

**Contribution of Nalanda's Ulama  
in Arabic and Islamic Studies:  
Before 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru  
University in partial fulfillment of the requirement  
for the award of the degree of  
**Master of Philosophy**

BY

**Mohd Azhar Sabir**

Supervisor

**Professor F. U. Farooqi**



Centre of Arabic and African Studies  
School of Languages, Literature and Culture Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi - 110067

**2009**



Centre of Arabic and African Studies  
School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi - 110067  
जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय, नई दिल्ली-110067

Date: 21/07/2009

## Declaration

I declare that the material in this dissertation entitled  
**“Contribution of Nalanda’s Ulama in Arabic and  
Islamic studies before 20<sup>th</sup> century”** submitted by me, is  
my original research work and has not been previously  
submitted for any other degree of this or any other  
university/institution.

Mohd Azhar Sabir  
Research Scholar

Professor F.U. Farooqi  
(Supervisor)  
CAAS/SLL&CS/JNU

Professor S.A. Rahman  
Chairperson  
Centre of Arabic & African Studies  
School of Language, Literature & Culture Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
CAAS/SLL&CS/JNU  
New Delhi-110067

Dedicated

To

The sweetest memories of my  
grandfather

**Hafiz Mohammad Aslam Rashidi**

Who taught me the first letter of education,  
manner and behavior and guided me how  
to live.

# Table of contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>03-09</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>10-18</b>
<b>First Chapter</b>	<b>19-57</b>
Contribution of Muslims in Indian civilization	20
Education before Mughals period	26
Education in Mughals period	32
Women Education during the Mughals period	38
Arabic Education in India	40
Muslims in Eastern Part of India	49
Arabic Studies in Eastern India	50
<b>Second Chapter</b>	<b>58-119</b>
Political Aspects of Bihar	59-95
Bihar before Muslims arrival	59
Bihar during the Muslim period	64
Rule of Balbun Family in Bihar and Bengal	66
Government of Sharqi Dynasty in Bihar	66
Malik Sarwar, Khwajah-i-Jahan	67
Mubarak Shah	68
Ibrahim Shah	68
Mahmud Shah	69
Muhammad Shah	69

Hussain Shah	70
Pathan's government in Bihar	71
SHER SHAH AND THE SUR DYNASTY	71
Bihar during the period of Akbar	77
Bihar during the period of Jahangir	81
Bihar during the period of Shah Jahan	84
Bihar during the period of Aurangzeb	90
Cultural Aspects of Bihar	96-99
Educational Aspects of Bihar	100-118
KHANQAHS (MONASTORIES) OF BIHAR	100-105
Khanqah of Maner	102
Khanqah of Bihar Sharif	103
Khanqah of Phulwari Sharif	103
Other Khanqahs	103
MADRASAS OF BIHAR	106-108
ULAMA OF BIHAR	109
MERIT ULAMA OF BIHAR	111-119
Shaikh Ahmad bin Yahya Maneri	111
Shaikh Shoib bin Jalal Maneri	112
Shaik Nizamuddin Maneri	112
Shaikh Tajuddin Usmani	112
Shaikh Raziuddin Bhagalpuri	113
Shaikh Abdul Shakur Maneri	113

Maulana Sulaiman Maneri	114
Khaja Imaduddin Phulwarvi	114
Maulana Wajeehul Haque Phulwarvi	115
Maulana Aasil Bhagalpuri	115
Maulana Sayed Shah Ahmad Husain Gayawi	115
Shaikh Abul Hasan Phulwarvi	116
Moulana Ahmadi bin Waheed Phulwarvi	116
Shaikh Ali Habib Phulwarvi	117
Maulana Wahidul Haque Phulwarvi	117
Maulana Wilayat Ali Sadiqpuri	118
Maulana Yahya Ali Sadiqpuri	119
<b>Third Chapter</b>	<b>120-185</b>
HISTORY OF NALANDA	121-129
Nalanda in the time of the Buddha (500 BC)	122
Nalanda in the time of the Mahaveer (599 BC)	123
Nalanda University	125
KHNAQAHS (MONASTRIES) OF NALANDA	130-133
Khanqah Firdausia Bihar Sharif	131
Khanqah built by Malik Kafi	132
Khanqah built by Ziyaul Haque	132
Khanqah of Islampur	132
Khanqah of Rajgir	133
Khanqah of Makhdum Hazrat Sultan Ahmed Chirmposh	133

MADRASAS OF NALANDA	134-138
Madrasa Aziziya	134
Madrasa Islamia	136
Madrasa of Nagar Nuhsa	136
Madrasa of Kahta	137
Madrasa of Geelan	137
Madrasa of Asthawan	137
Madrasa of Disna	137
ULAMA OF NALANDA	139-154
Sheikh Shahabuddin Peer	139
Maulana Ruknuddin Bihari	139
Zahid bin Mohammad Bihari	139
Sheikh Badruddin Bihari	140
Sheikh Musa bin Azizullah Bihari	140
Sheikh Ibrahim bin Ahmad Bihari	141
Sheikh Ahmad bin Mohammad Bihari	141
Sheikh Ali Bihari	141
Sheikh Ahmad Sewastani	142
Sheikh Nizamuddin Maula	142
Sheikh Fariduddin Tawilah Bakhsh	142
Sheikh Mohammad bin Ibrahim Bihari	143
Sheikh Ahmad bin Mohammad Bihari	143



Maulana Muhiyuddin Bihari	144
Makhdum Sayed Mazhar Wali Bihari	144
Maulana Mustafa Sher Desnavi	145
Sheikh Salimullah Nagar Nuhsawi	145
Sheikh Ghulam Yahya Bihari	145
Maulana Mohammad Ateeq Bihari	146
Sheikh Munim bin Aman Bihari	146
Maulana Aminullah Nagar Nuhsawi	147
Maulana Tasadduq Husain Nagar Nuhsawi	148
Maulana Lutf Ali Rajgiri	148
Sheikh Najabat Ahmad Nagar Nuhsawi	149
Makhdum Ahmad Chirmposh	149
Sultan Shamsuddin Balkhi	151
Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi	151
Hazrat Husain Nousha Tauheed Balkhi	152
Hazrat Zain Badr Arabi	153
Maulana Abdul Samad Uganvi	153
TWO GREAT SCHOLARS OF NALANDA	155-185
QAZI MUHIBULLAH BIHARI	155-161
Literary Works	157
Explanations of <i>Musallam al Thubut</i>	158
Explanations of <i>Sullam al Uloom</i>	159

SHEIKH SHARAFUDDIN YAHYA MANERI	162-185
Birth and early education	162
Journey to Delhi	164
In the Forest of Rajgir	165
Stay in Bihar Sharif	166
Death	167
Writings	169
Letters of Sheikh Sharafuddin	170
A letter of Sheikh Sharafuddin on the topic of death	173
Teachings	183
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>186-189</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>190-196</b>

# Introduction

*In the Name of Allah, the most Beneficent, and the most merciful*

## **INTRODUCTION**

First of all I would like to thank Allah for giving me the opportunity to write this M.Phil dissertation on the topic of **“Contribution of Nalanda’s Ulama in Arabic and Islamic studies before 20<sup>th</sup> century.”**

It is well known that Bihar had played a major role to establish Indian civilization and culture on which India feels proud. This state was the centre of Brahamvidya and the place of development of two religions Buddhism and Jainism. Mahaveer Jain passed last days of his life at Pawapuri near Nalanda and Mahatma Buddha received his Divinr knowledge in Bodh Gaya. Both palaces are situated in Bihar state. The current capital of Bihar which earlier known as Patliputra was the centre of attraction for whole country between sixth century BC and fifth century AD because of its vast geographical existence and being the capital of several dynasties. It not only left long-term impression in India but also in whole Asia. And two major conventions of Buddhism were held in Rajgir and Patliputra.

In ancient time Nalanda was great center for Buddhist learning. A large number of Buddhist students thronged the Nalanda University to study Buddhism. According to the Chinese traveler Hieun Tsang who travelled Nalanda in second half of seventh century, the place owed its name to a Naga, who resided in a local tank. Lord Vardhamana Mahavir

and Lord Buddha visited Nalanda quite frequently in the 6th century BC. Nalanda is also supposed to be the birthplace of one Sariputra, one of the chief followers of Lord Buddha.

The Nalanda University which was established by Gupta rulers in fifth century had attracted large number of Buddhist students from different parts of the world. There were thousands of students and teachers. The main courses which were taught were the Buddhist scriptures (both Mahayana and Hinayana), Vedas, Logic, Shabda Vidya (grammar), Chikitsa vidya (medicine) etc.

The Nalanda University received patronage from the great emperors, like Harshavardhana of Kannauj and the Pala rulers. The famous Chinese pilgrims, Hieun Tsang and Fi Han were among the distinguished students of the Nalanda University. Hieun Tsang received here the Indian name Mokshdeva. The importance of Nalanda University as a monastic university continued until the end of the 12th century.

The ruins of the Nalanda University extend over a large area. Excavations at Nalanda have uncovered nine levels of occupation. For revenue purposes, a large number of villages were assigned to the Nalanda University.

The ruins of the ancient residential university of Nalanda are silent reminders of the high levels attained in the field of education and learning in India during the ancient ages. Nalanda was one of the best-known universities of its time, attracting thousands of students from far

off places. Scholars all over Asia and other countries in the Middle East had learnt about Nalanda and continued to visit Nalanda till its destruction in the 12th century.

We can also find another very important place in Nalanda district that is Rajgir. This place was earlier known as Rajgirah, which means the home of kings. It was the capital of Magadha during the period of Jarasind and his twenty eight descendant kings. After those kings, Seesnag kingdom was came to power and Rajgir remained the capital of that Kingdom. During the period of King Bambissar, Mahatma Buddha came to Rajgir and made huge efforts to spread his religion with the help of the king and it resulted in a way that people adopted the Buddhism in large numbers. After the end of Seesnag Kingdom the government of Nanda family came to power. The most influenced king, Ashoka the Great belonged to this family, who had adopted Buddhism and helped from all means to make this religion acceptable to the large number of people of his kingdom.

It is a matter of fact that Nalanda and its nearby places were not only the centres of Buddhism and Jainism but from the beginning of eleventh century Nalanda and nearby places were growing up as the centres of Islam and Muslims, the towns and villages like Bihar Sharif, Nagar Nuhsa, Islampur, Hilsa, Khaja Itebar Sarai, Disna, Geelan, Asthawan, Haider Ganj Karah, Panhassa and so many places cannot be forgotten in this regard. These places were emerged as forts of Islam and

Muslims and felt proud for being birthplaces of various noted and distinguished Muslim personalities who played a major role to spread Islam in these areas.

Among the great Muslim personalities, history cannot forget the name of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, who stayed twelve years in the forest of Rajgir and devoted himself for the worship of Allah. After that more than half century he continued to inspire spiritual and moral zeal in the people. According to Muiz Shams of Balakh, more than a hundred thousand persons unite themselves in the bond of his spiritual paternity and not less than three hundred among them attained spiritual illumination and reached the highest degree of sanctity. The list of works have been put into writing by Makhdum Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri is quite extensive but unfortunately only few of these survive today. Some of the books still preserved are: *Rahatul Qulub*, *Ajweb*, *Fawaid Rukni*, *Irshadul Talibin*, *Irshadul Salkin*, *Risalah Makkiya*, *Maadanul Maani*, *Ishrati Mukhul Maani*, *Khwan Pur Niamat*, *Tuhfai Ghaibi*, *Risalah Dar Talabi Taliban*, *Malfuzaat*, *Zadi Safar* etc, however, still more significant composition bearing witness to his literacy gifts and giving an insight into the inner light of his spirituality is the collection of his letters compiled under the name of *Maktoobate Sadi*.

History cannot forget the great Arabic scholar Qazi Muhibullah Bihari, who born in Haidar Ganj Karah in seventeen century and proved himself the leader of logic (Mantiq). Whose *Musallam ath thubut* is

considered to be one of the most important of the later textbook on Usul al Fiqh, the law of jurisprudence, while his *Sullamul Ulum* Scientific Manual is regarded as the best work on logic ever written in India.

How can history ignore Sultan Chirmposh Amber, the cousin of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, Sayed Abdul Rahman bin Sirajuddin, Hazrat Noshah Touheed, Hazrat Sayd Mohammad Biya Ibraheem, Makhdum Shah Sultan Ahmad Sistani, Hazrat Sayed Ataullah Baghdadi, Hazrat Shah Yaseen Sawania, Hazrat Muzaffar Shaams Balkhi Burhan, Hazrat Makhdum Sheikh Soaib, and Hazrat Zain Badr Arabi etc, who are the well known Islamic personalities of Nalanda before 20th century, who did not skip any chance to uplift the Islamic teachings and its values.

Nalanda has also produced a large number of Arabic, Persian and Urdu poets like Moulana Aminullah, the famous student of Moulana Shah Abdul Aziz, Meer Waris Ali a well known Urdu poet, Moulana Tasadduque Husain a very good Persian poet, Hazrat Shah Amiruddin had contributed in Persian poetry, Mukarram Ali Khan, Abdul Aziz Rasa, Shah Karamat Husain, Hazrat Shah Aminuddin Shauque, and Haji Khairat Husain Aasi etc, these are the famous names of Poets who contributed their efforts in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages.

The history of Nalanda would not be complete, if the name of Madrasas is not listed and their role is not mentioned. We are mentioning here few names which were pillars of Islamic and Arabic studies. Madrasa Aziziya Bihar Sharif, which was established in 1892,



Madrassa Islamia Bihar Sharif, which was established in late sixth decade of eighteenth century, Madrasa Munirul Islam Soh Deeh, Bihar Sharif, Madrasa Qumia Bihar Sharif, Madrasa Ziyaul Uloom, Haider Ganj Karah, Madrasa Ibrahimia, Dhanchuhi, Madrasa Afzalul Uloom, Meena Bazar, Madrasa Mohammadia, Asthanwan, Madrasa Faseehul Uloom Oganwan and a large number of Madrasas which came in existence before 20th century and after that, have been playing a key role to uplift the Islamic studies.

Since, I have been brought up in Nalanda; have seen all these places and got chance to know about our great Islamic personalities, it was a due on me to highlight those personalities and centres of Islamic studies of Nalanda to the world. I have taken the responsibility of highlighting Islamic version of Nalanda on my shoulder and worked hard to achieve my goal. It is my best effort towards my village Haidar Ganj Karah and towards my district Nalanda that gave birth to hundreds of great scholars and religious persons.

I have divided this dissertation in three chapters along with an introduction and a conclusion. In the first chapter I put my efforts to cover the a brief survey of Arabic and Islamic studies during the Muslim rule of India with the special focus of flourishing of Arabic Language in eastern part of India which is covered by Bihar and Bengal. In second chapter I tried to give a comprehensive history of Bihar, its political, cultural and educational background. The third chapter of this

dissertation deals with a detailed history of Nalanda and near by places with the special focus on the history of Nalanda University, in the same chapter I tried to figure out the existence of Musliras in Nalanda and their Madrasas and Makatib which played a constructive role to impart the Islamic education in this region. I tried to collate all the great personalities of Nalanda before 20<sup>th</sup> century with a special and comprehensive focus on two prominent personalities of Nalanda, Makhdum Sheikh Ahmad Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri and the great Arabic writer Qazi Muhibullah Bihari. I strictly obeyed the principal that I have to mention only those scholars who died till 1900 AD.

I worked hard to collect the data related to them and I am happy to see the huge material about Makhdum Sheikh Ahmad Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri, while I felt very disappointment to observe that the data related to Qazi Muhibullah Bihari is very less in quantity. However, I tried to collect maximum data about him and I feel my self very lucky to work on Qazi Muhibullah Bihari, as he was born in the same village where I live. Today I feel that I paid a little amount of dues which were pending upon me to highlight the contribution of Ulama of Nalanda in Islamic studies.

I am extremely grateful to my guide professor Faizan Ullah Farooqi, Centre of Arabic and African Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, as a guide for this research; he gave most valuable advice and came forward in

planning and arranging this work and helped with every possible co-operation. I am highly thankful to my parents who always guided me and have been giving me consistently all means of support. In this great occasion I cannot forget my most valued teacher Maulana Kamal Akhtar Nadvi who directed me since my childhood and made me able to write something. I would like to show my appreciation to my wife and my younger brothers Akhtar Ali and Abdullah Zafar who supported me a lot and provided me a peaceful environment to complete this work. I am also very gratified to my friend Alok Mohan Das who suggested me some very important procedures in various places in this dissertation. May Allah give them all happiness and shower His mercy and kind upon them all.

**Mohd Azhar Sabir**

M. Phil

Centre of Arabic and African Studies

School of Languages, Literature and Culture Studies

Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi - 110067

# Chapter: 01

## Arabic and Islamic Studies in India during the Muslim rule: A Brief Survey

## **Contribution of Muslims in Indian civilization**

Muslim's arrival in India was mainly to spread the message of Allah and his prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him). They brought with them Islamic message of equality, social justice, humanity and brotherhood. They tried to rule on the heart of human being and they succeeded in this mission, they spent their energy in this regard and put all effort to pull out the mankind from thousands of gods to one Almighty Allah. This move helped thrusting Indian society for the social freedom and equality, to accept the Islam in a large number. The best instance of these kind of dedicated and high-souled personalities are Hazrat Ali Hujweri, Khaja Moinuddin Ajmeri and Sayed Ali bin Shahab Hamdani Kashmiri.

But sometimes, Muslims came to India as warriors and conquerors and deep hearted rulers such as Mohmood Ghaznavi, Mohammad Ghouri, and Zaheeruddin Babur. These men of courage and ambition laid the foundation of magnificent empire that continued to prosper for hundreds of year and carried the country heights of progress and prosperity.

Islam and its influence in India started almost at the inception of the religion. The traders from Arabia were frequent visitors to the Indian subcontinent even before Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). Following this, Mohammad bin Qasim in the year 712 A.D. conquered the Province of Sindh. However, this event in history does not seem to

have influenced India as much as expected. Beginning with the arrival of Mohammad of Ghazna in the 10th century, followed by several of invasions from Persia, Turkey and Afghanistan in the 11th and 12th centuries, a full force of Islam was thrust upon India.

The Muslims gave of their best abilities and talents thinking that the contribution they would make to its development and prosperity would ultimately be to their own advantage. Their aspiration was clearly different from the British and other foreign imperialistic powers to make hay while the sun shone. They treated India like a cow, which milk it as thoroughly as they could. The devotion with which the Muslims strove for the advancement and prosperity of India can be understood only in this context.

TH-19247

At the time of Muslim's arrival, India was famous in ancient sciences and philosophy but culturally, India was isolated from the civilized world for a long time. The strong mountains on the north and the sea on the other three sides had prevented it from having a regular communication with the world. The last foreign invader who came in India before Muslims was Alexander the Great. And between the period of two events happened, India has remained severely cut off from the outside the world. There had been no exchange of knowledge with the foreign countries. No new idea, or no fresh cultural momentum had not reached it from abroad, or it had been not able to send out anything from it's own ancient fund of wisdom.



At this condition of time Muslims made their debut on the Indian stage. They were, in those days, the most advanced community in the East. They brought with them to India a new, practical and highly realistic religion, matured knowledge, a progressive culture and an advanced civilization which included within it all that was best in the cultural stock of many nations.

The most important change was brought about by the Islam is the concept of human equality and brotherhood as there was no separation of society into caste, class and profession. There is no one untouchables among the Muslims. Their belief was that no one was born unclean in this world. No trade or occupation was reserved for a particular section of human being. The idea of brotherhood was for the Indian mind and the Indian society was a novel experience and a call to rethink their behavior, which did a lot of good to country. The society which was bond by class-ridden had felt relaxed to a considerable extent, and the people begun to put off the excessive rigidity of the caste-system. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru has accepted that the Islam had played a major role to throw off the casteism, classism from the Indian social structure: "The impact of the invaders from north-west and of Islam on India had been considerable. It had pointed out and shone up the abuses that had crept into Hindu society, the petrification of caste, unsociability, and exclusiveness carried to fantastic lengths. The idea of the brotherhood of Islam and the theoretical equality of its adherents made a powerful

appeal especially to those in the Hindu fold who were denied any semblance of equal treatment.”<sup>1</sup>

Before Islam's arrival in India, there was a major discrimination with women and their rights. Islam bestowed a significant rights and huge respect in society and strictly prohibits the tradition of burning of widow with her husband's cremation.

The Muslims introduced several modern branches of leanings, a most important of which is history. At that time writing of history was almost an unknown art in India. The Muslims produced a whole library of historical works that could compare favorably in authenticity and comprehensiveness with the endeavors made in this branch in any other country.

Dresses in India were generally made from rough, coarse cloth. A number of textile factories were set up in Gujarat by Sultan Mahmud Shah, better known as Mahmud Baigrah where cloth weaving, dyeing, printing and design laying were undertaken. He also established industrial centers for stone and ivory carving and papermaking.

From ancient days India was very famous for the gems and precious stones but there was no any systematic movement towards this very beneficial business. Sultan Mahmood Shah had directed to establish

---

*1 Jawaharlal Nehru, The discovery of India, page 225*



the industrial centres for stone and ivory cutting. He also took care of paper making industry which was new field of work at that time.

We can obtain an elaborate idea of good works done by them in these directions from historical records like *Tuzuki Jahangiri* and *Aini Akbari*. They built numerous hospitals, poor houses, public parks and gardens, tanks and canals.

In India during the arrival of Muslims the method of treatments were not so much developed, people were relying on some grasses and roots of forest or on ordinary local medicine. The Muslim brought to India a new system of medicine and that is Unani Medicine system, which was considered most scientific and advanced system. This system was cheap, simple and in harmony with the Indian climatic and temperamental conditions. It spread out in India very quickly and did a wonderful service to the people, composed as they were mainly of poorer classes.<sup>2</sup>

When Muslims came to India, there was no language which was accepted to all people of India. The main reason of this was, the kings and rulers of that time were separated by the regions and they wanted to promote their regional language, in this scenario the communication was very difficult. Muslims rulers promoted one language for nation attitude and they succeeded in this cause.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Muslims in India*, Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi, 1980, page no 19

As we know, India is surrounded by three of its territory with sea and it was necessary to safe guard the sea in order to save the nation. Muslim rulers widely had taken care of sea boundaries, for this purpose they established a separate navy who took care of sea shores. It was the first time in the history of India when Muslim rulers made a full flagged army to take care of sea boundaries.

These are the hundreds of new things which were done by the Muslim rulers in India, the list of development works and constructive works were large and I tried to highlight few of them.

Islam had brought to India a luminous torch which rescued humanity form darkness at a time when old civilization were on the decline and lofty moral ideals had got reduced to empty intellectual concepts. As in other hands, so in India too the conquests of Islam were more widespread in world of thought than in the world of politics. Today also the Islamic world is spiritual brotherhood, which is held together by community of faith in Oneness of God and human equality. Unfortunately, the history of Islam in this country remained tied up for centuries with that of government with the result that a veil was cast over its true sprit, and its fruits and blessings were hidden from the popular eye.

## **Education before Mughals period**

Education is one of the most important teachings of Islam. The first message of Allah to the prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) was related to education. Like the other reforms done by the Muslim rulers of India, they highly intended to promote the education in India.

During the Muslim period in India there was nothing like the modern system of education established by the State. But primary and secondary education of some sort existed. The rulers themselves and many of people encouraged such education by giving of lands or money to mosques, monasteries and individual saints and scholars. Thus almost every mosque had a Maktab attached to it, where the boys and girls of the neighborhood received elementary education. Hindu Snaskritic and vernacular schools also continued to function for the benefit of students in the urban as well as rural areas.<sup>3</sup>

The Muslim rulers of India were patrons of education. Mahmud of Ghazna (988-1080 A.D.) invaded India seventeen times during the period of 1000 A.D. and 1030 A.D., however, he did not able to established a permanent government in India, he annexed the Punjab in 1026 A.D.<sup>4</sup> The annexation of the Punjab was a lead up to the definite settlement of

---

*3 An advanced history of India, page no 571*

*4 History of India upto 1206 AD. Volume 1, by N. Jayapalan, Atlantic Publishers & Distributers, 2001, Page no 184*

the Muslims into the interior of this country although Multan had already Muslim colonists. He received his education under the tutorship of a learned man, who knew Quran by heart and was familiar with Muslim law and Tradition. He is said to be a poet and was considered a scholar of some repute. He is said to have been the author of a book named "*Tafriidu'l-Furu*" which was regarded as a standard work on Fiqh. He took part in the religious and literary discussions of the scholars at his court with the healthy interest of a learned Muslim. He was a great patron of learning and his court was the meeting place of scholars from all parts of the Muslim world. Mahmud founded a University at Ghazna containing a vast collection of valuable books on all branches of literature and various languages; and whenever a town was captured, all rare volumes found in its libraries were transplanted to Sultan's seat of government. There was also a museum of natural curiosities. The great poet philosopher Unsuri was the rector of the University.<sup>5</sup>

During the period of Mahmud, Ghazna became the centre of almost all Islamic studies, such as, Exegesis, Hadith, Fiqh and the principals of Fiqh, logic and philosophy and mysticism.<sup>6</sup>

Masud (1030-1040 A.D.) the son of Mahmud Ghaznavi has adopted the traditions of his father about the patronage of literary men. He paid particular attention to the diffusion of learning and placing its

---

<sup>5</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 11*

<sup>6</sup> *Lucknow: A centre of Arabic and Islamic Studies during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by F.U Farooqi, Page 27*

benefits within the easy reach of the general public by establishing educational institutions in several cities of his large dominions. Sanskrit and Greek were studied for enriching the stores of Arabic and Persian. Mathematics, Astronomy, Astrology, Philosophy, Medicine and Pharmacology were favourite subjects of study among the Muslim scholars. Persian was now beginning to acquire a standing which subsequently helped it in assuming the position of the lingua franca of the East.<sup>7</sup>

The great scholars of that period were Qazi Abu Mohammad author of *Fiqh Masudi*, Abu Raihan Khawarizmi, who was a prominent scholar of Mathematics, Astronomy and Al Bairuni the author of *Al Qanun al Masudi*. During his days the most prominent personality in Hadith Shaikh Ismail Bukhari came to Lahore. He was an authority on Hadith and exegesis. He had not only brought Hadith and exegesis to Lahore but also a result of his influence countless persons embraced Islam at his hand. Shaikh Ali Hijweri, also known as Data Ganjbakhs (Died in 1072 A.D.) kindled the light of learning and spiritualism in Lahore. He is author of many books, of which only one *Kashful Mahjub* is now available.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 12*

<sup>8</sup> *Lucknow: A centre of Arabic and Islamic Studies during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by F.U Farooqi, Page 27*

The House of Ghur (1206-1210 A.D.) was short-lived, though Muhammad of Ghur must be credited with the founding of the college Ajmer. The successors of Qutubuddin Aibak, however, encouraged learning in India and made their intellectual contact felt in the country. With the conquest of Hindustan, the seat of Muslim power was shifted from Lahore to Delhi. It was first from Lahore and then from Delhi that Islamic thought filtered into the provinces of India.<sup>9</sup>

The period of Sultan Iltutmish (1211-1236 A.D.) is very well known for the gathering of Ulama. We find at that time Shaikh Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, Sayed Nuruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi, Qadi Hamiduddin Mubarak Nagauri author of *Risalah Ashqiya*, *Tawali al Shomus*, *Lawaih* and *Sharah Asma-e-Husna*, Shaikh Jalaluddin Tabrezi, Shaikh Nizamuddin Abul Moyyid, Maulana Mujduddin Haji, Shaikh Badruddin Gaznavi, Shaikh Mohammad Turk Narnoli, Maulana Minhajul Siraj the author of *Tabqat-e-Nasiri*,<sup>10</sup> Amir Kuhani, Nasiruddin and Fakhrul-Mulk (an ex-Wazir of Baghdad) were noted scholars. A famous Madrasa was set up in Delhi known as the Muizzi College after the late Sultan Muizzuddin Muhammad (previously Shihabuddin) ibn Sam of Ghur, the patron of Aibak. A Muizzi school was established at Badaun also.

In Sultana Radiyya's time, this college had Maulana Badruddin Ishaq Bukhari as its head. Minhajuddin ibn Sirajuddin (or Minhaj-

---

<sup>9</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 14*

<sup>10</sup> *Lucknow: A centre of Arabic and Islamic Studies during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by F.U Farooqi, Page 29*

Siraj) the historian, author of the *Tabaqat-i- Nasiri* was the principal of the Nasiriyyah College of Delhi established by Nasiruddin (1246-1266 A.D.) the scholar scribe Sultan of the Slaves of Delhi.

Jalandhar, in the Punjab, had a college as perhaps a convenient place midway between Lahore and Delhi. Sultan Izzuddin (1266-1287 A.D.) attracted a number of literary men from abroad on account of the ravages of the Mongols in Khurasan where these workers must have found intolerable conditions for the pursuit of knowledge.

The literary society at Delhi was almost in bloom where Amir Khusru was strengthening the foundations of a new language known to us as Urdu. Shaikh Uthman Tirmidhi, however, continued his researches at Lahore and did not move down to Delhi despite the request of Prince Muhammad.

Balban's advice to his son, Prince Muhammad, to spare no pains to discover men of genius and to cherish them by kindness and munificence was fully carried out by the latter. Balban visited learned men at their own houses. Some of the noteworthy figures of the age were Shaikh Faridudin Ganj-i-Stiakar, Shaikh Bahauddin, Shaikh Badruddin, Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtyar Kaki and Sayyid Maula (who is associated with the foundation of the academy at Delhi). Even the great Sadi was invited from Shiraz, but he excused himself on the score of the feebleness of his old age. The well-known among the teachers of colleges were:

Shamsuddin Khwarizmi, Shamsuddin Qaushaji, Burhanuddin Bazzaz, Najmuddin Dimashqi and Kamaluddin Zahid.

The reign of Alauddin Khilji was one of the most glorious periods of history regarding Islamic studies. In his period we find Zahiruddin Bhakhari, Fariduddin Shafi, Hamiduddin Mukhlis, Shamsuddin Yahya, Mohiuddin Kashani, Fakhruddin Hansavi, Wajihuddin Razi and Tajuddin Maqaddam were delivering the high level works in Islamic studies. Some of these scholars had touched the height of Ghazali and Razi<sup>11</sup>

Muhammad Tughluq knew a good deal of Persian poetry by heart, and was quite familiar with Nizami's *Sikandanama*. He was fond of contending with poets in Persian. Mir Tahir Muhammad Naisani of Thatta (in Sind) records the study of Sadi, Jami, Khaqani and Anwari under Maulana Ishaq. The famous scholar and excellent teacher, Moinuddin Umrani, Qadi Abdul Muqtadir, Maulana Ahmad of Thanessar, and Maulana Abdul Aziz Ardbeli were among the literary persons of that period.

In Firuz Tughluq's time further impetus was given to Persian studies, while, in that of Sikandar Lodi, Hindus, as a class, took to the study of this language. In this period Arabic and Islamic studies made a great progress. He established a new system for the progress of Arabic education and handicraft by establishing various educational institutions

---

<sup>11</sup> Lucknow: A centre of Arabic and Islamic Studies during the 19<sup>th</sup> century by F.U Farooqi, Page 30



for his slaves and provided them training in arts and crafts. Due to this new system of training the education circle naturally expanded.

### **Education in Mughals period**

Zahiruddin Babur, the founder of the Mughul Empire in India, was a remarkable literary personality. His poetry was second only to Amir 'All Sher (1440-1500 A.D.) who held the first rank among Chaghtai poets. Babur's diwan (poetical work) is in the purest and most lucid Turki. His invention of a style of verse called Mubayyin is recorded, as also his authorship of a useful dissertation on jurisprudence entitled the *Mubin*. Babur excelled in music. His general reading was wide and included Firdausi's Skahnama. the poems of Amir Khusru, the Mathnawl of Jalaluddin Rumi, the poems of Nizami, the ethics of Sadi and the allegories of his contemporary Jami, whom Babur considered unrivalled in his day for esoteric and exoteric knowledge and whose tomb he visited as a mark of respect. The emperor devised the Baburi script in 1504 A.D. The illumination of manuscripts by means of coloured illustrations is said to have originated in India in his time and was later developed by Akbar and Jahangir.

Regarding the Babur's early education, we don't have much data; even in his detailed diary he makes no mention of his course of instruction. Perhaps, early struggles for life and throne left Babur little time for formal education. But his descendants took care about the

education of their princes. When the princes were five years old, they were taught to read and write the form of Turkish known as Turki, their ancestral language. Thereafter, they were placed under tutors to learn the liberal and military arts. The amusements were regulated in such a way that the princes acquired knowledge of the world as well as refined habits and elegant taste.<sup>12</sup>

Humayun studied Persian and Arabic, was interested in mathematics, astronomy and geography and wrote on the nature of the elements. Humayun was fond of books and carried a select library during his expeditions; and even as a fugitive he had his librarian and his favourite books with him. His favorite subjects beings geography and astronomy. He established a Madrasa at Delhi and changed the pleasure house build by Sher Shah in the Purana Qila into a library. It was, therefore, only fitting that he should die in his library at Delhi, and his beautiful tomb there should have a grand Madrasa where the small rooms round about were students' cubicles. Humayun has left a Diwan (collection of poems) in Persian. His special interest in Persian is attributed to his contact with the Shah of Iran.<sup>13</sup>

Sher Shah's course of instruction which he had at Jaunpur appears to have been the Qur'an, Arabic language and literature. Most of

---

<sup>12</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 49*

<sup>13</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 50*

his time was devoted to history and poetry. He knew, by heart, Nizami's *Sikandar-nama* and Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*. Philosophy also formed part of his studies. Lives of ancient kings had a great fascination for him which he evidently retained to his old age. His Madrasa at Narnaul (between Hisar and Jaipur) was built at a large expenditure in 1520 A.D., the place having been the residence of Hasan, Sher Shah's great grandfather.

It is to Sher Shah's credit that, despite having no soldier's training in his early life, the scholar rose to be the founder of an empire.

Sher Shah is indeed a striking personality in the history of Medieval India. By virtue of sheer merit and ability he rose from a very humble position to be a leader of Afghan revival, and one of the greatest rulers of India. His military character was marked by a rare combination of caution and enterprise. His political conduct was on the whole, just and humane and his religious attitude was free from medieval prejudice. His excellent taste in building is well attested, even today by his noble mausoleum at Sasaram.<sup>14</sup>

Akbar was playful and his record as a pupil is the most meager of all the Mughul rulers of India. Though he did not allow himself any formal schooling, he did a lot for others. On finding waste of time in the primary stage where boys were detained for years to learn the

---

<sup>14</sup> *An advance history of India* Page 435

consonants and vowels, Akbar issued an order that every schoolboy should learn to write the letters of the alphabet and also learn to trace their several forms. The shape and name of each letter was to be learnt in two days, and then joining letters was to begin. A week's practice was considered sufficient for this. Some prose and poetry was then to be committed to memory, including some verses in praise of good and moral maxims. Akbar himself was interested in the *Akhlaqi Nasiri*, *Kimiyai Sa'adat*, *Qabusnama*, in the works of the saint Shaikh Sharafuddin of Maner (a town in Bihar) who died in the beginning of the 15th century of the Christian era, and in Sadi's *Gulistan* and *Bustan*, Firdausi's *Shahriama*. Akbar reign marks a new era for the system introduced for imparting education in schools and colleges. He built colleges at Fatahpur Sikri, Agra and other places. With a view to improving the state of Muslim education, he effected certain changes in its curriculum, which it would be unreasonable to say produced no effect at all. As a matter of fact, all nations have schools for the education of youths but India was particularly famous for its seminaries. Prompted by his policy of religion toleration, Akbar arranged in later years for the education of Hindus in Madrasas.<sup>15</sup>

The Persian and Arabic literature of Akbar's reign may be considered under three heads:

---

<sup>15</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 54*

- Historical Works
- Translations
- Poetry and verse

The well known historical works of reign are *Tarikhi Alfi* of Mullah Daud, the *Aaini Akbari* and *Akbarnama* of Abul Fazl, the *Muntakhabul Tawarikh* of Badauni, the *Tabqati Akbari* of Nizamuddin Ahmad, the *Akbarnamah* of Faizi Sarhindi and the *Maasri Rahimi* of Abdul Baqi, compiled under the patronage of Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. The most accomplished writer of the reign was Abul Fazl, a man of letters, a poet, an essayist, a critic, and a historian. By the order of emperor, many books in Sanskrit and other languages were translated into Persian. Different sections of the Mahabharata were translated into that language by several Muslim scholars and were compiled under the title of *Razm Namah*. After hard works for four years, Badauni completed the translation of Ramayana in 1589 A.D. Haji Ibrahim Sarhindi translated into Persian the *Atharva Veda*; Faizi the *lilabati*, a work on mathematics; Mukammal Khan Gujrati the *Tajak*, a treatise on astronomy; Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana the *Waqiate Baburi*; and Maulana Shah Mohammad Shahabadi translated the history of Kashmir. Some Greek and Arabic works were also translated into Parsian. A number of famous poets or versifiers produced works of merit under the patronage of Akbar. The most famous among the verse-writers was Ghizali. Next in importance to him was Faizi, a brother of Abul Fazl. Other prominent

poets were Muhammad Hussain Naziri or Nishapur, who wrote Ghazals of great merit, and Sayyid Jamaluddin Urfi of Shiraj, the most famous writer of Qasidas in his days.<sup>16</sup>

Jahangir, possessed an excellent literary taste, also extended his patronage to scholars. His autobiography is second only after Babur in matter and style. Among the learned men who adorned his court, of whom the *Iqbalnamah-i-Jahangiri* has given a comprehensive list, we may mention here the name of Ghiyas Beg, Naqib Khan, Mutamid Khan, Niamatullah and Abdul Haqq Dihlawi. Some historical works were written during Jahangir's reign, the most important of these being the *Maasir-i-r Jahangiri* the *Iqbalnamah-i-Jahangiri* and *Zubdul Tawarikh*. Shah Jahan followed his predecessor in patronising learned men. Besides many poets and theologians, flourished in his court some of the famous writers of history like Abdul Hamid Lahori, author of the *Padshah-namah*, Aminai Qazwini, author of another *Padshanamah*, Inayat Khan, author of *Shah-Jahanamah*, and Muhammad Salih, author of *Amali Salih*, all of them were important authorities on the history of Shah Jahan's reign.<sup>17</sup>

Aurangzib's regular education began when he was ten, along with his brother Dara. Among his teachers the following names occur:

---

<sup>16</sup> *An advance history of India* Page 573

<sup>17</sup> *An advance history of India* Page 574

Maulana Abdul Latif Sultanpuri, Hashim Gilani, Mulla Muhyiddin alias Muhammad Bihari, Allaml Sadullah, Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Qannauji, Mulla Shaikh Ahmad, alias Mulla Jiwan, Shaikh Abdul Qawl and Danishmand Khan. He studied the Quran, and the Hadith, and spoke and wrote Arabic and Persian like a scholar. Urdu or Hindustani was at the time the popular tongue. Aurangzib had some knowledge of Braj Bhasha too. During his stay at Balkh he mastered Turki in which his father Shah Jahan was deficient. His writing was remarkably clear and beautiful, and in the naskh and nasta'liq styles of writing he was especially proficient.<sup>18</sup>

Shah Jahan though more interested in magnificent buildings than anything else, was educated in his early studies and encouraged learning by granting rewards and stipends to scholars. He founded one college in Delhi and repaired the college named Darul Baqa which had been almost in ruins.<sup>19</sup>

### **Women Education during the Mughal period**

The Quranic laws are meant for both men and women. The Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) himself looked after the interest of the women and established a school at the request of the ladies of Madinah

---

*18 Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum page no 62*

*19 An advance history of India Page 576*

for their education, where he instructed them once in a week.<sup>20</sup> Quran emphasized that the avenues of distinction in the field of knowledge and goodness are open to woman.

The Muslim sovereigns of India favoured the education of their daughters and special arrangements were made for their proper intellectual training. Amongst the Mughals, there were a large number of educated women and almost all the Mughal princess were highly accomplished and educated. Akbar made excellent arrangements for the education of royal ladies and for the daughters of elite. In his palace at Fatahpur Sikri a special quarter was used as girls' school.<sup>21</sup> Akbar bestowed great care and attention on the education of the princesses who were kept rigorously secluded from the sight of men. They were taught to read and write and were trained in many other ways by matrons.

The daughters of the imperial household, and the rich nobles, were given tuition in their house, and we may assume that the daughters of the middle class people among the Hindus received primary education along with the boys in the schools and that some of them were conversant with religion literature. There were in India and even early days many examples of women possessing wide knowledge, particularly of sacred and classical literature. Babur's daughter, Gulbadan Begam, authoress of the *Humayunnamah*, Humayun's niece, Salima Sultana

---

<sup>20</sup> *History of Islamic education and training*, by Ahmad Shalabi (1979) page no 154

<sup>21</sup> *Promotion of Learning during Mohammedan rule*, by N N Law, page 200



authoress of several Persian poems, Nur Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Jahanara Begam and Zebun Nisa were highly educated ladies, well read in Persian and Arabic literature. Besides being a fine Arabic and Persian scholar, Zebun Nisa was an expert in calligraphy and had a rich library. Female education, both among the Hindus and Muslims, was not unknown in later period of Mughals. The two daughters of Jan Mohammad were sent to school and attained some proficiency in letters. In Bengal we find several instances of educated ladies. For example the wives of Raja Navskrishna of Sobhabazar (in Calcutta) were famous for their capacity to read and Anandamayi of East Bengal was a poetess of no mean repute.<sup>22</sup>

According to Firishta, Mahmud Khilji of Malwa organized a department for the technical instruction of women in weaving velvet, and other varieties of cloth, sewing, needle-work and shoe-making.<sup>23</sup>

### **Arabic Education in India**

Arabic language has been the language of Islam from its very beginnings and a vast number of works on theology and jurisprudence have been written in Arabic from the time Muslim first arrived on the subcontinent.

---

<sup>22</sup> *An advance history of India* Page 577

<sup>23</sup> *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum* page no 47

Historically, Arabic has been used in India almost exclusively by its Muslim population, and has been a key force in delineating and shaping Indian Muslim identity. Almost all Muslims in India appear to have some acquaintance with Arabic. From the early eighth century, Arabic in India has borne an Islamic identity, which has continued to be elaborated and strengthened through the thirteen centuries of its use under Muslim, Hindu, and British rule. The succeeding dynasties of Muslim rulers including the Ghaznavids, Ghurids, slave-Sultans, Khaljis, Tughlaqs, and Lodis in and around Delhi, the Bahmanis and Adil-Shahis in the Deccan, the Shah-Mirs in Kashmir, the Sultans in Gujarat, the Ilyas-Shahis in Bengal, and the powerful Mughal emperors who ruled the entire Indian subcontinent, all these dynasties, even though the language of their court administration was one of the Indian languages or Persian, continued to patronize Arabic-Islamic scholars and to promote the study of Arabic for religious purposes.

Makatib imparted primary learning, focusing on Quran recitation and memorization of Suras, and, by extension, a basic knowledge of the Arabic language, particularly the script. They also taught Sharia precepts, particularly those relating to the ritual prayer (Salah), the ritual purification Wadu, the two calls to prayer Adhan and Iqama, and formulae recited within the ritual prayer. At more advanced levels, they taught some Quran interpretation and prophetic Traditions Hadith. Makatib continue to flourish in India today, in Masajid or independent

institutions, with the inclusion in modern times of a rudimentary secular component, comprising basic arithmetic and elementary literacy in the local vernacular. In addition, today many Muslim children who otherwise go to secular school or do not go to school at all also receive part-time religious education at home by professional Maulvis or parents, or at after-school part time Makatib. This home instruction is entirely focused on religion, the Quran, and Arabic.

Madrasas have generally been for more advanced religious learning and Arabic has been an important component of their curriculum. Many have "Arabic Madrasa" as part of their name. By the tenth century, the first ad hoc Madrasas in India were established in Sind in the towns of Mansura and Multan, and were associated with the local Masajid. In the last decade of the twelfth century, the Turk invader Muhammad Ghuri (d. 1206, founder of real Muslim dominion in India) established formal Madrasas in the town of Ajmer in North India. Soon thereafter, his successor's successor Sultan Iltutmish (Died 1236 A.D.) established the first Madrasa in Delhi and one in Badaun, and in the following decades, Madrasas sprang up all over northern India. Then, over the next seven centuries of partial or full Muslim rule, until the deposition of the last Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar in 1857 A.D. by the British, Madrasas proliferated in all parts of India into the hundreds, either associated with, or independent. In the nineteenth century, the new colonial power promoted secular education, particularly English, and the

Arabic language (and Persian) diminished in importance. Many Madrasas were adversely affected, but several new ones such as Deoband and then Nadwa were instituted by Islamic salaf revivalists deliberately to counter the colonial approach and bolster traditional religious education. Paradoxically, most of the important Madrasas existing today were established during the British Raj. In these institutions, in the words of a modern scholar, "Arabic, being the language of the original sources of Islam, was to be the major focus of study. It was not only a language but the major linguistic symbol of Islamic identity and Muslim resistance to modernity.

The curriculum followed in these Madrasas through the centuries focused on Islam as a subject and Arabic as a tool. Until the fifteenth century, the principal subjects of study in Madrasas were the religious sciences (in Arabic) of Quran exegesis, Hadith, jurisprudence, Sufism, theology, history, the related subjects of Arabic grammar and literature, and some logic and philosophy, also in Arabic. Approximately the same curriculum was followed all over India. The course was based on Arabic texts with works from the classical (Middle Eastern) canon being studied, such as *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, *Zamakhshari's Kashshaf*, *Tafsir al-Baydawi*, *al-Muwatta'*, *al-Sahihayn*, *al-Hidayafi al-furu'*, *Talkhis al-miftah*, *'Awarifalmaarif*, *Fusus al-hikam*, *Hidayat al-nahw*, *Sharh miat 'amil*, and *al-Kafiya*. A few modifications to this curriculum were made in the fifteenth century, when a couple of medieval Arabic science texts were

added, and again in the eighteenth century by Shah Wall Allah (Died 1760 A.D.). Some years later, Mullah Nizamuddin (of Sihali near Lucknow, Died 1748 A.D.) proposed a new Arabic curriculum, later to become famous as the Dars-i Nizami.<sup>24</sup> He confirmed several Arabic religious and grammatical texts already in use, and, for the first time in Indian Madrasa history, added Arabic texts on jurisprudence, logic and philosophy composed by Indian savants, such as Mulla Jiwan of Amethi (Died 1718 A.D.), Mir Muhammad Zahid al-Harawi (Died 1700 A.D.), and Mulla Mahmud Jawnpuri. This curriculum was adopted almost immediately all over India and continues to be used to this day with some amendments, including the addition of non-religious subjects such as Mathematics and English. In the late eighteenth century, Salafi Madrasas purged the syllabus of Sufi texts (Arabic and Persian). Shiite Madrasas follow different curricula with regard to religious texts, but usually the texts used for the study of Arabic grammar and rhetoric, perhaps even some literature and philosophy, are the same as those prescribed by the Dars-i Nizami.

Hadith literature flourished and India has remained a thriving centre for Hadith Studies. The great works of al Ghazali (Died 1111 A.D.) and the introduction of Sufi ethics *Adab al Moridin* by Abu Najib al Sahrawardi (Died 1165 A.D.) were in circulation at the time. During the course of fifteen century, the writing of great theosophist Ibn Arabi (Died

---

<sup>24</sup> Qamar al-Din, *Hindustan ki dini darsgâhên*, 345-52

1240 A.D.), especially *Fusul al Hikmah* (Ring stones of words of wisdom) achieved great popularity in India. The most important Sufi work written in Mughal India was “*The Five Jewels*” by Mohammad Ghauth Gwaliari a Sufi primarily associated with Humayun. His complex work, which weaves together elements such as astrology, kabalah and name invocations, had a great influence on popular Islam in India. There are still copies in existence today, in both Arabic and Persian.<sup>25</sup>

Despite Akbar’s attempt to limit the scope of the languages of the Quran, theologians continued to compose works in Arabic. In fact, the important Hadith collection of Ali al Muttaqi from Bhawalpur, title *Kanzu al Ummal*, which remained in circulation for centuries, was firmly rooted in Mughal tradition. A letter sent by Ahmad Sarhindi to the Mughal nobles was also partly written in Arabic Language. Furthermore, his contemporary Abdul Hazz Dehlavi (Died 1642 A.D.) was written partly in Arabic and partly in Persian. Great works in Arabic started to appear once more in Aurangzeb’s time, when the ruler began taking an interest in reviving traditional Islamic education, which was neither mystical nor syncretistic in orientation. The writings of Mullah Jeevan (Died 1717 A.D.) are relevant in this connection. Jiwan and the ruler read together Gazzali’s groundbreaking work *Ihya Ulum al Deen* revivification of the science of religion. His contemporary Muhibbullah Bihari (Died 1707

---

<sup>25</sup> *The empire of the great Mughals* Page 230

A.D.) the chief Qazi was distinguished writer in Arabic whose *Musallam ath thubut* is considered to be one of the most important of the later textbook on Usul al Fiqh the law of jurisprudence, while his *Sullamul Ulum* Scientific Manual is regarded as the best work on logic ever written in India. Also noteworthy is the great collection of legal precedents, *Fatawaye Alamgiri* which was compiled for Aurangzeb and which provides an important insight into Muslim law at the end of the seventeenth century. Many new Arabic commentaries on the Quran and works on Quranic recitation appeared in Aurangzeb's time.<sup>26</sup>

Arabic theological literature flourished in the eighteenth century. The pre-eminent work from this period was the *Hujjat Allah al balighah* (Conclusive proof of the Eloquence of God) by Shah Waliullah Dehlavi (Died 1762 A.D.) which dealt with Islamic problems and possible solutions. In spite of its idiosyncratic Arabic style, the book is still studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo. Waliullah's numerous Arabic and Persian works draw on his great breadth of knowledge, which was derived both from his family traditions (his father was among the people who worked on the *Fatawa-yi Alamgiri*) and also his experiences in Mecca at the very time when fundamentalist movement were arising there. In his Arabic poems in praise of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him), he made used of full range of classical Arabic vocabulary to

---

<sup>26</sup> *The empire of the great Mughals* Page 231

great effect, as did some of his learned contemporaries. One of these, Abdul Aziz Bilgarami (Died 1726 A.D.) who worked as an official in various provinces of the Mughal empire, wrote eulogies of Mohammad, Abdul Aziz's newpew, Azad Bilgrami (Died 1785 A.D. in Aurangabad) composed a work which merits careful study, titled *Subhat al Marjan*, the Coral Rosary. In this book he attempted to present India as the true homeland of the prophet, to find connections between Arabic and Sanskrit poetry, and to show that many good Muslims, especially Sufis, came from India.

Like Shah Waliullah, Azad had made a pilgrimage to Mecca. Somewhat later, Sayyid Murtaza, a pupil of Shah Waliullah also went to Mecca. Sayyid Murtaza was later called al Zabidi after the city of Zabid in the Yemen, which was for centuries had served as a halting place of Indian pilgrims, and was also an important centre for theologians and scholars in its own right. Sayyid Murtaza, whose Indian origins are often overlooked, was the author of the great Arabic dictionary *Taj al Urus* the bride's crown, and also an indispensable ten volume commentary on Ghazzali's *Ihya ulum ad din*. He never returned to India but died in Cairo in 1798 A.D.

The relationship between the Deccan states, especially Golconda, and the Arabic world culminated in gathering of Arabic poets and writers at the court of Golcondda in the seventeen century. As Delhi declined with the gradual weakening of the empire towards the end of the eighteen



century, the court of Awadh became a cultural centre. During this period, an Arab aesthete staying at Awadh by name of Ahmad bin Mohammad al Yamini ash Shirwani composed a work in Arabic in the style of the famous *Maqamat* of al Hariri, the acme of classical Arabic, which has been extensively imitated on the subcontinent ever since the medieval ages, and studied by every advanced student in India. His *Manaqib al Haydariyya*, dedicated to the ruler Ghaziuddin Haydar of Lucknow, was the first work to be printed on an Arabic printing press with moveable type, which had been imported by the ruler. The importance of this work was twofold; it was evidence of Muslim India's continuing interest in Arabic, and it was also the product of the first printing press on the subcontinent with Arabic type. However, it is first printing press since Portuguese had brought one to Goa during Akbar's time.

Every Muslim is supposed to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of Arabic, and so it is no wonder that Arabic verses, flowery phrases, clauses, even whole sentences, should appear in popular poetry in regional languages, as well as Persian and Urdu literature.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> *The empire of the great Mughals* Page 232

## **Muslims in Eastern Part of India**

Eastern India region (Bihar and Bengal) is always a favorable place for the Indian as well as for the foreigners due to its massive natural resources and fair climatic conditions. A lot of civilizations and cultures grew up and declined in this region with the passage of time. The Mauryans, the Guptas, the Palas and the Senas before the coming of Muslims had their control over this region and contributed a lot to the enrichment of its political, administrative and cultural accomplishment. Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar came in this region in 12<sup>th</sup> century after defeating the king of Sen kingdom Lakshman Sen, he managed to escape from his capital Lakhnawati. Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar, after conquering Bihar and Bengal he proceeded to Tibbat through Koch Bihar and this was the first person who tried to invade Tibbat but unfortunately he got defeated for some reasons and could not stand against this defeat and died in 1204. After Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar, Izzuddin Mohammad Sheeran came to power and governed in this region for three years. After that Ali Mardan Khilji, Husamuddin Auz, Alauddin Jaani, Nasiruddin bin Altamash, Alauddin Jaani, Saifuddin Aibak, Tughral Taghan Khan, Qamruddin Qairwan, Ikhtiyaruddin Yuzbek, Jalaluddin Masud Jaani, and Mughisuddin Taghral became the kings of Bihar and Bengal.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> *Tareekh-e-Magadh by Fasihuddin page 98*

All of them were responsible kings and they tried their level best to develop this region in terms of social, political and educational. As a result, Muslims at 12th and 13th century A.D. added a new outlook of contribution to its history. This region emerged as a country uniting three administrative divisions of Lakhnawati, Satgaon and Sonargaon. The credit of this unification goes to Sultan Shamsuddin Ilyas Shah (1342-1359 A.D.) who assumed the title of Shah-i-Bangala bringing the above mentioned regions under his government in 1352 A.D., and he extended his government from Rajmahal hill in the west to hilly region of Chittagong in the east and from the Himalayan Mountain in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south.

### **Arabic Studies in Eastern India**

During the Muslim rule in Bihar and Bengal, Arabic language flourished as a language of religion along with the Persian, which got maximum consideration as a language of culture of the rulers. Arabic, the youngest Semitic language got its recognition among the richest languages of the world as being the language of the holy Quran and the Prophet of Islam. With the expansion of Islam over half of the then world just after the demise of the Prophet (Peace Be upon Him) Arabic got momentum as an enriched language to produce voluminous works in all branches of learning for onward transmission to the contemporaneous and to the posterity as well. During the Muslim civilization from the

beginning of the seventh century A.D. to the end of the thirteenth century A.D. Arabic became the language of expression and bearer of knowledge in all the Muslim occupied territories of three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe. It did not prohibit the cultivation of local language of the countries of their domination. Hence, Persian second to Arabic as language got flourishment at the hands of the Muslim rulers since tenth century A.D. and spread all over the Central Asian regions as one of the richest languages of that time. It is unfair to assume that the Central Asian Turks with the rich linguistic heritage of Arabic and Persian entered the Indian subcontinent as the conquerors. In the case of Bihar and Bengal it is not an exception. The Khilji Turks of Central Asia who entered Eastern part of India as conquerors initiated the cultivation of Arabic and Persian learning by introducing Persian as the court language and establishing Madrasas where all attention was given for the study of both the languages. This move continued in later times of the rulers and sultans.

Qazi Ruknuddin Samarqandi was a well known scholar in Islamic studies. He was of Persian origin and a Qazi of Lakhnawati in the time of King Alauddin Ali Mardan Khalji. His translation of the Sanskrit book *Amritkund* on yogic system first in Persian and then into Arabic proves his proficiency in both the languages, and it is a witness to their study at the initial period of the Muslim rule in Eastern part of India. In this chain stands Imamzadah Jalaluddin son of Jamaluddin who delivered

lectures on Islamic disciplines in the court of Ghiyath al-Din Iwaz Khalji (1212-1227 A.D.) Jalaluddin, a noted scholar in Arabic and Islamic Studies although he belonged to Firuz kuh in Persia. These facts lead to validate the case for the cultivation of Arabic and Persian learning under the initial period of Muslim rule in Bihar and Bengal. The sources of Muslim law are four i.e. Quran, Hadith, Ijma and Qiyas. The persons in charge of the department of justice and other important departments of the government were expected to achieve proficiency in Arabic to understand properly the implication and interpretation of laws as personified in the holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (Peace be upon him). The records are witness to this fact that Arabic language was given importance for a subject of study in this land. The state language being Persian, the persons employed in the various positions of administrative hierarchy must have possessed mastery in Persian language. Hence it is reasonable to believe that all possible steps were taken to train up expertise personals in Arabic and Persian to run the administration of the country smoothly and in a proper way and this was done by the Madrasas and Makatibs where the special consideration was sought to address these two languages.

Of these educational seminaries Taquiuddin Arabi's Madrasah at Mahisun identified with Mahisantosh built in about the middle of the 13th century A.D., Zafar Khan's Madrasah at Triveni built in 1313 A.D., Darasbari Madrasa of the time of Shamsuddin Yusuf Shah (1474-1481

A.D.), Belbari Madrasah of Alauddin Husayn Shah (1493-1519 A.D.) both situated in Gaur area, Bagha Madrasah of the time of Nasiruddin Nusrat Shah (1519-1531 A.D.) and Mawlana Sharfuddin Abu Tawarama's Madrasah at Sonargaon deserves to be mentioned. The syllabi pursued in these academies spread over the various branches of secular and religious subjects. These are highly acclaimed by the scholars. Usually the medium of instruction was Persian though in higher stage of learning and specialization of subject one might have opted for Arabic.

The courses taught in the Madrasahs laid emphasis on Arabic language and literature. The translation of *Amritkund* by Qazi Ruknuddin Samarqandi in Arabic at the capital Lakhnawati in the time of Alauddin Ali Mardan Khalji and the transcription of *Sahih al-Bukhari* by Muhammad Yazdan Bakhsh in three volumes at Ikhdalah in the time of Alauddin Husayn Shah lead us to presume that Arabic study was encouraged under this Sultanate.

On the eve of Muslim conquest at the beginning of the 13th century A.D. the Senas belonging to the orthodox Brahmanic section of the Hindus were the ruling power. The language of the Brahmanic section and of the court was Sanskrit. All positive steps were taken by the Sena rulers for the cultivation and patronization of the Sanskrit language which was considered as the Deva language. The incoming Muslims as rulers on their permanent habitation in this land opened the door of education for all by establishing Madrasahs and educational

seminaries in all the important places of the country. This step also facilitated the Hindus, irrespective of their status in the society, to get education in their mother tongue and the Muslim rulers made equal efforts for the cultivation and patronization of mother language side by side with Arabic and Persian studies in the institutions of learning. The Persian being the court language the job seeking people either Hindus or Muslims were required to get proficiency in Persian study. Hence it seems probable that some Makatib or schools might have provided arrangement for teaching Persian to the Hindus. They might have been, therefore, allowed to enter into these Makatib to study Persian with the Mulavi. This system seemed to be prevailing in some places in later times.

For imparting knowledge in religious affairs and for manning administration of the country Arabic and Persian studies were deemed to be the most vital point on the part of the rulers. To implement this scheme the Madrasas or educational seminaries were the proper places for imparting knowledge to the learners of both primary and advanced levels of education. Though it is difficult to determine the exact courses of study yet it is reasonably presumed that religious instruction was the basis of primary education in the Makatib and masques. An Imam of the mosque as teacher is expected to teach his students the fundamentals of Islam and other rituals. To understand the fundamental and other rituals the students should have adequate knowledge of the Quran and

Hadith. The Sayyids, the Qazis and headmen of the Muslim society used to decide the various cases in accordance with the injunctions of the holy Quran and traditions of the Prophet. We may, therefore, presume that the Quran and Hadith were also included into the courses of education at the primary and higher levels. Fiqh or elementary of jurisprudence is prerequisite for performing the obligatory duties of Islam. The subject was, therefore, in all fairness included into the courses of study at the primary level.

On the completion of primary education in the Makatib and masques the students might have proceeded to the Madrasas for higher education. The Madrasas provided higher education for the advanced students though elementary courses were not at all excluded from their syllabi.

Besides these subjects, the sciences of secular nature such as Logic, Arithmetic, Medicine, Alchemy, Hindasa (geometry), Astronomy and other were also taught in the Madrasas. Every boy ought to read books on morals, arithmetic, agriculture, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, household matters, and rules of government, medicine, logic, higher mathematics, science and history, all of which may be gradually an acquired. The Madrasas for advanced studies possibly kept provisions for all these subjects for the students. But they were not required to study each and every subject. There might have been different grades of Madrasas on the basis of the subjects taught in them.



The nature of the subjects studied in the Madrasas of higher learning required proficiency in Arabic and Persian languages. In order to pursue the subjects of learning written either in Arabic or in Persian, the learners should have achieved mastery over them. The inscriptions of this region engraved in Arabic show the extent of cultivation of Arabic language by the Muslim rulers. This bears witness to the fact that Arabic was seriously studied in the Madrasas of higher learning. Likewise Sultan Ghiyathuddin Azam Shah's eloquence in Persian and his composing of verses in Persian testify to the study of Persian language in the Madrasas.

In this connection it is to be pointed out that the patronization of the Muslim rulers in the educational sphere made possible the study of Arabic and Persian learning's reaching the apex of development in their multidimensional aspects under the Sultanate period.

The egalitarianism of Islam inspired them to build a society and state on the principle of equilibrium ensuring the fundamental rights to all irrespective of race, religion and colours. The successive historical events bear witness to this fact that the Muslim rulers took positive steps for bettering the overall conditions of the people and for creating an environment of amelioration among the different sections of people. This policy brought tangible results in all directions of country's need including the nourishment of cultural and intellectual upheavals. Secondly, in the track of their cultural attainments and linguistic

advancement the personalized Turks of Central Asian region brought with them the Arabic as the language of their religion and the Persian as the language of the state and accomplishment to Bengal, the land of their conquest. Thirdly, without ignoring the importance of indigenous language, the incoming conquerors made all possible steps for the study of Arabic and Persian languages in this land so that their study being widespread throughout the country could be instrumental for transmitting valuable treasures of knowledge to the contemporaneous and to the posterity as well. With this end in view state patronization was extended and individual initiative was encouraged for the foundation of Madrasas and institutions of learning throughout the length and breadth of Bihar and Bengal Sultanate from the beginning of the 13th century to the last quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Lastly, the corporate endeavours of the ruling authority and the individual expertise made the Arabic and Persian studies to the blooming in the soil of Bihar and Bengal during the Sultanate period, the impact of which was found flowing in the Mughal and early British colonial Bengal.

## Chapter: 02

# Bihar Political, Cultural and Educational Background

# **Political Aspects of Bihar**

## **Bihar before Muslims arrival**

The history of the land mass currently known as Bihar is very ancient. Ancient Bihar, known as Magadha, was a center of power, learning and culture in ancient and classical India. From Magadha arose India's first greatest empire, the Maurya Empire as well as one of the world's greatest religions, Buddhism. Magadha empires, notably under the Maurya and Gupta dynasties, unified large parts of South Asia under a central rule. Its capital Patna, earlier known as Patliputra, was an important center of Indian civilization.

The name Bihar is derived from the Sanskrit word Vihara. Foreign invaders often used abandoned viharas as military cantonments; the word Bihar may have come from the large number of viharas thus employed in the area that later became Bihar. This means "abode". The word Vihar is itself derived from the word Brahmavihara<sup>1</sup> meaning "Brahma abidings", or "Sublime attitudes." The region roughly encompassing the present state was dotted with Buddhist vihara, which were the abodes of Buddhist monks in the ancient and medieval period.

It is also said that originally Bihar was name of a town, which was headquarters of the Muslim invaders in the Magadha region in the

---

<sup>1</sup> *The New Encyclopedia Britannica By Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc page 462*

medieval period. The town still exists and is called Bihar or Bihar Sharif (Nalanda District). Later on, headquarter was shifted from Bihar to Patna (current Patna) by Sher Shah Suri and the whole Magadha region was called Bihar.<sup>2</sup>

Bihar was called "Magadha" in ancient times. From Magadha arose two traditions, Jainism and Buddhism. The greatest Indian empire, the Maurya Empire, originated from Magadha, with its capital at Patliputra (modern Patna) in 325 BC. The Mauryan Emperor, Ashoka, who was born in Patliputra (Patna), is believed to be one of the greatest rulers in the history of India and the world. After seeing all the carnage that war causes he was placed on the path of Lord Buddha by his spiritual guide Manjushri.

According to indologist A.L. Basham, the author of the book "*The Wonder that was India*", the age in which true history appeared in India was one of great intellectual and spiritual ferment. Mystics and sophists of all kinds roamed through the Ganga Valley, all advocating some form of mental discipline and asceticism as a means to salvation; but the age of the Buddha, when many of the best minds were abandoning their homes and professions for a life of asceticism, was also a time of advance in commerce and politics. It produced not only philosophers and ascetics, but also merchant princes and men of action.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Indian\\_states\\_by\\_the\\_etymology\\_of\\_their\\_name](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Indian_states_by_the_etymology_of_their_name)

<sup>3</sup> *The Wonder that was India*, by Basham A.L. Picador, 2004, page. 46

It was here that Prince Gautam attained enlightenment, became the Buddha- at the present Bodh Gaya- a town in central Bihar; and the great religion of Buddhism was born. It is here also that Lord Mahavira, the founder of another great religion, Jainism, was born and attained nirvana (death). That site is located at the present town of Pawapuri, in district of Nalanda. It is here that the tenth and last Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh was born and attained the sainthood of Sikhism, that is became a Guru. A lovely and majestic Gurudwara (a temple for Sikhs) built to commemorate his memory - the harmandir- is located in eastern Patna. Known reverentially as the Patna Sahib, it is one of the five holiest places of worship for Sikhs.<sup>4</sup>

The ancient kingdoms of Magadh and of Licchavis, around about 7-8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., produced rulers who devised a system of administration that truly is progenitor of the modern art of statecraft, and of the linkage of statecraft with economics. Kautilya, the author of Arthashastra, the first treatise of the modern science of Economics, lived here. Also known as Chanakya, he was the wily and canny adviser to the Magadh king, Chandragupta Maurya. As an emissary of Chandragupta Maurya, Chanakya traveled far and wide in pursuit of promoting the interests of the State and dealing with the Greek invaders settled in the northwest of India, along the Indus valley. He succeeded in preventing the further onslaught of the Greeks. Indeed, he brought about amicable

---

<sup>4</sup> <http://gov.bih.nic.in/Profile/default.htm> (official website of Bihar government)

co-existence between the Greeks and the Mauryan Empire. Megasthenes, an emissary of Alexander's General, Seleucus Nicator, lived in Pataliputra (ancient name of Patna, the Mauryan capital) around 302 B.C. He left behind a chronicle of life in and around Patliputra. This is the first recorded account by a foreign traveler in India. It describes in vivid terms the grandeur of life in Patliputra, a city established by King Ajatshatru, around 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C., at the confluence of the rivers Sone and Ganga.<sup>5</sup>

Another Mauryan king, Ashok, (also known as Priyadarshi or Priyadassi), around 270 B.C., was the first to formulate firm tenets for the governance of a people. He had these tenets, the so called Edicts of Ashok, inscribed on stone pillars which were planted across his kingdom. The pillar was crowned with the statue of one or more lions sitting on top of a pedestal which was inscribed with symbols of wheels. As the lion denoted strength, the wheel denoted the eternal (endless) nature of truth (dharma), hence the name Dharma (or Dhamma) Chakra. This figure of lions, atop a pedestal, with inscription of a wheel, was adopted as the Official Seal of the independent Republic of India (1947 A.D.). Also, Ashok's dharma chakra was incorporated into the national flag of India, the Indian tricolor. Remains of a few of these pillars are still extant, for example at Lauriya-Nandan Garh in the district of West Champaran and at Vaishali, in the present district of the same name.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://gov.bih.nic.in/Profile/default.htm> (official website of Bihar government)

Ashok, a contemporary of Ptolemy and Euclid, was a great conqueror. His empire extended from what is now the North West Frontier Province (in Pakistan) in the west, to the eastern boundaries of present India in the north, and certainly, up to the Vindhyan Range in the south. Ashok was responsible also for the widespread proselytisation of people into Buddhism. He sent his son, Prince Mahendra, and daughter, Sanghamitra, for this purpose to as far south as the present country of Sri Lanka.<sup>6</sup>

Ancient Bihar also saw the glorification of women in matters of state affairs. It was here that Amrapali, a courtesan of Vaishali (the present district of the same name) in the kingdom of the Lichhavis, attained and wielded enormous power. It is said that the Lord Buddha, during his visit to Vaishali, refused the invitation of many princes, and chose to have dinner with Amrapali instead. Such was the status of women in the Bihari society of several centuries B.C.

At Nalanda, the world's first seat of higher learning, and university, was established during the Gupta period. It continued as a seat of learning till the middle ages. The ruins are a protected monument and a popular tourist spot. A museum and a learning center - The Nava Nalanda Mahavira - are located here.

Rajgir was capital of the Muaryan Empire during the reign of Bimbisara. It was frequently visited by Lord Buddha and Lord Mahavira.

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://gov.bih.nic.in/Profile/default.htm> (official website of Bihar government)



There are many Buddhist ruins here. It is also well-known for its many hot-springs which, like similar hot-springs elsewhere in the world, are reputed to have medicinal property.<sup>7</sup>

Bihar remained an important place of power, culture and education. The Gupta Empire, which again originated from Magadha in 240 CE, is referred to as the Golden Age of India in science, mathematics, astronomy, religion and Indian philosophy. The peace and prosperity created under leadership of Guptas enabled the pursuit of scientific and artistic endeavors. Historians place the Gupta dynasty alongside with the Han Dynasty, Tang Dynasty and Roman Empire as a model of a classical civilization. The capital of Gupta Empire was Pataliputra, present day Patna. The Vikramshila and Nalanda universities were among the oldest and best centres of education in ancient India.

### **Bihar during the Muslim period**

The establishment of Muslim government in Bihar was started when Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji came to Bihar in 1192 A.D. At that time the throne of Delhi Sultanate was occupied by Sultan Qutubuddin Aibak. After conquering Bihar Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar went to Delhi, and received a lot of praises by the Sultan Aibak. He returned Bihar once again and tried to conquer Nadya city which was

---

<sup>7</sup> <http://gov.bih.nic.in/Profile/default.htm> (official website of Bihar government)

related to Bengal state. The king of that area Lakshman Sen was defeated and Mohammad succeeded to spread his kingdom till Bengal. The capital of Bengal at that time was Lakhnowti which was declared the capital of Bihar and Bengal both. Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji made Madrasas, Masques, Khanqah, roads and sarai for the passengers. He also started monetary system under the Sultan of Delhi. His ruling period starts from 1192 to 1204 A.D.

After Mohammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji, Izzuddin Mohammad. Sheeran came to power in 1204 A.D. He governed Bihar and Bengal for three years.

Ali Mardan Khilji came to power in 1207 and governed Bihar and Bengal till 1210 A.D.

After that Husamuddin become the ruler of Bihar and Bengal, he conquered Orissa and received a huge wealth. He governed Bihar and Bengal for sixteen years from 1210 till 1226 A.D.

Alauddin Jani, Nasiruddin bin Iltutmish (1225-1228 A.D.), Izzul Mulk (1228-1231 A.D.), Malik Saifuddin (1231-1233 A.D.), Izzuddin Taghral (1231-1243 A.D.), Qamruddin Qeeran (1243-1245 A.D.), Ikhtiyaruddin (1246-148 A.D.), Jalaluddin Masud Jani (1248-1265 A.D.), and Mughisuddin Taghral (1265-1281 A.D.) these were the rulers of Bihar and Bengal.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Summarized Tarikh-e-Maghadh, by Faseehuddin page no 79-98

## **Rule of Balban Family in Bihar and Bengal**

Nasiruddin Baghra Khan ascended on the throne of Bihar and Bengal in 1292 A.D. as an independent king of this area. He was the son of Sultan Balban. He ruled on Bihar and Bengal peacefully and smoothly, even when Balban wanted to make him predecessor and called him from Bihar, he did not wish to become a king, leaving Bihar and Bengal region. But after the death of Sultan Balban, he forced to return Delhi.

The grandsons of Sultan Balban governed Bihar and Bengal till 1333 A.D. One of them was Ruknuddin Kekaous who had ruled from 1292 A.D. to 1302 A.D., he came to power after his father Nasiruddin Baghra.

After Ruknuddin, Shamshuddin Feroz Shah came to power in 1302 A.D. and remained in power till 1321 A.D.

Nasiruddin Shah was one of rulers of Balban family and he had governed on Bihar and Bengal after Shamshuddin Feroz Shah.<sup>9</sup>

## **Government of Sharqi Dynasty in Bihar**

The Jaunpur sultanate was an independent kingdom of northern India between 1394 A.D. and 1479 A.D. The Jaunpur sultanate was ruled by the Sharqi dynasty. The Khwajah-i-Jahan Malik Sarwar, the first ruler of the dynasty was a wazir (minister) under Sultan Nasiruddin

---

<sup>9</sup> Summarized *Tarikh-e-Maghadh*, by Faseehuddin page no 99-107

Muhammad Shah IV Tughluq (1390-1394 A.D.). In 1394 A.D., he established himself as an independent ruler of Jaunpur and extended his authority over Awadh and a large part of Bihar. The dynasty founded by him was named after his title Malik-us-Sharq (the ruler of the east). The most acclaimed ruler of this dynasty was Ibrahim Shah. The last ruler Hussain Shah was overthrown by Bahlul Lodi, and Jaunpur sultanate was permanently annexed to Delhi sultanate by Sikandar Lodi.

The Sharqi rulers of Jaunpur were known for their patronage of learning and architecture. Jaunpur was known as Shiraz of India during this period. Most notable examples of Sharqi style of architecture in Jaunpur are the Atala Mosque, the Lal Darwaja Mosque and the Jami Mosque. Though, the foundation of the Atala Mosque was laid by Firuz Shah Tughluq in 1376 CE, it was completed only during the rule of Ibrahim Shah in 1408 CE. The Lal Darwaja Mosque (1450 A.D.) was built during the reign of the next ruler Mahmud Shah. The Jami Mosque was built in 1470 A.D., during the rule of the last ruler Hussain Shah.<sup>10</sup>

### **Malik Sarwar, Khwajah-i-Jahan**

In 1389 CE, Malik Sarwar received the title of Khajah-i-Jahan. In 1394 CE, he was appointed as the governor of Jaunpur and received his title of Malik-us-Sharq from Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah II Tughluq (1394-1413 A.D.). Soon, he established himself as an independent ruler

---

<sup>10</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaunpur\\_Sultanate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaunpur_Sultanate)

and took the title of Atabak-i-Azam. He suppressed the rebellions in Etawah, Koil and Kanauj. He was also able to bring under his control Kara, Awadh, Sandila, Dalmau, Bahraich, Bihar and Tirhut. The Rai of Jajnagar and the ruler of Lakhnauti acknowledged his authority and sent him a number of elephants. After his death, he was succeeded by his adopted son Malik Qaranfal, who took the title of Mubarak Shah.<sup>11</sup>

### **Mubarak Shah**

After assuming the power in 1399 A.D., Mubarak Shah struck coins in his own name and also the Khutba was read in his name. During his reign, Mallu Iqbal tried to recover Jaunpur, but failed. He was succeeded by Ibrahim Shah after his death in 1402 A.D.<sup>12</sup>

### **Ibrahim Shah**

Ibrahim Shah, the most noted ruler of this dynasty was a patron of Islamic learning and established a number of colleges for this purpose. A large number of scholarly works on Islamic theology and law was produced during his reign. He constructed a number of monuments in a new regional style of architecture known as the Sharqi. During his reign, Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmud Shah II Tughluq took refuge in Jaunpur in order to get rid of the control of Mallu Iqbal over him. But he did not treat

---

<sup>11</sup> Mahajan, V.D. (1991, reprint 2007) *History of Medieval India, Part I*, S.Chand & Co., New Delhi, p.264  
<sup>12</sup> Mahajan, V.D. (1991, reprint 2007) *History of Medieval India, Part I*, S.Chand & Co., New Delhi, p.265

Sultan Mahmud Shah well. As a result, his relations with the Sultan became bitter and Mahmud Shah occupied Kanauj. In 1407 A.D. he tried to recover Kanauj but failed. His attempt to conquer Bengal also failed. He was succeeded by his son Mahmud Shah after his death.<sup>13</sup>

### **Mahmud Shah**

Mahmud Shah was successful to conquer Chunar, but failed to capture Kalpi. He also conducted campaigns against Bengal and Orissa. In 1452 A.D., he invaded Delhi but was defeated by Bahlul Lodi. Later, he made another attempt to conquer Delhi and marched into Etawah. Finally, he agreed to a treaty which accepted the right of Bahlul Lodi over Shamsabad. But when Bahlul tried to take possession of Shamsabad, he was opposed by the forces of Jaunpur. At this juncture, Mahmud Shah died and he was succeeded by his son Bhikhan, who assumed the title of Muhammad Shah.<sup>14</sup>

### **Muhammad Shah**

On assuming power in 1457 A.D., Muhammad Shah made peace with Bahlul Lodi and recognised his right over Shamsabad. He picked up a quarrel with his noble. In 1458 A.D., his brother Hussain Shah

---

<sup>13</sup> Mahajan, V.D. (1991, reprint 2007) *History of Medieval India, Part I*, S.Chand & Co., New Delhi, p.266

<sup>14</sup> *Tarikh-e-Maghadh*, by Fasehuddin page no 132

proclaimed himself as the sultan in Jaunpur while he was in Kanauj and he was soon killed by his army.<sup>15</sup>

### **Hussain Shah**

The last ruler Hussain Shah, in order to invade Delhi, reached the banks of the Jamuna with a very large army in 1478 A.D. Sultan Bahlul Lodi tried to secure peace by offering to retain only Delhi and govern it as a vassal of Hussain Shah but he rejected the offer. As a result, Sultan Bahlul crossed the Jamuna and defeated him. Hussain Shah agreed for truce but again captured Etawah and marched towards Delhi with a huge army and was again defeated by Bahlul Lodi. He was able to make peace this time also. In March, 1479 A.D., he again arrived at the banks of Jamuna. He was again defeated by Bahlul Lodi and lost the Parganas of Kampil, Patiali, Shamsabad, Suket, Koil, Marhara and Jalesar to the advancing army of the Delhi Sultan. After the successive defeats in the battles of Senha, Rapri and Raigaon Khaga, he was finally defeated on the banks of the Rahab. He fled to Bihar. In 1486 A.D., Bahlul Lodi placed his eldest surviving son Barbak Shah Lodi on the throne of Jaunpur.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> *Tarikh-e-Maghadh*, by Faseehuddin page no 135

<sup>16</sup> *Tarikh-e-Maghadh*, by Faseehuddin page no 137

## **Pathan's government in Bihar**

Sikandar Lodhi had appointed Darya Khan Lohani as a ruler of Bihar in 1495 A.D., he ruled on Bihar till 1517 A.D. After his death his son Bahadur Khan Lohani ascended on the Bihar's throne in 1517 A.D. and he announced as an independent king of Bihar. He adopted the title of Mohammad Shah and struck coin by his name. He died in 1531 A.D. Jalal Khan became the king of Bihar after his father's death Mohammad Shah in 1531 A.D., but all managements were taken care of by his mother Queen Lado with the suggestion of Farid Khan (Sher Shah Suri). After the death of Queen Lado Farid Khan had taken the managements under his own governance. Jalal Khan's reign was lasted till 1539 A.D.

## **SHER SHAH AND THE SUR DYNASTY**

Sher Shah Suri also known as Farid Khan or Sher Khan was a powerful medieval Indian emperor (1540-1545 A.D.) from Sasaram, Bihar, India. Sher Shah was of Pashtun (Afghan) descent who founded the dynasty known as Sur Dynasty in 1540 A.D. in North India. He drove out the Mughal dynasty in Agra and his rule marked the beginning of the short lived Suri Dynasty in India.

Sher Khan was born in Sasaram, Bihar. He was of Pashtun origin and descended from a Pashtun adventurer recruited much earlier by Sultan Bahlul Lodi of Delhi during his long contest with the Sharqi Sultans of Jaunpur. The Shah's personal name was Farid. One of eight



or 10 (in some sources it is claimed also of 12) sons of Hasan Khan Sur, a vassal of Sasaram and a horse breeder, Farid rebelled against his father and left home to enlist as a soldier in the service of Jamal Khan, the governor of Jaunpur.

In Jaunpur, Farid Khan became a private soldier. Later he worked for the province ruler of Bihar, Bahar Khan, who rewarded him for bravery with the Pashtun title Sher Khan (The King of Tigers), when he killed a tiger as a young man. Before he came back to Bihar he was working for the royal court of Mughals, where he became educated and well taught over the Arabic and Persian language and the armed force nature. Shortly after he became official and minister of the court and some later also the educator of the Mughal prince he became a rebel. As a rebel he wanted to obtain the control of the Pashtun sub-kingdoms of Bihar and Bengal. He returned back to Bihar, where he retook his old place as minister. Because the king of Bihar had conflicts with Bengal he sent Sher Shah to handle that for him. In early 1539 A.D. he conquered Bengal and, through clever deception, the Rohtas stronghold southwest of Bengal. At the Battle of Chausa on June 26, 1539 A.D., he faced and he defeated the Mughal emperor Humayun and assumed the royal title of Fariduddin Sher Shah. Humayun's rule began badly with his invasion of the Hindu principality of Kalinjar in Bundelkhand, which he failed to subdue. Next he became entangled in a quarrel with Sher Khan by unsuccessfully besieging the fortress of Chunar (1532 A.D.). Thereafter

he conquered Malwa and Gujarat, but he could not hold them. Leaving the fortress of Chunar unconquered on the way, Humayun proceeded back to assist Sultan Mahmud of that province against Sher Khan. He lost touch with Delhi and Agra, and, because his brother Hindal began to openly behave like an independent ruler at Agra, he was obliged to leave Gaur, the capital of Bengal. Negotiations with Sher Khan fell through, and later forced Humayun to fight a battle at Chausa, 10 miles southwest of Buxar, where Humayun was defeated. Humayun had no answer to the political and military skill of Sher Shah and had to fight simultaneously on the southern borders to check the sultan of Gujarat, a refuge of the rebel Mughals. Humayun's failure, however, was attributable to inherent flaws in the early Mughal political organization. The armed clans of his nobility owed their first allegiance to their respective chiefs. These chiefs, together with almost all the male members of the royal family, had a claim to sovereignty. There was thus always a lurking fear of the emergence of another centre of power, at least under one or the other of his brothers. Humayun had also to fight against the heavy odds of his opponents' rapport with the locality.<sup>17</sup>

Sher Shah's reign barely spanned five years (1540 – 1545 A.D.) at national level, but is a landmark in the history of the Sub-continent. Sher Shah was a capable military and civilian administrator. He set up reforms in various areas including those of army and revenue

---

<sup>17</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sher\\_Shah\\_Suri](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sher_Shah_Suri)

administration. Numerous civil works were carried out during his short reign. After the death of Sher Shah in 1545 A.D., his son Islam Shah ruled up to 1553 A.D. Then Muhammad Adil Shah came to power. Muhammad Adil was not a capable ruler. His minister Hemu became important and virtually controlled the kingdom. As a result of the onslaught by Ibrahim Shah and Sikander Shah the Sur Empire was broken up.

Bihar saw a brief period of glory during the rule of Sher Shah Suri, who built the longest road of the Indian subcontinent, the Grand Trunk Road. The economic reforms carried out by Sher Shah, like the introduction of Rupee and Custom Duties is still used in the Republic of India. He revived the city of Patna; where he built up his headquarter. Sher Shah on his return from Bengal, in 1541 A.D., came to Patna, then a small town dependent on Bihar, which was the seat of the local government. He was standing on the bank of the Ganges, when, after much reflection, he said to those who were standing by - 'If a fort were to be built in this place, the waters of the Ganges could never flow far from it, and Patna would become one of the great towns of this country. The fort was completed. Bihar for that time was deserted, and fell to ruin; while Patna became one of the largest cities of the province. In 1620 A.D. we find Portuguese merchants at Patna.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> (Omalley L.S.S., *History of Magadha*, Veena Publication, Delhi, 2005, page. 36)

Sher Shah of the Sur Dynasty who ruled over the Kingdom of the Mughals after driving Humayun out of the country was not only a great administrator but a lover of art also. He built several forts, tombs and mosques. The monuments of Sher Shah are a continuation of the Lodi style. The mausoleums are octagonal in plan and have verandahs around them, surmounted by huge domes. The verandahs have three smaller domes on each side.

Sher Shah built the Purana Quila in Delhi. Started by him, it was completed by Humayun. Built of red and buff sand-stone, it is ornamented with black and white marble and coloured tiles. A beautiful mosque inside the Quila with ornamental arches, decorative panels, geometrical designs and inscriptions is an example of the development of architecture and ornamentation during Sher Shah's reign.

Sher Shah's tomb at Sasaram in Bihar built in 1549 is in the centre of a large square tank and rises at 46 metres high. It is a two storey construction on a terraced platform. The upper terrace has pillared domes and the two stories above have a pillared kiosk at the four corners. The base of the large central dome has thirty two sides. The tomb is decorated with coloured tiles, very few of which remain now. Entrance to the tomb is through a domed structure.

Sher Shah Suri Masjid, Patna of Bihar is one of the finest specimens of Afghan style of architecture. Sher Shah Suri Masjid, Patna in Bihar was built by Sher Shah Suri to mark his rule in the year 1545

A.D. The mosque has been one of the star attractions in Bihar. Sher Shah Suri Masjid, Patna is counted amongst one of the most beautiful mosques in the state.

The exquisitely built mosque which is named after the name of the great Mughal king Sher Shah Suri is sited in the south west corner of Purab Darwaza near Dhawalpura. Sher Shah Suri Masjid of Bihar is another landmark not only in Bihar but also in the history of Sher Shah's reign for its striking beauty. It is because of Sher Shah Suri Masjid, Patna's unique architectural style that separates it from all other historical structures in Bihar.

The Sher Shah Suri Masjid, Patna is as beautiful from inside as it is from outside. There is a tomb inside the complex of the mosque which is covered by an octagonal stone slab. But the star attraction of the Sher Shah Suri Masjid in Bihar is its central dome which lies in the middle of the roof and is surrounded by four small domes. But all this is designed in such a way that you can view only three of them from any angle.

If you want to revisit history, then do visit Sher Shah Suri Masjid, Patna. The mosque is easily accessible by all the local transports such as bus, taxi and private cars from Patna, so you would face no difficulty in reaching the historical monument.

## **Bihar during the period of Akbar**

In Bihar province, the most important work of Akbar's time was in the hill fort of Rohtas. In 1576 A.D., Akbar's troops had captured Rohtas from rebel Afghan forces and had utilized the hill fort, some 45 km in circumference, as a garrison pivotal in controlling the rest of eastern India. As such, architecture in Bihar during Akbar comes down as a crucial point of time in Mughal architecture in Bihar, which was pivotal to the ruling and administration of the Mughal Empire from far-off Delhi or Agra.

Although the fort of Rohtas had served as an important fort under the Suri dynasty (made legendary by the daring debonair Sher Shah Suri), the Mughals had developed a different portion of the fort. There actually exists a palace at Rohtas Fort that Raja Man Singh (one of a Hindus in the court of the Muslim Akbar and one of his highest ranking amirs) had erected, but it was not the first Mughal building in the fort. A mosque had been built in 1578 A.D.; only two years after the fort became strictly Mughal in art after Sher Shah. Indeed, architecture in Bihar during Akbar grossly had revolved around the highly invincible and unassailable Rohtas Fort, shrouded with legends. After all, the mosque in Rohtas was the first Mughal monument in all Bihar provinces. Built by an Akbar loyalist, Habash Khan, who had died defending Rohtas against renegade Mughal amirs and Afghan rebels, the mosque is similar

in appearance to the Jami mosque constructed on the hill thirty-five years earlier by Haibat Khan, one of Sher Shah Suri's leading generals.

Both of the mentioned mosques adhere to a single-aisled three-bayed rectangular plan. Differences that lie till today are indeed slight. The central pishtaq of the Mughal mosque is lower and its facade bears intricately carved panels, recalling similar work on a gate at the Chunar Fort under Akbar. Although the Mughal mosque in Rohtas resembles the earlier Afghan one, situated approximately 3 km away, it bears an inscription over the central entrance arch that might be interpreted as a poignant statement of Mughal supremacy. Opening with the Quranic phrase, "With God's help victory is imminent," most of this Persian inscription refers to Akbar's victories and concludes with an appeal, in Arabic, to "deliver this good news to believers." Considering the wobbly political situation during that time, the inscription is mostly interpreted as a proclamation of Mughal authority over rebels in Bihar. Rebellious intervention was one major factor which was most commonplace during Akbar's time and his architectural circulation in eastern India. Yet, overlooking every kind of hardship, architecture in Bihar during Akbar was handsomely accomplished by the honest nobility and patronaged Amirs who were brought under the good-will of the emperor regularly from the Mughal court.

However, in association with Bihar's architecture during Akbar and the mass connection with the fort of Rohtas, a single mosque is not

enough to suggest an urban setting, the mosque which was erected by Habash Khan. There were, however, other Akbari structures on the Rohtas hill, which indicate the presence of a permanent and continuous large population. By far the largest and most important of these is the palace of Raja Man Singh. Numerous smaller buildings, mostly tombs, remain in the vicinity of the palace and Habash Khan's mosque. Amongst these are a chattri and an unusual wall mosque, serving as the tomb of Saqi Sultan, who had expired in 1579-80 A.D., before he could attain the title khan, which he greatly coveted. Further testimony to the fort's large population is a service town at the foot of the hill. It was - and still is - called "Akbarpur", after the then-ruling monarch. Thus, although relatively inaccessible and robustly fortified, Rohtas Fort appears to have functioned as a major urban centre as long as it remained a significant administrative centre.

While Rohtas was an important military headquarters, it was the cities of Hajipur, Patna and Munger, situated on the Ganges, as well as Bihar Sharif, the traditional administrative centre of Bihar and long a site of tremendous religious importance, that were the major urban settlements, likewise serving as the most strategic architectural governance in Bihar during Akbar. Inscriptions indicate Akbari-period building activity in all of them, excluding Patna.

Hajipur, situated at the confluence of the Gandak River and Ganges, across from Patna, was considered the key to north Bihar. The



city had been the land-holding of Said Khan, who on three separate occasions had served as the governor of Bihar. Here in 1586-87 A.D., during Said Khan's first period of governorship, his brother Makhsus Khan had erected a mosque, the second recognised Mughal mosque in Bihar, a classic instance of Mughal architecture of Bihar during Akbar. Although Makhsus Khan's mosque's facade and entrance gate were seriously ravaged in the 1934 A.D. earthquake, the original layout is intact and the interior appears little changed. The mosque's adherence to olden Afghani style mosques as well as its Bengali forms, for instance, the Minbar (a pulpit in the mosque where the Imam (leader of prayer) stands to present sermons) and curved cornice of the entrance gate, hints a reliance upon local designers, a particular Mughal architectural feature that has come down since the age of Babur. The link with Bengal in particular is not surprising since Hajipur, often in Bengali hands, was a decisive naval headquarters under the pre-Mughal Husain Shahi dynasty. Thus in Bihar, except for Raja Man Singh's outstanding patronage, Mughal architectural design remained primarily conservative.

During the Akbar's reign, Daud Khan was the governor of Bihar and Bengal. He announced his freedom from Delhi Sultanate. When King Akbar the Great heard this news, he ordered Munim Khan-e-Khana the ruler of Jaunpur to strike on Daud Khan. Khan-e-Khana went to fight against Daud Khan but he had forced to call for a help from Akbar. Akbar started his journey from Agra to Bihar on June 15, 1574 A.D. to

give a help to Khan-e-Khana. He had chosen river route as suggested by Khane-e-Khana and attacked on Daud Khan. Daud Khan could not able to stand against Akbar and ran away from Bihar. Thus Mughal emperor annexed Bihar and Bengal to his empire.<sup>19</sup>

### **Bihar during the period of Jahangir**

Patna, regarded as a most integral part in the present state of Bihar, serving as its capital, has been in the historical limelight in India, since the name of the place was Pataliputra during Buddhist and Hindu times. With time however, it had come to seize sufficient importance during Mughal times too, with men like Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb trying to establish their stronghold in Bihar in order to secure a well-made position in eastern India. In this context comes in the independent existence of Patna's architecture during Jahangir, which was indeed much massive in comparison to other places like Sasaram, Maner or Bihar Sharif. Quite as an expected consequence, architecture of Patna under Jahangir deserves to be specially stated as an 'autonomous' Mughal architectural excellence in a Mughal Bihar.

Sadly though, in Patna, as in many cities that still retain their medieval importance, very few buildings of early Mughal date remain. The continuous process of urbanization has replaced them. Only two early Mughal monuments in Patna's architecture during Jahangir are

---

<sup>19</sup> *Tarikh-e-Maghadh, by Faseehuddin page no 175*

worthy of comment, both characteristic of styles more widely witnessed in Bihar. The first instance is Mirza Masum's mosque, inscribed as a Jami mosque and constructed between 1614-15 A.D. and 1616-17 A.D. Mirza Masum had entered imperial service during Emperor Akbar's reign and then had served in Bengal under Jahangir's governor, Islam Khan. Evidently, Mirza Masum had left Bengal after Islam Khan's demise in 1613 A.D. and had retired to Patna, where he had constructed a mosque and also a market. Mirza Masum indeed was the most praiseworthy instance in architecture of Patna under Jahangir, building in his own accord being patronised by such a Mughal man.

Mirza Masum's mosque is a less refined version of Shaikh Farid Bukhari's mosque built in Bihar Sharif in 1608 A.D. The engaged columns flanking the central bay rise above the central Pishtaq - a feature characteristic of umpteen mosques in Patna and elsewhere in eastern India. Net patterns rendered in stucco appear in the central mihrab's soffit and again in the vaulting. This is the earliest recognised use of net patterning in stucco on an eastern Indian mosque that too executed in Patna's architecture during Jahangir, although the technique is visible earlier in parts of the Rohtas palace.

The second surviving Mughal monument in Patna and its related architecture during Jahangir is the Patthar-ki Masjid, built by Nazar Khwishgi in 1626-27 A.D. Nazar Khwishgi is best known for his stellar career under Shah Jahan, but during Jahangir's reign he was a close

attendant of Prince Parvez, one of Jahangir's sons. Parvez was governor of Bihar, but never actually had travelled there; in all probability, Nazar Khwishgi had served as his deputy.

Patthar-ki Masjid's east facade is stucco faced and adheres to the formula already witnessed in all Mughal mosques in Bihar. The other three sides, however, are stone-faced, nearly the last utilization of stone for a building's facade in either Bengal or Bihar. The stone is carved with small floral medallions and slender-necked wine flasks, a motif much visible upon contemporary monuments at the centre, but rarely in eastern India. It is indeed a matter of much interest and arrest that eastern Indian architecture under the Mughal Empire, with special stress in Bihar and Bengal was hugely unlike and dissimilar from the insignia architectural pattern in Agra or Delhi - the premiere Mughal bases and architectural wonders that any man can conceive of. Practically every kind of Mughal architectural pattern was altered and modified in places like Bihar, with locally favoured architecture being accentuated mostly. As a result, architecture in Patna during Jahangir was mostly espoused and embraced in such indigenous construction and further modification was held therein.

Prince Jahangir had started an independent government in Allahbad against the will of his father Akbar in 1600 A.D. He had divided the lands to his nears from Kalpi to Hajipur. However, after four years of his independent government he wished to meet his father. He appointed

Sharif Khan as governor of Bihar. Sharif Khan was at post from 1603 A.D. till 1604 A.D. After Sharif Khan the post of governor of Bihar held by Quli Khan and worked as a governor for two years. Jahangir replaced Nawab Islam Khan as a governor of Bihar and sent Quli Khan to Bengal, later on Nawab Khan also had sent to Bengal and replaced by Afzal Khan in 1607 A.D. He remained at same post till 1611 A.D. Zafar Khan was appointed as a governor after Afzal Khan and then Ibrahim Khan ascended on the post of governor in Bihar. After Ibrahim Khan, there were some governors like Jahagir Quli Khan (1617-1618 A.D.), Muqarrab Khan (1619-1620 A.D.), and Prince Parwez (1622-1625 A.D.).<sup>20</sup>

### **Bihar during the period of Shah Jahan**

When still a young prince, Shah Jahan had rebelled against his father and Mughal emperor Jahangir in 1623 A.D., which is intimately associated with his consequent architecture in Bihar. Eventually, Shah Jahan is also known to have taken Burdwan in Bengal and then had established a counter-court in Rajmahal (in Bihar). Subsequently, Shah Jahan had spent time at Rohtas, where his son Murad Bakhsh was born. After his accession in 1628 A.D., however, Shah Jahan never had returned to the eastern hinterlands, with reason not known to the modern world. Instead, powerful and effective agents such as his son

---

<sup>20</sup> *The History of Magadh, by Faseehuddin page 198*

Prince Shah Shuja, Shaista Khan and Saif Khan were entrusted with their administration in Bihar and other parts of eastern India.

During Shah Jahan's reign, Patna had remained the primary city in Bihar Province. Saif Khan - governor there from 1628 A.D. until 1632 A.D., had performed much to enhance the city, paralleling his earlier largess when he was Jahangir's governor of Gujarat. To mention some of the meritorious instances of Bihar's architecture during Shah Jahan, Saif Khan indeed acknowledged to have built grand mansions, though they no longer survive and at least two religious structures. One is an Idgah that he had provided in 1628 A.D., his first year as governor of Bihar. The central bay of its Qibla wall, the only wall of this Idgah, is higher than the successively lower flanking ones. It contains a deeply recessed tri-partite Mihrab whose demi-dome is marked by netted vaulting. Each side of the wall of this unusual Idgah possesses an intermeshed octagonal turret. This feature, witnessed earlier in Mughal architecture of Bihar and Bengal, such as Farid Bukhari's Bihar Sharif mosque and the Hajipur Jami mosque, is derived from the region's pre-Mughal Islamic buildings. This is yet another aspect that architecture in Bihar during Shah Jahan, or for that matter under any Mughal, was very much interlinked with pre-Mughali attempts in eastern parts of the country, a feature which is highly unlikely in Mughal architecture in Delhi or Agra.

Saif Khan also had provided a theological school (Madrasa) to Bihar's architecture under Shah Jahan, on the banks of the Ganges. Originally erected to house more than a hundred students, the Madrasa complex was lined with large vaulted buildings, including a Hammam. On the north side, overlooking the Ganges, are Chattris to provide soothing shade. Next to the mosque on the west - yet another stellar presence of religious instance in eastern India's architecture in Bihar during Shah Jahan was a large double-storied entrance portal that Mundy describes as being stately. Despite starting in 1629 A.D., the mosque was still not accomplished in 1632 A.D.

Several mosques were constructed during this time along Patna's main city street paralleling the Ganges, though only a few still remain. The best preserved instance of a mosque during Shah Jahan's Mughal architecture in Bihar is the Masjid of Hajji Tatar. Exquisitely carved black stone frames the three arched entryways on the east façade. Such black stone was employed at times on Mughal structures in Bihar and Bengal, but was commonly found on the mosques of Bengal before Mughal times. It was never employed on structures outside the periphery of eastern India. The arched niches flanking the entrances of Hajji Tatar mosque and the facade's ribbed engaged columns are typical of mid-seventeenth-century buildings in eastern India, for example on Habib Khan Sur's mosque, built in 1638 A.D. at nearby Bihar Sharif. The

mosque's affiliations with local buildings are thus evident, despite its overall conformity with the prevailing Mughal aesthetic.

Habib Khan Sur had held a position of great responsibility in Bihar and its architecture during Shah Jahan, especially during the frequent absences of the governor Saif Khan. Habib Khan had provided several works in Bihar Sharif, all in proximity to the dargah of Sharafuddin Maneri (Died. 1381 A.D.) - one of the subcontinent's most esteemed Sufi saints. Amongst these is a refined mosque, dated 1638. This single-aisled three-domed mosque is modelled closely on Shaikh Farid Bukhari's nearby Jahangiri-period mosque. It was thus almost certainly the product of a local, but expert architect. Several years later, in 1646 A.D., Habib Khan Sur had constructed a tank and Idgah near the shrine of saint Sharafuddin. The Idgah though was crudely constructed, revealing none of the refinements of the patron's earlier mosque, suggesting he had little role in its design.

Yet another structure influenced by those in Bihar Sharif, within the purview architecture in Bihar under Shah Jahan and his patronized men, is the mosque Raja Bahroz had constructed in Kharagpur in 1656-1657 A.D. Kharagpur, today in Munger District, long had been the seat of a prominent Hindu family in Bihar. Although initially allied with the Mughals, the Kharagpur rajas were defeated by them during the late 16th century. One member of the family had acknowledged Mughal authority and had also converted to Islam. He was then reinstated on the



Kharagpur throne. There, his successors had erected several mosques and many more tombs, suggesting that the newly converted Kharagpur rajas consciously had attempted to create a seat that very much had proclaimed their new religious affiliation.

The most magnificent amongst this Hindu-converted-Islam religious architecture by the Kharagpur rajas is Raja Bahroz's single-aisled three-domed mosque. Situated just north of the raja's palace on the bank of the river Man, the mosque is elevated on a high plinth - an increasingly common feature of later Mughal mosques. Visible from a great distance, this imposing mosque is the largest one built in eastern India since Raja Man Singh's Jami mosque of 1600 A.D. in Rajmahal. The facade of Raja Bahroz's mosque, now obscured by a modern veranda, had adhered closely to the form of contemporary mosques in Bihar Sharif. Due to the exceeding sanctity held by Bihar Sharif, those mosques doubtless were known to the converted Kharagpur family. Yet, as if to outshine the mosques of this esteemed city and architecture in Bihar during Shah Jahan's patronage, Raja Bahroz's instance is even more elegantly ornamented than the ones that serve as its models. Its polychromed stucco relief is more bountiful and copious than the ornamentation of any other contemporary Mughal structure in eastern India.

The tomb of Malik Wisal in Bihar is a simple and humble structure, consisting of a walled rectangular enclosure entered on the

north. In the centre of this open courtyard is a raised platform upon which there lie seven graves. A stone-faced wall mosque, punctuated by three Mihrabs is attached to its western end. Just outside the tomb can be witnessed a massive step well, rare so far east in India - a sudden dissimilarity in architectural pattern in Bihar under Shah Jahan, a man known to possess capabilities to godlike extent. Since Mughal authorities commonly were transferred from one part of the realm to another, they had indeed served as vehicles for the movement not only of style, but also, as in this case, whole new forms.

In Shah Jahan's period, Saif Khan was the governor of Bihar from 1627 A.D. till 1631 A.D. He had governed Bihar with full prosperity and dignity. He had done a lot of works for public utilities. He constructed a big Eidgah in Sadiqpur locality in Patna. He also constructed a big mosque and Madrasa in Patna. After Saif Khan, Abdullah Khan was appointed as a governor; he had governed Bihar for eight years from 1631-1638 A.D. In his period he conquered Bhojpur. Shaista Khan became a governor after Abdullah Khan, he had reached till Palamu through thick forest and forced the king of Palamu to surrender. He was on the post from 1638 A.D. till 1641 A.D. After Shaista Khan, there were few more governors in Shah Jahan's period like Nawab Iteqad Khan, Azam Khan, Saeed Khan, Jaffer Khan, and Ikhlas Khan.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> *Tarikh-e-Maghadh*, by Faseehuddin page no 217

## **Bihar during the period of Aurangzeb**

Emperor Aurangzeb was much less involved in architectural production as compared to his predecessors, but he did sponsor some significant monuments, especially religious ones. Indeed, religious monuments and spiritualistic architecture in Bihar was one domain, which is most visible under Aurangzeb's rule. Early during Aurangzeb's reign, the harmonious balance of Shah Jahani-period architecture was rejected in support of an increased sense of 'spatial tension' with vehemence on height. Stucco and other less expensive materials trying to outperform the marble and inlaid stone of earlier periods cover built surfaces under Aurangzeb. Immediately after Aurangzeb's accession, the utilisation of forms and motifs, such as the baluster column and the bangala canopy, earlier reserved for the ruler alone, are visible on non-imperially sponsored monuments. This suggests both that there was relatively little imperial interference in architectural patronage and that the vocabulary of imperial and divine symbolism established by Shah Jahan was rather "devalued" by Aurangzeb. At the same time, architectural activity by the nobility had proliferated like never before - a fact which was mostly accentuated in architecture in Bihar during Aurangzeb, which can be comprehended as under. This very fact suggests that the noblemen and Aurangzeb's Mughal court viziers were much eager and enthusiastic to fill in the "architect's" role, previously dominated by the emperor.

The flourishing trade of Bihar and the relatively calm political climate had made conditions here much ripened for building activity. For instance, Daud Khan Quraishi, governor of Bihar from 1659 A.D. to 1664 A.D., had provided structures himself and by example had encouraged others to do so as well. Daud Khan Quraishi indeed had ended the last significant source of on-going opposition to Mughal authority in Bihar by conquering Palamau, inhabited by Chero rajas. Inside the Cheros' seventeenth-century fort, whose elegant gates had been constructed during Shah Jahan's reign, Daud Khan had constructed a brick mosque in 1660. A single-aisled three-bayed structure surmounted by three low rounded domes, this mosque lacks the sophistication of the fort itself and other contemporary projects, possibly a result of its hasty construction. Nevertheless, it did serve as a powerful indicator of Mughal presence in this newly conquered territory. Indeed, Aurangzeb was so careful and meticulous about his eastern Indian architectural concern, that architecture in Bihar during Aurangzeb was masterfully handled by his positioned governing men, instances of which can be still be seen, standing tall and imposing.

Daud Khan's serai (a rest house for travelers and caravans, erected during Mughal era), in contrast to his Palamau mosque, is finely built. He had constructed it with the emperor's permission for the protection of travelers in a robber infested area. This brick serai is in the town still referred to as Daudnagar (Aurangabad District). It remains today as the

best-preserved example of seventeenth-century secular architecture in Bihar under Aurangzeb. The serai is entered on the east and west sides by arched portals with chamfered sides, harking back early statelier Mughal portals at the Ajmer Fort, built around 1570 A.D. Details, however, such as the stone pillars and cusped arches recalling those on the Sangi Dalan, built about a decade earlier in Rajmahal possess a more contemporary air.

A second illustrious instance of secular architecture in Bihar under Aurangzeb was built in Bihar Sharif for Shaikha, a member of the Afghan Ghakkar tribe, many of who had lived in Bihar since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Referred to as the Nauratan, it was built in 1688-1689 A.D. The main building in the Nauratan compound is a single-storied flat-roofed square-plan structure. The interior arrangement, however, is familiar throughout Mughal India. That is, a central domed chamber is surrounded by eight ancillary vaulted rooms, a total of nine chambers, the source of the building's name, Nauratan, or nine jewels. Besides this building, others in the compound include a tank with underground chambers, a mosque and domestic quarters, some of which are still extant. The building, serving as a school in present times, provides an exceptional view of the penchants of the upper class during the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Throughout the Aurangzeb's reign, buildings were constructed in Patna, the capital of Bihar. Only one of them, however, is credited, at

least by its inscription, to Aurangzeb as the emperor himself. The building being discussed under scanner is the Rauza mosque, dated 1667-68 A.D. It is, in fact, the only Mughal building in all Bihar that claims imperial Mughal sponsorship. This simple single-aisled three-bayed Rauza mosque was built in conjunction with the graves of two saints. It adheres closely to the form established by the early 17th century mosque of Mirza Masum. In spite of the brief inscription, the Rauza mosque's unostentatious style and plan evoke that it was built in response to a general order encouraging the construction of mosques, but was not actually paid for by the ruler. Now the matter that strikes a reader the most might be that Mughal architecture in Bihar, precisely in Patna during Aurangzeb was nearly accomplished in absence of the emperor himself! Aurangzeb, it is known never had been in Patna, nor did he construct mosques at sites with which he did not have a strong personal interest.

Unlike the simple and humble Rauza mosque, one constructed nearly twenty years later by Khwaja Amber in the service of the empire's highest-ranking noble, Shaista Khan, features the most elaborate stucco work on any Patna structure of this time. However, the decor of this mosque, dated 1688-89 A.D., is considerably more subdued and rather low-key as opposed to contemporary ornamentation elsewhere. Here in the mosque of Khwaja Amber, a noted instance of Aurangzeb's patronage in Mughal architecture in Bihar, only the interior of the domes is

intricately embellished, bringing to mind similar designs on the Benaras Jami mosque or the Bibi-ka Maqbara in Aurangabad, built at the beginning of Aurangzeb's reign. This contrasts with the more characteristically austere architecture of Mughal Bihar highly not under Aurangzeb, generally unembellished by contrast with contemporary architecture in the Mughal Bengal capitals of Dhaka or Rajmahal.

Daud Khan Quraishi was the governor of Bihar in the Aurangzeb's period from 1660 A.D. till 1665 A.D. In his period the most important thing was victory over Palamu. In his period a home of justice had been constructed in Patna in 1665 A.D. In 1666 A.D. Daud Khan had appointed Lashkar Khan as a governor of Bihar. Lashkar Khan remained at the post till 1668 A.D. After that many governor came and gone. Some names are Ibrahim Khan from 1670 A.D. to 1672 A.D., Amir Khan from 1673 A.D. to 1675 A.D., Tarbiat Khan from 1675 A.D. to 1677 A.D., Prince Mohammad Azam from 1677 A.D. to 1678 A.D., Shaif Khan from 1679 A.D. to 1683 A.D., Umid Khan from 1685 A.D. to 1695 A.D., Fadayee Khan from 1695 A.D. to 1700 A.D., Shamsheer Khan from 1701 A.D. to 1703 A.D., and Prince Mohammad Azim from 1702 A.D. to 1705 A.D.. In 1704 A.D. when Prince Mohammad Azim was ruling on Bihar, the name of Patna had been changed to Azimabad.<sup>22</sup>

After Aurangzeb's period the Sultanut of Mughals began to decline.

---

<sup>22</sup> *The History of Magadh*, by Faseehuddin page 237

In this period Bihar had some governors like, Syed Husain Ali Khan Bahadur from 1707 A.D. to 1711 A.D., Mir Jumla Khan-e-khana from 1712 A.D. to 1714 A.D., Sir Buland Khan from 1715 A.D. to 1718 A.D., Nizamul Mulk from 1719 A.D. to 1720, Aqeedat Khan 1721 A.D. to 1724 A.D., and Nawab Fakhrul Dowla from 1725 A.D. to 1730 A.D..

With the decline of the Mughals, Bihar passed under the control of the Nawabs of Bengal. Thus, the medieval period was mostly one of anonymous provincial existence.



## **Cultural Aspects of Bihar**

Bihar is as old as civilization itself. It is one of the states of India which has culturally most mixed population. In addition to different religious (Hindu, Muslim, Jain, Buddhists, Sikhs, Christians) groups, there are variations on the basis of race (Aryans, Dravidians, Mongolians), geographical (Bengalis, Marwadis, Gujratis, Punjabis) and linguistic (Bengali, Urdu, Nepali, Marwadi, Gujarati, Nepali in addition to Bhojpuri, Maithili, Magahi and Vajjika) basis. Since ancient era it has been home for extraordinary intellectual work. Bihar has a rich cultural background to be proud of. The present society reflects its cultural prosperity adequately.

Bihar is dominated by a mixture of Hindu and Muslim religious culture and rituals. Other religions like Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, though deeply associated with the past of Bihar. Altogether Bihar has impression of the entire religious compartment but predominantly of Hindus and Muslims who have been living together with peace except few minor deviations.

People are mostly shy, introvert, self content, easily accessible, honest and helping. Illiteracy, corruption, administrative failure, perennial flood, lack of employment and resulting poverty; all are reflected on the peoples behavior and attitude. People are usually confident of themselves, respect the law and are afraid of that. They

apparently accept the things easily at first but inside their heart they continue questioning till they come out of it or they find it true.

There are few villages with vegetarianism reaching to 100%. Buddhism and Jainism promote vegetarianism. Roti, Daal, Sabji is the usual blend diet. Chana (Bengal Gram) and its flour (SATTU) makes special ingredient of vegetarian food.

The well-known Mughal Miniature School of Painting flourished in Bihar during early 18<sup>th</sup> to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. With the decline of the Mughals, the Delhi artists migrated to Murshidabad. Some of them came to Patna and practiced their craft following a style that gradually came to be known as the Patna Qalam. The style is famous for its soft colors and the use of hand made paper or mica sheets. Most of these paintings depict the life of the people of Bihar.

Patna and Bihar-Sharif areas are glorious, colourful and ancient a land. Here lived the mythological king Janaka of Videha, vedic period Rishi Yangyabalka, Ramayan famed Maharshi Valmiki and Kautilya, the author of Arthashastra, the first treatise on modern economics. This is the land where great religious leaders like Buddha, Mahavir and Govind Singh were born and great kings like Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka and Sher Sah ruled. Here in the land flourished the ancient seats of learning - Nalanda and Vikramshila.

Ancient Bihar comprised of independent States like Magadha (land of Mauryas), Anga (state gifted to Karna by Duryodhana), Vaishali (the

first ever democratic country of the worlds), Mithila (the place of Sita) etc., which had shaped the socio-cultural heritage of India. But, it is Brihadratha, the Magadha King first established the Magadha empire in the region which in course of history came to be known as Bihar. The Sisunagas followed the Magadha Kings around 6th century B.C. Bimbisar and his son Ajatsatru annexed Anga and expanded the kingdom upto Punjab. In order to be away from the Baishali State, they erected their Capital at the confluence of the Ganges and Sone River in Pataligram which was known as Puspapur or Pataliputra. If Sisunag kings strengthened Magadha Empire, it is the Maurya and Gupta kings made ancient Bihar a prosperous and enlightened State as known from the history. With the fall of Gupta dynasty to the invaders from the Middle East during 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> century, Bihar lost its past glory and it no longer remained as the political and cultural centre of India. Pataliputra, Munger were annexed by the Pal Kings of Bengal. Gaya, Bhagalpur, Rohtas etc. became small independent States. The mighty Magadh Empire disintegrated. Bakhtiar Khilji captured Bihar from the Pal kings, but it was difficult for Delhi Sultanate to administer. Bihar continued to be under provincial administration except during the period of Sher Shah. It is Akbar; the great Mughal emperor during 1575-1576 A.D. annexed Bihar and Bengal to his empire and gave Bihar a stable administration making it a part of Bengal. However, with the decline of Mughal Empire, Bihar passed into the hands of Nawabs of Bengal.

With the rise of British ascendancy in Bengal during 1757-1765 A.D., Bihar's political life was much influenced. Jharkhand, Singhbhum, Santhal Praganas remained away from the local politics. The tribal chiefs remained independent of Muslim Subedars. At this juncture Lord Clive arrived at Patna in 1757 A.D. and in the decisive war of Buxar in 1765 A.D. the Dewani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was granted to the East India Company by the Mughal emperor Shah Alam. However the people of Bihar never accepted the British. The Santhal Pragana revolt of 1781-1782 A.D., the Hoj agitation of 1820-1821 A.D., Kol agitation of 1831-1833 A.D., finally shaped into the revolt of 1857 A.D. led by Kunwar Singh. This was the beginning of national freedom movement in India. Formation of Brahma-Samaj in 1868 A.D., publication of Bihar Times in 1894 A.D. demanding a separate State regulated further the political course in Bihar.

## **Educational Aspects of Bihar**

Education is the heart and blood for one's culture. It is only education which helps in the total growth of a person. All the developed communities of the world have a strong educational background. Bihar was recognized as the godfather of education. It was the birth place of two principle universities, Nalanda (established in 450 BC) and Vikramshila (established in 783 A.D.). The educational infrastructure and methods of the Bihar education was of a very high quality.

During the Muslim period, Bihar remained a major centre of learning and served Islamic studies with a great passion. We find a lot of Ulama, literary personalities imparting the education in Bihar. The Khanqahs, Madrasas and Makatibs were actively spreading the light of education in whole Bihar.

### **KHANQAHS (MONASTORIES) OF BIHAR**

Khanqah a Persian word meaning a house or abode of Sufis and dervishes. Khanqah seems to have started appearing in Khurasan and Transoxiana in the 10<sup>th</sup> century as centres of prayers as well as of teaching on various aspects of Islamic Shariah. From then onwards Khanqah continued to have been established both in urban centres and countryside throughout the whole Islamic world.

In medieval Bihar and Bengal, Khanqahs of Shaikhs and sufis played an important role in guiding Muslims and in their social and cultural development. Minhaj-i-siraj records that after making Lakhnauti the capital of Bengal, Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khalji built many mosques, Madrasas and Khanqahs. Thirteen inscriptions of the first one hundred years of Muslim rule in Bihar and Bengal (1204-1304 A.D.) have been so far discovered and of them, six bear the testimony of Khanqahs. This indicates the importance of the Khanqah in Bihar and Bengal society of the time. Places like Devkot, Deotala, Mahasthan, Dhaka, Sonargaon, Chittagong, Sylhet, Gaur, Pandua, Rajmahal, Murshidabad and Tribeni (Satgaon) were famous for Khanqahs.

The sufis played a prominent role in preaching Islam in Bengal by establishing Chilla Khanahs or Khanqahs. Each of them had many followers. They were pioneers in spreading not only the spiritual knowledge but also general education. Some Khanqahs of Bengal saints were great seats of learning. They produced many notable Alims (religious scholars), Sufis and dervishes such as Sharafuddin Yahyia Maneri, Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, Nasiruddin Manikpuri, Shaikh Husain Dhukkarposh, Hasanuddin Manikpuri, and Shaikh Kafi. In a Khanqah, the pious could find mental and spiritual peace.

Every Khanqah had a Langarkhana or free kitchen attached to it that provided food to the poor and the needy. Langarkhanas were maintained by endowments or income from the state endowed Lakhiraj

lands. They enabled the Sufis and dervishes to come closer to the common people and thereby, to understand their feelings and attitudes.

Khanqah was a spiritual institution based on human understanding and feeling. During medieval period and even after, people of all religions and races, irrespective of caste and creed, used to visit khanqahs for purposes of healing and satisfaction.

Khanqahs imparted spiritual teaching and in addition, they served as centres of education. The Sian inscription (Dated 1221 A.D.), the second Islamic inscription of Bengal, is the first epigraphic evidence of a Khanqah exclusively for the Sufis, who spent their whole time in meditation. The rent-free lands were extensively confiscated during the Colonial rule and as a result, many historic Khanqahs were affected. Through financial hardships many old Khanqahs were closed down. There are many Khanqahs in Bengal now. But they have lost their historical significance.

The Major Khanqahs (Monasteries) were:

### **Khanqah of Maner**

This Khanqah was built in first decade of twelfth century. Initially from this Khanqah the tradition of Sahrawardiya was formed after that the tradition of Firdousia, Chishtiya, and Qadriya were developed. During the period of Makhdum Shah Daulat Maneri, this Khanqah acquired the fame throughout India.

### **Khanqah of Bihar Sharif**

When Hazrat Makhdum Sharafuddin Maneri came to Bihar Sharif in 1320 A.D., the Sultan of Delhi Mohammad Shah Tughlaq ordered governor of Bihar, Majdul Mulk to build a Khanqah for Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. From that time till now this Khanqah actively has been involving itself to impart the goodness and noble causes.

### **Khanqah of Phulwari Sharif**

In Seventeen century, Hazrat Peer Mujeeb and his Khanqah had done a tremendous job to spread Islamic teachings and learnings.

A part from these well know Khanqahs, we have the below mentioned Khanqahs in Bihar, which worked as pillars of light on the sea shore:

### **Other Khanqahs**

- ❖ Khanqah of Shaikhpura
- ❖ Khanqah of Ibrahimpur Charyawan
- ❖ Khanqah of Maafa
- ❖ Khanqah of Qitalpura
- ❖ Khanqah of Islampur
- ❖ Khanqah of Dewrah
- ❖ Khanqah of Samla



- ❖ Khanqah of Fatuha
- ❖ Khanqah of Bhagalpur
- ❖ Khanqah of Muzaffarpur
- ❖ Khanqah of Hajipur
- ❖ Khanqah of Ratan Sarai
- ❖ Khanqah of Rajgir
- ❖ Khanqah of Chimni Bazar, Purnia
- ❖ Khanqah of Amjhar Sharif
- ❖ Khanqah of Choki Qital, Saran
- ❖ Khanqah of Bahman Bara Sharif, Siwan
- ❖ Khanqah of Hasan Purah, Siwan
- ❖ Khanqah of Tajpur Bisahya, Saran
- ❖ Khanqah of Chandows
- ❖ Khanqah of Barh
- ❖ Khanqah of Sahsaram
- ❖ Khanqah of Hilsa, Nalanda
- ❖ Khanqah of Chaman Peer Bigha, Nalanda
- ❖ Khanqah of Azimabad
- ❖ Khanqah of Safipur
- ❖ Khanqah of Ram Sagar, Gaya
- ❖ Khanqah of Bethu Sarai
- ❖ Khanqah of Manpur, Gaya
- ❖ Khanqah of Arwal

- ❖ Khanqah of Billori
- ❖ Khanqah of Shaikhpura Khurd
- ❖ Khanqah of Patna City
- ❖ Khanqah of Karap
- ❖ Khanqah of Abgila, Gaya
- ❖ Khanqah of Daud Nagar
- ❖ Khanqah of Amathwa, Jahanabad
- ❖ Khanqah of Maula Nagar
- ❖ Khanqah of Munger
- ❖ Khanqah of Darbhanga
- ❖ Khanqah of Lakhmaniya
- ❖ Khanqah of Badi Balya
- ❖ Khanqah of Kandoi <sup>23</sup>

These Khanqahs were very famous for is spirituality and Islamic educations. They always been delivering the message of brotherhood, humankind, and good manners but when community got declined, these centre of Islamic teachings and preaching also been effected and due to some self centered care takers the message of these Khanqah went wrong.

---

<sup>23</sup> *Tazkira Mashaikh by Dr Sayed Shah Tayyab Abdali page 18 Itaken from Taqreebat Sadi*

## **MADRASAS OF BIHAR**

Besides these Khanqahs which were spreading the goodness among the people, there were a large number of Madrasas and Makatibs, making the education accessible to all the people irrespective their faiths and religions. These centres of educations had done a tremendous works in the field of education in and got a very good position in this field.

Madrassa is Arabic word for any type of educational institution, whether secular or religious (of any religion). The word Madrasa is derived from the triconsonantal root *د-ر-س* (d-r-s), which relates to learning or teaching. Therefore, Madrasa literally means "a place where learning/teaching is done". The word is also present as a loanword with the same innocuous meaning in many Arabic-influenced languages, such as: Urdu, Bengali, Hindi, Persian, Turkish, Kurdish, Indonesian, Malay and Bosnian.

In the medieval Islamic world, an elementary school was known as a Maktab, which dates back to at least the 10th century. Like Madrasas (which referred to higher education), a Maktab was often attached to a mosque. In the 11th century, the famous Persian Islamic philosopher, Ibn Sina (known as Avicenna in the West), in one of his books, wrote a chapter dealing with the Maktab entitled "The Role of the Teacher in the Training and Upbringing of Children", as a guide to teachers working at Maktab schools. He wrote that children can learn better if taught in classes instead of individual tuition from private tutors, and he gave a

number of reasons for why this is the case, citing the value of competition and emulation among pupils as well as the usefulness of group discussions and debates. Ibn Sina described the curriculum of a Maktab school in some detail, describing the curricula for two stages of education in a Maktab school.<sup>24</sup>

History of Madrasas in India goes back to the advent of Muslims to the subcontinent. They played an important role in the eco-cultural life of the Muslim society. In the medieval India, they used to provide with the manpower to the government to run its huge and vast machinery. A chain of these Madrasas were spread in the length and breadth of the country. They were instrumental in imparting education to the masses. They were marked with the secularism in their nature. This, including with other characteristics of the Madrasas, attracted a good crowd of the children even from the non-Muslim majority. This situation continued up till late 19th century. The luminaries like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Dr. Sachdanand Sinha and thousands of others got their elementary education in Madrasas.<sup>25</sup> Some important Madrasas which were available before 20<sup>th</sup> century are being mentioned here.

### **Madrasa built by Saif Khan**

An important Madrasa has been established at Patna by the governor of Bihar Saif Khan, who was a brother-in-law of Emperor Shah

---

<sup>24</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrasah>

<sup>25</sup> <http://madrasa.wordpress.com/2007/03/25/madrasas-in-india-a-historical-perspective/>

Jahan. It may rightly be considered the first Madrasa in Patna about which the historical details are available. It had a sprawling campus built in double-stories, close to the river bank of Ganga. The specious structure also had endowed. It was big enough to accommodate 100 boarders. The Principal of this Madrasa enjoyed high academic repute and social eminence till the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The city of Patna continued to enjoy a good reputation as an important centre of Arabic and Persian learning in eastern India. As is well known, the great social reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Rai received instructions in Persian language at Patna.<sup>26</sup>

### **Madrasa built by Mullah Meetan**

There is an oral tradition about an important Madrasa being set up at Patna by Mullah Meetan in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. He also founded a khanqah which is still in functional state, at site close to river bank. The locality is still known as Meetan Ghat. It is mentioned that Mullah Meetan was a tutor of Prince Azim, at whose request the settled at Patna. The prince also made rich endowments for him. Contemporary records do not provide detailed information about the Madrasa, which seems to have had a brief existence. The site of the Madrasa is now identified with the Shahji ka Pushta. <sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> *Madrasa Education in India by S.M. Azizuddin Husain page 78*

<sup>27</sup> *Madrasa Education in India by S.M. Azizuddin Husain page 79*

## **ULAMA OF BIHAR**

The contributions made by the Ulama towards Arabic and Islamic studies are very high and distinguished. We had Shaikh Sharafuddin Maneri, a very papule Sufi and very well-informed person in Islamic studies, whose book *Maktoobat-e-Sadi* was reference book for Shah Waliullah Muhaddis Dehlawi and Hazrat Mujaddid Alf Sani. Akbar the great used to read the paragraphs of this book and Aurangzeb Alamgir used to keep this book always with him.

When *Fatawa Alamgiri*, a reference book for Islamic law and jurisprudence was being accomplished, three very prominent Ulama of Bihar were being called for this task. Shaikh Inayatullah Surajgarhi, Shaikh Raziuddin Bhagalpuri, and Shaikh Faseehuddin Phulwarwi were among the council of Ulama, who was responsible to complete this job.

Shaikh Muhiyuddin alias Mullah Mohan was appointed as teacher of Auragzeb by Sultan Shah Jahan, who gave the education to Aurangzeb till twelve years. Azizullah Mubarak Azimabadi was appointed as teacher of Princess Zebun Nisa as well as Mullah Muhibbullah Bihari who hailed from Nalanda was appointed as a teacher of Prince Rafiul Qadr and later Shah Alam in his days had given him the title of "Fazil Khan" and granted him the position of "president in chief". Shaikh Sulaiman Hanfi Maneri was granted a title of "Nawab Fazail Khan" and gave him the responsibility of "Darul Adl" (home of justice) during the period of Shah Jahan. Syed Nazir Husain alias Miyan Sahab Dehlavi,

who hailed from Suraj Garh, Munger, had been given the position of teaching of Hadith which was specialized for Shah Waliullah family. These are few cases of a large number of Ulama and literary personalities who proved themselves as riders of teaching and learning.

## **MERIT ULAMA OF BIHAR**

Bihar, as mentioned, has been a home of Ulama and literary personalities. Ulama of Bihar had been played a very bright role in development of Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh and other Islamic studies thorough out the history. The list of prominent Ulama is too big to mention here, but I would like to mention here some merit Ulama of Bihar. It will help to understand the contribution of them in Arabic and Islamic studies.

### **Shaikh Ahmad bin Yahya Maneri**

Shaikh Ahmad bon in Maner in 1262 A.D. during the period of Sultan Nasiruddin Mahmood bin Iltutmish. He got his early education in his native place then travelled to Sonar Gaun and had been included in the list of pupil of Shaikh Sharafuddin Abu Tauamah Dehlavi. He worked hard in learning and got a very good position in education. He also travelled to Delhi and received the knowledge from Shaikh Nizamuddin and other Ulama. He returned to Bihar and spent twelve year in the forest of Rajgir in worship of Allah. Then he settled in Bihar Sharif giving the knowledge what he got to the people and preaching them the teaching of Islam. Mohammad Shah had built a Khanqah near the residence of Shaikh Maneri which is a centre of Islamic learning till now. Shaikh Maneri died in 1370 A.D. during the period of Feroz Shah Sultan. He had left some very beneficial books in Arabic and other languages.



Few names are *Ajwibah*, *Fawaid Rukni*, *Irshadut Talibin*, *Irshadus Salikin*, *Madan Maani*, *Lataiful Maani*, *Khan Pur Nemat*, and *Tuhfai Ghaibi*.<sup>28</sup>

### **Shaikh Shoib bin Jalal Maneri**

He was born in Maner and got his early education in the same place. He was very famous in spirituality and modesty. He recognized with Shaikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri from his childhood. He received some education from Husain bin Muiz Balkhi and became famous in educational and practical life. He died in 1399 A.D. and left one book *Manaqibul Asfiya*.<sup>29</sup>

### **Shaik Nizamuddin Maneri**

He was famous with Nizamuddin Qalander. He wrote a big Qaseeda (Poem) and its explanation with the name of "Siratal Mustaqeem" in 1572 A.D. His grave is between Patna and Maner.<sup>30</sup>

### **Shaikh Tajuddin Usmani**

Shaikh Tajuddin bin Zakaria Hanafi, had born in 1545 A.D. in Saran district. He got his basic education in the birth place and then traveled to seek more education from the great scholars. After completion

---

<sup>28</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 144*

<sup>29</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 254*

<sup>30</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 441*

of his education he started teaching the student and giving the knowledge of Islamic studies. He spread out the tradition of Naqshbandiya in Arab countries with the help of his Arabic books. His noted book in this regard is well known as "*al Risalah fi Suluk Khulasatus Sadat al Naqshbandia*". He also translated few books of spirituality like "*Nafhatul Uns*". He died in 1642 A.D.<sup>31</sup>

### **Shaikh Raziuddin Bhagalpuri**

One of the most excellent Ulama of sixteen century, he became very famous for his graciousness in education. Aurangzeb Alamgir had appointed him in Ulama panel which was responsible to compile the "*Fatawa Alamgiriya*". He had expertise in various field like politics, lecture and as well as in battle field. Alamgir had granted him property of Barar region due to his braveness in battle field. He died in 1685 A.D.<sup>32</sup>

### **Shaikh Abdul Shakur Maneri**

He was one of the prominent Ulama who got famed in Fiqh, Usoole Fiqh and Arabic language. He born in Maner and spent his childhood in the same place. He travelled to Jaunpur to seek education from Shaikh Mohammad Rasheed bin Mustafa Usmani and other Ulama and spent a long time in education. He came back to Maner and started teaching and preaching the people about Islam. He had very deep knowledge in Fiqh.

---

<sup>31</sup> *Tazkera-e-Ulama-e-Bihar by Abul Kalam Qasmi Shamshi page 52*

<sup>32</sup> *Al Aluam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 530*

He never visited any government authority and did not have any glimpse to wealth. He died in 1684 A.D. and buried in Maner itself.<sup>33</sup>

### **Maulana Sulaiman Maneri**

Shaikh Sulaiman Hanfi Maneri was granted a title of “Nawab Fazail Khan” and gave him the responsibility of “Darul Adl” (home of justice) during the period of Shah Jahan. He was famous due to his modesty and religiousness. He had dissolved the problems of people according to the Sharia beside this he had teaching the students on regular basis. He died in 1690 A.D.<sup>34</sup>

### **Khaja Imaduddin Phulwarvi**

Khaja Imaduddin had born in 1664 A.D. in Phulwari Sharif, Patna. He got his early education in Phulwari Sharif then he had taken a trip to Delhi and from where to Lahore. He received the education from famous teachers and adopted Qalandariya tradition from Shaikh Mohammad Fazil and spent twelve year with him. He returned to Phulwari 1693 A.D. and devoted himself for the worship of Allah. He died in 1712 A.D.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 565*

<sup>34</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 728*

<sup>35</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 767*

### **Maulana Wajeehul Haque Phulwarvi**

Maulana Wajeehul Haque was from the descendents of Hazrat Abdullah bin Jaffer Tayyar (May Allah be pleased with him). He had born and brought up in very literate family. He learned some books from his father. He received Hadith's education from Shaikh Mohammad Ateeque bin Abdul Sami Bihari and learned *Mishkatul Masabeeh*, *Bukhari* and *Muslim*. He travelled to Ghazipur for occupation and stayed there a long time. He returned back to Phulwari and spent whole life to teach the students. He was an author of a book *Nuzhatul Salikin* which deals in advantages of worship. He died in 1737 A.D.<sup>36</sup>

### **Maulana Aasil Bhagalpuri**

Maulana Aasil Bhagalpuri was the son of Maulana Aaqil. He had born in 1698 A.D. He was among the great scholars of Islamic studies. He had written very precious books but unfortunately they are missing. One of them was the footnote on Arabic poem written by Maulana Saleh Mohammad bin Abdul Salam. He died in 1802 A.D.<sup>37</sup>

### **Maulana Sayed Shah Ahmad Husain Gayawi**

Maulana Sayed Shah Ahmad was born in Mathua in district Gaya. He was a famous scholar and had written few books related to Islamic

---

<sup>36</sup> *Al Alaam* by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 857

<sup>37</sup> *Tazkera-e-Ulama-e-Bihar* by Abul Kalam Qasmi Shamshi page 18

studies. He had also a very soft taste of poetry and composed few poems in Persian and Urdu. He died in 1895 A.D.<sup>38</sup>

### **Shaikh Abul Hasan Phulwarvi**

Abul Hasan bin Nimatullah had born in 1777 A.D. He followed Moulana Ahamadi bin Wahidul Haque and learned all books from him. He learned Unani stream of medication from his uncle Ghulam Jeelani. He emerged as a big competitor among his colleagues in all fields of education. He was a good poet and use to poetize with a very good taste of knowledge. He remained teaching and preaching Islamic studies till he had been attacked by paralysis and died in 1849 A.D. He had a book in explanation of "*Sharhus Sullam*", and left a compiled poetry in Persian language.<sup>39</sup>

### **Moulana Ahmadi bin Waheed Phulwarvi**

Maulana Ahmadi bin Wajeehul Haque was from the descendents of Hazrat Abdullah bin Jaffer Tayyar (May Allah be pleased with him). He had born in 1860 A.D. in Phulwari Sharif. He had taken basic education from his father and ascended on the educational position. He was like a reference in the knowledge. He had left some very precious books like footnote on "*Meer Zahid Mullah Jalal*", footnote on "*Meer Zahid Sharah Mawaqif*", footnote on "*al Shamshul Bazighah*", and a footnote on

---

<sup>38</sup> *Tazkera-e-Ulama-e-Bihar by Abul Kalam Qasmi Shamshi page 20*

<sup>39</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 892*

“*Sharah Hidayatul Hikmah*” by Sheerazi. He had written a small book named “*Mabhath al Musannat bil Takrir*”. All his footnotes and book indicate how he had deep knowledge particularly in Mathematics.<sup>40</sup>

### **Shaikh Ali Habib Phulwarvi**

Ali Habib bin Abul Hasan bin Nematullah Jaffri, one of the most honorable personalities in education and modesty. He had born in 1833 A.D. in Phulwari Sharif, Patna. He had learned some books from his father who was also a great Islamic personality, and some books from his brother, and his uncle. They were all the pupils of Maulana Ahmadi Phulwarvi. Then he proceeded to Madina and learned six most important books of Hadith. He was very interested in study and gaining knowledge from any means. He had written few books in Fiqh and in the subject of belief. One of them is “*al Nima al Uzma*” in religious queries, and “*Shawahid al Juma*”. He also wrote “*al Uswa al Hasana*” in the achievements of four caliphs of Mohammad (Peace be upon him). One more book from him is “*Salatul Muhibbin*” in forms of Namaz. He had also compiled book of Persian poetry. He died in 1878 A.D.<sup>41</sup>

### **Maulana Wahidul Haque Phulwarvi**

Wahidul Haque bin Wajihul Haque Jaffri, one of the prominent scholars of Islamic studies. He had born in Phulwari Sharif and got early

---

<sup>40</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani. Dar ibn Hazm, page 910*

<sup>41</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani. Dar ibn Hazm, page 1043*

education from his father. After completion of his education he started teaching and guiding the people towards right path. He was very honest, good manner, and soft spoken. He used to convince for good works and tried to prevent the people from wrong works. He used to remain very busy in learnings and teachings and hardly waste any moment without any educational benefit. He had written footnotes on “Hidayatul Fiqh”, “Shamail-e-Tirmizi” and “Tafseer Baizawi”. He also had written some small books on the topic of Fiqh. He died in 1787 A.D.<sup>42</sup>

### **Maulana Wilayat Ali Sadiqpuri**

Maulana Wilayat Ali bin Fatah Ali Sadiqpuri. He had born in Sadiqpur, Patna in 1791 A.D. He had learned his basic education in same place then proceeded to Lucknow and completed his education under the patronage of Shaikh Ashraf bin Nematullah. He became the follower of Sayed Ahmad Shaheed Rai Brailwy. He came back to Sadiqpur and started teaching the students. When Sayed Ahmad Shaheed migrated to Afghanistan to fight against the injustice and inequality, Maulana Wilayat Ali was among those who followed him in first phase. He also migrated with his spiritual guide to Afghanistan and strived for Islam. He died in 1853 A.D.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 1133*

<sup>43</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 1137*

## **Maulana Yahya Ali Sadiqpuri**

Maulana Yahya Ali Sadiqpuri was born in 1822 A.D. He had very deep knowledge in Fiqh and Hadith. He was the pupil of Maulana Wilayat Ali Sadiqpuri, he traveled with him to Afghanistan and helped him in strive for Islam. When his teacher Maulana Wilayat Ali died, he came back to Sadiqpur and started teaching the students. He had been exiled by the English government till the last breaths due to assisting Sayed Ahmad Shaheed. He died in 1867 A.D.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 1137*



# Chapter: 03

## Contribution of Nalanda in Arabic and Islamic Studies

## **HISTORY OF NALANDA**

Nalanda is the name of an ancient university in Bihar, India. The site of Nalanda is located in the Indian state of Bihar, about 80 Kilometer south east of Patna, and was a Buddhist center of learning from 427 to 1197 CE. It has been called one of the first great universities in recorded history. Some parts of Nalanda University were constructed by the great Mauryan emperor Ashoka the Great. The Gupta Dynasty also patronized some monasteries. According to historians, Nalanda flourished between 427 CE and 1197 CE, mainly on account of patronage of Buddhist Emperors like Harshavardhana and Pala kings of Pala dynasty. The ruins of Nalanda University occupy an area of 14 hectares.

Nalanda was a great center of Buddhist learning in ancient times. A large number of Buddhist students thronged the Nalanda University to study Buddhism. According to the Chinese traveler Hieun Tsang, the place owed its name to a Naga, who resided in a local tank. Lord Vardhamana Mahavir and Lord Buddha visited Nalanda quite frequently in the 6th century BC. Nalanda is also supposed to be the birthplace of one Sariputra, one of the chief followers of Lord Buddha. <sup>1</sup>

The name is a Sanskrit word that means *giver of knowledge*, (possibly from *nalam*, *lotus*, a symbol of knowledge and *da*, *to give*). The Chinese pilgrim-monk Xuanzang gives several explanations of the name

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.culturalindia.net/monuments/nalanda.html>

Nalanda. One is that it was named after the Naga who lived in a tank in the middle of the mango grove. Another is that Shakyamuni Buddha once had his capital here and gave "alms without intermission", hence the name.<sup>2</sup>

The micro analysis of the word "Nalanda" which to be broken as 'Na Alam Da' suggests that it was a question among the knowledge seekers literally "not giving enough," which seems a philosophical mark.

Sariputta died at the village called 'Nalaka,' which is also identified as Nalanda by many scholars.<sup>3</sup>

### **Nalanda in the time of the Buddha (500 BC)**

Siddhartha Gautama was the name of the person who began the religion of Buddhism. He lived from about 563 BC to about 483 BC.

Siddhartha, destined to a luxurious life as a prince, had three palaces built for him. His father, King Suddhodana, wishing for Siddhartha to be a great king.

As the boy reached the age of 16, his father arranged his marriage to Yasodhara. She gave birth to a son Rahul.

At the age of 29, Siddhartha left his palace in order to meet his subjects. This event is orderally called "The Great Departure". Siddhartha initially went to Rajagaha and began his ascetic life by begging for alms in the street. Having been recognised by the men of King Bimbisara,

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://forum.desicommments.com/showthread.php?t=9541>

<sup>3</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nalanda>

Bimbisara offered him the throne after hearing of Siddhartha's quest. Siddhartha rejected the offer, but promised to visit his kingdom of Magadha first, upon attaining enlightenment.

The Buddha visited Nalanda during his last tour through Magadha, and it was there that Sariputta uttered his "lion's roar," affirming his faith in the Buddha, shortly before his death. The road from Rajagaha to Nalanda passed through Ambalattika, and from Nalanda it went on to Pataligama. Between Rajagaha and Nalanda was situated the Bahuputta cetiya.

The Buddha is mentioned as having several times stayed at Nalanda. When he visited Nalanda he would usually reside in Pavarika's mango grove, and while there he had discussions with Upali-Gahapati and Dighatapassi, with Kevatta, and also several conversations with Asibandhakaputta.

In the Buddha's time Nalanda was already an influential and prosperous town, thickly populated, though it was not until later that it became the centre of learning for which it afterwards became famous.

### **Nalanda in the time of the Mahaveer (599 BC)**

Lord Mahavira was born in the royal family of Bihar in 599 B.C. His father's name was King Siddhartha and mother's name was Queen Trishala. Known by the name of Vardhamana, the young boy was a very bright and courageous lad who showed extraordinary skills at a very

young age. Though he had all the luxuries of life at his command, he led a very simple life. He left all his worldly possessions after his parents expired and became a monk. He gave up all pleasures and left his family for the purpose of attaining enlightenment.

For twelve years, he deeply meditated in order to overcome his desires and cravings. He succeeded in going without food for days together, avoided clothes and never harmed another living creature even if it was an insect. Once while meditating, he was bitten by a deadly snake. Still he did not develop any kind of hatred for the snake and kept meditating. After twelve years, he attained divine knowledge and self-realization. His perception about everything was crystal clear and he paved the way for spiritual pursuit for future monks. The attainment of this spiritual knowledge was known as keval-jnana.

Mahavira several times stayed at Nalanda, which was evidently a centre of activity of the Jains. Mahavira is believed to have attained Moksha at Pavapuri, which is located in Nalanda.

In Rajgir 19 kilometers from Nalanda was the ancient capital of Magadha Empire. Mahavira spent many years here.

Once he realized this knowledge, he traveled to the remotest places in India preaching whatever he had learnt. All through his wandering, he was barefoot and refrained from eating too often. His simple living and high morals attracted believers from all walks of life, which included kings, paupers, priests and untouchables. His teachings were based on

the concept of self-realization for ultimate attainment of Moksha. He taught people how to gain freedom from misery, pain and the cycle of birth and death. Lord Mahavira was known to be omniscient, which means he knew everything about past and future.

In Pawapuri, or Apapuri, 38 kilometres from Rajgir and 90 kilometres from Patna, all sins end for a devout Jain. Lord Mahavira, the final tirthankar and founder of Jainism, breathed his last at this place.

### **Nalanda University**

Nalanda was the largest residential centre of learning that the world had ever known. It is also one of the most famous universities. In its heyday it accommodated over 10,000 students and 2,000 teachers.<sup>4</sup> The university was considered an architectural masterpiece, and was marked by a lofty wall and one gate. Nalanda had eight separate compounds and ten temples, along with many other meditation halls and classrooms. On the grounds were lakes and parks. The library was located in a nine storied building where meticulous copies of texts were produced. The subjects taught at Nalanda University covered every field of learning, and it attracted pupils and scholars from Korea, Japan, China, Tibet, Indonesia, Persia and Turkey. Huen Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim who visited Nalanda in the first half of the seventh century, has

---

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.bihartodayonline.com/2007\\_12\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.bihartodayonline.com/2007_12_01_archive.html)

recorded a detailed description of the richly sculptured towns and fairy-like turrets and beautiful ponds at Nalanda.

The library was located in a nine-storied building, known as Dharma Gunj (Mountain of Truth) or Dharmaganja (Treasury of Truth), was the most renowned repository of Buddhist knowledge in the world at the time. Its collection was said to comprise hundreds of thousands of volumes, so extensive that it burned for months when set aflame by Muslim invaders. The library had three main buildings as high as nine stories tall, *Ratnasagara* (Sea of Jewels), *Ratnodadhi* (Ocean of Jewels), and *Ratnaranjaka* (Delighter of Jewels) <sup>5</sup>

Virtually the entire ranges of world knowledge then available. Courses were drawn from every field of learning, Buddhist and Hindu, sacred and secular, foreign and native. Students studied science, astronomy, medicine, and logic as diligently as they applied themselves to metaphysics, philosophy, Samkhya, Yoga-shastra, the Veda, and the scriptures of Buddhism. They studied foreign philosophy likewise.

The Nalanda University received patronage the great emperor, Harshavardhana of Kannauj and the Pala rulers. The famous Chinese pilgrims, Hieun Tsang and Fi Han were among the distinguished students of the Nalanda University. Hieun Tsang received here the Indian name Mokshdeva. The importance of Nalanda University as a monastic university continued until the end of the 12th century.

---

<sup>5</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nalanda\\_University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nalanda_University)

The ruins of the Nalanda University extend over a large area. Excavations at Nalanda have uncovered nine levels of occupation. For revenue purposes, a large number of villages were assigned to the Nalanda University.

In the Nalanda University complex a row of monastery sites lies from south to north. Almost all of them have the same pattern. The monasteries consisted of a number of monk's cells with wide verandas in front, initially set round an open quadrangular court, but later separated from it by a high wall. It was originally a building of two or probably more storey as the existence of stairs in the southeast corner shows. In the courtyard of monasteries, there used to be Lord Buddha's shrine and a well.

Excavation work has taken place over 14 hectares. All the structures are of red brick with beautiful gardens. In the complex, the buildings are divided by a central walkway that goes south to north, the monasteries or "Viharas" are located to the east of this central passage and the temples or "Chaiyas" to the west.

The ruins of the ancient residential university of Nalanda near Patna, in Bihar, are the silent reminders of the high levels attained in the field of education and learning in India during the ancient ages. Nalanda was one of the best-known universities of its time, attracting thousands of students from far off places. Scholars all over Asia and other countries in the Middle East had learnt about Nalanda and continued to visit



Nalanda till its destruction by the Turkish and Afghan invaders in the 12th century. The place is now one of the tourist attractions in Bihar and attracts tourists, especially Buddhists from all over the world.

The exact date of the establishment of the university is not yet known. Scholars have varied views on this, but it is generally accepted that the university reached its pinnacle during 5th to 8th centuries under king Harshavardhana (7th century A.D.), and the Guptas who succeeded him in Northern and Eastern India. Although much of the vast compound is yet to be excavated, the ruins do give an idea about the extent of the university. As many as 10000 students are said to have studied here at a time, in addition to about 2000 teachers and a similar number of monks. To provide for these vast numbers, there must have been an extensive system of rationing and providence of all the other necessary amenities. <sup>6</sup>

Nalanda was the biggest residential university in ancient India and the largest archaeological site in India spanning several square miles. At the height of its glory, Nalanda is said to have accommodated 10,000 students and 1500 teachers. It had three magnificent libraries. It was a renowned centre of Buddhist theology and scriptures and on diverse subjects such as logic, grammar, medicine, and later on, even purely texts like the Atharva Veda. Excavations have uncovered nine levels of occupation and six monasteries. Nalanda is a massive complex of stupas,

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.touristplacesinindia.com/nalanda/about-nalanda.html>

chaityas (temples) and viharas (monasteries). It has been rebuilt extensively at different times. One can identify the levels built by the Guptas (5<sup>th</sup> A.D.), the Sungas (9<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.) and the Pala kings of Bengal (12<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.). Out of respect for religious sentiment, each dynasty covered up what had been built earlier and built afresh over it instead of destroying earlier constructions, which are clearly visible. The sheer expanse of the site and the planned and manner in which the blocks have been neatly laid out is astounding. The bricks are much larger than normal size and are of excellent quality that is evident from the fact that they have survived the ravages of time. The brick walls were plastered over with lime of which some traces can be seen.

The monasteries have been built in neat blocks with cubicles of either single or double occupancy for the monks. Niches have been built in the walls for books, lamps and other equipment. The walls are of brick and six feet thick, meant to insulate the room from extreme weather conditions. In addition there are lecture halls, granaries and laboratories. Several little stupas liberally dot the area, built in memory of teachers who passed away. A display board put up by the ASI has an enlarged photograph of the site as it stood in 1861. It was just a cluster of mounds overgrown with grass and with a large mound where the main temple once stood. A series of photographs show how the accumulated soil and dust of centuries was removed, layer by layer, over several decades to reveal the site.

## **KHNAQAHS (MONASTRIES) OF NALANDA**

Nalanda was although a centre of Buddhism and Jainism, but from eleventh century it remained the centre for Islam and Islamic personalities. Since Eleventh century till now we have come to know a large number of Makatib and Madrasas all over the Nalanda District, particularly in Bihar Sharif which happened to be the head quarter of Nalanda District.

Bihar Sharif was once the capital of the Muslim Governors of Bihar between 13th and 16th centuries when the city was an active cultural center and an important seat of Muslim thought and learning. Turkish and Pashtun invaders often used abandoned viharas as military cantonments. The word Bihar may have come from the large number of viharas thus employed in the area that later became Bihar.

Originally Bihar was name of the town, which was headquarter of the Muslim invaders in the Magadha region in the medieval period. Later on headquarter was shifted from Bihar to Patana (current Patna) by Sher Shah Suri and the whole Magadha region was called Bihar. Almost 80% of the Muslim populations of Bihar Sharif and surrounding areas have a good degree of Turkish and Afghan blood in their veins.

It is located 80 km from capital of Bihar state Patna. It is 13 km from the ruins at Nalanda and well connected with Patna via train and buses.

It is small town located on the top of a craggy rock. The old center of the town has examples of medieval Islamic architecture, such as the Bukhari Mosque. Thousand of pilgrims of all religions visit the tombs of Makhdum Shah Sharafuddin, a Muslim saint of 14th century, and the saintly Syed Ibrahim Malik Biya.

It served as the capital of the Pala dynasty (10<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) and contains a 5th century A.D. Gupta pillar and several Muslim mosques and tombs.

In Nalanda District currently there are more than 50 Madrasas and Makatibs some of them are big Madrasas and some of them are running in where the most of the Muslim students receive their basic education, these Madrasas and Makatibs are playing major roles to impart the education not only in Muslim community but in non-Muslim community as well.

Here I tried to give a brief introduction of Madrasas and Makatibs located in Nalanda District and to count their role towards Islamic Studies in Nalanda District before 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Khanqah Firdausia Bihar Sharif**

Khanqah Firdausia was built in 1320 A.D. by order of Sultan Mohammad Shah Tughlaq. But an inscription over entrance of the dargah shows that his tomb was built in 1569 A.D. It may be that the existing building laid down on 1569 A.D. It stands on the south bank of

the river and is held in a great respect by Muslims. From this Khanqah Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri was giving the speeches and dictating the passages for his books. This Khanqah was a major centre of Islamic teaching till one and half century after its completion. Hazrat Jeewan Balkhi and other members of Balkhi family were addressing the Muslims on their issue and guiding them to the right path from this Khanqah.<sup>7</sup>

### **Khanqah built by Malik Kafi**

There is some indication for a Khanqah which was built by Malik Kafi in 1381 A.D.; in the area Makhdum Badre Alam's grave. It was a centre of spiritualism and education.<sup>8</sup>

### **Khanqah built by Ziyaul Haque**

In 1391 A.D. the ruler of Bihar Ziyaul Haque had built a Khanqah in Chota Takiya Mohallah in Bihar Sharif. This Khanqah was also a centre of education.<sup>9</sup>

### **Khanqah of Islampur**

Hazrat Diwan Habib Qadri grandson of Hazrat Shamsuddin Khizar Badayuni had migrated to Islampur and established a Khanqah there. This Khanqah had produced a big scholar of Islamic studies, Syed Shah

---

<sup>7</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqreebat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page no 174

<sup>8</sup> Tarikh-e-Maghadh, by Faseehuddin page no 126

<sup>9</sup> Tarikh-e-Maghadh, by Faseehuddin page no 126

Wilayat Ali Islampuri, by whom the whole area was benefited. Another, a very prominent scholar, Hazrat Makhdum Syed Shah Abul Khair was being attributed to this Khanqah.<sup>10</sup>

### **Khanqah of Rajgir**

Rajgir has been a place of worship and dedication towards God. A lot of Sufis were spent their times in the forest and mountain of Rajgir to purify themselves from dirties of life and world. When Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri shifter from Rajgir to Bihar Sharif the Khanqah was near to become silence but soon Hazrat Peer Mansoor Rajigiri developed the Khanqah and it remained a centre of learning till a sufficient time.<sup>11</sup>

### **Khanqah of Makhdum Hazrat Sultan Ahmed Chirmposh**

The biggest and the oldest building of Mohalla-Amber in the Biharsharif town (Nalanda), is Tomb of Hazarat Makhdum Sultan Saiyad Shah Ahmed Chirmposh Teg Barhana. He was born in the year 1236 A.D. and passed away in 1335 A.D. He is ranked to a very high order among other Sufi saints and Auliahs.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqreebat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page no 176

<sup>11</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqreebat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page no 177

<sup>12</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqreebat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page no 177

## **MADRASAS OF NALANDA**

Besides of these Khanqahs, there are a big chain of Madrasas and Makatib, but unfortunately the details of Madrasas and Makatis are lost. After a long search I did not able to collate except few names of Madrasas.

### **Madrasa Aziziya**

Madrasa Aziziya is on of the biggest Madrasa in Nalanda District, it was established in 1896 A.D. by Bibi Sughra, a very famous lady of Bihar Sharif who gave her all movable and immovable properties to Muslim charity and 30 percent of her property she had put for Madrasa. Initially this Madrasa was established in Patna City, but later on it had been shifted to Bihar Sharif. From the day one of the establishment of Madrasa Aziziya the management of Madrasa tried that the Madrasa will not give only Islamic education but it will also give the modern education. The management wanted to see the pass outers of on the top of Islamic education as well as in modern education. To achieve this target there were a complete course containing Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography and other modern education subjects. In 1924 A.D., Madrasa Aziziya got an affiliation from Department of Islamic Studies Bihar and Orissa, and the courses till "Alim" which is equitant of Graduation, introduced, later on 1930, on the

basis of excellent performance of Madrasa Aziziya in the examinations conducted by the Department of Islamic Studies Bihar and Orissa, the department had confirmed the affiliation till “Fazil” which is equivalent of Master.

Under the good management policies and the excellent academic performance, Madrasa Aziziya getting success day by day, and due to gathering of large number of students the old building did not remain sufficient for the student. In this situation the management decided to build a new building for the classes and the old one should be used as hostel of students, thus new building has been built in Ramchanderpur area.

Madrasa Aziziya is very lucky that it had the genius teachers like Maulana Mohammad Ibraheem, Maulana Fakhru Hasan, head master of Darul Uloom Deoband, Maulana Riyaz Ahmad, Shaik al Tafseer Darul Uloom Deoband, Maulana Sayed Faseeh Ahmad, Maulana Sayed Ali Hasan Raunaque, Moulana Mufti Abdul Mateen, Maulana Ilyas, Maulana Abdullah Adeb and Maulana Zafeeruddin.

Madrasa Aziziya has produced large number highly qualified personalities like the great Mufti of Darul Uloom Deoband Maulana Mufti Nizamuddin, the fifth Amir-e-Shariat Bihar and Orissa Maulana Abdul Rahman, the former vice principal of Madrasa Aliah Kolkata, Maulana Abu Salamah Mohammad Shafee, former chairperson of Department of Urdu in Magadh university Gaya, Mohammad Tayyab Abdali, the former



registrar of Veer Kuwar university, A.M.M Kamal Saba, former director of institution of Arabic and Persian Studies Mohammad Athar Sher and the chairperson of Arabic and Persian Studies professor Raees Imam. These are the names of some noted personalities who had taken education in Madrasa Aziziya and served the nation and Muslim community with their abilities.<sup>13</sup>

### **Madrasa Islamia**

The exact date of establishment of Madrasa Islamia is not found but it is certain that this Madrasa was founded in late nineteenth century. This Madrasa was established by Maulana Waheedul Haque Bihari. At the initial stage the Madrasa was run by the charity of Muslims but later on one very famous widow Bibi Jain had given some of her land for the expenses of Madrasa. Now the Madrasa is in worst condition as the land of Madrasa has been snatched by the locals and the library of Madrasa has been demolished; only few students of Hifz are here.<sup>14</sup>

### **Madrasa of Nagar Nuhsa**

There had been a Madrasa in Nagar Nuhsa, which was a first school of a large number of great Ulama like Maulana Alimullah, Maulana Salimullah, Maulana Amanullah, Maulana Madinullah,

---

<sup>13</sup> *The annual report of Madrasa Aziziya by Maulana Abdullah Khalid*

<sup>14</sup> *Magazine Sadi Tagreebat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page no 230*

Maulana Ibrahim, Maulana Tasadduq Husain, Maulana Gulzar Ali, and Maulana Alimuddin. <sup>15</sup>

### **Madrasa of Kahta**

Kahta is a village near Nalanda, it has traced out that there was a Madrasa where Moulvi Saadat Husain was got his early education. <sup>16</sup>

### **Madrasa of Geelan**

Geelan is a birth place of great Ulama. A Madrasa was existed at this village which was the centre of early education for many scholars like Moulvi Ahsan Mantiqi.<sup>17</sup>

### **Madrasa of Asthawan**

Asthawan is a village which is situated near Bihar Sharif. It is the fortune of Asthawan that it had many scholars like Maulana Wahidul Haque. A Madrasa was available to be a centre of basic Islamic education.<sup>18</sup>

### **Madrasa of Disna**

Disna is a very famous village in Nalanda District. It is the birth place of a large number of great Ulama. Like Maulana Mustafa Sher,

---

<sup>15</sup> *Hidustan ki Qadeem Islami Dars Gahen by Abul Hasanat Nadvi page 37*

<sup>16</sup> *Hidustan ki Qadeem Islami Dars Gahen by Abul Hasanat Nadvi page 37*

<sup>17</sup> *Hidustan ki Qadeem Islami Dars Gahen by Abul Hasanat Nadvi page 37*

<sup>18</sup> *Hidustan ki Qadeem Islami Dars Gahen by Abul Hasanat Nadvi page 38*

Maulana Yaqub who was very famous in Mathematics and Maulana Sayed Sulaiman Nadvi etc. A Madrasa was existed for the early Islamic education for the children.<sup>19</sup>

These Madrasas were the centre of Islamic learning and educations, besides that there were a strong chain of Makatibs in every masque of village. These Makatibs were run by the fund of Muslims. There was a system of Maktab where the basic education was given to the students. And most of the time the Imam of masque was the teacher of the Maktab. These Makatib were the initial centre of learning of every Muslim child.

---

<sup>19</sup> *Hidustan ki Qadeem Islami Dars Gahen by Abul Hasanat Nadvi page 38*

## **ULAMA OF NALANDA**

When we talk about Ulama of Nalanda, the attention would be drawn to the great scholars and prominent intellectual of Islamic studies.

I want to mention here some of them:

### **Sheikh Shahabuddin Peer**

Sheikh Shahabuddin was from Kashghar but he came to Bihar due to spread Islam in Bihar region. Initially he stayed in Jiuthly near Patna then sifted to Bihar Sharif in Amber locality. He spent whole life teaching and spreading Islam to the people. He died in 1375 A.D.

### **Maulana Ruknuddin Bihari**

He was one of the great literary and spiritual personalities. He has been guided by Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. He traveled to Macca and Madina and performed Hajj and returned back to home town. Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri wrote a book for him named "*Fawaid Rukni*".<sup>20</sup>

### **Zahid bin Mohammad Bihari**

Zahid bin Mohammad Bihari was the disciple of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. He spent long time with him and learned a

---

<sup>20</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 160*

good amount of knowledge related to Islamic studies. He queried to Sheikh Sharafuddin Maneri and received the answers of those queries. He compiled all those answers and named “*Al Ajwibah*”.<sup>21</sup>

### **Sheikh Badruddin Bihari**

Badruddin bin Fakhruddin bin Shahabuddin was very famous due his knowledge and modesty. He got his early education from his father and Sheikh Jalaluddin Husaini. After the death of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, he became the next to him. He had much influence on the people. He died in 1440 A.D. and buried in Shikhpura.<sup>22</sup>

### **Sheikh Musa bin Azizullah Bihari**

Musa bin Azizullah bin Ahmad was among the scholars who had depth in knowledge as well as in spirituality. His father was died in his childhood. He migrated for seeking the knowledge of Islam and other sciences. He received his education from the noted teachers available on that time. He was very well known in Islamic studies. His utterances have been collected by his disciples. He died in 1465 A.D. when he was crossed hundred in his age.<sup>23</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 160*

<sup>22</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 238*

<sup>23</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 283*

### **Sheikh Ibrahim bin Ahmad Bihari**

Sheikh Ibrahim bin Ahmad was famous with “Sultan”. He had born and got his early education from his father in birth place Bihar Sharif. He spent a long time with hid father seeking education and spiritualization. He died 1508 A.D. <sup>24</sup>

### **Sheikh Ahmad bin Mohammad Bihari**

Ahmad bin Mohammad was a great master of Fiqh of Hanafi School. He had born in Bihar Sharif and got his education from his father who was a very famous scholar in Fiqh. His father was known as Sheikh Buddha Tayyab. <sup>25</sup>

### **Sheikh Ali Bihari**

Sheikh Ali Bihari was a disciple of Sheikh Fridul Haque. He spent long time with Sheikh Faridul Haque till his death. He used to help him in all works. He had a deep knowledge in Islamic studies. He had written a book named “*Ahda*”. <sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 403*

<sup>25</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 307*

<sup>26</sup> *Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 166*

### **Sheikh Ahmad Sewastani**

Sheikh Ahmad Sewastani was the disciple of Sheikh Faridul Haque. His date of birth is not confirmed but he was in the period of Sultan Mohammad Tughlaq. He spent a long time with Sheikh Fraidul Haque and received a lot of knowledge regarding spiritualism. His grave is exists in Kaghzi Mohallah, Bihar Sharif. <sup>27</sup>

### **Sheikh Nizamuddin Maula**

Before the arrival of Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, there were a lot of disciples of Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia, one of them was Sheikh Nizamuddin Maula. He was very much down to earth. He was authorized student of Khwaja Nizamuddin but due his modesty he always felt that he is not able to have this great job. He was among those people who put their best efforts to bring Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri from the forest of Rajgir to Bihar Sharif and helped him to set up a centre of spirituality and Islamic studies. His grave is existed the campus of Khanqah of Sheikh Sharafuddin. <sup>28</sup>

### **Sheikh Fariduddin Tawilah Bakhsh**

Fariduddin Tawilah Bakhsh was the relative of Khaja Nizamuddin Aulia. He got his early education from his father. He was from a village

---

<sup>27</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 165

<sup>28</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 166

nearby Bihar Sharif “Pandwa”. He migrated to Bihar Sharif and in Chand Pur locality he started delivering the people the Islamic studies and lessons of spirituality. The family of Fariduddin had spread in Chand Pur and a large number of Sufis and religious personalities came down from his family. His grave is still existed in Chand Pur, Bihar Sharif. <sup>29</sup>

### **Sheikh Mohammad bin Ibrahim Bihari**

Mohammad bin Ibrahim was famous with “Darwesh”. He was one of the authorities of Khanqah Firdausia. He was born in Bihar Sharif and received education from his father. A large number of people had taken benefits from him. <sup>30</sup>

### **Sheikh Ahmad bin Mohammad Bihari**

Ahmad bin Mohammad Husaini had born in a village near Bihar Sharif. He was counted as a prominent Faqeeh in Hanfi School. He got education from his father and proved himself in various field of education. He started teaching the student and giving the judgments according to Sharia. Shah Jahan had appointed him as a Mufti of army and he remained at his post for a long time. He was very most excellent in Arabic language, Islamic law and its principals and thought of other religions. Shah Jahan had sent him as an ambassador to Usmania

---

<sup>29</sup> Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 167

<sup>30</sup> Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 403



kingdom and Harmain (Macca and Madina). He was very close to Shah Jahan. 31

### **Maulana Muhiyuddin Bihari**

Maulana Muhiyuddin bin Abdullah had born in a village of Nalanda. He was a genius person in Islamic law and jurisprudence. He had learned Quran by heart when he was only nine year old. He received education from his father and become able to teach when he was only seventeen year old. He came to Delhi and Shah Jahan appointed him as a teacher of his son Aurangzeb. He was teaching Aurangzeb for twelfth years. He died in 1658 A.D. when he was eighty four year old. 32

### **Makhdum Sayed Mazhar Wali Bihari**

Sayed Mazhar Wali had born in Bihar Sharif in 1777 A.D. He got education as per norms of that period but he by nature was interested in Sufism. He became the disciple of Shah Husain Ali. His famous teachers are Sayed Ashraf Ali, Maulana Amirul Haque Azimabadi and Sayed Shad Wilayat Ali. He died in 1848 A.D. and buried near Khusrupur, Nalanda.33

---

<sup>31</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 493*

<sup>32</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 647*

<sup>33</sup> *Tazkeera-e-Ulama-e-Bihar by Abul Kalam Qasmi Shamshi Vol 1, page 265*

### **Maulana Mustafa Sher Desnavi**

Maulana Mustafa Sher was counted among the great Ulama of Nalanda. He was the brother of grandfather of the prominent scholar, Sayed Sulaiman Nadvi. He was the famous student of Maulana Fazl-e-Rasool Badayuni. Maulana Mustafa had been teaching in Madras Kabiriya, Sahsaram for a long time. He worked hard in Sahsaram to promote Islamic studies as a commentary of 30th part of Holy Quran had been published by Kabiriya publisher by his great efforts. He was also very keen to poetize and left some very good couplets. He died in 1850 A.D. and buried in Khanqah of Sahsaram.<sup>34</sup>

### **Sheikh Salimullah Nagar Nuhsawi**

Salimullah bin Alimullah was a great scholar of Nagar Nuhsa, he was one of the follower of Abdullah Husaini whose grave is in Hilsa, Nalanda. He played a major role to develop the education in his native place. He died in 1680 A.D. and buried in Nagar Nuhsa. <sup>35</sup>

### **Sheikh Ghulam Yahya Bihari**

Ghulam Yahya bin Najmuddin, was one of the excellent scholars in logic and philosophy. He went to Sandila and got education from Maulana Babullah Jaunpuri in Madrasa Mansuia. He started teaching

---

<sup>34</sup> *Tazkera-e-Ulama-e-Bihar by Abul Kalam Qasmi Shamshi Vol 1, page 252*

<sup>35</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 728*

in Lucknow and wrote a footnote on “*Meer Zahid Risalah*” with the name of “*Lewaul Huda fi al Lail wa al Duja*”. This book was reached the up to mark among the Ulama and they put it in the syllabus. Maulana Ghulam Yahya had teaching for a long time then proceeded to Delhi and took the order of Naqshabandia from Sheikh Janjana Alawi and spent five year with him. He returned back to Lucknow and played a major role to uplift the teaching methods. He died in 1669 A.D. and left some books like “*Sharah Sullam bi al Hamdulillah*”, and “*Kalimatul Haqq*”.<sup>36</sup>

### **Maulana Mohammad Ateeq Bihari**

Mohammad Ateeq bin Abdul Sami was a very famous scholar of Islamic studies. He was born in Bihar Sharif and got early education there from his uncle Sheikh Abdul Muqtadir. He was much fond of Hadith Sharif. He died 1736 A.D.<sup>37</sup>

### **Sheikh Munim bin Aman Bihari**

Sheikh Munim bin Aman was one of the great spiritual personalities. He was from the village of Biluri near Bihar Sharif. His father had died when he was in childhood. He brought up with guardianship of his maternal grandfather. He became the followers of Sayed Khaliluddin bin Jaffer and spent twenty years with him. He went to Azimabad and started teaching the students. He was very modest,

---

<sup>36</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 778*

<sup>37</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 828*

deep religious and had a great contentment. He had written a book "*Mulhamat-e-Munimi*". He died in 1771 A.D. 38

### **Maulana Aminullah Nagar Nuhsawi**

Aminullah bin Salimullah Nagar Nuhsawi was among the prominent Islamic scholars of eastern part of India. He had a great command over logic, philosophy and literature. He had born in Nagar Nuhsa and got education from his father. He went to Allahabad and learned logic and philosophy from Sheikh Mohammad Qaim Allahabadi, and then he departed for Delhi and took the permission of Hadith from Sheikh Waliullah Dehlavi and then came back to his native place. After sometime he went to Calcutta and became the teacher of Madrasa Aliah and had been teaching there for a long time. A large number of people were the student of him. He had written few noted books among which a small book on the explanation of Quranic verse. He was a good poet and he composed some couplets on the praise of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him). He wrote a footnote on "*Musallamuth Thubut*" and a footnote on "*Meer Zahid Risalah*". He left a collection of poetry in Persian language. He died in 1818 A.D. in Calcutta. 39

---

<sup>38</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 848*

<sup>39</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 928*

### **Maulana Tasadduq Husain Nagar Nuhsawi**

Tasadduq Husain bin Ubaidullah was one of the famous Islamic scholars of Nalanda. He had born in Nagar Nuhsa. He learned Arabic grammar from Sultan Ahmad Wilayati in Allahabad and read logic and philosophy from Sheikh Waliullah Lucknowi in Lucknow. He also trained in mathematics by Ibrahim Husain Lucknowi. After taking these sciences he came back to his native place and started giving the students the best knowledge which he gained in various places. He wrote a footnote on “*Sharah Hidayah al Hikmah*” written by Mebzi. He left a collection of Persian poetry. He died 1852 A.D. in Nagar Nuhsa. 40

### **Maulana Lutf Ali Rajgiri**

Maulana Lutf Ali Rajgiri was a great scholar of Islamic studies. He had a great knowledge of Fiqh and Hadith. He had born in 1832 A.D. He traveled to various locations to seek the education, thus he learned from Mufti Nematullah Lucknowi, Mufti Wajid Ali Banarsi, Sheikh Nurul Hasan Kandhlavi, Mufti Sadruddin Dehlavi, Allamah Fazlul Haque Khairabadi and Sayed Nazir Husain Husaini. After the education he returned back to home and he was thirty five years old. He made himself available for the teaching and learning meanwhile he learned Quran by heart. The second journey of his education started when he traveled to Saharanpur and learned Hadith from Sheikh Ahmad Ali bin Lutfullah

---

<sup>40</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 940*

Saharanpuri and spent a long time with him. Then he departed to Muradabad and learned Hadith. He came back to Azimabad and started teaching the students. He went to perform Hajj and after returning from Hajj, he began teaching. He died 1879 A.D. <sup>41</sup>

### **Sheikh Najabat Ahmad Nagar Nuhsawi**

Najabat Ahmad bin Talattuf Husain was born in 1788 A.D. in Nagar Nuhsa. He had taken his early education from Maulana Ibrahim bin Madyan Nagar Nuhsawi and Qazi Hidayat Ali Gilani. After completion of his education he started teaching. A large number of people had taken benefit in education from him. He was very noble and modest man. He died in 1874 A.D.<sup>42</sup>

### **Makhdum Ahmad Chirmposh**

Ahmad Chirmposh was from the descendents of Hazrat Imam Husain (May Allah be pleased with him) and one of the great Sufis from Bihar particularly from Nalanda. He was the cousin of Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri and was four years older than him. His family was inhabitant of Hamadan city which is a part of Iran. He had born in Hamadan in 1261 A.D. His father name was Sayed Sultan Musa Kazim Hamadani and grand father's name was Sayed Sultan Sharik Hamadani. His father Syed Sultan Musa Kazim was the king of Hamadan city but he

---

<sup>41</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 1076*

<sup>42</sup> *Al Alaam by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 1120*

left the kingdom and preferred to be a simple man devoting himself for the worship of Allah. Makhdum Ahmad Chirmposh remained for some days looking after kingdom but he did not stop himself to be a common man like his father and proceeded to Multan. He reached Lasa which was a part of Tibet following the order of his guide Maulana Alauddin Alaul Haque. He had spent some time in Lasa teaching the people Islamic learnings, guiding them to right path and devoting himself to the worship of Allah. A large number of people accepted Islam. When Sheikh Ahmad Chirmposh completed his job of guiding the people towards right path, he proceeded to Siwan, Bihar. At that place a great personality was waiting for him. His name was Hazrat Hasan Piyare. When Sheikh Ahmad reached there that great personality requested him to become his disciple. Sheikh approved his request. When Sheikh wanted to leave the place, Hazrat Hasan wished to give some gifts but he convinced him that he will not take anything except the leather of scapegoat which was slaughtered on behalf of Hazrat Ismail (Peace be upon him). As said this leather was with Hazrat Hasan. Hazrat Hasan had given that leather. From that time the title Chirmposh was given to Sheikh Ahmad. Chirmposh means the wearer of leather. He came to Bihar Sharif and started preaching the Islamic values. He was a good poet in Persian language. He compiled a collection of Persian poetry containing on

lessons of Towhid (one God) with the help of good copulates. He died in 1375 A.D. and buried in Bihar Sharif.<sup>43</sup>

### **Sultan Shamsuddin Balkhi**

Sultan Shamsuddin Balkhi was the king of Balkh, who preferred hereafter rather than this world. He left his kingdom and became a simple man and came to India. He spent some days with Sultan Mohammad Tughlaq but soon after he left Delhi and proceeded towards Bihar Sharif where Sheikh Ahmad Chirmposh was delivering the lessons of Islam and spiritualism. Sheikh Ahmad welcomed Shamsuddin Balkhi and stood him with all respects and greetings. Sultan Shamsuddin and his whole family shifted in Bihar Sharif and they had done a good works in regards of spreading the Islamic teachings and values. <sup>44</sup>

### **Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi**

Muzaffar Balkhi was the son of Shamsuddin Balkhi. He was born of a family from Balkh in Afghanistan. He came to Bihar Sharif when his father shifted to there. He was disciple of Makhdum Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri, although his father and other family members were disciples of Sheikh Ahmad Chirmposh. He was much educated and very talented in the sciences which were available at that time. Once he went to Sheikh Yahya Sharafuddin Maneri and asked some questions related to logic

---

<sup>43</sup> *Tohfa-e-Bihar by Mufti Abdul Matin page 10*

<sup>44</sup> *Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 198*



and philosophy, Shikah Sharafuddin Yahaya Maneri replied but due to his over confidence on his education he refused to accept the answers. Sheikh Sharafuddin advised him and asked him to go Delhi for further education. He went Delhi and took further education with true hearted. He had put many efforts in education and proved himself in education. Sultan Feroz appointed him lecturer in the Royal Madrasa in Delhi due to his name and fame, but he could not able to continue his teaching job and returned back to Bihar Sharif. Muzaffar was incapable of staying in one place. He journeyed far and wide staying in Macca and Madina and eventually dying in Aden. He received more than 200 letters from his spiritual guide Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri of which only 28 are extant. There is an extant though unpublished letters of Muzaffar's own letters in a private library. He died in 1386 A.D. <sup>45</sup>

### **Hazrat Husain Nousha Tauheed Balkhi**

Husain Nausha Tauheed Balkhi was born in Zafrabad. He was nephew of Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi and disciple of Sheikh Sharafuddin Maneri. Hazrat Husain Nousha was ascended the throne of teaching soon after Maulana Muzaffar Balkhi. He had been spreading Islamic education and guiding the people towards right path for fifty six years. He died 1410 A.D. <sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> *Biographical encyclopaedia of Sufis: Central Asia and Middle East, by N. Hanif, page 280*

<sup>46</sup> *Tohfa-e-Bihar by Mufti Abdul Matin page 15*

### **Hazrat Zain Badr Arabi**

Hazrat Zain was the most favorite disciple of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. His early age was full of joy and lavishness. His mother who was disciple of Sheikh Sharafuddin prayed a lot for him. An incident which was occurred with Hazrat Zain, changed his life from lavishness to simplicity. He always remained with Sheikh Sharafuddin Maneri and he is the person who was responsible to write down the utterance of Sheikh Sharafuddin. Whatever is available among us now, are the efforts of Hazrat Zain Badr Arabi. He was died in Bihar Sharif and buried in the same place. <sup>47</sup>

### **Maulana Abdul Samad Uganvi**

Maulana Hakim Abdul Samad bin Munshi Fatah Ali was born in Uganwan village which is far from Bihar Sharif only 8 Kilometers in the east side. The date of birth was 1861 A.D. He got his early education in the same village then shifted to Bihar Sharif for further education. He learned logic books from Sayed Murtaza in Husainabad, Munger. He traveled to Ghazipur for seeking education from Hafiz Abdullah Ghazipuri. He learned Hadith from Maulana Sayed Nazir Husain and got the permission from him. After completion of Islamic studies, he gave his intention towards Unani Medical and for the same he went to Lucknow and learned Unani Medicals from Hakim Abdul Aziz and practiced for

---

<sup>47</sup> *Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 212*

some days in the dispensary of Hakim Abdul Hafiz. During the stay in Lucknow he did not escape his main motive of life i.e. guiding the people towards right path. When he completed his course in Unani Medicals, he became the teacher in a Madrasa which was situated in Misri Bazar locality in Calcutta where he had a chance to interact with Jamaluddin Afghani who had been in Calcutta at that time. He did stay in Calcutta for a long time and shifted to Danapur where he had been serving Madrasa Mohammadia till the last stage of his life. During the stay in Danapur, he always had been a helping hand for the noble causes. Maulana Abdul Samad was also interested in spirituality. He accepted to be disciple of Shah Mumtazul Haque. He was a good writer. Two books were published during his life one was "*Raf al Ishtebah an Sifat Auliaul Allah*" which deals in Tasawwuff and Hadith and the second book was "*Tashilul Talim*" which was related to Persian grammar. He was also interested in poetry and the pen name was "samad". He died in 1900 A.D. <sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup> *Mashaheer-i-Bihar vol 2, Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna page 22*

## **TWO GREAT SCHOLARS OF NALANDA**

### **QAZI MUHIBULLAH BIHARI**

Qazi Muhibullah Usmani and Siddiqui had born at Haidar Ganj Karah, Silao, Nalanda, which was at that time a village under Muhib Ali Pur region. Today it is lying between Rajgir and Nalanda national highway. The date of birth of Qazi Muhibullah is still not known. His father's name was Abdul Shakur. He got his early education within the family and had learned some Arabic and Persian books. For higher education he journey to Azimabad, Qannuj and Lucknow. He also traveled to Shamshabad and completed his education on the hand of the great scholar of that time Sheikh Qutubuddin Shamsabadi (Died 1709).

After completion of his education he went to Deccan. During this period the king was Aurangzeb Alamgir, who was himself, interested in education. He used to recognize the scholars with his kingdom and used to put them on literary works. When Muhibullah Bihari reached to Deccan, Aurangzeb came to know regarding his talent and depth in Fiqh (Islamic law and jurisprudence). Aurangzeb made him Qazi (chief justice) of Lucknow and sent him there. He remained at his position but eventually he had sacked by his position. He returned back to Deccan. Once again Aurangzeb appointed him Qazi (chief justice) of Hyderabad.

The next assignment which was handed over to him by Aurangzeb Alamgir was teacher-cum-guide to his grandfather Rafiul Qadr bin Shah

Alam. When Shah Alam shifted to Kabul as a governor, Qazi Muhibullah had to move with him to Kabul. When Aurangzeb died in 1707 A.D., Shah Alam forced to move Delhi to become a king after his father, this move lead Qazi Muhibullah to return back to Delhi. It was hardly one year left to come Delhi, Qazi Muhibullah died in 1708 A.D.

Qazi Muhibullah was good behavior, well mannered, sharp minded, highly talented, most graceful, very popular and great natured personality. He did not take rest until and unless he reaches to the depth of findings. He was on the top in Islamic education as well as in other sciences of that period. Meer Sayed Ali Bilgrami described him in his book "*Sabhat al Marjan*" as "sea of knowledge and a moon between the stars."<sup>49</sup> He had deep knowledge about theology; he studied Quran, Hadith and Fiqh in a very professional way. He specialized in school of Hanafi and Sahfayee in Islamic law and spent a long time to go in depth of basics principals of these schools. He was succeeded in his task and produced a very delighted bunch of basic principals with a very good style and attractive method and named it "*Musallam al Thubut*".

Qazi Muhibullah Bihari's period was full of logic and philosophy. The way of thinking of that time was that no one could be a great scholar by skipping these sciences, i.e. logic and philosophy. He put serious effort to gain logic and philosophy and not only he succeeded but became a master of that. His books "*Sullam al Uloom*" and "*Risalah al Jouhar al*

---

<sup>49</sup> *Quarterly Bahs wa Nazar, edited by Maulana Mujahidul Islam Qasmi (July-September 1990) page 93*

*Fard*” are the best examples of his authority in logic and philosophy. “*Sullam al Uloom*” is still a part of syllabus of Madrasas with Nizamia curriculum.

### **Literary Works**

Qazi Muhibullah Bihari had left the following precious books:

1. *Sullam al Uloom*. This book deals with logic
2. *Ifadaat*. This book also deals with logic and these two books were written before his noted book *Musallam al Thubut*.
3. *Musallam al Thubut*. This book was written in 1697 A.D.. *Musallam al Thubut* is a countable name which counts becomes 1109 Hijri.
4. *Risalah al Jouhar al Fard*. This booklet handles the philosophy.
5. *Risalah in common mistakes*. This booklet describes the mistakes which was common among the people.
6. *Risalah in describing that the school of Hanafi is more relevant with the Quran and Hadith rather than school of Shafayee*. This booklet describes in details that school of Hanafi is more relevant than the school of Shafayee. Sayed Abdul Hai Hasani had mentioned some points in his book “*al Alam*” related to this booklet.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>50</sup> *Al Alaam* by Abdul Hai Hasani, *Dar ibn Hazm*, page 793

## **Explanations of Musallam al Thubut**

1. The first explainer of *Musallam al Thubut* was Mullah Nizamuddin Lucknowi who according to some sources, had done the explanation of *Musallam al Thubut* in the life of Qazi Muhibullah Bihari and sent him a copy of it. It is said that Mullah Nizamuddin had written two explanations for *Musallam al Thubut*, one was detailed and another one was more detailed but according to Mullah Abdul Ali, the more detailed explanation had been lost.<sup>51</sup>
2. The son of Mullah Nizamuddin, Maula Abdul Ali had also written an explanation of *Musallam al Thubut* with the name of "*Fawatihu al Rahmut*". This explanation is main reference due to its technical research.
3. Maulana Mohammad Hasan bin Mustafa (Died 1784 A.D.) had also written an explanation of *Musallam al Thubut* but it was incomplete.
4. Maulana Mohammad Raza bin Qutubuddin Shaheed had written an explanation of *Musallam al Thubut* as mentioned in *al Alam* by Sayed Abdul Hai Hasani. He was brother of Mullah Nizamuddin and six years younger than Nizamuddin.<sup>52</sup>
5. Mullah Mubeen has written an explanation of *Musallam al Thubut* with the name of *Khazain al Shuruh ala Musallam al Thubut*.

---

<sup>51</sup> *Quarterly Bahs wa Nazar*, edited by Maulana Mujahidul Islam Qasmi (July-September 1990) page 95

<sup>52</sup> *Al Alaam* by Abdul Hai Hasani, Dar ibn Hazm, page 816

6. Maulana Waliullah bin Habibullah Firangi Mahali had written an explanation with name of *Nafaim al Malkut fi Sharh Musallam al Thubut*.
7. Maulana Abdul Haque Khairabadi bin Maulana Fazlul Haque Khairabadi had written an explanation of *Musallam al Thubut*.
8. The last explainer of *Musallam al Thubut* was Maulana Abdul Bari Firangi Mahali with the name of *Mulhim al Malakut*.

Like that Maulana Mohammad Aminullah bin Mufti Mohammad Akbar and Mufti Barkatullah had written a footnote on *Musallam al Thubut* respectively. It would like to be mentioned that all explainers were belong to Firangi Mahal, Lucknow except Maulana Abdul Haque. They worked on this book as much as they could do.<sup>53</sup>

### **Explanations of Sullam al Uloom**

The book *Sullam al Uloom* had also made a great position among the Arabic and Islamic studies scholars. The explanation of this book is also done by various scholars; some of them are being listed here:

1. *Explanation of Sullam by Qazi Mubarak*: Qazi Mubarak bin Mohammad Dayem Gopamaui (Died 1749 A.D.) had written an explanation of *Sullam al Uloom*. This explanation was completed in Shah Jahanabad and included in the syllabus.

---

<sup>53</sup> *Quarterly Bahs wa Nazar, edited by Maulana Mujahidul Islam Qasmi (July-September 1990) page 96*



2. *Manhiya ala Sharh-e-Sullam*: This was written by Qazi Mubarak after the explanation.
3. *Hamdullah, Sharh-e-Sullam*: This book was written by Molvi Hamdullah bin Hakim Shakrullah Sandilvi (Died 1747 A.D.).
4. *Mullah Hasan, Sharh-e-Sullam*: This was written by Qazi Ghulam Mustafa Lucknowi (Died 1794 A.D.).
5. *Mullah Mubin, Sharh-e-Sullam*: This was written by Mullah Mubin (Died 1810 A.D.)
6. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom*: This was written by Maulana Abdul Ali bin Mullah Nizamuddin (Died 1820 A.D.)
7. *Manhiya ala Sharh-e-Sullam*: Written by Maulana Abdul Ali bin Mullah Nizamuddin (Died 1820 A.D.)
8. *Footnote on Sharh-e-Sullam by Qazi Mubarak*: This work was done by Maulana Fazl-e-Haque bin Maulana Fazl-e-Imam Khairabadi (Died 1861 A.D.)
9. *Footnote on Sharh-e-Sullam by Qazi Mubarak*: This work had been done by Maulana Abdul Haque Khairabadi (Died 1898 A.D.).
10. *Footnote on Hamdullah by Qazi Mubarak*: This work was done by Maulana Abdul Haque Khairabadi (Died 1898 A.D.)
11. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom*: By Mullah Ashraf Bardawani
12. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom*: By Mohammad Feroz
13. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom*: By Molvi Asadullah Panjabi
14. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom*: By Molvi Abu Mazhar Sharafuddin

15. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom:* By Shamsuddin
16. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom:* By Imaduddin al Labkuni
17. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom:* By Ahmad Sandilvi
18. *Sharh-e-Sullam al Uloom:* By Mohammad Azim bin Kifayatullah.
19. *Footnote on Hamdullah by Qazi Mubarak:* By Mohammad Musa bin Mahmood bin Isa Multani
20. *Footnote on Sharh-e-Sullam by Mullah Hasan:* By Kalimuddin Habibullah
21. *Footnote on Sharh-e-Sullam by Mullah Hasan:* By Imaduddin Uthmani al Labkuni
22. *Ziyaun Nujoom Shar-e-Sullam al Uloom:* By Mohammad Ibrahim Balyawi <sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> *Quarterly Bahs wa Nazar, edited by Maulana Mujahidul Islam Qasmi (July-September 1990) page 97*

## **SHEIKH SHARAFUDDIN YAHYA MANERI**

Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri was known as Makhdumul Mulk Bihari. His name was Ahmad bin Sheikh Yahya and the title was Sharafuddin. He was descendent from one of the Prophet's uncle Zubair bin Abdul Muttalib. His grandfather Maulana Mohammad Tajuddin was a prominent scholar. He emigrated from Quds Khalil locality in Baitul Maqdis to Maner.<sup>55</sup> Maulana Tajuddin remained some time in Maner, where he succeeded in converting quite a large number of persons to Islam but he ultimately returned to Quds Khalil leaving his family in Maner. His maternal grandfather Sheikh Sahabuddin Jag Jot (The light of the world) was also a renowned mystic Sheikh of Sahrawardiaya order. He had belonged to Kashghar. He was settled down in Jathli, a village near Patna.<sup>56</sup>

### **Birth and early education**

Sheikh Ahmad Sharafuddin was born on Friday, Shaban 27, 661 AH, July 06, 1263 A.D. at Maner. He had tree other brothers whose names were Sheikh Khaliluddin, Sheikh Jaliluddin and Sheikh Habibuddin.<sup>57</sup>

---

<sup>55</sup> *Tohfa-e-Bihar by Mufti Abdul Matin page 2*

<sup>56</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 258*

<sup>57</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 258*

Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri got his early education at his home. The system of education which was followed at time required the student to learned by heart all the vocabularies, this system was causing the wastage of time of the students. However, he learned by heart the vocabularies of *Miftahul Lughah* but Sheikh Sharafuddin had deplored this system in his book *Ma'dinul Ma'ani*.<sup>58</sup> He had completed all studies which could be completed at his village, and then he wished to move elsewhere to get higher education. Meanwhile, God had granted an opportunity to come in contact with a reputed scholar of his time, Maulana Sharafuddin Abu Towamah, who was going to Sonar Gaun from Delhi. He stayed sometime in Maner and had favoured the people of Maner in terms of education and spirituality. Sheikh Ahmad Yahya Maneri was highly impressed by Maulana Abu Towamah and desired to migrate with him to Sunar Gaun for further education. He requested his parents to let him go, they agreed and Sheikh Ahmad had accompanied with Maulana Sharafuddin. About his teacher Sheikh Sharafuddin has said that Maulana Sharafuddin was an erudite scholar, without a peer, whose fame had traveled to the four corners of India.<sup>59</sup> During the stay at Sonar Gaun Sheikh Ahmad did not waste any moment but always tried to gain the knowledge, he did not go through the letters which came to him from his home lest these might cause him anxiety or distraction from his studies.

---

<sup>58</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 258*

<sup>59</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 259*

When Maulana Sharafuddin had taught him all the then prevalent sciences, religious, and discursive, suggested him to learn something about alchemy, but Sheikh Ahmad excused by saying that education of his religious sciences would suffice for him. Maulana Sharafuddin had such a high regard for his talented disciple that he offered the hand of his daughter to him. Initially Sheikh Ahmad was not agreed with this idea but regular insistence by Maulana Sharafuddin made him agreed upon the marriage. One son was being blessed to the couple and they named their son as Zakiuddin.

Sheikh Ahmad's father, Sheikh Yahya Maneri was died in August 09, 1291 A.D. when he was at Sonar Gaun. The information had been sent to him but due his study he did not go through the letter. When he came to know that his father had died he became very sad and rushed to his home with his son Zakiuddin. He was incapable to stay at home, and journeyed to Delhi with his brother Jaliluddin with the intension of gaining spiritual insight under the Sufi Sheikhs at Delhi.

### **Journey to Delhi**

It was the year 1291 A.D. or 1292 A.D. when Sheikh Ahmad set to out for Delhi. The careful guidance of his learned teacher Maulana Sharafuddin had enabled Sheikh Ahmad to recognize the worth of the mystics by their piety and spiritual attainments. Sheikh Ahmad visited Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia and other mystics of Delhi but he did not

satisfy with them. His comment was “If this is spiritual preceptorship, I, too can claim to be a mystic mentor”<sup>60</sup>. He went to Panipat where he met Bu Ali Qalandar, but he left him with saying that he was and attracted devotee and he cannot guide others.

Sheikh Ahmad returned disheartened from Delhi and Panipat. His elder brother Sheikh Jaliluddin, who was with him, suggested him to meet with Khwaja Najibuddin Firdausi. Initially he did agree but after brother’s insistence he made his mind to meet Khwaja Najibuddin Firdausi. When he went to him, he felt the other experience than the previous ones. After a while he requested Khwaja to accept him under his spiritual preceptorship. Khwaja graciously agreed to his request but sent him back after taking a formal oath from him. He was also granted permission to propagate the religious discipline of Firdausiyah order. Only a few days after Sheikh Ahmad left Khwaja, he got the death news of Khwaja Najibuddin Firdausi, but he did not return back to see off Khwaja, as it was a promise that he never come back.

### **In the Forest of Rajgir**

While returning to home Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri happened to see a peacock trilling in Behiah village, this scene was impressed him a lot, and he became so stirred the feeling of divine love that he breathlessly betook himself to a jungle. His brother and friends

---

<sup>60</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Spirit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 260*

who accompanied him on his way back home after a vigorous search but could not find any trace of him.

Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri remained in the forest of Behiah but no body was able to know his whereabouts. Thereafter, he moved to Rajgir forest where he was seen once or twice. He spent twelve years in the forest of Rajgir, he got arduous religious observances. He had totally lost the consciousness of his own self by drinking deep the cup of love divine.

### **Stay in Bihar Sharif**

During the stay in Rajgir forest, one disciple of Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia, whose name was Maulana Nizamuddin Maula came to know about Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. He met him and used to go to him often. Sheikh Sharafuddin feared him with the thick forest and suggested him not to come in forest, either he will go to Bihar Sharif every Friday for prayer and will meet them. Soon after, the people of Bihar Sharif requested him to settle down in Bihar Sharif. Sheikh Sharafuddin accepted their request and moved to Bihar Sharif. A monastery was constructed for him by the order of Mohammad Tughlaq.

For more than half a century from 1324 A.D. to 1380 A.D. Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri continued to inspire spiritual and moral zeal in the people. According to the Sheikh Husain Muiz Shams

Balkhi, more than a hundred thousand persons united themselves in the bond of his spiritual paternity of whom not less than three hundred attained spiritual illumination and reached the highest degrees of sanctity. Nemours yogis were guided by him on the path of mysticism after they had embraced Islam at his hand.<sup>61</sup>

## **Death**

Sheikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri was died on Wednesday, Shawwal 05, 782 AH, January 02, 1381 A.D.. According to Shaikh Zain Badr, it was Wednesday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of Shawwal, 782 AH (January 02, 1381 A.D.), when I went to pay my respect to the Sheikh. He was sitting on a carpet, leaning against a pillow, after performing the dawn prayer in the new room constructed by Nizamuddin Khwaja Malik. His brother Sheikh Jaliluddin, Qazi Shamsuddin and several other relatives and disciples who had been attending him all through the previous night were present there. The Sheikh said, there is no power, no might but from Allah, the Great and asked us to join in recital. After a while he said smilingly: Holiness be to God. Even at this moment the devil still wants to create doubts in my mind about the unity of God but to no avail. He kept himself busy in praise of God, often repeating joyfully: it is a favour from my Lord; it is a favour from my Lord. An hour or so before noon Sheikh came out in the courtyard and sat down on a

---

<sup>61</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 273*



carpet taking the support of pillow. He held out his hands as if he wanted to bid farewell to us.<sup>62</sup>

He further describes, at the evening, he recited the creed of Muslim faith from the bottom of his heart and then began the invocation: O Lord our God guide the followers of Mohammad on the right path. O Allah, have mercy on the followers of Mohammad, O Allah, forgive the followers of Mohammad, O Allah, be lenient to the followers of Mohammad, O Allah, help the followers of Mohammad. With these words his voice failed but he continued to recite. It was the night of Thursday, the 6<sup>th</sup> of Shawwal 782 AH (January 03, 1381 A.D.), when the time for Isha prayer had just begun, a smile on lips of Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri and he set off with the angels of death.<sup>63</sup>

The funeral prayer was led by Sheikh Ashraf Jahangir Samnani. He was going to pay a visit to renowned Chishtiya Sheikh Alaul Haque of Lahore, arrived Bihar Sharif just when the bier had been placed there for someone to come and lead the funeral services as desired by Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. Sheikh Ashraf Jahangir Samnani led the funeral services and lowered the bier in the grave.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 289*

<sup>63</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 294*

<sup>64</sup> *Magazine Sadi Taqribat edited by professor Ahmad Sajjad, page 191*

## Writings

Makhdum Sharafuddin Ahmad Yahya Maneri left, according to *Sirat-us-Sharaf*, more than a hundred thousand souls who had taken oath of allegiance to him.<sup>65</sup>

It is said that Makhdum Sharafuddin Ahmad Maneri had written seventeen hundred books but only following books found:

1. *Maktoobat-e-Sadi*
2. *Maktoobat-e-Do Sadi*
3. *Maktoobat-e-Bist was Hasht*
4. *Fawaid-e-Rukni*
5. *Rahat ul Qulub*
6. *Ajwebah*
7. *Irshad ul Talbin*
8. *Irshad ul Salikin*
9. *Madan al Maani*
10. *Risalah Makkiyah*
11. *Isharat-i-Mukhul Maani*
12. *Khwan Pur Nimat*
13. *Tuhfah-i-Ghaibi*
14. *Risalah Dar Talab-e-Taliban*
15. *Malfuzat*

---

<sup>65</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 294*

16. *Zad-e-Safar*
17. *Aqaid-d-Sharafi*
18. *Fawaid Muridin*
19. *Bahr ul Maani*
20. *Safar ul Muzaffar*
21. *Kanz ul Maani*
22. *Ganj-e-Layafna*
23. *Munis ul Maridin*
24. *Sharah Adab ul Muridin*
25. *Aurad-e-Kalam*
26. *Aurad-e-Awsat*
27. *Aurad-e-Khurd*
28. *Mirat ul Mohaqqinin*
29. *Risalah Dar Badayut Hall*
30. *Risalah Wusulu Allah* <sup>66</sup>

### **Letters of Sheikh Sharafuddin**

The tradition of letter writing among Sufis has a long history both within and beyond South Asian Islam. The early ascetics of tenth century Baghdad corresponded with one another, and Abu Nasr Sarraj (Died 988 A.D.) from Tus in eastern Iran refers to their literary activities in his compendium of Sufi doctrine, *Kitab al-luma'*.

---

<sup>66</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 295, and biological Encyclopedia of Sufis by N. Hanif page 359*

South Asian Sufis exercised their pens as well as their tongues in communicating spiritual insights to one another. Two thirteenth-century saints from Nagor, a city in present-day Rajasthan, wrote numerous letters to fellow North Indian Muslim mystics: The correspondence of Qazi Hamiduddin Nagori (Died 1244 A.D.) has been arranged and called *Surur as-sudur*.

Among the major Sufi saints of pre-Mughal India whose collections of letters have been partially or wholly preserved to the present day are Nizamuddin Awliya (Died 1325), Masud Bakk (Died 1387 A.D.), Nur Qutb-i Alam Pandawi (Died 1415 A.D.), Sayyid Muhammad Husayni Gesu Darraz (Died. 1422), Sayyid Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (Died 1425 A.D.), and Abdulquddus Gangohi (Died 1537 A.D.). All of them belonged to the dominant Sufi order of the Delhi Sultanate or pre-Mughal period (1206-1526 A.D.), the Chishtiya. But non-Chishti spiritual masters were equally prone to, and adept at, corresponding with fellow sheikhs, or disciples, or even lay acquaintances. The aforementioned Qazi Hamiduddiin Nagori was a member of the Suhrawardi order, while Shah 'Bu Ali Qalandar (Died 1324 A.D.), who authored an impressive set of letters at once lyrical and evocative was a nonaffiliated saint from the Punjab. A less extensive but still notable ream of correspondence has also been attributed to the premier saint of Kashmir, the Kubrawi Sheikh; Sayyid Ali Hamadani (Died 1385 A.D.).

By comparison with their medieval predecessors and contemporaries from other parts of the Asian subcontinent, the Firdausis were numerically small and delimited in influence; though linked by genealogy to the Kubrawi order, they never alluded to, or elaborated on, their connection with Central Asian Muslims and their growth within India appears to have been restricted to northern and western Bihar. For this reason, it is all the more remarkable that their contribution to the tradition of letter writing among South Asian Sufis was second to none. Their astonishing achievement may be traced directly to the subject of the book, *The Hundred Letters* of Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri; but it ought to be noted that both the immediate successors to Sharafuddin in the Firdausi order, Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (Died 1400 A.D.) and Husain Muizz Balkhi (Died 1440 A.D.), were not only spiritual masters of a high level but also skilled literary craftsmen; they produced collections of letters that complemented and extended the many insights set forth in the correspondence of their illustrious predecessor Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri.

Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri wrote a series of two hundred letters, many dealing with topics similar to those covered in *The Hundred Letters*, and also a small collection of twenty-eight letters addressed to his principal disciple and eventual successor, Muzaffar Shams Balkhi. Preceding *The Twenty-eight Letters* is an introduction in which it is reported that the Sheikh's correspondence with Muzaffar was

confidential and originally consisted of more than two hundred letters sent from Sharafuddin to his beloved disciple over a twenty-five-year period. Muzaffar, however, directed that they were to be buried with him, and only one small bundle was "kept apart in a bag"; it is they that now comprise the Twenty-eight letters.

The most celebrated among the collection of Makhdum's letters is the one published with name of Maktubat Hazrat Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri. This collection contains one hundred letters which were addressed to Qazi Shamsuddin of Chausa and compiled by the chief disciple of Makhdum Yahya Maneri, Sheikh Zain Bard Arabi.

The letters of Sheikh Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri include artful balance between reflection and conduct, between explanation and advocacy, between attachment to the Law and pursuit of the Way, between sobriety and ecstasy, bondage and freedom, death and life.

Here a letter which was written to Shamsuddin Balkhi is being mentioned for an example.

### **A letter of Sheikh Sharafuddin on the topic of death**

*In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!*

Dear Brother Shamsuddin,

Men are of three kinds: The first are covetous and greedy; the second have begun to turn to God; and the third have attained the

heights of mystical knowledge. Pleasure-loving people simply do not think about death and, even if they do, it is in order to pine for this world and to become further engrossed in its good things. The remembrance of death makes such a person move further away from God. A person who has begun to turn toward God thinks about death as a means of producing fear and dread in his heart, and thus be enabled to turn completely toward Him. It often happens that he has a great aversion to death out of fear that it might come before he has turned fully toward God and prepared the provisions necessary for it. Such a person would be excused for such an aversion, and would not come under this threat: "Anyone who has despised the vision of God Almighty does not rest in His favour." This is because he does not abhor death and the divine visage, but rather is afraid of losing that very sight on account of some fault of his. It is like a person who delays seeing his beloved and remains engrossed in making preparations to meet her at the time and place that will be most to his liking. He does not bother to make a count of the labour involved in such a preparation. The sign of his friendship is that he is always making some effort on her behalf, and is not preoccupied with anybody else.

The advanced Sufi is forever recalling death. for it is the time appointed for seeing the countenance of the Friend, and no lover can ever forget the time fixed for meeting his beloved. He would love to be swallowed up by death so that, being freed from this dwelling place of

sinners, he might rise to the abode near his Friend, just as Huzaifa relates: "O God, You know that I prefer poverty to riches, sickness to health, and death to life. Make death easy for me, that I might arrive at my reward You!" Now it will be understood why the novice is excused for shunning death and for desiring it, while, on the other hand, the advanced Sufi is also excused for loving death and yearning after it! It is said, however, that there is an even higher stage than both of these, when a person makes use of nothing at all, but does his work purely for the sake of God. For himself, he chooses neither death nor life. This is the stage of resignation and acceptance, and it is the final point of those who have reached the summit.

A person has attained this stage when the remembrance of death makes blessings appear irksome, and changes the pleasure one derives from them into vexation, and when what normally renders insipid things pleasurable and desirable for man becomes something leading to salvation. Here is a hint about this: "Think more about the destroyer of delights [i.e., death], that your inclination toward them might be severed. Thus will you be enabled to turn toward God Almighty." It is related in a Tradition: "If animals knew as much about death as you do, then you would not be able to eat the meat of any fattened animal."

A'isha said: "O Apostle of God, who will appear together with the martyrs on the Day of Resurrection?" The holy Prophet, (Peace be upon him). replied: "Anyone who thinks about death twenty times each day



and night." He also said: "Death is a present for the faithful, because the world is their prison, and they are always grief-stricken in it. Death is the release from all that, and release from prison is certainly a much-prized gift!" Again, he said: "Death is atonement for every Muslim." Anyone who is a real Muslim, unlike you and me, is in quest of it. A genuine believer is the person from whose hand and tongue Muslims receive peace and security. The behaviour of the believers should edify others. They should not be stained by sins, except for trifling ones. Death makes them pure.

Khawaja Hasan Basri said: "Death has dishonoured this world. It has not allowed any sensible man to rejoice!" A wise man wrote the following to one of his brothers: "Be afraid of death in this abode before you go to the other dwelling place, for you will long for death therein, but will not find it." When Ibn Sirin was remembered death, all his limbs became transfixed. Umar Abdul Aziz [a caliph] used to gather all the jurisconsults together each evening and recall death, the Day of Judgment, and the last things, and also weep as though his bier were in front of them all. And Khwaja Rabih Tamimi said: "The pleasures of this world cut me off from two things: One is the remembrance of death, the second is standing in the presence of God." Kaab Ahbar said: "Everyone who realizes what death is finds that the trials and difficulties of this life become easy for him to bear!" It is related that Mutarraf said: "I saw in a dream that someone in the mosque of Basra was saying that the description of death tears to pieces the hearts of the timid." It is related

that whenever Jesus a.s. was reminded of death, blood used to ooze out of his body. O brother, it behooves you not to lag behind those who day and night used to recall death at least twenty times. As far as possible, remain steadfast in this practice and be ready for death to come, whenever that may be. Qaqa Hakim said: "I have waited thirty years for death to come, for I have no love for anything here." It is also related that Imam Suri said: "I saw an old man in the mosque of Kufa who said: I have waited for death for thirty years in this mosque. not knowing when it would come. When it comes, I won't have to wait for anything else. I don't want any delay. I have no claims on anybody else, nor does anyone have any claim upon me." "One beloved of Allah ta'ala wrote in a letter: "This world is a dream. After it, comes the awakening. Midway between them lies death. We are all perplexed with dreams."

O brother, even if there were no sorrow, grief, fear, or torment, still death and its pangs would be quite sufficient, for the whole of life is made miserable because of that moment. All pleasure is spoilt therein, while every blunder and foolish action will be changed completely at the awakening. Meanwhile, it is said that death is more painful than the blow of a sword or a cut from a saw, or removing the nails from one's fingers. Hence it is that the holy Prophet, (Peace be upon him) said, "O God, make the pangs of death bearable for me!" In a similar way, Jesus a.s. said to his followers: "O my apostles, beseech God Almighty to make

death easy for me, for I am so much afraid of it that my fear itself is plunging me to my death!"

It is also related that a group of the sons of Israel was passing by a cemetery. They prayed to Allah ta'ala that He might revive one of the dead so that they might question him. Lo, one dead man rose up from his grave and, between his eyes, was the mark of his repeated prostrations. He said, "O men, what do you want of me? It is fifty years now since I tasted death, but its bitterness has not yet departed from my heart!" Imam Auza'i has related this: "I was told that a dead man is afflicted by death till the moment he is raised from the grave." One man used to make great inquiries of sick people who were at the point of death, saying: "How do you find death?" When he himself fell ill, and was hastening toward death, some people asked him, "How do you find death?" He replied: "It is as though the sky were covering the earth, and as though my soul were being drawn through the eye of a needle." It is also related that the Prophet Muhammad, (Peace be upon him) said: "If even a single hair of a dead person were to be placed upon the inhabitants of the heavens and earth, then by the divine command all would certainly perish, because in each hair is contained the effect of death, and this effect simply cannot fall upon anything without causing it to perish." It is also related that he said: "If only a drop of the fear of death were to be placed upon the mountains of the earth they would certainly melt away." It is also said that when the soul of the prophet

Moses reached the Divine Presence, Allah asked: "Moses, how did you find death?" He asked this question, even though He is fully aware of what it is like. Moses replied: "I found my soul was like a sparrow, and in such a state as though it had been fried in a pan but did not receive the relief of death, nor was it released so that it might fly away." Now understand that at the time of death the lover appears to pass away, that is, he is completely peaceful and at rest. Some appropriate words of witness will assuredly be found on his lips at that moment. In his heart there will be a good idea about Allah ta'ala.

There is a tradition that the Prophet, (Peace be upon him) said: "A dying man's attention should be fixed on three things: He should be blushing with shame; tears should be flowing from his eyes; and his lips should be parched. This would all be due to God's mercy, which had been showered upon him. And when he makes a noise, it would be a choking sound; his colour would turn red, and his lips became the colour of dust. All this constitutes torments sent by God, which have now overwhelmed him. It would, however, be a good sign if his tongue still moved in witness to God." It is also related that the Prophet, (Peace be upon him) said: "Everyone who is dying, and knows that there is no other god but God, will go to heaven." It is also narrated how the Prophet Muhammad, (Peace be upon him) went to a young man who was dying. He inquired: "What is your idea about God?" The youth replied, "I hope in God, but am afraid of my sins." He said: "At such a time, both these two

sentiments cannot be present in a man's heart, namely, that God Almighty would not grant him that for which he hopes, but would change his fear into assurance."

O brother, the end of one and all is by this way alone, whether you are a beggar or a king, for here it is all the same with respect to the possessions of kings and the poverty of beggars, as has been said:

If your possessions were to stretch from earth to the moon, finally, they would all lead to this door!

When your jaw suddenly turns rigid, then the entire World's wealth is no more than a chin! If you are a Faridun or an Afrasiyab, in this Ocean you are but a drop!

All the creatures of this world are submerged in an ocean of blood: Who knows what their condition is like beneath the dust?

If you say that in any particular state of these two, that is, fear or hope, should overcome the other; realize that when a slave is strong and completely correct in his belief and practice, fear is what should predominate. On the other hand, when he is sick and weak, especially when he is gripped by the pangs of death that is when hope should predominate. Scholars have said that the reason is because Allah ta'ala has said: "*I am close to those whose hearts are broken out of fear of Me!*"

At the time of death, and while undergoing its pangs, hope is better because at that moment a person's heart is broken, due to the sins committed while he was vigorous and healthy. If you were to say, "No, one should have only a good opinion about God, according to the traditions," then understand that one of the good opinions we should have is to shun any sin whatsoever against Allah ta'ala, as well as fear the punishments of the world to come, while striving to serve Him. Realize also that all works return to this one source, namely, it is a point that breaks backs, turns faces pale, rends hearts, and turns eyes into blood. Yet that very fear is the cause of mystical knowledge. In other words, this is the limit and extremity of those who fear God. A venerable Sufi has said: "There are three types of sorrow: that of worship – has it been accepted or not? that of sin – has it been forgiven or not? and that of the vision of God – will it be denied or not?" The especially favoured ones have said: "There is really only one sorrow – that of being denied the vision of God! Every other sorrow, apart from that, is easy to bear, because it is not destined to last." Hence it is that the prayer of all the wise in this: "O Lord, do whatever You wish, but don't cut us off from this!" The secret has been couched in the following verse:

The hearts of all are stirred In expectation of seeing Your face!

Our bodies, out of fear of separation, Cry out in the midst of pleasure and comfort!

Without Your beauty, flowers of desire

Turn to thorns in my hope-enkindled eyes! <sup>67</sup>

In his letters Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri always expounded that view that neither salvation could be achieved nor any perfecting of spirit, or, for that matter, nor the fellowship of Eternal Being can be attained without following in the footsteps of the beloved Prophet of God (peace be upon him). Commenting upon Quranic verse: 'Say, (O Mohammad to mankind) if ye Love Allah, follow me, Allah will love you. Makhdum Sharafuddin gave expression of God in these verses of a Gnostic poet:

Seek not a new path, his word is gospel,  
Seal your lips and stop all prattle.  
Whatever says he, saith the Lord,  
Whatever he does is an act of God.  
Be dust unto him wear the crown,  
To have your way, first knuckle down.  
Like the dust of his way, if not is he,  
He'll lick the dust, even if an angle be he.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> *The Hundred letters, translated by Paul Jackson*

<sup>68</sup> *Saviours of Islamic Spirit Vol 2 by Sayed Abul Hasan Nadvi, page 341*

## **Teachings**

A part from the letters of Makhdum Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri, he used to teach the people the lessons of spirituality and Islamic studies. Here I tried to mention some his teachings:

1. Belief in Divine Unity (Tawheed) can be divided into four stages. First is "there is no god but God". Here the heart is devoid of faith. This belief is hypocrisy and proves profitless in the next life. The second type is there is no god but God, it enters the heart that this is so such belief is either conventional or is supported by rational proof as is the case of the learner. The third type of stage is that when a person's soul is illuminated in such a way that he is able to perceive every action flowing from a single source and deriving from a single agent. This elevates the heart. It is contemplation of Divine light that effaces creatures. He is Sufi who in this stage sees creatures and experiences that creator in the scene that he perceives that they all come from Him. The fourth stage arrives when the pilgrim after austerities, self mortification and his adoration advances to such an extent that he sees nothing except God in entire universe. In this light every particulars in the air are lost to sight on account of brightness of light emanating from the



sun. Beyond these four stages is known as losing consciousness of being lost in Divine contemplation.<sup>69</sup>

2. The existence of lover in the pavilion of the Beloved is a sin beyond comparison to any other.
3. O Brother, sin for servant is great calamity. My God protect us from such things! Sin in the beginning hardens the heart, which ultimately leads to unbelief and wretchedness. Don't forget the wiles of Satan and the fate of Baalm Baour.
4. Spiritual Guide should be perfect, well versed in the vicissitude of the mystic path, and firmly established in his high state. He should be a man who has experienced both the horror of God's Majesty and the delight of His beauty.
5. Mystic way is infested with ones ego, devil men and Jinn, these making it impossible to travel along it without an experienced holy man as one's escort. Also there are many slippery places where it easy to fall. And one can be plagued with misfortunate and dangerous from behind.
6. A Saint (Wali) is people who continuously enjoys the Divine favour in all his activities and becomes are of those protected by God. Among there are four thousand "concealed". One who do not recognize one another and who don't know the beating of their own lofty state. The remains hidden from both themselves

---

*69 The Sayings and teachings of the 101 Great Mysteries of Islam by Mohammad Riyaz Qadri page 119*

and the people. Then there are three hundred saints who are authorized to loose and bind. They are called Akhyars. And there are forty Abdals, four Awtads and there are three Nuqba and two Najeebs and one Ghous. All these holy men know each other and run administration of the world in consultation with each others. Saint does not rest content with what is miraculous nor does he pride himself with being a miracle worker. The two attitudes are contradictory.

7. Saintliness (Wilayat) is one of the Divine secret. It is not born from self discipline and austerities. Only saint can be recognizing another saint. If this mystery (Nur-e-Wilayat) could be made plain open to all reasonable men, it would then be possible to distinguish the friends from foe or spiritual adept (Wali) from the careless world ling. God willed thing in such a way that the pearl of friendship (Wilayat) was placed inside a shell of popular contempt and be cast into the sea of affliction, so that the seeker of his pearl dive into the bottom of this ocean of death where he will either win his desire or make an end of his life.<sup>70</sup>

---

*70 The Sayings and teachings of the 101 Great Mysteries of Islam by Mohammad Riyaz Qadri page 120*

# Conclusion

## **CONCLUSION**

Nalanda district remained a very important place through the centuries due to its historical location. It was its location which made it a place of different dynasties like Guptas, Palas and Muriyas. And had the great kings like Ashoka the Great, King Bambisar, and Harshavardhana. Nalanda is also a sacred place of various religions like Buddhism and Jainism. Lord Vardhamana Mahavir and Lord Buddha had visited Nalanda quite frequently in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Nalanda is also supposed to be the birthplace of one Sariputra, one of the chief followers of Lord Buddha. Lord Mahavir got Moksha spent a long time in Nalanda district and got Nirvan in Pawapuri while Lord Buddha had a great influence in this area. Nalanda has its name the meaning of giver of education. It had enjoyed with the largest residential centre of learning that the world had ever known which had given knowledge to thousands of people and it accommodated over 10,000 students and 2,000 teachers.

In Muslim era, the district was very famous and its headquarter Bihar Sharif was the centre of Muslim rulers. Nalanda has seen many great spiritual personalities, lots of big scholars, various noted literary persons, a verity of prominent poets and a very beautiful galaxy of Islamic persona. Ulama of Nalanda had contributed generously in Islamic studies and always tried to give an authentic literary works.

Monasteries, Madrasas and Makatib had played a vital role to spread Islam and Islamic studies in this area. Khanqah Firdausia Bihar

Sharif remained a very good example of contribution of monasteries in Islamic studies. This was the place from where Makhdum Ahmad Sharafuddin Yahya Maneri was giving sermons and delivering the speeches on the topic of Islamic studies and spirituality. The famous letters of Sheikh Sharafuddin Ahmad was also been written in Bihar Sharif. The books of Sheikh Sharafuddin were been compiled or dictated in this place. Madrasas of Nalanda district had been consistently playing very imperative role to uplift the Islamic studies in this area. Madrasa Aziziya, Madrasa Islamia and other Madrasas are the big instances of Madrasas role in this region.

When we talk about the contribution of Nalanda's Ulama toward Arabic and Islamic studies, we find a large number of Ulama in this list and I tried my level best to mention those Ulama in my dissertation. Maulana Ruknuddin Bihari who had written "*Fawaid-e-Rukni*", Sheikh Ali Bihari the author of "*Ahda*", Ghulam Yahya bin Najmuddin the writer of "*Sharah Sullam bi al Hamdulillah*", and "*Kalimatul Haqq*", Sheikh Munim bin Aman the author of "*Mulhamat-e-Munimi*". Qazi Muhibullah Bihari the prominent Arabic and Islamic studies scholar and the writer of "*Sullam al Uloom*" and "*Musallam al Thubut*" and Sheikh Sharafuddin Ahmad Maneri the great Islamic scholar and noted leader of spirituality, are the stars of Nalanda in Arabic and Islamic studies over the periods.

Today, a great effort for the revival of Nalanda University is putting forward by the government of Bihar with the collaboration of some other

countries and whenever we hear the name of Nalanda, the mind automatically goes to the ancient university and no body bother to know that Nalanda district had a very bright history of Muslims culture and civilization. I tried to carry forward the contribution of Nalanda's scholars' works in Islamic studies; so that the world will know that the Ulama of Nalanda had played a tremendous job in Islamic studies. I have been restricted my self to mention the centres of Islamic studies and Ulama who died till 1900 A.D. in this dissertation but I am very positive to carry forward this work in Ph.D related to Ulama and centres of Islamic education of Nalanda after 20<sup>th</sup> century Insha Allah.

In this dissertation whenever I mention only Nalanda, it includes the current district of Nalanda, it does not mean only that small town which is situated between Bihar Sharif and Rajgir and called Nalanda.

# Bibliography

## **English:**

1. Sayed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi: *Saviours of Islamic Sprit Volume 2*, published by Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, Lucknow, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1997
2. Sayed Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi: *Muslims in India*, published by Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, Lucknow, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 1980
3. F.U Farooqi: *Lucknow: A centre of Arabic and Islamic studies during the nineteen century*, published by Falah-e-Darain Trust, Publication Wing, New Delhi 1999
4. Annemarie Shimmel, Corinne Attawood, Burzine K Waghmar: *The empire of the great Mughals*, published by Reaktion Books, 2004
5. N. Hanif: *Biographical encyclopedia of Sufis: Central Asia and Middle East* , published by Sarup & Sons, 2002
6. Sheikh Mohamad Ikram: *Muslim rule in India & Pakistan, 711-1858 A.C.: a political and cultural history*, published by Star Book Depot, 1966
7. Bindeshwari Prasad Sinha, Syed Hasan Askari: *Comprehensive history of Bihar*, Published by Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute, 1974
8. Muhammad Umar: *Islam in northern India during the eighteenth century*, Published by Munshiram Manoharlal



- Publishers for Centre of Advanced Study in History, Aligarh Muslim University, 1993
9. Malika Mohammada: *The foundations of the composite culture in India*, Published by Aakar Books, 2007
  10. Mohammad Riyaz Qadri: *The Sayings and teachings of the 101 Great Mysteries of Islam*, Published by Aden Publishers and Distributors Darya Ganj, New Delhi, 2007
  11. Peter Hees: *Indian Religions: The Spiritual Traditions of South Asia : an Anthology* , Published by Orient Blackswan, 2002
  12. Emmanuel Yartekwei Lartey: *In living color: an intercultural approach to pastoral care and counseling*, Published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2003
  13. Paul Jackson: *Sharafuddin Ahmad Maneri, The Hundred Letters*, translation, introduction and notes, Published by Paulist Press 1980
  14. Nehru, J. L: *The Discovery of India*, Published by Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1972
  15. N. Jayapalan: *History of India upto 1206 AD, Volume 1*, Published Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2001, Page no 184
  16. S. M. Azizuddin Husain: *Madrassa Education in India: Eleventh to twenty first century*, Published by Kanishka Publishers and Distributors, Darya Ganj, New Delhi, 2005

17. Qeyamuddin Ahmad: *Corpus of Arabic and Persian inscriptions of Bihar (AH 460-1200)* Published by K.P Jaiswal Research Institute, 1973
18. Burton Stein: *A History of India*, Published by Wilay Blackwell, 1998
19. R.C Majumdar, H.C Raychandhuri and Kalikinkar Datta: *An Advanced History of India*, Published by Macmillan India Limited 1982
20. G.M.D Sufi: *Al Minhaj being the evaluation of curriculum in educational institution of India*, Published by Muhammad Ashraf Kashmiri Bazar, Lahore, 1941
21. N. Hanif: *Biographical Encyclopedia of Sufis, South Asia* Published by Sarup and Sons, 2000
22. Sayed Athar Abbas Rizvi: *Revivalist Movement in Northern India in the sixteen and seventeen century*, Published by Agra University, Agra 1965
23. Sayed Athar Abbas Rizvi: *A History of Sufism in India*, Published by Munshiram Manoharlal Publications Private Limited, 1978
24. Tariq Rahman: *Language, Ideology and Power*, Published by Oxford University Press, 2002

25. Jan Peter, Paul Hartung and Helmut Reifeld: *Islamic Education, Diversity and National Identity: Dini Madaris in India Post 9/11*, Published in New Delhi 2006
26. Bashan A.L. Picador: *The Wonder that was India*, Published in New Delhi 2004
27. Mahajan, V.D: *History of Medieval India*, Published by S.Chand & Co., New Delhi 1991

### **Arabic:**

1. Abdul Hai Hasani: *Al Alaam bi man fi Tareekh al Hind min al Alaam*, Published by Dar ibn Hazm, Beirut, 1999
2. Abdul Hai Hasani: *Al Thaqafah al Islamiyah fi al Hind*, Published by Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, Lucknow, 1997
3. Dr Mohammad Iqbal Husain Nadvi: *Manahij al dirasat al arabiah fi al Hind*, Published by Om Sai Graphivcs Hyderabad 2005

### **Urdu:**

1. *Learning and literature in Bihar by eminent people of Bihar* edited by Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, 2000
2. *Mashahir-i-Bihar Vol 2* edited by Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, 2001

3. Molvi Fasihuddin Balkhi Azimabadi: *Tarikh-i-Magadh, A complete History of Bihar 642 BC to 1943 AD*, published by Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna, 2001
4. Mufti Mohammad Abdul Matin: *Tufa-e-Bihar*, published by Mohammad Misbahuddin, Mohallah Basar Bigha, Bihar Sharif, Nalanda 1952
5. Abul Hasanat Nadvi: *Hidustan ki Qadeem Islami Dars Gahen*, Published by Darul Musannifin Azam Garh, 2008
6. Maulana Mohammad Zakariya: *Tareekh Mazahir Volume 01*, Published by Kutub Khana Ishaat Uloom, Saharanpur, 1972
7. Abul Kalam Qasmi Shamshi: *Tazkirah Ulama-e-Bihar*, Published by Kitab Manzil, Patna, 2006
8. Mufti Abdul Matin: *Tohfa-e-Bihar*, Published by Mohd Misbahuddin, Basar Bigha, Bihar Sharif, 1953

### **Magazines:**

1. *Magazine Quarterly Bahs wa Nazar* edited by Maulana Mujahidul Islam Qasmi, July-Sept, 1990
2. *Magazine Sadi Taqreebat Madrasa Munirul Islam, Soh Deeh, Soh Sarai, Bihar Sharif* edited by Professor Ahmad Sajjad published by Madrasa Munirul Islam, Soh Deeh, Soh Sarai, Bihar Sharif 2004
3. Maulana Abdullah Khalid: *Annual report of Madrasa Aziziya Bihar Shari* Published by Madrasa Aziziya Bihar Sharif 2005

## **Websites**

1. <http://en.wikipedia.org>
2. <http://www.britannica.com>
3. <http://gov.bih.nic.in>
4. <http://madrasa.wordpress.com>
5. <http://www.culturalindia.net>
6. <http://forum.desicomments.com>
7. <http://www.bihartodayonline.com>
8. <http://www.touristplacesinindia.com>