CHAPTER - I
THE FIRST DECADE OF SULTAN MAHMUD'S REIGN

Early years of Sultan Mahmud's Life:

Sultan Mahmud was born in the year 849/October 1445 and named Fatimah. He was the grand son of Sultan Ahmad Shah. His mother was the daughter of Jam of Thatta in Sind. An interesting story of the marriage of Muhammad Shah, which indicates the relations of Sultans of Gujarat with the Bukhari Saiyyids of Batwa, is given by Sikandar. He writes that the Jam of Thatta, gave his two daughters, Bibi Mughali and Bibi Mirki, in marriage to Sultan Muhammad Shah II and Saiyyid Shah Alam, the son of famous Bukhari Saiyyid Burhan-ud-din Qutb-ud-Din of Batwa. It is stated that Bibi Mughali was fairer and as a result of the power and the prestige of the Sultan, she was given to him. This led Shah Alam to feel some bitterness and therefore he complained to his father. The father consoled his son and told him that the queen would ultimately come to him.

Incidentally, it happened so that Sultan Qutb-ud-din Ahmad Shah II succeeded his father Sultan Muhammad Shah

1. For more details "The Relations of the Saiyyids of Batwa with the Sultans of Gujarat"
2. MIRAT-I-SIKANDARI (Trans-Faridi) pp. 3, 27, (Trans Bayley) pp. 153, 156 (hereafter M.S.)
II on the throne of Gujarat. Immediately after he became hostile towards his brother Fath Khan, then a minor, because he did not wish to have a possible claimant to his throne. Hence, the designs of Sultan Qutb-ud-din, forced Bibi Mughali to seek the protection of Saiyyid Shah ' Alam for herself and her child.

Fath Khan, henceforth, was under the care of the Saiyyid but in the meanwhile Bibi Mirki, the wife of the Saint died and so Bibi Mughali was married to Saiyyid Shah ' Alam. This marriage was resented by Sultan Qutb-ud-din because he feared that this union might lead to a formidable coalition against him. Hence this fear resulted into vengeance against Fath Khan. Further, probably it was also regarded by him as an undesirable alliance for his father's widow to have made.

Various devices were used by Sultan Qutb-ud-din to secure Fath Khan. First, he tried to get at him by transferring his residence near the Saint's house. After his failure, he tried to get the Prince through his queen Rupmanjari and spies. But he did not succeed. Sikandar informs us that Prince Fath Khan was saved by the spiritual personality of Shah ' Alam.3

Sultan Qutb-ud-din did not succeed in his attempt, and after his death, he was succeeded by Da'ud Shah, who lacked the qualities of a ruler. After a brief reign of one month and sixteen days Sultan Da'ud Shah had to abdicate in favour of Fath Khan. It is interesting to note here that Malik Shuban and his followers engineered this revolt against Sultan Da'ud Shah. Malik Shuban was the follower of Shah Alam, and probably Shah Alam owing to his interest in Fath Khan and his antagonism to Qutb-ud-din Shah, might have influenced Malik Shuban to remove Da'ud Shah from the throne.

After the consent of Bibi Mughali, Prince Fath Khan was taken to the Bhadra citadel and declared the Sultan of Gujarat on Shaban 1, 863/May 25, 1458. The Sultan at this time was thirteen years old, and from this time he was known as Mahmud Shah.

Malik Shuban, other nobles and trusted persons, who helped the Sultan at the time of his accession, were rewarded with titles, jagirs and positions in the royal service.

The Political Condition of Gujarat at the time of his accession:

Since the time of Ahmad Shah I, the nobles of Gujarat were divided in several groups. During the reigns of Sultan Qutb-ud-din Shah and Da'ud Shah, this feeling became acute. The incident that followed the
accession of Sultan Mahmud Shah clearly indicates that Malik Shabban and Burhan-ul-Mulk respectively were the leaders of two rival groups. The rival nobles were jealous of each other and so this faction affected the accession of Sultan Mahmud.

Moreover, the Rajput kingdoms within Gujarat, who had accepted the overlordship of Sultan Ahmad Shah, had gradually become independent. The control of the Peninsula of Saurashtra was vital but difficult and not yet secured. This land was divided among a number of petty Rajput chiefs. Junagadh, the independent and powerful Rajput stronghold was a major challenge to the Sultans of Gujarat. Champaner, another powerful Rajput stronghold on the north-east boundary of Gujarat, was ruled by the house of Ravals.

The Conspiracy of Nobles:

After a few days of his accession, the young Sultan had to face a serious conspiracy at the hands of some of the nobles, namely; Kabir-ud-din Sultani or Burhan-ul-Mulk, Chand, the son of Ismail or Aqut-ul-Mulk; Khwajah-ul-Mulk or Hisam-ul-Mulk.

It seems that the real cause of their anxiety was the rise of Malik Shabban, Imad-ul-Mulk. Hence they thought of removing this powerful noble by misguiding the Sultan about his intentions and activities. They
informed the Sultan that Malik Shâbân was planning to dethrone him in favour of Shihâb-ûd-dîn Ahmad his own son. The Sultan, who was too young to judge this issue, immediately ordered the imprisonment of Malik Shâbân.

At night, Malik 'Abdullah, the Superintendent of Elephant Stables and a trusted servant of the Sultan approached him and told him that the conspirators intended to raise Hasan Kâhan (the Sultan's brother) in his place. The Sultan, at this information, was perplexed and sought the guidance of his mother Bibi Mughâlî. Other trusted nobles viz. Hâji Malik Qâlû and Malik 'Isânî were also called in by the Sultan.

Next morning in the durbar, the Sultan ordered Sharf-ul-mulk to present Malik Shâbân before him. The guards in charge of Malik Shâbân, being under the orders of the conspirators, did not carry out the orders. The

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4. The Persian chroniclers differ regarding this name. Sikandar writes Habib Kâhan (N.S. Trans. (F) pp. 42-44) Tabqât-i-Akbarî- Trans (De) (hereafter TA) Tarikh-i-Firistâh (hereafter TF) (Text) and Cambridge History of India III (hereafter CHI-III) write Hasan Kâhan. Firistâh writes that Hasan Kâhan was the brother of Sultan Mahmud - TF - Text, IV, II, p. 381.
Sultan then himself went to the "Tarpuliya Gate" of "Bhadra Citadel" where Malik Shāban was confined and freed him.

The servants of the disloyal nobles, finding the change in Sultan Mahmud's attitude, submitted to the Sultan while others escaped from the scene.

Sultan Mahmud masters the situation:

The nobles at the failure of their plan collected a large army and marched towards the Bhadra Citadel from the "Tin Darwazah". The Sultan on the other hand had by comparison a small number of soldiers to meet the challenge.

Some of the experienced nobles, thought it inadvisable to face a superior force and advised the Sultan to escape by way of Sabarmati and there after collecting a large army to attack the enemy. The Sultan refused to accept this suggestion and so they advised him to charge with elephants, which he did. This created confusion and disorder in the enemy force, for it was difficult for them to manoeuvre in the narrow streets against the advancing elephant force. The large army, therefore, was dispersed, while others submitted and the conspirators fled to different places.

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The Fate of the Conspirators:

Hisam-ul-Mulk fled towards his brother Rukn-ud-din, who was the Kotwal of Patan. Kabir-ud-din during his flight was killed by a Rajput Garasiya in Sabarkantha and his head was sent to the Sultan and placed on the city gates, a rather brutal custom of the age. Burhan-ul-Mulk was caught in Fathpur by an eunuch, while on his way back to Ahmedabad from Sarkhej, he was ordered to be trampled to death by an elephant. Maulana Khidra-ul-Mulk was imprisoned and sent to Dw, but was pardoned later and given a jagir at the request of Malik Shah.

The Rebellion, its causes & consequences:

The factions among the nobles was the important factor in this rebellion. The rivalry among the nobles was not an unknown thing in this age. The enmity of nobles, might have, possibly, increased during the reigns of Sultans Qutb-ud-din and Daud Shah. At the same time it may also be that the rebel nobles had possibly held high positions during the reigns of the previous two Sultans. The accession of Sultan Mahmud on the throne was victory of the rival group. The larger part of the army was under their control and the Sultan was young. So they took the advantage of this situation to overthrow their rivals.

It also appears that the nobles were of different racial origin and since this factor acted as a uniting
factor amongst them, it also led to the formation of groups.  

It is very likely, that the gradual rise of Malik Shäban, was envied by other nobles of high origin. Though he was not removed from his office in the first instance, we are informed that he willingly retired in 1461. This reason appears unconvincing for it hardly agrees with the normal attitude of the nobles of this age. The Persian chronicler informs us that he retired due to the old age. Probably this story might have been the popular one, but it does not appear to be the whole truth. The later history of Sultan Mahmud Shah indicates that after the departure of Malik Shäban, Khudawan Khan Malik Alim, Muḥafiz Khan other nobles of high origin came to power. The rise of Malik Shäban may then be a factor in this rebellion.

Another notable feature of "the insurrection of the nobles", was that the Sultan at an early age showed unusual courage intelligence and ready-wittedness which enabled him to master the situation with the limited means at his disposal. The virtues and valour, which the Sultan showed during the course of war, helped him in establishing his power over his nobles. Barring one or two stray instances, we find that the Sultan, inspite

6. MS - Trans (F) p. 86-87.
7. MS - Trans (F) pp. 86-87.
of his frequent absence from the capital, was able to maintain peace and order there.

Sultan Mahmud I may be criticised for his cruel punishments during the course of rebellion, though if his actions are to be judged in the light of circumstances, it was necessary and was demanded by the age he lived in. Besides, he was not wholly responsible for this harsh policy. It was the characteristic of the medieval age. Therefore the Sultan may be judged too harshly when he followed this common policy for maintaining peace and order.

The Distribution of Jagirs and titles:

After this event the titles and jagirs were distributed among the faithful nobles by the Sultan. Malik Shāban entitled ‘Imād-ull-Mulk was entrusted the office of the wazārat. Malik Hāji was appointed as Muhtasib, with the title of ‘Aqūd-ull-Mulk, among the others given titles were Malik Bahā-ūd-dān Tughan and Malik Iṣa Malik Sarang a noble of Rajput origin, given was the title of Mukhliś-ull-Mulk and later on known as Qiwām-ull-Mulk.

GUJARAT, MALWA & THE NIZAMSHAI STATE OF DECCAN

In 865/1461-62, the Sultan went on a hunting trip towards the South and encamped near the river Khari, a few miles from Ahmedabad. Here he received a letter from Sultan Nizām Shāh of Deccan, for assistance against
Sultan Mahmud Khalji, the ambitious ruler of Malwa, who was then on his way to Deccan, at the instigation of Nizam-ul-Mulk Gohari. Nizam-ul-Mulk Gohari, during the reign of Sultan Humayun Shah the predecessor of Nizam Shah had fled from the Deccan, to escape the anger of that Sultan and had taken shelter in Malwa. 8

Meanwhile Sultan Humayun Shah died and Nizam Shah became the Sultan with Mahmud Gawan or Khwajah Jahang, the celebrated noble of Deccan, as the regent. This gave an opportunity to Nizam-ul-Mulk Gohari to invade Deccan with the help of Mahmud Khalji of Malwa.

Sultan Mahmud Shah I acceded to the request and marched with a large army as far as Mandarbar. It is obvious that Sultan Mahmud's decision was politically motivated. Since the times of Ahmad Shah the relations of Malwa and Gujarat were not cordial. The rulers of both the kingdoms were expansionists and therefore they took opposite sides in the disputes which arose. The Malwa Sultan, for instance, Hoshang Shah, during Ahmad Shah's wars against Rajput principalities within Gujarat, helped the Rajputs. This policy of Malwa Sultans continued in the reign of Sultan Muhammad Shah, who was at war with

Reval Gangdas of Champaner. Similarly Sultan Mahmud Khalji attacked Gujarat during the reign of Sultan Qutb-ud-din Shah in 1451. 9

Strategically, it was in the interest of the Sultan of Gujarat to help Khandesh in maintaining its independence as a buffer between Malwa, Gujarat and Bahamanides, on the Southern frontier.

**The Course of the War:**

After reaching Mandarbar, Sultan Mahmud, encamped there to watch the movements of the Sultan of Malwa. Here, he received a second letter from Niẓām Shah, stating that Khwājah Jahān Turk and Sikandar Khan Bukhari, two of the Bahamani nobles, had been forced to retire with their master in the fortress of Bidar after an unsuccessful battle with the Sultan of Malwa. In this engagement Sultan Mahmud Khalji had also lost his two of his generals Mahābat Khan, the governor of Chanderi and Zahir-ul-Mulk one of his ministers. This was a serious loss for the Sultan of Malwa and hence he did not press the advantage afresh. In the meanwhile, Khwājah Jahān Turk, who commanded the centre of the army of Deccan, carried away the young Sultan in the fort of Bidar. On this, Sultan Mahmud of Malwa collected the force and besieged the fort. By this time Mahmud Gawah collected a large force to raise

the seige. According to Firishtah Sultan Mahmud Khalji gave up the seige of the fort because of the hot weather.\textsuperscript{10}

On receiving this news, Sultan Mahmud marched towards Bidar. On his way to Bidar, he received Khwajah Jahān Turk near Thalner. The meeting of Gujarat and Deccan armies at Thalner, forced Mahmud Khalji to retreat from Bidar to Mandu, for he feared the possibility of the joint attack of the armies of Gujarat and Deccan on his capital. The siege of Bidar was raised but the usual route to Malwa was closed and hence Mahmud Khalji had to retreat by the dangerous and wild Gondwanah route,\textsuperscript{11} in the course of which he and his army suffered greatly.

The expedition against Mahmud Khalji of Malwa in Deccan, according to Sikandar, was made at a heavy cost. The author states that the Sultan had to spend the whole revenue of Gujarat after the maintenance and equipments of the army. "No king had sent such forces in any direction." \textsuperscript{12}

Sultan Mahmud Khalji attacks Deccan again:

In 667/1465 A.D., Sultan Niṣām Shah again appealed to Mahmud Shah against the Malwa Sultan, who had invaded Deccan for the second time. This time Sultan Mahmud Khalji

\textsuperscript{10} TF - Trans (Briggs) IV, pp.227-49-51
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid (Text) IV, II, pp. 384-85
\textsuperscript{12} MS - Trans (F) p. 51.
had reached as far as Daulatabad. On the receipt of the letter, Sultan Mahmūd Shah, marched with a well-equipped army towards Sultanpur. On hearing the march of the Sultan of Gujarat, Sultan Mahmūd Khaljī abandoned his plan and withdrew to his capital, possibly because of the bitter experience that he had in the past. Sultan Mahmūd also returned to Ahmedabad from where he is said to have written to Sultan Mahmūd Khaljī, "your action is against the law of Islam. If you again invade Deccan, I shall on this side attack Mandu; take therefore your choice." 14

THE CONQUEST OF BAHROT, PARNERA & DUN:

In 1465, Mahmūd sent his army to Northern Konkan to capture the forts of Parnera and Barhot and the sea-port town of Daman, all of which were till then, in the hands of Rajput kings. These rulers were frequently engaged in piratical activities on the sea-coast and they attacked the Gujarat vessels.


14. MS – Trans (F) p.51

15. Persian chroniclers give these name differently Sikander writes Baradar Hill fort (MS Trans F p. 51).

On hearing the advance of the Sultan, the pirates with their leaders took refuge in the hill fort of Bahrot or Bawar. The Sultan crossed by the difficult way to Barhot or Bawar and encamped in the vicinity of the fort. After a sharp struggle, the Sultan captured the fort, forcing the enemy to submit and pay the tribute. On this acknowledgment, they were pardoned.

This episode is not very important in itself, and briefly treated by the Persian chroniclers. It is nevertheless important as it is connected with the early history of Parsis in Gujarat.

The Sack of Sanjan:

It was in the course of this expedition or perhaps in 1491, that the Sultan's generals destroyed the old Parsi colony of Sanjan and a principality of a Hindu Ruler.

15. contd. pp. 246-247). Daman is also spelt differently by them. Sikander writes Dun and Dahanu clearly. Prof. Commissariat and Haig call it Daman. If "Dun" is correct then it is wrong to identify it as Daman. Dahanu and Daman are equi-distant from Sanjan. Bawar might be the variant of Bahrot. Piristasah writes Bawar and Dun Sunder between Gujarat and Konkan, TF - (Text) IV, II, p. 385.
Jeddi Rana. This king and his Parsi subject valiantly defended Sanjan, when it was attacked by the Sultan’s general Alp Khan. The details have been recorded in Qissah-i-Sanjān, a chronicle in Persian, written by a priest Bahman Kaikobad Sanjana at Navsari in the year 1599.

The Parsis landed in India on their flight from Persia to escape the persecution of their religion by the Arab. They first settled at the port of Diu and later near Sanjan. The exiles were hospitably received by Jeddi Rana, the ruler of Sanjan and the surrounding territory.

According to the author "1,400 horsemen clad in steel armour and their leader Ardeshar led the host of Raja to war against the forces of Mahmud Begada." 16

In the beginning Alp Khan was repulsed but he obtained reinforcements and resigned to the attack. Ardeshar was wounded. Jeddi Rana and his army was completely routed. Alp Khan ravaged the town after his victory. The Parsis fled with their sacred fire to the hill fort of Barbot and from there they went to Vansda, Navsari, Bulsar

The Persian historians are silent about some events that took place during the early years of Sultan Mahmud's reign. This has been recorded in the history of Palampur State.

The independent State of Jhalore was at that time under the sway of Chauhan Rajputs. Malik Sher Khan, the leader of the Lohani Afghans, came from Bihar and was employed by the Rajput King in this Kingdom. The Chauhan Rajputs of Jhalore and the Rathods of Marwar were not on good terms. Once the Rathod king invited Visaldev Chauhan to his place and killed him. Jhalore was then brought under the Rathods of Marwar. Visaldev's widow sought the help of Malik Khurram, the Afghan, in recovering the lost kingdom. Later, this Afghan betrayed the widow and established an independent Muslim State in Jhalore in 1294 A.D. Zafar Khan, the Governor of Gujarat helped him in this plan. Hence, the relations of Gujarat with the Muslim State of Jhalore were friendly, since its inception.

17. Ibid.
In 1461, Usman Khan of Jhalore came to Gujarat and asked Sultan Mahmud to help him against his brother Malik Salar, who had seized the throne and driven him out. The Sultan kept the Prince in the capital and called the army to assemble. The Sultan was successful in recovering Jhalore. He also captured Bhinmal, Sachar, Satyapur and restored Usman Khan to its throne. As a token of special favour he conferred upon him the title of Zubdat-ul-Mulk.\(^{19}\)

\(^{19}\) The Title of Zubdat-ul-Mulk granted to Usman Khan was corrupted in the Marwari language into "Zubdal" or "Jabdal" and in later years it was common when any ruler emulated the greatness of Usman Khan, to describe him as a "Second Jabdal", prof. Commissariat - History of Gujarat Vol. I p. 178 n, also Sir Taley Muhammad Khan, History of Palampur State (Guj. text) p.13 n.