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# The end of the Muslim Sultanate era in Kashmir

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**Abstract**--This paper will enumerate the last days of the rule of the Sultanate of Kashmir, which was originally founded in very tough conditions by a Swati Muslim commander, Shah Mir, later known as Sultan Shams din Shah Mir, and was counted to be the second Muslim king and first Sultan, who, according to all estimates, was considered the most important figure among the later Lahora nobility. Hindu rule usually ended with the defeat of Kota Rani at Inderkot Safapora, in 1339 A.D., which commenced the aeon of Sultans of Kashmir that lasted till 1561 A.D. We saw the remarkable development under the rule of many Shahmiris like Shahubdin, Sultan Sikander, and Zainul Abedin, which, by their sensibility or broad perspective, enhanced Kashmir's position from just a province to a country and tied it to other states of the epoch.

**Keywords**---Shahmiri's, Zain-ul-Abidin, Succession, Religion, Assault, and Incompetence.

## Introduction

Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin's demise in 1470 A.D. marked the end of the great Sultanate period, which had started in 1339 A.D. with Shah Mir's accession to the throne. The Shah Mir dynasty's empire had reached its zenith under Zain-ul-Abidin, but within a century of his passing, the Shah Mir dynasty broke down. The institutions and procedures that were crucial to the nation's cultural character could be seen as degrading. The administrative policies that had started to take hold under Sultan ZainulAbidin's rule could not be reversed by his feeble successors and the succession battles only made matters worse. The army was also weakened by the deaths of talented commanders. As had been the case with their disciples, neither significant military developments nor technological advancements were made. The political atmosphere in Kashmir foreshadowed the Sultanate's glory days. It is difficult to blame the decline of any empire on a single event, such as the existence of incompetent heirs. Generally speaking, a variety of factors, including this one, can cause an arrangement to fail. Satisfactorily, the failure of the Sultanate in Kashmir is also attributed to Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin's ineffective successors. According to the chronology of events, however, the following factors caused the Sultanate period in Kashmir to fall.

## **Material and Methods**

The data for this study was gathered through primary and secondary sources. The objectivity of historical and contemporary writings has been used to develop a study's framework and arrive at an unbiased conclusion—the data gathered in order to analyze the End of the Sultanate Era in Kashmir.

## **Research objectives**

- To explain the Shiia Sunni religion controversies and weak successors which made the sultanate disintegrated.
- To discuss and analyze the factors responsible for the downfall of Sultanate Era in Kashmir.

## **Discussion and Result**

### **Politics and the nobility's responsibility**

A succession of feeble and ineffectual leaders caused a corrupt nobility to emerge, which ultimately led to civil wars and the eventual loss of the nation's independence. Shah Mir was responsible for the rise of the Chaks and other families. The conditions led to the birth of the Raines and Sayyid families. Under weak leaders, aristocrats' private ambitions openly influenced politics and governmental action. The Baihaqi Sayyids' desire for dominance led to civil wars between Mohammad Shah and Fatah Shah. The country was thrust into a triangular conflict between the Merges, the Reshi, and the Chaks when the Sayyid was expelled. Their mutual competition, jealousy, and internecine strife plunged the country into chaos and turmoil.

Dr M.L. Kapoor: The history of Kashmir after Hasan Shah is the history of nobles rather than kings. In a deal with the Kashmir nobles, Mirza Haider Doulat divided the land among three people; one was given to Mirza Haider, the second to Abdal Magre, and the third to Regi Chak. They used to split the land amongst themselves, leaving the Sultan with only the notional profits from crown land. Due to the duplicitous influence exerted by the Kashmiri nobility and their contempt for the Kashmiri people, Yaqub Shah was unable to expel the Mughals. The country's political stability as well as that of the ruling family was shattered by the effects, which did not become apparent until after Zain-ul-death. Abidin's As a result, the nation's strong military rulers started interfering in its internal affairs more vehemently. After Zain-ul-death, Abidin's effects destroyed both the ruling dynasty and the political stability of the nation.

### **Lack of a Fixed Law of Successions**

Lack of a Permanent Law of Successions: Shams-ud-Din had adopted a hereditary succession plan by designating his eldest son Jamsheed as his successor. The civil war between the two factions began when his younger son, Ala-ud-Din, refused to acknowledge Jamsheed as Sultan and sought the throne for himself. Shihab-ud-Din chose his brother Qutub-ud-Din over his son. Zain-ul-Abidin designated his younger brother Mahmud as his heir apparent, following tradition.

But before he passed away, he designated Haji Khan, his second son, as his heir. All of his sons infuriated him; therefore, he later declined to name a successor, leaving the throne vacant and vulnerable to military force. Zain-ul-Abidin's grandson, Zain-ul-Hasan Shah, wanted his cousin Fateh Shah to succeed him. The nation's civil wars, which lasted for about fifty years, were influenced by all of these factors. Similar tactics were used by the Chaks to allow the Mughals to conquer Kashmir. As a result, the severe and protracted succession wars stifled the nation's economic advancement and political stability

### **Foreign Invasion**

The sultanate's numerous foreign invasions were another significant political factor that contributed to the sultanate's fall. When Hasan Shah passed away, a gathering of nobles for the first time designated his young son Mohammad Shah as his successor. But eventually, Fateh Shah, who had the support of other members of the elite, overthrew Mohammad Shah three times. He eventually made it to Skinder Lodi's court and requested his help. In 1540 A.D., rival Kaji Chak enlisted Sher Shah Suri's assistance as Abadal Magre and Regi Chak led the Mughal army under Mirza Haider Doulat. Yousuf Shah travelled to Akbar's court as well and asked for help, which he was granted. As a result, Emperor Akbar was given the chance to conquer Kashmir. This was done in 1586. Princes and nobles from Kashmir have therefore grown accustomed to visiting the Delhi court. This invitation was disastrous for the monarchy because Mirza Haider Doulat used a divide-and-rule strategy to seize control of Kashmir and rule for over ten years. These foreign incursions destroyed the nation's economy. Due to crop destruction and decreased tillage, famine was an unavoidable outcome. Given how desperate things were, men and women roamed the streets in hunger.

### **The Legacy of Weak and under skilled Rulers**

The control of every nation, city, town, or empire depends on its rulers; if the ruler is in good form, the nation or empire will run smoothly. The Shahmir dynasty reached its pinnacle during Zain-Ui-Abidin's 50 years of rule, which was a model of respect in every way. He was a champion of good governance who supported the arts, architecture, and literature, as well as agriculture, manufacturing, trade, and commerce. He also revived the policy of religious toleration. These reasons led to him being referred to by Kashmir's as Bad Shah, and he is still remembered today. But after he passed away, the empire lost a figurehead who was remembered, and Zain-ul-demise Abidin's returned the nation to its pre-Muslim era condition, with sporadic periods of peace. Then came a string of feeble and ineffective rulers who, in contrast to their forebears, lacked wisdom and foresight and spent more time taking pleasure in harming than doing the duties required of them by their position.

The immediate successors of Zain-ul-Abidin, Haider Shah and Hasan Shah, were opulent drunkards who spent most of their time in harm's way and listening to music. The ineffectiveness of these rulers left the monarchy and crown in shambles. Ghazi Shah Chak eventually deposed the last nominal ruler of the Shahmir dynasty and ascended the throne himself. "It was like a severe disease of

the throat, compounded by the scorching of the foot," Shrivara recalled the struggle between Fate Shah and Mohammed Shah with much remorse.

### **The rise of a new religious sect**

Until the 15th century, Sunnis governed Kashmir, with Shiites having little influence both politically and numerically. However, Shiism gradually gained strength after the arrival of Shamas-ud-din Iraqi in 1502 A.D., and with the preservation of the Chaks, they increased their political clout. Sunni Ulmas, who had previously controlled political and religious activities, were more envious and hostile. As a result, while in positions of authority, each sector used state apparatus to try to limit the influence of the other, which frequently led to sectarian conflicts. These sectarian conflicts seem to have constituted an urgent motivation for Akbar to achieve his goal of conquering Kashmir, following the appeal of some disgruntled nobles who were fed up with Yaqub Shah Chak's discriminatory policy.

### **Economic factors**

The present day is an economic day, and the economy plays an important function. The economy is not just money that we can count on in every element of life; it is also an item that has an economy valve and can be employed in commerce and other functions. Another element that contributed to the sultanate's demise was the economy. Since ancient times, the valley of Kashmir has been divided into a number of administrative entities known as parganas, each of which was led by a distinct officer and staffed by others. All of these units' commanders were tasked with maintaining law and order as well as military units. They must deposit the surplus to the centre after realizing the land and other revenue and deducting the expenses incurred in maintaining all of these things, as well as their own spending. During the time period under consideration, the same system was in use.

As a result, a state's most influential person who was entrusted with the civil and military administration of the area assigned to him and who had to collect the area's revenues, maintain a military contingent, and pay a fixed sum to the state is known as a Jagirdar, and the land assigned to him is known as Jagir. Shrivara, who considers one of them uncontested masters of his estates, recognizes the power and status of the jagirdar over his jagir. He was subservient to the royal authority and accountable to him for his actions as a Jagir administrator. Yet, he did not own the Jagir territory. Because the nobles were true rulers and the Sultans were puppets in their hands during this period, the jagirdani structure of the country was drastically altered by the weakness that quickly entered into the Sultan's body politics following the death of Zainul Abdin. They forced the monarch to write the three letters of sanction on the document, according to Shrivara.

The most significant shift in the Jagirdari system was that during periods of weak monarchs, the Jagirdars became essentially self-governing. And independence achieved its pinnacle when the weak rulers excused them from paying income to the central authority, which was an important manner of administration. This

strengthened the Jagirdari at the expense of central power, decentralized administration, depleted state finances, and paralyzed the country's military strength, as Khalisa land was the only source of money, which was insufficient for the country's efficient management.

Another flaw in the Jagirdari system that weakened the Sultanate was the system of entrusting the power of maintaining the army to the Jagirdars rather than building a strong military force to be used against internal disturbances and external invasions. This system severely weakened the country's military strength and led to internal and external invasions. The Jagirdar's military was not loyal to the Sultan, but rather to his jagirdar. It was out of the Sultan's control. This force was only loyal to the centre if the jagirdar was also faithful to the centre. The jagirdar's military was far larger than the Sultan's troops. As a result, when a Jagirdar rose up in revolt, the Sultan found it impossible to put down the insurrection until another Jagirdar came to his aid. As a result, it made the centre fully reliant on the Jagirdars for military and income supplies, particularly when the country was threatened by a foreign invasion, but the reaction came from the Jagirdars to the centre when the relationship between the two was good. This was the nobles' command policy following Zain-ul-death; Abidin's and the Jagirdars' policy not only weakened the kingdom, but also invented foreign forces to invade the valley.

The Jagirdari system also made the masses' lives extremely difficult, particularly during the period when Jagirdars were free of central authority and their terms of office were extremely short in light of the country's recurrent civil wars. They oppressed the country, according to Shrivara, much as the twelve sons oppressed the earth with their overwhelming heat at the end of Kalpa.

### **Conclusion and Findings**

All of the aforementioned circumstances contributed to the end of the Sultanate period. He was motivated by imperialistic ambitions and a need to protect the empire from external invasions. The Mughals brought in an era of peace and tranquility, social and sectarian harmony, and the promotion of industry and trade, and linked Kashmir with the rest of India and other lands, leading to tremendous economic opportunities. The conflict among the nobles, the slackness of the administration, the reduction of revenue, and the exploitation of the populace, both economically and religiously, offered an opportunity for Akbar to capture Kashmir in 1586, and Kashmir lost its independence and became part of the Mughal dominion. This system severely weakened the country's military strength and led to internal and external invasions. The Jagirdar's military was not loyal to the Sultan, but rather to his jagirdar, who was out of the Sultan's control. This made the centre fully reliant on the Jagirdars for military and income supplies. The Jagirdari system also made the masses' lives extremely difficult. This was the nobles' command policy following Zain-ul-Abidin's death; the jagirdars' policy not only weakened the kingdom but also invented foreign forces to invade the valley.

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