

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF ASAF KHAN ( خان آصف ) FOR MUGHAL DYNASTY

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### ABSTRACT

Mirza Abul Hasan Asaf Khan was appointed Governor of Lahore by Emperor Jahangir in 1625. After the demise of Jahangir in 1627, he was instrumental in securing the accession of his son-in-law Shah Jahan by colluding with Dawar Bakht (Jahangir's other son) and defeating the acting emperor Prince Shahryar (Nur Jahan's son-in-law, married to her daughter by her previous marriage to Sher Afgan) in a battle near Lahore. Asaf Khan enjoyed a position even more elevated than in the preceding reign and retained it until 1632, when he failed in the siege of Bijapur, from which time he seems to have lost favour. Asaf Khan was made the Wazir in 1626. When Jahangir died, Shah Jahan was away in the Deccan. Asaf Khan betrayed his sister and sided with his son-in-law Shah Jahan to ascend the throne. In order to secure the accession of Shah Jahan, Asaf Khan brought Bulaqi, son of Khusrau, out of confinement and declared him the emperor under the title of Dawar Bakhsh (God Given) and sent a messenger to Shah Jahan informing him of Jahangir's death. Asaf Khan also got possession of his grandsons Princes Dara Shukoh and Aurangzeb who were in the female apartments with Nur Jahan. Dawar Bakhsh along with Asaf Khan's army defeated Shahryar's forces and Shahryar was blinded and imprisoned. On 30 December 1627, Shah Jahan ascended the throne at Lahore by general consent, and on his orders, Dawar's brother Garhasp, Shahryar, and Tahmuras and Hoshang, sons of the late Prince Daniyal, were all put to death by Asaf Khan. In 1636, he was elevated as Khan-e-Khana and commander-in-chief and a year later became the governor of Lahore. Asif Khan died on 12 June 1641 in a battle against the forces of rebel Raja Jagat Singh.

**Key words:** Mansab- An Administrative Post, Flag & drum- An honour for Victory, The drum is beaten when the royal person arrives, Vakil- A Post equivalent to Prime Minister, Subedar- A Post equivalent to Chief- Minister of State (Administrator of SUBA), Fool Katara- An Honour of Victory ( in the form of a sword embossed flower on it.

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**INTRODUCTION:** Asif Khan was the brother of Empress Nur Jahan, and father

of Arjumand Bano Begum, who became the consort of Shah Jahan under the name Mumtaz Mahal.

Asif Khan was grandson of KHWAJA resident of Tehran.<sup>1</sup> KHWAJA MOHAMMAD SHARIF was veglai-vegai( governer) of Khurasana.<sup>2</sup> Khwaaja Md. Sharif had two sons named A. Md. Tahir and Mirza Gyasuddin Mohammad . Mirza Gyasuddin Mohammad was also known as Gyasvwegh (Ghiyas).<sup>3</sup>

In1576 after the death of his father Mirza Gyasuddin Mohammad fled from Persia to India as a refugee with his two sons and one daughter.<sup>4</sup> Malik Masood helped Mirza Ghiyasvegh and met with emperor Akbar at Fatahpur Sikri. Emperor Akbar was impressed with ability and efficiency of Mirza Ghiyasvegh and permitted him for

MOHAMMAD SHARIF a royal services by appointing him as DEEWAN.<sup>5</sup>

Asif Khan was second son of Mirza Ghiyasvegh among his eight children. He was born at Persia in 1569. His mother was Asmat Beghum.His childhood name was Abul Hasan.

**Contribution of Asif Khan for Mughal Dynasty:** Asif Khan played an important role to reinforce the Mughal Dynasty. 6 He achieved many titles. He played an important role to enthrone Shah-Jahan. The achievements of Asif Khan can be summarized by the given chart-

***Asif Khan (Abul Hasan)***

YEAR	MANSAB	POST/APPOINTMENTSAND PRIZES
1611	-----	ITIQUAD, POSTED AS KHAN-E SAMA
1612	1000+ 3000	ACHIEVED SAR-ANDAZ SWORD
1614	3000+1000	AWARDED POST OF ASAF KHAN
1616	5000+4000	GAINS FLAG AND DRUM
1619	6000+5000	WAS AWARDED FLOWERED SWORD(FOOL- KATARA)
1620	-----	APPOINTED AS THE GOVERNER OF GUJRAT
1622	-----	APPOINTED AS THE SUBEDAR OF BANGAL AND ORISA, WAS GIFTED SPECIAL ROYAL GOWN
1624	7000+ 6000	POST OF VAKIL AND SUBEDAR OF PUNJAB
1628	8000+8000	SUBEDARI OF PUNJAB AND MULTAN,GOT TUMAN
1629	-----	AWARDED SILVER SADDLED ELEPHANT
1634	900+9000	TITLED KHAN-KHANA
1641	-----	ASIF KHAN'S DEATH



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Asif Khan was brother in -law of Jahangir and father in-law of Shahjahan (KHURRAM), this dual relationship with the royal family made him most powerful during the Mughal Reign. He himself was an intelligent and most efficient person. He played an important role to enthrone Shah Jahan, he brutally murdered the conspirators and his brothers who opposed the enthronement of Shah Jahan.

Asif Khan built a beautiful tomb for his father Itmad-id-daula in Agra in the patronage of his sister Empress

Nurjahan, which is the first Mughal structure to be built of white marbles, except it The Nurmahal Sarai at Punjab, Nur Afshan garden at Agra, Sahadra Bagh at Lahore and the tomb of Nur Jahan, were also built in his skillful supervision.

Asif Khan died on 12 June 1641 while engaged in fighting against the army of rebel king Raja Jagat Singh Pathania.<sup>7</sup> Thus this great pillar of Mughal Empire fell down after strengthening the dynasty. His tomb was built in Shahdara Bagh in Lahore by Shah Jahan.

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