

HISTORY

Chapter 4: The Mughal Empire



The Mughal Empire

The Mughal Empire is known for its able rulers who not only annexed and consolidated their empire but also ruled efficiently. This became possible due to sound administrative policies and ideals of governance.

The Mughal Lineage

The Mughals were the descendants of two great lineages of rulers. Babur was the descendant of Genghis Khan (ruler of the Mongol tribe of China and Central Asia) from his mother's side and Timur from his father's side. Mughals did not like to be associated with Genghis Khan as he had killed several innocent people during his lifetime. Further, he was also linked to the Uzbeks who were their Mongol competitors. On the other hand, the Mughals were proud of their Timurid ancestry as he had captured Delhi in 1398.



The Mughals were proud of their Timurid ancestry

Military Expeditions of the Mughals

Babur (1526-1556)

- In 1526- defeated Ibrahim Lodi in the First Battle of Panipat
- In 1527- defeated Rana Sanga and his allies at Khanua
- In 1528- defeated the Rajputs at Chanderi



Babur was the founder of the Mughal rule in India

Humayun (1530-40), (1555-56)

- Humayun divided his inheritance and gave a province to each of his brothers.
- His power against the Afghans was weakened by his ambitious brother Mirza Kamran.
- Humayun was defeated by Sher Shah Suri at Chausa and Kanauj in 1540.
- He took shelter in Iran and occupied Delhi again in 1555.
- Humayun died due a fall from the stairs of his library.

Akbar (1556-1605)

- From 1556-70, Akbar launched military campaigns against the Afghans, Malwa and Gondwana.
- In 1568 he captured Chittor and in 1569, he seized Ranthambore.
- From 1570-85, he launched military campaigns in Gujarat, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa.
- He suppressed the revolt led by his half brother Mirza Hakim.
- From 1585, Akbar expanded his empire. He captured Qandhar, Kashmir, Kabul, Berar, Khandesh and parts of Ahmadnagar.
- Prince Salim (Jahangir) revolted against him in the last years of his rule.



Akbar - (1556-1605)

Jahangir (1605-27)

- Jahangir captured Mewar
- He launched campaigns against the Ahoms, the Sikhs and the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar. However, these campaigns were not very successful.
- He married Nur Jahan who held considerable influence in the court.
- Prince Khurram (Shah Jahan) revolted against him in the last years of his rule.

Shah Jahan (1627-85)

- The Afghan noble Jahan Lodi was defeated by Shah Jahan.
- He defeated the Bundelas and captured Orchha.
- Shah Jahan captured Balkh from the Uzbegs but lost Qandahar to the Safavid dynasty.
- He annexed Ahmadnagar.
- Shah Jahan was imprisoned in Agra by Aurangzeb during the last years of his life.



Shah-Jahan (1627-85)

Aurangzeb (1558-1707)

- He defeated the Ahoms in north eastern India in 1663.
- Aurangzeb sent armies against the Yusufzai and the Sikhs.
- He also sent armies against the Maratha chief Shivaji. He was initially successfully but later the Marathas carried on guerilla warfare against the Mughals.
- In 1685, he annexed Bijapur and in 1687 captured Golconda.
- He faced stiff resistance from the Marathas, Sikhs, Jats, Satnamis and the Ahoms.
- After his death, the Mughal Empire began to decline.



Aurangzeb (1558-1707)

Tradition of Succession among the Mughals

The Mughals followed the custom of **coparcenary inheritance**. This meant that after the death of the king, the property was to be equally inherited by all his sons. They did not believe in the rule of primogeniture according to which the eldest son inherits the father's property. This was the reason why each Mughal prince vied with his brother to capture power.

Relation of the Mughals with Other Rulers

- The Mughals captured many Rajput states initially. Babur and Humayun did not have very good relations with the Rajputs.
- It was later realised by Akbar that since the Rajputs were brave and courageous, it was not easy for the Mughal forces to defeat them.

- Therefore, the Mughals entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Rajputs. This helped them to influence several Rajput policies.
- Many Rajput rulers were given high positions in the administration of the Mughals.



Raja Man Singh was a loyal friend of Akbar. He was a mansabdar in the Mughal court with a zat rank of 5,000

- The Sisodia Rajputs initially did not accept the suzerainty of the Mughals initially. Though they were defeated, they were honoured by the Mughals. They returned their lands to them as assignment. The policy of treating the Rajputs equally with the other Mughal nobles helped them to influence the Rajput kings. Many Rajput kings fought wars on the side of the Mughal rulers.
- However, not all Rajput rulers shared good relations with the Mughals.
- The Mughals did not have good relations with the Marathas. Aurangzeb's insult of Shivaji further deteriorated the Mughal-Maratha relations.
- The Mughals also had strained relations with the Sikhs.

The Administrative Policies of the Mughals

The Mansabdari System

In the mansabdari system, the nobles belonging to various groups such as the Turkish, Afghans, Rajputs etc. were given high ranks in the court. Some features of the mansabdari system were:

- Masabdari was a grading system by which the rank, salary and military responsibilities were fixed.

- The mansabdar was a person who held a mansab which literally means position or rank.
- Every mansabdar was given a rank called zat. For example, the nobles with a zat of 5,000 were ranked higher and had more powers than the nobles who had a zat of 1,000.
- The mansabdars had to maintain the sawar or the cavalymen. The number of cavalymen that they could maintain depended upon their zat.
- They paid salaries to the cavalymen and brought horses.
- The Mughals received jagirs (land) as their salaries. From the revenue collected from their jagirs, they paid salaries to the cavalymen and maintained horses.
- The mansabdars did not reside in their jagirs. Their officers collected the revenue from their jagirs.
- During the time of Akbar, the revenue of a jagir was assessed so that the salary of a mansabdar was equal to the revenues collected from his jagir.
- During the reign of Aurangzeb, there was an increase in the number of mansabdars and hence a shortage of jagirs. Also, the mansabdars received jagirs whose revenues were far less than what their salary was.
- Therefore, the mansabdars tried to extract maximum revenues from the peasants which led to their impoverishment.



Raja Todar Mal was
the revenue minister
in the court of Akbar

Zabt and Zamindars

The revenue collection from the land was the main source of income of the Mughal Empire. Following were the main features of revenue collection during this time:

- Peasants paid taxes to the headman or the local chieftain who came to be called as the zamindar.
- Todar Mal was the revenue officer of Akbar. He first carried out the survey of the crop produced, the prices and the land for a period of ten years.
- On the basis of the data received, land tax was fixed on each crop which was to be paid in cash.
- Each province was divided into revenue circles with its own revenue rates for each variety of crops. This system came to be known as zabt.
- Zamindars as revenue collectors became extremely powerful in some areas. In some cases, the zamindars together with the peasants revolted against the Mughal officials.

Akbar's Policies

We get lot of information about the reign of Akbar from the book 'Ain-i Akbari' written by Abul Fazl.

- Akbar's empire was divided into provinces called subas which were governed by the subedar. The subedar performed the political and the military functions in his province. He was supported by the kotwal (town police), bakshi (paymaster) etc.
- The diwan was the chief financial officer.
- The nobles during the reign of Akbar commanded large armies. They later became too powerful and challenged the Mughal authority at the end of the seventeenth century.
- Akbar held religious discussions with the ulemas, Brahmanas, Jesuit priests and Zoroastrians at ibadat khana in Fatehpur Sikri.
- Akbar realised that in every religion, dogmas and bigotry existed. This led him to follow the principle of 'sulh-i-kul' or 'universal peace'. This encouraged tolerance for other religions, honesty, justice and peace.

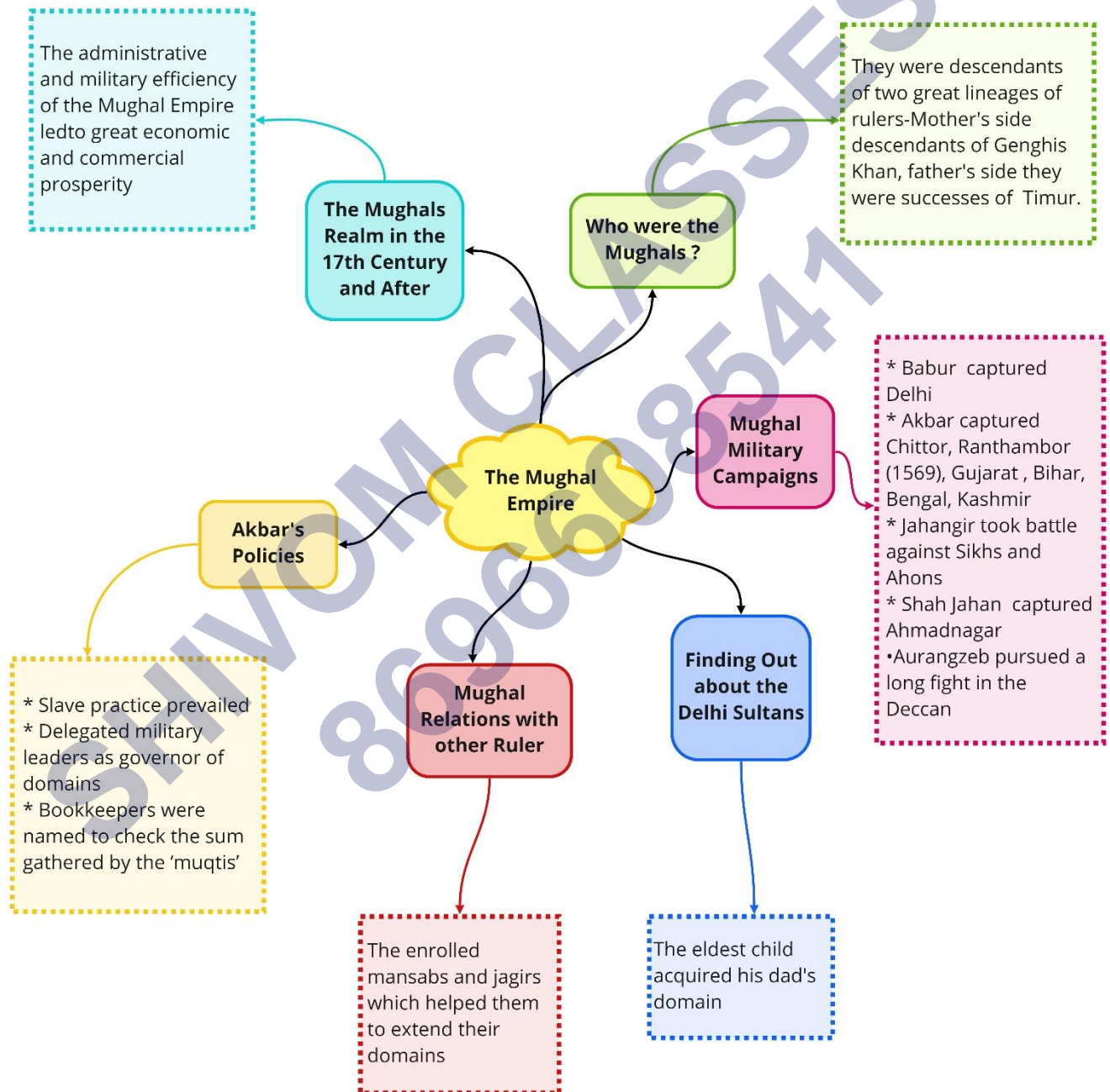


Akbar followed the principle of sulh-i-kul and also implemented it in many areas of governance

The Mughal Empire in the Seventeenth Century and After

- Due to sound administrative policies and military efficiency, the Mughal Empire reached its zenith in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries.
- Many travellers have left an economic account of the Mughal rule. According to them, while one section of the people was extremely rich, the other section was extremely poor.
- The mansabdars of high rank earned a good income for themselves which they spent on giving salaries to the cavalymen and purchasing various goods.
- This benefited the artisans and craftsmen who supplied the nobles with various goods and services.
- However, the small peasants were hardly able to save any amount which could be invested in the fields. The poorest peasants were sometimes not even able to provide a day's meal for their family.
- Big and wealthy peasants, nobles, merchants and bankers profited from the economic system which favoured the big and powerful.
- The wealth and resources of the Mughal Empire made them one of the greatest empires in the world at this time. But the empire began to decline in the later part of the seventeenth century.
- Many Mughal governors who were ruling the various states began to assert their independence and power. As a result many regional kingdoms such as Hyderabad and Awadh emerged. Though they recognized the Mughal Emperor as their master in Delhi, they began to rule independently in their own regions.

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Chapter 4 - The Mughal Empire



Important Questions

➤ Multiple Choice Questions:

Question 1. When Babur got throne of Ferghana, he was:

- (a) Only 12 years old
- (b) Only 14 years old
- (c) Only 15 years old
- (d) Only 20 years old

Question 2. 1st war of Panipat fought between:

- (a) Humayun and Ibrahim Lodi
- (b) Akbar and Ibrahim
- (c) Babur and Ibrahim Lodi
- (d) Lodi Sher Khan and Ibrahim Lodi

Question 3. War fought between Baber and Rana Sanga is called:

- (a) Panipat war
- (b) Khanua war
- (c) Chausa war
- (d) Kanauj war

Question 4. Who fought Chausa and Kanauj wars against Humayun?

- (a) Sher Khan
- (b) Mirza Hakim
- (c) Bairam Khan
- (d) Safavid Shah

Question 5. The Mughal Emperor who spent his last days in prison, was:

- (a) Babur
- (b) Humayun
- (c) Jahangir
- (d) Shah Jahan

Question 6. The mother of Shah Jahan was a:

- (a) Rajput Princess

- (b) Bijapur Princess
- (c) Rathor Princess
- (d) Mewar Princess

Question 7. Number of mansabdars in Aurangzeb's reign was:

- (a) 75
- (b) 79
- (c) 85
- (d) 90

Question 8. Who wrote 'Akbar Nama'?

- (a) Abul Fazal
- (b) Abul Faizi
- (c) Todar Mai
- (d) None

Question 9. Interesting aspect about the Ain-i-Akbari is:

- (a) Its pictorial details
- (b) Its ancestral details
- (c) Its administrative details
- (d) Its rich statistical details

Question 10. Meaning of 'diwan' is:

- (a) Administrative officer
- (b) Legal officer
- (c) Financial officer
- (d) Revenue officer

Question 11. Red Fort Delhi was built by:

- (a) Akbar
- (b) Jahangir
- (c) Shah Jahan
- (d) Aurangzeb

Question 12. What was the capital of Mirza Hakim Akbar's half-brother?

- (a) Kabul

- (b) Morocco
- (c) Sind
- (d) Afghan

Question 13. What was the other name of Prince Khurram (Jahangir's son)?

- (a) Shahjahan
- (b) Jahangir
- (c) Aurangzeb
- (d) None of these

Question 14. What was the other name of Prince Salim (Akbar's son)?

- (a) Shahjahan
- (b) Jahangir
- (c) Aurangzeb
- (d) None of the above

Question 15. In which year, Humayun recaptured Delhi?

- (a) 1552
- (b) 1553
- (c) 1554
- (d) 1555

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. The capital of Mirza Hakim, Akbar's half-brother, was _____.
2. The five Deccan Sultanates were Berar, Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, _____ and _____.
3. If zat determined a mansabdar's rank and salary, sawar indicated his _____.
4. Abul Fazl, Akbar's friend and counsellor, helped him frame the idea of _____ so that he could govern a society composed of many religions, cultures and castes.

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. Babur used canons effectively in the first battle of Panipat.
2. Babur defeated Ibrahim Lodi in 1530.
3. In Iran Humayun received help from the Safavid Shah.
4. Akbar was 33 years old when he became emperor.

➤ **Very Short Questions:**

1. What was Mansab system?
2. Why was it a difficult task for rulers of the Middle Ages to rule the Indian subcontinent?
3. Who was Genghis Khan?
4. Who was Babur?
5. Name the battlefield where Ibrahim Lodi was defeated by Babur?
6. To whom did Babur defeat at Chanderi?
7. What forced Hwnayun to flee to Iran?
8. At what age did Akbar become the emperor of the Mughal Empire?
9. Who was the regent of Akbar?
10. How is Prince Khurram better known as in the Indian History?

➤ Short Questions:

1. What were the military responsibilities of Mansabdars?
2. What were the reasons for Babur's success in the First battle of Panipat?
3. Write short notes on the religious policies of the Akbar.
4. Name the mothers of Jahangir and Shah Jahan.
5. Explain the Mughal relations with other rulers.

➤ Long Questions:

1. Write short notes on Akbar's religious policy.
2. What important measures were taken by Akbar to consolidate his empire?
3. Give a brief account of the conquests of Akbar?
4. Describe the Rajput policy of Akbar?
5. Who was Babur?

ANSWER KEY –

➤ Multiple Choice Answer:

1. (a) Only 12 years old
2. (c) Babur and Ibrahim Lodi
3. (b) Khanua war
4. (a) Sher Khan
5. (d) Shah Jahan

6. (c) Rathor Princess
7. (b) 79
8. (a) Abul Fazal
9. (d) Its rich statistical details
10. (c) Financial officer
11. (c) Shah Jahan
12. (a) Kabul
13. (a) Shahjahan
14. (b) Jahangir
15. (d) 1555

➤ **Fill in the blanks:**

1. Kabul.
2. Bijapur, Golconda.
3. military responsibility.
4. Sulh-i kul

➤ **Write true (T) or false (F):**

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. False

➤ **Very Short Answer:**

1. Mansab system was a grading system used by the Mughal rulers to fix the rank or salary of a Mansabdar, who were basically their military commanders.
2. It was because people of diverse backgrounds and cultures lived here.
3. He was the ruler of the Mongol tribes, China and Central Asia.
4. He was the first Mughal emperor and reigned from 1526 to 1530.
5. Panipat.
6. Babur defeated the Rajputs at Chanderi.
7. After being defeated by Sher Khan at Chausa in 1539 and Kanauj in 1540 Humayun fled to Iran.

8. Akbar became the emperor of the Mughal Empire at the age of 13.
9. Bairam Khan.
10. Price Khurram is better known as Emperor Shah Jahan in the Indian History.

➤ Short Answer:

1. Military responsibilities of Mansabdars were:

- The Mansabdar was required to maintain a specified number of cavalymen.
- The mansabdar had to bring his cavalymen for review, get them registered and get their horses branded.

2. Following are the reasons for success of Babur in the first battle of Panipat were:

- Strong artillery which was a new introduction in the Indian army and a well-trained cavalry.
- Good generalship. Babur arranged his soldiers in such a way that they could move easily from one part of the battle to other.

3. Akbar's religious policy:

He followed a liberal religious policy. Full religious freedom was allowed not only to the Hindus but also to the people of other religious faith. Also, He built a building called 'Ibadat Khana' where he held discussions with the religious leaders.

4. The mother of Jahangir was a Kachhwaha princess, daughter of the Rajput ruler of Amber. The mother of Shahjahan was a Rathor princess, daughter of the Rajput ruler of Marwar.
5. Mughal rulers campaigned constantly against rulers who refused to accept their authority. But as the Mughals became powerful, many other rulers joined them voluntarily. The Rajputs were a good example. Many of them married their daughters into Mughal families and received high positions. But many resisted as well.

➤ Long Answer:

1. Akbar's liberal religious views and his marriage with the Rajput princess influenced his religious outlook. He used to hold talks with the leaders of various religions. He also built a building called Ibadat Khana at Agra to hold discussions with the religious leaders. Views were exchanged freely. He also introduced the policy of sulh-i kul. This idea of tolerance focused on honesty, justice, and peace that were universally applicable. Akbar found that all religions taught similar ideology. Thus he incorporated the principles of all the religions to found a new faith which he named Din-i-Ilahi. 'Din-i-Ilahi' did not attract many converts and it perished with the death of Akbar.
2. Akbar ascended the throne in 1556 A.D. He was a great ruler who took various steps to

consolidate his empire. He founded an empire that was truly secular in character. Being a great warrior and conqueror Akbar extended his boundaries by conquering Gujarat, Bengal, Kashmir, Sind, Central India, Deccan states, and many other states. He followed the policy of religious tolerance and established friendly relations with the Rajputs in particular and the Hindus in general. He organized his administration on sound footing and took various steps for the welfare of his subjects.

3. When Akbar was crowned in 1556 A.D. the Mughal Empire was scattered. He established a vast kingdom by conquering other kingdoms.
 - He captured Gwalior, Ajmer, Jaunpur and Malwa. He also succeeded in capturing the famous forts of Ranthambhor and Chittor.
 - Military campaigns in Gujarat were followed by campaigns in the east in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Akbar's armies also conquered Kabul, Sind and Baluchistan.
 - From 1595 to 1601 the Mughal forces remained busy in the annexation of Berar, Khandesh and parts of Ahmadnagar.
4. Rajputs were the most powerful rivals of Mughals in north India. Knowing this Akbar adopted a special policy to handle the Rajputs. He was a far sighted ruler who knew that there could be no permanent Mughal rule in India without the support of the Rajputs. Akbar wanted to be friendly with these Rajputs states instead of subjugating. For this he adopted all possible measures like matrimonial alliances and assigning higher posts to Rajput chiefs. This made his position stronger and they became his loyal Comrades.
5. Babar's real name was Zahir-ur-din. He was the ruler of a small state 'Farghana' in Central Asia. He invaded India 5 times. The vast wealth of India and poor political condition and invitation from the nobles of Delhi prompted Babar to march to Delhi. He defeated Ibrahim Lodhi the last Sultan of Lodhi dynasty at Panipat in A.D. 1526. He effectively used cannons in the first battle of Panipat. In A.D. 1527 he defeated Rana Sanga. In A.D. 1528 he defeated Rajputs in the battle of Chanderi. Before his death He had established effective control over Agra and Delhi. He died in 1530 A.D.