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THE EMERGENCE OF SHER SHAH AND SUR DYNASTY IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Sher Shah was a courageous person who earned the sovereignty in Indian soil for the Afghan chiefs once again, who were forced to abdicate after the attack of Babar on India, by forcing Baber's son Huamyoon to flee from India. Sher Sha was an excellent ruler and conqueror. From the ruling history of Sher Sha for a short period it is to be assumed that if god has given a chance to him to live, there should not have been the much praised Mughal Empire in Indian history. The dynasty established by Sher Sha is known as Sur royal dynasty. As an aggressor who captured the power illegally, the Mughal Historians have not given Sher Shah a worthy position. But the modern Historians have assessed his achievements and given a respectable place (position) in middle age Indian History, Actually the honor for being the first nationalist Emperor of India is for Sher Shah only.

KEYWORDS: *sovereignty, conqueror, ruling history, royal dynasty,*

DISCUSSION

Sher Shah was a courageous person who earned the sovereignty in Indian soil for the Afghan chiefs once again, who were forced to abdicate after the attack of Babar on India, by forcing Baber's son Huamyoon to flee from India. Sher Sha was an excellent ruler and conqueror. From the ruling history of Sher Sha for a short period it is to be assumed that if god has given a chance to him to live, there should not have been the much praised Mughal Empire in Indian history. The dynasty established by Sher Sha is known as Sur royal dynasty. As an aggressor who captured the power illegally, the Mughal Historians have not given Sher Shah a worthy position. But the modern Historians have assessed his achievements and given a respectable place (position) in middle age Indian History, Actually the honor for being the first nationalist Emperor of India is for Sher Shah only.

Fareed was the actual name of Sher Shah. He was born as the son of Afghan Lord Hassan of Bihar in 1486. Unable to bear the cruelty of his father and step-mother, Fareed left for Jorpur and reached in 1494. Fareed Khan who have made hard work and steady enthusiasm as his capital, he has acquired higher education from there when the fame of Fareed became wide- spread, governor Jamal khan

settled the difference of opinion between father and son and the responsibility for ruling certain territories was entrusted to Fareed. People liked Fareed who have presented an excellent rule. The step mother of Fareed who became jealous of Fareed's good rule chased him away in 1518, though Ibrahim Lodhi has declared Fareed as the successor after the death of Hassan Khan, due to objection from his step- mother and others, he has entered in the independent ruler of Bihar . Babar Khan who was pleased with the service of Fareed has appointed him as the Dy. Government of South Bihar seeing Fareed khan killing a tiger single handedly, Babar Khan has given him the title of distinction as Sher Khan'.As a result of the conspiracies of the enemies Sher Khan who went out of Bihar, joined the services of Baber who have established the Mughal empire in 1527. When he reached Bihar after two years again he become the Dy governor After the death of Oudu Beevi in 1530 Sher Khan became the ruler of Bihar. Sher Sha who become the ruler of Bihar appointed his faithful followers on important positions of the administration and with tactical movements he has conquered Chunar Fort. In 1532 Humayoon has tried to conquer Chunar fort. The besieged continued for more than four months. He has made an agreement with Humayoon learning the power and weakness of

the Mughal army. Sher Shah has pretended to surrender to him. But his desire was to re-establish the lost sovereignty. For this purpose he was moving his chessmen. During the stay of Humayoon in Gujarat, Sher Khan has increased his military power. Hearing the news, though Humayoon has surrounded the Chunar Fort, he has failed in this. In 1538 Sher Khan has conquered Gour, after wards Rohthas fort also Sher Khan who have conquered the territories in between Bihar and Delhi, he has defeated Humayoon in chouse war in 1539. In an unexpected advance severing the relation between Bengal, Delhi and Agra Sher Khan acquired a decisive victory on Humayoon in May 1540 at Kanaj. In Kanouj war Humayoon could barely save his life Since Sher Khan has conquered Agra and Delhi; Humayoon has sought refuge in Persia. Thus Sher Khan in the name of Sher Shah became Delhi's Ruler and established a new dynasty The royal dynasty established by Sher Sha is the 'Sur Dynasty'.

Sher Sha was not a person to be satisfied with what be obtained Therefore he has continued his 'Digvijay' (conquest of the eight direction). In 1541 he has conquered Khokkar group of Punjab and Mughals of Kashmir wholly. Territories like Gwalior malwa and marwar without much delay accepted Sher Shaha's supremacy. Sher Shah's supremacy. Sher Shah cunningly occupied Chithor fort also. In 1545 Sher Shah desired to merge Kalinjar fort also to his empire. While surrounding and seizing the fort Sher Shah was killed from a bullet of one Rajput soldier in 22nd may 1545 Sher Shah was able to expand his empire within five years and to start a graceful ruling method. The name of Sher Shah will remain unerased in the history of the middle age. Though Sher Shah has ruled the country only for five years he was able to get an eternal position in the Indian history through important modernisation. Within this period he has proved that he was victor and administrator Sher Shah's was a dictatorship rule which was progressive and aimed at the welfare of the people. In this aspect it is felt that he can be compared to the enlightened dictators who ruled European countries in 18th century. With limited circumstances that brought revolution in the field of administration become an inspiration and guide for even the Mughal Emperor subsequent times. Renovation in the administration of Sher Shah was having lot of similarity with the renovations of Allavudhin Khiji. We can scrutinize which is the above mentioned praise worthy renovations.

In centralized administrative condition the king was the supreme authority. The entire authority pertaining to military or non – military was vested on the king. For the convenience of rule the work was divided and brought each one under each section. Minister was the head of each department. The king was having the authority for appointing or removing the ministers. For administrative convenience, Sher Shah has divided his kingdom into Paraganas Each Paragana was under Shikonar. To help him,

employees like munsif, Aameen etc were there A Sarkar (government) was of different 'paraganas' governors who carried out the administrative responsibility of the Govt. were appointed by the king directly. The villages the village panchayats were enjoying many powers Sher Shah was having the obstinacy that the administrative field should be most capable and comfortable to the people. Considering that the bigger provinces and its rulers were against the King's authority, he has not divided his kingdom into provinces. He used to inspect the income and expenditure of the treasury himself and the orders in connection with the administration were given directly to the ministers.

Sher Shah has enforced a new land tax system. Instead of collecting tax considering the area of the land, he decided the tax after taking into account the yield from the land. Pattayam was given to the farmer for his land. The tax was decided as one fourth of the total yield. The tax payer was having the freedom to give the tax as money or kind. The tax decision was to the almost generous and the tax collection was also almost strict made facilities for depositing the tax directly in the treasury instead of through middle men. In connection with this one historian has stated that if Sher Shah was alive for little more period, there should not have been a class called Land lords. When farmers were having hard ship like famine period etc tax concession was permitted.

Sher Shah was the person who understood that the power of the empire depended on the military power, Because of this he himself has carried out the supervision of the army. To prevent the system of presenting cheating horses by the jagirdars at the time of the inspection by royal employees, a system of putting seal on the horses were introduced. In the border areas instead of old forts new forts were constructed Sher Shah directly recruited the soldiers and fixed salary for them. Though he showed kindness to the soldiers, in the case of discipline he has not shown any compromise. Each military group was under a 'Fousidar' Even then most soldiers were under the direct control of the king. Jaggier system which was an obstacle for unified rule was discouraged by him. He has given special instruction not to make any destruction to the cultivation by soldiers during their military action. (cavalry foot solders (infantry) and army composed of elephants were included in his military division. Not only that, he has formed separate code of law for the army. Sher Shah insisted that law and justice should be flawless and the same should be available fast and inexpensive manner. Because of this once in a week he used to listen complaints directly and settled. Sher Shah was having the view that in front of law all are equal A person's position or status was not influenced the disciplinary action. Even for small crime severe punishment was given. He did like this to dissuade the people from committing crime.

The settlements in civil and criminal cases were taken up by the court called Darul Adalath'. He has organised police force also for maintaining law and order. Any person could travel inside the country with out any fear. The life and wealth of the citizens were safe .He has appointed a separate employer called. He who believed in social values has appointed a separate employee called" Muhthaseeb" for anticipating social evil customs like drinking intoxicating liquor , prostitution etc. Sher Shah has taken special care for expanding travel facilities and communication methods Since the facility for travel and communication connections were less, most of the time there was hindrance for contacting local authorities. As a solution for this plenty of roads and new communication system were introduced. The employees carrying news were travelling on the horse back. For them to take rest ' sarayees' were constructed .on the way. It is said tht he has constructed more than thousand seven hundred sarayees . He has started shade trees on the way. Grand trunk road, from Dakka to Arccot, the road connecting Agra and Jodapur road , Multan – Lahore road etc are the important roads constructed by Sher-Sha. These roads were helpful for speedy movements of army and trade.Sher Shah has arranged modernization of coins. He has released coins of gold, silver and copper. Exchange ratio between each one was decided He has with drawn the coins which were under circulation earlier. Among the coins for small amount ' Dham' was famous. Silver coins were known as a' Roopa ' As per the opinion of V A smith, the basis of British , currency existed till 1947 was this silver coins it seems. The ratio between Dham and silver ' Roopa was 64.1 Sher Shah name was recorded in Devangari script on these coins.Aware that some employees were corrupted, to prevent their corruption Sher Shah has arranged a particular plan . All these employees were brought under the observation of spies beside this, he used to transfer and appoint revenue employees in every two years. He has accepted various measures for preventing crimes. Manifesting strict and criminal laws he has given hard punishment to the culprits. The person who was holding the responsibility for maintaining law and order in local groups should prevent crimes or in case so happened he should fair out the culprits. In case if he was failed in finding out the wrong – doers, he was arrested and given punishment. Even though it felt like crude and cruel, as per Dr. Kanu's opinion this was very much effective.

Sher Shah has maintained a policy of tolerance. Though he was a complete sunni muslim in his personal life, he was nota religious fanatic. In public ruling field and and in military field, Hindus were given many responsible position.Due to religious reasons be has not persecuted Hindus at any time due to religious reasons. It can be said that with the ruling of Sher Shah the period of awakend Islam religion started. Sher Shah was holding the opinion

that religion and politics should not be mixed together. The administrative condition of Sher Shah's period was built up on the foundation of the ideal of national unity. Welfare of the people for the welfare of the people he has established so many charitable institutions. He has made dining halls in various parts of the country for providing food to destitute and the poor freely. For the education of the poor and orphaned children he has arranged scholarships and free education. He has helped for the marriage of poor widows' female children free treatment practice was also existed during this period.

During this period the commercial field was exhausted due to excess weight of tax. Because of this the consumers have to give excess price. Sher Shah has decided to make a change for this condition. He has stopped all the un necessary internal tax imposed. Excise duty for export and import, single faced tax at the time of sale was introduced. Many customs inspection centers which has affected adversely for the sate trade was stopped declared concession in customs duty. He has given in instruction to the officers to be having politely with traders and industrialist. This has given relief to the traders and the commercial field was also improved. It is to be mentioned specifically that during the period of Sher Shah encouragement was given to culture and arts. The administrator achievements Sher shah has attained within a short period is very great. Sher shah is having a noble place in Indian History in what ever way observed.

Sher Shah was remarkable ruler of the middle age history of India Very rarely history has seen such a genius person like him who was having various capabilities joined together. As a person Sher Shah was steady enthusiast and energetic person. Though his step mother and father were behaving mercilessly, he has not forsaken his mental spirit. All unfavorable circumstances he has faced with presence of mind. Sher Shah was able to put his individual stamp in wherever he entered. It can be seen that it is very rare to see person in whom both administrative and military capabilities came together. Sher Shah who was a complete idealist with out caste differentiations worked hard for the welfare of his subjects. Sher Shah was an idealist who believed that the important and foremost duty of a king should be the welfare of his people. Because of this reason he planned and introduced plenty of schemes for the welfare of the people. As an excellent victor Sher Shah has expressed his ability. After a short break the rule of the Afghans in the soil of India was able to establish because of the deceive conquest Sher Shah had achieved over Humayoon. After this he has achieved many successes. All these increased his fame also.

He was able to shine equally as a soldier and military chief. The brave Sher Shah's excellent character received (captured) the love and respect of the military heads and ordinary soldiers. Sher Shah

was not afraid of war, most of the occasions he was in the battle field. By directly entering the field and fighting he has given enthusiasm and encouragement. Sher Shah was not having any difficulty in taking decisions wisely when an urgent decision has to be taken in the battle field. Not only that he has taken care to enforce the decision he has taken. Sher Shah who was a very good diplomat, was also an expert in taking decisions properly in the matters and controlling it. He, very well knew the philosophy of resistance and submission – understanding that his resistance for preventing Humayoon’s effort to conquer Chunar Fort will not be effective he has pretended to surrender temporarily, made Humayoon satisfied But when he got the occasion again he rose vigorously. This diplomacy of Sher Shah was the basis of his success to a certain extend.

As a ruler he was able to prove his undesirability with in a short period. All his policies have reached minutely in all aspects of administrative planning. He has brought each division under his control. The interest of the farmers and poor people were safe in his hand. He has taken an upper hand in erasing malpractice and injustice and also worked hard for the improvement of travel and communication facilities. Sher Shah only has made arrangements for preventing crimes in the local level with this system he was able to prevent crimes to a great extent. Even for a woman without fear was able to walk through the road carrying a basket of gold on her head. Thieves or robbers have not looted them. One Historian has thus recorded. Being a just person, this ruler has desired that his subjects should get justice equally. He has not considered any differentiation whether he s great person or humble person. Position or status was not a reason for exemptions’ from punishment. The hard punishment he has given and administration of justice kept people away from crimes.

CONCLUSION

Sher Shah has introduced plenty of modernization in the field of public rule and military ruling period. The manifestation of land reform act produced far reaching results. The changes brought in deciding the tax and tax recovery was very much relief for the farmers. By introducing postal system in communication field and construction of new roads in the travel field and the manifestation he brought in customs tax in trade and commerce field made a new vigour. The modernization in coins was adequate to bring improvement in financial field. Besides an efficient Ruler, Sher Shah was a complete devotee. Reading Khur-Aan was a part of his daily routine. Sher Shah behaved with respect and tolerance towards other religions. Desired to see Hindu Muslim unity a reality, he was also a complete nationalist.

Sher Shah, the scholar linked arts and literature and encouraged it. He has arranged separate education facility for the poor and orphans.

For this purpose he has operated Madrassas and Mukhthabs. Interested in architecture, he has constructed many beautiful buildings. Though he desired to build a new city in Delhi, it was not accomplished. Being a ruler, strategist and victor, in all these areas with a short ruling period of five years, Sher Shah was able to shed light. It is no doubt that Sher Shah will be praised in Indian History being one among the rare persons who entered History thrashing and holding a place. ive brief account of Sher Shah’s successors and the cause that responsible for the decline of the Sur Dynasty:

Sher Shah, holding the steering of administration of Delhi only for a very short period and after acquiring a position in the History, in 1545 disappeared under period’s curtain. Within this period he could make Delhi Empire wide – spread and powerful. Since who came as his successors were not having sufficient capability or experience within. One decade their rule came to an end and again the Mughal power was installed on the Delhi’s throne. The destruction of the empire speeded up due to the inability of Sher Sha’s successors. If the successors were as powerful and capable like him, then the return of Humayoon and establishing the Mughal Empire should not have been possible.

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