HAKIM ALIMUDDIN WAZIR KHAN

A study of the career of Hakim Alimuddin furnishes a glimpse of his efficiency, loyalty to his patron and proficiency in the field of medicine. But contemporary chronicles are silent about his ancestry and early career. Farid Bhakkari merely tells us that he belonged to Chinoit and was brought up in Lahore. He further tells us that he was a close associate of Shahjahan from his Princehood and after his accession became his court physician.

Alimuddin entered the imperial service with an appointment to the office of Darogha-i-Adalat under Prince Khurram. Farid Bhakkari tells us that Prince Khurram was very much impressed with his skill and honesty in deciding disputes. By virtue of this fact, he rose to the esteem of the Prince.

Alimuddin Khan got his first important assignment during the campaign against Rana of Mewar, in which he performed valuable service and was promoted to higher rank. After some time, he was

appointed Diwan-iBayutat. With the out break of Khurram’s rebellion against imperial authority, Alimuddin Khan firmly attached himself with the Prince and rescued him at critical juncture. The Zakhirat-ul Khawanin narrates a very interesting incident during the course of rebellion. He writes that once Prince Khurram was in acute financial crisis and was desperately in needed of some money for personal expense as well as for military needs. When this news was conveyed to Alimuddin Khan, he appeared before Prince Khurram and provided him ten to twelve Lacs of rupees which he had saved earlier. This event must have further enhanced his position among the close associates of the Prince. Soon afterwards, the prince assigned the office of the Diwan to Alimuddin Khan.

He remained closely associated with the Prince throughout his period of rebellion and in his conquest of Bengal and Bihar, Alimuddin Khan along with Abdullah Khan and Raja Bhim played an important role. He was also made incharge of Bihar when Bairam Beg was summoned by the Prince to join him in the campaign against imperial army at Banares.

After his coronation, Emperor Shahjahan awarded distinctions and promotions to his loyal officers. Alimuddin Khan was also benifited by this policy and he was elevated to the rank of 5000 Zat 3000 Sawar, accorded with a flag, a drum and one Lacs rupees in cash. He was also granted the title of Wazir Khan.\(^{10}\) Shortly afterwards, he was appointed Subedar of Agra\(^ {11}\) but this assignment was short live.

During Shahjahan's reign, his first military assignment was against Deccanis in 1632. He was deputed alongwith Mahabat Khan to capture the fort of Daulatabad. After a hotly contested battle, the fort was captured and he returned to the court. In appreciation of the services rendered by him in the Deccan, he was promoted to the Mansab of 5000 Zat 5000 Sawar do aspa-sih aspa.\(^ {12}\) He was also appointed governor of Punjab\(^ {13}\) in the same year.

On, 26 Feb. 1638, AliMardan, the Persian governor of Qandhar surrendered the fort to the Mughals. Soon the Mughal forces also seized Bust and Zamindawar. The governor of Kabul Sa’id Khan was asked to quickly march to rescue AliMardan. The Emperor after the occupation

\(^{11}\) Lahori, vol. I, 243.
\(^{12}\) Ibid, 410
\(^{13}\) Ibid, 425; Ma’asir-ul umara, vol. III, 935.
of Qandhar sent letter to Shah Safi, expressing the hope that the recent events would not cloud mutual relations and also offered to pay every year a sum equal to the revenue of Qandhar. But when he was informed of the hostile moves of the Shah, he immediately ordered Prince Shuja to proceed to Qandhar and Wazir Khan, the governor of Punjab was asked to arrange for regular supply of provisions for enemy.14

Wazir Khan served as governor of Punjab for more than six year. In 1638, on the charge of oppression15 he was removed form the Subedari of Punjab. We have no information about his activities till 1640 when he was again appointed governor of Agra16 where he died while still serving as the governor of the Suba17. Hearing the news of the sad demise of Wazir Khan, Shahjahan expressed deep sorrow and also promised favours to his son Saleh. But apparently he was neither given any important office or high mansab during Shahjahan’s reign. However, after ascending the throne, Aurangzeb appointed him MirTuzuk.18 He served in various capacities during the entire period19

14. Lahori, vol. II, 38; For the details of the circumstances leading to the surrender of Qandhar by Ali Murdan, also see Reyazul Islam’s Indo-Persian Relation, 1970, 103-4.
19 Kamgar Husain, Ma’asir-iAlamgiri, B.M. or 171; 217-19.
Besides military and administrative skills, Wazir Khan was also a renowned physician of his age. On several occasions he was summoned to cure the royal Princes. In 1635, Shahjahan along with Prince Dara Shikoh and Prince Murad left Agra to visit Kashmir. On the way Prince Dara Shikoh fell seriously ill. Wazir Khan who was at Agra was immediately summoned to Kashmir for the treatment of the Prince. He started treatment soon after his arrival and cured him within a very short period. During the same period while Emperor Shahjahan was returning from Kashmir to Darul khilafat via Lahore, Prince Murad was caught by smallpox on the way. Wazir Khan was again summoned to attend the Prince. Within few days of the treatment, Prince Murad recovered. Wazir Khan was given a special robe of honour and elephant for this service.

Wazir Khan also took keen interest in construction of mosques, madarsas, roads, baths and markets. He built a magnificent Jama Masjid at Lahore and laid the foundation of Wazirabad near Lahore.

22. Ibid, 70.
The author of *Ma’asir-ul umar* summarised Wazir Khan’s career in the following words. ‘He was a quite man and of an even desposition. All his life he lived simply and without ostentation. In his loyalty and devotion he regarded the service of the Emperor as a keen to religious worship’. 24