

SUBAS AND SUBEDARS OF HYDERABD DECCAN 1650-1724 A.D. A HISTORICAL STUDY

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Abstract

The landmark of the Provincial Administration of the Mughals to a great extent was a small replica of the Central Government. But the administration of the all provinces of the Mughal India was not exactly the same. The different political problems and local conditions were primarily responsible for some variations in the style of administration from one province to the other. During the period of this study, the Emperor Aurangzeb was divided his empire into 21 Subas for administration convenience. Out of these 14 Subas in Northern India, 1 Suba was in Afghanistan and 6 were in the Deccan. So far as the Deccan Suba is concerned, it had a special feature besides its diverse political problems and geographical and local conditions. The entire Deccan Suba which was quite large in extent had for to six Subordinate provinces, i.e. Khandesh, Berar, Bidar, and Aurangabad was the capital of the Deccan Suba and the headquarters of the Subedar.

The Subedar was the provincial head of the administration, his essential duties were to maintain order to help the smooth and successful collection of revenue and to execute the royal decrees and regulations sent to him. He was entrusted with the work of realizing the tribute from the vassal states situated within the boundaries of his Suba.

Ostensibly the Subedar wielded wide administrative powers, holding the rein of multifarious functions. However in reality the Subedar was not all that powerful. Though armed with extensive authority in various important spheres he had to depend on the will and pleasure of the Emperor on relatively small matters like appointments, grants and enhancement of 'manual' etc.

During the period of Aurangzeb, prince Mauzzam was the Subedar of the Deccan for 4 times for a period of eleven years, Shaista Khan for four years, Mirza Jai Singh for two years and Dilir Khan for

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one year, along with their contemporary (nearly 75) other Subedars of the Deccan were served under the control of Aurangzeb, like, Wazib Khan, Daud Khan, Khan-I-Zaman and Chin Quilich Khan from Khandesh; Iraj Khan and prince Kam Bakhsh from Aurangabad; Jan Sipar Khan and Rustum Dil Khan from Hyderabad; Lashkar Khan and Mumur Khan from Bijapur and Mukhtar Khan and Khuda Band Khan from the Bidar Subas.

Finally, during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, there was much importance to the administrative policy of Subas and subedars in the Deccan. The Deccan Suba and the Subordinate provincial Subas of the Deccan were served by nearly big and small nobles like., 75 member Subedars under the Sovereignty of Aurangzeb. Even though, the Subedars had the more administrative powers, but they could not take any decisions on their own. If they cause displeasure to the Emperor in ruling they would lost their power. Therefore, the commitment and constructive administration of these Subedars of the Mughal in the Deccan, left a vital mark in the History of Medieval Deccan.

The landmark of the provincial administration of the Mughals to a great extent was a small replica of the administration of the Central Government. But the administration of all the provinces of the Mughal India was not exactly the same. The different political problems and local conditions were primarily responsible for some variations in the style of administration from one province to the other. Even though, during the period of this study, the emperor Aurangzeb was divided all the empire into 21 Subas for administrative convenience,¹ i.e. (1) Agra (2) Ajmer (3) Allahabad (4) Awad (5) Bengal (6) Bihar (7) Delhi (8) Gujarath (9) Kashmir (10) Lahore (11) Malwa (12) Multan (13) Orissa (14) Thatta (Sindh) (15) Kabul (16) Aurangabad (17) Berar (18) Bidar (Telangana) (19) Bijapur (20) Hyderabad and (21) Khandesh. Out of these, 14 Subas in Northern India, 1 Suba was in Afghanistan (Kabul) and 6 Subas in Deccan.

So far as the Deccan Suba is concerned, it had a special feature besides its diverse political problems and geographical and local conditions. It was distinguished for its Vastness. The entire Deccan Suba which was quite large in extent had for to six subordinate provinces. It, therefore, naturally required an army of officers to administer the Deccan Suba land and its subordinate provinces. At that time Aurangabad was the capital of the Deccan Suba and the headquarters of the Subedar.²

The subordinate provinces of the Deccan had their own headquarters, the administrative organization of which had great similarity with the administrative organization of the capital of the Deccan Suba. Each subordinate province of the Deccan had Sarkars (districts), Mahals (parganas) and Mauzas or Qasabas (villages) as its administrative divisions. At the same time, we find some of the principal officers such as the Subedar (viceroy governor) at the capital of the Deccan and at the headquarters of the subordinate provinces and the Diwan (revenue chief), Bakshi (provincial army), Bitakshi (revenue payment inspector), Kotwal (in charge of provincial capital), Waqai Nawis (news reporter), Photedar (treasury of customs), Sadar (religious in charge) and Qazi (judge) not only posted at the capital of the

Deccan, headquarters of the subordinate provinces but at different administrative divisions and at other places.³

During the reign of Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb was appointed the Subedar of the Deccan twice and he was in the Deccan altogether for about 13 years. As such, he had vast practical experience of the problems and conditions of the Deccan. He had the advantage of making necessary arrangements and appointing suitable persons for administering the Deccan during his reign. Then, he had divided the South part of the Mughal empire into two parts i.e. one was the vast Deccan Suba, and others were six in the part of Deccan Suba like, subordinate provinces (subas) i.e. (1) Khandesh (2) Berar (3) Aurangabad (4) Bidar (5) Hyderabad (Golconda) and (6) Bijapur⁴.

The Subedar

The title of the provincial governor during the early Mughal period was 'Sipahsalar' (commander of the forces) and it was subsequently replaced by the terms of Subedar, or viceroy or Nazim. The Subedar was the provincial head of the administration, his essential duties were to maintain order to help the smooth and successful collection of revenue and to execute the royal decrees and regulations sent to him.⁵ And some of the important instructions issued to the Subedar, as exhaustively mentioned in the book of Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari*.

The Subedar who is the Vicegerent of the Emperor has the forces of the Suba and its inhabitants under his orders and the welfare of the people depends upon his just administration. He must never discard the consideration of the people's property. He decided on criminal cases, and was to maintain peace and order and to punish the disaffected and the recalcitrant. He was to appoint reliable and loyal men for police duty and for intelligence service. He was to encourage agriculture and construct works of irrigation, roads, sarais, gardens, hospitals, wells and similar other works. He should retain impartial revenue collectors and get information about them from time to time. And he was to see that the people enjoyed complete religious liberty. As his very name implied he was a military officer and was required to maintain proper discipline among his troops and to exact obedience from them. He was entrusted with the work of realizing the tribute from the vassal states situated within the boundaries of his Suba.⁶

The Subedars of Subordinate Provinces of The Deccan

Besides the Subedars of the entire Deccan, there were separate Subedars for the subordinate provinces of the Deccan. A list of a few important Subedars of these provinces is given below.⁷ For those who served at the Subedars for more than once the number of the time is indicated within parenthesis.

I. Khandesh

1. Wazir Khan (2 terms)
2. Mir Jumla
3. Daud Khan Qureshi (2 terms)
4. Khan-i-Zaman (3 terms)
5. Mukhtar Khan (2 terms)
6. Hoshdar Khan
7. Iraj Khan
8. Prince Azam (2 terms)
9. Shah Nawaz Khan Safavi
10. Inayath Khan (2 terms)
11. Marhamath Khan
12. Nazabath Khan (3 terms)
13. Mutaqad Khan
14. Sadruddin Muhammad Khan
15. Prince Bedar Bakht
16. Mir Ahmad Khan
17. Chin Quilich Khan (Nizam-ul-Mulk Asafzahi).

II. Berar

1. Syed Salabath Khan
2. Shah Beg Khan
3. Iraj Khan (2 terms)
4. Daud Khan Qureshi
5. Khan-i-Zaman
6. Hassan Ali Khan
7. Muhammad Ibrahim
8. Mahabath Khan Hyderabad
9. Nawazish Khan Rumi
10. Prince Kam Bakhsh (2 terms)
11. Ali Mardan Khan Hyderabad
12. Khuda Band Khan
13. Ali Mardan Khan
14. Shihabuddin Khan Firoz Jung

III. Aurangabad

1. Mamur Khan
2. Amanath Khan-II
3. Lutfullah Khan

4. Prince Bedar Bakht
5. Prince Azam
6. Khan-i-Zama

IV. Hyderabad (Golconda)

1. Ruhullah Khan
2. Jan Sipar Khan (2 terms)
3. Jan Nisar Khan
4. Rustum Dil Khan (2 terms)
5. Prince Kam Bakhsh
6. Syed Muzafar Khan
7. Dawood Khan Panni
8. Nizam-ul-Mulk
9. Hussain Ali
10. Mubariz Khan
11. Abdulla Mahabath Khan

V. Bijapur

1. Ruhullah Khan
2. Abdullah Khan Barha
3. Lashkar Khan (2 terms)
4. Mumur Khan
5. Lutfullah Khan
6. Chin Quilich Khan-(Nizam-ul-Mulk)
7. Prince Kam Bakhsh

VI. Bidar

1. Khan-i-Zaman (2 terms)
2. Mukhtar Khan (2 terms)
3. Qalendar Khan
4. Chin Qulich Khan (Nizam-ul Mulk)
5. Abdullah Khan
6. Lashkar Khan
7. Ruhullah Khan
8. Ali Mardan Khan
9. Khuda Band Khan

The Subedars of The Deccan

Soon after hearing about the illness of Emperor Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb started for North India leaving Prince Mauzzam in the Deccan. When Aurangzeb came to the throne after winning the war of succession, the Mughal Deccan consisted

of the four Subas i.e. Khandesh, Berar, Aurangabad and Bidar (Telangana). After then, Hyderabad (Golconda) and Bijapur Subas were added to the Deccan by the Aurangzeb. Prince Mauzzam was the first Subedar of the Deccan during the reign of Aurangzeb from 1658 to 1659. The Second Subedar of the Deccan was Shaista Khan as Jadhunath Sarkar writes “among the administrative changes made by Aurangzeb at his Second coronation was the posting of Shaista Khan to the viceroyalty of the Deccan in the place of prince Muazzam”.⁸ Shaista Khan was also the Subedar of the Deccan during the reign of Shah Jahan when he was appointed in succession of Prince Murad Baksh.

Including Prince Muazzam and Shaista Khan, there were five Subedars of the Mughal Suba of the Deccan from January, 1658 when Aurangzeb departed from here to contest the imperial throne till he came back to the Deccan to spend the last 25 years of his life in constant warfare. During this period of 24 years, Prince Mauzzam was the Subedar of the Deccan for four times for a period of eleven years, Bahadur Khan for two terms for a period of seven years, and Shaista Khan for four years. Mirza Raja Jai Singh for two years and Dilir Khan for one year. The tenure of the Subedar of Deccan was not fixed, as its evidence is mentioned. Besides Muazzam, the other Subedars i.e. Shaista Khan, Mirza Raja Jai Singh and Bahadur Khan who served in the Deccan, during the period were the grand nobles of the Mughal court holding the mansab of 7000 Jath/7000 Sawar excepting, Dilir Khan who was holding 5000 Jath/5000 Sawar. Prince Mauzzam was a 40 – hazari (30,000 tr)⁹.

Apparently, the powers and responsibilities of the Deccan Subedars were greater and higher than the Subedars of the other parts of India as they had not only to administer the four to six sprawling Subas of the Mughal Deccan but also shoulder the Crucial responsibility of defending the long frontiers of the Suba.

In addition to the above-mentioned five Subedars some nobles holding ranks were also sent to the Deccan to command the expeditions. Mahabath Khan, the ex-Subedar of Kabul was sent on the Deccan expedition on 28th November, 1670. In the 20th year of Aurangzeb’s reign Asad Khan was appointed the Subedar of the Deccan. However another contemporary authority mentions that Asad Khan was sent to the Deccan with a large army and vast stores of material. It is mentioned that in the 22nd year of reign, Prince Muazzam was appointed to teach the Marathas a good lesson and the order was sent that Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur should also accompany him. But in another contemporary authority it is stated that Muhammad Azham (not Prince Muazzam) was appointed to the Deccan expedition on 31st July, 1681.¹⁰

Ostensibly the Subedar wielded wide administrative powers, holding the rein of multifarious functions. However in reality the Subedar was not all that

powerful. Though armed with extensive authority in various important spheres he had to depend on the will and pleasure of the Emperor in relatively small matters like appointments, grants and enhancement of manuals, etc. It was entirely left to the discretion of the Emperor whether to accept or reject any proposal made by the Subedar to the Emperor. In all such matters, the Subedar was only the recommending or proposing authority and nothing beyond that.

Finally, a deeper insight into the historical happenings during the period shows that almost all the subedars incurred the displeasure of the Emperor either for the failure in their expeditions in the Deccan or for the negligence of duty for oppressing the people. And also they had to face the severe punishments from the Emperor.

Example

The surprise attack of Shivaji on Shaista Khan on the night of 5th April, 1663 was a complete success. This disgrace of the Subedar of the Deccan caused great annoyance to the Emperor and as a mark of his displeasure, he transferred Shaista Khan to Bengal on 1st December, 1663, without permitting him even to visit him on his way to his new charge.¹¹

The information of the Subedars of the Deccan and the Subedars of the subordinate provinces of the Deccan have been compiled on the basis of the prominent works like, Alamgir Nama, Maasir-ul-Umara, Maasir-i-Alamgiri, Tarikh-i-Dilkhasa, History of Aurangzeb, Shivaji and His Times, Provincial Governors under Aurangzeb, Mughal Administration and Selected Documents of Aurangzeb's Reign from Telangana State Archives, Tarnaka, Hyderabad.¹²

Subedars of the Deccan – And their Time:

- 1. Prince Muazzam**
 - 1658-59 -1st time, 2 years
 - 1664 – 2nd time, 1 year
 - About the middle of January, 1664 Shaista Khan left the Deccan upon being relieved by prince Muazzam.
 - 1667-72-3rd time, 5 years.
 - In May, 1667 the newly appointed Subedar Prince Muazzam reached Aurangabad and relieved Mirza Raja Jaisingh of his charge. Prince Muazzam left the Deccan in June, 1672.
 - 1678-80-4th time, 3 years, Total 11 years.

- On 18th September, 1678 Prince Shah Alam Bahadur (Muazzam) with a vast army was sent to govern the Suba of the Deccan.
- 2. Shaista Khan** - 1660-63, only one time, for 4 years. He was appointed Subedar of the Deccan Vice-Prince Mauzzam on 22nd July, 1659. On 25th February, 1660 Shaista Khan left Ahemmad nagar with a vast army and on 9th May, 1660 he entered Poona.
- 3. Mirza Raja Jai Singh** - 1665-67 – only one time for 2 years, he arrived at Poona on 3rd March and took over the charge.
- 4. Bahadur Khan** - 1673-77 – 1st time, for 4 years, he became Subedar of the Deccan in January, 1673 and held that office till August, 1677.
- 1680-83 -2nd time, for 3 years total 7 years, on 1st March, 1680 Khan-i-Jahan Bahadur Zafar Jung Kokaltash became Subedar of the Deccan vice eldest Prince (Muazzam) Khan-i-Jahan's Second viceroyalty began at the end of May, 1680 when he relieved Prince Shah Alam at Aurangabad. By the middle of November, 1681 all the military resources of the empire were concerned in the Deccan under the Emperor himself.
- 5. Dilir Khan** - 1677-78, only one time for 1 year, he was ordered to keep watch till the arrival of the new Subedar.

Then, the following Subedars were served in the Deccan for certain periods.

6. Safi Khan – 1683-84
7. Amanath Khan – 1684-85
8. Hazi Shafi Sabzwari – 1685-86
9. Dianath Khan – 1694-95
10. Hassan Ali Khan Barha – 1698-99
11. Nazabath Khan – 1699-1700
12. Lutfullah Khan – 1701-1702

13. Prince Bedar Bakht – 1702-1704 and
14. Prince Azam -1705-1706
15. Kambakshi – 1706-1708
16. Dawood Khan Panni - 1708-1713
17. Nizam ul Mulk – 1713-1715
18. Hussain Ali – 1715-1720
19. Nizam ul Mulk – 1721-1724
20. Mubariz khan – 1724-
21. Nizam ul Mulk – 1724-1748.

Conclusion

During the reign of the Mughal Emperors Aurangzeb to Mohammad Shah, there was much importance to the administrative system of Subas and Subedars in the Deccan. For the administrative convenience, Aurangzeb divided his empire into 21 Subas, whereas in Deccan there were six Subas. Among these Aurangabad, which was the capital city of the Deccan Suba was given more importance by the Subedars and also Emperors. Deccan Suba and subordinate provincial Subas of Deccan were ruled by nearly 75 Subedars under the sovereignty of Aurangzeb and other Emperors. Even though the Subedars had the more powers, but they could not take any decisions on their own. If they cause any displeasure to the Emperor in ruling they would lost their power. Therefore, the constructive administration of these Subedars of the Mughal in the Deccan, left a vital mark in the history of medieval India.

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