

**HUMAYUN'S STRUGGLE WITH THE RISING POWERS OF NORTHERN INDIA.****Khalid Bashir***Research Scholar B.U Bhopal.***Abstract**

This paper epitomises the struggle and the defeat of Humayun by the rising powers of India. The empire whose foundation was so arduously laid by Babur was nevertheless precarious and unstable in character. As soon as Humayun ascended the throne, he found himself surrounded by the difficulties on all sides in many ways. Babur had of course, defeated the Indian powers like the Rajputs, the Afghans etc., but he could not completely crush them. Babur could not do anything more than this short period of four years. In fact, the roots of Mughal dynasty had not yet gone deep into the Indian soil and were then, of course in firm. Muhammad Lodhi, Ibarim Lodhi's brother, had regained power in Bihar and eastern provinces after his defeat in the Battle of Gogra. Another Afghan Sardar Sher Khan had also consolidated his position considerably. Of the Afghan Sardars he was the most capable and intelligent leader, who was engaged day and night in consolidating and organising all the scattered Afghan power. On the other side, Bhadur Shah who was a very courageous and ambitious ruler had considerably improved strength, and was eagerly engaged in his effort to obtain the Delhi throne. The Rajputs too, had begun to reorganise their power after their defeats in the battles of Khanwa and Chanderi. According to Lanepoole, "His (Humayun's) name means fortunate and never was an unlucky sovereign so miscalled", As a matter of fact, the royal throne that he inherited from his father as his successor, was bed of throns and not that of roses.

Keywords: *Life, battles and events.*

Introduction:

Three days after the death of Babur, Humayun succeeded the throne of Delhi at the age of 23, December 30, 1530 A.D.¹ According R.C Majaumdar at the age of 22 Humayun succeeded his father 'Babur'². Babur had six sons Humayun, Kamran, Askari, Hindal, Anwar and Farooq, but at the time of his death he left four sons expect Anwar and Farooq as these two sons of Babur died in his life time. Naseer-ud-din Muhammad, surnamed Humayun 'the fortune', the successor of Babur, was the eldest of four survived sons of Babur, Karman (born 1514), Askari (born.1516), and Hindal (born. January 1519). Humayun was born at Kabul on 6 March 1508 from Babur's third wife Maham Begum³, daughter of Sultan Hussain Baiqra the ruler of Khurassan. Well educated and well-trained, Humayun gave a good account of himself as an administrator and general in the reign of his father. For about eight years from

the age of twelve, he governed the province of Badakshan in face of the opposition of the formidable Uzbeks and earned the reputation of a capable and popular governor. He also successfully administrated Sambhal, a turbulent part of India. In the battles of panipat and Kanhua, he distinguished himself as a brave warrior. He won brilliant victories in the campaigns against the Afghan chiefs of the east and extended his father's dominion over the territory from Kannauj (Qannauj) to Jaunpur and Ghazipur.

At the time of Babur's last illness, Humayun was in Sambhal and the chief minister, Nizamud-din Ali Khalifa, plotted to deprive Humayun of the succession and secure the throne for Mahadi Khwaja, a relation of the royal family through his marriage. The plan came to nothing; because Khalifa was soon irritated at the over-bearing conduct of his nominee and abandoned his cause. Humayun arrived just in time to attend dying father, and to be formally acknowledged as the successor of his father to the imperial throne. On Friday December 29 1530 (Jumada1 9th, 937^h), three days after the death of his father (Babur), Humayun ascended the throne at Agra amidst universal rejoicings. The Mughal princes and nobles offered allegiance to him. The new emperor confirmed in their jagirs and offices. He gave his brother Kamran the government of Kabul and Qandhar which he had held for some time. He granted Sambhal to Askari and Alwar to Hindal Mirza Sulaiman, his cousin, were confirmed in the governorship of Badakshan. He treated his kinsmen and relations generously and gave everyone a share in the bounties of his father's empire.⁴

The name Humayun implies 'fortunate' but he proved to be one of the most unlucky monarchs who ever sat upon the throne of Delhi. Along with the empire, he inherited many difficulties for which he had not owed any personal responsibility. The Mughal rule had not yet taken deep roots in to the soil of the country (India). The Mughals were still treated as foreigners; and were hated and despised by the Indians, both Hindus and Muslims. Babur had done little to consolidate his Indian possessions; these were hurriedly parcelled out among his ambitious nobles who had made tremendous sacrifices along with Babur in the conquest of India. Their attachment to Babur had been very much personal albeit their loyalty to his successor could not be guaranteed as a matter of course. The civil administration of Babur was far from satisfactory and royal treasury was almost empty at the time of his (Babur's) death. Therefore the throne of Agra and Delhi was not a bed of roses.

Discussion

The newly founded Mughal state in India was threatened by numerous internal as well as external enemies. A number of powerful Afghan nobles had been left un-subdued with the fold of the Mughal dominions. The Indian feudal chieftains, powerful Mughal nobles and

even the blood-relations of Humayun, withheld their whole-hearted cooperation from him. His cousins Muhammad Sulaiman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza, his brother-in-law Muhammad Zaman Mirza adopted an hostile attitude towards him (Humayun). To add insult to the injury, even his brothers did not remain loyal to him and tried to put him inconvenience at every stage of his life.⁵ At the time of Humayun's accession to the throne, Kamran was the governor of Kabul and Qandhar. He began to behave as an independent ruler and took forced possession of the Punjab as well. Humayun out of sheer generosity, did not take against him and was at once deprived of about half of his father's dominions. Askari and Hindal were weaklings but deceitful and often played in the hands of selfish Mughal nobles.

The Muslim rulers of Bengal and Gujrat were amongst the external enemies of Humayun. Nusrat Shah of Bengal had entered in to a friendly treaty with Babur; after the death of latter, however, he (Nusrat Shah) once again began to instigate and support the Afghan nobles of Bihar against Mughals. Bahadur Shah of Gujrat was a powerful and capable ruler; he had annexed the kingdom of Malwa also. Ever since the defeat of ever since the defeat of Rana Sanga at the hands of Babur, he (Bahadur Shah) had become very bold, so much so that, after the death of Babur, he began to aspire for the throne of Delhi. He (Bahadur Shah) gave shelter to the enemies of Humayun and extended liberal patronage to the fugitive Afghan nobles.

Siege of Kalinjar 1531: Six months after his accession, Humayun besieged the powerful fort of Kalinjar in Bundalkhand. Humayun devoted himself to his father's scheme of subjugating Rajputana, in order to re-insure the protection of the of the southern frontier of his empire. In view of the ambitions of Pratap Rudra, the powerful Rana of Kalinjar, he decided that immediate action was essential. The Rana threatened Kalpi, a place of considerable strategic importance for the Mughal empire. Accordingly Humayun laid siege of Kalinjar in August 1531. The siege had barely lasted a month, when came the disquieting news that Mahmud Lodi and other Afghan chiefs had captured Jaunpur. The rise of the Afghan danger obliged Humayun to revise his plan in Rajputana and turn his attention to the east. On the Raja's offer of presents, he abandoned the siege of Kalinjar and proceeded to deal with Afghans.⁶

The weakness of the empire were largely due to the system which Humayun inherited from his father (Babur) and which he himself continued in a more liberal manner, as a mark of his love and consideration for his brothers and relations. Babur had parcelled out the empire in to territories and estates among his sons and chiefs. This made the monarch dependent on the chiefs and also provided them with a footing for their ambitions. The inherent weakness of this system was not visible in the reign of an exceptionally strong ruler like Babur, it was,

however, revealed after the accession of his (Babur) good-natured son Humayun. Secure in the possession of their territories, his (Humayun) brothers as well as his cousins, the Mirzas of the family of Timur and the Khans of the Mughal family, began to entertain ambitions for further territories and even aspirations to the throne. The worst part of it was that they assailed him from within, when external enemies menaced him from without.

The Afghans, who could not forget the loss of their Sultanate, organised themselves first under Mahmud Lodi⁷ and then an able and shrewd leader, Sher Khan in a campaign to regain their sovereignty. Babur did not have time to root out the Afghans and he had to follow a conciliating policy towards the Afghans. He left Sher Khan and some other Afghan chiefs undisturbed in their territories in Bihar when they promised to be loyal Mughal throne. Because of this policy, the Afghans maintained a strong hold in Bihar, which, in due time, they turned in to a rallying centre against the Mughals. When the Afghan danger was developing, another danger gathered momentum from an unexpected quarter. Bahadur Shah⁸, the young and energetic king of Gujrat, establishing his suzerainty over the kings of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar and Berar had conquered Malwa and then turned to the subjugation of Rajputana. This posed a threat to the Mughal empire. Moreover, many Afghan chiefs, including Alam Lodi after his sojourn in Badakshan, had take refuge at the court of Gujarat (Bhadur Shah). Some rebellious Mughal princes also found shelter there. These chiefs incited and encouraged Bhadur Shah in his expansionist policy. Troubles began first in east. Mahmud Lodi, ever since his defeat at Ghogra (1529) had lived as a pensioner at the court of Nusrat Shah of Bengal. When Humayun was engaged in the siege of Kalingar, Mahmud Lodi and other Afghan chiefs occupied the imperial territory of Jaunpur. The emperor had necessarily to proceed to the east. Wasting a few days in besieng Chunar, he (Humayun) advanced against Mahamud Lodi. Because of rains and the news of Kamran's invasion of the Punjab, he was obliged to abandon the campaign in the east and hasten to the north.

Under the pretence of coming to congratulate his brother on his accession, Kamran quietly moved from Kabul and easily took possession of the Punjab from the imperial officers. He (Kamran) then wrote respectful letters, professing loyalty to Humayun and requesting him to grant him the Punjab and Multan. Humayun did not oppose Kamran; on the other hand, he (Humayun) formally conferred on his brother, by a farman, the Punjab and Hissar Firuza in addition to Kabul and Qandhar. By this concession, he strengthened the hands of his ambitious brother and gave him the command of the high road between the Punjab and Delhi. This substantially weakened Humayun, because his connection with central Asia was cut off. This also deprived him of his best recruiting ground of the Indus region and beyond.

Humayun made this big concession to Kamran to enlist his loyalty and co-operation in dealing with the enemies in the east. In this object also, it will be seen that he was disappointed. Having settled affairs with Kamran, Humayun left for the east. He (Humayun) defeated Mahmud Lodi and others at the battle of Deurah and recovered Jaunpur. He then laid a siege to the fort of Chunar. The siege dragged on for four months. About this time Humayun received the news that Bhadur Shah had advanced towards Chittor then held by Sher Khan. He felt that a formidable danger was threatening him from the south. Chittor and Mewar were the territories very near to Agra and Delhi. If these fell in to the hands of the ambitious king of Gujrat, they would serve him as a stepping-stone to the conquest of the north. Naturally, Humayun became anxious to avert such a threat to his empire. To meet this serious danger, Humayun withdraw from the siege of Chunar, accepting Sher Khan's formal submission and returned to his capital.⁹

War with Bhadur Shah of Gujarat (1535-1536): In spite of Bhadur shah's conciliatory policy Humayun could not win over Mohammad Sultan Mirza and Mohammad sultan Mirza, who were given jagirs in Bihar and Kanauj respectively. To convert him in to a staunch friend and supporter, Humayun confirmed Muhammad Zaman as governor of Bihar. In July 1534, the two Mirzas, in alliance with Wali Khub Mirza, broke in to rebellion; but they were defeated. Muhammad Zaman Mirza was taken prisoner and ordered to be blinded. But he managed to escape from being blinded and fled to Bhadur Shah of Gujrat, Humayun requested to Bhadur Shah to deliver the prisoners back to him, which the latter refused to do. He had already given shelter to a number of Afghan enemies of the Mughal ruler, especially Alam Khan Lodi, supported them in their design on the emperors territory. Bhadur Shah was an ambitious ruler, he annexed Malwa in 1531, captured the fort of Raisin and defeated the chief of Chittor in 1533. He had considerably added to his military strength by raising a corps of musketeers and securing the services of a notable gunner, Rumi Khan of Constantipole. He (Bhadur Shah) was fired with the ambition of accquiring Delhi and making himself emperor of northern India. He was, therefore, not in amood top listen to Humayun's demand. Along and acrimonious correspondence followed, ending in the declaration of war. This was inevitable, for a continued expansion of the dominion of Gujrat towards Rajasthan and Central India must have alarmed Humayun. Moreover, Bhadur Shah had already assisted Tatar Khan, son of Alam Khan Lodi, in equipping a powerful army and invading and capturing Bayana, which belonged to the Mughals. Humayun was obliged to despatch his brothers, Askari and Hindal, who recovered the fortress and defeated and killed Tatar Khan at Manderal in November 1534. This victory opened Malwa to Humayun, who easily entered

Sarangpur. Bhadur Shah had in the meantime, again laid siege to Chittor. Humayun adopted the same method of diplomacy with the threat of war to save Chittor. But this time failed to make any impression on the resolute invader, who stormed the fort in right earnest and captured it in a few days 8 March 1535.

The fall of Chittor roused Humayun to action and set his army in motion. He opened the campaign in a brilliant manner and proved himself as a resourceful general. He chose a strong position on the bank of an artificial lake near Mandasur for his encampment. Bhadur had no alternative except to fight the Mughal the Mughal forces. He took defensive warfare. Humayun sent detachments of horsemen to scour the country in the rear of the enemy's camp and cut off their supplies. Sufferings in Bhadur Shah's camp reached such a pitch that many of his soldiers deserted and he himself was obliged to flee to Mandu. Humayun scored a decisive victory at the battle of Mandasur (April, 1535). Enormous booty fell in to his hands. Being distrusted by his master, Rumi Khan, the commander of Gujrat artillery, secretly entered in to alliance with Humayun and assured him of his help. The Gujrat army was completely demoralised by the treachery of Rumi Khan. Finally, Bhadur Shah took shelter in the island of Diu and the whole of Malwa and Gujarat was occupied by Humayun. He appointed Askari as viceroy of Gujarat and himself returned to Mandu, to keep an eye on the east. Humayun's authority in Gujarat and Malwa proved short-lived. After Humayun's return to Mandu, dissensions broke out between Askari and other Mughal chiefs in Gujrat. Their dissensions and inaction gave opportunity to the Gujrati chiefs to organise themselves. They expelled the Mughals from their country and re-installed Bhadur Shah in his Kingdom. Bhadur pursued the retreating Mughals to Champanir. Tardi Beg, the Mughal commandant at Champanir, denied shelter to Askari and his men in the fort, on the suspicion that he had ambition for the throne. Assailed by the Gujarati forces in the rear, Askari took the road to Agra. At the news that Askari was proceeding towards the capital, Humayun became anxious for his throne and left Agra (March 1537). With Humayun's departure from Mandu, his authority in Malwa disappeared. Because his problems in the east, Humayun could not think of re-establishing his authority in Malwa and Gujarat. The dissensions of the Mughal officers in Gujrat were the main cause of the loss of Gujarat and Malwa. The inaction of Humayun after his brilliant campaign was also largely responsible for the collapse of his authority in these provinces. Lastly, the chiefs and people of Gujarat loved their king and valued their independence. In the face of popular opposition, it was not possible to small Mughal force to retain control of Gujarat.¹⁰

Contest with Sher Khan: While Humayun was busy in fighting against Bhadur Shah, Sher Khan¹¹ consolidated his position in Bihar. He had become the master of south Bihar, was in possession of the strong fort of Chunar and most of the Afghan nobles had gathered under his banner. In Bengal, Nusrat Shah had died and his successor Mohammad Lodi proved an incapable ruler. That gave further opportunity to Sher Khan to strengthen his power at the cost of Bengal. He attacked Bengal in 1536 A.D., besieged its capital Gaur and forced Mahamud to thirteen lakh dinars. In 1537 A.D., he (Sher Khan) again attacked Bengal. Only then Humayun realised that it was necessary to subdue Sher Khan.

In 1537 A.D. Humayun proceeded towards Bihar and first laid the siege of Chunargrah. Humayun could not capture the fort after six months. In the meantime Sher Khan had captured Gaur and looted all its treasure which he kept safe at the fort of Rhotasgrah. Humayun, thus lost valuable time in the siege of Chunargrah. Humayun reached Banaras and started negotiations with Sher Khan for peace. It was agreed that the province of Bengal would be handed over to Sher Khan under the suzerainty of Mughals and he would pay ten lakh rupees annually while Bihar would be taken over by the Mughals. But before the treaty could be signed, a messenger of Mahmud Shah arrived and requested Humayun to attack Bengal to save his master. Humayun broke off the negotiations with Sher Khan to delay the advance of Humayun. Jalal Khan successfully achieved his mission and returned to his father who had successfully finished his campaign in Bengal and returned to Bihar. Humayun therefore, faced no difficulty in capturing Bengal. According to *A.L. Srivastav*, *Humayun wasted eight months in Bengal and failed to maintain his communication with Delhi, Agra or even Banaras while Dr. Tripathi says that he established order in Bengal and consolidated his army*. Whatever might be the reason of Humayun for staying in Bengal for eight months but he again lost valuable time. During these months, Sher Khan captured Kara, Banaras, Sambhal, etc. and laid siege of Chunargrah and Jaunpur. He virtually blocked the way of return of Humayun to Agra. After some months, news of the activities of Sher Khan and also that of his brother Hindal who declared himself emperor at Agra were received by Humayun. He left Jahangir Quli Beigh with five hundred soldiers in Bengal and proceeded towards Agra in March 1539 A.D.

Battle of Chusa 26 June 1539 A.D.: Humayun took the route of the Grand Trunk Road which passed through south Bihar which was under complete control of Sher Khan. According to Dr. A.L. Srivastav, it was a great mistake. But according to Dr. R.P. Tripathi 'it was the most proper route because it was known to Mughals and led them to Chunargrah where the Mughals were still fighting against the Afghan besiegers.' However Humayun was

forced to cross the river Ganges once more and he (Humayun) reached Chusa, a place at the boundary between Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Sher Khan also reached there. The two armies remained there facing for three months (April to June 1539 A.D.). Negotiations of peace were carried on but nothing came out of them. Sher Khan delayed the battle deliberately. He waited for the rains which would create problem for the Mughal army which was camping in the low land between the rivers Ganges and Karmansa. That actually happened when the rains started. On 25th June he (Sher Khan) gave the impression to the Mughals that he (Sher Khan) was proceeding to subdue one of the tribal chiefs in Bihar. But, he returned and attacked the Mughals in the early hours of 26th June from three sides. The Mughals were completely surprised and the entire army was destroyed.¹² Thousands of Mughal soldiers were put to death by the Afghans and no less than 8,000 of them were drowned in the flood waters of the Ganges while making an attempt to cross the river. Humayun's horse was drowned in the mid-stream but his (Humayun's) life was saved by a water carrier Nizam who offered him his (Nizam's) mashak (the inflated skin) for swimming across the river. On reaching his capital (Agra), Humayun allowed the man who had saved his (Humayun's) life to sit on the throne for half a day, and permitted him to reward his own relatives during that time with princely presents. The Afghans acquired the huge booty, including the entire artillery and the many ladies of Humayun's harem. The debacle of Chusa shook the Mughal power from the very roots. After this heroic victory, Sher Khan assumed the title of the Emperor of India under the name of Sher Shah Suri. He captured Bengal as well and then returned to Kannauj.¹³

The Battle of Bilgram or Kannauj 17 May 1540 A.D.: When Humayun returned to Agra, he found that all three brothers were present. Humayun once again not only pardoned his brothers for plotting against him, but even forgave Hindal for his outright betrayal. With his armies travelling at a leisurely pace, Sher Shah was gradually drawing closer and closer to Agra. This was a serious threat to the entire family, but Humayun and Kamran squabbled over how to proceed. Kamran withdrew after Humayun refused to make a quick attack on the approaching enemy, instead opting to build a larger army under his own name. When Kamran returned to Lahore, his troops followed him shortly afterwards, and Humayun, with his other brothers Askari and Hindal, marched to meet Sher Shah Suri just 240 kilometres (150 miles) east of Agra at the Battle of Kannauj on May 17, 1540 (10th of Moharrum, A.H. 947). Humayun accordingly marched with a hundred thousand horse, and crossing the Ganges, near Kannauj to meet Sher Shah's army, which consisted of only fifty thousand men. Meanwhile, Mahmood Sultan Mirza and his sons, who were distinguished for their treachery

and ingratitude, went over to the enemy with all their adherents.¹⁴ The battle once again saw Humayun make some tactical errors, and his army was soundly defeated. He and his brothers quickly retreated back to Agra, humiliated and mocked along the way by peasants and villagers. They chose not to stay in Agra, and retreated to Lahore, through Sher Shah followed them founding the short lived Sur-Dynasty of northern India with its capital at Delhi.

The causes of Humayun's defeat at this battle may be indicated here: Humayun himself must be held primarily responsible for the disaster. On the battlefield he had surrendered the supreme command of his army to his father's (Babur's) cousin, Mirza Haidar Daughlat¹⁵. That at Kannauj (Qanauj) he was suffering from some mental disorder is evident from the hallucinations to which he was subject at this time. He is reported to have observed to Mir Rاجيuddin Safavi that. During the course of attack, a host of darweshes were striking at the mouths of the horses of our soldiers. As far as we are aware no such ascetics were utilized by Sher Shah in the battle and their presence must be ascribed to Humayun's imagination. Bearing in mind the king's incompetence, it is to be regretted that he did not agree to Kamran's proposal of permitting him to take his place as commander in this battle. Another factor that contributed to Humayan's failure was the inexperience of the hastily collected army. The veteran soldiers that had won the previous victories for the Mughals either had become superannuated, or had died in Bengal, or at the battle of Chausa, or had accompanied Kamran to Lahore. The raw recruits gathered at Kannauj (Qanauj) could not achieve a victory. In this connexion it may be noted that the Mughal generals, Hindal, Qasim Husain, etc., were not wholly incompetent, and we attach no value to Haidar Mirza's statement that Humayun's officers were cowards, and did not unfurl their standards for fear of an attack from the enemy. Similarly his statement that 'not a man, friend, or foe had been wounded when the Mughals were routed, is also to be rejected. Another reason for the Mughal loss was Humayun's foolhardiness in crossing the river. If he had chosen to remain on the western bank, the loss of life at the close of the conflict might have been considerably smaller. Similarly the choice of the low sandy ground by the river for his camp was an unhappy choice.

Above all, the absence of discipline in the Mughal camp accounts for their defeat. The end of the battle came much too soon because of the irregular camp-followers, viz., the ghuldms. There is much truth in Haidar's words, 'many amirs of illustrious name perished, and all from want of concert and control. Every one went or came at his own will.

Under such disadvantages it would have been nothing short of a marvel if a victory had been secured against the alert and self-reliant Sher Shah. The heaven's judgment was eminently just on this occasion.¹⁶

Mirza Haider Dughlat, a cousin of Babur, who commanded a division in the battle of Kannauj, with dismay that the Chagaties were defeated in this battlefield where not a man, either friend or foe, was wounded; not a gun was fired, and the chariots were useless.¹⁷(81) Abbas Khan, the celebrated biographer of Sher Shah Suri, has, however, paid a personal tribute to Humayun for the courage with which he fought at this fateful battle. He writes as per J.L. Metha:

*'The emperor Humayun himself remained firm like a mountain in his position on the battlefield, and displayed such valour and gallantry as is beyond all description. But when he (Humayun) saw supernatural beings fighting against him, he acknowledged the work of God, abandoned the battle to these unearthly warriors, and turned the bridle of his purpose towards his capital of Agra. He received no wound himself and escape safe and sound out of that bloody-thirsty whirlpool. The greater part of his army was driven in to Gange'.*¹⁸

Some historians ascribe Humayun's defeat in this battle exclusively to the treachery of Sher Shah Suri and the desertions of Humayun's own men. However the sharp contrast between the discipline and deployment of the two forces and the superior skill of Sher Shah explain more fully the debacle of the Mughals at Kannauj.

After his (Sher Shah's) decisive victory at Kannauj, Sher Shah gave a hot chase to Mughal emperor and did not permit him to take respite at Agra. Humayun fled to Lahore and Agra and Delhi were occupied by Sher Shah without any loss of time. Kamran, who wanted to retain the Punjab and Afghanistan for himself, his plan to withdraw towards Kashmir was foiled by Kamran. Humayun had therefore to run away as a fugitive toward Sind for his dear life. Kamran made a futile attempt to come to some understanding with Sher Shah Suri as an independent ruler of Kabul and the Punjab; nevertheless Sher Shah captured Lahore in November 1540 and Kamran fled to Kabul on the approach of the Afghan armies; thus all of the Mughal territories in right up to the Khyber pass fell in to hands of Sher Shah. Askari also escaped in Afghanistan and was appointed by governor of Qandhar by Kamran. Hindal accompanied Humayun to Sind but after some time went over Kamran.

Humayun wandered about in the inhospitable regions of Sind and Rajasthan with a handful of his followers for about three years.¹⁹

On 29, 1541, Humayun married Hamida Banu Begum, a young girl of 14; she was the daughter of a Persian shia Maulvi Mir Baba Dost alias Ali Akbar Jami, who was the spiritual

preceptor of Hindal. Humayun expressed his desire to marry her. Hindal took great offence at the proposal, as he looked upon the girl as his sister. Hamida Banu herself, then the the girl of 14, showed great reluctance to marry the ex-king as he said, he hand could hardly reach his collar. The ladies of the harem successfully persuaded her. Soon after, Humayun had to return to Bhakkar and Hindal left Kandahar. The fugitive emperor now made preparations to attack Thatta, Shah Hussain Arghun's capital, but had to return from the way to re-besiege Sehwan. Anxious to show dissensions among the imperialists, Shah Hussain won over Yadgar Mirza by promising him his daughter in marriage and his assistance in conquering Gujarat. In view of the successful diplomacy of the ruler of Sind, Humayun had once again to abandon the siege of Sehwan and retreat towards Bhakkar. He (Humayun) found Yadgar Mirza absolutely hostile and, being despaired of his future, he talked of withdrawing himself from the world and going on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

In May 1542 the Raja of Jodhpur, Rao Maldeo Rathore, issued a request to Humayun to form an alliance against Sher Shah and so Humayun and his army rode out through the desert to meet with the Prince. As they made their way across the desert the prince became aware of how feeble Humayun's army had now become. Furthermore, Sher Shah had offered him more favourable terms and so he sent word that he no longer wanted to see Humayun, who was now less than 80 km (50 miles) from the city. Thus, Humayun and his troops, and his heavily pregnant wife, had to retrace their steps through the desert at the hottest time of year. All the wells had been filled with sand by the nearby inhabitants after Humayun's troops had killed several cows (a sacred animal to the Hindus), leaving them with nothing but berries to eat. When Hamida's horse died no one would lend the Queen (who was now eight months pregnant) a horse, so Humayun did so himself, resulting in him riding a camel for six kilometres (four miles), although Khaled Beg then offered him his mount. Humayun was later to describe this incident as the lowest point in his life. He ordered Hindal to join his brothers in Kandahar.

However, while Humayun was on his travels, Hussein, the Amir of Sindh, had killed Maldeo's father, prompting the Raja to change his mind about Humayun. He decided to ride out to meet him in Umarnkot, a small town by a desert oasis. Humayun was afforded full courtesies and was given new horses and weapons as the men formed an alliance against Sindh. Umarnkot was to become the centre of operations for this battle, and it was here, on October 15 1542 that the 15 year old Hamida, gave birth to her first child, a boy they called Akbar - (great), the heir-apparent to the 34 year old Humayun.

The war against Sindh had led to a stalemate, and so Shah Hussain Arghun decided to bribe Humayun to leave the area. Humayun accepted and in return for three hundred Camels (mostly wild) and two thousand loads of grain he set off to join his brothers in Kandahar, crossing the Indus on July 11, 1543.

Retreat to Kabul: In Kamran's territory, Hindal had been placed under house arrest in Kabul after refusing to have the Khutba recited in Kamran's name. His other brother Askari was now ordered to gather an army and march on Humayun. When Humayun received word of the approaching hostile army he decided against facing them, and instead sought refuge elsewhere. Akbar was left behind in camp close to Kandahar for; as it was December it would have been too cold and dangerous to include the 14 month old toddler in the forthcoming march through the dangerous and snowy mountains of the Hindu Kush. Askari found Akbar in the camp, and embraced him, and allowed his own wife to rear him. She apparently treated him as her own.²⁰

Refuge in Persia: Shah Tahmasp-I²¹ greets the exiled Humayun. Humayun fled to the refuge of the Safavid Empire in Iran, marching with forty men and his wife and her companion through mountains and valleys. Amongst other trials the Imperial party were forced to live on horse meat boiled in the soldiers' helmets. These indignities continued during the month it took them to reach Herat, however after their arrival they were reintroduced to the finer things in life. Upon entering the city his army was greeted with an armed escort, and they were treated to lavish food and clothing. They were given fine accommodations and the roads were cleared and cleaned before them. Shah Tahmasp, unlike Humayun's own family, actually welcomed the Mughal, and treated him as a royal visitor. Here Humayun went sightseeing and was amazed at the Persian artwork and architecture he saw: much of this was the work of the Timurid Sultan Husayn Bayqarah and his ancestor, Princess Gauhar Shad, thus he was able to admire the work of his relatives and ancestors at first hand. He was introduced to the work of the Persian miniaturists, and Kamaledin Behzad had two of his pupils join Humayun in his court. Humayun was amazed at their work and asked if they would work for him if he were to regain the sovereignty of Hindustan: they agreed. With so much going on Humayun did not even meet the Shah until July, some six months after his arrival in Persia. After a lengthy journey from Herat the two met in Qazvin where a large feast and parties were held for the event. The meeting of the two monarchs is depicted in a famous wall-painting in the Chehel Sotoun (Forty Columns) palace in Esfahan.

The Shah urged that Humayun convert from Sunni to Shia Islam, hinting that this would be the price of his support, and eventually and reluctantly Humayun did so, much to the

disapproval of his biographer Jauhar. With this outward acceptance of Shi'ism the Shah was prepared to offer Humayun more substantial support. When Humayun's brother, Kamran, offered to cede Kandahar to the Persians in exchange for Humayun, dead or alive, the Shah refused. Instead the Shah threw a party for Humayun, with three hundred tents, an imperial Persian carpet, 12 musical bands and "meat of all kinds". Here the Shah announced that all this, and 12,000 choice cavalry were his to lead an attack on his brother Kamran. All that Shah asked for was that, if Humayun's forces were victorious, Kandahar would be his. With this Persian aid Humayun took Kandahar from Askari after a two-week siege. He noted how the nobles who had served Askari quickly flocked to serve him, "in very truth the greater part of the inhabitants of the world are like a flock of sheep, wherever one goes the others immediately follow". Kandahar was, as agreed, given to the Shah who sent his infant son, Murad, as the Viceroy. However, the baby soon died and Humayun thought himself strong enough to assume power.

Humayun now prepared to take Kabul, ruled by his brother Kamran. In the end, there was no actual siege. Kamran was detested as a leader and as Humayun's Persian army approached the city hundreds of Kamran's troops changed sides, flocking to join Humayun and swelling his ranks. Kamran absconded and began building an army outside the city. In November 1545 Hamida and Humayun were reunited with their son Akbar, and held a huge feast. They also held another, larger, feast in the child's honour when he was circumcised.

However, while Humayun had a larger army than his brother and had the upper hand, on two occasions his poor military judgement allowed Kamran to retake Kabul and Kandahar, forcing Humayun to mount further campaigns for their recapture. He may have been aided in this by his reputation for leniency towards the troops who had defended the cities against him, as opposed to Kamran, whose brief periods of possession were marked by atrocities against the inhabitants who, he supposed, had helped his brother.

His youngest brother, Hindal, formerly the most disloyal of his siblings, died fighting on his behalf. His brother Askari was shackled in chains at the behest of his nobles and aides. He was allowed go on Hajj, and died en route in the desert outside Damascus. Humayun's other brother, Kamran, had repeatedly sought to have Humayun killed, and when in 1552 he attempted to make a pact with Islam Shah, Sher Shah's successor, he was apprehended by a Gakhar. The Gakhars were one of only a few groups of people who had remained loyal to their oath to the Mughals. Sultan Adam of the Gakhars handed Kamran over to Humayun. Humayun was tempted to forgive his brother, however he was warned that allowing Kamran's continuous acts to go unpunished could foment rebellion within his own ranks. So,

instead of killing his brother Humayun had Kamran blinded which would end any claim to the throne. He sent him on Hajj, as he hoped to see his brother absolved of sin, but he died close to Mecca in the Arabian Desert in 1557.

Restoration of Indian Empire and Death of Humayun (1555-1556): Sher Shah Suri had died in 1545, and, although he was a powerful ruler, his son Islam Shah died too in 1554. These two deaths left the dynasty reeling and disintegrating. Three rivals for the throne all marched on Delhi, while in many cities leaders tried to stake a claim for independence. This was a perfect opportunity for the Mughals to march back to India. Humayun placed the army under the able leadership of Bairam Khan. *Humayun reached Lahore on February 24, 1556. Making Lahore his headquarters, he (Humayun) sent a detachment under Shah Abul Maali towards Dipalpur, which was then held by Shahbaz Khan and Nasib Khan Afghans. A tough battle was fought and the Afghan confederacy was defeated. The property, families and retainers were seized and plundered by the Mughals.*²² On arriving at Kalanur in Gurdaspur district from Lahore, Humayun despatched a strong body of troops under Bairam Khan and Tardi Beg to attack Nasib Khan, the Afghan general, who lay encamped at Panj-Bahin near Haryana (Haryana). Bairam Khan pushed on to Haryana (Haryana) in Hoshiarpur District. This was a wise move given Humayun's own record of military which, after a slight skirmish, was surrendered by Nasib Khan, and much valuable plunder as well as the families of the Afghans fell into Bairam Khan's hands. The prisoners were all set at liberty and the women and children were collected and sent under the protection of an escort to Nasib Khan in consequence of a vow made by Humayun that if providence restored to him the sovereignty of India, he would allow no man to be made captive. Several elephants and some of the more valuable properties were despatched to Humayun.²³

Bairam Khan advanced to Jalandhar from Haryana via Sham Chaurasi, where the Afghans had taken up position. The Afghans retreated on his arrival for such was the terror which the Afghans at this time entertained for the Mughals that though thousands in number, when they saw the approach of but half a score of big turbans, they instantly turned and fled, without looking back. In this instance, the Afghans not only escaped with their lives but carried off their luggage too. After this, Mughal forces advanced towards Delhi to meet Afghan general Tatar Khan.

Battle of Machiwara (February 1555): Sikander sur²⁴, who held possession of Delhi, sent 30,000 men under Tartar Khan and Haibat Khan to attack the advance forces in Sirhind. The Chaghatai (Mughal) forces concentrated at Jalandhar, and for all the numbers of the enemy

and their own paucity they were ready to fight. They advanced and crossed the Sutlej. As the sun went down a great battle began.

‘The Afghans began the battle with their archers, but as it was getting dark, the arrows took little effects on the Mughals, but the Afghans being greatly annoyed by the fire (atishi) threw themselves in to the neighbouring village. *As most of the houses in the villages of Hindustan are thatched, a fire broke out, and lighting up the field of battle, the (Mughal) archers came out and piled their weapons heartily by the light of the burning village. The enemy in the glare of the fire, presented a fine mark for their shafts and being unable to endure longer, took to flight*’.²⁵

A great victory was gained, and elephants and much spoil fell in to the hands of the victors. When the news of the victory reached Lahore, the Emperor (Humayun) was greatly delighted, and showed great honour to his generals. All the Punjab, Sirhind, and Hissar-Firuza were now in his (Humayun’s) possession, and some of the dependencies of Delhi were also in the hands of the Mughals.

Battle of Sirhind, 22 June 1555: On hearing of this defeat, Sultan Sikander an Afghan (Sikander Sur) marched forth to take his revenge, with 80,000 horsemen and elephant and artillery. *Barim Khan fortified his position and sent a request to Humayun, who was then at Lahore, to send reinforcements. Prince Akbar was immediately order by the emperor to go and himself followed and joined the army at Sirhind.*²⁶ The Mughals tried to harass the Afghans and cut off their supplies. In one of the raids, Tardi Beg got the better of the Afghans, captured an important supply train and killed the brother of Sikander Sur. In their rage, the Afghans opened an attack and on June 22, 1555, a decisive battle was fought at Sirhind. The Afghans broke and fled. Sikander Sur was narrowly escaped with his life in to the Shivalik hills. The victory was complete. *The most remarkable thing in this battle was that on both sides humanity and gentleness were practised, so much so that the bodies of those who had sacrificed their lives were reverently made over to their respective friends.*²⁷

The first act of Humayun’s government was to distribute the provinces among his men. *Hissar-Firoza was assigned to Akbar, being the province Humayun himself had received from Babur when he first entered India.*²⁸ Sirhind and some other districts were granted to Barim Khan in addition to Kandahar, which he already held. Before leaving for Sirhind to reinforce Bairm Khan²⁹ as the governor of the Punjab, with suitable officers to support him. *Babar Khan was made the military commander, Mirza Shah Sultan the civil administrator, and Mehtar Jauhar the treasurer of the Punjab.*³⁰ Later, after the battle of Sirhind, when Sikander Sur was threatening the Punjab from the Shivaliki hills, where he had fled, Shah

Abul Maali was appointed the governor of Jalandhar immediately and to establish his headquarters there to watch the activities of Sikander. But instead of remaining at Jalandhar, Shah Abdul Maali proceeded to Lahore and he speedily usurped all the powers of the province from Gharat Khan and begun to act like an absolute sovereign.

The ill-advised movement of the Shah from Jalandhar to Lahore gave an opportunity to Sikander to occupy the Jalandhar Doab and he begun to collect the revenue. *Humayun designated Akbar, the heir apparent, in the Shah's place. Bairm Khan was to assist the young prince in order to put down Sikander's depredations.*³¹ *The honour of the victory was ascribed to Prince Akbar. In the month of Ramzan 23 July 1555 the Emperor (Humayun) entered Delhi, and once more the Khutba was read, and the coins were stamped with his name in the territories of Hindustan.*³²

From the time when Humayun arrived in Delhi, says Eriskine, "he devoted himself to a general superintendence of the affairs of his kingdom, and to watching the progress of his armies which he had sent in various directions to reduce different provinces. He saw clearly that there were great defects in the system of the government of the empire, and set himself to devising means of improving it. *The plan which projected was to separate the empire the Empire in to several great divisions, each of them to have a local capital, and a board of administrations, for directing local affairs. Delhi, Agra, Kannauj, Jaunpur, Mandu, and Lahore were among the capitals fixed upon.*³³ To each them was to assigned a considerable military force, under an able general so as to render it independent of assistance from the others; while the Emperor was to give unity to the whole, by visiting them in turn with an army of about 12,000 horse, which were to be under his own immediate command, and at all times ready to move in any direction. This plan, however, he never had time, he had even possessed sufficient steadiness, to carry in to execution."

On the evening of the 7th Rabi-ul awwal A.H. 963, (according to S.R. Sharma 8th Rabi-ul awwal), January 21, 1556, at sunset, the emperor stood for a short time. As he was descending, the muazin cried loud the summons to prayer, and he reverently sat down on the second step. When he was setting up again, his foot slipped, and he fell from the stairs to the ground at Din-panah. The people in attendance were greatly shocked, and the Emperor was taken up senseless, and carried in to the palace. After a short time he rallied and spake. The court physicians exerted all their powers but in vain. Next day he grew worse, and his case was beyond medical help. Sheikh Juli was sent to the Punjab to summon Prince Akbar. On the 15th Rabiul-awwal, 963 A.H. 24 January 1556 (According to Ferishta, January 25, 1556) at the setting of the sun, he left this world for paradise.³⁴ By a strange presentment, as it were,

some time before his death Humayun used to repeat with deep emotion, and tears gushing from his eyes, the following mystical verses, which he had heard from a supernatural voice:-

“O Lord, of Thine infinite goodness makes me Thine own; Make me a partner of the knowledge of thy attributes; I am broken-hearted from the cares and sorrows of life; O call to Thee Thy poor Madman (lover) O grant me my release!”³⁵

Conclusion:

Humayun was a man of complicated nature. He lacked political sense and good judgement. He paid heavily for ignoring the advice of not to spend precious time in reducing the fort of Chunar, but to push on to Gaur before Sher Shah Suri was able to take it. Humayun's lack of firmness encouraged his opponents to plot against him. Thus Malwa, Gujarat, Bihar, the Doab, Delhi and Punjab slipped out of his grasp one by one and he could neither crush the treachery of his seditious nobles nor raise powerful army to contend against his foes. He pardoned rebels and traitors again and again, and hesitated to deal drastically with them. A study of his battles clearly shows his incapacity for grand strategy and correct appraisal of the enemy's strength. His earlier successes always turned into defeats, for he was never able to consolidate his gains. The most prominent trait of his character was perseverance. This quality proved an inestimable blessing, especially at the time when he was ousted from power by Sher Shah Suri, without this, it would have been impossible from him to re-conquer the kingdom of India. Power was the real achievement of Humayun which paved the way for the splendid imperialism of Akbar. He was a dutiful son; in accordance with the wishes of his father he treated his brothers kindly. His misplaced regard for his brothers, who became to disloyal to him brought him much misery and sufferings which cost his kingdom. He was brave and courageous but lacked a strong will. Lane-poole a reputed Historian remarked *“Humayun's worst enemy was he himself.”*

References:

¹ *Ibid*, J.L.Mehta, 'Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India' VOL-II Mughal Period 1526-1707 Sterling Publishers New Delhi 2010 p. 98

² *Majumdar, Raychudari and Datta, Advanced Study in the History of India* Macmillian Publishers India Ltd. Reprint 2011, p. 425

³ *Maham- 'my moon', a term of endearment used for beloved; Maham Begum was the daughter of Sultan Hussain Baiqrah; Babur married her in 1506 when, on the death of the sultan he paid a condolence visit to Herat, the capital of Khurassan.*

⁴ *Ibid*. p. 72

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 73

⁶ *Ibid*. pp. 141-42

⁷ *Mahmud Lodi the brother of Iqbal Lodhi, declared himself Sultan and continued to resist Mughal forces. He provided 10,000 Pathan soldiers to Rana Sanga in battle of Khanwa. After the defeat, Mahmud Lodi fled eastwards and again posed a challenge to Babur two years later at the Battle of Gogra 1529.*

⁸ The great patron of Hindustani Classical music was the son of Shams-ud-Din Muzaffar Shah II, who had ascended to the throne of the Gujarat Sultanate in 1511. Muzaffar Shah II nominated Sikandar Shah, Bahadur Shah's elder brother as the heir apparent to the throne. Bahadur Shah's relationship with his brother and father became tense as Sikandar Shah began to assume greater administrative control. Fearing for his life, Bahadur Shah fled Gujarat, first seeking refuge with Chittor, and then with Ibrahim Lodi. He was present at the Battle of Panipat, though he did not take part in fighting. When he received the news of the death of his father on April 5, 1526 he returned to Gujarat and almost all the nobles except the murderers of his eldest brother Sikandar, who succeeded his father Muzaffar Shah II, joined him. The opposition was suppressed immediately and they were executed. After this Bahadur turned against his brothers, his nearest rival Latif was severely wounded in an action, taken prisoner and died. Mahmud II, the infant son of Muzaffar Shah II, who succeeded Sikandar after his death and three other princes were poisoned. Only one of his brother, Chand Khan survived, as he had refuge at the Malwa court and the Sultan Mahmud II of Malwa refused to surrender him. During his reign, Gujarat was under pressure from the expanding Mughal Empire under emperors Babur (died 1530) and Humayun (1530–1540), and from the Portuguese, who were establishing fortified settlements on the Gujarat coast to expand their power in India from their base in Goa.

⁹ M.A. Siddiqe, 'History of Muslims' (Edt.) pp. 221-22

¹⁰ Gulbadan Begum, 'Humayan Nama', (Tr. Beveridge), pp. 109-110

¹¹ Sher Khan or Sher Shah Suri is mentioned as one of the important leaders of the Afghan revolt against the Mughals, had made himself master of the province of south Bihar, by the end of 1531 and occupied an important stronghold of Chunar (Near Banaras). Sher Shah Suri was born as Farid Khan in the present day place Sasaram in Bihar. His surname 'Suri' was taken from his Sur tribe. The name Sher (tiger) was conferred upon him when, as a young man, he killed a tiger. Sher Shah took control of the Mughal Empire in 1540. He first served as a private before rising to become a commander in the Mughal army under Babur and then as the governor of Bihar. In 1537, when Babur's son Humayun was elsewhere on an expedition, Sher Khan overran the state of Bengal and established the Sur dynasty. A brilliant strategist, Sher Shah proved himself as a gifted administrator as well as a capable general. His reorganization of the empire laid the foundations for the later Mughal emperors, notably Akbar, son of Humayun. During his five-year rule from 1540 to 1545, he set up a new civic and military administration, issued the first Rupiya and reorganized the postal system of India. He further developed Humayun's Dina-panah city and named it Shergarh and revived the historical city of Pataliputra, which had been in decline since the 7th century CE, as Patna. He extended the Grand Trunk Road from Chittagong in the frontiers of the province of Bengal in northeast India to Kabul in Afghanistan in the far northwest of the country. After his accidental death on 26 May, 1545, his son Islam Shah became his successor.

¹² M.A. Siddiqe, 'History of Muslims' (Edt.) p. 22

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ EHI-04-(Ignou) 'India in the sixteenth century, pp. 21-22

¹⁵ Mirza Muhammad Haidar Dughlat (1500–1551) was a Chagatai Turko-Mogol military general, ruler of Kashmir, and a historical writer. He was a Turkic speaking Dughlat prince who wrote in Persian and Chagatai Turkish languages. Haider was a first cousin of Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur. He first campaigned in Kashmir in 1533, on behalf of Sultan Said Khan, of Kashgar. He drove out Mirza Kamran, second son of Babur. However, he did not stay long in Kashmir, leaving after making a treaty with the local sultan and striking coins in the name of Said Khan. Mirza suffered a military defeat and then made a treaty with the Kashmiris. His historical work *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* (History of Rashid) is a personal memoir combined with a Central Asian history. Mirza Muhammad Haidar devoted this extensive work, written in Kashmir from 1541 to 1546 in two volumes, to contemporary ruler of Kashgaria Abdurashid Khan, son of Sultan Said Khan descendant of first Moghul Khan Tughluk Timur Khan, grandson of Duwa Khan, great great grandson of Chagatai Khan, second son of Chengiz Khan). It was translated into English in 1895 by Ney Elias and Edward Denison Ross. Among other events, the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* describes the founding of the Kazakh Khanate in 1465 and Muhammad Haidar Dughlat's personal encounter with one of the early Kazakh rulers, namely Qasim Khan.

¹⁶ L.P. Sharma 'History of Medieval India', 3rd ed, Konark Publication, 2004, p. 270

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- ¹⁷ John Briggs, 'History of the Rise of Mahomdan Power in India' vol-II, 4th ed, Atlantic Publishers New Delhi 1989, p.53
- ¹⁸ J.L.Mehta, 'Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India' VOL-II Mughal Period 1526-1707, Sterling Publishers New Delhi 2010, pp. 157-58
- ¹⁹ John Briggs, 'History of the Rise of Mahomdan Power in India' vol-II, 4th ed, Atlantic Publishers New Delhi 1989, p.56
- ²⁰ S.K. Bannerji, 'Humayun Badasha', (Humayun on the Throne), oxford university press, Ameen House London, 1938, pp. 290-91
- ²¹ *Tahmasp-I* (22 February 1514–14 May 1576) was the son of Shah Ismail I and Shah-Begi Khanum of the Turcoman Mawsillu tribe. He was only 10 years old when he succeeded his father Shah Ismail, the founder of Safavid rule in Iran. Too young to rule in his own right, Tahmasp came under the control of the Qizilbash, Turkic tribesmen who formed the backbone of the Safavid power.
- ²² A.S. Beveridge, 'Akbarname' vol.II, pp.620
- ²³ Bakshish Singh Nijjar, 'Punjab Under the Mughals 1526-1707', IST Ed., Thacker & Co. Bombay, 1968.p.28
- ²⁴ Sikandar Sur, the sixth ruler of Sur dynasty, a late medieval Pashtun dynasty of northern India. He became the sultan of Delhi after overthrowing Ibrahim Shah Suri. Sikandar Shah Suri's actual name was Ahmad Khan Suri. He was the brother-in-law of sultan Muhammad Adil Shah. He was the governor of Lahore before declaring independence from Delhi in 1555. After becoming the independent sultan and bringing Punjab under control, he marched towards the territory controlled by sultan Ibrahim Shah Suri. Ibrahim was defeated in a battle at Farah near Agra and Sikandar took possession of both Delhi and Agra. While Sikandar was busy with his struggle against Ibrahim, Humayun captured Lahore in February 1555. Another detachment of his forces captured Dipalpur. Next, the Mughal army occupied Jalandhar and their advanced division proceeded towards Sirhind.
- ²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 29
- ²⁶ A.S. Beveridge, 'Akbarname' vol.II, pp. 619-620
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 620-621
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 623
- ²⁹ Bairam Khan was a Badakhshani Turkoman military general, who served as the regent to the underage Mughal ruler Akbar, who came to power in 1556. Although the period of Bairam Khan's regency is very brief that is, from 1556-1560, He played very important role in guiding footsteps of Humayun's son Akbar, while he was too young to establish his power. He gave great support to Akbar at the most difficult time when the border states of Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan enjoyed perfect freedom from all superior control and the Surs has recaptured Delhi and Agra. Thus Akbar was left only with the Punjab. Bairam Khan skillfully commanded the Mughal army and defeated Hemu, the commander-in-chief of the Surs at Panipat on November 1556 and thus recaptured Delhi and Agra. Bairam Khan was in fact the real administrator and faithfully extended his kingdom when the young king spent most of his time in hunting, elephant fighting and other youthful sports.
- ³⁰ H.Blochman, 'Ain-i-Akbari', Vol-II 3rd ed. New Delhi 1989, p. 325)
- ³¹ *Ibid*, p. 325
- ³² S.M Jaffer, 'Mughal Empirer from Babur to Arungzeb, (With an introduction by Honourable Sir Ab. Qadir) Ess Ess Publication, first Indian reprint,1974, p.69
- ³³ H.Blochman, 'Ain-i-Akbari', Vol-II 3rd ed. New Delhi, p. 620)
- ³⁴ Bakshish Singh Nijjar, 'Punjab Under the Mughals 1526-1707', IST Ed., Thacker & Co. Bombay, 1968. p.45
- ³⁵ S.R.Sharma, *The crescent in India (A study of Medieval History)* New Delhi, 1986, p. 264