

## Governors of Fars in Shah Abbas Safavi Era

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**Abstract:** Shah Abbas I in the first years of monarchy and in line with his centralizing policy based on declining the power and increasing influence of Qizilbash tribes and governors of the states and provinces about a century ended Zolqadr family rule on Fars and Miladian local government of Larestan in the south of this state and Fars Gulf beaches. These two families in the beginning of Shah Abbas monarchy tried for realizing centralizing policy of Safavi Shah by maladaptive behavior. Appointment of Allah Verdi khan Gholeler Aghasi, Safavi court and military character trusted by Shah Abbas and then his child, Imam Gholi khan arrived in Fars domination and also delegation of all politic affairs, properties and security in Fars and adjacent areas such as Kohkeluieh, Larestan, Bahrein, Doragh (Khoozestan), Gambroon and Hormoz to him were the most goals of Shah Abbas of these changes. Assignment of responsibility for stanching unrest of neighboring tribes with Fars states such as Kohkeluieh, Lorestan and Khoozestan gave to Bigler Beigi. This state is also military supporting of internal and external expedition of Shah Abbas which is the indicator of important politic and military place of Fars Emirates and special trust of Shah Abbas to his governor in this state. Hence Fars state by having important economic and commercial resources is the richest south state of Iran and like Safavi economic support in consolidation and fixation for power of this family because of natural position and placing in the neighborhood of Fars Gulf and Hormoz strait and crossing commercial roads of Fars Gulf. In this article we investigate politic place and importance of Fars governors and the reason of special attention of Shah Abbas to this state by relying to historical documents and references. [Seyed Mohsen Hoseini. **Governors of Fars in Shah Abbas Safavi Era.** *Researcher* 2015;7(5):31-35]. (ISSN: 1553-9865). <http://www.sciencepub.net/researcher>. 6

**Key words:** Safavids, Fars governors, Shah Abbas I, Fars state, local governments, family of Allah Verdikhan

### The purposes of research

The most important purpose for handling of this study is identifying the position of Fars state in politic, military and economic equations of Safavi era specially the reign of Shah Abbas and mentioning strategic importance of this state in the north of Fars Gulf and central role in consolidation and settlement of Safavi government in the south of Iran.

### Research question:

What are importance reason of Fars states for Safavi government and the reason for sending military characters close to Shah Abbas for managing Fars?

### Research hypotheses

1. Zolqadr family of Fars couldn't attract the trust of Shah Abbas for continuing his rule on Fars.
2. Shah Abbas by sending his military trusted characters for managing Fars and south zones wanted the stabilization of Safavid government and preventing of foreigners' influence in this zone.

### Research method:

In this study by using written works and references we investigated comparative survey and also we used a descriptive research of first hand researches and noted same cases by comparing the references and the results arising historians' opinions,

European travel writers and contemporary writers with Safavids and the era close to them.

### Introduction:

Shah Esmail I (930-907 h.q) the son of Sheikh Heidar established the government in early adolescence in 907 that ended to the years of turbulence and tribal government in the land of Iran. This government that named Safavi because of the ancestor Shah Esmail, Sheikh Safi that it has special importance in Iran history. Safavids by forming the first Iranian pervasive government after Islam ended the politic social uncertainties after Mongol attack and Kharazmshahiyan decline and by vitalizing national unity close to Shiite principles gave independent identity to Iran. The different zones of Iran that had local government following central government and the basis of Iran national government formed after years. Fars state in the south of country was one of the important zones of Iran that had ancient background in history and civilization of Iran. The government of this state was in the hand of one of Qizilbash families, advocate of Safavids including extensive areas as present provinces like Fars, Hormozgan, Boushehr, Kohkeluieh and Bovir Ahmad and parts of the provinces of Kerman, Yazd and Khoozestan. The important politic geography, social and economic position was special for Safavi rulers specially Shah Abbas I (1038-996 h.q). The young king of safavi for

developing his centralizing policies and declining the power and influence of Qizilbash families expelled the government of Fars state of the control of Qizilbash family. By deleting local governors of Fars, he considered this state as the first laboratory for his internal politic changes. He appointed a Georgia commander, a new Muslim to the governor of Fars state that gained high military and politic degree and he tried to achieve to his considerable goals.

Study and investigation of Fars state in Shah Abbas I era by using the present resources can help in identifying some part of history and civilization of Iran in these periods. In this study we considered the survey of governors of Fars state in the era of Shah Abbas and the most important politic and military events of this period and the actions of Shah Abbas against riot, independence of Zolqadr family and trying to abolish of this family and also local government of Larestan, important actions of Allah Verdi khan and Imam Gholi khan in Fars that they are less searched.

#### **Fars governors in Shah Abbas I era**

The first Fars governor in Safavi era was Elyas Beik Zolghadr that in the year of 909 h.q gained this degree of Shah Esmail I and then sixteen people of governors of Zolghadr family governed on Fars state. Ruling of Fars state in the last year of the government of Shah Mohammad Khoda bandeh was in the authority of Ali Khan Zolghadr. He encountered to the opposition of Fars grandee and went to Darolsaltaneh of Qazvin in Norooz of 995 h.q and again Shiraz Darolmolk delegated to him from Shah Mohammad Khod Bndeh. But that time Mehdi Gholi Khan Zolghadr, the son of Shadi Beig (Shiraz governing attorney) rebelled and called himself the Khan of Shiraz and supported by Zolghadr family. Zolghadr heads in supporting of Mehdi Gholi Khan against Ali Khan united and before his arrival to Shiraz arrested and killed him. At first Mehdi Gholi Khan announced his loyalty to Shah Mohammad Etaat by sending gifts and rewards but by arrival of Shah Abbas to Darolsaltaneh of Qazvin, Mehdi Gholi Khan and Abarqu and Bavanat governors and group of Zolghadr heads and the sons of Mirza Salman were considered to respecting of Navab Ashraf.

Mehdi Gholi Khan after several days of staying in Shah Abbas court decided to kill Morshed Gholi Khan, strong man supporter of Shah Abbas and Wakil alsaltaneh by helping Abarqu governor and group of Fars heads and Qizilbash heads. He was unhappy because of the behavior of Morshed Gholi Khan and governors and their followers. But Morshed that was supported by Shah Abbas tried to kill Mehdi Gholi Khan by helping Jacob Beig, the son of Ebrahim Khan Zolghadr (post governor of Fars) who was

waiting for achieving power (996 h.q). Then Jacob Beig Zolghadr got Fars government. He immediately for showing his obedience began to war by the help of Fars forces against Uzbek in Khorasan and then he tried to repress the governors of Yazd, Eij, Ni riz and some heads of Zolghadr tribe that got away the battle in Khorasan. Jacob Khan that had pride because of much attention of Shah Abbas to him showed arbitrary actions including as Mirza Hassan Fasaei said, he had bad imagination that Zolghadr family that wanted to govern Fars was surmounted that he himself wanted to govern sovereignty of Fars and he killed 24 people of Zolghadr heads for achieving to his goal. Jacob Khan who made despotic and repressive government in Shiraz campaigned to Yazd and defeated Biktash Khan Afshar and achieved to Yazd and Kerman states, then he developed the realm of his government and claimed for independence. He had no attention to the court of Shah Abbas that wanted him many times. He rebelled against Safavi government. This topic was important for Shah Abbas and he campaigned to Shiraz for extinguishing Jacob Beig riot and also Jacob Beig that had no capability for confronting with Shah Abbas got away Shiraz and stayed in Sepid Estakhr castle.

Shah Abbas after managing Fars affairs and surmounting Jacob Beig appointed another one of heads in this race as Bonyad Khan Tavachi bashi Zolghadr to Fars government although he had no satisfaction of Zolghadr family government (999 h.q) but lack of ability of Bonyad Khan in sending Fars forces to Shah Abbas camp in Khorasan caused the anger of Shah and his dismissal and as noted: because of the penalty that my division gained they were blamed and the way of Bonyad Khan and Zolghadr governors changed and Hossein Khan Masaheb Qajar was his substitute. By demanding of Zolghadr heads and accepting for the payment of twenty five thousand tomans, again Shah Abbas appointed Bonyad Khan to the Fars government but handling of this order did after one year of Hossein Khan Government. Bonyad Khan Zolghadr governed till 1003 h.q in Fars. In that time Shah Abbas decided to dismiss Zolghadr family of Fars government and then selected one of brave and trusted commanders as Farhad Khan that asa Eskandar Beig noted, he was excellent governor that because of loyal education gained good place and his fame arrived in near and far lands and he governed Shiraz and Fars state and therefore he ended to one- hundred government of Qizilbash family that they had despotic reign on Fars. Farhad Khan because of commanding of multiple zones in Gilan couldn't attend in Fars and in that time Shah Abbas appointed Allah Verdi Khan Gholeler Aghasi to the rule of Fars that he was famed to braveness, benevolence and valuable opinion among all governors.

### **The reign of Allah Verdi khan on Fars state**

Allah Verdi khan, one of Georgia servants and as Minorosky noted was an Armenian new comer in Islam that achieved Gholeler Aghasi position in the court of Shah Abbas I. He was a brave and trusted governor for Shah. Mirza Hassan Fasaei about the personality of Allah Verdi khan wrote: he was unique in policy, temerity and braveness. In the year 1004 h.q Shah Abbas appointed Farhad Khan who was Fars governor in a short time to governing of Bieh Pas area in Gilan. He assigned thereign of Fars state to Allah Verdi khan, the commander of king servants. Eskandar Beig Torkaman knew the reign of Fars state to Allah Verdi khan and wrote: the governing of Fars state referred all to Allah Verdi khan Gholeler Aghasi and the responsibility and authority of Fars affair was given to him. One of the most important goals of Shah Abbas for appointment of this commander of non Qizilbash to the most important south state of Iran that for the first time did in Safavi era was basic change in politic and military affairs of the country that before it was in the authority of Qizilbash tribes and Safavids family that knew themselves in the authority of these family did not have any control on the affair of states and their income. Shah Abbas wanted to manipulate this rule of thumb and making new power against Qizilbash governor and limiting their involvements in the affairs of state and control on their economic resources that the recent topic emphasized in the order of Shah Abbas to the governor of Fars: Allah Verdi Khan emphasized that annually take three hundred for managing states. Hence income arising of different areas of Fars that gained by control of local governor spent for division and war camp of Shah. It is clear that the goal of Shah Abbas for this appointment was utilizing of economic benefits and abundant incomes of Fars. Sharden, famous French traveler noted this purpose of Shah as: what caused that Safavi court considers Fars was focusing to the abundant incomes of this state, tolls and business tax. In fact Fars government was the first government that delivered to one of royal servants. Before it we didn't have such a sample for the reign of servants on states in historical references.

Therefore Shah Abbas knew other features of natural and military geography of Fars and he knew the importance and special place of this state (soon Safavi capital transformed to its neighborhood) as military and economic support of Safavi government based on adjacency with ports and the beaches of Fars Gulf and placing in main commercial roads. On the other hand adjacency with nomadic stormy areas of Khoozestan, Kohkeluieh and Bovir Ahmad, Mamasani and Lorestan became necessary the presence of strong government and in the control of Shah in this state. It shows the correctness for selecting of politic- military

governor of Fars state by young king of Safavi when Shah Abbas delivered the responsibility of suppressing riots in the area of Kohkeluieh and Khoozestan to Allah Verdi khan and he handled it well. Allah Verdi khan after achieving Fars and Kohkeluieh in the first his action repressed riot of Afshar heads and also scrunched Qaedan Alvar tribe in the area of Kohkeluieh. He also in the year 1005 h.q attempted very much in the riot in Lorestan area and by defeating Shah Verdi Khan helped to Shah Abbas and his forces that came to that area. Among important actions of Allah Verdi Khan was catching Bahrain Island and defeating Portuguese in the year 1010 h.q. This event was the introduction of military operations in the south area and Fars Gulf that caused more fame of Allah Verdi Khan and firing Portuguese from Fars Gulf islands. Other important action of Allah Verdi Khan was attacking to Larestan that Shah Abbas ordered it. Larestan was in the road of Hormoz commercial caravans and its governors tried for keeping their position and politic priority in Fars Gulf beaches that shows local government of Larestan despite obedience of Safavi Shah in his reign made many problems for foreign commercial caravans that caused their complaint to Safavi court. Shah Abbas that was so interested for development of commercial exchange with Europeans didn't like such a behavior and for complete control of commercial roads of that area ordered to Allah Verdi Khan to annoy Larestan governors. Allah Verdi Khan by attacking to Lar succeeded to defeat last head of Miladi family as the name Ibrahim Khan and appointed Abolqasem Lari as the governor of this area. This event was in the year 1010 h.q and after terrible earthquake of Larestan. Allah Verdi Khan in the same year by helping governors of Faal area (of Lar countryside) returned Bahrain island that from 921-1515 h.q (along with Shah Ismaeil I era) was considerable and it was in the authority of Portuguese.

Shah Abbas had considerable trust to Allah Verdi Khan so that in the year 1011 h.q that he wanted to coney to Azarbaeijan, he delivered all affairs of Isfahan Darolsaltaneh to him.

Allah Verdi Khan also in the year 1012 h.q form Shah Abbas had mission to catch Baghdad and in the same year, there were other missions as attendance in the battle with Azarbaeijan and Irvan. He afforded very good to handle his duties that he caused important area arrived to Safavi king. Allah Verdi Khan that had another nickname as Bigler Beigi of Fars spent much time with Fars forces in Shah Camp and ministers were responsible to manage Fars affair. Among these ministers, Mirza Moein addain Mohammad, the son of Mirza Gheias addin Shirazi was appointed from Allah Verdi Khan in the year 1018 h.q to this position. We can say that Allah Verdi Khan and Fars forces had

important role in many victories of Shah Abbas in the early eleventh century. Allah Verdi Khan apparently appointed his son, Imam Gholi Khan to Larestan reign. The writers as Mirza Hassan Khan in events explanation of year 1017 only pointed to this topic that: Imam Gholi Khan, the governor of Larestan and the son of Navvab Allah Verdi Khan Bigler Beigi with Fars force as a drop in the sea joined to Keivan Shoukuh camp but he didn't point to the appointment of Imam Gholi Khan. Also references in telling this news of wilters were Alam araye abbasi and rozeh asafa that they mentioned this topic. History writers wrote in detail about Larestan so that the book of Montakhab altavariikh pointed to the history of Larestan and its governors but it didn't point to Imam Gholi Khan, the governor of Lar after catching of this area by Fars forces.

Allah Verdi Khan the events from 1018 to 1021 with Fars forces had effective attendance that most important events were Salmas conquest and Ojan Azarbaeijan. At last in the year 1021 Allah Verdi Khan after arrival to Isfahan died because of disease. His death caused severe effect of Safavi Shah. The writer of Alam Aray Abbasi in this case wrote: religious king to the time of rinse down that followed his funeral and he gave one hundred and fifty toman for his funeral and sent him with respect to holy Mashhad and buried near the dome of Allah Verdi Khan and it is as the name of him so far. Great highness went to the house of Imam Gholi Khan Bigler Beigi and considered survivors.

Fars was a secure place for the reign of Shah Abbas in the era of Allah Verdi Khan so that governors whom wanted to riot was sent to support of Fars. Among these people, we can note Alvand Div Amir Shoreshi Mazandaran in the year 1006 h.q and Noor Mohammad Khan, grandson of Chengiz Khan mongol the governor of Marv Shahijan in the year 1007 h.q that stayed in Shiraz and he lived there under observation forever.

### **The reign of Imam Gholi Khan in Fars**

Shah Abbas because of abundant attempt of Allah Verdi Khan in the year 1021 h.q appointed his son as the governor of Fars that he was the governor of Larestan in that time and gave him the position of Bigler Beigi. Imam Gholi Khan like his father was brave and attempted very much in the battles of Shah Abbas. Tavarnieh, French traveler about him said that Imam Gholi was over active and all people liked him and respected to him. The elite of soldiers were under his order. Valeh Isfahani also knew Imam Gholi Khan as great governors that no one achieved to this position. He after arriving to Fars area tried to vitalize Shiraz and other cities of Fars and he made a big school in a famous area as Shiraz hen market that was well known

as Khan School. Mirza Hassan Fasaei about this school wrote: this building has one hundred up, down and angel houses and a big ceiling and Char bagh in four angels has two parts in front of garden and school. Imam Gholi Khan in the year 1032 h.q appointed Fars ministry to Mirza Hossein Beig, brother of Mirza Mohammad Salman Jaberi Ansari that he was the minister of Fars in the past period and in the year 1024 h.q Shah Abbas sent him to Irvan to battle with Mohammad Pasha Osmani and in this area he succeeded to enter much disadvantages to the forces of Mohammad Pasha. Shah Abbas because of the attempting of Imam Gholi Khan added Doragh area in Khoozestan to Mohmareh port (Khorram Shahr) and gave to Navab Imam Gholi Khan. The most important mission of Imam Gholi Khan that caused his abundant fame was in the year 1030 h.q when Shah Abbas ordered him. This important mission was firing Portuguese from Hormoz Island and catching of this sensitive area in the road of Fars Gulf. Imam Gholi Khan attacked to Hormoz Island with the forces that he brought of Shaban kareh Larestan and other areas and by helping two hundred ships and European travel writers mentioned their numbers as fifteen thousand people and he succeeded to a great conquest. Eskandar Beig Monshi in Alam Aray Abbasi about this event wrote: Navab Imam Gholi Khan Bigler Beigi went to Jorjon port that called Gambron port with Larestan force and they sat on England ships and fired Portuguese with gun from Hormoz island and caught their properties and made abig fences around the beach and named it Bandar Abbas. The news of these conquests in Darolsaltaneh of Harat was sent to highness.

These conquests caused fame and pride for Imam Gholi Khan and his fame for Shah Abbas increased. Imam Gholi Khan in the year 1033 h.q repressed the riot of sayed Mohammad Khan, the son of sayed Mobarak Khan in the area of Khoozestan and he made quietness in this area. In the year 1034 h.q he also helped to Shah Abbas for blockage of Baghdad by Osmani forces and Fars forces and he succeeded to free Baghdad from the blockage of Mohammad Pasha Osmani. He achieved Basreh and other area after this important victory and he joined them to other conquests in Safavi reign.

Shah Abbas in the year 1038 h.q in Mazandaran died and his grandson, Sam Mirza who was seventeen years old achieved the reign of Safavi. That time Imam Gholi Khan had the authority of Fars area and he was a brave commander and because he was strong governor of Shah Abbas era, he had decent court. Furthermore his court in Fars was the center of scientists and artists. Painters, calligraphy artists and poets like Mola Yaganeh, Hakim Layegh, Mola Yekta and Mola Torabi were in his court.

Shah Abbas had considerable trust to Imam Gholi Khan and he was free in the reign of Fars state so that he never went to Fars in the era of Imam Gholi Khan and Imam Gholi was free in removal and installation of governors. After the death of Shah Abbas, his son, Shah Safi had adversarial mood with Imam Gholi. At last in the year 1043 h.q in Qazvin, Imam Gholi Khan and his three sons and then his family were killed or became blind by the order of Shah Safi.

### Conclusion

Fars state in the Safavi era because of politic, social, economic and geographic position was considerable by the governors of Safavi dynasty. Historical and civilized history of Fars and the important role of this area in the different periods of Iran land, geographical development and population diversity of this province, vicinity with beaches and ports of Persian Gulf (it was considered by great colonialist powers in this period because of developments of Europe new centuries). Being in the main foreign commercial roads and establishing agent offices of European commercial companies in Fars center, the presence of nomadic tribes in this state, having fertilized land and economic abundant resources were among the importance factors of this province for governors of Safavi dynasty. Appointment of military politic characters trusted by Shah Abbas like Farhad Khan, Allah Verdi Khan and Imam Gholi Khan for managing Fars affairs and adjacent areas such as Kohkeluieh, Larestan, Bahrein, Hormoz, beaches and ports of Persian Gulf, military and economic supporting of Fars governors for subscribing the reign of Safavi dynasty in different parts of the country show the important role of Fars state in stabilization and consolidation of Safavi family position in big part of Iran land.

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