

## UNIT 86 – UPSC - Shah Jahan revolts against Jahangir

India's History : Medieval India : Shah Jahan revolts against Jahangir - 1623

### The History



Jahangir was crowned emperor by his father when the latter had been on his deathbed in 1605. He had to face the usual share of revolts and rebellions. The very first one being from prince Khusro, in which he was in good company ♦ for Khusro revolted when Jahangir's son, Shah Jahan, came to the throne as well. The single most important person in Jahangir's life was his wife, the enigmatic Nur Jahan, whom he married in 1611.

Nur Jahan was the real power behind Jahangir. She was a great queen, and a woman of amazing gifts. She was quite a beauty and set many trends in designs of clothes, textiles and jewellery. The attar (perfume) of roses was just one of this great lady's innovations. She was also a very capable and shrewd administrator. No detail, however small, escaped the queen's attention. Her ability to keep a cool head was almost legendary and she amazed even battle-hardy generals with her calm and poise in the middle of crisis. She has been accused of nepotism and of giving rise to a class of nobility which composed entirely of her kith and kin, but that she was entirely in control is clear from the fact that she rebuked even her brother when she thought so fit. Jahangir often remarked: "I have sold my kingdom to my beloved queen for a cup of wine and a bowl of soup."

However, Nur Jahan was not without failings and her biggest was ambition, not only for herself but for her child ♦ a daughter from earlier marriage. She tried her best to keep the king and the rightful heir Shah Jahan separated and to make her daughter's husband the king. However, this was one project that Nur Jahan could not complete with success.

### The Revolt

Jahangir was not a mere figurehead in his kingdom. He led his armies into battle a number of times and extended the frontiers of his empire further down in the Deccan,

although he lost Kandhar. This loss, however, was not his fault but that of the bitter in-fighting between Shah Jahan and his stepmother. Nur Jahan ordered Shah Jahan to move in battle against a rebellion there, but the prince, suspicious of her motives, refused and revolted against Jahangir instead. The emperor got so occupied with his family affairs that he simply forgot about winning Kandhar back, even though it would have been a matter of just a few days siege.

Things became so bad that Jahangir had to resort to the extreme measure of kidnapping his own grandchildren away to Kashmir with him to stop his son. Despite all this however Shah Jahan, being a huge favorite with the nobility, safely ascended the throne in 1627, when Jahangir died.

