

**COINAGE SYSTEM AS A MATRICES OF TRADE & COMMERCE IN MUGHAL PERIOD OF BENGAL PRESIDENCY: A STUDY.**
**Sonali Panigrahi**

Research Scholar,

 Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha.
 

---

**ARTICLE INFO**


---

**Article History**

Received on 22nd May 2021

Received in revised form 22nd July 2021

 Accepted on 28th July 2021
 

---

**Corresponding author.**

 E-mail : sonalipanigrahi591@gmail.com
 

---

**Introduction**

It is presently broadly accepted that there was exceptionally significant monetization in India amid the Mughal period and the development of cash economy was enormously cultivated by the income arrangement of the mughals. Satish Chandra has inspected how from the time of Akbar, the arrive income was requested to a great extent in cash within the central areas of the domain viz, Punjab, Delhi, Agra, Awadh, Allahabad, Gujarat, Bihar, and Bengal in spite of the fact that a certain degree of tact was cleared out to the neighborhood collectors. Irfan Habib also held that money nexus was well built up, the arrive income being as a rule collected in cash. Habib would not acknowledge the see that the economy of Mughal India was based on a town self adequacy and had small utilize of cash. On the premise of the estimates of Hawkins, Habib calculated that the entire sum of cash in circulation within the early a long time of Jahangir's rule was no less than 250 million rupees. The supply of cash was rising with the purport of silver from Europe within the 16th and 17th centuries and harmony between the request for cash and its supply was on the full kept up amid Mughal period. In a later distribution, J. F. Richards contended that the Mughal rulers had requested arrive assess in cash terms and not at all like its modern rulers in Ming China, they did not store up and dispense huge sums of nourishment grains. The extending royal arrive charge framework acted as a consistent boost to showcase action. Encourage, the

demand by the state of a expansive share of generation expanded the request for cash and the framework empowered all parties to back and encourage the transformation of rural items into cash. This was in fact, concurring to Richards, a commercialized agribusiness.

**Primary Mughal Currency**

It was amid the time of Akbar that a normal framework of money was presented in India. The foremost mints were found at Delhi, Lahore, Jaunpore, Ahmedabad, Tanda, Patna, and Bengal. Amid Aurangzeb's rule the number of mints coining silver rupees expanded to forty as against fourteen beneath Akbar's rule.

These mints struck a assortment of coins in gold, silver and copper of diverse weights and values. Gold coins were struck within the afterward period of Akbar's rule and as it were in four places. They were issued in twenty six groups but most of these were coined as supplementary money for the reason of making presents or paying tribute. The major money was the silver coin or rupee of 172.5 grain. This silver rupee was identical in weight to the silver rupee amid the early British period. The chief copper coin was the dom. Both silver and copper coins were not tokens but circulated at their metallic esteem. The Mughal stamping was free and it was open to anybody to go to the mint to induce his bullion converted into coins at a really ostensible charge. These charges summed to approximately 5.6 percent of the esteem of the coins stamped.

Since Mughal stamping was free, the esteem of the coins within the three metals varied in connection to each other according to the alter within the esteem of these metals within the bazaar. Akbar may keep up the standard between the silver rupee and the copper coin to the proportion of 1:40 but this proportion seem not be kept up after his passing since the esteem of the copper as metal expanded. A new proportion on the premise of the metallic esteem of copper should be set up and the fragmentary pieces of the rupee came to be known as Anna which was the sixteenth of the rupee and the proportion between silver rupee and the copper coin was settled at 1:16. This proportion got to be well built up by the rule of Shah Jahan . From Deyell's inquires about we come to know that the copper coins of this period voyage from the external wilderness areas of the realm to its hinterland inside the year of their stamping. The unfaltering convergence of the Unused World silver amid this period diminished the cost of that metal in connection to gold and silver with the result that the copper based majestic money related framework was supplanted by that of silver. As silver rupees came to be utilized increasingly and got to be the overwhelming cash by 1660, copper coins were generally utilized in unimportant transations. For encourage little installments, cowries were much in utilize. Around 1627 the stamping of copper up to this point moderately ample moderated down. The incredible world sadness of the 17th century seriously influenced the stream of copper to Bengal through surat and cowries briefly took the put of copper in exchanges.

#### The supply of silver

The prevalent cash was the silver rupee and the request for it tended to rise with the extension of showcase for Indian commodities at domestic and overseas. India did not have silver mines and thus had to depend totally on the purport of silver for money purposes. It is troublesome to form an appraise of how much silver was really imported amid the Mughal period for need of satisfactory data but it is certain that the moment of silver from Europe expanded significantly amid the 16th and 17th centuries. It got to be conceivable since Europe was plentifully provided with silver from the Unused World through Spain. From time immemorial Indian individuals were usual to accumulate up valuable metals like gold and silver. It is in any case, troublesome to decide how much of the imported silver was stored. James Give in a

unpleasant gauge in 1784 calculated that in the event that the whole silver imported between 1582 and 1682 had been changed over into coins, its supply must have trebled in circulation.

Aziza Hasan has made an endeavor to decide the genuine unit of silver coins and their fragmentary pieces in circulation year by year from the mint records. She has kept her think about to the issues of the coins of north Indian mints. Her conclusion is that silver cash in circulation expanded exceptionally surprisingly amid the 16th and 17th centuries and this authenticates James Grant's speculation. Concurring to the calculation of Aziza Hasan, between 1591 and 1639, silver rupees in circulation expanded three times compared to the figure some time recently 1591. After 1639, the figure declined for a time, but once more from 1684, the supply come to a level which was a small more than twice as such as that of 1591. Once more, after 1700, it remained at levels well over three times the sum in circulation in or approximately 1591. Consequently , the near connect between the surprising development of silver money in circulation amid the 16th and 17th centuries and the gigantic moment of American silver through Spain to Europe and subsequently to India stands set up . She has moreover demonstrated that nearly the complete amount of silver imported into India was changed over into coin and as it were a insignificant parcel had gone into accumulating by contending that since gold got to be exceptionally much acknowledged in regard of silver, it was gold instead of silver which turned out to be more beneficial metal for storing. The increment of cash in circulation raised the costs of diverse commodities and Irfan Habib has famous a few wide patterns within the common development of costs. Between 1610 and mid 1630s, the costs of agrarian items rose by one and a half to two times of what it was in 1595. The supply of silver money amid this period extended by three times . Habib has pointed out that any hunt for expansion, a cost transformation and its add up to affect upon money related framework must be limited to the period of develop silver based financial system and not some time recently and it was as it were amid the primary half of the 17th century that the cost Insurgency may well be said to have entered Northern India behind the quickly growing circulation of silver. There was a consistent decrease in silver money in circulation between 1630s and 1680s and a momentous development after 1685 which proceeded upto 1706. The steadiness in costs between

1665 and 1710 is traceable to the decrease in cash circulation. The rise in costs after 1710 is clearly the impact of expanding supply of cash.

The address normally emerges what utilize did the individuals of Bengal make of so much gold and silver imported within the to begin with half of the 18th century. The board held the see that the individuals of India had created the propensity of accumulating profitable metals like gold from time immemorial. The Government of Bengal had uncommon reasons to accept that gigantic amounts of gold had been stored especially by the wealthy individuals amid the Mughal run the show. K.N.Chaudhuri contended that "hoarding was verifiably a broad include of Indian financial life, but there's too prove that the cost of valuable metals varied a awesome bargain in India agreeing to exchanging conditions and did not all around command a premium at all times. From the prove given by the records of the European exchanging companies on the Indian cash markets amid the 17th and 18th centuries, it can be concluded legitimately that in India no less than in Europe, the demand for cash, within the nonattendance of a showcase for elective money related resources was isolated into a exchange request and a request for store of wealth".

#### **Differences of the Currencies**

The progressive collapse of the central specialist had seriously influenced the financial framework built up by the extraordinary Mughals. Taking advantage of the shortcoming of the majestic specialist, the trivial sovereigns begun coining their possess cash in their claim mints and settling its standard. The authorities of the mints too colluded with the semi - free sovereigns to corrupt the coins for illegal benefit and beneath such circumstances consistency of standard seems barely be kept up. The total nation was in result overflowed with a befuddling mass of rupees of distinctive values. The circulation of diverse sorts of rupees, of distinctive categories stamped at different places, on distinctive dates significantly complicated the full framework of financial exchanges. There was total need of any standard of esteem and one may say that the trade economy was essentially diminished to a bargain economy.

The Afterward Mughals did not enjoy in this. With the increase of a unused sovereign as it were, the coins of the past rules were called up and supplanted by modern ones on installment of a batta. So distant as Bengal was concerned, the semi- autonomous Nawabs of Bengal did

not strike coins of their possess and the unit of the Bengal Money was the rupee. Gold was every so often coined but the transcendent money was the silver rupee. This rupee was coined at the mints of Dacca, Rajmahal and patna. With the exchange of the capital to Murshidabad, in any case, the Murshidabad mint slowly rose into conspicuousness. Concurring to James Grant's investigation of the accounts of Bengal, the mint obligations of Murshidabad yielded an yearly pay of Rs. 3, 04,103 within the year 1722. In Bengal, there was a consistent request for silver bullion and the importation of it by the outsiders was continuously energized. Copper coins were too in utilize but not to the degree to which these were in common utilize within the rest of India. For little exchanges in Bengal individuals utilized cowries, a huge sum of which was imported from the Maldivic islands. Within the locale of Sylhet, cowries were indeed acknowledged for arrive income installments.

#### **Development of Bengal's exchange with other parts of India and its impacts on the money related system**

The volume of Bengal's exchange with other parts of India was exceptionally significant. The send out from Bengal of essential items as well as made products were apparently in overabundance of the region's imports. Bengal rice was sent up the Ganges to Agra through Patna to the Coromandel and circular cape Comorin to Kerala and different harbour - towns on the West Coast of India whereas Agra secured a few supply of wheat as well from the eastern areas likely the item of Bihar. The send out of sugar from Bengal by ocean to the complete of India and by stream to Agra and past has been depicted by Prof. Tapan Beam Chaudhuri as "of awesome commercial importance". The foremost critical thing of consequence into Bengal was salt from Rajputana. As respects fabricated merchandise, the Gujarat silk industry was completely subordinate on the consequence of crude silk from Bengal. Huge dispatches of Bengal silk too went to Agra. On the consequence side, Bengal had to depend on expansive amounts of cotton developed to a great extent between Surat and Burhanpur which came through Agra down the Ganges. Since the sends out from Bengal had continuously surpassed the imports, the monetary forms of other locales poured into Bengal each year in expansive amounts. Additionally, the coastal districts of Gujarat, Coromandel and Bengal had by the mid- 18th century near common joins in things such as cash supply. Deficiency of species in Bengal

initiated customary supplies of silver rupees from Surat and the Coromandel. The last mentioned put, a gold money range, presently stamped and sent out at slightest Rs. 500,000 a year whereas the trade from Surat was a million or more. In this way monetary standards of the different locales were brought to Bengal and as these coins were struck at distinctive mints, these were not of the same weight, fineness and immaculateness. There was in this way no address of consistency. This advertised the shorffs or cash changers a interesting opportunity of managing with these distinctive sorts of coins by charging a batta or markdown on the second rate coins from other districts of India, concurring to their claim course of action. They utilized to settle the esteem on these diverse sorts of monetary forms which was no question self-assertive but in this way they came to involve a really critical position within the financial life of the territory. The striking thing was that in this handle indeed the Sicca rupees coined at the mints of Bengal were not saved and these rupees came to be underestimated after the expiry of certain a long time on the ground that these rupees bore diverse dates of being coined, in spite of the fact that these had not misplaced Weight or fineness through utilize. The more seasoned a sicca rupee was the more noteworthy would be the sum of rebate charged on it. Verelst composed: " at the termination of three a long time, when these sicca rupees, at that point called sonauts, pass at 111/116 parts of the initial group, they are carried to the mint mainly by the shroffs, who get them back recoined and thus raised in esteem to 116, the primary and the most elevated category, deducting the cost and obligations of recoinage, producing to something more than 2%. By this operation, the shroffs pick up about 1/116 parts upon the esteem of the coin each third year".

The per capita pay of the larger part of the individuals was not adequate for a productive cooperation in cash economy. By expanding the rates of income and by demanding on cash installments, British run the show enormously cultivated monetization. It would, hence, be sensible to conclude that there was monetization in India amid the Mughal period but it was not very impressive.

#### **Credit instruments**

An fundamental portion of the Mughal financial framework was the expand structure of credit. The foremost characteristic credit institution in India was the 'Hundi' or Charge of Trade and huge exchanges were

for the most part done through 'Hundis'. The creator of Mirat-I-Ahmadi and exceptionally numerous European travelers portrayed how enormous exchanges in exchange and commerce were made by the issue of 'Hundis' by the Financiers from one portion of the nation to another without physical transfer of coins. Hundis instead of cash progressively got to be the regular and prevalent shape of installment at slightest among the affluent area. In long-distance exchange this framework not as it were met the necessities of an extending request for credit but decreased the dangers included in sending cash to a far off put by qafilas of bullock-carts. Within the 17th century, the arrive income from Bengal was carried to Agra by qafilas of bullock-carts but within the mid-18th century, the house of jagat seth transmitted it to Delhi through 'hundi' to his specialist there. Continuously, a showcase for hundis created and the dealers made broad utilize of it to carry on exchange.

#### **Conclusion**

The Mughal Realm at the stature of its control had kept up an successful and centralized money related framework all through its region of control. The request for cash expanded at the same time with the development of exchange and commerce. But the Mughal government was able to guarantee relentless supply of cash without causing genuine change within the economy as a entirety. With the gradual decrease of the central specialist, be that as it may, things changed a awesome bargain. Taking advantage of the shortcoming of the central government, common governors and unimportant rulers attested their autonomy by coining cash in their possess mints. Consequently endless monetary forms of distinctive guidelines with all its risks and bothers stamped the money related framework when the English picked up political authority in Bengal.

#### **Reference**

- 1 Satish Chandra, ' Some aspects of the growth of a Money Economy in India during the Seventeenth Century' in *Modern Asian Studies*, p. 374
- 2 Irfan Habib, ' Banking in Mughal India' in *Contributions to Indian Economic History* p. 2.
- 3 Richards I.F. (Edited) , *The Imperial Monetary System of Mughal India*, Oxford, 1987, p. 4.
- 4 Sukumar Bhattacharyya, *The East India Company and the Economy of Bengal*, p. 96.
- 5 *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol.

- 1, p. 361 ; Shireen Moosvi, *The Economy of Mughal Empire*, p. 353.
- 6 S. Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*
- 7 *The Cambridge History of India*, vol. 1, p. 361.
- 8 Shireen Moosvi, *op. cit.*, p. 353.
- 9 Richards (Edited) , *op. cit.*, Pp. 20-21.
- 10 Moosvi, *op. cit.*, p. 353
- 11 Braudel Fernand, *Capitalism and Material life*, (New York 1973) p. 339.
- 12 Aziza Hasan in 'The Indian Economic & Social History Review Vol. VII (I) Pp. 150-60 ; Irfan Habib *The Cambridge Economic History of India vol I*, Pp. 164-65. to be referred as IESHR and CEHI.
- 13 Despite John Deyell's objections to her method (IESHR vol XII Pp. 392-40) Aziza Hasan's histogram found corroboration from Shireen Moosvi's sample - Moosvi, *op. cit.*, Pp. 357- 58.
- 14 Irfan Habib in CEHI, Vol I, Pp. 366-67.
- 15 Irfan Habib 'A System of Trimetallism' in Richards (Edited)*op. cit.*, Pp. 159- 60.1
- 16 Debendra Bijoy Mitra ' Monetary System in the Bengal Presidency 1757-1835' p. 13.
- 17 K.N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English and the East India Company*, p. 156.
- 18 Sukumar Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*, p 98.
- 19 Sukumar Bhattacharyya, *op. cit.*, p. 99.
- 20 Edgar Thurston, 'Notes on the history of the E. I. Coy's coinage from 1753' in the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol I, LXII Part I, 1893.
- 21 Debendra Bijoy Mitra, "Monetary System in the Bengal Presidency 1757-1835, Pp. 16-19.