



10

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUGHAL RULE

In the previous chapter you studied about the establishment and consolidation of Delhi Sultanate (1206–1526). During this period the rulers were Turks and Afghans. You must have noticed that throughout the Sultanate period there was constant struggle between the various Turkish groups and Afghans. The disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate led to the emergence of various regional powers. Therefore, when Babur invaded India in 1526 the central power of the Sultanate had substantially weakened and there were a number of independent kingdoms. The Delhi and adjoining regions were under Sultan Ibrahim Lodi. Other Important kingdoms were Gujarat, Malwa, Bengal, Bijapur, Golconda, Ahmednagar, Berar, Mewar and Vijaynagar empire in the South. Besides, a large number of smaller autonomous chiefs were also ruling in different parts of the country.

In this lesson you will study about the conquest of India by a new ruling dynasty—the Mughals. The Mughals were led by an able military commander and administrator from Central Asia named Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur. His successors were successful in establishing an all India empire gradually. We will study the details of this process of conquests and consolidation in this lesson. Let us begin with the advent of Babur in India.



OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson you would be able to:

- know the circumstances under which Babur invaded India;
- describe the reasons for the success of the Mughals against Indian rulers;
- list the challenges faced by Humayun after Babur's death;
- analyse the circumstances that led to the defeat of Humayun and revival of Afghan power;
- describe the events leading to recapture of India by Humayun;
- give an account of the expansion and consolidation of the Mughal empire under Akbar;
- describe the territorial expansion upto the reign of Aurangzeb and
- analyse the challenges faced by the Mughal empire in India.

10.1 ADVENT OF BABUR (1526–30)

Babur ascended the throne at Farghana, a small principality in Transoxiana, in 1494 at the age of twelve after the death of his father. The situation in Central Asia was not



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stable and Babur had to face a lot of resistance from the nobility itself. Although he was able to capture Samarqand but very soon he had to retreat because of desertion of some of his nobles. He also lost Farghana to the Uzbegs.

Thus, the early years of Babur's rule in central Asia were tough. During this whole period he had plans of moving towards Hindustan. And finally from 1517 onwards he made decisive moves towards India. A few developments in India at that time also helped him to act on plans of invading India.

Timurids

Babur traced his lineage from Timur the great conqueror of Central Asia and to Chengiz Khan the distinguished conqueror. From mother's side he was a descendant of Mongols and from father's side the great commander Timur. Because of the lineage of Timur the Mughals are also referred as Timurids.

The unstable political situation in India after Sikandar Lodi's death convinced him of political discontentment and disorder in the Lodi Empire. Meanwhile there was conflict between some Afghan chiefs with Ibrahim Lodi. Prominent among them was Daulat Khan Lodi, the Governor of a large part of Punjab. The Rajput king of Mewar Rana Sanga was also asserting his authority against Ibrahim Lodi and was trying to increase his area of influence in north India. Both of them sent word to Babur to invade India. Invitations from Rana Sanga and Daulat Khan Lodi might have encouraged Babur's ambitions.

Babur was successful in capturing Bhira (1519–1520), Sialkot (1520) and Lahore (1524) in Punjab. Finally, Ibrahim Lodi and Babur's forces met at Panipat in 1526. Babur's Soldiers were less in number but the organization of his army was superior. Ibrahim Lodi was defeated in the battle of Panipat. Success at the Battle of Panipat was a great achievement of Babur's military tactics. Babur had an active army of only 12000 soldiers while Ibrahim's army had an estimated strength of 100,000 soldiers. When face to face in the battle field Babur's tactics were unique. He effectively applied the Rumi (Ottoman) method of warfare. He encircled Ibrahim's army from two flanks. In the centre his cavalry mounted attack with arrows and gun fires by expert ottoman gunners. The trenches and barricades provided adequate defence against march of the enemy. The Afghan army of Ibrahim Lodi suffered heavy casualties. Ibrahim Lodi died in the battle field. Babur was thus able to take control of Delhi and Agra and got the rich treasure of Lodis. This money was distributed among Babur's commanders and soldiers.

Victory at Panipat provided Babur a firm ground to consolidate his conquests. But now he was faced with a few problems:

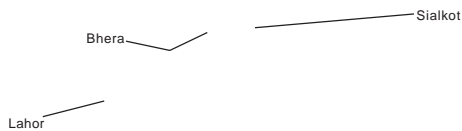
- i. His nobles and commanders were eager to return to Central Asia because they did not like the climate of India. Culturally also, they felt very alienated.
- ii. Rajputs were rallying around under the leadership of Rana Sanga the king of Mewar and wanted to expel the Mughal forces
- iii. The Afghans, though defeated at Panipat, were still a formidable force in eastern parts of UP, Bihar and Bengal. They were re-grouping to reclaim their lost powers.

To begin with Babur convinced his companions and nobles to stay back and help in consolidating the conquered territories. After succeeding in this difficult task, he sent his son Humayun to face the eastern Afghans. Rana Sanga of Mewar succeeded to



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muster support of a large number of Rajput chiefs. Prominent among these were Jalor, Sirohi, Dungarpur, Amber, Merta etc. Medini Rai of Chanderi, Hasan Khan of Mewat and Mahmud Lodi younger son of Sikander Lodi also joined Rana with their forces. Possibly, Rana Sanga expected Babur to return to Kabul. Babur's decision to stay back must have given a big jolt to Rana Sanga's ambitions. Babur was also fully aware of the fact that it would be impossible for him to consolidate his position in India unless he shattered Rana's power. The forces of Babur and Rana Sanga met at Khanwa, a place near Fatehpur Sikri. Rana Sanga was defeated in 1527 and once again the superior military tactics of Babur succeeded. With the defeat of Rana the biggest challenge in north India was shattered.



Map 10.1 Early conquests of the Mughals

Though the Mewar Rajputs received great shock at Khanwa, Medini Rai at Malwa was still threatening to challenge the authority of Babur. In spite of great valour with which the Rajputs fought in Chanderi (1528), Babur faced little difficulty in overcoming Medini Rai. With his defeat, resistance across Rajputana was completely shattered. But Babur had to tackle the Afghans. The Afghans had surrendered Delhi, but



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they were still powerful in the east (Bihar and parts of Jaunpur). The success against the Afghans and Rajputs at Panipat and Khanwa was very significant but the resistance was still present. However, these victories were a step forward in the direction of the establishment of Mughal empire. Babur died in 1530. Still the rulers of Gujarat, Malwa and Bengal enjoyed substantial military power and were not suppressed. It was left to Humayun to face these regional powers.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.1**

1. Why did Babur invade India?

2. What was Babur's strategy at the Battle of Panipat?

3. What problems did Babur face after the Battle of Panipat?

4. Who were the two rulers from Rajputana defeated by Babur?

2.2 HUMAYUN'S RETREAT AND AFGHAN REVIVAL (1530–1540)

After the death of Babur in 1530, his son Humayun succeeded him. The situation under Humayun was quite desperate. The main problems faced by Humayun were:

- i. The newly conquered territories and administration was not consolidated.
- ii. Unlike Babur, Humayun did not command the respect and esteem of Mughal nobility.
- iii. The Chaghatai nobles were not favourably inclined towards him and the Indian nobles, who had joined Babur's service, deserted the Mughals at Humayun's accession.
- iv. He also confronted the hostility of the Afghans mainly Sher Khan in Bihar on the one hand and Bahadurshah, the ruler of Gujarat, on the other.
- v. As per the Timurid tradition Humayun had to share power with his brothers. The newly established Mughal empire had two centres of power – Humayun was in control of Delhi, Agra and Central India, while his brother Kamran had Afghanistan and Punjab under him.

Humayun felt that the Afghans were a bigger threat. He wanted to avoid a combined opposition of Afghans from east and the west. At that time Bahadur Shah had occupied Bhilsa, Raisen, Ujjain and Gagron and was consolidating his power. While Humayun was besieging Chunar in the east, Bahadur Shah had started expanding towards Malwa and Rajputana. In such a situation Humayun was forced to rush back to Agra (1532–33). Continuing his expansionist policy, Bahadur Shah attacked Chittor in 1534. Chittor had strategic advantage as it could provide a strong base. It would have helped his expansion in Rajasthan particularly towards Ajmer, Nagor and Ranthambhor. Humayun captured Mandu and camped there because he thought that from here he can block Bahadur Shah's return to Gujarat. Humayun's long absence from Agra resulted in rebellions in Doab and Agra and he had to rush back. Mandu was now left under the charge of Mirza Askari, the brother of Humayun. During the period when Humayun was busy in Gujarat to check Bahadurshah, Sher Shah started consolidating himself in Bihar and Bengal.

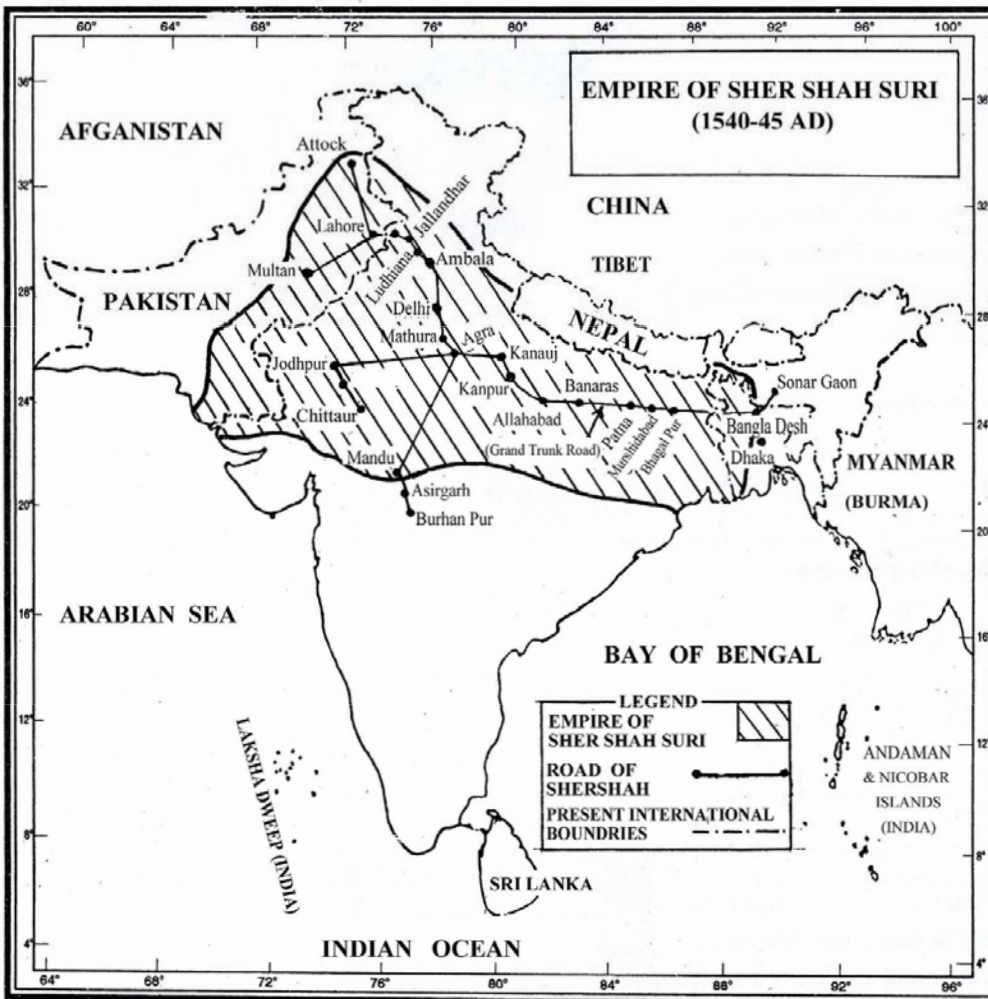


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Rise of Sher Shah Suri

Farid, who later came to be called Sher Khan and subsequently Sher Shah, was son of a *Jagirdar* under the kingdom of Jaunpur. His father Hasan Khan Sur held the jagir of Sasaram in Bihar during the rule of Lodis. Sher Shah helped his father in the administration of his jagir. Later he developed differences with his father and left him. He served under Afghan nobles. After the death of his father in 1524 he was given his father's *jagir* by Ibrahim Lodi. He had to enter into conflict with his family to take possession of the *jagir*. He very effectively managed the *Jagir* of his father. He also acquired great military and administrative skills. His capabilities made him the leader of Afghans. He gradually increased his influence and defeated Sultan Mahmud Shah of Bengal. He emerged as the most powerful military commander in the eastern provinces. Sher Shah continued consolidating his position in Bihar. He had to enter into a number of conflicts with prominent Afghan nobles in Bihar and ruler of Bengal. He finally succeeded in establishing himself as the most powerful Afghan chief in Eastern India.

Sher Shah wished to establish himself as the undisputed Afghan leader. He invaded the Bengal army and defeated them in the battle of Surajgarh. Sher Shah could



Map 10.2: Empire of Sher Shah



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extract quite a wealth from Bengal which helped him to raise a bigger army. Now he started attacking Mughal territories of Banaras and beyond. Humayun was quite suspicious of Sher Shah's ambitions but failed to estimate his capabilities. He asked his governor of Jaunpur, Hindu Beg to check the movements of Sher Shah. Meanwhile Sher Shah captured Gaur (1538) the capital of Bengal. While Humayun was moving towards Bengal Sher Shah took control of route to Agra making communication difficult for Humayun. On the other hand, Hindal Mirza, brother of Humayun, who was supposed to provide supplies for his army, declared his independence. Now, Humayun decided to return to Chunar. When he reached Chausa (1539), he encamped on the western side of the river Karmnasa. Sher Shah attacked Humayun at the bank of the river and defeated him. Sher Shah declared himself as an independent king. Humayun could escape but most of his army was destroyed. With difficulty he could reach Agra. His brother Kamran moved out of Agra towards Lahore leaving Humayun with small force. Sher Shah now moved towards Agra. Humayun also came forward with his army and the armies of the two clashed at Kannauj. Humayun was defeated badly in the battle of Kannauj (1540).

10.3 SECOND AFGHAN EMPIRE (1540–1555)

Sher Shah

As already discussed the first Afghan kingdom under the Lodis was replaced by the Mughals under Babur in 1526. After a gap of 14 years Sher Shah succeeded in establishing the Afghan rule again in India in 1540. Sher Shah and his successors ruled for 15 years. This period is known as the period of second Afghan Empire.

The founder of this Afghan rule Sher Khan was a great tactician and able military commander. We have already discussed his conflict with Humayun. After defeating Humayun he became sovereign ruler in the year 1540 and assumed the title of Sher Shah.

Sher Shah followed Humayun on his flight till Sindh in the North West. After expelling Humayun he started consolidating his position in Northern and Eastern India. He defeated and conquered Malwa in 1542 which was followed by Chanderi. In Rajasthan he led campaigns against Marwar, Ranthambhore, Nagor, Ajmer, Merta Jodhpur and Bikaner. He defeated rebellious Afghans in Bengal. By 1545 he had established himself as the supreme ruler from Sindh and Punjab to whole of Rajputana in the West and Bengal in the East. Now he turned towards BundelKhand. Here while besieging the fort of Kalinjar he died in 1545 in an accidental blast of gun powder.

During his brief rule Sher Shah introduced very important changes in administration and revenue system. The most important ones were:

- i. X judicial system.

Sher Shah was succeeded by his son Islam Shah. Islam Shah had to face a number of conflicts with his brother Adil Khan and many Afghan nobles. He died in 1553. The Afghan empire was substantially weakened. Humayun saw an opportunity and moved towards India. He again captured his lost kingdom by 1555 and ended the second Afghan Empire.

In 1555 Humayun conquered Agra and Delhi and established himself as the emperor of India. Before he could consolidate his position he died after falling from the stairs of the library at Sher Mandal (in Delhi) in 1556.



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**INTEXT QUESTIONS 10.2**

1. Why did Humayun fail to defeat Sher Shah?

2. How did Sher Khan emerge as the leader of Afghans?

3. List the territories which were brought by Sher Shah under his rule.

4. List two important achievements of Sher Shah.

10.4 THE MUGHAL EMPIRE FROM AKBAR TO AURANGZEB**Akbar**

Akbar was only thirteen years old at the time of Humayun's death. When his father died, Akbar was at Kalanaur in Punjab and therefore his coronation took place in Kalanaur itself in 1556. It was his tutor and Humayun's favourite and confidant Bairam Khan, who served as the regent of the Mughal emperor from 1556 to 1560. He became the *wakil* of the kingdom with the title of *Khan-i-Khanan*. One of the major achievements of his regency period was the defeat of Hemu and the Afghan forces in the second battle of Panipat in 1556, who were posing a serious threat to the Mughal Empire.

Regency of Bairam Khan 1556–1560

Bairam Khan remained at the helm of affairs of the Mughal Empire for almost four years, which is popularly known as Period of Bairam Khan's Regency. During this phase he appointed his favourite nobles on important positions. Bairam Khan emerged as the most powerful noble. He became very arrogant. A group of nobles were opposed to him. They managed to influence Akbar also. By this time Akbar also wanted to assume full control. He removed Bairam Khan. Bairam Khan revolted and was defeated. Akbar pardoned him and asked him to retire. He decided to go to Mecca for pilgrimage. He was killed by an Afghan near Ahmedabad. His son later on became an influential noble under Akbar and is famous as Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana.

Akbar started a policy of expansion after overcoming initial problems and consolidating his hold on the throne. The major political powers spread in different parts of the country were:

- i) the Rajputs who were spread throughout the country as independent chiefs and kings, and were concentrated mainly in Rajasthan.
- ii) The Afghans held political control mainly in Gujarat, Bihar and Bengal.
- iii) Khandesh, Ahmednagar, Bijapur, Golkonda and few other kingdoms in South India and Deccan were quite powerful.
- iv) Kabul and Qandhar, though ruled by Mughal factions, were hostile towards Akbar.

Akbar through a systematic policy started the task of expanding his Empire. The first step that Akbar took after the dismissal of Bairam Khan was to put an end to the conflict within the nobility. He demonstrated great diplomatic skills and organizational



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capabilities in handling it. Akbar started his policy of expansion with central India. In 1559–60 the first expedition was sent to capture Gwalior before moving towards Malwa. Malwa in central India was ruled by Baz Bahadur. Akbar deputed Adham Khan to lead the expedition against it. Baz Bahadur was defeated and fled towards Burhanpur. Gondwana, an independent state in Central India ruled by Rani Durgawati, widow of Dalpat Shah, was conquered and annexed to the Mughal empire in 1564.

Rajasthan

It seems that Akbar was fully aware of the importance of Rajput kingdoms and wanted them as allies in his ambition of establishing a large empire. He tried to win over the Rajputs wherever possible and inducted them into Mughal service. He also entered into matrimonial alliances with the Rajput rulers like Bharmal. Raja Bharmal of Amber was the first to enter into alliance with Akbar. The Rajput kingdoms like Merta and Jodhpur were also occupied without much resistance. However, Maharana Pratap, the ruler of Mewar posed most serious challenge to the Mughal emperor and did not submit before Akbar. After a prolonged struggle and siege of the fort of Chittor, Akbar succeeded in defeating the Mewar forces. A large number of Rajput soldiers got killed in the war. However, it could not be fully subdued and some resistance from Mewar side continued for a long time. After the fall of Chittor Ranthambhor and Kalinjar were captured. Marwar, Bikaner and Jaisalmer also submitted to Akbar. By 1570 Akbar had captured almost the whole of Rajasthan. The most important achievement of Akbar was that in spite of the subjugation of the whole of Rajasthan there was no hostility between the Rajputs and the Mughals. We will discuss reasons for it in a separate section in this lesson.

Afghans (Gujarat, Bihar and Bengal)

Akbar's campaign against Afghans started with Gujarat in 1572. One of the princes, Itimad Khan, had invited Akbar to come and conquer it. Akbar himself marched to Ahmedabad. The town was captured without any serious resistance. Surat with a strong fortress offered some resistance but was also captured. In a short time most of the principalities of Gujarat were brought under his control. Akbar organized Gujarat into a province and placed it under Mirza Aziz Koka and returned to capital. Within six months various rebellious groups came together and revolted against the Mughal rule and the Mughal governor had to cede a number of territories. The leaders of rebellion were Ikhitiyar ul Mulk and Mohammad Hussain Mirza. Akbar got the news of rebellion in Agra and he set out for Ahmadabad. Akbar marched at a rapid pace and managed to reach Ahmedabad in ten days. The emperor quickly suppressed the rebellion.

Bengal and Bihar which were under the control of the Afghans, were paid attention after the Gujarat expedition. In 1574, Akbar along with Munim Khan Khan-i-Khanan marched towards Bihar. In a short time, Hajipur and Patna were captured and Gaur (Bengal) was also taken away. With this the independent rule of Bengal was ended in 1576. By 1592, the Mughal *mansabdar* Raja Man Singh also brought the whole of Orissa under the Mughal rule.

A series of conflicts arose in some regions of the Mughal empire in 1581. Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat and the north-west were main centres of unrest. The Afghans were at the root of these problems since they were overthrown everywhere by the Mughals. Apart from this, Akbar's policy of strict administration of *jagirs* was also responsible for this. A new policy was adopted, according to which the *jagirdars* were asked to submit the accounts of the *jagirs*. This created dissatisfaction and jagirdars rose in revolt. Masum Khan Kabuli, Roshan Beg, Mirza Sharfuddin and Arab Bahadur were the main leader of rebels. Imperial officers posted there tried to crush the rebellion



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but failed. Akbar immediately sent a large force under Raja Todar Mal and Shaikh Farid Bakshi. A little later, Aziz Koka and Shahbaz Khan were also sent to help Todar Mal. The rebels declared Akbar's brother Hakim Mirza, who was in Kabul, as their king. But soon the Mughal forces were able to successfully crush the rebellion in Bihar, Bengal and adjoining regions.

Punjab and North West

In the Punjab, Mirza Hakim was creating problems for Akbar and he attacked Lahore. Hakim Mirza was expecting a number of Mughal officers to join him but no large group joined him. Akbar decided to march towards Lahore himself. Hakim Mirza immediately retreated and Akbar controlled the whole region. He gave first priority to organize the protection of North-West frontiers. After this he marched towards Kabul and conquered the territory. Akbar gave the charge of Kabul to his sister Bakhtunnisa Begum. Later on Raja Man Singh was appointed governor of Kabul and it was given to him in *jagir*.

Another important development in the North-West region was the rebellion of Roshanai who captured the road between Kabul and Hindustan. Roshanai was a sect established by a soldier who was called Pir Roshanai in the region. His son Jalala was heading the sect who had large following. Akbar appointed Zain Khan as commander of a strong force to suppress the Roshanais and establish Mughal control in the region. Sayid Khan Gakhar and Raja Birbal were also sent with separate forces to help Zain Khan. In one of the operations Birbal was killed with most of his forces. Akbar was greatly disturbed with the death of his trusted friend Birbal. He deputed Raja Todar Mal and Raja Man Singh to suppress the rebellion and they were successful in defeating the Roshanais. Akbar for a long time had his eyes set on conquering Kashmir. It was annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1586.

Some pockets in Sindh in the North-West were still independent. In 1590 Akbar appointed Khan-i-Khanna as governor of Multan and asked him to subdue Bilochis, a tribe in the region and conquer the whole territory. First, Thatta was annexed and placed as a *sarkar* in the *suba* of Multan. The conflict with Bilochis in the adjoining regions continued. Finally, by the year 1595, the complete supremacy of Mughals over North-West region was established.

Deccan

After 1590, Akbar gave shape to a Deccan policy to bring these states under Mughal control. During this period the Deccan states were facing internal tensions and regular conflicts. In 1591, Akbar sent offers to the Deccan states asking them to accept Mughal sovereignty, but there was not much success. Now Akbar decided on a policy of aggression. The first expedition was dispatched to Ahmednagar under the command of Prince Murad and Abdul Rahim Khan Khanan. In 1595, the Mughal forces invaded Ahmednagar. Its ruler Chand Bibi decided to face the Mughals. She approached Ibrahim Adil Shah of Bijapur and Qutub Shah of Golkonda for help but with no success. A fierce conflict followed. After heavy losses on both sides, a treaty was worked out and Chand Bibi ceded Berar to Mughals. After some time Chand Bibi attacked Berar to take it back. At this point Nizamshahi, Qutabshahi and Adilshahi troops decided to present a joint front. The Mughals suffered heavy losses but could retain their position. Meanwhile, serious differences between Murad and Khan Khana weakened Mughal position. Akbar, therefore, recalled Khan Khanan and deputed Abul Fazl to Deccan. After Prince Murad's death in 1598, Prince Daniyal and Khan Khanan were sent to Deccan. Ahmednagar was captured. Soon the Mughals also conquered Asirgarh and adjoining regions. Adil Shah of Bijapur also expressed allegiance and

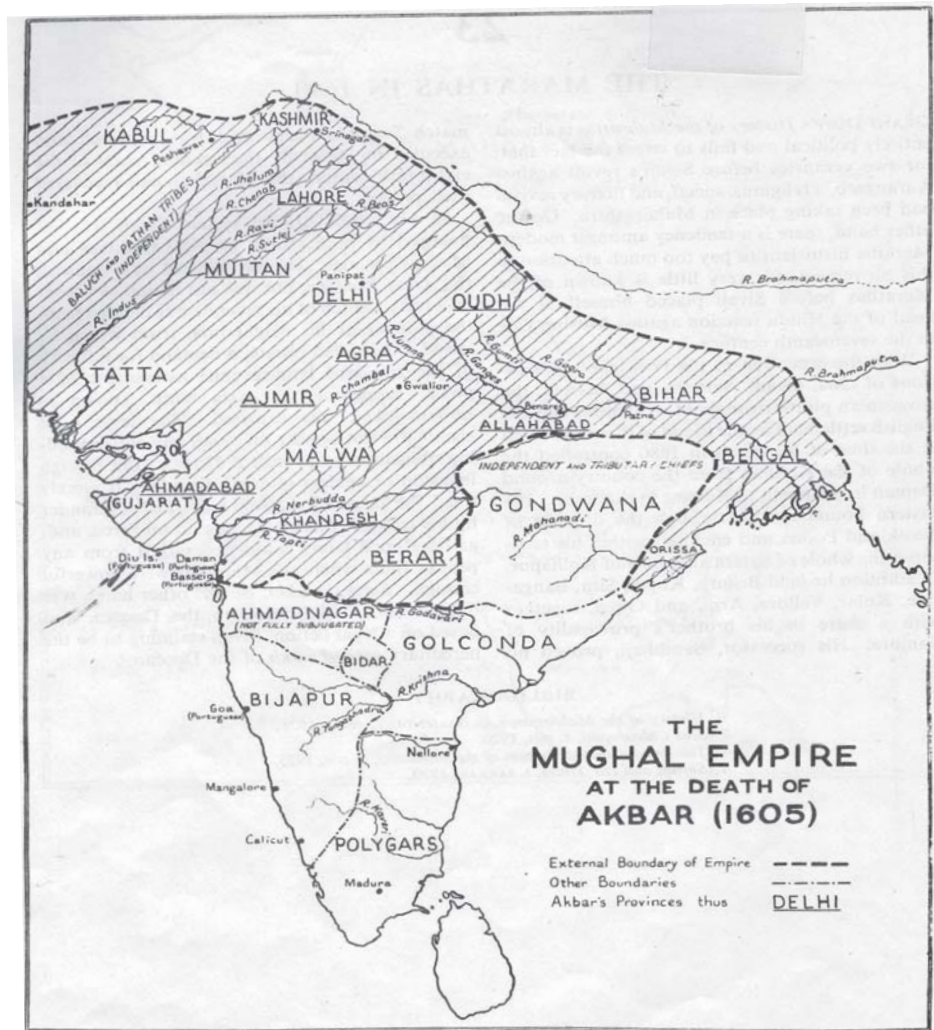


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offered his daughter in marriage to Prince Daniyal. Meanwhile Chand Bibi also died. Now Mughal territories in Deccan included Asirgarh, Burhanpur, Ahmednagar and Berar.

Along with the expansion of territory Akbar initiated the policy of absorbing the chieftains into Mughal nobility. His policy paid rich dividends to the empire. The Mughal emperor succeeded in getting the support of chieftains and their armies for new conquests. As part of Mughal nobility, their help was also available for administering a large empire. In addition, a friendly relationship with them ensured peace for the empire. The chieftains also benefited from this policy. Now they could retain their territories and administer them as they wished. In addition, they received *jagir and mansab*. (You would learn about these administrative measures in lesson 12 of Module 2). Often they got territories in *jagir* bigger than their kingdoms. It also provided them security from enemies and rebellions. Many Rajput *mansabdars* were assigned their own territories as *Watan Jagir*, which was hereditary and non-transferable.

The territorial expansion under Akbar gave a definite shape to the Mughal Empire. In terms of territorial expansion very little was added to the empire after Akbar. Some territories were added during the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb in the Deccan and North East of India.



Map 10.3 Extent of Mughal Empire under Akbar



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INTEXT QUESTION 10.3

1. Why Akbar removed Bairam Khan?

2. Which were the main political powers in India at the time of Akbar's accession?

3. Which of the Rajput rulers posed challenge to Akbar and did not submit?

4. Name the lady ruler who fought with the Mughals? Which was the territory ruled by her?

Jahangir and Shahjahan

Jahangir decided to follow Akbar's expansionist policy in the Deccan. But Jahangir could achieve little success in it due to certain problems. He could not devote much attention in the crucial phase due to Khurram's revolt. The Mughal nobles were also involved in a number of intrigues and conflicts to gain some advantages from Deccan.

During the first three years, the Deccan regained half of Balaghat and many districts of Ahmednagar. Malik Ambar was the main ruler who managed to defeat Mughal forces and captured Berar, Balaghat and parts of Ahmednagar. The Mughals could not regain control of the lost territories. Meanwhile Shah Jahan revolted against his father and became friends with Malik Ambar.

Malik Ambar made an attempt to capture Ahmednagar; but failing there, he took away Sholapur from Adil Shah and in alliance with Shah Jahan tried to capture Burhanpur but failed. Once peace was established between Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Malik Ambar was also pacified. Malik Ambar died in 1627 and was succeeded by his son Fath Khan as *Wakil* and *Peshwa* of the kingdom. Fath Khan was arrogant and during his time the conflict between the *Dakhnis* and other nobles grew.

During the reign of Jahangir there was no addition to the Mughal territory in Deccan. In fact the Deccani rulers weakened the Mughal authority in their states. Over ambition of Malik Ambar was an obstacle in the way of a joint front of the Deccan states.

During the period between the death of Jahangir and the accession of Shah Jahan, the Mughal governor of the Deccan, Khan Jahan Lodi, with the intention of securing help in times of necessity, gave away Balaghat to the Nizam Shah. After ascending the throne, Shah Jahan ordered Khan Jahan Lodi to recover it but as the latter failed, Shah Jahan recalled him to court. Khan Jahan turned hostile and rebelled. He took shelter with Nizam Shah. This infuriated Shah Jahan and he decided to follow aggressive policy towards the Deccan states. Shah Jahan's main concern was to recover the lost territories of the Deccan. He believed that independence of Ahmednagar was in the way of Mughal control in the Deccan. He decided to isolate Ahmednagar and win over Bijapur and Marathas. He was successful. Fath Khan son of Malik Ambar also made peace with Mughals. Now Mahabat Khan was appointed governor of Deccan. But the conflict with Deccan states continued. Finally in 1636 treaties were signed with Bijapur and Golconda. The main points of agreement with Bijapur were:



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- i. Adil Shah accepted the Mughal suzerainty
- ii. He was to pay 20 lakh rupees as indemnity
- iii. He was not to interfere in the affairs of Golconda
- iv. Mughal emperor was to arbitrate in case of any dispute between Bijapur and Golconda
- v. Adil Shah to help Mughals in conflict against Shahji Bhonsle

Golconda also made a separate treaty. According to this treaty:

- i. Golconda took oath of loyalty towards Mughal emperor. He agreed to include the name of the Mughal emperor in Khutba and exclude the name of Shah of Iran.
- ii. Golconda agreed to pay two lakh huns per year to the Mughals.

The treaties ended the conflicts in the Deccan. The Mughals could expand their area of dominance to large parts of Southern India. A distinct change in Mughal policy came towards 1656–57 when the treaties were ignored. Now, Shah Jahan asked Aurangzeb to conquer and annex the territories of Deccan kingdoms. It is argued by some historians that this change of policy was to exploit resources of the Deccan states for Mughals. However, this change did not benefit the Mughal empire in any substantial way and created more problems for future.

Aurangzeb

Aurangzeb believed in an aggressive policy towards Deccan. Prof. Satish Chandra identifies three distinct phases in his policy towards Deccan states.

- i. From 1658 to 1668 the focus was to get hold of the territories of Kalyani, Bidar and Pargana from Bijapur. During this phase attempts were made to secure the help of Deccan states against Marathas. The efforts were also made by Jai Singh, the governor of Deccan, to conquer Bijapur but the efforts failed.
- ii. From around 1668 to 1684 there was a shift in the policy. The death of Adil Shah of Bijapur, growing power of Shivaji and increasing influence of Akhanna and Madanna two brothers in Golconda administration affected the Mughal policy. Golconda tried to forge an alliance with Shivaji and Bijapur. Aurangzeb's efforts to contain Marathas were not very successful. The alliance with minor shifts and frequent tensions continued in some form or the other. Aurangzeb was not inclined to annex the Deccan states.
- iii. In the third phase (1684–87) Aurangzeb followed the policy of outright annexation of the Deccan states. Aurangzeb personally supervised the siege of Bijapur. By 1687 both Bijapur and Golconda along with the territory of Karnataka were annexed in the Mughal empire. The conflict with Marathas continued from 1687 to 1707 Aurangzeb spent most of his time in Deccan and could manage to keep the region under Mughal control. But after his death in 1707 (at Aurangabad in Deccan) they reasserted independence and succeeded in a short period.

Apart from Deccan Aurangzeb could expand Mughal power in Assam in the north-east region. The major success of the Mughals in this region was annexation of Ahom kingdom (Assam) under Mir Jumla, the governor of Bengal. Another notable achievement in north-east was capture of Chatgaon in 1664 under Shaista Khan the new governor of Bengal. The Ahom kingdom could not be directly controlled for long. The Mughal *faujdar*s posted there had to face resistance and there were regular conflicts. By 1680 Ahoms succeeded in capturing Kamrup and Mughal control ended.



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**INTEXT QUESTION 10.4**

1. Who was the ruler from Deccan who defeated the Mughal forces under Jahangir?

2. The Mughals signed treaty with which of the two states of Deccan in 1636?

3. Which Mughal commander brought the Ahom kingdom under Mughal Control?

4. With which of the Deccan powers Aurangzeb remained engaged for a long time?

10.5 CHALLENGES TO MUGHAL RULE: CONFLICTS AND NEGOTIATIONS

Under Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire reached its greatest territorial limits and it covered almost the whole of present day India. But his reign was marred by popular revolts of the Jats, Satnamis, Afghans, Sikhs and the Marathas. The Rajputs emerged as an important support base of the Mughals under Akbar, and later on under Jahangir and Shah Jahan. However under Aurangzeb they started feeling alienated and gradually lost their position in administrative set up. The Marathas posed a major challenge to the sovereignty of the Mughals under Aurangzeb. Deccan states put up a stiff resistance against Mughal expansion plans. The North-West frontier region was also trouble spot and Mughals had to suppress disturbances. Thus we notice that in the process of the establishment and expansion of Mughal empire the Mughals faced resistance and had to negotiate their way through diverse means and strategies. Here we will provide a brief discussion on all these issues.

Rajputs

Mewar was the only region in Rajputana that had not come under the Mughals during Akbar's time. Jahangir followed a persistent policy to capture it. After a series of conflicts, Rana Amar Singh finally agreed to accept Mughal Suzerainty. All the territories taken from Mewar including the fort of Chittor were returned to Rana Amar Singh and a substantial *jagir* was granted to his son Karan Singh. During the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the Rajputs generally continued to be friendly with the Mughals and held very high *mansabs* . Shah Jahan relied upon Rajput soldiers for his campaigns in Deccan and the North West. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Mughal relations with Rajputs suffered, particularly over the issue of the successor to the throne of Marwar. Aurangzeb's interference in the succession dispute and his support to the rival candidate antagonised the Rajputs. His occupation of Jodhpur further put a dent on the Mughal-Rajput relation and the Rajputs gradually got alienated from Mughal rule. In fact, the absence of a powerful Rajput section in the nobility ultimately proved detrimental to the Mughal control of the peripheral areas, specially when it came to negotiating with the Marathas.

Deccan

During the last years of Akbar and early years of Jahangir, Ahmednagar under Malik Ambar started challenging Mughal power. Malik Ambar succeeded in getting support of Bijapur also. A number of expeditions were sent by Jahangir but failed to achieve any success. During Shahjahan's reign, Mughal conflict with the Deccan kingdoms of Ahmednagar, Bijapur and Golconda was revived. Aghmednagar was first to be



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defeated and most of its territories were annexed into Mughal empire. By 1636, Bijapur and Golkonda were also defeated but these kingdom were not annexed to the Mughal Empire. After a treaty the defeated rulers were to pay annual tributes and recognise Mughal authority. For almost ten years Shahjahan deputed his son Aurangzeb in the region. During Aurangzeb's reign the struggle with Deccan state and Marathas became more intensive. In fact, Aurangzeb spent the last twenty years of his reign in Deccan fighting against them. By 1687, the Deccani kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkonda were annexed to the Mughal Empire. However, the time and money spent in the Deccan by Aurangzeb proved a great drain on the Mughal empire.

The Marathas

The Marathas emerged in the Deccan as a vital force under Shivaji in the middle of the 17th century and began to challenge the Mughal authority. Shiviji started his offensive operations in 1656 and captured the principality of Javli. After some time, Shivaji raided the Bijapur territory, and, in 1659, the Sultan of Bijapur sent his general, Afzal Khan, to capture Shivaji. But Shivaji was too clever for him (Afzal Khan) and killed him. Ultimately, in 1662, the Sultan of Bijapur entered into a peace settlement with Shivaji and acknowledged him as an independent ruler of his conquered territories. Shivaji now began to devastate the Mughal territories. Aurangzeb sent Shaista Khan, the viceroy of the Deccan, with a big army against Shivaji and the Treaty of Purandhar (1665) was signed between the two. Out of the 35 forts held by Shivaji, he agreed to surrender 23 forts to the Mughals. The remaining 12 forts (with annual income of one lakh of huns) were to be left with Shivaji. Shivaji was asked to pay a visit to the Mughal court at Agra. But, when Shivaji went there, he was ill-treated and was taken a prisoner. He managed to escape, reaching Raigarh in 1666. From then onwards, he waged a relentless struggle against the Mughals. Soon he conquered all the forts which he had surrendered to the Mughals. In 1670, he plundered Surat for the second time.

In 1674, Shivaji made Raigarh his Capital and celebrated his coronation, and assumed the title of Chatrapati. Shortly, after this, he made a great expedition into southern India and conquered Jinji Vellore and many forts in Karnataka. He died at Raigarh in 1680 after ruling for only six years. In this short time he founded the Maratha kingdom, which dominated western India for a century and a half.

Shivaji's successor was his son Sambhaji. Many Maratha chiefs did not support Sambhaji and extended help to Rajaram the other son of Shivaji. The internal conflict weakened Maratha power. Finally Sambhaji was captured and put to death in 1689 by Aurangzeb. Sambhaji was succeeded by Rajaram as his son Sahu was still young. Rajaram died in 1700. He was succeeded by his minor son Shivaji III under the regency of Tara Bai, his mother. The failure of Aurangzeb against the Marathas was largely due to Tara Bai's energy and administrative genius. The Mughals, however, succeeded in dividing the Marathas into two rival camps—one under Tara Bai and the other under Sambhaji's son, Sahu. Sahu, who for long was in the Mughal court, was released. He succeeded in deposing Tara Bai with the help of a Chitpavan Brahman named Balaji Vishwanath.

North West

Akbar had always considered the Kabul-Ghazni-Qandhar line as the strategic frontier and therefore, captured Qandhar in 1595.

During the 17th century the North-west frontier was the main area of activity of the Mughals. Here, the Roshanais were decisively defeated by 1625–26, but Qandhar became a region of conflict between the Persians and Mughals. After Akbar's death, the Persians, tried to capture Qandhar but failed under Shah Abbas I, the Safavi ruler.



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Map 10.4 The Maratha Kingdom under Shivaji

Following this, Shah Abbas I in 1620 requested Jahangir to hand over Qandhar to him but the latter declined to do so. In 1622, after another attack, Qandhar was captured by the Persians. Under Shah Jahan, Qandhar once again came into the Mughal hands, but was recaptured by the Persians in 1649. The struggle to capture Qandahar continued till Aurangzeb's reign but Mughals got little success. Shah Jahan's Balkh campaign to keep the Uzbeks (tribe) under control failed miserably and the Mughals lost huge amount of money and men in the conflict. During the reign of Aurangzeb, the Qandhar issue was dropped and diplomatic relations with Persia were revived.

It is quite evident that the territorial expansion of Mughal empire achieved under Akbar continued to be the core of the empire. Its further expansion during Aurangzeb's reign was in Deccan and in small measure in North-East region. During his period the



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Mughal empire had the largest area. However, the beginning of the decline of the Mughal empire also could be traced to the rule of Aurangzeb. The breaking up of the association with the potent regional forces like the Rajputs and failing relationships with the Deccani states and Marathas shook the unity and stability of the Mughal empire. Under his successors the empire kept disintegrating.



INTEXT QUESTION 10.5

1. On what terms Shahjahan established peace with Bijapur and Golconda?

2. What was Aurangzeb's policy towards Deccan?

3. Where was Shivaji Coronated? What was the title that he took?

4. Which of the Mughal rulers lost huge amount of money in north-west frontier conflicts?



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

After the disintegration of the Delhi Sultanate Babur was able to establish the Mughal empire in India in 1526. It was both the circumstances in Central Asia and in India which played a major role in the foundation of the Mughal empire. Before Babur could lay the foundation of the Mughal empire, he had to fight many wars with local ruling kingdoms. He defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526. Then he defeated one of the biggest forces in north India, Rana Sanga in 1527. After Babur's death in 1530 his son Humayun succeeded him. When Humayun was busy in Gujarat, Sher Shah started consolidating himself in Bihar and Bengal and moved towards Agra. Humayun was defeated in the battle of Kannauj in 1540 and Sher Shah was able to establish the second Afghan empire which continued from 1540 to 1555. However, in 1555 Humayun was again successful in capturing Agra, Delhi and other lost territories from the Afghans and re-established the Mughal rule. After Humayun's sudden death Akbar became the emperor at a tender age of 13 and Bairam Khan was made the regent. Akbar followed a policy of expansion after consolidating his hold on throne. He won over the Rajput kingdoms to his side either through matrimonial alliances or by invading the territories. He brought Gujarat, Bihar, Bengal, Punjab and the whole of north-west under the Mughal control. He also annexed Ahmednagar, Berar, Burhanpur, Asisgarh etc. in the Deccan. Jahangir also followed the expansionist policy in the Deccan. But he could not get much success here and lost few of the territories. Shahjahan was able to take control of Bijapur and Golconda in 1636. Aurangzeb also followed an aggressive policy in the Deccan and remained involved in conflict with the Marathas for most of his rule. Under Aurangzeb, the Mughal empire reached its greatest territorial limits. Ironically, the decline of the Mughal empire also began under Aurangzeb. There was a break up of the association with regional forces like the Rajputs and the Marathas.

**Notes****TERMINAL QUESTIONS**

1. Trace the establishment of the Mughal rule in India under Babur.
2. Who was Akbar's regent? Who were the major political powers in India in the initial years of Akbar's rule?
3. How did Akbar establish Mughal supremacy in the Deccan?
4. How was Aurangzeb's policy towards Rajputs different from Akbar?
5. How did Aurangzeb face the Marathas?

**ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****10.1**

1. Babur invaded India because he was facing tough situations in Central Asia. The unstable political situation in India also played a role.
2. Babur effectively applied the Rumi (Ottoman) method of warfare.
3. Problems faced by Babur:
 - (a) His nobles and commanders were eager to return to central Asia.
 - (b) The Rajputs were rallying around under the leadership of Rana Sanga.
1. Rana Sanga and Medini Rai

10.2

1. Humayun failed to defeat Sher Shah because his brother Hindal Mirza, who was supposed to provide supplies for his army, declared his independence.
2. Sher Khan was a great tactician and able military commander. After defeating Humayun he emerged as the leader of the Afghans.
3.
 - (a) Malwa;
 - (b) Rajputana
 - (c) Sindh
 - (d) Punjab
 - (e) Bengal
4.
 - (a) He streamlined local administration at Sarkar and Pargana level.
 - (b) He built Grand Trunk Road.

10.3

1. Akbar removed Bairam Khan because he had assumed full control and was behaving independently.
2. Rajputs, Afghans, Ahmednagar, Kabul and Qandhar
3. Maharana Pratap of Mewar
4. Chand Bibi; Ahmednagar

**Notes****10.4**

1. Malik Ambar
2. Bijapur and Goleconda
3. Mir Jumla
4. The Marathas

10.5

1. Bijapur and Golconda accepted Mughal Suzerinty and agreed to Pay annual trib-utes
2. Aurangzeb followed on aggressive policy & remained involved in conflict
3. Raigarh; Chatrapati
4. Shahjahan

HINTS TO TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Refer to section 10.1 para 4 & 5
2. Bairam Khan;
Refer to section 10.4 under Akbar
3. Refer to Section 10.4 (Deccan)
4. Refer to section 10.5 (Rajputs)
5. Refer to section 10.5 (Marathas)