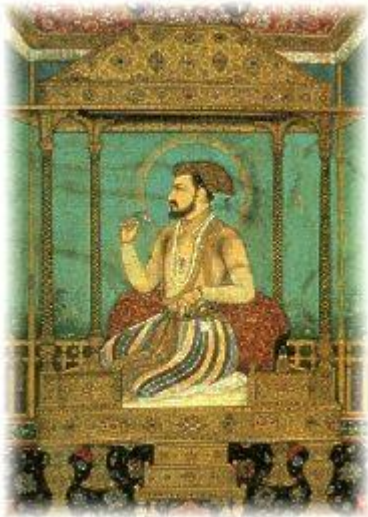


UNIT 81 – UPSC - Death of Shah Jahan

India's History : Medieval India : Death of Shah Jahan - 1666

The Emperor on Death Bed



SHAH JAHAN, Mogul emperor of Delhi, the fifth of the dynasty. After revolting against his father Jahangir, as the latter had revolted against Akbar, he succeeded to the throne on his father's death in 1627. It was during his reign that the Mogul power attained its greatest prosperity. The chief events of his reign were the destruction of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar (1636), the loss of Kandahar to the Persians (1653), and a second war against the Deccan princes (1655). In 1658 he fell ill, and was confined by his son Aurangzeb in the citadel of Agra until his death in 1666.

Shah Jahan's life, which began in 1592 with happy ceremonies, wouldn't have ended in a more tragic way. He spent the last eight years of his life sequestered in a part of the Agra fort; only Jahanara, his sincere daughter was allowed to visit him. Yet His only consolation was that from his prison window, he could see his unique architectural work Taj Mahal, though he couldn't visit.



During those eight years, Shah Jahan's soul had always yearned for visiting Taj Mahal where his beloved wife lay buried and it only rested when he followed her and was at last buried beside her.



The period of his reign was the golden age of Indian architecture. Shah Jahan erected many splendid monuments, the most famous of which is the Taj Mahal at Agra, built as a tomb for his wife Mumtaz Mahal; while the Pearl Mosque at Agra and the palace and great mosque at Delhi also commemorate him. The celebrated Peacock Throne, said to have been worth 6,000,000 also dates from his reign; and he was the founder of the modern city of Delhi, the native name of which is Shahjahanabad.