

12. DECAY OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

Aurangzeb's death in 1707 in Deccan led to war of succession among his **three sons** : Price Muazzam, Muhammad Azam and Kam Bakhsh. Muazzam defeated and Killed Muhammad Azam at Jajau and Kam Baksh near Hyderabad.

BAHADUR SHAH (1707-12)

Prince Muazzam asumed the title Bahadur Shah I. He pursued pacific policy of conciliation with Rajputs (Jai Singh (Amber) and Ajit Singh (Marwar). Jat chief Churaman and Bundela chief Chattrasat were taken into Mughal service. With Marathas there was half hearted reconciliation, Shahu was released and given Sardeshmukhi of Deccan but not Chauth and was also not recognized as Maratha sovereign-leading to civil war between Shahu and Trabal. He reconciled with Sikhs by giving Guru Gobind Singh a Mansab. But after Guru's death Skihs under Banda revolted who was defeated at Lohgarh (fort built by Guru Gobind) but the continued to fight Mughals. The historian khafi khan, called him 'Shah-i-Bekhabar' Bahadur shah gave away large number of Jagirs to Nobels, thus creating poor finanicial condition.

JAHANDAR SHAH (1712-13)

His period reflected increasing influence of nobels and administrators such as Zulfigar khan who along with Lal Kanwar the Mistress took all important decisions. The war of succession broks out again in 1712 amongst sons of Bahadur Shah. One of them Jahandar Shah became emperor with the help of zulfikar khan, senior-most noble of Aurangzeb. Zulfikar khan abolished Jiziyah. Jahandar Shah become the first mughal emperor to be killed in captivity.

FARRUKHSIYAR (1713-19) (Shahid-i-Mazlum)

He killed his uncle Jahandar Shah with the help of Saiyid brothers-Abdullah Khan and Hussain Ali who dominated the court till 1720. He appointed Abdulla khan as wazir and Hussain Ali as the Mir Bakshi. In 1717 he granted to the East India Company many trading privileges (called Golden Farman). including the exemption from custom duties for its trade through Bengal. Constant struggle between Emperor and Saiyid Borthers for domination. Banda bahadur was captured and killed by Mughal in July 1715 at gurdaspur fort. Johan surman who laid inenglish ambassy consisting of huge backer, edward stephenson and a surgeon wil-

liam Hamilton. Hamilton was successful in curing the emperor from ceertain disease. In 1719, Saiyids with help of Maratha troops under Balaji Vishwanath killed Farrukhsiyar.

SAIYIDS

Saiyid brothers raised 2 young princes Refi-ud Darajat and Rafi-ud-Daula one after the other but both died of consumption. Saiyid brothers then raised 18 year old Roshan Akhtar as Muhammad shah to throne. Saiyids adopted the policy of religious tolerance and are known as King-makers. Saiyids abolished Jiziyah and pilgrim tax, made peace with Rajputs and Jats. They also reached pact with Shahu by granting him the Swarjya (territories of Shivaji) and right to collect Chauth and Sardesmukhi of 6 provinces of Deccan. Saiyid due to murder of Farrukhsiiyar and their tolerant policies were declared as anti-Islam and anti-Mughal by the anti-Saiyid faction. They murdered Hussain Ali and Abdullah khan was made prisoner. But Saiyid could not save the disintegration of the Empire as this was period of intenser rivalry and factionalism at Mughal court.

MUHAMMAD SHAH (1719-1748) (Roshan Akhatr)

He was put on thrown by the king maker saiyid brothers. He was under the influence of his queen qadriya Begum (Udham Bai). Also called Rangila due to his indulgent nature. He supported anti-Saiyid faction of Nizam-ul-Mulk & his uncle Mohd. Amin Khan. In spite of 30 years of rule Rangila could not save the empire. He intrigued against able Wazir Nizam-ul-Mulk who tried to bring in reforms but left to Deccan frustrated by court intrigues. "His departure was symbolic flight of loyalty and virtue from Empire" Autonomus states of Deccan (Nizam), Bengal (Murshid Quli) and Awadh (Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk) were carved out during his reign. Khayal (New poem of classical singing), ghajal and Kathak (Classical dance) were greatly supported by rangeela.

INVASIONS ON THE EMPIRE

Pashwa Baji Rao I become the First peshwa to invade delhi in 1737. In 1739 Nadir Shah, ruler of persia invaded India and inflicted heavy defeat at Karnal. Nadir Shah plundered Delhi, took away Kohinoor and Peacock throne. The provinces west of Indus including Kabul were also acquired from Ranglia thus leaving

open the north-west frontier for further invasions. Ahmad Shah Abdali India for the first time during his reign in 1748 he invaded and repeated this practice eight times.

AHMAD SHAH (1758-54)

He was able to come to throw with help of queen mother udham Bai. Abdli attacked and ceded Punjab and north west frontier region.

ALAMGIR II (1754-59)

He was merely the puppet of his wazir imad-ul-mulk. He went on to have a pact with marathas so as to capture north west frontier against the invasion of Ahamad Shah. This was one of Major Reason behind the III battle of panipat.

SHAH ALAM II (1759-1806)

Prince Ali Gauhar crowned himself as Shah Alam II' In Bihar but he did not enter Delhi fearing his Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk who had killed earlier emperors. After Panipat, Abdali nominated Shah Alam as the Emperor but power remained in hands of Abdali protege Najib Khan Rohilla. He was defeated at Battle of Buxar (Oct. 1764) by English. He signed the treaty of Allahabad with English and granted them the Diwani of Bengal,

Bihar and Orissa in return, he received the territories of Kara and Allahabad and an annual tribute of 26 Lakhs from Bengal. He left the British shelter in 1772 and returned to Delhi under the protection of Maratha chief Mahadaji Scindia. But he was soon blinded by Rohilla leader Ghulam Qadir. When British captured Delhi in 1803 he was bound to rule over Delhi only as emperor.

AKBAR SHAH II (1806-1837)

Symbolic rule continued but limited to Red Fort and surrounding Area. Lord Hastings attacked over Delhi and wrested all ceremonial power and title which proclaimed Mughal emperor as superior. He gave title of Raja to Rammohun Roy and sent him to England to plead for hike in emperor's pension.

BAHADUR SHAH II (1837-1862)

He was last Mughal ruler. The son of Akbar II and Rajput Princess Lal Bai. He was a passionate Urdu poet. Who patronised Mirza Ghalib. Dalhousie declared that his successors would have to leave the Red Fort. Canning declared that his successors would not be recognized as kings but only as princes. After revolt of 1857, he was deported to Rangoon.