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The life history of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan/Jehan tells us much about the great ruler. Check out Shahjahan's biography.

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Shah Jahan

Shah Jahan, also known as Shahbuddin Mohammed Shah Jahan, was a Mughal Emperor who ruled in the Indian Subcontinent from 1628 to 1658. He was the fifth Mughal ruler, after Babur, Humayun, Akbar and Jahangir. Shah Jahan succeeded the throne after revolting against his father, Jahangir. The period of Shah Jahan's rule in India is regarded as the golden age of Indian architecture. He is credited with constructing numerous beautiful monuments throughout the landscape of India. However, the most brilliant monument is the 'Taj Mahal' of Agra, which he built in the memory of his beloved wife, Mumtaz Mahal.

The exquisite "Peacock Throne", which he got built for himself, is believed to be worth millions of dollars by modern estimates. Shah Jahan is also the founder of the modern city of Delhi. During that time, the city was known as Shahjahanabad. Get more information on the biography as well as life history of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan:

Early Life

Shah Jahan was born as Prince Khurram on 5th January 1592, to Emperor Jahangir and his second wife, Jagat Gosini (a Rajput Princess). In 1611, his father married Nur Jehan, the widowed daughter of a Persian immigrant and the aunt of Arjumand Banu Begum. Prince Khurram married Arjumand Banu Begum in May 1612. She was given the name of Mumtaz Mahal (Ornament of the Palace) when Prince Khurram acceded the throne and became Shah Jahan. However, the succession was not simple and easy. Infact, a bloody fight with his father ensued before the accession.

In 1627, when Jahangir died, Prince Khurram succeeded the Mughal throne as Shah Jahan (meaning the King of the World). He was also given the title of the 'Lord of the Auspicious Conjunctions', in reference to his pride in his Timurid roots. Throughout the earlier military campaigns of Shah Jahan as well as his rebellion against Jahangir, Mumtaz accompanied him everywhere with his entourage.

Reign

Throughout his reign, Shah Jahan constantly strived towards enlarging his empire. The first violence that erupted after his accession to the throne came from Jujhar Singh, son of the Bundela chief, Bir Singh Deo. In 1628, Shah Jahan faced another major revolt by Khan Jahan Lodi. He had united with the ruler of Ahmednagar and came out in open rebellion against the emperor. The aggression by Khan Jahan came to an end by the year 1660, when he surrendered and died near the fort of Kalanjar.

After Shah Jahan became emperor, the Deccan policy of the Mughals underwent a major change. This led to a suspicion of their alliance with the Shia rulers of Persia. However, with the death of Malik Ambar, the problem got sorted out. In 1631, the Mughal army led by Shah Jahan laid a failed siege on Bijapur. However in 1633, they managed to win the fort of Daulatabad. The chief aggressions of the reign of Shahjahan were - the destruction of the Ahmadnagar kingdom (1636), the loss of Kandahar to the Persians (1653) and a second war against the Deccan princes (1655).

Construction of Taj Mahal

One of the most significant incidents in the life of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan was the construction of Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. His wife Mumtaz Mahal died while giving birth to their fourteenth child. Shah Jahan decided to build world's most beautiful monument in the memory of his beloved wife. The monument, which is known as the 'Taj Mahal', contains the tombs of both Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan. Taj Mahal, also known as the Epitome of Love, is exceptionally beautiful and has become one of the most visited tourist destinations of India. People from different parts of the world come to India to see this amazing edifice in white.

Other Structures Constructed by Shah Jahan

The following monuments were also constructed by Shah Jahan during his rule:

- Red Fort or Lal Quila (Delhi)
- Agra Fort (Partly)
- Jama Masjid (Delhi)
- Moti Masjid or Pearl Mosque (Lahore)
- Shalimar Gardens (Lahore)
- Sections of the Lahore Fort (Lahore)
- Jahangir Mausoleum
- Takht-e-Taus
- Shahjahan Mosque (Thatta)

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Death of a Great Emperor

Shah Jahan fell seriously ill in September 1657. Seeking this as an opportunity, one of his sons, Aurangzeb, took over the throne and imprisoned him in the citadel of Agra. Shah Jahan left this world, in confinement, in the year 1666.

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