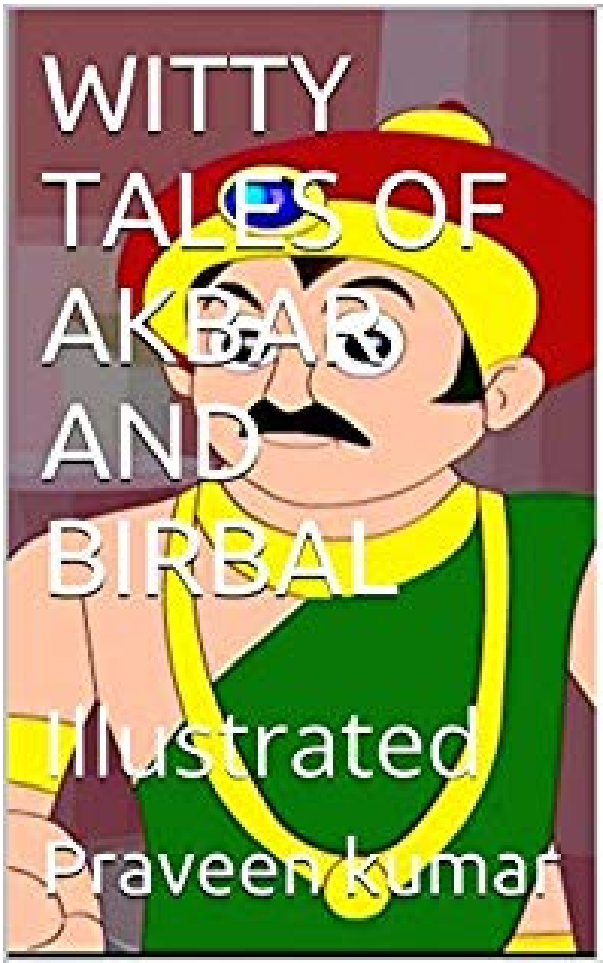


# WITTY TALES OF AKBAR AND BIRBAL: Illustrated



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Akbar, also known as Akbar the Great or Akbar I, was Mughal Emperor from 1556 until his death. He was the third and one of the greatest ruler of the Mughal Dynasty in India. Birbal or more accurately Rajah Birbar, was a Hindu advisor in the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar during his rule in India and is mostly remembered in folk tales, which focus on his wit.

Akbar-Birbal tales are passed on mainly by oral tradition. They focus on how Birbal manages to outsmart the envious courtiers who try to trap and portray him in poor light in front of Emperor Akbar, often in a humorous manner with him shown giving sharp and intelligent responses. Others show his interactions with the emperor which involve him trying to test Birbal's wit and Birbal making him realize his folly, which always ends with Akbar getting amused and impressed. He occasionally challenges Birbal by giving him a line of poetry which Birbal has to complete and some stories are simple humorous anecdotes. Getting an advantage in a seemingly impossible situation and making his challengers look silly are usual occurrences in these tales