CHAPTER II

ASAF KHAN VIS-A-VIS NUR JAHAN’S JUNTA (1611-1621)

Asaf khan started his political carrier in 1611 immediately after the marriage of her sister Nur Jahan, with the title of Itiqad Khan and was presented with a sword by Emperor Jahangir himself. In 1612 his daughter was married to Prince Khurram. His mansab was increased to 1000 zat and 300 sawars in the same year. In 1613 it was raised up to 3000 zat and 500 sawars. He was confirmed with the title of Asaf Khan in 1614 and his mansab was raised to 3000 zat and 1000 sawars. (See Appendix C)

Nur Jahan

As we know that Nur Jahan was born on a caravan travelling from Teheran to India with his parents. Initially she married to Ali Quli Sher Afgha. After his murder in Bengal, Mehrunnisa and his daughter were sent to the

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3Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, vol. 1, p. 260; Maa’sir-i Jahangiri, p. 151; Tazkirat-ul Umarai, p. 17; Iqbalnama, p. 79
4Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, vol. 1, p. 260; Maa’sir-ul Umar, vol. 1, p. 28
6Iqbalnama p. 54,
Mughal court. Mehrunnis got married with Jahangir in May, 1611. After the marriage she got the title of Nur Mahal and then Nur Jahan due to her devotion, ability and charm. Nur Jahan succeeded in establishing her influence at the court shortly after her marriage. She occupied the most exalted position at the court never before occupied by any Mughal queen. She was fortunate enough for belonging to the family of Itimad-ud Daulah which had closely been associated with the Mughals and had served on important position for a quite long period. On account of this Nur Jahan found the full support of her family at hand. In concentrating the power she needed not the immediate

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9 Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, p. 129; Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri, vol. 3, p. 512; Maa’sir-i Jahangiri, pp. 65, 72; Maa’sir-ul Umara, vol. 1, p. 129; Thomas Roe in, European Travellers, Under the Mughal (1580-1627) ed. M. A. Ansari, Adara-i-Adbiyat-i-Delhi, 1975, p. 74, writes that ‘Khurram, Nurjahan, Asaf Khan and Itimad-ul Daulah were “Supreme” and governed “all”’. William Hawkins in his Early Travels in India says, ‘Ghiyas Beg, father of the celebrated Nurjahan, (Whom Jahangir had just espoused) was made vizir… His son, known later as Asaf Khan, was also in great favour.’ Pp. 68, 94

10 Pelsaert described about Nur Jahan’s power and position and said- ‘she had made Jahangir a captive of her arts or of her persuasive tongue.’ She took the full advantage of it and “enriched herself with super abundant treasures.” She had secured “more than a royal position for herself.” Her supporters were well rewarded and the king ruled the country in name only, she and Asaf Khan held ‘the kingdom firmly in their hands.” Emperor’s orders were not considered unless they were approved by her. She had built palaces, pleasures gardens and sarais in all directions ‘to establish an enduring reputation.’ Pelsaert, p. 53. At another place Pelsaert again emphasized – ‘If anybody obtained an audience and spoke to the Emperor he heard him alright, but never gave a definite reply, unless he consulted Asaf khan, who referred it to his sister; the queen any one of them ‘who obtains a favour must thank to them for it, and not the king.’ Not only a hold on Imperial affairs, Nur Jahan also had great control over the person of Emperor, Pelsaert said – ‘When the king comes home in the evening from hunting, he takes his seat in his Ghusalkhana. Everyone leaves when the last cup has been drunk, and the king goes to bed … the queen comes with the female slaves, and they undress him, chafing and fondling him as if he were a little
support of the other nobles. Moreover, as Nur Jahan was a lady full of wisdom and a sincere beloved to her husband she very soon won the confidence of her husband, Jahangir. A considerable number of sources confirm that Nur Jahan, his family members and those who were in her good faith enjoyed great power and prestige at Jahangir's court.\(^{11}\) Coins were struck in her name.\(^{12}\) She set in the *jharokha* and issued order and *nishan* on different issues.\(^ {13}\)

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\(^{11}\) *Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri*, vol. 3, p. 529; *Maa’sir-i Jahangiri*, pp. 143-44; *Zakhirat-ul Khawanin*, p. 14; *Maa’sir-ul Umara*, vol. pp. 132-33; Pelsaert who stayed in Agra some time, remarks that Nur Jahan approved all orders (farmers) and grants of appointment that went out under the king’s name ordering her own name, ‘Nur Jahan, the queen Begam,’ to be jointly attached to the imperial signature. She controlled all promotions and demotions and the orders that issued from the royal government. He again says- ‘many misunderstand result, for the king’s orders or grants of appointment, etc., are net certainties, being of no value until they have been approved by the Queen’ Terry (p. 406) also said that- ‘Jahangir’s most beloved wife Nur Jahan made such a thorough conquest on his affections that she engrossed almost all his love, (and) did what she pleased in the government of that Empire.’

\(^{12}\) Pelsaert on p. 29, said that-‘very little trade, however, is done with these gold coins, seen that most of them come from the king’s treasures, and further the great men hoard them, and search for their *khazana* (treasures); Manucci, vol. 1, p. 157, however, said that ‘in her time these (zodiac coins) were current money.’

\(^{13}\) *Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri*, p. 25; Pelsaert, p. 29; Some of the *Nishan* issued by Nur Jahan preserved in the state Archives of Bikaner dated, 1617, see, Descriptive list of *Farman’s* and *Nishan* addressed by Mughal to prince of Rajasthan, pp. 38 and 39; For more detail see article, *Influence of Nur Jahan on Contemporary Court Politics: Some Reflection on European Accounts*’ Anis Fatima Jauhar, pub. Indian Historical Studies, vol. XI, April 2015, pp. 89-99.
A quote from a Dutch Chronicles suggests the amount of power she enjoyed—‘people with gifts and presents to the queen easily get themselves transferred from one province to another’.\textsuperscript{14} Bernier noted that- Jahangir thought only of his pleasures and left the management of public affairs to his wife, he used to say, and whose transcendent abilities rendered her competent to govern the Empire without the interference of her husband.\textsuperscript{15} Nur Jahan issued Imperial \textit{farmans} concerning the financial and legal affairs. According to \textit{Iqbalnama} ‘all \textit{farmans} also receiving the imperial signature, the name of Nur Jahan, the Queen Begum, was jointly attached.’\textsuperscript{16} Every \textit{farman} that went out was stamped with the royal seal, which was usually kept under the protection of queen and therefore stored in the \textit{harem}. Nur Jahan had her own seal and, as the author of \textit{Iqbalnama} noted, ‘no grant of land was conferred upon any woman except under her [the queen’s] seal,’ and also gold coins were struck reflects her political power.\textsuperscript{17} The gold coin [\textit{muhr}] of only one \textit{tola} was called a \textit{Nurjahani}.\textsuperscript{18}

**Debates on Junta**

Beni Prasad’s \textit{History of Jahangir} has aroused a controversy among modern historians because of his hypothesis that a faction or ‘Junta’ under Nur Jahan was formed soon after her marriage with Emperor Jahangir, which

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\textsuperscript{14}\textit{A Contemporary Dutch Chronicles in Mughal India}, ed. Brij Narayan & Shri Ram, Calcutta, p. 50.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Travels in the Mogul Empire}, 1656-1668, Bernier, ed. V. A. Smith, p. 5

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri}, E&D, vol. 6, p. 405.

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri}, E&D, vol. 6, p. 405

\textsuperscript{18}\textit{Tuzuk-i Jahangiri}, vol. 1, pp. 10-12.
enjoyed unlimited powers and influence at the court.\textsuperscript{19} Itimad-ud Daulah, Asaf Khan and Prince Khurram were prominent members of this group.\textsuperscript{20} Beni Prasad also writes that the promotions and rewards in the empire entirely depended upon good-will of these bonafide members of ‘Junta’.\textsuperscript{21} According to him, because of the concentration of all powers into the hands of a these members, a large section of the nobility failed to received promotions. As a consequence, a group opposed to the ‘Junta’ also emerged.\textsuperscript{22} Beni Prasad also divided the period of Nur Jahan’s ascendancy into two periods: first- from 1611 to 1622; and second from 1622 to 1627.\textsuperscript{23}

Nurul Hasan rejected the above assumption of Beni Prasad. He is of the view that historically the period between- 1611-1620 should not be studied as a period of Nur Jahan’s ‘Junta’. He completely disagree with the view of Beni Prasad that the court of Jahangir was broadly divided into two opposite groups like one consisted of the Nur Jahan and her ‘Junta’ and its allies, and the other of those who opponents of the ‘Junta’. The spokesman of the opponents was Mahabat Khan and due to that he failed to receive promotions in his rank and important assignments. He had also provided a long list of those Mughal nobles

\textsuperscript{22}Beni Prasad, \textit{History of Jahangir}, pp. 171- 80.
\textsuperscript{23}Beni Prasad, \textit{History of Jahangir}, 1962, pp. 171- 80; Beni Prasad said–‘in the first phase ‘junta’ was maintained but in latter phase after the death of Nur Jahan’s father and mother or marriage of Shahriyar ‘junta’ was broke up.’
who, according to Beni Prasad did not belong to the ‘Junta’, but received regular promotions.\(^2^4\)

Irfan Habib with the help of contemporary sources again tried to prove the extent of power and position of Nur Jahan and her family enjoyed during Jahangir’s reign. Although he does not totally agree with Beni Prasad’s ‘Junta’ theory, but to a certain length supports the view that Nur Jahan and her family not only enjoyed considerable power from 1611 to 1620, they occupied significant position even before the marriage between Jahangir and Nur Jahan took place.\(^2^5\) Although Nurul Hasan rejects the theory of Beni Prasad saying that this theory is based on few European sources like that of Thomas Roe, but at the same time he himself based his agreement on few other European sources that Nur Jahan enjoyed immense influence and power from1611 to 1620. Simultaneously, he totally disagrees with the idea of any factional alliance between Nur Jahan and Shahjahan. This hypothesis was also not accepted by Habib. He also mentions that Shahjahan got promoted due to his being a Prince, not due to Nur Jahan’s favours.

**Possible causes of the rise of Asaf Khan and his Family**

The death of Akbar in 1605 broadly divided the Mughal nobility into two distinct factions— supporters of prince Salim and those who wished to enthrone Prince Khusrau. The contemporary sources are silent about the role played by Asaf Khan’s family members on the eve of Akbar’s death. It appears


\(^{2^5}\) *The Family of Nurjahan during Jahangir’s Reign, a Political Study*, Proceedings, Indian History Congress, Allahabad Session, 1965
that the members of Itimad-ud Daulah’s family initially didn’t become a party to any of the two claimants to the Mughal throne and decided to watch the situation very carefully. Somehow, family of Itimad-ud Daulah received a setback and lost the confidence of Jahangir because of the involvement of Nuruddin, son of Ghayasuddin Ali Asaf Khan, (Brother-i-law of Abul Hasan Asaf Khan) and Muhammad Sharif, the elder brother of Asaf Khan, in a conspiracy was hatched by some of the nobles with Khusrau to murder of Jahangir with the help of four hundred supporters in 1607. The incident has been recorded in Tuzuk-i Jahangiri in detail which says that, ‘it proved abortive however, Diwan of Khurram Waisi revealed that nearly 500 men at Khusrau’s instigation got an opportunity to carry out the designs of the enemies and evil wishes towards the king. He told it to Khurram who immediately reported it to Jahangir. It is worthy of note that Itimad-ud Daulah and many of his family members were arrested and after that received no attention of the Emperor for a long period of about four years (1606 -1610). Contrary to this we find that Jahangir gave rapid promotions to his close friends and associates who had stood loyal during his princehood as well as during the accession crisis. For example Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, Mahabat Khan, Abdullah Khan, Khan-i Jahan

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Lodi and Khan-i Alam, Qutubudin Khan Koka, Sharif Khan, Mirza Jani Beg, Bir Singh Dev Bundela, etc. Because of the indifferent attitude of many leading nobles of Akbar at the time of his accession Jahangir lost his faith in them such as- Abdur Rahim Khan-i Khana, Man Singh, Abdur Razzaq Numani, Khawaja Abdullah Naqshbandi, Abdur Rahman, son of Abul Fazl, etc.

Jahangir after occupying the throne was faced with the problem of consolidation of empire which was left by Emperor Akbar. This forced him pay attention to the long continuing dispute with the Rana of Mewar, and the problem created in the Deccan by Malik Ambar. Bengal had faced with serious challenges from the local Hindu (Maghs) and Afghan zamindars. Similarly Qandahar problem was also a major problem for both the Emperors Akbar as well as Jahangir.

Period between 1606 -1610 had also been crucial from the view point of expedition sent in different directions. Unfortunately most of these campaigns ended in a failure. Some of these are summed up in the following passage.

**Expedition against Rana of Mewar (1608-1609)**

From the very beginning of the establishment of the Mughal empire in India the house of Mewar had been a great challenge to the Mughals. Emperor Akbar had also failed to bring the Sisodias under his complete suzerainty. One of the dreams of Jahangir after ascending the throne was to bring Mewar under the orbit of the Mughals. Because of this, shortly after his accession the Emperor in November 1605 sent a large army under Prince Parwez against
Mewar expedition with specific instructions that in case the ruler of Mewar along with his son Karan Singh agreed to accept the overlordship of the Mughals and accepted to join the Mughal service, his state was not to be invaded and plundered. Before any conclusive battle was to be fought the revolt of Khusrau forced the Emperor to recall the expedition.

For about two years Jahangir was not in a position to pay serious attention towards Mewar because of his preoccupation with Khusrau’s revolt and problem of Qandahar which was under constant threat from the Shah of Persia. It was only in March 1608 that Jahangir again decided to send a campaign to solve the Mewar problem. With high expectations Mahabat Khan was appointed to lead the expedition against Mewar. A number of experienced officers and a large well equipped army consisting of 12000 cavalry, 500 ahadis and 2000 infantry with heavy artillery were sent to assist Mahabat Khan. About 20 Lakhs of rupee were sanctioned to be spent in due course of the expedition. As usual, to boost up the morale of the army, a good number of officers were awarded with robes of honours and posts. Mahabat Khan, who was expected to bring fruitful result, was promoted to the rank of 3000/2500 on

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30 Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, p. 11.
this occasion and dispatched to Mewar from Agra. After arriving to his destination Mahabat Khan did not favour of initiating warfare immediately in the territory of the Rana rather he decided to arrest his family first and press the Rana hard to surrender before the imperial army. But he came to know that the family of Rana was hiding somewhere in Jodhpur. In response to his objectives, Mahabat Khan seized the *paragana* of Sojat from Raja Sur Singh, the ruler of Jodhpur and assigned it to Rathor Chandrasen on the condition to inquire into the matter and inform about the family of the Rana. Mahabat Khan now advanced from Mohi to Utala. He completely defeated his adversaries on the way. A number of police stations were established and officers were appointed. After arriving Utala he decided to organize his army.

Maharana Amar Singh reached to Udaipur from hilly tracts and ordered his supporters to surprise the Mughal army by adopting guerrilla technique of warfare. This indicates that the Rajputs army was not in a position to fight the mighty Mughal forces in the open field. Consequently, large number of the soldiers and *sardars* of the Rana were killed and imprisoned. Raja Kisan Singh and his contingent alone put to death about twenty Rajputs leaders and imprisoned about 300 of the Rajput soldiers. As a result the Mughal control

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34 *Vir Vinod*, vol. 2, pp. 224-261.
extended to Girwa and the Rana finding his position insecure and weak, again took shelter in the hilly region of Rajasthan.\footnote{Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, p. 72; Maa’sir-i Jahangiri, p. 118; Vir Vinod, vol. 2, p. 72; Beni Prasad, pp. 228-29.}

The details pertaining to the above victory of the Mughals against the Rana till the recall of Mahabat Khan from Mewar to the court in June 1609 are not clearly mentioned in the Persian contemporary sources. From \textit{Tuzuk} we come to know simply that Mahabat Khan was recalled because his services were required at the court.\footnote{Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, p. 74.} However, a story recorded in \textit{Vir Vinod} depicts the defeat of Mughal army at the hand of Rajput soldiers in a night attack.\footnote{If the information provided in \textit{Vir Vinod} for the recall of Mahabat Khan is taken into account, then we can say that despite their defeat and heavy losses the supporters of the Rana did not lose their courage completely. Now they decided to reverse the situation not through war but by adopting different method of attacking the Mughal camp in the night with a well-organized trick. For this, the credit goes to Bagh Singh and Megha Singh, the two leaders of the Rajputs, who during one night sent their soldiers in the disguise of melon-sellers with their buffaloes loaded with artillery. This created confusion in the Mughal camp. Taking the advantage of this confusion the Rajputs sent three hundred well trained soldiers in the night to attack the Mughal army. Mahabat Khan was forced to retreat leaving his baggage and other materials of war at the mercy of the Rajputs who plundered them. The campaign thus ended not in a complete defeat but a confused rout of the Mughals who could not meet the guerrilla tactics of the enemy. \textit{Vir Vinod}, vol. 2, p. 225.}

\section*{Failure of Deccan expedition (1608-1611)}

Emperor Akbar had failed to settle the affairs of the Deccan completely on account of the revolt of Prince Salim.\footnote{Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, p. 15; Muntakhab-ul Lubab, vol. 1, p. 216} After Akbar’s death Jahangir also did not take any serious step towards the Deccan problem immediately due to internal problems. Taking advantage of the preoccupation of the Mughals in dealing with the court politics, Malik Ambar, the leader of Ahmadnagar, not
only strengthened the military position of Nizamshahi kingdom but also reoccupied all the places which had earlier become parts of the Mughal Empire.\textsuperscript{39}

This was an open challenge to the Mughal prestige. Because of this, immediately after the suppression of Khusrau’s revolt, Jahangir turned his attention against Malik Ambar’s activities. A large army under Abdur Rahim Khan Khana was sent to the Deccan in 1608. Besides, Princes Parwez under the guardianship of Asaf Khan and a number of other Mughal mansabdars were also appointed to assist the imperial army.\textsuperscript{40}

However, the Mughal army failed to bring any fruitful result importantly because of their mutual misunderstanding and Khan-i Khana’s alleged secret alliance with Malik Ambar. This gave a heavy blow to the wishes of Jahangir. Again, Ahmadnagar came into the hands of Nizamshahi rulers which had been under the Mughals from Akbar’s time.\textsuperscript{41}

In December 1610 Khan-i Azam (Mirza Aziz Koka) was appointed to settle the Deccan problems.\textsuperscript{42} Mahabat Khan who had previously been recalled from Mewar and was at the court was also sent along with Khan-i Azam. He

\textsuperscript{39} Ma\'asir-ul Umara, vol. 1, p. 111, vol. 3, p. 8


\textsuperscript{42} Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, pp. 86, 88, 89; Ma\'asir-ul Umara, vol. 1, pp. 703, 687, 719; Ma\'asir-i Jahangiri, pp. 132-33; Muntakhab-ul Lubab, vol. 1, p. 262.
was promoted to the rank of 4000/3500\textsuperscript{43} at this time. Being one of the most faithful nobles of Jahangir he was given specific instructions to make the Mughal officers appointed in Burhanpur fully aware about their responsibilities and the appointment of Khan-i Azam to lead the Deccan campaign. They were also instructed to discover the causes of the successive defeats of the Mughals, to encourage the nobles to perform their duties with full devotion and sincerity and to inquire about the actual number of the troopers of the officers serving in the Deccan. He fully organized the imperial army and returned to the court at Agra on 23\textsuperscript{rd} June 1611 along with Khan-i Khana.\textsuperscript{44} Mahabat Khan submitted his report to the Emperor. Somehow, consistent efforts of Jahangir to settle the Deccan affair failed substantially because of Malik Ambar and internal dissentions of the Mughal officers.\textsuperscript{45}

Jahangir now decided to bring the Deccan under his control once and forever.\textsuperscript{46} To execute his plan successfully he appointed Mahabat Khan in 1615 to lead the Deccan campaign. Other officers like Khan-i Jahan and Suraj Singh were also ordered to assist Mahabat Khan in this venture. At the time of departure Mahabat Khan as usual was given a robe of honour by the Emperor. On this occasion an additional mansab of 1700 du aspa sih aspa was added to his mansab, but later on this conditional rank was taken away. Mahabat Khan

\textsuperscript{43}Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, pp. 88-89.

\textsuperscript{44}Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, pp. 88-89; Maa’ir-i Jahangiri, pp. 133-34; Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri, vol. 3, p. 526; Basatin-us Salatin, p. 271.

\textsuperscript{45}Beni Prasad, p. 135.

proceeded to the Deccan with a grand army and heavy artillery. The Emperor sanctioned rupees thirty lacs to be spent in due course of struggle in the Deccan.\textsuperscript{47}

Bengal problem (1605-1611)

Jahangir after accession looked the problem of consolidation and areas which were occupied in Bengal had faced with serious challenges from the local Hindu (Maghs) and Afghan zamindars. First of all he appointed Qutubuddin Kokah in 1606 at place of Raja Man Singh as governor of Bengal. But he died after one year in 1607. Then Jahangir Quli Beg was appointed as governor of Bengal in 1607. He also died within year due to his old age. On the death of Jahangir Quli Beg Shaikh Alauddin entitled Islam Khan, the grandson of Shaikh Salim Chisti was appointed as governor of Bengal with the promotion of 2000 mansab.\textsuperscript{48} He after arrival at Raj Mahal in June 1608, first of all transferred capital of Bengal from Rajmahal to Dacca.\textsuperscript{49} He started campaigns against Afghans zamindars and Maghs who created problems for imposing uniform administrative system over the entire province.\textsuperscript{50} He started campaign against Musa Khan chief of zamindars (leader of twelve Bhuiyas) in 1608 and continued till July 1611 Musa Khan surrender to the Mughals.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{47} Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, p. 108; Maásir-i Jahangiri, p. 203.
\textsuperscript{48} Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, vol. 1, p. 31.
\textsuperscript{49} Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, vol. 1, p. 209.
\textsuperscript{50} History of Bengal, Roy, pp. 63-64.
\textsuperscript{51} For more detail see Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, vol. 2, pp. 27-28; Iqbalnama-i Jahangiri, p. 61; History of Bengal, Roy, pp. 63-70.
Qandahar Problem

Qandahar problem was also a major problem for both the Emperors Akbar as well as Jahangir. When Shah Abbas was engaged in Turkish war in 1606, Jahangir sent army under the command of Mirza Ghazi, son of Mirza Jani Beg Tarkhan. Early in February 1607, the Mughal force easily reached the environs of Qandahar. Shah Abbas despatched Husain Beg to assure Jahangir that he had nothing but detestation for the conduct of the ill-fated recalcitrant borderers, that he tried to repress their turbulence at the very first news and he hoped that the incident would leave no hostilities. Jahangir professed to be satisfied with these explanations, but he posted a strong command of Mirza Ghazi and left for Kabul.52

The successive failures of the Mughals at different fronts forced Jahangir to realize the importance of those nobles who had been neglected by this time due to their dubious role during his accession crisis. The result was that Asaf Khan along with others was again recognized by Jahangir for his services to the Mughal Empire.

Conclusion

The assumption that the marriage of Jahangir with Nur Jahan in 1611 proved a turning point so far as the positions of the family members of Asaf Khan were concerned, they does not seem to be very convincing. From the reading of Beni Prasad’s work and his theory of so-called ‘Nur Jahan Junta’ it

52 Tuzuk-i Jahangiri, vol. 1, p. 85-86, 90, 112; Beni Prasad, p. 160-161
appears that Nur Jahan’s relation with Jahangir was the only reason for providing ample opportunity to raise the position of Asaf Khan and other members of her family. At the same time the role of Nur Jahan who very shortly after her marriage established her full confidence in Jahangir which can also not to be overlooked. But the promotion to the high ranks and appointment to the high administrative posts of her father and brother Asaf Khan and others should not entirely be seen in this context. The position of the family of Nur Jahan during the so called Nur Jahan ‘Junta’ period (1611-1621) was also largely determined by the political expediency of the Mughal Empire. As we have discussed above that most of the expeditions of Jahangir during his early years failed due to the inexperienced nobles who had been enrolled and rapidly promoted by Jahangir to counter the old and experienced nobles of Akbar. The successive failures of the Mughals at different fronts forced Jahangir to realise the importance of those nobles who had been neglected by this time due to their dubious role during his accession crisis. The result was that Itimad-ud Daulah, Asaf Khan along with others was recognised by Jahangir for his services to the Mughal Empire. The marriage of Arjumand Bano, the daughter of Asaf Khan with Prince Khurram further facilitated his position and influence at Jahangir’s court. A thorough study of the developments taking place at the Mughal court and the empire and the role played by Asaf Khan during this period (1611-1621) clearly indicates that at different times he stood firm independently and his power and position was enhanced due to his own ability not due to his sister’s power and influence at the Mughal court.