



BATTLES OF PANIPAT, SIKRI AND HAVNA

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Annotation

The article reveals the military art of the great king and poet Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, especially the battles of Panipat and Sikri, the most important battles of his conquest of India, and the factors of their victory. The article also presents the opinions and comments of some Indian and European historians about these battles, and compares the sources.

Keywords: Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur, Rano Sango, Ibrahim Lodi, Baburnoma, Prithviraj Kachwaha, Gopinath Sharma, History of India under the first two rulers of the House of Timur Babur and Humayun by William Erksy Rajput kings, Panipat, Sikri, Khawna, Marwa kingdom, Delhi Sultanate, Governors of Punjab.

In our history, Babur is not only a king and a poet, but also a skilled general and the founder of a huge empire. He organized and led many marches during his lifetime. Among them, the biggest battles are the battles of Panipat and Sikri, which he fought to conquer India. In 1504, Babur established his power in Kabul. After that, for many years he prepared for a military campaign to India. From time to time he makes raids on the northern part of India. By 1525, Babur begins his Indian campaign.

After all the preparations were made, on April 12, 1526, Babur Mirza's army arrived near the village of Panipat, placed itself on its right flank and tried to create favorable conditions for itself on the battlefield. It should be noted that no one has carefully studied the organization of the battle of Panipat, the combat actions and the process that resulted from the battle. Many historians cannot even imagine how this tactic used by Babur Mirza in the battle led to a positive result. According to historians, Ibrahim Lodi's army consisted of twelve thousand soldiers, about one hundred thousand warriors and about two thousand war elephants.

Babur's army consisted of only 10-12 thousand soldiers. In the battle held on April 21, 1526, the troops of Ibrahim Lodi were defeated. There were several reasons for his defeat in the battle. For example, he was still very young and inexperienced. In addition, his amirs began to betray him and secretly help Babur. Babur's fight against





Uzbek khans and several attacks on India gave his soldiers invaluable experience. Babur's army also had powerful firearms. And the Delhi army was armed only with swords and bows. After this victory, the Rajput prince Rano Sangam, who was an ally of Babur, did not think that Babur would return to Kabul.

After defeating the Sultan of Delhi, Babur aimed to establish a new state here. In 1525, Sangram Singh allied with Babur against Ibrahim Lodi, hoping to destroy the Delhi Sultanate. However, after Lodi's defeat at the Battle of Panipat in 1526, the Rajput prince realized his mistake and resisted Babur's forces.

First he takes the city of Qandar, then Bayana. The decisive Battle of Khanwa took place on 16 March 1527 (near Fatehpur Sikri). This battle was fought between Babur and Rano Sanga for supremacy in North India. The battle was a major turning point in the history of medieval India. Although Babur won at Panipat, it was a victory over a decadent and disintegrating state. The Kingdom of Mewar under Rano Sanga was one of the most powerful states in North India. Therefore, the victory in this battle was a battle that ensured complete peace for Babur in North India.

This is one of the oldest battles in North India, where gunpowder was used extensively. The battle resulted in heavy losses for both the Timurids and the Rajputs. However, at the decisive moment of the battle, Rana Sanga is knocked unconscious by a bullet and is carried unconscious from the battlefield by Prithviraj Kachwaha of Amber. At the Battle of Panipat, Rano Sanga offered help to Babur, but did not actually take any action. In "Boburnoma", Babur accuses Rano Sanga of breaking the agreement. However, Rajput sources claim otherwise. The Boburnoma says that Rano Sanga offered help, while Rajput sources say that Babur offered Rano Sanga an alliance against the Delhi Sultanate. According to historian Satish Chandra, Babur thought that after his victory over Lodi, he would own the treasure of the captured cities and leave Delhi and Agra like Timur.

But as soon as he learns that Babur intends to stay in India, he begins to form a large coalition against him. The purpose of this coalition was to expel Babur from India. In March 1527, Babur was once again victorious in the battle with Rano Sangani, governor of Chitora. According to the sources, the governors of Punjab, who were dissatisfied with Ibrahim Lodi's policy in Babur's march to India, supported Babur. However, Hindu scholar Gopinath Sharma, who is famous for his scholarly works on the rulers of Mewar and the Babur Empire, has skillfully refuted the theory that Rano Sanga sent his ambassador to Babur and tried to provide various factual modern evidences for this. Sharma adds, "Sanga had already established himself as the most powerful Hindu king of North India at that time, while Babur had not yet established





himself in India. Under these circumstances, it was in Babur's interest to seek an alliance with perhaps his greatest and most powerful enemy in northern India.

Also, while Babur did not detail his alliance with the Sanga, elsewhere he detailed his alliance with Daulat Khan and Alam Khan Lodi. The Boburnoma itself was not a trustworthy book, as it exaggerated many figures of the army at the first battle of Panipat in order to exaggerate its victory, which in modern scholarship is grossly exaggerated. William Erskine, one of the first Western works written about the Baburs, "History of India during the time of the first two rulers of the House of Timur Babur and Humayun" provides the following information: "Babur of Timur came into sharp conflict with the Rajputs several times. Now, they found that they had to contend with a foe more formidable than the Afghans or any of the natives of India they had yet encountered. The Rajputs were ready to meet face to face, always ready to die for their honor."

Another historian, Eraly Ibrahim, wrote: "Rana Sanga destroyed all the Mongol forces sent against him, which caused great fear in Babur's army, as he wrote that the "cruelty and valor of the heathen army" made the troops "anxiety and fear". The Afghans in Babur's army began to leave, and the Turks began to complain of the defense of their hated country, and they asked Babur to depart for Kabul with the rich booty they had collected. It can be seen that before the battle of Sikri, the condition of Babur's army was not enviable.

Rana Sanga formed a strong military alliance against Babur. Almost all the leading Rajput kings in Rajasthan joined him, including those from Harauti, Jalor, Sirokha, Dungarpur and Dundhar. Rao Ganga of Marwar did not join in person but sent a contingent on his behalf under his son Maldev Rathor. Rao Medini Rai of Chanderi in Malwa also joined the alliance. In addition, Sikandar Lodi's youngest son, Mahmud Lodi, who had been proclaimed by the Afghans as their new Sultan, joined the alliance with him along with a contingent of Afghan cavalry. Khanzada Hasan Khan Mewati, the ruler of Mewat, also joined the alliance with his people. Chandra also points out that the alliance forged by Rano Sanga was one between the Rajputs and the Afghans, who advanced the task of ousting Babur and restoring the Lodi Empire.

Historian Sharma writes that small groups of Afghans led by Mahmood Lodi also joined the Sangha, but they fled during the Battle of Sikri. According to Babur, Rano Sanga's army consisted of 200 thousand soldiers. However, according to Alexander Kinloch, this is an exaggeration, as the Rajput army during the Gujarat campaign did not exceed 40,000 men. Although this figure is exaggerated, Chandra notes that Rano Sanga's army undoubtedly outnumbered Babur's. The large number of Rajputs instilled fear in Babur's army. Astrologers added to the general malaise with their





foolish predictions. To raise the morale of his soldiers, Babur gave a religious tone to the battle against the Indians. Babur began to refuse to drink wine in future, broke his glasses, spilled all the liquor on the floor, and vowed complete abstinence. Babur writes in his autobiography: "It was indeed a good plan and had a positive propaganda effect on friends and foes alike".

Babur tried to use a charging method in the battle, but his men were unable to complete it, twice driving the Rajputs out, but they were forced to retreat to their positions due to ferocious attacks by the Rajput cavalry. Around this time, Silhadi of Raizen broke away from Rana's army and went over to Babur's side. Some historians believe that this betrayal never happened and was an "invention" of later times. At this point, Rano San was shot and lost his cool, causing great confusion in the Rajput army and a brief lull in the fighting. In order to continue the battle, a jhala chief named Aja played the role of Rana and led a Rajput army. Rana Sanga, on the other hand, is hiding among his trusted men. Jala Aja proved to be an inexperienced general as he ignored his weak center and continued to attack the enemy's flanks. The Rajputs continued their attack, but could do nothing against the fortified center of the enemy. Noticing the Rajputs' weak center, Babur ordered his soldiers to attack, and their attack drove the Rajputs back. The Rajputs were now leaderless as most of their senior commanders were dead and Rana Sanga had been driven from the battlefield.

The Rajputs made a desperate attack on the enemy's left and right flanks, where, as before, their bravest were cut off, and the battle ended in their irreparable defeat. The Rajputs and their allies were defeated.

In conclusion, the Battle of Khanwa showed that the bravery of the Rajputs was not enough to counter Babur's superior military and organizational skills. According to Indian historians, if Babur's artillery was not there, Rana Sanga could have won a historic victory over Babur. However, in the words of Pradeep Barua, Babur's cannons put an end to outdated trends in Indian warfare.

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