Sadr-Us-Sadur under the Mughals (1556-1707)

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ABSTRACT

Sadr-us-Sadur title was expressly used in the Muslim world for a high religious dignitary whose function was concerned essentially with the administration of religious affairs. He was a central minister who was given this title when the Mughal Empire was divided into Subas (Provinces) by Akbar in 1580 A.D. Besides directing land-grants and cash-grants, the Sadr-us-Sadur also suggested selections of Qazi’s or judges and Mufti’s, or interpreters of law and customs, though he had himself no judicial functions. The research paper argues the historical background and evolution of the position of Sadr-us-Sadur from the time of Mughal emperor Babur to Aurangzeb. The paper discusses the duties of the Shaikh-ul-Islam, the position and qualifications for the appointment of the Sadr under Akbar. This paper gives detailed information of different Sadrs like Saikh Gadai, Sheikh Abdul Nabi, Sultan Khwaja, Fateh Ullah Shiraz and Mir Fatihullah under Akbar, refers to the working of Mir Sadr Jahan, Mulla Muhammad and Musawi Khan under Jahangir. Onwards, it illustrates the role of Mir Sayid Jalal, Saiyid Hidayat Ullah and Mirak Saikh Haravi under the time of Shahjahan and gives comprehensive information about the duties and responsibilities of Qulij Khan Khwaja Abid, Razavi Khan Saiyid Ali, Fazl Khan Saiyid Makhdohum, Khwaja Abdullah, Inayat Ullah Khan and Muhammad Amin Khan Chin in the reign of Aurangzeb. It focused how the corruption linked with the office of Sadr and in which ways emperor deal with it. It highlights how two or more duties assigned to Sadr in the reign of Aurangzeb and how the office of Sadr lost importance over the period of time.

The basis of the Muslim state’s administration can be traced from the days of The Prophet Muhammad and Khalifate-i-Rashidin, where officers for specific duties were appointed. Their office ended when their duties had been discharged but they could also be dismissed at the discretion of the head of the state. Later on, Amir Muawiya, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty based in Syria, established the first system of Muslim monarchy. He organized a bureaucracy or governing class from the noble Arab clans, all officers were appointed by the head of the state and they could be dismissed at any time by him. When Islamic religious teachings had been put on a proper basis through writings, a group of officers for religious and semi-religious functions were appointed. The Ulama-i-Zahir of state controlled scholars were organized on the same lines as the bureaucracy. Its members were appointed and dismissed at his discretion by the head of the state.

In the medieval period, the ‘contract’ of Muslim king, Abu’l-Hasan al-Mawardi, a 10th century’s Islamic jurist of the Shafi’i school of thought called it as the ‘Imamate’ was to protect the Deen and manage the affairs by upholding Shari’a. The upholding of Shari’a means that king’s orders must be based on it. To qualified as a Hakim-i-Adil (a just king) the King have to prove different things like: (1) the matters of Shariat such as guarding the Deen from the blemish (2) the equity for protection of weak and slaves from the transgressing of tyrant (3) to protection of Islamic territory for both Muslims and Dhimmis (4) the collection of Fayz and Zakat and other taxes have to be protected.

The scholars dedicated to the conception of Shariat were called Ulama’s and for the guidance to king was known as Shaikh-ul-Islam, a great theologian of Islam or chief jurist. The Muslims came to India with the model of administrative system of the Abbasid Caliphs of Iraq, the Umayyad Caliphs of Spain, and the Fatimid Caliphs of Egypt, a galaxy of scholars well-grounded in Arabic and Persian also came with them. The Ulama’s had knowledge of Muslim law and jurisprudence and became the advisers of the sovereigns. The learned in law were appointed to perform the functions of the court of justice. The Shaikh-ul-Islam term was called in the Delhi Sultanate under diverse names such as Shaikh-ul-Islam, Qazi-ul-Quzat (chief of the Qazi’s) and Sadr (the chief). The office of the Sadr-us-Sadur formed with the institution of Qazi-ul-Quzat under the Abbasids when the Imam Abu Yusuf was given the power to assign the Qazi’s outside the capital.

Like other honorific titles beginning with the word ‘Sheikh’, the term Shaikh-ul-Islam was in the earlier reserved for Ulama’s and mystics. It first appeared in Khurasan in the 10th century A.D. In major cities of Khurasan it seems to have had more detailed connotations, since only one person held the title at any given time and place. The holders of the title of Shaikh-ul-Islam in Khurasan were amongst the most significant Ulama’s, but there is no confirmation that they delivered Fatwas. Under the Ilkhans (ruled by the Mongol House of Hulagu), the Delhi Sultanate and the Timurids the title was conferred, often by the ruler, to high-ranking Ulama’s who executed numerous duties but were not usually of Mufti’s, Islamic jurist qualified to issue a non-binding opinion Fatwa. The Shaikh-ul-Islam was the representative of the Ulama’s. The Shaikh-ul-Islam performed different duties as: (1) His duty was to see that the Shariat law was enforced. (2) Besides being an advice-giver to the Sultan, the Shaikh-ul-Islam was also in duty of the Waqf’s for benevolent and educational purposes. (3) From the income of these donations schools were run and

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The Mughals in India had continued it from the Delhi Sultanate and regional Muslims rulers. The kings at times, summoned a body of Ulama’s as well to whom they referred on significant matters. The Ulama’s, thus invited for assistance and pondering, were called as Sadr, the chief. Therefore, Sadr became equivalent with Shaikh-ul-Islam and technically he was regarded as the chief or the representative of the Ulama. The term Sadr-us-Sadar, the chief of the Sadur used by the Mughals was more exact. During the Mughal period, the Sadr with department of Diwan-i-Saadat dealt with the affairs of group of consisting holy persons to help through the Sayurghal. There was in each district an officer called Sadr under the Sadr-us-Sadar, whose business it was to see that the objects of all grants made by the crown, for maintaining were carried into effect. The Qazi and Mir Adl were under his orders, and he had a clerk called the Diwan-i-Saadat.

To form an idea of the nature, character and achievements of this department, it is indispensable to study the steady development through which it underwent during different Sadrs, their associations with the monarchs and the amendment and reorganizations introduced in the institution by them. Babur was not able to rule much long after conquering the Delhi and Humayun didn’t have firm regime. Akbar was the first Mughal ruler to have stable and longer regime for reforms in administration. During Akbar's reign the Sadr ranked as the fourth officer of the empire. The four officers referred to were Wakil, Wazir, Bakshi, and Sadr. He was the highest law-officer; was in charge of all lands devoted to ecclesiastical and benevolent purposes, and possessed an almost unlimited power of conferring such lands independently of the king. He was also the highest ecclesiastical law-officer, and might exercise the powers of High-Inquisitor.

The first qualification for Sadr-us-Sadar should be the requirement of learning of theology and Muslim traditions and customs. Further, Abu Fazl had given the qualifications like generosity, experienced, hardworking, not ease loving nature and peace loving with all. Second quality of the Sadr had to enquire into, before grants to be made and so that petitions must be considered in fairness. Hence an experienced man of correct intentions was to be employed for the office of Sadr. Third, he ought to be at peace with every party and must be kind towards the people at large in word and action.

Akbar being a minor at his accession, the first Sadr-us-Sadar of the realm, Shaikh Ghadai Dehlavi son of Jamal Kamboi was appointed by Khanan-i-Khan Bairam Khan, the regent of Akbar. Shaikh Ghadai got the post of the Sadr-us-Sadar on account of his friendship with the Khan-i-Khanan. When in the time of the predominance of Sher Shah Suri, Bairam chose exile and went to Gujrat, the Shaikh treated him well and was generous to him. When the control of India came into Bairam’s hands in 1556 the Shaikh came from Gujrat and by means of Bairam entered into the King’s service and was made Sadr. He managed so well with Bairam that the latter transacted no political or financial business without taking his opinion. The Shaikh used to put his seal on the back of ordinances. He was let off the salutation (Taslim) and in assemblies took precedence of all the well-born Saiyids. His greatness was such that he paid his respects to Akbar without dismounting. When Bairam’s power decayed, still Akbar treated him with favour. But the old honour and position did not remain the same.

After Ghadai in 1561, Khawaja Muhammad Salih of Herat, grandson of a well-known Wazir Khwaja Abdullah Marwarid, was appointed to the Sadrate for three years. But he had not such absolute power as his predecessors in the matter of conferring and granting Aukaf and Madad-i-Ma’ash and his authority was more that of a clerk. Shaikh Abdun-Nabi was appointed as Sadr-us-Sadar in 1563 A.D. in orders that in conjunction with Muzaffir Khan. He was the grandson of Shaikh Abdul Qudas of Gangoh who was great saint of Hind. He was appointed on the recommendation of the Muzaffir Khan, the Diwan. Mentioning the appointment of Shaikh Abdun-Nabi, Abu Fazl said that Akbar counted the qualification of an ideal Sadr. Firstly, a person should be appointed to the lofty office of Sadr who should be distinguished for wisdom and probity. Secondly, it was indispensable that there should be at the head of such an affair someone who should be firstly single-eyed so that this high office should not be a scene of grasping and contention for that he should not covet the goods of the poor. Secondly, he must be capable and a discerner of mankind so that he be not unduly swayed by the recommendations of oppressors, the blandishments of flatterers and his own ignorance. Thirdly, he must be able to appraise every man according to his merit, end so farther their work. Thirdly, he must not have patrician nature (Jabi’yat) and so spend his time in sloth, pleasure, and delay the business of the poor. Fourthly, on the contrary he must be strenuous and one who distinguishes not between night and day so that he may carry matters through and show the most exquisite devotion towards the needy.

With the appointment of Shaikh Abdun-Nabi a new period started in the history of office of Sadarat. He remained on the post till 1578 and then sent to Mecca. During his time of Sadarat, his power and position shined in a phenomenal way. Badauni states, “at this time Shaikh ‘Abd-un-Nabi was rising into power while’ the star of the Moulana was fast sinking. The Emperor on account of his great reverence and respect for the Shaikh used to go from time to time to his house to hear lectures on the traditions of the Prophet, and once or twice he even stood before him without his shoes and made the eldest prince attend his school to learn the collection of 40 Ahadis by the renowned master Maulana Abd-ur-Rahman Jami”. He distributed enormous areas of land to the people as Madad-i-Ma’ash, pensions and religious endowments. There was never in the reign of any monarch a Sadr-us-Sadar so powerful as Shaikh Abd-un-Nabi. For some time, the Akbar had so great faith in him as a religious leader that he would bring him his shoes and place them before his feet. At last owing to the disagreements with Makhduum-’l-Mulk and other ‘Ulama’s the Akbar’s opinion of him had changed completely.

Shaikh Abd-un-Nabi had executed the Brahaman on the charge that he had uttered abuse for the Prophet Muhammad. Some of the Ulama’s were of opinion that he should suffer death while others were in favour of his being publicly caning and heavily fined. Shaikh had issued orders for the execution of the Brahaman and the Akbar was exceedingly wrath. Although the slaying of the Brahaman is mentioned as the chief cause of Abdun-Nabi’s fall, Akbar had for some time been displeased with him. On the
discussion of the marriage-law in Islam; Akbar had accused the Shaikh Nabi of having at one time interpreted that law very liberally, and of having subsequently retracted this interpretation. It appeared that Akbar had never forgotten this.\[^{31}\] Further Badauni gave the information that, Akbar had given money to Abdur-Nabi for the poor of Mecca and sent him on a pilgrimage. When he came back, he was called to account for the money. Then he was put in prison, and murdered by some scoundrel in 1584.\[^{32}\]

In 1576-77, which was the anniversary of decease of Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti, Akbar arrived at Ajmer. Sultan Khwajah Naqasbandi\[^{33}\] was appointed as Mir Haji, leader of the pilgrims with sum of six lakhs of rupees, in money and goods, to be distributed among the deserving people of Mecca and Medina, and for building a Khana (prayer place) in the scared precincts.\[^{34}\] In 1578-79, Sultan Khwajah returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca and bought with him horses of Arabian pedigree, and Abyssinian slaves, and other precious presents for the Akbar.\[^{35}\] Many high and low joined the caravan for the journey to Hijaz; and perhaps few such large caravans had gone previously from India to that land. The Khwaja returned with edifying journey, and having made his obeisance became the recipient of even greater favors. He was appointed Sadr Kull, and given the rank of 1,000 personnel.\[^{36}\]

In 1579, Badauni stated that Akbar assembled the poor and the deserving in the Chugan field and came in person to the place. Nearly a lakh of person’s were present in that enclosure. The Sadr Sultan Khwajah and Qulij Khan (one of official of Akbar) presented to each a piece of gold. On that day of assembly eighty people’s women and children, were crashed to death under the hands and feet. And from the girdles of some of the women, whose husbands had died in Bengal, there fell purses full of Ashrafs and rupees. This affair caused great suspicion to arise as to all the poor. An order was issued, that in future but few persons should be brought together at once, but he soon laid aside this rule also.\[^{37}\] In Darbistan of Mubaid it was stated that Sultan Khwaja was one of the Albians, who was one of the faith which was founded by Akbar and which was known as the Din-I-Ilahi.\[^{38}\] On 25th July 1584 A.D., he died a natural death in the fort of Fatehpur.\[^{39}\]

The Sadarat of Abd-un-Nabi was well-known for the modifications and reforms which Akbar had made in the department and Madad-i-Ma’ash. When Akbar commenced to enquire into this department, it was discovered that the former Sadors had been found guilty of bribery and dishonest practices. He therefore appointed, Shaikh Abdun-Nabi to this important office. The lands which were then held by Afghans and Chaudris, were taken away, and became domain lands (Khalisa land), whilst all others that held grant were referred to Shaikh who enquired into, and certified, their grants.\[^{40}\]

But when rumors also regarding Sadr (Abd-un-Nabi) came to the ears of Akbar, an order was therefore given that all those who held more than five hundred Bighas should lay their Farmans personally before Akbar, and in default, should, lose their lands. As, however, the practices of these grant-holders did not come up to the guidelines of Akbar. The another order was passed, that the excess of all lands above one hundred Bighas, if left unspecified in the Farmans, should be reduced to two-fifths of it, three-fifths of the excess being annexed to the domain lands. Irani and Turani women alone were exception from this rule.\[^{41}\]

While the Akbar was at Bihar in March 1578, he confided the government of the Punjab to Sa’id Khan Mughul, and appointed Qazi’ Al Baghdadi (who was the grandson of Mir Qazi Husain Maibazi) to rearrange the boundaries of the lands given as Madad-i-Maash and Aimah (Al-Badauni uses the word Aimah in the sense of Aimah-daran, ‘holders of grant lands’) in the Punjab and elsewhere, which had been encroached upon by the old boundaries and re-measure the enclosures, and to put them all together into one village. Thus an exact distinction was made between the different grant-holders of the empire, and all this was done in spite of opposition of Shaikh Abdun-Nabi, and his subordinates.\[^{42}\]

The matters relating to Sayurghals (rent free land) took a very different course. In order to make personal inquiry, Akbar had appointed Shaikh Farid Bukhari to examine the grants of Gohana in 1577 A.D. Similarly, Faidi Sirhindi had given the details of the inquiry made into grant at Sirhind. The lapses in the land grants after these inquiries had made the Akbar that the re

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\[^{3}\] Akbar had divided the Mughal Empire into twelve provinces with appointments of other officials like Sadr’s in 1579.\[^{4}\] He had appointed provincial Sadr’s. As he did not want totally discredit the Abdun-Nabi, the reason he gave that single person can’t discharge all the duties.\[^{5}\] Later on, as appointments of Sadr’s were made, Akbar appointed Sadr’s of districts and Sadr of the realm.

\[^{4}\] When Abdun-Nabi was shipped to Mecca and the post of the Sadr fell vacant, Sultan Khwaja was appointed in 1579 A.D. as staed above. The new Sadr, who had just returned from Mecca, became a member of the Divine faith. Akbar enquired personally into all grants. The lands were steadily withdrawn and according to Badauni, who had managed to get 1000 Bighas, at first to the great disgust of Abdun-Nabi, many a ‘Muhammadan family’ was impoverished or utterly ruined.\[^{7}\] Badauni had commented on the land grants of Akbar that even to Hindus, he granted lands for the first time. Further he complained that thus learning and learned men fell from day to day into lower estimation.

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returned to the court near 1589 A.D. During Sadrship of Azaduddaulah (Mir Fatullah of Shiraz) the following order was given: ‘if any one held a Sayyurghal together with a partner, the Sadr should in the event of one of the partners dying, proceed without further enquiry to a division, the share of the deceased partner lapsing to the Crown and remaining domain land till the heirs should personally apply to His Majesty. The Sadr was at the same time prevented from granting, without previous reference to His Majesty, more that fifteen Bigbaha’s. Badauni stated that during his tenure, he could not make a grant of 5 Bighas of land and position of Sadr had remained only in books. Fatehullah had withdrawn the whole of the grants of lands. The confiscated land became the dwelling-place of wild animals, and of noxious beasts and reptiles. The event of the oppression of Aima Dar’s can be confirmed by the following incident during the time of Mir Fatehullah. Once Fatehullah presented in an bag offering of 1,000 rupees, which his Shiqdar had exacted as surplus from the widows and orphans of the Aima Dar-holders of Basawar, saying that his collectors had saved it from the charity lands. Abu Fazl stated that on account of the general peace and security in the empire, the grant-holders begun to design their lands and thus derived so much profit that it attracted the ‘greediness’ of the Government officers, who had certain notions of how much was sufficient for Sayurghal-holders and demand revenues taxes. But this displeased Akbar and commanded that such profits should not be interfered with. In 1589 A.D. Mir Fatehullah had died and Sadr Jahan was appointed as Sadr-us-Sadar by the Akbar.

Again when it was found but that holders of one hundred Bighas and even less were guilty of bribery, the order was given that Mir Sadr Jahan should bring these people before Akbar; and afterwards it was determined that the Sadr with the concurrence of Abu Fazl should either increase or decrease the grants. The rule now followed was that all Sayurghal land should consist of one-half of tilled land and of one-half of land capable of cultivation if the latter half be not so (i.e., if the whole be tilled land), one-fourth of the whole should be granted and a now grant be issued for the remainder. This was ordered because Akbar wanted that more arable and agriculture land should be increased. Akbar was a political realist and his doctrines were centred on a cautious examination of the situation. He was strong-minded to uphold the far-reaching Empire not by the strength of the sword but by a policy of harmony and good will. Hence he granted land to both Hindus and Muslims. In 1577, Akbar started an era of investigation, adjustment reforms and the grant holding and the institution of Sadarat, which nonstop throughout the reign of Akbar.

The office of Sadr was continued entrusted to Miran Sadr Jahan under Jahangir. The Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri stated that “I gave an order to Miran Sadr Jahan, who is one of the genuine Sayyids of India and who for a long time held the high office of Sadr (ecclesiastical officer) under my father that he should every day produce before me deserving people, worthy of charity.” The Jahangir did not make noticeable changes into the department. Jahangir had raised Sadr Jahan from the rank of 2,000 to that of 4,000 as he knew him from his childhood. He regarded him as preceptor in religious matters (Khalifa). After some time he had promoted Miran Sadr Jahan to the rank of 5,000 personal and 1,500 horse. A lakh of dams was given to Mirza Sadr Jahan and others to dispose of in charity for different quarters of the city during the first Ramazan 'Id after Jahangir’s accession. Asif Khan Miran Zafar had said that Miran Sadr Jahan under Jahangir had given more land as compared to Akbar. It could be that some powers of Sadr would have restored some of making grants in early period of Jahangir.

Jahangir in his memoirs wrote that “I had established a custom that deserving people and dervishes should be brought before me every night, so that I might bestow on them, after personal enquiry into their condition, land, or gold, or clothes”. There is not much information about the Sadr-us-Sadar under the Jahangir period. On 1615, Jahangir informed that Miran Sadr Jahan came from his native place and made with an offering of 100 Muhrs. Jahangir had allowed the Sadr Jahan to leave in 1616 A.D. and bestowed on him Rs. 5000. Sadr Jahan had died at the age of 120.

It was mentioned that one Sayyid Ahmad Qadiri and other Taqi-Ud-Din-Shushatwi were the Sadrs in the time of Jahangir, although with meager information about them. When the family of Yamin-ud-Daulah Asaf Jah (father-in-law of Jahangir) rose high in the time of Jahangir, their connections and dependents had also flourished. Mulla Muhammad of Thatta was began to honor and favor by Asaf Jah more and more because he was his tutor. Through his intermediation the Mulla Muhammad was gratified by being appointed Sadr Kull of the imperial territories throughout India. Soon Mulla Muhammad became the owner of all the properties, gardens, houses and dwellings of the Arghuns and Tarkhans—who had been rulers of Thatta—came into his possession by purchase or by gift from the royal exchequer. In short, he became the owner of all Thatta, and his brethren became Qazi’s, Mufti’s and censors in the province. These relatives of Mulla Muhammad, paid little heed to the local officers, and ruling independently did whatever they fancied.

Mulla Muhammad had died during the revolt of Mahabat Khan. The author of The Maathir—Daulah, confirmed in his office of Sadr Kull, and who for a long time held the high office of Sadr (ecclesiastical officer) under my father that he should every day produce before me deserving people, worthy of charity”. It could be that some powers of Sadr would have restored some of making grants in early period of Jahangir. Jahangir had raised Sadr Jahan from the rank of 2,000 to that of 4,000 as he knew him from his childhood. He regarded him as preceptor in religious matters (Khalifa). After some time he had promoted Miran Sadr Jahan to the rank of 5,000 personal and 1,500 horse. A lakh of dams was given to Mirza Sadr Jahan and others to dispose of in charity for different quarters of the city during the first Ramazan 'Id after Jahangir’s accession. Asif Khan Miran Zafar had said that Miran Sadr Jahan under Jahangir had given more land as compared to Akbar. It could be that some powers of Sadr would have restored some of making grants in early period of Jahangir.

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Jahan. As his ancestors had also served as officers of the kings of Gujarat, Shah Jahan on the 1642 accepted the rank of 4,000 and the office of the Sadrat of India in succession to Musavi Khan.76

The Mir Saiyid Jalal represented to the Shah Jahan77 that due to the negligence and carelessness of Musavi Khan many grants of maintenance land had been made to persons who were not entitled to them and many had got hold of lands by forged documents. An order was issued by Shah Jahan to the dominions that until inquiry into grants had been made, maintenance lands were in general confiscated. It resulted in the Saiyid having a very bad name with the public. At the same time the Begam Sahiba’s (Jahanara the daughter of Shah Jahan) dress caught fire, and badly burnt. Much charity was bestowed, and prisoners were released, debts were remitted, and the above order was also cancelled. The Mir’s allowances were gradually increased till they came to 6,000 with 6,000 horse. He died young at Lahore on the 4th June, 1647 A.D. Saiyid Hidayat Ullah Sadr was the son of Saiyid Ahmad Qadiri who was the chief Sadr in the time of Jahangir. In the 20th year of the reign of Shah Jahan when the Sadr-us-Sadar Saiyid Jalal died, and Hidayat Ullah, who was the Diwan of Qandahar, had been repeatedly bought to the notice of the Shah Jahan, he received the rank of 1,000 with 100 horse and was summoned to the court. In 1648 A.D., he was admitted to an audience and received the robe of the Sadarat and an increase of 500 with 100 horse. In 1650 A.D., he had an increase of 500. In 1653 A.D., his rank was 2,500 with horse.78 After the battle of Samughar, when Aurangzeb’s army had arrived79 in Agra, in accordance with orders (from Shah Jahan), he came twice before Aurangzeb. He produced a royal letter and a sword called Alamgir which had been given (to Aurangzeb by Shah Jahan), and communicated a verbal message (from Shah Jahan). In the early part of the reign of Aurangzeb, the Sadrat was taken from him and transferred to Mirak Shaikh Haravi.80

Mirak Shaikh Haravi was the brother’s son of Qazi Aslam. During Jahangir’s reign, he came in his early youth to India from Khurasan, and lived with Mulla Abdul Salam in Lahore. The latter was one of the recognized learned men of that city, and had a high reputation as a theologian. For nearly fifty years he sat upon the Masnad (seat of honour) of authority, and was appointed Mufti of the royal court, and died in the first year of Shah Jahan’s reign. Mirak Shaikh studied a great deal, and later entered the service of Shah Jahan. He was honored by his appointment as instructor of Prince Dara Shikoh and the other princes. As a mark of royal favor he was appointed as writer of authentic accounts, and in 1644, promted to the post of the examiner of petitions. When Aurangzeb through his conquests bought the whole of India under his control in July 1658 A.D., Mirak Shaikh Haravi received increased favors, and on the occasion of the anniversary of the 2nd year of the reign he was granted an increase of 500, and thus his rank was raised to 3,000. At the end of the 2nd year he was appointed the chief Sadr in succession to Saiyid Hidayat Ullah. As he had grown very old, he was removed from that office in the 4th year of reign of Aurangzeb.81

During the reign of Shah Jahan, every year 79,000 rupees were distributed in five months through the Sadr-us-Sadar, but in the other months no expenditure was made (on charity). Aurangzeb ordered that during five months the existing practice should be followed, and during the remaining seven months 10,000 rupees were to be distributed every month so that in all every year one lakh and 49,000 rupees were to be spent on the needy.82

Qulij Khan Khawaja Abid had completed his education in Samarqand and then went to Bokhara. He was at first appointed as a Qazi, and later on Shaikh-ul-Islam. In 1656 A.D. he with a view to going on pilgrimage of the holy places of Islam, came to Kabul and from there India. He paid his respects to the emperor, and was allowed to depart after receiving a robe of honor and Rupees 6,000 in cash, returned after performing the pilgrimage.83 During the time when Prince Aurangzeb started from the Deccan to upper India to ‘enquire’ after the health of his father, Khwaja was honored by promotion to the rank of 3,000 with 500 horse, and the title of Khan. After the battle with Maharaja Jaswant Singh he was promoted to the rank of 4,000 with 700 horse. In 1662 A.D. he was appointed to the office of Sadr Kull. In 1665 A.D., he was exalted by the advance of his rank to 4,000 personal with 1500 horse.84 In 1668 A.D., he was removed from office85 but was later appointed as Governor of Ajmer. Razavi Khan Saiyid Ali was the second son of Sadr-us-Sadar Miran Saiyid Jalal Baukhari.86

When Shah Jahan in the 20th year of reign proceeded from the capital towards Kabul, he left Saiyid Jalal who was very ill at the time in the capital, and took Saiyid Ali with him for carrying on the work as his father’s deputy.87 After his father’s death Saiyid Ali’s rank was increased to 1,000 personal with 200 horse. When the affairs of the state came into the hands of Aurangzeb, he joined him, and in the 10th year he was promoted to the high office of chief Sadr in succession to Abid Khan; in 1674 he was granted a robe of honour. In 18th year of reign Aurangzeb had condoled with the Sadar Razavi Khan, for the death of his brother and bought him to Court. A mourning robe and permission to go to Delhi were given to him.88 In 1680 A.D., he died.89

After this, for the second time to the high office of Sadar Qulij Khan Khawaja Abid was appointed by Aurangzeb.90 After a brief stint of one year he was sent to the Deccan for campaign.91 Then the post was given to the Sharif Khan for a brief period also. Sadr Sharif Khan had died on Wednesday 4th October 1982. Fazil Khan Shaikh Makhduum Sadr was originally of Thatta. At first he was secretary to Muhammad Azam Shah. On the death of Sharif Khan, he was made Sadr-i-Kull (chancellor) and got the title of Fazil Khan.92 In 1688, he died of the plague which was prevalent in the royal camp.93

For ten year after the death of Shaikh Makhduum the contemporary sources did not mentioned the name of any Sadar. Although it had not be vacant in these years. The Qazi Khawaja Abdurrahman was given the extra duty of Sadar for some time.94 In the 42nd year of Aurangzeb, Inayat Ullah Khan acted as Sadar until the appointment of another officer, and his rank was 1,000 with 100 horse.95 Muhammed Amin Khan Chin Bahadur (Itimad-ud-Daula) in 1689 A.D., took off the sandals of exile in the Deccan (where Aurangzeb was), and entered the emperor’s service. He obtained the rank of 2,000 personal with 1,000 horse and the title of Khan.96

In the 42nd year of Aurangzeb, Sadar Qazi Abdullah had died.97 Aurangzeb had ordered to the Inayatullah Khan that, as the department of the Sadar was a part of the department of the Diwan, he should discharge the former work as deputy, till the appointment of another Sadar. Muhammed Amin Khan Chin was summoned to the court, and received the robe of the supreme Sadarship (Sadrat-i-Kull) and a present of three enamelled rings studded with emeralds.98 He was assigned both the judicial and militarily duties under Aurangzeb. He remained till the death of Aurangzeb on the duties of Sadar-us-Sadar.99
To conclude, Akbar not only systematically investigated into the credentials of the officers of the department, he stringently dealt with land grantees given to fraudulence. After the Abd-un-Nabi, Akbar had chosen a liberal minded as the Sadr-us-Sadur. Akbar had continued the post of the Sadr-us-Sadur all through his reign and that appointment of provincial Sadr’s was in association with the reorganization of the department. Slowly, but surely the authority of the Sadr, in spite of all his outward dignity, began to shrink. There were fewer cases of wrongdoing after the period of Abd-un-Nabi in the department. Jahangir had continued the practice of personal administration of Sayurghal. We know very little about the Sadarat organization and its officials under Jahangir. Jahangir, it seemed from his memoirs, made all the grants himself. But the subsistence’s grants from the Sadarat were not mentioned either by Jahangir or Mutamad Khan. But it does not ascertain that the Sadr had independent power of grant. It was not practicable for Jahangir to assume this widespread responsibility on himself. It was a very time consuming work to enquire into the merit and necessity of the land grantees. Jahangir to assume this widespread responsibility on himself. It was a very time consuming work to enquire into the merit and necessity of the land grantees. The Sadarat did not undergo any major transformation at Shah Jahan’s and Aurangzeb’s period. There is not much data available in the contemporary sources for the office of Sadr through which land grants to be made. The most of information related names and titles of the Sadr’s are available. The appointed Sadr’s were given more duties linked to the political affairs of the Mughal Court by the successors of the Akbar. One thing is considerably common that all the foremost Mughal rulers appointed their Sadr’s without any sectarian contemplation.

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4. The term used to label the sort of indefinitely renewed contract through which the Muslim community accords generosity and protection to members of other revealed religions, on circumstance of their recognizing the domination of Islam. The Encyclopedia of Islam, (Volume II), p. 227
5. The collective wealth of Muslims derived from the taxation of conquered peoples. Also called as Ghanima and Khums. The Encyclopedia of Islam, (Volume II), p. 869
7. Al-Akham-as-Sultaniyah, pp. 27-28
8. The term Ulama denotes scholars of almost all disciplines. However, the term refers more specially to the scholars of the religious sciences. In Sunnism, they are regarded as the guardians, transmitters and interpreters of religious knowledge, of Islamic doctrine and law. The term also embraces those who fulfill religious functions in the community that require a certain level of expertise in religious and judicial issues, such as judges and preachers etc.
10. H. Qureshi, The Administration of the Mughal Empire, Low Price Publications, Delhi, Reprinted 1990, p. 207
12. Fatwah is an opinion on a point of law. The term “law” is applied, in Islam, to all civil or religious matters. The act of giving a Fatwa is a Futya or Ifta—the same term is used to signify the profession of the adviser; the person who gives a Fatwa, or in Volumeved in that profession, is a Mufti; the person who asks for a Fatwa is a Mustafti.
16. Nizam Al-Mulk, The Siyar-al-Muluk or Siyasat-nama, Translated from the Persian by Hubert Darke, p. 60. It was his duty to respect doctors of religion and pay their salaries out of the treasury, and he should honour pious and abstemious men. Furthermore it was fitting that once or twice a week he should invite religious elders to his presence and hear from them the commands of the Imam.
17. Rent free land. Grants by which king the alienated his rights to collect the land revenue and other taxes from a given area of land for the life time of grantee. It is also known as Madad-i-Maash, Milik, Aimmah and Amlak. Irfan Habib, The Agrarian System of Mughal India, (1556-1707), Second Edition, G.S. Press, Madras, 1962, p.298
19. A History of India, Muntakhabu-T-Tawarikh, Volume II, p.70
20. The Ain-I-Akbari, Volume I, p. 268
21. A History of India, Muntakhabu-T-Tawarikh, Volume II, p.28
23. The Maathir-ul–Umara, Being Biographies of the Muhammadan and Hindu Officers of the Timurid Sovereigns of India From 1500 to 1780 A. D., Volume I, p. 569-570
25. A History of India, Muntakhabu-T-Tawarikh, Volume II, p. 70
27. The Akhbarnama, Volume II, pp. 373-374. It is interesting to note that Abu Fazl puts the responsibility of Abdun-Nabi on Muzaffar Khan. It could be due to the fact that later on Abdun-Nabi had lost the favour of the Akbar and Abu Fazl did not want to blame the Akbar for Abdun-Nabi’s appointment. Badauni stated that Shaikh Abdun-Nabi was appointed (seems like he was appointed entirely by the Akbar) as Sadr-us-Sadur in 1563 A.D. in orders that in conjunction with Muzaffar Khan from the town of Andari–Karnal.
29. A History Of India, Muntakhabu-T-Tawarikh, Volume II, p. 275
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32. Muntakhabu-T-Tawarikh, A General History of India from the Mohammedan conquest to the Year of Akbar’s Reign 1595 A.D., Volume III, p. 127-131
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34. The Ain-I-Akbari, Volume I, p. 273
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