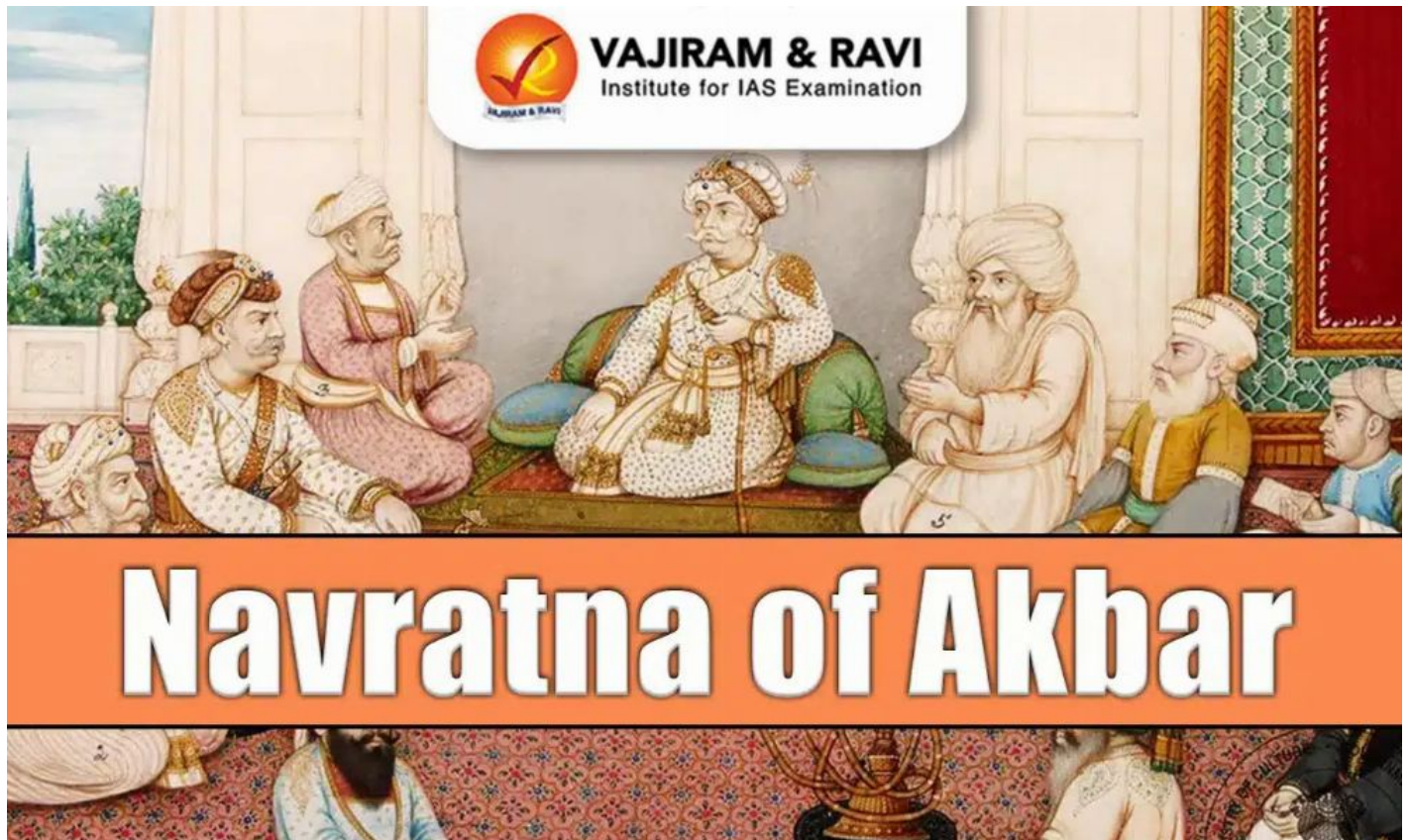


Navratna of Akbar, Contributions, Significance

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The **Navratnas of Akbar** (also called **Nine Gems**) were nine distinguished individuals in Emperor Akbar's court, celebrated for their brilliance in various fields such as administration, literature, music, and military strategy. This group included Birbal, Tansen, Abul Fazl, Raja Todar Mal and other figures. Their collective expertise strengthened the Mughal administration and enriched its cultural landscape.

Emperor Akbar encouraged collaboration among scholars, poets, and artists from diverse backgrounds. This integration of talents not only improved governance but also left an enduring cultural legacy, shaping the history of the Mughal Empire.

About Akbar

Akbar (1542-1605), the third Mughal emperor, ruled from 1556 to 1605, establishing the Mughal Empire as a dominant power in India. Known for his military conquests, administrative reforms, and cultural advancements, Akbar promoted religious tolerance, abolished the jizya, and introduced social reforms like prohibiting sati and legalizing widow remarriage. He refined the *mansabdari* system and introduced Din-i Ilahi, a syncretic religious creed.

What is the Navratna of Akbar?

Navratnas (meaning "Nine Gems") referred to a group of nine distinguished individuals in the royal courts of Indian rulers, symbolizing a council of talented advisors, scholars, or artists. Their expertise significantly enhanced the courts and played a crucial role in reinforcing the rulers' administration and policies.

- **Vikramaditya's Court:** Notable examples include the court of Emperor Vikramaditya, which featured scholars like Kalidasa, a renowned classical Sanskrit writer, best known for his works *Shakuntala* and *Meghaduta*, and Varahamihira, a distinguished astronomer and mathematician.
- **Akbar's Court:** The court of Mughal emperor Akbar included figures like Birbal and Raja Todar Mal, who contributed to the administration and the empire's revenue system.
- **Raja Krishnachandra's Court:** Raja Krishnachandra's 18th-century Bengal court promoted intellectual and cultural development.

Nine Navratna of Akbar

The **Navratnas** or **Nine Gems** were a group of nine extraordinary individuals who served in the court of the Mughal **Emperor Akbar**. They were known for their exceptional talents and contributions in various fields such as administration, arts, and literature. Following are the nine Navratnas:

1. **Abul Fazl:** Chief advisor and author of the *Akbar Nama*.
2. **Faizi:** Poet laureate and mentor to Akbar's sons.
3. **Tansen:** Renowned singer and Minister of Culture.
4. **Birbal:** Known for his wit and served as the Foreign Minister.
5. **Raja Todar Mal:** Finance Minister.
6. **Raja Man Singh:** Chief of Staff of Akbar's army.
7. **Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana:** Defence Minister and poet.
8. **Fakir Aziao-Din:** Religious Minister.
9. **Mulla Do Piazza:** Home Minister

These individuals played a significant role in the administration and cultural development of the Mughal Empire under Akbar's reign.

Abul Fazl

Abul Fazl was a writer, historian, and politician who served as the chief advisor to the Mughal Emperor Akbar. He served as a military commander whose strategic leadership in the Deccan campaigns helped expand Mughal power against the Sultanates.

- **Contribution:** He was popularly known for his theory of *Padshahat*, which argued that the emperor's rule, as an agent of God, could not be overthrown.
- **Books:** *Akbarnama*, *Ain-i-Akbari*, and a Persian translation of the Bible.

Raja Todar Mal

Raja Todar Mal was a key figure in the Mughal Empire during Akbar's reign, serving as Finance Minister (Diwan-i-Ashraff), Vakil-us-Sultanat (Counsellor of the Empire), and Joint Wazir.

- **Contribution:** He is known for reforming the Mughal revenue system by introducing standard weights and measures, implementing a land survey and settlement system, and establishing revenue districts and officers.
- His revenue collection method, "**Todarmal's Bandobast**," involved a 10-year survey of crop yields and prices, which laid the foundation for a cash-based tax system.
- He declared **Persian**, written in the Iranian style, as the official language of the Mughal administration.

Birbal

Birbal, originally named **Mahesh Das**, served as an advisor to Mughal emperor Akbar between 1556 and 1562, earning the title 'Birbal', which means 'quick thinker'. He was one of Akbar's nine prominent advisors, the Navaratnas, and held the rank of commander of two thousand.

- **Contribution:** A Hindu by birth, Birbal embraced Din-i-Ilahi, Akbar's religion, becoming its only Hindu follower.
- Known for his wit, intelligence, and poetic talent, he was a skilled composer of Braj language poetry, and his cleverness is captured in numerous folk tales passed down through oral tradition.

Fakir Aziao-Din

Fakir Aziao-Din was a prominent Sufi mystic and spiritual advisor to Emperor Akbar, known for his profound wisdom and piety. His guidance significantly influenced Akbar's policies on religious tolerance and pluralism, promoting a syncretic culture that aimed for harmony among diverse faiths within the Mughal Empire.

Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana

Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana, widely known as Rahim, was a celebrated poet and a distinguished member of Emperor Akbar's Navaratnas. As the son of Bairam Khan, Akbar's mentor and guardian, Rahim earned acclaim for his Hindustani couplets (dohas) and contributions to astrology.

- He translated Babur's memoirs, the **Baburnama**, from Chagatai into Persian and authored two Sanskrit treatises on astrology.

Faizi

Faizi was a distinguished Indian poet and scholar of the late medieval period. As the elder brother of Abul Fazl, Emperor Akbar's historian, Faizi was appointed by Akbar as a tutor for his sons Salim, Murad, and Daniyal.

- **Role:** He was appointed the poet laureate in Akbar's court and also served as the *sadr* (religious leader) for Agra, Kalpi, and Kalinjar.
- **Contribution:** Known for his Persian poetry and literary scholarship, Faizi earned acclaim for translating Sanskrit works into Persian, including Bhaskaracharya's mathematical treatise "**Lilavati**."

Tansen

Tansen, also known as Ramtanu, was a renowned Hindustani classical musician of the 16th century. He first served in the court of Raja Ramchandra Singh of Rewa before joining Mughal Emperor Akbar’s court in 1562. Akbar held Tansen in high regard, honouring him as one of his Navaratnas (nine jewels) and bestowing upon him the title "Mian," symbolizing scholarly excellence.

- **Contribution:** Tansen's legacy includes his Dhrupad compositions, the creation of new ragas, and the promotion of musical instruments.
- He also founded the **Gwalior Gharana**, a prominent school of Hindustani classical music, which has had a lasting influence on the tradition.

Raja Man Singh

Raja Man Singh, the Maharaja of Amber, was a prominent general in Akbar's Mughal army and a member of the Navaratnas. A devout Hindu and skilled strategist, he helped expand the Mughal Empire through key victories in Kabul, Bihar, and Orissa.

- **Contribution:** He played an important role in the **Battle of Haldighati** against Maharana Pratap.
- Aside from his military feats, Man Singh is remembered for his cultural legacy, including the construction of temples and palaces.

Mulla Do Piyaza

Mulla Do-Piyaza was one of Akbar's prominent advisors, known for his sharp wit and intelligence, earning a place among the emperor's Navratnas. Although he often competed with Birbal, he was frequently outsmarted by him, yet their interactions were a source of much amusement at the Mughal court.

Significance of the Navratnas in Akbar’s court

The significance of Akbar's Navratnas lies in their transformative impact on the Mughal Empire's administration, culture, and military strength. These nine distinguished individuals were selected for their exceptional skills and contributions in diverse fields such as literature, music, governance, and warfare.

- For instance, Abul Fazl’s political counsel, Tansen’s musical brilliance, and Raja Todar Mal’s administrative reforms exemplify their enduring influence.
- Military leaders like Raja Man Singh and Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khana played vital roles in expanding the empire’s territories through successful campaigns.

Thus, their combined expertise strengthened Akbar's rule, leaving a lasting legacy of cultural advancement, administrative efficiency, and religious tolerance.

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