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Lesson No.

- 2.1 : Establishment of Mughal Empire under Babur
- 2.2 : Sher Shah Suri and His- Administration
- 2.3 : Rajput Policy of the Mughals
- 2.4 : Religious Policy of the Mughals
- 2.5 : Shivaji : His Conquests and Administration
- 2.6 : Central, Provincial and Judicial Administration of the Mughals
- 2.7 : Land Revenue and Mansabdari Systems
- 2.8 : Social and Economic Life under the Mughals

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LESSON NO. 2.1

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE UNDER BABUR

Birth and Dynasty : With the coming of Babur, a new era of political power, religious tolerance, culture, civilization, administration and development of literature begins in the history of India. Babur was born on 14th February, 1483. His father's name was Umar Sheikh Mirza and his mother's Qutlus Nigar Khanum. His parents were the residents of the fertile state of Ferghana. This state was surrounded with mountains on three sides. Some historians are of the opinion that the word 'Babur' was Arabic word 'Babar'. But Vincent Smith says that Turkish word 'Babur' and Arabic word 'Babar' are not the same. According to Smith, its meaning is lion (Tigris Regalis). Power Price also admits tiger as its meaning but both words give out the spirit of gallantry and fearlessness.

In the veins of Babur ran the blood of two great conquerors of Central Asia, Changaz and Timur. For this very reason, Lane-Poole has rightly remarked that the strength of the Mughals and boldness of the Turks (Timur) were both present in him. But he was not rigid and despotic like them. Power-Price writes that it was only once in his life when he got the criminals trampled over by elephants, and they were the men who gave him poison in connivance with, Ibrahim's mother. According to some historians, he descended in the fourth main line to Timur, but according to Rushbrook Williams he was the fifth line. On his maternal side, he descended from Chaghezi dynasty in fourteenth line.

His taste for education, literature and fine arts : Babur could not get much education because he was only eleven years and four months on the death of his father and he had to shoulder the administration of Ferghana at his tender age. His brother and relatives wanted to snatch Ferghana from him. Despite very little education Babur was literary man and poet of a high degree; a critic, a patron and lover of music and fine arts. That is why Ross remarks that even if Babur was not a good warrior and ruler, he would have become well-known for his poetry written in Turkish language. His collection of poems, the translation of religious poems 'Mahayyin' and Khawaja Aharar's "Risala-i-walidujya" into Turkish languages gives him a prominent place among the poets of middle ages. "Tuzk-e-Babri", the autobiography written in Turki according to Powel-Price is an immortal living literature. Its historical importance is in no way less. Moreland has appreciated very much its style of writing, clarity and

explanation. Its significance is proved from the fact that it was translated into French. He learnt Arabic, Persian and Turkish language from his teacher Sheikh Majid; and his maternal grand mother. Ashan Dault Begum gave him preliminary political training.

Early life : From 1501 to 1504 A.D. Babur had to go from pillar to post on numerous hills. In the meanwhile he heard life story of the invasions of Timur from the mother of Aratipa's lambarbar, who then was hundred years old and was seven or eight at the time of Tirmur's invasion of India and (according to Babur) his relatives had participated in the invasion. The story brought a new turn in Babur's life. Rushbrook William says that the thought of re-starting the conquest of India always occupied his mind. So when in 1501 A.D. the amirs dethroned his son Abdur Razaq on the death of Ulag Beg Mirza, the ruler of Kabul and Babur's uncle, Babur exploited the disturbances, lawlessness and civil war in Afganistan, and occupied Kabul with the help of 4000 soldiers for making it a base and his future programme of conquering India. According to Lanepool the conquest of Kabul threw Babur out of the crowd of princes fighting for small principalities of Timurs' Kingdom and made him the master (without any opposition) of the territory lying in the centre of impassable mountainous passes of Afghanistan. Therefore, he occupied Herat Bad Khshan, Gazni and Qandhar during 1505 to 1511 A.D. His conquest of Kabul in 1504 was also the base of his victory over India. From Kabul, he could watch the events happening in India. He adopted the title of Padshah in 1507 A.D.

His difficulties in the beginning : Babur inherited from his father not only the state of Farghana, but this disputes. His great enemies were his uncles. Ahmed Mirza, the ruler of Samarqand and Mehmud Khan, the ruler of Tashkent. Their aim was to snatch the kingdom from Babur. But his maternal grand mother, Ashan Daulat Begum helped him in his difficult hour.

**Successful and unsuccessful wars of Samarquand, Kabul Badkhshan,
Heart, Gazi and Qandhar**

STRUGGLE FOR MASTERY IN CENTRAL ASIA

During those days, Samarquand was the foremost centre of education, politics, architecture and aesthetic beauty in Central Asia. According to Rushbrook Williams, the word Samarqand was the synonyms of culture, decoration and wealth. Babur fell into romance with the city of Timur when for the first time he did not succeed in conquering the city in 1496. He wept for a long time taking over the ruler of Farghana, according to Spear, Babur tried for some years to conquer Samarqand but the Uzbek leader Shaibani Khan always got on his nerves. At first Babur conquered Samarqand in 1496 A.D. but could rule over there for a hundred days only. His chiefs under the leadership of Tanbol rose in revolt and Babur's brother Jhangir Mirza was made to occupy the

throne of Farghana. Babur set out from Samarqand in order to recapture Farghana but did not succeed. On the other hand, the enemies, occupied Samarqand also in his absence. Babur writes though he did move from Samarqand in order to recapture Farghana but did not succeed. On the other hand, the enemies, occupied Samarqand also in his absence. Babur writes though he could not reign in Farghana but he did not lose Samarqand. Babur occupied Samarqand second time in 1500 A.D. Next year the Uzbek Chief, Shaibani Khan defeated Babur at Sar-e-pool near the Kohid river. In December 1510 A.D. the king of Iran, Shah Ismail Safavi defeated Shaibani Khan in the battle of Marry and Shaibani Khan was killed in the same battle. Babur who was loved and liked by the people of Samarqand, decided in 1510 to try for the last time to conquer Samarqand. But having reached Hissar (across Hindukush), he realised that defeat of Uzbek was not possible for him single-handed. So he entered into an agreement with Ismail, the King of Iran. Babur's elder sister Khanzada Begum who was the wife of Shaibani Khan, had treated Shah Ismail very well. Persian historians and Rushbrook Williams interpret this agreement, as acceptance by Babur of the overlordship of the shah of Iran. Under this agreement Babur promised to spread Shia religion. The Shah of Iran gave him military help. With this help Babur succeeded in capturing Samarqand in October 1511 A.D. People welcomed him, but hoping that while sitting on the throne of Samarqand, he would remove the symbol of Shia's Persian ruler before wearing the crown of Mahmud Sunn, but Babur did not do so. Because he had promised to propagate Shia religion and he was true to his word. The people of Samarqand were staunch sunnis. Religion was the first and foremost key in those days of religious fanaticism. Mirza Haider writes that people's devotion for him diminished in their hearts. Babur was not deistic, so he did not make any atrocities on his Amirs for not preaching Shia religion. Shah of Iran saw that his hopes were not succeeding. so he sent 11,000 soldiers from Iran to punish Babur. The Uzbeks found that neither the people of Samarqand now liked Babur nor was the Shah of Iran with him. So, they started invasions against Babur, In 1512 A.D. Babur fled from Samarqand. After this, another important turn came in Babur's life. Dennis Ross says that Babur gave up all hopes of conquering Samarqand and began to think of conquering India, a feat which had not been accomplished either by Chagiz or by Timur even. Ultimately his success in India secured for him a permanent place in history.

Babur's early tough and hard career proved to be a great asset in his later life. His constant struggle against the various Central Asian power enriched his personality, and he gained valuable experience. He taught himself from the Uzbeks, Tughlughama Strategy, the use of artillery from the Persian and the advantages and organization of fast moving cavalry units Babur learnt from

the Turks. His early life prepared and equipped Babur to take up the challenge of a major confrontation in India.

Political Conditions of India

Babur's success in India cannot be attributed to his valour alone. Had Babur been such a gallant warrior, he would have succeeded in establishing his rule in Central Asia like his ancestors Chagiz and Timur. The weak political condition and political instability prevailing in India, as discussed below was equally responsible for his success here. In the words of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "India was a congeries of states" in the sixteenth century. By that time the sultanate of Delhi had considerably weakened and a number of small kingdoms had come up.

Babur writes that when he entered India, five Muslim and two Kafir Hindu kings were ruling India. But in fact the number of independent kings was larger. We can divide these kingdoms into the following groups :

1. Muslim kingdoms of Northern India.
2. Hindu kingdoms of Northern India (Rajputana).
3. Muslim kingdoms of Central and South India.
4. Hindu kingdoms of Southern India.
5. Coastal kingdoms and Portuguese colonies.

The Muslim Kingdoms of Northern India :-

There were Kashmir, Lahore, Delhi, Jaunpur, Bihar and Bengal, Kashmir occupied no effective place in India politics.

(1) Kingdom of Delhi : After 1451 A.D., the influence of the Afghan chiefs in Punjab was continuously increasing over Delhi sultanate. In the same years, they had made Behlol Lodhi occupy the throne of Delhi. Behlol Lodhi and his son Sikander Lodhi administered well up to 1517 A.D. Both of them enjoyed much respect among the chiefs. But we see that during the rule of Sikandar Lodhi his territory from Sindh to Bihar was not an integral empire but was merely a confederacy. Governors of these provinces were semi-independent and they had armies of their own. The Jagirdar of Kara, Azam Himayun, had 45,000 horsemen and 700 elephants ; the governor of Jaunpur had 20,000 cavalry and the governor of Lahore Daulat Khan had 4,000 horsemen. His success was by virtue of his personal qualities only. But such situation could be embarrassing for a man of lesser ability and calibre at Delhi. The same happened in the times of proud, jealous and despotic ruler Ibrahim Lodhi, who succeeded to the Delhi throne in 1517 A.D. He turned all his chiefs against him. Punjab and Jaunpur rebelled openly. Daulat Khan Lodhi severed his relations with them. He became unpopular among the people, Rajputs defeated him twice. In short he reduced to the ground the good work done by his ancestors.

(2) Jaunpur and Bihar : Almost the whole territory of Uttar Pradesh today

was included in Jaunpur, Upto 1394 A.D., it was a part of Delhi Kingdom, when its Governor, Khawaja Jahan assumed the title, 'Malik-ul-Shark' (The king of the East) and declared himself an independent ruler. In 1473 A.D., Behlol Lodhi conquered it and annexed it to his kingdom. At the time of Babur's invasion it had again revolted. In the same way, Darya Khan Lohani had established an independent rule in Bihar.

(3) Bengal : Having conquered Bengal, Qutab-ud-din Aibak had annexed it to the kingdom of Delhi. But it became independent during the reign of Mohammed-bin-Tughluk. When Babur invaded India, the ruler of Bengal was Nusrat Shah. Babur had appreciated him in his memories. According to Rushbrook William, Bengal had little importance in the then politics of India.

(4) Sindh : In the fourteenth century Sindh was part of the Delhi Kingdom, but in 1326 A.D., the Rajputs of the Samana tribe again established their own Rajput rule here. In 1520 A.D. the governor of Qandhar, Shah Beg and his Afghans conquered it. In this way, Sindh had no concern with the Delhi Sultanate at the time of Babur's invasion.

(5) Gujrat : Gujrat was a part of the Delhi Sultanate. In 1328 A.D. Muzaffarkhan established here his own independent rule. The ruler of Gujarat at the time of Babur's invasion was Muzaffar the second. His death of 1526, was followed by a period of disturbance which considerably weakened the kingdom of Gujarat. In July 1526 his son Bahadur Shah became king and he proved to be an ambitious and successful ruler.

The Hindu Kingdoms of Northern India (Rajputana)

There were Rajput states in the south of the above detailed Muslim Kingdom. The most powerful of these was Mewar. Here, the ruler of the Sisodia dynasty, Rana Sanga was the leader of Rajputs. In 1519 A.D., he defeated the joint forces of the Muslim rulers of Malwa and Ahmednagar, Babur himself writes about him that all parts of Rajputana were directly under his control. Eighty thousand horsemen, seven big rulers, one hundred four Rajput chief and five hundred war-elephants accompanied him to the battle-field.

The Muslim States of Central and Southern India

In the South of Rajput states were Muslim state of Malwa, Berar, Ahmednagar, Bijapur, Golkunda and Bedar. In the north Khandesh and in the south of Mewar lay the state of Malwa. It became independent of Delhi Sultanate during the reign of Feroz Tughlak. But being close to Mewar, it had to suffer. In 1435 and 1519 A.D. the rulers of Mewar, inflicted upon it a severe defeat. At the time of Babur's invasion. Medni Rao ruled over there. The territory of the Vindhya hills and central part of the southern plateau was called Khandesh. The independent kingdom of Khandesh was also established during the reign of Feroz Tughlak by Malik Farooqi. But it had no political influence.

The Bahmani Kingdom : It extended upto Krishna river in south of the Muslim state of Khandesh. It was a powerful state upto 1481 A.D., when its able minister was murdered. After that it was split up into independent kingdom of Berar (1484) Ahmednagar (1489), Bijapur (1489) and Golkunda (1512). The independent state of Berar was also carved out of it. All the five Muslims states were not very powerful. Besides, they were always at war with the strong, powerful Hindu kingdom of Vijaynagar in the South.

The Hindu States of Southern India

(1) **The Empire of Vijaynagar :** Extending up to Kanyakumari in the south of the Bahmani kingdom was the Hindu kingdom of Vijaynagar. It was established by the two powerful chiefs of Hoshala dynasty. Harihar and Bukka Rao who exploited the disturbed and confused situation caused by invasion of Mohammad-bin-Tughlak on the Hindu states of the south. The Hindu kingdom remained prosperous for two centuries and Hindu culture and civilization also made great progress. Its ruler had one thousand war elephants one lac soldiers. It never allowed the Bahmani kingdom to become powerful. In fact, the Bahmani kingdom was bound between the powerful Rajput federation in the north and the strong Vijaynagar empire in the south.

(2) **Orissa :** In the east of Bahmani kingdom was the Hindu kingdom of Orissa which was called Gondwana. Because it was situated between the Bengal and Bahamani kingdom (Muslim states) it prevented the state from forming a federation like that of Rajputs.

The Malabar Coastal States and Portugues Colonies

On the coast of Malabar were the Muslim state of Cochin and the Hindu state of Calicut. Both the states were ever at war with each other. The Portuguese had also established but their power in Goa and Diu. They had got control of the whole trade of Arabian sea, specially in pepper and spice. Their second function was to convert Indians to Christianity. But these states had no political influence over the politics of Northern India.

Summing up the Political Conditions : From the above it seems that the 1526 A.D. South India was absorbed in its own quarrels and strifes and it had no concern with northern India. In the north, there were two strong contenders for power-Ibrahim Lodhi and Rana Sanga. The power and influence of the Lodhis was on its decline. According to Rushbrook Williams, Rana Sanga was not prepared to occupy the whole of the sultanate of Delhi. At the time India was a land of states. There was no central administration nor any central Sultan. The provincial courts were generally the places of intrigues and conspiracies against their rulers.

Babur's Invasions of India :-

Babur writes in his 'Memories' that after the conquest of Kabul, it always

remained his ambition to conquer India. Babur refused to confine himself to Kabul, and moved to the East. Having failed in the attempt to permanently hold Samarqand, Babur became single minded in his plans to attack India. For example we have already seen that Babur had invaded India in 1505 and 1507 A.D. During his first attempt he reached up to Dera Gazi Khan through Khyber pass, and second time came up to Mandrawar through Qandhar. According to 'Advanced History of India' the objective of these invasions was the reconnaissance of India territory. But when he had no hope of capturing Samarqand, he made all preparations from 1513 to 1518 A.D. for invading India. Initially, however, he confined himself to the border regions. During the same period, he strengthened his artillery and recruited Ustad Ali and Mustaffa, the famous artillery men.

Babur's task was made easier by the existing confusion and anarchy in the political system. The rise of a number of competitive and fairly strong provincial dynasties undermined the strength and authority of the Central government.

It is clearly revealed in the Memories of Babur that the invaded India five times between 1519 and 1526 A.D. and that he conquered and occupied a part of India in his fifth attempt.

First Three Invasions : When in 1519 A.D. Babur came over to crush the revolt of Yussufzai people of the Suleiman mountains through Khyber, he occupied first Bajaur and then Bhera. But he inflicted no loss on the people of these places. Perhaps he wanted to create this impression on the people that Babur was their well-wisher. He sent Mullan Mir Murshad to Ibrahim Lodhi with the word that he should hand over the Babur all the territories of north western India conquered by Timur. But it bore no fruit. Having appointed his representative in Bhera, he went back to Kabul. But after some time the people expelled his representative from Bhera.

Babur's second invasion was in 1519 A.D. When he reached up to Peshawar. But had to retreat because of the revolt in Badakhshan. As a result of his third invasion in 1520 A.D. Babur occupied Bhera and Sialkot. The people faced him at Sayyadpur (Emanabad). Guru Nanak Dev ji was also there at this time. He has recorded in most painful words the atrocities of Babur's army. Babur returned owing to a revolt in Qandhar and up to 1524 A.D., he remained busy in establishing his full and complete control over there.

Fourth Invasion of Daulat Khan's Invitation : The Punjab Governor, Daulat Khan Lodhi had severed his relations with Delhi. For the reason, he was afraid that Ibrahim would take him to task. He invited Babur through his son, Dilawar Khan to invade India. He wrote to Babur that if he were accepted as an independent ruler of the Punjab, he would give to Babur full assistance. To exploit his opportunity fully Babur invaded India for the fourth time in 1525

A.D. Ibrahim sent his armed forces to face Babur. They defeated Daulat Khan but Babur succeeded in defeating these forces. He occupied Lahore, Sulatanpur, Jullundhur and Dipalpur. He gave to Daulat Khan the district of Sultanpur only. Daulat Khan had hoped that he would get all the four districts. But when it did not happen, he planned a conspiracy against Babur. But his son Dilawar Khan disclosed all about it to Babur, Fearing the wearth of Babur, Daulat Khan Lodhi fled to Shivalik hills Babur gave Dipalpur to Dilawar Khan, the district of Sulatnpur and the district of Dhilapur, he gave to Khan Lodhi. He stationed his own troops in Lahore, went back to Kabul and intensified his preparations for launching another Indian attack.

Fifth Invasion-the First Battle of Panipat (April 21,1526) :

Causes : When Babur's position became strong and stable in north west India including the regions of Balkh, Badkhshan and Afganistan it was not difficult for him to invade India. According to Power-Price. "The Cambridge History of India", Moreland and the "Advanced History of India", during this time, even Rana Sanga entered into an agreement with Babur and promised to gave him assistance against Ibrahim. But he did not keep his promise. It is evident that Rana Sanga's objective in inviting. Babur was that after the defeat of Ibrahim he would set up his own rule in India. Another reason was that Rana Sanga thought that Babur was high spirited, enterprising and bold and it would be merely for glory that he would fight Sultan Ibrahim. Some other causes which helped Babur's return into India's abverse political condition; conspiracies and mutual wars and quarrels, which were have already been elaborated. The immediate cause was that as soon as Babur went back to Kabul, Daulat Khan defeated Dilawar khan and Alam Khan and snatched their territories. Alam Khan went to Babur to seek his help. He promised to surrender the whole of Punjab to him. Babur sent orders of help to his forces stationed at Lahore. And later on he himself set out for India in November, 1525 A.D. after entrusting the responsibility of Kabul to Kamran. He called back Humayan from Badhkhshan. Daulat Khan heared the news of Babur's invasion. He went to the fort of Malot and prepared himself with 10,000 soldiers to give fight to Babur. But Babur defeated him and he was despatched for imprisonment in Bhera. But he died on the way. In the meantime Alam Khan who was defeated by the force of Ibrahim, had joined Babur. After this, Babur captured Ambala and then Panipat. Now his target was to capture Delhi. Ibrahim Lodhi also encamped along with his force in the plain of Panipat. He had 1,00,000 soldiers and 1,000 elephants. Babur had only 25,000 soldiers according to the Cambridge History of India; 12,000 soldiers according to the Advanced History of India and only 8,000 soldiers and powerful artillery, according to Power Price and Moreland and Chatterjee.

Up-to April 12,1526 the forces of both sides had set up their camps

facing each other. But neither side attacked for eight days. On the night of 20th April a small unit of Babur opened the attack. Next morning, the forces of Ibrahim also attacked. Babur applied the 'Tulghama' war strategy. In the foremost were 700 carts and the artillery. To his far left and far right were the horsemen. They advanced to the left and attacked Ibrahim's forces from the rear. Ustad Ali and Mustafa fired guns from the fore. Ibrahim's elephants trampled his own army. But soon the battle came to an end. There was utter confusion in the ranks of the Indians who were surrounded by Mughals on all sides. Ibrahim lost his 15,000 soldiers and the king of Gwalior, Bikramjit who had helped Ibrahim, all were killed in the battle.

Babur at once started for Delhi and captured the forts and the treasury. The eulogy of Friday Prayer was read in the name of Babur on April 27, 1526. He at once sent Humayun to Agra, so that someone else might not loot the treasury. Here the soldiers of Humayun caught hold of family members-running stealthily-of the deceased King of Gwalior Bikramjit. But Humayan treated them very cordially. In return offered him many presents and the precious gem, Kohinoor was one of these. Babur also reached Agra on May 10. Here he got a huge treasure.

Importance and Results : This Battle occupies the same importance in the life of Babur and the foundation of Mughal rule in India as is accorded to the battle of Plassey in the career of Clive in the establishment of the British rule. The battle of Panipat marks an end and a beginning in the history of India. The first result of the First Battle of Panipat was the Lodhi dynasty and the Pathan rule in India came to an end for ever. Lanepoole says that as a result of this battle, the power and influence of the Pathans over Indian society came to an end. The end of a chapter was related to the beginning of a new phase of Indian history.

The second result was the establishment of Mughal dynasty in India which continued upto 1857 A.D. (practically upto 1707). The dynasty gave India the great emperor Akbar, the greatest of all Indian rulers. During the Mughal rule there was alround development in education, architecture, fine arts, literature and his public welfare works. This proved to be a very creative and productive period in history.

Thirdly, after this battle Babur distributed India's wealth among his friends of Iran, Afghanistan, Khurassan and Farghana etc. According to Lanepoole, he sent one silver coin for every man, woman slave, child and old man of Kabul. In this way, a lot of wealth from India was sent abroad as is evidenced by the fact that Babur himself felt hard up later on.

Fourthly many chiefs of Ibrahim crossed over to Babur and the strength of later's forces increased. In this way more conquests became easy.

Fifthly, some Pathan chiefs got the opportunity of establishing their own

independent rule.

Sixthly, Babur's installation as the ruler of the newly conquered territories provided him inspiration and incentives for further conquests in India. Babur got inspiration to attempt the conquest of the remaining territories of India.

Seventhly, When after his battle, Babur read the proclamation of kingship in his own name in Delhi, the foundations of Kanwaha and a series of battles in India were laid down, because it meant that Babur, unlike Taimur was not returning to his home country after plundering India. On the other hand, he had decided to stay in India and establish a permanent empire in India.

CAUSES OF BABUR'S SUCCESS :-

(1) Inefficient Leadership of Ibrahim : Babur writes in his 'Memories' the Ibrahim was an inexperienced ruler. His force advanced unsystematically; without an orderly way : they stopped or retreated ; he ordered for fighting without invoking any political or military foresight. On the contrary, Babur was an able general and leader. He could look far into the future. His wars of the past thirty-two years with Iran and the Uzbeks in central Asia had taught and trained him very much.

(2) Ibrahim's Untrained and indisciplined Armies : Ibrahim's armies had neither got any training of war nor was there any discipline among them. On the contrary, Babur's armies followed his order as the orders of God. The focus of discipline was Babur himself. His horsemen also did not miss any opportunity to strike.

(3) Use of New Tulghama war Technique by Babur : The new Tulghama War technique was used by Babur in this battle. His far left and far right horsemen surrounded Ibrahim's forces from the rear. The soldiers of Ibrahim did not know of these new methods. In fact it was just a crowd of soldiers. According to Percival Spear, many of them had not come to the battle field for giving a sincere fight.

(4) Babur's soldiers were residents of cold and hilly area as (Balkh, Badkshan, Herat, etc) : Therefore, they were strong and healthier. On the contrary the Pathans had been affected by the hot climate.

(5) High Spirits : Babur's soldiers were in high spirits since they had not met defeat so far in India. The prospect of following their leader for a great future kept their morale up. Fighting far from home was a definite challenge to the Mughal soldiers. It was quite evident to Babur's soldiers that if they were defeated once they would not be able to reach back his country. Victory held promise of much wealth and booty.

(6) Ibrahim's Isolation : No powerful ruler of India gave Ibrahim any assistance. The rulers of Mewar, Bengal and Bihar were happy at his defeat. The collapse of Ibrahim could be exploited to extend their territories and influence.

(7) Unpopularity of Ibrahim : Ibrahim had become unpopular among his relatives, Alam Khan, Daulat Khan, the nobles and the people, So, none had sympathy with him. He was left alone to face his destiny.

THE BATTLE OF KANWAHA (MARCH 15, 1527)

Babur had successfully captured Delhi and Agra. Tired of the scorching heat of his region his soldiers requested Babur to take them back to Kabul. But Babur did not agree. He persuaded them to undertake further conquest in India. After this he made the rulers of Sambhal and Biana to accept his subjugation. Kalpi and Dholapur were captured by him. Rana Sanga understood that Babur would not go back. So it had become necessary for him to fight Babur. On the other hand, Babur had realised that Rana Sanga had not helped him in any way in spite of an agreement to this effect. Both suspected each other's intentions. Both were over ambitious. Therefore, a confrontation between the two was inevitable. Rana Sanga invaded Biana and expelled from there Nizam Khan, the representative of Babur. Now it was a challenge for Babur to strike. But when the soldiers of Babur heard the legends of gallantry of the Rajputs and Rana Sanga; they were demoralised and refused to fight. Meanwhile, an astrologer, Mohammad Sharif came from Kabul. He predicted that the Mughals would lose in the battle of Kanwaha. According to Power-Price, the prediction caused much fear and demoralised the soldiers of Babur.

Babur's Historic Speech : Babur was not alarmed. On the other hand, he made such a stirring and impressive speech to his chiefs and soldiers that they regained their courage and enthusiasm. He said that if they were killed in the battle field, they would become martyrs (according to Islam) ; if they survived, they would be victors. In order to make this battle a 'Jihad' (religious war) against the Rajputs, he abolished the tax over the Muslims and at the same time he vowed that he would never drink wine in future. He threw away all the wine and smashed all his drinking vessels.

The armies of Rana Sanga and Babur encamped at Kanwaha, forty miles away in the west of Agra. Babur had 10,000 soldiers and artillery. Rana Sanga had 80,000 horsemen (1,00,000 horsemen according to Power-Price) and 500 elephants. Besides the armies of rulers of Marwar, Amber, Gwalior and Ajmer were also with him. The Afghan chiefs, Hussan Khan and Mehmud Lodhi, the brother of Ibrahim Lodhi joined Rana Sanga along with their armies. The battle began on March 15, 1527 ; at nine in the morning and it ended after ten hours. Babur won the day. Rana Sanga was wounded and he fled from the battle field and after two years he passed away.

Significance : The battle of Kanwaha according to the 'Advanced History of India' is more significant than the first battle of Panipat. In the battle of Panipat only the nominal ruler. (Ibrahim Lodhi) was defeated, but at Kanwaha

both the powerful Rajput federation and the claimant of Delhi throne, Mahmud Lodhi were routed. After this there was no political power to challenge the power of Babur in India. Rushbrook Williams says that after this, Delhi instead of Kabul, became the focus of the activities of Babur.

Conquest of Chanderi : After the defeat of Rana Sanga, his famous naib Medini Rao gathered five thousand soldiers and refused to accept the subjugation of Babur. But in 1528 A.D., Babur succeeded in conquering the fortress of Chanderi.

Conquest of Ghagra (May 6, 1529) : When Babur was engaged in the battle of Chanderi, Mehmud Lodhi connived with Afghan chiefs and captured Bihar. Then he advanced towards Benars with 10,00,000 soldiers. But when they saw Babur with his armies the soldiers took to their heels. Mehmud Lodhi took asylum with Nusrat Shah, the ruler of Bengal. But Babur defeated the armies of both at Ghagra (Buxar). After that he made a treaty with Nusrat Shah, the ruler of Bengal, according to which Nusrat promised not to give shelter to any Afghan Chief.

Babur's death : There is a famous anecdote about Babur's death. When Humayun fell ill and the Hakims declared the case hopeless, the saint Mir Abu Baqqa said that if Babur sacrificed his most precious thing Humayun could survive. Perhaps he meant by it the Diamond 'Kohinoor' But Babur said that nothing was more precious to him than his own life. According to 'Akbarname' he prayed for Humayun's illness for himself from Allah. After that, Humayun recovered and Babur fell ill. But according to the version of S.R. Sharma and Powel-Price. Babur passed away on December 26, 1530 because of the after effect of the poison which was given to him four years earlier by the mother of Ibrahim Lodhi.

Babur's Empire : When Babur died his empire extended from the river Oxus Central Asia up to Bihar in India.

Babur as an Empire Builder : Babur in the role of an empire-builder was an exceptionally brilliant and capable general. He conquered a vast empire in his time. Apart from conquest, empire building, however, also involves consolidation i.e. the integration of various territories and administrative reforms and reorganisation. Babur did not follow-up conquest with consolidation and left a difficult administrative, political and military situation for his successor, Humayun at the time of his death.

Summing up, Babur was a successful conqueror, an able general and a born leader of men. He conquered an extensive territory and laid the foundation of Mughal dynasty and empire in India. But the nature of problems which he faced after his victories proved a real test for Babur, the statesman Babur's legacy to his son was large empire and a number of political, military, financial and

other administrative problems. Babur was a successful conqueror but either due to lack of time or aptitude he could not pay serious attention to the task of consolidation of his conquests.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

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|----|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. | Majumdar, Ray Chaudhary And Dutta | : | Advanced History of India, pp. 425-432. |
| 2. | Powel Price, J.C. | : | A History of India, pp. 223-232. |
| 3. | Moreland, W.H. and Chatterjee, A.C. | : | A Short History of India, pp. 204-206 |
| 4. | Spear Percival | : | India pp. 115-123. |
| 5. | Ross, Denisson | : | The Cambridge History of India.Vol. IV pp.120. |
| 6. | Williams, Rushbrooke | : | An Empire Builder of the Sixteenth Century |
| 7. | Singh, Meera | : | Medieval History of India.passim |

Suggestive Questions

1. Mention the causes and events of the battle of Panipat.
2. Give reasons for the success of Babur and results of Battle of Panipat.

LESSON NO. 2.2

SHER SHAH SURI AND HIS ADMINISTRATION

Introduction : During the exile of Humayun, the throne of Delhi was occupied by Suri dynasty. From 1540 A.D. to 1555 A.D. Sher Shah Suri and Islam Shah Suri ruled over India. Islam Shah and his successors proved incapable and therefore lost rule kingdom to the Mughals who staged a come back. Sher Shah the contemporary of Humayun was the greatest of the Suri rules and showed his worth as a general and an administrator. We shall now study his life, his struggle with Humayun and his achievements as a general and administrator. In this context we also discuss at length Sher Shah's administrative reforms.

Early Life : Sher Shah's real name was Farid and according to Dr. Qanungo, he was born in 1486 A.D. at Hissar Firoza, but the researches of Dr. A. L. Srivastava and Dr. P. Saran show that he was born in 1472 A.D. at village called Bejwara, near Hoshiarpur. Farid's father's name was Hassan. Hassan entered the service under Jamal Khan and went alongwith him to Bihar when he was transfered to Jaunpur by Sikandar Lodhi. On the recommendation of Jamal Khan the Jagir (fief) of the districts of Sahasaram, Khawaspur and Tanda was conferred on Hassan. Farid spent the early years of his life at Sahasaram.

At Jaunpur : Due to ill treatment of his step-mother, Farid made his way to Jaunpur which was an important centre of learning in those days. There Farid studied well-known Persian works, 'the Gulistan', 'the Bostan' and the 'Sikandarnama.' He impressed Jamal Khan with his deep knowledge of Persian and Arabic languages and literatures Jamal Khan affected a reconciliation between the father and the son. Hasan realized his mistake and sent Farid in charge of his Jagirs of Sahasaram and Khawaspur.

Administration of Jagirs : Farid administerted Jagirs of Sahasaram and Khawaspur efficiently. He devoted his energies to the administration of his father's Jagirs for about 20 years (1497-1518). He proved a successful administrator but it aroused the jealousy of his step mother, who in 1518, again drove him out from his father's house. He reached the court of Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi and requested him to order the grant of his father's Jagir to him. But the Sultan of Delhi did not form a good opinion of a youngman who complained against his own father and did not grant his request.

Farid in the Service of Bahar Khan : Soon after, he entered the service of Bahar Khan Lohani, Subedar of Bihar, Bahar Khan conferred upon him the title of Sher Khan for killing a tiger single handed in a hunting expedition. Sher Khan's rapid rise excited the jealousy of Patham nobles and they poisoned the ears of Bahar Khan.

Sher Khan in the Service of Babur : Sher Khan secured a post in the Mughal service for about a year. It is said that once he expressed his view thus, "if fortune favours me, I can easily turn the Mughal out of India." Babur had also taken notice of Shershah's ability and had warned his Prime Minister to keep a strong vigilance over Sher Khan. He is a very clever man. Signs of royalty are visible on his forehead Sher Khan took more of this suspicious attitude of the Mughals and left Babur's Service in 1528 and returned to Bihar.

RISE TO POWER

As a Vakil (Deputy Governor) in Bihar : From Mughal service, Sher Khan returned to his master, Bahar Khan. But Bahar Khan died soon after. His widow, Dadu Bibi, appointed Sher Khan as Vakil (Deputy Governor) of Bihar because her son, Jalal Khan was a minor and was unable to take up the responsibility of administration Sher Khan took full advantage of this golden opportunity. He conferred the officers on his supporters and brought the army under his own control. After the death of Dadu Bibi, Sher Khan grew more powerful and broke the power of Lodhi nobels and asserted independence.

Occupation of Chunar Fort (1530 A.D.) : He strengthened his position both financially and miliatarly by acuirng the strongfortress of Chunar as a result of his marriage with Lad Malika, widow of Taj Khan Sarang Khan, the former Governor of the place. He got an immense treasure which was found buried there. These achievements whetted his appetite and soared his ambition. Humayun tried to wrest ths fortress from Sher Khan but Sher Khan, by means of his clever diplomacy made Humayun's efforts unsuccessful.

Conquest of Bengal : The ruler of Bengal Mahmud Khan was an enemy of Sher Khan. So Sher Khan wanted to punish him. He invaded Bengal 1535 and inflicted a crushing defeat on Mahmud Khan in the battle of Surajgarh According to Dr Qanungo if Sher Khan had not won the battle of Surajgarh he would not have dared to enter the arena of India politics and he would not have the courage to measure sword with the Humayun for establishment of an empire. Sher Khan also fought against the ruler of Bengal in the battles of Teligarhi and Sikrigarhi and won splendid victories. Sher Khan felt encouraged and reached Gaur, the capital of Bengal. Sher Khan also occupied the well known fortress of Rohtas. In this critical situation, Mahmud Khan the ruler of Bengal appealed to Humayun for help.

STRUGGLE BETWEEN HUMAYUN AND SHER KHAN

In response to the appeal of the ruler of Bengal, Humayun left Agra in July 1537. Instead of proceeding directly to Gaur, he wasted six months in the fort of Chunar. Thus, when Humayun marched towards Gaur, Sher Khan had captured Rohtas.

Humayun wasted time in merry-making at Gaur : Humayun wasted precious four months in merry making in the fortress of Gaur. In the meantime, Sher Khan brought Bihar and Benaras under his control and recovered the lost districts of Chunar and Jaunpur. The power of Sher Khan increased immensely and Humayun found himself unable to face Sher Khan. So he made unsuccessful efforts to conclude peace.

Battle of Chausa (June 25, 1539) : Sher Khan won the battle and routed the Mughals. Humayun jumped in the river Ganges to save his life and reached the other side of the river with the help of an inflated skin (Mashkar) of a water-carrier, Dr. Qanungo rightly observes that one year before Chausa he (Sher Shah) would have contended himself with the position of a Mughal vassal, if he had been left unmolested in Bengal. His ambition now was to drive Mughals from India and to occupy the throne of Delhi.

Battle of Bilgram (Kanauj - May 17, 1540) : Humayun collected a fresh army to fight Sher Shah who was rapidly approaching Agra. A decisive battle took place at Bilgram (Kanauj). Humayun suffered an easy defeat and fled back towards Agra. Sher Shah occupied Delhi and Agra. Finally Shah forced Humayun out of India towards the Sind region. The Mughals were defeated in this battle where neither a man was wounded nor a gun fired. This battle gave Sher Shah the throne of Delhi.

SHER SHAH AS THE RULER OF INDIA AND HIS OTHER CONQUESTS

Conquest of the Gakkhar Territory : Sher Shah undertook another campaign for the reduction of Gakkhar territory which was a mountainous region, situated between upper courses of Jhelum and the Indus. The ruler of this territory was Raj Sarang Sher Shah defeated the Gakkhars but at the same time he received news of the rebellion of the Governor of Bengal. So he left the work of subjugation of the Gakkhars in the hands of his lieutenants Haibat Khan and Khawas Khan. Sher Shah built a gigantic fortress there and named it Rohtas. He garrisoned it with fifty thousand seasoned Afghan troops. According to the author of "Tarikh-i-Daudi", Sher Shah spent a sum of 805000020¹/₂ Beholi rupees on the construction of this fort.

Conquest of Malwa (1542 AD.) : Mallu Khan, the ruler of Malwa had promised help to Sher Shah against Humayun in 1540 but he did not fulfil his promise. Moreover he assumed the title of Qadir Shah and declared himself an independent king. So Sher Shah invaded Malwa in 1542. Mallu Khan submitted without any battle. Sher Shah invaded Malwa to his empire and transferred

Mallu Khan as the Governor of Lakhnauti.

1. **Conquest of Raisin (1543 A.D.)** : Puran Mal Chauhan was the ruler of Raisin. It is said that Puran Mal treated his Muslim subjects cruelly. So many Muslim families had migrated from Raisin to neighbouring states. Sher Shah marched from Agra in 1543 and besieged the fortress of Raisin. According to Dr. Qanungo, this campaign had no connection with any religious fanaticism nor Sher Shah wanted to punish Puran Mal for oppression of his Muslim subjects. The fact is that no incentive of fanaticism was necessary in this campaign as the political motive was a sufficient stimulant to move Sher Shah against Raisin. According to Abbas Khan, Rajputs fought bravely. Sher Shah cut off the communication of the Rajputs. So there was an acute shortage of provisions and ammunition in the fort. Raja Puran Mal sued for peace. Sher Shah made a solemn promise that the lives and property of the Rajput chief and his followers would be respected if the Rajputs surrendered for fort. When the Rajputs came out of the fort. Sher Shah fell upon them and killed them mercilessly. Sher Shah's perfidious conduct against Puran Mal is the biggest blot on his otherwise good name. According to Elphinstone we can find no reason or objective for his cruelty and treacherous conduct.

2. **Conquest of Marwar (1544 A.D.)** : Marwar was an independent kingdom under Maldev. He had annexed to his kingdom the territories of Sojat, Jalor, Todar, Ajmer and Nagaur. Moreover, he had failed to surrender Humayun to Sher Shah. So Sher Shah wanted to punish him. Sher Shah invaded Marwar. The Rajputs put up a stiff resistance and fought bravely. Sher Shah, therefore thought of a stratagem to extricate himself from the critical situation. He caused letters written to himself on behalf of the nobles of Maldev with a promise that they would arrest the ruler King and deliver him into his hands. He got the letters enclosed in a '*Khavika*' (Silken bag) and dropped the same near Maldev's camp, as if they had fallen there by accident. Thus he created a rift between the King and his chiefs. In spite of this the Rajputs fought bravely. The valour of the Rajputs impressed Sher Shah greatly. His loss at their hands has had been great and he exclaimed that they might have lost the empire of Hindustan for a handful of *Bazra* (millet).

3. **Conquest of Mewar** : Sher Shah appointed Khawas Khan to administer Marwar and he himself invaded Mewar. The ruler of Mewar at the time was a minor, Uday Singh. The chief of Mewar surrendered the keys to Chittor fort of Sher Shah without any resistance. Though Sher Shah did not annex Marwar and Mewar to this empire, but he established garrisons at strategic places like Ajmer, Jodhpur, Mount Abu and Chittor, to keep a watchful eye on Rajput states and keep them under control. According to Qanungo in Rajputana Sher Shah made no attempt to uproot the local chiefs or reduce them through subjection as he had done in other parts of Hindustan. His objective was not their total annihilation, he only aimed at their political and geographical isolation from one another in order to make any general

upheaval against his authority impossible.

4 Conquest of Multan and Sindh : There were two rebel leaders. Father Khan's activities had made the road between Delhi and Lahore unsafe. Bakhshu Langah had established himself as an independent ruler of Multan. Fateh Khan was made a prisoner and Multan and Sindh was annexed to empire.

5. The siege of Kalinjar and death of Sher Shah (May, 1545) : Raja Kirat Singh the ruler of Kalinjar had refused to acknowledge the over-lordship of Sher Shah. So, he invaded Kalinjar, in November, 1545. Rajputs resisted the Afghan forces for six months. At last, Sher Shah had no way except to make an attempt to blow up the walls of the fort. He built a high tower for mounting a battery. On 22nd May, 1545 Sher Shah ordered an assault on the fort and himself advanced to attack. He ascended the tower and ordered his men to bring a supply of rockets in order to throw them into the fort. One of the rockets when fired against the gate rebounded and fell into a heap of ammunition lying near the place where Sher Shah was standing. There was a huge explosion and Sher Shah was most severely burnt and he died. Thus ended the glorious reign of Sher Shah. He ruled over for about five years.

Extent of the Empire : During a short period of five years. Sher Shah established an extensive empire. The boundaries of his empire extended from Sonargaon (now in Bangladesh) in the east of banks of river Jhelum in the north-west. In the North it was bounded by the Himalayas and in the south by the Vindhyas.

ADMINISTRATION

Sher Shah was only an able general and a great conqueror, but also an administrator of the highest calibre. Within a short space of five years, he worked out an administrative system which has been praised both by his contemporary and later historians. According to Havell, Sher Shah was an industrious and capable administrator. Among the ruler of Delhi, Sher Shah had the distinction of being familiar with the varied problems of administration at every level being associated with the administration of his father's jagirs from an early age. He introduced many administrative reforms in a brief period of five years. V.A. Smith has rightly observed that if Sher Shah had lived longer, the Mughals might not have reappeared on the stage of Indian history. In the words of Keen, "no government not even the British, had shown so much wisdom as this Pathan."

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The King : Sher Shah was the head of the administration. According to Dr. P. Saran "his (Sher Shah) administration was centralized and despotic, but it was splendid and unequalled. In fact the King possessed all the power i.e. executive legislative, judicial and military." According to Jaffer, "Sher Shah was the source of all powers. He was the shadow of Almighty on earth and was not responsible to any human being. He wanted to supervise every wing of the

administration and he had unlimited capacity to work. Nothing was unimportant and insignificant to him. He supervised administrative plans. He himself enables soldiers at the capital. In order to implement his ambitious plans he was busy from morning till evening. Consequently, he achieved great success during a short period of five years which his contemporaries could not do so even in twenty-five years. He used to say that it behaves great man to exert themselves. At the same time he always kept in mind the welfare of his people."

Central Departments : Like all the rulers of the Sultanate of Delhi, Sher Shah was a despot and possessed almost unlimited powers, but unlike his predecessors, he was a benevolent despot exercising powers, for the good of the people. According to Dr. Pandey, Sher Shah started from below and introduced reforms in the administration of the local level units in 'Parganas' and 'Sarkars'. But he did not have much time to pay serious attention to central and provincial administration.

In spite of his preoccupation with the local administrative units Sher Shah made the central government run fairly efficiently. At the head was the sovereign himself who enjoyed unlimited powers. He appointed ministers to assist him. The allocation of respective departments and functions to the ministers was on the model of the Sultanate period. They were :

(i) Diwan-i-Wizarat : The head of the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* was called the Wazir. He was the minister of revenue and finance and was therefore, the incharge of the income and expenditure of the government. Besides, he exercised a general supervisory authority over other ministers.

(ii) Diwan-i-Ariz (Defence Minister) : The *Diwan-i-Ariz* was under the Ariz-i-Mamalik, who in modern language may be designated as the defence minister. He was not commander in-chief of the army, but was the incharge of its recruitment organization and discipline, Sher Shah himself was the commander in-chief of army and paid special attention of efficiency and discipline of this department.

(iii) Diwan-i-Rasalat (Foreign Minister) : The minister incharge of this department was in close touch with ambassadors and envoys sent to and received from foreign state. He was also incharge to diplomatic correspondence. Sometime the charity and endowment department too, was placed under him and he distributed charity among deserving persons.

(iv) Diwan-i-Insha (Home Minister) : The minister incharge of this department had to draft royal proclamation and despatches. His duty was also to communicate with the governor and other local executive. Government records, too, were in his charge.

(v) Diwan-i-Qaza (Judiciary) : The Chief *Qazi* was the head of this department. He had to supervise the administration of justice besides deciding

cases filed originally and appeals against the decisions of the courts of provincial *Qazis*.

(vi) Diwan-i-Barid (Intelligence Department) : The Barid-i-Mamalik was the head of the intelligence department and it was his duty to report every important incident to the king. He had a host of news writers and spies, who were posted in towns, markets and in every important locality. He also made arrangements for the posting of news-carriers at various places to carry the royal dak.

(vii) Lord High Steward (*Darogha-i-Khahuma*) : He was incharge of the royal household and various workshops attached to it. His duty was to administer the King's household department and to keep a watch over large number of functionaries employed therein.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Administration of Sarkar : Dr. P. Saran is of the opinion that Sher Shah did have large military governorship and that there existed provinces in the empire but Dr. Qanungo differs from this view and maintains that Sher Shah had no higher division than the Sarkar. According to Dr. Srivastava, 'Iqtas' was the highest division and 'Iqtas' were assigned to important chiefs. These 'Iqtas' were administrative divisions corresponding to province but they were not uniform in size or income. The 'Iqtas' did not enjoy a uniform political status and were not governed by the same system of administration. The official incharge of 'Iqtas' were commanders of army, 'Iqtas' were divided into 'Sarkars'. 'Sarkar' was an important unit of administration. They were two chief officers in every Sarkar viz 'Shiqdar-Shiqdaran' (Chief Shiqdar) and 'Munsif-i-Munsifan' (Chief Munsif).

Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran (Chief Shiqdar) : He was a grandee of considerable importance and had a force under his command. His duties were to maintain law and order in the district and to undertake expeditions against rebellious Zamindars. He was also required to supervise the work of the *pargana* officer in his sarkar.

Munsif-i-Munsifan (Chief Munsif) : He was a judge and decided civil cases. But at the same time he supervised the work of the *Amins in Parganas*.

Administration of Parganas : Each Sarkar comprised of a number of parganas which were the lowest units of administration. According to Abbas Khan, the empire of Sher Shah comprised of 1,13,000 parganas. In fact this was the number of village and not of parganas. Sher Shah appointed one Shiqdar and one Munsif in every Pargana. The Shiqdar was a military officer incharge of a small contingent of troops and charged with the duty of maintenance of peace in his *Pargana*. He carried out the order of the government. He was also required to assist the *Amin* and to punish rebellious people. The *Munsif's* or *Amin's duty* was to conduct survey and to make arrangements for the settlement of land revenue. Besides a shiqdar and Munsif, Sher Shah appointed to one Potdar (treasurer) and two karkuns (writer) in each Pargana; one karkun (writer) maintained records in Hindi and the other in Persian.

They maintained records concerning revenue.

Village Administration : Each *pargana* comprised of a number of villages. Each village had a Muqaddam (Headman) who served as a link between the people and the government. He collected land revenue and deposited it in the royal treasury. *Muqaddam* (headman) was an important figure in village administration. He settled disputes regarding boundaries of land, etc. He appointed watchmen (chowkidars) in the village to avoid robberies. He was required to produce the culprits in any robbery, dacoity or murder took place in his village, otherwise he himself was punished. Though this seems to have been hard on the *Muqaddam* (Headman), yet it assured maintenance of peace. If any trader died on the way, his goods (property) were handed over to his heirs. Besides, there were two village officials, namely, *Patwari* and *Chowkidars*. *Patwari* maintained records of land revenue.

Land revenue administration :

Sher Shah introduced many reforms in land revenue administration and these measures constituted his chief title to fame. With regard to land revenue administration Sher Shah had two main objectives before him. Firstly, to improve the condition of peasants and secondly to improve the financial position of the state.

Varied factors inspired Sher Shah to undertake the reforms and reorganization of the existing system which had many defects. There were no uniformity, no regular measurement of land, and no direct connection between the state and peasants. Sher Shah had a first hand knowledge of the working of the revenue system in his father's Jagir in Bihar. According to Dr. Qanungo, Sher Shah was clear about the system of administration which was based on successful experience.

Measurement and classification of land : He wanted to fix the share of the state based on the uniform measurement of land. The land was measured according to a uniform system but the land in Malwa and Rajputana were exempted from his system. According to Qanungo, the land was measured with the string yard introduced by Sikandar Lodhi. This was 32 fingers in length. A standard Bigha measured 60x6 square Sikandary yards.

Share of the State : All cultivable land was divided into three classes viz., good, mediocre and inferior and the produce of each kind of land was ascertained. It was then added up and divided by three in order to find out the average produce per *bigha* of land. One third of the produce was fixed as the state share. In addition to this share, peasants were required to pay an additional cess on 20 Bashoils or 7 chhatanks grains per bigha. The grain so collected were stored in the state granaries and were sold at a cheap price in times of famine or other calamity, even and the above the land revenue proper (1/3 of the produce).

The peasantry was required to contribute towards the maintenance and fees of the surveyors of the land and collectors of the revenue, when they were on active duty. These additional charges were known as 'Jaribana' (surveyor's fee) and 'Mahasilan' (Tax collector's fee), probably it ranged from 2% and 5% of revenue paid by each cultivator. Sher Shah had warned local official against corruption and opperession of the peasantry. According to Abbas Khan, Sher Shah knew that the - post of an Amit was very responsible and lucrative source of profit. So he transfered them from one place to another after a couple of years. The cultivators could pay the land revenue either in cash or in kind.

Patta (title deed) and Qabullyiat (deed of agreement) : The state 'officials gave Patta (title deed) to each cultivators specifying the state demand this is revenue that he was required to pay. Every cultivator was required sign a *Qabullyiat* (deed of agreement) signifying his assent to pay the amount of revenue fixed.

Assessment of land revenue : All the three modes of assessment were allowed to prevail as before.

There are :

(i) Batai or Ghallabakush : Batai means sharing the cultivators produce. 1/3 of the produce was the share of the stae, 2/3 of the produce was given to the cultivators.

Kankut : *Kankut* implies a rough estimate of the soil while the crop is standing in the field. The state got its share on the basis of this estimate.

Zabti System : *Zabti* or *Naqti* is a sort of contract between the individual peasant and the government which fixes the rate of rent per bigha of land per year. The cultivator paid the land revenue according to this contract. The government officials gave a deed to the cultivator, mentioning the state share. Maqaddam realized the land-revenue from the cultivator and incase he did not pay the land revenue, he was arrested and put behind the bars till he paid the amount. If the crops were damaged due to the natural lumities, land revenue was remitted. Compensation was paid if during the course of troop movements, standing crops were trodden under their feet or damaged on account any other reason. Interest-free loans were also given to the cultivator, if necessary. benjar or uncultivable land was considered as village common land.

According to Moreland, the historical importance of land reforms introuduced by Sher Shah is that he started a series of experiments which continued till the middle of Akbar's reign.

Other Sources of Revenue : The main source of the government revenue was land revenue, but there were other sources which were as follows.

(i) Khams : or one fifth of the plunder made by the army during the time of war.

(ii) Salt and Customs : Sher Shah levied customs on main articles,

salt duty was also a source of profit.

(iii) Mint : Royal mint as also a source of profit.

(iv) Presents : All vassals and nobles officials and visitors were required to make presents to the ruler, which constituted source of profit to the state.

We have to bear in mind that Sher Shah abolished many useless taxes in his empire. There was no export and import duty on goods taken from one province to another. Once duty was changed then mercantile commodities entered the frontier and the other place of its sale. All internal custom-house duties were abolished. These reforms encouraged trade and commerce and brought a great prosperity.

Police System : There was no separate department of police in the times of Sher Shah. The army was required to maintain law and order in the country. Shiqdars were required to keep a strict watch on thieves, robbers and other bad character in their respective areas and to punish them. So far as the village were concerned Sher Shah introduced the principle of local responsibility and made the headmen of a village responsible for all the crimes committed in his villages. The headmen was given time to produce the culprit or to make good the loss due to theft or robbery. If he failed to do so he was punished. As a general rule, the headmen of village was well acquainted with the bad character of the village and hardly any offence occurred without his knowledge. Condition of law and order in the country was praiseworthy. Abbas Sarwani writes that in the time of Sher Shah an old woman might place a basketfull of gold ornaments on her hand and could go on a journey. No thief or robber could come near her because of punishment which Sher Shah inflicted.

Intelligence department : Sher Shah revived the dak chowki and the espionage system of Alau-din-Khiliji, Spies were posted in all important towns with instructions to transmit to the court whatever information they thought necessary to be placed before the King. Much of the success of Sher Shah's administration was due to the efficiency of his spy system. The big chiefs and grandees did not dare to be haughty or careless against their subordinates.

Currency Reforms : He abolished all old and mixed metal currency and introduced new coins. He found on his accession that the currency system had practically broken down due to the debasement of the then current coins and the absence of a fixed ratio between the coins of various metals. He introduced coins of fixed weight in place of uncertain weightage. Both the silver rupee and copper dam had their halves, quarters, eights and the sixteenth so that common people may not experience any difficulty in transactions. He increased the number of royal mints. During the reigns of Babur and Humayun the number of mints was 7. Now the number of mints rose to 23. Sher Shah's name and title and

the place of mints were invariably inscribed on the coins in Arabic characters. Some of his coins bore his name in Devnagiri script. Edward Thomas observed that Sher Shah's reign constitutes an important test point in the annals of Indian coinage, not only in its specific mint reforms but also as of correcting the progressive deterioration of the previous kings and as introducing many of these reforms which the succeeding Mughals claimed as their own. His silver rupee weight 180 grains of which 175 grains was pure silver. This rupee minus its inscription lasted through out the Mughal period and was retained by the East India company up to 1835. V.A. Smith rightly observed that it was the basis of the British currency. Sher Shah's gold coin was known as Asharfi, and it contained 167 grains of pure gold.

Justice : Sher Shah considered it his duty to do justice to every body. He was inspired by high ideas of justice. He was very particular in giving all protection to the poor and weak and to save them from oppression and injustice. An anecdote is recorded how he inflicted a harsh punishment on his nephew who had thrown a betel leaf on the wife of a goldsmith, when she was taking bath in the enclosures of her house. Similarly, Shujat Khan, Governor of Malwa, had unjustly withheld a part of the Jagirs of his soldiers. When Sher Shah heard of it he ordered due punishment although Shujat Khan had, meanwhile rectified his mistake by restoring the Jagirs.

Dar-ul-Adalat : Sher Shah established a Dar-ul-Adalat or a court in every Sarkar. There were no written laws during his reign. Religious laws (Shariat) and customary laws were kept in view, while delivering judgement. Panchayats settled dispute in villages. He held courts on Wednesday and himself tried both appeals and original cases. The Chief Munsif was responsible for administering civil justice in the district, while the Amins discharged the same duty in the pargana. The Chief Shiqdar with the assistance of qazi tried the criminal cases. The author of Tabqat-i-Akbari writes that so great was Sher Shah's fear and his love of justice that even the robbers and thieves kept watch over the merchants goods.

Religious Policy : Sher Shah was liberal in his religious views but he was not as tolerant and broad-minded as Akbar. He did not abolish jaziya (Poll Tax). During the wars against Raja Puran Mal of Raisin and Maldev of Marwar he demolishing the temples of Hindus and massacred them. But apart from an exhibition of bigotry during a campaign against the Hindu King, he was on the whole, a tolerant ruler and did not think it wise to follow a policy of religious persecution. He employed many Hindus in the army and revenue department. He maintained his official records in Devnagari also for the convenience of Hindus. In normal circumstances therefore, Sher Shah may be said to have been tolerant towards the Hindus.

Military Reforms : Sher Shah realised the importance of efficient military establishment. Sher Shah took personal interest in the army and recruited troops and fixed the salary of individual soldiers by careful personal observations of individuals recruits. Sher Shah revived Ala-ud-Din's practice of branding (Daag) horses in order to prevent the troops from selling away the government horses and bringing instead worthless ones at the time of musters. Besides, he instituted the practice of recording the descriptive roll (Hullia) of soldiers. As a result of these reforms much of the corruption was eliminated and army became a powerful instrument of force. According to Abbas, he had 1,50,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry armed with matchlocks. Important forts such as Gwalior, Rasien, Chunar and Rohtas were strongly garrisoned.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public welfare was the main achievements of Sher Shah. He undertook many welfare activities to improve the foot of the common people.

1. **Roads :** Sher Shah undertook the construction of many vital roads for better communications, Development of the means of communication was essential for military as well as commercial purpose. He constructed many roads in order to connect his capital with various parts of his empire. Four of his roads are well known. One of which originated from Sonargoan in Bangla Desh to the Indus was 1500 'kms' in length. It was known as 'Sarak-i-Azam' and might be identified with the modern Grank Trunk Road. The second ran from Agra to Jodhpur and Chittor, and fourth from Lahore to Multan. On either side of the road Sher Shah ordered the plantation of Shady trees. The total length of these roads was about 3400 miles. These roads promoted the feelings of national integration, because people of different religious could travel easily. Trade and commerce flourished. These roads facilitated the movement of armies from one part of the country to another.

2. **Sarais and their importance :** Along the roads, Sher Shah built sarais at a distance of two mile each. Total number of sarias was about 1100. According to Abbas there were seprate quarters for the Hindus and the Muslims in each *Sarai*. Provision was made to station horses of the servants of the postal departments. Each Sarai had a well and mosque with an *Immam* (who led to people in prayer) and a *Muzzan* (who called people to prayer). Besides being useful for travellers. The sarais were particularly meant to serve as houses for the servants of the postal department who carried the royal mail. They were provided with ration and this class comprised both Hindus and Muslims, there were seprate arrangements for their food. Hot and cold water was available in the sarai. Some land in the vicinity of each *Sarai* was endowed to it for its maintenance. The roads and Sarais were useful not only for the transportation of troops but they also served the purpose of *Dak Chowki* of the postal department. Each Sarai had

two horses for the postal department for carrying the royal mail to the next sarai and thus supplying the Government with news from distant parts of the kingdom.

3. **Sher Shah as a Forerunner of Akbar :** Akbar raised administration on the foundations laid by Sher Shah. Akbar tried his best to present himself as a national monarch of India. Sher Shah had taken some steps in this direction. Sher Shah established a strong government at the centre and introduced a uniform system of administration in the different parts of his empire. National unity and public welfare were the main objectives before Sher Shah. In the military reforms too, he proved a fore runner of Akbar. During the time of Sher Shah royal horses were branded on one thing whereas during the reign of Akbar they were branded on both the things. On the left there was a brand of the 'Jagidar' and on the right that of the government. Sher Shah employed many Hindus in various departments. Akbar made improvements in every sphere. Sher Shah made separate arrangements for food for Hindus and Muslims. He did not interfere with the religious feelings of the Hindus. He respected their religious leaders, went to pilgrimage to sacred places of Hindus and thus won their hearts. On account of his religious tolerance. Akbar is considered as one of the greatest monarchs of the world. Akbar is praised for his currency reforms but here also the initiative was taken by Sher Shah. Similarly Akbar followed in the footsteps of Sher Shah in various fields, viz administrative reforms, land revenue settlement, welfare of peasantry, control over the feudal chiefs etc. In the beginning of his reign. Akbar continued the land revenue system of Sher Shah, later he effected many improvements. In short we can say that Akbar raised the administrative superstructure over the foundations laid by Sher Shah.

CHARACTER AND ESTIMATE OF SHER SHAH

According to Erskine, "the greatness of Sher Shah lies in the fact that before Akbar there was no king in India like Sher Shah, a guardian of public welfare and a peace giver. "It is true that Akbar won greater fame and success than Sher Shah but as a general and statesman Sher Shah was not inferior to Akbar.

As a soldier : Sher Shah was a great warrior. He was well-versed in war tactics. He believed that he could legitimately use any means, fair or foul to attain his objects. Malleon writes that Sher Shah possessed the characteristics of both a lion and a fox. With his limited resources he fought against Humayun successfully and turned the Mughal ruler out of India. When he realized that he could not win a battle by force he used strategem and diplomacy. He was a great general. As a general he invariably displayed consummate skill and cunning in every campaign and the joys and sorrows of fortune. He did not avoid their company but mixed with them on intimate terms. When Humayun's emissaries visited him on the eve of the battles of Chausa they found him digging a trench

along with his troops. He had a dynamic magnetism and was loyally served and loved by his men.

As a Nation Builder : He was an able statesmen. According to Crooks, Sher Shah was the first man who tried to build an empire on the basis of the good will of his subjects. He realized that in order to strengthen his empire he had to win the heart of his subjects and also show justice and toleration to the Hindus. According to Qanungo, Sher Shah may justly compete with Akbar the claim of being the first who attempted to build up an Indian nation by reconciling the followers of the rival creeds. According to Zulfiqar Ali Shah, Sher Shah was an apostle of Indian unity; had he lived longer he would have laid strong foundation for the building of a strong Indian nation Dr. Tripathi. Dr. A.L. Srivastava and some other historians are of the opinion that Sher Shah was guided by the motive of enlightened self-interest rather than by national patriotism. But they also admit that Sher Shah occupies a place of distinction in Indian history on account of his indefatigable industry and devotion to duty numerous reforms and level of justice.

A great Administrator : Sher Shah was a genius of high order. To him belonged the credit of not only reviving the old and tried institutions of the land, but also administering them successfully by eliminating flaws and deficiencies. Some of the traditions established by him in the field of administration continued through out the Mughal period and were even retained during the period of the East India Company.

As a Builder : Sher Shah had a taste for buildings and architecture. He built many hospitals, Sarais and forts during his short reign. The best example of Sher Shah's architecture is his masuoleum at Sahasaram in Bihar. It was built on a lofty plinth in the midst of a lake. It is considered to be a distinctive example of the Indo-Islamic architecture. Percy Brown also lavishes praise on Sher Shah's masuoleum for its exquisite design, excellent execution and artistic decoration. Dr. Qanungo adds that while the outer portion of the building which is rather rough, indicates the growing exterior of Sher Shah's character, its beautiful interior speaks of a heart overflowing with kindness. It is a specimen of Muslim art from outside and of Hindu art from within. It is a proof of his broad and secular feelings in the field of architecture.

The Purana Qila at Delhi is said to have been built by Sher Shah. He also built a magnificent fort of the Jhelum and named it Rohtasgarh. He demolished many old buildings at Kanauj and Patliputra and replaced them by new building. Dr. Qanungo says that Sher Shah wanted to build a fort in every Sarkar, but he could not do so because of his very short reign.

Industrious : Although Sher Shah became a king at the age of 58 yet he worked to the administration of the empire.

His place in History : Some historians have not done full justice to this able and benevolent ruler. In the opinion of Sir Woolsley Haig he was one of the greatest Muslim rulers in India. According to Erskine, Sher Shah was the greatest law-giver and guardian of public welfare among Muslim rulers in India before Akbar.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Sharma, S.R. : The Crescent in India, pp. 269-301.
2. Tirpathi, R.P. : Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire, pp. 115-141 (3rd Ed.)
3. Srivastva, A.L. : The Mughal Empire, pp. 71-110 (4th Ed.)
4. Pandey, A.B. : Later Medieval India, pp. 54-81.
5. Meera Singh : Medieval History of India.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS :

- (1) Estimate the character of Sher Shah Suri.
- (2) Describe the Local Administration under him.
- 3) What were the Features of his Central Govt.? Explain.

LESSON NO. 2.3

RAJPUT POLICY OF THE MUGHALS

The Mughals in India had to reckon with the resistance of various Rajput States in North India. Babur fought a major battle with Rana Sanga at Kanwah and defeated him. Humayun failed to win over Rajput goodwill when he did not decide to help the Rajputs against Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. With Akbar, began a definite policy on the part of the Mughal Government to enlist the support and goodwill of the Rajputs. We shall now study the various stages in the development of this policy.

Principal Rajput States :

In the latter half of 16th century, there were six important independent Rajput State in Rajputana. They were Mewar (Modern Udaipur), Marwar, Amber (Jaipur), Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Ranthambhore. Mewar with its capital at Chittor attained its glory under Rana Sanga (1509-28 A.D.), a man of remarkable military ability. He fought successfully against Malwa, Delhi, and Gujarat, but was defeated by Babur in the battle of Kanwaha (1527 A.D.) Though Mewar lost its former glory after the death of Rana Sanga yet the Sisodias of Mewar put up a tough resistance against the might of the Mughals and never submitted to dishonourable or unequal terms.

Marwar was ruled by the Rathores. It was one of their famous ruler, Jodha (1438 A.D.-1488 A.D.) who build the fort of Jodhpur, founded a town there and made it his capital. The most important ruler of Marwar was Maldeva (1532-1562 A.D.) under whom the dynasty reached its peak but his successors, submitted tamely to the Mughals and secured the *mansabs* of the highest class at the Mughal court.

The state of Ambar, which was founded in the 10th century A.D., was ruled by Kachhawaha Rajputs. It was the first state of Rajputana which submitted without resistance and also cemented its friendship with the Mughals by a matrimonial alliance.

Policy of Babur and Humayun :

When Babur was at Kabul, he was invited by Rana Sanga, the ruler of Mewar. But with the passage of time, both of them began to suspect each other and ultimately came to a clash in the battle of Kanwah (For detail see lesson No. 9) After this Babur lived only for three years and most of this time was spent in wars. Therefore, he did not have much time to formulate a definite policy

towards the Rajputs.

Humayan (his successor), who was offered a golden opportunity of befriending Sisodiyas, when they were hard pressed by Bahadur Shah of Gujrat but he did not take advantage of the situation. After Humayun's expulsion from India, Maldev, the ruler of the Marwar extended a hand of friendship to him, but he failed to grasp it at a proper time.

Background of Akbar's Policy :

First, Akbar, who was a statesman of great calibre, had fully realised that the Mughal empire could never be safe without the active co-operation of the powerful militia of the Rajputs. The history of the past 350 years bore ample testimony to the fact that it was impossible to establish a stable government in India without winning over the help and co-operation of the Rajputs. As a master of statecraft, he knew, that the Rajputs were a divided house in itself and it could be properly exploited for the Mughal cause.

Secondly, from the beginning of his career he had to face the rebellion and distrust of the Muslim officials and followers, most of whom could not be relied upon. There were numerous examples of the treacherous conduct of the Mughal officials like Shah Abdul Mali, Shah Mansoor, Adham Khan, Asaf Khan and Abdullah Khan Uzbeg. Even Bairam Khan rose against him and stained the record of his life by long loyalty to the Mughal cause. Thirdly, Afghans who became the sworn enemies of Mughals after they lost the empire, were the dominant power in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. If Suleman Karrani was assuming the leadership of Afghan on the one hand, on the other Sher Khan the son of late sultan Adil Shah was dreaming to overthrow the Mughal power in the eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh. But, the Mughals were foreigners and had relied mainly on foreign troops for their wars in India. However, it was not always possible to secure a regular supply of troops, and these whenever available had no love and sympathy for the local population. Akbar first understood its problem in its totality and therefore, in his enlightened self-interests sought the friendship of Rajputs. Co-operation with Rajputs could help him to transform his foreign rule into a national ruling dynasty. Fourthly, it is also said that as Akbar was born under the roof of a Rajput, he had affection and love for the community as a whole. So he tried, as far as possible, to convert the Rajputs into honourable allies of an empire of friendly persuasion. But, it is notable that whenever persuasion failed he resorted to war.

Akbar aimed not merely at the political and military integration of the Rajput States to the Mughal Empire. In addition, he conceded to the Rajputs, a position of honour and eminence in the Mughal empire. Rajputs were given representation in state services. Rajputs enjoyed perfect religious freedom. In short from the time of Akbar, Rajputs became a source of political and military

strength and also provided a cadre of able and loyal officers of the Mughal state.

If we look into the history of Akbar's relations with different Rajput states, we find that he had to deal with three different categories. Firstly, rulers, who submitted before Akbar and were given high ranks in the Mughal Court e.g. Amber (Jaipur), Bikaner, Jodhpur, and Jaisalmer, Secondly, those who offered tough resistance but later on joined the Mughals as honourable allies e.g. Ranthambhor. Thirdly, there were the Ranas of Mewar, who resisted Akbar and carried on a tough struggle against heavy odds.

Relations with Amber (First Rajput Mughal) Marriage:

In 1526 Akbar was going on a pilgrimage to the tomb of Khawaja Muin-ud-din. Chisti, Raja Bihari Mal of Amber along with his son Bhagwan Dass met him at a place called Sabhar which is midway between Agra and Ajmer. The Raja was given great honour, and the friendship between them was further strengthened by a matrimonial alliance. Raja Behari Mal's daughter who was married to Akbar received the title of Mariya Zamani and she became afterwards the mother of Jahangir. This marriage according to Dr. Beni Prasad symbolised the dawn of a new era in Indian Politics; it gave the country a line of remarkable sovereigns; it secured for four generations of Mughal Emperors the services of some of the greatest captains and diplomats that Medieval India produced. V.A. Smith gives much importance to this marriage and he writes the marriage of the Amber princess can be compared with important events in the history of the world and this greatly helped Akbar to become the emperor of both, the Muslims and Hindus.

Following Amber's footsteps, Rawal Har Rai of Bikaner, Rawal Askaran of Dungarpur, and Kalyan Mal, the ruler of Bikaner also entered into matrimonial alliance and were given places of honour at the Mughal Court.

Akbar and Marwar :

In 1570, Rao Chandra Sen, the ruler of Marwar waited upon the Emperor and accepted the Suzerainty of the Mughals. But, later on, he rose in rebellion. Akbar defeated and deposed Chandra Sen and planted Raja Uday Singh on the throne of Marwar. He also entered into a Matrimonial alliance with him. Marwar remained loyal to Mughals till the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh in 1678 A.D. It is clear from above the conclusion of matrimonial alliances became one of the important features of Akbar's Rajput policy. As a result of this policy Rajasthan escaped terrible wars and destruction and the Mughals gained without any bloodshed a rapid enhancement in their prestige and power. It may, however, be remembered that although Akbar regarded matrimonial alliance as an aid to lasting friendship, he did not make them obligatory on all as will be clear by the terms of the Treaty of Bundi which he concluded with the Hadas of Ranthambhor.

Conquest of Ranthambhor (1569) :

Surjan Rai Hada, Who was a vassal of Rana of Mewar, was the chief of Ranthambhor. An expedition was sent against him in the year 1568, but it was diverted towards Malwa owing to the rebellion of Mirzas. This task was undertaken next year by the Emperor led the expedition under his personal supervision. The fort of Ranthambhor widely known for its strength and height in Hindustan was besieged by imperial forces. The siege lasted for about a month after which the fort was surrendered to Akbar. Raja Surjan Rai was enrolled as a mansabdar and sent as Governor of Godwana. He was later on transferred to Benars and Chunnar. But most important in the treaty which was signed between Hadas and Mughals. The terms of the treaty clearly indicated the spirit of a compromise and leniency shown by Akbar despite the tough resistance that had been put by the Hadas.

The terms of the treaty were :

- (1) Hadas were not to enter into a matrimonial alliance;
- (2) Chiefs of Ranthambhor were not to be compelled to cross the river attack on the Indus;
- (3) They would never be placed under the command of any other Hindu leader;
- (4) Chiefs of Hadas were not to be forced to perform Sijda at the Mughal Court nor were they to send their females to hold a stall in the Mina Bazar in the festival of Nauroz (New Year's Day) ; and
- (5) That their horses would not be branded with imperial dagh (a flower branded on the forehead of the horse).

This liberal treatment of Akbar was able to convey the enmity of the Hadas into a lasting friendship with the Mughals. The fall of the fortress of Ranthambhor added immensely to the prestige of Akbar. Now he sent Majnu Khan to reduce fort of Kalinjur in Bundhel Khand. Raja Ram Chander, its ruler had already heard the fate of Ranthumbhor, and therefore, he surrenders the fort to the Mughal commander. He was given a *Jagir* (estate) near Allahabad, Kalinjar was placed under the charge of Majnu Khan.

Relations with Mewar :

Rana Rai Singh of Mewar who traced his descent from Raja Ram Chander, the hero of Ramayana, was the greatest prince in Rajputana. Akbar was clear in his mind that without subjugation of Mewar, his aim of becoming the paramount lord of northern India could not be realised. His intention was to treat Chittor as a stepping stone to his further conquest of whole of Hindustan. Moreover, the Rana had given shelter to Baz Bahadur, the ruler of Malwa. This was considered as affront by the Emperor. In the year 1567 when Akbar was encamped at Dholpur, Shakti Singh, son of Rana Udai Singh waited upon him.

One day when Akbar jokingly told the prince of his intention of marching against Mewar the latter quietly slipped from the royal camp and informed his father about Akbar's intention. Akbar was furious at being thus misrepresented and resolved to punish the ruler of Mewar.

He marched against Chittor and laid siege to the fortress. Rana Udai Singh convened a council of his chiefs. They advised him to retire to the hills. The fort, therefore, was left in the care of two brave warriors Jaimal and Fatta with 8,000 Rajput soldiers under their command. The Rajputs fought gallantly. After six months of severe fighting, one day Jaimal was wounded by a bullet from Akbar's gun. On the advice of Jaimal, the Rajput ladies performed the customary rite of *Jauhar*, and the gates of the fort were then opened. The entire garrison died fighting to the last man. Akbar after entering the city ordered a general massacre in which according to Abul Faizal about 30,000 persons lost their lives. After appointing Asaf Khan as the Governor, he returned on foot to Ajmer to pay his respects to the shrine of Khawaja Chisti. However, Akbar's admiration of Rajput's valour found expression in the installation of the statue of Jaimal and Fatta at the gate of his fort at Agra.

Akbar and Maharana Partap (1572-1597) :

Akbar's conquest of Rajputana was almost complete by 1569 but for some portions of Mewar which were still under the control of Rana Sanga. But the Rana could not survive more than four years after the loss of Chittor. He died in the year 1572 and was succeeded by his son Partap, Rana Partap embodied in his person the fighting qualities of his fore fathers Rana Kumbha and Rana Sanga. He gladly sacrificed all the pleasures of life to the honour of the House of Mewar. Though, from the very beginning, his task seemed hopeless before the might of the Mughals, still he was a man of dauntless courage and spirit. He fought single handed for 25 years against the Great Mughal who was at the time "immeasurably the sole richest monarch on the face of this earth." (Smith). His aim was to secure the freedom of Mewar and to re-occupy Chittor. Therefore he oiled his military machine by repairing the forts of Goganda and Kubhalner. He is reported to have spurned the most favoured terms offered by Akbar through Raja Man Singh. War was inevitable at this stage. Akbar sent Asaf Khan and Raja Man Singh in 1576 to chastise the proud Rana. The Mughal Army arrived at the pass of Haldighat at where a great battle was fought between two forces of unequal strength. Rana Partap and his followers fought very bravely but were defeated. Rana Partap had to retire to the hills and Goganda was occupied by the Mughals. According to Badaoni, who was himself present on the battlefield, Man Singh deliberately did not pursue the Rana after the latter's fight. This displeased Akbar who removed him from the court of some time. A man of more balanced views, Nizam-ud din Ahmed the author of "Tabquaiti Akbari" on the

other hand says that the Emperor rewarded Man Singh and amirs with robes and horses after the victory.

Defeated but the high spirited Rana soon started recovering his lost territories. He was able to reoccupy most of Mewar except Chittor, Ajmer and Mandalgarh. He died in 1597. Col. Tod in his book, 'Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan' has aptly noted the death of Rana Partap, "Thus closed the life of Rajput, whose memory is even now idolized by every Sisodia and will continue to be so till renewed oppression shall extinguish the remaining spirit of patriotic feeling." He further observes, "There is not a pass in the alpine Aravalli that is not glorified by some deed of Partap, some brilliant victory or often more glorious defeat."

After Maharana Partap his son Amar Singh succeeded him. Akbar again sent Prince Salim and Raja Man Singh to invade Mewar. Despite Amar Singh's defeat the campaign could not be continued as Raja Man Singh was recalled to suppress Usman Khan in Bengal. Akbar's desire to conquer Mewar could not be realised during his lifetime as his illness and other engagements kept him busy elsewhere.

Significance of Akbar's Rajput Policy :

Akbar's Rajput policy was successful to a large extent and bears testimony to Akbar's political foresight and statesmanship. Firstly, with the subjugation of a number of Rajput states, the Mughal's became free of any potential danger from the Rajputs. Secondly, Mughal Government enlisted the services and loyal cooperation of Rajputs in civil and military administration. Thirdly, with the positive help of the Rajputs. Akbar could successfully crush his Muslim opponents; such a policy widened the base of Muslim government in India from a dynastic into a national state. Fifthly, this policy resulted in peace and security within the country and eventually led to an efficient administration and prosperity. Finally, such a broad based policy promoted the growth of an Indo-Muslim culture and progress in all spheres of life.

JAHANGIR'S RAJPUT POLICY

Jahangir followed the broad features of Akbar's Rajput policy. The subjugation of Mewar, which was left unaccomplished by Akbar was taken up by Jahangir.

Jahangir and Mewar :

The task of Mewar's subjugation which was left unaccomplished by Akbar was completed during Jahangir's rule. One year after ascending the throne. Jahangir sent his second son Parvez at the head of a huge army to invade Mewar. An indecisive battle was fought between Amar Singh and the prince at Dear pass. Parvez who was recalled on account of Khusro's rebellion could not accomplish much. Several other expeditions were sent till the year 1613 when Jahangir entrusted the task of defeating the Sisodias to prince Khurram (Shah Jahan). Khurram was able to put a great pressure on Rana Amar Singh, by

completely cutting off supplies and compelled him to begin peace negotiations. A treaty was concluded laying the following terms :

- (1) Jahangir was recognised by the Rana as his Paramount Lord.
- (2) Mewar (Including Chittor) was given back to the Rana.
- (3) Rana was not required to enter into matrimonial alliance.
- (4) Chittor fort was not to be fortified and repaired.

Jahangir accepted the terms of the treaty. He did not insist that Rana should give him any tribute or conclude any matrimonial alliance. According to Dr. Ishwari Prasad the attitude of Jahangir in this respect was quite praiseworthy.

Thus ended a long and bloody chapter in the history of Mewar-Mughal relations. During his regime Jahangir followed his father's policy of friendly alliance with Rajputs. But at the Mughal Court and in the imperial services Rajputs were not given as high positions as they had been conferred upon during the day of Akbar. This was probably due to this increasing influence of Nurjahan under whose patronage a number of Persians joined the Mughal imperial service.

Policy of Shah Jahan towards the Rajput

Shah Jahan, who, had introduced certain anti-Hindu measures, still continued to be friendly towards Rajputs. Only once when Rana Jagat Singh of Mewar in 1655 refortified Chittor he sent an expedition against him. The Rana apologised and dismantled the new additions to the fort. Rajputs were given high positions and were appointed as governors and commanders by Shah Jahan. Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur held the rank of Governor and enjoyed the confidence of Shah Jahan.

AURANGZEB AND THE RAJPUTS

The accession of Aurangzeb, marked a material change in Mughal-Rajput relations. Those Rajputs who in the days of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, had become the pillars of Mughal rule in India, now became sworn enemies of Mughals on account of Aurangzeb's unwise policy based on fanaticism. He instigated Rajputs against the Rajputs. For example, Raja Jai Singh of Amber was given a dose of poison by his son Kirat on the instigation of Aurangzeb. Some more reasons for this action of Aurangzeb being : firstly, he regarded Jai Singh as future leader of Hindus and therefore a strong opponent of his religious policy; and secondly, he did not like the friendly attitude of Raja Jai Singh towards Shivaji. After this he returned his attention towards the kingdom of Mewar. Maharaja Jaswant Singh, its ruler who had fought against Aurangzeb in the war of succession, was transferred to Jamrud in Afghanistan in disgrace after his failure in Deccan where he died in 1678. Immediately after this, Aurangzeb placed his puppet Inder Singh, grandson of Jaswant's brother on

the throne of Marwar. The whole area was brought under Mughal rule by appointing Muslim officers in Marwar, Temples were demolished and Jazia was revived.

Aurangzeb's refusal to accept the succession of Ajit Singh to the throne of Marwar.

In February 1679, two posthumous sons were born to Jaswant Singh at Lahore. One of the whom died and the other Ajit Singh lived to fight for the throne of Marwar, which he secured in 1709 after a protracted struggle with the help of Durga Dass, a son of Jaswant Singh's minister. Aurangzeb wanted to bring up Ajit Singh as a Mughal prince, when he was taken to Delhi by Rathors. This caused a great resentment in the Rajput Camp. In this hour of Crisis Durga Dass, a devotee of the Marwar royal house escaped with Ajit Singh and windows of Jaswant Singh to Jodhpur. In order to defeat the plan of Durga Dass. Aurangzeb declared that Ajit of Durga Dass was a bogus prince and a prince (who incidentally was the son of milkman) was set up in his harem, as the "real" Ajit Inder Singh was removed from the Gaddi of Marwar and a large force, under the command of Prince Akbar was despatched against Marwar. Rajputs were defeated and Marwar's was annexed to the Mughal territory. At this juncture the Rani of Marwar who herself was a Mewar princess appealed to Rana Rai Singh for help. Aurangzeb had demanded Jazia from Rana Rai Singh and had further injured his sentiments by destroying many Hindu temples. Therefore he, like a true Sisodia, made common cause with the Rathors. Aurangzeb now attacked Mewar and the Rana took refuge in the hills of Rajasthan. According to Jadu Nath Sarkar the Emperor ordered the demolition of 186 Hindu Temples and placed Chittor under prince Akbar.

The Rajputs now adopted guerrilla tactics of warfare which completely demoralized the imperial army. When Aurangzeb was informed about it, he sent prince Azam to deal with Mewar. Akbar was transferred to Marwar. Prince Akbar had realised the value of Rajputs to the empire and had patched up with them to raise a standard of revolt against his father. At this time, Aurangzeb was at Ajmer and had a few soldiers at his command and Akbar had an opportunity to defeat his father. This is clear from Aurangzeb's remarks which he made at that time. He is reported to have said that he was defenceless and that was why the young hero Akbar was delaying when he had a golden chance at his disposal. But Prince Akbar wasted his time in pleasure and gave ample time to Alamgir to get help from Prince Muazzam. When finally every thing was set for a grand battle between Aurangzeb and Prince Akbar and Rajputs the former turned the tables through trickery. He wrote a letter to Prince Akbar congratulating him on turning the Rajputs to a position to doom. This letter as arranged by him reached Durga Dass and caused a division among his supporters. At this, many of his Muslim followers changed side and joined Aurangzeb. Akbar had to flee for his life and

was escorted safely by Durga Dass and Jai Singh (Successor of Raj Singh) to Shambhuji in Deccean. He fled from Deccean to Persia and died in 1704.

Treaty of Udhaipur

After much bloodshed, a treaty of peace (1681) was concluded between Raja Jai Singh of Mewar and Aurangzeb, through the mediation of Prince Azam. The terms of the treaty were :

- (1) The Rana ceded the district of Mandal, Pur and Bednor to the Mughals in lieu of Jazia.
- (2) He was given a mansab of 5000.
- (3) Mughals withdrew from Mewar and recognised Jai Singh as the Maharana.
- (4) Rana would not repair the fort of Chittor.
- (5) Raja would not help the Rathors against the Mughals.

But the Rathores of Mewar carried on the war for thirty long years (1679-1709), till Bahadur Shah the successor of Aurangzeb recognised the claim of Ajit Singh to the throne of Mewar.

These ruinous war caused a good deal of loss to the Mughal treasury.

Mughals were deprived of Rajput help and Aurangzeb had to fight single handed in Deccean. The unstatesman like reversal of Akbar's Rajput policy by Aurangzeb was responsible for creating chaos and anarchy in the empire. Expressing similar views. Dr. Ishwari Prashad also remarks that a vast empire and narrow brain could never work together. In spite of shrewd political awareness, Aurangzeb adopted a very narrow minded Rajput policy which proved a major factor in the collapse of the Mughal empire.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Sarkar and Datta : Modern Indian History, Vol. 1, pp. 205-16
2. Sharma, S.R. : The Crescent in India, pp. 342-49, 62,450-53,563-73
3. Iswari Parshad : A Short History of Muslim Rule in India. pp. 261-73
4. Smith, V.A. : Akbar the Great Mughal, Chapter IV & V.
5. Srivastava A.L. : The Mughal Empire, pp. 515-18
6. Col. Tod : Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan.
7. Narang, K.S. and Gurcharan Singh : Muslim Rule in India.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PRACTICE

1. Discuss critically the Rajput policy of Aurangzeb. What were its results? Explain.
2. Write Short notes on :
 - (i) Maharana Partap

- (ii) Druga Dass Rathore

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE

Q.1. Fill in the blanks :

- (i) In the later-half of the 16th century.....were six important independent Rajput States in Rajputana.
 (ii)was the capital of Mewar.
 (iii) Rathor ruled over.....
 (iv) Amber was ruled over by the.....Rajput.
 (v) Raja Biharimal married his.....to Akbar.

2. Mark () the correct statements :

- (i) Udai Singh was the ruler of Mewar/Marwar/Jaisalmer.
 (ii) Udai Singh died in 1568 A.D./1572 A.D.
 (iii) Battle of Haldighat was fought in 1576 A.D./1597 A.D.
 (iv) Who of the following revolted against Aurangzeb ?
 (a) Prince Azam
 (b) Prince Muazzam
 (c) Prince Akbar

CHECK UP YOUR POSITION

Excellent	:	Above 6 correct answers.
Good	:	5-6 correct answers.
Satisfactory	:	4 correct answers.
Unsatisfactory	:	Below 4 correct answers.

Key to answers :

- Q.1. (i) Mewar, Marwar, Amber, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Ranthambhor.
 (ii) Chittor (iii) Marwar (iv) Kachwahar (v) daughter
 Q.2. (i) Marwar (ii) 1572 A.D. (iii) 1576 A.D. (iv) Prince Akbar

LESSON NO. 2.4

RELIGIOUS POLICY OF THE MUGHALS

Introduction : Mughal Emperors with the exception of Aurangzeb, believed in the policy of religious toleration. They realised that in a country like India, it was essential to keep the laws of God and the principles of state separate. It was according to this principle that the Mughal Emperors never resorted to ruthless intolerance. It is note worthy that Mughal Emperors regarded non-Muslims as much their subjects and as much under their protection as the people of their own faith. Under them, Hindus were eligible even for their highest responsible posts. They were allowed to profess their own religion and social system while enjoying justice and full rights of subjects, officers, soldiers statesmen and public servants were recruited without any distinction of caste, colour and creed.

Babur's Religious Policy

Unlike his ancestor Timur, Babur was tolerant in the matter of religion. No doubt in the beginning, in order to arouse his followers particularly in the battle of Khanwaha against the Rajputs, he made use of the religious cry - *Jehad* but after establishing himself, more or less he abandoned the policy of religious fanaticism. In his 'Memories', we find no mention of the destruction of Hindu temples or a wholesale massacre of the infidels. It is said that Babur in his secret will to his son Humayun impressed upon him the desirability of refraining from the sacrifice of cow, demolition of the places of worship of any community and the quarrels between the Shias and the Sunnis. In short, Babur was almost free from narrow minded religious bigotry.

Humayun's Policy

Like his father Humayun was also free from sectarian bigotry. He cherished little-ill-will towards the Shias. Though himself a Sunni, his chief Begum, Hamida Banu and his most faithful servant Bairam Khan, were Shias. But his attitude towards the Hindus did not rise above the standard of the age. He displayed partiality towards his co-religionists even at the cost of his political interests. His rejection of Karanwati's request to act her brother in protecting Chittor against Bahadur Shah is an example of this kind. As it is well-known, he had refused because Bahadur Shah co-religionist was engaged in a war with the infidels (Karanwati). He even demolished temples at Kalinjar. But Dr. A.L. Srivastava's following conclusion is right. "He was not a bitter prosecutor and he

followed no systematic policy of repression of Hinduism."

Akbar's Policy

His religious policy occupies a distinctive place in the annals of Mughal history. Although he started his career as an orthodox Muslim and earned the title of Ghazi by touching with his sword the head of the captive Hemmu to please his minister Bairam Khan, but after freeing himself of Bairam's tutelage, Akbar rose above the narrow minded dogmatism of his age. Akbar made a definite departure from the traditional Islamic approach.

Akbar's heritage

His association with Sheikh Mubarak and his two sons, Faizi and Abdul Fazal, his matrimonial alliance with Rajput princesses were some of the factors responsible for the change in the religious outlook of the Emperor. In 1562, he married the eldest daughter of Raja Behari Mal of Amber and got prince Saleem from this union. He also married two other Rajput princesses of Bikaner and Jaisalmer in 1570. Even prince Saleem was married to Rajput Princess. Apart from this, there was a definite and deliberate political motive in the religious policy of Akbar; he desired to win over the non-Muslim communities and reach the goal of benevolent despotism.

Akbar opened a new leaf in the religious history of the Mughals. He abolished the pilgrimage tax in 1563 A.D. which, hitherto, Hindus were required to pay. Next year (1564), he abolished the much hated *Jazia*.

Not only the persecution and humiliation of Hindus was stopped, but also Akbar fully associated them with the government of the day. The appointments of Man Singh, Bhagwan Dass, Todarmal, Raj Singh and others to responsible position vouchsafe this fact. It is said that there were at least 8 Hindu provincial Dewans out of 12. Akbar also started the practice of appointing Brahmin judges to decide the cases of Hindus. A large number of Hindus were also appointed to the Revenue Department. They were allowed full freedom to build new temples, repair the old ones and worship as they liked. In various other ways too, Akbar showed his respect and regards for Hinduism. Muslims were advised by the Emperor to stop killing of the cows. Hindu festivals began to be celebrated with great pump and show. Akbar himself participated in the festivals like Dussehra, Diwali and Shivratri. He even attempted to stop the evil practice of Sati. As a result of these measures, Akbar created the basis of a common statehood for all. Apart from liberal and progressive state policies, Akbar as an individual was keenly inquisitive to discover for himself the truth of other religions.

Debates in the Ibadat-Khana

Till 1575, there was no significant change in Akbar's personal religious faith but he was very keen to know the truth of other religions. Consequently in

1575, Akbar ordered the construction of a new building at Fatehpur Sikri, called the Ibadat Khana (the house of worship), for holding religious discussion. In the beginning, Akbar called the learned Ulemas to the Ibadat-Khana. But later on, he also invited the experts of other religions to Ibadat Khan to know what their religions contained. To illustrate it, representatives of Hinduism Jainism. Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity were invited to present their points of view. Purshottam and Devi were the exponents of Hinduism; and Hira Vijay Suri and Vijay Sen expounded Jainism. In 1578, Akbar invited to his court Dastur Meherjee Rana of Nausari. Akbar also invited to Christian Fathers from Goa to his court. The advocates of Islam were Makhdool-ul-Maulik and Abul Nabi. At the end of these debates, Akbar arrived at the realisation of the fundamental truth of all religions. The essence of all religions was same; difference lay in outward forms and manifestation. Akbar was now ready to free himself from the bondage of orthodox Islam and the Ulemas. Moreover, the authority of the Ulemas served as a check to his absolute political supremacy over India.

Reciting the Khutba :

To realise his desire to establish religious leadership. Akbar proceeded step by step. In June 1579, Akbar displaced the chief preacher at the chief Mosque in Fatehpur-Sikri and read the Khutba (which was prepared by Faizi) in his own name. The significance of the act was that it emphasized Akbar's position as the supreme head of the Church (Iman-i-Adil).

The Infallibility Decree :

In September, 1579, the Ulemas received a blow. A document known as the Infallibility Decree was drawn up by which the leading Ulemas transferred into the hands of Akbar their authority in spiritual matters. By means of this decree. Akbar assumed powers with regard to the interpretation of Muslim law. The following were the chief terms of this documents :

- (i) **Obey God :** Obey the Prophet and obey Him, who wields the supreme political power in the state.
- (ii) He who defies the authority of the supreme head, defies God.
- (iii) The position of the Emperors is pre-eminent ever superior to any religious leader.
- (iv) Akbar, the able and just Emperor also possesses spiritual insight.
- (v) In future, in all matters relating to the interpretation of Muslim law, the Emperor's decision would be final. However these decisions required to be in according with the *Shariat* and inspired by the welfare of the people.

Criticism of the Decree of Infallibility

Proclamation of this decree was one of the most significant events of

Akbar's reign. By virtue of this decrees, Akbar became the supreme arbiter in all religious matters. His decisions were binding on all Muslims. Akbar freed himself from the control of the orthodox Ulemas and could implement his progressive and liberal policies. V.A. Smith and Wolseley Haig have compared this document to the Act of Supremacy which was passed and enforced in the reign of Queen Elizabeth in England. According to these two historians, the decree like the Act of Supremacy invested in Akbar the supreme religious and political powers in the State. But according to Professor S.R. Sharma, anybody could question the decision of the Emperor if they were in contradiction with the Quran or the Shariat.

Din-i-Ilahi

The debates and the discussion in the Ibadat-Khana had convinced Akbar of the universal truth in all religions. Difference only lay in outward forms, rituals and ceremonies. Accordingly, in 1582, Akbar promulgated Din-i-Ilahi or the Divine Faith. This new faith was a combination of the fundamental ideas of all religions as Akbar believed that all religions were different paths leading to the same goal.

However, S.R. Sharma feel that it is not apt to regard Din-i-Ilahi as a religion, because the new religion had not prophet, no religious book and no independent religious principles. It was more like an order and it was obligatory on the members of this order to challenge the orthodox point of view in Islam. M.R. Choudhary has compared Din-i-Ilahi to Sufism.

- (i) **Din-i-Ilahi was a Simple Religion :** Followers to his religion only believe in God and regarded Akbar as the religious leader and the Imam of his age.
- (ii) Members keen to embrace this faith were initiated into it only after proper ceremoniae et etiquette.
- (iii) Members of Din-i-Ilahi greeted each other with special greetings. The members of the order were to address 'Allah-u-Akbar' (God is Great) for salute, the answer to which was Jall-e-Jalal-Hu (Splendid in his glory)
- (iv) Every member was expected to celebrate his birthday and to invite other members of this brotherhood to a feast and to bestow alms. Members were advised to refrain from eating meat but vegetarianism did not involve hatred of non-vegetarians.

Spread of Din-i-Ilahi :

Din-i-Ilahi could not become a very popular religion. While Hindus regarded it as another version of Islam, Muslims were reluctant to accept the new faith as some of its ideas and principles were contrary of Islam. As a result the number of followers to Din-i-Allah remained very limited. According to *Ain-i-Akbari* only 18 members from the upper classes embraced this religion. These included-Abul Fazl, Faizi and Shaikh Murabak. Among Hindus only Raja Birbal

embraced the new faith. Among the common people also, the number was never more than a few thousands.

Criticism :

There has been a great difference of opinion about Din-i-Illahi. V.A. Smith, Wolseley Haig and other Anglo-Indian writers have severely criticised this act of Akbar. In the words of Smith, "Din-i-Illahi was an outcome of Akbar's vanity, a monument of folly and not of his wisdom. Akbar wanted to combine his role of political leadership with that of a Prophet. Since it is absolutely impossible to combine the two roles, Akbar's experiment also died with him.

On the other hand Dr. Ishwari Prasad, S.R. Sharma and S.M. Jaffar have effectively proved that Akbar's motives in the promulgation of the new faith were not religious but political. But it should be noted that Akbar enforced no state measures for the propagation of the new faith. In fact to promote a common national feeling Akbar had devised a golden means of toleration and mutual co-existence in the religious sphere.

Jahangir's Policy

Jahangir was as tolerant as his father. Though he had Muslim religious symbols on the coins still he remained free from religious bigotry. He issued instructions to his officials never to force Islam on any one. Sir Thomas Roe remarks that Jahangir heard the laws of Moses, Jesus and Mohammed and men of different faiths.

He did not allow any one to be molested because of his religious views. Manucci tells us that Jahangir had a great affection for the Jesuit Fathers, whom he provided with a house and a church at Lahore. The Jesuit fathers were also allowed to instruct the Mughal Princess. He also took an active part in the celebration of Hindu festivals e.g. Raksha Bandhan, Dussera, Basant and gave a good deal of charity on the day of Sankranti. However, on one or two occasions, Jahangir's behaviour was incompatible with his general policy of toleration. After the conquest of Kangra he ordered a bull to be slaughtered. Similarly, the execution of Guru Arjan Dev also speaks of fanaticism. Thus Jahangir cannot be regarded to be as tolerant as his father.

Shahjahan's Policy

Under Shahjahan, we notice a change in the religious policy of the Mughal government. He was more fanatic and bigoted as compared to his predecessors. Temples under construction at Benars were pulled down. At Mathura, too, the Muslim fanatics raised to the ground the magnificent Hindu temples. After the defeat of the Portuguese, the Christian prisoners, both male and female, were treated badly. They were first asked to embrace Islam. Those who disobeyed were shown kindness; others were imprisoned. After suppressing Jujhar Singh Bundela Shahjahan sent for the members of his family and asked them to

choose between Islam and death. On their refusal, they were executed. These instances confirm the religious intolerance of Shahjahan. But in the matters of administration, Shahjahan, too was as tolerant as his ancestors. According to Dr. Keene the proportion of Hindus among the amirs of Shahjahan was larger than under Akbar. Shahjahan treated both the communities alike. Hindus looked upon him as their benevolent sovereign and remained happy and contented under his rule. This explains the fact why his period is known as the golden age in the history of the Mughals.

Aurangzeb's Policy

With Aurangzeb, the religious policy of the Mughals turns into a story of persecutions due to intolerance. Not only the Hindu, but Muslims of the Shia sect were also persecuted severely. Aurangzeb was an orthodox Muslim and it was through his orthodoxy and religious fervour that he had gained the throne.

Himself extremely Puritan in his attitude on life, he would not allow arts like music to develop. All artistic activities and amusements like drinking, dancing, etc. were banned. He was himself a moralist and he wanted to spread morality in his kingdom, not by the tolerant method of Ashoka, but by his own "Puritan method". A number of farmans were issued by him prescribing all non-Muslim practices or festivals.

He put an end to the practice of *Jarokha Darshan* as it was a Hindu custom. The celebration of Hindu festival like Dussehra, Basant, Holi were also discontinued at the court. Demolition of the Hindu temples was affected with great zeal. Here the demolition of Vishvanath's temples at Benars and Kesar Rai's at Mathura are worth mentioning. In the Rajput wars, about 250 temples were demolished in Mewar alone.

Brahmins were not allowed to preach their idolatrous faith. Additional taxes were imposed on the Hindu traders. Jazia was re-imposed and many Hindu officers were dismissed. In spite of all this, when the tax burden on the Hindus seemed not to be as effective as he had intended, he adopted other means to coerce the Hindus to embrace Islam. Hindu religious fairs were banned. Non-militia Hindu were prohibited to ride or carry arms.

Aurangzeb's aggressive campaign against the Shian Kingdoms of the South were also the result of his religious policy. By this blunder he weakened the solidarity of Deccan which had its *nemesis* in a country wide outburst of rebellions and these proved fatal to Mughal Empire.

Criticism :

The policy of religious persecution by Aurangzeb led to a number of revolts e.g. rebellion of Jats, the Bundhela and the Sikhs. No doubt, Aurangzeb crushed these rising, yet it created permanent discontentment among the non-Muslims and they lost faith in the Mughal Empire. In his religious fanaticism.

Aurangzeb did not even spare the Rajputs, who had shown undisputed loyalty to the Mughals ever since the time of Akbar. Thus the religious policy of Aurangzeb can be regarded as one of the principal causes, which led to the down fall of the Mughal Empire. Whereas Akbar was anxious to reconcile the Hindus and the Muhammadans and wanted to rule over an empire broad-based on the love and good-will of all the subjects, Aurangzeb deliberately followed the old policy of regarding India as a Muslim state.

Aurangzeb did not feel the necessity of divorcing religion from politics and allowed religion to cover statesmanship. Aurangzeb completely forgot that in a vast country like India, Hindus constituted the bulk of the population and his reactionary and orthodox religious policy could hardly succeed. Ultimately Aurangzeb's narrow- minded religious policy led him to destroy a vast and splendid Mughal Empire created by Akbar. V.A. Smith has rightly said, "Nothing in the History of Aurangzeb justifies posterity in classing him as a great king."

Conclusion

In the end, we can say that the religious policy of the Mughals played a prominent role in the Mughal history, particularly in the times of Akbar and Aurangzeb. While Akbar's religious policy created almost a national state, Aurangzeb's commitment to a narrow ideal destroyed the whole edifice of the Mughal Empire.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Ishwari Prashad : A Short History of the Muslim Rule in India, pp. 691-93.
2. Narang, K.S. : Mughal Rule in India, pp. 324-43, 420-28

SUGGESTED QUESTION FOR YOUR PRACTICE

1. Write a detailed note on Din-i-Illahi or Akbar's Religious views

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE

Fill in the blanks :

- (1) (i) Din-I-Illahi was founded by.....in.....
(ii) Pilgrimage tax was abolished in.....by Akbar.
(iii) Jazia was abolished in.....
(iv) Akbar madewith the Hindus.
- (2) Mark (✓) for the correct statement.
(i) A policy of intolerance and persecution was followed by ;
(a) Akbar
(b) Aurangzeb

- (c) Jahangir
- (ii) Who can be called a national ruler ?
- (a) Babur
- (b) Akbar
- (c) Aurangzeb
- (3) Name four Hindus who were appointed to high posts by Akbar :
- (i)..... (ii).....
- (iii)..... (iv).....

CHECK UP YOUR POSITION

- Excellent : Above 6 correct answers.
- Good : 5-6 correct answer
- Satisfactory : 4 correct answers.
- Unsatisfactory : Less than 4 correct answers.

KEY TO ANSWER

- | | | |
|----|-------|----------------------|
| 1. | (i) | Akbar |
| | (ii) | 1563 |
| | (iii) | 1564 A.D. |
| | (iv) | Matrimonial alliance |
| 2. | (i) | b |
| | (ii) | b |
| 3. | (i) | Man Singh |
| | (ii) | Todar Mal |
| | (iii) | Bhagwan Dass |
| | (iv) | Raj Singh. |



B.A. PART- I (SEMESTER-II)

HISTORY-PAPER- B

HISTORY OF INDIA : 1000-1707 A.D.

UNIT NO. : 2

Department of Distance Education
Punjabi University, Patiala

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Lesson Nos :

- 2.1 : Establishment of Mughal Empire under Babur
- 2.2 : Sher Shah Suri and His- Administration
- 2.3 : Rajput Policy of the Mughals
- 2.4 : Religious Policy of the Mughals
- 2.5 : Shivaji : His Conquests and Administration
- 2.6 : Central, Provincial and Judicial Administration of the Mughals
- 2.7 : Land Revenue and Mansabdari Systems
- 2.8 : Social and Economic Life under the Mughals

Note : Students can download the syllabus from the departments website www.dccpbi.com

**SHIVAJI : HIS CONQUESTS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF MARATHA
EMPIRE,
ADMINISTRATION AND ESTIMATE OF HIS PERSONALITY**

Early Life of Shivaji : Shivaji was the son of Shahji Bhonsle and was born in the fort of Shivner, near the city of Junnar on 20th April, 1627. According to some historians, he was born on 9th March, 1630. The first version is considered to be more authentic. His mother Jijabai was from the Yadav family. She was a highly devout and pious lady. Shahji Bhonsle was holding a high post under the Sultan of Bijapur and gained popularity as a commander. The marriage of Shahji and Jijabai was a sort of political alliance which did not last long.

Shahji married another beautiful lady, Tukabai. Though Shahji and Shivaji loved each other immensely and Shahji had some regard of Jijabai also, but still there was something lacking, which was essential in a loyal husband and an affectionate father. Consequently this all made Jijabai to concentrate her attention on bringing up Shivaji. In October, 1636 Jijabai and Shivaji moved to their Poona estate and lived in the house popularly known as *Lal Mahal* (Red Palace). Dadaji Konda Dev was appointed as their guardian. Shivaji lived here for about eleven years. During these years Shivaji received the best possible training from Dadaji Konda Dev who was an expert administrator, diplomat and commander. Soon he became adept in the art of government, diplomacy and war. In addition to this, Jijabai used to narrate to his son the stories of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and the other renowned Hindu heroes and warriors of the bygone epic ages, and thereby she infused in him a great spirit to defend his country, the cow and religion. According to Ranade, "if ever great men owed their greatness to the inspiration of their mothers, the influence of Jijabai was a factor of prime importance in the making of Shivaji's career, and the chief source of strength." Besides, his mother and Dadaji Konda Dev, Guru Ramdas also exercised profound influence in moulding the character of Shivaji. He inspired a spirit of patriotism in Shivaji. At the same time, Guru Ramdas preached to him the gospel of his special role in this world. God has sent him here for the protection of cow and Brahmin. The feelings changed Shivaji. In him grew an intense fervour to become the protector of cow and Brahmin (*Chattar Patti Go Brahmin- Pratipalik*). Besides, he was possessed by a strong ambition for carving out an independent Maratha state.

His Early Conquests : Immediately after 1640 he started his career of

military conquests and captured a few forts in the neighbourhood of Poona. He captured the fort of Torna in 1646 A.D. from the commander of Bijapur and a booty of two lakhs of rupees fell into his hands. This amount was went on further consolidation of his position and the construction of a new fort named Rajgarh. Dadaji Konda Dev did not like these activities of Shivaji. When he died on March 7, 1647, Shivaji shifted his headquarters from Poona to Rajgarh. In 1648 A.D. Shivaji conquered the fort of Purandhar, which was then under the control of Nalaji Nikanth. Shivaji conquered this fort by diplomacy. After this he seized the fort of Supa. By these conquests he became the master of the territories between the rivers Bhima and Nirah and Poona and Shirwal. The forts of Chakan, Purandhar, Supa and Barawati were now brought under his control. Here he established his administration efficiently. Then he advanced towards Konkan and occupied the territory of Kalayani. The Sultan of Bijapur was so enraged at this outrageous act of Shivaji that in retaliation he arrested his father and confiscated his *jagir*. He also developed friendship with the England and Portugese neighbours who had established factories in Rajputs, Wangorala and Chaul. He extended his dominion to the western coast and tried to protect it with the aid of naval force. Shivaji also developed friendship with the Siddis (a Muslim clan) of Janjira. By these activities, Shivaji secured the release of his father, Shahji Bhonsle, from the custody of Bijapur state and helped in getting a respectable position for him.

Conquest of Javli : He conquered the famous fort of Javli in 1656. The estate of Javli was in possession of Chandra Rao Maur, a Maratha noble. He had formed an anti Shivaji alliance with the Bijapur Governor and blocked Shivaji's expansion in the south and the south west. This threw a challenge to Shivaji's rising power because he was cherishing a very high ambition. Thus, with a view to capture the fort of Javli and getting rid of Chandra Rao he drew up a plan. He secured the murder of Chandra Rao by a hired assasin and immediately attacked Javli and occupied the fort. His son escaped but the manager of *jagir* Hanumant Rai Maur, was put to the sword. Consequently, Shivaji captured the entire *jagir* or Javli. The conquest of Javli was a landmark in Shivaji's career, as it owned a door for conquest of fresh territories in the south and west of his newly established kingdom. Secondly about a thousand men of Maur cavalry joined Maratha services and thus it greatly enhanced the strength of Shivaji's forces. Thirdly, he acquired a huge treasure that the Maurs had accumulated for generations. So with the conquest of Javli, Shivaji gained a very solid and many-sided victory. Now he turned his attention towards North Konkan, conquered important territories such as Kalyan Bhiwandi and Mahali. The Sultan of Bijapur once again sent his army to defeat Shivaji but it could not attain success.

Clash with Bijapur : Above triumphs of Shivaji greatly perturbed the rulers of Bijapur State. In order to punish the Maratha Chief, Sultan of Bijapur sent

Commander Afzal Khan to bring Shivaji dead or alive. The general boasted that he would bring Shivaji as a captive in Chains without dismounting from his horse. He left Bijapur in September, 1659 and penetrated into the Maratha country and planned to attack Shivaji in Poona, but he immediately realized the difficulty of encountering Shivaji there. Therefore, he tried to achieve his aim by deceit and diplomacy. He sent Krishanji Bhaskar to Shivaji to request him to come and see him (Afzal) at Shivaji's own terms but in fact the invitation was aimed at treachery. Shivaji got scent of Afzal Khan's treacherous design from Krishanji Bhaskar. So Shivaji remained very cautious.

Shivaji Meeting with Afzal Khan : The meeting between Shivaji and Afzal Khan took place in Partapgarh. In the very beginning Afzal Khan embraced Shivaji and tried to tighten his grasp around his neck in order to strangle him, but the clever Maratha Chief did not give him a chance and plunged his *bichchawa* into his bowel. Afzal Khan fell badly wounded on the ground and his army was attacked by the Marathas and completely routed. This episode caused a server set-back for the state of Bijapur. Historians hold divergent views about this episode. Khafi Khan, and Grant Duff accuse Shivaji of having treacherously murdered Afzal Khan, but Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar is of the view that the Shivaji acted in self defence and committed what is called a "preventive murder."

Occupation of Panhala : The murder of Afzal Khan immediately boosted the morale of Shivaji. He followed up his victory and captured the forts of Panhala and other forts and extended his territory up to the bank of Krishna.

Unsuccessful Campaign of Bijapur Sultan against Shivaji : In 1660 A.D. Ali Adil of Bijapur was so upset by these activities of Shivaji that he sent his general to undertake expeditions against him. The fort of Panhala remained under siege for four months. At best Shivaji was compelled to evacuate it and escaped in the fort of Vishalgarh. At this juncture Sultan himself took charge of his army and with a big force followed Shivaji and recovered the forts of Panhala, Pawangarh, etc. With the advent of the rainy season, Sultan had to retreat and entered into negotiations for peace with Shivaji. Shivaji was recognised as an independent ruler of the territories in his possession.

Shivaji and The Mughals

Clash with Shayista Khan : Aurangzeb sent Shayista Khan, his maternal uncle, who was the Governor of Deccan to wipe out the increasing Maratha power under Shivaji. Shayista Khan left Ahmadnagar for Poona and soon occupied it and captured the Maratha forts on his way, but as yet he did not meet Shivaji. This was also a trick on the part of Shivaji. Shivaji knew the difficulty of facing such a huge Mughal army. Accompanied by 400 chosen troops, Shivaji entered Poona after night fall in the guise of a marriage party and made an attack upon the camp of

Shayista Khan. In this scuffle many Mughal troops were slain. Six wives, one son and forty personal attendants of Shayista Khan were also put to sword. Shayista Khan narrowly escaped with the loss of his finger. This daring exploit increased the prestige of Shivaji while Shayista Khan had to face humiliation and as punishment Aurangzeb transferred him to Bengal.

Sack of Surat : The adventure of Poona greatly emboldened Shivaji. In 1664 Shivaji attacked Surat with the help of 4,000 selected troops. Surat was the richest port of the Mughals. The Governor of Surat was Inayat Khan. Inayat Khan left the city and fled for safety. This city was thoroughly plundered. Shivaji acquired a booty amounting to more than a crore of rupees.

Shivaji and Jai Singh : Shayista Khan's failure and the sack of Surat by Shivaji lowered Mughal prestige in Deccan. Aurangzeb appointed his bravest General Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Amber to crush the Maratha power. The Rajput Chief crossed Narbada river in July 1665 and entered Poona and took over the charge of Mughal army from Jaswant Singh of Marwar. He chalked out a comprehensive plan of action against Shivaji. He instigated all the important elements in Deccan against Shivaji. Jai Singh and Diler Khan together defeated Shivaji at Purandhar in the month of April, 1665. Shivaji met Jai Singh and was obliged to sign a treaty to make peace. According to this treaty known as the treaty of Purandhar, Shivaji surrendered 23 forts and agreed to pay an annual revenue of five lakh *Hunnas*. Now Shivaji was left with twelve forts. Shivaji honoured all the conditions laid down in the treaty of Purandhar and even assisted the Mughals in the conquests of Bijapur. In 1666, Shivaji made another unsuccessful bid to capture Panhala.

Shivaji's visit to Agra : In April 1666, Shivaji at the invitation of Aurangzeb, reached Agra. He began his journey on 16th March, 1666 with his eldest son Shambhuji, five high officers, a small escort of 250 selected troops and Kanwar Ram Singh, son of Jai Singh. Having reached the imperial presence he was made to stand in the third row and was not conferred the robe of honour. Now the Maratha Chief was filled with anger and burst out his heart and came out of the *Darbar* and went to his residence. But he could not escape the Mughal wrath and was imprisoned. But Shivaji cleverly escaped from prison in August, 1666 and just after a lapse of 25 days, he reached Rajgarh on 22 September, 1666 in the guise of a Hindu *Sanyasi*.

Recommendment of Shivaji's Career of Conquests : Aurangzeb was furious when he learnt about the escape of Shivaji and once again he restored to the policy of persecution towards Hindus in Deccan. Now the charge of Deccan was in the hands of Prince Muazzam and Diler Khan who were otherwise secretly hostile towards each other. Diler Khan rebelled and was about to be arrested when he

escaped towards Malwa. Now Jaswant Singh was deputed to accompany the Prince in Deccan. The enmity between the Prince and Diler Khan greatly marred the prestige of the Mughals. Shivaji took advantage of this strife and declared war against the Mughals. First of all he reconquered Sinhgarh and then one after the other annexed the areas of Purandhar, Manduli Kanvala and Lohgarh. In 1670 A.D., he pounced upon Surat and recovered a booty of Rs.66 Lakhs. After this he invaded Berar, Baglan and Khandesh. His Peshwa Moro Pant Pingle had conquered many forts in Konkan. Aurangzeb at this stage sent Mahabat Khan to check the advance of Shivaji. Bahadur Khan also asked to assist him. Since both the *Sardars* were hostile towards each other, they could not achieve any success. On the other hand, Aurangzeb suspected a secret alliance between Mahabat Khan and Shivaji. Therefore, he (Aurangzeb) recalled Mahabat Khan and appointed Diler Khan and Bahadur Khan to take charge of the Deccan expedition. Now a fierce war began between the Mughals and Shivaji. In a battle place called Salher, Shivaji completely routed the Mughals and within a few years he not only reoccupied all the lost forts but also boldly confronted the Mughal commanders. On March 6, 1673 he conquered the fort of Panhala.

Shivaji's Coronation and Death : After the re-conquest of lost territories in 1674 the formal coronation of Shivaji took place at Rajgarh on June 16, 1674. On this occasion he assumed the title of *Chattarpati*. At this ceremony he spent about Rs.50 lakhs. By this he became the lawful Emperor of Maharashtra. For a year Shivaji was busy consolidating his position. After that he was preoccupied for three years in the conquest of south. During this short span, he conquered Karnatak as well. The last year of Shivaji's life were clouded with anxiety. His Commander-in-Chief Netaji Palker deserted him to join the rank of Diler Khan's fold. His son Shambhuji also left him and joined Diler Khan. This was a severe blow for Shivaji. However, later both Palker and Shambhuji came back to Shivaji. Shivaji's life was cut short by these distresses and he died on April 18, 1680.

Extent of his Kingdom : At the time of his death, kingdom of Shivaji extended to Ramnagar (near Surat) in the north to Kanwar (near Goa) in the south except the Portuguese possessions. In the east, it included Belgam, half of Nasik and Poona district, the whole of Satara and much of Kohlapur district. These territories formed his Swaraj. In addition to these, he had conquered western Karnatak extending from Belgam to the bank of Tungabhadra. Besides, he had annexed the country extending from river Tungabhadra to Vellore. This included northern, central and eastern parts of Mysore, and the parts of the districts of Bellary, Chittor and Arcot. He had also conquered the Kanara region which included Sunda and Bednur and Southern part of Dharwar. Outside the above regions, a large part of the Mughal territory in Deccan was also under his influence. From there Shivaji used to collect *Chauth*. However, we cannot limit the

boundaries of Shivaji's kingdom because it changed too often with the fresh conquests. Shivaji's kingdom had two hundred and forty forts.

Shivaji's Administration

Shivaji's was not only an able soldier but also an intelligent administrator and lover of justice. His administration can be studied under the following heads :

Central Government

As was the practice in medieval times, Shivaji concentrated all powers in his own hands but he was always mindful of the welfare of his subjects. As far as possible he tried to abide by religion and dispensed justice. But at the time of war, he was shrewd enough to use fair or foul means. He was not only famous as a general but won laurels as an administrator also. His administration was based partly on the political principles as enunciated in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and partly on traditions, and customs, and the laws of Shia states and the Mughal Empire.

Asht Pradhan : In the discharge of his duties, he was helped by a council of eight ministers called *Asht Pradhan*. The designation of the ministers were adopted from Persian and Sanskrit languages. It cannot be ascertained when this council came into being, but during the time of Dadaji Konda Dev there were four ministers in his council i.e. *Peswa Majumdar*, *Dabir* and *Sachiv*. When he became independent in 1647, he appointed *Sar-e-Naubat* (Commander-in-Chief) and added one more *Dabir* in his council. In 1656 after the victory of Javli he included one *Sachiv* and one *Waqia Nawis*. He also appointed one commander for his cavalry. On his return from Agra, in 1667 he also appointed one *Nayayadhis*. In 1674, his council consisted of eight ministers with the following functions :-

Peshwa : He was to exercise supervision over other ministers and to direct the affairs of state in the absence of Shivaji. He used to get 15 thousand *Hunnas* annually (4,375 rupees per month) as his salary. It was his duty to put his seal on all the royal letters and despatches. He was also the commander of the Maratha forces during war.

Majumdar or Amatya or Auditor : His duty was to check all accounts of income and expenditure and to countersign all statements of accounts. His salary was 12 thousand *Hunnas* annually (3,500 rupees per month). He also renewed military service at the time of war.

Waqia Nawis or Chronicler : He was incharge of compiling a daily record of king's activities. He was also expected to keep a strict watch over his invitation letters and meals, etc. in order to guard against any plot. He was also the custodian of the records of government proceedings. He assisted the king at the time of war. His monthly salary was three thousand rupees.

Dabir or Samant or Foreign Secretary : His duty was to advise the king on matters

relating to foreign affairs, particularly with regard to war and peace. He received foreign ambassadors and envoys and kept himself in touch with the activities of other powers. He also assisted the king in war. His salary was three thousand rupees for month.

Sar-i-Naubat or Senapati or Commander-in-Chief : He was incharge of recruitment, organisation and discipline of the army. He had also to arrange for the mobilization of troops on the battlefield. He received three thousand rupees per month. He was to maintain the record of booty as well. He acted as a liaison officer between the king and the army.

Sadr or Muhtasib or Pandit Rao or Dan-Adhyaksha : His main duties were to fix dates for religious ceremonies to punish and to distribute amongst the Brahmans large sums of money set apart by the king for charity. He was also the judge of the canon law and a censor of public morals. He decided theological disputes and looked after the learned men. He was exempted from war duty. His monthly pay used to be three thousand rupees per month.

Nyayadhish or the Chief Justice : He was the highest judge in the kingdom and responsible for both civil and military justice. He was also free from war duties. He received three thousand rupees per month as salary. All the decisions of government had to bear the seal of the chief justice.

There were 18 departments of the state and these were under the charge of the various ministers who worked under the supervision and guidance of the king. Every minister has one secretary who was known as *Chitnis*.

Local Government :

Shivaji's kingdom was divided into three provinces. The northern province included the territory of northern Konkan and extended from Poona to Salaha. It was under Moro Trimbak Pingle. The next province, consisted of southern Konkan and the north coast. It was governed by Annaji Datta. The third was south-eastern division and comprised the districts of Satara, Kapvol and Dharwar. It was under Dattaji Pant. Besides there was another province consisting of the recently conquered territories extending from Tungabhadra to Vellore and Jinji which was under the charge of Shivaji's son-in-laws, Hariji Mahadev. Besides these provinces, far flung territories of Shivaji were under the control of his trusted officers. The whole territory which was conquered and annexed by Shivaji and popularly known as *Swaraj*. The Mughal territory in Deccan, which was under his influence, was known as *Mughlia*. Shivaji exacted *Chauth* from the Chief of this territory. The province were subdivided into *pargans* each of which have a collector with a contingent of troops under his command. But we have no evidence about the administrative institutions at this level.

Military Administration of Shivaji

Shivaji's army administration was of a high order. At the time of his death his

army consisted of 45,000 cavalry, 60,000 *Silahdar* cavalry and about one lakh of moveable infantry. He had 32,000 horses in his stables in addition to 5,000 which had been given to the *Bargirs*. Historians are divided in their opinions about the number of elephants, but 300 seems to be a more accurate figure.

Shivaji's thoroughly acquainted himself with his army. He either recruited the troops himself or on the recommendation of his trusted chiefs. Small guns, swords, shields, bows and arrows were the chief arms. In his cavalry there were two types of soldiers - *Silhadar* and *Bargirs*. *Silhadar* was of a higher rank and they had their own horses and arms and they were better paid but the *Bargirs* were provided with horses, arms and equipment and were low paid.

Cavalry : Twenty five troops formed one unit which was placed under the charge of a *Havildar*. Five *Havildars* were placed under one *Jumaldar*. Ten *Jumaldars* were placed under one *Hazari*. The highest rank was that of the Commander of Five *Hazari* cavalry men. The whole of the cavalry was under the command of the *Sir-i-Nabbi*.

Infantry : The infantry was known by the name of *Paiks*. Over every nine *Paiks* there was one *Naik* and over every five *Naiks* there was a *Havildar*. Two or three *Havildars* were under one *Jumaldar*. Ten *Jumaldars* were placed under a *Hazari*. Seven *Hazaris* were placed under the *Sar-i-Naubat* of infantry. This was splendidly equipped, brigade of infantry which consisted of 20,000 soldiers. Who were well dressed and armed.

Discipline : A strict discipline was maintained in the army organisation and those who violated discipline were severely punished. No soldier or officer was allowed to keep booty with himself. He could neither dare to harm the people become licentious. Thus on account of its rigorous discipline and extreme simplicity, Shivaji's army was one of the best armies of the seventeenth century India.

Revenue System

Land Revenue : The area under Shivaji's control was 400 miles in length and 120 miles in breadth. The revenue settlement was based on measurement of land by a fixed system of mensuration. The assessment was made after a careful survey. Classification of land had been done according to their quality and yield. According to Rawlinson, land was divided into three categories: (i) Paddy fields (ii) Garden lands (iii) Hilly lands. In the paddy fields state share was fixed at 2/5th. In the garden land the state share was one half and in the hilly lands, state share was nominal. The revenue was payable either in cash or kind. The collection was made by the Government officials. Shivaji gave preference to *rayatwari* system over the grant of *jagirs*. He did not permit the *zamindars* to exercise political authority.

Other Taxes, Chauth and Sardeshmukhi : Besides land revenue, Shivaji levied export duties, and excise taxes. Another source of income for the state was *Chauth*

which was exacted from the neighbouring hostile states. He also realised *Sardeshmukhi* from these states. Chauth was one-fourth of the revenue of the country and *Sardeshmukhi* was one tenth of the standard revenue of the state. In lieu of this Shivaji's army was not to raid or plunder these states. *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* were among the chief sources of income. Ranade holds that *Chauth* was a contribution in lieu of protection against third power. But Sir J.N. Sarkar differs and says that *Chauth* was only a means to protect a state from the invasion of Marathas. Its payment did not impose any corresponding obligation of Shivaji to protect these territories from rebellion and foreign invasion. According to Sardesai it was a tribute realised from the hostile or conquered territories. So on the question of *Chauth*, there is difference of opinion among historians and therefore nothing can be said definitely. In Maharashtra almost all the states regarded Shivaji as *Adhyaksh* and paid him one tenth of the total yield. This revenue was known as *Sardeshmukhi*.

Criticism of Shivaji's Revenue Policy : Professor Sen writes that Shivaji never restored to third degree methods for the collection of revenue. People in general, were prosperous. His revenue administration was based upon the principal laid down by Malik Amber, but he made changes according to the needs of the time. According to Dr. Sen there were about 50 other miscellaneous taxes and he has mentioned about 49 taxes in his book, 'Administrative System of the Marathas.'

Administration of Justice

The administration of justice under Shivaji was however of a primitive nature. The name of the highest court was *Hazirmajilis* (King's Court). The important cases were decided by this court. Next to this was the court of *Nayayadhis*, Appeals in civil and criminal cases were heard by this court. In villages, the *Panchayats* settled most of the disputes and criminal cases were heard by the *Patel*. Fine was levied for minor offences, but for major offences punishments were severe. The system of ordeal was common. There are instances when offenders confessed their fault when they were made touch red hot iron or their hands were put into boiling water.

Character of Shivaji

Ram Chander Nilkanth, the Prime Minister of Shivaji has given a complete description of Shivaji's character in the *Ajna papers*. He writes that Shivaji was a shrewd judge of human character and his choice of man never betrayed him. He consolidated the scattered power of the Marathas and gave them a taste of political freedom. His kingdom was surrounded by the hostile states like Bijapur, Golkanda, Ahmed Nagar, Mughal kingdom and the English settlements. In addition there were small states of Ram Nagar, Sodhan Bajnor, Mysore, Trichinopoli and a few independent Maratha Chiefs.

(1) **As a Builder** : Shivaji was a great genius. By dint of his ability, he welded the Marathas into a mighty nation and established an independent Maratha kingdom. His kingdom extended from Salhar in Western Khandesh and Ahiwant to the river Kaveri and Tanjore. He built forts and strengthened his naval force. He created his own regiments of 40,000 paid troops, in addition to two lakh infantry and 70,000 silahdars and a treasure which counted in crores.

(2) **As a man** : Shivaji was a man of high character. He was a dutiful son, faithful husband, a loving father and a kind friend. He was a friend of the poor and down-trodden. Though not educated in the formal sense yet he was highly learned and well informed. Despite being an orthodox Hindu he had respect for other religions.

(3) **As a Commander** : Shivaji was a born general. He instinctively adopted the guerrilla system of warfare, which was suited to geographical features of the country. He was the first Indian ruler of the age to perceive the necessity of building up a navy. According to J.N. Sarkar he had the unfailing sense of reality in politics, as also the gift of grasping quickly the possibilities of a particular situation and knew well when to advance and when to retreat.

(4) **As a Ruler** : As a ruler, Shivaji was a great administrator. His administration was such as even in his absence, worked efficiently. It was a novelty for the sovereigns of Asia. His administration was free from the maladies of favouritism and corruption. He had a great regard for men of genius and wisdom. He was a great builder and to regard him as a mere plunderer is mistake.

(5) **As a Religious Leader** : The main ambition of his life was to extend protection to Hindu religion, cow and Brahman, but it does not mean that he was the sworn enemy of Muslims. In fact he was the destroyer of fanaticism and bigotry. His policy was of religious toleration. He respected the holy books of the Muslims and never persecuted innocent Muhammadans. Under the influence of his mother, he became a staunch follower of Hindu religion. He always preferred to keep company with the holy men and Muslim faqirs. He adopted Bawa Tuka Ram, Guru Ram Das, Baba Jai Ram of Sahut Kalsi, Moti Baba of Matgaon, Gusoi Nichalouri, Baba Permanand of Balapur Jai Ram of Vargon, Narain Dev of Chandavad, Swami Ranga Nath of Donagdi, Baba Bhano Das the discipline of Eknath, etc. as his Gurus.

(6) **Was Shivaji A Plunderer** : Khafi Khan, Dr. V.A. Smith and Grant Duff hold Shivaji as a robber and plunderer. But on the other hand, great historians of the present times like Sir J.N. Sarkar have conclusively proved that he (Shivaji) was the greatest constructive genius of the medieval age in India. In fact he was a real revolutionary who had revolted against those who had forcibly occupied his mother-land it was the duty of every patriot to fight for the freedom of the country. Therefore; being a revolutionary was thing of pride for him and that is why Shivaji was

called a *Pandu* (a rebel) in Marathi language. When he freed his country he got himself crowned and assumed royal titles and became the lawful ruler of his country. To call him a plunderer is to deny him his rightful place in history.

Estimate of Shivaji

According to Elphinstone Shivaji began his life as a leader of band of robbers and gradually rose to be a brave general, an intelligent diplomat, and an efficient ruler. According to Richard Temple, he was not only a brave general but he infected others with his enthusiasm and courage. He infused the Marathas with a political and religious consciousness and knit them into a nation. Another historian is of the view that Shivaji had the knack of assessing the weakness of his enemy and his own strength. Though his own personal life was not free from certain moral failings yet his objectives in life were noble. He spent his whole life fighting for the freedom of his country. Shivaji's personal character stands out in contrast to Aurangzeb. Shivaji was deeply committed to his own religion, yet in his attitude towards other religions, he was tolerant and liberal. He built up a strong nation and devoted his life to attain political independence for his people. He was not only a great military leader but also an able administrator. S.S. Edwards is of the opinion that Shivaji welded the scattered elements of his people into one nation. Sir J.N. Sarkar writes that he revived and gave unity to the Maratha nation. Shivaji became the tower of light in the whole of Maharashtra. He was the greatest constructive genius of medieval India. He was not only a great soldier and conqueror but also an admirable civil ruler. Sir J.N. Sarkar writes, "Before his rise, the Maratha race was scattered like atoms through many Deccan kingdoms. He welded them into a mighty nation. No other Hindu has shown such capacity in modern times." Dr. Ishwari Prasad and R.K. Mukherji also agree with this view.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. Discuss Shivaji as a maker of Maratha Empire.
2. Write notes on the following :
 - (i) Mughal Maratha relations
 - (ii) Early life of Shivaji
 - (iii) Shivaji's relation with Bijapur.

Hints for Q.No.1

- (a) He infused a new life into the people of Maharashtra (b) Welded the scattered Maratha race into a mighty nation (c) Assumption of the title of *Chhatrapati* (d) Uniform system of Government (e) Equality and religious toleration for all
(f) Extended his respect and patronage to scholars.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|---|---|
| 1. | Narang, K.S. | : | Mughal Rule in India, pp.511-38. |
| 2. | H.G. Rawlinson | : | Shivaji, His Life and Times, pp. 25-89. |
| 3. | Sharma, S.R. | : | Shivaji, pp. 7-46. |

4. Sardesai, G.S. : New History of Marathas, pp. 87-250.
 5. Srivastava, A.L. : Mughal Empire, pp. 368-94.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE**Q.1. Fill in the blanks :**

- (i) Shivaji was born on April, 1627.
 (ii) Jijabai belonged to the family.
 (iii) Shivaji assumed the title of on June 6, 1674 A.D.
 (iv) Shivaji's kingdom was divided into provinces.
 (v) During Shivaji's reign, the highest court was

Q.2. Tick () the correct statements :

- (i) Shivaji conquered the fort of Torna in
 (a) 1646 A.D. (b) 1640 A.D.
 (ii) Shivaji and Afzal Khan met at :
 (a) Rajgarh (b) Partapgarh
 (iii) Shivaji occupied Javali in :
 (a) 1646 A.D. (b) 1656 A.D.
 (iv) Share of *Chauth* in the revenue of the country was
 (a) One fourth (b) One tenth

- Q.3. What was the name of the council of minister in Shivaji's government?
 Q.4. What do you understand by Sardeshmukhi and Chauth ?
 Q.5. Who was Shahji Bhonsle ?
 Q.6. Who was Dadaji Konda Dev ?
 Q.7. Who were Jai Singh and Jaswant Singh ?
 Q.8. When did Shivaji ascent the throne ?
 Q.9. Describe the main sources of Shivaji's revenue.

Key to answers

- Q.1. (i) 20th (ii) Yadav (iii) Chattarapati (iv) three
 Q.2. (i) a (ii) b (iii) b (iv) b
 Q.3. *Asht Pradhan.*

CHECK-UP YOUR POSITION

- Excellent : Above 6 correct answers
 Good : 5-6 correct answers
 Satisfactory : 4 correct answers
 Unsatisfactory : Less than 4 correct answers

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE MUGHALS
Central, Provincial and Judicial**

Introduction :

The Mughals reorganised the administrative system and their administrative institutions were a legacy to the British in India. Beginning with Akbar who imparted to his large empire an efficient and uniform system of administration, his successors till Aurangzeb provided effective and able leadership at the central level to make the system work well. The Central, Provincial, Local, Land Revenue Administration was reformed and reorganised and an imperial service arranged in thirty three grades was instituted to strengthen the roots of the Mughal hierarchy. The Mughal rulers retained some of the indigenous features and administrative institutions existing in the country. In the words of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "it was a Perso-Arabic system in Indian setting. It presented a combination of Indian and extra Indian elements."

Sources : Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* is one of the most important sources of information. However there are short-comings and gaps and as Sir Jadunath Sarkar had commented, "the author does not give us much help in drawing a correct and detailed account of the administrative machinery though in the statistical portion he is detailed and accurate." *Dastur-ul-Amals* or officials handbook composed in the reign of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb provide ample details. But the manuscripts are not easily accessible. Additional information is provided by court-histories like the *Akbarnamah* of the sixteenth century, the *Iqbal-namah Jahangiri* by Muhammad Khan, the *Padshahnama* by Abdul Hamid Lahori, the *Bahadurshah-namah* of 1709, from memories like the *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, contemporary Persian histories like the *Tobaqat-i-Akbari* by Nizamuddin and the *Muntakhab-ut-Twarikh* by Badaoni and from the contemporary account of foreigners like Thomas Roe, Hawkins, Bernier, De Laet, Terry and others.

Salient Features of the Mughal Government

Absolutism of the Emperor : Babur's ancestor Timur had declared himself to be the agent of God on this earth. Babur took the title of Badshah. Before him the princes of Timur's dynasty styled themselves as Mirza or Sultans. Babur's assumption of this title was significant. It meant that Babur did not consider himself subordinate to anybody. His son Humayun used to say that as the Sun is superior to all stars so is the ruler superior to all the subjects.

This should be clear from the above observation that the Mughal rulers

considered themselves absolute. Before the Mughals the Sultans of Delhi considered the Khalifa (alive or dead) as their legal sovereign. The Mughal Emperors never acknowledged the Khalifas as their supreme political head. In 1577 A.D. Akbar went to the extent of reading the Khutba himself like the Khalifas. He himself became the Imam-i-Adil. The office of the king was considered divine. The king took himself to be the God's agent worthy of commanding high respect and obedience.

1) Religious Tolerance : The underlying spirit of Mughal administration particularly till the coming of Aurangzeb was religious toleration. It was not based on the tenets of any fanatic religious practices. The Sultans of Delhi who were the predecessors of the Mughals considered Islam to be the superior religion. Akbar, the greatest Mughal Emperor, adopted the policy of 'peace with all'. Excepting Aurangzeb almost all the Mughal Emperors to a large extent gave equal treatment and freedom to all in matters of religion.

2) Progress in all fields : Mughal state was not only a police state. The Mughal Emperors sought to promote arts and a common culture. There was peace and prosperity and much artistic and creative activity. They also laid stress on the education and mental development of the people. But it was not the responsibility of the government to make arrangements of education etc. This work was done by the religious institutions. The government made efforts to promote agriculture and to make the farmers prosperous, so that they may be able to make regular payments of taxes. During the Mughal period beautiful places, massive forts, mausoleum and inns were constructed and beautiful gardens laid out. The Mughal period produced prominent writers and great poets; the art of painting also acquired a very high degree of perfection. It is important to remember that literature and paintings flourished because of state patronage.

3) Welfare State : The Mughal rulers treated their subjects with paternal care. The monarchs were very hard-working and the major portion of the day was utilised in attending to the state duties. They supervised the acts of government servants and if any employee was found guilty of harassing the people he was dismissed from service. This goes to prove that Mughal Government sought to promote the well being of the subjects. Under the Mughals there was no hereditary office. The Government confiscated the property of their deceased officers even if they had their legitimate heirs. Keeping in view the well-being of the people the government ordered the manufacture of various things from the government workshops to meet their requirements. In this way the people could get employment.

4) Mixture of Indian and Foreign Elements : In the villages there existed the self government as it functioned during the days of Hindu rulers. Although there were foreign elements in the Mughal administration but some indigenous principles were retained.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The Monarch, His Position and Powers : In the Central-Government the Emperor was the pivot of the administration. His powers had no limit and check. The Mughal rulers were secular for religion did not stand in their way. They were not bound by the Islamic traditions. They were despotic. Every citizen of the state irrespective of his caste and religion enjoyed the same privileges. The ministers were only the advisers of the rulers and they could be appointed or dismissed at the ruler's pleasure. The Mughal Emperor considered himself to be agent of God on this earth. Abul Fazl writes that the Emperor is the light that emanates from God. He is a ray that issues from God, the Sun.

Prerogatives : The Mughal rulers had certain prerogatives which none could question. Every morning the Mughal ruler performed Jharokha-Darshan through a window of his palace. People standing below could, thus, see their ruler and could know that he was safe and sound. Before the ruler held his court or went out on pilgrimage drums were beaten. This prerogative could not be enjoyed by anybody else. The key position in administration could not be given by any except the ruler and the mutilation of limbs could not be ordered by any man other than the king. Only the Mughal Emperor could put his seal and hand impression on the official farmans and only he could order the fighting of the elephants. The Mughal rulers gave away in charity to the poor gold and pearls equal to their weight. From the above it is clear that the Mughal rulers had special prerogatives and no body in his realm could equal his elevated position.

Daily Life : It is also important for us to look into the personal life of the rulers because most of the people think that the Mughal rulers lived of life a luxury and they had no time to look into the welfare of the people. The Mughal rulers got up early in the morning. They offered their prayers and read the holy Quran. Then they appeared for Jharokha-Darshan. There, they heard the complaints from the people. They went out to inspect their contingents and then conducted the state affairs in Diwan-i-Aam. All the officials submitted their reports to him in Diwan-i-Khas which was attended by a few selected ministers and officials and important matters were discussed there. Only the important minister participated in the discussion. Then at noon the rulers retired for meals and rest. In the afternoon again a meeting was held in the Diwan-i-Aam where matters relating to justice were taken up. This session continued till the evening. Akbar attended Diwan-i-Aam at night but he utilised this time in religious and literary discussion. Shah Jahan spent this time in enjoying dance and song. He retired to bed late. It is very clear that the rulers conducted that state affairs diligently and under their personal supervision.

Personal Rules : The Emperor was supreme head of the administration and there was no restriction of check on his power. The sovereign dictated the firmans

and replies to letters coming from foreign governments. They decide the domestic matters personally and expeditiously. They themselves made the appointments to important posts and transfers and promotions of officials lay in their hands. Punishments and rewards were decided by them. They personally inspected the industrial establishments. The rulers inspected the army. Commanders were appointed by them at the time of despatch of various expeditions.

Department of the Central Government : Akbar realised the difficulty of administering the large empire without the help of able and trusted ministers. The role of the ministers has been discussed by P. Saran "it was their duty not only to execute the order and decrees of the sovereign but to serve as a link between the sovereign and the subjects and to render to the former proper and beneficial counsel and guidance. There was not clear distinction between the civil and military wings of the administration. Every civil officer held a *Mansab* in the Army which determined his salary and status in the official hierarchy.

MINISTERS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The powers and functions of the individual ministers and their department were defined for the first time under Akbar. The following were some of the important ministers :

- i) *Diwan-i-Ala* (**High Diwan**) was incharge of the revenue department. *Mir-i-Saman* was incharge of the royal household. *Mir Bakshi* was incharge of the recruitment of the army and their payments. *Chief Qazi* was incharge of the department of justice. A department under *Chief Sadar* looked to the needs of the scholars, orphans and the poor. Besides the above, there were some smaller departments as well. For example, *Muhatsib* looked after the conduct of the people. *Mir Atish* supervised the artillery. *Daroga* controlled the *Dak* and arranged to send the post from one place to another.
- ii) *Diwan-i-Ala* was the most powerful minister and he was incharge of the revenue department. He fixed the revenue and arranged its realisation. All papers relating to revenue were submitted to him. He issued orders about expenditure. He, being the head of the revenue department, supervised the other departments as well. He had a high *Mansab* in the army. Muzafar Khan, Todar Mal, Shah Mansur has been three prominent revenue ministers.
- iii) *Mir Bakshi* (**Pay Master**) : *Mir Bakshi* was an influential minister. All government officials were *Mansabdars* in the army. *Mir Bakshi* passed the pay bills of all the officials big or small. He made the recruitment of the soldiers and inspected the army. In the battlefield he fixed up the different commanders at their proper places. He was incharge of the whole army.
- iv) *Khan-i-Saman* (**Lord High Steward**) : *Khan-i-Saman* was incharge of the royal house hold. He looked after the property of the royal palaces and the requirements of the palaces. He supervised the government industries. The servant of the royal

household worked under him. He made arrangements of the royal feasts. He was responsible for the decoration of the court and the palaces. This was a very important post and only very reliable persons were posted to it.

v) *Chief Sadar* : *Chief Sardar or Chief Qazi* was incharge of department of justice at the centre. As this office was associated with Islam, the chief sadar was held in high esteem in the Mughal Government. He was responsible for administering justice to the people. He heard the appeals from the junior courts. He was responsible for applying the Islamic law. He was also the representative of the Ulema. He had some junior officials under him in his department.

vi) *Muhtasib (Chief Censor)*: His main duty was to look after moral conduct of the people and to see that the people lived their life according to the teaching of their prophet Mohammad Sahib.

vii) *Daroga of Dak Chowki* : He was incharge of the Dak and information department. Espionage Department was also under him.

viii) *Mir-i-Atish* : He was the incharge of artillery.

ix) *Mastaufi* : He was auditor general or the checking officer of the accounts department.

x) *Mushrif* : He was an officer incharge of ports.

xi) *Mir-i-barr* : He was incharge of the forest department.

xii) *Mir-i-Ariz* : He was the officer incharge of the appeals and petitions.

Mansabdari System

It was a system of ranking army and government officials. All the government officials were *Mansabdars*. They got stipulated amount from the government for the maintenance of soldiers and their horses. Although some features of this system were prevalent in the administration before the Mughals yet it was Akbar who introduced it in an organised form.

The appointment of the *Mansabdars*, their promotion and dismissal rested with the Emperor. According to Abdul Fazal there were sixty six grades of the *Mansabdars* but in actual practice not more than thirty three were in existence. And the *Mansab* of 10 was the smallest. Later the highest *Mansab* rose upto 20,000 ranks. The *Mansabdar* received good salaries. There is controversy about the *zat* and *sawar* ranks. In fact, *zat* was the personal rank of the *Mansabdar* and *Sawar* was his separate rank. In the beginning this system proved very effective and useful. But later many defects crept into it and gradually weakened the system. *Mansabdar* were often corrupt. They had become ease-living. They became ambitious and planned rebellions against their masters. In this way the evils of the *Mansabdari* System contributed to the decline of the Mughal Empire. We shall discuss the *Mansabdari* System in detail in the next lesson.

LAND REVENUE SYSTEM

The land revenue system of the Mughal is also another important feature

of the Mughal administrative institutions. Akbar tried many experiments for the permanent land revenue settlement. In 1580 A.D. he divided his whole empire into 15 provinces. In 1582 A.D. he introduced a permanent land revenue system. This system may be called the *Zabti* system. Todar Mal introduced it. This system continued for a long time in the Mughal Empire.

Before the introduction and implementation *Zabti* system the land revenue was fixed annually. It caused great inconvenience to the peasants. They did not know as to how much revenue was due from them. The revenue collectors also experienced a lot of difficulty every year. Taking the average of the land revenue of the previous years, Akbar had a permanent land revenue. The fertile land was measured. Formerly the land was measured with the ropes which was not a satisfactory method. Todar Mal introduced Jarib for the purpose of measuring land. The Jarib was made of the bamboo pieces joined together with iron rings.

The Classification of Land : The productive land was classified into four categories.

Polaj : This land was cultivated every year.

Prauti : This land was left fallow for some time so that it could regain its lost fertility.

Chhachar : This kind of land was left uncultivated for the three or four years.

Banjar : After a crop was harvested that land was left fallow for five or six years.

Government's Share : In order to fix the revenue, *Polaj* and *Prauti* lands were divided into three grades : good, middling and bad : The government's share was determined by dividing the average produce of the above three categories by three.

Galla Bakhs and Nasiq System : Besides *Zabti* system were some other systems of land revenue Procurement. *Galla Baksh* system was practised in some parts of Thatta, Kabul and Kashmir. According to this system the crop was divided into three parts after it was harvested. One part of the produce went to the government and the other two were retained by the peasant. According to *Nasiq* system an appraisal of the produce of the standing crops was made and on the basis of that the government receive 1/3 of the produce.

Revenue Officers : The head of the revenue department at the centre was called Diwan-i-Ala. There was a Diwan in every province. In the Sarkar there was an Amil Guzar, and in the pargana there was an Amil. Amil collected the revenue. He had Bitikchi, the Potadar, the Patwari and Muqaddam to assist him.

Criticism : According to Dr. V. A Smith, Akbar's revenue system was based on definite rules. The government officials were strictly ordered to observe these rules. It is evident from the Ain of Abul Fazl that Akbar's revenue system was of a very high standard and the peasant were happy under that system and during drought or floods the revenue was remitted. The needy farmers were given loans by the government. We shall discuss at length the Land Revenue system of Akbar in

the next lesson.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Provincial Administration : The Empire under the Mughals was divided into several administrative units. Akbar abolished the Jagirdari system and divided his empire into twelve provinces. After further conquests three more provinces were added. Under Shahjahan the number of the provinces rose to 22. The provincial administration was organised on the model of the central administration. Every province had a Sipah Salar, Diwan, Sadar, Qazi Waqaya Nawis and a Kotwal. The Emperor was the appointing authority of these officers.

Sipah Salar (Governor) : The head of a province was the Governor who was called *Sipah Salar*. His main functions were to maintain peace and security in his province to realise the revenue, to undertake works of public welfare and maintain the provincial army. According to Travenier and Peter Mundy Governors were transferred from one province to another after three to five years.

Diwan : He was an important officer of the province and incharge of the Finance Department. His main duties were to maintain accounts of the income and expenditure to promote agriculture and to make payments to the provincial officers.

Sardar and Qazi : The main duties of the Sadar was to look after the land given for the religious works and to arrange charities. *Qazi* was incharge of justice.

Bakshi : He was appointed by the ruler on the recommendation of *Mir Bakshi*. His main duty was the recruitment of the army and its management. He was also to send reports about the important events of the province to the ruler. A very trustworthy man was appointed to this office.

Kotwal : Officials of the name of *Kotwal* were found in the provincial capitals and all the cities. He was a police-officer who maintained law and order in the town. He kept an eye on the bazar and market and kept a control over the business and industries in the town. He took special care of the foreigners living in the town.

Sarkar and its administration : Each province was divided into different parts called *Sarkars* and the officers in this administrative units were as under :

Faujdar : This official was the head of the administration of a *Sarkar*. He maintained a small army. His main duty was to get the royal farmans executed in the *Sarkar*. He also associated the *Amil Guzar* in the realisation of land revenue.

Amil Guzar : He was incharge of the land revenue department of the *Sarkar*. His main duties were to collect correct information about the produce of the land and to deposit the revenue in the treasury at the proper time. He decided the cases pertaining to land.

Bitkchi : He prepared and maintained the record about land. He examined the records of Numbardars and Patwaries.

Treasurer : He released the revenue and kept the same in the treasury. One key of the treasury remained in his custody and the other with the Amil Guzar. He sent all the money to the royal treasury.

Pargana and its administration : Each *Sarkar* was sub-divided into many units and each unit was called *Pargana*. Four officials namely *Shikadar*, *Amil*, *Potdar* and *Qanungo* ran the administration of the *Pargana*.

Shikdar : He was the head of the *Pargana* and he maintained law and order.

Amil : He was the revenue officials of the *Parganas*. He collected the revenue and had direct dealings with the peasants.

Qanungo : He was the head of the Patwaries of the *Pargana* and he maintained all the records about the land produce, the revenue demand, the realisation of the revenue and its arrears.

Village administration : The village administration was run by the village samiti called panchayat. It heard the cases of the villages and devised plans for their well-being.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

Almost all the Mughal Emperors paid special attention to the administration of justice. Imparting fair and impartial justice was considered a sacred duty by the Mughal rulers. It is true that neither law court at different levels were properly organised nor their powers and jurisdiction clearly defined. Laws were vague and uncertain. However, there was a network of courts in the empire. People could look up to fair and inexpensive dispensation of justice.

Central Courts : *The Emperor, the Chief Qazi and the Chief Sadar* : The emperor was the highest court in the empire. Capital punishment could only be awarded by the emperor. Next to the emperor, the Chief Qazi was an important functionary in the judicial administration. He looked after the entire judicial administration. Qazis were appointed by him entertained appeals against qazis in the lower courts. The Chief Sardar was responsible for matters relating to religious disputes with regard to lands given in grants. Appeals against the Sadar at the lower levels were also heard by him.

Provincial Courts - *Subedar Diwan and Qazi* : These three sets of courts were instituted in the capitals of all the provinces. Cases related to civil matters were entertained by the Subedar. Offences involving defiances and disobedience of royal orders were punished by him. Cases with regard to revenue matters were dealt with by the Diwan. In all the important cities of the provinces qazi courts were established. Civil and criminal cases of Hindus as well as Muslims were tried here. The qazi was helped in the discharge of his duties by mufti and Mir Adil.

Administration of Justice in Sarkar and Pargana : In the Sarkars, Qazi, Kotwal and Faujdar tried civil cases. Revenue cases were dealt with by the Amil-

Guzar. Similarly, in the Parganas the Shiqdar and the Amil were responsible for civil and Diwani cases respectively.

Administration of Justice in the village : The village Panchayat dispensed justice in the village. These decided all kinds of cases in which the parties were Hindus-religious, civil and criminal - according to customary Hindu law and usage. The Qazi, Governor, Sarkar or Pargana officer exercised no control on the Panchayats but their decisions were recognised by the Mughals.

Laws : During the Mughal period, there did not exist a written code of state laws for the guidance of judges deciding cases. The law administered by the judges was chiefly (i) Quranic injunctions, (ii) Sunnas or Hadis or sayings of the prophet second in importance to the Quran, (iii) Fatwas or previous interpretations of the sacred law by the jurists (iv) digests prepared from time to time by the learned specialists of the four schools of the Islamic law. Distinctions with regards to religion were not made in criminal cases. In civil cases involving Hindus, respect and consideration were shown to their traditional rights and customs.

Defects in the organisation : First and the foremost was the fact that three separate judicial agencies "Worked at the same time and quite independent of one and another." The Chief Qazi had no authority to exercise and control over the courts of the governors and their subordinate officers. The courts were not graded or defined as lower courts or higher courts. The relationship and respective jurisdiction was equally vague. An appeal could be put before emperor without reference to any of the lower courts. The powers of the respective courts were also not defined. It was not clearly stated that a particular court could take up cases of certain nature or of a certain maximum value. Akbar took substantial steps to reform the entire administrative machinery but these organisational steps in the judicial administration continued through out the Mughal period.

Conclusion : The Mughal Emperors built up a tradition of fair and impartial justice. Akbar expressed his ideal thus, "If I were guilty of unjust act I would rise in judgement against myself. What shall I say then of my sons, my kindred and others." Akbar's successors continued this tradition. Even today, Jahangir commands respect as the dispenser of impartial justice. "Shahjahan" according to a foreign traveller Manucci "upheld the maxim of his father that true justice must be enforced." Aurangzeb was equally keen to dispense even handed justice. The only constraints and reservations for him were the sanctity and interests of Islam.

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Discuss clearly the salient features of the Mughal Government and administration.
2. Give an account of Law and Justice under Mughals.
3. Describe the position, powers and prerogatives of the Mughal Emperor.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Narang, K.S. : Mughal Rule in India (1526-1707).
 2. Pandey, A.B. : Later Medieval India, pp.396-447.
 3. Smith, V.A. : The Oxford History of India, pp.476-484.
 4. Ishwari Prashad : A Short History of the Muslim Rule in India, pp.396-433.
 5. Majumdar, R.C. : An Advanced History of India, pp.552-565.
- Raychaudhri & Data

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE

1. Fill in the blanks :
 - (i) The Mughals reorganised the
 - (ii) The office of the Mughal king was considered.....
 - (iii) The Mughal period was an age of
 - (iv) Mansabdari was a system of army and government service.
 - (v) The dual ranks of a mansabdar were called and respectively.
 - (vi) The Mughal Government established relationship with the peasants.
2. In which years did Akbar introduce the permanent land revenue system ?
3. What were the two important features of Akbar's land revenue system?
4. Name a well known historian of Mughal India who has written about the life and times of Akbar.
5. Can you say that the Mughals, particularly Akbar promoted a spirit of nationalism ?

- Key to Answers**
1. (i) Administration
 - (ii) Divine
 - (iii) Progress
 - (iv) Ranking
 - (v) Zat, Sawar
 - (vi) Direct
 2. 1582 A.D.
 3. Measurement and classification of land.
 4. Abul Fazl
 5. Yes.

CHECK-UP YOUR POSITION

- | | | |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Excellent | : | Above 6 correct answers |
| Good | : | 5-6 correct answers |
| Satisfactory | : | 4 correct answers |
| Unsatisfactory | : | Less than 4 correct answers |

**ADMINISTRATION OF MUGHALS : LAND REVENUE AND
MANSABDARI SYSTEMS**

In the last lesson, we had a brief idea of the Land Revenue and Mansabdari system of the Mughals in context of the broader framework of Mughal administrative institutions at the central and provincial levels. In the present lesson we shall study these two institutions in detail.

LAND REVENUE SYSTEM OF THE MUGHALS

Before Akbar : In the medieval period, land revenue was the main source of income of the state and the financial stability of the Government rested on the success and failure of the land revenue administration. That is why the rulers laid more emphasis on the organisation of land revenue system. Before Akbar, Sher Shah Suri had paid special attention to it, e.g. his reforms with regard to measurement and classification of land. When Humayun sat on the throne for the second time he divided the entire land into two categories - *Khalsa* (Crown land) and *Jagir*. On *Khalsa*, the land revenue was charged by sharing the crops. Most of the state lands were divided into jagirs whose annual land revenue had been fixed for ever.

Land Revenue Reforms of Akbar :-

Akbar's primary problem was to ascertain whether or not the farmers had legal right to the lands in their possession. His second problem was to fix the land revenue. This was rather difficult, because the reasonable land revenue could not be fixed by keeping in view the quality of land cultivated, crops sown, market rates of the crops, and the labour put in the crops. Besides, was it to be charged in kind or cash ? And then it was equally important to organise the basic system and machinery for collecting land revenue. Taking all these factors into account, Akbar introduced many reforms in the then prevailing land revenue system.

About the ownership of land, Akbar accepted the position that the farmer is the real owner of the land and the government is entitled to charge land revenue only. According to him, if a farmer was not in a position to pay up land revenue, the land was not to be taken away from him. However, he was pressurised to deposit land revenue with the Government, even though sometimes the pressure so exerted could be too harsh including corporal punishment. At times houses and domestic articles of defaulters were confiscated and their women and children were sold away. But all the same Government ensured that the farmers did not flee the fields.

It was in 1570 A.D. that Akbar directed his Diwan-i-Ala, Muzaffar Khan Tubati to introduce changes in the entire system. For this purpose, he appointed 10

Qanungos in the Central Government. The first duty entrusted to the Qanungos was to supply elaborate data concerning the working of existing land revenue system. Qanungos sent datas from the provinces. In 1575, the entire land divided into 1489 Karoris. Land revenue officer in charge of each unit was called *Karori*.

Zabti System : Akbar asked Todarmal, who was appointed Diwan-i-Ala in 1582, to reorganise the land revenue system. Before this, Todarmal had gained experience in the land revenue administration by his association with Muzaffar Khan. This system now introduced was known as *Zabti* as it was based on definite rules or also the system of Raja Todarmal or Ain-i-dahsala. This system was introduced in all parts of the empire except Bengal, Bihar, Sind, Kashmir, Hilly areas, and the areas commanded by the local chiefs and Kings. *Zabti* system was more scientific than all other methods of assessing land revenue. Because of this system relations between the Government and the farmers became cordial as well as regulated by law. Thus the interests of the farmers were secured. The following are the main characteristics of this system:-

Land Measurement : Akbar got the land measured for which propose he had a yard stick of 41 fingers length while Sher Shah Suri used that of 32 fingers length. For accurate measurement. Akbar replaced the hampen rope by a new and satisfactory *Jarib* which was free from contraction and expansion. Unit of (Sher Shah's Bigha was of 48 x 48 sq.yards) land was Bigha measuring 60 x 60 sq. yards. The amount spent on the measurement of land was borne by the Government. Another important feature of the measurement records was the details of pastures, forests and lakes were maintained separately.

Classification of Land : Land was classified on the basis of fertility into the following four categories :

1. *Polaj* : It included first rate land where crops could be sowed regularly. It brought regular land revenue to the state treasury.
2. *Parauti* : This type of land was left fallow for sometime, so that it could regain fertility.
3. *Chhacher* : The land which was kept fallow for three to four years was called Chhacher.
4. *Banjar* : The most inferior type of land which was kept fallow even for more than five years and yield meagre crops was placed under this category.

Polaj and Parauti : These two types of land were further divided into three categories - best, mediocre and inferior. The average production of these three categories was taken as the normal production of each class of land i.e. *Polaj* and *Parauti* and the share of the Government was fixed on the basis of this average production.

Government's Share : Government charged 1/3rd of the average production

of the *Polaj* and *Parauti* categories as land revenue. On the Chhacher land, Government charged 1/15 of the produce in the first year, 2/15th in the second year, 3/15 in the third year, 4/15 in the fourth year, and the 5/15th in the fifth year as land revenue. The produce of this land was calculated by taking the average of the produce of the same land for the last ten years.

Mode of Payment and Collections : Land revenue could be paid both in kind and cash. However, Government preferred cash payment. In order to convert government's share of grains into cash, schedules of rates were prepared for different *Ilqas*.

Land revenue was collected twice a year; firstly at the time of *Harri* (April Crops) and secondly at time of *Sawani* (November Crops). *Lambardar* was paid $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the total land revenue, collected from his village. Government tried not to keep arears on either side. It gave *Patta* to the landlords and the landlords gave assurance (*Qabuliyat*) the Government. Terms were laid down in the Pattas on which lands had been given to the landlords, and the landlords acceptance of these terms was contained in the *Qabuliyats* given to the Government.

Revenue Staff : In every village there was a Patwari who maintained the records of the village lands. Generally this was a hereditary post. Instead of pay, he used to get 1% commission on the collection of the land revenue of the village. Farmers were given demandslips and the details of the crops cultivated in the village land were furnished to the Government duly certified by the village *Lambardar*, who was the next officer after Patwari. He worked as a link between the Government and the farmers. He assisted in the collection of land revenue. Sometimes he was entrusted with the duty to collect and deposit land revenue in the Government treasury. In the *Pargana* the hereditary post of Qanungo was very popular. He used to maintain records of the produce and inspection reports of the whole *Pargana* on the basis of the files of the Patwari. Government used to get the needed information from him. For his remuneration Akbar had ordered to give one percent of the collection of the whole land revenue of the *Pargana* to Qanungo. Later on, the Government abolished the old system and fixed his salary. *Anil* was the highest official among the staff for the collection of land revenue in the *Pargana*. He used to fix Government's share in the crops. He kept watchful eye on his subordinates, and sent the report of the income and expenditure of the *Pargana* to the Government. It was also his duty to look after the needs and demands of the farmers, increase the cultivation of crops, to provide *Taqavi* to make waste-land fit for cultivation and arrange other necessary facilities. He was paid handsome salary to prevent bribery, *Amil* and *Karkun* and *Girdawars*, etc. assisted him in maintaining accounts. They used to measure the land and visited the village as a team.

The happiness and prosperity of the farmers on the honesty and integrity of the officers. As such the Mughal Emperors kept special check on the activities of

these officers so that they might not harass the farmers.

Importance of the Zabti System : Zabti system proved beneficial both of the farmers and Government. Now the farmer was aware of what he had to pay to the Government for a particular type of crops. The task of the Amils and Karkuns became easier.

By this system Government could have an estimate of income it could realise from land revenue in a particular year. Another advantage was that much staff was not needed to run this arrangement.

It was on the basis of this model that Malik Ambar Murshed Quli, Anna Ji Date, etc. introduced reforms in the land revenue system. Another significant feature was flexibility. The government could reduce or increase the share according to the circumstances. For instance, from 1585 to 1590 A.D. in areas between Delhi and Allahabad, crops were so good that the rates fell drastically. Consequently, Government gave a temporary concession in land revenue, on the other hand, the constant stay of the Emperor Akbar for many years at Lahore shot up the prices in the locality by which farmer benefitted greatly. Government temporarily increased land revenue by 20% when the Emperor left that place and the prices returned to normal, the old rate of land revenue was restored.

Other Methods of Land Revenue

Beside Zabti, Batai, Galla Baksh and Nasq systems were also in use. These system continued in those areas where it was difficult to introduce the Zabti system.

Batai (Sharing Crops) : This method of sharing the crops had been prevalent since long. One such method was Kankut. Under this system, after making an estimate of the produce of the large crops, the government share was fixed. Galla Baksh was another such method. According to this system after harvesting, the produce was divided. There was still another system called *Khat Batai*. According to this, Government claimed its share in the form of the produce of some fields. This system was prevalent in some parts of Kabul and Kashmir.

Nasq System : This system was prevalent in the province of Bengal and Orissa. Moreland does not consider it a new system but an old system that had continued at many places since long. He terms it as 'Group Assessment' system. According to this system, land revenue was fixed by estimating the crops of the whole village and that land revenue was deposited in the Government treasury by the village *Lambardar*. In turn, Lambardar was authorised to collect land revenue from the farmer as he willed. But according to Dr. Parmatma Saran and Moreland, the land revenue fixed under *Nasq* system was not fixed on the actual produce as it was done under *Zabti* and *Batai* system but was fixed by vague estimations.

CRITICISM OF AKBAR'S LAND REVENUE POLICY

According to Moreland, in the first half of his reign, the land revenue system of Sher Shah Suri continued but Akbar introduced later, with modifications, innovations and new features. The system of Akbar was better than that of Sher Shah. Many scholars give credit to Sher Shah Suri for many of the land revenue reforms made during Akbar's reign. But it is not entirely justified. Undoubtedly, Sher Shah Suri started the measurement of land, yet Akbar made many further reforms and introduced a number of additional innovations. For example he fixed the standard measurement of yard, prepared the list of prices on the basis of the prices of the past ten years. According to V.A. Smith, land revenue system of Akbar was prepared on the basis of the stern rules, and Government employees were strictly ordered to follow these rules. Numerous facilities were given to the peasants as discussed below :

Facilities for the Peasants :

1. In case of the less production or at the time of famine, the peasants were given concession in or total exemption from the payment of a land revenue.
2. Pattas were given to the farmers in order to provide them security from harassment by Government officials. In the Patta, the condition of the given land, its area and the details of the land revenue were enumerated so that farmers could not be overtaxed in any way and *Qabliyat*s (their acceptance) was taken from the farmers.
3. General *Taqavis* (Loans) were given to the farmers by the Government so that they could improve agriculture.
4. Farmers were free to pay up land revenue either in cash or kind.
5. The salaries of the officials associated with the work of land revenue administration were made attractive so that they worked honestly.
6. Damage done to the crops by the military operations was compensated by the Government and was known as *Payamali* or *Uzara*.
7. Land revenue staff was specially directed by the Government to behave cordially towards the peasantry and provide them every type of facility for improving agriculture.

Keeping these considerations in view, we come to the conclusion that the land revenue system of Akbar was fairly beneficial to the peasantry and the Government took many steps to keep them satisfied and happy. According to V.A. Smith land revenue system of Akbar was admirable. Rules and regulations concerning land revenue were quite strict. Government officials were given instructions for maximum benefits of the peasants.

Land Revenue System under the Successors of Akbar :

During the reign of Akbar *Zabti* system had become very popular. Jahangir and Shahjahan continued to follow his land revenue policy. But they showed leniency in enforcing the rules and as a result many defects crept into the land

revenue system. *Zabti* system was given up during the times of Aurangzeb and *Nasq* system replaced it. Under it, land revenue was imposed on the basis of rough measurements and estimate. As a result, revenue staff misused their powers and that led to great dissatisfaction among the peasantry. During the reign of Aurangzeb, those farmers who produced less were flogged. While during the reign of Akbar, rate of land revenue on best lands was $1/3$ rd, it was increased to $1/2$ in the times of Aurangzeb. Consequently, great dissatisfaction prevailed among the Zamindars and peasants.

MANSABDARI SYSTEM

In 1571 Akbar introduced the Mansabdari System. Mansab means 'Rank or Office or Position'. When a Mansab was conferred on some body, he had to keep a certain number of horses, carts and ponies, etc. Although predominantly, Mansabdari remedied the defects of the feudal system of army organisation which had prevailed hitherto, yet Mansab was conferred not only on military officials but was given to the civil officials as well. Irvine says, "The word 'Mansab' meant nothing beyond the fact that the holder of the Mansab was an employee of the state." R.P. Khosla opines, "In Mughal India, the Army, the peerage and the civil administration all rolled into one."

i) Difference between Mansabdar and European Feudalism :

Here it is necessary to know the difference between the European feudal system and Mansabdari. According to the European feudal system every petty feudal lord had to be faithful to his master-lord. Even the master-lord under certain terms could become the vassal of his vassal. Thus it was quite different from Mansabdari where every Mansabdari was directly under the Mughal Emperor.

ii) Evolution of the Mansabdari System

Mansabdari system was not a new innovation of Akbar. Some of its elements had been in existence in the Sultanate Period and also during the times of Babur, and Humayun. While initially it existed in Iran it was brought to India by the Sultans. The contribution of Akbar, which is no less, was that he re-organised it and made it, an integral part of his administration.

iii) Rules of Recruitment, Promotion and Termination of the Mansab

All the powers of the conferments of 'Mansab', recruitment, promotion and termination of the Mansabdars were vested in the Mughal Emperor himself. Mansabdars were given promotion generally on three occasions :

1. Before or after an expedition
2. On auspicious occasions
3. When officers of some Mansabdars fell vacant.

iv) Grades of Mansabdars : According to *Abul Fazal* under the Mansabdari system there were 66 grades, but practically these were not more than 33. The lowest

rank was that of ten and the highest was up to 7,000 and rarely of 10,000. But a Mansab higher than 7000 was generally given to persons of the royal family. However, later the Mansab of Prince Salim was raised to 12,000. During Jahangir's reign, the Mansab of royal Princes increased to 40,000. It was further raised to that of 60,000 in the time of Shahjahan. It was also conferred on his father-in-law, Asaf Khan, a Mansab of 9,000. It is note-worthy that such a high rank was never given to any commoner.

v) Class of Mansabdars

Mansabdars were divided into four classes, for example :

- (a) Persons having a Mansab from 20 to 400 were called Mansabdars.
- (b) Mansabdars holding a rank from 500 to 2500 were called Umra.
- (c) Mansabdars holding a rank of 3000 or above were called Umra-i-Azam.
- (d) The highest of the Mansabdars of the Empire was called Amir-ul-Umra.

Apart from the Mansab of the Mughal Princes, this was the highest Mansab. Big chiefs made efforts constantly to get that rank.

vi) The Ranks of *Zat*, *Sawar* and Mansabdars :-

In the beginning of Akbar's reign only one rank has been mentioned in relation to a Mansab. But in the closing years of his reign, we find references to the ranks of *Zat* and *Sawar*. With the name of every Mansabdar his ranks of *Zat* and *Sawar* were also pronounced and written. However, about the purpose and meaning of *Zat* and *Sawar*, scholars have expressed various opinions.

According to Blochman, *Zat* indicated the number of troops which was expected to be kept by a Mansabdar and the meaning of *Sawar* was the number of which he actually kept. But Irvine puts forward a different opinion. According to him, rank indicated a great respect and used to show the actual number of horsemen which a Mansabdar was supposed to keep besides the *Zat* rank. However, this point of view does not appear to be correct. According to Dr. R.P. Tripathi, rank commanded only great virtue by which a Mansabdar got some extra allowance, but he was not obliged to keep corresponding horsemen. According to Abdul Aziz, the *Sawar* rank indicated whether a Mansabdar with a particular *Zat* rank held first, second or third grade in a particular mansab. For example if the *Zat* and *Sawar* ranks of that a Mansabdar were equal, he was considered to be the Mansabdar of 1st grade; if the *Zat* rank of some *Panj hazari* Mansabdar of the 1st grade, if the *Sawar* rank of a Mansabdar was half or more than half of the *Zat* ranks, he was considered a Mansabdar of 2nd grade. For instance of Mansabdar with a *Zat* rank of 5000 and the *Sawar* ranks of 3000 was considered a Panj-hazari Mansabdar of second grade. If his *Sawar* rank was less than half of the *Zat* rank, he was known as Mansabdar of 3rd grade. For example, a Mansabdar with 5000 *Zat* rank and 2000 *Sawar* rank was called a *Panj hazari* Mansabdar of the 3rd grade. Thus every mansab was divided into

three grades. However, these three grades only existed in Mansabs of over 5000.

vii) Salaries of Mansabdars :

Mansabdars were paid according to their ranks. As we have seen every mansab was divided into three grades, for every grade different salaries were fixed. Mansabdars were not paid by the state only for their personal service but they were paid expenses for the maintenance of horses, elephants, camels, etc. Sometimes Mansabdars were asked to collect land revenue from a particular area in lieu of their salaries. However, salaries of the Mansabdars, who were paid in cash, were cleared twice a year. While clearing up the account, cost of horses, materials and uniforms of the soldiers provided by the Government to a Mansabdar was deducted. However the salaries of the soldiers of the Mansabdars were not uniform. Many times the efficient soldiers of the Mansabdars who owned good horses were paid better. Many times able Mansabdars were paid handsome money for doing some special job. Dr. Srivastava opines that the Mansabdars were not paid for all the twelve months. Perhaps the misunderstanding has come up due to the reason that actual salary paid to Mansabdar was less than the fixed, because Government deducted for the horses and other materials supplied to him during the years. According to Manucci and Moreland many other foreign writers, the Mansabdar were getting huge salaries on account of which they used to lead a luxurious life. But the Mansabdars had to spend on many things e.g. on (1) presenting gifts and presents to the emperor (2) the management of soldiers' horses, elephant etc. and (3) on the promotion of art and literature in their respective areas.

viii) Terms and Conditions of Recruitment, Salary & Service of the Mansabdari Soldiers

Mansabdari soldiers were recruited by a Mansabdar himself. In those days caste prejudice was very strong. Soldiers under a commander of their own caste fought with greater loyalty and bravery than under a commander belonging to a different caste. Hence it was not proper for the Emperor to recruit the armies and allocate them to different Mansabdars. That is why the work of recruitment; control and command of the Mansabdari army was handed over to the Mansabdars. Thus the Central Government was free from the responsibility of recruiting and maintaining the armies. Mansabdar himself disbursed salaries to his soldiers.

Every soldier was supposed to follow the rules framed by his Mansabdar. But the principal defect in this system was that every soldier considered himself to be a personal servant of a particular Mansabdar. The system perpetuated local loyalties. If a Mansabdar was killed in the battle-field, his soldiers refused to fight under another's command and generally ran away from the battlefield.

Mansabdari-soldiers were paid for about four and half months in a year and even that was not paid regularly. Moreover they were low paid and were expected to purchase and maintain their horses and arms out of their meager salaries. However,

the salary of soldier was increased if he kept a horse of good breed. For example, if a soldier had an Iraqi-horse he was paid a sum of Rs.30 extra. Those having horses of a inferior breed were paid only Rs.12 towards the cart and maintenance of the horse.

Another interesting feature was that there was no provision for regular parades. The means for training the soldiers were hunting, suppression of rebellions, operations, on the battlefield etc. Sometimes when soldiers were not regularly paid, they were compelled to acquire money by harassing the local people. Emperors like Aurangzeb strictly prohibited the Mansabdari soldiers from such activities.

Under the Mughal Emperors, number of permanent soldiers was very small and Mansabdari army consisted of two to four lac soldiers. Number of Mansabdars ranged by thousands but it fluctuated. However, the number of Mansabdars in the reign of Aurangzeb stood at 14,500.

ix) Promotion of the Mansabdars : There were no fixed rules for the promotion of the Mansabdars. Emperors could promote or demote any Mansabdars as the desired. While giving promotions, a particular Mansabdar's loyalty, efficiency, and seniority were kept in view. The Mansabs were taken away from the dishonest Mansabdars or they were demoted to the lower ranks. A Mansabdar who presented his army well disciplined at the time of inspection, was promoted to the next higher rank. For promotion it was not necessary for Mansabdar to go through all the stages, but on the basis of loyalty and previous service record, Emperor could promote a Mansabdar from a very low rank to a very high one.

x) Merits of the Mansabdari System

According to P. Saran, in the time of Akbar, Mansabdari was not a retrograde step rather it was in accordance with the time. It worked efficiently in his reign. Dr. Srivastava opines that with the help of this system Akbar utilized Rajput Mansabdars against the refractory Rajput chiefs.

xi) Shortcomings of the Mansabdari System :-

Mansabdars did not follow the rules. Those who were away from the Centre, did not keep the fixed number of soldiers, but draw money from the Government for the entire fixed number. When they were asked to present soldiers and horses, they remained absent by making one excuse or the other or they made some pretext for not bringing the entire contingent. Sometimes they got the dates postponed by bribing the inspection-officers. Such examples are available when Mansabdars drew full payments without getting their soldiers inspected consecutively for 12 years. As and when they came with the temporary recruit and borrowed horses, they satisfied the Department of the Bakshi and got their salaries sanctioned. Many times the same men and horses were shown in the Palatoons of different Mansabdars.

During the reign of Akbar a number of such defects came to light and efforts were made to eradicate these. Those Mansabdars found guilty were severely punished.

The Emperor also made surprise inspections and framed this rule that every Mansabdar must present his army and inspections at least once a year. Sometimes, guilty Mansabdars were deprived of their ranks or *Jagirs*. But on following the rules to the satisfaction of the Emperor, they were reinstated. A rule was made recording the marks of identification of the soldiers. The types of identity marks were put on the horses. Mark of the Mansabdars was planted on one thigh (leg) of the horse and the Government mark was put on the other. Thus no Mansabdar could present another's horse at the time of inspection. Mansabdars were given different marks to be planted on horses. Sometimes marks of identification and the weights of the horses were also recorded. The messengers and the spying-officers of the Government were instructed to keep an eye on the Mansabdars and to furnish the report of their maladministration. Though Akbar tried to reform and operate the system according to rules yet he did not succeed to tally and a number of defects remained.

A major defect in this system was that officers of the army of one Mansabdar could not be transferred to the army of another Mansabdar. Due to this, uniform rules could not be applied to all the Mansabdari armies. In the battlefield, soldiers under different Mansabdars did not fight unitedly. That is why the Mughal army was not strong and homogenous as a national army should or could be. Thus Mansabdari system made the Mughal army weak unstable. Whatever success they achieved was not due to their well organised and well knit army but due to the large army they had.

Still another defect was that huge salaries made soldiers and Mansabdars extravagant and thus the Mughal army became a great burden upon the Government treasury. Mansabdars indulged in luxuries and extravagant living.

Another important demerits of the system was that the Mansabdars were quite aware that their posts would not be inherited by their successors, and their jagirs etc. would be taken back by the Government after their death. This is why they lived lavishly.

Due to immense wealth, some Mansabdars became very powerful. They openly defied the Emperor. To cite an example, the struggle among Shahjahan's sons became more intense and deadly, largely due to this Mansabdaris system. The different Mansabdars took sides and divided their loyalties and resources. Mansabdars, to further their self interests and enhance their ranks and Mansabs in the long run, definitely involved themselves in the wars of succession, and assisted the rebellion Princes. Sir Jadunath Sarkar is also of the opinion that the Mansabdaris system was one of the principal causes of the down fall of the Mughal Empire.

RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Sarkar, J.N. : Mughal Administration (Fifth edition) for Land Revenue Policy, see pp.65-90; for Mansabdari System, see pp.201-06.
2. Pande, A.B. : Later Medieval India; for Land Revenue System, see

- pp.419-34; for Mansabdaris System, see pp.401-406.
3. Srivastava, A.L. : The Mughal Empire (4th Edition) for Land Revenue System, see, pp.502-4, for Mansabdari System, see, pp.197-204.
 4. Sharma, S.R. : The Crescent in India for Land Revenue System, see, pp.393-96; for Mansabdari System, see pp.397-98.
 5. Sir Wolsley Haig : The Cambridge History of India, Vol.IV, (S.Chand Edition); & Sir Richard Burns, for Land Revenue Policy, see pp.442-75.
 6. Majumdar, Rai : An Advanced History of India, pp.556-57, 560-63.
Chaudhari & Datta
 7. Narang, K.S. : Muslim Rule in India.

SELF-CHECK EXERCISE

1. What was the major source of income of the State in medieval time?
2. In which year was the *Zabti* system introduced by Akbar.
3. Why was the *Zabti* system so named ?
4. Name two important features of the *Zabti* system.
5. Fill in the blanks :
 - (i) In a general sense, Mansab meant
 - (ii) According to Abul Fazl, *Mansabdari* had grades but actually there were not more than thirty-three grades.
6. Who appointed :
 - (i) *The Mansabdars*
 - (ii) *The Mansabdari Soldiers*

1. Land Revenue
2. 1582 A.D.
3. It worked according to certain rules and regulations.
4. For example measurement and classification.
5. (i) rank or position in the services, (ii) 66.
6. (i) The Emperor, (ii) Mansabdar.

Key to Answers

CHECK-UP YOUR POSITION

Excellent	:	Above 6 correct answers
Good	:	5-6 correct answers
Satisfactory	:	4 correct answers
Unsatisfactory	:	Less than 4 correct answers

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC LIFE UNDER THE MUGHALS

Introduction :

We have sufficient material on the political history of the Mughal. But comparatively very little is mentioned by the Muslim writers about the life of the people and their standard of living. It is because Muslim writers were mostly court historians who praised the political attainments of the Mughal rulers. Different histories centred around the heroic achievements of a particular rulers. So they wrote mostly about the political career and achievements of the rulers. However, after a careful study of certain sources and writings we can form an idea about the social and economic life of the people. Various observations and odd reference scattered in such writing helps us to reconstruct the pattern of social and economic life. Al-Beruni's accounts, Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Babur-Nama* and the writings of the European travellers are the important sources for the study of social and economic life of the Mughals.

Society under the Mughals comprised of two distinct-groups - the Hindus and Muslims. The two were fairly self-contained though there was bound to be interaction; tension, withdrawal and occasional attempt towards understanding and cordiality were some of the attitudes which come to the surface from time to time.

Social Life :

In the context of social life we shall study the social life of the Hindus and Muslims.

Hindu Society :

The Hindu Society was divided on the basis of the traditional caste. There were four castes among the Hindu viz Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra. These four castes were further divided into sub-castes known as *Jatti*. The origin of caste-system among the Hindus is traced back to the Vedic period. It is obvious that in the last *mandal* of Rig Veda there is one *Sukta* known as *Puras Suktra* and in this *Sukta* the origin of *Varna* system is mentioned. In the early time the caste-system was not so rigid but during the course of the time the caste became very rigid. The society was divided into water-tight divisions. The Brahmans was the dominant group in Hindu society and their position was certainly better than the other three *Varnas*. The Kashtriya and Vaisya also occupied a prominent place in the Hindu Society. Majority of them began to take active part in trade. Sudras, the fourth *Varna* of the Hindu Society suffered at the hands of the Hindus as well as by the Muslims. Their position was deplorable. They were mal-treated. They were not allowed entry

into religious places nor could they recite the Vedic *mantra*. Due to this reason many of them were converted to Islam or embraced Sikhism. The Hindus worshipped many gods and goddesses. The bathing in the river Ganga was considered to be sacred and the Hindus came from distant places to take the sacred bath.

Muslim Society :

The Muslim Society during the Mughals was marked by sectarian divisions as also racial difference. The sectarian division was more important and rigid. The Muslims were also divided into three classes viz. the upper class, the lower class and the slaves. The upper class was constituted by *Amirs, Ulemas, Qazis Moulvis, Khan, nobles etc.* They were organizers in times of war, while in the time of peace they were the pleasure seekers. They indulged in drinking, hunting, and women. They kept many wives and led a life of luxury. The Muslim lower classes consisted of the peasantry and the minor officials, like tax collectors etc. But their position was certainly better than that of the Hindus. The slaves were mostly men; but women too were kept as slaves. But in some respect they were better treated as compared to the Hindu Sudra.

The attitude of the Muslims towards the Hindu masses :

The Muslims being the ruling class held certain advantages. Hindus enjoyed a lower status. There was even no proper climate for the Hindus for social interactions. Some sort of thesis and antithesis were being put forward by the two communities. The orthodox Muslim have always sought to prosecute the Hindus. Muslim considered the Hindu as *Kafir* who prepared and worshipped images. According to the theological belief of Quran, the man can not prepare *Naqash* or image of God and one who prepares image is Kafir or Kufir i.e. infidels. Due to this reason the Muslim rulers had destroyed the Hindu temples and images. However, some Mughal rulers were liberal and fairly tolerant of faith. At the same time some Muslim rulers were so orthodox and biased against the Hindu society and religion that the very spirit of the Hindu community was being changed or dominated by the Muslim socio-interactions.

We find a different phenomena in the village life. In the cities the Muhammadans were more cautious about the Hindu population and the degree of inter-mixing or co-mingling was very less. But in the villages the Muslim community had to find out a via media for their diffusion. There was some sort of inter-mixing or co-mingling. Even some religious and social customs were celebrated jointly by the two communities. It is an admitable fact that the degree of rigidity was more in the urban areas than in the villages.

After a glimpse of the social condition of the Hindus and Muslims respectively, we can elaborate on the individual's life under the Mughals.

(a) The Position of the Priest - Pandit and Qazi

- (b) The Position of Women
- (c) The Position of Sudra and Slave
- (d) The Sources of Entertainment
- (e) The Standard of living of the different social classes
- (f) Dress, Decoration and Ornaments
- (g) Fairs and Festivals

(a) The Position of the Priest - Pandit and Qazi :

The Hindu Society was guided by the *Purohit* or *Pandit*. He was considered to be the chief exponent of the Vedas. But the Brahmans had not contributed much for the welfare of the Hindu Society. They became greedy and morally weak. They (Pandits) had a feeling of superiority with regard to the remaining three *Varnas*. It is also true that some of the Brahmans left the hereditary profession and took up administrative jobs under the Mughals. Some of the Brahmans even adopted agriculture profession. But there was not much of a nobility. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "The Hindu society remained practically static throughout the medieval age. In fact it deteriorated morally and materially."

The Muslim Society was also, to some extent, guided by their religious leaders, especially the *Qazis* and *Ulemas*. Their position, like the Hindu Pandits, was also supreme in the Muslim Society. These *Qazis* and *Ulemas* exercised considerable influence on government and politics.

On the basis of the Islamic theology, the Muslim Society in India was divided mainly in two sections viz. Shia and Sunni. The Sunnis were more in number as compared to the other groups. There was tension and infighting between these two groups. The Sunnis were in an advantageous position because most of the Mughal rulers were Sunnis. However, in the time of Akbar, relations between the Sunnis and Shias were fairly cordial. But Aurangzeb was an orthodox Sunni and during his reign the *Shias* suffered much. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "There was a good deal of antipathy among the Muslims on Sunnis and the Shias. The rivalry between the Central Asian Sunnis (whose number was very large in Northern India) and the Persian Shias (who formed a minority) lasted throughout the medieval age."

(b) The Position of Women :

The position of Hindu woman was deplorable. The girls were married at very tender age. They were mostly confined only to their home. The Hindu woman observed *Purdah*. Polygamy was permitted and the rulers and princes had number of wives; but the common people were monogamous. In the words of A.L. Srivastava,

"Muslims took delight in enslaving Hindu women mass from the lowest rank, and many of them were forced to entertain the Muslim Court and the nobility with dance and music."

The marriage took place in one's own caste but at the same time inter-caste marriages were also not unknown. In the Hindu Society widow remarriage was also forbidden. Divorce was not allowed and the marriage was dissolved only by death. Hindu women were not allowed to have an independent status.

No doubt *Sati* was not obligatory for Hindu women, yet there was a tradition for the widow to burn herself on the funeral-pyre of her husband. This act was considered a very brave act on the part of a woman. A.L. Srivastava says, "these two institutions - child marriage and purdah-brought about the segregation of girls and a degradation in the condition of Hindu women during the medieval age.

The position of Muslim women was comparatively better than the Hindu women. The Muslim women also observed Purdah and were confined to their houses but being members of the ruling class, were comparatively in a better position. According to the Quranitic Law, a Musalman can marry more than once and thus polygamy was very common among the Muslims.

(c) The Position of Sudras and Slaves :

The Sudra, suffered heavily during the Mughal period. However, those who were converted to Islam escaped exploitation by the other *Varnas*. The Sudras were not allowed to enter Hindu temples. They were not allowed to fetch water from the public well. The Sudras were also divided into sub-divisions e.g. the chandals. In the opinion of A.L. Srivastava, "The two most undesirable features for the Hindu society was untouchability and slavery. The touch of a *Chandal* was considered defilement, and the person concerned had to purify himself by bathing with his clothes different penances were prescribed by the Brahmans various types of defilement, such as conversing with the *Chandals*, joining them on a journey or a trip, touching them, drinking water from a well or a pond owned by a chandal, drinking water from a *Chandal's* vessel, eating a *Chandal's* food or living for some time in the same house with him etc. etc."

The Muslim Society was divided on an economic pattern yet we do not have such a pitiable condition of any section of Muslim society as that of the Sudras. It is true that Muslim nobles or aristocracy engaged slaves for house hold work or in the field but their position was certainly better than that of the Sudras. It is said that slavery was very common and the slaves were distributed as gifts or presents among the friends.

(d) Recreation and amusement :

During the Mughal period there were many means of entertainment. The people of upper class enjoyed indoor games likes chess, dice etc. and also outdoor games like hunting, swimming etc. Middle classes enjoyed games like cards, cock fighting, pigeon flying; knitting. The lower classes enjoyed witnessing these games. The nobles indulged in heavy drinking, gambling, women and dancing. The

royal ladies and courtesans also took wine on special occasions. The people were fond of music, dance and drama.

(e) The Standard of Living of the Different Social Classes

Position of the Upper Class :

The upper classes lived in big houses. They wore costly dresses and ornaments. They used to drink wine and kept big harems. They had large number of servants including the slaves. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "The standard of living of the upper classes was high. Kings and nobles in splendid, well-decorated and furnished palaces. Kings and royal officers ate in the utensils of gold and silver. The residences of well-to-do people too were well-furnished and royal processions were marked with splendour and gorgeousness."

Position of the Middle Class :

The middle class comprised of government officials and traders. They did not live like the nobles but led fairly simple life. Terry and Bernier are of the opinion that traders intentionally lived a simple life because they wanted to hide their wealth from the greedy Subedar who could appropriate their property at any time. But the traders and businessmen living on the western coast were really wealthy and their standard of living was also high. By the times of the later Mughals the resources of the nobility had become considerably scarce and the middle classes were becoming prosperous by means of trade and banking in Eastern India.

Position of Lower Class :

The lower class was constituted by peasants, artisans, shopkeepers and other labours. Their standard of living was austere. Their life was hard as compared with the other two upper classes. Woollens and shoes were rarely used by them. It seems that woollen clothes and shoes were beyond their means. Normally there seems to be no famine and scarcity of food, but in times of drought, famine and scarcity, their miseries must have multiplied. During the times of Akbar the position of the peasants was reasonably good but under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb their condition was not very satisfactory. In the times of later-Mughals land revenue increased. The Revenue Officials were harsh and intimidating. The labourers were unable to have even two meals a day. They lived in the mud houses. Normally they ate *Khichri*. Sometimes they were forced to undertake manual work without proper wages. The upper classes were not very sympathetic to the lower strata of society whether Hindu or Muslim.

(f) Dress, Decoration and Ornaments :

In the Mughal period people wore cotton, woollen and silken clothes. The aristocracy used perfumes, oils and other cosmetics. Special attention was given to long hairs. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "In Northern parts men wore *dhotis* and turban and women *saris*. Well-to-do people put on a kind of Jacket (*angika*) with long

sleeves. In South India both men and women wore loin cloth, and went bare footed. But the use of jewellery both by the males and the females were common throughout the country." The dress and decoration of the Hindus were similar with that of the Muslims but at the same time we can not say that there were absolutely the same. The distinction of dress between the two was very obvious. As A.L. Srivastava says that the well-to-do Muslims were particular about their dress. They wore a long upper garment called *qaba*. Besides this they put on a shirt (*qamis*) and trousers. They well-to-do put on an overcoat called *dagla* in cold weather. At home they wore *lungis* instead of trousers. The *Ulemas* were distinguished by their large turbans and long sleeved tunics. They tied the strings of their coat on the right hand side. Their women were clad in close-fitting trousers, shirt and a long scarf. Some women put on caps on their heads. The women of Kashmir wore a long tunic coming down to the feet, but no trousers. Both men and women made use of waist-band. In short we can say that the mode and quality of dress, ornaments depended upon the economic condition of the individual.

The burqah or the pardah were also prevalent among the Muslim and Hindu women too came out of their houses in *burqa*.

(g) Fairs and Festivals :

We find many fairs and festivals of both Hindu and Muslims. The most important Muslim festivals were Id-ul-Zuha, Muharram, Shah-i-Barat, the prophet's anniversary and Nauroz. The simple and common activities during these special days were shaving of head, celebration of marriages and death ceremonies. The festivals of Hindus like Dusshera, Dewali, Holi etc. were celebrated with much zeal and enthusiasm. The holy place of the Hindu like Kurukshetra, Hardwar, Mathura, Prayag and Ayodhya were important centre of pilgrimage where the festivals were held on special occasions. Both men and women participated in the festivals.

Like the Hindus, Muslims too visited their important religious places like Sarhind, Panipat and Ajmer where festivals were held on important occasions. The Muslim Society, like the Hindus, also believed in superstitions.

Economic Condition :

India was famous for her wealth from the earliest times. The fabulous wealth of India attracted the foreigners to invade India again and again. During the Mughal period the economic condition of India was reasonably good if not better. But in the time of latter Mughals the economic condition of the people in general deteriorated, the upper classes being an exception.

Agricultural :

Majority of the people lived in the villages and their main occupation was agriculture. The main source of wealth was produce from the land. Agriculture

depended upon rain. Though there was canal irrigation and people knew the use of Persian-wheel yet the majority cultivators depended upon the rainfall. The main crops grown were wheat, rice, barley, cotton, sugarcane, oilseeds, indigo, poppy etc. Rice was the main produce of Bengal while wheat was the major crop of Northern India. No doubt the Mughal Emperor had not taken too much interest in the irrigation and construction of the new canals yet the position of the peasants was comparatively good. During Akbar, the condition of the peasants, was better but later it began to deteriorate especially, under the later-Mughal Emperors. From the peasants provincials officials began to collect exorbitant rate of revenue and subjected to the extreme hardship.

Industries :

These were two types of Industries viz., state industries and private undertaking. In the cities large industries were established because of the demand for these products. But in the villages these cottage industries and their products were mostly consumed in the village itself. The industries of *Karkhanas* under the patronage of States were called royal workshop and they prepared articles of the best quality which were used by the royalty and the upper classes. The product of such industries were silk, gold and silverware and embroiders work of high standard.

Regarding private enterprises the most important were the textile industries printing industry, sugar industry, metal work, stone-work etc. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "There were some minor industries, such as, shoe-making, manufacture of arms, manufacture of brass and other metal industries and clay industries. Textile industries were common to all the province of the country; but Bengal and Gujarat were particularly renowned for the manufacture and export of textile goods."

During the Mughal period India had exported agricultural goods, textile manufacture both cotton and silk; and also some other items like opium, indigo etc.

Trade :

Trade in medieval India was flourishing. The political stability of the Mughal Government, facilitated movement of traders from one part of the country to another. The government did not impose restriction on the movement of traders and the sale of their products in different parts of the country. Trade was carried on the sea route as well as by road. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "We had, during this period commercial relations with China, the Malaya Islands and other countries in the Pacific Ocean which were connected with us by sea routes. Our trade with Bhutan, Tibet, Afghanistan, Persia and other countries in Central Asia was carried on through land routes."

India in the times of Mughals had good trade contact with Ceylon, Burma,

China, Japan, Nepal, Iran and Central Asia. India exported cotton and silken clothes, opium, indigo, sugarcane, salt and chillie and the imports included gold, silver, perfumes and horses of the best qualities. The main sea-routes of India for the trade with different parts of the world were Goa, Calicut, Cochin; Nagapatam, Camby, Surat and Chittagaon. A.L. Srivastava is of the opinion that the government demands on the people's productive capacity and labours were exorbitant and the tiller of the soil was left with about one-third of his produce. This incidence of taxation fell heavily on him; but it seems that in normal times he did not starve. His wants were few, infact, fewer than he has in our days, and thins of every day use were much cheaper.

During the reign of Akbar, the taxes were not so heavy on the produce as compared to later Mughals. It is obvious that during the reign of Aurangzeb industry and trade were badly effected due to constant wars and the general inefficiency of the administration. In brief we can say the economy was fairly well balanced under the Imperial Mughals but it gradually began to be unbalanced during the rule of the later-Mughals.

One of the important factors of the development of trade during the Mughals was the rice and development of big cities. During the Mughal period many cities were developed and new cities were founded. Cities like Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Allahabad, Ajmer, Raj Mahal, Decca, Burhampur became important centres of trade.

Another factor responsible for economic activity and balancing of Mughal economy was construction of and maintenance of roads. The big cities were connected by roads. The grand-trunk road which was from Decca covering Patna, Delhi, Lahore and Attock reached upto Kabul. Another important high-way the road which leads from Agra running through Gwalior, Jodhpur, Ajmer to Asirgar. Another high-way was from Agra to Ahmedabad. Another road constructed during the Mughal period was from Lahore to Multan. Thus the big and important cities were well connected with roads. The highly well-planned land-routes helped the provinces to balances their economy.

The economic condition of India after Aurangzeb's death was rapidly deteriorating. The condition of the peasants worsened. Industry was decaying. Trade came to a stand still in the south. Where an important part of India for trade was being gradually dominated by the British East India Company and the Mughal Government become too weak to stabilize and control the economy of India.

Prices and Famine :

In the times of the Mughals things of daily use such as wheat atta, vegetables, desi-sugar, fruit, milk, ghee, oil, meant and articles of clothing were very cheap. Dama and rupees were the coins in circulation during the Mughals period. Dam was a compper coin having a weight of one tola and $8\frac{1}{2}$ masha. It was

the 40th part of a rupee. Rupee was silver coin and its weight was $11\frac{1}{2}$ masha. The popular and common coin in circulation was Dam. Especially during Akbar the prices were very low. Abdul Fazl has given the list of commodities as following :

Wheat	.....	12 Dam per maund
Wheat atta	.....	22 Dam per maund
The course quality of Rice	.....	20 Dam per maund
Meat	.....	16 Dam per maund
Mungi	.....	18 Dam per maund
Ghee	.....	105 Dam per maund
Sugar best quality	.....	06 Dam per maund

The prices of vegetables were also very cheap. In the words of A.L. Srivastava, "the prices did not much differ during the reign of Akbar's successors except in the time of war or during a famine when for a temporary period things became very dear indeed. Otherwise, generally speaking, the prices of things throughout the Mughal period remained low. The effect of all round cheapness and low prices was that the common man got his means of subsistence without difficulty."

As we have seen during the Mughal period the crops depended upon rainfall so the failure of seasonal rains always brought famine. North-western India suffered a severe famine in the first year of Akbar's reign i.e. 1555-56. Another famine occurred in Gujarat in 1573 and again in 1630-32. In 1596 there occurred, famine in Kashmir too. The common people were hard hit by these famine. A.L. Srivastava is of the opinion, "The Mughal Emperor from Akbar onwards followed a policy to relieve the distress of the people as much as they could. It seems that although the means of a common man during the Mughals period were meager yet he was "not unhappy".

SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Sarkar and Dutta	:	Modern Indian History, Volume I. passim
Srivastava, A.L.	:	The Mughal Empire, passim
Singh, Meera	:	Medieval History of India, passim

Type Setting:

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