (1657-1707)

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

Religious Policy

The religious policy of Aurangzeb represented a marked departure from the liberal policy of his predecessors. This was a result of the following factors:

- Aurangzeb was an **orthodox Sunni Muslim**, who is said to have offered Namaz five times a day even on the battlefield.
- In his war of succession against Dara Shikoh, he was supported by orthodox elements.

Important Religious Policy Actions

- 1659 - Ordered the **demolition of new Hindu temples**.
- 1670 - Reimposed **Jizya**
- He **abolished** un-Islamic court rituals such as **Tuladan, Jharoka Darshan, Sijda, Paibos and Navroz**.
- He banded **music and painting** from his court.
- He forbade the cultivation of **bhang**.
- He **abolished** the practice of issuing **Zawabits**.
- He began appointing **Mutasibs** (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, he **abolished**
 - **Rahdari** (inland transit duties), **Pandari** (octroi) and **Abwabs** (illegal cesses)

- He discontinued the practice of inscribing **Kalima** (Islamic confession of faith) on coins because he did not want it to be trampled underfoot.

Imperial Relations

- **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.
- **1683-84** - His son, Prince Akbar, the governor of Deccan rebelled. Aurangzeb pursued him and became preoccupied with Deccani politics.
- **1686-87** - He annexed Bijapur and Golconda.
 - However, by this time, Maratha power had emerged in force under Shivaji.
 - Aurangzeb neglected the North Indian affairs in order to suppress the Marathas.
 - This led to wastage of valuable resources and men, causing a huge drain on the economy, and led to frequent agrarian revolts in other parts of the empire, which harmed the empire's stability.
- **1690** - He executed Sambhaji, the son of Shivaji.

Rebellions

- **Jats** - under Gokal, Rajaram and Churaman successively.
- **Satnamis/Mundiyas** - by followers of Birbhan .
- **Sikh** - after the execution of Guru Teg Bahadur, led by Guru Govind Singh.
- **Marathas** - after imprisonment and execution of Sambhaji.
- **Marwar and Mewar** - due to succession issue.

- **Bundelas** - led by Champat Rai and Chhatrasal.

MUGHAL MILITARY ORGANIZATION

- **Ahdis** - They were gentlemen troopers directly recruited and paid by the state.
- **Ashkan** - Infantry soldiers.
- **Bargirs** - Cavalry soldiers, mounted and equipped by the state.
- **Silehdars** - Cavalrymen who brought their own horses and arms, and were paid higher salaries than Bargirs.
- **Dasti** - Light artillery.
- **Dakhilis** - They were supplementary troops, recruited by the state and paid from the state treasury in times of war.
- **Jinsi** - Heavy artillery.
- **Seh-bandis** - Infantry soldier serving as civil police.

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

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.**

1. Religious orthodoxy –

- Aurangzeb abandoned Akbar's policy of religious tolerance, thus **alienating the support and sympathy of Hindus.**
 - He **reintroduced Jizya and pilgrimage tax.**
 - He **dismissed Hindu officials** from service and allowed only those Hindus to continue serving who were prepared to convert, i.e. forcible conversions.
 - He **banned the building of new Hindu temples** and **destroyed the old ones**, including
 - The Kashi Vishwanath Temple and
 - The Keshav Rai Temple of Mathura built by Bir Singh Deo.
 - Thus, **resentment** started to brew amongst non-Muslims.

2. 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 at Mewar** led to a costly dispute with the Rajputs, lasting more than 20 years.

- It also revived the political consciousness of Rajputs.

3. Deccan Campaign –

- Aurangzeb was bent upon crushing the Marathas and dominating the Deccan.
 - Thus, a futile and arduous campaign ensued.
- Bijapur and Golconda were suppressed and annexed owing to their Shia rule as well as military and financial sponsorship of the Marathas.
 - He should instead have followed a buffer policy towards them and saved expense, energy and resources.
- 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 north western frontier, and
 - Emergence of local provincial leaders to defy central authority, especially in Bengal and Awadh, who wanted to establish their autocracy.

4. 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.

Crisis of Personality –

- The Mughal empire was top heavy and highly centralised, 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.

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 Irani, 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.
- **Aurangzeb's weak successors fell prey to court politics** and the **empire stopped expanding** after his death, creating chaos and confusion, advantage of which was taken by the Marthas, Jats etc. to interfere in court politics.
- The **causes** for this factionalism were –
 - Struggle for jagirs and personal advancement.
 - Struggle for supremacy between the wazir and the monarch.
- This **weakened the empire from within**.
 - The emperor was prevented from following a consistent policy.
- The **nobility also gradually became a closed corporation** as other classes had no opportunity of promotion and offices became hereditary.

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, the revenue from which went directly to the imperial treasury.
- There were 2 kinds of Mughal mansabdars –
 - **Naqdi** – Those who were paid cash salaries.
 - **Jagirdars** – Those who were given land revenue assignments in lieu of cash.
- During **Akbar's** reign there were roughly **5000** Jagirdars, which increased to **14,000** by **Aurangzeb's** reign.
 - The territorial expansion of the empire was unable to keep up with the demand for new jagirs.
- The system was also marked by **unequal distribution** –
 - 16% of the jagirdars held 61% of jagirs.
- A basic flaw in the Mughal Revenue system was the **difference between Jama (estimated revenue) and Hasil (actual revenue)**. As the shortage of Jagirs intensified, the gap widened.
 - This shortfall implied that the **jagirdar was unable to perform his military functions** and be remunerated for his services, leading to military weakness.
- The shortage of jagirs reached crisis proportions when, after **annexing Bijapur (1686) and Golkonda (1687)**, Aurangzeb categorised their **entire territory as Khalisa**.
 - On the one hand, the local nobility was incorporated into the empire, thus swelling the ranks of the jagirdars, but on the other hand, there was no growth of jagir lands.
- This **increased the sense of competition and insecurity** amongst the nobility.
- Jagirdars also began **extracting illegal cesses (Abwabs)** from the peasants.

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 had also increased its revenue demand** to fund the Deccan campaign.
 - The **Ijaradari system** or the practice of revenue farming i.e. the auctioning of land revenue collection rights to the highest bidder, had been introduced by Aurangzeb's due to his preoccupation with the Deccan.
- 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.

Technological Backwardness –

Since the 16th century, Indian knowledge of science and technology had stagnated.

- The growth of **Indian trade was hampered by poor communication** and by the **self-sufficient nature of the village economy**.
- 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.
 - e.g., the First Carnatic War (Battle of St. Thome), Second Carnatic War (Siege of Arcot), Battle of Buxar (1764) etc.

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.

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.