

## THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

- Established by Persian warrior
   Babur in 1526, the Mughal empire's
   rule eventually covered most of the
   Indian sub-continent and Central
   Asia, and lasted well into the
   nineteenth century.
- Emperor Akbar (1556-1605), who is widely seen as the greatest of the Mughal emperors, extended Mughal control over Bengal.
- It was under Akbar that much of the territory which makes up modern Bangladesh was reclaimed from the forest and began to be cultivated.





## BABUR

- The Mughal dynasty was founded by Bābur, a dispossessed Timurid (dynasty in Turkey) prince who reestablished himself in Kabul.
- From there he conquered the Punjab and subsequently unseated the Delhi sultanate before extending his rule across northern India.

## TURKIC-MONGOL

- Bābur, a descendant of
  - the Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan and also of
  - ➤ the Turkic conqueror Timur (Tamerlane),
- was a military adventurer, a soldier of distinction, and a poet and diarist of genius, as well as a statesman.



## MUSLIM RULE IN BENGAL [1203 - 1757]

- The Muslim rule in Bengal continued for five centuries and half.
- Muslim rule began in 1203, through the conquest of Bakhtiyar Khalji.
- The period ended in 1757 after the battle of Plassey.
- After the battle, the British East India Company became the controlling power in Bengal's politics and administration.

## MUSLIM RULE IN BENGAL

- The period of Muslim rule is divided into two phases Sultanate and Mughal.
- The sultanate period ended in 1576 when the last Afghan Sultan Daud Khan Karrani was defeated in the battle of Rajmahal by Khan Jahan, the general of great Mughal emperor Akbar.

## MUSLIM RULE IN BENGAL

- Akbar made strenuous efforts by sending general after general, to bring the whole Bengal under his control but failed. His dream of conquering Bengal was fulfilled in the reign of his son Jahangir by a young, energetic Subahdar, Islam Khan Chisti.
- Jahangir's first few years remained static in the Mughal advance to Bengal. But with the appointment of Islam Khan Chisti as Subahdar in1608 the situation was completely changed. Islam Khan took initiatives to identify the weak points of Mughal emperors and strength of the enemies.

Joining his office in the then capital Rajmahal, Islam Khan Chisti decided to take the following steps:

- 1. **Transferring capital:** As he founded that the strength of their enemies laid in Eastern Bengal, he decided to transfer the capital to a suitable eastern strategic place. He chose Dhaka as the ultimate capital which was situated in the heart of Bhati.
- 2. **Strengthening Mughal Navy:** He strengthened the Mughal navy. The Bara Bhuiyans were strong in river warfare.
- 3. **Subjugating the enemies:** On the way to Bhati he subjugated the Jamindars and Chiefs of surrounding areas. After reaching there he subjugated the Bara Bhuiyans. By the end of 1612, the whole Bengal except Chittagong was brought under Mughal control.
- 4. **Reinstating the enemies**: The Rajas, Jamindars and Bhuiyans were reinstated in their position on promise of remaining loyal and paying tribute. But as soon as the Mughal army retraced their steps, they shook off allegiance, gathered fresh strength and became independent.
- 5. **Final successful strategy:** Islam Khan examined the situation very carefully. He did not allow the defeated chiefs go back to their station and forced them into Mughal service.

# 2. WHAT FACTORS ACTED AS BARRIERS TO MUGHAL AGGRESSION IN BENGAL?

## 1. Geographical Barrier:

- Bengal's climate and geography offered great barrier to the Mughal aggression in Bengal. Bengal is a country where monsoon prevails for almost half of the year. There were many rivers and water channels in Bengal at that time.
- The Mughal cavalry was not strong enough to defeat Bara Bhuiyans as they were very organized and strong in river warfare.

# 2. WHAT FACTORS ACTED AS BARRIERS TO MUGHAL AGGRESSION IN BENGAL?

### 2. Political Barrier:

- Bengal was occupied by a large number of independent and semiindependent Bhuiyans, Rajas and Afghan Chiefs who were very cooperative to one another.
- They established authority in different part of Bengal taking advantage of change of government at the centre.
- So, the conquest was very tough for the Mughal emperor.

# CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY SUBAHDAR SHAISTA KHAN DURING MUGHAL RULE.

 Shaista Khan came to Bengal at the age of 63 with several grown-up sons. With their help and cooperation, he ruled Bengal ably and with distinction. In his reign, he made several contributions:

### 1. Conquest of Chittagong:

 Shaista Khan's great fame in Bengal lay in his conquest of Chittagong. The King of Arakan with the aid of Portuguese pirates used to attack Bengal. The pirates left the coastal regions desolate, burning and looting property and enslaving men, women and children. By a careful policy, Shaista Khan won over the Portuguese pirates and with their help conquered Chittagong.

# CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY SUBAHDAR SHAISTA KHAN DURING MUGHAL RULE.

#### 2. Benevolent activities:

 Shaista Khan was kind and liberal. He spent for the welfare of poor, indigent (needy) and religious person.

#### 3. Architectural contribution:

He built mosque, bridges and sarais for the welfare of general people.

#### 4. Administrative contribution:

In his time, the price of grain was extremely low so that rice was sold at 8 maund per rupee.

#### 5. Pattern of excellence:

• He was gentle, amiable and humane so much so that he was described as a pattern of excellence.

With coming of the Mughals in Bengal, the country witnessed the working of certain new forces in the administrative, social, economic, and cultural life. These forces transformed Bengal's life and thought. Bengal now became a part or a province of the centralised Mughal Empire under one administration, one law, one official language, uniform official cadre and uniform currency.

#### 1. The Subah:

 Emperor Akbar divided the empire into several provinces called Subah. While doing so, due consideration was given to geographical feature, natural boundaries and language.
 Bengal became a Subah with the Bengali-speaking people enclosed by well-demarcated natural boundaries.

The capitals: The capitals of the Subah were situated on the banks of the rivers keeping in view the geography of the country and communication. The capitals were not only the administrative headquarters but also military cantonments and trade centres.

#### ❖ Province Head or Subahdar:

Akbar also introduced well-defined and efficient administrative machinery for the
provinces. The head of the province was the governor (which was named Sipah-Salar in
the days of Akbar, Subahdar under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, and Nazim under
Aurangzeb and his successors). He was the vicegerent of the emperor in the province
and was responsible for executive matters, defense, criminal justice and general
supervision of the province.

**The Diwan**: Below the Subahdar, but not subordinate to him, was the Diwan appointed by the central government. He was also responsible to the government for revenue administration and civil justice.

#### **❖** Other officers:

- The two officers, Subahdar and Diwan shared responsibility for the whole provincial government. They were assisted by other provincial officers. There were:
  - > Bakshi (Pay master of the army)
  - > Sadr (Head of religious department, charity and grant)
  - ➤ Qazi (Judge)
  - > Kotwal (Superintendent of police)
  - ➤ Mir-bahr (Admiral)
  - > Waqianavis (News reporter)

The province or Subah was divided into Sarkars and Parganas or Mahals.

#### 2. The Sarkar:

• The Sarkar was both an administrative and revenue unit. It was headed by Faujdar in the executive and administrative department and by Amalguzar for revenue administration.

### 3. The Parganah or Mahal:

• In the Parganah or Mahal, Shiqdar was the executive officer and Amin was responsible for collection of revenues. Though the administrative and revenue functions were separate and well-defined, officers of one branch were made responsible to go to the aid of those of other branch in times of need. They were made to work in harmony and co-operation.

## PRINCIPLES OR CHARACTERISTICS OF LAND REVENUE SYSTEM DURING MUGHAL PERIOD

 For proper administration, Bengal (Subah Bangla) was divided into 19 Sarkars and 682 Parganas or Mahals. Land-revenue was the main source of income, so the Mughals first paid attention to the reform of the revenue administration. The revenue system was reformed in the reign of Akbar, when Raja Todar Mal introduced his Bandobast or Settlement 1n 1582.

#### 1. Division of revenues:

• The revenues were divided into Mal and Sayer. Mal was the name given to the land-revenue. Sayer included all kinds of revenue like customs duties and other sundry duties except the land revenues.

#### 2. Division of lands:

Lands were divided into Khalsa and Jagirs for the purpose of revenue collection. Khalsa lands were
those which were directly administrated by the government through Diwan and his staff. The Jagir
lands were those which were assigned to the officers, civil and military for their services.

## PRINCIPLES OR CHARACTERISTICS OF LAND REVENUE SYSTEM DURING MUGHAL PERIOD

### 3. Assignment of lands:

• In the later period lands were also assigned to establishments, like Nawwara (Navy), Kheda (Catching elephants), and Amlah-I-Islam (Military establishment for guarding the frontier). Lands were also granted to religious persons and learned men.

#### 4. Existence of Zamindars:

An important feature of the revenue administration was the existence of the Zamindars.
 They acted as middlemen between the Ryot and the Government. The Jagirdars also collected revenue through the Zamindars.

## PRINCIPLES OR CHARACTERISTICS OF LAND REVENUE SYSTEM DURING MUGHAL PERIOD

#### 5. Activities of Diwans:

 The diwans and his staff remained busy settling the issues keeping in view the condition of the lands, the loss of crops due to weather conditions and the land erosion caused by flood, change of course of river, transformation of agricultural lands to fallow ones or bringing fallow lands under the plough. The diwani department also decided cases where taqvi or agricultural loans had to be provided.

#### 6. The objectives:

 The Mughal revenue system was, therefore, designed to achieve the object of collecting as much revenue as possible. Besides, the objective also was keeping the ryot happy and content, so that they might prosper and bring more and more land under plough. The Mughal revenue system was so well thought out and well planned that the system, with no great change continued through the British period.

 The period of imperial Mughal rule over Bengal witnessed the working of certain new forces which have completely transformed Bengali life and thought and whose influence is still operating in the province. Here are the several contribution which they have made:

### 1. International Connections:

 In the Sultanate period, Bengal's cultural contact with the outside Muslim world was limited chiefly to Makkah and Madina. In the Mughal period such connections, particularly with Arabia, Iran and Turkey increased in a large way.

### 2. Educational significance:

The Mughal emperors were learned and liberal and they possessed high moral principles. The
high officers, like Wazir, Subahdar, and Diwan were also very learned and cultural people. They
set examples of etiquette, tradition and polished manner to be emulated by others. The
Subahdars maintained libraries in their residences and got books on history, philosophy, and
science.

#### 3. Contributions in literature:

 Influenced by the Persian literature, poems dealing with love stories of men and women began to be the theme of Bengali literature. Persian literary works, particularly romantic stories were translated into Bengali. Side by side Bengali literature was also influenced by Hindi-Awadhi poetical works.

### 4. Cultural significance:

Persian influenced the Bengali language and literature in a great way. Many Persian words
entered the Bengali vocabulary. Many such words are still found not only in literature but also in
the court circle and in the day to day use of people.

### 5. Employment opportunities:

 Though the Muslims came to Bengal from outside from the beginning, with the consolidation of Mughal authority, there was peace and prospects of employment opportunities increased. So scholarly Muslims like the Ulemas, Sufis, Teachers, Poets and Physicians came to Bengal in large number.

### 6. Religious significance:

 As the Mughals were liberal in religious matters, the non-Muslims could also practice their religion freely without any interference. Besides, the lower-class non-Muslims accepted Islam either for mundane reasons, like gaining favours from the rulers, or getting state services, or they were attracted by the teachings of Islam.

### 7. Administrative significance:

• The Mughal administrative and revenue system was so well thought and well planned. During this period there was one administration, one law, one official language, uniform official cadre and uniform currency. Mughals established peace, good government and discipline. They freed the people from the oppression of the pirates.

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