HUMAYUN (1530-1556)

(A brief summary of mistakes made by Humayun)

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Humayun who ascended the throne of India in 1530 was faced with very serious difficulties during his accession. An inefficient military general and an unwise statesman he aggravated his difficulties by his blundering mistakes. Although he had many enemies, yet he proved himself to be his own greatest rival. Following mistakes made by him proved to be very decisive to his rule.

- (a) Division of Empire- At the very outset of his career as emperor, Humayun committed the mistake of dividing his kingdom among his brothers. He gave Kabul and Qandhar to Kamran, Mewat to Hindal and Sambhal to Askari. By dividing the empire, he divided the resources of his empire and invited troubles for himself.
- (b) Concessions to Kamran Kamran was very ambitious, on the pretext of congratulating Humayun, he marched ahead and captured Peshawar and also bought whole of Punjab under his sway. Humayun allowed his brother to enjoy the sovereignty of Kabul, Qandhar and Punjab. It was a blunder on Humayun's part to make these concessions. The cession of Hissar Firoza was also a great mistake for this brought the new military road from Delhi to Qandhar under Kamran's command.
- (c) Wastage of money- Mahmud Lodhi with the help of Biban and Bayazid raised the standard of opposition and took possession of Jaunpur and its dependencies. Humayun marched against him, defeated him and returned victorious to Agra. There he indulged in feasts and festivities. About 12,000 persons received robes of honour and about 2000 men were presented with precious outer garments. Humayun's already depleted treasury could not afford such an extravagance especially at this moment of crisis when he had to fight enemies on all sides.

- (d) Conflict with Bahadur Shah- At the beginning of the conflict with Bahadur Shah he made a mistake by not attacking him while the latter engaged in battle with the Rajputs. When Mughal forces marching towards Gujrat had reached Sarangpur, Humayun came to know that Bahadur Shah was busy in fighting against the infidels. So he withdrew his expedition. If he had attacked at that time, Bahadur Shah might have been crushed at the first blow. After Bahadur Shah had defeated the Rajputs, Humayun laid siege to his capital. Due to shortage of food supplies Bahadur Shah could not offer resistance to the Mughals and escaped to take refuge at Mandu. Humayun followed him but he escaped to Diu. Here again Humayun did not pursue him, which was a blunder on his part. Malwa and Gujrat fell into the hands of Mughals, but left its administration on untrustworthy men like Askari, Hindu Beg, Vedgar, Nasir and Tardi Beg. Mirza Askari and Hindu Beg conspired against Humayun, Bahadur Shah took advantage of all this and recovered the provinces of Malwa and Gujrat.
- (e) Conflict with Sher Khan- By 1531 Sher Khan had become the master of whole of Bihar and had also occupied the fortress of Chunar. Humayun sent his forces to besiege Chunar. Sher Khan agreed for surrender and offered to read Khutba and strike coins in the name of the Emperor. Humayun agreed and concluded peace with Sher Khan. Humayun again blundered, and therein helped Sher khan to extend his power. Sher khan conquered the neighbouring Mughal territories and became very powerful and captured Gaur. Instead of attacking Gaur first Humayun laid siege of Chunar and thus fell into the trap which Sher Khan had laid for him. Sher Khan acquired huge territories and thus strengthened his resources considerably. Before the battle of Chausa, Humayun again made a great mistake. Delay on Humayun's part gave Sher Khan enough time to fortify his camp and reinforce his army. Eventually Humayun lost the battle of Chausa. Sher Shah brought his forces to Kanauj to fight Humayun. Here also Humayun blundered. There were dissertations in his camp, their morale was low, and when they were attacked, most of them fled the battlefield. Eventually Humayun was thrown into exile.

Thus it was due to these mistakes of his own, that Humayun was ruined. However there were many other factors too, besides his own, which contributed to his failures.