

The Socio-Economic Welfare Contribution of Ulugh Khan Jahan to the Islamic Civilization in Bengal during the 15th Century CE

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ABSTRACT

Ulugh Khan Jahan (1369 CE-1459 CE) was a great Sufi, Islamic scholar, and politician in fifteenth century Bengal. He was a committed and sincere Islamic scholar and social activist who appeared as a socio-economic-religious reformist for the welfare of the Bengal people. The aspect of his life and contribution has received less attention from scholars compared to his thought and agenda in the sphere of Sufism. However, he worked hard to promote Muslims to enhance socio-economic aspects and integrate the revealed knowledge with civilizational spheres. He presented his reformative and integrated ideas for the welfare of humanity for all communities. This study used the qualitative method by which data will be collected and analyzed from the primary and secondary texts. The present study aims to investigate Khan Jahan's inclusive socio-economic welfare contribution to Islamic civilization as a means to its realization as reflected in some of his literary works. It seeks to explain comprehensively why he focused on such a bold vision and how he initiated to achieve the goal of socio-economic welfare while acknowledging the religious and cultural differences between Muslims and Hindus. Highlighted in this discussion are the salient features of socio-economic enhancements during his time that influenced others later developments. This study also discusses the significance and relevance of his thoughts and ideas on the issue for contemporary Bangladesh particularly and the society.

Keywords: Bengal, Ulugh Khan Jahan, socio-economic welfare, Islamic civilization

INTRODUCTION

Ancient Bengal was a non-Muslim majority area but present Bangladesh is a Muslim mainstream country, and ninety percent of the people are followers of Islam (Sarker, 2005). Muslim political leaders, Islamic scholars and social workers arrived in Bengal to effect the change in society (Uddin, Hasan, & Uddin, 2022). From 1204 to 1205 CE, Bakhtiyar Khalji was the first Muslim monarch or ruler in Bengal and he had established government and Islamic culture-civilization and communal harmony in society (Arnold, 2001). Socio-economic welfare was a noteworthy part of changing society, and its development was the sign of a developed society (Uddin & Yusof, 2022). Muslim rulers had a socio-economic welfare and religious contribution to society (Kaçay et al., 2020). Ulugh Khan Jahan, locally known as Khan Jahan Ali, and Khan e Azom Khan (d, October 25, 1459 CE) was a successful ruler and great saint of Islam in the 15th century of South Bengal, especially Jashore-Khulna area (Karim, 1992). Khan Jahan made substantial contributions to the socio-economic welfare in Bengal of the 15th century and he established a peaceable society in southern Bengal that was mainly non-Muslim (Banu, 1992). Moreover, the steps he took to create a socio-economic welfare task that are still visible today in South Bengal (Uddin et al., 2022). Knowledge of the total boundary area of Khan Jahan's territory is important in

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describing his' socio-economic welfare activities. His working area can be determined through his development work and his follower's activities.

Moreover, Ulugh Khan Jahan built a big city in the north-east area of his government; this area was known as Bagerhat town recently (Mitra, 1922). This city was situated on the Bhairab River, and here Khan Jahan built mosques, (*masjid*) roads, and other social welfare institutions and this city was the capital of the Khan Jahan administration (Westland, 1871). Khan Jahan's administration boundary area was Barobazar under the Jhenaidha district and Meherpur district in the North, Bay of Bengal in the South, Pirojpur, Barisal and Narail district in the east, and Koyra sub-district area was the west border. However, Khan Jahan carried out development tasks with his army and followers for the people as a part of raising Islam, and established Islamic Civilization. He built roads, waterways, and mass transport to create trade and commerce facilities for people and he built inter-city road network from Barobazar to Muruli Qosbah, Poigram Qosbah, and the last city and center of government Known as Habily Qosbha (Khalifatabad) (Mitra, 1922). Khan Jahan also contributed to creating pure water ponds, deep-water pit and wells (*Kup/kuya*) for people. This was to meet the need the demand for clean drinking water, a commodity that was severely lacking. In short, building roads, providing safe houses, constructing freshwater reservoirs, establishing communal harmony, creating opportunities for foreign trade, developing a prosperous economy, and spreading Islam, and Islamic Civilization were the exemplary contributions of Khan Jahan.

The Short Biography of Ulugh Khan Jahan

Ulugh Khan Jahan is known as *Hazrat* Khan Jahan Ali, Khan I Azom, *Pir* Khan Jahan, *Oli* Ulugh Khan, and Khan i-Azom Khan (Great Khan), but his actual name is Ulugh Khan Jahan found in an inscription (Karim, 1992). Although, Khan Jahan Ali name is prevalent and famous in Bangladesh (Khan, 2021). Moreover, He was Uzbek or Turk origin because the word "*Ulugh*" is a Turkish word meaning "leader" (Sarkar, 1948). The Turks and Uzbeks nation lived in center Asian countries from the 15th century to the 21st century. Talha Tarif argues that Khan Jahan was born in 1369 CE in Delhi, and his father's name was Akbor Kha, and his mother's name was Ambiya Bibi (Tariff, 2015). Khan Jahan's family comes from Türkiye, Azerbaijan or any central Asia country because Khan Jahan's actual name is Ulugh Khan Jahan. Local Indian people did not use the "*Ulugh*" title of their name. Furthermore, Khan Jahan died on October 25, 1459 CE (863 AH, 26th Zilhaj) in present Bagerhat city, Bangladesh (Karim, 1992).

The Contribution of Khan Jahan to the Socio-Economic Welfare

Ulugh Khan Jahan had established a robust Muslim army in southern Bengal and he enforced peace and security by establishing the security forces. Not only that but also he established social-oriented institutions with his human resources. Khan Jahan and his army did a lot of socio-economic welfare actions in South Bengal during 15th century CE (Mitra, 1922). First, Khan Jahan and his army built new cities for socio-economic welfare (Khan, 2021). Second, they built roads to establish communication with other cities. Third, they dug hundreds of ponds and *dighis* (Big Ponds) in need of drinking water. Four, they created safe residential areas for ordinary people. Five, their direct and indirect role led to the expansion of international trade with the region. Six, their economic contributions in various fields had contributed significantly to the economic prosperity of the people of this area. Seven, they played an essential role in the spread of Islamic art and architecture. Eight, they built hundreds of mosques and *madrasas* (Islamic School) to expand education. Nine, they provided free food to the poor and needy people. Ten, Khan Jahan and his army fought small

battles with local non-Muslim rulers, and the victory in this war laid the foundation of Islamic civilization in this area.

ROADS AND WATERWAYS BUILT BY ULUGH KHAN JAHAN

Transportation is the countless part of the best community services. Without good roads and communication ways people cannot do their occupations perfectly. Khan Jahan built roads, waterways, and mass transport for people in south Bengal in the 15th century CE for aim of social welfare. He built inter-city transportation network from Barobazar to Muruli Qosbah, Poygram Qosbah, and the last city and center of government known as Habily Qosbha, present-day known as Bagerhat city (Polin & Alam, 2019). He also established another communications system from a remote area to central city. For example, he created two transportation methods for the masses. First, road communication, and second, river communication known as waterways. Land communication was a very long route from Barobazar to Bagerhat through two big cities of Khan Jahan. He constructed in this area hundreds of kilometers stone and brick roads for the people (Mitra, 1922). About this writer James Westland describes nicely,

“From the bank of the Bhairab River at Baghahat there ruins, in almost a straight line, a brick-laid road which was made by Khan Jahan Ali. The bricks, which are smaller than those now used, being about five or six inches square, and less than two inches thick, are laid on edge to form the road; there are dive equidistant longitudinal lines, each of two bricks thickness and between these the bricks are laid transversely, forming in all a brick road of about ten feet across, raised on a slightly elevated embankment” (Westland, 1871).

The Baghahata area was the under second city Muruli Qasbah in present Jashore. James describes here, characteristic brick roads of Khan Jahan, and he noticed that this road's surface was the natural 400 years presentiment of 500 years attrition, which was incredibly irregular. In most places, the embankment had been partly broken down away. Some parts of the brick roads in the Baghahata area were under Jashore. But these roads in Bagerhat, Jashore, Phultala, and Bagerhat had been continually used for 500 years. Recently archaeologist have discovered these roads in Bagerhat town area. These concrete roads were a lifeline for the society because they were used for business and trade. Recently, a brick road leading from Ranobijoypur Masque to Khan Jahan's *Dighi* and *Mazar* has been found. Additionally, a road built by Khan Jahan has been discovered under the newly constructed pitch road in front of Sattar Shaikh's house and beside Alom Kha ponds. The brick structure obtained here, and the style of road weaving were similar to those of other roads built by Khan Jahan (Sorder, 2016). Khan Jahan built the waterways and land communication from Muruli Qosbah to Bedkasai village under the Koyra sub-district of Khulna (Khan, 2021). Within this communication route, various contemporary archaeological sites of Khan Jahan have been discovered by Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh, such as *Guimarasbell* archaeological site, Sha Afjalal *Mazar* Mosque and ponds, archaeological artefacts of Magura village under the Tala sub-district and Bura pir *Mazar*, Mosjidqur mosque, and Khalas Kha Ponds in Koyra sub-district (Division heritage, 2022). These archaeological sites prove that people travelled from Muruli Qosbah to the mangrove area by roads and rivers. This supported the fact that one of Khan Jahan's associates, Pir Nehal Uddin, was known to have come Bagerhat to Rupsha village through Atharobagi River to spread Islam with his friends. Now his grave and mosque still exist in this village.

Khan Jahan established the best communication system in different regions from his administrative capital Bagerhat as discussed above. There has been recent discovery of various details on Khan Jahan's representative in the north-western district, Meherpur. The documents found suggest that his communication system was extended to the present

Meherpur district. Satish Chandra Mitra claims that Khan Jahan established a communication system from Bagerhat to Chandpur and Chandpur to Chittagong through roads and waterways (Mitra, 1922). The various mosques were situated in different parts of Barisal, these mosques had the same the architectural style of Khan Jahan's mosques of Bagerhat. It shows that Khan Jahan established a communication network with Barisal through roads and rivers (Khan, 2021). The Amadi was developed ancient town of Khan Jahan's time, and here the representatives of Khan Jahan built many mosques, residential zone, and roads (Polin & Alam, 2019). The Amadi area were under Koyra Upazila of Khulna district, and this area were located next to Sundarbans. During the reign of Khan Jahan, there were two ways travel from Bagerhat to Koyra. First was the road's communication from Bagerhat to Phultala, then Phultala to Chuknagar, from Chuknagar to Paikgachha, lastly from Paikgachha to Koyra. The second way was via river. At that time, it was possible to reach Koyra by rivers from Bagerhat. At present, there are land and river routes from Phultala to Narail. It has been proven that Khan Jahan established communication with Narail through roads and waterways. At that time, people used the rivers to reach the *Sundarbans* from the city of Bagerhat. Thus it can be concluded that Khan Jahan established roads communication from Bagerhat to Sarankhola Upazila, and this area is also adjoined with sunderban (mangrove forest) (Sowrav, n.d.).

Khan Jahan and his army built most of the roads by bricks, but in many areas, they filled the lowlands with mud, sand, and soil and built soil roads for the local people. At present, many rural roads in the coastal areas are being constructed in this way. There is no natural source of rock in the Sundarbans (mangrove forest) area, and that is why no roads have been found to date which were made of stone in the coastal area. Khan Jahan used many bricks and stones in his architecture, and archaeological sources prove that he collected these stones from Bihar or another side of India. *Jahajghata* is a Bengali word which means "shipyard". At present, various pieces of stone have been found near the one-domed mosque in Bagerhat city, and the local call this low-lying land to the shipyard (Mitra, 1922). In short, we can say that Khan Jahan made impactful contribution to the socio-economic development by the creating a remarkable communications system and contributed to the development of brick and soil roads, intricate waterways, and shipyards. Below is a sample of the roads and waterway connections of different regions with in medieval Bagerhat. These developed communication systems proved that Ulugh Khan Jahan did his mission to establish Islamic Civilization in Bengal.

NEW CITIES IN SOUTH BENGAL FOUNDED BY KHAN JAHAN

After Khan Jahan arrived in the south Bengal on the orders of the Delhi and Bengal Sultan. He founded cities, and notable among them were Barobazar (Mohammadabad), Muruli Qosbah, Paygram Qasbah, and Habeli Qosbah known as Bagerhat city (Hasan, 1987). However, the first three cities were Qosbah (city), and the last capital city was Habeli Qosbah (capital city). Habeli Qosbah was the capital city of Khan Jahan, although this city was historically known as Khalifatabad (Sorder, 2016). This area was under the Bagerhat city, situated in the southwestern part of Bangladesh. Khan Jahan established the first city Mohammadabad in Barobazar known by its old name of Champainagor (Alam, 2021). This city was the biggest city in this area then, situated in the Kaliganj Upazila under the district of Jhenaidah. *Barobazar* (twelve markets) was a collection of twelve markets known as, Enaetpur, Abdalpur, Daulaptur, Rahmatpur, Samaspur, Muradgarh, Haibatpur, Nischintapur, Sayedpur, Ganimatpur, Belt and Shahbajpur (Alam, 2021). The Bengali words *Baro* means twelve and while *Bazar* means market, or daily or weekly people gather here. Also, the group of twelve saints (*Sufis*) came here, and they dug a large number of tanks (*dighis*) and built mosques for the Muslim community. Archaeological sites, revealing artefacts, pottery,

ancient Mosque and ponds and historical places, and roads can be found around Barobazar within a radius of about three to four kilometers.

Khan Jahan built the second city in present Jashore town known as Murali Qosbah, alongside his propagation of Islam. Here Khan Jahan created big township from north to south and west to east, built a Mosque for the Muslim community, and dug the ponds to supply drinking water for society (Khan, 2021). Brick roads were built around the city from Muruli to Poygram. The town of Jashore was under the ancient Muruli city, and the present-day Jashore city has been extended to include Bogchar, Palpara, Bamunpara, and the present Qosbah area (Westland, 1871). Muruli city was the hub of Khan Jahan's army and he divided his army and followers into two groups. The first group followed Khan Jahan to the capital city Bagerhat. The second group went to Koyra near Sundarbans through the Kapothakko rivers (Mitra, 1922). When Khan Jahan exited this city, he appointed representatives while he continued his missionary work. Garib Shah and Beram Shah were the representatives of Khan Jahan in the Muruli in the 15th century. They strove to rule this area properly and did social and religious work for the people. The Mosque of Garib Shah and the grave of Beram Shah can be in Jashore town today (Polin & Alam, 2019). Moreover, Satish Chandra Mitra claims that the large mound on the western side of Karbala Pond is possibly an old Buddhist Stupa, and the Buddhist community that lived in Jeshore city area (Old Murali town) from the 11th to the 15th century (Mitra, 1922). Khan Jahan established the 3rd city in Phultala sub-district under the Khulna District, known as Paygram-Qosbah. Paygram Qosbah was the third city of Khan Jahan, and he established this city after Murali Qosbah. Here he also built roads, bridges, ponds, and lakes for society. However, this city was 22 kilometers away from the Muruli Qosba, the 2nd city of Khan Jahan. This city was divided into the north and south, and the Bhairob River was in the middle of the city. The north part was known as *Uttordihi*, and the South part of the city was known as *Dokhindihi* (Mitra, 1922). Khan Jahan established in this city a big mosque for *Salatul Joma*, *Joma Masjid* (weekly prayer), known as Khan Jahan *Masjid*. Khan Jahan also established intercity roads to aid travel and transportations and dug big ponds known as Shahabatir *Dighi* (ponds), Andhra Pond, and saner pond (Andhra Pukur and saner Pukur) (Mitra, 1922). Moreover, Khan Jahan has left this city, and he was going to Bagerhat city to create a new city, but he appointed his new commander for ruling this area.

Haveli Qosbah was the capital city of Khan Jahan in the 15th-century present, known as Bagerhat town. This city was the 4th city of Khan Jahan, and in 1985 CE, Bagerhat was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site, especially the sixty dome mosque (Khan, 2021). The ancient city was, formerly known as Khalifatabad in the 15th century CE (Hasan, 1987). As in other cities Khan Jahan also constructed , mosque, ponds, roads, welfare complexes and house, These monuments and tomes were divided into two principal zones around 6.5 kilometers apart to the west around the mosque sixty dome (*Shait-Gumbad*) and the east around the mausoleum and Ponds of Khan Jahan (Mitra, 1922). This magnificent city, which extended for 50 kilometers, contains some of the most significant buildings of the initial period of the development of Muslim architecture and Islamic civilization of Bengal in the 15th century by Khan Jahan. They include 360 mosques, public buildings, mausoleums, bridges, roads, water tanks, and other public buildings constructed from brick, all of which reflected the foundation of Islamic civilization in Bengal in the 15th century (Hasan, 1987).

FULFILING THE DEMAND FOR FRESHWATER SUPPLY

Water is a significant resource for society and the ecosystem, and no living thing can survive without water. Human beings need freshwater because salty water is harmful to the body and mind. At this time, in the whole world, water covers more than two-thirds of the earth's surface, but mostly water are undrinkable, salty, and dirty (Sarker et al., 2014). A significant challenge for society in the 15th century and 21 centuries is the availability of

freshwater or drinking water and its management. At present, the available freshwater resource is only 2.7 percent of the water on the earth, and one percent of fresh water in the lakes, rivers, and groundwater is accessible (Davie & Quinn, 2019). However, Khan Jahan established new towns and communities in the mangrove forest area and did good service for the people. Other cities such as Khulna, Bagerhat, Sathkhira, and Pirojpur district were coastal areas. Saltwater was available in these area, but this water was undrinkable; for this reason, Khan Jahan established a pure or freshwater system to meet the basic needs of the inhabitants and to overcome local water issues. Thus, Khan Jahan ordered the army to create pure water ponds and dig the deep-water pit for people because people needed fresh water (Khan, 2021). This benefitted not only Muslims but also everyone in the community. Khan Jahan believed that helping the poor and community was excellent work to promote Islam. Allah SWT said in the holy Quran ‘*Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful*’ (Surat An-Nisa’ [4:36], n.d.).

Moreover, Khan Jahan also improved water management in a modern town or new city, especially Barobazar, Murali Qosbah, Poygram Qosbah, and Bagerhat. He established a water controlling and drainage system in these cities. This contribution was more significant work for rising Islam in this area. This contribution is a more significant part of Islamic civilization in Bangladesh and Bangle Muslims history and culture and heritage. Three mediums were used to supply the required water in Bengal, first rivers, second ponds, and *Dighi* and the third deep well (*Kuya*). In Bengal, rivers can be broad and deep. Some rivers flow year-round in mangrove forest areas, while others small rivers or lakes flow only during certain seasons or when there has been much rain. The largest rivers are the Padma, the Jamuna, and the Meghna can be hundreds of miles long (Sarker et al., 2014). In this coastal areas, water that flows in rivers is salty and sweet, meaning that it contains salt and fresh water. Rivers also carry and distribute essential salts and nutrients to support plant and animal life in south Bengal.

For this reason, some of the most bio-diverse habitats, human settlements, and cities in our research area can be found around rivers. Bengal people use rivers for irrigation in agriculture, drinking water, transportation, swimming, and boating, from ancient to the present. Each of these uses can affect the health of a river and its surrounding ecosystems and human settlements. For this reason, Khan Jahan established cities and human settlements around the rivers. Human perception of taste includes sour (hydrochloric acid), salty (sodium chloride), sweet (sucrose), and bitter (caffeine). Mainly, the Bengal coastal rivers have salty (sodium chloride), sweet (sucrose) water (Sharma & Singh, 2017). Although the significant rivers in the coastal region were salty, for this reason, Khan Jahan dug the ponds and deep wells (*Kuya*) for drinking water. Concerns about ponds and *dighis* water quality were directly related to the use(s) of the ponds and *dighi* in south Bengal. In the 15th century CE, ponds and *dighis* used to supply drinking water for humans and animals. When Khan Jahan and his army were dug ponds and *dighi* in south Bengal, they built mud walls on four sides of ponds to keep the pond's water safe. These ponds and *dighi* met the demand for freshwater for humans and animals as there was a shortage of sweet drinking water in this coastal area. Khan Jahan's hand-dug wells were an essential source of potable water in the rural area of south Bengal.

BUILDING A SAFE RESIDENCE ZONE

Khan Jahan did a lot for the socio-economic welfare of his people. One of his tasks was to create safe accommodation for society. In the coastal areas, houses built of mud did not

last long due to salt water that, quickly damaged them. These also easily destroyed by earthen dwellings do not last long due to tidal salt water that, storms, floods, and natural disasters. Nevertheless, some of the structures were built of bricks and stones, especially the mosque, temple, government office court. Khan Jahan filled low lands with soil and built a high elevation to construct safe houses for people. He formed this residential elevated land by batter managing the soil that could be found after digging the ponds. Khan Jahan dug hundreds of ponds, and after digging each pond, the soil was used to build up low-lying areas.

Archaeologists have discovered from these (Khan Jahan's sites) research areas houses, mosques, markets, temples, shrines, and brick roads (Division heritage, 2022). Moreover, surrounding settlements have been built by the large soil lake in front of the present Khan Jahan shrine, and the height of the land of the settlement is much higher than the surrounding low land. Khan Jahan thus built new settlements from town to villages. The coastal area of Bengal has not a rich place in good stones for building the house. Mainly, traditional Bengali architecture primarily used brick, wood, bamboo, and tinder often reflecting the styles of the wood, bamboo, and thatch styles of local vernacular architecture for houses and residence from ancient to present. In general, most of house in Bangladesh have been built out of wood, bamboo, and straw from ancient to modern times and that was why these houses were not long lasting and are still not till today.

Moreover, these houses do not last long due to storms and coastal saltwater. Due to these reasons, the homes in the medieval period of the general people do not exist today, but various religious and administrative buildings still survived. Khan Jahan built a high level of safe housing for the people by filling the lowlands with soil and he built architecture for his administration with tradition (Khan Jahan Style) (Ali Naqi, 2003). As a result, people have succeeded to protect their houses from tidal, salt waters, and floods. One of Khan Jahan's contributions to socio-economical welfare was the creation of safe-havens. Because he dug hundreds of ponds in his administrative area, and he used this soil to create a safe residential zone (Mitra, 1922). Khan Jahan gained equal popularity among Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims alike for building safe havens. Even today, the arrival of non-Muslim brothers and sisters at his shrine reminds us of that popularity. In conclusion, Khan Jahan played an essential role in the socio-economic welfare as well as Islamic Civilization of Bengal by creating a safe residential zone.

THE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY OF KHAN JAHAN

One of the examples of socio-economic welfare is economic prosperity. It is impossible to achieve socio-economic welfare without economic enrichment, which was why Bengal rulers wanted to bring economic affluence to the entire region. Examples of economic prosperity that could be seen in the region were, the construction of expensive mosques, roads, bridges, ponds, and various social welfare institutions built (Eaton, 1993). Ulugh Khan Jahan was able to bring economic growth to the region by taking several public welfare initiatives in South Bengal. First, Khan Jahan and his army brought in much foreign currency and investment in the area. Second, this massive foreign exchange created local employment, which played an essential role in bringing economic prosperity to the people. Third, Khan Jahan built many roads to support internal and intercity communication. These roads played a revolutionary role in expanding local and international trade, which led to economic prosperity. Four, Khan Jahan dug numerous ponds and lakes to supply fresh water, and local farmers used this water for their farming. As a result, the farmers succeeded in cultivating vegetables and paddy because many lands were uncultivated due to saltwater.

Five, information has been collected from the Khan Jahan Ali Museum of Bagerhat on various fancy porcelain utensils. Southern Bengal did not have any porcelain utensils

factories at that time, so it can be surmised that these fancy utensils were imported from China or other countries. This proves that traders established international trade relations with this region at that time, which played a significant role in the growth of the local economy. Six, *Takshal* (Money making institution) is one of the examples of economic growth. Khan Jahan established a *takshal* at Bagerhat city, which was known as *Dar ul Jobor* (Karim, 1992). Although Khan Jahan did not issue any currency or coins in his name from his ruling area since, he was not an independent ruler but a ruler under the sultans. Seven, the buildings built by Khan Jahan and his representatives in different parts of South Bengal were very advanced, modern, and decorated with the high-quality handicrafts and stones. Since these stone were not found in South Bengal, it can be assumed that they collected the high-quality *Kasti* stones used from the hilly region of Bihar, India, and brought back to the south by rivers. Although writer Satish Chandra Mitra claims that he collected these stones from the hilly areas of Chittagong, such stones are not found in the hilly areas of Chittagong at present (Mitra, 1922). Eighth, In Bengal, a strong agriculture cultivation was an example of a developing and a prosperous economy. Agriculture was the largest employment sector in Bengal in the 15th century. From Ancient to modern times, the performance of the agriculture sector had an overwhelming impact on primary macroeconomic objectives like employment generation, poverty alleviation, and food security. Bengal's fertile soil and typically ample water supply were the leading cause of thriving agriculture. Khan Jahan built roads by building various dams in the coastal areas. That is why the salty water of the rivers could not enter agricultural lands, which resulted in large-scale cultivation of paddy and other crops (Westland, 1871). Ninth, Khan Jahan and his followers dug ponds in this area and farmed native fish in these ponds. As a result of fish farming, village farmers became economically successfully. Local farmers solved the unemployment problem by cultivating freshwater fish, and they were played a significant role in the rural economy in Bengal in the 15th century CE.

THE CHARITY WORK FOR IMPOVERISHED PEOPLE

Charity is the best work for people, and this activity is the foundation of love and kindness for the people (Masud, Uddin, & Islam, 2023). In Bengal, the charity workers have done unconditionally worked for people from ancient to modern times. Moreover, a good heart and love are the ideology of charity, and people do this work without expecting any rewards in the world. Muslim rulers, saints, and *dawah* persons believe that charity work should progress rapidly in our society. Providing food and shelter are the best charitable acts for the poor and helpless. Khan Jahan and his followers provided service for the poor. The *Musafirkhana* is a shining example of charitable the service of the medieval society in Bengal. The exact number of *Musafirkhana* set up by Khan Jahan is still unknown. In present Bangladesh, *Musafirkhana* refers to a place of refuge for the poor and needy to stay and eat for free. In general, we can say that it is a guest house of poor and needy, and they could easily find their basic needs in this house, and he arranged food and temporary residence were provided for the poor in this house.

The locals refer to this installation as Barojina. It was another guest house of Khan Jahan. At present, abandoned stone pillar fragments are available in this place, and there are no ornamental patterns on the body of these fragments. Furthermore, Khan Jahan collected these stones and built this for social work and charity. Because when the stone fragments were used for religious purposes, the stone fragments were decorated with the calligraphy of Islam. These stones naturally did not have any Islamic, social, or natural decoration. However, Khan Jahan's Mosque and shrines used, many flower motifs and, Islamic calligraphy designs. Moreover, many locals call it *Katra*, which is a Bengali word meaning guest house. Khan Jahan used *Katra* or *Musafirkhana* to meet the basic needs of the poor

people. Writer Satish Chandra Mitra has described Khan Jahan's kitchen which were next to Khan Jahan *Mazar* in Bagerhat town (Mitra, 1922). Furthermore, he informs that Khan Jahan used this kitchen to prepare food for the needy and he implemented various welfare programs for the poor in south Bengal. At that time, the number of Muslims was fewer than the number of non-Muslims (Bose, 1958). And we can expect that these welfare programs encouraged ordinary people to convert to Islam in 15th century.

Khan Jahan's representatives mainly carried out administrative and social welfare work in Bengal in the 15th century. Their works are visible in the south-western region of Bengal (Khan, 2021). They established mosque (*masjid*), schools (*madrasha*), roads, ponds, Islamic complexes, and *dawakhana*s (primary medical center). At present, the culture of primary treatment is prevalent through the distribution of amulets, charms, honey, and blackberries from many *darbars* (*Sufi* complex). Everyday thousands of people receive this first aid (*daw or todbir*) from the shrine of Khan Jahan in the present town of Bagerhat, which is mainly related to religious beliefs. This example reflects the practice during that in Khan Jahan's period, where the poor and needy received such first aid from the *Sufi* complex. Khan Jahan's representatives established peace and order in society by establishing the *darbar* and *Sufi* complex in Bengal. This study has identified thirty *Mazars or darbars* who were representatives of Khan Jahan from south Bengal. Khan Jahan and his army greatly improved and developed socio-economic well-being through these charitable activities (Khan, 2021). In essence we can say that Khan Jahan and his army's socio-economic and charitable activities were led non-Muslims to embrace the great ideals of Islam.

ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER KHAN JAHAN'S RULE

Architecture is a significant part of the local culture and socio-economic condition. The developed and traditional architectural style are the shining symbol of the economic condition and cultural significance. The early development of Islamic architecture was influenced by Roman, early Christian, and Sassanian architecture, with later influences from Central Asian nomadic traditions. Moreover, Chinese art and architecture had a formative influence on Islamic painting. Khan Jahan also contributed to Islamic architecture in 15th century CE Bengal. Khan Jahan's architecture was a mixture of Asian, Roman, and Indian influences with the local Bengali architectural characteristics dominating (Ali Naqi, 2003). Khan Jahan's architectural styles was difficult to characterize because it covers a wide range of lands, periods, and local traditions including Islamic architecture and Islamic calligraphy. The focused on religious art was reflected in the calligraphy, architectural elements, and furnishings of religious buildings, such as mosque fittings (Khan, 2021). Khan Jahan made terracotta designs on mosque walls with trees and flower motifs. Sometimes Khan Jahan's architecture style focused on local tradition and Bengali style as part of Islamic architecture (Ali Naqi, 2003).

He established cultural, official, religious, residential, and charitable buildings for social-economic welfare. First, Khan Jahan, and his army established permanent settlements in the area. Although, these structures are not fully visible in modern times. Second, Khan Jahan built office buildings to manage the administrative work, and used the sixty-domed mosque as a court hall for administrative work (Khan, 2021). Third, Khan Jahan created a beautiful building to celebrate cultural or social festivals in Bagerhat. This building is known as the *thapghor*, and this structure is situated beside Jatrapur road in Bagerhat town. There are many designs carved in a one-room house facing north-south. These designs are geometric design, flower design, herb design. The west and east walls of the building are rich in carvings designed. This building is rich in unique features and is believed to have been built for cultural and social activities or used by Khan Jahan personally (Rahaman & Mahfuz-ud-Darain, 2007). The east-west wall of the building has niches, and the south has arched doors,

and the presence of a lot of artworks inside proves that it was a significant installation and this building has built for socio-cultural activities at that time.

Four, Khan Jahan built separate establishments for charitable work, which were known as *Katra and Musafirkhana (guest house)*. Five, Khan Jahan and his army-built hundreds of mosques in south Bengal, and these Mosques are a glorious part of Khan Jahan's history (Khan, 2021). He established mosques in every *Mohalla (small unit of village)*, town, and city. Sixty dome mosques are a world heritage site, and this is the Bengali architecture style of Khan Jahan (Hasan, 1987). The Sixty Dome Mosque is the glorious and historic architectural wonder of Bengal, and it represents the architectural golden era of Muslim Bengal of the 15th century. Moreover, Sixty Dome Mosque (*Masjid*) has walls of thick, extensive, and tapered brick like the Tughlaq style. The corner towers are analogous to the fort and similar to the Tughlaq architecture of Delhi. Mahmudul Hasan describes the mosque as,

“The liwan or prayer hall is divided into two wings by a central nave as like that Andina Masjid. But unlike the Adina Masjid nave, which is barrel-vaulted, Saith Gumbaz Masjid has its nave roofed over by series of seven four-segmented or chouchala roof. It is presumed that this is the earliest known example of a hut-shaped structure in Bangladesh which undoubtedly exerted a profound influence on the chhoto Sona Masjid of Rajshahi. On either side of the central nave, the wings are divided into as many as thirty-five squares by seven aisles and five bays each. These squares are rooted over by small hemispherical domes, the transition from the square substructure to the circle of the dome is marked by stalactite brick pendentives” (Hasan, 1987).

The mosque represents exceptional archaeological beauty and glorious architectural history. The point is that these glorious architectures accentuated the strong economy of the middle ages, and this proves that the socio-economic welfare activities of Bengal were very steady in the 15th century.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Socioeconomic welfare work is significant in Islam, the most influential thought of Islamic Civilization (Uddin, Jahan, & Hasan, 2022). This article details Khan Jahan's socioeconomic welfare and contributions to 15th-century Bengal. Khan Jahan's army also significantly contributed to the socioeconomic welfare in Bengal. He established new cities for people, which was the symbol of development. Welfare works for people played a significant role in changing society. This city's welfare-oriented measures and good services are still witnessed today. The best symbol of socioeconomic prosperity is the glorious architecture and trade of Khan Jahan in Bengal, and this research has studied and described this information. Charity work is the fundamental element in a changing society. Khan Jahan contributed to establishing a safe residence zone and freshwater management for his people. These were one of the main tasks of Khan Jahan and his army. Additionally, Khan Jahan's roads and waterways were good examples of his socioeconomic welfare (Westland, 1871). This research has also attempted to describe Khan Jahan's contribution to the transportation and communications sectors. Hopefully, this research will add new perspectives on Khan Jahan's socioeconomic contributions, even though there is a lack of written information in history. After this long discussion, we present some recommendations for the present time, which can be beneficial recommendations for socio-political and religious society and responsible persons.

- ❖ Ulugh Khan Jahan and his army built new cities and roads to communicate with other cities and dug hundreds of ponds and *dighis* (Big Ponds) for socio-economic welfare. These are the most remarkable events of raising Islamic Civilization in South Bengal in

the 15th century. Now, Muslim rulers and their army can do this type of work as part of the Islamic *Dawah* mission, which is essential for Muslim countries.

- ❖ Khan Jahan and his representative had created safe residential areas, and their direct and indirect role led to the expansion of international trade with south Bengal. Moreover, their economic contributions have contributed significantly to the economic prosperity of the people of this area. At present, Responsible people of our society can take this lesson for their duty to the ordinary people and their countries because, without economic prosperity, communities cannot do their duty perfectly.
- ❖ He played an essential role in the spread of Islamic art and architecture and built hundreds of mosques and madrasas (Islamic schools) to expand education. After these educational and cultural activities, Islamic civilizations spread rapidly. Education must be essential for all people, but now Muslims are backed in education and culture because of a lack of Quranic and ethical education.
- ❖ Ulugh Khan Jahan and his team had good leadership qualities and were motivated by Islamic values. After that, local people were influenced by this type of leadership and dynamic work, but present Muslim leaders are divided ideologically, some are corrupted, and they deny their glorious historical legacy. As a result, Western civilization controlled Muslim countries, and they established their thoughts in Muslim minds and society.

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