

First Battle of Panipat (April 21, 1526 A.D.):

After conquering Punjab, Babur proceeded towards Delhi and met the army of Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat — now a town in Haryana, 85 km. north-west of Delhi. Babur, in his 'Memoirs' mentions that with a small army of 12000 picked horsemen he defeated Ibrahim's army of about one lakh soldiers. Whatever be the statistical details, all historians agree that Ibrahim's army was far greater in numerical strength.

For about a week, both the armies faced each other and engaged in skirmishes before the real battle started on the morning of April 21, 1526 and by noon it was over.

Ibrahim Lodi's army was destroyed and he died in the battle field along with his 15000 soldiers. (Estimates vary). Pleased at his victory Babur wrote, "By the grace and mercy of Almighty God, this difficult affair was made easy to me and that mighty army, in the space of half a day was laid to dust."

Causes of Babur's Success and Ibrahim's Failure: —

① Absence of any strong power in India:

As Dr. Ishwari Prasad has put it,

"In the beginning of the sixteenth century, India was a confederacy of a number of small independent states which could easily fall prey to any strong and determined invader."

② Babur's efficient artillery:

According to Rushbrook Williams, "If it could be possible to emphasize anyone of the factors as being the most important cause of his (Babur's) victory, one would surely have to assign the first place to his artillery."

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