

Mughal Dynasty: Akbar

These notes are your ultimate revision weapon to revise Mughal Dynasty : Akbar history. We've distilled years of previous exam questions (PYQs) into one powerful, concise resource. Everything you need to know, nothing you don't.

- **PYQs, Decoded:** All key concepts from past exams, organized and simplified.
- **Revise in Record Time:** Short, precise, and designed for last-minute review.
- **Focus on What Matters:** Master high-probability topics and boost your confidence.

Emperor Akbar: A Structured Fact File

Accession & Early Reign



- **Place of Enthronement:** Kalanaur.
- **Reason for Immediate Coronation:** Crowned immediately upon receiving news of Humayun's death from a tragic accident (falling down the stairs at the Din-e-Pannah library).

Administration & Reforms

A. Military Administration (Mansabdari System)

- Introduced the **Mansabdari System** to organize the military and bureaucracy.
- The system was **borrowed from the Mongolian military organization** (from Genghis Khan's time) and then modified.
- The head of the military department was **Mir Bakshi**.
 - His duties included recruitment, assigning rank (mansab), and setting salaries for soldiers.
 - He was **not** the commander-in-chief of the army.

- A key feature: Mansabdars had to maintain **20 horses for every 10 cavalymen** to ensure horses could be rested during marches and replaced during war.

B. Revenue Administration

- **Zabti system** (also known as **Dahsala** or **Bandobast System**) was introduced for land revenue collection.
- This system was famously implemented by **Raja Todarmal**, Akbar's finance minister (Diwan).
 - Todarmal is historically famous for his **land revenue reforms**.
 - He is considered the connecting link between the revenue systems of Sher Shah and Akbar.
- The system calculated revenue based on the **average produce and average prices from the previous 10 years**.
- The state's share was fixed at **one-third of the average production**.
- In the Deccan region, a different system called the '**Number of plows**' was prevalent during Akbar's reign.



C. Central Administration

- The Persian term '**Diwan**' referred to the head of the treasury and financial department.
- The **first person to be given the proper status of Diwan** by Akbar was **Muzaffar Khan Turbati**.


Relations with Rajputs

- **First Matrimonial Alliance:**
 - Established with the **Kachhwaha** clan of Amber.
 - **Raja Bharmal (Bihari Mal)** offered his daughter, Harkha Bai (Jodha), in marriage to Akbar in **1562**.
 - This made Bharmal the first Rajput ruler to accept Akbar's supremacy.

- **Resistance:**
 - **Mewar** (under Rana Pratap) did **not** accept Akbar's supremacy willingly.
 - **Marwar** (under Rao Chandrasena) also continued a struggle for independence and never surrendered.
- **Battle of Haldighati (1576):**
 - **Date:** Fought on **June 18, 1576 A.D.**
 - **Akbar's Commander: Man Singh** (with 5000 soldiers).
 - **Rana Pratap's Commander-in-Chief: Hakim Khan Sur** (a Pathan/Afghan leader from the Sur dynasty).
 - **Akbar's Aim:** To subdue Rana Pratap.
 - **Outcome:** Rana Pratap was defeated and fled to hide in the Aravali Hills.

Religious Policy & Philosophy

A. General Policies & Beliefs

- **Abolition of Taxes:** 
 - Abolished the **pilgrimage tax** in **1563**.
 - Abolished **Jizya** (a tax on non-Muslims) in **1564**.
- **Religious Visits:** Frequently visited the mausoleum (Dargah) of the Chishti saint **Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti** in Ajmer.
- **Nationalist Image:** His popularity was based on religious tolerance, administrative unity, and social reforms. He did **not** forsake Islam.
- **Theory of Sulh-i-Kul:** Promulgated the theory of '**Sulh-i-Kul**' (Universal Peace and Fraternity), which was a result of political generosity, religious tolerance, and a liberal cultural attitude.

B. Din-i-Ilahi

- Promulgated **Din-i-Ilahi** (also called **Tauhid-i-Ilahi**) in **1582**.
- It was an eclectic religious movement that aimed to combine elements of various faiths.
- His court historian, **Abul Fazl**, is called its prophet.

- Among the Hindu courtiers, only **Birbal** accepted it; **Raja Man Singh** and **Raja Bhagwan Das** refused.
- A contemporary writer, Mohsin Fani, argued it was **not a new religion** but a Sufi-based concept of monotheism.

C. Ibadat Khana & Mahzar

- Constructed the **Ibadat Khana (House of Worship)** in **1575** for philosophical and theological conversations.
- Initially for Islamic scholars, it was later **opened to all religions** for discussion.
- These debates led to the **Mahzarnama (Infallibility Decree)** in **1579**.
 - This decree reduced the power of orthodox clerics.
 - It recognized Akbar as the final authority in religious matters, earning him the title **Sultani-Adil** or **Imam-i-Adil**.
- His liberal policies provoked opposition; a **Fatwa** was issued against him from **Jaunpur** in 1580.

Social Initiatives & Reforms

- **Marriage Law:** Decreed that a man could marry only **one wife** and could marry another only if the first wife was barren.
- **Abolition of Practices:** Worked to abolish **slavery (1562)**, child marriage, and the practice of **Sati**.
- **Widow Remarriage:** Encouraged and supported the remarriage of widows.
- **Age of Marriage:** Tried to **fix the age of marriage** (girls at 14 and boys at 16).
- **Marriage Freedom:** Advocated for **girls to have the freedom to marry of their own will**, without parental pressure.
- **Causes of Popularity:** His Mansabdari system, Religious policy, Land Revenue System, and Social reforms were all key factors.

Military Campaigns and Conflicts

- **Against Gondwana:**
 - Fought against **Rani Durgavati**, the queen of **Mandla (Gondwana)**, who acted as regent for her young son, Vir Narayan.
- **In Kashmir:**
 - Exiled **Yousuf Shah Chak** (the last Muslim ruler of Kashmir) to **Bihar**.
 - Yousuf Shah Chak was buried in **Nalanda (Bihar)**.
- **Internal Conflict:**
 - Personally killed **Adham Khan** in **1562** for the murder of his prime minister, **Atgah Khan**.
- **Expansion in the East:**
 - Merged **Bengal and Bihar** into his empire after defeating **Daud Khan** in **1576**.

Court, Culture, and Learning



A. Translation Projects

- Established a Translation Department.
- The **Mahabharata** was translated into Persian and called '**Razmnama**' (Book of Wars).
 - Supervised by **Faizi**.
 - A collaborative effort by **Badauni, Abul Fazl, and Faizi**.
- The **Ramayana** was translated into Persian by **Abdul Qadir Badauni**.
- Other translations:
 - **Faizi** translated the mathematical work '**Leelavati**'.
 - **Abul Fazl** translated '**Kaliyadaman**'.

B. Art and Culture

- **Daswant** was a famous painter in Akbar's court.
- Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* lists 15 exceptional painters, including Daswant and Basawan.
- **European paintings were first introduced** to the Mughal court during **Akbar's** reign.
- The famous musician **Tansen's** original name was **Ram Tanu Pandey**.

C. Scholars and Figures

- **Muhammad Hussain** of Kashmir was a famous calligrapher awarded the title "**Zari Kalam**" (Golden Pen) by Akbar.
- **Nizamuddin Ahmed** was the author of **Tabaqat-i-Akbari**.
- **Abul Fazl** was the author of **Ain-i-Akbari** and also referred to the **discovery of America** in his works.
- **Jain Scholars:**
 - **Hari Vijay Suri** was honored with the title **Jagadguru**.
 - **Jin Chandra Suri** was given the title "**Yug Pradhan**".

Architecture

A. Fatehpur Sikri

- The site of Akbar's finest monuments. Key structures include:
 - **Ibadat Khana:** Hall for inter-faith discussions.
 - **Buland Darwaza:** Built to commemorate Akbar's victory over Gujarat.
 - **Panch Mahal:** A five-storied pavilion modeled after a Buddhist monastery.
 - **Jodha Bai Palace.**

B. Forts

- Akbar constructed the **Agra Fort**, **Allahabad Fort**, and **Lahore Fort**.
- He did **not** construct the **Red Fort in Delhi** (built by Shah Jahan).

- The **Jahangir Mahal** is located within the Agra Fort.
- The **Akbari Mahal** is located within the **Agra Fort**, not at Fatehpur Sikri.

C. Tombs

- **Akbar's Tomb** is located in **Sikandara** (near Agra). It was started by Akbar and completed by Jahangir. It is a unique, four-tiered pyramid structure without a dome.
- **Humayun's Tomb** in Delhi is noted as a synthesis of Persian and Indian architectural styles.
- **Quick Reference of Mughal Tombs:**
 - Babur: Kabul
 - Humayun: Delhi
 - Akbar: Sikandara
 - Jahangir: Lahore
 - Shah Jahan: Taj Mahal, Agra

Foreign Relations & Europeans

- **Contemporary Ruler:** Akbar (1556-1605) was a contemporary of **Queen Elizabeth I** of England (1558-1603).
- **East India Company:** The **English East India Company** was formed in **1600** during their reigns.
- **First English Visitor:** **Ralph Fitch** was the **first Englishman** to visit Akbar's court (Agra and Fatehpur Sikri).

Succession & Later Reign

- **Death of Abul Fazl:**
 - Prince **Salim** (later Jahangir) was responsible for the death of Abul Fazl in **1602**.
 - The assassination was carried out by **Vir Singh Bundela** on Salim's orders.

Historical Reputation

- Known as an "**enlightened despot**," a ruler with absolute power who used it to implement policies for the welfare and equality of his subjects.

Know More About the Mughal Dynasty : Akbar:

- [Mughal Dynasty: Akbar– Old Year Questions and Answers](#)
- [Mughal Dynasty: Akbar One Liner Questions & Answers](#)

