

India: Renewal of an ancient Civilization, Monday, 22nd January 2024

January 14, 2024

*Please read the A Brief BACKGROUNDER on **Babur**, the King of Agra, Northern India on pages 3-7. It includes a few lines on the 3 Battles of Panipat on page 5.*

January 14, 2024, **Ayodhya**, Uttar Pradesh, Bharat (India): A beautiful temple has been re-built at the birthplace of Lord Ram after 495 years.



January 22, 2024: PM **Narendra Modi**, carrying his personal gifts for **the deity**

On 22nd January, after returning from Ayodhya, on the auspicious occasion of consecration of the temple in Ayodhya, the Prime Minister launched “**Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana**” with the target of installing rooftop solar systems on 10 Mn houses. This will not only reduce the electricity bills of the poor and middle class, but will also make India less dependent on fossil fuels.

SYMBOLISM: Lord Ram was the eldest son of Dashratha, a King of the **Suryavanshi** dynasty. (**Suryavanshi** means of “**Sun dynasty**”)

According to Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, the beautiful temple has been built by a Public Trust during 2020-23, **entirely with voluntary donations from the**

people, while his government was investing on more than 40 Mn houses for the poor.

Modi's Government helped **the poor, in rural areas, complete 29.3 million houses by December 2023**, under the **PM Awas Yojana - Rural** (PMAY-R) scheme.

Under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban** (PMAY-U), which was launched in 2015, **12 Mn houses for the poor in urban areas**, have been sanctioned till July 10, 2023. In addition, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** announced on August 15, 2023, while speaking from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the occasion of the 77th Independence Day, that the government would provide **relief in interest rates on mortgage** from banks to those families that live in cities, but are living in rented houses or slums or chawls and in unauthorized colonies.

The construction of the Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya began on **August 5, 2020**, after the **Supreme Court of India's verdict on November 9, 2019**.

(The unanimous verdict by a bench of 5 judges found that the mosque had been built on the debris of an older Hindu temple, on the basis of

- a detailed Report by the Archaeological Survey, and
- the description in an ancient Veda (part of 4 oldest books of the world in Sanskrit) specifying exactly the location of the place of birth of Lord Ram. (This was identified by a famous blind religious scholar, Jagadguru Rambhadra. From his memory, he gave the exact **Shloka number** (*i.e. page # and line #.*) and the book #. It proved to be the correct information.

So, the land of the temple was awarded to the Hindus. The Court also awarded an equivalent piece of land for a mosque to the Muslims, at some other place in Ayodhya. The bench, which gave the verdict, included a Muslim Judge also.)

The construction of the temple marks the **culmination of a 495-year struggle by Hindus** over the site.

The dispute began in 1528 when the Babri Masjid was constructed by **Baqi Tashqandi**, a Commander of the 1ST Mughal emperor **Babur**.

Baqi Tashqandi (*Baqi of Tashkent*) liked to call himself **Mir Baqi**. (*Mir means a Prince.*)

After desecrating the temple, **Baqi** got the mosque built by constructing domes over the pillars of the temple.



Probably **Baqi Tashqandi** did it to curry favor with **Babur**, who was unhappy with the performance of **Baqi Tashqandi**, as the Governor of Awadh. (***Baqi Tashqandi** was an **Uzbek**, who had come with **Babur**, when he shifted from **Ferghana** to **Kabul**.)*

----A Brief BACKGROUNDER on **Babur**, King of Agra, Northern India----
***Babur** (means "Tiger" in Persian): Founder of the Mughal dynasty of North India*

Babur's DEFEAT at Sar-e Pol (1501) and LOSS of the small Principality of Fergana and its capital- Samarkand (1504): **Babur** was a 13th descendant through the female line from the **Mongol conqueror Genghis Khan** and fifth in male succession from the **Turkic conqueror Tamerlane**. **Babur** came from the **Barlas tribe of Mongol origin**, but was a Turk in language and customs. His family was a member of the **Chagatai clan**.

Babur was a military adventurer, a poet in Turkic and a diarist of genius. (His autobiography **Babur-nameh**, in Turkic, is available in English as two volumes of **Memoirs of Babur**).

Babur's father, **Umar Shaykh Mirza**, ruled the small Principality of Fergana to the north of the HinduKush mountain range. **Babur's** father spent his life trying to recover Timur's old capital of **Samarkand** (now in **Uzbekistan**). For 10 years (1494–1504) **Babur** followed in his father's footsteps. He succeeded in occupying it twice

briefly (in 1497 and 1501). But Muḥammad Shaybani Khan, a descendant of Genghis Khan and ruler of the Uzbeks, beyond the river **Syr Darya**, defeated **Babur** decisively at **Sar-e Pol** in 1501.

KABUL, a BASE: For three years, the **homeless prince** wandered Central Asia, trying to attract followers to help him retake his father's throne. Finally, **in 1504**, he and his small army turned to the southeast, marching over the snow-bound Hindu Kush mountains into Afghanistan. **Babur**, now **21 years old**, besieged and **conquered Kabul**, establishing a base for his new kingdom.

A DECISIVE DEFEAT for **Babur**: **Babur** took the help of the rulers of **Herat** and **Persia** and tried to take back **Fergana** in 1510 to 1511. Once more, however, the Uzbeks utterly defeated the Mughul army, driving **Babur** back to Afghanistan. Thus, within three years, **Babur** had lost both **Samarkand** and his **Principality of Fergana**.



***Babur** (b. Feb 15, 1483 in **Fergana, Uzbekistan**, d. Dec 26, 1530 in **Agra, India**)
17th century painting of **Babur***

TOWARDS AFGHANISTAN and INDIA: In 1504 **Babur** seized **Kabul** (Afghanistan).

Babur made his last unsuccessful attempt on Samarkand (1511–12).

In 1519, **Babur** made his first raid into the west Punjab region (now in Pakistan) to get resources for his army through looting a rich area. Punjab was part of the dominions of **Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi** of Delhi and his governor in Punjab was **Daulat Khan Lodhi**.

After just four years of **Ibrahim Lodhi's** rule, the Afghan nobility was so fed up with him that they invited the **Timurid Babur** to come to depose **Ibrahim**. In 1521, **Babur** besieged **Kandahar** (city in Afghanistan, within **Ibrahim's** empire). As the siege dragged on, however, important nobles and military men from the Delhi Sultanate such as **Alam Khan**, *Ibrahim Lodhi's* uncle and *Pretender to the throne of Delhi*, and **Daulat Khan**, *Ibrahim's* Governor of Punjab met him and assured him of support against **Ibrahim Lodhi**. In 1522, was able to secure **Kandahar**, a strategic city, on the road to **Sindh, India**.

By 1524 **Babur** had raided Punjab three more times and brought in rich resources. In 1524, he mounted a **full-scale attack** on west Punjab, with the intention of expanding his empire. However, **Babur** had to return back due to an Uzbek attack on his Kabul kingdom. (Ref: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Humayun-Mughal-emperor>)

The 1st BATTLE of PANIPAT: In November 1525, a joint request for help from **Alam Khan** and **Daulat Khan** encouraged Babur to make his fifth attempt. **Babur** met **Ibrahim Lodhi** at **Panipat**, 80 Km north of Delhi, on **April 21, 1526**. **Babur's** army was estimated at no more than 12,000, but they were seasoned soldiers, adept at cavalry tactics, and were aided by new artillery acquired from Europe and the Ottoman Turks. **Ibrahim Lodhi's** army was said to number 100,000 with 100 elephants, but its tactics were antiquated and it had treacherous persons like **Alam Khan**, and **Daulat Khan**. **Babur** won the battle by coolness under fire, by his effective use of artillery, and by using Turkish wheeling tactics of his cavalry on a divided, dispirited enemy. **Ibrahim Lodhi** was killed in battle. With his usual speed, **Babur** occupied Delhi three days later and reached Agra on May 4, 1526.

Three Battles of Panipat were a series of military engagements, which changed the course of Indian History. These were fought in 1526 (between the Timurids (Uzbek) under **Babur** and **Ibrahim Lodhi** (Delhi Sultanate)), 1556 (between **Hemchandra Vikramaditya** (Sur Empire) and the Uzbek under **Akbar**) and 1761 (between the **Maratha Confederacy** under **Sadashivrao Bhau** and the **Durrani Empire** under the Afghan King **Ahmad Shah Abdali**). As in 1526, some treacherous elements in India, helped the invader. The army of **Rohillas** led by **Najib Khan Yousafzai**, *supposed to be a service man of the Mughal King in Delhi* and the army of Oudh State's **Shuja-ud-Daula**, *supposed to be an ally of the Marathas*, joined the invader.

In the vicinity of **Panipat** is a level plain suitable for cavalry movements. It is 80 Km north of Delhi, India.

During the 18th and early 19th centuries, Afghans and Uzbeks were able to prevail over the Sultans and Kings of Delhi due to **modern artillery and guns**, obtained by Uzbeks from Europe and Ottomans of Istanbul.

When **Raja Ranjeet Singh of Punjab** was able to acquire the technologies, his armies were able to win **Jammu, Kandhar, Kabul** and a large part of **East Afghanistan**.

Unlike his ancestor Timur, who raided India and went back, **Babur** wanted to build a permanent empire in India, with his capital at Agra. Rajputs did not want a foreign King in India. In 1527, **Rana Sanga** of Mewar, Head of a Rajput Confederacy, advanced with a large army towards Agra.

Babur's first problem was that his soldiers, suffering from the heat and disheartened by the hostile surroundings, wished to return home as Timur had done. **Babur** encouraged his soldiers by promises, and appeals in a stirring speech. He also announced that he would give up liquor. He broke the wine vessels and poured the wine down a well. His soldiers responded both to that act and his exhortations.

At Khanua, 60 Km west of Agra, on March 16, 1527, **Babur** managed to deal the Rajputs a huge defeat. **Rana Sanga** was injured badly and his soldiers were able to take him to safety. **Rana Sanga** vowed not to enter Chittor, his capital, till he had driven out **Babur**. But **Rana Sanga's** officers poisoned him and he died within a few days.

The Rajput ruler of **Chanderi** was still defying **Babur**. After capturing that fortress in **January 1528**, **Babur** turned to the east.

The Afghans had captured Lucknow while **Babur** was facing **Rana Sanga**. **Mahmud Lodhi**, Sultan Ibrahim's brother, had occupied Bihar. Crossing the river Ganga, **Babur** drove the Afghan captor of Lucknow into Bengal. He then turned on **Mahmud Lodhi**. **On May 6, 1529, at Ghaghara**, where that river joins the Ganga, Babur won a third great victory. Artillery was again decisive, helped by the skillful handling of boats.

LEGACY of a LARGE EMPIRE: **Babur's** dominions extended from Kandhar to the borders of Bengal, with a southern limit marked by the Rajput desert and the forts of Ranthambhor, Gwalior, and Chanderi.

Within that great area, however, there was **no settled administration**. The empire still had to be pacified and organized. The Rajputs were undaunted and battles and skirmishes continued all over the northern and eastern sections of the empire for the next several years.

Babur breathed his last on December 26, 1530, passing on to his 22-year old son **Humayun** the large empire.

A STORY: In 1530, when **Humayun** became deathly ill, **Babur** is said to have offered his life to God in exchange for **Humayun's**, walking seven times around the bed to complete the vow. **Humayun** recovered and **Babur's** health declined, and **Babur** died on December 26, 1530.
