

Lesson 10

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MUGHALRULE

Summary

In the previous chapter you studied about the establishment and consolidation of Delhi Sultanate. Now 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.

ADVENT OF BABUR (1526–30)

- Babur traced his lineage from Timur the great conqueror of Central Asia and to Chengiz Khan the distinguished conqueror.
- 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.
- Daulat Khan Lodi, the Governor of Punjab and Rajput king of Mewar Rana Sanga sent word to Babur to invade India.
- 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.
- Ibrahim Lodi was defeated in the battle of Panipat.
- 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.
- Babur sent his son Humayun to face the eastern Afghans.

- The forces of Babur and Rana Sanga met at Khanwa, Rana Sanga was defeated in 1527
- These victories were a step forward in the direction of the establishment of Mughal empire.

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

- After the death of Babur in 1530, his son Humayun succeeded him.
- Humayun wanted to avoid a combined opposition of Afghans from east and the west.
- While Humayun was besieging Chunar in the east, Bahadur Shah had started expanding towards Malwa and Rajputana.
- Bahadur Shah attacked Chittor in 1534.
- Chittor had strategic advantage as it could provide a strong base.
- 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 Bahadur Shah, Sher Shah started consolidating himself in Bihar and Bengal.
- Humayun was quite suspicious of Sher Shah's ambitions but failed to estimate his capabilities.
- 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.
- 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
- Sher Shah 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).
- While besieging the fort of Kalinjar he died in 1545 in an accidental blast of gun powder.
- Sher Shah introduced very important changes in administration and revenue system.
- The most important ones were: 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.
- Humayun 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.

SECOND AFGHAN EMPIRE (1540–1555)

- 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.
- After expelling Humayun he started consolidating his position in Northern and Eastern India.

THE MUGHAL EMPIRE FROM AKBAR TO AURANGZEB

- Akbar was only thirteen years old at the time of Humayun's death.
- Bairam Khan served as the regent of the Mughal emperor Akbar from 1556 to 1560.
- Bairam Khan became the *wakil* of the kingdom with the title of *Khan-i-Khanan*.
- The first step that Akbar took after the dismissal of Bairam Khan was to put an end to the conflict within the nobility
- Akbar started his policy of expansion with central India

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.

- His son later on became an influential noble under Akbar and is famous as Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khana.

Rajasthan

- Akbar was fully aware of the importance of Rajput kingdoms and wanted them as allies in his ambition of establishing a large empire.
- He also entered into matrimonial alliances with the Rajput rulers like Bharmal
- By 1570 Akbar had captured almost the whole of Rajasthan.
- 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
- 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.

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.
- 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

- Akbar quickly suppressed the rebellion.
- 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.
- 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
- Akbar decided to march towards Lahore himself
- Hakim Mirza immediately retreated and Akbar controlled the whole region.
- Another important development in the North-West region was the rebellion of Roshanai who captured the road between Kabul and Hindustan.
- Akbar appointed Zain Khan as commander of a strong force to suppress the Roshanais and establish Mughal control in the region.
- Akbar deputed Raja Todar Mal and Raja Man Singh to suppress the rebellion and they were successful in defeating the Roshanais
- 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
- Akbar decided on a policy of aggression.
- The first expedition was dispatched to Ahmednagar under the command of Prince Murad and Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan.

- In 1595, the Mughal forces invaded Ahmednagar
- 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.
- The territorial expansion under Akbar gave a definite shape to the Mughal Empire
- Some territories were added during the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb in the Deccan and North East of India.

Jahangir and Shahjahan

- Jahangir decided to follow Akbar's expansionist policy in the Deccan.
- During the reign of Jahangir there was no addition to the Mughal territory in Deccan.
- After ascending the throne, Shah Jahan ordered Khan Jahan Lodi to recover Balaghat but as the latter failed
- Khan Jahan turned hostile and rebelled.
- He took shelter with Nizam Shah.
- This infuriated Shah Jahan decided to follow aggressive policy towards the Deccan states.
- He decided to isolate Ahmednagar and win over Bijapur and Marathas.
- Finally, in 1636 treaties were signed with Bijapur and Golconda.
- A distinct change in Mughal policy came towards 1656–57 when the treaties were ignored.
- Shah Jahan asked Aurangzeb to conquer and annex the territories of Deccan kingdoms.

Aurangzeb

- Aurangzeb believed in an aggressive policy towards Deccan.
- Apart from Deccan Aurangzeb could expand Mughal power in Assam in the northeast region.

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 Marathas posed a major challenge to the sovereignty of the Mughals under Aurangzeb
- 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.
- Ironically, the decline of the Mughal empire also began under Aurangzeb.
- There was a breakup of the association with regional forces like the Rajputs and the Marathas.

Evaluate yourself

Q. Victory at Panipat provided Babur a firm ground to consolidate his conquests. Examine.

Q. List the challenges faced by Humayun after Babur's death.

Q. List the main point of agreement with Bijapur.