

Babar

Jahiruddin Mohammed Babar was born in 1483. He related to the families of Taimur and Chingiz Khan. Thus, he had in him the blood of the two greatest conquerors of Central Asia. At the early age of 12, his father Sultan Umar Sheikh Mirza, died and Babar became the king of Fargana. At the time of his accession, he was surrounded by his enemies. His uncle and cousins took advantage of the confusion that prevailed in Samarkand after the death of Ahmed Mirza, his uncle.

In 1497, Babar was able to capture samarkand. Babar fell ill and his ministers put his younger brother on the throne. Due to his ill-luck, Babar lost both samarkand and Fargana.

In 1500, he Conquered Samarkand for a second time, but was forced by the Uzbeks to leave the same. But Babar managed the whole situation, and by his braveness he conquered Kandhar and Herat. He also captured Bukhara and Samarkand. But he failed to sit on the throne of Samarkand. Then he put attention on India. At last, by the battle of Panipat, he defeated Ibrahim Lodi and founded the Mughal empire in India. Babar was not only a warrior, but a great scholar and poet. He was a lover of nature and poetry. He was an orthodox Sunni but not a fanatic like Mohammed of Ghajini. He wrote about Hindus with contempt and recognised jihad against them as a sacred duty. As a soldier Babar was fearless in battles. He was the founder of the Mughal empire in India.

1. Battle of Panipat 1526

The Battle of Panipat was held on 21 April 1526. India was politically divided into two rival independent groups. No doubt the supreme Power was in the hands of afghans but they themselves were divided. Ibrahim Lodi, the Sultan of Delhi, and Agra. His uncle Alam Khan and Daulat Khan Lodhi, the governor of Punjab were planning to capture the throne of Delhi and Agra. He

Invited Babar to attack India.

Ibrahim Lodi and Babar armies remained stationed face to face for 8 days from 12th April to 19 April 1526. At last Babar started the war and sent a small contingent of about 5000 soldiers and made a night attack on 20th April but it failed. As a result, the army of Ibrahim Lodi also moved in battle but reaching very close to Babar's army to his surprise, Ibrahim Lodi found the army entrenched. The army of Babar within no time wheeled round and attacked the enemy from the sides and rear simultaneously. No doubt the Afghan soldier was worth praise, but Babar was

master of War strategy. He also used his Tulguma tactics. Within a few hours Ibrahim Lodi was defeated by Babar.

Results of the Battle of Panipat

1. Lane Poole writes-"To the afghans of Delhi the battle of Panipat was their canne. It was the ruin of their dominions, the end of their power."
2. The battle of Panipat marks the end of the second stage in Babur conquest of Hindustan.
3. It also late the foundation of the Mughal empire and led to the dissolution of the Lodhi Dynasty.
4. It shattered the aspirations of Hindu kings and chiefs who wanted to establish political supremacy of Hindus in India on a national basis.

2. Battle of Khanwa 1527

Babar's decision to stay in India and his ambition of establishing Mughal rule in India alarmed the rajputs. So far, they were Expecting that Babar, like his ancestor Taimur, would only plunder India and go back to Samarkand.

Babar accused Rana sanga of not giving the promised help and Rana complaining of not handing over the promised territories such as kalpi,dhaulpur,Bayana and Agra, hence a war broke out between the two traditional enemies.

The army of Babar and Rana sanga met at khanva, about 40 km away from Delhi. Babar arranged his army almost in the same manner as he had done at Panipat. Several important Rajput rulers and Afghan chiefs rallied to Rana sanga. About Rana's army

Lanpoole has observed-

"Whatever the exact number might have been, A more gallant army could not be brought into the field."

The battle started at 9:00 a.m. on March 17, 1527 and continued for about 10 hours. The Rajput began to bring havoc upon babar's army that seemed to have been reduced almost to their last gasp. At this moment Babur made a stirringspeech before his soldiers-

"Noble man and soldiers every man that comes to this world is subject to dissolution. How much better is it to die with honour than to live with infamy. Let us then with one Accord swear on God's holy Quran that none of us will ever think of turning his face from this warfare till his soul is separated from his body."

The stirring appeal had the desired result. The bloody war followed.

The Mughals won the battle. Rana Sanga was badly wounded and taken away from the battlefield. He wanted to take revenge for his own defeat, but his nobles did not want to take risk.

In the words of S R Sharma-

"Defeat of the Rajput at Khanwa ended the superiority of the Rajput, which they had established successfully in the last 10 years, and which was an eyesore to the Muslims."

A L Srivastava observed-

"Rajput military power was no doubt crushed in the battle of Khanwa but it was not totally crushed. Within a few years they again raised their heads."

According to Dr. Lunia-

"After the defeat and death of Rana Sanga, Mewar lost its prestige and in its place Marwar started gaining power."

3. Battle of Chanderi 1528

As a result of the battle of Khanwa, the power of Rajputs was crippled not crushed. Babar marched against Chanderi which was a stronghold of the Rajput under Medini Rai.

This Rajput chief was very powerful and had made his position felt in Malwa. Babar reached Chanderi on 20th January 1528. The Mughals besieged the fort where Medini Rai had taken shelter with his 5000 followers. He refused to enter any treaty with Babar and did not accept Babar's offer of a jagir in lieu of Chanderi. Consequently, Babar pressed the siege of Chanderi with full vigour and attacked the fort of Chanderi from all sides. Rajputs were determined to fight to finish, and their women burnt themselves by performing jauhar. Almost all the Rajputs lost their lives. On 29 January 1528 the fort of Chanderi was captured. After this supported by this army no other Rajput chief could challenge the authority of Babar.

3. Battle of Ghagra 1529

Although the Rajput menace was removed, there were still the afghans who had to be subdued. Muhammad Lodi, a brother of Ibrahim Lodi, had fled and taken refuge in Bihar and established his position there. He had a large army estimated at about 1 lakh. Supported by this army he went to Banaras and from there to Chunar. When he laid siege to Chunar Babar sent his own son Askari against Muhammad Lodi and later himself Marched against him. When the Afghan came to know of the movements of Babar, he raised the siege of the Chunar and withdrew. On his way to Burar through Allahabad, Chunar and Banaras several Afghan chiefs offered their submission to Babar. Mohammed Lodi had taken refuge in Bengal. Although its ruler Nusrat Shah had assured Babar of his friendship, Babar decided to put an end to Afghan Menace, even at the risk of a war and March towards Bengal. The battle of Ghagra was fought on 6 May 1529 and the afghans were completely defeated. The defeat of Ghagra was final so far as Lodi's were concerned. Babar entered a treaty with Nusrat Shah by which both the parties agreed to respect each other's sovereignty and Nusrat Shah agreed not to give shelter to the enemies of Babar in future.

Last days of Babar

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Babar breathed his last on December 26, 1630. Just a few months before his death Babar declared his son Humayun as his successor to the throne and asked him to be liberal towards his brothers. His body was buried in Arambagh on the bank of river Yamuna in Agra, but later according to his last wish his body was taken to Kabul and buried on the side of a hill near Kabul a place of his own choice.

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