



# UNIQUE STUDY POINT

## Chapter 4 The Mughal Empire

**Question 1:** Match the following:

Mansab	Marwar
Mongol	governor
Sisodiya Rajput	Uzbek
Rathor Rajput	Mewar
Nur Jahan	Jahangir
subedar	rank

**Answer:**

Mansab	rank
Mongol	Uzbek
Sisodiya Rajput	Mewar
Rathor Rajput	Marwar
Nur Jahan	Jahangir
subedar	governor

**Question 2:** Fill in the blanks:

- (a) The capital of Mirza Hakim, Akbar's half-brother, was \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) The five Deccan Sultanates were Berar, Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- (c) If zat determined a mansabdar's rank and salary, sawar indicated his \_\_\_\_\_.

(d) Abul Fazl, Akbar's friend and counsellor, helped him frame the idea of \_\_\_\_\_ so that he could govern a society composed of many religions, cultures and castes.

**Answer:** (a) The capital of Mirza Hakim, Akbar's half-brother, was **Kabul**.

(b) The five Deccan Sultanates were Berar, Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, **Bijapur** and **Golconda**.

(c) If zat determined a mansabdar's rank and salary, sawar indicated his **number of cavalrymen**.

(d) Abul Fazl, Akbar's friend and counsellor, helped him frame the idea of **sulh-i-kul** so that he could govern a society composed of many religions, cultures and castes.

**Question 3:** What were the central provinces under the control of the Mughals?

**Answer:** The central provinces under the control of the Mughals were Delhi, Sindh, Kabul, Mewar, Marwar, Gujarat, Bihar, Bengal, Chittor, Orissa and Deccan.

**Question 4:** What was the relationship between the mansabdar and the jagir?

**Answer:** Mansabdars received their salaries as revenue assignments called jagirs which were somewhat like iqtas. The Mansabdars did not actually reside in or administer their jagirs, rather they only had the rights to the revenue of their assignments, which was collected for them by their servants while the mansabdars themselves served in some other part of the country.

**Question 5:** What was the role of the zamindar in Mughal administration?

**Answer:** Zamindars were powerful local chieftains appointed by the Mughal rulers. They exercised great influence and power. They collected taxes from the peasants and gave them to the Mughal emperor. Thus, they played the role of intermediaries. In some areas the zamindars became more powerful. The exploitation by Mughal administrators made them to rebellion. They got support from the peasants in rebelling against the Mughal authority.

**Question 6:** How were the debates with religious scholars important in the formation of Akbar's ideas on governance?

**Answer:** Debates with religious scholars helped Akbar in framing the idea of sulh-i kul that means universal peace. Akbar was interested in the religion and social customs of different people. Akbar's interaction with people of different faiths made him realise that religious scholars who emphasised ritual and dogma were often bigots. Their teachings created divisions and disharmony amongst his subjects. This led Akbar to the idea of sulh-i kul. This idea of tolerance did not discriminate between people of different religions in his realm. By using such a policy of tolerance Akbar was able to formulate governance guidelines which were based on a system of ethics – honesty, justice and peace.

**Question 7:** Why did the Mughals emphasise their Timurid and not their Mongol descent?

**Answer:** The Mughals emphasized on their Timurid and not their Mongol descent because Ghengiz Khan's memory was associated with the massacre of innumerable people. They took pride on the fact that Timur had captured Delhi in 1398. Each ruler got a picture made of Timur and himself.

**Question 8:** How important was the income from land revenue to the stability of the Mughal Empire?

**Answer:** The income from land revenue was very important to the stability of the Mughal Empire. It strengthened the economic system of the Empire. In fact, the income from land revenue which was the main source of income for the Mughal rulers which they used for building forts and for the welfare of their subjects.

**Question 9:** Why was it important for the Mughals to recruit mansabdars from diverse backgrounds and not just Turanis and Iranis?

**Answer:** It was important for the Mughals to recruit mansabdars from diverse backgrounds and not just Turanis and Iranis because the empire had expanded to encompass different regions and provinces. By recruiting mansabdars from diverse backgrounds, the Mughals won the trust of the common people and created a balanced administration.

**Question 10:** Like the Mughal Empire, India today is also made up of many social and cultural units. Does this pose a challenge to national integration?

**Answer:** No, this does not pose a challenge to national integration because:

1. We have a unified system of government that has the same rules and regulations for all the citizens irrespective of religion, region, etc.
2. We have a constitution guarding the rights of all and specifying their duties.
3. Now we are unified as a nation, not as distinct states or regions of different rulers.

**Question 11:** Peasants were vital for the economy of the Mughal Empire. Do you think that they are as important today? Has the gap in the income between the rich and the poor in India changed a great deal from the period of the Mughals?

**Answer:** Peasants are as important today as they were during the Mughal Empire. They cultivate land and grow crops without which we cannot survive. They pay land revenue to the government which is used in various development work. We cannot think of a sound economy without them. They are the backbone of the country.

**Question 12:** The Mughal Empire left its impact on the different regions of the subcontinent in a variety of ways. Find out if it had any impact in the city, village or region in which you live.

**Answer:** Self attempt.

### Extra Questions

#### Very Short Answer Questions

**1. What were the Mughal traditions of succession?**

**Answer:** The Mughals did not believe in the rule of primogeniture, where the eldest son inherited his father's estate. Instead they followed the Mughal and Timurid custom of coparcenary inheritance, or a division of the inheritance amongst all the sons.

**2. Who all constituted the nobility (Turkish nobles) of the Mughals?**

**Answer:** From a small nucleus of Turanis, they expanded to include Iranians, Indian Muslims, Afghans, Rajputs, Marathas and other groups.

### 3. Who was a Mansabdar?

**Answer:** The term mansabdar refers to an individual, who holds a mansab, meaning a position or a rank. It was a grading system used by the Mughals to fix ranks, salary and military responsibilities.

### 4. What was zat?

**Answer:** Rank and salary were determined by a numerical value called zat. The higher the zat, the more prestigious was the noble's position in court and the larger his salary.

### 5. How was zat ranking done?

**Answer:** Nobles with a zat of 5,000 were ranked higher than those of 1,000. In Akbar's reign, there were 29 mansabdars with a rank of 5,000 zat, but by Aurangzeb's rule, the number of mansabdars had increased to 79.

### 6. How do we know about the influence of Nur Jahan in Jahangir's court?

**Answer:** Mehrunnissa married emperor Jahangir in 1611 and got the title Nur Jahan. She remained extremely loyal to the monarch. As a result, Jahangir struck silver coins bearing his name on one side and on the other, the inscription struck in the name of elevated majesty Nur Jahan Padshah Begum.

## Short Answer Questions

### 1. Who were Mughals?

**Answer: (i)** The Mughals were descendants of two great lineages of rulers— Genghis Khan, ruler of Mongols Tribes, China and Central Asia from their mother's side from their father's side, they were descendants of Timur who ruled over Iran, Iraq and Turkey.

**(ii)** However, Mughals did not like being called Mongols because of the memories of massacres of Genghis Khan, while they were proud of Timurid as their great ancestor had captured Delhi in 1398.

## **2. How did Mughals extend their influence over many kings and chieftains?**

**Answer: (i)** The Sisodiya Rajputs refused to accept Mughal authority for a long time.

**(ii)** Once defeated, however they were treated honourably by Mughals and their lands (watan) were given back.

**(iii)** The careful balance between defeating but not humiliating their opponents enabled the Mughals to extend their influence over many kings and chieftains.

## **3. Explain the relationship of the Mughals with other rulers.**

**Answer:** Mughal rulers campaigned constantly against rulers who refused to accept their authority. But as the Mughal became powerful, many other rulers also joined them voluntarily. The careful balance between defeating but not humiliating their opponents enabled the Mughals to extend their influence over many kings and chieftains. In this way, we can say that the relations of the Mughals were better with the other rulers of that era.

## **4. How were the Mughals greater than other rulers?**

**Answer:** The Mughal created a huge empire and accomplished what had hitherto seemed possible for only short period of time. In the 17th century, they controlled nearly all the subcontinents. They imposed structures of administration and idea of governance that outlasted their rule.

## **5. What is 'Akbarnama'? Give an account of 'Akbarnama'.**

**Answer:** Akbarnama is the history of the reign of Akbar. It was written by one of Akbar's close friends and courtiers Abul Fazal. Akbarnama is divided into three parts. The first volume dealt with Akbar's ancestors and the second recorded the events of Akbar's reign. Ain-e-Akbari is the third volume. It dealt with Akbar's administration; household, army, revenues and the geography of his empire.

## **6. What is Sulh-i-Kur? Describe its main features.**

**Answer:** Sulh-i-Kur is an Arabic term literally meaning 'peace with all', drawn from a sufi mystic principle. As applied by the third mughal emperor of India, Akbar, it described a peaceful and harmonious relationship among different religions. Main features of Sulh-i-Kur were (i) Sulh-i-Kur was based on the idea of tolerance which did not discriminate between the people of different regions. (ii) It focused on ethical approaches like honesty, justice, peace, etc.

### Long Answer Questions

#### **1. How were Mansabdars paid?**

**Answer: (i)** Mansabdars received their salaries as revenue assignments called jagirs which were somewhat like iqtas.

**(ii)** But unlike muqtis, most mansabdars did not actually reside in or administer their jagirs which was collected for them by their servants while the mansabdars themselves served in some other parts of the country.

#### **2. How did jagirs decline?**

**Answer: (i)** In Akbar's reign, these jagirs were carefully assessed so that their revenues were roughly equal to the salary of the mansabdar.

**(ii)** By Aurangzeb's rule this was no longer the case and the actual revenue collected was often less than the granted sum. There was also a huge increase in the number of mansabdars which meant a long wait before they received a jagir. It led to shortage in the number of jagirs.

#### **3. What do 'Akbarnama' and 'Ain-i-Akbari' tell us?**

**Answer: (i)** Much of what we know about Akbar is known from his court historian Abul Fazl, who wrote Akbarnama.

**(ii)** Akbarnama is divided in three volumes.

**(iii)** The first volume dealt with Akbar's ancestors from days of Taimur to those of Humayun.

**(iv)** The second volume presents the events of Akbar's reign.

**(v)** The third volume 'Ain-i-Akbari' gives information about Akbar's army, administration and the legal and revenue systems of the empire.

#### **4. Describe the main achievements of Sher Shah Suri.**

**Answer:** The main achievements of Sher Shah Suri were:

##### **(i) Administration**

- He strengthened central administration.
- He established large standing army.
- There were a number of provinces called Sarkars, each of which was again subdivided into parganas.

**(ii) Public Works:** Sher Shah paid great attention to the means of transport and communication. The longest route connected Sonargaon in Bengal to Agra and then to Lahore. It was later called the Grand Trunk Road.

##### **(iii) Trade**

- Excellent transport and communication system promoted trade and commerce.
- Rest houses or sarais were constructed.

#### **5. Write a note on life and achievements of Babur.**

**Answer: (i)** Babur became the king of Farghana at the age of eleven years.

**(ii)** After facing much hardship, he captured Kabul in 1513.

**(iii)** He fought the famous battle of Panipat against Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat. Ibrahim was defeated and killed.

**(iv)** In 1527, Babur defeated Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar and thus broke Rajput resistance.



(v) Lastly, in 1528, he inflicted a second defeat on the Afghans in the battle of Ghagra and thus, extended his rule over Bihar and Bengal. It enabled him to establish the Mughal rule in India.

### **6. Write a short note on Humayun.**

**Answer: (i)** Babur died in 1530 and was succeeded by his son Humayun.

(ii) He was not strong and resolute and lost these territories to the Afghan leader Sher Shah Suri in the famous battles of Chausa and Kannauj.

(iii) He took shelter in the court of the Safavid ruler of Iran.

(iv) In 1555, he defeated Sikandar Suri, and after fifteen years of exile again occupied the throne of Delhi.

### **7. Describe the achievements of Akbar as the greatest Mughal emperor.**

**Answer: (i)** Humayun was succeeded by his son Jalaluddin Akbar in 1556.

(ii) He not only consolidated but also expanded his empire.

(iii) When Akbar died in 1605, he left for his son a settled empire, people attached to the dynasty by a special sense of loyalty, a treasury filled with money and an army which had not met with any defeat.

(iv) He had conquered the whole of northern India—to the north of Vindhya. Gujarat and Bengal had been firmly secured and Sindh was annexed.

### **8. Describe the major achievements of Jahangir.**

**Answer: (i)** Akbar died in October 1605 and was succeeded by his son Prince Salim, who styled himself as Nuruddin Jahangir.

(ii) In May 1611, Jahangir married Mehrunnisa, who was now named Nur Jahan and she had influence over the private and public life of the emperor.

(iii) Gradually, Jahangir made her the virtual ruler of the empire.

(iv) It was during the rule of Jahangir that the Mughals lost the fort of Qandhar to the Safavid rulers of Iran.

### **9. Describe the major achievements of Shah Jahan.**

**Answer: (i)** After the death of Jahangir, his son Shah Jahan ascended the Mughal throne in 1627.

(ii) This age witnessed all-round progress of the empire.

(iii) Art and literature flourished immensely.

(iv) But his extravagance over architectural monuments and unwise acts of intolerance weakened the Mughal empire.

### **10. How was Aurangzeb responsible for downfall of Mughals?**

**Answer: (i)** Aurangzeb was the sixth Mughal emperor of India and the third son of Shah Jahan.

(ii) He succeeded to the throne after winning the war of succession against his brothers.

(iii) Under his rule, the Mughal empire reached the greatest extent but this climax of territorial expansion was accompanied by perils, which soon after his rule engulfed the empire and hastened its downfall.

### **Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)**

#### **1. Describe the zabt and zamindar system of the Mughals.**

**Answer: (i)** During Akbar's reign, the main source of income was through peasantry.

(ii) The Mughals had given the term Zamindars to describe all intermediaries, whether they were local headmen of villages or powerful chieftains.

- (iii) These Zamindars would exploit the peasants and try to extract as much revenue as they could.
- (iv) Todar Mal, Akbar's revenue minister carried out a survey of crop yields, prices for a period of 10 years.
- (v) Revenue circles were divided in each province with differing revenue rates for different crops.
- (vi) This was known as zabt.
- (vii) This method was followed in all Mughal periods to keep a careful account of revenue and tax. However, this was not possible in Gujarat and Bengal.

## 2. Describe Akbar's religious policy.

**Answer: (i)** In Fatehpur Sikri, there was a room called the Ibadat Khana where religious meetings were held by Akbar.

(ii) There he used to call a huge gathering which included the Ulema, Brahmins, Jesuit priests and Zoroastrians.

(iii) On his interaction with these religious leaders, Akbar realised that religious scholars who gave more importance to rituals and dogmas were bigots.

(iv) Therefore, Akbar gave the idea of sulh-i-kul or universal peace.

## 3. Who were the later Mughals?

**Answer: (i)** After the death of Aurangzeb, the last thirteen rulers of the Mughal dynasty, generally called the Later Mughal Emperors came to the throne.

(ii) They were weak sovereigns whose dominions progressively declined throughout the eighteenth century, a process which was hastened by the invasions of Nadir Shah in 1739 and Ahmad Shah Abdali from 1751 to 1767.

(iii) Regional powers asserted independence.

**(iv)** The last nominal Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar II, was formally deposed by the British in 1858 for his alleged interest in the uprising of 1857 and exiled to Rangoon where he died in 1862.

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