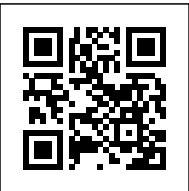


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Traders from Armenia frequented the Indian subcontinent as early as 2000 BC, according to "The Daily Star" (Sept. 4, 2006) of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Winding their ways along the tortuous mountains and following the Silk route through Iran and Afghanistan the Armenian merchants traded in spices, muslin and precious stones.... They finally settled in the subcontinent during the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar when he offered them freedom of trade, religion and exemption from taxation. They were also allowed to enter areas where foreigners were banned. One of the emperor's wives was Armenian. Their adopted son (Miraz Zul Qumain) was a governor, poet and singer. Abdul Hai, chief justice of the emperor and Domingo Peres, the emperor's interpreter, were also Armenian.

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