

Mughal administration assignment



**ASSIGN
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MUGHAL ADMINISTRATION | | | by | | Abdur Rahim Sajid | | M. Phil-I | | |

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The Mughal Empire India in the 16th century had numerous unpopular rulers, both Muslim and Hindu, with an absence of common bodies of laws or institutions.

External developments also played a role in the rise of the Mughal Empire. The circumnavigation of Africa by the Portuguese explorer “Vasco da Gama” in 1498 allowed Europeans to challenge Arab control of the trading routes between Europe and Asia. In Central Asia and Afghanistan, shifts in power pushed Babur of Ferghana (in present-day Uzbekistan) southward, first to Kabul and then to India. The Mughal Empire lasted for more than three centuries. The Mughal Empire was one of the largest centralized states in pre modern history and was the precursor to the British Indian Empire.

The Mughals were the last powerful descendants of the Mongols; descended from Mongol stock in Turkestan, in the early 1500's they engaged in the last series of conquests to bear the Mongol name. They were, however, quite distant from their original ancestors. The Mughals had become Islamic, for the Middle Eastern Mongol invaders had converted to Islam long before. They had also thoroughly absorbed Middle Eastern culture, especially Persian culture (the Persian word for Mongol is "Mughal," from which we get the English word, "mogul," meaning "tycoon"), and their wars of invasion spread Persian culture throughout India.

Much of Persian culture was based on Shi'a Islam and its mystical doctrine of a Divine Light present in the earth in the form of the Imam, or religious guide on earth. It was equally influenced by Sufi mysticism, a branch of Islamic religion that stressed the mystical union of human with god. Much of Persian culture was also derived from Mongolian culture, particularly art, which was based on Chinese models of painting. In many ways, then, the Mughal invasion of India and its importation of Persian culture was a roundabout way of importing far eastern culture into India.

India was no stranger to Islam; it had been invaded by Muslim forces as early as the seventh century AD, and since the early 1300's, the south-eastern portion of India, the Rajput, was dominated by the Dehli sultan, a Turkish invader. Despite their illustrious ancestors, the Mughals began humbly. When the great Mughal conqueror, Babur the Tiger, came to power in 1483, he ruled over a very small kingdom in Turkestan. With the smallest of armies, he managed to conquer first Afghanistan and then the Dehli sultanate and all of Hindustan.

Faced with overwhelming odds (when he fought the Dehli Sultan he was outnumbered ten to one), he overcame his enemies with a new technology: firearms. For this reason, Western historians have dubbed the Mughal Empire, the first gunpowder empire. Mughal Emperors Certain important particulars regarding the Mughal Emperors is as under: ? Zaheeruddin Babur (1526-1530) born on Feb 23, 1483 and died on Dec 26, 1530 was the founder of the Mughal Dynasty. ? Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun (1530-1540, 1555-1556) born on Mar 6, 1508 and died in Jan 1556.

Reign interrupted by Suri Dynasty. Youth and inexperience at ascension led to his being regarded as a less effective ruler than usurper, Sher Shah Suri. Restored rule was more unified and effective than initial reign of 1530-1540; left unified empire for his son, Akbar. ? Jalaluddin Mohammed Akbar (1556-1605) born on Nov 14, 1542 and died on Oct 27, 1605. He greatly expanded the Empire and is regarded as the most illustrious ruler of the Mughal Dynasty as he set up the empire's various institutions; he married Mariam-uz-Zamani, a Rajput princess.

He eventually founded Din-i-Ilahi, a syncretic religion based on Hinduism and Islam. One of his most famous construction marvels was the Lahore Fort. ? Nuruddin Mohammed Jahangir (1605-1627) born in Oct 1569 and died in 1627. He set the precedent for sons rebelling against their Emperor fathers. Opened first relations with the British East India Company. Reportedly was an alcoholic and his wife Empress Nur Jahan became the real power behind the throne and competently ruled in his place. ? Shahabuddin Mohammed Shah Jahan (1627-1658) born on Jan 5, 1592 and died in 1666.

Under him, Mughal art and architecture reached their zenith; constructed the Taj Mahal, Jama Masjid, Red Fort, Jahangir mausoleum and Shalimar Gardens in Lahore. Deposed and imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb. ? Mohiuddin Mohammed Aurangzeb Alamgir (1658-1707) born on Oct 21, 1618 and died on Mar 3, 1707. He was more conservative in behavior and far less extravagant as the previous emperors; brought back Islamic law, and the jizya tax. He is well-known for his personal piety and for leading an extremely simple and pious life. His conquests expanded the empire to its greatest extent, incorporating much of southern India.

A major and last desperate attempt was also made to conquer Assam during his rule but with no success at Battle of Saraighat; the over-stretched empire would face challenges after his death. Nature of Mughal Administration Some historians hold that Mughal administrative structure was highly centralised. This centralization is manifested in the efficient working of land revenue system, mansab and jagir, uniform coinage, etc. But Stephen P. Blake and J. F. Richards, while they accept the centralising tendencies, point out that the Mughal Empire was 'patrimonial bureaucratic'.

For them, everything centred around the imperial household and the vast bureaucracy. For Streusand, despite being centralised, the Mughal structure was less centralised at its periphery. Chetan Singh supports this view. He is of the opinion that even in the 17th century the Mughal Empire was not very centralised. For him, the centralised structure controlled through the efficient working of jagirdari seems to hold little ground. According to him, jagir transfers were not as frequent as they appear, and the local elements at the periphery were quite successful in influencing the policies at the centre.

The extent to which the Mughal Empire was centralised in practice can be a matter of debate. However, theoretically the Mughal administrative structure seems to be highly ‘centralised and bureaucratic’ in nature. The Emperor was the fountainhead of all powers, and bureaucracy was mere *banda-i dargah* (slaves of the court). In spite of the vast range of powers enjoyed by the central ministers, they were not allowed to usurp and interfere in each others’ jurisdiction nor to assume autocratic powers. The Mughals through a system of checks and balances prevented any minister or officer from gaining unlimited powers.

Administration in Mughal Empire In Islam the real sovereign of the world is Allah and Khalifah is his representative on the earth. Muslim rulers in India prior to Akbar recognized the authority of Khalifa but the institution of Kingship as mentioned by Abul Fazl in *Aziz-i-Akbari* that the Padshah or Shahansha is the vice-regent of god on earth, *Farr-i-Izadi* has given new dimension to the theory Kingship in India. Emperor- The form of Mughal government was despotic, monarchy, the emperor was the head of the executive, legislature, judiciary and the Army, the only limits on the autocracy of the King were the mobility and the Ulema.

The basic objective of the Mughal administrative setup was to exercise control over the different parts of the Empire so that recalcitrant elements challenging the Mughal sovereignty could be checked. You will appreciate the difficulties if you could visualise that each part of the Mughal Empire was inhabited by diverse set of people over whom their respective rulers or dominant chieftains exerted considerable influence. The ingenuity of the Mughal polity lies in the fact that it not only incorporated these refractory

rulers and chieftains into its administrative setup but also enrolled them into military service.

The logical corollary of sustaining the huge administration was to appropriate maximum rural surplus in the form of land revenue for which the Mughal polity was geared to. The Mughals tried to establish highly centralised bureaucratic machinery which was based on ‘direct’ command. The Emperor was the head of all powers. A number of central ministers were directly appointed by the Emperor to assist him in the administration. Similarly, to keep them in check, he adopted the principle of checks and balances. To have an effective administration, the Empire was divided into subas (provinces), sarkars, parganas and villages.

The provincial administration was on the lines of the Centre, headed by separate officers. Here also none of the officer enjoyed supreme powers. Both the subadars and diwans worked independently and were responsible to the Centre only. Cities and port-towns had separate administrative machinery. The kotwal in the cities and mutasaddis in the port towns normally took care of the law and order situation. The Mughals had certain military outposts as well where separate qila’dars were appointed. At local level, the pargana was the most important administrative unit and the villages formed the smallest unit of administration.

Administration under Sher Shah In the process of evolution of Mughal administrative machinery, the Afghan interval (1540-1555) was significant. Under Sher Shah Suri the experiment in the formation of a bureaucracy under a centralised tyranny had taken place. Akbar gave it a definite shape.

Thus, it can be said that Sher Shah anticipated Akbar. First, the administrative measures of Sher Shah will be studied. There is very little information about the working of central administration under Sher Shah but he was an autocrat and kept everything under his direct control and supervision.

Therefore, things went well so long as he was alive: his successors were no match to him. The village was the smallest unit of administration. A group of villages constituted a pargana and a few parganas a shiqq which was equivalent to Mughal sarkar. However, in few areas, such as Punjab, Bengal, Malwa, etc. several shiqqs were placed under an officer whom we can equate with the Mughal subadar. The village-head was known as muqaddam who worked as the sole link between the government and the village. Though he was not the government servant, nonetheless he was responsible for maintaining law and order in his village.

Next comes the patwari, a village record-keeper. He was also not an employee of the state but of the village community. The shiqqdar was incharge of the pargana. His chief function was to collect the revenue at pargana level. He was frequently transferred under Sher Shah. He was assisted by two karkuns (clerks) who kept the records both in Hindi and Persian. The munsif was responsible for measuring the land, etc. Both (shiqqdar and munsif) were directly appointed by the government. The qanungo maintained the records at pargana level. He was a hereditary semi-official.

The fotadar was entrusted with the treasury of the pargana. A number of parganas formed a sarkar (shiqq), headed by shiqqdar-i shigddaran. He was the supervisor and executive officer over the shiqqdars of all the parganas in a sarkar (shiqq). The munsif-i munsifan performed the duties of amin (created later by the Mughals) at sarkar (shiqq) level. There were 66 sarkars (shiqqs) in Sher Shah's Empire. Sher Shah attached great importance to the administration of justice. Civil cases of the Muslims were taken care of by the qazi, while the criminal cases were tried by the shiqqdar.

The largest responsibility for detecting crimes rested upon muqaddams. If the muqaddam of the village, where the crime was committed, failed to capture the culprit, he was liable to severe punishment. Central Administration The Mughal Empire had pan-Indian character. Babur and Humayun for reasons of their brief reign and that of being busy in military matters could not concentrate on establishing a definite system or pattern in administration. By the end of Akbar's reign we find establishment of elaborate offices with assigned functions to the heads of offices.

The rules and regulations guiding both their public and private conduct had all been fixed so that the officers were converted into what can be termed the Apparatus of the Empire. The Emperor The ancient Indian traditions had always supported a strong ruler. The Muslim jurists and writers also held the same view. Thus, the concept of divine origin of monarchy could easily find credence among the Indian people. It is not surprising that the Mughals publicised their jharokha darshan with great deal of pomp and show in which the Emperor appeared.

At an appointed hour before the general public, the myth being that a mere look of his majesty would redress their grievances. With such popular perception of the ruler, it is obvious that all officers in Mughal administration owed their position and power to the Emperor. Their appointment, promotion, demotion, and termination were subject to the ruler's personal preference and whims. Wakil and Wazir The institution of wizarat (or wikalat since both were used interchangeably), according to some accounts, can be traced back to the Abbasi Caliphs. Under the Delhi Sultans, the wazir enjoyed both civil and military powers. But under Balban his powers were reduced when the Sultan bifurcated the military powers under diwan`arz. As for Sher Shah, this office remained almost in abeyance under the Afghans. The position of the wazir revived under the early Mughals. Babur's wazir Nizamuddin Muhammad Khalifi enjoyed both the civil and military powers. Humayun's wazir Hindu Beg also virtually enjoyed great powers. The period of Bairam Khan's regency (1556-60) saw the rise of the wakil-wazir with unlimited powers under Bairam Khan.

In the 8th regnal year (1564-65), Akbar took away the financial powers of the wakil and entrusted it into the hands of the diwan kul (Finance Minister). Separation of finance gave a jolt to the wakil's power. However, the wakil continued to enjoy the highest place in the Mughal bureaucratic hierarchy despite reduction in his powers. Diwani Kul We have already seen how Akbar strengthened the office of the diwan by entrusting the revenue powers to the diwan. The chief diwan (diwani' kul) was made responsible for revenue and finances. His primary duty was to supervise the imperial treasury and check all accounts.

He personally inspected all transactions and payments in all departments. He maintained direct contact with the provincial diwans and their functioning was put under his His seal and signatures were necessary for the validation of all official papers involving revenue. The entire revenue collection and expenditure machinery of the Empire was under his charge. No fresh order of appointment or promotion could be affected without his seal. To check the diwan's power, the Mughal Emperor asked the diwan to submit the report on state finances daily.

The central revenue ministry was divided into many departments to look after the specific needs of the Empire. For example: diwani aalisa, diwani tan (for cash salary), diwani jagir, diwani buyutat (royal household), etc. Each branch was further subdivided into several sections manned by a secretary, superintendents and clerks. The mustaufi was the auditor, and the mushrif was the chief accountant. The khazanadar looked after the Imperial treasury. Mir Bakhshi The mir'arz of Delhi Sultante changed its nomenclature to mir bakhshi under the Mughals.

All orders of appointments of mansabdars and their salary papers were endorsed and passed by him. He personally supervised the branding of the horses (dagh) and checked the muster-roll (chehra) of the soldiers. On the basis of his verification, the amount of the salary was certified. Only then the ' diwan made entry in his records and placed it before the king. Mir bakhshi placed all ' matters pertaining to the military department before the Emperor. The new entrants, seeking service, were presented before the Emperor by the mir bakhshi. He dealt directly with provincial bakhshis and wagaiaavis.

He accompanied the Emperor on tours, pleasure trips, hunting expeditions, battlefield, etc. His duty was to check whether proper places were allotted to the mansabdars according to their rank at the court. His darbar duties considerably added to his prestige and influence. The mir bakhshi was assisted by other bakhshis at central level. The first three were known as 1st, 2nd and 3rd bakhshi;. Besides, there were separate bakhshis for the abadis (special imperial troopers) and domestic servants of the royal household (bakhshi-i shagird pasha). Mir Saman

The mir saman was the officer incharge of the royal karkhanas. He was also known as saman. He was the chief executive officer responsible for the purchase of all kinds of articles and their storage for the royal household. Another important duty was to supervise the manufacture of different articles, be it weapons of war or articles of luxury. He was directly under the Emperor but for sanction of money and auditing of accounts he was to contact the diwan. Under the mir saman there were several officers, including the diwani buyutat and tahvildar (cash keeper). Sadr-us Sudur

The sadr-us sudur was the head of the religious department. His chief duty was to protect the laws of the shari'at. He was also connected with the distribution of charities – both cash (wazifa) and land grants (suyurghal, in'am, madad-i ma'ash). Initially as the head of the judicial department, he supervised the appointment of qazis and muftis. Before Shah Jahan's reign, the posts of the chief qazi and sadr-us sudur were combined and the same, person held the charge of both the departments. However, under Aurangzeb, the post of the chief qazi (qazi-ul quzzat) and the sadr-us sudur got separated.

It led to sharp curtailment of sadr's power. Now in the capacity of sadr, he supervised assignment of allowances and looked after the charitable grants. He also looked into whether the grants were given to the right persons and utilized properly. He scrutinized applications for all such grants, both fresh and renewals, and presented before the Emperor for sanction. Alms were also distributed through him. Qazi-ul Quzzat The chief qazi was known as qazi-ul quzzat. He was the head of the judiciary. (We have already mentioned that prior to Aurangzeb's reign his powers were combined in sadr-us sudur. His principal duty was to administer the shariat law both in civil and criminal cases. In the capacity of the chief qazi, he looked into the appointment of the qazis in the suba, sarkar, pargana and town levels. There was a separate qazi for army also. Besides the qazi-ul quzzat, another important judicial officer was mir`adl. Abul Fazl emphasized the need to have a mir`adl in addition to qazi, for the qazi was to hear and decide the cases while mir`adl was to execute the orders of the court. The muhtasibs (censor of public' morals) was to ensure the general observance of the rules of morality.

His job was to keep in check the forbidden practices – wine drinking, use of bhang and other intoxicants, gambling, etc. In addition, he also performed some secular duties-examining weights and measures, enforcing fair prices, etc. Provincial Administration In 1580, Akbar divided the Empire into twelve subas (later on, three more were added). Each suba was divided into a number of sarkars and these were further divided into parganas and mahals. During Shah Jahan's reign, another administrative unit chakla came into existence. It was a cluster of a number of parganas. Provincial Governor

The governor of a suba (subadar) was directly appointed by the Emperor. Usually the tenure of a subadar was around three years. Among the duties of the subadar, the most important one was to look after the welfare of the people and the army. He was responsible for the general law and order problem in the suba. A successful subadar was one who would encourage agriculture, trade and commerce. He was supposed to take up welfare activities like construction of sarais, gardens, wells, water reservoirs, etc. He was to take steps to enhance the revenue of the state. Diwan The provincial diwan was appointed by the Emperor.

He was an independent officer answerable to the Centre. He was the head of the revenue department in the suba. The provincial diwan supervised the revenue collection in the suba and maintained accounts of all expenditure incurred in the form of salaries of the officials and subordinates in the suba. The diwan was also to take steps to increase the area under cultivation. In many cases advance loans (taqavi) were given to the peasants through his office. A roznamcha (daily register) was maintained by the diwan which carried entries of amount that was deposited in the royal treasury by the revenue officials and zamindars.

A large number of clerks worked under him. Thus, by making the diwan independent of the subadar and by putting financial matters under the former, the Mughals were successful in checking the subadar from becoming independent. Bakhshi The bakhshi was appointed by the imperial court at the recommendation of the mir bakhshi. He performed exactly the same military functions as were performed by his counterpart at the Centre. He was responsible for checking and inspecting the horses and soldiers

maintained by the mansabdars in the suba. He issued the paybills of both the mansabdars and the soldiers.

It was his duty to prepare a list of deceased mansabdars, but often news reporters (waqai navis) of the parganas directly sent information to the provincial diwan. Often his office was combined with waqa'inigar: In this capacity his duty was to inform the Centre the happenings in his province. To facilitate his work, he posted his agents in the parganas and various important offices. Darogha-i Dak and the Secret Services Developing a communication network was very essential to govern a vast Empire. A separate department was assigned this important task.

The imperial postal system was established for sending instructions to the far-flung areas of the Empire. The same channel was used for receiving information. At every suba headquarters, darogha-i dak was appointed for this purpose. His duty was to pass on letters through the postal runners (mewras) to the court. For this purpose, a number of dak chowkis were maintained throughout the Empire where runners were stationed who carried the post to the next chowki. Horses and boats were also used to help in speedy delivery. At the provincial level, waq'ai navis and waqai nigars were appointed to supply the reports directly to the Emperor.

Besides, there were also sawanih nigar to provide confidential reports to the Emperor. Many reports of these secret service agents are available to us. They are very important sources of the history of the period. Thus, the Mughals kept a watch over their officials in the provinces through offices and institutions independent of each other. Besides, the Mughal Emperors'

frequent visits to every suba and the system of frequent transfers of the officials after a period of three years on average helped the Mughals in checking the officials.

But the possibility of rebellion always existed and therefore, constant vigil through an organised system of intelligence network was established. Local Administration In this section, we will discuss the working of administration at the sarkar, pargana and mauza (village) levels. Sarkars At the sarkar level, there were two important functionaries, the faujdar and the amalguzar. Faujdar He was the executive head of the sarkar. But his area of influence seems more complex. He was not only appointed at the sarkar level, but sometimes within a sarkar a number of faujdars existed.

At times their jurisdiction spread over two full sarkars. We hear different faujdars appointed to chaklas as well. It seems his duty was mainly to take care of rebellions, and law and order problems. His jurisdiction was decided according to the needs of the region. His primary duty was to safeguard the life and property of the residents of the area under his jurisdiction. He was to ensure safe passage to traders within his jurisdiction. As the chief executive of the region, the faujdar was to keep vigil over the recalcitrant zamindars. In special circumstances, he was to help the amalguzar in matters of revenue collection.

Amalguzar The most important revenue collector was the amil or amalguzar. His primary duty was to assess and supervise the revenue collection through other subordinate officials. A good amil was supposed to increase the land under cultivation and induce the peasants to pay revenue willingly without

coercion. All accounts were to be maintained by him. Daily receipts and expenditure reports were sent by him to the provincial diwan. Thanedar The thana was a place where army was stationed for the preservation of law and order. They were to arrange provisions for the army as well.

These thanes were established specifically in disturbed areas and around the cities. Its head was designated as tanedar. He was appointed at the recommendation of the subadar and diwan. He was generally placed under the faujdar of the area. Pargana Administration The parganas were the administrative units below the sarkar. The shiqqdar was the executive officer of the pargana and assisted the smile in revenue collection. The amil looked after the revenue collection at the pargana level also. His duties were similar to those of the amalguzar at the sarkar level. The qanungos kept all the records pertaining to the land in his area.

He was to take now of different crops in the pargana. The village was the lowest administrative unit. The muqaddam was the village-headman while the patwari took care of the village revenue records. Under the Mu4hals, the pattern of village administration remained almost on the same lines as it was under Sher Shah. Town, Fort and Port Administration To administer the cities and ports, the Mughals maintained separate administrative machinery. Kotwal For urban centres, the imperial court appointed kotwals whose primary duty was to safeguard the life and property of townsmen.

He may be compared to the present day police officer in the towns and cities. The kotwal was also to maintain a register for keeping records of people coming and going out of the town. Every outsider had to take a

permit from him before entering or leaving the town. The kotwal was to ensure that no illicit liquor was manufactured in his area. He also acted as superintendent of weights and measures used by the merchants and shopkeepers. Qil'adar The Mughal Empire had a large number of qilas (forts) situated in various parts of the country. Many of these were located at strategically important places.

Each fortress was like a mini township with a large garrison. Each fort was placed under an officer called qil'adar. A cursory survey of the persons appointed as qiladars reveals that mansabdars with high ranks, generally were appointed. He was incharge of the general administration of fort and the areas assigned in jagir to the qiladar. Sometimes, the qiladars were asked to perform the duties of the faujdar in that region. Port Administration The Mughals were aware of the economic importance of the sea-ports as these were the centres of brisk commercial activities.

The port administration was independent of the provincial authority. The governor of the ports was called mutasaddi, who was directly appointed by the emperor. Sometimes the office of the mutasaddi was auctioned and given to the highest bidder. The mutasaddi collected taxes on merchandise and maintained a custom-house. He also supervised the minthouse at the port. The shahbandar was his subordinate who was mainly concerned with the custom-house. Military Organization The weakest part of Mughal administration was the military organization, precisely the area where one might have expected the most efficient centralized control.

But instead of a large standing army, the emperors depended upon four different classes of troops for the maintenance of order and the defence of the empire's borders. There were, first of all, the soldiers supplied by the mansabdars; the number a mansabdar was expected to provide upon the demand of the emperor were specified in his warrant of appointment or were indicated by his rank. Another class of troops under the command of a mansabdar was known as dakhili, whose services were paid for by the state.

A third class were the ahadis, or “gentlemen troopers,” drawing higher pay than those in the ordinary service; according to the Ain-i-Akbari, they might get as much as five hundred rupees a month, in contrast to the seven or eight rupees of the regular troopers. Finally, the chiefs who had been permitted to retain a degree of autonomy were required to provide contingents under their own command. The artillery was paid wholly out of the imperial treasury. Recognizing its importance, Akbar had given it his special attention, but his efforts to secure from the Portuguese some of their better pieces were unsuccessful.

European gunners were employed later on in appreciable numbers, but no permanent improvement was effected. During the eighteenth century the Mughal army shared in the decline of the other imperial institutions, and little advantage was taken of technical improvements in weaponry. When Nadir Shah invaded India in 1739 the jazair or swivel guns employed by his troops were superior to anything the Mughals could bring against them. There are no existing statistical records of the strength of the Mughal army.

The best estimate is probably that of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, who concluded from evidence from the reign of Shah Jahan that in 1648 the army consisted of 440, 000 infantry, musketeers, and artillery men, and 185, 000 cavalry commanded by princes and nobles. The army could still count on the personal valor of the commander of an individual contingent, but pitted against disciplined European soldiers, or hardy, resourceful Maratha horsemen, it did not prove effective. The loose organization of the army, the paucity of officers, the failure to build up a well-knit and active pyramidal organization, reduced the efficiency of the army.

There were no uniforms, and discipline was poor, particularly in lower ranks. The cavalry was the only branch which was considered respectable and fit for a gentleman to join, while the ordinary “ Indian foot soldier was little more than a night watchman and guardian over baggage. The Mughal practice of taking along a great number of camp followers, including occasionally the families of the soldiers and the royal harem, made the army a very cumbersome, slow-moving organization. Descendants of a people who knew nothing of the sea, the Mughals had little success in creating a navy.

They had no large fighting vessels, and the ships that they maintained were primarily for the furtherance of the commercial operations of the state. After the conquest of Gujarat, the Mughal army reached the shores of the Indian Ocean, but Akbar failed to build a navy. He tacitly acquiesced in the Portuguese supremacy by making no effort to challenge their authority, and by taking out licenses from them for the ships which he sent to the Red Sea. To deal with the pirates in the Bay of Bengal, and also for the purpose of

communication over the vast river system of Bengal, a river flotilla was maintained at Dacca.

Under Akbar it consisted of 768 small armed vessels and boats, estimated to cost about 29, 000 rupees a month. It was not effective against the Magh and Portuguese pirates, but it was reorganized under the efficient administration of Mir Jumla and Shayista Khan, and in 1664 the latter was able to inflict a decisive blow against the pirates. A few years later Aurangzeb had an opportunity to make at least tentative arrangements for the defence of the seas along the west coast of India. A coastal chieftain known as the Sidi of Janjira had provided protection for the ships and ports of the sultan of Bijapur.

When the Sidi's territories were attacked by Shivaji, however, the sultan did not come to his assistance, and in 1670 the Sidi offered his services to Aurangzeb. Since Aurangzeb needed all the help he could get in the Deccan, he took the Sidi into his service, placing him under the Mughal governor of Surat, and subsidizing his fleet. The Sidi was assisted by another fleet based on Surat, and in every way treated as an official of the empire, but the Mughal command of the sea was too slight to make supervision of so independent a force possible.

In course of time his descendants established themselves as the rulers of the state of Janjira south of Bombay. * * * * * References o Aziz, Abdul. (2002). The Mughal Court and its Institutions. Al-Faisal Lahore. o Moss, Peter. (2002). Oxford History for Pakistan, Book Two. Oxford University Press. o Watson, Francis. (1999). India, A Concise History. C. S. Graphics. o Qureshi,

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