

UNIT 84 – UPSC -Aurangzeb - The viceroy of Deccan

India's History : Medieval India : Aurangzeb appointed Viceroy of Deccan - 1636

Aurangzeb



Aurangzeb was the greatest king among the Mughals and ruled over the largest territory of any ruler in Indian history. His empire extended from Kabul in present Afghanistan to areas in South India bordering Madurai in present Tamil Nadu State. He was a kind-hearted man and led a simple life. He was a just ruler and forgave his enemies. He abolished all non-Islamic practices at his court; abolished Ilahi calendar introduced by Akbar and reinstated Islamic lunar calendar. He enforced laws against gambling and drinking. He abolished taxes on commodities and inland transport duties. He forbade the practice of Emperor being weighed in gold and silver on birthdays. Aurangzeb did not draw salary from state treasury but earned his own living by selling caps he sewed and selling copies of the Quran he copied by hand.

Birth and Education

Mohyuddin Muhammad Aurangzeb was born on October 24, 1618 CE at Dohad in the Bombay Presidency. He was the third son of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal. Aurangzeb was nine years old when his father became Emperor of India. From that time on, his regular education began. He got good education in religion as well as the ordinary education of that time. He memorized the whole Quran and was taught to write in a beautiful handwriting. He also developed a taste for poetry and could make verses. He also learned the Arabic language.

Military Training

His military training began by age 16. When Aurangzeb was seventeen, he was made the Viceroy of Deccan. Aurangzeb worked well as the Viceroy of Deccan. This didn't

still bring peace to his mind. He wanted a purpose of life. After some thought, he turned to the Quran as a light for his life.

Life as a Faqir

In May 1644 CE, he gave up his duties as the Viceroy of Deccan and left to live in the wild region of Western Ghats. Here he lived for several months as a Faqir (poor, simple man). He took up a life of prayer and self-disciplined life.

Anger of his Father

This action of Aurangzeb brought great anger to his father, the Emperor. He was so shocked that his son became a Faqir that he stopped all his allowances and took his estates. This didn't bother Aurangzeb at first. After some thought though, Aurangzeb decided to go back to his family. For some months, Aurangzeb lived in Agra with disgrace. His mother and sisters felt sorry for him but the Emperors displeasure was hard to go.

Regaining his Rank

In November 1644 CE, his sister, Jahan Ara, who was the eldest and best-loved daughter of the Emperor, got a terrible burn and when she recovered, the Emperor, who was so happy, could not refuse her anything. At her request, Aurangzeb was raised back to his rank. The prince was again the Viceroy of Deccan.

