

Shah Shujaa: The Mughal Fugitive Prince of Mrauk-U.

House: of Babur

Dynasty: Timurid/Mughal

Father: Shah Jahan

Mother: Mumtaz Mahal

Religion: Sunni Islam

Compiled By;
Mohammed Q Abdul Karim 29th April- 2023 - San Francisco



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I. Introduction

Shah Shuja, a distinguished Mughal prince, was the second son of Emperor Shah Jahan and his chief consort Mumtaz Mahal. Born in 1616, his life was filled with political intrigue, military campaigns, and cultural patronage. As a key figure in the Mughal Empire, Shah Shuja's story offers a unique lens through which to examine the political and cultural landscape of the mid-17th century Mughal era. His journey from royal prince to a contender for the throne and eventually to a life in exile provides a multifaceted perspective on the complexities and challenges of power dynamics within the empire.

The importance of Shah Shuja in the Mughal Empire lies not only in his direct involvement in the succession struggle following Shah Jahan's illness but also in his contributions to art, literature, and architecture. As a patron, Shah Shuja played a vital role in promoting various artistic expressions, fostering a thriving cultural environment in the regions under his administration. This patronage, along with his political and military endeavors, cemented Shah Shuja's legacy as a significant figure in the history of the Mughal Empire.

The aim of this paper is to provide a comprehensive account of Shah Shuja's life, examining his background, role in the Mughal Empire, struggle for succession, life in exile, and cultural contributions. Through the exploration of these various aspects, this paper seeks to illuminate the multifaceted nature of Shah Shuja's life and legacy, shedding light on the broader historical context of the Mughal era.

The structure of the paper is as follows:

Section I will focus on Shah Shuja's background and early life, highlighting the historical context of the Mughal Empire during his time and his early upbringing.

Section II will explore Shah Shuja's role in the Mughal Empire, delving into his political influence, administration, and military campaigns.

Section III will examine the struggle for succession, recounting the War of Succession and Shah Shuja's eventual defeat and exile.

Section IV will discuss Shah Shuja's life in exile and the circumstances surrounding his death. Finally,

Section V will consider Shah Shuja's cultural contributions, focusing on his patronage of art, architecture, literature, and poetry.

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Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb, and Murad Bakhsh mounted on horses in a landscape with mountains and a village in the background c. 1637 by “Balchand”

II. Background and Early Life

A. Historical context of the Mughal Empire during Shah Shuja's time

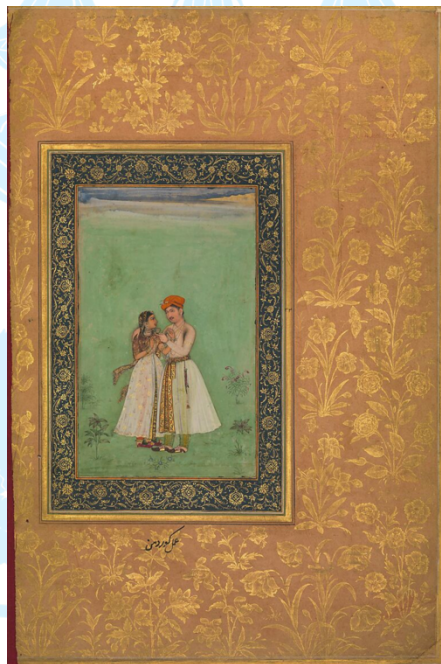
Shah Shuja was born into the Mughal Empire during a period of great prosperity and cultural achievement. The empire, founded by Babur in 1526, had expanded its territory and influence under the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan, Shah Shuja's father. Shah Jahan's rule (1628-1658) Under Shah Jahan's rule, the Mughal Empire continued to maintain a strong military presence in the Mughal subcontinent, while also engaging in trade and diplomatic relations with neighboring kingdoms and European powers. The empire was a hub of cultural

exchange and intellectual development, bringing together scholars, poets, and artists from various regions and backgrounds.

Prosperity: The empire was economically prosperous, with a strong agricultural base and flourishing trade. Shah Jahan's rule was marked by increased revenue and a stable economy.

Art and architecture: Shah Jahan's reign are known for its architectural achievements, including the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, and the Jama Masjid. Art and culture flourished under his patronage, and the Mughal Empire became renowned for its fine arts, including painting, textiles, and jewelry.

1. **Military successes:** Shah Jahan expanded the Mughal Empire's territories through successful military campaigns. He consolidated Mughal rule in the Indian subcontinent and maintained relative peace and stability throughout the empire. **Centralized administration:** Shah Jahan strengthened the empire's centralized administration, which enabled efficient governance and resource management.



"Shah Shuja with a Beloved or his first wife", Folio from the Shah Jahan Album

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B: Official Positions and Title

As a son of the Mughal Emperor, **Shah Shuja** received a privileged upbringing, with access to the best education available at the time. His early education focused on subjects such as religion, history, philosophy, languages, and the arts. This comprehensive education not only equipped him with the knowledge and skills necessary for ruling, but also fostered an appreciation for cultural achievements, which would later manifest in his patronage of the arts.

Shah Shuja's upbringing in the Mughal court exposed him to the intricacies of politics and diplomacy from a young age. As a teenager, he was given responsibilities in the administration of various provinces, allowing him to develop his skills in governance and management. During this time, Shah Shuja formed close relationships with his siblings, particularly his elder brother Dara Shikoh, who was considered the favorite for succession. These familial ties, however, would later be tested during the tumultuous struggle for the Mughal throne.

As **Shah Shuja** grew older, his involvement in the Mughal Empire's administration and military campaigns increased. He demonstrated his competence as a military commander and a skilled diplomat, helping to expand and maintain the territories under Mughal control. These experiences laid the foundation for his eventual participation in the War of Succession, as he sought to secure the Mughal throne for himself.

- 28th August 1633, Appointed to Mansab of 10,000 zat and 5,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- 20th March 1636, promoted to, 11,000 Zat (Infantry) and 6,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- 24th August 1637, promoted to, 12,000 Zat (Infantry) 7,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- 16th March 1638, promoted to, 14,000 Zat (Infantry) 8,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- 22nd August 1638, promoted to, 15,000 Zat (Infantry) and 9,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- 5th March 1639, promoted to, 16,000 Zat (Infantry) and 10,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- 21st January 1642, promoted to 20,000 Zat (Infantry) and 15,000 Sowar (Cavalry)
- Subadar of Bengal and Bihar 1641-1657, and of Orissa from 25th July 1648.
- Granted the title of **Shah Shuja' Bahadur**, by his father.

Proclaimed as Emperor with the style of Abu'l Fauz Nasir ud-din Muhammad Timur III Iskandar II Sahib-i-Qiran-i-Sani Shah Shuja' Padishah Ghazi, at Rajmahal, Bengal, November 1657. Signed a treaty with his elder brother Dara,

which left him in control of Bengal, Orissa and a large part of Bihar, 17th May 1658. After the death of his elder brother Dara Shikoh and defeated by his younger brother forces he fled to Arakan, 12th May 1660.

C) Family & lineage:

Shah Shuja and was born in Ajmer on June 23, 1616. He was the second son of Emperor Shah Jahan and his chief consort, Mumtaz Mahal, who is best remembered for being the inspiration behind the Taj Mahal.

In 1633, Shah Shuja was married to his first wife, the daughter of the Sultan of Kashgar. Over the years, he would go on to marry several other women, as was customary for Mughal royalty. These marriages were often strategic alliances that helped secure political support and maintain peace among various factions within the empire.



1627 - 1658 H.M. Al-Sultan al-'Azam wal Khaqan al-Mukarram, Abu'l-Muzaffar Shihab ud-din Muhammad, Sahib-i-Qiran-i-Sani, Shah Jahan I Padishah Ghazi Zillu'llah [Firdaus-Ashiyani], Emperor of Great Sub content (Hindustan)

1) Married first at Agra, 12th December 1609, Kandahari Begum Sahiba (b. at Kandahar, before 1594; bur. Kandahari Bagh, Agra), previously Kandahari Mahal, elder daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza Safawi, by whom he had issue, one daughter.

2) Married second at Delhi, 10th May 1612, H.M. Malika-i-Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal cre. 14th February 1610) Nawab Mahd-i- 'Aliya Begum, Arjumand Banu Qudsia Begum Sahiba (b. 1593; d. in childbirth at Burhanpur, 17th July 1631 bur. Taj Mahal, Agra), daughter of H.H. Waqil-i-Mutlaq, Yamin ud-Daula, Nawab Abu'l-Hasan Asaf Khan Bahadur, Khan-i-Khanan, Chief Minister and C-in-C under Emperor Jahangir having had issue, six sons and twelve daughters: Married other women...See Shahjahan in Royal Timurid Decedents.

3) Padshahzada-i-Buzurg Martaba, Jalal ul-Kadir, Sultan Muhammad Dara Shikoh, Shah-i-Buland Iqbal. b. 30th March 1615 (s/o Mumtaz Mahal).



Sultan Shah Shuja - (27 April 1637) – Akbarabad – Aged 21-Year

Mughal Library – 2023-MQB

1- Sultan Muhammad Shah Shuja' Bahadur. b. at Ajmer, 23rd June 1616, son of Empress Mumtaz Mahal, educ. privately. He was killed by pursuers dispatched by King Sandathudamma, after escaping from the capital, in the jungles near Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), Arakan, 7th February 1661, having had issue, three sons and four daughters:

(A) Married first at Patna, 5th March 1633, **Nawab Bilqis Begum Sahiba (d. 1634)**, daughter of Nawab 'Iffat Khan (Sultan Rustam Mirza).



Wedding Procession of Shah Shuja- accompanied with his Young Brothers Aurangzib and Murad



Nawab 'Iffat Khan (Sultan Rustam Mirza) Mughal Library - MQB

Nawab 'Iffat Khan Born at Kandahar, 1565. Governor of Zamindawar and Garmsir 1578-1589. Disputed control over Sistan and Zamindawar with his elder brother, Muzaffar Husain. Surrendered his rights to the government to Emperor Akbar I of India, 1594. Entered the Mughal service and appointed to an Imperial Mansab of 5,000 Zat and 150 Sowar 1594, promoted to 5,000 Zat and 500 Sowar. In 1613, he was promoted to 5,000 Zat and 1,000 Sowar. In 25/3/1617, he was promoted to 5,000 Zat and 1,500 Sowar. In 1618, he was promoted to 6,000 Zat and 6,000 Sowar. Subadar of Patna 1611-1613, Thatta 1613-1615, Kandahar 1617-1618, Allahabad

1622-1626, and Bihar 1626-1627. Received Multan in jagir together with several parganas in Baluchistan 1594, exchanged for Chittoor 1596, and granted Pathankot 1597, exchanged for Raisen in 1599. A poet under the nom de plume of 'Fidai'. He died at Agra, India, about 1st April 1642. He was son of Sultan Husain Mirza. Governor of Sistan 1555-1557, Kandahar 1557-1576, Zamindawar and Garmsir 1558-1566 Who was son of Prince (Shahzada) 'Abu'l Fath Sultan Muiz ud-din Bahram Mirza , Son of H.M. 'Abu'l Muzaffar Ismail Shah I, Shahanshah of Persia.

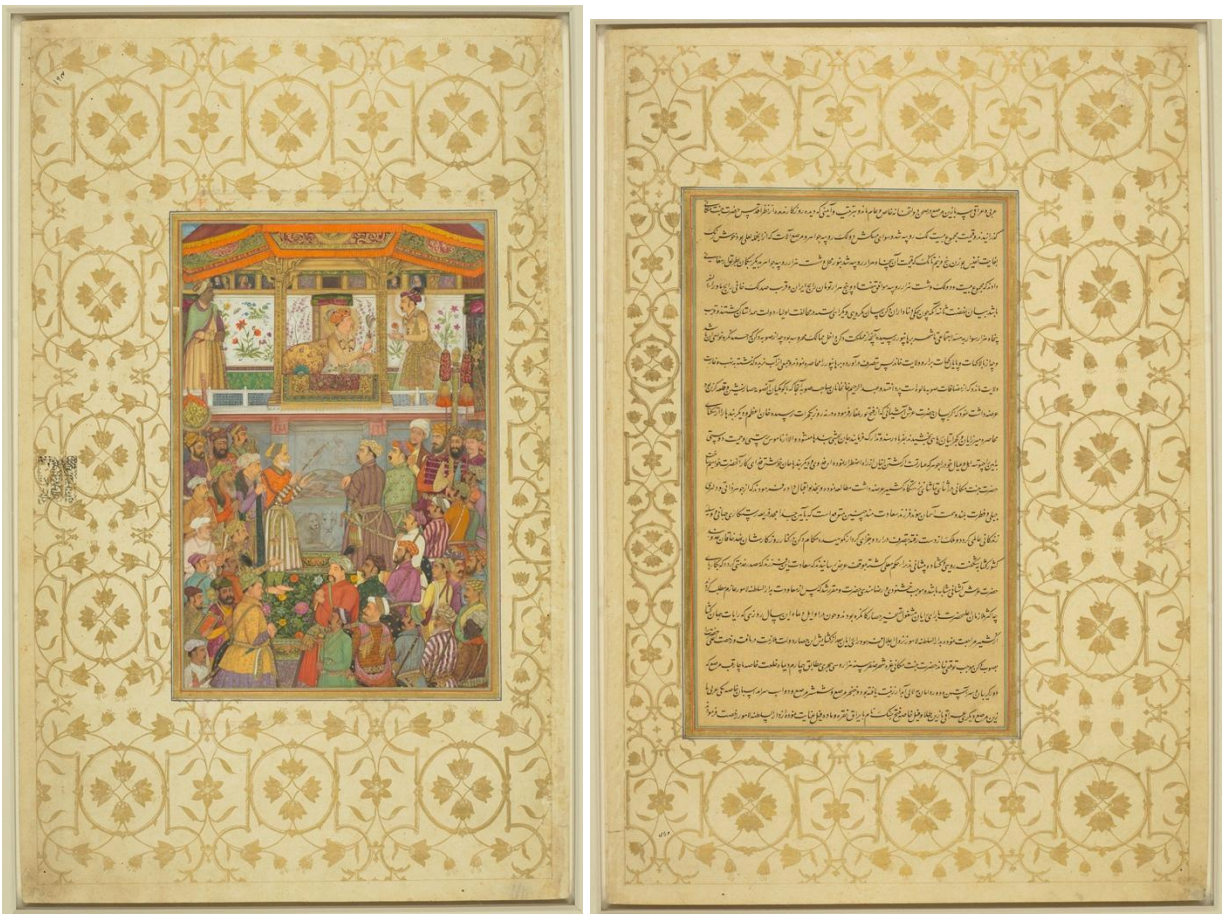
(B) Married second in Bengal, after 1642, **Nawab Piyari Banu Begum Sahiba** (taken into the harem of King Sandathudamma of Arakan, February 1661, and later committed suicide by dashing her head against a stone, at Mrohaung, ca 25th July 1663), daughter of Nawab '**Azim Khan** (Mir Muhammad Baqir), sometime mansabdar of 5,000 and Subadar of Allahabad, Gujarat, Bengal, Bihar, Kashmir and Jaunpur.

Azam Khan served as Subahdar of Bengal from 1632 to 1635 (During Shah Jahan). He was also known as Iradat Khan. Azam Khan's real name was Mir Muhammad Baqir He was originally from Iraq and came to Mughal Subcontinent during the reign of Jahangir. Jahangir appointed him as "Khan-i-Saman". Then, he was appointed as Subahdar of Kashmir. Later, he was appointed as Mir Bakhshi too. Shahjahan honored him with the title "Azam Khan" and he appointed him as "Important Minister". When Azam Khan was the Governor of Bengal, the English had warm relation with the Mughals. During his ruling time Bengal faced chaotic administrative and military situation because, Assamese King Pratap Singh made sporadic raids in Kamarpur, West Bengal today. For this, he was removed from his post and Islam Khan II was appointed as Subahdar of Bengal.



Azam Khan's Image officially mentioned in the court of Jahangir

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This painting is likely to depict a durbar ceremony held on 12 October 1617 in the hall of public audience of the palace at Mandu in Malwa. It was during this ceremony that the Emperor Jahangir awarded his then 25-year old son, Prince Khurram, the title Shah-Jahan ('King of the World') following his return from military victories in the Deccan. The painting comes towards the end of the Padshahnama volume accompanying a text describing the Deccan campaigns of Shah-Jahan's ninth regnal year with flashbacks recounting his triumphs there as a prince. Jahangir, seated at a jharokha balcony, presents Shah-Jahan with a jeweled and plumed turban ornament symbolizing the future transmission of power. The heads of both royal figures are surrounded by shamuses to signify the 'divine light' emitted by kings. Painted in grisaille under the jharokha balcony is an allegorical image in three parts which was not part of the architectural decoration: at the center is a globe on top of which stand two mullahs with a lion and an ox lying side by side below. This is a reference to both emperors' projecting themselves as benign universal sovereigns, expressed through their titles Jahangir ('World-Seizer') and Shah-Jahan ('King of the World'). The Iranian Mirza Ghiyas Beg, Jahangir's father-in-law and Shah-Jahan's grandfather gestures towards the mullahs representing spiritual authority. **One holds the imperial sword, and the other an open book that reads 'may the lifetime of the state be perpetually extended'.** Mir Muhammad Baqir, an important minister, gestures to the cow and the lion lying together, symbolizing sulh-e kul, 'universal harmony', under beneficent Mughal rule. This image is adapted from the title page of the Polyglot Bible, where it symbolizes Messianic peace prophesied in the eleventh book of Isaiah, a copy of which was brought to the Mughal court by the Jesuits in 1580. A similar example in another durbar scene depicts two mullahs praying before the Chain of Justice, a real chain of golden bells running from the Agra Fort that could be shaken by anyone seeking redress in order to attract the Emperor's attention.

The figure on the lower left edge of the painting holding a folder and wearing a fashionable Turkish textile of a wavy tiger-stripe design is a self-portrait of the artist. Jahangir and Shah-Jahan's painters almost invariably depicted themselves on the periphery of the image. The inscription on his folder reads 'God is great! Drawn by Payag, brother of Balchand', which may suggest that his brother, the painter Balchand, was the better known of the two when this work was painted. Although active from the 1590s, Payag is celebrated for his later works, particularly his nocturnal and landscape scenes. His color palette is unlike that of any of Shah-Jahan's other artists, mellow tones being used to create an almost dream-like atmosphere in this flashback painting.

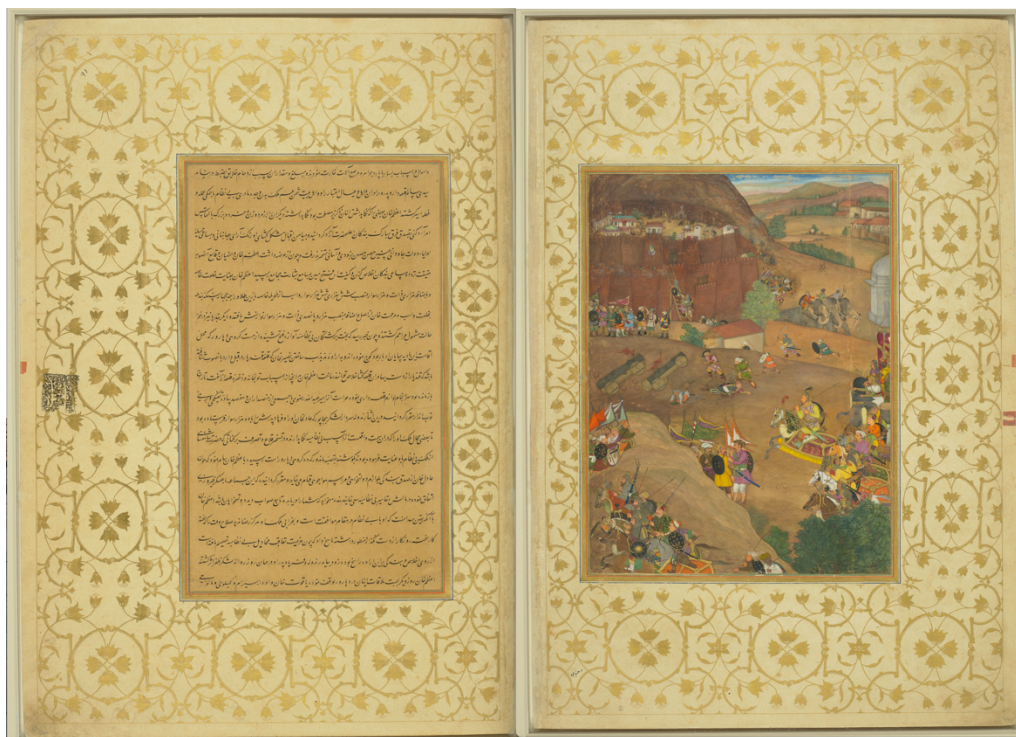
The order of gazes starts from the lowest group of courtiers on the right and travels diagonally across to the slightly higher group opposite on the left then continuously upwards back and forth to the chief eunuch standing on the royal balcony who gazes directly at the Prince. Similarly, the 45-degree angles repeated across the left-hand side of the painting and the strong verticals of the right all direct the eye to the spot-lit head of Shah-Jahan, leaving no doubt as to which of the two rulers this painting was intended to honor most.



Azam Khan captures Fort Dharur in Maharashtra present (January 1631)



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(C) Married third in 1648, a daughter of Raja Gur Sen, Raja of Kishtwar, in the Kashmir hills (she was taken into the harem of King Sandathudamma of Arakan, February 1661).

The Kishtwar state was conquered by Emperor Jahangir. The Raja of Kishtwar greatest source of income was the heavy fines inflicted, especially on wealthy folk, even for trivial offences. The total income of the State amounted to Rs. 100,000. All the revenue from saffron was appropriate to the maintenance of a band of 700 Rajput musketeers.

Below the last Raja Palace.



- i) **Shahzada Sultan Zain ud-din Muhammad Mirza**. b. at Rajmahal, Bengal, 28th October 1639 son of Piyari Banu Begum, educ. privately. Appointed to an Imperial Mansab of 7,000 zat and 2,000 Sowar 21st January 1656. Commander of his father's forces 1658-1659. Imprisoned by King Sandathudamma after the murder of his father on 7th February 1661, married at Patna, February 1659, a daughter of Khanlar, known by Qaramanlu, migrated to Mughal Sub-Continent around the end of Emperor Jahangir's reign. His father named Zulfiqar Khan, was Bigler Beige of Shrivren during the reign of the Safavid king Shah Abbas I. However, he was executed around 1600 by Shah Abbas, and the family fell out of favor. We in Mughal Library believe he was a Kurdish origin.



Sultan Zain ud-din Muhammad Mirza – or Shah Shuja in his young age

Zulfiqar Khan Qaramanlu was accepted in the court of emperor Shah Jahan and married the daughter of Sadiq Khan, brother-in-law to Mughal noble Asaf Khan. Asad Khan was married to Mehrunissa, daughter of Asaf Khan. A son named on the grandfather Zulfiqar Khan was born to them in the year 1657. Asad Khan also had a daughter who was married to Khuda Bandah Khan, son of noble Shaista Khan

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Image of Asad Khan was brother of the first wife of Sultan Zain ud-din Muhammad Mirza daughter of Khanlar, known by the title Zulfiqar Khan Qaramanlu. Mughal Library - MQB

- ii) **Shahzada Sultan Buland Akhtar Mirza.** b. at Rajmahal, Bengal, August 1645 (son of the Kishtwar princess), educ. privately. Imprisoned by King Sandathudamma after the murder of his father on 7th February 1661. He was killed (beheaded with a blunt axe) at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), ca 25th July 1663, following an abortive rescue by the Mughal governor Subadar of Bengal Shaista Khan.
- iii) **Shahzada Sultan Zainal 'Abidin Mirza.** b. at Rajmahal, Bengal, 20th December 1645 son of Piyari Banu Begum), educ. privately. Imprisoned by King Sandathudamma after the murder of his father on 7th February 1661, He was killed (beheaded with a blunt axe) at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), ca 25th July 1663, following an abortive rescue by the Mughal governor Subadar of Bengal Shaista Khan.
- iv) Shahzadi Dil Pazir Banu Begum Sahiba. b. 1633 (daughter Bilqis Begum).
- v) Shahzadi Gul Rukh Banu Begum Sahiba (daughter of Piyari Begum). married at Dogachi, Bengal, after 18th June 1659, Shahzada Sultan Muhammad Mirza (b. near Mathura, 19th December 1639; d. in confinement, at Salimgarh Prison, Delhi, 5th December 1676), eldest son of H.M. Al-Sultan al-'Azam wal Khaqan al-Mukarram, Abu'l-Muzaffar Muhi ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur 'Alamgir Padishah Ghazi, Emperor of India, by his wife, Nawab Bai Begum Sahiba, daughter of the Raja Chatar Shena [Taj ud-din Khan], Raja of Rajauri, in Kashmir. She died by suicide, taking poison, at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), ca 25th July 1663.
- vi) **Shahzadi Raushan Ara Begum Sahiba** [Mah Khanan] second wife. She died by suicide, taking poison, at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), ca 25th July 1663.

vii) **Shahzadi Amina Banu Begum Sahiba daughter** of third wife Married at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), July 1663, H.M. The Lord of the Golden House, Sanda Suriya Dharmaraja [Shwenanthakhin Sandathudamma Raza], Emperor of Pegu, King of Arakan, Chittagong, Tandjur, Dianga and other places in Bengal (b. 1627; d. at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), 1684), son of H.M. The Lord of the White Elephant, Sadhu Mangtara (Hsinpyuthakkhin Thadoemongtara), Emperor of Pegu, King of Arakan, Chittagong, Tandjur, Dianga and other places in Bengal, by his wife, the daughter and heiress of uncle, King Narapdigyi. She was allowed to starve to death while presumed pregnant with child, by King Sandathudamma after he had divested her of her father's remaining treasure, at Mrohaung (Mrauk-U), Arakan, in 1666.

3) Sultan Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur, who succeeded as H.M. Al-Sultan al-'Azam wal Khaqan al-Mukarram, Abu'l-Muzaffar Muhi ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur 'Alamgir Padishah Ghazi, Emperor of Mughal Sub-Content son of Mumtaz Mahal.

4) Sultan Jahan Afruz Mirza. Born in 1 Jun 24, 1619 son of. He died. at Burhanpur, February/March 1622. Son of the daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan son of Abdul Rahim Khan-i-Khannan.

5) Sultan Ahmad Bakhsh alias Ummid Bakhsh. b. near Sir hind, 18th December 1619 son of Mumtaz Mahal He died, February/March 1622.

6) A child son of Mumtaz Mahal. born at Mandu, late 1623, but died before being named.

7) Sultan Muhammad Murad Bakhsh Bahadur. Born at the Fort of Rohtas, South Bihar, 9th October 1624 son of Mumtaz Mahal.

8) Sultan Lutfu'llah Mirza. born at Thatta, 4th November 1626 son of Mumtaz Mahal He died at Akbarabad, 14th May 1628.

9) Sultan Daulat Afzal Mirza. Born at Akbarabad, 9th May 1628 son of Mumtaz Mahal. He died. there 13th May 1629.

1) Shahzadi Parhiz Banu Begum Sahiba. born 1610 daughter of Kandahari Begum (Married to Shah Jahan in 1609) daughter of Muzaffar Hussain Mirza the grand-nephew of Emperor Humayun and son-in-law of Emperor Akbar. Kandahari Begum was born a princess of the prominent Safavid dynasty, the ruling dynasty of Iran (Persia) and one of its most significant ruling dynasties. She was the daughter of decreased Persian dignity from the northern mountains at Kandahar, Sultan Muzaffar Husain Mirza Safavi, of the royal house of Persia, who was the son of Sultan Husain Mirza, the son of Bahram Mirza, the son of Shah Ismail I, founder of the Safavid dynasty. He was the ancestor of Shah Abbas I and also cousin to the Persian Emperor.

2) Shahzadi Hur Al-Nisa Begum. Born at Agra, 8 Safar, 1020. Corresponding to Gregorian date Apr 21, 1611 Al-Khamis (Thursday), She Died after 3 year on month. Eldest Child of Mumtaz Mahal.

2) Shahzadi Par Parhiz Banu Begum Sahiba. born at Akbarabad, 22nd August 1611, the daughter of Kandahari Begum. She died at Delhi, November 1675.

3) Shahzadi Jahan Ara Begum Sahiba (Nawab 'Aliya Padishah Begum Sahiba -Sahibat uz-Zamani). born at Ajmer, 1st April 1614 daughter of Mumtaz Mahal, educ. privately. Received Achhrol, Bacchol, Safipura, Dohraha, Farjahara and Panipat in jagir from her father. Granted the titles of Begum Sahib, Padishah Begum Sahiba 1665, and Nawab 'Aliya during her lifetime and given the posthumous title of Sahibat uz-Zamani after her death. Author of "Risala-i-Sahiba", "Munis ul-Arwah", She dead. at Delhi, 16th September 1680 n (bur. there at the Tomb of Jahan Ara Begum, Nizamuddin).

4) Shahzadi ...Begum Sahiba daughter of Chamani Begum. She died from smallpox, 1616.

5) Shahzadi Roshan Ara Begum Sahiba born at Burhanpur, 23rd August 1617 daughter of Mumtaz Mahal educ. privately. She died at Delhi, 24th September 1671 (bur. Roshan Ara Bagh, Sabzi Mandi).

6) Shahzadi Soraya Banu Begum Sahiba. Born on 10th June 1621 daughter of Mumtaz Mahal She died from smallpox, at Akbarabad, 28th April 1628.

7) Shahzadi Hussn Ara Begum Sahiba. Born at Burhanpur, 23th April 1630 daughter of Mumtaz Mahal. She died shortly afterwards.

9) Shahzadi Roshan Bai Begum Sahiba, Shah Begum Sahib born at Burhanpur, 7th June 1631 Not a daughter of Mumtaz Mahal. Some say she was the Instrumental in the murder of her brother, Dara Shikoh, in 1659. Most properly daughter of Kumari Lilavati Baiji Lal Sahiba, daughter of Rao Shri Sakat Singh (Shakti) or known as Bibi Nawab Bai Sahiba. Rao Shri Sakat Singh (Shakti), of Kharwar. born at Phalodi, 29th November 1567 (son of Rani Kapur Deviji), educ. privately. Entered the Mughal service and appointed to an Imperial Mansab of 500 zat, prom. to 1,600 Sowar and 300 Zat March 1605, prom. to 3,000 Zat. Received the jagir of Kharwar in reward for saving Emperor Akbar from drowning. Ancestor of the Thakurs of Raghunathpur, in Kishengarh and the Rao's of Kharwar in Ajmer. He died suddenly (poisoned by Gyan Das Bhatti). Outside the Red Fort, Agra, 30th May 1606.

10) Shahzadi Gauhar Ara Begum Sahiba Born at Burhanpur, 17th July 1631 daughter of Mumtaz Mahal. She died at Delhi, 1706. She was the last child of Mumtaz Mahal and during her birth Mumtaz Mahal passed away.

11) Shahzadi Burhan Ara Banu Begum Sahiba. She died after 1666. Mother other than Mumtaz Mahal

12) Shahzadi Nazar Ara Begum Sahiba. Mother other than Mumtaz Mahal

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The war of succession

The war of succession among Shah Jahan's children refers to the struggle for power that took place among his four sons after Shah Jahan fell ill in 1657. Shah Jahan was the fifth Mughal emperor, who ruled over the Indian subcontinent from 1628 to 1658. His reign was marked by significant cultural, architectural, and military achievements, including the construction of the Taj Mahal.

Shah Jahan had four sons: Dara Shikoh, Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb, and Murad Baksh. As there was no clear rule of succession in the Mughal Empire, the four brothers began to vie for power when their father fell ill.

Dara Shikoh (1615-1659): The eldest son and Shah Jahan's favorite, Dara was a learned and cultured prince who was known for his religious tolerance and patronage of the arts. He was the designated heir to the throne, but his liberal views made him unpopular with the more conservative factions within the court and military.

Shah Shuja (1616-1661): The second son, Shah Shuja was the governor of Bengal and a competent military commander. He declared himself emperor when Shah Jahan fell ill, but he failed to gain much support from the nobility.



Aurangzeb (1618-1707): The third son, Aurangzeb, was a highly capable and ambitious military commander. He was a strict Muslim and believed in a more conservative interpretation of Islam than his brother Dara Shikoh.

Murad Baksh (1624-1661): The youngest son, Murad was the governor of Gujarat and later Malwa. He joined forces with Aurangzeb in the fight for the throne.

The main reasons for the war between Shah Jahan's sons were:

1. Ambition: Each son believed that they were the most suitable candidate for the throne and wanted to ensure their own power and legacy.
2. Lack of a clear succession plan: Since there was no clear rule of primogeniture in the Mughal Empire, the sons were left to compete for the throne, which often resulted in conflict.

3. Deteriorating health of Shah Jahan: Shah Jahan's declining health created a power vacuum and uncertainty, prompting the brothers to act and solidify their claims to the throne.
4. Factions and alliances: The brothers had their own supporters among the Mughal nobility, military, and religious factions. These alliances fueled the conflict and intensified the competition for power.
5. The Mughal and Timurid empires adhered to the principle of "may the capable might rule" as per their ancestral tribal customs. This principle, which emerged from Central Asian, Turkic, and Mongol traditions, prioritized the leadership qualities, personal merit, and martial prowess of an individual over the order of their birth.

Instead of adopting a clear rule of primogeniture, these empires followed the law of appanage, dividing the empire's territories among the ruler's sons. This system aimed to ensure stability within the empire by allocating each son a role in governance, allowing them to demonstrate their capabilities as leaders. However, the principle of "may the capable might rule" often led to conflict, as ambitious sons sought to prove their worth and seize the throne.

The reasons for adhering to this principle in the Mughal and Timurid empires were as follows:

2. Cultural and historical traditions: The principle of "may the capable might rule" emerged from the Central Asian and Mongol predecessors of the Mughal and Timurid empires. These traditions valued the ability to command loyalty from followers and exhibit martial prowess over the mere order of birth for succession.
3. Ensuring competent rulers: By emphasizing the leadership qualities of a ruler, rather than automatically passing the throne to the eldest son, this principle sought to ensure that the most qualified and capable candidate would ascend to power.
4. Maintaining stability: Theoretically, the system of appanages aimed to maintain stability within the empire by providing each son with a role in governance. However, as noted earlier, the principle of "may the capable might rule" often resulted in conflict and power struggles.
5. In conclusion, the Mughal and Timurid empires followed the principle of "may the capable might rule" based on their ancestral tribal customs. While this approach was intended to ensure the competence of rulers and maintain stability, it often led to conflict and power struggles among the sons of the ruler, as seen in the case of Shah Jahan's sons.

The struggle for power and succession among Shah Jahan's sons ultimately led to the war between the brothers. The war weakened the Mughal Empire, setting the stage for its eventual decline in the following decades.



While there isn't a specific list of individuals who fueled the war among Shah Jahan's sons, it is evident that various factions within the Mughal Empire played a significant role in intensifying the conflict. These factions supported different princes based on their interests, ambitions, and alignments with the princes' ideologies and policies.

1. Nobles and courtiers: The Mughal Empire's nobility and courtiers had a vested interest in the outcome of the succession struggle. They often supported the prince they believed would best serve their interests, provide them with positions of power, or align with their personal beliefs. Individual nobles and courtiers might have switched allegiances based on the shifting power dynamics during the conflict.
2. Military commanders and soldiers: Each of the princes had their own military supporters who fought on their behalf during the war. These military commanders and soldiers were often loyal to their respective prince and played a crucial role in the conflict.
3. Religious factions: The Mughal Empire was diverse in terms of religion, with various religious factions holding influence. Dara Shikoh's liberal and inclusive religious policies earned him the support of many Hindus and Sufis and Shia, while Sunni Muslim factions were more inclined to support Aurangzeb, who was a strict adherent to Islamic law.

Although specific names of individuals who fueled the war are not readily available, it is clear that the conflict was driven by the ambitions, loyalties, and interests of various factions within the Mughal Empire. The interplay of these factions and their support for different princes played a significant role in intensifying the war of succession.

The Showdown:

Aurangzeb and Shah Shuja's struggle for power was marked by a series of battles that took place during the Mughal War of Succession. The main battles between them were the Battle of Bahadurpur and the Battle of Khajwa. Here is a detailed description of these two battles:

1) Battle of Bahadurpur (1658):

In 1658, after Shah Jahan fell ill, Shah Shuja declared himself the emperor in Bengal. Meanwhile, Aurangzeb and his younger brother Murad Baksh joined forces to challenge Dara Shikoh, who was Shah Jahan's designated heir. After defeating Dara Shikoh at the Battle of Samugarh, Aurangzeb turned his attention to Shah Shuja.

The Battle of Bahadurpur took place near the city of Bahadurpur in Bihar. Shah Shuja, with his forces, tried to capture the region and strengthen his claim to the Mughal throne. Aurangzeb, sensing the threat from his brother, sent his general, Mir Jumla, to confront Shah Shuja's forces. Mir Jumla's forces, though outnumbered, managed to outmaneuver and defeat Shah Shuja's army.

As a result of this defeat, Shah Shuja had to retreat to Bengal. The Battle of Bahadurpur was a significant setback for Shah Shuja in his quest for the Mughal throne, as it weakened his position and allowed Aurangzeb to focus on securing his rule over northern India.



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Battle of Khajwa (1659):

After the defeat at Bahadurpur, Shah Shuja regrouped his forces and attempted to make a comeback by attacking Aurangzeb's territories. The decisive battle between Shah Shuja and Aurangzeb took place at Khajwa (also spelled Khajuha), near Fatehpur in present-day Uttar Pradesh.

Aurangzeb, having learned of Shah Shuja's movements, marched towards Khajwa with his army, which was led by the experienced generals Mir Jumla and Shaista Khan. The two armies met at Khajwa in January 1659. Aurangzeb's forces, although smaller in number, were better trained and equipped.

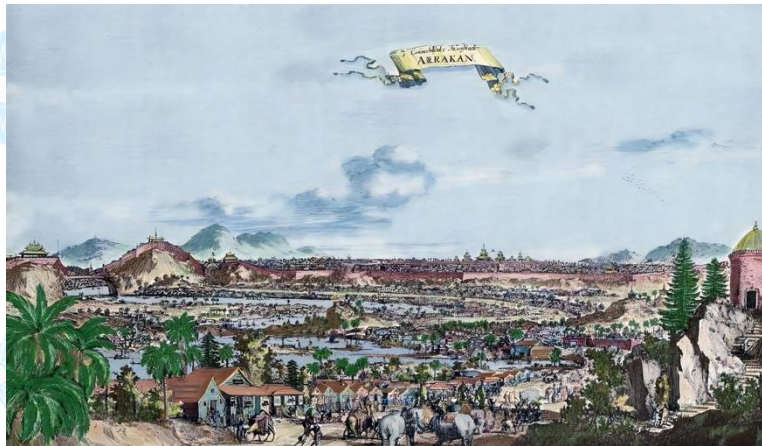
The battle was fierce, and both sides suffered heavy casualties. However, Aurangzeb's forces ultimately emerged victorious. The outcome of the Battle of Khajwa effectively ended Shah Shuja's challenge to Aurangzeb's rule. Shah Shuja fled eastward to Arakan (present-day Rakhine State, Myanmar).

fact remains; in 1660, the fleeing Shah Shuja sought refuge with King Sanda Thudhamma, the King of Arakan, known as "The Pirate King."

Leaving Dhaka, to which he had fled as the long-time ruler, he took ship to Chittagong, then held by the Arakanese, and, from there, set out overland to reach Mrohaung, the court of the King, south of the Naf River.

The Death Trap and Shah Shuja's Tragic End in Arakan

In late May 1660, Shah Shuja and his entourage, including his vast court and family, left Chittagong in a grand procession. It is said that the caravan included 1,000 palanquins to carry the ladies of his court. The journey took them along the road to Cox's Bazar and Teknaf, which is still referred to as the "Shuja Road" by some. The area behind Kolatoli Beach in present-day Cox's Bazar became known as "Palongki Beach," as it was the site where the thousand palanquins were said to have encamped.



Shuja and his followers reached Arakan, present-day Rakhine State in Myanmar, on August 26, 1660. They were warmly received in the capital, Mrauk U, by the influential Arakanese King Sanda Thudhamma. The king had agreed to provide ships for Shuja and his family to travel to Mecca, where the prince intended to spend his remaining years. The Mughal royals brought with them an enormous amount of wealth, including six camel-loads of gold and jewels, which astounded the people of Arakan.

After eight months, King Sanda Thudhamma had yet to provide the promised ships and continued to make excuses. Eventually, he demanded to marry Shuja's daughter, which the prince vehemently refused. In response, Sanda Thudhamma ordered the Mughals to leave within three days. When they were unable to move and denied provisions in the bazaars, Shuja decided to try to overthrow the king. With the support of the local Muslim population and around 200 soldiers, he believed he had a good chance of success.

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Unfortunately for Shuja, Sanda Thudhamma received advance notice of the coup attempt. In desperation, Shuja set the city ablaze, hoping to escape amidst the chaos. While most of his entourage was captured, Shuja initially fled into the jungle but was later apprehended and executed.

In the shadows of deceit and treachery, a tragic tale unfolded in the once-mighty kingdom of Arakan. As the Mughal prince Shah Shuja and his family sought refuge from the relentless pursuit of Aurangzeb, they found themselves in the clutches of the cunning Arakanese King Sanda Thudhamma. The Mughals, unaware of the impending doom that awaited them, placed their trust in a ruler who would ultimately betray them.

King Sanda Thudhamma, consumed by greed and blinded by ambition, sought to marry Shah Shuja's daughter. But when the prince, adhering to the dignity and honor of his noble lineage, refused the king's proposal, a dark veil of vengeance descended upon the entire Mughal family.

The king, fearing another coup attempt, ordered the execution of Shah Shuja's sons. Their lives, once filled with promise and hope, were brutally snuffed out, leaving behind a haunting void. As the cold winds whispered the names of the fallen princes, the heartache of the Mughal family grew, only to be met with further cruelty.

In an act of unimaginable ruthlessness, King Sanda Thudhamma commanded the slow and agonizing starvation of Shah Shuja's daughters, including the pregnant eldest princess. The young women, whose lives had been defined by their royal status and privileges, now found themselves entangled in a cruel web of torment, as hunger gnawed at their frail bodies.

The once-luminous eyes of the princesses, filled with dreams of a brighter future, grew dim as they withered away under the merciless hand of the Arakanese king. Their anguished cries echoed through the palace halls, a somber reminder of the injustice and suffering that had befallen them.

The tragic demise of Shah Shuja's family serves as a poignant testament to the fragile nature of human life and the dark depths of human cruelty. As the pages of history turn,

their story continues to evoke a deep sense of sorrow and empathy, reminding us of the pain and heartache that can result from the insatiable hunger for power and control.

The exact number of Shah Shuja's family members and servants killed during their time in Arakan is not well-documented, but we do know that several key family members perished due to the brutal actions of King Sanda Thudhamma.

Shah Shuja himself was executed after his failed coup attempt against the Arakanese king.

Sanda Thudhamma seized Shuja's riches and added the Mughal princesses to his harem. He married the eldest princess, an event that inspired songs and poetry. The next year, however, fearing another coup, Sanda Thudhamma ordered the execution of family.

His sons, at least three of them, were executed. Shah Shuja's wives and four daughters suffered a cruel fate, as they were starved to death. It is known that the eldest daughter was pregnant at the time of her death.

In addition to these immediate family members, it is likely that numerous servants and members of Shah Shuja's entourage met tragic ends as well. Some might have been killed during the coup attempt, while others may have faced execution or other forms of punishment under the orders of King Sanda Thudhamma.

While some claims suggest that Shah Shuja managed to escape from Arakan to Tripura and then to Manipur, where he eventually vanished from history, the majority of records indicate that he met his tragic end in Arakan. The fate of the enormous wealth Shuja brought with him remains a mystery, sparking speculation that it may still be hidden in the caves and hills of present-day Bangladesh, near the Naf River or the hills behind the so-called "Bangladesh Riviera."

Intriguingly, there is a grave attributed to Shah Shuja in Dharema, a small town in the Sargodha district of Punjab, Pakistan, about 10 kilometers from Sargodha city on Shahpur road. The grave is located inside the mausoleum of a saint, Mian Habib Sultan Nangiana, who died in 1088 AH, corresponding to 1677 AD. The mausoleum is situated at 32° 9'19.97"N, 72°35'37.31"E.

While this grave has attracted the attention of many history enthusiasts, the accuracy of the claim that it belongs to Shah Shuja is uncertain. The grave's existence adds another layer of mystery to the already enigmatic story of Shah Shuja, his final days, and the fate of the treasure he carried with him.

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The grave of Sultan Shuja. (17.07.2019.)



The Revenge of Aurangzib:

In 1665, the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb decided to act on the Arakanese marauders and launched the Mughal conquest of Chittagong. He also wanted to avenge for his brother Shah Shuja who was killed in exile by the Arakanese king. Chittagong, located in present-day southeastern Bangladesh, was a vital port and commercial hub on the Bay of Bengal. The city was under the control of the Kingdom of Mrauk U, also known as the Arakanese Kingdom. The Arakanese had been involved in piracy and slave raids along the Bengal coast, which had created tensions with the Mughal Empire. The conflict was further exacerbated by the mistreatment and execution of the Mughal prince Shah Shuja and his family members by the Arakanese king, Sanda Thudhamma.

The Mughal Campaign:

Emperor Aurangzeb ordered his forces, led by his general and governor of Bengal, Shaista Khan, to invade Chittagong and bring the region under Mughal control. The Mughal army was well-prepared and well-equipped, consisting of soldiers, artillery, and a navy to support the invasion.

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The Mughal campaign to capture Chittagong from the Arakanese Kingdom was a strategic operation led by Shaista Khan, the Mughal governor of Bengal. The campaign took advantage of the internal divisions among the Arakanese and their Portuguese allies, who had been guarding the Chittagong region.

1. Co-opting Portuguese mercenaries: Recognizing the potential to exploit the situation, the Mughal viceroy of Bengal, Shaista Khan, lured the Portuguese mercenaries guarding Chittagong for King Sanda Thudhamma to defect. He offered them land grants and other incentives, which resulted in many Portuguese soldiers switching their allegiance to the Mughals. This weakened the Arakanese defenses and created an opportunity for the Mughal forces to advance.
2. Capturing Sandwip: The Mughal forces, under Shaista Khan's command, first captured the island of Sandwip (located in the Bay of Bengal near Chittagong) in late 1665. This strategic victory provided the Mughals with a base for further operations and destabilized the Arakanese control of the region.
3. Siege and capture of Chittagong: In January 1666, the Mughals launched a major assault on Chittagong with a force of 6,500 men and 288 boats. The Arakanese and Portuguese defenders were overwhelmed by the superior Mughal forces, and after a 36-hour siege, Chittagong fell to the Mughals.
4. Expansion further south: After the successful capture of Chittagong, the Mughals pushed further south, taking control of territories as far as Ramu. This marked the end of Arakanese control over the Chittagong region, which they had held for a significant period of time. The loss of Chittagong was a major setback for the Arakanese Kingdom, as it was a crucial source of revenue and a strategically important location. The Arakanese Kingdom was unable to recover from this loss, and the kingdom's power and influence began to decline rapidly. The weakened state of the kingdom eventually led to its conquest by the Burmese in 1784.

The Mughal conquest of Chittagong not only expanded their empire but also put an end to piracy and slave raids along the Bengal coast. This allowed maritime trade and security in the region to flourish under Mughal rule.

Interesting facts and aspects that can provide a broader perspective on the historical events:



1. Arakanese-Portuguese relations: The Arakanese Kingdom had a long history of interaction with the Portuguese, who established trading settlements in the region during the 16th century. Portuguese mercenaries played a significant role in Arakanese military operations, especially in piracy and slave raids along the Bengal coast. Their defection to the Mughal side was a critical factor in the Mughal conquest of Chittagong.
2. Shaista Khan's governance: Shaista Khan, the Mughal governor of Bengal who led the Chittagong campaign, was known for his excellent administrative skills and military prowess. Under his rule, Bengal became one of the wealthiest provinces of the Mughal Empire, with Dhaka, the capital, emerging as a thriving center of trade and culture.
3. Mughal maritime expansion: The capture of Chittagong was an essential step in the Mughal Empire's efforts to expand its influence in the maritime domain. Following the conquest, the Mughals built a strong navy to protect their interests in the Bay of Bengal and control the vital sea routes for trade and communication.
4. The role of the Feranghi: The Portuguese mercenaries, often referred to as 'Feranghi,' played a unique role in the history of the region. They participated in the local conflicts, pirate activities, and were involved in the slave trade. The term 'Feranghi' was used to refer to Europeans, primarily the Portuguese, who arrived in the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal during the Age of Exploration.
5. Impact on Bengal's history: The Mughal conquest of Chittagong had a profound impact on the history of Bengal. The successful campaign helped to integrate the Chittagong region into the Mughal Empire and facilitated economic and cultural exchange between the Bengal heartland and the southeastern coastal region. The Mughal rule also brought a period of relative peace and stability, allowing maritime trade and regional development to flourish.

These interesting aspects of the Mughal invasion of Chittagong and its aftermath provide a more comprehensive understanding of the historical context and the intricate relationships among the various actors involved in these events.

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Aftermath:

The capture of Chittagong was a major blow to the Arakanese Kingdom, as the city was a significant source of revenue and an essential strategic location. The Mughals incorporated Chittagong into their empire, and the city became an important administrative center under Mughal rule.



The Mughal victory also helped to suppress piracy and slave raids along the Bengal coast, leading to increased maritime trade and security in the region. The Arakanese Kingdom, already weakened by internal strife and weak leadership, would eventually be conquered by the Burmese in 1784, bringing an end to its independent existence.

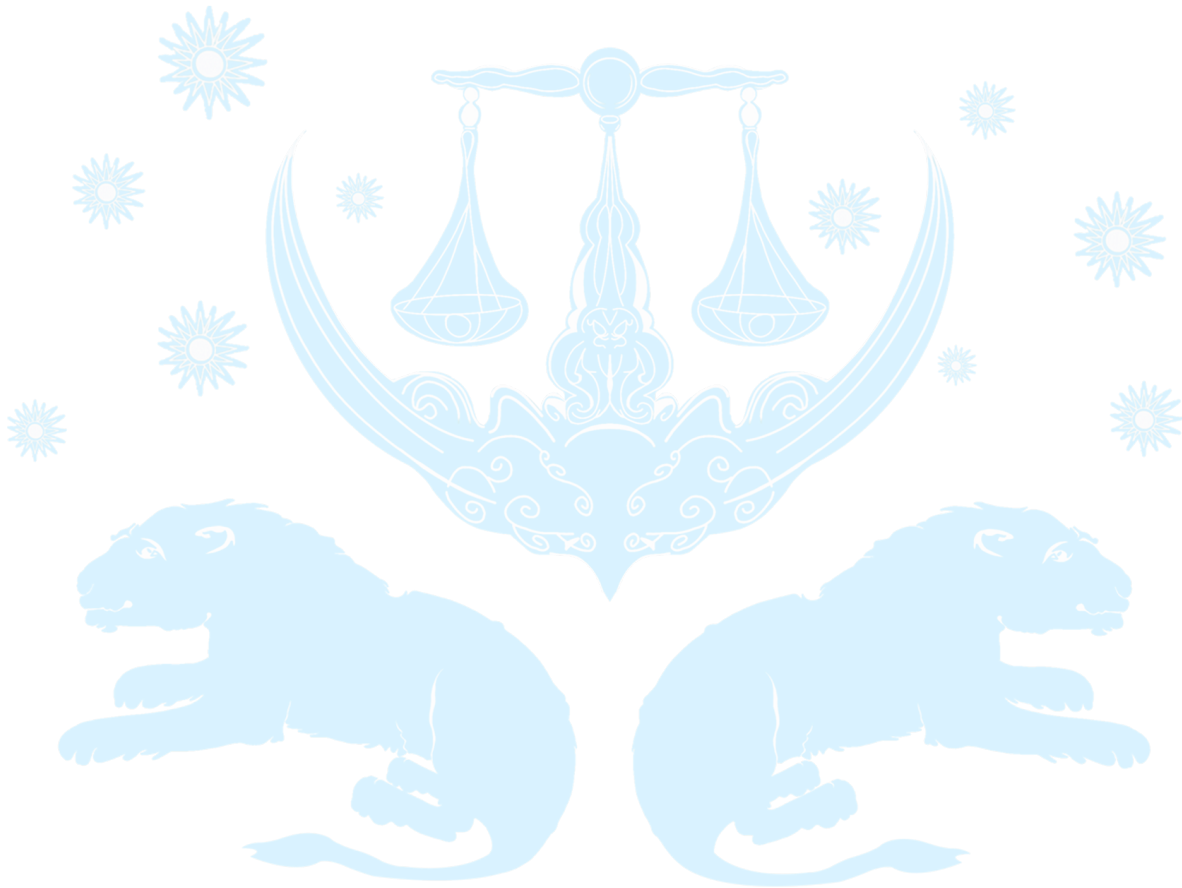
Further reading.... Check and read in Mughallibrary.com

There are historical sources that indicate Aurangzeb dispatched forces against Arakan in response to the mistreatment and execution of his family members by Sanda Thudhamma. However, the Mughal campaign against Arakan focused primarily on Chittagong, which was a strategically important port city in the southeastern part of Bengal (now part of present-day Bangladesh).

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These sources offer more detailed information on the Mughal campaign in Chittagong and the surrounding regions. They discuss the political and strategic context of the time, as well as the various factors that contributed to the decline of the Arakanese Kingdom. By exploring these sources, you can gain a deeper understanding of the events that unfolded during this period in history.



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