

# SHER SHAH SUR AND HIS DYNASTY

I. H. Siddiqui

4633

**Collection of Prof. Muhammad Iqbal Mujaddidi  
Preserved in Punjab University Library.**

پروفیسر محمد اقبال مجددی کا مجموعہ  
پنجاب یونیورسٹی لائبریری میں محفوظ شدہ





# Shershah Sur and his Dynasty



**Prof. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui**

**Publication Scheme, Jaipur (India)**

133336

ISBN 81-85 263-97-3

© Author 1995

**Published by :**

Publication Scheme,  
57, Mishra Rajaji Ka Rasta, Jaipur

**Laser type Setting :**

Seema Printo Fast  
413, Surya Chamber,  
Nehru Bazar, Jaipur

**Printed at :**

Gaurav Offset Printers, JAIPUR

## Preface

Sher Shah Sur was a remarkable man on several counts. The patterns of political behaviour displayed by him went a long way to bring about social and political changes in polity and society in the country under his rule. As a military genius, he made his mark both as a great strategist and a successful tactician, certainly a rare combination of qualities. As an administrator and statesman also he occupies an important place in the annals of great Indian sovereigns. but, he has a curious modern historiography. Dr. K.R. Qanungo published his '*Sher Shah*' in 1921 : then a few articles by various scholars appeared in various journals, challenging Dr. Qanungo's views. In 1965 Dr. Qanungo published his extended work, '*Sher Shah and His Times*', but without utilising fresh evidence discovered in miscellaneous contemporary and near contemporary sources after the publication of his '*Sher Shah*'. His extended work also does not have any chapter on Sher Shah's administrative system. Therefore, the need to recount and reappraise the entire course of Sher Shah's history remained unfulfilled. My work, '*History of Sher Shah Sur*', published in 1971 was an attempt at fulfilling this need. A number of contemporary sources were utilized in its preparation for the first time.

It was encouraging for me in 1970s that my work on Sher Shah Sur was well-received in India and abroad. It was out of print in a few years. Though, the publishers were eager to bring out its second edition, I did not agree to have it republished without revision, because some more fresh evidence was to be incorporated. The present edition, '*Sher Shahs and His Dynasty*', is a thoroughly revised and recast version of my '*History of Sher Shah Sur*'. The reader will find new material incorporated in each chapter of this second edition.

I am thankful to Mr. S.S. Natani, the enterprising proprietor of 'Publication Scheme', Jaipur for undertaking the publication of this work.

Centre of Advanced Study in History  
The Aligarh Muslim University,  
Aligarh.

(I.H. Siddiqui)

**For**

**Blal, Usama, Alman, Saman, and Yasir Kamal.**

## Contents

	Pages
Dedication	
Preface	
Chapter I. Introductory	1-29
(a) Socio-political background and early life of Farid (later Sher Shah)	
(b) Education	
(c) Administration of Mian Hasan Sur's iqta by Farid.	
Chapter II. Advent to Power	30-52
(a) Life and activities during the Post-Lodi period.	
(b) Rise to Supreme Power in Bihar	
(c) Relations with Bengal	
Chapter III. Declaration of Independence and the Conquest of Bengal.	53-89
(a) Sher Shah's first Coronation	
(b) War between Sher Shah and Humayun	
Chapter IV. Masnad-i- 'Ali Khawwas Khan, the victor of Bengal and Marwar.	90-119
Chapter V. Barmazid Kur	120-130
Chapter VI. Provincial Organization	131-172
Chapter VII. Wajh'i-ma'ash-Grants	173-199
Chapter VIII. Struggle for the Survival : Role played by Hemu	200-213
Excursus	214
A Select Bibliography	215-220
Index	221-235





## CHAPTER I

# Introductory

---

### (a) Socio-Political background and Early life of *Farid* (Later Sher Shah)

The history of *Sher Shah* whose reputation rests specially upon military and administrative achievements has attracted the attention of different modern scholars for a long time, but certainly there is still a need for an objective and critical study that will both recount and appraise the entire course of his history. Because certain problems, connected with his life and times have been left unnoticed by the scholars, perhaps due to the paucity of contemporary and authentic information that will stand up to the historical criticism. None needs to be told how hopelessly muddled the Afghan sources are. One cannot find much authentic materials from which positive conclusions can be drawn. Therefore, one has to turn to different sources of information-historical, documentary, epigraphical, numismatic, literary and hagiological-in search of supplementary and corroborative evidence.

For the socio-political background and life of Sher Shah, we do not possess good contemporary sources. The meagre historical data, furnished by the Persian Chroniclers and the casual references, contained in literary and religious works help us, to some extent, in reconstructing the history of Sher Shah and his times. Amongst the principal sources of information about Sher Shah's reign, Rizq Ullah Mushtaqi's work, *Waqi'at-i- Mushtaqi*, though a rambling account, fills an important gap in our historical knowledge. The real charm of the work lies not only in the fact that its author was a contemporary of the Lodi and the Sur Kings and gives them due credit for their attainments,, but also in providing us with a picture of the age in its full colour and glory. It may also be noted that it supplies little direct information about Sher Shah's early life and his

hard struggle to rise from obscurity, but whatsoever, it is very valuable. He often writes with a real knowledge about many events. He was interested in the politics of his time as well as in the personal habits of the leaders of the Indian society.

Mushtaqi's account of Sher Shah from the time of his conflict with Emperor Humayun is a bit detailed; the portrait he gives us of Sher Shah, however, is that of his being at the climax of success. Here the author provides rare information about Sher Shah's sudden rise to power. In this portion there is no sign of the twisting of facts, whether to cover up the weakness of any person or for the sake of fanciful adulation.<sup>1</sup>

The other important chronicle is Abbas Sarwani's *Tuhfa-i-Akbar Shahi*, better known as '*Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*'. This is the only work, devoted exclusively to Sher Shah. It was compiled in 1582 when the short-lived Sur dynasty had already passed into the limbo of history; and no hope was left for the revival of the Afghan power, for the authority of the Mughals was well-established every-where in North India. Now an Afghan writer could get satisfaction only in magnifying the Afghan rule and exaggerating the achievements of the Afghans in political, social and religious fields. Abbas compiled his work with preconceived notions, practising the economy of truth when the facts were disparaging. Moreover, his is not a first-hand source. All, or almost all, his narratives relating to Sher Shah, are based on the information supplied by his Sarwani relatives who were the descendants of Khan Azam Umar Khan Sarwani and had served under Sher Shah. As descendants of a high noble of Sultan Bahlul and Sikandar, they could not be expected to enquire about the life and career of a petty noble, who himself and whose father had been their servants. But Sher Shah's sudden rise to power surprised all the Afghans of respectable families in India and then must have excited their curiosity to acquire some knowledge about his family background. But the information gathered about the background of any man after his rise from obscurity to political supremacy might be mixed with legends and myths, developed around his personality, as it happened in so many cases during the medieval times.<sup>2</sup> Thus

1. Cf. Shaikh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqi (A Sufi historian of Medieval India), Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, *Islamic-Culture*, Hyderabad, Oct. 1969.

2. For example, legends and myths were created about 'Alauddin Khalji,

Abbas narrates his story of the family and early life of Sher Shah laying emphasis on the fact that Khan 'Azam Umar Khan Sarwani was the master and benefactor of Sher Shah's family. Moreover, his story, about the career of Hasan Sur contains important gaps, that can be filled, to some extent, with the help of the *Waqia' at-i-Mushtaqi*.

However, keeping the psychological attitude of the Sarwanis in view and critically examining the evidence, one can sift the grain of truth from the details, available in the work, as it furnishes clue to certain facts about the early life and military career of Sher Shah. The later writers heavily draw upon the *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* for these details. As a result, the *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani* of Ni'mat Ullah,<sup>1</sup> *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* of 'Abdullah,<sup>2</sup> and *Tarikh-i-Shahi* of Ahmad Yadgar,<sup>3</sup> all compiled during the reign of Emperor Jahangir, contain very little additional information with regard to Sher Shah.

As regards the *Afsana-i-Shahan* of Shaikh Kabir Batni (Afghan), it was also compiled during the reign of Jahangir. But Shaikh Kabir was the descendant of a respectable Afghan family of Bihar, the members of which had served the Afghan rulers and thus were eye-witnesses to many political events. His paternal and maternal grand-fathers, Shaikh 'Ali Hazyani and Shaikh Khalil Haqqani were the celebrated saints of Bihar. The former was in the service of Sher Shah, but he decided to retire to Sufi's life after the battle of Chausa (1539) when every man of some consequence in Sher Shah's service was to be promoted to higher dignity and position. For the close association of his grandfathers with Sher Shah and the Afghan nobles, Shaikh Kabir seems to have had much better knowledge of the history of the Afghan Kings than others.

But Kabir's work suffers from glaring defects. In actual fact, the author of the work seems to have been ignorant

---

Ghiyas Uddin Tughlaq, Firuz Shah and Bahtul, showing the prophecies of saintly persons in their early career about their future greatness. Cf *Salatin-i-Delhi-ke-Mazhabi Rujhanat*, Urdu, Prof. K.A. Nizami, Delhi, 1958, pp. 309-310, 441.

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, Dacca (East Pakistan), 1960, English Introduction, pp. 21-34.
2. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, *Indo. Iranica*, Calcutta, March, 1966, pp. 16-26.
3. *Islamic-Culture*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 1, Jan. 1959, p. 46.

even of the elementary facts of history. He was not at all a historian by inclination. There are neither dates of important events nor the sequence of events is well-arranged. It abounds in fanciful stories, and the long digressions interspersed in the account, not only deform the work but also make its reading difficult and uninteresting. Nevertheless the author should not be dismissed as a story-teller having no regard for real history. One may cull important pieces of information which are not only corroborated by the standard works but also supplement our information about the history of the Afghans in India.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike the aforesaid works, the Mughal histories, such as Abul Fazl's *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari*, Nizam-ud-din's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and Badaoni's *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* casually give the accounts of Sher Shah and his successors only to fill the gap between the flight of the Mughals from India in 1540 and the restoration of their authority in 1555. Abul Fazl's and Nizam-ud-din's presentation of the Sur Kings fairly reflects the hostility of the Mughal historians; only at a few places one can find wry admiration. Badaoni who was an eye-witness to certain political events that occurred during the later Sur period, briefly narrates the history of the Sur period. But it is true that he supplements about certain important facts, related to the reign of Sher Shah and his successors. His praise of Sher Shah is that of a just king and there can be no question of deliberate suppression or deflection of truth. He shows no sign of the twisting of facts or fanciful adulation of any person. But his panegyric tone, like that of Mushtaqi, Abbas, Nimat Ullah, Shaikh Kabir etc. reflects the attitude of the orthodox Muslims to the services, rendered by Sher Shah to the cause of orthodoxy by founding and financially assisting the religious institutions as well as by suppressing the heretics; although a critical study reveals that Sher Shah was neither orthodox in religion nor reactionary in politics. He was rather a man of catholic views. However, these are the principal sources of information, containing historical materials for the period under review.

In some of the aforesaid sources facts are often mixed up with anecdotes and stories, mostly fictional without any grain of truth. The scholars of history have to treat them with

---

1. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, *Shaikh Kabir and His History of the Afghan Kings*, *Indo-Iranica*, Calcutta, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 58-78.

all necessary caution, sifting facts on the basis of reliable evidence available in the literary, religious and other works, produced during the Afghan period.

Unfortunately we do not have much authentic materials at our disposal about the family background and early life of Sher Shah. Abbas Sarwani's account in this regard is somewhat detailed but it neither refers to the age of Ibrahim Sur (Sher Shah's grand-father) at the time of his arrival in India nor the actual date and place of Sher Shah's birth. As a result the question of the date and place of his birth has long attracted the attention of modern historians, and by 1921 different scholars have discussed this problem unnecessarily at great length refuting each other's arguments.<sup>1</sup> No doubt, Sher Shah's date of birth might have some bearing on the history of his life and achievements, but it is not necessary to devote undue space to this problem by indulging in improper criticism of each other's views. Taking no serious notice of this controversy, we may examine the evidence and briefly discuss certain facts regarding the family background, date and place of Sher Shah's birth.

According to Abbas Sarwani, Ibrahim Sur came along with his son, Hasan Sur to India in 1452 when Sultan Bahlul extended invitation to the Afghans of Roh, the ancestral homeland of the Afghans, to help him against his formidable

- 
1. Prof. Qanungo is the first scholar to suggest the year 1486 as a hypothetical date and Hisar Firuza as the place of Sher Shah's birth in his monograph, *Sher Shah*, published in 1921. Cf. *Sher Shah*, Calcutta, 1921. P. 3.
- Prof. Qanungo's assumption was challenged by Dr. P. Saran in a lengthy article, exclusively dealing with the date and place of Sher Shah's birth which was first published in a journal and later included in his *Studies in Medieval Indian History*. According to Dr. P. Saran, Sher Shah was born in Bajwara in 1472.
- Cf. *Studies in Medieval Indian History*, Dr. P. Saran, Delhi, pp. 29-38.
- Dr. S.K. Benerjee follows Dr. P. Saran, while Dr. Ishwaqri Prasad accepts the view of Dr. Qanungo with regard to the date and place of Shah's birth.
- Cf. *Humayun Badshah*, p. 179. *Life and Times of Humayun*, p. 95-96. Dr. R.P. Tripathi states: It was at Hisar Firuza or Narnol that Hasan's Afghan wife gave birth to Farid. The exact date of his birth is not known though 1472 and 1486 have been suggested. Cf. *Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, p. 115. In reply to Dr. P. Saran's criticism Prof. Qanungo again discussed the date and place of Farid's birth in his revised monograph to justify his hypothetical date, 1486. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp.9-10.

rival, Sultan Mahmud Sharqi of Jaunpur.<sup>1</sup> It seems from his details that Ibrahim Sur was not an old man, for only the able-bodied persons were required by the Sultan and his nobles. The old aged Afghans were not considered for recruitment in the army. The available evidence shows that the old Afghans even of very respectable families sent their grown-up sons to India in the hope of employment while they themselves remained in Roh,<sup>2</sup> for their departure from their homeland in search of fortune in old age was thought to be derogatory in the Afghan society of Roh.

On his arrival Ibrahim Sur entered the service of Mahabat Khan Sur, who was one of his distant relations. 'Abbas says about Ibrahim Sur's first patron that he was one of Bahlul's nobles and held in his *iqta* the *Parganas* of Bahkala and Tahka.<sup>3</sup> This does not seem to be correct. I have discussed at length elsewhere<sup>4</sup> that the leading noble families of the Lodi period belonged to the Shahu Khail and Yusuf Khail clans of the Lodi tribe, Sarwani, Jilwani and Nuhani tribes, and the Farmuli *Shaikhzadas* of non-Afghan stock.<sup>5</sup> The members of these families continued to hold the extensive territories and key positions in the Lodi Empire for generations. Next to them came the Afghan nobles of Kakar and Karrani families, none of whom appears to have held a rank higher than that of a malik, a position second to that of Khan in the nobility. In so far as the Sur, Niazi and the Afghans belonging to other different tribes are concerned, they either worked as *sawars* or

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 4b-5a

2. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, ii, 433-444.

Prof. Qanungo's statement that Ibrahim Sur came to India in old age is not convincing, because the old-aged immigrants of obscure origin could not be considered fit for appointment even as petty *amirs* or *sawars*. As Ibrahim Sur was assigned a few villages by Mahabat Khan for the maintenance of a few troops, he must have retained the vigour of youth and ability to justify his master's favour to him. Soon later he seems to have distinguished himself in the military life and was therefore taken in service by Jamal Khan Sarang Khani, the *Muqta* of Hisar Firuza. Now he got an *iqta* for the maintenance of his contingent of forty *sawars*. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 5,6.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 5a.

Also *Sher Shah and his Times*, op.cit., p.7.

4. Cf. Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, pp. 6-10, 55.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 7 (f.n.3)

petty officers in the service of high nobles of Bahlul and Sikandar.<sup>1</sup> Mushtaqi's following statement is significant in this regard. He says : "None of the Surs was a noble of the (Lodi) Sultans. Only Saif Khan Sur was in the royal service but even he did not enjoy the status of a noble. He lived in Baran (during the times of Sultan Sikandar)." Soon afterwards the same writer says about the Niazis that they could not be employed by the Sultan even on very petty posts for their uncouth manners and treacherous activities.<sup>2</sup> This is corroborated by the actual facts which I have discussed elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

In view of the facts discussed above we may reasonably assume that Mahabat Khan Sur was in the service of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani who belonged to the Lodi tribe<sup>4</sup> and was

1. *Ibid*, p. 14-15.

2. *Waqiat-i- Mushtaqi*, f. 47 b.

3. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*. p. 15.

4. Discussing the origin and position of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani, Prof. Qanungo falls into errors by confusing certain facts and making contradictory statements. First he calls Jamal Khan Sarang Khani of non-Afghan origin and assumes that the Sarang Khani nobles were many in number. Soon later he states that they were afraid of the increasing influence of the Lohani and Sarwani favourites of Sultan Sikandar, and "therefore they might have thought of strengthening their power by enlisting the loyalty of the Afghan emigre clans to Hindustan." At another place he contradicts himself : "The sarang Khanis were non-Afghans of Turksman origin, and were raised to power by Sultan Sikandar to counterpoise the ascendancy of the Lohanis and also to serve as watch and ward against the Sarwani, Farmulis and the Lohanis on the West, North and South East respectively." *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 12-15.

In the first place Jamal Khan was an Afghan noble who belonged to the Lodi tribe. Mushtaqi calls him, his son and grandson, the successive *muqtas* of Jaunpur after him, Lodi.

*Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*; ff. 36 b, 41 b, 47 b.

Kalyan Mal, a Sanskrit poet and the author of the famous *Anang Rang* who flourished in the service of Lad Khan, the grandson of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani, also mentions his patron and his ancestors as belonging to the Lodi tribe. Kavi Kalyan Mal, *Anang Rang*, Kashi, p. 2.

In the second place Prof. Qanungo implies that the Sarang Khanis were afraid of the Afghan favourites of Sikandar during the time of Bahlul and they strengthened their power by taking Afghan immigrants in their service, so that they could defend their position by force at the time of emergency. This is absolutely incorrect. We know that Jamal Khan was the only noble who bore the Surname Sarangkhani due to his association with famous Sarang Khan of the later Tughlaq period and afterward his descendants were called Sarang Khani. He was very closely attached to Sikandar Lodi (former Nizam Khan) since the times of Bahlul. It was due to



the *muqta* of the territory of Hisar Firuza during the reign of Bahlul. Because the *parganas* which are said to have been held by Mahabat Khan are to be sought in the territory of Hisar Firuza. Prof. Qanungo identifies Bahkala with Barwalah, about 19 miles north of modern Hisar, and Tahka as Tohana, a *pargana* also included in the *Sarkar* of Hisar Firuza of Akbar's times.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the fact that Muhammad Khan Sur, the son and successor of Mahabat Khan continued to serve Jamal Khan and his descendants in the Vilayet of Jaunpur, also substantiates our assumption. Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani was assigned the charge of the government of Jaunpur Vilayet in 1500 A.D., with the title of Khan 'Azam and a high rank of 12000 *sawars* where he not only took his old servants with him but also recruited new ones in accordance with the increase in his rank.<sup>2</sup>

During the Lodi period the high nobles usually conferred the *iqtas* and ranks of their deceased servants on their sons or other near relations in the absence of the formers.<sup>3</sup> Such people were called *Khanazads* (House-hold servants) of their masters, and therefore, they were treated more favourably than the newly-employed persons. Muhammad Khan Sur, who had succeeded to the *iqta* and rank of his father in the service of Jamal Khan either during the reign of Bahlul or after

---

him and certain other nobles, both Afghan and non-Afghan Farmuli nobles' support that Sikahndar Lodi succeeded in consolidating his authority. It was Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani whom Sultan Sikandar honoured with a robe and left him in Delhi, while leaving for Jalali for his coronation after Sultan Bahlul's death.

Thirdly, the learned Professor states that the Sarang Khanis were raised to power to counterpoise the ascendancy of the Sarwanis, Farmulis and the Nuhanis on the West, North and South-east respectively. So far as the historical fact is concerned, Jamal Khan was entrusted with the administration of Jaunpur Vilayet after the dismissal of Mubarak Khan Tugi Khail (Lodi) who was found guilty of embezzling the State revenue (1499-1500). On Jamal Khan's death, his eldest son Ahmad Khan Lodi Sarang Khani succeeded to his rank, *iqta* and position as Mushtaqi says. Jamal Khan's other son, Taj Khan Sarang Khani held the impregnable fort of Chunar. They were never posted in the east, west and north to have an eye on the ambitions and activities of the Afghan and non-Afghan Farmulis. *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi*, ff. 36 b-37b. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i- Jahani*, 1/87; *Badauni*, 1/360.

1. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 23.
2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 6b.
3. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 28b.

Sikandar's accession to the throne, was promoted to a rank of 1,000, *sawars*, in the Vilayet of Jaunpur.<sup>1</sup>

It is now reasonable to suggest that first Ibrahim Sur entered the service of his kinsman who was a servant of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani and then joined Jamal Khan himself, perhaps on the recommendation of Mahabat Khan Sur. Now he got a few villages in *iqta* in the territory of Hisar Firuza for the maintenance of 40 *sawars*.<sup>2</sup> At this time Mian Hasan Sur does not appear to have been a grown up person as he remained with his father for many years.

Similarly Prof. Qanungo's suggestion about the age and the date of Ibrahim Sur's arrival in India is not convincing. Prof. Qanungo suggests that Ibrahim Sur came to India in 1482, in the thirtieth year of the reign of Bahlul and he was an old man at that time.<sup>3</sup> There is no reason to differ from 'Abbas in this connection as there is no earlier or later source to throw any fresh light on this matter.

The time of Hasan Sur's entry in the service of Khan 'Azam' Umar Khan also requires explanation. Abbas Sarwani, who is always indifferent towards the dates of even important events, mentions neither the duration of period when *Hasan* lived with his father in the service of *Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani*, nor he describes the circumstances in which he was attracted to join the Sarwani noble.<sup>4</sup> He only states that Hasan joined 'Umar Khan's service during the reign of *Bahlul*. However, it appears from the historical materials at our disposal that by the year 1485 Hasan Sur had been more than 20 years of age and could not remain with his father who does not appear to have risen above the rank of a petty rank-holder of 40 *sawars*. Hasan Sur might have got employment somewhere else in order to help his family. Abul Fazl provides the missing link when he says that Hasan also served Raja Raimal in his early life.<sup>5</sup> Now it may be assumed that Hasan might have

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 23b. 'Abbas does not mention the time of the elevation of Muhammad Sur to the rank of 1000 *sawars*.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 5a.
  3. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p.6.
  4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 5b.
  5. *Akbarnama*, 147-148.

joined the service of the Raja at the age of 20 years or even before, and remained there till 1485.

In or after 1485 A.D., Hasan seems to have joined the service of Khan 'Azam' Umar Khan Sarwani, for at this time the latter stood in need of recruiting able persons as he was raised to a high rank by Sultan Bahlul for his devoted services to the royal cause. The Khan 'Azam fought valiantly under the command of Prince Nizam Khan (later Sultan Sikandar) against Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail, the rebel *Muqta* of the territories beyond the river Sutlej.<sup>1</sup> On the destruction of the rebel, 'Umar Khan Sarwani was rewarded with the charge of the government of Lahore *Sarkar* and the office of *Wazir* in addition to his large maintenance *iqta* in Sirhind *Sarkar* which he held since long.<sup>2</sup>

However, Ibrahim Sur had a few villages for his maintenance in the *pargana* of Narnaul which was included in the *iqta* of Jamal Khan Sasang Khani in the *Sarkar* of Hisar Firuza.<sup>3</sup>

1. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 10a-11a, Also *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, pp. 31-33. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, 5b.

Towards the close of Bahlul's reign, *Masnad-i-'ali* Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail assumed an air of independence and encroached on the *Khalsa* land. Being informed of his rebellious activities, Sultan Bahlul ordered the nobles, posted in the territories in the north-west of Delhi including Umar Khan Sarwani, Khwaja Said Farmuli and Jamal Khan Sarang Khani to march with Prince Nizam Khan against Tatar Khan. On their march Tatar Khan also advanced at the head of 15,000 sawars and fought bravely near Ambala in 1485. As his men were taken by fear, they fled away leaving him to be slain. But 'Abbas omits the details of the rebellion of Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail and his destruction in consequence. Mushtaqi, Ahmad Yadgar and Abdullah furnish the account of this conflict in full details.

Contrary to Mushtaqi's and other Afghan chroniclers' account of the above mentioned battle, Prof. Qanungo, in sheer confusion, states that Prince Nizam Khan rebelled against his father towards the close of his father's reign, Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 11.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 5b. Also *Farishta*, i/178.

3. Khan Azam Umar Khan Sarwani's maintenance *iqta* comprised the *parganas* of Shahabad, Banur, Pail and some others around them while he was the *Maqta* of the territory of Lahore and the *Wazir* of the Lodi Empire. Since the *Pargana* of Narnaul was included in the *Sarkar* of Hisar Firuza it formed the part of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani's *iqta*. *Ibrahim Sur lived and died there and Sher Shah had a tomb built over his grave in Narnaul after his rise to Sovereign Status*. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 5b.

Shaikh Rukn uddin, whose father, Shaikh Abdul Quaddus Gangohi, the celebrated Saint of the Lodi period, was invited by Umar Khan Sarwani

Abul Fazl is right when he says that Sher Shah was born in Narnaul. Therefore, Sher Shah's birth must have taken place before his father's employment under Khan Azam Umar Khan. Abbas Sarwani is correct in stating that Ibrahim got a few villages in Narnaul from Jamal Khan Sarang Khani, for Narnaul was included in the territory of Hisar Firuza and Narnaul formed the part of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani's *iqta*.<sup>1</sup>

In the light of facts discussed above the year 1486, suggested by Prof. Qnungo as a hypothetical date of Sher Shah's birth<sup>2</sup> seems to have been earlier by a few years. It is also probable that the first issues, born of his wife were female. Because one of Sher Shah's sisters is reported to have been married to Hassu Sarwani who was an old man in 1540 and could not survive long.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it appears that Farid was born sometime after 1486 and 1490 may be suggested as the approximate date of his birth.

The details furnished by Abbas about Farid's visit to Khan Azam Umar Khan's court in his early childhood in Shahabad, Ibrahim Sur's death towards the close of Bahlul's reign and Mian Hasan Sur's departure from Umar Khan with the latter's permission and a recommendatory letter to join Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani's service in the hope of a higher rank and a better maintenance *iqta* deserve a critical examination. Farid's visit to the Khan-i-Azam does not seem to be based on historical fact because Farid was an infant child, hardly one or two years old during Umar Khans' lifetime and, secondly, the latter seems to have spent his last years in battles fought between the Afghans and Sultan Husain Sharqi's armies in the eastern territories.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the question of Hassan Sur's entry

---

from Radauli (in Barabanki district) to settle down in Shahabad, the head-quarters of his large *iqta*, corroborates Abbas. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, p. 31. Also Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, Nature of the *iqta*-system under the Lodis, *Proceedings of the All India History Coingress*, 24th Delhi Session, 1961, p. 147.

1. Cf. Chapter, V.

The *Shiqq* of Hisar Firuza and Sirhind were constituted as two separate administrative units with well-determined boundaries during the reign of Sultan Firuz Shah. Later, they came to be known as *Sarkars* with out any change in their boundaries, Cf. Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, *Evolut of the, the Shiqq and the Sarkar*, *Medieral India, Quaterly*, Alearh, 1963, Vol. V.

2. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 9.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 32b.

4. Prof. Qanungo also rejects the statement of Abbas about Farid's visit to

in the service of Jamal Khan during the life time of 'Umar Khan does not arise, for the latter was such an important noble of the Lodi Empire that none of his servants could think it wise on his part to join another noble of inferior position. Most probably he joined Jamal Khan after the death of Umar Khan Sarwani.

The relevant evidence, available in the rambling account of Mushttaqi sheds light on the position, held by Khan 'Azam Umar Khan towards the end of his life. By virtue of his being the *Wazir* and the one of the leading nobles of the Lodi Empire, Khan 'Azam was entrusted with the command of the advance guard of the Afghan army (as it was the highest honour to be conferred upon the highest noble). He succeeded in destroying the formidable army of Sultan Husain Sharqi in Chaund even before the main Afghan army under the personal command of Sultan Sikandar Lodi could join him (1495).<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter we do not find any reference to Umar Khan Sarwani. It is probable that he died a few years after this event.

The events, following the destruction of the anti-Afghan forces in eastern territories, show that 'Umar Khan Sarwani's title, position and rank were conferred upon his sons. Sa'id Khan, the eldest son. He was honoured with the title of Khan 'Azam and the office of *Muqta* of Lahore *Sarakar*, while other sons, Hiabat Khan, Babu Khan and Ibrahim Khan were expected to co-operate with their eldest brother and share with

---

Umar Khan Sarwani's court in Shahabad as inauthentic. But Prof. Qanungo's own view that Hasan Sur never served under Umar Khan Sarwani is also unacceptable. *cf. Sher Shah and His Times* p. 8. The only defect with Abbas is that he himself knew nothing about the early life and the family background of Sher Shah, but what he gathered from hearsay about more than a century later and compiled it without subjecting it to historical scrutiny or showing any regard to the sequence of time. Many important gaps have been left unfilled in his narrative. But most of the details, provided by him in his work contain grain of truth and it may be sifted with the help of other earlier works.

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 12b.

No Chronicler mentions the date of Khan Azam Umar Khan Sarwani's death. The author of the *Lata'if-i-Quddusi* informs us that on the death of Umar Khan Sarwani in the early years of Sultan Sikandar's reign, his sons became hostile to Shaikh Abdul Quddus, the celebrated Saint of the Lodi period. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, p. 41.

him the revenue of their father's *iqta* in the *Sarkar* of Sirhind.<sup>1</sup> Khan Azam Said Khan lived in Lahore, and others lived either in Shahabad or in attendance at the royal Court. But within a few years of their father's death, all the brothers except Ibrahim Khan Sarwani lost Sultan Sikandar's confidence and were exiled from the Lodi Empire for their involvement in a conspiracy, hatched against the person of Sultan Siikandar in Jaunpur in 1498.<sup>2</sup> On their expulsion Mian Hasan Sur, who appears to have been in Jaunpur with the sons of his late master, must have become jobless. Because *Masnad-i-'Ali* Ibrahim Khan Sarwani, who still enjoyed the royal confidence, could not retain all of his father's officers as his own maintenance *iqta* was not large enough. His father's title of Khan 'Azam was conferred upon Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani,<sup>3</sup> and the *Muqtaship* of Lahore *Sarkarr* was given to Daulat Khan Lodi, son of Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail.<sup>4</sup> As regards Umar Khan Sarwani's *iqta* in Sirhind *Sarkar*, it was distributed among different nobles.<sup>5</sup> However, in the given conditions Hasan Sur had no alternative but to search a suitable job under some other noble. Fortunately Hasan Sur found the desired patron in Khan 'Azam Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani's service whom Ibrahim Sur had served and who was recently appointed the *Muqta* of the extensive Vilayet of Jaunpur with a high rank of 12,000 *sawars*. As the latter was in need of able-bodied and experienced military men to compose his army contingent, he must have recruited many persons like Hasan Sur who had been thrown jobless by the expulsion of their masters from the Lodi Empire. Therefore, the year 1498-99

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/186; *Lataif-i-Quddusi*, p. 41.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I, p. 323; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i, 188.

*Masnad-i-'Ali* Ibrahim Khan Sarwani was killed fighting against Rana Sanga during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi as will be discussed subsequently.

3. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 36b; *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 7a.

4. Daulat Khan Lodi (Yusuf Khail) was a favourite of Sultan Sikandar, in spite of the fact that his father was destroyed by the former. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 11d, 34a. Also *Baburnama*, (Turki text), Mrs. Beveridge, 1/225b, Babur Says :

(Sultan Bahlul) entrusted Tatar Khan with Sirhind and all the Vilayet in the north of the Sutlej river". Further he says that on Tatar Khan's death his son Daulat Khan Lodi was assigned the charge of Lahore only. He does not refer to Tatar Khan's rebellion. Most probably he did not know of it.

5. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, p. 31.

may be taken as the date of Hasan Sur's entry in Jamal Khan Sarang Khani's service.<sup>1</sup>

Mushtaqi's account of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani and his son and grandson, Ahmad Khan Lodi and Khan-'Azam Lad Khan Lodi (Sarang Khani) who held the Vilayet of Jaunpur as its *muqtas* successively, provides a clue to the fact that Hasan Sur could not get a sizeable *iqta* from Jamal Khan Sarang Khani at the time of his entry in his service. It was rather his son and successor, Khan 'Azam Ahmad Khan Lodi Sarang Khani (also known as Nasib Khan), who had raised Hasan Sur to the position of an *amir* with a flag and the assignment of the pargana of Sahasram because his own rank was raised by the Sulttan from 12,000 to 20,000 *sawars*. Naturally he must have now favoured the old servants of his father's time by promoting them to higher ranks and *iqtas*.<sup>2</sup> I accept here Mushtaqi's statement not because he is a contemporary writer but for the fact that no fresh entrant like Hasan Sur who held the rank of 40 *sawars* in the service of a noble, could be abruptly given a high rank of 500 *sawars* by another noble. Abbas Sarwwani has certainly confused Khan-'Azam Ahmad Khan Lodi Sarang Khani with Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani. In fact, Hasan Sur got both the *iqta* of Sahasram and Khawaspur Tanda, and the rank of 500 *sawars* after the death of Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani.

There are certain other important points at issue which require a thorough probe for analysing the political conditions prevailing in the eastern territories of the Lodi Empire. The available information, though meagre and laconic, reveals the fact that the consolidation of the Afghan authority in the

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 6b

Abbas omits the details of the involvement of the sons of Khan-'Azam Umar Khan in the conspiracy, hatched against the life of Sultan Sikandar Lodi. But Ni'mat ullah refers to it in his details of the above-mentioned conspiracy. *Tarikh-i-Khan Jahani*, i/187, 188, 266, for the date of appointment of Khan Azam Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani as the *Muqta* of Jaunpur Vilayet. Also Cf. Chapter V, for the size and resources of the Vilayet of Jaunpur during the Lodi period.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, d ff. 36b-37b, for the account of Jamal Khan Sarang Khani and his successors in Jaunpur Vilayet; and f, 47b for the career of Hasan Sur. Mushtaqi says: During the reign of Sultan Sikandar Shah Jamal Khan died and Nasib Khan (his son) succeeded him, in his Position as *Muqtaib*, Mian Hasan was elevated with the grant of banner and the *iqfa* of Sahesram that became his (i.e. Hasan Sur's) headquarters.

eastern region took a long time. For instance, the territories of Bahraich, Sarwar (Gorakhpur), Saran and Champaran continued to be held by the nobles of Sultan Husain Sharqi, even after the latter's expulsion from Bihar in 1495.<sup>1</sup> Mushtaqi's account of the high nobles of the Lodi period shows that the big zamindars defied the Afghan arms in the Vilayets of Jaunpur, Awadh and Bihar and they could be suppressed only by the joint efforts of the *muqtas* of the respective territories.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly Abbas Sarwani's account of the *parganas* of Sahasram and Khawaspur Tanda shows that they were full of turbulent *zamindars* (Rajputs and Others), and Mian Hasan was given these *parganas* in *iqta* to maintain 500 *sawars* for the service of his master as well as to force the rebel chiefs into submission, most probably after the year 1510.<sup>3</sup> It appears that the subjugation of the local Chiefs took a few years as the military campaigns launched by *Farid* against them show. The distant villages in the *parganas*, assigned to *Hasan Sur* were surrounded by dense forests that could not be penetrated easily by the Afghans who were so far ignorant of the geographical conditions of that region, for they had just settled there. According to Prof. Qanungo the southern portion of Sahasram was inhabited by the Chero *zamindars* of Dravidian stock, while its northern part was dominated by the Rajput *zamindars*.<sup>4</sup> To these details may be added the information, provided by a contemporary Hindi work, dealing with the origin of the Ujjainiya Rajputs in Bihar. This shows that the Ujjainiya Rajputs also lived in *Hasan Sur's iqta* and they had come to terms with *Farid* after he had been appointed by his father as *shiqdar*<sup>5</sup> to look after the administration of the *iqta*.

However, Mian Hasan got the *parganas* where the establishment of peace and order was by no means an easy job. In an attempt to bring the region under control, he seems to have distributed the revenue of the villages amongst his relations and followers, so that they might reach there and govern them. The villages, adjacent to the *pargana* head-

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 39a-b., 40b-41a, 41b.

2. *Waqi' at-i-Mushhtaqi*, ff. 39b, 41b.

3. *Tarik h-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 12b-13a.

4. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 44-45.

5. *Proceedings of the "All India History Congress", 24th Session, 1961, pp. 122-127.*



quarters were easily controlled while those at distance remained outside the control of the Afghans for some time.

Hasan Sur's distribution of the revenue of his *iqta* amongst his relatives and servants caused much bitterness between him and his eldest son, Farid (Sher Shah) who by this time had become a sensitive young boy. As the latter did not get an agreeable *iqta* for the maintenance of his mother, brother and sisters, he decided to leave his father in disgust. He fled to Jaunpur without his father's knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

### (b) Early Education of Sher Shah :

Prof. Qanungo rightly observes that Sher Shah must have accomplished his early education before his departure from Sahasram to Jaunpur. Abbas Sarwani's statement that within a few years' stay in Jaunpur Farid became an '*alim*' as he had seriously devoted himself to the study of the classics of Arabic and Persian, supports our view. During this period learning had become very popular amongst the Afghans due to the keen interest, evinced by Sultan Bahlūl and Sikandar in it. Mushtaqi says about the reign of Sultan Sikandar<sup>2</sup> that the cause of education was served with such a zeal that the sons of the nobles and the soldiers seriously applied themselves to the acquisition of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Sultan Sikandar himself was a profound Scholar as well as a poet of cultivated taste. He liked the company of sophisticated people and honoured them with important positions.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the nobles were seized with a passion for learning and even government officials of petty means arranged for the education of their children.<sup>5</sup>

In the provincial cities and towns, the *Muqtas* (governors) extended patronage to the scholars and vied with one another in lavishing financial grants upon them.<sup>6</sup> In such a favourable atmosphere the educational institutions (madrasas) flourished where students, both poor and rich could receive

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 6b. The later writers draw upon Abbas for this information.
  2. *Loc.cit.*
  3. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, p.36.
  4. *Waqi' at-i- Mushtaqi*, f.8b.
  5. *Loc.cit.*
  6. Cf. Chapter,V.

instructions. Particularly Jaunpur which had become a famous centre of culture and learning under the rule of the Sharqi Sultans was still famous for its old grand schools and celebrated scholars. The Sarang Khani *Muqta* took keen interest in their maintenance. Therefore, Sher Shah found in Jaunpur a favourable atmosphere for the pursuit of knowledge. Khan-i-'Azam, Ahmad Khan Lodi the then *Muqta* must have granted Sher Shah an agreeable stipend as his whole-hearted devotion to his study shows.<sup>1</sup> Amongst the works, studied by him, mention is made of *Kafia* (a work of grammar), with the commentaries of Qazi Shihabuddin, the biographies of most of the kings of ancient times; *Sikandar Nama* of Nizami Ganjavi, Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*; the works of some Arab philosophers, and the Persian historical writings.<sup>2</sup> The period of Sher Shah's study in Jaunpur does not seem to have extended more than three years.

According to Abbas, *Main Hasan* came to Jaunpur to attend the governor's court few years after his son's arrival there. As customary, his relations in Khan-'Azam's service hastened to pay visit to him and then spoke very highly of the ability and excellent qualities of his son, *Farid*. They patched up the differences between the father and the son. Mian Hasan was besides himself with joy when he learnt of his son's progress in acquiring learning. He agreed to send Farid to Sahasram as the *Shiqdar* of his *iqta* on the recommendation of his relations.<sup>3</sup> The date of Farid's appointment as the *Shiqdar* by Hassan Sur is not mentioned by any medieval authority, but it may be supposed that this event took place in 1512 or 1513 and by this time he was a grown up youngman, at least twenty-two or twenty-three years old. However, it provided him with a training ground to gather experience in the revenue administration and military profession which, later shaped his views and policies.

### (c) Administration of Mian Hasan's *iqta* by Farid (Sher Shah)

The revenue administration of the *Parganas* of Sahasram and Khawaspur Tanda by Sher Shah has long attracted the attention of modern scholars of Medieval Indian History. They

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 7a-b. Also *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 36b, 37a, for Ahmad Khan Lodi Sarang Khani's patronage to the 'Ulama.
  2. *Zubdat-ul-Tawarikh*, f. 109 b.
  3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff.8b-9a.

have expressed their opinion regarding the agrarian relations that obtained in Medieval India largely on the basis of Abbas Sarwani's account, written more than half a century later. A close study is, therefore, needed to re-examine the relevant passages of Abbas Sarwani's work with the help of fresh evidence contained in certain earlier works, in order to draw a correct picture of the agrarian relations and Farid's administration of his father's *iqta*.

First, doubts arise about the terms used by 'Abbas in connection with the revenue administration. The author appears to have used revenue or administrative terms which were not in vogue during the Lodi period and thus he is influenced in his description by the institutions of Akbar's reign. The term *jagir*, the standard Mughal name for a territorial assignment of revenue to the nobles in lieu of cash salary does not occur in any work, written before Akbar's reign as we have already discussed it at length elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> The term *iqta* continued to be a standard name for all such assignments throughout the Lodi and the Sur periods. It is to be noted here that the *iqta* of the Sultanate period differed in nature from the mughal *jagir* to some extent.<sup>2</sup>

The later writers wrongly call the territorial assignment of revenue to the nobles during the Afghan period as *jagir* instead of *iqta*. The present writer could not find any reference to *jagir* in any contemporary work. *The Tawarikh-i-Daulat-Sher-Shahi*, a so-called contemporary work of the Sur period frequently refers to *jagir* in the sense of maintenance *iqta* even for the Lodi period. But the contents of this work show that it was fabricated long after the overthrow of the Sur power, and the evidence contained in it is a later concoction.<sup>3</sup>

The only change of some importance that seems to have occurred in the times of the Lodi Sultans is that the term '*wajhdar*', used for the petty assignees during the reign of

1. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, Nature of the Iqta System Under the Lodis., "Proceedings of the All India History Congress, 24th Session, Delhi, 1961, pp. 145, 148 (f.n.6.)

2. *Ibid*, p. 147.

3. Cf. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi *On the Authenticity of the Tawarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi*, *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad Deccan, April, 1963.

Sultan Firuz Shah,<sup>1</sup> now began to be applied to all the assignees (nobles), high as well as small. Similarly the term *muqta* appears to have undergone some change. Previously every high assignee, whether he was given the revenue of an entire *Shiqq* or a certain percentage of its revenue in lieu of cash salary was called *muqta*. In any case, he was charged with the duty of maintaining peace and order in the territory entrusted to his charge. By the time of the Lodis the governors of the large territories such as *Vilayets* and *sarkars* were called *Muqtas*, while the assignees of one or two *parganas* were called *Wajhdars*.<sup>2</sup> Even the *Parganas*, assigned to the *Muqtas* either in the territories under their charge or outside them were called *Wajhdari Parganas*.<sup>3</sup> Thus the term *Muqta*, now meant governor, while *Wajhdar* stood for assignee. Like the *Muqta*, the *Wajhdars* were also responsible for the government of the *parganas* given to them as maintenance *iqtas*.<sup>4</sup>

The second problem which arises out of Abas Sarwani's passage regarding Farid's revenue settlement, is whether the author uses here the term '*rai'y'at*' in the sense of *Muqaddam*, *Chaudhry*, other petty *Zamindars* and *Patwaris*, who worked as intermediary between the State representatives and the peasantry, or in that of common peasantry. Elliot's translation of *rai'y'at* as peasantry<sup>5</sup> has led the modern scholars like Prof. Qanungo, Mr. Moreland, Dr. P. Saran, and Dr. R.P. Tripathi to express more or less the same opinion that Farid made a direct settlement with the peasantry and not through the *Muqqadams*. Prof. Qanungo assumes that a small country-town like Sahasram could not provide sufficient space of a big assemblage of peasants of both the *parganas*, and Farid might therefore have held several meetings at different places by taking round of the entire *parganas*. "All that one can legitimately assume is that Farid's policy was to come into direct contact with the peasantry and their natural spokesmen and leaders, the *muqaddams* and *patwaris*.."<sup>6</sup> Accord-

1. See *Tarikh-i-Firoze Shahi*, Afif, pp. 193-194.

2. *Nature of the Iqta System Under the Lodis*, op. cit. p-148 (f.n.3).

3. *Nature of the Iqta System Under the Lodis*, op. cit. pp. 145-146.

4. *Ibid*, pp. 147-148. Also my paper, *Rise of the Afghan Nobility under the Lodi Sultans*, op. cit. pp. 130-131.

5. *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Elliot and Dowson, Vol. IV, P. 313.

6. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 48.

ing to Mr. Moreland, the land was held partly by peasants and partly by chiefs : Farid gave the peasants their choice as to the system on which the demand should be assessed. Dr. Tripathi and Dr. P. Saran also take the statement of Abbas literally and assume that the peasants were called by Farid at the time of revenue settlement.<sup>1</sup>

My Professor Syed Nurul Hasan rightly observes that the term *rai'y'at* has been used by Abbas in the sense of *Muqaddam*. As a matter of fact 'Abbas who came to India during Akbar's reign, was ignorant of many facts, relating to the agrarian system of India.<sup>2</sup> This is the reason as to why Abbas fails in making any distinction in the position held by different sections of the rural population, such as *rai'y't*, *muqaddam*, *mustajir* and *muzarl'an*. He creates much confusion by calling all of them *rai'y' at*.

No doubt, Mushtaqi also calls the village headmen, including petty zamindars and patwaris combined as *rai'y'at* but by *rai'y'at* he clearly means the hereditary village dignitaries, enjoying the position of intermediary between the State and the common cultivators. The relevant evidence relates that once Sultan Sikandar Lodi ordered an enquiry to be instituted with regard to the actual *Jama* (annual revenue yield) of a certain *Pargana*, assigned to Mian Sayid Fazlullah of Kol. Here references are found to *ijara* (held by *Mustajir*), *amin* (an official charged with the duty of measuring the land under cultivation for revenue assessment), *muqaddam* (*zamindar*) and *rai'y'at*. By *rai'y'at* the author means *patwaris*, the petty village officials who maintained the records of the annual yield of their respective villages.<sup>3</sup> Since they were called along with the *muqaddams* of the *pargana* concerned to the royal court to inform the Sultan of its actual yield, they could not be other than *patwaris* as the coming of the cultivators of so many villages to the royal court is out of question.

- 
1. Moreland, *Agrarian System of Moslem India*, p.69;  
Some Aspects of Muslim Rule in India, R.P. Tripathi, p. 299;  
Dr. P. Saran, *Studies in Medieval Indian History*, Delhi, 1952, pp. 78-79.
  2. Cf. Prof. S. Nurul Hasan, *Revenue Administration of the Jagir of Sahsram by Farid (Sher Shah)*, *All India History Congress, 1964*, Part II, Aligarh, 1967, p. 102.
  3. Iqtidar H. Siddiqi, *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, p. 149.

So far as Abbas Sarwani's reference to *Muzari'an*<sup>1</sup> is concerned, he means either petty zamindars who cultivated the land themselves or through their servants or *Mustajir* (revenue farmer). Abbas has often confused *Mustajir* with *Muzari'*, the latter being an ordinary cultivator. Because Farid is reported to have called *Muzari'an* along with *muqaddams*, soldiers and 'amils for the settlement of all disputes related to the revenue administration of his father's *iqta*. As *Mustajir* existed and *ijaradari* was in practice, we may, therefore, assume that by *Muzari'* Abbas either means petty zamindar or *Mustajir*, for the coming of the common peasants, who might have been thousands in number, along with the village dignitaries to Sahasram was out of question. This point is substantiated by Mushtaqi who mentions *Muzari'* only in the sense of an ordinary cultivator.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the details furnished by Abbas about Farid's conversation with each category of persons contain no reference to *muzari*. The relevant passage shows that first Farid addressed the soldiers and 'amils, the persons in the service of the *Muqta* and then turned to the *rai'y'at* and the *Muqaddams* to discuss the revenue matters.<sup>3</sup> The term *rai'y'at* stands here for the patwaris, petty zamindars and *Mustajirs*.<sup>4</sup>

As for the systems of assessment existing during the period under study, Abul Fazl informs that they were *ghalla-bakhshi* and *Muqta'i*.<sup>5</sup> The former system was an age-old system and involved the indigenous *Kankut*, signifying the measurement of the land under cultivation. Under this system the state share in the gross produce was fixed per *bigha* according to the government rates. But the yearly measurement of the land under cultivation was not essential; the demand could be made on the basis of the revenue statistics of the previous years, provided by the village *patwaris*, whose primary duty was to maintain the records of the revenue, collected in their respective villages during the past. Unlike the

1. *Tarikh Sher Shahi*, f. 10b.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 22b; Also *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, op.cit. pp. 158-160.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* ff. 11b-12a.

4. Cf. *Revenue Administration of the Jagir of Sahsram by Farid* (Sher Shah), op. cit. pp. 102-103.

5. *Ain-i-Akbari*, (eng Tr.), li/66.

*ghalla-bakhshi* system, the *Muqta'i* system meant the revenue demand fixed for a territory on a permanent basis or till there was no need of further re-settlement.<sup>1</sup>

Besides, there appears to have obtained a third system also, officially termed as *jarib* or *zabt* (yearly measurement of the land). According to this system the land under cultivation was measured year after year, revenue was fixed and then converted into cash on the basis of current market prices of the commodities grown by the peasants.<sup>2</sup>

'Abbas, the only authority on Sher Shah's administration of Hasan Sur's *iqta* states that he allowed only *ghalla-bakhshi* and yearly measurement as the systems of revenue assessment. The *Muqaddams* were given choice to accept one of them as a standard system for their respective villages. That after the agreement had been reached between Farid and the village headmen, regarding the mode of assessment, the former ordered his revenue officials to fix revenue demand either in relation to the actual produce or on the basis of area under each crop.<sup>3</sup> This evidence makes it clear that Farid offered the *Muqaddams* and *zamindars* option in the system of assessment and not in the mode of payment.<sup>4</sup>

Some space may be devoted to describing and discussing the mode of payment. Sher Shah is reported to have said to his revenue officials that the amount of money due as land-revenue (*arz-i-Wajib-i-Diwani*) be paid (by the cultivators) from harvest to harvest.<sup>5</sup> This reveals that the basis of assessment was grain, but the actual payment was made in cash.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Moreland's statement that Farid must have collected the revenue in his *parganas* in kind is not convincing.<sup>7</sup> He

1. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, p. 158

2. *Ibid*, p. 160-161.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* f. 11b.

4. Dr. P. Saran's view that Sher Shah offered the peasants option in the mode of payment and not in the method of assessment, is not supported by any medieval authority. Cf. *Studies In Medieval Indian History*, op. cit. p. 79.

5. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 12a.

6. Abul Fazl also implies that under the prevailing systems of assessment, the demand was primarily assessed in kind and then it was commuted into cash. *Ain*, 1/285-6.

7. *Agrarian System of Moslem India*. p. 74.

bases his statement on the evidence, related to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi's reign. Owing to the shortage of silver in his land-locked kingdom, the Sultan ordered that the revenue be collected in kind throughout his Empire.<sup>1</sup> As Farid carried on the administration of his father's *iqta* before Ibrahim Lodi's reign, we may safely state that the land revenue was fixed on the basis of gross produce and was then commuted into cash by applying Schedule of prices for the various Crops.

A few words may also be added about Farid's abolishing certain taxes, levied on the peasants over and above the fixed land revenue. Abbas says that 'amils and amins were strictly ordered not to charge any thing as *Muhassilana* and *Khurak* more than he had fixed.<sup>2</sup> By *Muhassilana* and *Khurak*, Abbas seems to have meant the numerous taxes that a cultivator had to pay. These taxes were collectively termed as *Sa'ir-i-Jihat*.<sup>3</sup> Sher Shah abolished these taxes and allowed his revenue collectors only to charge *Muhassiland* (fee for measurement) and *Khurak* (food).

Having dispensed with all the problems between him and the subservient *zamindars*, regarding the modes of reve-

1. *Tarikh-i-Dau'di*, p. 105; Also Abdul Haque Dehlevi, *Tarikh i-Haqqi*. Aligarh MS. f. 49a.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 12a.

3. The taxes levied on the cultivated and pasture lands, on the produce of the rivers and ponds, on the commodities manufactured by the artisans, taken together were called as *Sair-i-jihat*. To them may also be added the nominal taxes which were collected as charges to meet the expenses incurred in connection with the assessment of the State demand of revenue.

The earliest definition of the *Sair-i-Jihat* (taxes) is found in the *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazl. "Whatever was assessed on the cultivated land in accordance with the *ra'i* (crop rates) was known as *mal*. Whatever was collected from various kinds of arts and crafts was termed as *jihat*, and rest of the taxes came to be known as *Sair-i-Jihat*. "Ain-i-Akbari, Vol. I, p. 205.

But the earliest reference to *Sair-i-Jihat* is found in Babur's *farman* regarding a *land-grant*. It shows that these taxes were collected under the head *Sair-i-jihat* since long and Babur allowed them to remain as such. There is also found reference to *Sairijihat* in Islam Shah's *Farman*, granted to the *dargah* (tomb) of ShahMadar in the village of *makanpur*, in the *sarkar* of Shergarh alias Qanauj. Babur's *farman*, *Oriental College magazine*, 1937, vol Islam Shah's *farman* published in the *Tazkirat-ul-Mutaqin*, Edited by Saiyed Muhammad Amir Hasan, Kanpur 1322 A.H.P. 172.



nue assessment and payment, *Farid* resolved to punish severely the recalcitrant *zamindars*. In his account of *Farid's* military operations against these rebels, 'Abbas sheds light on the nature and position of the strong *zamindars* in the *iqta* of *Mian Hasan*. It may be briefly discussed that some *zamindars* were powerful enough to defy the authority of *muqtas*, by behaving in any manner they pleased. For instance, they took to highway robbery and did not pay revenue to the State. Proud of the strength of their armed followers, they could not be induced into submission to the State Officers peacefully. Moreover, they subjected the poor peasants living nearby to cruel treatment, extorted from them their surplus produce and left them only the minimum needed for their survival. *Farid*, who happened to be a young but fully determined man to create conditions favourable for peace and prosperity in the *iqta*, could not tolerate this state of affairs for long. But, for their subjugation, he needed a strong force, while most of the contingent of *Mian Hasan* was with him in *Jaunpur*. To get over this difficulty, *Farid* persuaded all the able-bodied *Afghans*, who were jobless, to join him. He promised them good treatment and subsistence *iqtas* in reward of their service. Since there were not enough horses to be supplied to the soldiers, *Farid* borrowed them from the faithful *muqaddams* and others, and in this way this problem was also resolved. Besides many of the competent peasants were required to join hands with his followers in destroying the rebels.

On his march at the head of the newly-raised levies, some of the *zamindars* were terrified to sue for pardon, in case request received a favourable consideration from *Farid*, they agreed to pay their dues, including arrears for the previous years. They also agreed to furnish sureties for their excellent conduct in future. But the powerful *zamindars* who were known for their cruelty and high-handedness for long were not spared, in spite of their requests. They were surrounded in their villages; the dense forests which were used by them as hide-outs were cut down; and then they were killed to the last man. It is said that not a trace was left of the old population, for the children and women who survived their men were captured and sold into slavery. And, new peasants were brought there to carry on cultivation. However, this exemplary punishment, given to the recalcitrant village chiefs served as

a deterrent to others, and the rebellious tendencies among people were thus curbed for long.<sup>1</sup>

In the absence of any direct evidence, it cannot be said for definite that the practice of destroying the entire population of the villages in rebellion and settling new peasants on the land instead, originated with Farid, or it was an age-old practice which he was forced to follow. The reference contained in an anecdote in the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* to a rebel zamindar, suggests the probability of its being a well-established practice in Farid's times. It shows that the entire population followed the *muqaddam* in peace as well as in battle, and suffered or gained as the case might be.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the information about Farid's creating new *zamindaris* in the aforesaid villeges, available elsewhere may also be added. According to this information, Farid conferred the *zamindari* rights on the Ujjainya Rajputs at this time and they rose in prominence after his rise to supreme power.<sup>3</sup> In conclusion we may briefly discuss the results of Farid's administration. Abbas informs us that as a result of Farid's reforms, the *muqaddams* and their followers (peasants) gave up their antagonistic activities. They rather set to carry on their work enthusiastically as no body from amongst the *'amils* and soldiers could oppress them. They cleaned forests to bring new land under cultivation; in this way the financial resources of *Hasan Sur's iqta* improved considerably, and on his return from *Jaunpur* after a few years, Mian hasan was amazed to mark it. He admired the work of his able son before his men. But the relations between the Father and the son could not remain cordial for

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 13b-15b;

also cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp.52-59.

Prof. Qanungo aptly remarks : "The selling into slavery of the wives and children of one's enemies was common incident of medieval warfare in the east. Forcible seizure of the property and persons of disobedient *muqaddams* and cultivators was the only means of recovering the arrears of revenue."

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 67b, 68a.

Here Mushtaqi incidentally mentions a rebel *zamindar* of a village in the *Sarkar* of Bayana in the times of Sultan Sikandar Lodi and says that Ahmad Jilwani, the *muqta* had to depute his army against the village. But, on the arrival of this army, the entire population fled away, leaving their thatched houses behind.

3. Cf. *Traditions and Genealogy of the Ujjainiyas in Bihar*, 'Proceedings of the All India History Congres, 24th. Session, op cit. 1961, p. 125.

long. Mian Hasan's favourite wife, Sulaiman's mother grew jealous of Farid's popularity amongst people and compelled her husband to transfer the *shiqqdar* of his *iqta* from Farid to *Sulaiman*. Mian Hasan gave way and Farid had to leave in disgust sometime towards the close of Sikandar's reign.

#### (d) Search of Profession.

*Abbas Sarwani* would have us believe that just after his dismissal from the *Shiqqdar* of his father's *iqta* Farid left for Agra peacefully without doing any injury to his father's feeling and this incident took place in the beginning of Ibrahim Lodi's reign. A careful study of the events, related to Farid's early career not only yields different facts but also helps us in filling up an important gap in the history of his life. Abul Fazl, who had access to different sources of information for Sher Shah's reign, says that he (Farid) pained his own father by his arrogance and evil disposition. That he gathered a band of ruffians and took to robbery and thus caused grief to his father.<sup>1</sup> One may assume that Abul Fazl based this statement on hearsay only to discredit Sher Shah's fair name but it is certain that Farid did not leave Sahasram peacefully. He rather displeased his father by indulging in some indecent activity. Mushtaqi corroborates Abul Fazl when he incidentally provides a clue in the details of Sher Shah's conversation with Mallu Khan of Malwa to the effect that Farid took to brigandage in his early life.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of this evidence Prof. Qanungo suggests that Farid became a dacoit during his student life in Jaunpur and takes pains to justify this assumption.<sup>4</sup>

No doubt, Mushtaqi's testimony to this fact is of considerable value as he was a contemporary of Sher Shah, but there is no mention of the time when Farid organized his gang of the dacoits. This is certain that Farid was a serious student in Jaunpur and no person belonging to a family in the state service could have courage to indulge in anti-social activities during the times of *Sultan Sikandar Lodi*. The Sultan kept himself well-informed about every region through his spies. The provincial governors had to exert in establishing peace and order in their jurisdiction, for even a little negligence on their part, caus-

1. *Akbarnama*, i/148.

2. *Waqi at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 53a.

## Introductory

ing social insecurity was likely to be reported to the Sultan, and then would result in their humiliation.<sup>1</sup> Sultan Sikandar's reign was a period of peace and prosperity. Furthermore, at this time many of *Farid's* relations were in *Jaunpur* in the service of the governor and they had high opinion about Farid's excellent conduct and good manners.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable to think that if he ever took to robbery, it might have been the time just after he was replaced by his step-brother, Sulaiman as the Shiqqdar of Sahasram and khawaspur Tanda. This is what Abul Fazl also implies.

An ambitious young man with self-consciousness, Farid could not be taken by pessimism. In reaction to his father's unkind attitude towards him, he was much disggusted and, therefore, could rebel against the existing social system. He appears to have organized his gang at this time and raided the territories of the independent rajas and *zamindars* in north and eastern Bihar. He led the life of a dacoit till he was engaged in an encounter with an other stronger party of the dacoits. As his men were overcome by the rivals and he could not make good his escape with difficulty, he decided to give up vagrancy and take to the profession of soldiery instead (as he himself is said to have told Mallu Khan), and then he left for *Agra*.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly *Abbas Sarwani's* statement that having reached *Agra*, Farid chose *Daulat Khan Naib*<sup>4</sup> (Who was a household servant of 'Azam Humayun Sarwani and whom Sultan Ibrahim Lodi had raised to an important position after the destruction of his master) as his patron does not stand to reason. Because the details, furnished by him about the presence of the men of 'Azam Humayun Sarwani's military contingent in Kanpur with whom Farid stayed for a few days on his way, create the impression that 'Azam Humayun Sarwani, the *Muqta* of the vilayet of Kara was still on good terms with the Sultan.<sup>5</sup> Abbas does not say that the Sarwanis were in rebellion at that time.

- 
1. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, *Espionage system of the Sultans of Delhi, Studies in Islam*, New Delhi, April 1964 Vol. 1, No. 2, pp : 98-99.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 8-1.
  3. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 53a-b.
  4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 22a.
  5. *Ibid*, f. 21a-b

His account that the Sarwanis showed great hospitality to Farid and also permitted him to take *Shalkh Ismail Sur* (later Shuja'at Khan), who was related to them on his mother's side with him to Agra, supports our assumption.

The information, provided by the authors of the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani* with regard to the affairs of 'Azam Humayun Sarwani reveals that he enjoyed the royal confidence till 1519 when he was recalled from Gwallor and thrown into prison for his failure in arresting prince *Jalal Khan*, a rebel refugee with the Raja of Gwallor.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that Farid must have entered Daulat Khan's service after 'Azam Humayun's fall and the destruction of his rebel son, *Islam Khan* in kara.

According to Mushtaqi, Daulat Khan was a Nuhani Afghan and held the rank of 4,000 sawars in the personal service of the Sarwani *Muqta* of kara.<sup>2</sup> 'Abbas supplements this information when he says that Daulat Khan *naib* was a *khanazad* of 'Azam Humayun whom Sultan Ibrahim Lodi took in his personal service after the destruction of the Sarwanis. That he made rapid progress in the royal service and soon rose to the rank of 12,000 sawars.<sup>3</sup> The fact that Daulat Khan might have taken some time to rise in royal estimation, should not be lost sight of. Therefore, Farid who reached Agra in the beginning of Ibrahim Lodi's reign, must have got employment under some other noble.

Again, in his account of the battle, fought between the Afghan army and Rana Sanga in 1520, Mushtaqi provides a clue to the fact that Farid entered the service of *Masnad-i'all Ibrahim Khan Sarwani*, son of Khan 'Azam Umar Khan Sarwani. The *Masnad-i-all* was killed fighting against Rana Sanga and then Farid was left to find out job under some other noble. *Mushtaqi's* reference to him shows that at this time he was a young man possessing indomitable courage and much physical charm.<sup>4</sup> As Sultan Ibrahim Lodi raised so many Afghans to important positions and high military ranks in place of certain old nobles of doubtful loyalty, it was not difficult for any com-

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/348, *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*; i/247.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 36a.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* f. 22a.

4. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 61a.

petent man to find out a suitable job, for the newly-created nobles stood in need of such men to compose their contingents. Farid seems to have chosen *Daulat Khan naib* as his new patron, for the latter had been shown great favour by the Sultan as 'Abbas informs us.

In his details about the relations between Farid and *Daulat Khan naib* Prof. Qanungo Confuses 'Azam Humayun Sarwani with Khan 'Azam Umar Khan Sarwani who had died in the reign of Sikandar Lodi, and wrongly calls *Daulat Khan naib* as one of the sons of *Jamal Khan Sarang Khani*. He rejects 'Abbas Sarwani's account about the origin of *Daulat Khan* without giving any evidence in support of his own statement.<sup>1</sup> This is absolutely incorrect. Both Mushtaqi and 'Abbas testify to the fact that *Daulat Khan* was previously in the service of 'Azam Humayun Sarwani and belonged to a Nuhani family. *Daulat Khan Nuhani's* rise to a prominent position in the royal service after the destruction of *Islam Khan Sarwani* (son of 'Azam Humayun Sarwani) was possible because both Sultan Sikandar and Ibrahim Lodi used to win over the important men in the service of their nobles before they laid their hands upon the latter for doubts about their loyalty to them.<sup>2</sup>

However, Farid entered the service of *Daulat Khan naib* a few years after having served Ibrahim Khan Sarwani, and soon became a favourite man of his second patron for his intelligence, courage and excellent manners. On *Mian Hasan Sur's* death sometime before 1524,<sup>3</sup> *Daulat Khan naib* got the royal *farman* in favour of Farid, granting the *iqta* of Sahasram and Khawaspur Tanda with the rank of 500 *sawars*.<sup>4</sup> Owing to the grant of the royal *farman*, Farid's position changed. Now he was to enjoy the position of a petty royal *amir* instead of being a servant of the governor of Jaunpur vilayet. He went straight a way to Sahasram and took over the charge of his *iqta* from his step-brother, *Mian Sulaiman*.

□

---

1. *Sher Shah and His Times*. p. 67.

2. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*. pp. 35, 45.

3. This is an approximate date.

4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 23b.

## CHAPTER II

# Advent to Power

---

### (a) Life and activities during the Post-Lodi period.

The fall of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in the battle of Panipat on 20th April, 1526, and the confusion that arose thereupon, gave the signal for wide-spread anarchy in the whole of the Afghan Empire. The Mughal victors carried sword and fire down from Lahore to Delhi and Agra. The cities and towns, such as Lahore, Dipalpur, Shahabad, Gangoh etc. were plundered and people massacred in cold blood indiscriminately. Those, who survived, fled away for refuge, leaving their hearths and valuables behind. Even the 'Ulama and Saints were not spared by the Mughals.<sup>1</sup> Babur himself indirectly corroborates the evidence, available in the *Lataif-i-Quddusi* and the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, when he complains about the hatred of the Indians towards the Mughals that excepting Agra and Delhi, not a single fortified town submitted to the Mughals. People either fled away or strengthened the defences of their towns and cities. "All the inhabitants," says Babur, "had run away in terror. Neither grain for ourselves nor corn for our horses was to be had. The villagers, out of hostility and hatred to us had taken to thieving and highway robbery: there was no moving on the roads".<sup>2</sup>

The nobles who held forts and territories in the *Doab* (Modern Western U.P.) and eastern Rajputana with some resources, were thrown into a critical situation, which menaced their political existence. In the first instance they appear to have decided to hold out against the Mughals, but were soon forced to realize the impossibility of their survival, owing to the disunity and lack of co-operation among the Indian nobles.

---

1. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, pp. 63; also *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 56b.

2. *Baburnama*, ii/524.

They had to resist single handed. Therefore, they submitted to Babur one by one, either as a result of persuasion or in the face of military pressure.<sup>1</sup> But the case of the Indo-Afghan nobles, stationed in the eastern territories was quite different. They were divided into three different groups having different view points regarding their course of action.

The first group was constituted by the powerful *muqtas* (governors) of the vilayets of Awadh and Jaunpur. Miyan Mustafa Farmuli, the nephew and son-in-law of *Masnad-i-'ali* Mian Muhammad Farmuli Kalapahar whom he had succeeded as the *Muqta* of Awadh and Bahraich, died on the frontier of Bihar sometime before the battle of panipat after having inflicted severe defeats on the rebels in the eastern territories. On his death, Bayazid Farmuli, his younger brother took over the command of his army.<sup>2</sup> Khan Azam Lad Khan Sarangkhani, the *Muqta* of jaunpur Vilayet was also a trusted noble of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and had co-operated with the Farmulis of Awadh in cleaning the eastern territories of the rebels. His uncle, Firuz Khan Lodi Sarang Khani lived with Bayazid till the battle of Panipat. But the fall of Khan Azam Lad Khan along with many of his lieutenants in the battle of Panipat and Mian Mustafa's natural death on the frontier of Bihar weakened the hold of their successors in the eastern territories,<sup>3</sup> while the rebels under the leadership of Sultan *Muhammad Nuhani* of Bihar were encouraged by the turn of circumstances. The fugitives from Panipat and other western territories came to them for refuge and thus enhanced their strength. In such circumstances Bayazid Farmuli, Firuz Khan Sarangkhani and some others, like Qazi Jiya decided to pay allegiance to *Babur* when *Prince Humayun* marched towards *Jaunpur* in August 1526.<sup>4</sup>

The other important group was headed by *Masnad-i-all* Mian Maruf Farmuli, the *Muqta* of *Qanauj sarkar*, *Masnad-i-all* Nasir Khan Nuhani, the *Muqta* of *Ghazipur sarkar*, and *Fath* Khan Sarwani to whom *Sultan Ibrahim* had restored the large *iqta* of his father, 'Azam Humayun Sarwani in the vilayet of

1. *Baburnama*, II/526, 527. 530.etc.

2. *Baburnama* I/527, *Tarikh-i-SherShahi*, f. 52a-b; also *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 43a

3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 43b.

4. *Baburnama*, II/527.



*Kara* and *Manikpur*, sometime in 1520- 21.<sup>1</sup> They were defeated and driven away by Mian Mustafa Farmuli to Bihar where they had joined Bahar Khan Nuhani and declared him as *Sultan Muhammad Shah*.<sup>2</sup>

To the third group belonged the nobles who were left leaderless in the eastern territories after the fall of their supreme commanders at *Panipat*. Their means were inadequate and their *iqtas* bordered the vilayet of Bihar. Of them only *Muhammad Khan Sur* and *Farid Sur* may be mentioned because our medieval authorities fail to provide us with information about others. They held their *iqtas* in the vilayet of *Jaunpur*, adjoining *Bihar*. The available evidence shows that the nobles of *Jaunpur* were forced by the vicissitude of circumstances to seek protection under some powerful man. First they seem to have invited Prince Bahadur (later *Bahadur Shah of Gujarat*) who had fought in the battle of *Panipat* on the side of the Afghans, to proceed with them to *Jaunpur* and lead them in war against their enemies. The latter did not accept their offer because he was called by the nobles of *Gujarat* to occupy the throne of his ancestors as it had fallen vacant after the assassination of his brother, *Sikandar Shah*.<sup>3</sup> Uncertain of their present and doubtful of their future, they dispersed in different directions. Some of them joined *Firuz Khan Sarang Khani* who had also died soon later.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter, they either went to *Taj Khan Sarang Khani*, the *Muqta* of *Chunar* or joined the service of *Sultan Muhammad Nuhani* as will be discussed later on.

Thus the fall of *Sultan Ibrahim Lodi* led many Afghans to seek refuge in Bihar, and in this way they considerably added

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 43a.

2. *Ibid*, f. 42b. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/305; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/252, 253; *Baburnama*, ii/523.

3. *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Gujarat*, *Medieval India Quarterly*, Aligarh, 1963, p. 60. *Mirat-i-Sikandri*, pp. 203-204.

The author of the *Mirat-i-Sikandri* says that Bahadur Shah left *Sultan Ibrahim Lodi's* camp before the battle of *Panipat* because he had got inkling of his hostility towards him. On his separation from the royal court, the nobles of *Jaunpur* invited him to *Jaunpur*, for they were against *Ibrahim Lodi*. This is neither corroborated by the earlier chronicle of *Gujrat* referred to above nor by any other Afghan source.

4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f.43a.

to the military strength of Sultan Muhammad Nuhani's army. Babur testifies to this fact in these words; "The various rebel amirs of the East, that is to say, those under Nasir Khan Nuhani and Ma'ruf Farmuli, had crossed the Gang(Ganges) with 40,000 to 50,000 men, taken Qanauj, and now lie some three milels on our side of the river".<sup>1</sup> If this statement is studied along with Mushtaqi's account of the successful military campaigns, led by Mian Mustafa Farmuli against the rebels of East,<sup>2</sup> it reveals that Sultan Muhammad Nuhani had succeeded in creating from the wreckage of Sultan Ibrahim's army, which was badly mauled at Panipat, a large but disorderly formation. That is the reason why he could detach 40,000 to 50,000 men to occupy the eastern region upto Qanauj through his supporters while he himself remained in Bihar.<sup>3</sup> But this is also true that his occupation of the eastern territories was partial. The impregnable forts like those of Chunar, Jaunpur and Awadh were still in the hands of his rivals who were never willing to co-operate with him. Without getting these fortified places in their possession the supporters of Muhammad Nuhani were not in a position to hold out against the Mughals outside Bihar for long. Hence their failure in checking the Mughal expansion eastward.

On Humayun's advance in August 1526, the Afghans were seized with panic, turned into a disorderly rabble and then took to heels without putting resistance.<sup>4</sup> Their flight from Jajmau (Kanpur district) unnerved Fath Khan Sarwani, a powerful supporter of the Nuhani chief who held the vast territory of *Kara and Manikpur*. Therefore, *Fath Khan Sarwani* decided to align with the Mughals. He paid visit to Humayun in Dilmāu (Dist. Rai Bereilly) and the latter sent him to Babur in Agra.<sup>5</sup>

---

1. *Baburnama*, ii/530.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 43a.

3. *Baburnama*, ii/530.

4. *Baburnama*, ii/533. The details, contained in the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* shed light on the demoralization of the Afghan *amirs*. The Afghans were seized with panic in such a way that a false rumour of the Mughal advance in any direction led them to run away, despite their numerical superiority at many places, *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*; f. 44a.

5. *Baburnama*, ii/534, 537.

It is worthy of note that neither Sultan Muhammad Nuhani nor anyone among his senior supporters possessed the requisite qualities of an able leader. They failed to unite the Afghans for a common cause. Their lack of organising ability led to the occupation of most of the eastern territories by the Mughals. The vilayets of *Kara*, *Jaunpur*, *Awadh* and *Bahraich* fell into the hands of the Mughals; Shaikh Bayazid and Firoz Khan Lodi Sarang Khani decided to visit Humayun along with some of other amirs like *Qazi Jlya* and *Mahmud Khan Nuhani*, son of Nasir Khan who was hostile to his father since the times of Ibrahim Lodi, for compromise.<sup>1</sup> All these nobles were the trusted men of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, but they would have been forced to cooperate with the Nuhani chief of Bihar, if the latter had succeeded in checking the Mughals in Qanauj.

On the Mughal occupation of the eastern territories, the Nuhani rule was confined to the vilayet of Bihar and a few parganas forming the eastern boundary of Jaunpur vilayet and thus adjacent to Bihar region under the petty Afghan nobles. Mention may be made of the *iqtas* of *Muhammad Khan Sur* and Shaikh Farid Sur, both of whom were hostile to each other. Being inferior to Muhammad Khan Sur, the *Wajhdar* of Chaund, in rank and resources, Farid Sur decided to save himself from his enemy by paying allegiance to Sultan *Muhammad Nuhani*. Soon afterwards Muhammad Khan also appears to have been forced into submission to the authority

1. *Baburnama*, ii/527.

Prof. Qanungo makes confusion in describing the events of this period. He wrongly states that Bayazid Farmuli separated himself from Sultan Muhammad Nuhani at the time of Humayun's advance in the East. Babur and Mushtaqi testify to the fact that Bayazid Farmuli remained faithful to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi till his fall and then he joined the Mughal service along with certain Afghan nobles against the Nuhani ruler of Bihar. Prof. Qanungo is also not justified in stating that Bayazid had a long-standing quarrel with his elder brother Maruf Farmuli over the fief of Awadh.

cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, op. cit., p.73.

Bayazid Farmull was the younger brother of Miyan Mustafa Farmuli, the son-in-law of Mian Muhammad Kalapahar, the famous *muqta* of Awadh. On the death of the latter, Sultan Ibrahim conferred the *iqta* and office of Kalapahar on Mustafa Farmull. Bayazid remained with his brother till the latter's death as discussed above. Mian Maruf was the *Muqta* of Qanauj and in hostility to the Farmulis of Awadh. This is what we know for definite on the authority of Mushtaqi and Abbas.

of Nuhani Sultan.<sup>1</sup> These Sur nobles are said to have joined the service of the latter sometime after the battle of Panipat.<sup>2</sup>

The author of the '*Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*' is the only writer who furnishes somewhat a detailed account of the life and career of *Farid* during this period, and we have every good reason to treat his narrative with suspicion and examine it more closely, applying the methods of historical criticism, whenever possible. According to him *Farid's* alliance with the Nuhani Sultan of Bihar saved him from Muhammad Khan Sur who was bent upon destroying him in favour of *Mian Sulaiman*, son of *Hasan Sur* born of a Slave girl. That *Farid* was able to win over his new master's confidence by dint of merit and courage within a short time of his entry in his service. Once he accompanied the Sultan on a hunting expedition, killed a tiger and got the title of Sher Khan in reward.<sup>3</sup> Mushtaqi, though very brief, testifies to the fact of *Farid's* entry in Sultan Muhammad Nuhani's service, yet his version of the grant of title of sher Khan to *Farid* is different from that of Abbas. Mushtaqi indicates that once *Farid* agreed to lead the military expedition against Muhammad Sur, the *Mquta* of Chaund while other nobles were reluctant to undertake the task assigned to them. He defeated Muhammad Sur and Sultan Muhammad Nuhani was deeply impressed by his courage and thus honoured him with the title of Sher Khan.<sup>4</sup> Shaikh Kabir also implies that the title was granted to Shaikh *Farid Sur* when he led expedition against Muhammad Khan Sur of Chaund, who was defeated and forced to join the ruler of Bihar.<sup>5</sup> Mushtaqi's statement seems to be correct because the

---

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 48b. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 51a; *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, p. 111.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 25a, 25b.

3. *Tarikh-i-sher Shahi*, f. 25b.

4. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 48-ab.

5. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff 50b, 51a. Prof. Qanungo does not accept 'Abbas' surmise and thinks that *Farid* must have got the title of Sher Khan on the occasion of Muhammad Nuhani's coronation in May 1526. He is justified in rejecting 'Abbas but his statement that *Farid* got the title without doing any remarkable service to his master is not right. As a matter of fact, he has not utilized the *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, extensively. As regards the *Afsana-i-Shahan*, it has been left by him untapped. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 74, 75, 76.

title of Sher Khan was common during the Sultanate period, and it was not necessary for a noble to kill a tiger for its sake.

Therefore, *Sher Khan Sur*, convinced of his master's confidence in him, sought permission to leave for Sahasram to visit his family members there. But his overstay in his *iqta* provided *Muhammad Khan Sur*, who had also become one of the close associates of the Nuhani Sultan soon after his alliance, with an opportunity to work against Sher Khan. He accused Sher Khan of being in a secret understanding with the allies of Prince Mahmud Lodi, son of Sultan Sikandar Lodi whom the Afghans were supporting against the Mughals as well as Sultan Muhammad Nuhani. He also suggested to the Nuhani Sultan that the *iqta* of Sahasram should be seized from Sher Khan and assigned to *Sulaiman*, his step-brother instead. Though the Nuhani Sultan was not doubtful about Sher Khan's loyalty to him, yet on being pressed, he allowed Muhammad Khan Sur to settle the dispute between the step brothers amicably.<sup>1</sup>

Having obtained the permission of his suzerain, Muhammad Khan Sur came to Chaund whence he directed Sher Khan to handover the *pargana* of Khawaspur Tanda to Sulaiman. Sher Khan refused to concede his demand on the ground that the partition of *iqta* would impair his resources and was against the political custom of India. At the same time he directed Sukha, his slave whom he had appointed as the *Shiqqdar* of Khawaspur Tanda to fight against the army of Muhammad Khan Sur in face of attack. Since Muhammad Khan Sur was annoyed by Sher Khan's disobedience, he deputed Shadi Ghulam (slave) with his military contingent to capture Khawaspur Tanda by force, in case Sher Khan was unwilling to part with it peacefully. Consequently a severe battle took place between Shadi and Sukha; the latter was killed along with most of his followers fighting heroically. Only a few fugitives came to Sahasram to inform their master of the outcome of the conflict.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 26a-b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 27b.

Prof. Qanungo's surmise that Muhammad Khan Sur seized the *iqta* of Sher Khan to redeem his pledge to Sulaiman without Sultan Muhammad Nuhani's permission and after the Afghan confederacy, headed by the latter in the eastern region had broken down is not supported by any medieval source. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 74-76.

Driven to strait, Sher Khan decided to seek help from the Mughals for the recovery of his *iqta* as the Nuhani ruler was not expected to disapprove of Muhammad Khan Sur's action against him because he held comparatively a superior position. Therefore, Sher Khan went to Junaid Barlas, the Mughal governor of Jaunpur who happened to be in Bhatta (Modern Rewa) at that time. The latter was pleased by his visit and helped him in recovering his *iqta*.<sup>1</sup> This event seems to have taken place in 1527 after the battle of Khanwa was over, as the reference to Sultan Mahmud Lodi in the conversation of Muhammad Khan with Sultan Muhammad Nuhani indicates.<sup>2</sup> These details, provided by Abbas about Sher Khan's relations with his Afghan rivals and the Mughals appear to be authentic, for the death of Sukha (Sher Khan's slave) can not be described otherwise.

As the modern scholars have discussed Sher Khan's entry in the Mughal service at length,<sup>3</sup> we need not repeat them. However, it may be stressed that the setback, suffered by Sher Khan at the hands of the *Muqta* of Chaund proved a blessing in disguise for him. Because his alliance with Junaid Barlas enabled him not only to recover his own *iqta* but also occupy a few other *parganas* that belonged to the *khalsa* of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi previously. On the departure of the Mughal auxiliary force, Sher Khan started a dialogue with his old enemy, Muhammad Khan Sur who had fled to the hills in fear of the Mughals. His overture of friendship impressed Muhammad Khan Sur and the latter again settled in Chaund as his friend. Thus hostility was turned into friendship. Satisfied as Sher Khan was with his affairs, he left Sahasram to join Junaid Barlas. Junaid Barlas either took Sher Khan to Babur himself or sent him along with his men to Agra at the time when the Emperor

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 28a.

Prof. Qanungo says that Sher Khan paid visit to Junaid Barlas in Benaras because Patna, mentioned as the place of meeting in his manuscript was not probable. In almost all the manuscripts, available in Aligarh Bhatta is found where Sher Khan met Junaid Barlas. The reference, available in the *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi* to Bhatta also shows that its Raja was subordinate to the *Muqta* of Jaunpur. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 38a.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 25b; *Lataif-i-Quddusi*, pp. 73-74.

3. *Sher Shah and his Times*, pp. 75-88.

was preparing to march on Chanderi for its conquest<sup>1</sup> (January, 1528).

Prof. Qanungo considers Abbas' account of Sher Khan Sur's presence in the Mughal camp at Chanderi as inauthentic, because there is no mention of Sher Khan or Junaid Barlas in Babur's description of the siege of Chanderi fort.<sup>2</sup> Although, the details given by Abbas about Sher Khan's open criticism of the Mughal state system in the presence of different Afghans, his suspicion about his arrest by Mughals when Babur's argus-eye noticed in him a shrewd, scheming and ambitious man, dangerous to his family and throne, and his consequent flight from Agra<sup>3</sup> do not contain factual basis. Because, Abbas states in the same place that Shher Khan having reached Sahasram safely, decided to join Sultan Muhammad Nuhani. The political conditions in Bihar and other eastern territories, when critically explained and properly fitted into a broader pattern of events, reveal that Sher Khan never met Sultan Muhammad Nuhani after he had joined the Mughals sometime in the beginning of 1527.

*Sultan Muhammad Nuhani* seems to have been dead in the mid of 1527 as he is never heard of in the account of later events. The vilayet of Bihar slipped into the hands of Sultan Mahmud Lodi and his supporters towards the close of 1527. Dattu Sarwani's eye-witness account, available in the *Lataif-i-Quddusi* confirms our surmise that the Nuhani ruler of Bihar was no more beyond the year 1527. Dattu Sarwani himself reached Bihar in the company of *Masnad-i-ali* 'Isa Khan

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 29a-b.

There is no reference to Sher Khan's visit to the royal court in Agra or at Chanderi in the *Baburnama*. Abbas is the first writer to mention it. But the evidence about the later events suggests the probability of his presence in the Mughal camp at Chanderi and then in the eastern region.

2. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 80-84.

3. Abbas narrates Sher Khan's presence at a banquet hosted by Babur. He states : when it happened that they placed before him a dish of (fried) fish, which he did not know the customary mode of eating, So he cut it into small pieces with his dagger and then easily disposed of them. Babur was impressed by Sher Khan's ingenuity and asked Khalifa to keep an eye on him because the marks of royalty were visible in his forehead. Sher Khan, though Ingorant of the Turkihs language, understood Babur's fear by the latter's facial expressions and then fled away to Sahasram, This story seems to have been fabricated after Sher Shah's rise to sovereignty. *Tarikh-i-SherShahi*, f. 30a.

Sarwani Afghan in 1527 and soon afterwards Sultan Mahmud Lodi appeared.<sup>1</sup> Babur's mention of the son and widow of Sultan *Muhammad Nuhani* in his account of 1529 makes it clear that he was dead at the time of Mahmud Lodi's arrival in Bihar.<sup>2</sup> Mushtaqi's statement is conclusive in this regard. Without mentioning the exact date of Sultan Muhammad Nuhani's death, he says that the Nuhani sultan of Bihar died after the fall of the Lodi Empire.<sup>3</sup>

Babur's reference to *Sher Khan Sur* in his *Baburnama*, shows that he was not only left with his own *iqta* but he also got a few more *parganas* in addition as a royal favour for his loyal service to the Mughal Emperor in 1528.<sup>4</sup> At this time Shah Muhammad Farmuli, son of *Mian Maruf Farmull*, Taj Khan *Sarang Khani*, and Mahmud Khan Nuhani, son of Nasir Khan Nuhani were also showered upon royal favours for their unwavering loyalty to the Mughals.<sup>5</sup> All this gives the impression that Sher Khan remained with Babur, at least in 1528 from the siege of Chanderi to his first campaign in the Eastern territory. As for Sher Khan's desertion to Mahmud Lodi soon afterwards (1529), in spite of Babur's favourable attitude towards him, smokes of his unfaithfulness and treachery, 'Abbas invents the story of a royal feast and Sher Khan's flight from Agra for his fear of arrest by the royal order in order to justify his action.

As regards *Sher Khan's* desertion to *Sultan Mahmud Lodi* in 1529, we know on the basis of evidence available, both in the *Baburnama* and *Lataif-i-Quddusi* that no Afghan or any other Indian noble residing in the eastern region could incur the displeasure of Sultan Mahmud Lodi because he had gathered a large following that consisted of many important nobles of the Lodi Empire. *Bayazid Farmuli*, the powerful man of Awadh who possessed vast treasures with a quite good number of well-disciplined and trusted *sawars*, deserted to Mahmud Lodi just after the latter's appearance in Bihar in 1527.<sup>6</sup> Likewise *Fath Khan Sarwani* to whom Babur had re-

---

1. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, p.74.

2. *Baburnama*, ii/676.

3. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 48b.

4. *Baburnama* ii/652.

5. *Ibid.*, ii/657, 659; also *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 59a.

6. *Baburnama*, ii/589 also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 52a-b, for his resourcefulness.



stored his father's extensive *iqta* in Kara not only joined Mahmud Lodi, but also gave him his daughter in marriage to strengthen the bonds of friendship.<sup>1</sup> Besides *Mian Maruf Farmull*, *Baban Khan Lodi*, *Masnad-i-all Ibrahim Khan Lodi* (Yusuf Khail), the sworn enemies of the Mughal raj in India pledged to fight against Babur till the last breath.<sup>2</sup>

*Masnad-i-all 'Isa Khan Sarwani* who had settled in Bihar along with many other Afghan nobles and their followers after the battle of Panipat, added considerably to the strength of Mahmud Lodi. The passage, contained in the *Lataif-i-Quddusi* about the Situation, caused by the appearance of Mahmud Lodi provides interesting information. "After sometime Sultan Mahmud, son of Sultan Sikandar (Lodi) appeared and his appearance filled the Afghans, left leaderless, with good cheers. They all assembled under his banner and pledged to fight against Babur. With faith in 'Allah, Sultan Mahmud proceeded from Bihar and stayed near the town of *Benaras*."<sup>3</sup> There is no mention of the fate of the widow and son of *Sultan Muhammad Nuhani* and their supporters in this passage. Most probably they had fled to Bengal leaving Bihar in the hands of the supporters of Mahmud Lodi as their return to Bihar and agreement with Babur in 1529 shows.<sup>4</sup> As regards the position of *Nizam Sur*, the younger brother of *Sher Khan* whom the latter had left in *Sahasram* at the time of his departure to see *Junaid Barlas'* court, he must have also joined the army of Mahmud Lodi. Even *Shah Muhammad Farmull* to whom Babur had assigned an *iqta* in *Saran* could not antagonise the Afghans, although he had secretly written to Babur assuring him of his loyalty.<sup>5</sup> Only *Taj Khan Sarang Khan*, the *Muqta* of *Chunar* fort refused to pay allegiance to the son of *Sikandar Lodi* and was consequently besieged by the Afghans.<sup>6</sup>

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Sheer Shahi*, f. 45b; *Baburnama*, II/652.  
Abbas is the only writer to inform us of the marriage of Fath Khan Sarwani's daughter with Mahmud Lodi. The latter seems to have conferred upon Fath Khan the title of 'Azam Humayun which Babur had refused to grant for the sake of Prince Humayun.
  2. *Baburnama*, II/652.
  3. *Lataif-i-Quddusi*, pp. 73-74.
  4. *Baburnama*, II/676.
  5. *Ibid.*, II/675.
  6. *Ibid.*, II/654.

However, with the help of his supporters *Mahmud Lodi* came out of *Bihaar* and deputed his supporters to seize eastern territories from the Mughals. His supporters overran the eastern region and occupied it upto *Qanauj*.<sup>1</sup> The Mughals were defeated in Lucknow and then driven to *Qanauj*. Soon later, the Afghans also succeeded in capturing the towns of *Qanauj* and *Shamsabad*, although the latter place had been strengthened by the Mughal expeditionary force towards the beginning of February, 1528.<sup>2</sup> Now a few forts like those of *Jaunpur* and *Kara* remained in the possession of the Mughal garrisons, and they were also reduced to the position of islands cut off from the mainland. Babur was perturbed by these news. He gave up his former plan of conquering *Raisin*, *Bhilsa*, and *Sarangpur* and turned towards the East in the last week of February.<sup>3</sup>

The Afghan gains in the eastern region were short-lived. Riddled with internal conflicts, group dissensions, and personal jealousy, as were they, their unity could not last for long. Being jealous of one another, they could not agree to a common plan; their lack of cohesion frustrated the efforts of their brave followers and thus the chances of their success against the enemy were lost. They really set bad examples to the young members of the old aristocratic families. This is why *Maruf Farmuli's* son (perhaps *Shaikh Muhsin*) whom the Afghans had appointed in *Qanauj*, fled away on seeing the Mughal News-gatherers. He neither tried to know the actual number of the Mughals nor could distinguish whether they were soldiers or news-collectors.<sup>4</sup>

In an attempt to check Babur from crossing the Ganges at *Qanauj*, *Bayazid Farmuli*, *Baban Lodi* and *Maruf Farmuli* came to guard the eastern bank, opposite to *Qanauj*. But Babur left *Qanauj* and built a boat bridge on some distance in spite of the heroic resistance, put by the Afghans at this time. *Malik Qasim*, one of the mughal generals was killed in one of the encounters. On the completion of the bridge, the Mughals crossed the Ganges in battle-array on 13th March. "The whole body of Afghans" says *Babur*, "armed, mounted,

---

1. *Ibid.*, ii/594.

2. *Baburnama*, ii/598.

3. *Ibid.* ii/651-2.

4. *Ibid.*, ii/598.

and having elephants with them, attacked us. They hurried off our men of the left hand, but our centre itself and right hand stood firm and forced the enemy to retire." The rival armies continued to fight till it was dark. The following day (14th March) the Afghans did not fight and stood arrayed a long way off. On the third day they broke away, perhaps owing to jealousy and internal dissensions.<sup>1</sup>

On the flight of the Afghans, Babur went ahead and all the territories were cleaned of the hostile Afghans upto *Awadh*, *Bahraich*, *Gorakhpur*, while the mughals besieged by the enemy in *Jaunpur* and *Kara* were relieved.<sup>2</sup> On this occasion Babur rewarded his faithful Indo-Afghan allies.<sup>3</sup> *Sher Khan Sur* who is reported to have been favoured by the grant of additional *parganas*, adjacent to his *iqta* of *Sahasram*, must have been permitted to leave the Mughal camp at this time. It was from this time onward that *Sher Khan Sur* began to count in the politics of Bihar and was soon able to make headway towards political supremacy.

Babur's only reference to *Sher Khan Sur* in his account of the year, 1529 indicates that the latter was forced to shift his allegiance from Babur to Mahmud Lodi soon after Babur's return from the East, for the Afghans had again joined Sultan Mahmud Lodi in large numbers. This time also the Mughals were driven away from many places. Babur's own description of the situation is quite detailed ; "While we were in these parts," says Babur, "news came again and again that Sultan Mahmud Lodi had collected 10,000 Afghans; that he had detached Shaikh Bayazid and Baban with a mass of men towards *Sarwar* (*Gorakhpur*); that he himself with *Fath Khan Sarwani* was on his way along the river for *Chunar*; that *Sher Khan Sur* whom I had favoured last year with the gift of several *parganas* and had left in charge of this neighbourhood, had joined these Afghans who thereupon made him and other Afghans (*amirs*) cross the water; that *Sultan Jalal Uddin's* men in *Benaras* had not been able to hold that place, had fled, and got away."

---

1. *Ibid.*, ii/598-600.

2. *Ibid.*, ii/602.

3. *Ibid.*, ii/603, for translator's note.

As usual, the Afghans remained united till Babur was away from the scene. On Babur's advance they were again directed by selfish motives and thus failed to realize the importance of cohesion and co-ordination among fellow nobles at the time of war. For this reason they could not be strongly knit together. Even the assignment of a position to one noble displeased the other. This state of affairs in the Afghan army disheartened those who were determined to fight against Babur to the last breath. Consequently they broke away on Babur's advance from Kara. *Dattu Sarwani*, who was with *Sultan Mahmud Lodi* at this time, describes the atmosphere prevailing in the Afghan Camp near Benaras: "With faith in 'Allah' Sultan Mahmud proceeded with all the Afghans from Bihar and stayed near the town of Benaras. Between the two armies flowed the river Ganges. There was great anxiety in the hearts of the Afghans regarding the outcome of the battle". Further he testifies to the fact that the Afghans suffered from selfishness and having stood arrayed for action for a few days, fled away without shooting a single arrow. Sultan Mahmud Lodi reached Bhatta with some Sarwani nobles, including Fath Khan Sarwani and *Isa Khan Sarwani*; *Raja Bir Singh Deva* gave them villages for maintenance. Others were scattered in different directions.<sup>1</sup>

### Rise to Supreme Power in Bihar

The breakdown of the Afghan coalition in 1529 considerably added to the resources of *Sher Khan*. Being a practical man of affairs, Sher Khan realised the gravity of situation and tried to win over Babur's favour. He sent dutiful letters to Babur to the effect that he should be pardoned for his involvement in anti-Mughal activities. Babur was placated by his friendly gesture and, therefore, left him untouched in his *parganas*. He was now enabled to consolidate his authority in his *iqta* which appears to have been more than doubled. At this time he must have taken some of the able-bodied and experienced Afghan *sawars*, left leaderless and without the means of livelihood by the headlong flight of their leaders. It

1. *Lataif-i-Quddusi*, p. 74.

According to Babur the Afghan army was divided into two parts; one stood near Benaras to face Babur, while the other was directed to continue the siege of Chunar fort against *Taj Khan Sarang Khani*, a Mughal ally. *Baburnama*, ii/652-654.

appears that he became a strong man in the politics of Bihar within a short time. It was actually his resourcefulness which attracted the attention of *Dudu*, the widow of *Sultan Muhammad Nuhani* and the mother of *Jalal Khan* to whom Babur had restored the vilayet of Bihar on their return from *Bengal* under certain conditions that *Jalal Khan* would remain loyal to the Mughal Emperor and pay one crore *tankas* as annual tribute.<sup>1</sup> The Nuhani nobles had seven or eight thousand *sawars* but they were disunited. Babur's reference to *Yahya Nuhani* shows that he was keen to enter into agreement with the former, independent of *Jalal Khan Nuhani* and his mother. *Babur*, therefore, accepted his offer of service and assigned to him an *iqta* in Bihar on June 15, 1529.<sup>2</sup>

For their disunity as well as exile from Bihar for more than two years the Nuhanis were not in a position to re-establish their authority there. The presence of a large number of the Afghan refugees from the Western territories must have also created some problems for them because they were deeply attached to the Lodi house. The Nuhanis appear not to have possessed treasures to build up a strong army nor a will to unite themselves for keeping the hostile Afghans under check. In view of the adverse conditions, *Dudu*, the mother of *Jalal Khan* asked *Sher Khan Sur* to run the government of Bihar as the deputy of her son.<sup>3</sup> By this time *Sher Khan* had become a resourceful man for his popularity among the non-Nuhani Afghan refugees.

*Sher Khan's* appointment as the deputy of *Jalal Khan Nuhani* was soon followed by the sudden death of *Dudu*, who might have been a check on *Sher Khan* in time to come. *Mushtaqi*, the second best authority after *Dattu Sarwani* says incidentally that the widow of *Sultan Muhammad Nuhani* died soon after her return from *Bengal* and her death paved the way for *Sher Khan's* supremacy. That *Sher Khan* suppressed the Nuhanis and became the undisputed master of Bihar,<sup>4</sup> suggests the hypothetical date of *Dudu's* death as 1529- 1530.

1. *Baburnama*, ii/676.

2. *Ibid.*, ii/683-684.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 31b. As already discussed, *Sher Khan* was appointed deputy of *Jalal Khan Nuhani* in Bihar by *Dudu* in 1529 and not by *Sultan Muhammad Nuhani* who had died in 1527.

4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 31b, 32a. Also, Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*. Here

Abbas Sarwani would have us believe that all the events - the deaths of Sultan Muhammad Nuhani and his widow, Dudu; the invasion of Bihar by *Qutb Khan* of Bengal; the destruction of *Makhdum-i-alam*, the Bengali, *Muqta* of Hajipur and Tirhut, the Western border territories of Bengal by Sultan *Mahmud Shah* (of Bengal) for his rebellion; Jalal Khan Nuhani's conflict with Sher Khan in Bihar, and the latter's flight to Bengal leaving his rival in occupation of his vilayet; second invasion of Bihar by the Bengal army under *Ibrahim Khan*, son of *Qutb Khan*, took place in rapid succession between 1530 and 1531 before *Sultan Mahmud Lodi* occupied Bihar in 1531. But it does not sound plausible. Abbas creates confusion by narrating facts regardless of chronology. He is not deficient in dates alone but also betrays ignorance of the sequence of time by putting down first what should have been narrated later. However, in the light of evidence, furnished in other sources, we may analyse the march of important events that had great bearing on Sher Khan's career in their right perspective.

As already mentioned, *Sher Khan* was free to carry on the administration of *Bihar* as he liked after the death of Dudu. His dictatorial postures displeased the Nuhani Afghans who were denied all interference in the government affairs by Sher Khan. In retaliation to his high-handedness, they instigated Jalal Khan, and with the latter's permission hatched a conspiracy against Sher Khan's life. Failing in their design, they took Jalal Khan with them to Bengal, sometime in 1530. In Bengal they were granted refuge by *Sultan Nusrat Shah* whom they had promised whole-hearted support in wresting the region of Bihar from Sher Khan Sur.<sup>1</sup>

The flight of the Nuhani Afghans from Bihar made Sher Khan the undisputed ruler of Bihar. Here *Mushtaqi's* statement sheds interesting light on the measures taken by Sher Khan to stabilize his position thereafter. He states: "Having occupied the whole of Bihar, he (Sher Khan) set to improve his financial position. He always kept 400 Sawars ready at his gates and

---

chronology, as worked out by me differs from *Qanungo's* hypothetical dates at certain places.

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 65a- b.

Shaikh Kabir clearly states that the flight of the Nuhanis from Bihar took place before Sultan Mahmud Lodi's occupation of Bihar in 1531. He also mentions the fact that Sultan Nusrat Shah was pleased to show all kindness to the Nuhanis when the latter sought refuge at his court.

sent the same number (of *Sawars*) to pillage the territories (of his enemies, probably the rebel *zamindars*). As they returned with booty, the other four hundreds, standing ready, moved on for the same. The whole day and night this thing continued; one group came (back) and the other went."<sup>1</sup>

The predatory activities of his men, must have enabled Sher Khan to raise an adequate military force for the administration of *Bihar*. 'Abbas Sarwani's statement that soon after his occupation of Bihar, his reputation as a gifted administrator reached far and wide, contains truth. Many of the Afghans, who were rendered jobless by the vicissitudes of fortune, must have joined him.<sup>2</sup> It was only his improved position that attracted the young but wealthy widows of *Taj Khan Sarang Khani* and *Nasir Khan Nuhani* to seek protection under him by the ties of marriage.

For example, *Lad Malka*, the beloved wife of *Taj Khan Sarang Khani* decided to marry Sher Khan after the Murder of her husband by one of his sons, born of another wife.<sup>3</sup> Prof. Qanungo's opinion about the age of *Lad Malka* and the circumstances of the murder of *Taj Khan Sarang Khani* is contrary to what the contemporary evidence reveals.<sup>4</sup> This mar-

---

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 48 b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 38 b.

3. *Ibid*, f. 43 a-b.

4. *Sher Shah and his Times*, pp 96.

Prof. Qanungo's statement with regard to Sher Khan's marriage with *Lad Malka* is not only misleading but ridiculous also. "The bridegroom, Sher," says he, "now forty four, and the bride, *Lad Malka* perhaps a few years younger than Sher's own mother since she had been the eldest wife of *Taj Khan* who had been like *Mian Hasan* a grandee of the regime of *Sultan Sikandar...*". There is not even a shred of evidence to show that *Lad Malka* was the chief and senior wife of *Taj Khan*, while *Abbas* and *Badauni* give the impressin that she enjoyed the extreme love of her husband due to her young age and matchless beauty. There is no reason to reject *Abbas's* account of *Taj Khan's* murder by his eldest son, as he is the first writer to provide us with information about this event. In the absence of any other evidence, one should not hypothesise the other way. *Badauni*, who supplements our information with regard to Sher Khan's history, not only corroborates 'Abbas but also informs us that *Taj* was the son of *Jamal Khan Sarang Khani*. In the light of facts, recorded by *Mushtaqi*, one may safely suggest that *Lad malka* was the young and beautiful wife of *Lad Khan*, the young *Muqta* of *Jaunpur vilayet* who was a nephew of *Taj Khan*. On the fall of *Lad Khan* in the battle of *Panipat*, she seems to have been taken away from *Jaunpur* with treasures to

riage, however, helped Sher Khan in building up a position of strength in India in more than one way. As a result of this marriage, Sher Khan got hold over the impregnable fort of *Chunar* with all its dependent *parganas*. In addition to the fort, Lad Malka is said to have offered him one hundred and fifty valuable diamonds, seven *mans* of pearls (*marwarid*) and one hundred and fifty *mans* of gold the very first day of her marriage. Thereafter Sher Khan acquired the treasures of Chunar and brought the whole of Chunar *Sarkar* under his own control.<sup>1</sup> *Badauni* rightly says that the occupation of an impregnable fort like Chunar made Sher Khan an ambitious man and led him to aspire for a sovereign Status.<sup>2</sup>

Thereafter, Sher Khan had another windfall. His marriage with Lad Malka is said to have been followed by his marriage with Hargusa'in, the widow of *Nasir Khan Nuhani*. She also gave him three hundred *mans* of gold.<sup>3</sup> Like Lad Malka, *Hargusa'in* was a young lady, married to an old man, who possessed vast treasures. On her husband's death, she was left with his treasures, accumulated in the form of gold. Now Sher Khan had enough gold to build up a huge army to serve him, yet he did not have sufficient time to take necessary steps in this direction. Soon afterwards he was faced with a critical situation, caused by Babur's death in 1530.

The Afghans who lived in misery and disappointment, received the news of Babur's death with all happiness. They gathered courage and rose to recover their lost Empire. They collected under the leadership of *Bayazid*, *Baban*, *Ibrahim Khan Lodi* (Yusuf Khail, the descendent of Mubarak Khan Yusuf Khail, Sikandar Lodi's *Muqta* of Lucknow *Sarkar*) and many other chiefs and determined to fight against the Mughals. Again *Bihar* was to be used as a military base.<sup>4</sup>

---

Chunar where Taj Khan married her. In this way Sher Khan got his third husband.

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 45 a; Also cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 95-6.
2. *Badauni*, i/360.
3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 45 b.  
In the Habibganj collection, Ms. Azad Library, Aligarh, the amount of gold and money given by Hargusain to Sher Khan is only seventy *mans*.
4. *Tarikh-i-Qutbi*, pp-600. 602-3.



According to 'Abbas, Sher Khan was in a quandry by the appearance of Sultan Mahmud Lodi in Bihar at the head of a huge army, placed under the command of highly respectable Indo-Afghan nobles. That Sher Khan's own army was comparatively very small; he neither refused to co-operate with him as his refusal involved his own destruction, nor he decided to give him whole-hearted support. Because he knew that Mahmud's supporters still suffered from selfishness and his cause was doomed to failure for this reason. However, he decided to avoid conflict with both, the Afghans and the Mughals by departing from Bihar to *Sahasram*. In *Sahasram* also he was forced by *Sultan Mahmud Lodi* to march with him for the conquest of *Jaunpur*. But Sher Khan secretly entered into alliance with the Mughal emperor through Hindu Beg that he would desert Mahmud Lodi at the time of battle. When the battle took place between the rival armies near Lucknow, Sher Khan did accordingly. His desertion caused dismay in the rank and file of the Afghan army. The Afghans took to flight when their best generals, Bayazid Farmuli and Ibrahim Khan Lodi Yusuf Khail were cut to pieces.<sup>1</sup>

The relevant information available in the *Afsana-i-Shahan* not only serves as a corrective to the account of Abbas about this battle, but also abundantly clarifies certain points related to the problem. He states that on receiving the news of the death of Babur, Bayazid Farmuli and *Baban Khan Lodi* wrote to Sher Khan along with other Afghan chiefs in Bihar to join Sultan Mahmud Lodi as it was the proper time to strike against the Mughals. All the Afghans favourably responded to their call; Sher Khan also hastened with a few thousand strong Afghans and accompanied the Afghan army to *Jaunpur*. Having captured *Jaunpur* without any difficulty, they proceeded to *Lucknow*. In the meantime, *Humayun*, who was aroused by these developments in the East, rushed from *Agra* to deal with the Afghans. On his approach, the Afghans also prepared themselves for a trial of strength. The Afghan army consisted of thirty thousand *Sawars* and a large number of footmen. The rival armies came face to face near the village of *Do-rah*, a dependency of *Daryabad Pargana* in the *Sarkar* of *Lucknow*. In the thick of battle, *Bayazid* took his one thousand tried *Sawars* and pierced the centre of the Mughal army. But he was surrounded

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 48 b.

by the Mughals and fell down fighting heroically. On his fall, the Afghans were seized with panic and soon took to heels.<sup>1</sup>

The modern scholars differ from one another in respect of the date and the site of the above battle. The middle of September, 1531 as its date, suggested by Prof. Qanungo seems to be quite reasonable.<sup>2</sup> But in view of the rare information, available in the *Afsana-i-Shahan*, Prof. Qanungo's statement regarding the site of the battle is not acceptable. According to the learned scholar, "Do-rah was situated about 8 miles west of *Sultanpur*, 10 miles south of *Musafirkhana* and five miles south from *Aliganj*, and about 50 miles north-east of the town of *Jaunpur*." where the highways, one running from "Agra via *Allahabad* eastward through *Sultanpur* to *Faizabad* and beyond; and another from *Chunar* via *Jaunpur* to *Luckow* cut one another.<sup>3</sup> In fact it is not necessary to locate the village of Do-rah somewhere along any highway. Because a village situated at a point anywhere cutting two roads could be called Do-rah and distinguished from others by the name of the *Pargana* to which it was attached as a dependency. Since all the medieval writers are in agreement that the battle was fought near *Lucknow*, *Shaikh Kabir's* statement that this battle was fought at Do-rah in the vicinity of *Daryabad* town in the *Sarkar* of *Lucknow* is more specific and acceptable.

Similarly *Abbas's* charge that *Sher Khan* caused the defeat of the grand Afghan coalition in the battle of Do-rah by coming out of the battle-field at a critical moment as he had assured *Humayun* through *Hindu beg*,<sup>4</sup> is baseless. Taking *Abbas* seriously, Prof. Qanungo observes: "There is no justification for minimising *Sher's* guilt by an apology that 'Sher strove to save himself and his countrymen' by his act of desertion at a very critical moment. Nevertheless, in our opinion, *Sher Khan* cannot be accused of having been a traitor to a national cause—a national cause which was non-existent, or in which at least *Sher* did not himself believe."<sup>5</sup>

- 
1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 66 a.
  2. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 107
  3. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 107.
  4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 45b-47b.
  5. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 109.

A careful study of all the extant medieval sources reveals that Sher Khan was an active participant in the battle of *Dorah*, and concluded a peace-treaty with the Mughal Emperor in 1531 when the cause of Sultan Mahmud Lodi was lost for ever and his own position was being menaced by the Mughal siege of Chunar fort. For instance, *Shaikh Kabir* does not accuse him of any desertion. He rather states that *Sher Khan* co-operated with his fellow Afghans and had to face the Mughals single-handed at Chunar soon afterwards.<sup>1</sup> The author of the *Tarikh-i-Qutbi*, who does not seem to have utilized *Abbas's* work, throws some light on the Mughal-Afghan relations: "The Afghans who were living in poverty and were taken by pessimism, became overjoyed upon the news of Babur's death. In an attempt to recover their Empire, they collected together and joined *Bayazid* and other respected members of the old aristocracy. They determined to destroy the Mughals." But the fall of *Bayazid* and other nobles like *Ibrahim Khan* (*Yusuf Khail*) Lodi disheartened the Afghans who ran away. He further states that Humayun's victory over Sultan *Mahmud Lodi* was grand, and after it the Emperor decided to punish *Sher Khan*, the ally of his rival.<sup>2</sup>

The contemporary Mughal writers like *Jauhar* and *Gulbadan Begum* who are independent authorities, also do not refer to *Sher Khan's* treachery against his fellow-Afghans. They rather imply that *Sher Khan* was a rebel against Humayun like others. The later chroniclers who draw upon *'Abbas's* work for this information should not be given any credence. In fact, *'Abbas* could not blame the selfishness and cowardice of the Afghans for the defeat of their grand coalition. It was safe to put the entire blame on the shoulders of an individual instead of exposing the weakness of the Afghans, for the author himself belonged to their race. Despite Prof. Qanungo's inclination to accept *'Abbas's* version about *Sher Khan's* treachery, I reject it as a later concoction.

The fact is that Sultan Mahmud Lodi did not possess organising ability. Devoid of the requisite ability of a successful leader, he failed in making his followers realize the enormity of the task. The Afghans, most of whom were capable of heroic sacrifices, could not be knit together by him. Humayun's vic-

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 65b.-66a.

2. *Tarikh-i-Qutbi*, p. 603.

tory over him at *Do-rah* finally sealed his fate. He retired from politics and settled down in the friendly territory of *Bhatta* where he is said to have plunged himself into womanish pleasure. His chief supporters, *Baban Lodi*, *Maruf Farmull* and some others of importance sought refuge at the court of *Bahadur Shah* of *Gujrat*.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Afghan nobles such as '*Azam Humayun Sarwani*, *Masnad-i-ali'isa Khan Sarwani* either went to *Bhatta* or stayed in *Bihar*,<sup>2</sup> while the remaining Afghans who did not count very much in the politics and served as mere *Sawars* or petty officers under different leaders, might have joined *Sher Khan's* service, as the latter was now left free to build up his own independent power. For his part, *Sher Khan* must have realized the need of raising a compact body of soldiers loyal and subservient to a single leader, for nothing could be achieved without it. Tutored in the school of adversity, *Sher Khan* was a man of outstanding ability and experience, who knew well how to govern both men and affairs. Despite the fact that his difficulties increased day by day after 1531 he was soon able to wade through successfully by sheer dint of ability as the following events show.

Soon after the flight of *Mahmud Lodi* and his supporters, *Sher Khan* was faced with a critical situation. Emperor *Humayun* demanded from him the surrender of *Chunar* fort and when the latter refused to obey, the former advanced in person to besiege the fort in November, 1531.<sup>3</sup> By this time *Sher Khan* had collected 6,000 *sawars*, who formed a compact-body.<sup>4</sup> None of its members appears to have descended from the influential aristocratic families of the *Lodi* period. '*Abul Fazl* is right when he contemptuously remarks that *Sher Khan* had gathered indecent people of obscure families under his leadership. No doubt, none of the generals, trained and raised to high positions by *Sher Khan* could boast of belonging to respectable family, but they were animated with a spirit to die for the cause of their master to whom they owed their prominence. It was due to his confidence in their ability that *Sher Khan* left his own son, *Jalal Khan* along with *Jalal Khan*, son of *Jilo Sur* in the fort of *Chunar* to resist the *Mughal* army.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Lataif-i-Quddusi*; p. 74, ; *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi* f. 48-b.

2. *Lataif-i-Quddusi*; p.74, : *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi* f. 48-b.

3. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 110-111.

4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 47a.

The details of Humayun's siege of Chunar fort, furnished by *Jauhar* reveal that *Humayun* could not bring heavy artillery that could breach the thick ramparts of the fort. Secondly, the soldiers of Sher Khan under the command of *Jalal Khan* and *Jalal Khan*, son of *Jilo Sur* were able to keep the enemy at a distance by making successful sorties.<sup>1</sup> In the face of bold and daring defence of the fort by the Afghans, the rebellions of *Zaman Mirza* and *Maha Mirza* and the aggressive posture of *Sultan Bahadur Shah* of Gujrat, Humayun was constrained to agree to the peace proposal, offered by Sher Khan.<sup>2</sup>

The Medieval chroniclers differ from one another on the terms of peace. 'Abbas states that Sher Khan only deputed his son, Qutb Khan and 'Isa Khan (*Niaz*) Hajib with some sawars to remain in the royal attendance according to the agreement.<sup>3</sup> *Ni'mat Ullah Harvi* adds that Sher Khan appointed his son and Isa Khan with 500 sawars to serve the Emperor on his behalf.<sup>4</sup> *Jauhar* mentions only the arrival of Qutb Khan at the royal court as Sher Khan's nominee after the treaty had been concluded.<sup>5</sup> *Abul Fazl*, though silent on the actual number of the *Sawars*, supplied by Sher Khan under his son's command, wrongly calls Qutb Khan as *Abdur Rashid* who accompanied the Emperor upto *Malwa* and then fled away to his father.<sup>6</sup> The author of the '*Tarikh-i-Qutbi*' supplements the scanty information in this connection that as peace was made, Sher Khan also had to send five *mans* of gold to the Emperor as a token of submission.<sup>7</sup> Now it may be inferred that the treaty, agreed between Humayun and Sher Khan in December, 1531 was only to the advantage of the latter. At this time Sher Khan needed time to build up an army for the defence of his territories of Bihar and Chunar.

□

7. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 49a. Also cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 111.

1. *Tazkiratul-Waqiat*, f. 3b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 49b-50a; Also cf. *Sher-Shah and His Times*, pp. 111-112.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f.45a.

4. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/289

5. *Tazkirat-ul-Waqi' at*, f. 3b.

6. *Akbarnama*, I/123-4.

7. *Tarikh-i-Qutbi*, pp. 603-4.

### CHAPTER III

## Declaration of Independence and the Conquest of Bengal

---

On Humayun's return from Chunar in December, 1531 A.D., Sher Khan was again in a dilemma. Upon their defeat, the leading Afghan chiefs had migrated to *Gujrat*, causing a political vacuum in Bihar. Sher Khan was left free to fill it but he required some time for this work, because his military power was still insufficient. The Nuhani Afghans under the leadership of *Jalal Khan* in *Bengal* were constantly persuading *Sultan Nusrat Shah* to destroy Sher Khan in *Bihar*, but the latter appears to have waited for a suitable opportunity for the invasion of Bihar.

*Mushtaqi's* account reveals that *Sher Khan* feared an unprovoked invasion of Bihar by the Bengal army after *Humayun's* return from *Chunar*. Therefore, he is reported to have set to consolidate his authority in Bihar by eliminating all the persons of doubtful loyalty soon after he was free from the Mughal menace.<sup>1</sup> But his work was still incomplete that Bihar was attacked by a formidable army of Bengal under the command of *Qutb Khan*, sultan *Nusrat's* *muqta* of *Monghyr* territory, sometime in 1532-1533 A.D.

Although *'Abbas* describes the invasion of Bihar by *Qutb Khan* in detail, yet the time of its occurrence, implicit in his work is not correct. According to him, this event took place before *Sher Khan's* occupation of *Chunar* fort and the battle of *Do-rah*.<sup>2</sup> Our earliest authority, *Mushtaqi* as well as *Shaikh Kabir* help us in establishing more accurate chronology of this

- 
1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff, 48b, 49a.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 32 a.

and subsequent events. Mushtaqi says that Qutb Shahzada (khan) was one of the close associates of *Sultan 'Alau'-din* (father of Sultan Nusrat Shah). The Sultan of Bengal (Nusrat Shah) had entrusted him with the frontier territories between Bengal and Bihar and he invaded Bihar when *Sher Khan* was busy with improving his resources. At first *Sher Khan* did not come out for encounter, he rather continued to use 'hit and run' tactics against the enemy and thus avoided a pitched battle for several days. *Sher Khan* ran away whenever Qutb Khan appeared in sight and Qutb Khan chased him every time. "At last Qutb Khan realized that he (*Sher Khan*) was not in a position to fight against him and so he decided to drive him away from Bihar. One day, he gave him a hot pursuit in all arrogance. For his part, *Sher Khan* quickly changed directions in flight, If he turned in one direction, he soon appeared in the opposite one. His sawars hit the enemy (on the rear) and ran away as they were adept in these tactics. However, Qutb Khan became weary. One day the army of *Sher Khan* suddenly fell on Qutb Khan when he was in hot pursuit of the Afghans. Since the followers of Qutb Khan were terrified by the strange tactics of *Sher Khan's* men and had lost courage, they turned into a disorderly rabble. They took to flight, while Qutb Khan stood firm on the battle-field and was knocked down. Seeing him dead, *Sher Khan* came down from his horse and placed his head into his lap. He burst into tears and performed his burial ceremony."<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Kabir's account of the aforesaid battle is corroborative as well as supplementary. It reveals that Nasib (Nusrat) Shah came from *Gaur* to *Hajipur* to watch the developments following the death of Babur. He stayed there until peace was established between *Sher Khan* and Humayun. On Nasib Shah's return, Qutb Khan, the *muqta* of *Monghyr* attacked Bihar. At first, *Sher Khan* requested Qutb to spare him in Bihar, but in vain. According to Shaikh Kabir, first *Sher Khan* destroyed the advance guard of the Bengal army, and then prepared to face the main army under Qutb Khan, stationed on the western bank of the river Son. One day *Sher Khan* made a surprise attack on the enemy, owing to which the *Bengal* army was thrown into confusion. Qutb Khan rode the horse but he was severely wounded in the very beginning of the battle. Qutb Khan fell down from his horse and his follow-

1. *Waqf' at-I-Mushtaqi*, ff. 48b-49a,

ers broke away in confusion. *Sher Khan* paid respect to the fallen general.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the facts, discussed above, the year 1533-4, suggested by Prof. Oanungo as a hypothetical date of Qutb Khan's invasion of Bihar and *Sher Khan's* victory over him is not tenable. As already discussed Qutb Khan's invasion of Bihar took place after *Nusrat Shah's* return from Hajipur to Gaur either in December 1532 or in the beginning of 1533 as a matter of fact. *Sultan Nusrat Shah* was worried about the protection of the western frontiers of his kingdom due to the increasing might of the Mughals. For the effective defence of Bengal he had an eye on Bihar; and flight of *Jalal Khan Nuhani* to his court provided him with justification for the occupation of Bihar. Moreover, the destruction of the Afghans by the Mughals at *Do-rah* must have led him to seize Bihar because *Sher Khan* could not be considered by him strong enough to keep Bihar as a buffer state between his kingdom and the Mughal Empire. The territories of *Hajipur* and *Tirhut* were annexed to Bengal in 1526-27.<sup>2</sup> Now Bihar remained to be seized for the defence of Bengal. *Humayun's* return from *Chunar* and the flight of powerful Afghan nobles to *Malwa* and *Gujrat* provided him with the opportunity to wrest Bihar from *Sher Khan* at this time. Hence Qutb Khan's invasion of Bihar in 1532-33 A.D.

However, *Sher Khan's* victory over Qutb Khan considerably raised his prestige in Bihar and its neighbouring territories. He seized the treasure, horses and many war elephants brought by Qutb Khan. *Sultan Nusrat Shah* must also have been discouraged to retrieve his honour by deputing another contingent against him in haste. Consequently *Sher Khan* had time to address himself seriously for the administrative organization of his territories. The details furnished by *Mushtaqi* and 'Abbas about *Sher Khan's* activities with regard to the strengthening of his military power may be filled here. First of all he is reported to have got rid of all the Afghans of doubtful loyalty in Bihar. They were either killed or driven away. Then he turned to train his followers under his own trusted officers as good fighters. His training of the generals and soldiers was so nice that they were soon able to endure hardships of military

---

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f.58a-b.

2. *cf Supra*,



life. He deputed them in parties of a few hundred *Sawars* to raid the enemy territories in Bengal regularly which returned loaded with booty.<sup>1</sup> By this practice he increased the mobility and stamina of his men, which enabled them to hazard the risks involved in guerrilla warfare. 'Abbas also adds about his raising a huge army, that he forcibly took the able-bodied Afghans in his army who were reluctant to return to the profession of soldiery. They were taken by pessimism as a result of repeated defeats, and lived on alms. He gave exemplary punishment to those who refused to join his army and thus taught a lesson to others. For his own part, *Sher Khan* evinced keen interest in the well-being of the Afghans by giving them generous help. His kind attitude towards his followers attracted the Afghans from different directions, and added lustre to his name.<sup>2</sup>

It was during this period that *Bahadur Shah* of *Gujrat*, who had honoured the Afghan refugees from the north with *iqtas* and positions of trust at his court,<sup>3</sup> was attracted by *Sher Khan's* reputation and, therefore, invited him for co-operating with him in destroying the Mughal power. *Sher Khan*, who was deceitful, both in thought and action, appears to have accepted *Bahadur Shah's* invitation and demanded money for preparing a large army as well as meeting travelling expenses. *Bahadur Shah* sent him sufficient amount of money through the merchants which he kept for his own use. He did not fulfil his promise.<sup>4</sup> Soon after he had other windfalls which enabled him to build up a formidable army to wage war against the Sultan of Bengal and the Mughal Emperor.

In 1533 *Sultan Nusrat Shah* died in *Gaur* leaving two minor sons. On his death, his younger brother *Mahmud* killed the princes and ascended the throne with the title of *Sultan Mahmud Shah*. Almost all the nobles of Bengal paid allegiance to him. Only *Makhdum 'Alam*, whose wife was the sister of *Sultan Mahmud*, and who held the territories of *Hajipur* and *Tirhut* in his charge, protested against the cruel murder of the princes, hence a conflict between them.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi* f. 48 b.
2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f.50b.
3. *Mirat-i-Sikandar*, P.231.
4. *Akbarnama*, I/148.
5. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 70 a, 75 a

Makhdum 'Alam and Sher Khan are reported to have been on friendly terms for long. It is also said that for his friendship, Makhdum 'Alam did not help Qutb Khan and the latter's defeat and destruction by Sher Khan was attributed to the former's unfaithfulness towards his master. However, Makhdum 'Alam, as was expected, asked Sher Khan to help him against Mahmud Shah. But Sher Khan would not think it proper on his part to involve his own army in a battle for the sake of friendship when the friend was sure to lose. Personal gain remained the inspiring motive of his life all through. He played false to his friends and benefactors with impunity whenever the situation demanded. At this time also he managed to get hold over the treasures of Makhdum 'Alam, he sent Mian Hassu Sarwani, entitled Darya Khan, perhaps with a few hundred sawars with the message that he was unable to do more. Therefore, Makhdum 'Alam fought single handed and was killed by Sultan Mahmud. Darya Khan came back with the treasures of Makhdum 'Alam that the latter had handed over to his custody.<sup>1</sup>

Thereafter Sher Khan laid his hands upon the wealth of Fath Malka, the daughter of Masnad-i-'ali Mian Muhammad Farmuli Kalapahar and the widow of Mian Mustafa Farmuli whom Sultan Ibrahim Lodi had allowed to inherit the vast treasures of her father. Sher Khan obtained three hundred man gold from her. The details given by the medieval writers of Fath Malka's treatment by Sher Khan reveal the treacherous character of the latter. 'Abbas states that on the destruction of Bayazid Farmuli, Fath Malka was left without any protection, and so Sher Khan could deprive her of her wealth without any difficulty.<sup>2</sup> Shaikh Kabir also incidentally sheds valuable light on his highhandedness with Fath Malka. He supplements 'Abbas's account when he says that Bayazid had left her in Hajipur under the protection of his friend, Makhdum 'Alam. On Makhdum 'Alam's destruction she wrote to Sher Khan to save her from the clutches of the new Bengali Muqta, appointed in Hajipur after her protector. Sher Khan did accordingly. On her arrival Sher Khan took away her wealth, but

---

Also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 32 b. Prof. Qanungo's version is different from what I have discussed on the basis of fresh evidence.

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 32 b.

2. *Ibid*, f. 57 b.

also made proper arrangements for the maintenance of her family.<sup>1</sup> This event seems to have taken place towards the close of 1533.

In the year 1534, Sher Khan was faced with another invasion of Bihar by the Bengal army under the Supreme Command of *Ibrahim Khan*, son of *Qutb Khan*. This time the Bengal army is said to have consisted of one lac soldiers with strong artillery, war- elephants and huge treasures. For the information about this campaign we have to depend only upon the *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* and the *Afsana-i-Shahan*, as other later sources contain nothing additional. Though the former source contains valuable information about the strategy and tactics, adopted by Sher Khan against his enemy, yet the time of its occurrence, implied therein, is again incorrect.<sup>2</sup> The latter source is correct in this regard. According to it, Sultan *Mahmud Shah* deputed Ibrahim Khan with a strong and large army of one lac soldiers for the destruction of Sher Khan soon after his victory over *Makhdum 'Alam*. Many important nobles of Bengal were placed under the command of Ibrahim Khan. With them Ibrahim Khan entered Bihar and stationed his army near the river *Punpun*. Thereupon Sher Khan also came out of Bihar town with 30,000 *Sawars* and stationed on the western bank of the *Punpun*, while his rival was on its eastern bank.<sup>3</sup> 'Abbas is not correct in stating that Sher Khan forestalled the invasion of Ibrahim Khan and so had arrived at the border of Bengal to fight outside his own territory. But the remaining portion of 'Abbas's account about the battle seems to be correct and may therefore be added here briefly.

Sher Khan is reported to have carried on 'hit and run' tactics for several days before the final encounter with the enemy. In this way he harassed the rival army and pulled down its morale. His generals continued to sally out from inside the mud fortification and then soon got inside after having inflicted losses on the enemy. Ibrahim Khan, who had become arrogant in the beginning owing to his numerical superiority in addition to a strong park of artillery and war elephants, also grew weary, as his strength was being weakened day by day. At last he requested his Sultan to send more re-inforcement.

---

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 76a-b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 39b-42a.

3. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 77a-78b.

But Sher Khan got inkling of the matter and decided to give battle before the enemy was reinforced. First, he raised the morale of his followers by an encouraging speech and then informed *Ibrahim Khan* about his intention to fight the following day. *Ibrahim Khan* also agreed.

As the darkness prevailed, Sher Khan held a war council where he apprised his men of the necessity of giving battle to the enemy the following day, as any delay in this matter was to his disadvantage. His followers expressed their joy over his decision. He also told them that *Ibrahim Khan* possessed war-elephants and heavy artillery which would play havoc in case they were used against him. For rendering the elephants and artillery useless, he suggested to his men that a greater part of his army would stay behind the cover of the hills ahead, while a small number of the crack *sawars* would charge the enemy by a volley of arrows and turn back soon later. Thereupon *Ibrahim Khan* would be lured into supposing that the Afghans were running away and then he would give them a hot chase leaving his artillery and war elephants behind. At a vantage point Sher Khan would fall on the pursuing army and make its short work. On the next day the Afghans acted accordingly. *Ibrahim Khan* was entrapped and fell along with many soldiers fighting valiantly. Sher Khan got victory that brought to him large booty. The treasures, war-elephants and the entire park of artillery fell into his hands.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the destruction of *Ibrahim Khan* finally exposed the weakness of the Bengal army and thus hastened the fall of Sultan Mahmud Shah in Bengal.

It may be pointed out here that the period from 1530 to 1534 in Sher Khan's career was that of a struggle, involving the issue of life and death. During this period he was confronted with critical situations at several times, but he ultimately rose from obscurity into prominence overcoming all hurdles in his way. His difficulties multiplied every time, yet his tact and indomitable courage helped him in getting over them. It was really Sher Khan, who, with his successes, achieved against his enemies, showed the Afghans that the political setbacks, suffered by the old Afghan aristocracy were due to their selfishness, disunity and the absence of the singleness of purpose. The result was that the Afghans rushed to join his army and

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff, 39a-42b.

thus its ranks swelled within a short time and he could move to take offensive against the Sultan of Bengal.

Furthermore, the circumstances also took a turn in his favour. Humayun's pre-occupation with his war against *Bahadur Shah* of *Gujrat* from 1533 to 1535 freed him from the Mughal menace, which could deter him from building up a war machinery. However, the available data indicates that he took pains in raising a huge army, fit for carrying on successful military operations. The soldiers were trained under his own supervision by his early companions whom he had turned into fierce soldiers. Now they were raised to the highest ranks in his army. Most important of them were sons of Sukha (Sher Khan's slave), *Khawwas Khan the Elder*, *Shihab Khan* (later entitled as *Khawwas Khan*) and *Shamsher Khan*; *Shuja'* at *Khan Sur*, *Sarmast Khan Sirbini*, *Haibat Khan Niazi*, (later '*Azam Humayun Niazi*', *'Isa Khan Hajib* (also *Niazi Afghan*), *Qutb Khan naib (Sur)*, *Jalal Khan* son of *Jilo Sur*, *Ghazi Khan Sur*, *Barmazid Kur*; *Haji Khan Sultani* and *Habib Khan Sultani* (the latter being the manumitted slaves), and Sher Khan's own sons, '*Adll Khan*, *Jalal Khan* and *Qutb Khan*. All of them descended from the obscure families the members of which never appear to have occupied any important position in the administrative set up of the Lodi period.<sup>1</sup> Their contingents were composed of the fierce soldiers, also belonging to the ordinary families. As they owed their dignified positions to Sher Khan, they had a sense of gratitude to serve him with the unwavering loyalty. They drew inspiration from the radiating personality of their master and were animated with a chivalrous spirit to fight for his cause to the last. With their whole-hearted support, *Sher Khan* was able to obtain the throne of Hindustan as *Shuja'* at *Khan* told *Islam Shah* later on.<sup>2</sup>

So far as the senior Afghan nobles of the Lodi period are concerned, they were forced by the adverse circumstances to seek refuge with him when their last patron, *Sultan Bahadur Shah* of *Gujrat* was defeated and his dominions had been temporarily occupied by the Mughals. Even at that time the sensitive Afghans who looked down upon *Sher Khan* as a

---

1. cf. *Shaikh Muhammad Kabir and His History of Afghan kings, Indo-Iranica*, op. cit, pp. 72-73.

Also cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, op cit, pp, 87- 93.

2. *Tarikh-i-Dau'di*, p. 147.

mere upstart, could not think of coming to him. The relevant evidence shows that many of them turned to *Ahmadnagar* along with *Babban Khan Lodi* but they were denied refuge and forced to go away.<sup>1</sup> In this state of affairs they were constrained to turn to him. They came from Deccan, Gujrat and Malwa and joined his service.<sup>2</sup>

The Sarwani Afghans who had settled in Bihar along with *Masnad-i-'ali 'Isa Khan Sarwani* after the battle of *Do-rah*, must have co-operated with him in his battles, fought against *Qutb Khan* and *Ibrahim Khan*, for 'Isa Khan Sarwani appears to have been the only Afghan noble of the old high family whom Sher Shah honoured with a high rank of *Sawars* and the charge of the important *Sarkar* of *Sambhal* after the expulsion of the Mughals in 1540.<sup>3</sup> Generally, the members of the old aristocracy were given small maintenance-*iqtas*.

In short, Sher Khan was also to collect for his service the bulk of all the anti-Mughal forces and maintain it at a high cost for the fulfilment of his ambition. Mushtaqi informs us that by the year 1535 he had gathered 70,000 strong *sawars* whom he paid twelve crore *tankas* every month.<sup>4</sup> With this army, first, he destroyed the kingdom of *Bengal* and then turned to drive away the alien Mughals from India.

### Sher Shah's first coronation.

The revenue of *Bihar* and *Chunar* territories could neither suffice for the maintenance of 70,000 troops of Sher Shah's nor could the treasures, acquired by Sher Shah could last for long; he was bound to expand his rule in some direction for the accommodation of his nobles and their dependent *Sawars*. The Mughal arms were still regarded invincible; their recent successes achieved in *Malwa* and *Gujrat* had further enhanced their dread. Therefore, the kingdom of *Bengal* was left the only target to reach. In revenge also, his aggression against *Bengal* was justified. But, before adopting a forward policy, Sher Shah had to decide whether he would attack *Bengal* as the vassal of *Humayun* or as an independent king.

---

1. *Lata' If-i-Quddusi*, pp. 48-49.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 50b-51a. Also *Lata' If-i-Quddusi*, pp. 79, 81-2.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 81a-b, 83a.

4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 47a.

Two valuable coins, one preserved in the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh, and the other in the personal Collection of G.S.Farid in Calcutta make it clear that Sher Shah assumed the titles of Sultan and Shah, and began to strike coins in that capacity in 1535.<sup>1</sup> Though there are only two available coins minted in 1535, doubt does not arise about their authenticity because it was never profitable in medieval times to practise forgery in silver coins; there was no difference between the real and the face value of a silver rupee. The coins of the subsequent years also establish the fact that Sher Shah had called himself a king long before his victory over Humayun at Chausa in 1539. The coins found in the neighbourhood of Dacca in quite a good number have the year 945 A.H. inscribed on them, as they were minted in Bengal just after the occupation of *Gaur* by Sher Shah's generals in March-April, 1538.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the news received by Humayun in 1535 about the rebellion by Sher Shah made him rush to Agra. The assumption by a vassal of the royal title meant rebellion against and a challenge to the paramount lord.<sup>3</sup>

The Medieval historians, including Mushtaqi, who compiled their works after the Sur dynasty had already passed into the limbo of history, did not bother about the earliest date of Sher Shah's coronation. Shaikh Kabir's authority whose grandfather had served *Sher Shah* till 1539 may be given credence. He provides important details in his account of Sher Shah's first invasion of Bengal and the treaty signed between him and *Sultan Mahmud* in *Gaur* on the terms of the former, indicating that his first coronation took place in 1535. (These details will be critically analysed subsequently). In fact, *Jauhar* and Mushtaqi, who are the earliest writers, were not in a position to hear of the assumption of sovereignty by Sher Shah, as his activities were confined to *Bihar* and Bengal, far away from their home towns. This is also likely that Sher Shah himself tried to keep the people of north India in the dark by not giving publicity to this fact as it could arouse the Mughals to take arms against him in spite of Humayun's absence from his capital of Agra. He could not afford to fight against both, Humayun and *Sultan Mahmud* of Bengal at the same time.

1. cf. *Medieval India, A Miscellany*, Vol. I, 1969, Aligarh. pp. 39-40, G.S.Farid A new coin of Sher Shah and his Accession, *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad, Vol. n. I, April, 1976, pp. 115-121.

2. *Mirat-i-Sikandari*, p. 254..

For opening hostility with *Humayun*, it was essential for Sher Shah to break the military power of Bengal, as it is implicit in the account of Medieval writers about Sher Shah's war against Bengal.

Abbas's account of Sher Shah's relations with Sultan Mahmud after the destruction of *Ibrahim Khan* at the Punpun river is brief and faulty. He states that having seized the gold of *Fath Malka*, Sher Khan prepared his army to wage war against the king of Bengal. First he seized the territories from the Bengal officers upto Garhi, the gateway to Bengal.<sup>1</sup> Unlike Abbas, Shaikh Kabir furnishes a comprehensive account in this regard. He says that Sher Shah deputed four thousand sawars under Khawwas Khan the Elder, *Haibat Khan Niazi* and Mian Ma'ruf Farmuli to capture 'the fort of *Suraj Garh*, situated on the border of Bengal kingdom, but the Bengalis forestalled the Afghan attack and had assembled there in a large number for its defence. Unable to storm the fort, the Afghan commanders informed their master about the situation asking for re-inforcement. Thereupon Sher Shah sent 'Isa Khan Niazi with a strong force, and the latter assaulted the fort of *Suraj Garh* soon after his arrival there. Though 'Isa Khan succeeded in breaking through the gate, he had to pay a heavy price. His younger brother was killed at the time of assault, while so many of his followers were cut to pieces in the fierce battle which took place after the gate had been thrown open. But this was a grand victory, gained by Sher Shah's generals. Even 'Abul Fazi admits that the battle of *Suraj Garh* greatly enhanced Sher Shah's prestige and he became known far and wide for his resourcefulness.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 79a.

2. *Akbarnama*, II/148; Also cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 136-139.

'Abul Fazi's reference to Sher Shah's grand victory over the army of Bengal at *Surajgarh* has misled Prof. Qanungo to assume that Sher Shah fought against Ibrahim at *Surajgarh* in 1534, which was a border dependency of the Bengal kingdom. That Sher Khan entered Bengal territory to forestall Ibrahim Khan's invasion "before the Bengal army showed any sign of a forward move from Monghyr during the winter of 1534. This is not supported by any medieval authority.

According to 'Abbas, the battle between Sher Khan and Ibrahim Khan was fought somewhere on a considerable distance from Bihar, certainly the town of Bihar. Shaikh Kabir enlightens us on this point when he says that Sher Shah defeated Ibrahim Khan near Ghlyaspur along the river Punpun as already discussed.



After the capture of Suraj Garh, some time in the middle of 1535, Sher Shah at once deputed two armies for seizing the forts of Garhi and Monghyr, the occupation of which was necessary for advance on Gaur as they guarded the routes to it. But the forts were found well-defended. Besides their impregnable ramparts, they were heavily guarded by the Bengalis; the Afghan armies could not move ahead. One Afghan army laid siege to *Garhi* under the command of *Prince Jalal Khan* and the other came to *Monghyr* under *'Isa Khan Nlazi*. Both the generals failed in achieving their respective targets and they informed *Sher Shah* about the impossibility of success. First, *Sher Shah* appeared before *Monghyr* where he left sufficient force to press the siege, and then turned to *Garhi* and made the same arrangements there also. Thus satisfied with his arrangements at both the places, he secretly turned from the north of *Garhi* to steal a march on *Gaur* in all haste from the side of hills and their defiles. From this side no army is said to have passed in the past. Therefore, none of the enemies came to know of his secret move, he reached *Raj Mahal* in two days, and having crossed the *Ganges* there, he entered *Gaur* all of a sudden to the surprise of *Sultan Mahmud*. Being unnerved, the latter sued for peace; hence the conclusion of a peace treaty on *Sher Shah's* conditions.

The treaty concluded between *Sher Shah* and *Sultan Mahmud*, as described in the *Afsana-i-Shahan*, is as follows :

- (i) *Sultan Mahmud* would cede the entire region from the river *Kosi* to *Hajipur* and from *Garhi* to *Monghyr* (both the gateways to *Bengal* were thus handed over to *Sher Shah*).
- (ii) *Sultan Mahmud* would pay nine lac *tankas* to *Sher Shah* annually as tribute.

---

In fact, the battle of *Surajgarh* took place in 1535 when *Sher Shah* was in a position to adopt a forward policy. Before the destruction of the formidable army of *Bengal* under *Ibrahim Khan*, *Sher Khan* does not appear to have entered the kingdom of *Bengal*. His victory over *Ibrahim* considerably added to his strength, because he had captured artillery and most of the ferocious war-elephants belonging to the king of *Bengal*.

- (iii) It was also agreed that the Sultan of Bengal would supply war- elephants with his army, and financial help to Sher Shah whenever required.<sup>1</sup>

The treaty seems to have been agreed between the rulers sometime in 1536 as the later events indicate.

This campaign of *Sher Shah*, discussed above is one of the most brilliant exploits of his career, he dashed through a very difficult route which was considered to be untraversed so far. Having overcome all the hurdles in the defiles, forests and other natural obstacles, confronting him in a difficult terrain, he reached *Gaur* like a hurricane. This information, furnished by *Kabir* is corroborated by the contemporary Portuguese sources also. According to them, when Sher Shah failed in capturing 'Gorgi' (Teliagarhi) and 'Faranduz' (?) he went by another less protected way and entered *Gaur*. They also testify to the treaty concluded between the Victor and the vanquished, but it is brief and the terms of treaty are wanting there.<sup>2</sup> As regards *Mushtaqi*, he incidentally refers to Sher Shah's march on *Gaur* through the untraversed hilly route, that he had reached *Gaur* all of a sudden for every body's surprise.<sup>3</sup> *Abdullah* also makes the similar statement without giving full details.<sup>4</sup>

But the success, achieved by Sher Shah as a result of this campaign, soon brought him in direct conflict with the Mughal Emperor who had returned from *Mandu* in the first week of August 1536. Humayun could not leave him to build up his formidable power to menace his own position in *Hindustan*. All the Afghans who fought against the Mughals incessantly under the leadership of *Mahmud Lodi* and *Bahadur Shah* later on, had now joined hands with him. Moreover, the

---

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 79b-80.

2. *Campos*, pp. 35-38, quoted by Prof. Qanungo in his *Sher shah and his times*, P.158. Prof. Qanungo has identified 'Faranduz' with pointy (?) But I think that Faranduz was no town other than Monghyr which was still outside Bihar of Sher Shah.

3. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 49a.

*Mushtaqi* states :

He passed from *Tirhut*, took to an untraversed route and having rushed through jungles appeared before *Gaur* all of a sudden.

4. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, p. 119

presence of the rebel relations of *Humayun, Sultan Mirza* and his sons who were defeated and driven away to Bihar by *Mirza Hindal* in the beginning of 1536; and whom Sher Shah had granted refuge inspite of his followers' opposition, must have been considered by the Emperor as his (Sher's) violation of obligation, for he was a Mughal vassal.<sup>1</sup>

The information available in different medieval works may help us in presenting a full picture of the conflict, provided it is carefully sifted and analysed. Jauhar and Mushtaqi, as the contemporary writers of the contending rivals are more reliable than the later writers, who either drew upon them or based their account on what they had gathered from hearsay. Jauhar narrates briefly that on his arrival in Agra Humayun was astonished by the news of tremendous increase in Sher Shah's power, for the latter had conquered vast territories in Bihar and Bengal. The Emperor remarked: "the affairs of the Afghans have progressed so far," and then ordered his army to march against him. Mushtaqi's account is comprehensive enough, it does not shed valuable light on the causes which led to war between Humayun and Sher Shah alone, but also inform us about the superiority of the king of Delhi over other rulers in the sub-continent, atleast in theory. As the valuable information, contained in the *waqf' at-l- Mushtaqi* has so far escaped the notice of the modern scholars, I may be excused for reproducing it at length.

"As (Humayun) returned from *Gujrat* to *Agra*, *Amir Hindu Beg* was appointed (*the Muqta*) of *Jaunpur* (in place of *Junaid Barlas* who was dead). At this time *Sher Khan* was in Bihar. He sent presents (to *Hindu Beg*), and wrote to the effect; "I am one of the servants of the Emperor. Your arrival in *Jaunpur* is a source of joy and strength to me as Your Excellency is loyal to the Emperor and also a well-wisher of the *Musalmans*, I hope that you will be kind to me."

"Again he sent a few *mans* of gold (perhaps on being questioned about certain matters), and wrote to him requesting that he should be left with the territories which he had seized from the sultan of Bengal. That the fort of *Chunar* should be left with him on a permanent and hereditary lease. (For this) he would send annual tribute to the royal exchequer

---

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, I, 94a-b; Also *Akbarnama*, I/149, 150.

and so be treated as one of the royal servants. He also promised; "I will perform every service assigned to me anywhere. (In addition to it) I shall supply 4,000 sawars under one of my sons to remain permanently in the royal attendance. But I shall not attend the (Emperor's) court personally; otherwise I pledge to do every thing else."

"Hindu Beg wrote to him in reply; "If you intend to serve the Emperor, you should proceed to the court. I shall recommend your case and you will return after satisfying the Emperor. But it is improper to say that the *farman*; containing the grant of the territories to you should come from the court while you remain in Bihar. One cannot serve in this way. When you come back from the royal court with a robe of honour and horse after leaving one of your sons there, everything will be set right (automatically). As regards your argument that you have seized no royal territory but those belonging to the kingdom of Bengal and, therefore, you should not be questioned, is foolish. The Emperor of Delhi (meaning Hindustan) is supposed to be the lord of the whole (subcontinent); the names of Delhi, Bengal, Gujrat, the Deccan, etc. do not matter seriously. But he (the Emperor) can leave any territory with anyone he pleases. He can appoint any of his servants to rule over any region; it is only his business, I cannot do anything in this regard. You should go to the court. You will gain what you deserve. I shall also do my best to get favour granted to you."

"Thereupon Sher Khan wrote; "I knew it for definite that the coming of Your Excellency in this part would soon be followed by the march of His Majesty (against me). But I have tasted your salt and I do not want to turn disloyal to it. I have already decided to vacate Chunar and Bihar on the approach of the Emperor. I shall go to Bengal, in case he follows me there, I shall leave Bengal also for some other place. As the Emperor is ease-loving and given to carnal pleasures he would make himself comfortable and fall into pleasure at Gaur, without being aware of his surroundings, I shall remain inactive for a while and then raise such a storm that one would not know about the other. Whatever may come, I have done my duty. This is all right that you have not accepted (my offer). You will see what I shall do?"

"Amirul-Umra Hindu Beg wrote to the Emperor; Sher Khan says things which are not worthy of being repeated to your

Majesty. But it is a fact that at the time of our march to Gujarat he had six thousand *sawars*. Now the number has increased to seventy thousand *sawars*. He pays 12 crore *tankas* to them every month. His power is on the increase. If we do not move against him this year, he would be more powerful next year. Perhaps he himself may advance (against us)."

"Having received the *arzdasht* (the report), the Emperor marched through the territories under Sher Khan's occupation and reached Bengal safely."<sup>1</sup> Thereafter he turns to describe the measures taken by Sher Khan to entrap the Emperor in Gaur before he had left Bengal on the advance of the Mughal army in that direction as will be discussed subsequently.

*Jauhar* and 'Abbas also give the impression that Humayun stayed in Agra to pass the rainy season, and asked *Hindu Beg*, the newly-appointed governor of *Jaunpur* to report on the designs and activities of Sher Shah, and that he moved towards *Chunar* after he had been informed of the second invasion of Gaur by the army of Sher Shah in the first week of November 1537 as Prof. Qanungo also holds.<sup>2</sup> 'Abbas also bears testimony to the fact that during the intervening period of Hindu Beg's appointment in *Jaunpur* and Humayun's march against Sher Shah, the latter succeeded in avoiding the conflict of arms for some time, for he waited to know the outcome of his one year old treaty with the Sultan of Bengal, as the year was to come to an end. Apart from it, the details, contained in 'Abbas' work are faulty at certain places. For instance, his statement that Hindu Beg was corrupted by Sher Shah's gold to misinform Humayun in Sher Shah's favour, does not contain any grain of truth.<sup>3</sup> Hindu Beg was the premier noble of the Mughal Empire, and he could not be careless to send a report to the Emperor, containing wrong information about Sher Shah, because it involved the loss of his dignity. *Mushtaqi's* account makes it clear that Hindu Beg remained loyal to Humayun and could not be corrupted by Sher Shah's gold. Shaikh Kabir's account of the later events also substantiates this view.

---

1. *Waqi' at-t-Mushtaqi*, ff. 46a-47a.

2. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 174.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 54a.

It is said that *Sher Shah* did not want to violate his treaty with *Sultan Mahmud Shah* because he expected the latter to render him full military support at the time of his conflict with *Humayun*. To know the mind of *Mahmud Shah*, he waited for the end of the first year of the treaty when the former was to send his annual tribute with arrears, promised to be paid according to the peace-treaty. In the meantime, he succeeded in preventing the Emperor from waging war by prolonging the dialogue with *Hindu Beg* as already discussed. *Sher Shah*, however, summarily refused to concede to the terms suggested by *Hindu Beg* for peace with *Humayun* when the *Sultan of Bengal* provided him with an opportunity to attack Bengal by violating the one year old treaty. Thereupon *Sher Shah* deputed his army under the command of his son, *Prince Jalal Khan* and *Khawwas Khan*, the Elder for the conquest of Bengal. At this time he was prepared to withstand the *Mughal* invasion which he could reasonably visualise as *Mushtaqi* says. For him the conquest of Bengal was no longer a difficult task; he had struck a shattering blow to it in the previous year. The gateways, leading to *Gaur* were in his possession and the resistance, put by the demoralized Bengal army at *Gaur* could be overcome by *Sher Shah's* generals without any difficulty. Therefore, he invited the conflict of arms with the *Mughals* when it could not be avoided any further as his army had already reached *Gaur* to besiege *Sultan Mahmud Shah*, and this news was enough to arouse *Humayun* to move for his destruction.

The second invasion of Bengal by *Sher Shah's* army, and the collapse of the *Saiyid* dynasty there calls for a fresh study. The details about it, given in the *Mughal* chronicles as well as in the '*Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*' imply that *Sher Shah's* aggression against Bengal in 1536-37<sup>1</sup> was unjustifiable because he committed it without any provocation from *Sultan Mahmud Shah*. *'Abbas* describes this campaign under *Prince Jalal Khan* and *Khawwas Khan*, the Elder somewhat in detail, yet he fails to mention the causes which led to the re-opening of hostility between *Sher Shah* and the *Sultan of Bengal*. As a result, the modern writers accuse *Sher Shah* of violating the one year old treaty with *Mahmud Shah*.<sup>2</sup> *Shaikh Kabir's* work, which has

---

1. *History of the Portuguese in Bengal*, J.J.A. Compos, 1919, p. 40.

2. *cf. Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 170-174.

been left untapped by the modern scholars for legends and uninteresting anecdotes abounding therein, serves at many places as a corrective to what the other writers would have us believe. As the information, available in Shaikh Kabir's work is comprehensive, it may be interpreted below.

According to our author, Sher Shah's envoy, Qutb Khan (naib) whom the former had sent to collect the annual tribute after the lapse of one year was turned out by Sultan Mahmud with humiliation, and Sher Shah's *muqta* of Hajipur was brutally killed by the officers of Bengal. At this time Sher Shah was fully convinced of his conflict with the Mughal Emperor who could not be expected to let him consolidate his power in the newly conquered territories. Therefore, Sher Shah decided to punish the Sultan of Bengal by destroying him without any delay, so that he might not be sandwiched between the hostile armies at the time of his war with the Mughals. For the conquest of Bengal, he deputed prince Jalal Khan, and Khawwas Khan, the Elder with 30,000 sawars.<sup>1</sup> This is corroborated by the Portuguese sources but the information, provided by them is not so comprehensive and detailed: As allies of Sultan Mahmud, the Portuguese write that "Sher Shah's curious demand for a large sum of money as his annual tribute, due to him after the lapse of one year preceded Sher's second invasion of the kingdom of Mahmud."<sup>2</sup> It is not convincing because Sher Shah could not demand any thing more from Sultan Mahmud than it was agreed in the last year's treaty.

### War between Sher Shah and Humayun

The second invasion of Bengal by the Afghan army led Humayun march towards *Chunar* against Sher Shah, as Sher Shah's conquest of Bengal was to upset the balance of power between the Mughals and the Afghans. But the time which the news of this invasion took in travelling from *Bihar* to *Agra* enabled Sher Shah to strengthen the defences of the

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff, 82b, 83a, 95a.

(The remaining details in the account of Sher Shah's second invasion of Bengal given in the *Afsana-i-Shahan* have been left as they are faulty and full of confusion.

2. *Compass* as quoted by Prof. Qanungo, *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 172.

fortresses of Chunar and *Bhar Kunda* that he expected to be invested by the Mughals on their eastward march. Prince Jalal Khan and Khawwas Khan, the Elder seem to have overrun the whole of Benal kingdom within a short time as most of the strategic forts in the western region upto *Chittagong*<sup>1</sup> had been occupied satisfactorily by the Afghans and thus Gaur was left an isolated place, surrounded by Jalal Khan and his companions. All this appears to have been done by the Afghan army within a short time. Sultan Mahmud's Portuguese allies failed in reaching Gaur to his rescue in time, and when pressed hard inside the fort of Gaur, Sultan Mahmud Shah requested Humayun through an envoy to come for his help. The author of the '*Tarikh-i-Qutbi*' adds that *Mahmud Shah* wrote to Humayun that Sher Shah, a man of treacherous nature would pose a serious threat to him after his own fall if he did not move against him without delay. *Humayun*, thereupon, left towards Chunar in the autumn of 1537.<sup>2</sup>

Humayun's first point of attack was the fort of *Chunar* to which he laid siege sometime in October, 1538; *Ghazi Khan Sur* and *Sultan Sarwani* were left to defend Chunar from inside while Sher Shah himself stayed in the fortress of *Bharkunda*,<sup>3</sup> (a fortress, recently constructed by him in the Vindhya-chal hills) to watch the Mughal activities and supply food and other necessities to his besieged garrison. Sher Shah's presence in *Bharkunda* through which *Humayun* passed after the capture of Chunar shows that *Bharkunda* was also regarded by him as a possible point of attack by Humayun in case *Chunar* was left behind unconquered. In such a case Humayun was at a loss for he might have been encircled by Sher Shah's fierce soldiers on all sides. The Afghans, left in Chunar could not sit idle. Because Sher Shah was bound to stop the Mughal somewhere in Bihar until the capture of Gaur by his army; otherwise his army in Gaur would have been destroyed. Humayun was wise in occupying Chunar on his way to *Gaur*.<sup>4</sup>

---

1. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 172.

2. *Tarikh-i-Qutbi*, p. 626.

3. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*, ff. 9b-10a.,  
also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 54b-55a.

4. Prof. Qanungo criticises Humayun's decision about capturing Chunar first, because he could leave it behind to overtake the Afghans in Gaur, and remarks ; "the fact is that the siege of Chunar was not a necessity but a tremendous mistake that cost Humayun his Empire," cf. *Sher Shah and His*



However, the Afghan generals could not hold out against Humayun in *Chunar* for more than three months. They were forced by the Mughal artillery, skilfully handled by Rumi Khan to surrender the fort to the enemy in March, 1538,<sup>1</sup> while Gaur still remained unconquered. This was not all. It was also at this time that he received the sad news from Gaur that Khawwas Khan was drowned in the ditch of Gaur, when he was assaulting the ramparts.<sup>2</sup> All these losses might have unnerved another man of ordinary clay, but *Sher Shah* did not lose courage. He at once called *Shihab Khan*, the younger brother of the drowned general, conferred upon him the title of Khawwas Khan and then sent him to take up the place of his brother in *Gaur* in April, 1538. *Shihab Khan*, famous as Khawwas Khan came true to his master's expectations. He conquered Gaur the very day he reached there despite the disagreement with *Jalal Khan* and others who wanted him to postpone the final assault for a few days.<sup>3</sup>

Even a few days before the capture of Gaur, *Sher Shah's* men had succeeded in taking the possession of the impregnable fort of *Rohtas* (now in the *Shahabad* district of Bihar) by playing a trick upon its Raja. Its Raja who was friendly to *Sher Shah* agreed to give shelter to the Afghan families after the fall of *Chunar* but was deceived when the soldiers forced into the fort along with women and children. The fort was then occupied by the Afghans and the Raja had to run away for his life. Thus the capture of *Rohtas* more than compensated the temporary loss of *Chunar*. Now *Sher Shah* had a stronger and spacious fort to accommodate the Afghan families.<sup>4</sup>

---

Times, pp. 175-176.

1. Jauhar says that the Afghans surrendered *Chunar* to Humayun after six month's siege But Prof. Qanungo is right in fixing March, 1538 as the date of *Chunar's* fall, for Gaur was captured by the Afghans, atleast one month later. Humayun got the news of Gaur's fall near the river Son on his way to Gaur. As Humayun could not like to march to Gaur in June when the monsoon was to break out, the date of his Bengal expedition could not be pushed beyond April, 1538.

*Tazkirat-al-Waqi' at*, f.11a.

2. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 95a.

3. cf. Chapter V.

4. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 180-182, for details about *Sher Shah's* treachery with the Raja of *Rohtas*.

Again, we may turn here to discuss Humayun's plan of action as well as the strategy that Sher Shah worked out to meet the situation caused by former's advance. Having obtained the possession of Chunar fort, Humayun came to Benaras to make proper preparations for his grand expedition for Bengal. In Benaras he enquired about the activities of Sher Shah. Ra'i Bachha of Benaras told him that Bengal was completely laid waste by Sher Shah and would be finally conquered within a short time. Humayun, thereupon, ordered for the march of his army.<sup>1</sup> On reaching the river Son he was informed about the fall of Gaur to Sher Shah's men. He continued his advance and in the vicinity of *Bharkunda* deputed Qabal Husain Turkoman to see Sher Shah as his envoy and persuade him for surrendering the umbrella, throne and treasures, seized in Bengal along with the territories of Bengal and Rohtas to the Emperor in lieu of Chunar, Jaunpur and any other place he would choose. Sher Shah did not accept the royal proposal and remarked that he had conquered Bengal after a long struggle, lasting for over five or six years in which much of his army was destroyed. Qabal Husain returned unsuccessful to Humayun while Sher Shah rushed towards Gaur.<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime Humayun received the message of the vanquished Sultan of Bengal to the effect that the Emperor should continue his march towards Gaur. Soon afterwards Sultan Mahmud himself came with serious injuries and visited Humayun. The latter cheered him up and also promised to restore his kingdom to him. At *Monia* situated between Ara and Dinapur on the confluence of the Ganges and the Son

---

1. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'* at, f. 11b.

These details have been left out by Prof. Qanungo. It seems that the manuscript, available to him does not contain them. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p.182.

2. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'* at f. 12a.

'Abbas Sarwani gives a different version that Sher Shah demanded the Kingdom of Bengal in return for the treasures, umbrella, throne and Bihar from the Emperor, and the latter was pleased to accept it, and, that after a few days Humayun went back upon his promise when the defected Sultan of Bengal persuaded him to continue his march for the destruction of Sher Shah.

Despite the inclination of Prof. Qanungo to accept it, I reject it as a mere fabrication of later days, for 'Abbas seems to have concocted these details in order to accuse Humayun of the breach of faith. Jauhar, who was an eye-witness to the event, makes it clear that Sher Shah already had a plan to fight against the Mughals.

rivers, the Emperor entrusted *Jahangir Quli Beg* with the command of his advance guard, placing some other senior nobles under him.<sup>1</sup>

In an attempt to show that *Sher Shah* had struck terror into the hearts of the Mughal nobles even before the battle of *Chausa* and the Afghan nobles could lay down their life for his cause without any hesitation, 'Abbas invents the following story. That *Sher Shah* left *Bharkunda* for *Gaur* with a few hundred *sawars*, as the major part of his army was sent to *Rohtas* for the protection of the Afghan families there. Though, in pursuit of *Sher Shah*, the Mughal advance guard was alarmed by the news of *Sher Shah's* presence in a village, 14 miles (7 kos) ahead of *Patna*. *Jahangir Quli Beg* referred the matter to *Humayun* for guidance and also appointed a few men to collect correct information about the actual number of *sawars* with *Sher Shah*. The news collectors returned with the correct information in the evening when a hot pursuit was not possible. Next day Mughal advance guard was stopped to face the fierce charge of *Saif Khan Sarwani* whom *Sher Shah* had left there with 300 *Sawars* to check the advance of the Mughal columns, engaged in his pursuit as long as possible. The followers of *Saif Khan* fought valiantly to the last. *Saif Khan* was taken prisoner. Impressed by his bravery and courage, *Humayun* allowed him to join his family in *Rohtas*.<sup>2</sup>

*Shaikh Kabir* adds to these details that *Saif Khan Sarwani* fought against the Mughal advance guard near the *thana* of *Sulaimanabad*, situated along the route to *Monghyr*. Most of the followers of *Saif Khan* were slain on the battle-field, while he himself fell down from his horse after receiving serious injuries. But his slaves took him away.<sup>3</sup>

Had any encounter taken place between *Saif Khan* and *Jahangir Quli Beg* on the way to *Garhi*, it would not have escaped the notice of *Jauhar* who mentions every thing faithfully. The fact that *Sher Shah* rushed from *Bharkunda* to *Gaur* with full speed, while *Humayun* was moving under a leisurely

1. *Tazkirat-al-Waqf* at, f. 12b.

2. *Tarikh-i Sher Shahi*, f. 63a-64a. Prof. Ganungo treats this anecdote as authentic.  
*Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 186.

3. *A'isan-i-Shahan*, f. 98a.

manner should not be lost sight of. Moreover, 'Abbas's statement that Sher Shah took a few hundred Sawars with him, is also not convincing. We know it for definite that Sher Shah had seventy thousand Sawars in his service and only 30,000 of them were sent under Jalal Khan and Khawwas Khan, the Elder to Gaur. The remaining forty thousand Sawars were left with him for the defence of *Chunar* and *Bharkunda* forts. Therefore, it is not reasonable to think that he sent almost all of them to *Rohtas* and took only a few hundred with him to *Bengal*. He must not have taken less than 20,000 Sawars with him because he had to keep many of them with him even at the time of back journey with treasures from Gaur to *Rohtas*, while the nobles stationed in Bengal were to be sent to *Garhi* (*Teliagarhi*) for blocking the route against the advancing Mughals. As a result of his swift journey to *Gaur*, *Sher Shah* was able to make necessary arrangement for carrying away the huge booty of Bengal to *Rohtas* and depute his son, *Jalal Khan* with other Afghan nobles with a strong army to guard the fort of *Garhi* against the Mughals until he was away on a safe distance from the Mughals. Unlike the Afghans, the Mughals could not move very swiftly. Despite their effort, *Jahangir Quli* reached *Garhi* only to be defeated by *Jalal Khan* who had reached there in time.

Our information about the first victory of *Sher Shah's* army over the Mughals at *Garhi* is supplemented by the *Afsana-i-Shahan*. Since this source has been left untapped by the modern scholars and contains interesting details, they deserve to be discussed. *Shalkh Kabir* sheds light on the fact that *Sher Shah* reached *Gaur* safely; he had sufficient time to take effective measures against the advancing Mughals. Soon after his arrival in *Gaur*. In *Gaur* he deputed his own son, *Jalal Khan* along with *Jalal Khan* (son of *Jillo Sur*), *Haibat Khan Niazi* and *Isa Khan Niazi* at the head of 12,000 sawars and 500 war-elephants to guard *Garhi* till he was away from the reach of the Mughals in Bengal. *Sher Shah* is also reported to have made it clear to his generals that they would hold out against the Mughals without being engaged in a serious fight so long as the treasures of Bengal were not shifted to *Rohtas*. *Jalal Khan* and his comrades arrived in *Garhi* in time and took proper steps for its defence. *Jahangir Quli Beg* reached there with 40,000 sawars in the evening, a few days later. They decided to fight against the Afghans on the following day. When they set

to invest one of the gates of Garhi in the morning, Jalal Khan, finding them reckless in their operations, sallied out with his own personal contingent and took the Mughals by surprise. The Mughals were thrown into confusion; many of them were killed. Jahangir Quli Beg and some other Mughal nobles saved their life by taking to flight. Their baggage and animals were captured and sent to Sher Shah in Gaur.<sup>1</sup>

The following account, given in the *Makhzan-i-Afghana*, though somewhat more comprehensive, is a later interpolation. "The next morning the Mughals, according to their custom, ran their horses and retreated to their tents where they put off their armour and unsaddled their horses; the privates went out to forage, whilst the officers reposed on the cushions of idleness. Noon had approached when the Afghans, opening the gate in the defile, sallied forth. A few only of the Mughals whose horses were near at hand mounted and put themselves in an attitude of defence, but the greater part being disconcerted in the extreme turned their faces to flight."<sup>2</sup>

Though it seems to be an interesting piece of information, it seems to have been the figment of a later writer's imagination. Because it is wanting in the text of the *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, ably edited by Dr. S.M. Imamal-Din. The learned editor has successfully proved that the *Makhzan* was not written by the author of the *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, and was a much later work from the pen of Ibrahim Batini.<sup>3</sup>

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 99a-b.

The figures of Mughal sawars as 40,000 given in the *Afsana-i-Shahan*, seem to have been exaggerated. They were in no case forty thousand. Jauhar says that Jahangir Quli Beg, 'Ali Beg, Zindar Beg, Mughal Beg, Haji Muhammad Koka, 'Ali Khan Mahauli, Haider Bakhshi and some other nobles were ordered by Humayun to advance on Garhi. They were defeated by Jalal Khan, son of Sher Khan. 'Ali Khan Mahauli and Haider Bakhshi were slain.

*Tazkirat-al-Waqf* at f. 12 b.

As regards 'Abbas's account of this battle, it is brief.

See *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 64 a-b.

2. *Makhzan*, as quoted by Prof. Qanungo, *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 187-188.

3. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 1/293.

Also *Introduction to the Persian Text*, pp. 14-15. for the Editor's opinion about the *Makhzan*

## Declaration of Independence and the Conquest of Bengal 77

However, we know it for certain on the authority of Jauhar, 'Abbas and 'Abul Fazl that Jalal Khan and his companions stayed in Garhi till Sher Shah carried away the treasures and other movable property from *Gaur* to *Rohtas*. *Haji Muhammad Beg* whom Humayun had sent to Garhi to bring situation report, succeeded in gathering that Jalal Khan was ordered by Sher Shah to leave Garhi as soon as the latter had reached *Sherpur*, 16 miles west of modern Qasim Bazar. Jalal Khan did accordingly.

Jalal Khan's success in inflicting a severe defeat on the Mughal advance guard was very important in certain respects. It established for the first time that the Mughal arms were not invincible. The morale of the Afghan soldiers was raised; they were filled with a chivalrous spirit to settle their scores with the Mughals, still aliens in Hindustan. The indomitable courage of the generals and *sawars* combined with Sher Shah's own military strategy brought about the sudden fall of the Mughal Empire.

Before leaving *Gaur* for *Rohtas*, Sher Shah seems to have laid a trap for Humayun to fall in by stocking the palaces in *Gaur* with the choice beauty and luxuries of Bengal. All was done with a view to making the young, ease-loving and opium edict Emperor plunge headlong into womanish pleasure. Mushtaqi's graphic account, given in this regard deserves to be quoted :

"As his majesty (Humayun) reached *Gaur*, he found every place a paradise full of fairy-faced girls and handsome maids. He found the exhilarating gardens and soothing tanks. The villas and palaces were numerous and no place in the world could be compared with them in beauty and grandeur. Beautiful and costly carpets were spread every where, the long-necked flasks were placed in the niches in different decorative ways and the sweet-smelling odours, such as aloe-wood, *sandal* (an odoriferous wood), camphor, musk, *Kiyura* (name of a plant with a strong scented flower as well as a perfume made of its flower) and civet were found in abundance in every corner (in those palaces). The pillars in the palaces were made of the Sandal Wood and the bricks were plastered with porcelain. The fine cloth made in that country

was also available in plenty and variety. The royal palace was full of all things.

To this be added the information, contained in an anecdote in the *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, giving a clue to the fact that Sher Shah not only left the beautiful girls of *Sultan Mahmud's harem* in the palaces of Gaur but increased their number by bringing there all those also whom he had found elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> This fact is further supported by the contemporary Portuguese source. But this source only refers to the large number of girls, and their figures as ten thousand girls left by Sher Shah in the palace of Gaur do not appear to have been correct. It is like creating mountain out of the mole hill. Prof. Qanungo, who has not utilized the *Waqi'at- Mushtaqi* extensively, takes the Portuguese account literally and says : "Sher carried away from Gaur only what could be carried over a long distance. It is said that Sher had left the palace of Gaur in a fairly attractive condition and made it more attractive by stocking it with 'ten thousand women' of *Sultan Mahmud's harem*, perhaps intended as the Emperor's portion of the royal one-fifth of the booty, so that the Mughals might not miss any of the amenities of the Paradise in Gaur."<sup>2</sup>

In the light of evidence, referred to above, we may discuss the extent to which *Sher Shah's* military strategy succeeded in putting resistance and pulling down the morale of the Mughal army. It is said that on the evacuation of *Garhi* by *Jalal Khan*, the Mughals rode to Gaur in triumph and reached there within a short time without meeting any resistance on their way, sometime in June, 1538.<sup>3</sup> In Gaur they found the narrow winding streets of the magnificent city, filled with stinking corpses. The city was at once cleaned by the royal orders. The length of the city of Gaur was 22 kos (one kos equivalent to two miles), and its width about 70 kos. It was studded with innumerable mosques.<sup>4</sup> Humayun was overcome by the charm and comfort of the place so much so that he was completely given to the pleasure of body. He remained confined to the walls of the seraglio for one month, during which

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, pp. 123-124.
  2. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 189.
  3. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
  4. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 100 a-b.

none of his nobles could see him.<sup>1</sup> The entire period of Humayun's stay in Gaur as described by Jauhar was nine months and three months according to Nizam Ud'din.<sup>2</sup> Since the battle of Chausa took place on June 26th, 1539, Jauhar's statement is near the truth.

During the period of Humayun's merry-making in Gaur, Sher Shah availed of the opportunity by carrying sword and fire in the eastern territories under the Mughals. *Mushtaqi* briefly states that he raised a storm in the imperial territories as he had threatened previously in the letter to *Hindu Beg*.<sup>3</sup> Jauhar also bears testimony to the fact when he says that Humayun was startled in his *harem* by the news of Sher Shah's activities that Benaras was captured by *Sher Shah* and seven hundred Mughals along with Mir Fazl were put to death. That the forts of *Chunar* and *Jaunpur* were under siege while the entire region between had already been occupied by his men.<sup>4</sup> 'Abbas adds to this information that *Benaras* was attacked by Sher Shah in person; *Khawwas Khan* captured Khan-Khanan Lodi in *Monghyr*, while Halbat Khan Niazi, Jalal Khan Jilo and Sarmast Khan Sirbini cleaned the territories of *Bahraich* and *Sarwar* (Gorakhpur) of the Mughals. The army deputed for occupying *Jaunpur* was placed under some other noble (?). The Mughals were driven to *Kara* where also they met defeat. He further says that the Afghans brought the entire eastern region upto *Qannauj* and *Sambhal* under their control and collected revenue from the peasants for the crops of *kharif* and *Rabi* there.<sup>5</sup> At the same time *Khawwas Khan* was sent against *Maharetha Chero* who was hostile to *Sher Shah*.<sup>6</sup> Shaikh Kabir also mentions the same territories,

---

1. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*, f. 13 a.

2. *Ibid.* f. 13 a.

3. *Waqi'at-Mushtaqi*, f. 49 b.

4. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*, f. 13b.

5. *Tarikh-Sher Shahi*, ff. 64b-65a.

'Abbas is wrong in his statement about the Afghan occupation of *Sambhal* territory, for it remained under the control of the Mughals till the battle of *Qannauj* in 1540. Similarly *Khan Khanan Lodi* was sent by Humayun to *Monghyr* when the eastern territories had been occupied by *Sher Shah's* men and Humayun decided to leave for *Agra* after *Hindal's* rebellion. He is also wrong in saying that *Jaunpur* was occupied by the Afghans before the battle of *Chausa*.



Jaunpur, Bahraich, Benaras, Lucknow, Banagarmau, Qannauj and Shamsabad where Sher Shah's officers collected revenue.<sup>1</sup>

The news of the occupation by the Afghans of the aforesaid territories came to the surprise and annoyance of Humayun. Either to hide his own anxiety or to boost the morale of his nobles, he refused to believe these news and expressed that *Sher Shah* could not dare to attack the imperial territories.<sup>2</sup> But his nobles were dismayed and terrified: the damp climate of Bengal had caused a serious epidemic in the Mughal horses and taken a heavy toll. The health of the soldiers and generals was badly affected; their spirit had sunk down. Their indulgence in debauchery and voluptuousness had brought down their morale.

Convinced about the gravity of situation, Humayun decided to return to Agra, although the charm of Bengal still made him waver in his decision. Yet the gravity of situation compelled him to start for back journey. He called all his nobles for a consultation, in the meeting he decided to entrust the government of Bengal to Zahid Beg but the latter summarily refused to accept the responsibility as he was not sure of holding out against Sher Shah after the departure of the Emperor. Thereupon *Humayun* flared up; he called Zahid Beg a coward and also ordered him to be executed. Zahid Beg came out of the meeting and made good his escape to Agra where he succeeded in instigating Hindal to assume independence and kill *Shaikh Phool*, a confidant of Humayun.<sup>3</sup>

---

8. Prof. S.H. Hodivala has successfully discussed the location of the territory of the Chero Chieftain. According to him the Chero Chief ruled over the region of Palamau in Bihar and held strong forts in his possession. He also suggests that Maharetha could be read as Bharat Raj as the local traditions say "Bharat Raj, a renowned border chieftain, more probably a bold and successful cattle-lifter.... who appears to have harassed Sher Khan to some purpose and to have been regarded by him as an opponent whom it was absolutely necessary to crush."  
*Studies in Indo Muslim History*, p. 454.

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 102 b.

2. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'* at, f. 13b.

3. cf. *Life and Times of Humayun*, p. 123, 124.

On Shaikh Phool's murder and Hindal's rebellion in Agra, Humayun posted *Jahangir Quli Beg* with certain other nobles to govern Bengal and ordered *Khan Khanan Lodi* to proceed to *Monghyr* and wait for the Emperor there.<sup>1</sup> Soon afterwards *Humayun* also moved for his back journey, while he was no longer the moulder of events; circumstances had taken a serious turn in *Sher Shah's* favour.

*Khan Khanan Lodi* was captured in *Monghyr* by *khawwas Khan* a few days after his arrival there. *Mirza 'Askari* whom Humayun had ordered to lead his advance guard to *Kahalgam* via *Garhi* and collect information about the whereabouts and activities of *Sher Shah*, came to know that all the routes leading to *Delhi* and *Agra* were blocked by the men of *Sher Shah* while he himself was in *Rohtas* with the larger portion of his army. *'Askari* came back to the Emperor and informed him of the situation near *Monghyr*. Humayun asked the advice of his nobles as to whether the Ganges should be crossed at *Monghyr* or elsewhere. Amongst his nobles, *Phool Beg* and *Mulla Muhammad Farkh 'Ali* expressed the opinion against crossing the river Ganges at *Monghyr* and suggested that the Emperor should proceed along the bank in the direction of *Jaunpur* where he could collect the armies of different territories for action against *Sher Shah*. But *Mu'id Beg* differed from them saying that the river should be crossed at *Monghyr*, so that the Emperor might not be regarded as afraid of the enemy. The latter agreed with him. *Jauhar* seems to imply that Humayun's acceptance of *Mu'id Beg's* opinion caused his defeat.<sup>2</sup>

The modern writers are in agreement with *Jauhar* that Humayun made a tactical mistake by not proceeding to *Jaunpur* along the Ganges as *Phool Beg* and *Mulla Muhammad Farkh 'Ali* had suggested. They hold that if he had trekked along the river, he would have avoided a serious encounter with *Sher Shah's* army, and thus the situation would have been saved in his favour.<sup>3</sup> There is no reason to take *Jauhar* seriously as we know that *Sher Shah* seriously meant business with Humayun at that time. He knew the plight of the

---

1. *Infra.*

2. *Tazkirat al-Waqi' at'* ff. 15b-16a.

3. *cf. Life and Times of Humayun, p. 127.*  
*Sher Shah and His Times, p. 195.*

Mughal army, caused by the unhealthy climate of Bengal and could not let the long-awaited opportunity slip away from his hands. He had collected all his armies in *Rohtas* for action against the Mughals at a vantage point of his own choice.<sup>1</sup>

We know it for definite on the authority of Mushtaqi that it was the part of Sher Shah's plan and strategy to allow the Mughals a free passage on their march towards Bengal and fight a battle at the time of their return to *Agra*. Therefore it may correctly be held that Sher Shah was determined to measure strength with the Mughals at this time; the change of route by his rival could not deter him. As the son of the soil, he could choose any place to halt the Mughals for the battle. With lightning swiftness, Sher Shah and his generals could move from place to place. In this regard the statement of 'Abbas sounds plausible and therefore be relied upon. He says that Sher Shah's own generals as well as the members of the old Afghan aristocracy had assembled in *Rohtas* to act according to Sher Shah's plan. All of them were in high spirit; and they assured Sher Shah of their whol-hearted co-operation against the Mughals.<sup>2</sup>

In short, the battle was certain to take place between the Mughals and the Afghans somewhere in Bihar because it was to the advantage of *Sher Shah*, who was shrewd enough not to let the Mughals reach *Jaunpur* where the Mughal garrison was still holding out.

It appears that first Sher Shah decided to weaken the strength of the Mughal army by making surprise attacks on its

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 65b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 65b-66b.

It is worthy of note here that 'Abbas puts speeches in the mouth of Sher Shah and certain Afghan nobles, both new and those of the Lodi period to show that they could claim equality with Sher Shah and the latter could not expect the old sensitive Afghan nobles to show him undue respect. He feigned humility before them in order to please them. If these speeches are studied in the light of circumstantial evidence, available in other sources they appear to be misleading. As already discussed Sher Shah had assumed kingship in 1535, and his entire army was placed under his own generals. As regards the surviving members of the old aristocracy, they were refugees whom he does not seem to have trusted even after the expulsion of the Mughals, for none of them excepting Isa Khan Sarwani was ever entrusted with any key-position during his reign as will be discussed subsequently.

rear, plundering its baggage and avoiding a serious clash of arms until the place of his choice was arrived. *Jauhar* says that *Humayun* was informed at *Maner*, near the tomb of *Shaikh Yahya Maneri*<sup>1</sup> by the men of *Chandawal* (a Turkish term, meaning rear guard) that the Afghan army was seen moving behind them. On the following day the news were received that the two armies came face to face and exchanged arrows and artillery fire. On the third day the Afghans charged the Mughal army and took away the boat, carrying the huge cannon that was used for demolishing the ramparts of *Chunar* fort. At *Chausa* where the Mughals are said to have reached at sun-set within the fourth day of their crossing the Ganges at Monghyr, the mughals were stopped by the arrival of Sher Shah at the head of his army. Sher Shah came there with fast speed after having travelled for 18 or 19 Kos.<sup>2</sup>

On *Sher Shah's* approach near *Chausa*, *Humayun* was persuaded by *Qasim Husain Sultan* to fall upon the enemy without delay because he had arrived there after having traversed a long distance with fast speed and so his *sawars* and horses were tired and unfit for military action. *Humayun* accepted his suggestion but soon gave up the idea when *Mu'id Beg* expressed his opinion otherwise. *Mu'id Beg* did not think it wise to take any decision about giving battle to *Sher Shah* in haste. According to *Jauhar*, *Humayun's* acceptance of *Mu'id Beg's* opinion disheartened the Mughal nobles. But the fact is that there flowed a stream, between the two armies and so *Sher Shah* was in a position to inflict heavy losses on the Mughals at the time of their crossing the stream. Moreover, *Sher Shah's* intrepid generals and *Sawars* could not be easily rendered unfit for action by long march, for they were used to hard labour. Their master must have taken the

---

1. Shaikh Yahya Maneri was the father of Shaikh Sharaf Uddni Maneri, the leading Firdausi saint of the 14th century. He lived in Maner and was buried there. *Akhbar al-Akhiyar*, Shaikh Abdul Haq Dehlvi.

2. *Tazakirat-at-Waqi' at*, f. 16a-b.

Prof. Qanungo rightly observes that some allowance must be made for the lapse of memory on the part of *Jauhar* due to his old dotage. Because the distance between Maner and Chausa is 80 miles and this could not be covered by the Mughals at the rate of 20 miles a day when the Son river was to be ferried on the way. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 197.

possibility of clash soon after his reaching *Chausa* into consideration. Therefore, *Humayun* seems to have agreed with *Mu'id Beg* with regard to the postponement of battle for the obvious reasons. Prof. Qanungo is perfectly right in his observation : "the modern biographers of *Humayun* have blamed *Mu'yyid Beg* for advising the postponement of an attack on *Sher* in the afternoon, when the *Afghans* and their horses, tired and jaded, came within easy striking distance of the less tired *Mughals*. They deplore this unwise decision so much, that one of them goes so far as to suggest that "the history of India might have been different" if *Humayun* had delivered an immediate attack. In point of fact, the position of both the armies on the opposite banks of a river 25 yards wide (even admitting it to be the *Karmanasa*), is enough to prove that throughout his whole career *Mu'yyid Beg* unwittingly gave sound advice on this occasion,"..... "An attack on him across this muddy stream is exactly what *Sher* himself wanted the *Mughals* to attempt, thus placing *Humayun* in the predicament of "the elephant in the mire."<sup>1</sup>

The two armies, however, continued to face each other for more than two months with skirmishes taking place almost daily. Both the sides suffered losses. Driven to straits by the rebellion of *Hindal* and the impossibility of the reinforcement from any quarter, *Humayun* made overture for peace with *Sher Shah* through *Shaikh Khalil*, the descendant of *Baba Farid Ganj-i-Shakar*. *Sher Shah* is said to have agreed to make peace with *Humayun* on the condition that the fort of *Chunar* would be left to him with the territories of *Bihar* and *Bengal*, but the *Mughals* were not willing to give him *Chunar*. Consequently a peace treaty could not be concluded.<sup>2</sup>

'*Abul Fazl*, *Nizam ud'din* and even '*Abbas* differ from *Jauhar* when they imply that it was *Sher Shah* who initiated the negotiation for peace. '*Abbas* says that *Sher Shah* requested *Humayun* through his envoy to leave *Bengal* to him and promised to have the *Khutba* read and the coins struck in the name of the Emperor. *Humayun* responded favourably. To finalise the terms of peace-treaty *Shaikh Khalil* was sent by

1. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*. pp. 199-200.

2. *Tazkirat al-waqi'at*, ff. 16b-17a.

Humayun to *Sher Shah's* camp. But the Shaikh was won over to Sher Shah's side by a good present, including money and fine cloth of Bengal in large quantity, with the result that he advised him in a private meeting to fight against Humayun telling that there was complete disorder in the Mughal army and an acute shortage of horses and mules.<sup>1</sup> Nizam 'Uddin Bakhshi states that Shaikh Khalil was Sher Shah's religious preceptor and the latter sent him to Humayun.<sup>2</sup> Drawing upon Nizam Ud'din, Badaoni states that Sher Shah concluded the peace-treaty by an oath on the divine word (Quran) and violated it when Humayun's mind was at peace with regard to Sher Shah.<sup>3</sup> 'Abul Fazl also makes a similar statement to show that Sher Shah had violated a solemn treaty by making a sudden attack on the Mughals at day-break when none of the Mughals was prepared to fight.<sup>4</sup>

In the light of an eye-witness account of Jauhar it is not reasonable to give credence to the later sources because we know that legends and false traditions grew about the great personalities after them in medieval India. Sher Shah's violation of a peace-treaty that he is reported to have made by an oath on the Quran, is nothing more than a story fabricated by the Mughals to discredit Sher Shah among the Muslims. No doubt, Sher Shah was deceitful in his dealings with the enemies and could resort to treachery and foul means, but at this time he does not appear to have concluded any peace treaty with Humayun. *Jauhar* is right in his statement that peace treaty could not be agreed between Humayun and Sher Shah because the Mughals were not prepared to give up *Chunar*.

'Abbas's account of the peace-treaty as well as the battle of Chausa deserves a critical examination. Here, as usual, he puts long speeches in Sher Shah's mouth to the effect that *Sher Shah* was doubtful of Humayun's sincerity in respect of his overture to peace and he attributed it to the plight and weakness of his army. Hence the violation of the

---

1. *Tarikh-Sher Shahi*, f. 66b.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/10/.

3. *Badauni*.

4. *Akbarnama*, I/158-159.

treaty by Sher Shah. Thereafter he turns to give details about the battle, showing that Humayun was very brave and he made the display of unprecedented chivalry on the battlefield, but his nobles and soldiers could not stand, owing to the disorganization in the Mughal army, caused by the unsuitable climate of Bengal.<sup>1</sup> This is surprising that 'Abbas, who was an Afghan and gets satisfaction in glorifying the rule of the Afghan rulers, does not try to absolve Sher Shah of the charge of violating a solemn treaty. But the mere fact that he compiled his work at the instance of *Emperor Akbar* in the hope of reward indicates that he could not reject the myth which was created by the Mughals to discredit the illustrious name of Sher Shah. It certainly indicates his helplessness. Because his rejection of the myth which had no historical truth involved the royal displeasure.

It may also be pointed out that 'Abbas also fails to give due credit to *Khawwas Khan*, the only man among Sher Shah's nobles who undertook to make a surprise attack on the Mughal army when others were reluctant. *Khawwas Khan's* attack on the Mughal army at dawn on 7th June, 1539 put the Mughals to flight even before the Afghan army under the command of Sher Shah<sup>2</sup> reached the scene of the battle. 'Abbas rather attributes the Afghan victory to the joint effort of all the Afghans.

Upon this victory over Humayun at Chausa, Sher Shah seems to have been enthroned second time with ceremonies and rejoicing.<sup>3</sup> Then he busied himself with the administrative organization of the territories from *Qannauj* to the eastern frontier of Bengal. *Khawwas Khan* was deputed first to clean Bengal of the Mughals and then turn for the destruction of *Maharetha Chero*.<sup>4</sup> Likewise other nobles were sent to dif-

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 67a-71a.

It also deserves to be noted that Shaikh Khalil also seems to have remained faithful to Humayun because he had informed Humayun of the possibility of *Khawwas Khan's* surprise attack on him at night. Jauhar does not say that he was bribed by Sher Shah. See *Tazkirat al-Waql'at*, ff. 17a.

2. cf. *Chapter 4*,

3. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, ff. 73b-74a,  
also Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 219-222 for further details.

4. *Chapter 4*, for details.

ferent places. *Shuja'at Khan Sur* was left in Bihar. In fact Sher Shah could not think it wise to proceed further unless his authority was stabilized in the already conquered territories, because the hostile elements could rise in his back at the time of his conflict with his enemy. For this reason *Jahangir Qull Beg* was destroyed in Bengal and *Maharetha Chero* in Bihar by *Khawwas Khan*. When free from their side, Sher Shah could take steps against the Mughals. It appears that through spies Sher Shah entered into a secret understanding with *Kamran* that he would leave the whole of the Punjab beyond the river *Sutlej*, in case the latter did not co-operate with Humayun.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the messengers were sent to the rulers of *Rajputana* and *Malwa* to co-operate with his son, *Qutb Khan* in fomenting troubles in the territories under the Mughals, so that the Mughals might be kept busy in different directions. But the *Rajas* and *Mallu Khan*, the ruler of *Mandu* (*malwa*) did not keep up their word. Consequently Sher Khan's third son, *Qutb Khan*, who was sent to create confusion in the border territories of the Mughal Empire with the help of the rulers of *Rajputana* and *Malwa* had to fight single-handed and was killed near *Kalpi*.<sup>2</sup>

As regards the battle of *Qannauj* which finally settled the dispute over the throne of *Hindustan* between *Humayun* and *Sher Shah* on 17th May, 1540, it has been discussed by the modern scholars at length. But some space may be devoted here to discuss the actual site where *Humayun* and *Sher Shah* fought this historic battle in the light of contemporary evidence available in the *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*. *Dattu Sarwani*, who was present in the camp of *Sher Shah* at the time of the battle says :

- 
1. *Jauhar's* reference to the correspondence between *Mirza Kamran* and *Sher Shah* after the battle of *Qannauj* (1540) supports our surmise. Because *Kamran* is reported to have written to *Sher Shah* that he should leave the Punjab in his possession. But *Sher Shah* refused to concede his demand saying that the condition had changed and he would leave only the country of *Kabul* in his possession.  
*Tazkirat al-Waqi'at*, f. 26a.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 75a.



"When Sher Shah and *Humayun Badshah* came face to face with each other on the banks of the river Ganges, Humayun Badshah was on the side of Bhojpur town,<sup>1</sup> while Sher Shah was on the opposite bank. Humayun Badshah publicly stated that if he were to win that time and the Afghans were to be defeated, he would eradicate the names of the Afghans from the world, even of their children. When I heard of this, I was much perturbed, but the same night I saw Shaikh Abdul Quddus in dream who told me that Sher Shah would win.

"Thereafter Humayun Badshah, having constructed a bridge of boat, crossed the Ganges and stationed on the bank of the Ganges. On the fourth day the battle took place and Humayun was defeated."<sup>2</sup>

Though we cannot attach any importance to Shaikh Dattu's dream in which Shaikh Abdul Quddus, his religious preceptor who had died a few years earlier, appeared to assure him of Sher Shah's victory over Humayun in the battle, which was to take place, yet the historical importance of the passage needs to be stressed because it has been provided by a contemporary Afghan and gives clue to a fact regarding the site of the last battle, fought between *Humayun* and *Sher Shah* on May 17, 1540. It makes it clear that Humayun encamped on the western bank of the Ganges near the town of *Bhojpur* and could not move onward to cross the river as its eastern bank was effectively guarded by Sher Shah's army. In the light of this information, Prof. Qanungo's surmise that Humayun was held up by Sher Shah "for about a month from his original camp which was probably somewhere near the site of the modern Mehdighat,"<sup>3</sup> is not borne out by fact.

---

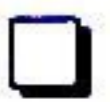
1. During Akbar's time the town of Bhojpur was included in the *Sarkhr* of Qannauj, It is 8 miles south-east of Farrukhabad and 30 miles north-west of Qannauj.

2. *Lataif-i-Quddusi*, p. 83.

3. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 227-231.

Prof. Qanungo devotes long passages to establish that Humayun crossed the Ganges near the site of Mehdighat, and proceeded to Bilgram where he had decided to give battle to the Afghans. (Bilgram was then a pargana, included in the Sarkar of Lucknow). This is contrary to what appears from the medieval sources earlier as well as later. Even Abul Fazl implies that Humayun had crossed the Ganges near Bhojpur.

The details, furnished by 'Abbas in this regard are convincing. For instance, Duttu Sarwani briefly states the fact that Humayun continued to stay on the western bank near Bhojpur for a certain period of time and then crossed it after having built a bridge of boats. The statements of 'Abbas and Shaikh Kabir in this regard are acceptable because they are corroborated by Dattu Sarwani. Particularly 'Abbas supplements our information when he explains the reason as to why Sher Shah allowed Humayun to cross the river and encamp on the eastern bank of the Ganges. He says that Sher Shah stopped the Mughals on the other side of the river so long as Khawwas Khan did not return from the territory of Maharetha Chero. On Khawwas Khan's return, Sher Shah decided to give battle to the Mughals without further delay. Further, Sher Shah shifted several miles away in the direction of Qannauj from the site of his original camp, and thus Humayun was able to come across the Ganges. Second, the battle was fought on the fourth day of Humayun's arrival on the eastern bank of the river near Qannauj.<sup>1</sup> Like others, Shaik Kabir also states that on Khawwas Khan's return, Sher Shah told Humayun through his envoy that he could cross the river. But he did not allow the enemy to proceed any further from Qannauj and fought against him there.<sup>2</sup> Other chroniclers, like Ni'mat Ullah, Abdullah, etc. drew upon 'Abbas for their account of the battle.<sup>3</sup>



---

1. *Tarik-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 77b-77a.

2. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 115b-118b.

3. It may be pointed out that Ni'mat Ullah is wrong when he says that the battle of Qannauj was avoided by Sher Shah for four months even after Humayun had crossed the Ganges. His actual words are :

"As Humayun) reached near Qannauj, Sher Shah also turned from the direction and came face to face.... In this way four months passed away."

*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 1/308.

## CHAPTER IV

# Masnad-I-'Ali Khawwas Khan, The Victor of Bengal And Marwar

---

The study of the life and achievements of *Masnad-I-'all* Khawwas Khan who rose to supreme position in the Afghan nobility under Sher Shah Sur by sheer dint of merit deserves a closer attention than paid so far. Khawwas Khan is one of the most colourful figures in the history of Medieval India, his reputation rested upon his military achievements and the distinctive moral elements that his career involved. His organizing capacity and experience in the art of war had raised him head and shoulder above his contemporary nobles of the Sur Empire. In fact, he stands next to Sher Shah in his exploits, both cultural and military. The display of a remarkable talent by him in dealing with the complex and exacting problems of government on the one hand and the keen interest, evinced in the welfare of people on other, endeared him to the king and people alike. A careful study of his life, achievements, predictions and interest would help us in explaining the political situation prevailing in India during the first half of the 16th century. It would also help us to some extent in analysing the spirit of the time through which the *Masnad-I-'all* lived.

To begin with, *Masnad-I-'all* Khawwas Khan was neither an Afghan nor he belonged to any old and respectable family of medieval India. He was the second son of *Sukha*, the slave of Sher Shah whom Shadi Ghulam of Muhammad Khan Sur of Chaund had killed as described previously.<sup>1</sup>

The information about the early life of Malik Sukha's children is wanting in the Medieval sources of information. But it appears from the study of later events that Sher Shah himself

---

1. Cf. Chapter 1.

took care of Sukha's family after his death, and made necessary arrangements for their upbringing and education. Among the children of Sukha, only four are mentioned by the chroniclers; three of them were sons and the fourth was a daughter, married to *Haji Khan* who was a favourite slave of Sher Shah. The latter was also trained by his master as a military general and, therefore, he became one of the top-rank nobles after Sher Shah's rise to sovereignty.<sup>1</sup> Sukha's first and third sons are known by their titles as Khawwas Khan (the Elder) and Shamsheer Khan respectively, while the actual name of his second son, Shihab Khan alone is mentioned by 'Abbas and Shaikh Kabir.<sup>2</sup>

*Khawwas Khan, the Elder* appears to have been raised to the position of a high noble in Sher Shah's service even before the latter became the Emperor of Hindustan. In 1537 he was deputed along with *Prince Jalal Khan* for the conquest of Gaur, while the nobles, even of the status of *Shuja'at Khan* were placed under him. The Afghan army under the joint command of Jalal Khan and Khawwas Khan, the Elder easily swept away the resistance put to them by the ruler of Bengal on their way and they reached Gaur by forced marches to besiege its fort. But in the course of siege operations, Khawwas Khan, the Elder fell down in the ditch while he was encouraging his men in scaling the ramparts of the fort. On the news of his tragic end, Sher Shah conferred his title of Khawwas Khan on his brother, *Shihab Khan* along with his high rank and position. At the same time he was ordered to proceed to Gaur to take over the command of his deceased brother's contingent.<sup>3</sup>

In Gaur, Khawwas Khan first paid visit to Prince Jalal Khan and after some customary talks, he suggested to him as desired by Sher Shah that they should storm the fort at once without any further delay. Jalal Khan asked him to postpone

- 
1. Rizqullah Mushtaqi states that he was originally Sher Shah's slave and calls him Haji Khan Sultani along with other slaves, raised to the dignity of high grandees. Abul Fazl mentions him as Haji Khan, one of the chief slaves of Sher Shah, But Nimatullah, who is a later writer wrongly says that Haji Khan was a Batini Afghan. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 73b; *Akbarnama*, ii/20; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 56b.  
*Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 82b, 95a.
  3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 55a, 56b.

the assault for one day because he thought it necessary for him not to fight for capturing the fort on the very day of his arrival as he needed some rest, for he had covered a long distance. Khawwas Khan did not agree with the Prince and left for his late brother's camp. The soldiers of his brother received him as their new leader. Having consoled them, he spoke to them that he wanted to storm the defences of Gaur without wasting time and they should be prepared to fight. The *naqibs* were thereupon ordered to announce in the Afghan army camp that every soldier would march to the scene of battle. Prince Jalal Khan and Shuja'at Khan disliked Khawwas Khan's decision but they rode to the battle-field. To their surprise, Khawwas Khan captured the fort in the first assault even before they reached there.

This was his first grand victory and it brought him into the full gaze of history. His fame spread far and wide. 'Abbas Khan, who generally glows with pride upon the achievements of the Afghan generals, has to confess: "From this day (the conquest of Gaur) Khawwas Khan's chivalry was known to people. He always achieved victory wherever he went after this (event). There was nobody in the army of Sher Khan to rival him in courage and large-heartedness. As Gaur was captured, Jalal Khan himself sent *Fathnama* of Khawwas Khan's victory to his father."<sup>1</sup> The later events show that he was fully rewarded by Sher Shah for this achievement. From this time he was addressed as *Masnad-i-'all* (exalted lordship). He led the advance guard of Sher Shah's army which was considered to be the highest honour to be done to the premier noble in medieval times.

It deserves to be noted here that the conquest of Gaur also created new problems for Sher Shah to face. Emperor Humayun, who was thinking to make peace with the Afghans after his capture of Chunar, was aroused to march to Gaur, so that the Afghans could not consolidate their position there. His march at the head of a formidable army forced Sher Shah to take all steps in haste for transferring the treasures, acquired in Gaur, to Rohtas, lest they should fall into the hands of the Mughal Emperor. He rushed to Gaur in person and there directed his son *Jalal Khan*, *Khawwas Khan*, *Barmazid Kur*, *Sarmast Khan Sirbini*, *Haibat Khan niazi* (later *Azam Humayun niazi*,

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 57b.

the Muqta of the Panjab) and Bahar Khan Sarwani to proceed to Garhi and hold it against the Mughals till he had reached Rohtas with Gaur's treasures. On Sher Shah's departure from Gaur, the Afghan generals also left Garhi for Rohtas.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter Khawwas Khan seems to have been busy in cleaning Bihar and other eastern territories of the Mughals, but the detailed information about his activities for this period is not available. The only important achievement recorded by the contemporary writers is his capture of Khan Khanan Lodi, the Mughal ally in Monghyr.

Before his departure from Gaur to Agra, Humayun deputed Khan Khanan Lodi to guard Monghyr against the Afghans and wait there till his arrival in that direction. But the news of Khan Khanan Lodi's appointment in Monghyr provided Sher Shah with an opportunity to avenge the wrong done by him to his fellow Afghans of India.<sup>2</sup> Sher Shah sent Mansad-I-'ali Khawwas Khan with a strong force to destroy the traitor there. Khawwas Khan moved with his customary speed, reached Monghyr at sun-set and took Khan Khanan Lodi prisoner by surprise after having burnt down the gates of the fort.<sup>3</sup>

1. *Tarikh-Sher Shahi*, f. 64a.

'Abbas does not give the full list of the generals whom Sher Shah had posted at Garhi along with Jalal Khan. He particularly drops the name of Khawwas Khan. But Khawwas Khan's name is found in the *Tarikh-i-Alfi* and the *Akbarnama* as well. *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, f. 566b; *Akbarnama*, i/152.

2. *Akbarnama*, i/152, Khan Khanan Lodi's former name was Dilawar Khan Lodi. He was one of the sons of Daulat Khan Lodi, Sultan Sikandar's Muqta of the *sarkars* of Lahore, Bhera and Sialkot. Dilawar Khan was one of the most trusted allies of the Mughals in India. He co-operated with the latter against his own relations who felt betrayed by Babur's decision to conquer Hindustan for himself, because they had invited him only to support their cause against Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. Babur honoured Dilawar Khan with the highest title of Khan Khanan, but he was looked down upon by the Indian Afghans as a traitor. Even when Akbar's authority was well-established in north India, the sensitive Afghans could not think to enter the Mughal service in the fear that they would be condemned by the posterity like Dilawar Khan. For instance, Fath Khan Batini, Islam Shah's faujdar of the fort of Rohtas considered Sulaiman Karrani as a mere upstart and never liked to surrender the fort to him. But he changed his mind when its defence was not possible in the face of Mughal aggression. Thinking that he would be denounced by the Afghans as a traitor like Dilawar Khan, he joined the service of Sulaiman Karrani. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 210b, 211a.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 64b.

Contrary to the evidence, contained in different medieval sources, Prof. Qanungo states that Khan Khanan Lodi was captured in Monghyr after the battle of Chausa was won by Sher Shah. The learned Professor unnecessarily accuses 'Abbas of not describing this event correctly as it showed the violation of a solemn promise by Sher Shah. According to him Khan Khanan surrendered to Khawwas on certain conditions which were not fulfilled by Sher Shah afterwards. Therefore, it was an act of perfidity and cruelty that marred the grace of his victory at Chausa.<sup>1</sup> The present writer does not see any reason in rejecting 'Abbas Sarwani's statement that Khawwas Khan captured Khan Khanan Lodi in *Monghyr* when Humayun was in *Gaur*, for it is corroborated by Jauhar; the contemporary Mughal writer who was in *Gaur* in the service of the Emperor at that time. The later writers are not only in complete agreement with 'Abbas and Jauhar but also supplement their information. Shaikh Kabir, the author of the *Afsana-i-Shahn* Says that Khawwas Khan appeared all of a sudden before Monghyr after the darkness had prevailed. He deputed Panjur Turk to assault the northern gate, while he himself turned towards the southern gate which he found wide-open. He at once entered the city, and at his sight the followers of Khan Khanan were seized with panic; their leader had already gone to sleep after attending a convivial party. *Khan Khanan Lodi* was made prisoner with all his family members and then sent to Sher Shah.<sup>2</sup> Jauhar also makes a similar statement. 'At this time news came (in *Gaur*) that Khawwas Khan had dashed towards Monghyr, burnt down its gates and having captured Khan Khanan Lodi, taken him to Sher Khan. His Majesty was much perturbed by this news.'<sup>3</sup>

After the affair of Khan Khanan Lodi was over, Sher Shah deputed Khawwas Khan against *Raja Maharetha Chero*,<sup>4</sup> the

---

1. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 219-220.

2. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff.100b-101a.

3. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*, Aligarh MS., f. 14b.

4. Prof. Hodivala has indentified the region of Palamau in Bihar as the territory of Maharetha Chero. The Cheros were of Dravidian stock and their chiefs were known for their predatory activities. Prof. Hodivala observes on the basis of local traditions that the real name of the chief attacked by Khawwas Khan was Bharat Rai, "a renowned border chieftain, more probably, a bold and successful cattle-lifter. These local

powerful Raja of Palamau (Bihar) who had become a sworn enemy of Sher Shah. As the territory of the enemy was surrounded by dense forests, Khawwas Khan cut down the forests wherever necessary and carried sword and fire in the region; with the result that the entire agricultural land was laid waste within a short time. But, before he could make short work of the enemy, he was called by Sher Shah as the latter required him for giving a decisive battle to the Mughals at Chausa.

On Khawwas Khan's return to Chausa, Sher Shah called all his nobles for consultation and enquired as to whom he would depute to make a surprise attack on the Mughal camp. All kept quiet, but Khawwas Khan undertook the duty with great pleasure to fall on the Mughals and size up their strength. Sher Shah was pleased; he gave him some war-elephants, wishing good luck. Khawwas Khan came out with his followers and elephants but he postponed his attack till the darkness prevailed.<sup>1</sup>

Jauhar's details about Khawwas Khan's surprise attack on the Mughal army at Chausa, are interesting. His statement reveals that the Mughals had wrong notion about Sher Shah's strength and thus exhibited their lack of realism. For instance, when Khawwas Khan agreed to take the Mughals by surprise, Shaikh Khalil who was in Sher Shah's camp as a Mughal envoy, informed Humayun about his suspicion of Khawwas Khan's surprise attack on the Mughal camp at night. Thereupon, Mu'id Beg remarked : "Khawwas Khan being the son of a slave cannot be conceived of having courage to attack them." His remark allayed the fears of the Mughal Emperor who was still full of self-complacency. For Khawwas Khan the best time of charging the Mughal army camp was the time of day break when the night-guards of the Mughal Emperor could retire to rest having no apprehension of any trouble, whatsoever. Khawwas Khan fell on the royal stable while the

---

traditions are not, perhaps, without value, and that they may provide a clue to the determination of the real name of the renowned border chieftain who appears to have harassed Sher Khan to some purpose and have been regarded by him as an opponent whom it was necessary to crush." Cf. *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 454, also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 66a.

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 70a- b.



Mughals were at rest in their tents. When aroused by noise, they were seized with panic and ran away in utter confusion. Even the generals of repute could not make a heroic stand against the soldiers of Khawwas Khan and fled towards the boat bridge on the Ganges which Humayun had prepared and Sher Shah's men destroyed just at the time of Khawwas Khan's attack; with the result that many Mughals were drowned in the overflowing river.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor himself could escape with the help of a water-carrier.<sup>2</sup>

The decisive Afghan victory, achieved at Chausa required Sher Shah and high nobles to busy themselves in establishing their firm authority in the region, east of Qannauj as the presence of the hostile elements there could pose a serious threat to them at the time of their final encounter with the mughals, particularly Khawwas Khan could not enjoy any rest; he was ordered soon after the battle of Chausa to march and complete the destruction of Mahharetha Chero, so that the latter might not create any trouble in the back. Khawwas Khan rode through the dense jungles, and having surrounded the enemy camp, he got victory and chopped Maharetha Chero's head to present it to his master with other booty.<sup>3</sup> His victory raised the morale of the Afghan army which might have been pulled down by the destruction of the Afghan army under Sher Shah's third son, Qutb Khan by the Mughals near Kalpi, described previously. For him it further added feather to his cap. However, from this time onward the *Masnad-i-'all* continued to enjoy the most privileged position in the Sur Empire till Sher Shah's death (1545). Mushtaqi informs us that he was always entrusted with the command of the royal advance guard by Sher Shah and this was considered to be the highest honour, done to the premier noble of the regime.<sup>4</sup> 'Abbas also testifies to this fact when he mentions him as the commander of the Afghan advance guard in the battle of Qanauj.<sup>5</sup>

As regards the final encounter between Sher Shah and Humayun which took place near Qanauj in 1540, Khawwas

1. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*, ff. 17a-18a, also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 70a-71b.

2. *Akbarnama*, i/155; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/44. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 61b.

3. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, f. 75b.'84.

4. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 57a.

5. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, 78b.

Khan seems to have played a more important part than other fellow nobles in it. In command of the advance guard, he faced the Mughal advance guard and having made short work of it within no time, turned back to join the main Afghan army. He was certainly well-adept in manoeuvring tactics. When the battle started between the rival armies, the Afghan right wing under the command of Prince Jalal Khan was almost broken by the shattering charges of *Mirza Hindal* and *'Askari*, the commanders of the Mughal left wing, but the timely arrival of *Khawwas Khan* in the direction saved Prince Jalal Khan from the humiliation of defeat. First the *Mansad-I-'ali* turned against *Mirza 'Askari*, defeated him, and then moved to rescue *Jala Khan*. Similarly, the assault of *Hindal* was also repulsed. Thereafter, *Khawwas Khan* fell on the Mughal centre and inflicted severe losses on it. However, the Mughals lost their courage and broke away in utter consternation.<sup>1</sup>

The statement of the author of *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* with regard to the causes of Humayun's defeat in the aforesaid battle is not at all correct. He states : "So before the enemy had discharged an arrow, the whole army was scattered and defeated.....where not a man, either friend or foe, was wounded. Not a gun was fired."<sup>2</sup> This is not corroborated even by any contemporary Mughal Chronicle. It appears that the author who himself had taken part in the fight, refrains from describing the actual causes of Humayun's defeat because his description would show the military superiority of the Afghan generals, trained by *Sher Shah* over the Mughals. In fact it was a hard won victory of *Sher Shah* which made him the master of north India in place of *Humayun*.

It is also worth-mentioning that the battle of *Qanauj* had cleared the way to *Agra* for the Afghans, but *Sher Shah* did not like to ride in triumph to *Agra* in haste. As usual, he moved cautiously. He himself stayed in *Qanauj* with his high nobles including *Khawwas Khan*, but deputed *Barmazid Kur* with a strong force to pursue the Mughal fugitives towards *Agra*. The latter reached *Agra* when *Humayun* had already left for the *Panjab*.<sup>3</sup> Being informed of his occupation of *Agra*, *Sher Shah*

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 78b-79a; *Akbarnama*, I/164-165, *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*, ff. 20b- 21a.

2. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, (eng. tr.) p. 477.

3. Cf. Chapter, V.

also came there and then decided to take steps against the Mughals, concentrating in the Punjab. Khawwas Khan and Barmazidkur were selected to march with the specific orders that they would pursue the Mughal Emperor without giving a fight to him on the way.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly they tracked Humayun all through from Delhi right upto Sirhind where they were asked to stay.<sup>2</sup> Their stay in *Sirhind* seems to have lasted for three months.

Satisfied with the progress of affairs in the Panjab, Sher Shah sent order to Khawwas Khan to make advance on Sultanpur as he had already completed the administrative arrangement in the territories around Agra and Delhi, and was therefore able to march to *Lahore* in person. Khawwas Khan did accordingly. As he approached *Sultanpur* he found *Junald Beg*, a Mughal noble guarding the river Beas against him. The latter was easily defeated and killed.<sup>3</sup> Soon afterwards Sher Shah also came to *Sirhind* where he rewarded Khawwas Khan with the assignment of the entire *Sarkar* of Sirhind as his maintenance *iqta*. The *Masnad-i'all* left his slave, Bhagwant to carry on its government on his behalf because he had to serve elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 80b.

Both 'Abbas and Abul Fazl avoid recording the truth about the events of this time because it was disparaging to the Mughals. 'Abbas states that Sher Shah had given specific orders to Khawwas Khan, "not to engage the Emperor in battle, but to drive him beyond the borders of the kingdom." According to Abul Fazl it was the fear of the Emperor which deterred Khawwas Khan from attacking the Emperor in spite of the latter's numerical inferiority. Prof. Qanungo accepts the statement of 'Abbas and observed that instead of being serious of Humayun Sher Shah's attitude towards Kamran became more severe as the latter appeared to him stepping into the shoes of Babur and Humayun. Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 263.

The fact that Sher deputed Haji Khan, Habib Khan (also his slave), Sarmast Khan Sirbini, Jalal Khan Jilo, 'Isa Khan Niazi and Barmazid under Khawwas Khan with a large army, should not be lost sight of. They were the leading nobles of Sher Shah who had smashed the Mughal forces in different battles, fought previously. They could not hesitate in giving a battle to Humayun who was now left with a small band of followers. But the obstacles on the route rendered it almost impossible for the Afghan army to wheel on with fast speed. Moreover, the Mughals also left the region in haste so that they might not be caught by Khawwas Khan.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 80b.

3. *Akbarnama*, I/359.

4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 83b.

On Sher Shah's arrival in the Panjab, the Mughals fled from Lahore in different directions.<sup>1</sup> Having reached Lahore, *Sher Shah* deputed *Masnad-I-'all Khawwas Khan* to chase Humayun along the western bank of the *Jhelum* towards *Sind*, and *Qutb Khan naib (Sur)* to overtake Mirza Kamran in the direction of *Kabul*.<sup>2</sup> But none of them succeeded in overtaking the Mughal fugitives. The difficult terrain, the presence of the war-like tribes in the region and the unfamiliarity of the Afghan generals with its topography must have hindered their rapid movement in the pursuit of the enemy. Khawwas Khan, however, returned to Sher Shah when Humayun had entered lower *Sind*.<sup>3</sup>

On the evacuation of the Panjab by the Mughals, Khawwas Khan was required along with other fellow nobles to subdue the pro-Mughal Gakkhar chief, *Sarang Khan*, whose tribe inhabited the Salt Range. On being summoned by Sher Shah, Sarang Khan had summarily refused to submit to his authority. Sher Shah, therefore, decided to punish him in an exemplary way. His region was over run; the villages were plundered, children and women were made slaves, while the captured men were put to death. Among the captives were also included two daughters of Sarang Khan whom Sher Shah gave to Prince Jalal Khan and Khawwas Khan respectively.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter Sher Shah appointed Khawwas Khan and Haibat Khan Niazi in the newly-constructed fort of Rohtas (in the Panjab) as governors to stem the raids of the Gakhars to carry on the government of the Panjab as a joint responsibility. There were also left certain nobles, such as 'Isa Khan Niazi, *Haibat Khan Sultani* and *Rao Husain Jilwani* to work under them.<sup>5</sup> (Then Sher Shah left for Bengal).

1. Cf. *Life and Times of Humayun*, pp. 158-160, for further details,

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 84a,

3. *Ibid.*, f 84a. *Akbarnama*, i/361.

Here also I have rejected 'Abbas's statement that Khawwas Khan was ordered by Sher Shah only to drive Humayun away from the Panjab and not to fight against him. It does not sound reasonable, but our author writes in this way to imply that Sher Shah still had respect for Humayun and could not do otherwise. This is 'Abbas's flattery.

4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 87a-b.

'Abbas wrongly states that both the daughters of Sarang Khan Gakhar were given to Khawwas Khan, because Badaoni's account of Islam Shah's reign shows that one of the two girls was Islam Shah's wife. Badaoni, i/380.

5. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f.87b.

In the beginning, the supreme *muqtas* worked in close co-operation. The local *zamindars* and chieftains must have paid allegiance to Sher Shah through them either willingly, because the new ruler was an Indian who had driven away the alien Mughals or they were terrified by the presence of powerful men in the Panjab to submit to them without any hesitation. But, with the pacification of local people and the consolidation of the Afghan authority there, the supreme *muqtas* whom Sher Shah had delegated equal powers, began to quarrel over matters related to the administration of the Panjab. *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan, who possessed great sense of loyalty to his master realized that the administrative machinery could not function owing to their differences, and then he wrote to Sher Shah suggesting that one of them should be recalled without delay. As the *Masnad-i-'ali* was required elsewhere, Sher Shah recalled him sometime in 1542-43.<sup>1</sup>

In 1543 A.D., Khawwas Khan accompanied Sher Shah for the conquest of *Marwar*. The credit of stabilising Sher Shah's rule in *Marwar* also goes to Khawwas Khan. We know it for certain that it was Khawwas Khan who destroyed the heroic Rajput generals of *Raja Maldev*, and after them, the establishment of Sher Shah's authority in the conquered region had become comparatively easy. It is said that before giving battle, Sher Shah tried to make *Maldev* lose confidence in his trusted nobles by playing a trick upon him. He had letters written in the name of *Maldev's* officers to the effect that they were in secret alliance with the Afghan King, and then managed to get them to *Maldev*. Finding these letters, the *Raja* lost confidence in his generals and fled away without giving fight to the enemy. *Maldev's* general *Jaita*, *Kupa* and *Akhairaj Sangara* decided to make a surprise attack on Sher Shah and fight to the last breath, in order to prove their loyalty to their master. At day break, they charged the Afghan army and Khawwas Khan came out to face them. The Rajputs displayed unprecedented chivalry by breaking through the Afghan force. Even 'Abbas, a panegyrist of the Afghans, has to admit that they had inflicted severe losses on the Afghan army by their fierce charges. But Khawwas Khan, who was a soldier in millions soon succeeded in getting over them. The Rajput gen-

1. *Ibid.*, f. 92b.

erals were killed with thousands of followers and the news of victory were sent to Sher Shah in his tent while he was offering his morning prayers.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the conquest of *Marwar* was complete, and Sher Shah was now confronted with the problem of its administration. He needed a capable man who might consolidate his authority on one hand and could dispense impartial justice to the ruled on the other. In actual fact there was no dearth of competent military generals in the army; the nobles like Barmazid, Nasir Khan, Jalal Khan bin Jilo Sur, Qutb Khan naib (Sur), Haji Khan, etc. were excellent soldiers who had already distinguished themselves as generals of dash and ability. In their way they were capable of doing great things, but they were not fit for the practical work of peace time. They were tyrants, unfit for regular and systematic work. However, the required man whom he found in Khawwas Khan, was an intrepid soldier on the battle-field but a kind-hearted and generous administrator in peace-time. He was really the best suited man for the government of *Jodhpur* territory which was full of war-like Rajputs and almost without any local population to help in the establishment of the Afghan rule there. For this reason *Sher Shah* appointed him as the supreme *muqta* of the *sarkars* from *Jodhpur* to *Mewat*, while Barmazid, 'Isa Khan Niazi and Haji Khan were placed under him as the *muqtas* of *Ajmer sarkar*, *Nagaur sarkar* and *Mewat sarkar* respectively.<sup>2</sup>

1. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, ff, 99a-100a.

In an attempt to overstate the importance of Sher Shah's victory over the generals of Maldev, 'Abbas seems to have concocted many details. His mention of an ordinary Afghan soldier who went to Sher Shah and informed him about the fierce battle being fought between the Rajputs and the Afghans, as well as Sher Shah's remark after the victory was achieved, that he had just lost the Empire of Hindustan for the sake of a handful millet, need not be taken seriously. We are informed by 'Abbas that at this time also Sher Shah was at the head of a large army, consisting of his veteran soldiers, a strong park of artillery and numerous war-elephants, and, therefore, it seems that he had proceeded against Maldev with all determination to destroy him. In order to avoid much blood shed, he liked to deceive Maldev by a stratagem and fortunately succeeded in achieving his object without difficulty. Moreover, the fact that Khawwas, who was the first noble to face the valiant Rajputs, could outmaneuver his opponents before the main Afghan army joined him, also makes it clear that victory was achieved by Khawwas Khan without suffering very heavy losses in men or material.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 99b-100a.

The Persian chroniclers do not furnish enough information about Khawwas Khan's activities in these territories. 'Abbas dismisses his achievements in a few sentences : "Khawwas Khan founded a city near the fort of Jodhpur and called it Khawwaspur after him. He brought the entire region of *Nagaur*, *Ajmer* and the vilayet of Marwar (Jodhpur) under his control; and that Maldev fled to the fort of *Siwana*, situated on the border of Gujarat."<sup>1</sup>

On the basis of information contained in the Rajput sources, we can discuss the role, played by Khawwas Khan and his followers in Marwar region after the battle of *Samel*. On the departure of Sher Shah for Ajmer, Khawwas Khan laid siege to the fort of Jodhpur, then known for its impregnability. Though the defenders; *Achola* (son of Shivraj), *Tiloksi*, *Barjang* and *Bhati Jalmal* fought to the last breath, Khawwas Khan occupied it without much difficulty. Thereafter, Khawwas Khan proceeded to the village of *Kosana*, where a large number of the Rajput soldiers had gathered under the leadership of Rani *Umade*, the wife of Maldev. When Khawwas Khan reached the place, where he later founded the town of Khawwaspur, (between Jodhpur and Kosana), he came to know that the Rani was determined to fight and die, but he did not consider it worthy of a soldier to lay hands upon women. As chivalry demanded, Khawwas Khan "proclaimed amnesty to Kosana, and went away in search of men worthy of his steel. Later on, when Umade expressed her desire to go to her paternal home of Jaisalmir, Khawwas Khan gave her retinue a safe conduct there."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, the Rajput resistance in *Falodhi* and *Pohkaran* was crushed and Maldev's officers, *Dhanna Bhati* (defender of Falodhi) and *Benidas*, *Ramdas*, *Dalpat* and *Goka* (those who were left to defend Pohkaran) were killed by *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan. Raja Maldev, who had shut himself in *Sanchor*, demanded Khawwas Khan's attention when the occupation of Jodhpur and its surrounding area was complete.

---

1. *Ibid.*, f. 100a,

The fort of Siwana was sixty miles south-west of Jodhpur and was surrounded by inaccessible hills.

2. *Nainsi's Khyat and Reu, Marwar*, as quoted by Prof. Qanungo, *Sher Shah and his times*, pp. 409, 410

The *Masnad-I-ali* captured the fort and Maldev fled to Siwana which was the only fort left to him.<sup>1</sup>

Almost all the places which Khawwas Khan had cleaned of the officers of *Maldev*, were given to the Rajput princes who had paid allegiance to Sher Shah and agreed to serve him with full loyalty. Rawal Lunkaran of Jaisalmir was given Falodhi, while Medta was returned to *Biram Dev* with additional land grant in the *sarkar* of Ajmer in recognition of their services to Sher Shah against Maldev.<sup>2</sup>

Having crushed the hostile elements in all the territories of Marwar, Ajmer and Nagaur, Khawwas Khan set to establish peace and order there. He established *thanas* (military posts) at the strategic places and stationed strong garrisons there under his trusted men. One of the *thanas*, which was named Shergarh by *Khawwas Khan*, soon became the headquarter of a flourishing *pargana*.<sup>3</sup> This was not all. By his large-heartedness and love for service to mankind, regardless of any racial or religious consideration, endeared him to the local people as will be discussed subsequently.

During the period, 1538 to 1545 *Masnad-a-'ali* Khawwas Khan worked tirelessly; he conquered new territories and consolidated Sher Shah's rule there. He never appears to have stayed at any one place for more than a few months, for his presence was required in different directions. Having been satisfied with the affairs of the vilayet of *Marwar*, he turned to *Nagaur* sometime after March 1544, but he does not seem to have stayed in Nagaur for a long time, because in the beginning of 1545 he was in *Bayana*. *Rizquallah Mushtaqi* incidentally mentions this fact with regard to the visit of twenty-two nobles under the command of *Ahmad Khan Sur* to Khawwas Khan in *Bayana*. *Ahmad Khan Sur* was the commander of the Afghan advance guard marching towards *Khajuraho*.<sup>4</sup> The reason of Khawwas Khan's coming to Bayana has not been explained by any chronicler, but it may be assumed that the rebellion of 'Alam Khan *Mlana* (Afghan) in Meerut at the time

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 410, 411, 412. Sanchor was 132 miles south-west of Jodhpur and 70 miles from Siwana.

2. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, pp. 104-106.

3. *Waqi' at-I-Mushtaqi*, f. 59a.

4. *Ibid.*, f. 58a.



when Sher Shah was proceeding for the conquest of *Kalinjar* and *Bhatta* territories, might have caused his departure from *Nagaur*. Because he appears to have ordered his slave *Bhagwant* to march from *Sirhind* with his contingent to join him against the rebel. But *Bhagwant*, instead of joining *Khawwas Khan* straight away attacked 'Alam Khan somewhere on his way and destroyed him. The *Masnad-i-'all* *Khawwas Khan*, thereupon, might have stayed in *Bayana* for sometime.<sup>1</sup>

### (b) Religious and Social life :

The data available in the medieval literature reveals that the *Masnad-i-'all* *Khawwas Khan* was sincerely devoted to religion and piety. Severe and a harsh military general in the battle, he was compassionate to mankind in peacetime. *Mushtaqi* says that he was distinguished by the marks of nobility and uprightness. In addition to five time prayers, he spent his night in vigil on certain occasions, such as *Shab-i-barat* and *Shab-i-Qadr*.<sup>2</sup> But his true religious spirit kept him free from religious fanaticism. The information, available about the *Masnad-i-'all* in different sources, if properly sifted and analysed, shows that he was a deep mystic, known for his dynamism as well as interest in the exoteric and esoteric sciences. He practised an eclectic faith, and gave himself up to the service of those who lived in the territories assigned to his charge. In this respect he was neither carried away by any considerations- religious, racial or sectarian. We know it on the basis of *Badaoni* that he could not pull on with *Shaikh 'Ala'i*, the popular leader of the *Mahadevi* movement, inspite of the fact that the latter's piety and honesty had immensely impressed him.

The *Masnad-i-'all* came into contact with *Shaikh 'Ala'i* during his stay in *Jodhpur* towards the close of *Sher Shah's* reign. The *Shaikh* who wanted to purify the Indian Islam of its later accretions, the continuation of which, according to him involved unbelief. But the practices adopted by the Muslims in Indian environment centuries back had already become the part and parcel of the Muslim way of life and were even Muslimised to some extent. It was really too much for the Indian Muslims to shake them off all of a sudden. *Khawwas*

1. *Waqf' at-i- Mushtaqi*, f. 58a. Also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 100b- 101a.

2. *Waqf' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 57a, 59a.

Khan, who was a man of catholic views and evinced keen interest in audition parties (*sama* or *Qawali*) which was considered to be a sinful innovation by Shaikh 'Ala'i, could not pull on with the latter; differences were certain to arise. Badaoni says about Shaikh 'Ala'i's short-lived association with *Khawwas Khan* : "On his arrival at Khawwaspur which is near Jodhpur, Khawwas Khan who had been appointed to the district, at first came out to receive him and joined the circle of his adherents; but in consequence of his devotion to musical entertainments and pastimes, where every Thursday night sufis used to assemble in his house, and Shaikh 'Ala'i forbade music and other prohibited pastimes, and enjoined that which was lawful and opposed that which was forbidden by law, accordingly their association was not agreeable, besides which opposition and disagreement arose with regard to the upholding of the rights of the soldiery."<sup>1</sup>

However, *Masand-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan stuck to his old practices that were popular among the sufis of the day. Like the Sufis, he considered the service of humanity as the greatest act of piety. A large number of the destitute and needy people was attached to him and he provided all of them with food, cloth and other necessities of life. Mushtaqi states about his sympathy and love for the poor : "He had pitched large tents for destitute people and travellers both. For widows the tents were pitched separately. He provided all of them with mattresses and beds, he was never found without such people, whether in the town or on journey."<sup>2</sup>

His radiating personality, shapped by his excellent qualities of head and heart seem to have created many legends about his unprecedented generosity and large-heartedness after his death,<sup>3</sup> for the medieval works are replete with them. Here we may relate only what can stand to the test of historical criticism and is corroborated by different sources of information. Because it helps us in analysing the popular trends in a certain section of the Indian society.

---

1. *Badaoni*, (Eng. Tr.) Ranking, i/512-13.

2. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi* f, 59a.

3. Abul Fazi tries to discredit Khawwas Khan in his account of the Sur Kings by stating that Khawwas Khan extorted money from people with one hand and distributed it among them with the other in order to gain popularity. I have taken no note of his criticism as he is biased against every person who was opposed to the Mughals.

The traditions of munificence and generosity were generally associated with the aristocracy; the Indian aristocrats vied with one another in this respect. In fact, they earned fame and popularity among people by extending patronage to the scholars and pious saints, distributing treasures among the poor on certain occasions and arranging grand banquets for the entertainment of their friends and fellow nobles. *Masnad-i-'all Khawwas Khan* is said to have excelled his contemporaries in these matters. But, unlike others he got greatest pleasure in feeding those who were left without means of livelihood. It is said that once his servants failed to get dry fuel in Rohtas (Panjab) as it was raining during the winter and the Gakkhars were causing difficulties for the Afghans in the vicinity of the fort, and the food for *faqirs* who were with the *Masnad-i-'all* in a large number could not be cooked. Being informed of it, he was disturbed very much. As there was no easy solution to the problem, he ordered his servants to sock the bales of fine cloth of Bengal, available in plenty in his stores, in oil and use them for cooking food. In this way food and *halwa* (sweetmeats) were prepared for his indigent guests. Since the night was extremely cold, he visited every *faqir* and enquired about his comfort. This was not all. He helped those also who could not live with him. He used to send lacs of rupees to many needy persons living in different territories every year.<sup>1</sup>

Upon the occurrence of famines which were faced so frequently with their attendant suffering by people in Medieval India, Khawwas Khan took pains in saving people from its disaster. Once a severe famine broke out in the *sarkar* of Nagaur and, 'Isa Khan Niazi, the *faujdar* of the territory informed Khawwas Khan and the latter rushed to the scene of calamity with necessary provisions. In Nagaur, Khawwas Khan found that people had come to the town from different places and the number of people had considerably increased. He, thereupon, fixed two seers of food grains for every person, irrespective of age as a daily ration that was given free of cost. Mushtaqi says that one day the grain could not be procured for distribution, but the *Masnad-i-'all* insisted on providing people with eatables on that day also, he ordered that every person would be given dry fruits, two seers per head. Consequently they got almonds, dried grapes and

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 1/340-341.

dates.<sup>1</sup> In short, he never seems to have given up his interest in supporting the poor. Even when he had suffered defeat at the hands of *Islam Shah* in *Agra* in 1545 and was hotly pursued, he did not forget to take care of the *faqirs* who were with him at that time. It is said that he was forced to face the pursuing army of 12,000 sawars with a small contingent of his remaining followers near *Mewat* because the *faqirs* were exposed to danger. In order to save them he fell on the royal army and caused confusion in its rank and file by his sudden charge. Many people of the royal army were killed and the rest were routed.<sup>2</sup>

The author of the *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani* supplements our information in this regard. According to him the number of the *faqirs*, permanently attached to the court of the *Mansad-i- ali* consisted of several hundred persons, belonging to different religious orders; the *malang* (a kind of Muslim ascetics), *Langotaband* (Hindu ascetics who put on only loin cloth), *Yaran-i-Pyara* (also Muslim ascetics), *jogis* and *munis* (Brahmans, exclusively devoted to religion) and *gibrs* (fire-worshippers). "They had come from different quarters, kindled fire (for worship) in his camp and got daily allowances in the form of money, grains and cooked food as well."<sup>3</sup>

Similarly *Khawwas Khan's* attitude towards his soldiers was also sympathetic. He loved them like his own kith and kin. *Mushtaqi* rightly observes that his large-heartedness and munificence was in proportion to his personal greatness. No noble of *Sher Shah* could rival him in any way.<sup>4</sup>

*Khawwas Khan's* celebration of the birth anniversary of the Prophet of Islam also deserves to be mentioned. On this occasion he was always overwhelmed with joy and enthusiasm and gave away what ever he possessed. In the year 1540-41 the birth day of the Prophet happened at a time when he was busy with fighting against the *Gakhars* of the *Salt range* in the *Punjab*, but its celebration could not be postponed. He celebrated it on such a grand scale that every *Afghan noble*, present there was amazed, for there was short-

- 
1. *Waqi at-i-Mushtaqi*, f, 59a,
  2. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f, 59a.
  3. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/340.
  4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f.58b,

age of food in that quarter. It is said that the soldiers had already exhausted their provisions and had nothing to eat on that day particularly. Therefore, Khawwas Khan invited all the nobles with their soldiers who numbered about 40 or 50 thousand to dinner. First the nobles were served with various dishes, such as mutton soup, different meat preparations, milk, rice and sweet dishes. There was separate arrangement for the Hindus. For the latter, there were Puris (fried bread), *Suhall*, *Gulgulal*, *Gitehndi*, *Curd curry*, *baris*, *bara*, *Pahloori*, *Manguri*, and *Mangochhi*. Besides various sweet meats were also available. As the nobles finished their meal; the sawars and footmen came to eat. In the last every person left the camp of the *Masnad-i-'all* with a betel leaf. Amazed by this grand feast when there was acute food shortage, *Haibat Khan Niazi* said to Khawwas Khan: "Today you have displayed your miraculous power." Thereupon, Khawwas Khan replied: "I have done no miracle. I keep enough in store by giving something to every one of my ten thousand footmen to carry on. The cows and she-buffalos accompany me. Similarly the two thousand led horses, camels and elephants also carry the sacks of necessary articles for the kitchen."<sup>1</sup>

Mention may also be made of a few of the grand feasts, arranged by the *Masnad-i-'all* from time to time for the entertainment of the fellow nobles and friends because they shed interesting light on the food habits of the medieval aristocrats. Here we may confine only to the description of two feasts for the sake of brevity. They were arranged at two different places at different times. The account of the first feast is given by *Ni'mat Ullah* in full details. The author relates it on the authority of *Malik Badru'd dln Maral* of *Samana*, who happened to be one of the close friends of Khawwas Khan and had survived the Sur Empire. Some of the details are important in so far as they reveal the humanism of Khawwas Khan, the ruthlessness of *Barmazid Kur*,<sup>2</sup> and the nature of kingship under Sher Shah. Even the chosen nobles who could boast of raising Sher Shah to sovereign status later on,<sup>3</sup> did not have courage to act

1. *Waqf' at-i- Mushtaqi*, f, 57a-b.

2. cf. *Chapter, IV*.

3. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, p. 147

It is said that once *Shuja' at Khan*, Sher Shah's muqta of Malwa wrote to *Islam Shah* that he was one of those nobles who had helped his father in

against his wishes. Besides we are also given insight into many other important facts, such as the political views of certain nobles about kingship.

However, according to the authority of Ni'mat Ullah, once Sher Shah called *Masnad-i-'all* Khawwas Khan and Barmazid to his private chamber and consulted them on certain matters. In course of conversation the king turned to Khawwas Khan and told him with love and affection that if any criminal charged even with a serious crime, would be entrusted to his custody, it was for him alone to decide whether the accused would be killed or pardoned. Then the king addressed Barmazid that he would atonce kill the man who was given to his charge whether he deserved death or not. Both the grandees bowed before the king and came out.

To Khawwas Khan the favour shown by Sher Shah in allowing him to kill or pardon a person as he desired, was a matter of pride and joy and he thanked his God for it in his customary way. He arranged a feast to which all the persons—nobles, officers and ordinary servants in the army camp of Sher Shah were invited. Since Khawwas Khan looked overwhelmed with joy and served the guests with his own hands in the presence of his servants, his friend Malik Badru'ddin asked the reason for his strange behaviour on that occasion. The *Masnad-i-'all* remarked. "They (the kings) are the shadow of God, If I had been charged with the work of soul-ravishing and murdering, I was bound to obey." He did not like to kill innocent people.<sup>1</sup>

Mushtaqi's account of Khawwas Khan's banquet, given in *Bayana* on the arrival of 22 Afghan nobles in the command of *Ahmad Khan Sur* in *Bayana* is also worth mentioning. *Ahmad Khan Sur* was appointed by Sher Shah to lead the army to *Khajuraho* when the latter was preparing to march towards *Kalinjar*. The commander of the army was asked to reach his destination by forced marches. But, on reaching *Bayana*, he rushed to pay visit to *Khawwas Khan*. This was the 15th day of the lunar month and *Khawwas Khan* used to observe fast on this day. Therefore, he requested *Ahmad*

---

gaining the throne of Hindustan and so he could not be disloyal to his son. The king should have no doubt about his loyalty to him.

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/342.

Khan Sur to stay for the day, so that he might play the host to him and all his followers in the evening. *Ahmad Khan Sur* told him that he would have certainly obeyed him if he had not been ordered by the king to reach *Khajuraho* without making half on the way. Then *Khawwas Khan* asked his officers and cooks to entertain his guests with whatever they had in the kitchen and stores.

The servants acted promptly. They brought water-ewers to wash the hands of the guests. First they served them with bread and meat-pieces (*kababs*). All the nobles were present with their entire contingents of *sawars*. They began to take bread and *kababs*, thinking that it was all to be eaten. But soon the officers of *Khawwas Khan* surprised them by saying that they would not feed themselves with *Kababs* alone, for there were other dishes also to be served. Thereupon some of the guests remarked that as the *Masnad-i-'ali* was fasting, the cooks could not be expected to keep much ready in the kitchen. However, the servants brought beef-tea for every one, and then started afresh to serve them. According to the Afghan custom, they placed roasted sheep and castrated goats (*khasi*) before every three or four persons. Thereafter followed the dishes of red and yellow mutton curry, chicken, partridges and several other birds, and in the end particularly *halwa* (sweet dish) was placed before everyone. Likewise, the Hindus of the army were extended hospitality. They were served with other food preparations, popular among themselves and jointly termed as *Pakwan-i-Hindi*, that is said to have consisted of Puris, vegetables, and different pulses. As usual they also finished their meal with coagulated milk, rice, both sweet and salted.<sup>1</sup>

In short, *Khawwas Khan's* hospitality became proverbial in the Sur Empire. *Badaoni* says that one of his noble qualities was his munificence towards his guests and the poor. As he accompanied *Sher Shah* on his way to *Kalinjar*, he advanced two lac rupees to the confectioners of *Kalpi* so that they might send sugar to him without intermission upto *Ranthambore* from where he had to return to *Bayana*. In the same way he gave money to the gardeners of *Bayana*, to have a regular supply of mangoes day after day to the halting places upto *Jodhpur* for the poor and *faqirs* living under

---

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 58b

his shelter. On Khawwas Khan's flight from the Sur Empire, Islam Shah appointed persons to recover twenty four thousand rupees which remained of that money with the confectioners of Kalpi and the mango merchants of Bayana, and deposited it in the royal treasury.<sup>1</sup>

To resume the description of Khawwas Khan's military career during Islam Shah's reign, I conclude my discussion of Khawwas Khan's socio-religious life with the remark of Ni'mat Ullah :

"Had Hatim Ta'i (Arab chief, celebrated for his large-heartedness) been alive in his days, he would have put on the mantle of servitude on his shoulders to learn the ways of munificence and generosity from him. If famous Rostam (the legendary Persian brave) had seen him, he would have prostrated before him."

On Sher Shah's accidental death in 1545, the nobles present in *Kalinjar* conspired to set aside the claim of Prince 'Adil Khan (the eldest son of Sher Shah), in favour of their master's second son, *Jalal Khan* whom they invited from the region of Bhatta and placed him on the throne. At this time *Masnad-i-ali* Khawwas Khan seems to have been in *Bayana*<sup>2</sup> from where he rushed to welcome the new king on his way to *Agra*. Their meeting took place in *Kara*, and Khawwas Khan celebrated his coronation second time in that city with a view to paying his allegiance to him in a manner befitting his position. His allegiance to Islam Shah removed all the danger of a Civil War at that time, because his decision in this matter did

---

1. *Badaoni*, i/410.

2. Nizam Uddin Bakhsi says that Khawwas Khan was in his *Iqta*, the *Sarkar* of *Sirhind* at the time of Sher Shah's death and Islam Shah's accession to the throne in *Kalinjar*. Being informed of those events he rushed to meet the new king on his way from *Kalinjar* to *Agra*. He met the king near *Kara* and paid allegiance to him. There Ni'mat Ullah and other later chroniclers follow Nizam Uddin. But Mushtaqi's reference to Khawwas Khan's stay at the time of the Afghan occupation of *Khajuraho* and Badaoni's specific statement that he stayed in *Bayana* towards the close of Sher Shah's reign indicate that he proceeded from *Bayana* to pay visit to Islam Shah on his way to *Agra*. It is reasonable to accept Badaoni's statement because he could reach *Kara* within a short time from *Bayana*, and not from *Sirhind*.



## Sher Shah Sur and His Dynasty

away with the possibility of an armed conflict between the new king and his elder brother *Prince 'Adil Khan*, as Islam Shah himself realized.<sup>1</sup> His support to Islam Shah was decisive. But their happy association did not last for long, owing to the vacillating nature of the king; Khawwas Khan was soon dragged into the conflict between the brothers.

Islam Shah, an autocrat by temperament, was not willing to tolerate the powerful nobles of his father, some of whom had outshone him in their military exploits, for he feared them to oppose his political views and administrative reforms that he wanted to introduce in the army and the nobility.<sup>2</sup> For this purpose Islam Shah decided first to lay hands upon Prince 'Adil Khan who was popular among the nobles as well as common people for his amicable manners and could rally around him the recalcitrant persons at the time of conflict with the crown. He sent *Ghazi Mahli* to Bayana with gold chains to arrest 'Adil Khan (1545).<sup>3</sup> Thereupon, 'Adil Khan fled to Khawwas Khan in *Mewat*; the latter was much pained by Islam Shah's violation of his solemn pledge, for he was deputed along with *Qutb Khan naib*, *'Isa Khan Niazi* and *Jalal Khan bin Jilo Sur* to assure the former of the security of life and position, in case he would pay homage to Islam Shah. It was on their assurance that 'Adil Khan acknowledged his younger brother as king, and then Islam Shah granted him the *Sarkar* of Bayana instead of Ranthambore where he had been posted by Sher Shah. Always honest to his pledge, as

---

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II/107,  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahanl*, I/354.

After Khawwas Khan had paid allegiance to Islam Shah in Kara, the king instantly declared that he was a real king only from the time of the former's homage to him. In fact, Khawwas Khan's prompt action in this regard implied that the question of 'Adil Khan's claim to the throne was not to be taken by any other noble seriously as the *Masnad-i-all* was his chief supporter.

2. cf. *Some aspects of Afghan Depotism in India*, pp. 70, 85-6.

3. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II/108-109.

Upon Islam Shah's accession to the throne, Adil Khan wrote to his brother that he would pay visit to his court in Agra if Khawwas Khan, Qutb Khan, the naib, 'Isa Khan Niazi and Jalalkhan Jilo Sur would assure him of his security. For his satisfaction, Islam Shah sent all the nobles to him and then he paid visit to Agra. Upon His arrival in Agra, Islam Shah decided not to fulfil his promise. But the high nobles pleaded 'Adil Khan's cause and the king had to yield to their pressure. The *Sarkar* of Bayana was assigned to him for his maintenance.

Khawwas Khan was, he had now no other alternative except to take up openly the cause of 'Adil Khan.

First of all, Khawwas Khan decided to persuade certain high nobles of Sher Shah through letters as well as agents to support 'Adil Khan against Islam Shah as he had committed the breach of faith and thus lost their confidence. On his persuasion many nobles appear to have decided to espouse 'Adil Khan's cause. Qutb Khan *naib*, Jalal Khan Jilo Sur and *Barmazid*, who already had soft-corner for 'Adil Khan, promised whole-hearted support and also suggested to Khawwas Khan through the messenger that he should advance on *Agra* at night time, so that they might join him in the dark. Khawwas Khan did accordingly. He took 'Adil Khan and his comrade-in-arms, *Masnad-i-all* 'Isa Khan Niazi with him and reached the town of Sikri at midnight from where he could dash onward. But in Sikri his love for the holy men came in his way, and he stopped there to pay visit to *Shaikh Sallim Chishti*, the celebrated Sufi saint of the 16th century, and passed much of his time in offering obligatory prayers (*nawafil*) as it happened to be *Shab-i-barat*. He, however, reached the outskirts of *Agra* at dawn.<sup>1</sup>

Islam Shah was unnerved by the news of his arrival with 'Adil Khan and 'Isa Khan Niazi, and in utter panic, he decided to leave *Agra* for *Chunar* and prepare a strong army of trusted men with the treasures of Sher Shah, accumulated there. In his anxiety he also allowed Qutb Khan *na'ib* and other nobles of doubtful loyalty to join Prince 'Adil Khan, for their presence inside *Agra* was thought to be dangerous for him. But 'Isa Khan *Hajlb* asked him to prevent all the nobles from joining 'Adil Khan and give him battle without any delay. Further he said to the king that he should rely upon the six thousand *sawars* who constituted his *Khasa Khatt* during his father's life-time, in case the loyalty of the old nobles was doubtful. On 'Isa Khan *Hajlb*'s (also a Niazi Afghan) persuasion Islam Shah recalled Qutb Khan *na'ib* and other nobles and

---

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/109;  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/359;  
*Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, pp. 165-166.

said to them : "Why should I surrender you to the enemy, lest he should harm you."<sup>1</sup>

Thus the nobles, who were secretly in alliance with Khawwas Khan and had decided to espouse the cause of 'Adil Khan, failed in their designs. The sudden appearance of Islam Shah before the rival army rendered it difficult for them to desert him with their followers. Therefore, they remained with the king, but in the fight they do not seem to have exerted with any enthusiasm. Their inaction must have caused dismay in the rank and file of Islam Shah's army, with the result that the right and the left wings of his army were completely broken in the very beginning of the battle. Even many of the men in the centre under Islam Shah's personal command took to heels. *But Islam Shah* did not lose courage, he stood firm at his place with a few thousands of his trusted followers. Soon the circumstances took a turn in his favour. At the time when the battle was almost lost, he found 'Adil Khan standing with a few men, for most of his followers were engaged in pursuing the fugitives and plundering the royal camp; he at once took advantage of the weak position of his rival by falling upon him. 'Adil Khan could not stand Islam Shah's charge and fled away for his life. In this way Islam Shah's defeat turned into victory.<sup>2</sup> Khawwas Khan and 'Isa Khan Niazi fled to Mewat, while 'Adil Khan went to Bhatta.<sup>3</sup>

Although the defeat of 'Adil Khan and his supporters had finally decided the issue of succession to the throne of Sher Shah in his favour, yet their safe flight always kept him worried. In fact, he could not view his future as safe in their life-time because there was still a possibility of the hostile nobles joining hands with them. In an attempt to secure his position on a permanent basis, he decided to destroy the powerful nobles of his father whose loyalty was doubtful. He succeeded in laying his hands upon certain high nobles, present in the royal camp, while others sought safety in rebellion.

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/110

The Afghan chroniclers, Ni'mat Ullah, Abdullah, Shalkh kabir and Ahmad Yadgar have drawn upon the *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* for this information, and so we need not refer to them. . .

2. *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, f.578 a.

It is only the *Tarikh-i-Alfi* which contains the interesting information regarding the battle between Islam Shah and 'Adil Khan. Other works are very brief in this regard.

3. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/361.

*Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 241

As a matter of fact his long drawn conflict with the nobility deprived him of the time and resources which could be utilized in the further expansion of the Sur Empire as visualised by his father. Moreover, this conflict resulted in the weakening of the Sur Empire. The dearth of able generals after the untimely death of Islam Shah led to the sudden fall of his Empire.

Furthermore, the attacks of Khawwas Khan on the imperial territories, particularly the *sarkars* of Sambhal and Badaun from the hills of Kumaon where he had got shelter along with 'Adil Khan and 'Isa Khan Niazi forced Islam Shah to post a large army there for defence and to keep a strict watch upon the nobles posted in other border territories.<sup>1</sup>

Endowed with great energy, power and talent of a successful general, Khawwas Khan inflicted heavy losses on Islam Shah's army whenever he came in clash with it. On Khawwas Khan's flight towards Mewat, Islam Shah deputed a strong force of 12,000 *sawars* to pursue him, but Khawwas Khan defeated it with the small number of his tried followers who had been left with him. Thereafter he left with 'Isa Khan Niazi for Kumaon, the Raja of which granted them refuge.<sup>2</sup> In Kumaon 'Adil Khan also joined them. There they became a permanent source of trouble to Islam Shah, for they used to get down from the hills and plunder the royal territories. For the defence of the frontier territories, Islam Shah deputed a huge army under the command of Qutb Khan *na'ib*.<sup>3</sup> But his

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/111.

*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, /361.

*Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 241.

Nizamud'din says that 'Adil Khan fled to Bhatta after his defeat and nothing was heard of him later on. The later chroniclers of the 17th century repeat his statement in this regard. The modern scholars accept this statement and do not bother to find out information about the life and activities of 'Adil Khan after his flight from the Sur Empire, although they come across references, available in the aforesaid sources to 'Adil Khan in the details about the discussion which took place between Khawwas Khan and 'Azam Humayun Niazi over the issue of succession to the throne of Sher Shah after Islam Shah. They pass over this fact without discussing the whereabouts of 'Adil Khan at that time.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 59a.

3. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, 1/111-112.

*Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 71b.

Soon afterwards, Qutb Khan *naib* fled away to Azam Humayun Niazi in Lahore because he was afraid of Islam Shah's wrath who had treacherously killed Jalal Khan Jilo Sur and his younger brother, Khudadad

raids on the border territories could not be successfully checked due to the pre-occupation of Islam Shah in fighting against the nobles of Sher Shah. Khawwas Khan is said to have laid waste the entire *sarkar* of Sambhal.<sup>1</sup>

In 1547 Khawwas Khan and 'Isa Khan Niazi came to Lahore to co-operate with Azam Humayun Niazi (former Haibat Khan) who was in rebellion against Islam Shah. The Niazis were glad to receive them but Khawwas Khan soon fell out with them on the issue of succession to the throne. Khawwas Khan wanted Prince Adil Khan to ascend the throne after Islam Shah, while Azam Humayun Niazi expressed his own desire to become the king. His ambition displeased Khawwas Khan, who thought it unbecoming on his part to fight against the son of his master for the sake of the rebel Niazis. For this reason, he decided to keep himself out of the conflict. He rather did harm to the Niazis by coming out of the battle-field when the two armies started fighting. The Niazis were naturally disheartened by this act of Khawwas Khan. However, they did not lose courage and fought with heroic valour. But they could not succeed against the royal army which was numerically far superior, and were defeated near Ambala.<sup>2</sup>

On Islam Shah's return to Agra, Khawwas Khan and 'Isa Khan Niazi came back to Lahore from the Siwalik hills and laid siege to its fort, while Shams Khan Nuhani, whom Islam Shah had entrusted with the government of the western *sarkars* in place of Azam Humayun Niazi, was on some military expedition 45 miles away. Khawwas Khan encamped in the garden of Mirza Kamran, where he pulled down the tall trees to use them as ladder for climbing the ramparts of the fort. He exerted such a great pressure on the garrison that it was to give way, but the news of the arrival of Rao Husain Jilwani at the head of 30,000 *sawars* dimmed the chances of Khawwas Khan's success. Thereupon, 'Isa Khan Niazi insisted on his rais-

---

Khan for their sympathy with 'Adil Khan. As Said Khan, the younger brother of Azam Humayun Niazi was still with Islam Shah, he sent Qutb Khan to Islam Shah who ordered him to be thrown into prison with Barmazid and others and then had them killed.

1. *Badaoni*, I/380; *Waqf'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 71b.
2. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/364-365,  
*Badaoni*, I/380; *Waqf'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 71b.

ing the siege as their flowers were in a small number. Khawwas Khan yielded to pressure exerted by his friend, but he did not like to leave Rao *Husain Jilwani* without giving fight. He fell on the royal army with 500 picked *sawars* and massacred thousands of them. Both, Mushtaqi and Badaoni state that having been impressed by Khawwas Khan's undaunted courage, Rao Husain Jilwani did not consider it possible to encircle and destroy him. That Rao Husain asked his men to allow Khawwas Khan a free passage so that "the calamity might pass away." But the fact is that a general of Khawwas Khan's ability could easily hit the enemy at an advantageous point and run back without being molested. In this encounter the Masnad-i-'ali received severe wounds on his arms and fell off from his horse, but his men succeeded in taking him away on a cot.<sup>1</sup>

On his safe return to *Kumaon* from Lahore, *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan confined his activities to destroying the northern vilayet of the Sur Empire. Having failed in checking his raids, Islam Shah entrusted *Taj Khan Karrani*, who was known for his shrewdness and pleasing manners, with the government of the *sarkar* of *Samhhal* and asked him to do away with Khawwas Khan by fair or foul means. For accomplishing the deed undertaken by him, Taj Khan first persuaded the Raja of Kumaon through his agents to send the rebels to Islam Shah's court as prisoners, and promised him treasures in return, but the latter did not pay any heed; Khawwas Khan continued to enjoy his hospitality. He lived there till the death of 'Adil Khan who seems to have died sometime before the year 958 A.H. On his death Khawwas Khan gave up his interest in opposing Islam Shah as he was now left the only son of his master, Sher Shah. This is the reason why he responded to Islam Shah's *farman* requesting him to join his court again in 1552.<sup>2</sup>

The evidence furnished by *Ahmad Yadgar* about the last days of *Mansad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan's life, supplements the accounts of Mushtaqi and Badaoni in this connection. Ahmad Yadgar states that the Raja of kumaon had assigned a few villages to Khawwas Khan and his companions for their maintenance. Though *Taj Khan Karrani* carried on negotiation with the Raja in regard to the destruction of Khawwas Khan, the

1. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 59b. *Badaoni*, i/382-383.

2. *Badaoni*, i/400.

latter declined to lay his hands upon him as he had granted him asylum. Then Islam Shah himself wrote to Khawwas Khan: "You fought against me for the sake of 'Adil Khan. I know that you did not participate in the conflict on your own initiative but Qutb Khan *na'ib* and 'Isa Khan dragged you into it. The past is past. I have already forgiven you for it and now you should come to me without any fear. The Rana (probably of Marwar) has raised his head, plundered certain *parganas* of Ajmer (*sarkar*) and took Muslim women and children as prisoners. Some of the nobles were deputed against him but none could succeed."<sup>1</sup>

We know it for definite that Khawwas Khan was determined to carry on the struggle against Islam Shah to the last, for he was not made of ordinary stuff to yield to Islam Shah in any way. According to Mushtaqi, he never thought in terms of joining Islam Shah so long as 'Adil Khan remained alive. On the death of 'Adil Khan he lost all interest in his struggle against Islam Shah. Our author says: "So long as 'Adil Khan was alive, he remained his partisan. On his passing away he ceased to be his partisan. He said : I myself had no ambition, Islam Shah violated the pledge which he had made by taking oath. Now 'Adil Khan is dead; therefore, our struggle has come to an end. Islam Shah is my master and disobedience to him now amounts to dishonesty."<sup>2</sup>

On Khawwas Khan's decision to return to Islam Shah's court, the Raja of Kumaon and 'Isa Khan *Nlazi* persuaded him to change his mind because they were doubtful of Islam Shah's sincerity. But he did not agree with them and left for *Sambhal*. *Taj Khan*, the *faujdar* of the territory rushed to receive him with all honour. He pitched a tent for him outside *Sambhal*. But next day Khawwas Khan was treacherously killed by *Taj Khan's* men and then his body was sent to Delhi to be shown to people.<sup>3</sup> His murder took place sometime in 1552.<sup>4</sup>

1. *Tarikh-i-Shahl*, pp. 245- 246.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 59b-60a; also its english translation by Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, New-Delhi, 1993, p. 167.

3. *Tarikh-i- Shahl*, p. 246. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 61a.

4. Mushtaqi and Nizam Uddin do not mention the year of Khawwas Khan's murder. Badaoni is the earliest writer to refer to it in his account of Islam Shah's reign. He is corroborated by a sufi writer of the 16th century who incidentally mentions the date of his murder while referring to his tomb in

Contrary to the expectations of the king, people paid homage to Khawwas Khan by placing wreaths of flowers over his body at night. He was regarded as a *Shahid* (martyre) and was imbued with spiritual power. Many legends developed about him and his grave in Delhi and in course of time it became a centre of pilgrimage.<sup>1</sup> This was not only common with the people belonging to the lower strata of Delhi, but the highly educated people also believed in the nobility of his soul. Shaikh Abdul Haq of Delhi, who was nearly a contemporary writer, testifies to the fact in these words: "This Khawwas Khan was one of the slaves of Sher Shah. He was one of the saints of his age. He had surpassed everyone in his generosity and noble qualities."<sup>2</sup> Badaoni would have us believe that the murder of two saintly persons, Shaikh 'Ala'i and Khawwas Khan, brought about not only the end of Islam Shah's life but also the fall of the Sur Empire.<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact the Sur Empire collapsed after the death of Islam Shah, because the great generals, trained by Sher Shah, whose existence could keep away the Mughals from crossing its borders, were killed by him. On Islam Shah's death, none of his own nobles rose equal to the situation, caused by the return of Humayun.




---

Delhi, which was visited by people.

*Badaoni*, I/410.; Abdul Haqare Dehlevi, *Akbar-ul-Akhiyar*, p. 276.

1. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 246.
2. *Akhbar-ul-Akhiyar*, p. 276.
3. *Badaoni*, II/408-9.



## CHAPTER V

# Barmazid Kur

---

Barmazid Kur is one who joined Sher Shah in the beginning of his career and sprang up into top-rank prominence after his advent to sovereignty. Almost all the medieval chroniclers mention his name as *Barmazid Kur* and present him as a military general of dash and indomitable courage. In fact, his picture which emerges on going through the medieval works is that of a dare-devil whose tyranny knew no bounds. He could thrive only in the days of war. But the origin and religion of this man has been a matter of controversy among the modern scholars since the publication of Prof. Qanungo's '*Sher Shah*' (1921). In order to arrive at the correct understanding of his origin and career calls for a critical examination of the evidence, whatsoever, furnished by the medieval writers.

In 1921 Prof. Qanungo was the first writer to hazard the guess in his monograph that Barmazid was a Rajput noble of Sher Shah and so his name should correctly be read either as Brahmaditya or Brahmajit Gaur, for Barmazid was neither a Hindu name nor it was common among the Muslims. Thereafter he calls him as *Brahmajit Gaur*.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Banerjee, following Stewart, calls him Mir Farid Gaur without taking any notice of Prof. Qanungo's hypothesis.<sup>2</sup> Prof. Hodivala re-examined the evidence in different medieval works and then held that Barmazid was a common name among the Turks and the Afghans. Since his approach to the matter is objective and his conclusions are based on a critical study of the medieval literature, produced in different parts of the Muslim world, he deserves to be quoted at length :

---

1. cf. *Sher Shah*. pp. 197, 225, 369.

2. *Humayun Bad' shah*, 1/252.

"All the Mussalman chroniclers," says Prof. Hodivala, "are unanimous in calling him Barmazid, but Prof. Qanungo has in his monograph on 'Sher Shah' hazarded the conjecture that this man was a Rajput named 'Brahmaditya or Brahmajit Gaur. It is therefore necessary to stress the fact that Mazid and Barmazid were and are common names among Afghans as well as Turks. A Mazid who was the chieftain of Indarab and Auzen Mazid Baghdadi are mentioned in the histories of Timur. Several other persons bearing the name, e.g. Shaikh Mazid Beg Sarkhan Arghun, are mentioned in the *Baburnama* (Tr. 26, 27, 131, 167, etc.). The great leap of 25 feet across a gorge which is described by Akhund Darveza was taken by the horse of a Sadozi named Barmazid. This Barmazid was the brother of the famous Khan Kaju who was a cotemporary of Humayun and flourished about 956 A.H. Abul Fazl states that when Humayun marched to Bangash in 959 H the first tribe attacked was the 'Abdur Rahman, the last the Barmazidi. This clearly shows that Barmazid was an Afghan name."

As regards Kaur or Gaur, he states that it was a sobriquet in no way uncommon among the Muslims. The argument developed by him is: Then he expresses his opinion about the origin of Barmazid Kur in these words: "In the '*Tarikh-i-Da' udi* the subject of this note is styled as Barmazied Sur, but this also indicates that the author who was himself an Afghan, was sure that person intended was an Afghan and not a Hindu."<sup>1</sup>

Likewise De. whose English translation of the *Tabagat-i-Akbari* was published with annotation in 1939, correctly read Barmazid's name as Barnazid Kur and also suggested in the footnote on the basis of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* that this noble was a Sur Afghan. In his revised work, "*Sher shah and His Times*" Prof. Qanungo devotes sufficient space to refute the criticism of Prof. Hodivala and justify his conjecture, made in 1921. His arguments are that Abdullah's reference to Barmazid Sur cannot be acceptable because he is not an independent authority. Second, Barmazid's surname, 'Sur' occurring in certain

---

1. Studies in Indo- Muslim History, pp. 457-458.

Dr. Ishwari Prasad calls Barmazid as Barmazid Gaur and thus seems to be in agreement with Prof. Hodivala. Dr. Ishwari Prasad's words are: ".....he (Sher) sent Barmazid Gaur with a large force to press upon the Emperor's rear and hasten his retreat, never hazarding an engagement, and never approaching nearer, but effectively preventing any attempt at a rally." cf. Life and Times of Humayun, p.156.

manuscripts of the *Tarikh-i-Da'udi* may be a copyists' mistake. Then he blames prof. Hodivala in a ridiculing manner for calling Barmazid a Barmazidi Afghan. He says that the genealogical tables of the Afghan tribes, given in the *Makhzan*, do not refer to any Barmazidi sept, "though they might exist in Bannu." That there is no mention of any Barmazidi migrating to India or occupying any position in the army or administration in any historical work, dealing with the Lodis or the Surs. Therefore, it is not reasonable to think that a solitary Barmazidi could proceed to distant Bihar and make rise in Sher Shah's service. "If Barmazidi is a tribal name and Kur a sobriquet," says Prof. Qanungo, "where we are to find the ism, i.e. the personal name?" In the last he remarks that Ajmer which was given to Brahmajit Gaur, became the home of the Gaur in the sixteenth century in consequence. But he contradicts himself in the foot note on the same page while quoting Tod about the Gaur of Ajmer territory that they had settled in that region in the 12th century.<sup>1</sup>

Before the relevant evidence in the chronicles is critically examined and re-interpreted, it may be pointed out that Prof. Qanungo is not justified in accusing Prof. Hodivala of calling Barmazid a Barmazidi Afghan, for Prof. Hodivala's reference to the Barmazidi Afghans of Bannu is just to show that Barmazid was a common name among the Turks and the Afghans of 'Roh'. In fact, he did not imply that Barmazid belonged to this tribe. In Prof. Hodivala's opinion Barmazid was either a Sur Afghan or he belonged to some other Afghan clan. His source of information in this regard is only the *Tarikh-i-Dau'di* of Abdullah.

The writer of the present lines has recently discovered the source of Abdullah in respect of Barmazid being a Sur Afghan. Shaikh Rizq Ullah Mushtaqi mentions Barmazid as Sur, only in his account of the reign of Islam Shah while discussing the causes of conflict between the old nobility and the crown. Here Mushtaqi refers to all the nobles (whom Islam Shah destroyed) with their tribal surnames. He calls Barmazid as Barmazid Sur. The following extract not only sheds light on the problem under discussion but also helps us in analysing the political problems caused by Islam Shah's accession to the throne of Sher Shah (1545):

---

1. cf. Sher Shah and His Times, pp.419-421.

"(Islam Shah) Promoted six thousand sawars he had in his service while he was a prince. Every one of them was promoted: the sawar swas raised to the position of an officer, and the officer became a (high) noble. It disturbed the old arrangement and displeased the nobles of Sher Shah, who considered it humiliating for them. The king also got angry with them in consequence. He destroyed the nobles who had sympathy with 'Adil Khan. Some of them were arrested and thrown into prison. Mahmud Khan (son of 'Adil Khan, son of Sher Shah), Qutb Khan Sur (generally known as Qutb Khan *na'ib*) and Barmazid Sur were imprisoned and administered opium to die. Zain Khan Niazi, Jalal Khan Sur and his younger brother (sons of Jilo Sur) were put to death. Many other were also killed. Before their death, they were first tied to the feet of the elephants and paraded in the army camp with the (favourite) nobles riding over them. People were, however, frightened."<sup>1</sup>

The author of the *Tarikh-i-Dau'di* copies Mushtaqi's above passage verbatim, therefore, Barmazid Sur occurs in most of the manuscripts of his work, available in different libraries.<sup>2</sup> As Prof. Hodivala did not know of this information, contained in the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, he could not point out Abdullah's original source of information. The value of the *Tarikh-i-Da' udi* lies in the fact that its author compiled or even at places copied verbatim the evidence available in different works, some of which are not extant now. Prof. Hodivala was, however, correct in suggesting on the authority of 'Abdullah that Barmazid was' a Sur Afghan and Kur occurring as his susrname in different chronicles should be read as Sur.

The information, contained in the *Afsana-i-Shahan* about Barmazid also deserves to be discussed. According to Shaikh Kabir, Barmazid Kur was one who served Sher Shah from the beginning of the latter's career. The author of the *Afsana-i-Shahan* says that in the days (1530) when a conflict developed between Sher Shah and *Jalal Khan Nuhanl* in Bihar, the latter, as in alliance with the Mughals requested *Muhammad*

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f.71-b; eng tr. p. 202.

2. Prof. Shaikh Abdul Rashid, probably under the influence of Prof. Hodivala wrongly reads Barmazid Sur as Barmazid Gaur in the text of the *Tarikh-i-da' udi*, edited by him without annotation. *Tarikh-i-Dau'di*, p. 170.

*Zaman Mirza*, the then governor of *Jaunpur* to help him against his enemy. The Mughal governor of *Jaunpur* sent help to *Jalal Khan Nuhani* and *Sher Shah's* men were defeated. *Barmazid Kur*, who was the *Khasa Khail*<sup>1</sup> (close associate) of *Sher Shah* was taken prisoner with his dependants. But, soon he succeeded in making good his escape with the help of one of his Ladies who happened to be an Afghan woman.<sup>2</sup> Even if we doubt the authenticity of the capture of *Barmazid* by the Mughal allies of *Jala Khan Nuhani* in 1530, we cannot be doubtful of *Barmazid* being an Afghan, because *Shaikh Kabir's* grand-father served *Sher Shah* till 1539 and so he could not be ignorant of *Barmazid's* real origin. At another place, *Shaikh Kabir* mentions him while justifying his murder along with other nobles by *Islam Shah* that *Shahbaz Khan Nuhani*, son-in-law of *Sher Shah*, *Barmazid Kur* and *Jalal Khan Jilo* were killed by *Islam Shah* because they were tyrants and the king wanted to establish just rule, so that his people might enjoy peace and prosperity without being molested by anyone.<sup>3</sup>

Similarly *Badaoni* who was born during the reign of *Sher Shah* also gives a clue to the fact regarding the origin of *Barmazid*. He states in his account of the early years of *Islam's* reign which were marked by an acute conflict between the crown and the nobility that *Islam Shah* set himself to destroy the group of the nobles who were favourable to his elder brother, 'Adil Khan and swept them out of existence one by one. That *Islam Shah* sent *Qutb Khan na'ib* (Sur) together with *Shahabaz Khan Nuhani*, son-in-law of *Sher Shah* and *Barmazid Kur*, "who was the anti-christ for his generation and the *Hajjaj* (the famous Ommayyid governor of Iraq, known for his tyranny) of his age, and thirteen or fourteen *amir's* sons to the fortress of *Gwalior*, where most of them quitted the body in imprisonment."<sup>4</sup>

*Badaoni* who was orthodox in religion and reactionary in politics, could not fail in calling *Barmazid* an infidel if the latter had been a Hindu tyrant as he did almost in all the cases. In

- 
1. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, *The Army Organization under the Afghan kings*, *Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad-Deccan July, 1965, pp.223- 227.
  2. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f.61-b.
  3. cf. *Shaikh Muhammad Kabir and His History of the Afghan Kings*. *Indo-Iranica*. op.cit.p. 60.
  4. *Badaoni*, i/379.

case, a Muslim did not come upto his standard, he would denounce him as heretic or a tyrant having no fear of God. For this reason Barmazid also fell victim to his contempt. Since Barmazid Kur (Kur means one-eyed) was known for his violence and cruelty, he calls him both *dajjal* (anti-christ who would be a one-eyed tyrant according to some Muslim traditions) and Hajjaj (who had suppressed the people of Iraq ruthlessly during the times of caliph 'Abdul Malik and his successor).

Ni'mat Ullah also includes an interesting anecdote in his *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani* which sheds light on the life and temperament of Barmazid Kur. Knowing fully well his violent temper and ruthlessness, Sher Shah also entrusted him with certain duties that another man having a little consideration for human life could fail in performing to the utmost satisfaction of the master. For instance, once Sher Shah called Barmazid Kur along with *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan and addressed them one by one. First Barmazid was told that when a person, accused of some crime was entrusted to his custody, he was to put him to death even if he appeared to be innocent. He was not required to ask for royal permission; for the mere fact that a criminal, left to his charge was the sign of his days having been numbered. Thereupon Barmazid bowed down and accepted the work of butchery with all pleasure. Contrary to it, *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan was left free to treat the criminal, he pleased. He could either spare him or kill him as the nature of his crime demanded as already mentioned.<sup>1</sup> Lastly, it may be added that Barmazid's son whose lexicon in Persian has survived the ravages of time calls himself in its Introduction Sher Khan bin Barmazid Sur.<sup>2</sup>

A few words may also be added about the significance of Kur, used by the Medieval chroniclers as the last part of Barmazid's name. In fact, it was not a sobriquet but a nick-

---

1. cf. *Chapter Iv.*

Dr. Imam al-Din, the able editor of the *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani* does not take any notice of the controversy with regard to Barmazid's real name and reads it as Barmazid Kur as he found it in all the manuscripts of the work, available in different libraries of the world.

2. *Farhang-i-Sher Khani*, Ms. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, ff. 1b-2a.

name which was used for all those persons who were one-eyed or had defect in one of the eyes. Therefore, Kur occurring in the Medieval Persian works as the last part of any person's name is indicative of the fact that he bore the nickname for defect in his eye. It should be correctly read as Kur and not Gaur.

As regards the career of Barmazid Kur, he seems to have been brought up and trained as a military man by Sher Shah along with other persons such as the princes (Sher's own sons); sons of *Sukha*, namely, *Khawwas Khan the Elder*, *Shihab Khan* (later *Khawwas Khan*, the famous) and *Shamsher Khan*, *Jalal Khan Sur bin Jilo Sur*, the *Niazi Afghans* like *Halbat Khan Niazi*, *'Isa Khan Niazi*, *Shuja' at Khan sur*, etc. For their long association with Sher Shah, these nobles are called by certain chroniclers as his *Khasa Khails*.<sup>1</sup> The information available in the *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* also substantiates the fact that Barmazid was one of the close associates of Sher Shah whom the latter trusted even in very important matters.

'Abbas mentions Barmazid Kur for the first time when Sher Shah deputed him to pursue *Humayun* towards *Agra* after the battle of *Qanauj* was over (1540). According to 'Abbas, Barmazid was ordered by Sher Shah only to chase *Humayun* and not to give battle to the *Mughal fugitives*. His advance overawed the vanquished Emperor who left *Agra* with his remaining followers and their families without any delay as the pursuing *Afghan army* was to reach there. But Barmazid is said to have been able to arrest a few hundred *Mughals* who might have been left staggering in or around *Agra*. He killed all of them mercilessly and was reprimanded by Sher Shah for his cruelty soon later.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. The close associates of a prince or noble, prior to his advent to sovereignty were called his *Khasa Khails*. On his accession to the throne these *Khasa Khails* were raised to the positions of confidence and thus they became the supreme nobles of the king. cf. *Army organisation of the Afghan kings in North India. op., cit. pp.224-225.*

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f.80b.  
The early *Mughal writers* such as *Jauhar*, *Halder Doghlat* and *Gulbadan* are silent about the massacre of the *Mughals*, left in *Agra* by *Barmazid*.

Thereafter Sher Shah never appears to have appointed Barmazid as the supreme commander of a military expedition, deputed against any region. He appointed his nobles known for their humane qualities over his rash and cruel generals as the cases of Nasir Khan, the *faujdar* of Sambhal and Barmazid illustrate. Henceforth, Barmazid had to work with <sup>1</sup> Khawwas Khan. For instance, Sher Shah deputed him under the command of Khawwas Khan from Agra to occupy the western territories and treck the Mughals in the Punjab. Barmazid co-operated with the supreme commander and soon they became close friends. They remained together in the Punjab nearly for one year and travelled to Khoshab, Multan and the upper Sind region chasing the Mughals. Sometime in 1541, Sher Shah took Barmazid with him to Bengal where he rushed to punish Khizr Khan Turk, the supreme *Muqta* who had begun to assume an air of independence. Haibat Khan Niazi, Khawwas Khan and Isa Khan Niazi were left as the supreme officers to carry on the government in the Panjab in co-operation.<sup>2</sup>

From the year 1541 to the beginning of 1544 Barmazid remained in the royal company and thus went from one corner of the Sur Empire to the other, i.e. from *Multan* and *Rohtas* in the Punjab to *Gaur* in Bengal, and then from *Malwa* to *Marwar*. In this period he must have played a significant role in the battles that Sher Shah had to fight against the rulers of *Raisin* and *Marwar*. Like Khawwas Khan he also facilitated Sher Shah's work of subduing the entire region of *Marwar* kingdom from *Ajmer* to *Jodhpur*. Barmazid was posted in *Ajmer* along with Prince 'Adil Khan to invest its fort which was heavily guarded by the Rajputs under *Shanker Bhati*. The capture of the fort was by no means an easy task. The besieged garrison began to resist the Afghans boldly, and to relieve it of the outside pressure Raja Maldev also came out of *Siwana* fort to divert the Afghans by attacking their rear. But Sher Shah, who forestalled his attack, had come out to pursue him

- 
1. Masnad-i-'all khawwas khan was appointed the supreme governer of the sarkars of Mewat, Bayana, Ajmer, Nagaur and Jodhpur while Haji Khan, Isa Khan Niazi and Barmazid wer posted in the territorial units to work under him.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 80b, 84a, 85b, 87a-b.



before he could do any harm to his men. While Sher Shah was giving a hot pursuit to Maldev, Barmazid and Prince 'Adil Khan succeeded in capturing the fort of Ajmer. The Rajputs made a display of their heroic chivalry and were killed to the last man.<sup>1</sup>

On the complete subjugation of the territories of Nagaur, Ajmer and Marwar, Sher Shah sent Khawwas Khan to organise the government there. These territories were grouped into three separate *Sarkars* with Nagaur, Ajmer and Jodhpur as the respective provincial headquarters. Barmazid was entrusted with the administration of the *Sarkar* of Ajmer; 'Isa Khan Niazi was posted in Nagaur, while Khawwas Khan was appointed as the supreme *Muqta* of all the territories, from Jodhpur to Mewat, including Ajmer and Nagaur. The latter lived in Jodhpur permanently and paid visits to other headquarters at intervals. The appointment of these officers in the aforesaid territories sheds light on the political views of Sher Shah who had based his administrative system on the principles of benevolence tempered with strictness. If Khawwas Khan could pacify alien people by his chivalrous personality, combined with largehearted generosity, the presence of Barmazid Kaur and 'Isa Khan Niazi could deter the turbulent Rajputs from raising their head against the new government. Khawwas Khan's radiating personality not only made him the beloved of people in Rajputana but his comrades, Barmazid and 'Isa Khan Niazi also developed attachment for him; their feeling of professional rivalry, that was so common among the high nobles was shaken off. But this close association with Khawwas brought about their fall after Sher Shah's death.

Sher Shah's accidental death in Kalinjar on May, 22, 1545 threw the important grandees of his Empire on the horns of dilemma. Prince 'Adil Khan being the eldest son was the

---

1. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 411-12, 414;  
*Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 99b-100a.

It appears that Khawwas Khan lived at different places after his appointment as the supreme *muqta* of Marwar. In the first year of Islam Shah's reign he was in Mewat where 'Adil Khan came to him from Ranthambore after Islam Shah had sent Ghazi Mahli to arrest him ('Adil Khan). From Mewat Khawwas Khan marched along with 'Isa Khan Niazi and Prince 'Adil Khan to Agra against Islam Shah.

heir-apparent. But Isa Khan *Hajlb Khas* (Niazi) who was hostile to him, prevailed upon the Afghan nobles present in the army camp at Kalinjar to invite Prince Jalal Khan, Sher Shah's second son for coronation as he was in Bhatta, a place comparatively nearer than Ranthambore. The nobles who sympathised with 'Adil Khan were silenced by the argument that a little delay in the selection of the new king might throw the leaderless Afghan army into confusion. The shrewd Afghan statesman, however, succeeded in paving the way for Islam Shah's succession to the throne in suppression of 'Adil Khan's claim. Jalal Khan reached Kalinjar on the 5th day of his father's death and ascended the throne with the title of Islam Shah on the same day.<sup>1</sup>

Though 'Adil Khan's chief allies, among whom mention may be made of Khawwas Khan, *Jalal Khan bin Jilo Sur*, Qutb Khan *na'ib* (Sur), *'Isa Khan Niazi*, the *Muqta* of Nagaur and *Barmazid*, also paid allegiance to Islam Shah, yet the civil war between the brothers could not be averted for long as already discussed. Because Islam Shah happened to be a man of vacillating nature. On the flight of 'Adil Khan, Khawwas Khan and 'Isa Khan Niazi from the Sur Empire after their defeat, Islam Shah laid his hands upon all the high nobles of his father one by one and thus destroyed the cream of the Shar Shahi nobility. Jalal Khan bin Jilo Sur and Barmazid were the first nobles who fell victim to Islam Shah's wrath in the very first year of his reign.

The Medieval writers make different statements in respect of the way Barmazid was killed by Islam Shah's order. Mushtaqi, as quoted above, states that he was administered opium along with Prince Mahmud Khan and Qutb Khan *na'ib* (Sur) to die of its deadening effect in sometime. If Mushtaqi's statement is true, it suggests the probability of Barmazid's relation with the ruling dynasty. Because the princes of the blood and the near relations of the king were given opium in prison when no serious charge could be concocted against them, and therefore, they were not condemned to death publicly.

---

1. *Tabaqat-i- Akbari*, II/107;  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/352- 353;  
*Tarikh-i-Da'udl.* p.164.

The later writers among whom Nizamud'din and Badaoni are important authorities also deserve mention in this regard. The former briefly says that Barmazid was sent to Gwalior fort with some other nobles and they were blown off there.<sup>1</sup> The latter who also describes the history of the Sur Kings briefly and only to link up his narrative with Akbar's reign, furnishes some interesting details, with regard to the killing of the imprisoned nobles in Gwalior. According to Badaoni, the house where the prisoners lived was blown off by the gunpowder; only Kamal Khan Gakkhar could escape.<sup>2</sup> Nizam Ud'din and Badaoni may be true with regard to the killing of the prisoners in the Gwalior fort but Prince Mahmud Khan, Barmazid and Qutb Khan *na'ib* seem to have died of the effect of opium before the prison was blown off, for they were the important prisoners and could not be kept alive for long.

□

3

---

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/111.

2. *Badaoni*, i/380.

Badaoni says about the survival of Kamal Khan Gakkhar that he was informed by his sister, who was one of Islam Shah's wives, about the royal order. She also provided her brother with quilts and water in enough quantity, so that he could save himself under quilted bed with water poured on it. The wet quilted bed saved Kamal Khan while the prison was set on fire by gun-powder. Islam Khan came to see him and then became compassionate to him. His survival was attributed to the mercy of God. He was, therefore, raised to the dignity of a noble.

## CHAPTER VI

# Provincial Organization

---

The organization of provincial government under Sher Shah, like other political problems connected with his reign, deserves a closer study than has so far been made. First of all, we have to go to the earlier period in order to trace the development of the administrative institutions which reached their perfection in Sher Shah's time, after having passed through an evolutionary process that, in certain respects, had started in the beginning of the Sultanate period. In fact, the extensive administrative units with well-defined boundaries came into existence, first in the trans-Sutlej region, and later on in the region of the Doab which was also divided into manageable units in the light of the geographical conditions, population as well as vegetation.

The references to the *Khittas*, vilayet and *iqtas* found in the early chronicles imply that the extensive and unwieldy units were carved out at the start of the Muslim rule in north India, but the difficulties that arose in connection with their effective control as well as the royal apprehension caused by the presence of a powerful governor in an extensive region who could think of defying the royal authority led the Sultans to break certain vast and unwieldy vilayets into fragments.<sup>1</sup> These territorial units were given the name of *Shiqq* and were entrusted to the charge of the nobles designated, both, as *muqtas* and *faujdars*. Sultan Balban is the first Sultan to be credited with the establishment of *Shiqq* as an administrative unit with fixed boundaries, comprising a number of *parganas*. Afterwards the whole of the Delhi Sultatate appears to have been organized into *Shiqqs* and small vilayets that could be successfully governed.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. *Evolution of the vilayet, the Shiqq and the Sarkar in North India*. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqui, *Medi-India Quarterly*, Aligarh, 1963, Vol. V, No. 1, pp. 10-15.

2. *Ibid*, p. 14.

It may also be pointed out that the chroniclers of the 13th and 14th centuries have used the terms, *vilayet*, *Shiqq*, *khitta*, and *iqtas* for the units (administrative as well as fiscal) more or less in the same sense. The references to the State papers and the *diwan* create the impression that *vilayet* was certainly the largest unit and, no doubt, a synonym of the modern province while the *Shiqqs* were constituted out of the *vilayet* under the strict control of the centre. As regards the *iqta*, it appears to have been a smaller unit than a *Shiqq*, and consisted of a few *parganas*.<sup>1</sup>

Now we may discuss the extensive units which existed in the Delhi Sultanate, much reduced in area owing to the rise of the provincial kingdoms of *Gujrat*, *Malwa*, and *Jaunpur* during the times of the Saiyid rulers, for they were the immediate predecessors of the Lodi Sultans who succeeded in reviving the past glory of the Sultanate without making any change in any political institution that survived upto their time. However, the units mentioned in the contemporary works of the Saiyid period are : (1) *vilayet* of Lahore,<sup>2</sup> (2) *Shiqq-i-Multan*, (3) *Shiqq-i-Dipalpur*, (4) *Shiqq-i-Samana*,<sup>3</sup> (5) *Khitta-i-Sirhind* (mentioned as *iqta* also), (6) *Shiqq-i-Hisar Firuza*, (7) *Shiqq-i-Saharanpur*, (8) *Shiqq-i-Mian-i-Doab* (Meerut), (9) *Shiqq-i-Darul-Mulk Delhi*, (10) *Shiqq-i-Sambhal and Ahar*, (11) *Shiqq-i-Badaon*, (12) *Khitta-i-Baran*, and (13) *Shiqq-i-Kol*.<sup>4</sup> As regards the Rajput Rais (Zamindars) of *Katehar* (District Bareilly), *vilayet* of *Etawah* and the *parganas* of *Patiali*, *Bhogaon*, *Kampil*, etc. are concerned, they remained turbulent throughout the Saiyid period and paid tribute only in face of military force stronger than their own. Likewise the rulers of the *vilayet* of *Mewat* and *Shiqq* of *Bayana* also defied their authority. On the death of

1. *Ibid*, 15-17.

2. *Evolution of the vilayet, the Shiqq and the Sarkar*, op. cit. pp. 25-26.

The *vilayet* of Lahore during the Saiyid period comprised all the *Shiqqs* upto the borders of Dipalpur and Multan units. The *Shiqq* of Dipalpur included in itself the modern district of Montgomery while Multan extended over a large area now forming Mianwali and Multan districts, in the Punjab and some part of the upper Sind province including the towns of Uchh and Sehwan.

3. The *Shiqq* of Samana was a small unit and was amalgamated in the *iqta* of Sirhind during the Lodi period.

4. *cf. Evolution of the vilayet, the Shiqq and the Sarkar*, op. cit. p. 26.

Sultan Mubarak Shah (Salyid), even the faithful *muqtas* became indifferent to the centre and started consolidating their respective *Shiqqs* and *Khittas*. Amongst them Sultan Bahlul emerged as the most powerful man who, besides the *Shiqq* of Samana and the *Shiqq* of Hisar Firuza, also brought the trans-Sutlej territories of Sialkot, Lahore and Dipalpur under his own control. This was not all. He also captured the throne of Delhi in 1451 when Sultan 'Ala Uddin (Saiyid) retired to Badaon to pass his last days in peace.<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Bahlul Lodi not only retained the old-existing units which he had found but also reorganised some of them anew, and seized the *Shiqqs* and *Khittas* of those *Muqtas* and *Zamindars* who had not been reconciled to the Saiyid kings previously. The *Shiqq* of Samana and Sunam was merged in the *iqta* of Sirhind and the amalgamated *parganas* were subsequently known as *Khitta-i-Sirhind*. The Auhadi *Muqta* of Bayana *Shiqq* was replaced by Ahmad Khan Jilwani (Afghan),<sup>2</sup> While the powerful chief of Mewat, Ahmad Khan Mewati was forced into submission to the Lodi Sultan. Moreover, the seven *parganas* which Ahmad Khan of Mewat had occupied in the times of the last Saiyid Sultans, were restored to the *Shiqq* of Delhi.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the *Katehar* chiefs were finally suppressed and their strong-hold, the town of Aonla was included in the *Shiqq* of Badaon. As regards the turbulent Rajput chiefs of Etawah *Shiqq* and the adjacent territory, they were either swept away or reduced to impotence. Rai Dudu, the *Zamindar* of Etawah and Ra'i Pratap, the ruler of the territory of Patlall, Bhogaon and Kampil *parganas* disappeared from the political scene owing to their changing sides between Bahlul and his adversary, Sultan Husain Sharqi, and their territories were assigned to the charge of the Afghan nobles. Ibrahim Khan, son of Masnad-i'-all Mubarak Khan Nuhani was assigned the charge of the *Khitta* of Etawah<sup>4</sup> in 1479 and Isa Khan Lodi was appointed to govern the territory of Ra'i Pratap during the last years of Bahlul's reign.<sup>5</sup>

1. cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, p. XXIII.

2. *Evolution of the Vilayet, the Shiqq and the Sarkar*, pp. 23-24.

3. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, pp. 17-18.

4. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/305-306.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 332-7, 314.

The consolidation of Sultan Bahlul's authority in the eastern region (modern Eastern, U.P.) was possible only after the expulsion of *Sultan Husain Sharqi* from Jaunpur in 1486. Thereafter, the Sultan appointed his own faithful nobles as *Muqtas* in the vilayets and *khittas* (later termed as *sarkars*) from Badaon upto Awadh<sup>1</sup> and Jaunpur. In short, the extensive administrative cum-fiscal units that had come under the rule of Bahlul, besides the trans-Sutlej territories were : (1) The *khitta* of Sirhind, (2) the *shiqq* of Hisar Firuza,<sup>2</sup> (3) the *shiqq* of Saharanpur,<sup>3</sup> (4) the *khitta* of *Daru'l Mulk Delhi*.<sup>4</sup> (5) The *shiqq* of Mian-i-Doab<sup>5</sup> (Meerut) (6) the *khitta* of Sambhal<sup>6</sup> (also written as Vilayet). (7) *khitta* of kol,<sup>7</sup> (8) the *iqta* of Baran,<sup>8</sup> (9) the *khitta* of Badaon<sup>9</sup> (also called as vilayet), (10) the *khitta*

- 
1. *Evolution of the Vilayet, the Shiqq and the Sarkar*, pp. 27-8.
  2. The *shiqq* of Hisar Firuza was held by Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khan, with certain other nobles possessing its *parganas* in their maintenance *iqtas*, as already discussed in the first chapter.
  3. No reference has been found to the *Sarkar* of Saharanpur in any work dealing with the Lodis, but it was an old unit and does not seem to have been disrupted under the Lodis, for it has been mentioned as one of the *Sarkars* in the *Al'n*.
  4. During the times of the last Saiyid ruler, the unit of Delhi was reduced to Delhi proper and the villages in its vicinity. But Sultan Bahlul restored all its *parganas* to it by depriving Ahmad Khan Mewati and Darya Khan Lodi of Sambhal of seven *parganas* each. According to Rizaq Ullah Mushtaqi, the territory of Delhi was assigned by Bahlul to Prince Nizam Khan (later Sultan Sikandar Shah). Babur calls it the *Sarkar*.  
*Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/299.  
*Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 7b.  
*Baburnams*, ii/521.
  5. Babur mentions its revenue along with that of the unit of Delhi, although it existed as a separate unit during the period under review. Mian Husain Khan Lodi governed it during the early years of Bahlul's reign. But it is not known as to whom its charge was assigned when Mian Husain Khan Lodi was honoured with the title of Khan Jahan and the government of the territory of Badaon on the death of his father, Khan Jahan Lodi, the Elder (son of Firoz Khan Lodi, uncle of Sultan Bahlul): During the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, Prem Deo held Meerut with the rank of 4000 *Sawars*.  
*Baburnama*, ii/ 521; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*.
  6. *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, i/296, 302, 308; *Baburnama*, ii/521; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 22b.
  7. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 44a.
  8. Shaikh Abdul Haque calls it the vilayet while Mushtaqi mentions it as Badaun only, but his account shows that it comprised many *parganas* some of which were reserved for the *Khalsa*, *Akhbar u'l-Akhyar*, p. 220; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 29a-b.
  9. *Baburnama*, ii/521 and the *Turki text*, f. 292b.

of Khairabad,<sup>1</sup> (11) the *khitta* of Lucknow,<sup>2</sup> (12) the *iqta* of Qannauj,<sup>3</sup> (13) the *shiqq* of Awadh,<sup>4</sup> (14) the vilayet of Jaunpur,<sup>5</sup> (15) the *Khitta* of Kara and Manikpur,<sup>6</sup> (16) the *Shiqq* of Kalpi,<sup>7</sup> (17) the vilayet of Mewat,<sup>8</sup> (18) the *iqta* of Patiali (including the parganas of Kampil, Bhoggon, Shamsabad, etc.),<sup>9</sup> (19) the *iqta* of Rapri and chandwar,<sup>10</sup> (20) the *khitta* of Bakesar,<sup>11</sup> (21) the *shiqq* of Bayana,<sup>12</sup> and the vilayet of Mewat, which was left under the control of Ahmad Khan mewati who had agreed to serve *Bahlul* as his noble in the early years of his rule.<sup>13</sup>

With the advent of Sultan sikandar Lodi, the Lodi Empire was nearly doubled in area due to the new conquests. The territory of *Bhera*<sup>14</sup> in the north-west of *Sialkot* territory and the *khitta* of *Nagarkot* (mentioned as *Mulk-i-Bala* or vilayet) in the Himachal Pradesh were seized and annexed to the Delhi Sultanate.<sup>15</sup> The territory of *Bhera* was annexed by Daulat Khan Lodi in 1509 when 'Ali Khan, its *hakim* (*muqta*) had detached himself from *Babur*, the ruler of *Kabul*, while *Nagarkot* was conquered by Masnad-i-'ali *Khawwas Khan*, the father of famous *Mian Bhu'a*, from some Hindu Raja, even before the

- 
1. Mushtaqi mentions it either a vilayet or an *iqta*; but in the *Baburnama* it has been referred to as a *Sarkar*.  
Waqi'at Mushtaqi, ff. 34b, 90b, : *Baburnama*, ii/521; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I/331.
  2. Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi, ff. 34b, 94b; *Baburnama* (*Tirki*) f. 292b.
  3. *Anwarul-'Uyum*, p. 16; Waqi'at-i- Mushtaqi, f. 34b; *Bahadurnama*, ii/521 and *Turki* text, f. 292a.
  4. *Baburnama*; ii/521; *Waqi'at-i- Mushtaqi* f. 36b.
  5. *Baburnama*, ii/521; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 36b.
  6. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/312, 316; *Baburnama*, ii/521; *Turki* text, f. 292a.
  7. *Baburnama* 521; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* i/312.
  8. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/302; *Tarkh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/146.
  9. *Frishta*, i/174; *Tabaqat-i-AKbari* i/315.
  10. The town of Bakesar was situated on the confluence of the rivers, Gomti and the Sarju.  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/164.
  11. *Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, f. 45b; *Waqi'at-i- Mushtaqi*, f. 67b; *Baburnama*, ii/521.
  12. *Tarikh-i-Haqqi*, f. 45b; *Baburnama*, ii/292b. (*Turki*).
  13. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, pp. 17-18.
  14. *Baburnama*, i/382.
  15. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* f. 32b.



Afghan occupation of Bhera.<sup>1</sup> As for the annexation of certain eastern territories, they were captured in the course of military operations of 1495 A.D., that were launched against the nobles and *zamindars*, attached to *Sultan Husain Sharqi* who had settled in Bihar after his expulsion from Jaunpur. At this time the vast territories of *Bahraich*, *Chunar*, *Ghazipur*, *Sarwar* (mentioned as *vilayet*),<sup>2</sup> Bihar (*vilayet*),<sup>3</sup> *Saran*,<sup>4</sup> *Champaran* and *Tirhut*<sup>5</sup> were also annexed to the Lodi Empire. The Raja of Tirhut was left uncrushed, for he had promised to pay an annual tribute as a vassal.

The *shiqq* or *khitta* of *Bahraich* extended over the region in the east of Awadh territory beyond the Ghogra river and, thus, besides the modern district of Bahraich also comprised the district of *Gonda* and was bounded by the dense forests of the *khitta-i-Sarwar* (*Gorakhpur*). *Masnad-i-'ali* Mian Muhammad Farmuli Kalapahar was directed in 1495 to seize it from *Shams Khan*, the *muqta* of *Sultan Husain Sharqi*.<sup>6</sup> The *khitta* of *Chunar*, which *Sultan Sikandar Lodi* had to leave uncaptured for the impregnability of its fort in 1494, was a stronghold of the pro-Sharqi *zamindars* and the nobles of *Sultan Husain*. The Lodi Sultan must have occupied it in 1495 after the flight of *Sultan Husain Sharqi* from Bihar in 1495. It was held by *Taj Khan Sarang Khani* who had the rank of 6000 *Sawars* during the times of *Sultan Ibrahim Lodi*. Later on, *Taj Khan* was reconciled to *Babur*.<sup>7</sup>

As regards the territories of *Ghazipur*, *Sarwar* (*Gorakhpur*), *Bihar* and *Saran*, they were also cleaned of the hostile elements by the Sultan and entrusted to his nobles in 1495. The territory of *Tirhut* was left to *Raja Roop Narain* who had shifted his allegiance from *Sultan Husain Sharqi* to *Sikandar Lodi*.<sup>8</sup>

1. *Baburnama*, ii/521; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 32b.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 22a; *Mushtaqi* refers to it as *vilayet* while *Babur* mentions it as *Sarkar*.  
*Baburnama*, ii/521.

3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 41b, 42b; *Baburnama*, i/521; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/351.

4. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 40b, 41a-b; *Baburnama*, ii/521.

5. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/319; *Baburnama*, ii/521; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 41b.

6. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 39b; *Baburnama*, ii/521.

7. *Tarikh--Khan-i-Jahani*, i/179; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 47b, also *Baburnama*, ii/654.

8. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/419; *Baburnama*, (Turki) f. 123a.

while *Champaran* is reported to have been seized by *Masnad-i- 'all Mian Husaln Farmull*, the *muqta* of *Saran*, a few years after his posting in *Saran* in 1495.<sup>1</sup>

Now a word may be added about the adoption of *Sarkar* as an official name to be given to the extensive administrative cum-fiscal units. The information contained in both the contemporary documents and the inscriptions is indicative of the fact that *shiqq* and *khitta* continued to be officially used for the extensive units long after Sultan Sikandar Lodi's accession to the throne. But the evidence furnished by Ni'mat Ullah on the authority of some contemporary historical work or an official document reveals that some time before the foundation of *Agra* in 1506 as the second capital (besides *Delhi*) of the Lodi empire, the extensive units must have been called as *Sarkars*. Ni'mat Ullah says :

In the area between the villages of *Bashi* (now a village in the suburb of *Agra* city) and *Poya* in the *pargana* of *Doll* in the *Sarkar* of *Bayana*, the city (of *Agra*) was founded and out of 52 *parganas* in the *Sarkar* of *Bayana*, nine *parganas* were separated to be included in (the *Sarkar* of) *Agra*.<sup>2</sup> This statement is corroborated by *Babur* who found *Sarkar* as a well-defined unit existing in India as will be discussed subsequently.

The reason attributed to the foundation of *Agra* by Sultan Sikandar Lodi is that he wanted to put down the turbulence of the Rajput *zamindars* in that region.<sup>2</sup> But a careful study of his reign suggests that the defiant attitude of the Rajas of *Gwalior* and *Dholpur* and the centrifugal tendencies which started to prevail in *Malwa* after the death of Sultan *Ghiyas uddin* (1469-1500) aroused a desire in Sikandar Lodi to grab new territories in that direction. For launching successful operations against the Rajas and others, he founded *Agra* for his permanent residence. The construction of buildings in *Agra* started after he had taken the decision to expand his rule towards *Rajputana* and *Malwa*. Therefore, it will not be out of place to discuss his conquests in Eastern *Rajputana* and the *Malwa* kingdom and the organization of the conquered terri-

1. *Waqi'at-i- Mushtaqi*, ff. 41b-42a.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I/325;  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/195.

tories into *Sarkars*. The *Sarkars* of *Chanderi*,<sup>1</sup> *Nagore*<sup>2</sup> and *Shivpur*<sup>3</sup> fell into his hands without the use of force and as a result of his diplomatic manoeuvrings. But the strong forts comprising more than one *pargana* and not organized into small *Sarkars*-such as *Dholpur* (seized in 1505)<sup>4</sup>, *Mandrail* (recently in the *Karauli State*), *Awantgarh* (*Untgar* in the *Ai'n*), 28 miles south-west of the *Karauli town*, which was entrusted to *Mallk Taj U'd-din Kambo* and the fort of *Narwar* (mentioned as a separate *sarkar* in the *Ai'n* in the *Suba* of *Agra* and was recently in the *Gwalior State*) that was assigned to *Raja Singh*, a *Khachhwaha* prince in the service of the *Sultan*,<sup>5</sup> were captured by military force.

The evidence contained in the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* and *Baburnama* reveals that *Dholpur* was made the headquarters of a quite sizeable *Sarkar* which comprised<sup>6</sup> several towns including the fortress of *Kotah* in *Rajputana*. *Sultan Sikandar Lodi* is reported to have taken keen interest in the development of this *Sarkar* as his plantation of the beautiful gardens with magnificent buildings and *serais* along the route from *Agra* to *Dholpur* shows.<sup>7</sup> As regards the *Sarkar* of *Gwallor*, it was seized during the reign of *Sultan Ibrahim Lodi*, and at that time yielded the annual revenue of 2, 37, 57, 450 *tankas*.<sup>8</sup>

Emperor *Babur* who supplanted the *Lodi* rule by his own in 1526, found *Sarkar* as a well-defined administrative unit and he adopted it without making any change in its size or in its administrative system. The list of the *Lodi Sarkars* given in both, *Babur's* own memoirs (*Baburnama*) and its first Persian translation, entitled as *Tarikh-Baburi* substantiates the point, because

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i.208; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 19a.
  2. *Sarkar* as mentioned in the *Baburnama*, Vol. II. p. 521, and *khitta* in the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* f. 56b.
  3. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/321.
  4. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/192, 194, 196, 200; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* pp. 326, 327 etc.
  5. *Ma'a Sir-Rahmi*, i/469.
  6. A.B. Pandey, *The First Afghan Empire*.  
The medieval chroniclers note with pleasure that the sultan destroyed the Hindu temples in *Narwar* and built mosques instead. But it does not seem to have been a fact because, *Abul Fazl* states : "In certain parts of the fort are ancient temples of stone," *Ain-i-Akbari* (Eng. tr.) Vol. II, p. 190.
  7. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 61b.
  8. *Baburnama*, ii/521.

the revenue figures of Sarkars mentioned therein separately are based on the documents of the Lodi Sultans. Despite the fact that the list is incomplete as the names of certain Sarkars have been left unmentioned, it may be reproduced for giving the revenue figures of certain important units in the following manner :

**REVENUE<sup>1</sup>**

	Sarkars	Crores	Lacs	Tankas
1.	Trans-Sutlej Sarkars :-Bhera, Lahore, Sialkot, Dipalpur, etc.	3	33	15,989
2.	Sarkar of Sirhind	1	29	31,985
3.	Sarkar of Hisar Firuza	1	30	75,174
4.	Sarkars of Capital Delhi and Mian-i-Doab	3	69	50,254
5.	Sarkar of Mewat	1	69	81,000
6.	Sarkar of Bayana	1	44	14,930
7.	Sarkar of Agra	0	29	76,919
8.	Mian-i-Vilayet (Mid lands)	2	91	00,019
9.	Sarkar of Gwalior	2	23	57,450
10.	Sarkar of Qannauj	1	36	63,358
11.	Sarkars of Kalpi and Seondha	4	28	55,950
12.	Sarkar of Sambhal	1	38	44,000
13.	Sarkars of Lucknow and Baksar	1	39	82,433
14.	Sarkar of Khairabad	0	12	65,000
15.	Sarkars of Awadh and Bahraich	1	17	01,369
16.	Vilayet of Jaunpur	4	00	88,333
17.	Vilayet of Kara and Manikpur	1	63	27,282
18.	Vilayet of Bihar	4	05	60,000
19.	Sarkar of Sarwar (Gorakhpur)	1	15	17,506 $\frac{1}{2}$
20.	Sarkar of Saran	1	10	18,373
21.	Sarkar of Champaran	1	90	86,060
22.	Sarkar of Kandra		20	00,000
23.	Vilayet of Tirhut, the Raja of which was the vassal of the Lodi Sultans and so paid an annual tribute of		27	50,000 Copper coins.

1. The above list, though incomplete, has been prepared on the basis of Baburnama In Turki, Baburnama, translated into English by Mrs. Beveridge and Tarikh-i-Baburi of Shaikh Zain, Baburnama, (Turki text), Mrs. Beveridge, ff. 292 a- b.  
Eng. tr. by Mrs. Beveridge, ii/521.  
Tarikh-i-Baburi, Shaikh Zain, Mrs., Raza Library, Rampur, ff. 94 ab.

The above list of the *Sarkars*, though tentative, makes it crystal clear that the *Sarkars* differed in size, those of Agra, Khairabad and Kandla were smaller units consisting of a few Parganas, whereas the others were very large and yielded revenue in crores. Thus it may be said that the extensive administrative units were organised for administrative convenience, and the geographical conditions along with the racial composition of the population of an area were also taken into consideration at the time of determining the size and fixing the boundaries of the *Sarkars*. For instance, the *Sarkar* of *Shamsabad*, which has been mentioned as a vilayet by the Medieval Indian writers in their accounts of both, the Lodi and the Sur Kings, seems to have extended over the area of a few *parganas*, such as Bhogaon, Patiali, Kampil, *Shamsabad*, etc., because the powerful Rajput *Zamindars* were predominant and known for their rebellious spirit and, therefore, the large size of the units would have been unmanageable. Furthermore, the Afghan Kings thought it advisable to assign it to some Rajput noble in *iqta*.<sup>1</sup>

Now the following facts can be stressed with regard to the extensive units. By the time of the Lodis the vilayet, the *Sarkar* and the *iqta* had taken a definite shape. The chroniclers use the terms, vilayet, *Sarkar*, *Khitta* and *iqta*, more or less in the same sense without making any distinction in the respective size of the different units. The relevant references found in the contemporary works to the reextensive territorial units create the impression that the Vilayet and the *Sarkar* were the official terms used for the extensive units that had been adopted sometimes during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi. In actual fact, the vilayet was larger than the *Sarkar*. But the actual Vilayets during the Lodi period do not seem to have been more than two. The first was the vilayet of Lahore or the Panjab, consisting of the *Sarkars* of Bhera, Sialkot and

---

1. First Afghan Empire, p. 179;  
Also Gwaliornama, ff. 18b, for its assignment to Raja Bikramajit of Gwalior when he was taken in the royal service by Sultan Ibrahim Lodi after the annexation of his ancestral principality. Sher Shah is also reported to have assigned it to Puran Mal of Raisin before the latter was destroyed.

Lahore,<sup>1</sup> while the other was of Bihar that included in itself the modern districts of Gaya, Patna, etc. in South Bihar and Tirhut, the Raja of which was the vassal of the Sultan but subject to the control of Bihar's *Muqta*. On the fall of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, the territory of Tirhut was seized by Sultan Nusrat Shah of Bengal in 1526.<sup>2</sup>

Sher Shah Sur, who more than doubled the former Lodi Empire by his conquests of vast territories in all directions, deserves credit for having carried on the administrative system of the Delhi Sultanate, in so far as he organised the vilayets of Bengal, Malwa, Rajputana, Multan etc. into *Sarkars* and more or less established there the same administrative machinery that had evolved and functioned in the Sultanate of Delhi, at least, since the 14th century. In this matter Sher Shah seems to have revived certain institutions of some utility which had ceased to exist during the fifteenth century owing to the unfavourable conditions caused by the disintegration of the Sultanate and the rise of independent principalities. Sher Shah, however, was in no way an innovator but a reformer of the first order. Modern writers have credited him with the creation of many institutions which had really come to him from the early times. So far as the *Sarkar* and its administrative system is concerned, it was in no way Sher Shah's creation. Dr. P. Saran's statement. "It was Sher Shah who for the first time essayed seriously and with success to define the territorial limits of the provinces and to establish a uniform System of Government,"<sup>3</sup> is but a sweeping generalisation which does not tally with the historical fact.

Indeed, Sher Shah found the *Sarkar* an ideal administrative cum-fiscal unit and so he retained it. The *Sarkars* of the Lodi times in north India remained as they had come to him.

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 55-a.

It deserves to be pointed out that the *Sakar* of Dipalpur remained a separate unit under a *Muqta*, independent of the *Muqta* of the Punjab, after the destruction of Tatar Khan Yusuf Khali. During the reigns of Sikandar Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi, the *Sakar* of Dipalpur was governed by Ali Khan Farmuli.

*Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 22b-23 a.

But Babur mentions its revenue along with the revenue of the other trans-Sutlej *Sarkars*. *Baburnama*, II/521.

2. *Bihar Through the Ages*, p. 395.

3. *The Provincial Government of the Mughals*, p. 61.

They were not even amalgamated into Vilayets. Moreover, the vast and outlying Vilayets that lay outside the former Lodi Empire as independent kingdoms were also parcelled out into manageable *Sarkars* on the model of the Lodi *Sarkar*. The administrative machinery for every *Sarkar* was also organised on the same model with necessary modifications and changes. In Bengal, Bihar, Malwa and Rajputana many new Units seem to have been constituted by Sher Shah as *Sarkars* while those existing as *Khittas* or vilayets (large units) were also designated as such. That is why the Vilayets of Bengal, Malwa, Rajputana and Multan are found well-organised into *Sarkars* during the reign of Emperor Akbar.

The important change introduced by Sher Shah in the strategic regions also deserves to be explained. The *Sarkars* in such regions were grouped into vilayets and then placed under the charge of a noble, called *Faujdar*, *amin* or *Muqta* who held authority over the nobles in charge of different *Sarkars* in the Vilayet. They were placed in sub-ordination to him, so that the administration of all the territories could be carried on properly and the frontiers of the Empire guarded more successfully under his direction. For instance, Hamid Khan Kakar was posted in Nagarkot to supervise the administration of all the territories of Jaiswal, Didawal, Gualiyar in the Himachal hills; Mubarak Khan Sur in Rohtas fort to guard against the Ghakkhars and the Mughals; Fath Jang in Multan and Uchh *Sarkars*, Jhakkar Chand in Bhakkar *Sarkar*, and over all of them 'Azam Humayun Niazi (former Haibat Khan Niazi) was placed with a higher rank of 30,000 *sawars*. The latter lived in Lahore as the *amin* of all the *Sarkars* beyond the Sutlej river.<sup>1</sup> The cis-Sutlej *Sarkars* were assigned to other nobles either in maintenance *iqta* or as administrative charge. The *Sarkar* of Sirhind from which several *parganas* were separated to constitute the *Sarkar* of Narnaul,<sup>2</sup> was assigned to Masnad-

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher-Shahi*, ff. 92b 93a-b.

2. The *Sarkar* of Narnaul with 16 *Parganas* continued as a separate unit till Akbar's time, and then it was included into the *Suba* of Agra as one of its 13 *Sarkars* at the time of the re-organization of the Mughal Empire into *Subas*. *Ain-i-Akbari*, ii/453.

According to Prof. Qanungo the reason of upgrading Narnaul from the headquarters of a *pargana* into that of a *Sarkar* was that it happened to be Sher Shah's birth place. In Narnaul, he built a mausoleum over the grave of his grand-father, the ruins of which may still be seen there.

Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 9.

*I-'all* Khawwas Khan in *Iqta*, while the *Masnad-i-'all* was posted in Jodhpur, as the *Amin*, the *Sarkars* of Dholpur, Gwalior, Chittore, etc. and region of Rajputana was placed under the charge of Prince Adil Khan, stationed in Ranthambore with a strong military Force.

The regions which claimed Sher Shah's attention most for administrative re-organization were of Bihar, Bengal, Malwa and Multan. During the Lodi period, the reigon of Bihar under the direct rule of the Afghan Kings was comparatively very small but Sher Shah restored it almost to its geographical limit by his conquests till 1539. Formerly the Vilayet of Bihar, as stated above, extended actually over the area of Bihar and Tirhut under a vassal ruler, while the *Sarkars* of Saran and Champaran were treated as separate units, and they were governed by Mian Husain Farmuli.<sup>1</sup> Sher Shah not only incorporated these *Sarkars* into his Vilayet of Bihar but also separated a few from Bengal to add to it, and thus Bihar was turned into a geographical and cultural entity.

Actually it was in Bihar that Sher Shah had started his career as an administrator of somewhat a vast area as well as a commander of an army, and so had full knowledge about its resources, population and the problems involved in its administration owing to its rivers system. In an attempt to develop this territory, he evinced great interest in its progress, and in consequence it had turned into a prosperous area. Abul Fazl's description about the prosperity of Akbar's *Suba* of Bihar is, in fact, related to the *Sarkar* of Bihar proper as is clear from his references to the town and the *zabt* system prevailing there as the only and standard method of revenue assessment since long, and this was due to Sher Shah's efforts made before his occupation of north India in 1540. However Abul Fazl's description is interesting and may be taken as about Sher Shah's Bihar also : "Agriculture flourishes in a high degree, especially the cultivation of rice which, for its quality and quantity is rarely to be equalled. *Kisari* is the name of a pulse, resembling peas, eaten by the poor, but is unwholesome. Sugarcane is abundant and of excellent quality. Betel leaf,

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/315, 333.

*Waqi'at-i- Mushtaqi*, f. 40b, 41b for details about Mian Husain Farmuli's Conquest of Champaran territory. The raja of Champaran was aligned with Sultan Husain Sharqi.



especially the kind called *Makhl*, is delicate and beautiful in colour, than in texture, fragrant and pleasant to the taste. At Maner, a flower grows named *Majkand*, somewhat like the flower of the *Dhatura*, very fragrant and found nowhere else. Milk is rich in quality and cheap. The custom of dividing the crops is not here prevalent.<sup>1</sup>

Upon the overthrow of his adversaries, Sultan Mahmud in Bengal and the Mughals in north India, Sher Shah set to organise his Empire into *Sarkars* and the *Sarkars* into *Vilayets* in the frontier regions. In Bihar the *parganas* as well as the old existing *Khittas* were re-grouped into *Sarkars* in the light of topographical conditions. Thus the seven *Sarkars* of Bihar, as described in the *al'n*, seem to have been created by Sher Shah and they were (1) the *Sarkar* of Bihar with 46 *parganas*, (2) the *Sarkar* of Monghyr (formerly included in the kingdom of Bengal), (3) the *Sarkar* of Champaran (only three *parganas*), (4) the *Sarkar* of Saran, (5) the *Sarkar* of Tirhut, (6) the *Sarkar* of Hajipur, and (7) the *Sarkar* of Rohtas.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the aforesaid units existed as extensive units from the early times and Sher Shah seems to have given them the name of *Sarkar* and included in the *Vilayet* of Bihar, without making reduction in their size. For example, the territories of Monghyr and Rohtas were quite extensive units; the former was the part of the Bengal Kingdom, while the latter was held by a Raja friendly towards the Afghans. However, Sher Shah appointed one of his nobles in every *Sarkar* for administration and all of them were subject to the authority of the governor of Bihar *Vilayet* whom the medieval writers mention with different denominational titles as will be discussed subsequently.

In Bengal the extensive territorial units appear to have been designed and shaped on the pattern of the *Shiqq* and *Vilayets* of the Delhi Sultanate long before Sher Shah's occupation. The rivers, rivulets and the hills were an important factor in determining the demarcating lines among various units, *vilayets*, *Khittas*, *Shiqqs* or whatever name they might have been given. We know for certain that the entire region of Bengal was parcelled out into several units among which the *Vilayet* of Lakhnauti (West Bengal), and the *Vilayet* of Sonargaon were very large, and the government of each was

1. *Ain-i-Akbari*, (Eng. Tr.) II/15/.

2. *Al'n-i-Akbari*, (Persian text). II/420-422.

entrusted to a high noble separately during the times of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq.<sup>1</sup> But in 1336-7 Fakhruddin, the cup-bearer killed his master, Bahram Khan, the *Muqta* of Sonargaon, also captured Lakhnauti and then declared his independence with the title of Sultan Fakhruddin. Later on he was killed by Haji Ilyas who united the whole of Bengal under his rule, shifted his capital to Pandua<sup>2</sup> and thus the foundation of a Provincial Kingdom was laid down. This change in the Status of Bengal led its sultans to maintain large armies and construct impregnable forts on the frontiers to guard against the Sultans of Delhi and the non-Muslim rulers of Arakan. In this way the number of the nobles or the commanders of the army must have considerably increased, and since everyone of the nobles was to be assigned the charge of some territory for administration as well as for his maintenance, the extensive territories must have been further divided into smaller units, some of which might have been left by Sher Shah with their original size.

In 1539, Sher Shah finally occupied Bengal and posted Khizr Khan Turk<sup>3</sup> as its supreme *Muqta*. Being in possession of a large and resourceful vilayet Khizr Khan was filled with arro-

1. *Barani*, pp. 450, 451, 468, 587, *Afif*, p. 137.

2. Pandua is now a deserted town in the Malda district of Bengal.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 87b.

I am sorry to disagree with Prof. Qanungo about the origin of Khizr Khan Turk. The learned Professor considers him as the native and one of the old officers of Bengal whom Sher Shah had taken in his service after his conquest. To press his point further, he says; "It was also his (Sher's) policy to recruit the administrative personell from the province itself, and then press into his services the local Hindu and Muslim aristocracy with a view to making the administrative change over as smooth as possible for the conquered people." *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 222.

No doubt Sher Shah took the members of the local Hindu and Muslim aristocracy when their loyalty was not doubtful. But he was wise enough not to entrust the charge of any important and extensive territory to fresh entrants. We know on the basis of the available contemporary evidence that no important post or conquered territory was given to the charge of any one outside the close group of his old followers. As regards Bengal, it was the largest vilayet of the Empire for the conquest of which Sher Shah had to suffer a lot, and so it could not be entrusted to a Bengali, about whose loyalty doubts could be had. In fact Khizr Khan Turk was an old follower of Sher Shah in whom the latter reposed high confidence. It was after his imprisonment that Sher Shah took up certain measures to curtail the powers of the Governor of Bengal for dispelling his apprehensions about the possibility of his assuming independence.

gance. He married the daughter of the ex-Sultan and began to behave in the fashion of the Bengali Sultans. Consequently, Sher Shah threw him into prison and set to organise the government of Bengal in such a way that the possibility of the rebellion of the Governor in future might not arise. At this time Sher Shah is stated to have parcelled out Bengal into pieces of well-defined boundaries and posted a *muqta* in each one. Qazi Fazilat was appointed *amln* to keep watch on all the *Muqtas* in Bengal.<sup>1</sup> The pieces of territories as carved out by Sher Shah in the light of local geographical conditions were actually the *Sarkars* that continued without any change in the Mughal period also, and we can presume this because Akbar is not reported to have reconstituted the boundaries of any *Sarkar* in Bengal. The arguments put forth by prof. Qanungo in this regard are convincing. He observes that, "Todar Mal served in Bengal at the initial stage of the Mughal conquest of Bengal only in a military capacity. He compiled his Rent-roll on the basis of old records of the *Pathan* regime. How else could Todar Mal and abul Fazl know of the *Mahals* of Sylhet and Chittagong which were then, mere hearsay to them?"<sup>2</sup> At another place the same writer says that Sher Shah created *sarkars* in Bengal by a judicious distribution of the *parganas* of the previous regime. "This division was not made arbitrarily to suit any fancy for equalising the area of the *Sarkars* were of unequal extent varying in the yield of revenue. The name of these *Sarkars* were evidently the same as we find in the *Al'n*.....and the newly created *Sarkars* of Sher were named after the name of the most important subdivision under each *Sarkar*."<sup>3</sup>

If we examine the above statements in the light of evidence available in the *Al'n* and other works, no doubt remains about the region of Bengal having been parcelled out into nineteen *Sarkars*,<sup>4</sup> the boundaries of which were fixed on the basis of geographical conditions as well as in view of

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 87b.

2. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 308 (f. n. 2).

3. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, p. 310.

4. Abul Fazl simply gives the list of the *Sarkars* of Bengal as they were found in existence at the time of Mughal conquest. But Orissa was parcelled out into *Sarkars* by Akbar, therefore Abul Fazl states. "Formerly (Orissa) was a single unit but the Emperor of the World divided it into five *Sarkars*."

*Al'n*, ii/391.

the administrative facility. Indeed, the river system of Bengal must have made the creation of larger units difficult because a *muqta* posted in an extensive *sarkar* extending beyond large rivers could not discharge his responsibilities efficiently. For this reason the *Sarkars* varied both in size and their yield of revenue. However, the *Sarkars* of Bengal given in the *al'n* may be tabulated as follows :

Name of the <i>Sarkar</i>	Number of <i>Parganas</i> attached to the <i>Sarkar</i>	Reference, <i>Al'n</i> , ii/394.
1. Under, commonly known as Tanda	52 Parganas	<i>Ain</i> , ii/394
2. Lakhnauti	66	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/394
3. Fathabad	31	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/395-6
4. Mahmudabad	88	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/397-9
5. Khalifatabad	35	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/399-400
6. Bagra	4	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/400
7. Purniyah	9	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/400-401
8. Tajpur	29	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/401-402
9. Ghoraghat	84	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/402-403
10. Pinjarah	21	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/403
11. Barbakabad	38	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/403-404
12. Bazoha	32	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/404
13. Sonargaon	52	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/405
14. Sylhet	8	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/406
15. Chittagong	7	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/406
16. Sharifabad	26	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/406-407
17. Sulaimanabad	31	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/407-408
18. Satgaon	53	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/408
19. Madaran	16	<i>Ibid</i> , ii/409

As regards the territory of Malwa , Sher Shah found it much reduced in its size in 1542, because some of its extensive territories were seized by the neighbouring rulers, while the remaining ones had suffered a lot in population and prosperity, first owing to the internecine struggle of the Malwa nobles, apparently an outcome of their selfish policy of blind self-aggrandisement during the reigns of the last two Khalji Sultans, and then the conflict between *Bahadur Shah* of Gujrat and *Humayun* that had further ruined its economy. As in Bihar and

Bengal, Sher Shah paid attention to its administrative organization also and created conditions favourable for peace and prosperity. As already mentioned, the *Sarkar* of Ajmer and Ranthambore which previously formed the part of the Malwa Kingdom were separated, but the *Sarkar* of Chanderi was incorporated into the Vilayet of Malwa. Furthermore, Sher Shah is also credited with the creation of new *Sarkars* in certain regions which either lay desolate or were sparsely populated. He took keen interest in their development. He rehabilitated people in the valley of Narbada, so that the vast arable land lying waste might be brought under cultivation. He gave cultivators rent-free land for three years.<sup>1</sup> For its administration, a fort was constructed in Handiya and the territory was named as *Sarkar* of Handiya and Sewanis. *Masnad-o-all* Shuja'at Khan Sur was entrusted with its government with a rank of 4,000 *sawars* in the first instance.<sup>2</sup> In Islam Shahs' time this *Sarkar* was held by the *Faujdar*, Bahar Khan Sarwani,<sup>3</sup> whose rank was increased to 6000 *Sawars* in proportion to its increased revenue.<sup>4</sup>

An other area that attracted Sher Shah's attention in Malwa was that of *Saronj*, like the *Sarkar* of *Handiya* and *Sewanis*. He developed it also by conferring the same favours upon the new settlers as he had granted elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> But Abul Fazl includes *Saronj* in the *Sarkar* of Chanderi and states that white muslin which people called *Mahmudi* was manufactured there.<sup>6</sup> May be, Akbar included it in Chanderi *Sarkar* because it was small in size and its inclusion did not involve any administrative inconvenience. However, our impression formed on the basis of our study of the Afghan chronicles is that Sher Shah's malwa was smaller than Akbar's *Suba* of Malwa and that the boundaries of certain *Sarkars* of the Sur time underwent changes in the subsequent period. However, the *Sarkars* incorporated into the Vilayet of Malwa by Sher Shah, as mentioned in different sources seem to have been : (1) the *Sarkar* of Chanderi, the charge of which was assigned

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 127a-b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 90b.

3. *Ba daoni*, I/406.

4. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 127a.

5. *Ibid.* f. 131b.

6. *Ain*, (Eng. Tr.) II/202.

to some *Rajput* noble,<sup>1</sup> (2) the *Sarkar* of *Saronj*, (3) the *Sarkar* of *Mandessor*,<sup>2</sup> (4) the *Sarkar* of *Ujjain*, (5) the *Sarkar* of *Raisin* and *Bhilsa*, (6) the *Sarkar* of *Sarangpur*, (7) the *Sarkar* of *Mandu*,<sup>3</sup> (8) the *Sarkar* of *Dhar*,<sup>3</sup> (Akbar merged it into the *Sarkar* of *Mandu*), (9) the *Sarkar* of *Handiya* and *Satwas*,<sup>4</sup> (10) the *Sarkar* of *Bijagarh*, which was left to *Raja Bhopal Rai*, a faithful ally of *Sher Shah* in *Malwa*.<sup>5</sup>

According to 'Abbas, *Sher Shah* had made up his mind to appoint *Shuja'at Khan sur* as the *faujdar* of *Malwa Vilayet*, but the latter's negligence in keeping a strict watch on *Mallu Khan*, the ruler of *Malwa*, who in the beginning had agreed to shift to the *Sarkar* of *Lucknow* with his family and dependants as one of *Sher Shah's* nobles but soon afterwards slipped away from the *Afghan* camp, deprived *Shuja'at Khan* of the chance of his being elevated to the highest position in the provincial government there. *Sher Shah* gave him only the *Sarkar* of *Handiya* and *Satwas* in *iqta* for the maintenance of 4,000 *Sawars* and posted *Haji Khan*, the brother-in-law of *Khawwas Khan* in *Mandu* as *Malwa's Faujdar* with *Sa'id Khan Harsain* as *diwan* to assist him in the financial affairs.<sup>6</sup> The other nobles whom *Sher Shah* is reported to have posted in other *Sarkars* were *Darya Khan Gujarati* in *Ujjain Sarkar*, 'Alam Khan Lodi (son of *Sultan Bahlul*) in *Sarangpur*, while *Masnad-i-ali Taj Khan* (*Karrani*) was assigned the charge of the *Sarkar* of *Dhar*.<sup>7</sup>

Shortly after the departure of *Sher Shah* from *Malwa* the overthrown *Malwa* nobles attacked the *Afghan* nobles from different quarters, and in encountering them *Shuja'at Khan* made a display of unprecedented chivalry and shattered the power of *Mallu Khan* and his ally, *Nasir Khan Miana* (*Afghan*).<sup>8</sup> Being pleased with *Shuja'at Khan*, *Sher Shah* recalled *Haji*

1. cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 385-6.

2. *Al'n*, ii/466 In the *al'n* it is called as the *Sarkar* of *Mandosor*, but the earlier writers mention it as *Mandessor*. Cf. *Tazkirat-al-Waqi'at*.

3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* f. 54a.

4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 90b. *Satwas* is situated on the bank of the *Narbada* river; 20 miles in the west of *Handiya* town.

5. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 54a.  
Also Cf. *Sher Shah and His Times*, pp. 341-342.

6. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 90b.

7. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 54a.

8. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 91a; *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 54a-b.

*Khan* from Malwa and appointed Shuja'at Khan as the suprem, *Muqta* of Malwa with his rank indreased to 12,000 *sawars*.<sup>1</sup>

The Vilayet of *Multan* which lay desolate on account of the tyrannical rule of the Baloch chiefs, also received Sher Shah's attention for its betterment. Although the Baloch chiefs were left untouched in that territory in 1541 when they had agreed to rule there in Sher Shah's name as his nobles,<sup>2</sup> in 1543 Sher Shah decided to improve the conditions of Multan by removing them from there. On their unwillingness to obey the royal farman, *Halbat Khan Niazi*, the *Muqta* of the Punjab was ordered to mobilise his army against them. The Baloch chiefs were destroyed, and Haibat Khan was rewarded with the title of '*Azam Humayun* and an increase in his rank, which was now raised to 30,000 *Sawars*. As ordered, '*Azam Humayun Niazi* took measures conducive to peace and prosperity : he posted *Fath Jang* in Multan and *Jhakkar Chand* in the *Sarkar* of Bhakkar,<sup>3</sup> his lieutenants with the specific orders that they would not introduce the *zabt* system, but would collect one-fourth of the land produce as State share by crop-sharing as it was the rule during the times of the *Langahs*, and rehabilitate the ruined towns and villages by their nice treatment. Both the officers were equal to the task assigned to them and the Vilayet is said to have become more prosperous than it was even during the heyday of the *Langahs*. Particularly *Fath Jang* deserves credit for developing Multan as the construction of the towns including *Sher Garh*, indicates.<sup>4</sup>

The Vilayet of Multan seems to have formerly been a single unit, extending over the modern district of Multan and the parts of Mianwali district in the Punjab and the *Parganas* of the Uchh and Sehwan in the upper Sind. To know the exact boundaries of the Vilayet as fixed in the medieval times we have to trace their evolution from the earlier times.

During the 14th Century the Vilayet of Multan seems to have been divided into two divisions (1) the *Shiqq* of Multan, and (2) the *Shiqq* of Uchh which, besides the *Parganas* of

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, 91b-92a.

2. *Ibid.* ff. 85a-b, 92b-93b.

3. *Ibid.* f. 93a.

4. *Ibid.* f. 94a. *Sher Garh* is about 20 miles to the south-east of *Satgarh*.

Sehwan and Bhakkar also included other areas around them in the Upper Sind region.<sup>1</sup> By the time Sher Shah occupied the Punjab in 1541 Multan had been held by the Baloches, Uchh by Bakhshu Langha<sup>2</sup> and the towns of Bhakkar and Sehwan were annexed by Shah Husain Arghun to his territory of Thatta. Thus the vilayet was reduced in area. In 1543, Haibat Khan Niazi (Lataer Azam Humayun Niazi) not only succeeded in destroying the power of the Baloch chiefs in Multan but he also seized the territory of Upper Sind from the Arghun ruler of Thatta, as the numismatic evidence shows.<sup>3</sup> As the conquest of this region was complete, 'Azam Humayun Niazi set to reorganise its administration under the direction of his master. The important change which seems to have taken place at this time was the transference of the *Sarkar* headquarters from Uchh to Bhakkar, the reason being the decline of Uchh in its past grandeur and importance. The flood of the river Sind had started doing damage to it since the times of Firuz Shah Tughlaq.<sup>4</sup> Sher Shah, who was very particular about establishing the seats of provincial government at strategic points selected Bhakkar to be the Headquarters of the *Sarkar* as the town was situated on the border of Arghun territory and, moreover, Uchh was to be left to Bakhshu Langha, a faithful ally. According to the *Ain*, the *Sarkar* of Multan comprised 47 *parganas* and the *Sarkar* of Bhakkar only 12 *parganas*. As for the *Sarkar* of Dipalpur which formed the part of Akbar's *Suba* of Multan, it was always a separate unit during the Sultanate period.<sup>5</sup>

### Provincial government

The Afghan Sultans of Delhi do not seem to have established any new administrative system, but they retained the age-old institutions that had come to them having passed through the evolutionary stages. Therefore, the administrative machinery, both at the levels of the *pargana*, the *Sarkar* and the Vilayet, did not undergo any major change; only improvements and modifications could be effected whenever

- 
1. *Insha-i-Mahru*, Ainul Mulk Mahru, Edited by Prof. Sh. Abdur Rashid, Lahore, (Pakistan) pp. 17-18, 19.
  2. Cf. *Sher Shah nad His Times*, pp. 291, 293, 297, 298.
  3. *Ibid.* p. 300.
  4. *Insha-i-Mahru*, pp. 41, 48-50.
  5. *Ain-i-Akbari*, ii/550-552.



necessary. The *Shiqqdar* who combined in himself the functions of the military and civil officer remained in charge of the *pargana* administration, and in this capacity he wielded authority over the *amll* (revenue collector) *amln* (official, charged with the duty of measuring the land under cultivation for determining the government Share in agricultural produce) and the hereditary petty officials, *Chaudhrles*, and *muq-qadams* (also called *zamindars*), and their helpers, the khuts in the countryside.<sup>1</sup> As regards the officer incharge of the government of the *Sarkar* or the vilayet, he was a high noble, generally designated as *muqta*<sup>2</sup> ('Synonymous with the governor) during the Lodi period. In addition to the maintenance of a contingent of *sawars* (troops) by him for the state service, the *muqta* was also responsible for the establishment of law and order in his jurisdiction. Thus he combined the offices of the army commander and an executive officer at the level of the *Sarkar* or the vilayet. He was always expected to be active for meeting internal as well as external exigencies in the extensive territory placed under his charge.

The position of the *muqtas* was different in different *Sarkars*; those of the frontier territories had to be assigned the major portion of the revenue of the *Sarkar* or *Vilayet* entrusted to their charge, because they maintained large army contingents for defence as there was always a possibility of external invasion or internal rebellions. The available information shows that some of the *muqtas* of outlying border vilayets had army officers, holding military ranks from one thousand to six thousand *sawars* in their personal service. For the maintenance of these nobles, they sub-assigned large *parganas* in *iqta* out of their own maintenance *iqta*.<sup>3</sup> The examples of Masnad-i'-ali

- 
1. Cf. *Postions of Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi*, Iqtidar Hasain Siddiqi, Islamid Culture, Hyderabad- Deccan, Ochober, 1967, pp. 233-237.
  2. The Medleval chroniclers, with the exception of Riza Ullah Mushtaqi refer to the heads of the *Sarkar* administration with different denominational titles, such as *Hakim*, *Muqta* and even *Jagirdar* more of les, in the same sense, but Mushtaqi, Shalkh 'Abul Quddus of Gaugoh and Shalkh Jamali mention such nobles in their writings as *Muqtas*. Since the full *Sarkars* were not reserved for the Khalsa under the Lodis, there was no need of appolnting *faujders* and so *muqta* appears to have been the official title to be given to the head of the *Sarkar* government.  
*Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 34a, 34b, 36a-36b, 39 a etc.  
*Anwar-ul-'Uyun*, pp. 42;  
*Siya ru'l-'Arfin*, p. 177.
  3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 33b.

Darya Khan Nuhani, 'Azam Humayun Sarwani, Daulat Khan Lodi (Yusuf Khail) and Mian Husain Farmuli may be cited in this regard. The first two held the extensive and resourceful vilayets of Bihar and Kara respectively with large armies<sup>1</sup> while the last two were given the charge of more than one frontier *Sarkars* because the resources of one frontier *Sarkar* could not suffice to meet the expenses of a large army. Daulat Khan Lodi held the *Sarkars* of Lahore, Behra and Sialkot in his control and Mian Husain Farmuli guarded the *Sarkars* of Saran and Champaran.<sup>2</sup> All such *Muqtas* distributed the parganas of vilayets and *Sarkars* among their own nobles partly for administration and partly for their maintenance.<sup>3</sup>

Next to them come the *Muqtas* of the second category who do not seem to have been left by the Sultans with such large amount of revenue yielded by their territories as the *muqtas* of the first category. Because they were posted to govern the *Sarkars* in the interior of the Sultanate; and owing to proximity with the centre the presence of large armies was not necessary there, in most of these *Sarkars* some of the *parganas* were reserved for the royal *Khalsa* that were governed directly by the *Dewan* of *Wizarat* (Revenue Ministry) through *Shiqqdars*.<sup>4</sup> The *Shiqqdars* posted in the *Khalsa parganas* were in subordination to the *muqtas* of the *Sarkars*, provided the headquarters of the *Sarkar* with the larger number of its dependancies was placed under the charge of the latter.<sup>5</sup> Besides maintaining peace and order in their jurisdiction, the *Muqtas* of all such *Sarkars* also had to supervise the work of the *Shiqqdars* and *amils* in the *Khalsa Parganas*. They were required to send the revenue collected in the *Khalsa parganas* to the Centre after having paid the share of the *pargana* officers and their subordinates which they deserved as their salary and allowances.<sup>6</sup> But, like the *Muqtas* of the first order, they had to maintain their accounts regarding their

---

1. *Ibid.* ff. 36a-b, 40b, 41b.

2. *Baburnama*, ii/521.  
*Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 40b.

3. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, pp. 149-152.

4. Cf. *Position of Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi*, op. cit., p. 26.

5. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 29 b.

6. *Position of Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi*, op. cit., pp. 237-88

expenditure as well as income accruing from their respective *Sarkars* through their own *diwans* and their accounts were regularly checked by the officers of the *diwan-i-'ala* (Royal Revenue Ministry).<sup>1</sup> Likewise they had to leave one of their relations or trusted servant at the royal court to work as their *vakil* in their absence from the royal court.<sup>2</sup>

Our study of the medieval sources of information pertaining to the Afghan period clearly indicates that the *muqtas* were the direct representatives of the imperial government at the level of provincial government, and besides military and police power, the executive and judicial authority was also vested in them, and thus they appear to have been autocrats within their jurisdiction. But the fear of unfavourable public opinion and the presence of the spies whom the Sultan appointed to keep a strict watch upon the *muqtas* in the *Sarkars* and the *vilayets* always prevented them from misusing their powers and also made them bureaucrats to govern the territories properly. The local public opinion antagonised by any misdeed of the noble could result in his humiliation. The spies sent their secret reports while the *ashraf* (responsible gentlemen) of a place sent memoranda (*mahzarnama*) to the royal court complaining against the misconduct of their *muqta*.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, they served as a check upon him and created conditions under which he had to perform his duties.

The interesting evidence available in a contemporary work shows that the *Muqtas* used to take rounds of their *sarkars* in peace-time and saw to it that no person was maltreated anywhere by their subordinates, and the administration of the *parganas* included in the territories was carried on properly. They punished the wrong-doers in different ways, according to the nature of crimes. They fined the culprit, in case he did not deserve corporal punishment.<sup>4</sup>

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p. 38; also *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 9a.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 13 b.

3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff.; *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 80 b.  
*Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I/422.

Also Cf. Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, *Espionage System of the Sultans of Delhi*, Studies in Islam, New Delhi, April, 1964.

4. *Anwar-u 'I'-Uyun*, Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, pp. 15, 16, 18, 19, 21.  
*Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, pp. 35, 41.

As for the powers of the *Muqtas* they were delegated full power by the Sultan as his representatives in the *Sarkars* and the vilayets. In the absence of fast means of communication the governors had to be allowed full powers in the interest of administration; otherwise they would have been deprived of initiative, so necessary for coping with critical situations that arose so often, in different regions, full of recalcitrant *zamin-dars*. But it is also imperative to stress that there was no privilege, enjoyed by the *muqtas* which could not be taken away by the Sultan. The *Muqtas* enjoyed their privileged position so long as they did not incur the royal displeasure. Likewise, a drastic change in the royal policy with regard to the further over-centralization of administration could also affect the position of the *Muqtas*. In short, the governors retained their high status in the territories at royal will. A little deviation by the governor from the path of loyalty could result in his dismissal.<sup>1</sup>

Further, the *Muqtas* had to conform to the standards set by the Sultan at the centre in respect of the State-system, in case, the Sultan was just and took keen interest in the well-being of his people, the *Muqtas* were careful in keeping the people of their territory satisfied with their conduct. They dispensed justice to all, irrespective of caste and creed. Cruelty and high-handedness on the part of the state officers was never tolerated.<sup>2</sup> The information furnished by *Mushtaqi* in his account of the high nobles of the Lodi period reveals that the *muqtas* were granted autonomy in certain respects; they could ban or prohibit certain obnoxious things in their jurisdiction, arbitrarily if they liked, although the Sultan allowed them in the metropolitan cities of Delhi and Agra. For instance, Daulat Khan Lodi (Yusuf Khail) is said to have prohibited the sale of wine and closed down the gambling dens in the trans-Sutlej *Sarkars*, while these things were common and people could indulge in them without any fear even in the royal Capital.<sup>3</sup>

In short, the *Muqtas* were shown high favour and consideration by the Sultans. They were allowed to bring the alien

---

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/431-2.

*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/189-190.

2. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 13b-14a.

*Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, i/p.322; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/189-190.

3. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 34a, 16a-b.

territories under their control, provided they captured them from the hostile *rajas* or the nobles attached to an enemy. But it was always implicit that the administration of the seized territories would be modelled on the pattern adopted for the Empire. In this way the conquered territories became additional charge, and were generally left to them as an increase in their maintenance *iqta*. In certain cases, the original *iqta* of the noble was more than doubled. *Masnad-i-'all* Mian Muhammad Farmuli Kalapahar, the famous *muqta* of Awadh *Sarkar* was permitted to govern the *sarkar* of Bahraich through his own men and asked to consider it as an addition to his maintenance *iqta*, for he had seized it from Shams Khan, the Sharqi noble, after having fought a fierce battle.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Mian Husain Farmull, who was posted in Saran *Sarkar* and had captured the territory of Champaran shortly afterwards, was given its charge in reward.<sup>2</sup> Daulat Khan Lodi (Yusuf Khail) who had succeeded in persuading the Mughal governor of Bhera, Ali Khan to enter Sultan Sikandar Lodi's service and hand over Bhera territory to him, was also permitted to govern it through his men.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the *Muqtas* established diplomatic ties with the independent rulers of neighbouring territories and interfered with their internal affairs whenever they got an opportunity. They did it in the interest of their sovereign.<sup>4</sup>

A word may also be added about the rise of certain *muqtas* of the vilayets that comprised more than a *Sarkar*. Properly speaking there were only two such units that can be called vilayets; (i) the Punjab or the vilayet of Lahore and (ii) the vilayet of Bihar as already mentioned. But it should be pointed out that the *muqtas* of the *sarkars* of Jaunpur and Kara equalled the *muqtas* of the Punjab and Bihar in resources, position and grandeur. For instance, 'Azam Humayun Sarwani, the *Muqta* of Kara and Manikpur launched military

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 39a-b.

2. *Ibid*, f. 40b.

3. *Baburnama*, I/382.

4. Cf. Prof. Mohibbul Hasan, *Kashmir under the Sultans*, pp. 102, 106, 108, for Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail's interference with the internal affairs of the Kingdom of Kashmir. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, III/537, for Daulat Khan Lodi's relation with the Langah rulers of Multan.

operations against the hostile Rajas of *Bhatta* (Bath- Ghorah of Akbar's times) and others and forced them into submission by annexing much of their territory to his *sarkar*, with the result that it was considerably expanded into a vast area. Much of the region captured by him was still unexplored by the Muslim warriors owing to the dense forests and hilly terrain<sup>1</sup> A'zam Humayun Sarwani is said to have maintained the highest army rank in the Lodi Empire. Mushtaqi says. "He had forty-five thousand *sawars* and seven hundred elephants. There were two thousand five hundred rank-holders in his service. Some of them were high nobles : Saif Khan Acha Khail was his lieutenant and had 6000 *sawars* under him. Daulat Khan Nuhani and 'Ali Khan Oshi were given the ranks of 4000 *sawars* each while *Firoz Khan Sarwani* commanded 6,000 *sawars*. There were other 2,500 *sawars* and *amirs*"<sup>2</sup>

These officers in the service of A'zam Humayun Sarwani worked in different capacities; they worked as administrators, led military expeditions and represented their master at the royal court as well. They were assigned maintenance *iqtas* out of the large *iqta* of their master.

Likewise the *muqta* of Jaunpur also rose in prominence due to the expansion of his authority in the areas of the hostile *Zamindars* in the parganas of modern *Mirzapur* and *Shahabad* districts. In the beginning Khan 'Azam Jamal Khan Sarang Khani was assigned the rank of 12,000 *sawars*, but afterwards it was raised to 20,000 *sawars* as mentioned previously. Darya Khan Nuhani, the *Muqta* of Bihar vilayet and Daulat Khan Lodi, the *Muqta* of the Panjab had the ranks of 30,000 *sawars* respectively.<sup>3</sup>

Being in command of the vast resources of their territories, the *muqtas* were in a position to maintain grand courts in their provincial towns in imitation of the Sultan.<sup>4</sup> But their ambitions and authority were checked, to some extent by the presence of the spies and the nobles appointed by the Sultan in different parts under them.<sup>5</sup> Despite certain limitations and

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 19b-20b.

2. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 36b, 41b; also Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, p. 123.

3. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff.36b, 37a, 39a.

4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff.36b, 37a, 39a.

5. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/219;

checks imposed upon them, the *muqtas* of the vilayets were never denied initiative. They wielded vast powers and met an emergency situation in the outlying territory in the manner they thought proper.<sup>1</sup> But they were always subject to royal orders. They could be replaced by others or ordered to move and help the royalists in suppressing the rebels or conquering new territories in any direction.<sup>2</sup> Now the following facts can be deduced with regard to the Lodi period.

The decline of the Delhi Sultanate during the last decades of the 14th century was paradoxically paralleled by an evolution of political and administrative institutions. The Lodi Sultans not only retained these institutions, but also revived the glory of the rapidly declining Sultanate. The State was somewhat centralised, in the sense that the *Muqtas* had no clearly defined powers that could not be disturbed by the centre. There were no constitutional or customary safeguards. The law and the orders of the Sultan prevailed all over the Empire, provided he was strong enough to keep the governors under check. As regards Sher Shah, he deserves credit for carrying on this administrative system in the territories which lay outside the former Lodi Empire and that he had annexed to the Afghan Empire after his rise to Sovereign status. Besides, Sher Shah revived certain institutions which had ceased to function during the 15th century for unfavourable circumstances as will be discussed now.

### Supreme officers of the Sarkar under Sher Shah

The supreme Officers of *sarkars* under Sher Shah and his successors are mentioned in different sources with different denominational titles, such as *Faujdar*, *Shiqqdar-i- Shiqqadaran*, *Muqta* and *amin* and they appear to have been vested with varying authority. But the paucity of quantitative data regard-

---

also *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 41b, 42b.

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 41b.

In the beginning of his reign Sultan Sikandar Lodi appointed his trusted nobles in the *Khitta* of Jaunpur while the over all charge of the provincial government was left in the hands of Prince Barbak Shah. The nobles posted there were expected to have a watch on the activities of the prince whose loyalty to the Sultan was doubtful. Similarly in Bihar *iqtas* were assigned to certain nobles under Darya Khan Nuhani, so that the supreme *Muqta* of the *vilayet* could be placed under check to some extent by their presence.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I/329, 235;  
*Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 13a

ing their appointments with different designations in different *Sarkars* makes it rather difficult to state exactly what were the royal considerations for it. However, the scattered references in the chronicles to these officers tend to suggest that Sher Shah posted them in the capacity of the head of administration at the level of *Sarkar* and their powers and position were determined by their designation. Let us discuss the powers and position of every officer according to his designation.

### (I) Faujdar and Faujdari

As regards the origin of faujdari, it seems that this institution was established by Sultan 'Alau'ddin Khalji in the beginning of the 14th century when the Sultan had reserved the most of the Panjab and Doab regions for Khalsa; and so the *faujdar* was the head of administration of a *Shiqq*.<sup>1</sup> The important reference in the '*Tarikh-i- Firuz Shahi*' to *faujdar* along with *Shiqqdar*, in connection with the rebellion of the land Chiefs (Zamindars), caused by the increase in land revenue during *Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's* reign, provides us with a clue to the understanding of his position. The Sultan was annoyed by the disobedience of the zamindars, and so he ordered the *Shiqqdars* and *faujdars* of the *Doab* to chastise them. Barani says : "In those two years when the Sultan remained at Delhi (1327- 1328), the vilayet of *Doab* was brought to ruin by the heavy taxation and numerous other cesses. The Hindus (*Khuts* and *muqaddams*) set fire to the stocks of corn and turned out their cattle. The Sultan ordered the *Shiqqdars* and the *Faujdars* to destroy them. Some of the *muqaddams* and *Khuts* were killed and others were blinded."<sup>2</sup>

The passage quoted above clearly shows that the *shiqqdars* and *faujdars* were important army officers, posted in the *Shiqqs* and *parganas* for maintaining peace and order. The evidence available in other sources reveals that the *faujdar* wielded authority over all the government servants in the *shiqq*, including the *shiqqdars*.<sup>3</sup> According to the author of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, the *faujdar* held *shiqq* or vilayet in his charge and combined in himself both the functions of an army commander and those of an executive Officer. Yahya

1. *Tarikh-i-firoz Shahi*, Barani, p. 337.

2. *Ibid*, p. 479.

3. Cf. *Position of Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi*, op. cit., pp. 235.



Sirhindi mentions the appointment of Daulat Khan as the *faujdar* of the *shiqq* of Mian-i-Doab in 1404.<sup>1</sup>

During the Lodi period the *faujdar* is conspicuous by his absence, for only the *Parganas* in different territories under *muqtas* were reserved for the royal *Khalsa* and a *Shiqqdar* was posted in every *pargana* for its administration as in the past.<sup>2</sup> It is to the credit of Sher Shah that he revived the institution of *faujdari* just after he had established his sway over the vast territories in north Indian in 1439. We find Shuja at Khan holding Bihar vilayet as its *faujdar* in the very beginning of his reign (1540).<sup>3</sup> Likewise Nasir Khan who also happened to be one of his trusted men, was entrusted with the *faujdar* of Sambhal *Sarkar* soon after the battle of Qanauj in 1540.<sup>4</sup> For the proper administration of the *Sarkar of Daru'l Mulk Delhi*, Sher Shah appears to have made a slightly different arrangement. As the headquarters of the *Sarkar* was Delhi itself, the largest city in population and income, different officers were posted there. Adil Khan and Hatim Khan were appointed *Shiqqdar* and *faujdar* respectively, while Mian Ahmad Khan Sarwani was posted over them as an *amin*.<sup>5</sup>

The *Sarkar* of Delhi being an extensive territory independent of any vilayet like other *sarkars*, had *Shiqqdar* for looking after the civil and police administration of the city, the *faujdar* for the entire territory, having so many populous towns as its dependancies, and the *amin* was required to co-ordinate and supervise their work. In this capacity he was charged with the duty of looking after the work of the officials engaged in collecting the state revenue and other taxes in the urban as well as rural areas. This is substantiated by 'Abbas when he described the administrative arrangements made by Sher Shah in other *sarkars*. For instance, the newly founded city of Sher Garh<sup>6</sup> alias Qanauj (near old Qanauj), the seat of the

1. *Yahya Sirhindi, Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, p. 175.

2. *Position of Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi*, p. 236

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 80a.

4. *Ibid.*, ff. 80a-80b.

5. *Tarikh-i-Sher*, f. 110a.

6. Although 'Abbas mentions the construction of the new city on the bank of the Ganges and the shifting of old Qanauj to the new one by Sher Shah, he does not refer to the change in its name. Fortunately an available *farman* of Islam Shah's reign sheds light on this fact that the

*sarkar* of Qanauj was reserved for *Khalsa* while its *parganas* (dependancies) were assigned in maintenance *iqtas* to the higher nobles, was placed under a *shiqqdar*.<sup>1</sup> Here the *Shiqqdar* was responsible for the development of the new city and keeping the roads safe from the highway-men<sup>2</sup>. Since the *sarkar* of Qanauj was sparsely populated and abounded in dense forest, Sher Shah did not feel any need of appointing high nobles in the capacity of *amin* and *faujdar* as he had done in the case of Delhi, that seems to have been an exception in this regard. We do not find *amin* as supreme officer in any *sarkar* other than Delhi in north India. In all the *sarkars* reserved for the *Khalsa*, *faujdar*s were posted as the head of the government.

Alongwith *faujdar*s the *muqtas* also appear to have held the charge of certain *sarkars* in the Sur Empire, and therefore, the difference between the position of a *faujdar* and *muqta* deserves to be explained in some detail. The information available in the *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* about the assignment of the *sarkar* of Sirhind to *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan in maintenance *iqta* by Sher Shah in 1541 tends to suggest that such assignees were officially designated as *Muqtas*. Unlike the Mughal *jagirdars* of the subsequent period, the assignees of the Afghan period, whether they were assigned the revenue of a *pargana* or a *sarkar* in lieu of cash salary, were held responsible for the government of their charge and, thus, they discharged their duties in the same way as *faujdar*s. But the *Muqtas* held a higher status in the nobility than the *faujdar*s, and for this reason they were assigned almost the full or a major portion of the revenue, collected in a *Sarkar*. In case the *Muqta* was posted to serve outside his *iqta*, he appointed one of his trusted men there to carry on its government on his

---

newly-built city was named after Sher Shah as Sher Garh alias Qanauj. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 110a;

Islam Shah's *farman*, contained in *Tazkirat-al-Mutaqqin*, ii/172.

1. It may be pointed out that the *iqta* of Mian Muhammad Farmuli and his descendants remained in the *Sarkar* of Qanauj from the times of Bahlul down to the end of Islam Shah's death. Sultan Adil Shah decided to transfer the *iqta* of Shah Muhammad Farmuli (son of Maruf Farmuli) to Sarmast Khan Sirbini, but its announcement enraged the Farmuli noble and his son, who killed many courtiers in the court and was killed along with his father in turn.
2. *Tarikh-i-Sher shahi*, f. 108a.  
Also Islam Shah's *farman*, *Tazkirat-al-Mutaqqin*, op. cit.

behalf.<sup>1</sup> It also needs to be pointed out that only *Masnad-i-all'* Khawwas Khan is reported to have been assigned by Sher Shah the entire *Sarkar* of Sirhind in *iqta*, and that too, as a special case.

The epigraphical evidence contained in an inscription of Islam Shah's reign reveals that the successor of Sher Shah called the governors of vilayets, consisting of a number of *sarkars* as *Muqta* instead of *amin* or *faujdar*. For instance, Islam Shah's governor of Bihar vilayet was some Saiyid Yaha in 1548<sup>2</sup>. Mushtaqi incidentally corroborates this information when he refers to Muhammad Khan Sur as the *Muqta* of Bengal Vilayet,<sup>3</sup> whereas in Sher Shah's days the governor of Bengal was designated as *amin*. In Islam Shah's days only the officer in charge of a *Sarkar* under the *Khalsa* was called as *faujdar*.<sup>4</sup>

A few words may also be added here about the position of the *Munsif-i-Munsifan* who is mentioned both by Mushtaqi and 'Abbas as an officer posted in the *sarkar* along with *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran*.<sup>5</sup> Unlike Mushtaqi, 'Abbas also explains the functions of his office and quite clearly indicates that the *Munsif-i-Munsifan* held an official position inferior to that of the *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran*. The evidence available in a contemporary work shows that *Masnad-i-'all'* 'Isa Khan Sarwani whom Sher Shah held in high esteem for his learning and integrity of character, and had granted a high rank of 5,000 *sawars* with a quite agreeable maintenance *iqta*, comprising the *parganas* of Kant and Tilhar in the *sarkar* of Badaun, was entrusted with the *Munsifi* of the *sarkar* of Sambhal.<sup>6</sup>

If we examine the evidence referred to above in the light of 'Abbas's statement in regard to the position of *Munsif-i-Munsifan*, it would have us believe that the Sarwani noble

1. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, p. 83, also *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 83b.

2. The inscription deciphered and published by Prof. Hasan 'Askari, in *The Journal of Bihar Research Society*, Vol. XL III, Sep.-Dec. 1957, parts III and IV, pp. 237-8

3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, 73b.

4. *Badaoni*, ii/403. For example, Bahar Khan Sarwani was the *faujdar* of Handiya *sarkar* in Malwa.

5. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 50b.

6. *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, p. 83.

was placed in subordination to Nasir Khan, the *faujdar* of Sambhal, because, according to him the *Munsif-i-Munsifan* was a civil officer charged with the duty of settling disputes among the *'amils* of *parganas* over their boundaries as well as other matters related to the revenue administration.<sup>1</sup> But the same author has specifically stated earlier that *Masnad-i-'ali* 'Isa Khan was placed over and above Nasir Khan, the *faujdar* in the *sarkar* of Sambhal because the latter had displeased Sher Shah by his oppressive rule. Sher Shah, who was not only interested in the well-being of his people but also had great regard for public opinion could not ignore the petition of people from Sambhal in Delhi containing a description of misdeeds and ruthlessness of his *faujdar* presented to him by influential people with the seals of the local leading *ulama* (1541). He is reported to have consulted Qutb Khan na'ib about the selection of a suitable man for governing the *Sarkar* of Sambhal properly, and their unanimous choice was *Masnad-i-ali* 'Isa Khan Sarwani who had been the benefactor of certain Sur families during the Lodi period. This is what we gather from the *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, and on this basis we cannot make a categorical statement in regard to the designation of 'Isa Khan. It is only Dattu Sarwani, a relation of the Khan who gives a clue to the fact that *Munsif-i-Munsifan* (Chief Munsif) functioned side by side with the *faujdar* in the *Sarkar* and their respective powers and jurisdiction were separately determined by the sovereign. According to Dattu Sarwani *Masnad-i-ali* 'Isa Khan Sarwani settled the disputes, related to land grants held by the *ulama*.

*Masnad-i-'ali* 'Isa Khan Sarwani being singular for his learning and integrity of character, was entrusted with the *Munsifi* of Sambhal, and in this capacity was required to administer justice to people with the help of *Muftis*<sup>2</sup> and the *Pargana Munsifs*. As for the matters related to *ai'ma* lands and the fixation of the boundaries of the villages and the *parganas*, they were settled through the subordinate officials, such as *amins*.<sup>3</sup> Nasir Khan, the *faujdar* and thus the head of the military and police administration must have been en-

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 106-ab.

2. *Ibid.*, f. 108a.

3. *Lata' if-i-Quddusi*, p. 84.

gaged in suppressing the rebellions of the recalcitrant *zamin-dars* and punishing all those who had been condemned by the court of the *Munsif-i-Munsifan* and the *Mufti*. It is also probable that he might have sat in the court alongwith 'Isa Khan for deciding certain cases.<sup>1</sup>

Equally significant is the information contained in an inscription of *Chaund* regarding a *Munsif*, posted there by Sher Shah. This is a bilingual inscription relating to the construction of a garden with a water tank in the town by *Yusuf* (son of Mulla Makkhan), the *Munsif* of the locality.<sup>2</sup> This piece of evidence is quite important as it supplements our meagre information available in the medieval works about the position of *Munsif*. The impression formed on the basis of chronicles is strengthened in that the *Munsifs* of Sher Shah's times were well versed in Muslim learning and came of the respectable families. Mushtaqi states that Sher Shah appointed one *Munsif* in every *pargana* besides a *Munsif-i-Munsifan* of the *Sarkar*.<sup>3</sup> 'Abbas, who seems to have used the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi* for his account of Sher Shah's reign at different places, supports him by his statements that the *Munsif-i-Munsifan* was the head of revenue administration alone and thus worked under the authority of the *faujdar* or *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqdaran*,<sup>4</sup> although the fact seems to have been otherwise. The evidence of Dattu Sarwani is conclusive and we can reasonably assume on his authority that *Munsif-i-Munsifan* was posted as a supreme judicial official in the *Sarkar* and supervised the work of the *pargana Munsifs* in collaboration with the *faujdar* who combined in himself the functions of the military and those of the executive officer at the level of *Sarkar*. Further, *Munsif-i-Munsifan* were also appointed from amongst the high nobles and they held high ranks, such as 'Isa Khan Sarwani's rank of 5000 *Sarkars* indicates. As regards their jurisdiction, they de-

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shah*, f. 81a-b. 'Abbas states that Nasir Khan helped *Masnad-i-ali* Isa Khan.
  2. This is an important bilingual inscription in Persian and Sanskrit both, related to the construction of a garden with a tank of water in *Chaund* by Shaikh Yusuf, the local *Munsif*. I am grateful to Dr. Qayyam Uddin of Patna University for providing me with this excellent piece of information. This is contained in his unpublished article, *Persian Inscriptions in Bihar*.
  3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 50b.
  4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 106a.

cided the civil cases and disputes related to revenue and land-grants as well.

The mention of *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran* made both by Mushtaqi and 'Abbas in their respective works also requires to be discussed. Both the writers state that he was appointed in the *Sarkar* and imply that the charge of entire administrative machinery was entrusted to him. But it is difficult to know where they were posted. A few high nobles posted in the *Sarkars* whom the chroniclers mention in their works, either in connection with their participation in the battles or maltreatment of people by them in their territories or any other extraordinary event, have been described as *Faujdar*s. There is no shred of circumstantial evidence to suggest that ever a *shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran* was appointed in any *sarker*.

As already discussed, the administration of the *Shiqq* or the *Sarkar* under *Khalsa* was entrusted to high nobles, designated as *faujdar*s who were left with a sufficient percentage of revenue collected by them as their salary and allowances. The appointment of a noble to the office of *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran* is never heard of before Sher Shah who is credited with its creation. But, doubt arises as to whether this change was ever made because *faujdar*s appear to have held the *Khalsa Sarkars* during the Sur period. Though Mushtaqi's reference to *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran* is significant, it seems probable that he did so because the officer held authority over so many *pargana Shiqqdar*s in his *Sarkars* and forgot to indicate his real designation. 'Abbas, who compiled his work several years after the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, seems to have drawn upon it particularly for his account of Sher Shah's administrative system and military campaigns launched against the rulers of Malwa,<sup>1</sup> and incidentally refers to the *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran* while copying Mushtaqi. The fact that Abbas came to India from Roh during Akharar's reign should not be lost sight of. He had no first hand knowledge of the sultanate polity in India. Indeed, the references available in the *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi* to the supreme officers of *Sarkars* in connection with some extra-ordinary events indicates that they were appointed either with the designation of *faujdar* or *amin* as stated above. *Nizam u'ddin* and *Badaoni* also men-

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 50b, 52a, 53b. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 89a-90b, 106a-b.

tion Bahar Khan Sarwani, the *faujdar* of Handliya Sarkar during the reign of Islam Shah in their account of Shaikh'Ala'i's execution.<sup>1</sup> However, in the absence of any source other than Mushtaqi's - documentary, epigraphical or even contemporary hagiographical we cannot assume that *Shiqqdar-i-Shiqqadaran* was ever adopted by Sher Shah as an official appellation to be used for the executive-cum-military heads of the *Sarkar* government.

#### (d) Subordinate officers of the Sarkar

The *Afghan Kings*, both the Lodis and the Surs posted different civil officers in the cities and towns to work under the supreme officers of the *Sarkars*. The *Kotwal*, the officer in charge of the police administration seems to have been appointed only in the important and large cities.<sup>2</sup> He was charged with the duty of preventing crimes and keeping the evil-doers under check. The small towns also had police-posts (called *thanas*) under *Shahnas* or *thanedar* who could have the ranks even of one thousand *sawars*. The relevant information reveals that the post of *thanedar* was of a purely military nature, for the *thanas* were established at strategic points for the protection of highways against the robbers and dacoits, and this was by no means a new system but continued from the days of Balban.<sup>3</sup> Conversely the post of *kotwal* was civil in its nature; he had a staff of clerks and soldiers under him to keep records of people belonging to different professions in the locality.<sup>4</sup> The soldiers under the *Kotwal* appear to have taken rounds of different lanes and quarters of the city at night time and checked all those found loitering at the time of rest.<sup>5</sup>

No light is thrown by our sources on the real difference existing between the respective positions of the *Shiqqdar* and the *Thanedar*. The references found to them tend to suggest

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*,  
*Badaoni*, ii/403.

2. *Anwar-ul-'Uyun*, pp. 12, 21. *Afsana-i-shahan*, ff-97b-98b.

3. *Barani*, pp. 57, 58-9.

4. Cf. *Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, op. cit, p. 173.

5. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 87a, 90a. The city of Lahore had a *Kotwal* with a quite large staff for discharging police duties, But in other towns and small localities the *Shahna* appears to have been a police officer instead of *Kotwal*. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 89b

that the *Shiqqadars* were entrusted with the government of *parganas* with well-defined boundaries, while the *Thanedar* or a *shahna* was posted at a strategic point along some highway running through dense forests or the region of recalcitrant *zamindars* who took to robbery and loot.<sup>1</sup> The *Shiqqadar* was really a high and respectable noble, while the *Thanedar* or *Shahna* held a *thana* as police man.

### Administration of the Vilayet under Sher Shah

Certain far-reaching changes were made in the administrative system of the vilayet by *Sher Shah*, and they served as a model for Akbar when he organized his Empire by grouping *Sarkars* into *Subas*. The administrator of the vilayet under *Sher Shah* was called either *amin* or *Faujdar*, the latter being in charge of the vilayet, most of which was reserved for the *Khalsa*. For example, *Khizr Khan Turk* was posted in Bengal with a large army as its supreme governor,<sup>2</sup> while *Shuja'at Khan Sur* was assigned the charge of the newly-organized vilayet of Bihar with the designation of *Faujdar*.<sup>3</sup> It seems that at this time he decided to make some change in the governmental set-up of the Vilayets before his departure from the Panjab to Bengal for punishing *Khizr Khan*. He posted *Masnad-i-'ali Khawwas Khan*, *Haibat Khan Niazi*, *'Isa Khan Niazi* with the same authority and powers to conduct the administration of the Punjab and guard its frontiers in co-operation. Besides, *Hamid Khan Kakar* to whom *Sher Shah* assigned the charge of the hilly territories of *Nagarkot*, *Jaiswal*, *Didawal* and *Jammu*, and where the said noble is reported to have reduced the turbulent people to complete obedience and collected land revenue in accordance with the *zabt*-system (measurement of the land under cultivation), was placed under the authority of the supreme *Muqtas* of the Panjab. The system of posting more than one high noble in a vilayet with equal powers seems to have been adopted by *Sher Shah* for keeping the nobles from assuming independence, because the nobles posted in a vilayet in this way were certain to work as a check upon each-other's ambition.

---

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 97b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 87b.

3. *Ibid*, f. 80a.



In Bengal Sher Shah threw Khizr Khan into prison (1541) and then organized the vast vilayet into manageable *Sarkars* to be entrusted to the trusted nobles separately for administration. Qazi Fazilat was chosen for appointment as the *amin* of Bengal to supervise and co-ordinate the work of the different *Muqtas* of the *Sarkars* there.<sup>1</sup> The Qazi, so appointed was not an *'alim* alone but a military man also. Shaikh Kabir says that being the son of Sher Shah's teacher, the Qazi was looked after by him from the very beginning. As he was known for his honesty and fair mindedness, Sher Shah always assigned to him responsible posts.<sup>2</sup> Similarly Mian Ahmad Sarwani's appointment in Delhi territory as its *amin*, also indicates that the *amin* also held a military rank, because the *amin* of Delhi was a high noble like 'Isa Khan Sarwani. Therefore, Qazi Fazilat was not simply a Civil Officer having nothing to do with the affairs of the military officers in Bengal. The fact that even land-grantees who belonged to the *ai'ma* families were required to render help to the State officers in their locality,<sup>3</sup> suggests the possibility of every able bodied person being adept in military service.

The administrative machinery in the vilayet of Malwa also seems to have been modelled on the pattern of Bengal in the beginning. On its occupation, Sher Shah gave the *Sarkar* of Handiya and Satwas to Shuja'at Khan for maintaining 4,000 *sawars*<sup>4</sup>; Ujjain *Sarkars* to Darya Khan Gujrati,<sup>5</sup> the *Sarkars* of Sarangpur to Alam Khan Lodi (son of Sultan Bahlul Lodi) who had come to Sher Shah from Gujarat,<sup>6</sup> while *masnad-i-'all* Taj Khan Karrani was posted in the *Sarkar* of Dhar.<sup>7</sup> Over and above these nobles Haji Khan (brother-in-law of Khawwas Khan) was placed in Mandu as the *faujdar* of entire Malwa with Sa'id Khan Harsain,<sup>1</sup> perhaps to help him in financial matters.

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 87b-88a, 108b.

2. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 135b-136a.

3. Cf. Chapter VII.

4. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 90b.

5. *Ibid*, f. 90b.

6. *Ibid*, f. 90b.

7. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 54a.

Sher Shah's system of limiting the powers of the governors of the vilayets by vesting authority in more than one governor in the same province, so that they might work as a check upon each other, could not function successfully. Khawwas Khan and Haibat Khan Niazi, who happened to be the highest nobles in dignity and rank, started quarreling with each other over the governmental matters in the Panjab, and this resulted in the recall of Khawwas Khan with 'Isa Khan Niazi to the centre<sup>2</sup>. Thus Haibat Khan Niazi was left there as the sole administrator of the vilayet. Shortly afterwards, Haibat Khan seized the territories of Multan and Bhakkar, former from the Baloch chiefs and the latter from the Arghun ruler of Thatta. For the government of these territories, he appointed Fath Jung in Multan and Jhakar Chand in Bhakkar.<sup>3</sup> In recognition of his services, Sher Shah honoured Haibat Khan Niazi with the title of 'Azam Humayun, and made him the commander of 30,000 *Sarkars*<sup>4</sup> stationed in the sarkars of the Panjab.

On his recall to the court, Khawwas Khan was given the charge of the newly constituted vilayet of Jodhpur and so the *faujdar*s of Ajmer, Nagore and Mewat became subordinate to him.

Like Haibat Khan Niazi, Shuja'at Khan Sur was also elevated to the position of the supreme *muqta* of Malwa, about the same time (1541). The reason for his elevation was his grand victories, achieved in the battles fought against Nasir Khan Miana (Afghan) and Mallu Khan who had started military campaigns soon after Sher Shah's departure from Malwa. *Haji Khan* was recalled and posted in Mewat.<sup>5</sup> *Shuja'at Khan's* rank was increased to 12,000 *Sarkars*.<sup>6</sup>

Like the *Muqtas* of the Lodi period, the nobles, placed at the head of vilayet administration under Sher Shah enjoyed vast powers for dealing with insurrection and maintaining law and order as well. They took round of the *Sarkars* under their

1. Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi, f. 90b.

2. Cf. *Supra*.

3. Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi, ff. 93a-b.

4. *ib. bid*, f. 94a.

5 & 6. , Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi, ff. 91b-99a. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 54a-

charge very regularly and saw to it that nothing wrong was done anywhere. In supreme authority over the people of their vilayet, they held grand *darbars*, extended patronage to the poets, scholars and religious people and also distributed treasures among common people on certain occasions, and this generous act was calculated to gain both, the blessing of God and popularity among local people.<sup>1</sup> The relevant evidence, available shows that the *Muqta* also performed the duties of the Supreme Judge in his Vilayet and even could inflict corporal punishment upon the culprits without referring the matter to any *mufti* or *Qazi*; in case the accused persons were found guilty of crimes against the state and the punishment given by him was often severe. Both of the hands of a criminal could be chopped off even for misconduct by a State servant in drunkenness.<sup>2</sup>

But it may also be pointed out that the *Muqtas* could act neither against the wishes of the sovereign nor against the interest of people. In normal conditions they referred all the important matters related to political and administrative problems in their respective territories to the centre, and thus were kept waiting for guidance from the Sultan. Even a little overstepping in any respect could result in their humiliation. For instance, 'Azam Humayun Niazi was ordered to punish the murderers of Mubarak Khan Sur, Sher Shah's nephew posted in the tribal area of the Sumbhal Afghans in the Panjab, but 'Azam Humayun put a large number of the Sumbhal Afghans to death indiscriminately by stratagem, therefore, Sher Shah condemned his wanton cruelty. 'Abbas says that Sher Shah wanted to replace him in the Panjab for his guilt but the untimely death of the king in Kalinjar in 1545 left the governor unpunished.<sup>3</sup>

In the end we may discuss the changes that Islam Shah made in the administrative system of the Sur Empire in order to

- 
1. *Waqi at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 57a- 59a;  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/367;  
*Tabaqat-i- Akbari*, ii/113;  
*Tarikh-i-Daudi*, pp. 173.
  2. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/  
*Tabaqat-i- Akbari*, ii/113;  
*Tarikh-i-Daudi*, p. 173.
  3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 120a.

further overcentralize it and enhance the prestige of the crown. Having enlisted the support of the soldiers, Islam Shah decided to replace the old governors by his own favourites who were expected to carry on his orders more faithfully. Consequently, Qazi Fazilat, the *amin* of Bengal was replaced by Muhammad Khan Sur in Gaur, sometime after Islam Shah's accession to the throne.<sup>1</sup> Uwais Khan Sarwani was entrusted with the government of the Punjab after the destruction of the rebel Niazis.<sup>2</sup> *Masnad-i-'ali* Shuj'at Khan Sur was also driven away from Malwa to Gujrat for refuge and 'Isa Khan Sur was left in his place at the head of 20,000 *sawars*.<sup>3</sup> Even when pardoned by the king on the request of his son, Daulat Khan Ujyala whom Islam Sher Shah held in high favour, Shuja't Khan could not be restored to his previous position. In 1548 he was assigned only the territories of Sarangpur and Raisin, instead of the government of the entire vilayet of Malwa.<sup>4</sup>

Other important changes that Islam Shah is reported to have introduced were that he brought the whole of his Empire under *Khalsa*, and the nobles, including those in charge of vilayets and *sarkars* were paid in cash, and thus *iqta* system was abolished.<sup>5</sup> Though this is not supported by the relevant data available to us,<sup>6</sup> yet it seems probable that the major part of the Empire was brought under *Khalsa* and the majority of the nobles was paid in cash.<sup>7</sup> This change certainly deprived the nobles of the increased income in their *iqtas* which was possible, provided the peasants were treated favourably and encouraged to reclaim new land for the extension of agriculture.

Furthermore, the governors of the *Sarkars* and vilayets were regularly directed through the royal *farmans* to conduct the government of the vilayets and the *Sarkars* in consonance with the rules and regulations explained therein. Public *darbars*

---

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 73b.

2. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahdani*, ii/327.

3. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/113.

4. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, pp. 176-177.  
*Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, ii/176.

5. *Badaoni*, i/384.

6. Cf. My Some Aspect of Afghan Despotism in India, p. 157

7. *Waqi'at-i-ushtaqi*, f. 72b.

were held in all the provincial headquarters on every Friday after the congregational prayers in a lofty tent, set up on high poles; the shoes and a quiver of Islam Shah were placed on the throne inside the tent, the governor along with his followers and influential men of the locality would come and bow before them to show their respect and then the royal *farman* containing regulations was read out. The regulations were concerned with all the state officers and, in case, some body defaulted for any reason, the spies, who were posted everywhere by the king to keep watch on the important nobles, informed the king and exemplary punishment was inflicted upon the defaulter.<sup>1</sup> The other restrictions imposed on the governor and high state officers were that none could hold convivial meetings: the dancing girls were taken away from them, so that they might not enjoy *akharas* (a dance performance) and be overtaken by the love of ease and pleasure.<sup>2</sup> He further checked their ambitions by denying them the right of riding elephants and using red tents, and both of them were reserved for royal use. The governors and officers could keep female-elephants for carrying their luggage.<sup>3</sup>

The age-old administrative system retained by Sher Shah and Islam Shah with necessary improvements and modifications according to the needs of the changed times functioned properly so long as there was a strong man on the throne. The moment the throne was occupied by a weak successor, the system broke down and the nobles rose up in arms against Sultan 'Adil Shah Sur in different territories and ultimately brought about the fall of the Sur Empire.<sup>4</sup>



- 
1. *Badaoni*, ii/385. Badaoni himself witnessed this ceremony in Bajwar (in the Sarkar of Bayana) where Farid Taran whom Islam Shah had appointed the *faujdar* of Bayana with 5,000 *sawars* happened to be in connection with some state business.
  2. *Akhara* was an entertainment held at night. Four pretty dancing girls danced, four others used to sing while more accompanied them with instruments and lamps.
  3. *Badaoni*, ii/384.
  4. Cf. *Chapter V*.

## CHAPTER VII

# Wajh'i-ma'ash-Grants

---

From the inception of Muslim rule in India the Sultans showed much consideration to the *Masha'ikh* (saints) and '*Ulama* (religious scholars) and other deserving persons, as this was supposed to be an act of piety and was calculated to bring fame to them. Moreover, the *Masha'ikh*' and '*Ulama* commanded respect among Muslims belonging to different sections of the society for their spiritual qualities. Like the common people, the Sultans and their nobles also approached them for blessing, made them offerings, both in cash and land-grants and employed them in the religious and judicial departments of the State. The land-grants, conferred upon them for subsistence became an institution of social and economic importance in due course of time and continued to exist through out the period of Muslim Rule.

During the Afghan period (1451-1555) the appellation, employed both in the official documents and contemporary Persian literature for these land-grants, appears to have been *wajh'i-ma'ash*<sup>1</sup> (allowance for subsistence), *wajh'i-milk*, *amlak*

---

1. During the early period of the Sultanate of Delhi, the terms used for land-grants to the pious and scholarly people were *milk*, *wazifa*, *waqf* and *In'am*, while the land-grants, made for the maintenance of a religious shrine was called *waqf* and *Auqaf* (plural of *waqf*). In the subsequent period the terms, *wajh'i-ma'ash* and *wajh'i-milk* became popular and were used in the official documents for all the land-grants, conferred upon the scholars and other religious dignitaries. The earliest reference to the *wajh'i-ma'ash*-grant is found in the documents of Firuz Shah's reign, contained in the '*Insha-i-Mahru*.

*Insha-i-Mahru*, Letter no. 4 and 5, pp. 13, 14.

The Lodi Sultans adopted all these terms for the land-grants in the beginning of their rule. Later on, *wajh'* was placed as a prefix to *Milk* as the *parwana* of *Masnad-i-'ali* Mahmud Khan Lodi shows.

Cf. *Parwana*, contained in the '*Tazkirat-ul-Kiram*, being the *History of Amroh*, Delhi, Facsimile, facing p. 34.

(plural of milk), *wazifa* (stipend), *waza'if* (plural of *wazifa*), *waqf* and *Auqaf* (plural of *waqf*) and *In'am* (grants). The *waqf*-grant was made for the maintenance of the religious shrines-mosques and tombs, while the *In'am*-grant was conferred upon the poets, army men and artists, in the state service or attached to the royal court.

*Wajh'-l-ma'ash* was thus a grant in land, assigned to the *Masha'ikh* (Saints), *Saiyids* (the descendants of the Prophet, through his daughter, married to 'Ali, the fourth caliph of Islam), the *'ulama* (religious scholars), poets and other deserving persons such as widows, for their maintenance in recognition of their piety, need, learning or services rendered to the state. These landgrants were given to the aforesaid persons for life-time as well as in perpetuity. There was a separate department, called *Sadarat*, charged with the work of looking after these grants. The minister in charge of this department was known as *Sadr-u's-Sudur*, who was expected to be well versed in Islamic learning.

By these grants the Sultan alienated his right to collect land-revenue and other taxes, collectively called *Sa'irijhat* <sup>1</sup> in the area covered by the grants, made in favour of the grantees. The *farmans* issued to the *Wajh'-l-ma'ash* holders usually contained a few sentences warning the state officials not to interfere with the land-grants which were tax-free. In this way the grantees were freed from all obligations that a peasant or even the *zamindar* had to perform. But the *wajh'-l-ma'ash* holders could neither deprive the peasants of their occupancy rights nor could they affect the *zamindari* or *malikana* rights, established over the agricultural lands and enjoyed by *zamindars* (also called the *muqaddams*). The *zamindari* rights were hereditary and could be sold or purchased by people. <sup>2</sup>

---

Sometime, during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, *Wajh,l-ma'ash* seems to have been adopted finally and was used in the official documents. Therefore, Babur also adopted it without making any change as the available *farman* shows. Cf. Babur's *Farman*, Edited by Prof. Muhammad Shafi, *Oriental College Magazine*, Part I, May, 1933. Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi, the celebrated saint of the Lodi period also refers to these grants as *wajh'-l-ma'ash*. *Maktubat-l- Quddusi*, p. 236; also *Waqi'at-l-Mushtaqi*, ff. 11b, 32b, 33b, etc.

1. Cf. Chapter, I.
2. The early Persian writers use the terms *khuts*, *Muqaddams* and *Chaudhry* for the hereditary village potentates. But the writers of the 14th century

Contrary to it the *wajh' -l-ma'ash* grants were always of non-proprietary nature. Neither could they be sold nor inherited by the successors of the deceased grantee. Similarly the grantee could not demand land-revenue more than the standard demand, fixed by the state at different rates for different territories in accordance with the productivity of the soil. In fact, they were held during the royal pleasure, for the Sultan always had a right to resume them at any time (as will be discussed subsequently). But the *wajh' -l-ma'ash* holders enjoyed a better and more privileged position than the *zamindars*, because the former were invested with all the rights, claimed by the Sultan for himself in the agricultural produce. For this reason, certain *zamindars* could aspire for acquiring the status of a *wajh' -l-ma'ash* holder in addition to the *zamindari* rights over his village. The interesting anecdote, recorded by Shaikh Kabir in his work sheds light on the matter. A certain Brahmin *zamindar* wanted his future king to promise him the grant of his village as a *milk* in perpetuity, in return for his services to him.<sup>1</sup>

*The anecdote referred to above, though based merely on hearsay, reveals the difference between the position of the zamindar and wajh'-l-ma'ash holder during the Medieval times. It is also indicative of the fact that no major change took place in the nature of wajh'-l-ma'ash grants from the early time of the Muslim rule to the Afghan period. In fact, the zamindar's share in the agricultural produce of the village which he collected from the peasants for the State was meagre in comparison with that of the State. In case, he was, by chance, granted the village or some of its part under cultivation over which he had previously control as a zamindar, as an in'am or milk for State service, he would keep the entire revenue of that land with him. The land-grant made to the zamindar, either as in'am or milk could be for his life-time as well as in perpetuity. In any case his zamindari rights always*

---

call them collectively as *zamindars*. The available documents of the Sur period shed light on the fact that the *zamindari* rights could be sold and purchased. These documents, recently acquired by the History Department of the Aligarh Muslim University are actually sale-deeds and related to the reigns of Sher Shah and Islam Shah.

Cf. *Calendar of Documents*, Dr. Dr. Irfan Habib, *The Indian Economic and Social History Reviews*, Vol. IV, No. 3, Sept. 1967, p. 222; also *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 71 a-b.

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff.71 a-b.



remained hereditary, his descendants were not deprived of family *zamindari* unless they themselves alienated it through sale or by a rebellious act.

The *wajh'-l-ma'ash-* grants are reported to have been made, both as a rule, in terms of *bighas* and entire village according to the status of the grantee. In case, it was made in terms of *bighas*, the *gaz-l-Sikandari* and later *gaz-l-Sher Shahi* (yards) might have been used to measure the *bighas* of the grant.<sup>1</sup> Now doubt may arise as to whether the grants were ever made in *bighas* before Sher Shah as measurement (*zabt* system) was not the only mode of assessment in practice. The contemporary evidence shows that the *ulama* and other deserving persons were granted the maintenance land in *bighas* even before the Lodi period.<sup>2</sup>

Due to the expansion of the families of local Saiyids, Shaikhs and an increase in the number of '*Ulama*', the rulers were no longer in a position to make large land-grants to every claimant, they were consequently forced to reduce its size. In certain cases the large grants were broken into parts to be distributed among the descendants of a deceased grantee, provided the State renewed it in favour of the latter. The large grants, comprising one or more than one village were conferred upon those persons, who were very much distinguished for their piety, learning or influence over people as will be discussed subsequently.

At times it happened that certain celebrated saints and *Sufis* were given a few villages along with some plots of uncultivated land, specifically mentioned in the *farman*, so that the grantee might bring it under plough as the evidence contained in the contemporary work, *Anwar-al-'Uyun* shows. Shaikh Abdul Haq Chishti was offered a grant of four villages and one thousand *bighas* of land by Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi.<sup>3</sup> The grandfather of Shaikh Bayazid Sarwani is reported to have

1. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, *op.cit.*, pp. 158, 162.
2. A few important documents, contained in the '*Insha-l-Mahru*', related to the reign of Sultan Firuz Shah (Tughlaq) shed light on the rights of the grantees. They substantiate the fact that since the 14th century the land-grants were made in terms of villages and *bighas* as well. It could consist of a few hundred *bighas*, an entire village or even more than a village as the status or influence of the Scholar or Saint demanded. *Insha-l-Mahru*, pp. 14, 15, 74, 75, etc.
3. *Anwar-ul-'Uyun*, Abdul Quddus Gangohi, pp. 16-17.

been granted two thousand *blghas* of land in *wajh'-i- ma'ash* in the *pargana* of Banur (Sarkar Sirhind) by Sultan Bahlul. Shaikh Bayazid Sarwani held this grant till 1526 when he had left for Roh after the fall of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi.<sup>1</sup> The references to the *wajh'-i-ma'ash*-grants, contained in the *waql'at-i-Mushtaq* reveal that the grants made in terms of *blghas* alone were definitely smaller in size than those comprising villages.<sup>2</sup>

The Afghan kings made land-grants in villages to those revered people who were supposed to be the leading '*Ulama* and *Mashalkh* of the country. So often, they did it with discreet ostentation to earn popularity for championing the cause of religious people. Besides, the fact that the grantees ran institutions of learning was also taken into consideration by the rulers. Many of the scholars maintained *madrassas* with kitchens and mosques without charging any fee from their students. They fed people free of charges. For example, Shaikh Allahdad, a popular saint of Bihar who ran a *madrassa*, was granted a few villages near the town of Bihar (modern *Bihar Sharif*) by sultan Sikandar Lodi.<sup>3</sup> The other *Mashalkh* and '*Ulama* were also given land in terms of *blghas* for their maintenance.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, the example of Haji Shaikh Hasan and his younger brother, Shaikh Nasrullah may be cited. The brothers belonged to an old religious family of Bengal. Having returned from Mecca, Shaikh Hasan decided to settle down in Bayana in 1528. Upon it his younger brother also joined him with other family members in Bayana. Although we do not have any information about their relation with the Mughals, they held a large land-grant, consisting of several villages for maintaining a *madrassa*, with a vast *langarkhana* (kitchen for distributing food among the needy people) and a spacious hospice during the reign of Sher Shah. Shaikh Hasan delivered sermons about the importance of pious and religious life while the younger one issued *fatwa* (religious decree) and gave instructions in religious knowledge to his pupils. On their death,

1. *Tarikh-i- Sher Shahi*, f. 92.

2. *Waqf'at-i-Mushtaq*, ff. 13b, 14b, 22b, etc.

3. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 27b-28a.

4. *Ibid*, f. 32a

Shaikh 'Ala'i, one of the sons of Shaikh Hasan undertook the responsibility of maintaining the aforesaid institutions as he was the most learned among the family members. He ran them till he became a Mahdevi preacher under the influence of 'Abdullah Niazi towards the close of Sher Shah's reign. He gave up the ways of his forefathers, and devoted himself completely to the service of the poor.<sup>1</sup> As he also abandoned his house and *wajh'-l-ma'ash* grant, his brothers might have taken over the charge of the institutions.

The two rare documents of the Lodi period substantiate the fact, discussed above. The first document is the *parwana* of *Masnad-i-all* Mahmud Khan Lodi (Shahu Khail), issued to *Shalkhu'l Mashalkh*, Bandagi Mian Shaikh Chailda, one of the descendants of Shaikh Farid U'ddin *Ganj-i-Shakar*, regarding the grant of two villages in the *pargana* of Nindru (now in district Bijnore), then in the *Khitta* of Sambhal in 1493 A.D. The term, used for the grant in the *parwana* is *wajh'-l-milk*.<sup>2</sup> The second document is the *farman* of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi issued in 1520 A.D., with regard to land-grant, made in terms of *blghas*. According to this *farman* 300 *blghas* of uncultivated land out of the village, Gonda, near Chakesar, in the *pargana* of Sandila under *Khalsa*, was granted to Hasan, son of Barkhurdar Husain.<sup>3</sup>

The available information about the Sur period also shows that the *a'lma* were given land-grants in terms of *blghas* as well as in villages, as the case might be.<sup>4</sup> But four out of seven documents of the Sur period, so far known to us, are concerned with the grants, made in terms of *blghas* while

1. *Badaoni*, (English tr.), Ranking, I/508-510.

2. *Parwana* of *Masnad-i-all* Mahmud Khan, *Tazkirat-ul-kiram*, op. cit. p. 34.

3. Cf. *Farman* of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, Edited by Prof. Muhammad Shafi, proceedings of the *Idara-i- Ma'rif-i-Islamia*, second season, held at Lahore, 1936. p. 283.

*In actual fact this is a sanad of land-grant. The upper portion is written in Nastaliq, the lower portion transliterates the Persian text in Hindi script. The size of the paper is 8 1/2" X 5 1/2" in 6 lines of Persian covering about 5 inches. The transliteration of the same in Hindi character is written in 8 lines. This document is, from its language and contents, quite free from any suspicion of forgery or fabrication.*

4. The relevant evidence contained in the chronicles sheds light on the fact that the leading *a'lma*, reputed for their high learning and piety were granted villages by the sur king as will be discussed later on.

the rest are saled deeds.<sup>1</sup> Sher Shah's *farmans*, two of them published in the Oriental College Magazine and the third available in the National Archives of Allahabad (U.P.) show that the grants comprised half of the land under cultivation (*Mazru'a*) by the peasants enjoying occupancy rights, and the remaining half *Khud Kasht*, i.e. waste land to be brought under cultivation by the grantee himself.<sup>2</sup> The fourth document is a private letter, written by a noble of Islam Shah to one of his fellow nobles warning of the ill-consequences of his usurpation of the fifty *bighas* of *wajh'-lma'ash* land belonging to Shaikh Raju, one of the *Hajibs* at the royal court.<sup>3</sup>

The land, mentioned as *Banjar* in the *farman* of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and *Uftada* in the *farmans* of Sher Shah, referred to above, mean the wasteland to be brought under cultivation by the grantees themselves. It was called *khud kasht* after it had been ploughed. It was generally on the waste-land that the *wajh'-lma'ash*-holders established their *khud kasht* holdings. They cultivated it either themselves or through their servants.<sup>4</sup> As for the land mentioned as *Mazru'a* in the official documents, it was the peasant held land. The *farmans* of Sher Shah indicate that in his days it had become a standing rule that half of the grant was the *Mazru'a* land (already under cultivation) and the remaining half comprised the *Banjar* (cultivable waste). In the *Mazru'a* land the grantee realized reve-

- 
1. *Documents of the Sur period*, available in the department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. They are dated: December 1542, January 1543, July 2, 1545 and April 9, 1550  
Also Cf. Dr. Irfan Habib. *Calendar of Documents, The Indian Economic and Social history Review* Vol. IV, no. 3, September, New Delhi 1967, pp. 222-223.
  2. Sher Shah's *farman*; printed in the 'Oriental College Magazine, Vol. IX, No. 3 (May, 1933), pp. 123-127.  
Sher Shah's Allahabad *farman*, 818.
  3. *A Sur Document* edited by Prof. Mohammad Shafi, *Proceedings of the Idara-i-Ma'arif-i-Islamia*, second session, held at Lahore, 1936.  
This is a private, but unsigned letter, written on July 24, 1548. The addressee is an individual, Ahmad by name, who had taken possession of 50 *bighas* of land belonging to Shaikh Raju Hajib. The latter is said to have been a favourite of the King's cousin, Ibrahim Khan (Sur) and Mubariz Khan Sur.
  4. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 22b-23a.  
Here *Mushtaqi* incidentally refers to the land of Bandagi Shaikh Muhammad of Ajodhan who cultivated it through his servants during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi.

nue from the peasants according to the standard rate, fixed by the state for the neighbouring region. In other words the grantee could not think of enjoying any other right that was not claimed previously by the State. But he was free from all fiscal obligations, such as the payment of various taxes to the State exchequer which a *zamindar* had to do.

This also deserves to be noted that in every territory the area, yielding a certain amount of revenue was earmarked for distribution among the *a'ima* in *wajh'-l-ma'ash*. According to Mushtaqi the revenue of the area, reserved in the newly conquered territories of *Mulk-i-Bala* (the hilly territories of Nagarkot, etc.) for distribution among deserving people was three lac *tankas* during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi.<sup>1</sup> Since Sultan Sikandar is not said to have originated this practice, we can assume that it was an age-old one and the Lodis continued it. But Sher Shah appears to have given it up after he had become the Emperor of Hindustan as will be discussed.

Generally the land-grants were made for the life-time of the grantees, they could be<sup>2</sup> renewed and restored to his descendants after his demise, provided they were considered deserving for maintaining traditions of piety and learning like their ancestors. Similarly, in case of the death of a ruler or the dynastic change, the grantees had to approach the new royal court for the renewal of their grants as certain documents show.<sup>2</sup> On renewal of the grants, the grantees went to the *Shiqqdar*<sup>3</sup> or the officers concerned who allowed them to retain the land. As regards the fresh grantees, they were also issued *farmans*, containing a passage which not only set out the rights and favours conferred upon them but also directed the officers of the *parganas* to measure the land and then hand it over to the grantee.<sup>4</sup>

Sher Shah is reported to have changed the system of issuing the *farman* to the grantee directly. 'Abbas Sarwani informs us: "For the correction and betterment of the grant-

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 32b.

2. Babur's and Sher Shah's *farmans*, published in the *Oriental College Magazine*, contain references to the *farmans* of Sikandar Lodi and Ibrahim Lodi regarding the grants, renewed and confirmed by them.

3. Cf. Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, *Position of Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi, Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad, -Deccan, October, 1967, pp. 237-238.

4. Sultan Ibrahim Lodi's *farman*, *op. cit.*

ees, he did not hand over *farmans* to them. He ordered the *sadr* to bring them to him after drafting. Then the *farmans* were sent to the *parganas* concerned. As the *Shiqqdars* were informed (by the *farmans*), they measured the land and gave it to the grantees. Thereafter the *farmans* were also given to the *a'lma'*,<sup>1</sup> so that they might keep them safely as a proof.

It may also be noted that the land-grants were unconditional during the Lodi period, at least no condition or obligation was specified in the official document. There is no evidence to the contrary, no obligation was imposed upon the grantees explicitly in return of the *wajh'-i-ma'ash* land, assigned to them for their maintenance, the outward purpose of the grants was only to support the class of people, devoted to learning and religion. But, in actual fact, the generous grants were designed to enhance the prestige of the crown in the public. The wise rulers like Sikandar Lodi and Sher Shah surrounded themselves with theologians and holy men, amongst whom were many persons of wide renown and influence, and so used them as envoys and propagandists.<sup>2</sup> Some of them were attached to the mundane world and they willingly served the kings improperly in the hope of royal reward. For instance, Shaikh Farid of Daryabad was employed by Sultan Ibrahim Lodi to incite the *Shaikhzadas* of Chanderi to kill *Masnad-i-'ali* Mian Husain Farmuli, the powerful *muqta* of that vilayet whom the Lodi Sultan did not like. On his murder by the *Shaikhzadas*, Shaikh Farid Daryabadi was given ten villages, in *wajh'-i-ma'ash* as a reward for his indecent act.<sup>3</sup>

With the advent of Sher Shah to the throne, obligations seem to have been imposed upon the grantees. The available documents of his reign show that certain *wajh'-i-ma'ash* holders were asked to offer their five-time prayers in congregation in the local mosques and render military help to the local officers whenever required.<sup>4</sup> The Allahabad *farman* prescribes a regular exercise in archery for the grantees, so that

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 121.
  2. *waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 26a, 51a, 53b, etc. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 1/325, *Badaoni*, 1/399.
  3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 64a.
  4. *Farman*, *Oriental College Magazine*, op.cit.

they might render effective military help to the State at the time of need.<sup>1</sup>

Let us now discuss the policies of different Afghan kings, adopted in respect of the *a'ima* and *wajh'-l-ma'ash* grants. Sultan Bahlul Lodi, the founder of the first Afghan Empire is reported to have been very kind to the *ulama* and saints. But in the absence of documentary evidence for his reign, one cannot state definitely as to whether he made land-grants in *blghas* or gave complete villages to the deserving persons. Nizam U'ddin says, probably on the authority of the contemporary historical work, '*Tarkh-i-Ibrahim Shahi*' of Mahmud Katwani that he renewed all the grants of the previous kings to their holders after his occupation of Delhi in 1451.<sup>2</sup> Mushtaqi's account of Bahlul's reign, though brief and based on hearsay, indicates that he was interested in the wellbeing of the religious persons who could have access to him without any difficulty. The Sultan helped them by granting stipends (*wazaif* in cash) and *wajh'-l-ma'ash*- grants as well.<sup>3</sup> It was his generous attitude towards the *a'ima* that enhanced his prestige and influence amongst his contemporaries. At times the leading saints supported his cause against the Sharqis of Jaunpur. Shaikh Sama-uddin Suhrawardi publicly reprimanded the Afghan and non-Afghan nobles for joining hands with Sultan Husain Sharqi against him, and succeeded in winning certain nobles to Bahlul's side by declaring him a Godfearing man and foretelling his victory over his rival.<sup>4</sup> Further, the members of religions elite (i-e-*ulama*) render important service both to the state and society; diffusion of learning was possible only through the activities of this class.

A careful study of the Medieval literature reveals that the dynastic change never affected the position of the old grantees very much. In certain cases an inquiry was constituted where the old *wajh'-l-ma'ash* holders fulfilled the necessary qualifications for retaining their grants, and they were usually confirmed in their possessions after the fact had been ascertained. Because no Sultan thought it proper on his part to deprive the deserving persons of their *wajh'-l-ma'ash* as their

---

1. Allahabad *farman*, 318, op. cit.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, 1/293.

3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 6a-b.

4. Shaikh Jamali Kamoo, p *Siyar-ul-Arifin*, 177.

resumption could make him unpopular among people. On the contrary the dynastic change, sometimes, led to an increase in the number of the *wajh'-i-ma'ash* holders, for new grants were made to the new favourites and those who came to India from abroad after having been attracted by their munificence and generous patronage to the men of religion and learning.

During the times of the successors of Bahlul, the number of the grantees increased considerably. It is said that Sikandar Lodi's generosity attracted saints, *ulama* and other literary persons from Arabia, Iran, Central Asia and different parts of India. They were either absorbed in the nobility or granted *wajh'-i-ma'ash*, so that they might devote their time to learning and worship without any worry of livelihood.<sup>1</sup> As regards the local *Sufis*, scholars, and Saiyids, they were also treated kindly. Sultan Sikandar is reported to have laid down in the farmans issued to the officers with regard to their maintenance-iqtas that *wajh'-i-ma'ash* lands were excluded from them, so that the grantees, holding land grants might not be deprived of their sustenance-land.<sup>2</sup> This evidence provides us with a clue to the understanding of Sultan Sikandar's considerate attitude towards the *a'ima*. It is indicative of the fact that besides making fresh grants to the *Ulama*, saints and new immigrants, he left the old grants in his Empire untouched without ascertaining whether the old grantees had genuine claim to them. As a matter of fact these grantees, being the descendants of the respectable families, known for their learning and piety commanded great respect among the Muslims. Having been granted *Wajh'-i-ma'ash*-lands, some of them turned to be the apologists and propagandists of the State. An anecdote, contained in the *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, throws interesting light on the States' anxiety over protecting the rights of these grantees. The anecdote goes to tell: Once a Saiyid, resident of the town of Arwal (in Gaya district of Bihar) came to the court and complained before Sultan Sikandar that Malih Turk, the *wajhdar*<sup>3</sup> of the pargana (of Arwal) had occu-

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 8b, 33a.

*Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p.36,

also Iqtidar H.Siddiqi, *Masnad-i-'all Mian Bhu'a'* (A Scholarly Statesman of Medieval India), Indo-Iranica, op.cit, p.34.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 34b, 65a-66a.

*Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p.44

3. The *wajhdar* was the State officer who was assigned a maintenance-iqta instead of cash salary for maintaining an army contingent for the service of the Sultan. *Wajh* in Persian means salary and *wajhdar*, a salary-holder.



pled his small tract of *wajh'-l-ma'ash*-land. The Sultan ordered the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* (Revenue Ministry) to look into the matter. Two months elapsed and the issue was not decided for both the parties (the grantee and the *wajhdar*) defended their positions. At last the Sultan himself decided to settle the dispute, the *ulama* attached to the royal court, Malih Turk and the Saiyid grantee were summoned and the proceedings were personally checked by the Sultan. On going through them, he discovered that Malih Turk, the *wajhdar* of Arwal was guilty of misappropriating the land and the Saiyid was just in his claim to the land. Thereupon, the Sultan said to the *wajhdar*: "I have ordered that no one (noble) would oppress anyone and it is specifically mentioned in the *farmans* (regarding the maintenance-*iqtas* of the nobles) that the *imlak* and *wazalf*-lands were excluded." Then Malih Turk was dismissed from the royal service for ever.<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Sikandar was indeed anxious to revive the past traditions of learning and scholarship in his Sultanate. For this purpose the *ulama* were given stipends and lands for subsistence in large number, for they established *madrassas* and taught students there free of any charges. We know it for definite that the sultan established mosques, *madrassa* with *a'lma* in the newly-conquered territories of Bihar and eastern Rajputana and was never niggardly with monetary help.<sup>2</sup> Many of the *ulama* whom he held in high esteem for their high learning were honoured with presents every year in addition to the land-grants. Mushtaqi states that whatever gift the Sultan gave to a person of learning and piety in his first meeting, he never discontinued it. The person concerned got the gift whether cash, robe of honour or any thing else every year at his residence.<sup>3</sup>

It may also be pointed out that certain ministers and officers, entrusted with the departments of Justice, education and other religious affairs belonged to the *ulama* class.<sup>4</sup> On

- 
1. Cf. *Some Aspects of AFGHAN Despotism In India*, pp. 147-150. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 13b-14a
  2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I/329.  
*Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/185, 204, 217, 218.
  3. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 26a-b, *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 27b, 28a, 38a.
  4. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, 8b, 13b.

their appointments in different capacities, these people were assigned *iqtas* and allowances like other nobles, posted in the army or charged with the work of administration in different regions. These *iqtas* and allowances were always in addition to their *wajh'-l-ma' ash-grants*.

During Sikandar Lodi's reign the posts of *amir-i-akhur* and *Hajib* were held by the members of the land-grant holding families. 'Umar Khan Kambo, (Sultan Sikandar's *amir-i-akhur*), Maulana Juman (*Hajib-i-Khas*), Qazi 'Abdullah (son of Tahir Kabuli), Shaikh 'Umar, Shaikh Ibrahim (both *hajibs*) and Shaikh Ladan Kambo (the *imam* of Sikandar Lodi) deserve to be mentioned in this regard.<sup>1</sup> By virtue of their being taken in the state service, they got salary and allowances in cash while their land-grants also continued to be held by them. In fact, they belonged to the distinguished families of the country, the members of which were known for their learning and religiosity. Like the Kambos, the Indian *Shalkhzadas*, the local Saiyids and some of the Afghans also held simultaneously the *amlaks* and *iqtas*, in case they held position in the army or the nobility as nobles. Generally their *amlak*-lands were of the nature of *waqf* attached to the tombs of the family ancestors who had been saintly men in the past.<sup>2</sup> In such cases one of the descendants had to work as the *Sajjada Nashin* (Spiritual successor of the saint and the trustee of the *dargah waqf*).<sup>3</sup> Those who entered the state service as military men, got *iqtas* for the maintenance of their family and the servants, such as *Sawars* and footmen, according to their ranks and position in the official hierarchy.

Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, successor of Sultan Sikandar Lodi not only renewed and confirmed the land-grants given by his predecessors but also favoured many new persons in an attempt to earn good name. The available evidence shows that he surpassed his father and grand-father by conferring sustenance-land to everyone who approached him without enquiring whether he deserved it or not. As chaos and anarchy was caused by the rebellions of the nobles in his times, the '*amilis*

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, I/327; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/199-200., *Waqi' at-l-Mushtaqi*, f. 19b. 24b.

2. *Waqi' at-l-Mushtaqi*, f, 24b. 26b, 27 a.

3. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, II/818.

became corrupt and the land-grantees also took advantage of the situation. They bribed the *amlls* and with their connivance occupied more land than they were allotted.<sup>1</sup>

With the advent of Sher Shah to power, the old *wajh-i-ma'ash*-grants were resumed by the state and then redistributed among the deserving persons after an inquiry was instituted to ascertain the genuine claims to them. It was done with a view to taking away the land-grants from underserving men. Because Sher Shah is reported to have been doubtful about the integrity of grantees as they had obtained land-grants during the reigns of Ibrahim Lodi, Babur and Humayun by foul means. Abbas informs us that having made satisfactory investigation about the affairs of the *al'ma*, he made agreeable landgrants to them and no one was disappointed. They were called to the court with the old *sanads* or *farmans* regarding their grants and were paid travel expenses at the time of their departure.<sup>2</sup> Mushtaqi corroborates Abbas in this matter when he briefly remarks : "He had resumed all the land-grants of the *al'ma* and then assigned lands to them afresh."<sup>3</sup>

Like the Lodis, Sher Shah was considerate to the '*ulama* and *Mashaikh* from the beginning of his career. The available documentary evidence shows that he considerably helped the *al'ma* in Bihar before his occupation of Delhi, even though his resources were meagre at that time.<sup>4</sup> After his rise to supreme power in India, he said : 'It is incumbent upon the king to give *madad-i-ma'ash* to the *al-ma*, for the splendour of the cities of India is due to these '*ulama* and saints.'<sup>5</sup>

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 112-113a.

2. *Ibid.*, f. 113a.

3. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 49b.

4. There is Emperor Akbar's farman, issued in favour of Makhdum Saliyd Husain, son of Makhdum Hasan Danishmand in 1576, regarding the renewal of the grant of village Sultanpur, 12 miles south of Bhagalpur in the thana (Police Station) of Umarpur in the District of Bhagalpur (Bihar). There is a specific reference to the farman of the preceding regime. Akbar's farman was issued after his conquest of Bangal in 1575 A.D. It is now available in the personal collection of Shah Fakhr Alam, the trustee of the dargah in Baugapur.

5. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 113a.

We may now turn to the procedure adopted by Sher Shah with regard to the confirmation of *wajh'-i-ma'ash*-grants. It is said that for the convenience of the state as well as for checking the grantees and officials from using unfair means to occupy land illegally, the *farmans*, issued with respect to the land-grants, were sent directly to the *shiqqdar*,<sup>1</sup> so that he might allot the land to the claimant in the village, specifically mentioned, after measuring it properly. When the land was measured and given to the grantee, the *shiqqdar* handed over the royal *farman* also to him for keeping it as a *sanad*.<sup>2</sup> It is also notable that every *farman* or *sanad* of land-grant had to be processed through the *Diwan*. It was first drafted by the *sadr* and then sent to the *wazir*, the minister in charge of the Revenue Ministry so that the land to be given to the grantee in a certain area might be specified for the guidance of the *shiqqdar*.<sup>3</sup>

Mushtaqi relates an anecdote about a certain Saiyid whose land-grant was resumed by the state after the expulsion of the Mughals. This anecdote corroborates Abbas about Sher Shah's treatment of the claimants of the *wajh-i-ma'ash* lands. The Saiyid, mentioned in it, belonged to Radauli whence he came to the royal court for the renewal of his grant. Being satisfied by his claim, Sher Shah ordered him to be given four hundred rupees in addition to the travel expenses. His land-grant of four hundred *bighas* was also renewed.<sup>4</sup>

Besides, Sher Shah was also generous towards other needy people who did not belong to the *ai'ma* class but deserved financial assistance for their inability to earn their livelihood. He is reported to have ordered his high officers to maintain records of all the disabled and handicapped persons in different towns, cities and territories. All of them got maintenance-allowances in cash and kind as well.<sup>5</sup> He was actually interested in helping his subject people in their miserable life.

1. Cf. *Position of the Shiqqdar under the Sultans of Delhi*, Iqtidar Husain Siddiqi, Islamic Culture, Hyderabad-Deccan, op. cit.

2. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 113a

3. Sultan Ibrahim Lodi's *farman*, op. cit.  
Also *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, f. 113a, for Sher Shah's reign.

4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 52a.

5. *Tarikh-i-Sher:Shahi*, f. 112b. Also *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 49b.

The Hindi poet Malik Muhammad Ja'isi testifies to this fact "The World touched this sun, and became gold compact, so that poverty fled and went beyond the borders of his kingdom. He who but once approacheth him and asketh, for all his life is free from hunger and from nakedness. Even that (king of old) who performed ten horse-sacrifices, even he gave not holy gifts like him."<sup>1</sup>

However, it may also be added that he was very strict in resuming the land-grants of all those who failed in fulfilling the obligations they owed to religion and society. He kept himself well-informed of the activities of the state officers as well as the leading *al-ma* and severely censured those whom he found neglectful of their duties. For instance, the case of shaikh Isa Miswani (Kakar Afghan) is a case in point. The Shaikh was one of the celebrated saints of the time and held a number of villages in the *sarkar* of Hisar Firuza both as a hereditary *chaudhry* (zamindar) and *wajh'-l-ma' ash*-holder as a *Sufi* saint. But it was reported to Sher Shah that Shaikh Isa was addicted to wine and did not deserve to be treated as a pious man. Sher Shah got angry and deputed a spy to investigate the fact. Fortunately, the Shaikh succeeded in impressing the state spy by his saintliness and the latter in his turn changed his royal master's adverse opinion about the saint. In this way Shaikh Isa was left untouched.<sup>2</sup>

Again, the point deserves to be stressed that Sher shah expected the *al-ma* enjoying land-grants, to devote themselves to the service of religion and mankind. Because the responsibility of imparting education and religious instructions to people lay upon their shoulders; the duty of the State was to give financial assistance to them. But the fact that certain *ulama* and *Sufis* had influence with the Muslims and it could be utilized by the king in consolidating his rule, should also be taken into consideration. Many *ulama* were assigned maintenance-land or given *wazifa* in cash for rendering help to the State at various times. The available evidence, relating to the times of Sher Shah, shows that he often helped even those persons whom he never considered loyal to him, for they were

---

1. *Padmavat, Malik Muhammad Jasi, (Eng. tr.) p. 14.*

2. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani, II/824.*

held in esteem by people and a little regard shown by him to them was certain to make him popular among people.

Once Sher Shah was annoyed by *Shaikh Budhan* of *Maner* for his sympathetic attitude towards Humayun in *Maner* at the time of his back journey from *Gaur* to *Agra*. He is said to have decided to punish the *Shaikh* after his victory over Humayun. But he changed his mind after the battle of *Chausa*, although the *Shaikh* was apprehending his doom. Sher Shah rather granted him twelve thousand *blghas* of cultivated land and was consequently praised by the elite of *Bihar*, for the *Shaikh* commanded great respect there. He ran a *madrassa* which attracted pupils from distant places.<sup>1</sup> Similarly his treatment with one of the descendants of *Shaikh Farid Ganji-Shakr* shows that even if the claimant of land-grant failed in impressing him by his religiosity, he showed consideration to him, in case he belonged to a reputed family of a saint. The descendant of *Shaikh Farid* looked very shrewd and cunning, yet Sher Shah ordered his secretaries to issue the *farman* regarding the renewal of the grant of the village which the *Shaikh* held (in the *Panjab*) in *wajh'-i-ma'ash* since long. But it is interesting to note that Sher Shah ordered all the relatives of the *Shaikh* to be mentioned as partners in the *farman* and then remarked : "The *Shaikh* is very shrewd, he would deprive every one otherwise."<sup>2</sup>

Sher Shah was also kind to all the *Shaikhs*, *Saiyids* and *ulama* who came from foreign lands and settled in his Empire. Though the chroniclers do not provide us with information about the arrival of important *ulama* from foreign countries during the period under review, the scattered references to them in their chronicles with regard to some extra-ordinary events shed light on the matter. *Badaoni's* reference to *Shah Muhammad*, supports our statement. *Shah Muhammad* came from *Iraq* during Sher Shah's reign and settled in *Delhi*. He called himself *Saiyid* and received favours from Sher Shah. *Islam Shah*, whom *Badaoni* accuses of disregarding the Islamic *Shariat* in the State matters, also had great respect for *Shah Muhammad* and paid frequent visits to him during his stay in *Delhi*. During *Islam Shah's* reign two other *Saiyid* broth-

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 112b.

2. *Ibid*, f. 121b.

ers. *Mir Talib* and *Mir Shamsuddin* came from Iraq and settled in Delhi. Mir Talib was distinguished for his knowledge of Tib (Unani medicine) and the other was a religious scholar. On account of their past association with Shah Muhammad, they sought his help for approaching the king. The latter introduced them to the royal court and then had proper arrangements, made for their permanent stay in Delhi.<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the land-grants made to the religious persons, mention may also be made of the *waqf*-lands endowed by the Sultans to the newly-constructed mosques and *madrassa* attached to them. Both, Sultan Sikandar Lodi and Sher Shah are credited with the construction of mosques in different territories and reserving the revenue of some land under cultivation on a permanent basis for their upkeep.<sup>2</sup> Sher Shah is said to have studded every large *sera'i*, designed to be the administrative headquarter of the locality under the *Shiqqdar* all along the highways, with mosques and *madrassas*. For their maintenance *waqf*-land-grants were made, and the *Imams* and *muazin* were paid their allowances out of the income yielded by the *waqf*-land.<sup>3</sup>

The Sultans did not build the mosques only to please God or earn fame among the Muslims but also to make their rule felt by alien people in the conquered territories by having the *Khutba* read in their names. The Sultans were particular of the two things. i.e. the coins should be struck and *Khutba* read in their names on every Friday at the time of congregational prayers, for these two things were considered to be the proof of the acceptance of their rule by the local people in a region.

Likewise, the available evidence, though brief and scanty, makes it clear that the Muslim rulers had started giving land-grants to the Brahmins, temples and *Maths*.<sup>4</sup> If all the odd bits are taken together, they indicate that the need of

1. *Badaoni*, I/392-393.

2. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II/332, *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/216, 217

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, 108b-109b.

4. Sultan Ala u ddin Shah of the Saiyid dynasty is reported to have built a math for Nam Deva, a Hindu saint.

*Cultural Heritage of India*, II, p. 251, as cited by Dr. I.H. Quraishi, *The Muslim community of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent*, p. 118 (f.n. 32).

bringing the countryside with its influential chiefs under effective control must have caused considerable change in the traditional outlook of the Sultans towards their non-Muslim subject people. The anecdote, contained in the *Afsana-i-Shahan* and referred to above, also implies that the Sultans had begun to give villages to the Hindus in *milik* in recognition of their services to them. 'Abdullah furnishes valuable information in his account of Sher Shah regarding his favourable attitude towards the non-Muslims. Abdullah relates that at the time of leading expedition against Kalinjar, Sher Shah, by chance, came across a Brahmin who belonged to some village in the *Pargana* of *Hamirpur*, a dependancy of the *sarkar* of *Kalpi*, and enquired from him whether the officer in charge of the *pargana* was governing it properly or not. The Brahmin told him every thing correctly without knowing that the man, engaged in conversation was his emperor. The latter was much pleased by his honest speaking and rewarded him with the grant of the entire village in which he resided in *in'am* and five hundred rupees in cash.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence, contained in the *Tawarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi*, a spurious work of Hasan Ali Khan, a so-called contemporary of Sher Shah that "the Hindus are also granted *waqf* by the government.....This is under the management of five Hindus," is somewhat important in so far as it implies that the legends had developed about Sher Shah's liberal policy towards the non-Muslims.<sup>2</sup> In fact, by the time of Sher Shah's occupation of north India, it had become a well-established practice in India that Brahmins or their ancient places of worship could also be considered for the grant of maintenance-land. For instance, Sultan Sikandar Lodi is said to have granted maintenance-land to a Jain saint, Jambuji, near Malesar in Bikaner region. The Jain saint says in his *Jambu Sagar* that he met the Sultan when he passed through Bikaner, impressed him and the latter made a land-grant to him.<sup>3</sup> Emperor Humayun made a grant of 800 *Blghas* of land in Mirzapur district (U.P.) in favour of the Jangamvadi *Math* of Benaras

1. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, pp. 138-139.

2. Cf. *Tawarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi*, *Medieval India Quarterly*, Aligarh, Vol. 1, No. 1, July, 1950. p. 63.

3. *Jambu Sagar* Shlok no. 29 pp. 319- 320.

I am indebted to Munshi Sohan Lal who has utilised *Jambu Sagar* for his Urdu work, *Tarikh-i-Bikaner*.



before Sher Shah. The original *farman* is available with the people of *Math*.<sup>1</sup>

The nobles who made generous land-grants to the saints and scholars out of their own maintenance-*iqtas* are also to be discussed as they help us to understand the nature of relationship between the *a'ima* and the nobles on one hand and analyse the socio-religious trends in the nobility on the other. But it must be made clear at the outset that the nobles gave land-grants only to those persons in whose piety they had faith or whom they considered useful for the consolidation of their authority in a region. In both the cases, however, they earned fame. A little consideration shown to the scholars and saints by a noble was certain to raise his prestige and thus made him popular in the society, for the saints and *ulama* not only attracted people for blessing but also had their disciples in different sections of the society.

The *parwana* of *Masnad-i-all* Mahmud Khan Lodi (Shahu Khail) issued to *Shaikh-ul-Mashaikh* Shaikh Chailda, a descendant of Baba Farid Ganji-Shakar in 899 A.H. (1493 A.D.) contains a grant of two villages in the *pargana* of Nindru (now in district Bijnoor).<sup>2</sup> When the *Masnad-i-all* was transferred to the *sarkar* of Kalpi as its *Muqta*,<sup>3</sup> there also he might have given villages and lands to the *a'ima* according to their status. Riza Ullah Mushtaqi states about Khan-i-Jahan Lodi (former Mian Husain, son of Khan-i-Jahan the elder, a cousin of Bahlul) : "Everyone amongst the *ulama* and *Mashaikh*, who came to him, got village and land or stipend (as the case might be)."<sup>4</sup> The same writer says about *Masnad-i-all* Mian Bhu'a that he had villages and *parganas* of his maintenance-*iqta*, scattered in different territories and whenever any one of *ulama* and *Mashaikh* approached him for help, he asked him to choose his *wajh'-i-ma' ash*-grant in any village of his choice. When he expressed his choice, the *Masnad-i-all* issued the *parwana* accordingly.<sup>5</sup>

---

1. Cf. S.R.Sharma *Religious Policies of the Mughals*, p. 10 (f. no. 10 on p. 12).

2. *Parwana, Tazkirat-ul-Kiram*, (being *Tarikh-i-Amroha*), op. cit., p. 34.

3. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, 1/325; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 1/173.

4. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, 28b.

5. *Ibid.*, f. 33b.

However, the nobles took interest in providing men of religion and learning with financial assistance in the form of land grants, and it certainly affected their own income, derived from the revenue of their maintenance-*iqtas*. The high nobles possessing large *iqtas* could give even villages to the individual saints while the smaller ones made grants in terms of *bihas*. It is reported that every one, particularly amongst the important nobles who displayed generosity in this respect was praised and honoured by Sultan Sikandar Lodi. Once the Sultan remarked about such a noble : "He has done good, he should not have any setback (in the life hereafter).<sup>1</sup> Hence the nobles who had thus become conspicuous, were *Masnad-i-ali* Khar, A'zam Umar Khan Sarwani, *Masnad-i-ali* Mahmud Khan Lodi (Shahu Khail), *Masnad-i-ali* Khan-i-Jahan Lodi (former Husain Khan Lodi), Khan azam Jamal Khan Lodi Sarang Khani, *Masnad-i-ali* Khawwas Khan, Mian Bhu'a (Sultan Sikandar's famous wazir), *Masnad-i-ali* Zainuddin, *Masnad-i-ali* Khwaja Sa'id Farmuli and Daulat Khan Lodi. Their culture and munificence attracted *ulama*, literati and poets from different parts of India and abroad as well. They provided all of them with maintenance-lands and stipends.<sup>2</sup>

During the Sur period also, the Indo-Afghan nobles maintained the tradition of generosity and large-heartedness, associated with the Muslim aristocracy since long. The nobles kept *ulama* and poets in their service, paid frequent visits to the *Mashaikh* and gave them land-grants according to their needs and position. *Masnad-i-ali* Isa Khan Sarwani whom Sher Shah had appointed as the *munsif* of the extensive *sarkar* of Sambhal,<sup>3</sup> deputed Shaikh Dattu Sarwani to settle the administration of the *parganas* of *Kant* and *Tilhar* (Shahjahanpur district) of his maintenance-*iqta* and restore the lands, granted to the *a'ima* previously. The widows and other deserving people were given *Wajh'-i-ma'ash*-lands lavishly in his maintenance-*iqta*.<sup>4</sup> But *Masnad-i-ali* Khawwas Khan (son of *Sukha*, Sher Shah's slave) surpassed all the nobles of Sher Shah in his generosity. Himself a saintly man, spent lavishly on the

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/219.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 32b, 33a, 33b, 35a, 36a-37, for details about the nobles, also *Lata' If-i-Quddusi*, p. 40.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, ff. 81a-b.

4. *Lata' If-i-Quddusi*, pp. 83-84.

*ulama*, saints and men of letters. He maintained a large number of them at his court wherever he was posted and assigned lands to others in his *sarkar* of *Sirhind* which he held as his maintenance-*iqta*, as already discussed.

All the grants, given by the nobles were of temporary nature, for they had no royal sanction behind them. The grantees held them during the pleasure of their patrons or till the time the patrons were not transferred from the particular *iqtas*; although the transfer of the nobles from one place to another did not take place very frequently during this period.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the death of a noble also caused the resumption of these land-grants. Even if the son of the deceased noble was confirmed by the Sultan in his father's rank and position as it usually happened, he was free to cancel the grants made by his own father. Because it was for him to decide whether he would part with some amount of his income derived from the revenue of his maintenance-*iqta*. Sometimes the decision taken by the noble in this matter was shaped by his personal like and dislike for certain people. The evidence available in the *Lata' if-i- Quddusi* shows that the sons and successors of *Masnad-i- 'all Khan a'zam Umar Khan Sarwanl* did not like Shaikh Abdul Quddus (Gangohi) to enjoy their father's patronage but they could not do anything against the Shaikh as their father had faith in him. On *Umar Khan's* death, they asked the Shaikh to leave Shahabad, one of the *parganas* included in their *iqta* in the *sarkar* or *Sirhind*; they had succeeded their father in his position.<sup>2</sup> But it should not be taken for granted that in every case the son and successor of a deceased noble deprived the *a'ima*, favoured by his father of their grants. Generally the sons were expected to respect the commitments made by their father. *Masnad-i- all Mian Bhu'a* and the *Sarang Khani muqtas* of Jaunpur vilayet may be specifically mentioned in this regard.<sup>3</sup>

Since the period of the Sur dynasty did not last for more than fifteen years, the nobles or their families could not continue to hold the *iqtas* for generations, but the nature of land-

1. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, pp. 152-155.

2. *Lata' If-i-Quddusi*, p. 41.

3. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 33b, 34b, 36a-37a.

grants made by the nobles under the Lodi Sultans remained unchanged during this period also.

### Sadr and Sadarat

The *Sadr* was a highly venerated minister who presided over the department of *Sadarat*, basically established for controlling the religious affairs of the state and providing sustenance to the *ulama*, saints and other deserving persons. In this way he was expected to safeguard the interest of the 'ulama class by recommending them to the Sultan for state stipends and land-grants. Often, he combined with his own, the duties of chief *qazi* (chief justice) and *Shaikh-ul-Islam*. In his latter capacity he could issued decree in regard with religious issues relating to the Muslim community or both, the Muslim state and the community. His-patronage to the men of learning and piety considerably added to his popularity in society and also helped him in controlling educational institutions and having influence over public opinion.

During the Afghan period, most of the *Sadrs* seem to have been distinguished for their wide renown as just men devoted to the cause of piety and learning. Though the definite evidence about the *sadr* of Bahlul's reign is wanting, Sultan Sikandar Lodi's *sadrs* were his famous *wazirs*, *Masnad-I-ali* Khawwas Khan and after him, his son Mian Bhu'a. Endowed with the excellent qualities of head and heart, Khawwas Khan not only distinguished himself as a talented military general and able administrator but he was also singular for his learning and devotion to the men of piety.<sup>1</sup> He seems to have been entrusted with the charge of *Diwan-i-Wizarat* and *Sadarat* after the death of Khan azam Umar Khan Sarwani<sup>2</sup> who seems to have died, sometime in 1496.

Towards the close of his life, the *Masnad-I-ali* was deputed by Sultan Sikandar for the capture of Nagarkot (called by Mushtaqi as *Mulk-I-Bala*, and now in Himachal Pradesh)

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 32b.

2. *Firisha*, p. 178. *Firisha* says that Umar Khan Sarwani was the Wazir of Bahlul. He is corroborated by Mushtaqi's reference to the Sarwani as commander of the Afghan advance guard during the early years of Sikandar Lodi's reign. It was the highest privilege of a noble to lead the advance guard of the royal army in Medieval times. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, p. 128.

with the specific orders that after conquering the territory, he would make land-grants to the *al'ma*, not exceeding the revenue of three lac *tankas*. But, *Masnad-i-'all* Khawwas Khan, whose generosity knew no bounds distributed among the *'ulama* the land, yielding fifteen lac *tankas*. On his return to the royal court, he reported the matter to the Sultan and also requested him to deduct all the amount in excess from the revenue of his *iqta* as the state exchequer was deprived of its money due to his misplaced generosity. But the Sultan did not dislike his action; he rather pleased Khawwas Khan by endorsing it.<sup>1</sup>

On Khawwas Khan's death, his rank and posts were granted to his eldest son, *Masnad-i-'all* Mian Bhu'a.<sup>2</sup> Though Mian Bhu'a never appears to have distinguished himself as a military general as there is no reference to his participation in any battle, he was an able administrator as well as one of the celebrated scholars of his age.<sup>3</sup> He combined in himself the departments of *Wizarat*, chief *qazi* and *sadr*,<sup>4</sup> and continued to perform his duties till the early years of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi's reign. Sultan Ibrahim got annoyed with Mian Bhu'a over certain matter and threw him in prison,<sup>5</sup> where he died soon afterwards.<sup>6</sup>

Upon Mian Bhu'a's fall, the department of *Sadarat* was separated from the *Diwan-i-Wizarat*. The *Sadarat* was entrusted to Shaikh Farid Bukhari, who had taught Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in his childhood, while Dilawar Khan (the son of *Masnad-i-'all* Mian Bhu'a) got the charge of the *Diwan-i-Wizarat*.<sup>7</sup> The new *wazir* is reported to have been a great womaniser<sup>8</sup> and thus unqualified for the post of *Sadr*. Shaikh Farid, who was a scholar of established fame and also belonged to an old respectable family, plunged headlong into politics. He joined

1. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f.33a.

2. Cf. *Masnad-i-all Mian Bhu'a (A Scholarly Statesman of Medieval India)*, *Indo-Iranica. op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

3. *Ibid*, pp. 36-38.

4. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 32b-33a.

5. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, 1/347.

6. *Ibid*, p. 347.

7. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, 1/347; *Zubdat-ul- Tawarikh*, ff. 79b-80a, for Shaikh Farid's appointment as *Sadr*.

8. *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f.33a.

hands with the favourite nobles of the Sultan and brought about the fall of nobles whom he suspected to be disloyal to Sultan Ibrahim Lodi.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the *Sadr* of Sher Shah, we do not find mention of his name in any available work. 'Abbas refers to Sher Shah's *Sadr* only once while discussing the resumption of old *Wajh'-i-ma' ash*-grants and their redistribution as already discussed. A study of the works of Abbas and Badaoni suggests that Shah Rafiuddin who was in his service, held the posts of *Sadr* and *Shaikh-ul-Islam* as the latter is reported to have been consulted by him on different occasions about religious issues. After Shah Raifi uddin's death, Shaikh Abdul Ha'i Kambo, the son of Jamali Dehlevi seems to have been elevated to the post of *Sadr*<sup>2</sup>. But it is definite that Sher Shah did not delegate absolute powers to his *Sadr* in regard to the distribution of land-grants. He personally interviewed the claimants of the *Wajh'-i-ma'ash* and *farmans* concerning the land-grants. Having ascertained the genuineness of their claims, the *farmans* were drafted and the details about the land-grants and grantees were recorded by the secretaries under the supervision of the *Sadr*. No doubt, Sher Shah had great respect for certain ulama and saints and, sometimes, appears to have acted on their advice, yet he could not be reconciled to the idea of delegating full powers to his *sadr* in connection with the grant or stipends and sustenance-lands to the *ulama* and *Mashaikh*.<sup>3</sup> His policy of looking into the claims to the *a'ima* to *Wajh-i-ma'ash*-grants and then deciding the cases on the ground of genuine need and merit, saved his *Sadr* from the unavoidable charges of favouritism and discrimination, so common in those days. Moreover, the underserving persons who had obtained grants through fraud and bribe previously were deprived of their unlawful possessions. He stuck to this policy throughout his reign. In certain territories, the trusted nobles, who were known for the integrity of their character

1. *Siyar-ul-Arifin*. pp. 138-139; also *Iqtidarh*. Husain Siddiqui, *Mughal Relations with the Indian Ruling Elite*, New-Delhi, 1983, p.97.

2. *Tarik-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 11a.

3. *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*, f. 112b; *Waqi' at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 54a. Badaoni, i/372, 392. Amongst the leading ulama of Sher Shah's court, mention may be made of Salyid Mir Rafiuddin, Shaikh Khalil, Shaikh Abdul Ha'i i Kambo, etc.

could also confirm the old grants of the rightful persons, particularly in the territory of their jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup>

With the succession of Islam Shah to the throne, Shaikh Abdullah Sultanpuri attained to the coveted position of *sadr* and *Shaikh-ul-Islam* of the Sur Empire.<sup>2</sup> As a favourite of the king, Shaikh Abdullah Sultanpuri succeeded in acquiring tremendous influence over the royal court. He was thus enabled to reduce the other leading *ulama* to a secondary position. Despite this highly privileged position, his thirst for more power remained insatiable; he ultimately secured the office of chief *Qazi* (*Qazi-ul-Quzat*) also for himself. Mian Hatim Sambhali and Mian Jamal Mufti whose primary duty was to administer justice in conformity with the Islamic *Sharia* were thus placed under his authority. In fact, Abdullah Sultanpuri was one of the greatest theologians of his age. He impressed people by his profound knowledge of Islamic *fiqh* (jurisprudence). But he was also one of the crooked *ulama* who brought miseries to many *ulama* towards whom he was contemptuous, such as the *Mahadavis*.<sup>3</sup>

In the final analysis the role, played by the grantees and the importance of the institution of *Wajh'-i-ma'ash*-grants may be briefly discussed. In actual point of fact, the medieval *ulama* who enjoyed royal grants, were expected to engage themselves in the service of society and religion; many of them taught children the holy Quran and propagated the Islamic concept of the unity of God in a self-less, humble and devoted manner. They were really the guardians of learning and considered its diffusion among people, belonging to different sections of society as an act of divine worship. The doors of their *madrassas* and *Khanqahs* (hospices) remained open to all; the sons of the wealthy and poor people sat together for the acquisition of knowledge. A few of the anecdotes, recorded by Mushtaqi in his work show that even the children of destitute widows could become the men of high learning due to the sympathetic attitude and selfless services of the *ulama* to the cause of education.<sup>4</sup> In recognition of these services;

1. *Lata' if-i-Quddusi*, p. 83

2. *Badaoni*, I/399

3. *Ibid*, I/406-408; *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, I/382-383; *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II/118.

4. *Waqf' at-i-Mushtaqi*, 8b, 13b, 26b, etc.

the state provided for the maintenance of their educational institutions and families.

This is also interesting to note that certain grantees developed their lands by planting the gardens of mangoes and other fruit trees. They constructed wells for the irrigation of their lands as well as for the service of travellers.<sup>1</sup> The *Shaikhzadas* of *Chanderi* who were more than ten thousand in number, had planted vast gardens of fruits and flowers around *Chanderi*, and thus become the proprietors of the land of gardens during the Lodi period.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, many of the grantees settled in the villages in which they were assigned maintenance-lands and came into contact with the *zamindars* and peasantry and were thus acquainted with one another's way of life. In this way the Muslim urban culture permeated the countryside through them. They also became a link between the state officers in the town and city and the rural population in the villages. They kept the officers well-informed of the rural area, and sometime caused the ruin of the recalcitrant and anti-social elements in the country side.<sup>3</sup> Likewise the *ulama*, who happened to be ambitious and worldly-minded people, took active part in politics and dangled around the court of the Sultan or his nobles in the hope of material benefit. But they were looked down upon by people. The religious sentiment of the public demanded from the *ulama* complete devotion to religion and piety.

□

- 
1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, ii/818. Shaikh Hamza, son of Malik Adam Kakar (a high noble of the Lodi Sultans) was a celebrated saint who flourished during the times of Sher Shah and Islam Shah. He owned a beautiful garden with a well where the travellers took rest and drank water. The garden was planted in the land of *wajh-i-ma'ash*. In the case, when the waste land was brought under plough or a garden was planted there, the grantee acquired proprietary right like *zamindar* and retained it on the payment of a nominal tax which a *zamindar* had to pay on his holding after the grant was cancelled or resumed by the state. Badaoni's reference to the son of Shaikh Hamza who was also a celebrated saint during Akbar's reign shows that he retained the garden and *Khudkasht-land* in Lucknow, most probably as a *zamindar*, for he does not seem to have applied for the renewal of his *wajh'-i-ma'ash-grants*. He was a recluse having no attachment with the mundane world. His property was managed by his family relations and servants. *Badaoni*, iii.
  2. *Waqi' at-I-Mushtaqi*, ff. 64b-65a.
  3. *Waqi' at I-Mushtaqi*, f. 56a.



## CHAPTER VIII

# Struggle for the Survival : Role Played by Hemu

---

---

The *zamindars* and Rajput chiefs began to occupy positions of importance in the nobility of the Sultanate of Delhi since the times of the Lodi Sultans.<sup>1</sup> Sher Shah whom the Afghans of high families looked down upon as a mere upstart till 1535, trained people of insignificant background as military generals, and afterwards assigned to them the highest positions in the administration of his Empire. His successors also continued his policy. Therefore, the Afghan and non-Afghans of ordinary background constituted a considerable part of their nobility. Even the *julahas* (weavers)<sup>2</sup> and the *ʿanyas* (grocers) appear to have held the status of high nobles. Amongst the nobles of low background, Hemu emerged as a military general of marked ability towards the close of the Sur period. The Persian chroniclers, including Abul Fazl present him as a monster who brought innumerable miseries to mankind, yet the data, if properly analysed, will enable us to discuss the life and achievements of Hemu, and the role, played by the Afghan nobility during the last phase of the Sur Empire under his leadership.

- 
1. Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-60, 136-140.
  2. The Afghan chroniclers seldom provide the figures of the nobles, belonging to different castes, tribes, clans or social groups, except in so far as they were reflected in the events at the royal court or camp, such as rebellions, etc. Rizq Ullah Mushtaqi and Badaoni and later writers shed light on the rise of petty people in the ruling class in order to show the reaction of the noble-born Afghans towards the royal policy. Iqbal Khan, who served as a footman in the beginning of his career, was raised to the position of a high noble during Islam Shah's reign. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 72b. *Badaoni*, Vol. 1/411.

Hemu was one of the nobles of insignificant origin, who was employed as a market inspector (*Shahna-l-bazar*) some-time during the reign of Sher Shah. A study of Hemu and certain other high nobles of the Sur Empire reveals the fact that the Sur Kings did not attach importance to birth; the requisite qualification for the state service in their times was ability to serve the State.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the family background of Hemu, he belonged to the *Dhusar* caste, which is considered to be a sub-division of Gaur Brahmans, but in medieval times it was supposed to be the lowest caste of the *Banyas* (grocers), because most of its members dealt in the trade of food grains and other commodities on a small scale.

Abul Fazl's Statement : At the back of lanes he sold salt petre with thousands of mortifications till at last he by means of astuteness, became a government huckster under Salim Khan'', is not devoid of truth. Hemu's achievements had excited people's curiosity to know about his background, and the mention of *baqa!* with Hemu's name by Mushtaqi and other writers indicates the fact that he came of a grocer's family. Abul Fazl who appears to have made some inquiry about Hemu's background also mentions the caste and early profession of Hemu's family.<sup>2</sup>

Abul Fazl's references in the *Ai'n* to the *Dhusar zamindars* in certain *parganas* of the *sarkar* of Rewari tend to contradict his statement made in the *Akbarnama*<sup>3</sup> and, therefore, it mer-

- 
1. The Lodi, Sarwani, Nuhani, Jilwani and Farmuli families predominated the political scene during the Lodi period. The Afghans who belonged to the Sur, Niazi, Sirbini, Karrani, etc. served either on petty posts or were in the service of the high Afghan nobles. With the advent of the Surs to power, they made tremendous rise. Similarly the slaves, eunuchs and ordinary Indians, who happened to be the early followers of Sher Shah rose in prominence during his reign. Mention may be made of *Masnad-i-'ali* Khawwas Khan, *Masnad-i-'ali* Haji Khan, Habib Khan Sultani in this regard. They were originally Sher shah's slaves.  
Cf. *Some Aspects of Afghan Despotism in India*, op. cit., pp. 87-93 for details.
  2. *Akbarnama*, i/337, (Eng. tr.) pp. 616-617.
  3. The Persian text of the *Ai'n-i-Akbari* contains references to the *Dhusar zamindars* who existed in Akbar's time. But Blochmann has translated the *zamindar* families in the *parganas* of different *sarkars* as castes and this is not correct. Therefore, certain *Dhusar* families began to enjoy *zamindari* rights from the days of Hemu. See *Ai'n*, ii/293 (Eng. tr.).

its explanation. The relevant evidence in the *al'n* indicates that all the members of the *Dhusar* caste did not deal in the trade of ordinary commodities but many of them were *zamindars*, and Hemu might have also belonged to a *zamindar* family. But, in fact, the *Dhusar zamindars* as mentioned by Abul Fazl in the *parganas* of Rewari were the creation of Hemu. Our earliest authority, Mushtaqi states that Hemu did not spare even *Chaudhries* and *Muqaddams*, he destroyed them root and branch at several places and raised *baqals* in their place.<sup>1</sup> Mushtaqi's testimony to this fact is of considerable significance as it corroborates Abul Fazl's statement about the origin of Hemu.

However, Hemu's father, Ramiya followed his ancestral vocation of trade at Rewari, a town then in the *sarkar* of Mewat.<sup>2</sup> Hemu appears to have been the first member of his family who rose in prominence on account of his talent and ability. Employed as a petty official, he soon distinguished himself as a competent man to be considered for promotion. He made rapid progress and ultimately became one of the important nobles during the reign of Islam Shah. In 1550 he accompanied Islam Shah to the Panjab where he was deputed alongwith other high nobles to receive *Mirza Kamran* in the fort of *Rohtas*.<sup>3</sup> Abul Fazl's remark that he rode on the back of elephant because he did not know horse-riding is not convincing.<sup>4</sup> We know for certain that *Islam Shah* had taken away elephants from his nobles and no noble, howsoever great, was permitted to use elephant for riding. They were allowed only to ride horses.<sup>5</sup>

The circumstances following the death of Islam Shah on October 30, 1553, paved the way for Hemu's rise to the supreme position in the Afghan nobility. The accession of Adil Shah Sur to the throne after the murder of Firoz Shah, son of Islam Shah caused rebellions, and the *Muqtas* of large vilayets began to fight for political supremacy. The disruptive forces

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 74a.

2. *Akbarnama*, Abul Fazl, Bib. Ind. Vol. I, p. 337.

3. *Badaoni*, Vol. I, p. 389. Abul Fazl also testifies to the fact that by masterpieces of feline trickery, he gradually rose to the dignity of an *amir* under Islam Shah. *Akbarnama*, i/337.

4. *Akbarnama*, i/338.

5. *Badaoni*, p. vol. I, 384.

which had been kept under check by Islam Shah got out of hand and overwhelmed the Sur Empire. The sound administrative system, established by Sher Shah and Islam Shah broke down, giving rise to chaos and anarchy.<sup>1</sup>

In an attempt to control the situation, 'Adil Shah favoured all those nobles in whom he reposed confidence. He also recruited new nobles and recalled those who were in exile since the time of Islam Shah. 'Isa Khan Niazi, one of the favourite nobles of Sher Shah returned from the Kumaon hills.<sup>2</sup> Bahar Khan Sarwani, Ibrahim Khan Sur, Shamsheer Khan (younger brother of famous Khawwas Khan), Daulat Khan, a convert, Sarmast Khan *Sirbini*, Hemu and Mujahid Khan, formerly a Bhagat boy, were raised to high positions and ranks.<sup>3</sup> But none of them except Hemu could retain his position for long. Some of them were killed while others were won over by the rebels. Thus *Hemu's* path to the highest position in the Afghan nobility was cleared.

The rise of the aforesaid nobles to high positions displeased the high grandees of the Sur Empire, present at Adil Shah's court in Gwalior. *Shah Muhammad Farmull* and Taj Khan Karran expressed their displeasure publicly. In short, the former was killed in Gwalior, while the latter fled towards his *iqta*, comprising the *parganas* of *Malihabad, Kakori, Lucknow*, etc.<sup>4</sup> These events took place within the very week of Adil Shah's accession.

The flight of *Taj Khan Karrani* aggravated the situation. Realizing the seriousness of the matter, the Sultan pursued him hotly, overtook and defeated him at *Chhibramau* (in Farrukhabad district). But the rebel made good his escape, seized hundred war-elephants and treasures, accumulated in the *parganas* of *Khalsa* and then joined his younger brothers, *Sulaiman* and *Imad* beyond the Ganges.<sup>5</sup> The Sultan stayed in Chunar and deputed Hemu with a large army to destroy the Karranis.<sup>6</sup>

1. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 73a-b; *Badaoni*, Vol. 1, pp. 412-13.

2. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, p. 195, *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 165a.

3. *Badaoni*, p. 412. Mujahid Khan's rank was 12,000 sawars.

4. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, 164a-b.

5. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 1960, p. 394.

6. *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*, pp. 195-196.

On Hemu's departure from Chunar, Ibrahim Khan Sur fled away from the court to rebel against the Sultan. The latter appointed *Masnad-i-'all 'Isa Khan Niazl* to overtake him, but Ibrahim inflicted a severe defeat on the pursuing army near Kalpi and put its commander to flight. Thereupon the Sultan moved in person and reached Delhi which had been occupied by the rebel. In Delhi the desertion of Bahar Khan Sarwani, Rao Husain Jilwani and few other high nobles weakened the position of the Sultan and forced him to retreat to Chunar unsuccessful.<sup>1</sup>

Thus within a month of the accession of *Sultan Adil Shah*, rebellions broke out in all directions, the powerful *Muqtas* of the extensive vilayets and *sarkars*, either became indifferent to the centre or began to advance their claims to the throne. The less important Afghan nobles began to side with different claimants of the throne in the hope of reward and promotion. *Masnad-i-'all Shuja'at Khan Sur*, the powerful *Muqta* of Malwa, whom Adil Shah had restored to supreme position, adopted an attitude of indifference towards the centre, while the *Muqtas* of the Panjab and Bengal became the serious contestants for the throne against Adil Shah. In the heart of the Empire, Rukn Khan Nuhani rebelled in Bahraich. Ibrahim Khan Sur occupied Delhi and Agra and declared himself Sultan while Taj Khan Karrani along with his younger brothers joined the *Muqta* of Bengal. On the other hand, the non-Afghan nobles whom Sher Shah had raised to dignity lost interest in the affairs of the Afghans and decided to join anyone who would finally emerge victorious. *Masnad-i-'all Haji Khan*, the powerful *Muqta* of the territories of Mewat, Nagaur, Ajmer and Marwar, who was a colourful figure in the nobility, said to Habib Khan Sultani<sup>2</sup> (whom Ahmad Khan Sur, entitled as Sultan Sikandar Shah had sent to the former to win over): "There is Sultan Sikandar on the one side and Ibrahim on the other, but we are the slaves of Sher Shah. We have nothing to do with these strange people. They have become kings while the descendants of Sher Shah underwent humiliation. We should

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, i/395.

2. Here Sultani means that Habib Khan was originally a slave of Sher Shah as it shows their close association with Sher Shah and his dynasty. Mushtaq, the earliest writer on the history of the Afghan kings calls Haji Khan and Habib Khan as Sultani while Abul Fazl mentions them as Sher Shah's slaves.

destroy them one by one by deceit and treachery." Haji Khan joined Ibrahim Sur and Habib Khan Sultani remained with Sikandar Sur.<sup>1</sup>

Ibrahim's assumption of kingship in Delhi brought him into conflict with Sikandar Sur who marched from the Punjab for the occupation of Delhi and Agra. Firstly, Sikandar Sur tried to persuade Ibrahim to agree to the division of country and failing this, he gave a tough flight at Farrah towards the close of 1554 and, in spite of his numerical inferiority, he inflicted a severe defeat on Ibrahim Sur.<sup>2</sup> Soon afterwards Sikandar's power was challenged by Humayun who started from Kabul after he had received information of Civil war among the Afghans.

At the time of conflict between Humayun and Sikandar Sur, Hemu had cleaned the eastern territories of the Afghan nobles, hostile to Adil Shah. Hemu, having won a grand victory over the Karranis in South Bihar, turned to *Bahraich* where *Rukh Khan Nuhani* was in rebellion. Rukn Khan Nuhani was defeated and taken prisoner.<sup>3</sup> Thereafter Hemu appointed trusted officers to carry on the government in the eastern territories. His own nephew, Taharpal was posted in Hajipur to defend Bihar against the rebels of Bengal.<sup>4</sup> Having made these arrangements, he turned to Chunar where the faithful Afghan nobles were honoured with special robes by Adil Shah on Hemu's recommendation.<sup>5</sup>

As regards Hemu, he was honoured with the title of Raja Bikramjit<sup>6</sup> and was sent with a huge army for the recovery of Agra and Delhi, which were defenceless due to Sikandar Sur's pre-occupation with the Mughals in Sirhind. But on his way Hemu came to know of Ibrahim Sur's occupation of Kalpi, therefore, he turned to Kalpi. Hemu defeated Ibrahim Sur, who fled to his father, *Ghazi Khan Sur*, the *Muqta* of *Bayana*. Humu came to Bayana, laid siege to its fort and continued to rain fire on the besieged for three months. But he was forced to raise the siege by the news of the march by Muhammad

1. *Waqia't-i- Mushtaqi*, ff. 73a-b.

2. *Badaoni*, p. 424; *Firishta*, p. 234.

3. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 167b, 168a.

4. *Ibid*, f. 170a.

5. *Tarikh-i-Shahi*, p. 289.

6. *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, p. 196.

Khan Sur from Bangal with a large army against Adil Shah.<sup>1</sup> On his retreat Ibrahim Sur fell on him but was again defeated.

*Muhammad Khan Sur* who had assumed the title of Sultan *Jalal Uddin Shah* in Bengal after the death of Islam Shah, marched towards north India at the head of a huge army with the intention of establishing his power. He captured Jaunpur without meeting any resistance and then moved towards Kalpi. Realizing the seriousness of the matter, Adil Shah rushed to Kalpi and checked his progress. On Hemu's arrival Adil Shah decided to fight against Muhammad Khan Sur. Crossing the Jamuna at night, Hemu made a surprise attack on the rival army at *Chapparghatta*, and swooped down upon the army of Bengal, taking it unawares. No one could have time so much as to lift his hand. As a result the men of Muhammad Khan Sur were thrown in confusion and they found safety only in flight. Muhammad Khan Sur fought bravely with a few followers and was slain.<sup>2</sup> (December, 1555).

The victory achieved in the battle of Chapparghatta raised Hemu's prestige in the Afghan nobility and also strengthened the position of Adil Shah. By this time *Sikandar Sur's* power was destroyed and the Mughals had occupied the region upto Delhi and Agra. Their occupation of such a vast area opened the eyes of the Afghans who began to realize the gravity of the situation. They decided to co-operate with Adil Shah whose army had achieved victories over the rebels under the distinguished leadership of Hemu. Within a short period from 1553 to 1555 Hemu had fought twenty-two battles and was victorious in all of them.<sup>3</sup> Now the chances of the survival of the Afghan Empire had become bright.

The nobles, who held territories in north India and were so far dissatisfied with Adil Shah, joined him in the interest of the Afghan Empire. Hence considerable increase in the army of Adil Shah. At this time Adil Shah also adopted a reconciliatory attitude towards the disaffected nobles; he released *Masnad-i'-all* Mahmud Khan Lodi, Qasim Khan Lodi, Kamal Khan Lodi (all brothers and the descendants of a respectable family of the Lodi period), Rukn Khan Nuhani and others, restored them

---

1. *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, II/124.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, 73b. Badaoni, I/432.

3. *Akbarnama*, II/22, 26.

to their old positions and thus they were prepared to struggle for the maintenance of the Afghan rule.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, *Masnad-i-'all* Rao Husain Jailwani was pardoned and invited to the court at Chunar.

Having won over the confidence of the disaffected nobles, Adil Shah prepared two armies, one for the occupation of Bengal and the other for the destruction of the Mughals. *Masnad-i-'all* Salim Khan Kakar was appointed the commander of the army of 50,000 *sawars*, deputed against Bengal,<sup>2</sup> while Hemu had to lead the other army, consisting of 50,000 *sawars*, 500 war-elephants and a strong park of artillery under the high nobles of Sher Shah's and Islam Shah's time. Most of the high nobles, set on liberty after the battle of Chapparghatta, were placed under the command of Hemu for their long experience in war.<sup>3</sup> But *Masnad-i-'ali* Salim Khan Kakar was killed treacherously by Taj Khan Karrani whom Adil Shah had pardoned and deputed to help his commander in Bengal.<sup>4</sup> It may be pointed out here that the statement of Mushtaqi with regard to Hemu's disloyalty to Adil Shah after the battle of Chapparghatta that : "Hemu became all-powerful, he did not pass any thing except food to Adil Shah, seized treasures, elephants stud, also brought the whole country under his own control, appointed his own men everywhere and thus the reins of the government slipped away from Adil Shah's hands; did not pay even the single penny to the Afghans while his own men got much", is unfair to him.

A word may also be added here about Hemu's administrative organization in the territories seized from the Mughals and the war preparation before his occupation of Delhi on October 7, 1556. The time-gap between the battle of Chapparghatta (December, 1555) and Tughlaqabad (October 7, 1556) shows that he had spent enough time in establishing order in the region between Bihar, Delhi and Agra. During this time *Shadi Khan Kakar*, one of the high nobles of Adil Shah whom the latter had detached with six thousand *sawars* to

---

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, ii/453.

2. *Afsana-i-Shahan*. 181b. Shaikh Kabir mentions 20,000 *sawars*, while according to Nimat Ullah, *Masnad-i-'all* Salim Khan Kakar was deputed for the conquest of Bengal with 50,000 *sawars*. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani* ii/884.

3. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*. ii/483-485.

4. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 182a-b.



oppose the Mughals in the *Sarkar* of *Sambhal*, succeeded in destroying three thousand *Sawars* of the contingent of *All Qull Khan* in the battle of *Ramganga*.<sup>1</sup> At the same time Hemu appeared before *Agra* which the Mughal generals vacated without putting resistance.

In all the places, vacated by the Mughals, Hemu appointed trusted men, both on the ordinary as well as important posts. *Mushtaqi's* reference to the destruction of *Chaudhries* and *Muqaddams* in the countryside and the appointment of *Baqals* in their place by Hemu (as referred to above) substantiates the view that he did not spare anyone disobedient to his king. Having made these arrangements, Hemu proceeded to *Delhi* and stayed near the city of *Tughlaqabad*. Hemu's fame as the hero of twenty-two battles and his large following and the unity of the *Afghans* dampened the fighting spirit of the Mughal nobles, left in charge of *Delhi* after the death of *Humayun* (January 28, 1556). *Abul Fazl* says: "many brave men from motives of wisdom and some out of cowardice were not willing to fight. Some brave men were, however, determined to fight and die."<sup>2</sup>

However, Hemu easily occupied the towns of *Mehrauli* and *Tughlaqabad* and prepared to make assault on *Sher Garh*. He was soon joined by *mašnad-i-'ali* *Haji Khan* and other *Afghan* nobles, scattered as a result of conflict between *Ibrahim Sur* and *Sikandar Sur*.

Since the strength of the *Afghan* army increased day by day, *Tardi Beg* decided to give battle on October 7, 1556. As the battle started at *Tughlaqabad*, the Mughals fiercely charged the *Afghan* army and overpowered its vanguard, right and left wings. Some of the *Afghan* generals, including *Rao Husain Jilwani* were slain. But Hemu, who was unmoved in the centre, encouraged his men and fell on the centre of the rival army. Unable to face the fierce charge of Hemu, *Tardi Beg* and his followers took to flight, and *Delhi* was occupied by Hemu on the same day, where the people welcomed him and his companions.<sup>3</sup>

---

1. *Akbarnama*, II/27.

2. *Akbarnama*, II/28

3. *Akbarnama*, II/29, 31. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, f. 74a.

But the prejudiced writers of Medieval India have levelled baseless charges against Hemu. They accuse him of disloyalty to Adil Shah and hostility to Islam. Some of the modern historians accept their statements without making a critical examination of the historical facts.<sup>1</sup> For a proper understanding of the political conditions obtaining in India during the period under review, we have to understand the views, prejudices and associations of Medieval Chroniclers and critically scrutinise the data, provided by them.

Shaikh Rizq Ullah says : "Every one (Afghan) was humiliated (by him). He put the Afghan nobles and soldiers of established reputation to death whenever he got an opportunity (to do so). He got such a hold over the Afghans that he abused them at the time of dining and ordered : 'Eat this and this.' The Afghans had to obey bowing their heads. He arrested many persons, hanged and killed them, saying; "The Afghans used to say : We have a few thousand brethren. Where are these brethren ? Everyone passed before him bowing his head, for they could not look at him. They offered him thousands of *tankas* (to please). He arrested seventy Saiyids of Rewari and put them to death; Islam suffered humiliation everywhere. It was just possible that Islam might be replaced by infidelity; cow-slaughter was banned at certain places. The same was to happen in Delhi but the situation was saved by the victory of the just king, Akbar."<sup>2</sup>

Copying Mushtaqi's account in this regard, Badaoni adds that the Afghans were so weary of Hemu's ill-behaviour towards them that they became desirous of the destruction of their own power. His account is more ridiculous than Mushtaqi's, when he writes, "On one occasion 'Hemu was one day presiding at a public banquet, and summoning the Afghan *amirs* into his presence, to the head of the table, urged them to partake of food, saying : 'Help yourself to the largest morsals' and if he saw anyone of them eating slowly, no matter who he was, he would address him in terms of the foulest abuse, saying : 'how can such a nondescript nonentity as you who are sluggish in eating your victuals, hope to contest against your own son-in-law, the Mughals in the battle.' As

1. *Cambridge History of India*. iv/72, *Advanced History of India*, 446.

2. *Waq'at-i- Mushtaqi*, f. 74a.

the fall of the Afghan power was near at hand, they had not the courage to say a word to that foul infidel, and laying aside all that disregard of superior force for which they were renowned, swallowed his insults like sweetmeats, either from fear or hope, this had become a regular practice with them." This is not all. He attributed the miseries of people, caused by a severe famine, to Hemu, which were by no means Hemu's creation. That when people were forced to take to cannibalism due to the scarcity of food grains, Hemu's elephants, five hundred in number were fed solely upon rice, oil and sugar.<sup>1</sup>

Bayazid Bayat writes : "Having got a huge army and elephants, Hemu proceeded towards Delhi, where he prayed to God : 'if I overcome the Mughals, I shall embrace Islam.' But after his victory he did not fulfil his pledge."<sup>2</sup> Abul Fazl, who is free from religious fanaticism, and expresses high appreciation for the courage and ability of Hemu and even remarks that if his Majesty had come out of the curtain, Hemu's life would have been spared; if he had been kept in prison and persuaded to serve his Majesty, he would have performed marvels. "He was an excellent servant and possessed undaunted courage."<sup>3</sup> The same writer accuses Hemu of disloyalty to Adil Shah in his account of the battle of Panipat. That he was full of vanity and arrogance; apparently he behaved loyally to Adil Shah but, in reality, he sought his own ends.<sup>4</sup>

These charges are baseless. Hemu appears to have been neither disloyal to Adil Shah nor hostile to Muslims or Islam. Surrounded by powerful Afghan nobles, neither he could become independent of Adil Shah nor he could insult the Afghans. As regards religion, eclecticism was popular; the Hindus visited the tombs of the celebrated Muslim saints and the Muslims approached the Hindu saints for blessing.<sup>5</sup> They were not divided on communal lines. There was full communal harmony. The Hindu nobles served as trusted servants and confidants of the State. The Muslim Chiefs employed Hindu officers and vice-versa.

---

1. *Badaoni*, I/428-429.

2. *Tazkira-i-Humayun wa Akbar*, Bib. Ind. 1941 p. 212.

3. *Akbarnama*, II/46.

4. *Ibid.*, II/29-30.

5. See *Lata'if-i-Quddusi*, pp. 74, 83.

The available data shows that the Rajput princes remained attached to different Muslim nobles, holding extensive territories in different directions. For instance *Alam Chand Kachhwaha* and *Mota Raja*, son of *Raja Maldeo* were the faithful allies of *Haji Khan*. The former was the *vakil* of *Haji Khan*, and the latter had been reconciled to the Afghan rule and got a sizable *iqta* while his father was constantly fighting for the possession of *Jodhpur*. *Raja Bharamal Kachhwaha* and *Mota Raja* even gave their daughters and sisters to *Haji Khan* in marriage respectively in order to cement their ties with him.<sup>1</sup> Similarly *Raja Ranbah Gwallori*, *Bhupal Rai*, *Raghu Rai* and *Rai Gobind* held important *iqtas* and territories with high ranks in *Malwa* under *Masnad-i-'all Shuja'at Khan Sur*. They did not repudiate their allegiance to the Afghan rulers until the overthrow of the Afghan rule in the aforesaid territories.<sup>2</sup>

Mention may also be made of the relative position and strength of the Afghan, Muslim and non-Muslim nobles in the main army, placed under the supreme command of Hemu: *Shadi Khan Kakar*, the commander of the right wing, *Husain Khan faujdar*, *Mangli Khan*, *Ikhtiyar Khan*, *Mian Khwaja Kakar*, father of *Shadi Khan*, *Rukn Khan Nuhanl*, *Mian Mahmud Khan Lodi* were the high nobles of *Adil Shah*.<sup>3</sup> These are the names only of those nobles whom the pro-Mughal historians mention for the important positions held by them in the battle of *Panipat*. As regards the non-Muslim nobles, they still constituted comparatively a small portion of the nobility. They were *Rajya*, son of Hemu's sister and the commander of the left wing, *Sangram Singh*, *Teharpal*, son of Hemu's brother and *Bhagwan Das*, whom *Abul Fazl* describes a general of mark.<sup>4</sup>

However, Hemu enjoyed the confidence of the Afghan nobles, and they began to look at him as the saviour of the Afghan power after his victory over *Tardi Beg*. The Afghan nobles rushed to him from different quarters and laid down their lives fighting for their Empire under his command. Infact, no Afghan noble, holding territory around *Delhi* and *Agra* desisted from joining him as their interest and life were being threatened by the presence of the Mughals.

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, ff. 177a-b, 178a.

2. *Waqi'at-i-Mushtaqi*, ff. 54a, 92a-b.

3. *Akbarnama*, ii/35-36, 37, 40, 41. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, ii/453-485.

4. *Akbarnama*, ii/37, 40.

As regards the preparation for the battle of Panipat, Hemu assigned positions to the nobles according to their status and position. No noble seems to have been dissatisfied with him over this issue. Shaikh Kabir criticises him only for not having waited for the arrival of *Masnad-i-'all Haji Khan* from *Alwar*, and Shadi Khan's three thousand *sawars* from Sambhal whom the latter had left behind. Haji Khan and the men of Shadi Khan reached Delhi when the battle was already lost.<sup>1</sup>

But the grave mistake committed by Hemu was that he sent the entire park of his artillery in advance to Panipat under a weak guard, led by *Mubarak Khan* and *Bahadur Khan*. The Afghan guard was overcome by the Mughals and thus Hemu's army was deprived of its very effective weapon. But Hemu cheered up his soldiers and proceeded to face the advancing Mughals in the plain of Panipat.

A fierce battle was fought between the rival parties on 5th November, 1556 in which victory seemed to have chosen the Afghans for its favour in the beginning. The war-elephants of the Afghans pressed the fight and the left wings of the Mughals and the latter had begun to leave their ground. But they did not allow panic to seize them. As soon as they found it impossible for their horses to hold up the ferocious elephants of the enemy, they came down and started to fight with their swords and lances. They also detached some parties from their reserve body to make over-flanking charges in the rear of the right and left of the Afghan army; they caused much confusion, and entirely stemmed their attacks. This was not all. The best of the Afghan generals were also killed. Shadi Khan Kakar was trampled to death, while *Bhagwandas*, a gallant general was cut to pieces. Similarly *Khwaja Kakar*, the father of Shadi Khan, *Mahmud Khan Lodi* and *Qasim Khan Lodi* were also slain.<sup>2</sup> Upon these losses Hemu himself moved from the centre, shook the left wing of the Mughals, and then fell on the Mughal centre under the command of *All Qull Khan*. At a time when the Afghans were fighting gallantly under the leadership of Hemu, an arrow pierced Hemu's eye and made him unconscious in the *haudah* of his elephant. His men, thinking

1. *Afsana-i-Shahan*, f. 171a.

2. *Akbarnama*, II/40. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, II/485.

their leader dead, took to heels. Hemu was captured and brought before Akbar and Bairam Khan. First Akbar struck him with his sword and then Bairam Khan killed him.<sup>1</sup>

The fall of Hemu in the second battle of Panipat frustrated the hopes of the Afghans to retain power in north India. In spite of the presence of Sultan Adil Shah in Chunar, the Afghan generals, like Haji Khan, Kamal Khan Lodi and Umar Khan Lodi left for Gujarat. In 1557 Adil Shah himself was defeated and killed by Bahadur Shah, son of Muhammad Khan Sur. His fall sealed the fate of the Afghans in north India.

---

1. Haji Arif Qandhari, *Tarikh-i-Akbari*, p. 51.

## Excursus

The spellings of the *nlsba* (family surname) of the great ruler, Sher Shah has been wrongly deciphered by modern scholars as Suri instead of Sur. Not only the modern scholars of medieval Indian History call Sher Shah a Suri Afghan, the Pathans (or Afghans) in India who claim to have been the descendents of the Sur Kings or their nobles are also known as Suri Afghans. This is, doubtless, a historiographical error that calls for correction. Nimat ullah Harevi, a medieval writer mentions 395 Afghan Tribes and their branches, including that of the Sur Afghans.<sup>1</sup> Rizqalcah Mustaqi, a contemporary of Sher Shah, explaining his rise to power, states about the position of the Sur Afghans in India during the Lodi period : "None among the nobles of the king (i.e. the Lodi Sultan) was a Sur, except Saif Khan, who was in the royal service. But, even he did not hold the rank of an amir"<sup>2</sup>

It is also worth-mentioning that Sher Shah did not have his *nlsba* of Sur struck on his coins after his accession to the throne. Generally we find on the coins his royal title of Sher Shah. However, the inscription, belonging to a mosque at Amthua (Gaya district in Bihar), constructed, sometime, in the beginning of 1535 A.D., mentions him as Hazrat-i-ali (exalted lordship) Sher Shah bin (son of) Hasan Sur.<sup>3</sup> It may be stressed that an inscription is the best source of information in this regard; because the information contained therein is of corroborative importance. As far as the inscriptions fixed on the buildings constructed during Sher Shahs' reign (1540-45 A.D.) are concerned, therein the reigning king is mentioned as Hazrat-i-Sher Shah.<sup>4</sup>

To conclude, the *nlsba* Sur, mentioned by the Indo-Persian writers is correct and Suri being a Hindu Caste Surname can not be used for an Afghan. The early European writers wrongly deciphered Sur as Suri and the Indian writers followed them uncritically, thus perpetuating this historiographical error. □

1. *Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, ed. Imam al-Din, Dacca, 196, Vol. 11, p. 550; also Iqtidar H. Siddiqui, *The Afghans and Their Emergence In India as Ruling Elite*, *Central Asiatic Journal*, Wiesbaden, Vol. 26, No. 3-4, pp. 244-45.
2. *Waqiat-i-Mushtaqi*, eng. tr. P. 129
3. Cf. Qayam Uddin Ahmad, *Corpus of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions of Bihar*, Patna, 1973, p. 125.
4. *Ibid*, pp. 127-128.

## A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Persian and non-Persian Medieval Works

- Abbas Sarwani** — *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi, or Tuhfah-i Akbar Shahi*, compiled in 1582, Rotograph of the Manuscript of the India Office Library, 1.0.218.
- Abdul Baqi Nihavandi** — *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi*, ed. *Hidayat Hasain*, Vol. I, Bibliotheca Indica, Calcutta.
- Abdul Haq (Dehlvi)** — *Tarikh-i-Haq'qul* (Aligarh MS.).  
**Idem** *Akhbar-u'l-Akhlyar*, (Mujtaba'i Press Delhi, 1914).
- Abdullah** — *Tarikh-i Daudi*, Edited by Prof. Shaikh Abdur Rashid, History Department, Muslim University, Aligarh, 1954.
- Abul Fazi, Shakh** — *Akbarnama*, Vols. I & II, 1873-87, Bib. Ind. Calcutta; English translation by H. Beveridge, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1892.
- Idem** — *A'in-i Akbari*, Text (Bib. Ind.), Translation by H. Blochmann, Jarret and Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Bib. Ind. 1927.
- Aff, Shams Siraj** — *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1890.
- Ahmad Yadgar** — *Tarikh-i Shahi*, Edited by M. Hidayat Husain, Bib. Ind. Calcutta 1939.



- 'Al'nul-Mulk Mahru** — *Insha-i-Mahru*, Edited by Prof. Shaikh Abdur Rashid, Lahore, 1965.
- Arif Qandhari** — *Tarikh-i-Akbari*, Edited by Arshi, Rampur, 1962.
- Babur** — *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* or *Baburanama*, Persian translations by Shalkh Zain and Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. English translation by A.S. Beveridge, Luzac & Co. London.
- Muhammad Bihmad Khanl** — *Tarikh-i-Mahammadl*, Rotograph of the MS. British Museum, or. 137.
- Badaoni, Abdul Qadir** — *Muntakhab-u't-Tawarikh*, Text, Bib. Ind. Calcutta 1865. Translation by George S.A. Ranking.
- Barani, Ziaud-Din** — *Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1862.
- Bayazid Biyat** — *Tazkira-i Humayun wa Akbar*, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1941.
- Bhua, Masnad-i Ali** — *Ma'adan-u'l-Shafa* or *Tib-i Sikandari*, compiled during the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, Habib Ganj Collection MS. Aligarh.
- Farid Bhakkari** — *Zakhiratal-Khawanin*, Vol. I, Edited by Dr. S. Moynul Haq, Karachi, 1960.
- Firishfa, Mohammad Qasim Hindu Shah** — *Gulshan-i-Ibrahim*; alias *Torikh-i-Firishfa* (Nawal Kishore) Lucknow.
- Ghulam Husain Salim** — *Riyaz-u'l-Salatln*, Bib. Ind. 1890.
- Gulbadan Begam** — *Humayun Nama*, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1902.

- Hayat Khan** — *Hayat-i Afghani*. RawalPindi, 1352 Shamsi.
- Ibn-i Battuta** — *Rehla*, English translation by Dr. Mahdi Husain, Baroda.
- Isami** — *Futuh-u's-Salatin*, Edited by Usha, Madras, 1948.
- Jamall Kambo** — *Syar-al-Afirin*, Delhi, 1311 H.
- Jauhar Aftabchi** — *Tazkirat-u'l-Waql'at*, Nawab Sharifia Collection, MS. Aligarh.
- Jaisi, Mohammad Malik** — *Padmaval*, eng. tr. A.G. Shirraffs, Calcutta, 1944.
- Kalyan Mal (Sanskrit Poet)** — *Anang Rang*, Kashi, 1957.
- Mahmud Ahmad Abbasi** — *Tazkirat al-Kiram*, alias the *Tarikh-i-Amroha*, (Urdu) for the Parwana of *Masnad-i-ali* Mahmud Khan Lodi.
- Mahmud bin Zia** — *Tuhfat-u'l-Sa'adat*, compiled during the reign of Sikandar Lodi, Raza Library Rampur MS.
- Mir Manjhan** — *Madhu Malati*, Edited by Mata Prasad Gupta, Allahabad, 1961.
- Muhammad Jaisi (Malik)** — *Padmavat*, English tr. by A.G. Shirreffs, Calcutta, 1944.
- Muhammad Kabir** — *Afsana-i-Shahan*, Rotograph of the MS. British Museum, London, Ad. 24, 409.
- Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah Firishta** — *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi* or *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow.
- Mushtaqi, Rizqullah** — *Waqlat-i Mushtaqi* Rotograph of the MS. British Museum, London, Add. 11633.

- Ni'matullah** — *Tarikh-i Khan-i Jahani*, Vols. I & II, Edited by Dr. Imam Uddin, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1960.
- Nizamud-Din Ahmad** — *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Vols. I & II, Bib. Ind. Calcutta.
- Nurul Haq** — *Zubdat-u't-Tawarikh*, Rotograph of the MS. India Office Library, London, No. 1805.
- Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangohi** — *Anwar-u'l-Alyun*, Delhi,
- “ “ “ — *Maktubat-i Quddusi*, Delhi, 1332, A. H.
- Shaikh Jamali Kambo** — *Siyar-u'l-Arifin*, Printed, Rizvi Press Delhi, 1311 A.H.
- Shaikh Rukh-u'd-Din Sikandar Manjhu** — *Lata'if-i Quddusi*, Delhi.
- *Mirat-i Sikandari*, Bombay, 1308 A.H.
- Yahya Sirhindi** — *Tarikh-i Mubarak Shahi*, Bib. Ind. Calcutta, 1931.
- Zain uddin** — *Waqiat-i-Baburi*, Ms. Or. 1999, British Museum, London.
- Modern Works**
- Agha Mahdi Husain** — *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughlaq* Luzac & Co. London, 1938.
- Awadh Bihari Pandey** — *The First Afghan Empire in India*, Bookland Ltd. Calcutta, 1956.
- Elliot & Dowson** — *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vols. I-V, London.
- Habibullah** — *The foundation of Muslim Rule in India*, Lahore, 1945.
- Hodivala, S.H.** — *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, Bombay, 1939.

- Ishwari Prasad** — *The Life and Times of Humayun*, Calcutta, 1955.
- M.A. Rahim** — *History of the Afghans in India*, Karachi, 1961.
- Moreland, W.H.** — *The Agrarian System of Moslem India*, Reprint, Book Depot Allahabad.
- Muhammad Habib (Prof.)** — Introduction to the Reprint of Elliot's Volume, II, Aligarh, 1956.
- Mohibbul Hasan (Prof.)** — *History of Kashmir under the Sultans*, Iran Society, Calcutta, 1959.
- Nirod Bhushan Rai** — *Sher Shah's Successors*, Dacca, 1934.
- Nirod Bhushan Rai** — *Makhzan-i Afghani*, Calcutta, 1958.
- Quraishi, Ishtiaq Husain** — *The Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, Lahore, 1944.
- Qanungo, K.R.** — *Sher Shah*, Calcutta, 1944.
- Qanungo, K.R.** — *Sher Shah and His Times*, Calcutta, 1965.
- Siddiqui, Iqtidar Husain** — *Mughal Relations with the Indian Ruling Elite*, New-Delhi, 1983.
- Syed Muhammad Amir Hasan** — *Tazkirat al-Mutaqqin*, Vol. 2, Kanpur, 1322 A.H. for Islam Shah's Farman.
- S.R. Sharma** — *Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, Second Edition, Asia Publishing House.
- Tripathi, R.P.** — *Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, Allahabad, 1944.
- Wright, H.N.** — *The Coinage and Metrology of the Sultans of Delhi*, Delhi, 1936.

**Journals and Magazines**

*Islamic Culture*—Hyderabad—Deccan, India.

*Journal of the Bihar Research Society*—Patna.

*Journal of Pakistan Historical Society*—Karachi.

*The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition, Vol. I, Fasciculus 4*  
Leiden, 1955.

*Proceedings of All India History Congress, 1961 session.*

*Proceedings of Idara-i Ma'arif-i-Islamia, Lahore.*

*Oriental College Magazine, Lahore.*

*Medieval India Quarterly, Aligarh. 1963.*

*The Indian Economic and Social History Reviews, New Delhi.*

*Studies in Islam, Panchkuin Road, New Delhi-I.*

*Indo-Iranica, Calcutta-16.*

*Medieval India—A miscellany, Department of History, Aligarh.*

## INDEX

### A

- Abbas, the compiler of the **Tarikh-Sher Shahi**, 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, etc.
- Abdullah, the author of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi*, 3, 121.
- Abdullah Niazi, 174.
- Abdullah Niazi, 174.
- Abdullah, Qazi, 181.
- Abdullah Sultanpuri, *Makhdum ul-Mulk*, 194.
- Abdul Haque Chisti, Saikh, 173.
- Abdul Haque, Muhadith, Dehlevi, 117.
- Abdul Malik, (Omeyyid Caliph), 124.
- Adul Quddus Gangohi, Shaikh, 12 (F.n.1), 13 (F.n.1), 86, 190.
- Abdur Rahman, Bangash, 120
- Abul Fazl, Shaikh, 4, 10, 50, 51, 63, 76, 83, 120, 140, 144, 146.
- Achola, 146.
- Achola, 101.
- Adil Khan Sur, Son of Sher Shah, 60, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 116, 124.
- Adil Khan, Faujdar, 157.
- Adil Shah Sur, 158 (f.n.2), 169, 198, 199, 200, 203.
- Afsanah-i-Shahan**, 3, 47, 48, 122.
- Agra, 26, 30, 33, 37, 39, 48, 62, 65, 66, 67, 79, 80, 81, 92, 96, 97, 110, 111, 112, 115, 125, 135, 185, 200.
- Ahar, 130.
- Ahmad Khan Jilwani, 131.
- Ahmad Khan Lodi (Sarang Khan), 13, 14, 16.
- Ahmad Khan Sur (Later Sultan Sikander Shah Sur), 102, 108, 200, 201, 202, 204.
- Ahmad Khan Mewati, 131.
- Ahmad Khan Sarwani, 157, 165.
- Ahmadnagar, 60.
- Ahmad Yadgar, The Compiler of **The Tarikh-i-Shahi**, 3, 116.
- Aln-i-Akbari**, 4.
- Ajodhans 176 (f.n.3).
- Ajmer, 101, 116, 121, 126, 145.
- Akbar, Badshah, 8, 128.
- Akbarnama, 4.

Akhund Darveza, 120.  
 Alam Khan Lqdi, 147.  
 Alam Khan Miana, 102.  
 Alauddin, The Sultan of Bengal, 54.  
 Alauddin Shah, Saiyed, 131.  
 Ali Ganj, 48.  
 Aligarh, 61.  
 Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam, 171.  
 Ali Hazyani Batini, Shaikh, 3.  
 Ali Khan (Bhera), 133, 153.  
 Ali Quli Khan, 203, 208.

## B

Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, 32, 50, 51, 55, 59, 60.  
 Bahar Khan Sarwani, 145, 199, 200.  
 Bahkala, Pargana, 6.  
 Bahlul Lodi, Sultan, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 15, 173.  
 Bahar Khan Nubani, 32.  
 Bahar Khan Sarwani, 91.  
 Bahraich, 14, 31, 33, 41, 78, 79, 133, 134, 153, 200, 201.  
 Bajrang, 101.  
 Bakesar, 133.  
 Bakhshu Langah, 148, 149.  
 Balban, the Sultan, 129.  
 Banagarmau, 79.  
 Bandagi Mian Shaikh Chailda  
 Bangash, 120.  
 Banur, 10 (f.n.1).  
 Bannu 121, 173.  
 Barbakabad, 145.  
 Baran, 6, 130, 132.  
 Barani, Ziyauddin, 156 (F.n.1).  
 Barbakabad, **Sarkar** in Bengal, 145.  
 Barkhurdar Husain, 175.  
 Barmazid Sur Kur, 60, 91, 96, 100, 111, 118-128.  
 Bashi, 135.  
 Bayazid Sarwani, Shaikh,  
 Bayazid Farmall, 31, 33, 39, 41, 42, 47, 49, 57.  
 Bayana, 2, (f.n.2), 102, 108, 109, 110, 111, 130, 131, 133, 136, 201.  
 Bazoha, **Sarkar**, 145.

- Benaras, 40, 42, 72, 78, 79.  
 Bengal, 43, 44, 53, 54, 55, 59, 61, 62, 64, 66, 74, 75, 79.  
 Bhagvant 97, 102.  
 Bhagwan Das, 107.  
 Bhakkar, 140, 148, 149.  
 BharKunda, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74.  
 Bharamal Kachchwaha, 206.  
 Bhati Jaimal, 101.  
 Bhatta, 36, 42, 50, 102, 110, 112, 127.  
 Bhera, 133, 138, 150, 153.  
 Bhilsa, 40, 146.  
 Bhogaon, 130, 131, 133, 138.  
 Bhojpur, 86.  
 Bhopal Rai, 206.  
 Bhua; the Vazir, 133, 189, 192.  
 Bihar, the town and vilayet, 3, 14, 15, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 39, 40, 43, 47, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 60, 61, 62, 67, 70, 81, 83, 83, etc.  
 Biram Dev, 101.  
 Bir Singh Deva, 42.  
 Bijalgarh, 146.  
 Bijnore, 175  
 Bikaner, 188.  
 Budhan, Shalkh, 185.  
 Bogra, 145.

## C

- Calcutta, 61.  
 Chakesar, 175.  
 Challda, Shaikh, 175.  
 Champaran, 14, 134, 141, 142, 150, 153.  
 Chanderi, 37, 145, 146, 178.  
 Chandwar, 12, 133.  
 Chapparghatta, 202, 203.  
 Chaund, 35, 36, 37, 89.  
 Chausa, 3, 62, 78, 82, 84, 93, 94, 95, 185.  
 Chhibramau, 199.  
 Chittor, 140.  
 Chittagong, 70, 144, 145.  
 Chunar, 32, 33, 40, 42, 46, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 55, 61, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 78, 82, 83, 84, 91, 112, 133, 134, 199, 200.



**D**

- Dalpat*, 101.  
*Daryabad*, 48.  
*Darya Khan Gujarati*, 147, 165.  
*Darya Khan Nuhani*, 155.  
*Daulat Khan Lodi*, 13, 155, 189.  
*Daulat Khan Naib (Nuhani)*, 26, 27, 28, 154.  
*Daulat Khan Ujyala*, 168.  
*Daulat Khan, the Hindu Convert*, 199.  
*Dattu Sarwani*, 38, 42, 44, 86, 87, 160.  
*Decca*, 62.  
*Deccan*, 60, 66.  
*Delhi*, 30, 66, 80, 97, 117, 130, 132, 139, 200.  
*Dhanna Bhatti*, 101.  
*Dholpur*, 130, 135, 136.  
*Dhar*, 147, 165.  
*Didawal*, 140, 164.  
*Dilmau*, 33.  
*Dilwar Khan, son of Main Bhua*, 192.  
*Dinapur*, 73.  
*Dipalpur*, 30.  
*Doll*, 135.  
*Do-rah*, 48, 50, 60.  
*Dudu, the widow of Sultan Muhammad Nuhani*, 43, 44.

**E**

- Etawah*, 130, 131.

**F**

- Falzarabad*, 48.  
*Fakhruddin*, 142.  
*Falodhi*, 101.  
*Farid Taran*, 169 (f.n.1.).  
*Farid Daryabadi, Shalkh*, 178.  
*Farid Bukhari*, 192, 193.  
*Farid (Later Sher Shah)*, 1, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 32.  
*Farah*, 201.  
*Farrukhabad*, 199.  
*Fath Khan Sarwani*, 31, 33, 39, 42, given the title of Azam Humayun Sarwani by Mahmud Lodi, 50.  
*Fath Malka*, 57, 62.

Fath Jang, 140, 148, 166.  
 Fathabad, 144.  
 Fazlullah, Salyid, 20.  
 Fazilat, Qazi, 143, 165, 167.  
 Firoz Shah, Sultan of Delhi, 18, 149.  
 Firoz Shah Sur, 198.  
 Firoz Khan Lodi, (Sarang Khani), 31, 32, 33.  
 Firoz Khan Sarwani, 154.

**G**

Ganges 32, 41, 73.  
 Gangoh, 30.  
 Garhi, 62, 63, 64, 74, 75, 76, 77, 80, 91.  
 Gaur, 54, 55, 63, 64, 65, 67, 68, 70, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 90, 91, 92, 93, 185.  
 Gaya, 180.  
 Ghazipur, 31, 133, 134.  
 Ghazi Mahli, 110.  
 Ghazi Khan Sur, 60, 70, 201.  
 Ghoraghat, 145.  
 Ghyas Uddin, Sultan of Malwa, 135.  
 Goka, 101.  
 Gonda, 134, 175.  
 Gorakhpur 14, 41, 42, 78, 134.  
 Gulbadan Begum, 49.  
 Gwalior, 27, 135, 136, 199.  
 Gwaliyar (In Himachal hills), 140.  
 Gujarat, 50, 51, 53, 55, 56, 59, 60, 61, 66, 100.

**H**

Habib Khan Sultani, 60, 98, 200.  
 Hilbat Khan Sarwani. 12.  
 Halbat Khan Niazi, entitled as  
 Azam Humayun Niazi, 60, 62, 74, 78, 91, 98, 106, 114, 115, 126, 140, 147.  
 Haji Khan Sultanji, 60, 90, 100, 147, 200.  
 Haji Hasan, Shaikh, 174.  
 Haji Ilyas, 142  
 Hajipur, 54, 55, 57, 64, 142, 201.  
 Haji Muhammad Beg, 76.  
 Hajjaj, 124.

- Hamid Khan Kakar*, 140, 164.  
*Hamirpur*, 187.  
*Handiya*, 145, 146, 165.  
*Hargusain*, 46.  
*Hasan Sur, Mian*, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 25, 28, 35.  
*Hasan, Son of Barkhurdar Husain*, 175.  
*Hasan Ali Khan*, 187.  
*Hassu Sarwani, entitled Darya Khan*, 11, 57.  
*Hatim Khan, Shiqqdar*, 157.  
*Hatim Sambhali*, 194.  
*Hemu*, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201, 203, 204.  
*Himachal Pradesh*, 133.  
*Hindal, Mirza*, 65, 79, 83, 95, 96.  
*Hindu Beg*, 47, 48, 66, 67, 68, 78.  
*Hisar Firuza*, 6(F.n.1), 8, 10, 130, 131, 132.  
*Husain Arghun, Shah*, 1.  
*Husain Sharqi, Sultan*, 11, 12, 14, 131.  
*Husain Khan, Faujdar*, 207.  
*Husain Farmuli, Mian*, 134, 141, 178.  
*Humayun, Badshah*, 2, 31, 33, 34, 47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 61, 62, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87, 92, 93, 94, 96.  
*Ibrahim Shaikh*, 181.  
*Ibrahim Sur, grand father of Sher Shah*, 5.  
*Ibrahim Khan Sarwani*, 12, 27, 28.  
*Ibrahim Lodi, Sultan*, 26, 27, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 37, 134, 136, 173, 192, 193.  
*Ibrahim Khan Lodi (Yusuf Khalil)*, 39, 47, 49.  
*Ibrahim Khan, a Bengali general*, 58, 59, 62.  
*Ibrahim Khan Sur*, 6, 10, 199, 200, 201, 204.  
*Imad Karrani*, 199.  
*Iraq*, 186.  
*Isa Khan Sarwani*, 1, 38, 93, 42, 50, 60, 61, 159, 189.  
*Isa Khan Niazi, Masbad-i-'all*, 63, 74, 98, 100, 105, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 127, 199.  
*Isa Khan Lodi*, 131.  
*Isa Khan Sur*, 168.  
*Isa Misvani, Shaikh*, 184, 185.  
*Islam Shah Sur*, 115, 167, 198, etc.  
*Islam Khan Sarwani*, 27.

## J

Jahagir Qull Beg, 73, 73, 75, 79, 85.

Jalmal, Bhatti Rajput, 101.

Jalsalmer, 101, 101.

Jaiswal, 140, 164.

Jaita, 101.

Jajmau, 33.

Jalal Khan Jilo Sur, 51, 60, 74, 78, 100, 111, 122.

Jalal Khan Nuhani, 43, 44, 53, 55, 122.

Jalal Khan (later Islam Shah), 51, 60, 63, 68, 69, 70, 74, 71, 73, 76, 77, 90, 91, 96, 105, 109, 111, 112.

Jambuji, 188.

Jammu, 164.

Jamal Khan Lidi, Sarang Khani, 6(f.n.1), 7(F.n.3), 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 28, 189.

Jamal, **Mufti**, 194.

Jaunpur, 5, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 28, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 40, 44, 47, 48, 66, 67, 68, 72, 78, 79, 80, 81, 122, 132, 133, 201-2.

Jauhar Aftabchi, 49, 51, 62, 65, 74, 76, 78, 81.

Jhakkhar Chand, 140, 148, 166.

Jiya Qazi, 34.

Jodhpur, 100, 101, 103, 109, 126, 127.

Juman, the Hajib, 181.

Junaid Barlals, 36, 37, 66.

Junaid Beg, 97.

## K

Kabir Batini, the Compiler of the **Afsasih-i-Shahan**, 3, 35, 54, 57, etc.

Kabul, 97, 133, 201.

Kahalgaon, 80.

Kakori, 199.

Kalinjar, 102, 108, 109, 127, 167.

Kalpi, 86, 95, 109, 133, 187, 199, 202.

Kamal Khan Ghakkar, 128.

Kumaon (hills), 113, 114, 115, 116, 199.

Kurran, Mirza, 85, 97, 115, 198.

Kutalla, 137.

Kamhal, 130, 131, 138.

Kanpur, 15, 33.

Kant 140, 141.

- Kara, 27, 31, 33, 39, 40, 41, 78, 110, 133.  
 Katehar, 130.  
 Khalrabad, 132.  
 Khan Kaju, 120.  
 Khan Khanan Lodi, 78, 79, 92, 93, 188.  
 Khan Jahan Lodi (Former Main Husain), 188, 189.  
 Khalifabad, 144.  
 Khalil, Shaikh, 83, 94.  
 Khajuraho, 102.  
 Khanwa, 37.  
 Khawwas Khan, the Elder, 60, 63, 68, 69, 70, 74, 90.  
 Khawwas Khan (former Shihab Khan) **Mamad-i-ali**, 60, 71, 78, 80, 85, 87, 90, 91, 92. Captures Khan Khanan Lodi, 92, 93, 94, defeats the Mughals at-chausa, 96, 97, 98.  
 Khawwas Khan (father of Main Bhua), 138, 189, 191.  
 Khawwaspur Tanda, 14, 17, 26, 36.  
 Khawaspur, 103.  
 Khizr Khan Turk, 126, 143, 164.  
 Khoshab, 125.  
 Khwaja Said Farmull, Kol, 20, 130, 132.  
 Kosi, (river), 64.  
 Kosana, 101.  
 Kotah, 136.

## L

- Lad Khan Lodi, Sarang Khan, 7 (F.n.3), 13, 31.  
 Ladan Kambo, Shaikh, 181.  
 Lad Malka, 45, 46.  
 Lahore, 10(f.n.2), 13, 30, 97, 115, 130, 150.  
 Lakknauti, 142, 144.  
 Lataif-i-Quddusi, 30, 38, 39.  
 Lucknow, 40, 47, 48, 79, 132, 17, 199.  
 Lunkaran, Raja of Jaisalmer, 100.

## M

- Mandessor, 146.  
 Madran, 145.  
 Mahabat Khan Sur, 6, 8.  
 Maha, Mirza, 51.  
 Maharetha Chero, 78, 85, 87, 93, 94.  
 Mahmud Khan Nuhani, 34, 38, 40.

- Mahmud Lodi (sultan), 35, 37, 38, 40, 42, 47, 49, 50.  
 Mahmud Shah, Sultan of Bengal, 56, 57, 59, 62, 64, 68, 69, 70, 73, 77.  
 Mahmud Khan Lodi, Shahu Khail, **Masnad-i-all**, 175, 189.  
 Mahmud Khan, grandson of Sher Shah, 122.  
 Mahmudabad, sarkar in Bengal, 144.  
 Mahmud Katwani, 178.  
 Mahrauli, 204.  
 Mian Khwaja Kakar, 207.  
 Makhdum Alam, **Muqta** of Hajipur, 56, 57, 58.  
 Maldev, Raja, 100, 101, 126.  
 Mallhabad, 199.  
 Malesar, 188.  
 Mallh Turk, 180, 181.  
 Malik Muhammad Jaisi, 184.  
 Mallu Khan, ruler of Malwa, 25, 26, 86, 146.  
 Malwa, 25, 51, 55, 60, 61, 86, 135, 139, 166.  
 Mandu, 65, 86, 146.  
 Mangli Khan, 207.  
 Mandrail, 135.  
 Maner, 81, 141, 185.  
 Manikpur, 31, 33, 133.  
 Maruf Farmuli, 31, 32, 33, 38, 39, 41, 50, 62.  
 Marwar, 98, 99, 100, 102.  
 Mazid Beg Sarkhan Arghun, 120.  
 Mecca, 174.  
 Medta, 101.  
 Mehdighat, 87.  
 Meerut, 102.  
 Mewat, 105, 113, 133.  
 Mian-i-Doab, 130, 132.  
 Mianwali, 130, (f.n.2).  
 Mirak kur,  
 Mir Fazl, 78.  
 Mir Fazl, 78.  
 Mirzapur, 188.  
 Monghyr, 53, 63, 64, 73, 78, 79, 82, 92, 93, 142.  
 Monica, 73.  
 Moreland, 22.  
 Mubarak Khan Lodi (Yusuf Khail), 47.  
 Mubarak Khan Nuhani, 131.

- Mubarak Shah, Sultan*, 130.  
*Mubarak Khan Sur*, 140.  
*Mubarak Khan (Lodi) Tujikhall*, 7(F.n.3.).  
*Muhammad Farmuli Kalapahar*, 3, 57, 134.  
*Muhammad Khan Sur*, 8, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 89.  
*Muhammad Khan Sur of Gaur*, 167201, 202.  
*Muhammad Shah Nuhani*, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 38, 40, 43.  
*Muhammad Shah Tughluq, Sultan*, 142, 156.  
*Mahammad Farkh Ali, Mulla*, 80.  
*Muid Beg*, 80, 82.  
*Mujahid Khan, the Cenvert*, 199.  
*Multan*, 125, 126, 130, 139, 147.  
*Muhsin Farmuli*, 41.  
*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, 4.  
*Musafir Khana*, 48.  
*Musatafa Farmuli, Mian*, 31, 32, 57.

## N

- Nagaur*, 100, 102, 105, 126.      ➤  
*Nagar Kot*, 133, 140, 164, 192.  
*Narbada*, 145.  
*Narnaul*, 10, 140.  
*Narwar*, 136.  
*Nasir Khan Nuhani*, 31, 32, 34, 38, 45, 46.  
*Nasir Khan Miana*, 147, 166.  
*Nasir Khan, Faujdar of Sambhal*, 100, 125, 160.  
*Nasrullah*, 174.  
*Nimatullah Harevi, the author of the Tarikh-i-Khan-i-Jahani*, 3, 51, 135.  
*Nindru*, 175.  
*Nizam uddin Ahmad Bakhshi, The Compiler of the Tabaqat-i-Akhar*, 4, 78, 83.  
*Nizami Gangavi*, 16.  
*Nizam Khan Sur*, 40.  
*Nusrat Shah, the ruler of Bengal*, 44, 53, 54, 55, 56, 139.

## P

- Pail*, 10 (Fn.2).  
*Palamau*, 93.  
*Pandua*, 142  
*Panipat*, 31, 39.  
*Panjab*, 85, 91, 96, 109.

Panjur Turk, 93.  
 Patlall, 130, 131, 133, 138.  
 Patna, 73.  
 Phool, Shaikh, 79.  
 Phool Beg, 80.  
 Pinjarah, 145.  
 Pohkaran, 101.  
 Poya, 135.  
 Pratap, Rai, 131.  
 Punpun, river, 58, 62.  
 Purniya, 145.

## Q

Qabal Husain, Mughal, 72.  
 Qanauj, 31, 34, 40, 41, 78, 79, 85, 86, 87, 95, 96, 125, 132.  
 Qasim Husain Sultan, 82.  
 Qasim Khan, Afghan, 208.  
 Qutb Khan, general of Bengal, 54, 55, 56.  
 Qutb Khan, son of Sher Shah, 51, 60, 86.  
 Qutb Khan Sur, 60, 69, 97, 100, 111, 112, 114, 116, 122, 160.

## R

Radauli, 184.  
 Raghu Rai, 206.  
 Rai Bachcha, 72.  
 Rai Dudu, 131.  
 Rai Gobind, 207.  
 Raisin, 40, 126, 146.  
 Rajputana, 86, 135.  
 Raja Singh,  
 Raja Rambha, 206.  
 Raju, Shaikh, 176.  
 Ram Das, 101.  
 Ramiya, 198.  
 Ranthanbore, 109, 111, 127, 145.  
 Rana Sanga, 13(F.N.3), 27.  
 Rao Husain Jilwani, 98, 115, 200, 202.  
 Rapri, 133.  
 Rewa, 36.  
 Rewari, 197, 198.  
 Rizquallah Mushtaq, 1, 2, 6, 11, 14, 15, 19, 44, 45, etc.



Roh, 5, 6, 121.  
 Rohtas, Bihar, 72, 73, 75, 76, 80, 81, 91.  
 Rohtas (in Panjab), 104, 140, 198.  
 Roop Narian, Raja of Tirhut, 134.  
 Rukn Khan Nuhani, 200, 201, 202.  
 Rumi Khan, 71.

## S

Sadi, Persian poet, 16.  
 Sahasram (town), 14, 15, 16, 17, 25, 28, 35, 36, 40, 47.  
 Saharanpur, 130, 132.  
 Sa'id Farmuli, Khwaja, 189.  
 Said Khan Sarwani, son of Khan Azam  
 Umar Khan Sarwani, 12.  
 Said Khan Harsain, 147, 165.  
 Saif Khan Sur, 6.  
 Saif Khan Acha Khail, 154.  
 Saif Khan Sarwani, 73, 74.  
 Salim Chishti, Shaikh, 111.  
 Salim Khan Kakar, 203.  
 Samauddin Kambo, Shaikh, 179.  
 Sambhal, 78, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 125, 132, 160.  
 Sammel, 101.  
 Samana, 107, 130.  
 Sanchar, 101.  
 Sandila, 175.  
 Sangram Singh, 207.  
 Saran, 14, 40, 134, 140, 142, 150, 153.  
 Sarang Khan, the Ghakkar Chief, 98.  
 Sarangpur, 40, 146.  
 Sarmast Khan Sirbini, 60, 78, 91, 199.  
 Sarwar, Vilayat, 14, 42, 1333, 134.  
 Satwas, 165.  
 Satgaon,  
 Sewanis (Satwas), 145, 146.  
 Sehwan, 148.  
 Shadi Ghulam, 36, 89.  
 Shadi Khan Kakar, 203, 207.  
 Shahabad, (a paraganā in the sarkar of Sirhind, 10 (F.n.1), 11, 13, 30, 190.

- Shahabad (in Bihar), 72.  
 Shahbaz Khan Nuhani, 123.  
 Shahjahanpur, 189.  
 Shah Muhammad Farmuli, 38, 40, 199.  
 Shah Muhammad Mir, 186.  
 Shah Rafiuddin, 193.  
 Shalkh Ala'i, 163.  
 Shams Khan Nuhani, 115.  
 Shamsabad, 40, 79, 133, 138.  
 Shams uddin, Mir, 186.  
 Shams Khan of Bahraich, 134, 153.  
 Shaikh Ala'i, 103, 117.  
 Shamsher Khan, son of Sukha, 60, 90, 199.  
 Shankar Bhatti 126.  
 Sharifabad, 145.  
 Satgon, 145.  
 Sher Shah Sur, early life, 1, 2, 3, 5, 16, gets the title of Sher Khan from the Nuhani Sultan, 35, is driven away from Sahasram by Muhammad Khan Sur, 36, joins the Mughals, 37-38, joins Sultan Mahmud Lodi, 39-42, becomes the ruler of entire south Bihar, 43-45, marries lad Malka, 46, signs a treaty with Humayun in 1531, 49-51, faces invasion by Qutb Khan of Bengal, 58-59, decides to assume the title of Shah and invades Bengal, 61-64, concludes treaty with the Sultan of Bengal, 64-65; war with the Mughals, 66-77, carries sword and fire against the Mughals during Humayun's stay in Gaur, 78, makes preparation to give battle to Humayun on his way back from Bengal, 79-81, defeats Humayun at Chausa, 82-84, achieves victory over the Mughals at Chausa, 85, wins the decisive Battle near Qanau, 86-88, 89.  
 Sherpur, 76.  
 Shergarh, 158.  
 Shihabuddin, Qazi,  
 Shiv Raj, 101.  
 Shivpuri, 135.  
 Shujaat Khan Sur, 27, 60, 85, 90, 91, 125, 145, 146, 200.  
 Siolkot, 130, 138, 150.  
 Sikandar Lodi, Sultan, 2, 6, 9, 12, 15, 16, 26, 28.  
 Sikandarnama, 16.  
 Sikandar Shah (Sultan of Gujarat), 32.  
 Sikri, 111.  
 Sind, 97, 98.  
 Sirhind, 10, (F.n.3), 13, 97, 102, 130, 131, 132, 158, 190.

Siwana, 100, 101, 126.  
 Siwalik hills, 115.  
 Son, river, 73.  
 Sonargaon, 142, 145.  
 Sulaiman, step brother of Sher shah, 25, 28, 35, 36.  
 Sulaimanabad, 73 145.  
 Sulaiman Karrani, 199.  
 Sukha, 36, 60, 89, 90.  
 Sultan Jalaluddin, (a Mughal noble) 42.  
 Sultanpur, 48, 97.  
 Sultan Sarwani, 70.  
 Surajgarh, 63.  
 Sylhet, 144, 145.

### T

Taharpal, 201.  
 Tahir Kabuli, 181.  
 Tahka, pargana, 6.  
 Taj Khan Lodi, Sarang Khani, 32, 38, 40, 45.  
 Taj Khan Karrani, 115, 116, 117, 134, 147, 165, 199, 203.  
 Tajuddin Kambo, 136.  
 Tajpur (Sarkar in Bengal), 145.  
 Talib, Mir, 186.  
 Tarikh-i-Qutbi, 49, 51.  
 Tarikh-i-Rashidi, 96.  
 Tardi Beg 204, 207.  
 Tatar Khan Yusuf Khail, 9, 13.  
 Thatta, 148.  
 Tilhar, 160, 189.  
 Tilaksi, 101.  
 Timur, Amir, 120.  
 Tirhut, 55, 56, 134.  
 Todar Mal, 143.  
 Tughluqabad, 203, 204.



### U

Uchh, 111, 148, 149.  
 Umadevi, wife of Maldev, 101.  
 Ujjain, 146, 165.  
 Umar Khan Sarwani, Khan Azam, 2, 3, 9, 11, 12, 13, 27, 28, 189.  
 Umar Khan Kambo, 181.

*Under, known as Tanda, 144.*

*Uwais Khcn Sarwani, 167.*

**W**

*Waqi at-i-Mushtaqi, 1, 3, 30.*

**Y**

*Yahya Khan Nuhani, 43.*

*Yahya Maneri, Shaikh, 81.*

*Yahya Sirhindi, 157 (f.n.3).*

*Yahiya, Saiyid of Bihar,*

*Yusuf, son of Mulla Makhan, 161.*

**Z**

*Zahid Beg, 79.*

*Zain Khan Nizai, 122.*

*Zainuddin (Muqta of Badaon), 189.*

*Zaman, Mirza, 51, 122.*



## Other Books of Interest

<b>Mughal Documents Taqsim</b> <i>S.P. Gupta &amp; Sumbul Halim</i>	1995	Shortly
<b>Sher Shah Sur and his Dynasty</b> <i>I.H. Siddiqui</i>	1995	350
<b>The Cultural History of Lower Krisna Valley</b> <i>A. Ramachandran</i>	1995	1200
<b>Bhosle of Nagpur &amp; East India Company</b> <i>Prabhakar Gadre</i>	1994	360
<b>The Critical Triangle :India, Britain and Turkey</b> <i>R.K. Trivedi</i>	1994	380
<b>Feudal Polity in Mewar</b> <i>T.K. Mathur</i>	1987	290
<b>History of the Rashtrakutas</b> <i>by Bisheshwarnath Reu</i>	1995	250
<b>Modern Education</b> <b>Its Growth and Development in Rajasthan</b> <i>G.C. Verma</i>	1985	500
<b>Papers Respecting the Succession by Adoption</b> <b>of Sovereign Princes in India</b> <i>Introduction by R.C. Gupta</i>	1993	750
<b>Peshwa Maratha Relations and Malharrao Holkar</b> <i>N.N. Nagarale</i>	1989	175
<b>Princely Historian</b> <i>(Maharaj Kumar Dr. Raghuvir Singh Commemoration Vol.)</i> <i>Manohar Singh Ranawat</i>	1994	1200
<b>Prithviraj Chauhan and his Times</b> <i>R.V. Somani</i>	1982	150
<b>Sati and Social Reforms in India</b> <i>Meena Gaur</i>	1989	190
<b>Scarcity and Famine in Central Provinces</b> <i>(1860-1910)</i> <i>D.P. Awasthi</i>	1994	155
<b>Sketches of the Relations Between British</b> <b>Government in India and the Different Native States</b> <i>J. Sutherland</i>	1989	150
<b>States People's Confrence</b> <i>(Its Origin and Role in Rajasthan)</i> <i>V.D. Mathur</i>	1985	150

Available at :

**SHARAN BOOK DEPOT**  
GALTA ROAD, JAIPUR-302 003