

# Role of Raja Man Singh in Mughal Administration and Warfare

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## Abstract:

In Indian history, the 16<sup>th</sup> century was an important time in, especially with the rise of the Mughal Empire under Akbar (1556 CE-1605 CE). During the reign of Akbar many powerful Rajput clans, who were independent in early medieval times started to build relations with the royal Mughal court. Among these Rajput clans was the Kachhwahas of Amber were the pioneer. The Kachhwaha Rajputs are broadly divided into two sects; the Rajawats and the Shekhawats. Among these, the Rajawats played significant role in establishing relationships between Rajputs and Mughal Empire. One of the most prominent figures from this branch was Raja Bihari Mal (1548-1574 CE), who holds historical significance as the first Rajput ruler to enter into the imperial services of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. The alliance between Bihari Mal and Akbar also laid the groundwork for subsequent generations of Kachhwaha rulers, particularly his son Raja Bhagwan Das (1574-1589 CE), and grandson Raja Man Singh (1589-1614 CE). The decision of Bihari Mal to maintain relations with the Mughals marked the beginning of a new era in Rajput-Mughal relations, characterized by strategic matrimonial alliances and administrative collaborations.

The present research will focus on the contribution of Raja Man Singh a young leader of the Rajputs in the development of Mughal-Rajput composite relations. The paper also seeks to highlight that how and why Man Singh left his Rajput kingdom of Amber and become a trusted noble in the Mughal Empire. It also explains how this decision changed his life and the relationship between the Mughals and the Rajputs. The main objective of this paper is to examine earlier relations of Akbar with Kachhwahas, rise of Raja Man Singh within the Kachhwaha lineage, and his role in the Mughal Court.

This research paper will be based on the critical analyze of the contemporary, near contemporary and modern writings, such as Abul Fazl's Ain-i-Akbari, Col. James Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Rajiv Nain Prasad's Raja Man Singh of Amber, Jadunath Sarkar's A History of Jaipur, and the translation works of H. Beveridge.

**Keywords:** Rajput-Mughal alliance, Imperial Expansion, Battle of Haldighati, Bengal Campaign, Bihar Expedition, Kabul Campaign, Afghan Resistance.

## INTRODUCTION:

The history of medieval India, particularly during the Mughal period, shows a complex relationship between regional powers and the central imperial authority. In the late 1500s, India saw many Changes as the Mughal Empire expanded its power and influence. During this time, several Rajput rulers had to decide whether to fight against the Mughals or join them. One of the most important examples of cooperation was the Kachhwaha Rajputs of Amber. The Kachhwaha lineage traces its origin to the

mythological figure Kush, the second son of Lord Rama, the legendary ruler of Kosala, whose capital was Ayodhya.<sup>1</sup> This ancestral claim situates the Kachhwahas within the solar (suryavanshi) lineage, emphasizing their association with divine and royal heritage in traditional Hindu narratives. Instead of resisting the Mughals, they chose to form an alliance with them. The Kachhwahas of Amber (later Jaipur) played a pivotal role in the political and military framework of the Mughal Empire, particularly from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards. As one of the first Rajput clans to establish a formal alliance with the Mughals, the Kachhwahas became integral to Mughal statecraft. The Kachhwaha chiefs of Amber were known for their strong loyalty to the Mughal emperors and helped them in many military campaigns. Their support played an important role in helping the Mughal Empire grow stronger and more stable. Because of their faithful service and success in battles, the Mughal rulers gave them high positions in the empire and many rewards. Leaders like Bharmal, Bhagwan Das, and Raja Man Singh I became powerful generals and governors in important areas that were under the Mughal Empire. This close relationship between the Kachhwahas and the Mughals helped both sides: the Mughals gained strong allies, and the Kachhwahas gained power and respect in the Empire.

Bharmal was the first ruler of Amber to formally accept the dominance of Mughal power. He aligned himself with the imperial interests during the reign of Babur and was subsequently recognized by Emperor Humayun, who conferred upon him the mansab of five thousand<sup>2</sup>, affirming his status as the Raja of Amber. According to *Ain-i-Akbari* and other contemporary sources such as *Umra-i-Hinood*, Emperor Akbar expressed a keen desire to meet Raja Bharmal of Amber. However, the Raja initially hesitated, uncertain about the emperor's intentions and the nature of his reception at the Mughal court. To understand Akbar's nature, Bharmal dispatched his brother Rupsi and nephew Jaimal as representatives. These Kachhwaha nobles met the emperor at Dausa (historically referred to as Deosa), but Akbar was not fully satisfied with this gesture, as he specifically desired the personal presence of Raja Bharmal. Upon receiving this message, Bharmal given charge of Amber to his son Bhagwan Das and proceeded to meet Akbar at Sanganer. According to Dr. Rajiva Nain Prasad, Raja Bharmal, demonstrating political foresight and caution, initially deemed it unwise to respond immediately to Emperor Akbar's invitation. Uncertain about the reception he might receive at the imperial camp, he refrained from making a personal appearance and instead deputed his brother Rupsi as his representative. Upon learning that Rupsi had been received with warmth and respect by the emperor, and realizing Akbar's genuine intent to establish affable connection, Bharmal reconsidered his position. Convinced of the emperor's friendly disposition, he ultimately decided to present himself before Akbar at Sanganer.<sup>3</sup> Raja Bharmal presented himself at the imperial court accompanied by several of his close household members and prominent figures from the Kachhwaha lineage.<sup>4</sup>

This meeting marked a significant step in establishing a diplomatic alliance between the Mughals and the Kachhwaha Rajputs, which later evolved into a strategic matrimonial and political relationship. Abul Fazl writes that the emperor noticed the loyalty and honesty shown by Raja Bharmal and his relatives. Akbar treated the Raja kindly and gave him a higher position in the royal court.<sup>5</sup> Emperor Akbar welcomed Raja Bharmal with great warmth and respect. He gave him a mansab of 500 and made him a

<sup>1</sup> Col. James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, London, 1832, vol.II, p.280

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.286

<sup>3</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, The world press private Ltd, Calcutta, 1966, p.8

<sup>4</sup> H. Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-I-Fazl (tr.)*, The Asiatic Society, Park Street, Calcutta, 1907, vol.II, p.241

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.242

member of the royal court. During or shortly after this diplomatic engagement, a matrimonial alliance was proposed between the Mughal Emperor Akbar and the Kachhwaha royal family. Consequently, the marriage of Raja Bharmal's daughter to Emperor Akbar was performed with great ceremonial grandeur at Sambhar, located approximately 41 miles west of Jaipur, in March 1562.<sup>6</sup> This alliance not only marked a significant political development but also laid the foundation for enduring Rajput-Mughal cultural relations. After this marriage, Raja Bharmal was raised a high rank of 5000<sup>7</sup> in the the Mughal administration, which showed that Akbar wanted to include powerful Rajput leaders in his empire to get support of them for the establishment of Mughal sovereignty in India. Raja Bharmal served the Mughal emperor in different capital cities during his time. He ruled the state of Amber for more than twenty five years, from June 1547 to January 1573,<sup>8</sup> and helped maintain peace and cooperation between the Rajputs and the Mughals.

Raja Bharmal was followed by his eldest son, Raja Bhagwan Das, who became the ruler of Amber on 7 February 1573.<sup>9</sup> He was a strong and capable leader. He showed great bravery in the battle of Sarnal in Gujarat, where he risked his life for the Mughal emperor. As a reward for his loyalty and courage, the emperor gave him the honour of the royal drum (danka) and flag. He also gave important help to Akbar during the Gujarat campaign in 1572. From 1582 to 1589,<sup>10</sup> he served as the governor of Punjab and managed the region well. He held a high rank in the Mughal army as a commander of 5000 soldiers (panch hazari mansabdar). Raja Bhagwan Das died in Lahore in November 1589.<sup>11</sup>

Kuar Man Singh, most eminent Rajput noble of Amber known for his bravery and executive competence, was born on 21<sup>st</sup> December 1550 in Mozamabad.<sup>12</sup> He was the eldest son of Raja Bhagwant Das and his chief queen, Rani Bhagmati Panwar (also referred to as Bhagoti Pawar), belonging to the esteemed Pawar lineage. When Kuar Man Singh was born, astrologers predicted a bright future for him but also warned of possible troubles due to evil stars. They advised that he should live away from Amber for twelve years. So, his grandfather Raja Bharmal built a palace for him at Muazzambad,<sup>13</sup> about forty miles from Amber. Kuar Man Singh was sent to the newly constructed palace at Muazzamabad under the care and supervision of his mother, Rani Bhagmati. To ensure his social development and engagement, a group of one hundred boys accompanied him to serve as companions and playmates. Rani Bhagmati took personal initiative in organizing his education,<sup>14</sup> which includes both formal learning and martial training. Special emphasis was placed on the development of skills such as archery, horse riding, and swordmanship. By the age of twelve, Man Singh had attained notable proficiency in military disciplines. Despite his young age, he exhibited the qualities and temperament of a capable and well trained soldier. In 1562, Kuar Man Singh came back to Amber<sup>15</sup> at an important time, when Emperor Akbar was getting married to the daughter of Raja Bharmal. Even though Man Singh had a

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<sup>6</sup> H. Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.II, p. 243

<sup>7</sup> H. Beveridge, *The Maathir-Ul-Umara by Nawwab Samsamuddaula Shah Nawaz Khan (tr.)*, The Asiatic Socceity, Kolkata, 1941, vol.II p.411

<sup>8</sup> Genealogical table in the state archives of Jaipur.

<sup>9</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.9

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p.9

<sup>11</sup> H. Beveridge, *The Maathir-Ul-Umara by Nawwab Samsamuddaula Shah Nawaz Khan (tr.)*, vol.I, p.405

<sup>12</sup> Dr. V.S. Bhargava, *Madhya Kalin Rajasthan ka Itihas*, College Book Depot, Jaipur, 1966, p.172

<sup>13</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.19

<sup>14</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.19

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p.20

dusky complexion, he impressed the emperor with his good manners and friendly nature. Historian Abul Fazl writes that Man Singh, the son of Raja Bhagwan Das and grandson of Raja Bihari Mal, gained the emperor's special attention and was made a permanent member of the royal service.<sup>16</sup> This was the beginning of his close connection with the Mughal court.

The fort of Ranthambore was very strong and held by Rao Surjan Hada, a Rajput ruler who did not accept the Mughal rule. In 1569, Emperor Akbar decided to capture the fort. Man Singh, though still a 18 years old<sup>17</sup>, joined this important campaign along with his father and grandfather. Raja Man Singh played an active role in this campaign as a trusted Rajput general in Akbar's army. He helped in organizing the siege operations, maintaining discipline among the troops, and guiding Mughal officers. The successful capture of Ranthambore strengthened Mughal control over Rajputana and proved Man Singh's loyalty and military ability. His presence also encouraged other Rajput chiefs to cooperate with the Mughals, which reduced resistance. On his return journey to Agra in 1569, Emperor Akbar halted at Amber, where he was cordially received by Raja Bharmal and Kuar Man Singh. To accommodate the religious needs of the Emperor and his accompanying Muslim nobles, a mosque was constructed on this occasion. This structure, later known as the Akbari Mosque<sup>18</sup>, was intended to serve as a place for offering prayers during the imperial visit. Kuar Man Singh also supported Mughal military campaigns during the conquest of Gujarat in 1572 CE under Emperor Akbar. In the Battle of Ahmedabad (1572 CE), Man Singh supported the Mughal army in establishing control over the city after it surrendered. His role was crucial in maintaining order and assisting in the smooth integration of the region into the Mughal Empire. During the year of 1573 CE in the Battle of Sarnal, Man Singh displayed extraordinary courage. He fought with great courage and risked his life on the battlefield to secure victory for the Mughals. His fearless leadership contributed significantly to the defeat of the rebel forces and earned him high respect in the imperial court. He was also the part of campaign of Surat, from Mughal's side. These military achievements not only strengthened Mughal authority in Gujarat but also established Man Singh as one of the most trusted and capable generals of Akbar.

The Battle of Haldighati (1576) proved to be a pivotal moment in the career of Kuar Man Singh, bringing him to the forefront of Mughal military leadership. It offered him the first major opportunity to display his strategic skill and organizational ability as a general. The battle was fought between the Mughal army under Man Singh's command and the Rajputs of Mewar led by Rana Pratap. Regarding the cause of this battle, the court historian Abul Fazl notes that the conflict stemmed from Rana Pratap's continued defiance, his perceived arrogance, the duplicity in dealing with the Mughal court.<sup>19</sup> Abul Fazl remarks when the Rana's disobedience and insincerity exceeded acceptable limits, Emperor Akbar resolved to take decisive action to suppress his resistance and assert imperial authority over Mewar. The Jaipur Vanshawali and the Kachhwaha Vanshawali provide a detailed account of the famous elephant episode as a cause of Battle of Haldighati that during his return from Gujarat expedition, Kuar Man Singh halted near Udaipur, within the domain of Rana Pratap. There, he learnt of a celebrated elephant named Ram Prashad, renowned for its royal appearance and extraordinary martial skills. Although Emperor Akbar had previously requested for elephant, Rana had declined to send it. Man Singh visited the pavilion where the elephant was kept, and although his Mahawat briefly brought Ram Prashad under

<sup>16</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.II, p.244

<sup>17</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.23

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p.26

<sup>19</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, The Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1939, vol.III, p.236

his control, Man Singh respectfully ordered its return. Subsequently, the Rana invited Man Singh for lunch near Sagar Lake, Udaipur, where the kuar requested kheer as part of the meal. However, the Rana declined to dine, citing illness. In response, Man Singh released his three hundred dogs, to check the food. This incident, later remembered in Rajasthan through the proverb “the Dogs spoiled kheer,” deeply offended Man Singh, leading him to leave the region and warn the Rana of serious consequences.<sup>20</sup> Also, Emperor Akbar successfully brought many Rajput states under Mughal suzerainty through a policy of diplomatic alliances, matrimonial relations, and coercion. However Rana Pratap of Mewar remained a staunch opponent, refusing to submit to Mughal authority. He emerged as a symbol of Rajput resistance, firmly committed to preserving the independence of his kingdom, even at the cost of his life. His orthodox, Rajput values and deep resentment towards Mughal matrimonial ties with Rajput royalty further intensified his opposition. Additionally, Akbar’s persistent desire to acquire Rana’s prized elephant, Ram Prashad, is considered among the contributing factors leading to the Battle of Haldighati. In October 1573, Emperor Akbar sent Raja Bhagwan Das to Udaipur to convince Rana Pratap to accept Mughal rule, but Rana refused to change his position. Again, in December 1573, Raja Todar Mal was sent for the same purpose,<sup>21</sup> but he also failed. Rana Pratap remained firm in his decision. After these failed attempts, on April 3, 1576, at Ajmer, Akbar gave Man Singh the high title of Farzand (son) and appointed him as the commander of the Mughal army to lead the campaign against Rana Pratap.<sup>22</sup> Some Muslim nobles in Akbar’s court were unhappy when Kuar Man Singh, a Hindu, was made the chief commander of the Mughal army. Historian Badauni mentioned that when he asked Naqib Khan to help him get permission to join the Rana’s army, Naqib Khan said he would have gone himself if a Hindu was not leading it.<sup>23</sup> This shows that some people still had religious bias, even during Akbar’s rule to tolerance. On 3 April 1576<sup>24</sup>, the imperial Mughal army under the command of Raja Man Singh commenced its march from Ajmer towards Gogunda and halted at Mandalgarh. Badauni, an eyewitness to the Battle of Haldighati, wrote that Man Singh had about 5,000 soldiers, while Rana Pratap had around 3,000, along with many Bhil archers who joined him. However, later historian James Tod claimed that Rana Pratap had a force of nearly 22,000 Rajputs to face the Mughal army. Man Singh ensured his army was highly mobile and effective, organizing it in consultation with other Mughal generals, as noted in *Maasir-i-Rahimi*. His vanguard was led by Raja Jagannath, Khwaja Ghasuddin Ali, and Asaf Khan. Similarly, Rana Pratap arranged his forces by placing Hakim Sur Pathan at the front with support from Chandavat Krishan Das, Ram Das, and Raja Ram Shah of Gwalior, while Rana Pratap held the central position with the help of Rana Panja, Purohit Gopinath, Mehta Ratan Chand, and Jagannath. On 18 June 1576,<sup>25</sup> the Mughal and Rajput forces confronted each other at the village of Khamnaur, situated at the entrance of the Haldighati pass, a strategic location under the jurisdiction of Gogunda.

Although the Mughals claimed a tactical victory on the battlefield by compelling the Rajput forces to retreat, the battle did not result in the complete submission of Mewar. Despite being outnumbered and less equipped, Maharana Pratap managed to survive the encounter and withdraw safely, preserving the

<sup>20</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.37-38

<sup>21</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.III, p.93

<sup>22</sup> W.H. Lowe, *Muntakhab-ut-Twarikh by Al-Badaoni (tr.)*, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1884, vol.II, p.233

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, p.233

<sup>24</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.III, p.237

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p.245

spirit of Rajput resistance. However, Mughals failed to capture Maharana Pratap on bring Mewar fully under imperial control. The significance of this battle lies in its symbolic and strategic dimensions. Man Singh's leadership was instrumental in affirming the loyalty of Rajput allies to Akbar and highlighting the growing influence of the Kachhwaha house within the Mughal court. For Mewar and its people, the battle came to symbolize valor, resistance, and enduring spirit of Independence. In this battle, Man Singh fought bravely and captured Gogunda<sup>26</sup> for Akbar. However, he failed to defeat or capture Rana Pratap. The Mughal army faced heavy losses, lacked supplies, and their route from Gogunda to Ajmer was blocked<sup>27</sup>. In September 1576, Akbar came to Ajmer to take charge of the campaign. Later, Man Singh and Asaf Khan were called to the court but were not allowed to enter for some time<sup>28</sup>. This showed Akbar's anger at the incomplete success of the battle, but soon he realized that Man Singh was not at fault. He was quickly restored to favour. In 1581, during Akbar's campaign to Kabul, Man Singh was made commander of the Mughal army. He fought bravely and achieved success, proving his loyalty and skill.

After the death of Mirza Muhammad Hakim on 30 July 1585<sup>29</sup>, Akbar sent Man Singh to take control of Kabul. He crossed the Indus and reached Peshawar, where the Afghans surrendered without resistance. In Kabul, Man Singh found the young sons of Mirza Hakim, Qaiqubad and Afrasiyas, unfit to rule due to their age. The local nobles had taken over the administration<sup>30</sup>. Man Singh's arrival in Kabul brought peace and order to the region. He moved to Jalalabad and reached Butkhak<sup>31</sup>, a nearby village. The people of Kabul, intimidated by the Mughal presence, submitted without resistance. Man Singh assured them of imperial protection and restored Mughal authority. Emperor Akbar was very pleased with Man Singh for his good work in Kabul. As a reward, he made him the governor of Kabul. Akbar also gave him the important duty of dealing with the Raushanias, a rebel group in the Boundary zones.

The Raushanias were a strong Afghan group who often attacked travelers on the Khyber Pass. Their actions made the area unsafe and caused problems for people moving through that route<sup>32</sup>. Very soon, Man Singh got the chance to take action against the Raushanias and punish them for their activities. When Man Singh learned that Mir Quraish, the ambassador of Abdullah Khan, the ruler of Turan, was coming to meet the Mughal Emperor, he took steps to ensure the ambassador's safety. He sent his brother, Madhava Singh, to join the caravan and help guide them safely through the dangerous Khyber Pass. While Madhava Singh entered the Khyber Pass, Man Singh went to the nearby fort of Ali Masjid with a small number of soldiers. The Raushanias, a rebellious Afghan group, took advantage of the small force and attacked the fort during the night. Some of them even climbed to the top of the fort. However, Man Singh quickly acted and pushed back the attackers, forcing them to run away. The next morning, rebellious Tarikis were defeated and many were killed or captured. As a result, the ambassador from Turan safely crossed the Khyber Pass and was escorted to the other side of the Indus River. Soon

<sup>26</sup> Kunwar Razaqat Ali Khan, *The Kachhwahas under Akbar and Jahangir*, Kitab publishing house, New Delhi, 1976, p.35

<sup>27</sup> Dr. G.N. Sharma, *Mewar & Mughal Emperors*, Shiv Lal Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra, 1951, pp.106-107

<sup>28</sup> A.L. Srivastava, *Akbar the Great*, Shiv Lal Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra, 1962, vol.I, p.213

<sup>29</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.63

<sup>30</sup> B.DE, *The Tabaqat-i-Akbari of Khwajah Nizamuddin Ahmad*, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, 1936, Vol.II, p.605

<sup>31</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.65

<sup>32</sup> H. Beveridge, *The Maathir-Ul-Umara by Nawwab Samsamuddaula Shah Nawaz Khan (tr.)*, Asiatic Society, Calcutta, 1957, vol.II, p.49

afterward, Man Singh was given another important assignment by Emperor Akbar. In February 1586<sup>33</sup>, Raja Birbal had lost his life while fighting the Yusufzai Afghans in the Malandhari Pass. In response, the emperor had initially sent Prince Murad along with Raja Todar Mal to deal with the Yusufzais. However, Todar Mal believed that the task was not appropriate for a young and inexperienced prince and suggested that someone else should lead the campaign<sup>34</sup>. Akbar accepted this proposal and appointed Man Singh to join Todar Mal in crushing the Yusufzai rebellion.

As per Mughal policy, governors were often changed every two or three years to avoid power buildup. In March 1587, Man Singh was recalled from Kabul, and Zain Khan Koka was appointed as the new governor of the province of Kabul<sup>35</sup>. But Abul Fazl states that the Rajput officers under Man Singh treated the people of Kabul unfairly, and Man Singh did not take proper action to help the oppressed. He also disliked the cold climate of the region. Because of this, Kabul was taken from him, and he was sent to deal with the Tarikis. But the concept of Abul Fazl does not appear true. Man Singh successfully defeated the Yusufzais and Raushanias, leading to the annexation of Kabul into the Mughal Empire. He proved to be a capable general. However, the eastern provinces, especially Bihar, were facing unrest and troubling the Mughal administration. In 1587<sup>36</sup>, the governor of Bengal, Wazir Khan, died and Said Khan, the governor of Bihar, was appointed in his place. As a result, the governorship of Bihar became vacant and was given to Man Singh and Raja Bhagwan Das. Their Jagirs in Punjab were then given to Muhammad Sadiq Khan<sup>37</sup>.

Abul Fazl in the Akbarnama writes that Raja Man Singh became the governor of Bihar in December 1587 and served there until March 1594. Bihar was an important province for the Mughal Empire, but it was very disturbed at that time because many Pathans and Afghan chiefs often rebelled against Mughal rule<sup>38</sup>. These frequent uprisings made the province very unstable and caused constant problems for the Mughal governor. Upon his arrival in Bihar, Man Singh focused on creating a strong and stable administration. After the death of Raja Bhagwan Das in 1589, Kuar Man Singh, who was in charge of Bihar, was given the title of “Raja” and became the ruler of Amber<sup>39</sup>. In North Bihar, three major zamindars held considerable influence, while several smaller landholders controlled territories in Shahabad, Chotanagpur, and other parts of South Bihar<sup>40</sup>. The three principal zamindars were Raja Gajpat of Hajipur, Raja Purnamal of Gidhaur, and Raja Singram Singh of Kharagpur. Raja Man Singh first moved against Raja Purnamal of Gidhaur, who had refused to submit to Mughal authority. Man Singh captured his fort and took much loot. After his defeat, Purnamal accepted Man Singh’s protection, gave valuable gifts including elephants, and married his daughter to Chandrabhan, Man Singh’s brother. In March 1590, Man Singh defeated Singram Singh of Kharagpur. After his submission, Singram Singh offered elephants along with other valuable gifts as a token of loyalty. Raja Man Singh also campaigned against Anant Cheros and the Saiyyids of Sambhapuri, both located at Gaya district. He successfully defeated them and brought their territories under Mughal control<sup>41</sup>. Subsequently, Raja Man Singh

<sup>33</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.III, p.734

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p.734

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, p.790

<sup>36</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.75

<sup>37</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, p.801

<sup>38</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.77

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.78

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p.79

<sup>41</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.III, p.872

overcame the opposition of Raja Gajpat of Hajipur and obliged him to give up his position as chief. Thereafter, the territory of Hajipur was merged into the Mughal Empire. The strong steps taken by Raja Man Singh in Bihar brought good results. The revolts were crushed, and peace was restored across the province.

After restoring order in Bihar, Raja Man Singh directed his attention to the neighboring province of Orissa. Although Orissa was nominally under Mughal Empire, but the Mughals had not able to securing effective control over the region. At the time, the province remained largely under the domination of Afghan chiefs led by Qutlu Khan. In April 1590, Raja Man Singh marched towards Orissa<sup>42</sup>. On the way, he stopped near Bhagalpur and asked Said Khan, the governor of Bengal, for help. Said Khan sent his officers to assist him. Qutlu Khan, the Afghan leader, sent troops under Bahadur Kurah to Raipur fort. During this time, Qutlu Khan died of illness in August 1590<sup>43</sup>. His minister Khwaja Isa made Nasir Khan the new leader and signed a peace agreement with Man Singh in August 1590. In 1592, the Mughals had complete control over Orissa, and it was made a regular province of the empire.

Because of his loyalty and bravery, Raja Man Singh was rewarded by Emperor Akbar with the post of Governor of Bengal in March 1594. As a result, Saeed Khan, who was earlier the governor of Bengal, was transferred to Bihar. In this era, Amber rose to prominence as one of the most well known and thriving semi-autonomous states in the Mughal Empire. When Man Singh became the Governor of Bengal, Mughal control over the region was weak and unstable. The area was facing frequent disturbance, and the situation required a strong and capable leader. His appointment was made to bring stability and strengthen Mughal authority in this important province. When Raja Man Singh reached Tanda, he found the province in a state of serious disorder and decline, requiring immediate attention and reforms. The swampy areas near the Bay of Bengal, the thick forests of the Sundarbans, and the nearby hills gave the rebel Afghans a safe place to hide and plan attacks against the Mughal rule in Bengal. Many Afghans who had been forced out of Bihar and Orissa also took shelter in Bengal. Because of their growing presence and activities, the region began to be seen as an Afghan stronghold within India, often called "Afghanistan in Hindustan"<sup>44</sup>. At first Raja Man Singh decided to shift the capital of Bengal from Tanda to Akmahal in November 1595. Akmahal was located on the bank of the Ganges and protected by hills, making it a safe and strategic place for military actions against the Afghans. After becoming the new capital, Akmahal was renamed Akbarnagar in honour of Emperor Akbar. After setting up the new capital at Akbarnagar, Raja Man Singh began a campaign in December 1595 to suppress the Afghan rebels in eastern Bengal. In 1596, Raja Man Singh successfully brought the state of Cooch Bihar under the influence of the Mughal Empire.

Raja Man Singh faced personal sorrow during his service. In March 1597, his son Himmat Singh died at Diarrhoea in Bengal. Later that year, his second son Durjan Singh<sup>45</sup> also passed away. The death of Isa Khan (one of the most formidable and persistent Afghan leaders in Bengal) in September 1599, provided a significant respite to Raja Man Singh. Isa Khan had long posed a serious challenge to Mughals, and his passing marked a turning point in the political landscape of Bengal. With the immediate threat of rebellion diminished, Man Singh found the opportunity to temporarily withdraw from active administration in the province. He chose to reside in Ajmer during this period of rest, a location close to

<sup>42</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.III, p.878

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p.879

<sup>44</sup> Rajiv Nain Prasad, *Raja Man Singh of Amber*, p.90

<sup>45</sup> H.Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol.III, p.1093

Amber, his ancestral homeland. This decision not only allowed him proximity to his native state but also offered a place of relative peace after years of military and administrative engagements in Bengal. Raja Man Singh entrusted the administration of Bengal to his eldest son, Kuar Jagat Singh, during his absence. This decision was formally approved by Emperor Akbar. However, the arrangement was short-lived, as Jagat Singh passed away in October 1599 due to excessive drinking. His untimely death was both a personal loss for Man Singh and a disruption to the governance of the province. Grieved by the death of his son, Raja Man Singh chose not to return to Bengal and remained in Ajmer. He appointed his grandson, Maha Singh (son of Jagat Singh) as his deputy in Bengal, placing him under the guardianship of his brother, Pratap Singh, to oversee the administration.

The Afghan factions in Bengal, led by Usman Khan (son of Qutlu Khan) and supported by Sajawal Khan, openly rebelled against Mughal authority and managed to capture certain imperial territories. In response, Maha Singh and Pratap Singh advanced with a Mughal force in April 1600 to quell the uprising. However, a major battle occurred near Bhadrak, where the imperial forces suffered a significant defeat at the hands of the rebels.

During the Afghan rebellion in Bengal, Abdul Razzaq Mamuri, the paymaster general of the Bengal army, was captured by Afghan rebels during the uprising<sup>46</sup>. On hearing of this news, Akbar ordered Raja Man Singh, then in Ajmer, to proceed to Bengal. Man Singh first visited his jagir at Rohtas to organize a strong force. In February, 1601, he confronted the rebels at Sherpur Atai in Murshidabad and inflicted a decisive defeat on them. Mir Abdul Razzaq was rescued from the Afghan rebels, but it required great effort and difficulty. After defeat, the Afghan rebels gave many elephants to the Mughal governor and promised to stay loyal to the empire. Man Singh defeated Kedar Rai, the ruler of Dacca, and made Dacca his headquarter. From there, he led campaigns against the rebels. By 1604, he had successfully crushed the rebellion and restored Mughal control<sup>47</sup>.

In August 1604, Emperor Akbar recalled Raja Man Singh from Bengal to the imperial court. He arrived at the court in March 1605. Impressed by his work, Akbar conferred upon him a high Mansab of 7000 Zat and 6000 Sawar. In recognition of his distinguished service, he was also honored with the title of Mirza Raja.

### Conclusion:

Raja Man Singh, the Rajput ruler of Amber, played a very important role in strengthening the Mughal Empire. He joined the Mughal court during Akbar's reign, not because of weakness, but as a smart political decision. By joining the Mughals, he secured his kingdom and gained high respect in the imperial court. He became one of Akbar's most trusted generals and administrators. Man Singh served the Mughal Empire in many important regions like Kabul, Bihar, and Bengal. In Kabul, he controlled the Afghan tribes and secured the northwest frontier. In Bihar, he handled local disturbances, and in Bengal, he faced strong Afghan rebellions and established Mughal control. He also led military campaigns in Ranthambore, Orissa, and the Deccan. Through his dedication and leadership, Man Singh helped build a strong relationship between the Mughals and the Rajputs. He showed that loyalty and bravery could bring peace, power, and respect. His career shows how regional leaders like him helped shape the Mughal Empire into a powerful and united state. Besides giving military help to the Mughals, in 1607 Raja Man Singh also strengthened his ties with the royal family by marrying his granddaughter, the

<sup>46</sup> H. Beveridge, *The Akbarnama of Abu-l-Fazl (tr.)*, vol. III, p. 1174

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, pp. 808-809

daughter of Jagat Singh, to Emperor Jahangir. This marriage helped build a closer relationship between the Rajputs and the Mughals. Although Raja man Singh established military and matrimonial relations with Mughals. But he was a true devotee of Hinduism, he does not change any of his religious belief for Mughals. Emperor Akbar wanted Raja Man Singh, one of his most trusted officers, to accept his new religious path called Din-i-Ilahi. However, Man Singh did not agree to join it. Some Muslim saints also tried to convert him to Islam, but they were not successful. Even though he worked closely with the Mughal emperor and served in high positions, he stayed true to his own religion. This shows that while he was loyal to the Mughals in politics and service, he kept his religious beliefs strong and unchanged.