

### CHAPTER - III

#### INTERNAL AFFAIRS, BAHĀDUR GILĀNĪ & KHANDESH

##### Administrative divisions of the Kingdom :-

After the conquest of Dwarka and Shankhodhar in 1473, the Sultan divided Gujarat in five separate "Thanas" each under the charge of "Thanedar".

Accordingly Farhat-ūl-Mulk was appointed at the "Thana" of "Dwarka and Shankhodhar", Imād-ūl-Mulk was placed in charge of Songadh in Surat District. Qiwan-ūl-Mulk Malik Sarang was in charge of Godhra Thana in Panchmahals district and "Mahim" in the South was placed under Nizām-ūl-Mulk. The administration of Ahmedabad was given to Khudāwand Khān, the Sultān's brother-in-law, while the Sultan resided at Mustāfābād - Junagadh.<sup>1</sup>

##### Foundation of Mahmudabad :-

From 1473 to 1482, the Sultān was engaged with the internal affairs. During this period he also founded another city Mahmūdābād, on the river Vatrak. This he might have begun in 1479. It seems that the Sultān founded this city as a defence for Ahmedabad against the disturbances of the Rajput Kings of Mahikantha. It came into promine-

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1. TF - Trans (Briggs) IV, p.62 TA Trans (De) III, pp.263-264.

nce when Sultān Mahmūd III in 1537-1553, selected it as his residence.

Conspiracy of Khudāwand Khān :-

The Persian chroniclers write that after the conquest of Junagadh and Dwarka, Sultān Mahmūd was in the habit of spending most of his time in Mustāfābad. After his short stay in Ahmedabad, the Sultān returned to Mustāfābad in the year 885/1480, leaving behind him, his eldest son Ahmad Shah there with Khudāwand Khān, his brother-in-law, in charge.

The continuous absence of the Sultan from the capital, probably led Khudāwand Khān to think of removing his master from the throne. Khudāwand Khān planned to place Ahmad Khān on the throne and for this he contacted, Rāy-i-Rāyān, a Rajput noble, but Rāy-i-Rāyān disclosed the plot to the Wazīr Imād-ul-Mulk.<sup>2</sup>

It is believed that Khudāwand Khān told Rāy-i-Rāyān that he was tired of the Sultān's incessant campaigns and also desired to remove Imād-ul-mulk, the Wazīr.<sup>3</sup> It seems

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2. TF - Text, IV, II p. 395, TA - Trans (De) pp.263-264.

3. Sikandar writes that Khudāwand Khān was instigated by some rebellious people to place Prince Ahmad on throne  
 Cf. MS - Trans (F) pp.65-66.

that a certain section of the nobles was really discontented, with the Sultān's constant cōmpaigns and they were probably led by Khudāwand Khān. It is also likely that Khudāwand Khān was envious of Imād-ūl-Mulk and the position he held in the absence of the Sultān from the capital.

The reason, if chroniclers are to be believed, for including Rāy-i-Rāyān, the Rajput noble, in the secret plot was that he was the friend both of Imād-ūl-Mulk and Khudāwand Khān.<sup>4</sup>

Rāy-i-Rāyān was faithful to the Sultān and so he informed Imād-ūl-Mulk immediately regarding Khudāwand Khān's plans. Imād-ūl-Mulk immediately ordered Muhāfiz Khān, the "Kotwal" of the city and Qiwām-ūl-Mulk Malik Sarang to remain ready on Ramadhān Id, the day chosen by the conspirators for action.

Imād-ūl-Mulk, pretended to join the conspirators. On Ramadhān Id, he attended on Ahmād Khān with his retinue for prayers in the "Idgah" and returned as usual,

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4. The chroniclers are silent about the position held by Rāy-i-Rāyān, a Rajput noble, and so it is difficult to find out a clue of relationship of this noble with Khudāwand Khān and Imād-ūl-Mulk.

"befooling Khudāwand Khān of his agreement with him of placing Prince Ahmad on the throne." <sup>5</sup> Khudāwand Khān did not think of any further action because of the presence of Muhāfiz Khān at the court and the secret preparations of Qiwan-ul-Mulk Malik Sarang.

It may be noted here that bloodshed was avoided, probably, because of Imad-ul-Mulk's timely action. Khudāwand Khān, possibly failed to win over the powerful nobles and hence failed in his plan. It is difficult to understand why he should inform Ray-i-Rayān, who could not be trusted by him and was more faithful to Imad-ul-Mulk. Probably he did so because he did not know this Rajput noble better.<sup>6</sup>

The Sultan tests the loyalty of the nobles :-

On being informed of these events by Qaisar Khān, an officer of his household, Sultan Mahmud ostensibly proceeded towards Ahmedabad. The nobles received him at Cambay and requested him to proceed to Ahmedabad. The Sultan refused to proceed further and asked the nobles to allow him to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, after abdicating

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5. TF - Text, IV, II pp. 395-396, Nizām-ud-dīn states that Khudāwand Khān did not disclose anything out of danger. Cf TA - Trans, (DE) pp. 264-267.
6. TA - Trans, (De) III, pp. 264-266. ~~TF~~ Text, IV, II pp. 394.

in favour of his son Ahmed.

At the same time he declared his firm resolution not to touch food or water till they gave their consent Firishah states that the Sultan <sup>u</sup>sammoned all the nobles and asked them to accept Muzaffar Shah as their Sultan after him and insisting on his desire to proceed on Haj. <sup>7</sup>

The nobles requested the Sultan to give up his idea for the time being, on the ground that the treasury lacked sufficient funds for the expenses. This they said was possible only after the conquest of Champaner. <sup>8</sup> The Sultan then abandoned the idea and proceeded to Ahmedabad.

From Imād-ūl-Mulk, he also learnt the course of events during his absence from the capital. At this information, the Sultan humiliated the minister Khudawand Khan, either naming one of his regions as Khudawand Khan, <sup>9</sup> or employing a person in meanest office of household to be called by his name. <sup>10</sup> This seems to be rather a mild punishment for such an offence. ✓

This was the second conspiracy of the nobles during the reign of Sultan Mahmūd but differs in its nature and consequences from the earlier one of 1458. In the first conspiracy, the Sultan was frightened and had few nobles

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7. TF - Text, IV, II, pp. 394-395.

8. Ibid -p. 395, TA - Trans (De) pp.267-271.

9. Ibid - pp. 267-271

10. TF Text, IV, II p.395.

at his command, while in this event, it seems that most of the nobles were with him.

Surprisingly, the Sultān, known for severe punishments did not take strong action and also he did not go into the details of the conspiracy. Why was it so ? Did he consider this threat as less important ? Why did he seek the permission of the nobles for pilgrimage to Mecca ? Did he really wish to abdicate the throne in favour of his son ?

The chroniclers' answers to these questions is that the Sultan did all this to test the loyalty of his nobles. What was the reason of testing the loyalty of the nobles at this time ? Probably, he might have thought of invading Champner during his stay in Mustāfabād, and of testing the patience of his nobles for further engagements. Champner had been the powerful stronghold of the Rajputs and hence without the co-operation and the loyalty of the nobles, its conquest would have been difficult. The Sultan got this opportunity and therefore he utilised it, for the success of his further plan.

Due to political pressure, the Sultān against his nature, ordered a very mild punishment to be given to the conspirator." A strong action" might have affected "the

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political balance" of the state and would have been an obstacle in the "Invasion of Champaner". According to Firishta Nizam-ul-Mulk, a noble suggested the Sultān to conquer the fort of Champaner, "from the plunder of which the expenses of the pilgrimage might be defrayed".<sup>11</sup> Hence this might have forced Sultān Mahmūd to deal leniently with the conspirators.

#### BAHĀDUR GĪLANI'S PIRATICAL ACTIVITIES ON THE COST OF GUJARAT:

Bahādur was a native of Gilan, a town in Persia and joined the service of Bahamani Kingdom under its celebrated minister Mahmūd Gāwān. After the assassination of Mahmūd Gāwān on April 5, 1481, he went into rebellion against his ruler Mahmūd Lashkāri. Bahādur and Mahmūd Gāwān were the natives of same place ~~in-place~~ and therefore it is likely that the death of the latter might have been considered by Bahādur as his and his countrymen's insecurity in Deccan. Hence, this might have resulted into his rebellion.

He occupied Dabhol and gradually occupied the whole of Konkan. With this success, he extended his activities on the coast further to the North, so that the ships from the port towns of Gujarat were at his mercy and some of the Sultān's vessels were captured.

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11. TF - Trans (Briggs) IV, p. 64

Sikandar tells us that Bahādur sent his men to Cambay with the proposal of marriage for the daughter of Malīk-ūl-Tujjār Dukhānī for himself. Owing to the opposition of the people of Cambay Bahādur failed in his plan. As a result of this failure, Bahādur, started plundering the ports of Gujarat.<sup>12</sup>

The reason, advanced by Sikandar, is not supported by other Persian chroniclers and so it is doubtful whether that was the only reason for which Bahādur attacked Gujarat shipping. The author of Māathir-i-Mahmūd Shāhī, supposed to be the contemporary of Sultān Mahmūd, does not mention this reason.<sup>13</sup>

The depredations of Bahādur on the coast of Gujarat extended to such an extent that Mahim, near modern Bombay, was attacked by Bahādur's Abyssinian Officer Yaqūt, with a fleet of twelve ships, sacked and burnt.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> MS - Trans (F) pp. 72-74

<sup>13</sup> Maathir-i-Mahmūd Shāhī (hereafter MMS) Fol. 21-23

<sup>14</sup> TF - Text, IV, II p.399 - writes Bahādur attacked while translator writes Yaqūt attacked Mahim. (Briggs), IV, pp.71-72, other Persian chroniclers refer to this Abyssinian general of Bahādur.



The Sultān took this attack on Mahim seriously and so to check Bahādūr from advancing further he sent a naval unit under Safdar Khān and Kamāl Khān towards Mahim. The author of Maāthir-i-Mahmudshāhi states that due to storm the officers were separated from each other and therefore they could not fight a strong enemy at sea, with the result that both of them were captured by Bahādūr's men and taken as prisoners at Dabhol.<sup>5</sup>

The Sultān on being informed of the reverse met his generals at Mahim, ordered Qiwām-ul-Mulk Malik Sarang attack Bahādūr by land. A fleet of three hundred vessels was also sent to support the army. Malik Sarang on reaching Agashi and Bassein, appealed to the Sultān to secure permission to him to pass through the territory of the Deccan ruler, so that Bahādūr might be forced to submit.

On receipt of this request from Malik Sarang, the Sultān sent Bairam Khān with a letter, to the Deccan ruler, requesting him to help the army of Gujarat in suppressing the marauder. Accordingly Qāsim Bārīdi, a minister of Bahamani ruler, led a campaign against Bahādūr Gilāni and after protracted operations he was defeated captured and executed. Safdar-ul-Mulk, a captive of Bahādūr, was released and all the ships which<sup>had</sup> been seized

by Bahādūr on the coast of Gujarat, were restored to their owners. Safdar-<sup>ul</sup>-Mulk sailed from Mahim for the north carrying valuable gifts for Sultān Mahmūd from the Bahmani ruler Mahmūd Lashkari.

The piratical activities on the coast of Gujarat were not unknown to the rulers of Gujarat but Gilani's incursion to Gujarat ports deserves attention not from its results but from the way in which it was put down.

The Sultan of Gujarat sent two of his naval officers to control the Situation in the sea but they failed to overpower Bahādūr. The Persian chroniclers inform us that a storm was responsible for the failure of Safdar Khan and Kamal Khan. Even if this argument is accepted it does not explained why the naval unit sent for the second time to assist the army failed in the attempt. The chroniclers inform us that it was only with the help of the naval force of the Sultān of Deccan that Bahādūr Gilani submitted. Therefore, this instance indicates that however strong the Gujarat army may have been on land, it was not so on sea. Here it does not mean that the Sultāns of Gujarat did not care for the protection of the ports of Gujarat. They maintained naval units but not in sufficient strength, and due to this weakness, the activities of Bahādūr on the sea-coast of Gujarat, could not be checked.

This incident occurred sometimes in the year 1491 to 1494, but the Sultān failed to learn the lesson from it regarding the possibility of danger or invasion by sea. After six years of this event, the Sultāns of Gujarat were helpless against the Portuguese, because of their weaknesses at sea, though for time being, Gujarat evaded this danger till her great noble, Malik Ayāz was alive.

#### SUCCESSION PROBLEM OF KHANDESH :

Towards the end of his reign, Sultān Mahmūd was involved in a succession dispute in Khandesh. The Fārūqī rulers of Khandesh had been connected with the rulers of Gujarat, since the times of Malik Raja Fārūqī. Khandesh almost existed as a subsidiary of Gujarat for a long time. These relations then also extended to marriage alliances between the two families.

The relations of Gujarat with the rulers of Khandesh date back to Sultan Ahmad Shah of Gujarat. Ahmad Shāh had to march against Nasir Khan the ambitious ruler of Khandesh, who planned to capture the western part of Khandesh from his brother Iftikhār Khān. Iftikhār Khān was driven out and he appealed to the Sultan of Gujarat, for help. He failed to secure the help of Ahmad Shāh. Nasir Khān, with the help of the army of Malwa captured

the fort of Thalner and Iftikhar Khan was taken a prisoner. The joint army then attacked Sultanpur and hence Ahmād Shāh, marched against them and thus failed their plan of capturing Sultanpur. <sup>16</sup> The peace was concluded in which Nasir Khan of Khandesh "acknowledged Ahmād Shāh as overlord. Nāsir Khān was given his title now with the grace of Ahmād Shāh and as a special case, also allowed to use the red umbrella and canopy, though subordinate to Gujarat." <sup>17</sup>

Since this agreement in 1418, the Faruqi rulers of Khandesh were regularly paying their tribute to Gujarat. In 1498 or 1499, Mahmūd Begada had to move against 'Ādil Khān II, one of the most powerful rulers of Khandesh, when he omitted to send the usual tribute. This ruler died in 1501 and was succeeded by his brother Dāūd Khān and his inglorious reign ended in 1508. <sup>18</sup>

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16. TF - Trans (Briggs) IV, P. 292.

17. Misra B.C. Rise of Muslim power in Gujarat (Asia) 1963, pp. 176-178.

18. Dāūd Khān mismanaged the administration of Khandesh. The period of seven years was very burdensome for the people. MMS Hikamat Bey Lib. MS#. Fol. 127-130.

Dāūd Khān was succeeded by his son Ghizani Khān. He was poisoned by Malik Hisām-ud-dīn after two days of his accession.<sup>19</sup>

Ghizani Khān, had no male issue to succeed him and so a section of the nobles headed by Nizām Shāh favoured the claims of 'Ālam Khān.<sup>20</sup> At the same time 'Ā dil Khān the son of Hussain and grandson of Nāsir Khān by the daughter ~~thor~~ of Mahmūd Shāh of Gujarat, then in Thalner, advanced claim on the throne of Khandesh. Sultān Mahmūd, finding Khandesh was about to be involved in succession dispute thought of interfering in favour of his grandson, 'Ā dil Khān. Hence he advanced towards Khandesh.<sup>21</sup>

On reaching Asirgadh, the Sultān's army occupied it without any opposition. At Burhanpur, Nizām Shāh of Ahmadnagar, appealed to the neighbouring rulers for help, but he was checked by 'Ā dil Khān and Rumi Khān. Nizam Shah retreated to Amalner where he was joined by Ahmad Khān, a noble of Khandesh. Both Nizām Shāh and Ahmad Khān started

19. TF - Trans (Briggs) IV, p.302.

20. It is nowhere explained whose son 'Ā lam Khān or on what grounds his claim to the throne rested. Cf. TF - Tr. (B) IV, p.303.

21. According to the author of MĀ'ATHIR-I-MAHMŪD SHĀHĪ the Sultān was requested by the people of Khandesh to take over its administration. MMS, MSS Vol.131.

ravaging, were again repulsed with many of his allies were killed.

After these successes, the Gujarat army captured Burhanpur. Here 'Ādil Khān, was proclaimed as ruler of Khandesh and Khutbā was read in the name of Sultān Maḥmūd.<sup>22</sup>

A noble Malik Lādan Khālji, "the lord of nobles of this country", revolted and captured Asir but submitted on the advance of Gujarat army. The opposition thus was put down and the rebel leaders who submitted were pardoned and honoured with presents and titles. 'Ādil Khān was accepted as their ruler by the nobles of Khandesh and Sultān Maḥmūd conferred upon him the title of 'Āzam Humāyūn 'Ādil Khān III'.<sup>23</sup> The new ruler cemented his alliance with Gujarat by marrying a daughter of Sultān Maḥmūd's son Prince Khālil Khān.<sup>24</sup>

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22. Ibid Fol. 152-167.

23. IMS - Fol. 168-172.

24. Ross, Sir E. Dennison - An Arabic history of Gujarat, I, pp. 51, 55, 57 TF - Trans (Briggs) IV, p. 304.  
Haig CH. I, III, pp. 313-314.