

Mahmud of Ghazni

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Mahmud Ghaznavi

محمود غزنوی

Father Sabuktigin**Religion** Sunni Islam**House** House of Sabuktegin

Yamīn-ud-Dawla Abul-Qāṣim Mahmūd ibn Sebüktegīn (Persian: یمین‌الدوله ابو القاسم محمود بن سبکتگین‎), more commonly known as **Mahmud of Ghazni** (محمود غزنوی; November 971 – 30 April 1030), also known as **Mahmūd-i Zābulī** (محمود زابلی), was the most prominent ruler of the **Ghaznavid Empire**. He conquered the eastern **Iranian lands**, modern Afghanistan, and the northwestern **Indian subcontinent** (modern Pakistan) from 997 to his death in 1030. Mahmud turned the former provincial city of **Ghazna** into the wealthy capital of an extensive empire that covered most of today's **Afghanistan**, eastern **Iran**, and **Pakistan**, (conquering) the riches and wealth from the then Indian subcontinent.^{[2][3]}

He was the first ruler to hold the title *Sultan* ("authority"), signifying the extent of his power while at the same time preserving an ideological link to the *suzerainty* of the **Abbasid Caliphate**. During his rule, he invaded (and secured) parts of **Hindustan** (east of the **Indus River**) **seventeen times**.^{[3][4]}

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Mahmood NEVER lost a battle in his life (A Rare General) [TH]

Early life and origin^[edit]

Mahmud was born on Thursday, 10 Muharram, 361 AH/2 November 971 CE in the town of Ghazna in [Medieval Khorasan](#) (modern southeastern [Afghanistan](#)). His father, [Sabuktigin](#), was a [Turkic Mamluk](#) who founded the Ghaznavid dynasty and was thus the first Ghaznavid [Sultan Sebüktigin](#). His mother was the daughter of a [Persian](#) aristocrat from [Zabulistan](#).^[a] Mahmud had a younger brother, Yusuf Sebüktigin.

Family^[edit]

Mahmud married a woman named Kausari Jahan, and they had twin sons [Mohammad](#) and [Ma'sud](#), who succeeded him one after the other; his grandson by Mas'ud, [Maw'dud Ghaznavi](#), also later became ruler of the empire. His sister, Sitr-i-Mu'alla, was married to Dawood bin Ataullah Alavi, also known as [Ghazi Salar Sahu](#), whose son was [Ghazi Saiyyad Salar Masud](#)

Mahmud's companion was a [Georgian](#) slave [Malik Ayaz](#), and his love for him inspired poems and stories.^[a]

Early career^[edit]



Sultan Mahmud and his forces attacking the fortress of [Zaranj](#)

In 994 Mahmud joined his father Sabuktigin in the capture of Khorasan from the rebel Fa'iq in aid of the [Samanid Emir, Nuh II](#). During this period, the Samanid Empire became highly unstable, with shifting internal political tides as various factions vied for control, the chief among them being Abu'l-Qasim Simjuri, Fa'iq, Abu Ali^[citation needed], the General Bekhtuzin as well as the neighbouring [Buyid dynasty](#) and [Kara-Khanid Khanate](#).

Reign^[edit]

Mahmud took over his father's kingdom in 998 after defeating and capturing Ismail at the [Battle of Ghazni](#). He then set out west from Ghazni to take the [Kandahar region](#) followed by Bost ([Lashkar Gah](#)), where he turned it into a militarised city.

Mahmud initiated the first of numerous invasion of [North India](#). On 28 November 1001, his army fought and defeated the army of [Raja Jayapala](#) of the [Kabul Shahis](#) at [the battle of Peshawar](#). In 1002 Mahmud invaded [Sistan](#) and dethroned [Khalaf ibn Ahmad](#), ending the [Saffarid dynasty](#).^[a] From there he decided to focus on Hindustan to the southeast, particularly the highly [fertile](#) lands of the [Punjab region](#).

Mahmud's first campaign to the south was against an [Ismaili](#) state first established at [Multan](#) in 965 by a [da'i](#) from the [Fatimid Caliphate](#) in a bid to carry political favor and recognition with the Abbasid Caliphate; he also engaged elsewhere with the Fatimids. At this point, Jayapala attempted to gain revenge for an earlier military defeat at the hands of Mahmud's father, who had controlled Ghazni in the late 980s and had cost Jayapala extensive territory. His son [Anandapala](#) succeeded him and continued the struggle to avenge his father's suicide. He assembled a powerful confederacy that suffered defeat as his elephant turned back from the battle at a crucial moment, turning the tide into Mahmud's favor once more at [Lahore](#) in 1008 and bringing Mahmud into control of the Shahi dominions of Udbandpura.^[a]

Ghaznavid campaigns in Indian Subcontinent^[edit]



Mahmud of Ghazni's last success in India against the Jats.

(his Navy was Iron Clad & Superior ... TH)

Following the defeat of the Indian Confederacy, after deciding to retaliate for their combined resistance, Mahmud then set out on regular expeditions against them, leaving the conquered kingdoms in the hands of [Hindu vassals](#) and [annexing](#) only the [Punjab region](#).

In 1001 Mahmud of Ghazni first invaded modern day Afghanistan and Pakistan and then parts of India. Mahmud defeated, captured, and later released the Shahi ruler Jayapala, who had moved his capital to [Peshawar](#) (modern Pakistan). Jayapala killed himself and was succeeded by his son Anandapala. In 1005 Mahmud of Ghazni invaded Bhatia (probably Bhera), and in 1006 he invaded [Multan](#), at which time Anandapala's army attacked him. The following year Mahmud of Ghazni attacked and crushed Sukhapala, ruler of [Bathinda](#) (who had become ruler by rebelling against the Shahi kingdom). In 1013, during Mahmud's eighth expedition into eastern Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Shahi kingdom (which was then under Trilochanapala, son of Anandapala) was overthrown.^[a]

In 1014 Mahmud led an expedition to [Thanesar](#). The next year he unsuccessfully attacked [Kashmir](#). In 1018 he attacked [Mathura](#) and defeated a coalition of rulers there while also killing a ruler called Chandrapala. In 1021 Mahmud supported the [Kannauj](#) king against [Chandela](#) Ganda, who was defeated. That same year Shahi Trilochanapala was killed at Rahib and his son Bhimapala succeeded him. [Lahore](#) (modern Pakistan) was annexed by Mahmud. Mahmud besieged [Gwalior](#), in 1023, where he was given tribute. Mahmud attacked [Somnath](#) in 1025, and its ruler Bhima Deva I fled. The next year, he captured Somnath and marched to Kachch against Bhima Deva. That same year Mahmud also attacked the [Jat people](#) of Jud.^[a]

The Indian kingdoms of [Nagarkot](#), [Thanesar](#), [Kannauj](#), and [Gwalior](#) were all conquered and left in the hands of Hindu, [Jain](#), and [Buddhist](#) kings as vassal states and he was pragmatic enough not to neglect making alliances and enlisting local peoples into his armies at all ranks. Since Mahmud never kept a permanent presence in the northwestern subcontinent, he engaged in a policy of destroying Hindu temples and monuments ...

[Nagarkot](#), [Thanesar](#), [Mathura](#), [Kannauj](#), [Kalinjar](#)(1023)^[a] and [Somnath](#) all submitted.

Political challenges^[edit]

The last four years of Mahmud's life were spent contending with the influx of [Oghuz](#) and [Seljuk Turks](#) from Central Asia and the Buyid dynasty. Initially, after being repulsed by Mahmud, the Seljuks retired to [Khwarezm](#), but Togrül and Çagri led them to capture [Merv](#) and [Nishapur](#) (1028–1029). Later, they repeatedly raided and traded territory with his successors across Khorasan and [Balkh](#) and even sacked [Ghazni](#) in 1037. In 1040, at the [Battle of Dandanagan](#), they decisively defeated Mahmud's son, [Mas'ud I](#), resulting in Mas'ud abandoning most of his western territories to the Seljuks.

Sultan Mahmud died on 30 April 1030. His [mausoleum](#) is located in Ghazni, Afghanistan.

Campaign timeline^[edit]

As emir^[edit]

- 994: Gains the title of Saif ad-Dawla and becomes Governor of Khorasan under service to Nuh II of the Samanid Empire in civil strife
- 995: The Samanid rebels Fa'iq (leader of a court faction that had defeated Alptigin's nomination for Emir) and Abu Ali expel Mahmud from [Nishapur](#). Mahmud and Sabuktigin defeat Samanid rebels at [Tus](#).

As sultan[edit]

- 997: Kara-Khanid Khanate
- 999: Khorasan, Balkh, [Herat](#), Merv from the Samanids. A concurrent invasion from the north by the Qarakhanids under Elik Khan (Nasr Khan) ends Samanid rule.
- 1000: [Sistan](#) from Saffarid dynasty
- 1001: [Gandhara](#): Sultan Mahmud defeats Raja Jayapala at Peshawar; Jayapala subsequently abdicates and commits suicide.
- 1002: Seistan: Is imprisoned in Khuluf
- 1004: Bhatia ([Bhera](#)) is annexed after it fails to pay its yearly tribute, 1004 CE
- 1005-6: Multan: Fateh Daud, the Ismaili ruler of Multan^[14] revolts and enlists the aid of [Anandapala](#). Mahmud massacres the Ismailis^{[12][13]} of Multan in the course of his conquest. Anandapala is defeated at Peshawar and pursued to Sodra ([Wazirabad](#)).

[Ghor](#) and [Muhammad ibn Suri](#) are then captured by Mahmud, made prisoner along with Muhammad ibn Suri's son, and taken to Ghazni, where Muhammad ibn Suri dies. Appoints Sewakpal to administer the region. [Anandapala](#) flees to [Kashmir](#), fort in the hills on the western border of [Kashmir](#).

- 1005: Defends Balkh and Khorasan against Nasr I of the Kara-Khanid Khanate and recaptures Nishapur from [Isma'il Muntasir](#) of the Samanids.
- 1005: Sewakpal rebels and is defeated.
- 1008: Mahmud defeats the Indian Confederacy ([Ujjain](#), [Gwalior](#), [Kalinjar](#), [Kannauj](#), [Delhi](#), and [Ajmer](#)) in battle between Und and Peshawar,^[14] and captures the Shahi treasury at [Kangra, Himachal Pradesh](#).

Note: A historical narrative states in this battle, under the onslaught of the [Gakhars](#), Mahmud's army was about to retreat when King [Anandapala](#)'s [elephant](#) took flight and turned the tide of the battle.^[citation needed]
- 1010: Ghor; against [Amir Suri](#)
- 1010: Multan revolts. Abul Fatah Dawood is imprisoned for life at Ghazni.
- 1012-1013: Sacks [Thanesar](#)^[14]
- 1012: Invades [Gharchistan](#) and deposes its ruler [Abu Nasr Muhammad](#).
- 1012: Demands and receives remainder of the province of Khorasan from the Abassid Caliph. Then demands [Samarkand](#) as well but is rebuffed.
- 1013: Bulnat: Defeats Trilochanpala.
- 1014: [Kafiristan](#) is attacked
- 1015: Mahmud's army sacks Lahore, but his expedition to [Kashmir](#) fails, due to inclement weather.^[15]
- 1015: [Khwarezm](#): Marries his sister to Abul Abbas Mamun of Khwarezm, who dies in the same year in a rebellion. Moves to quell the rebellion and installs a new ruler and annexes a portion.
- 1017: Kannauj, [Meerut](#), and Muhavun on the [Yamuna](#), Mathura and various other regions along the route. While moving through Kashmir he levies troops from vassal Prince for his onward march; Kannauj and Meerut submit without battle.
- 1018-1020: Sacks the town of [Mathura](#).^[14]
- 1021: Raises [Ayaz](#) to kingship, awarding him the throne of [Lahore](#)
- 1021: [Kalinjar](#) attacks [Kannauj](#): he marches to their aid and finds the last Shahi King, Trilochanpaala, encamped as well. No battle, the opponents leave their baggage trains and withdraw from the field. Also fails to take the fort of Lokote again. Takes [Lahore](#) on his return. Trilochanpala flees to [Ajmer](#). First Muslim governors appointed east of the [Indus River](#).
- 1023: Lahore. He forces Kalinjar and [Gwalior](#) to submit and pay tribute:^[16] Trilochanpala, the grandson of Jayapala, is assassinated by his own troops. Official annexation of [Punjab](#) by Ghazni. Also fails to take the Lohara fort on the western border of Kashmir for the second time.
- 1024: [Ajmer](#), Nehrwalla, [Kathiawar](#): This raid is his last major campaign. The concentration of wealth at [Somnath](#) was renowned, and consequently it became an attractive target for Mahmud, as it had previously deterred most invaders. The [temple](#) and [citadel](#) are sacked.
- 1024: [Somnath](#): Mahmud sacks the temple and is reported to have personally hammered the temple's gilded [Lingam](#) to pieces, and the stone fragments are carted back to Ghazni, where they are incorporated into the steps of the city's new *Jama Masjid* (Friday [Mosque](#)) in 1026. He places a new king on the throne in [Gujarat](#) as a tributary. His return detours across the [Thar Desert](#) to avoid the armies of [Ajmer](#) and other allies on his return.
- 1025: Marches against the Jats of the Jood mountains who harry his army on its return from the sack of [Somnath](#).
- 1027: [Rey](#), [Isfahan](#), [Hamadan](#) from the Buyids Dynasty.
- 1028, 1029: Merv, Nishapur are lost to Seljuq dynasty

Attitude on religion and jihad[[edit](#)]

Following Mahmud's recognition by the Abbasid caliphate in 999, he pledged a *jihad*.

Thapar writes:

Of the mercenaries, not an insubstantial number were Indians and, presumably, Hindus. Indian soldiers under their commander, referred to as Suvendhary, remained loyal to Mahmud. They had their own commander, the *sipasalar-i-Hinduwan*, lived in their own quarter in Ghazni and continued with their religion. When the Turkish commander of the troops rebelled, the command was given to a Hindu, Tilak, and he is commended for his loyalty. Complaints are made about the severity with which Muslims and Christians were **killed by Indian troops fighting** for Mahmud in Seistan.^[20]

[Mohammad Habib](#) states that there was no imposition of [Jizya](#) on "non-Muslims" during the reign of Mahmud of Ghazni nor any mention of "forced conversions":

Attack on the Somnath Temple[[edit](#)]



A painting of the tomb of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, in 1839–40, with sandalwood doors long believed to have been plundered from Somnath, which he destroyed in c. 1024, but later found to be replicas of the original

In 1024 Mahmud raided [Gujarat](#), plundering the [Somnath temple](#) and breaking its *jyotirlinga* . He took away a booty of 2 crore dinars.^{[22][23]} Historians estimate the damage to the temple to have been minimal because there are records of pilgrimages to the temple in 1038 that make no mention of any damage.^[24] However, powerful legends with intricate detail had developed regarding Mahmud's raid in the Turko-Persian literature,^[25] which "electrified" the Muslim world according to scholar [Meenakshi Jain](#).^[26]

Historiography concerning Somnath[[edit](#)]

Historians including Thapar, Eaton, and A. K. Majumdar have questioned the iconoclastic historiography of this incident. Thapar quoted Majumdar (1956) ... Thapar also argued against the prevalent narrative:

Yet in a curiously contradictory manner, the Turko-Persian narratives were accepted as historically valid and even their internal contradictions were not given much attention, largely because they approximated more closely to the current European sense of history than did the other sources.^[28]

Coins of Mahmud with the [Islamic declaration of faith](#). Obverse legend with the name of the caliph [al-Qadir bi-llah](#) (in the fifth line). Reverse legend: *Muhammad Rasul/Allah Yamin al-Daw/la wa-Amin al-Milla/Mahmud*.



Silver jitals of Mahmud of Ghazna with bilingual Arabic and Sanskrit minted in Lahore 1028. avyaktam-eka (La ilaha illAllah) Muhammada avtāra (Muhammad Rasulullah) Nrpati Mahamuda ...



Under the reign of Mahmud of Ghazni, the region broke away from the [Samanid](#) sphere of influence. While he acknowledged the [Abbasids](#) as [caliph](#) as a matter of form, he was also granted the title [Sultan](#) in recognition of his independence.

By the end of his reign, the [Ghaznavid Empire](#) extended from [Ray](#) in the west to [Samarkand](#) in the north-east, and from the [Caspian Sea](#) to the [Yamuna](#). Although his raids carried his forces across [South Asia](#), only a portion of the [Punjab](#) and of [Sindh](#) in modern-day Pakistan came under his semi-permanent rule; [Kashmir](#), the [Doab](#), [Rajasthan](#), and [Gujarat](#) remained under the control of the local Hindu dynasties.

The booty brought back to [Ghazni](#) was enormous, and contemporary historians (e.g. [Abolfazl Beyhaghi](#), [Ferdowsi](#)) give descriptions of the magnificence of the capital, as well as of the conqueror's munificent support of literature. He transformed Ghazni, the first centre of [Persian literature](#),^[29] into one of the leading cities of Central Asia, patronizing scholars, establishing colleges, laying out gardens, and building mosques, palaces, and caravansaries. Mahmud brought whole libraries from Ray and Isfahan to Ghazni. He even demanded that the Khwarizmshah court send its men of learning to Ghazni.^[30]

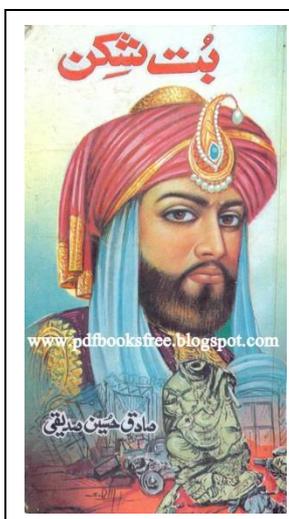
Mahmud patronized the notable poet Ferdowsi, who after laboring 27 years, went to Ghazni and presented the [Shahnameh](#) to him. There are various stories in medieval texts describing the lack of interest shown by Mahmud to Ferdowsi and his life's work. According to historians, Mahmud had promised Ferdowsi a [dinar](#) for every distich written in the Shahnameh (which would have been 60,000 dinars), but later retracted his promise and presented him with dirhams (20,000 dirhams), at that time the equivalent of only 200 dinars. His expedition across the Gangetic plains in 1017 inspired [Al-Biruni](#) to compose his *Tarikh Al-Hind* in order to understand the Indians and their beliefs. During Mahmud's rule, universities were founded to study various subjects such as mathematics, religion, the humanities, and medicine.

On 30 April 1030 Sultan Mahmud died in Ghazni at the age of 59. Sultan Mahmud had contracted [malaria](#) during his last invasion. The medical complication from malaria had caused lethal tuberculosis.

The Ghaznavid Empire was ruled by his successors for 157 years. The expanding [Seljuk](#) empire absorbed most of the Ghaznavid west. The [Ghorids](#) captured Ghazni in 1150, and [Mu'izz al-Din](#) (also known as Muhammad of Ghor) captured the last Ghaznavid stronghold at Lahore in 1187.

The military of Pakistan has named its [short-range ballistic missile](#) the [Ghaznavi Missile](#) in honour of Mahmud of Ghazni,^[31] In addition, the Pakistan Military Academy, where cadets are trained to become officers of the Pakistan Army, also gives tribute to Mahmud of Ghazni by naming one of its twelve companies Ghaznavi Company.

Preceded by: Ismail of Ghazni	Ghaznavid Sultan 997–1030	Followed by: Mohammad Ghaznavi
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A Warrior on Water, he Won on Jats ... on the Waves of Sindh ! [TH]

Mahmood Ghaznavi

[Personalities](#) »

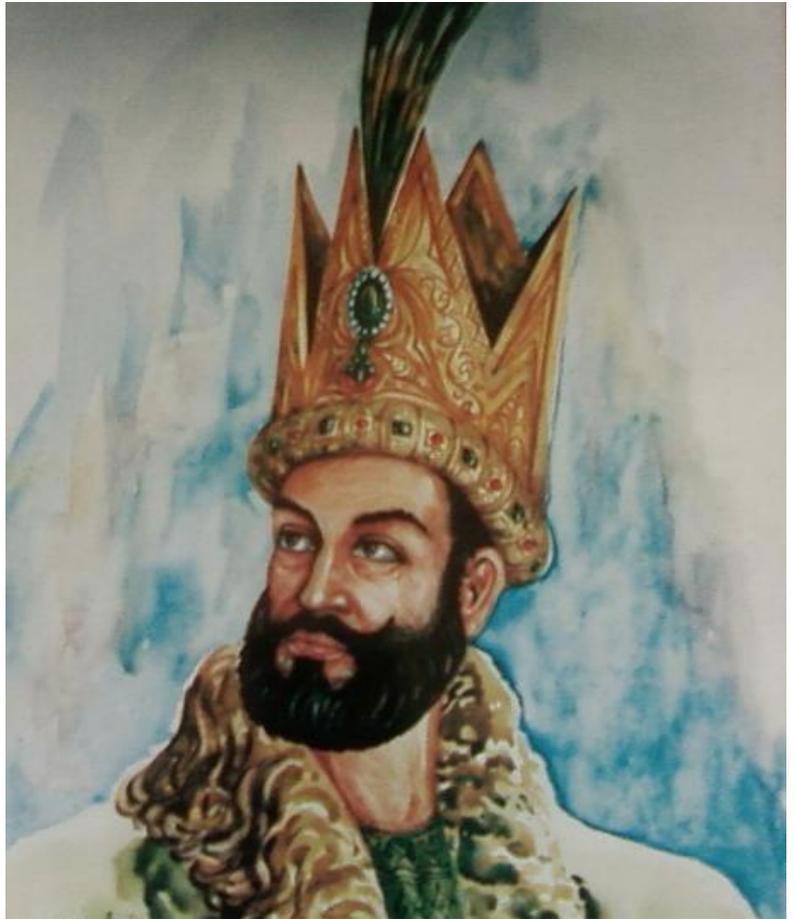
[712-1206 Advent of Islam pph](#) »

Mahmood Ghaznavi

Mahmood of Ghazna was a great patron of learning. Firdosi the poet, Behqi the historian and Al-Biruni the scholar and scientist were associated with his court. Ghazni became one of the most important and beautiful cities of the Islamic world. Lahore also became a great center of learning and culture.

Mahmud was also a deeply religious man. He himself wrote a book on Fiqh. He had respect for other religions. A large number of Hindus lived in Ghazni, and they enjoyed religious freedom. One of his commanders named Tilak was a Hindu. A number of soldiers in his army were also Hindus. Mahmud attacked the Hindu Temples in India because of political and not religious reasons. Mahmud Ghaznavi died on April 30, 1030AD.

Posted by: [HistoryPak](#)



Mahmood Ghaznavi was born in 971AD, in **Khurasan**. Mahmood Ghazni was the son of Abu Mansur **Sabuktigin**, who was a Turkish slave soldier of the Samanid ruler. In 994 Mahmood joined his father in the conquest of Ghazni for Samanid ruler, it was the time of instability for Samanid Empire. In 998AD Mahmood took control of the **Ghazni** and also conquered **Qandahar**.

In 1001 AD, he started his military campaigns, which were lasted before his death in 1030 AD. Mahmud's campaigns seem to have been motivated by religious zeal against both the Fatimid's Shiites and non-Muslims; Buddhists, Jains and Hindus. Mahmood of Ghazna was one of the undefeatable military commanders of the World. He attacked South Asia seventeen times successfully and went back to Ghazni every time with a great victory. He fought against the forces of Jaipal, Annadpal, Tarnochalpal, Kramta and the joint forces of Hindu Rajas and Maharajas but all of them were forced to flee away from the battlefield due to Mahmood's war strategy as a general.

The military campaigns of Mahmood Ghaznavi made him controversial personality in the history of South Asia. Mahmood of Ghazni destroyed important Hindu shrine- Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple (known as Kesava Deo Temple) in 1017 AD along with several other Hindu and Buddhist temples in the holy city of Mathura. Mahmud of Ghazni destroyed one of the most sacred temples of Hindus- Somnath Temple in 1025 AD (but-shikan) ... killing over 50,000 people who tried to defend it. Due to this Mahmood Ghaznavi is considered as a looter and plunder by the most of the non-Muslims of South Asia.

Mahmood of Ghazna became the sign of respect and bravery for South Asian Muslim and is considered as their Hero.

Mahmood weakened the power of the neighboring rulers as they could not attack over the newly established Muslim state. The booty of war was used to consolidate the power of the state. After the conquest of Multan and Lahore, Mahmood made Punjab a part of his empire in 1021. He also established his provincial headquarters at Lahore. Ghazni and Lahore become the center of learning and culture. Thus Mahmood established a strong Muslim empire, which was lasted for hundreds years. He also exposed the weakness of Hindu rajas, which enabled the Muslim leaders to conquer India in future. These all made him the Hero for the Muslims of South Asia.