

## Modern History

### Chapter-1

#### Decline and Disintegration of Mughal Empire

- The Mughal Empire which had dazzled the contemporary world by its extensive territories, military & cultural achievements showed unmistakable signs of decay towards the beginning of the Eighteenth Century.
- The reign of Aurangzeb was the swan-song of the Mughal rule in India.
- A complex disease struck the heart of the empire and gradually spread to different parts.
- While nine Mughal emperors followed another in quick succession in the fifty years following the death of Aurangzeb, many adventurers, Indian & foreign, carved out independent principalization for themselves.
- **Percival Spear** said "It was in this way that the British proved to be the residuary Legatees of the unclaimed estate of Hindustan."
- Mughal Governors of Oudh, Bengal and the Deccan freed themselves from the control of Central Government.

#### Later Mughals

##### **Bahadur Shah-I (Heedless King: 1707-1712)**

After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, a war of succession started among his three surviving sons-

- **Muazzam** (The Governor of Kabul)
- **Azam** (The Governor of Gujarat) &
- **Kambakhsha**(The Governor of Deccan)
- Muazzam defeated and killed Azam at Jajau in June, 1707 and ascended the throne with the title of Bahadur Shah-I. Later, he defeated Kambakhsha near Hyderabad in January, 1709.
- He pursued pacifist policy, hence he was called 'Shah-i-Bekhabar'.
- The Maratha prince, Shahu was released who had been in Mughal captivity since 1689. Aurangzeb had arrested Shahu & his mother after killing Shambhaji, the father of Shahu.
- Peace was made with the Rajput Chiefs confirming them in their states.
- He defeated Banda Bahadur (LaxmanDev). A disciple of Guru Gobind Singh at Lohgarh and re-occupied Sirhind in 1711; however, the Sikhs were neither conciliated nor crushed.
- In 1711, A Dutch Diplomatic Mission visited the Court of Bahadur Shah-I. Josua Ketelaar was head of the team. Portuguese Lady Julia was also a member of this mission. Bahadur Shah gave the title of Bibi or Fidwa to Julia.
- According to W. Irvine during the reign of Bahadur Shah-I, four parties flourished in Mughal Court-
  1. **Irani Party**, whose members were-
    - Amir Khan
    - Ishaq Khan
    - Saadat Khan

2. **Hindustani Party** whose members were
    - Hasan &
    - Hussain.
  3. **Turani Party** whose members were –
    - Nizam-ul-Mulk
    - AsafJah
    - Qamruddin
    - Mohammad Shah
    - Zakarta Khan
  4. **Afghani Party** whose members were –
    - AliAhmad Khan
    - Muhammad Khan Bangash
- Bahadur Shah died on 27 Feb. 1712. The contestants were in such indecent haste about deciding the question of succession that the dead body of Bahadur Shah was not buried for about a month.
- **Sidney Owen** had written, “He was the last Mughal Emperor, of whom anything favourable can be said.”

### **Jahandar Shah (Profligate Fool: 1712-13)**

- The usual war of succession broke out again in 1712 amongst the four sons of Bahadur Shah- Jahaandar Shah, Azim-us-Shan, Rafi-us-Shan and Jahan Shah but Jahandar Shah became Mughal Ruler with the help of Zulfikar Khan. Jahandar Shah appointed Zulfikar Khan as his Wazir.
- He gave the title of Mirja to Jai Singh and made him the Subedar of Malwa.
- He also gave the tile of Maharaja to Ajit Singh and made him the Subedar of Gujarat.
- He was most famous for his relation with LalKumari.
- He removed Jizyah imposed on Hindus on the advice of Zulfikar Khan and Asad Khan.

### **FarukhSiyar (Contemptible Coward: 1713-19)**

- Farukhshiyar (son of Azim-us-Shan) came to the power with the help of Sayyid brothers- Hasan & Hussain Ali. In token of gratitude, Farukhshiyar appointed Hasan as his Wazir & gave him the title of ‘Abdullah Khan’. Hussain Ali was appointed as **Mir Bakhshi** (commander-in-chief.).
- Soon the Emperor found the yoke of the Sayyid brothers galling and conspired to get rid of them. However, Sayyids proved too clever for him.
- On the advice of Mirjumla, Emperor sent Hussain Ali to Deccan as Viceroy and ordered Daud Khan (Subedar of Gujarat) & Shahuto kill him. Hussain Ali finalized a treaty with Shahu and promised to get approval of the Emperor of Delhi).

### **Terms of the Treaty**

- That Shahu to get, in full possession, all territories known as ShivajiSwarajya.
- That the Marathas should be allowed to collect Chauth and Sardes mukhi from all the Mughal Subasa in Deccan. In return for these privileges, the Marathas were to place at the disposal of the Emperor a

contingent of 15,000 troops and also maintain peace in the Deccan.

- That Shahu would not harm anyway Sambhaji of Kolhapur.
- That Shahu would annually pay a tribute of ten lakh rupees to the emperor.
- That the Mughal Emperor would release from his captivity Shahu's mother and other relations.

Accordingly, Balaji Vishwanath with a Maratha contingent of 15,000 troops accompanied Hussain Ali to Delhi. With the help of Maratha troops Sayyid brothers killed Farukhsiyar & Treaty was approved by the new Emperor. Sir Richard Temple named the treaty as Magna Carta for the Marathas.

- Farukhsiyar defeated Ajit Singh of Marwad & married the daughter of Ajit Singh.
- He maintained peace treaty with Jat Leader Chudaman.
- Sikh Leader Banda Bairagi was captured and imprisoned at Gurudaspur and later he was executed at Delhi.

A Panel of doctors of Fort William cured a member of the royal palace. Sir John Surman, Stephen Edwart, Hamilton and Khwaja Sehud were included in panel. The Emperor was impressed & granted large concession to the Company. Important privileges were-

- Free trade in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa for the payment of Rs.3,000/-.
- Permission to the company to rent additional territories around Calcutta.
- Permission to purchase 38 villages in Bengal.
- Permission to mint coins in Royal Minting Centre.
- Permission to settle anywhere in Mughal Empire except Surat.

Historian **Aurma** named these privileges as 'Magna Carta' for the British.

#### **After murder of Farukhsiyar-**

- Rafi-ud-Darjal
- Rafi-ud-Daula
- Nikosiyar were placed on the throne

#### **Mohammad Shah 'Rangila' (1719-40)**

- Real name of Mohammad Shah was Roshan Akhtar. He was the son of Jahan Shan.
- He also came to the power of with the help of Sayyid brothers, hence Sayyid brothers were called Kingmaker.
- Mohammad Shah spent most of his time watching animal fights. He did not take interest in public affairs and addicted to wine and women, hence he was called Rangila.
- The Sayyid brothers followed the policy of religious tolerance & abolished Jizyah permanently.
- Later Sayyid brothers were killed through a conspiracy organized by Nizam-ul-Mulk.
- During the time period of Rangila, Deccan became free from Mughal Empire under Nizam-ul-Mulk. Saadat Khan carved out a state for himself on Oudh while Murshid Quli Khan became virtually independent in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.
- By quick marches through the hilly territories of the Jats and Mewatis Bajhao-I dashed into Delhi on 29 March, 1737 and terrorized the emperor. Although the Peshwa remained in the capital only for three days, yet he exposed the weakness and unpreparedness of the once mighty Mughal Empire.

### **Battle of Karnal, 24 Feb. 1739-**

- Nadir's rapid advance towards Delhi alarmed the Mughal Emperor. The Emperor gathered the Army of 80,000 and accompanied by the Nizam-ul-Mulk, Qamar-ud-din and Khan-i-Dauran marched from the capital to confront the invader. Saadat Ali Khan joined them soon after.
- But The Battle of Karnal lasted only three hours. Khan-i-Dauran fell fighting in the battlefield while Saadat Khan was taken prisoner by Nadir Shah.
- Nizam-ul-Mulk played the role of the peacemaker. It was agreed that Nadir would get 50 Lakhs Rupees, 20 Lakhs rupees immediately and thirty lakhs in three equal installments of 10 lakhs each payable at Lahore, Attock and Kabul respectively. The Emperor was so pleased with the services of Nizam-ul-Mulk that he confirmed on him the office of the Mir Bakshi which had fallen vacant on the death of Khan-i-Dauran.
- Due to selfishness Saadat Khan said to attack on Delhi; hence Nadir Shah decided to March to Delhi. He reached at Delhi on 20 March, 1739. At Delhi, the Khutba was read for Nadir and coins were struck in his name. The Mughal Empire had ended, the Persian Empire had begun.
- On 22 March, a rumor spread in Delhi that Nadir Shah had suddenly died. There was a popular rising in the city in which 700 of Nadir's soldiers were killed. Thereupon, Nadir Shah gave an order for general massacre. It has been estimated that about 30,000 persons were slaughtered. On the solicitation of Muhammad Shah, Nadir ordered his men to stop the massacre. The Mughal Emperor was also compelled to give a royal princess in marriage to Nadir's son Nasir Allah Mirza.
- Nadir Shah (also known as 'Napoleon of Iran') returned with 30 crore of Rupees in cash besides gold, silver, writers, masons etc. Above all, he carried with him the Peacock Throne of Shah Jahan.
- Nadir on his part declared Mohammad Shah as Emperor of the Mughal Empire once again with the right to issue coin and have the Khutba read in his name.
- Muhammad Shah also surrendered the Mughal Provinces – west of the river Indus including Kashmir and Sind. The Subah Thatta and ports subordinate thereto were also surrendered to the invader. Besides, the Governor of the Punjab agreed to pay to Nadir Shah a sum of 20 Lakhs Rupees Per Annum to remove the for any Persian garrison being left east of the Indus.

### **Ahmad Shah (1748-54)**

- Ahmad Shah succeeded Mohammad Shah. He was the son of Mohammad Shah from Udham Bai (A dancer wife of Mohammad Shah). 'Kibla-i-Alam' was the title of Udham Bai.
- Ahmad Shah excelled his predecessors in his sensual pursuits. His Harem extended over a full Koss where from all males were excluded and the emperor spent a week, sometimes, a month in the company of women.
- He did not check the disintegration of Empire.
- Ahmad Shah Abdali (Durr-i-Durrani) invaded India in 1749 & 1752 and marched up to Delhi. Maximum invasion was done in his time period.
- Imad-ul-Mulk displaced the Wazir Safdar Jang and became Wazir. Later, Imad-ul-Mulk blinded & killed Ahmad Shah.

### **Alamgir-II (1754-1759)**

- After the dethronement of Ahmad Shah, Alamgir-II became emperor with the help of Imad-ul-Mulk.

He was the son of Jahandar Shah. His real name was Azizuddin.

- Battle of Plassey was fought during his time period in 1757.
- Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded Delhi in 1757 once again and the Imperial City was plundered. He made Nazib-Ud-Daula as his Chief agent & Mir Bakshi of Mughal Empire.
- WazirImad-UI-Mulk killed him in 1759.

### **Shah Jahan-III (1759-60)**

- WazirImad-ul-Mulk placed Shah Jahan-III on the throne of Delhi. He was the grandson of Kambakhsha. His real name was Mahi-ul-Millat.
- Marathas dethroned him & captured Delhi in 1760.

### **Shah Alam-II (1760-1806)**

- Ali Gauhar, the son of Alamgir-II became the Mughal emperor in 1759 and took the title of 'Shah Alam-II'.
- At the time of his father, he was in Bihar. Although he was declared as the Mughal Emperor, he did not proceed to Delhi for 12 years due to fear of Wazir Ghazi-ud-Din.
- Battle of Panipat-III was fought in 1761 between Marathas (SadashivaRao&VishvaraoBhau) and Abadli.
- Battle of Buxar (1764) was fought during his time period. Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-Daula and Shah Alam-II made a confederacy and fought battle of Buxar (1764) against the British.
- Last time, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India in 1767 (7<sup>th</sup> Attack.).
- Shah Alam-II was a pensioner at Allahabad from 1765-1772.
- Ultimately in January, 1752, Shah Alam-II was reinstated at Delhi by the Marathas but GulamQadir occupied Delhi in 1788 and blinded Shah Alam-II and deposed him. GulamQadir was defeated and executed by MahadajiScindia at Meerut in 1789 and Shah Alam-II was re-throned.
- In 1803, Delhi was captured by the British. Lord Lake defeated Marathas. Now Shah Alam became the British pensioner (Lord Wellesley). **David Ochterlony** became the 1<sup>st</sup> Resident for the Mughal Court.

### **Third Battle of Panipat (1761)**

#### **Background of Panipat Battle-III**

- BajiRao-I established Maratha supremacy in Deccan and formulated the policy of the conquest of the North. He perceived the impending collapse of the Mughal Empire and planned to use the situation to the advantage of the Marathas.
- He wanted to make Maratha power the successor of Mughal Empire.
- This statement is proof of this intention- "Now is our time to drive the strangers from the country of the Hindus and acquire immortal renown. Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree, and the branches will fall off themselves. By directing our efforts to Hindustan, the Maratha flag shall fly from the Cuttack / Krishna river to Attock."
- Shahu also approved to this intention in following words- "You shall plant it beyond the Himalayas, you are, indeed, a noble son of a worthy father."
- In 1752, the NawabWazirSafdar Jang had concluded an agreement with the Marathas offering to concede

to the Marathas, the right of collecting *Chauth* from Punjab, Sindh and the Doab.

- In return, for the Marathas defending Mughal Empire against internal and external dangers.
- It whetted Marathas appetite for territorial ambition in North.
- Thus, a clash between Ahmad Shah Abdali and the Marathas lay in the logic of political developments.
- In 1757, Abdali had left Najib-Ud-Daula as Mir Bakhshi at Delhi but Maratha Raghunath compelled Najib to return to his estate in Najibabad.
- In March 1758, Raghunath Rao crossed into the Punjab and drove away Prince Timur & extended Maratha authority to Attock.
- The Maratha conquest of the Punjab from the Pathans was a direct challenge to Abdali and the latter decided to accept it.

### **Battle of Panipat-III (1761)-**

- In 1759, Ahmad Shah Abdali crossed Indian River with a large army and overran the Punjab.
- Sabaji & Dattaji Scindia could not stop the Abdali & Dattaji was killed in 1760. Jankoji Scindia & Malhar Rao Holkar also failed to check the advance of Abdali and the latter occupied Delhi.
- The Peshwa sent Sadashiv Rao Bahu to repulse invader. Bahu captured Delhi on 22 August 1760 and repulsed Abdali to the Panipat.
- The two armies faced each other on the battlefield of Panipat in November, 1760.
- Both sides were handicapped for supplies and negotiated for peace. Since no meeting ground was found, the battle came on 14 January, 1761. The Marathas lost the day. Afghan victory was complete and the Maratha casualties were very heavy, estimated at 75,000.

### **Causes of Marathas defeat-**

1. Abdali's forces outnumbered the forces under the command of Bahuji.
2. Near famine conditions prevailed in the Maratha camp of Panipat. Roads to Delhi were cut off by the Afghans. There was no food for men and no fodder for the horses, but the Afghans kept their supply line open.
3. While all the Muslim powers of North India rallied to the side of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Marathas had to fight alone.
4. Mutual jealousies of the Maratha commanders considerably weakened their side but entire Afghan troops worked according to single plan under strict disciplines.
5. Abdali's troops were not only better organized but better equipped.
6. While Abdali's troops used muskets, the Marathas fought mostly with swords and lances. The heavy artillery of Ibrahim could not prove its usefulness but Abdali's swivel guns mounted on camels' back caused havoc.
7. Kashi Raja Pandit, who was not only eye witness of the battle of Panipat but took part in the peace negotiations with Afghans blames Bahuji for this defeat.

**Q-1)** Battle of Panipat-III did not decide, will be the successor of Mughal but it decided that Marathas will not be the successor.

**Q-2)** The Third Battle of Panipat was fought in 1761. Why were so many empire shaking battles fought at Panipat?



### Akbar-II (1906-1937 AD)-

- 1<sup>st</sup> Emperor under the protection of British.
- Akbar-II succeeded Shah Alam-II. He sent Ram Mohan Rai to England to negotiate for getting pension.
- He gave the title of 'Raja' to Ram Mohan Rai.
- Now Mughal coins were prohibited to circulate.

### Bahadur Shah-II (1837-1857)-

- 'Jafar' was the nickname of Bahadur Shah-II.
- He was fond of poetry and wrote various verses.
- Ibrahim Jauk and AsadUllah Khan Galibwere his poet Guru.
- HasanAskari was his religious guide.
- He joined Great Revolt of 1857. He was deported to Rangoon where he died in 1862.

### Rise of Autonomous States-

With the decline of Mughal authority, the governors of large provinces, Subahdars and big Zamindars cemented their powers in different regions of the subcontinents. These powers can be divided into three categories-

1. Successor states
2. Independent states
3. New states

1. **Hyderabad (1724)** –Nizam-ul-Mulk was the founder of the Hyderabad state. He founded Asaf-Jah dynasty. Mohammad Shah Rangila appointed Mubariz Khan as a full-fledged Viceroy of Deccan and ordered to suppress Nizam but Nizamul-ul-Mulk defeat4ed and killed Mubariz Khan in 1724 in the Battle of Shaker Kheda. Mohammad Shah appointed Nizam as Viceroy of Deccan in 1725 and gave him the title of AsafJah.
2. **Oudh**-Saadat Khan, also known as Burhan-ul-Mulk, founded the autonomous principality of Oudh.
  - Safdar Jang succeeded him as Nawab of Oudh. Mohammad Shah made him the Wazir of Mughal Empire.
  - **Saadat Ali**, the ruler of Oudh embraced the title of 'Raja'.
  - **Wazid Ali Shah (AkhtarPiya)** was the last Nawab of Oudh. He was deported to Calcutta in 1756 with his family.
3. **Bengal**-MurshidQuli Khan founded the independent state of Bengal during the time period of Rangila. MurshidQuli Khan was a skilled ruler who led Bengal to prosperity. In 1727, he was succeeded by this son Shuja-ud-din. Sarfaraz Khan, his successor, was assassinated in 1740 by Aliverdi Khan, the deputy governor of Bihar at Gheria, who seized control and declared independence from the Mughal emperor by paying early Tribute.

4. **Rajputs-** Amber, Jodhpur, Marwad like Princely states were prevailing in Rajputana. Sawai Raja Jai Singh of Amber was an important ruler of 18<sup>th</sup> Century (1681 – 1743). He was a great Astronomer, Scientist, Jurist and Social Worker. He founded Jaipur in a scientific manner. He contributed more in the field of Astronomy by establishing Jantar-Mantar at Jaipur. Delhi, Ujjain, Mathura and Varanasi. He prepared a table in the name of Zij Muhammad Shahi for the calculation in the field of Astronomy. He also translated Euclidean Geometry in Sanskrit.
5. **The Ruhelas and Bangash Pathans:** Ruhelakhand was located in eastern direction of Delhi. Afghans who settled there, were called Ruhelas. First of all, an Afghan Vir Daud and his son Ali Muhammad Khan founded a small state at Bareilly but later it was renamed as Ruhelkhand state which was located between Kumaon in North to Ganges River in South.  
One more Afghan Mohammad Khan Bangash founded an independent state in modern Farukhabad but later he extended it to some areas of Bundelakhand and Allahabad.
6. **Mysore-** Mysore state became independent in 1612. Earlier, it was a part of Vijay Nagar Empire. Hindu Wodeyar dynasty started ruling there.
7. **Travancore-** Travancore was an autonomous state in Kerala. Martanda Varma expanded Travancore state from Cochin to Kanyakumari. Ram Varma was another ruler of Travancore. He was a great Scholar, Poet, Actor and Musician. Trivendram became a great centre of Sanskrit learning during the time period of Ram Varma.
8. **Bundela State-** Vir Singh Bundela, also known as Bir Singh Dev was a Bundela Rajput Chief and the ruler of the kingdom of Orchha. He killed AbulFazl in 1602 on the advice of Jahangir. Chhatrasal Singh Bundela was another important ruler of Orchha.
9. **Jat State-** Jat state was founded in 1669 by the Jats of Mathura. Gokula was its leader. Aurangzeb executed Gokula.  
Rajaram & his nephew Chudaman started revolt in 1680 against Aurangzeb. Both leaders looted the grave of Akbar located at Sikandara (Manu).  
Badan Singh succeeded Chudaman. He founded forts at Dig, Kumber, Ved and Bharatpur. He founded Bharatpur state after the Nadir's invasion in India. Ahmad Shah Abdali gave him the title of 'Raja Mahendra'.

Surajamal became ruler of Jat state in 18<sup>th</sup> Century. He was described as 'The Plato of the Jat People' due to his political sense, steady intellect and clear vision.

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**Ques. Clarify how mid-eighteenth century India was beset with the spectre of a fragmented polity. (UPSC GS-1 Mains 2017)**

**Ans. :**

During the first half of the eighteenth century, with Aurangzeb's misguided policies which weakened the stable Mughal polity and failure of later Mughals like Muhammad Shah's rule from 1719 to 1748 reshaped the boundaries of the Mughal Empire by the emergence of a number of independent kingdoms.

**Major Political units of that time:**

- Through the 18th century, the Mughal Empire gradually fragmented into a number of independent, regional states.

- The Mughal empire's influence was not as widespread or deep as was believed. Significant parts of India, especially in the North East and South, remained outside it, as did many social groups.

- Despite fragmented polity there was survival of the Mughal tradition of government, as the prestige of the emperor was quite considerable despite the increasing influence of the rebel chiefs of the Marathas and Sikhs.

- Semi-independent or autonomous states: These were established by the Mughal nobles during the reign of Mohammad Shah (1720-1748). Such as Awadh founded by Saadat khan and Bengal founded by Murshid Quli Khan.

- After Aurangzeb's death a war of succession broke out among his sons and Muazzam emerged as victorious. He assumed the royal authority under the title of Bahadur Shah I (1707-1717). He was the last Mughal emperor about whom anything considerable can be said.

- In a quick succession Syed brothers raised Rafiuddarzat and Rafiddaula to the throne (1719) but soon they passed away. Now the king makers Syed brothers appointed Mohammad Shah as the king (1720-1748).

Therefore, it can be seen that the mid eighteenth century was characterized by weak rulers and rise of autonomous regional states who pledged only namesake loyalty to the emperor. The frequent wars of succession, invasion by foreign and neighboring rulers like nadir shah who sacked Delhi and went off with Kohinoor Diamond, the peacock throne and three year worth of revenue resulted in destabilization of the country.

- Successor States Hyderabad, Bengal and Awadh were the three cases where provincial governors under the Mughals set up independent states.

- The second group of regional states were the 'new states' or 'insurgent states' set up by rebels against the Mughals-the Marathas, Sikhs, Jats and Afghans.

- The independent states like Mysore, the Rajput states and Kerala fall in this category.

- The third battle of Panipat proved significant as British significantly gained with Maratha defeat and British got a tremendous opportunity to expand their influence in

Bengal and India.

- Aurangzeb died in 1707 and almost instantly the Mughal empire started breaking up. This break up was followed by establishment of large number of independent and semi independent or autonomous states of three types as follows: Warrior States: These were formed by the Sikhs, Jats and Marathas in course of their rebellion against the Mughals.

- Local Kingdoms: Such as Rajput states, Mysore, Travancore etc.

- He followed a conciliatory and liberal policy towards Jats, Satnamis, Bundelas, Sikhs and Rajputs. When he died in 1712 a war of succession broke out among his four sons and Jahandar shah emerged victorious.

- He became the emperor with the help of an Iranian courtier named Zulfikar Khan who was appointed as the wazir of the Mughal empire. Soon, he was murdered by his nephew Farrukhsiyar who became the emperor with the help of the Syed brothers from Meerut including the elder brother Abdullah khan and younger Hussain Ali. In 1719 Farrukhsiyar was murdered by the Syed brothers when he refused to be like a puppet ruler.

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