

### **Bahadur Shah 1707 to 1712**

Emperor of Mughal Empire

Shah Alam Bahadur (reigned 1707-1712), circa 1675

Reign 1707 - 1712

Born 14 October 1643

Birthplace Burhanpur

Died February 27, 1712 (aged 68)

Place of death Lahore

Predecessor Aurangzeb

Successor Jahandar Shah

Wife Nizam Bai

Offspring Jahandar Shah 1712-1719

\* Azim-ush-Shan

## Moghals after Aurangzeb

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- \* Rafi-ush-Shan
- \* Khujista Akhtar Jehan Shah
- \* Buland Akhtar

Dynasty     Timurid

Father Aurangzeb

Religious beliefs     Islam

His original name was Qutb ud-Din Muhammad Mu'azzam later titled as Shah Alam by his father. He took the throne name Bahadur Shah in 1707(Persian: بہادر شاہ Bahādur Shāh; his name Bahādur means "brave"; October 14, 1643 – 27 February 1712). He was a Mughal emperor who ruled India from 1707 to 1712.

### Early life

Muazzam, the second son of the emperor Aurangzeb through Nawab Bai Begum Saheba, the daughter of Raja of Rajauri (Jarral Rajput), was born in Burhanpur in 1643. In his father's lifetime, Muazzam was deputed governor of the northwest territories by Aurangzeb. His

province included those parts of the Punjab where the Sikh faith was blossoming. As governor, Muazzam relaxed the enforcement of Aurangzeb's severe edicts, and an uneasy calm prevailed in the province for a brief time. In fact, he maintained a friendly relationship with the last Sikh spiritual leader, Guru Gobind Singh. When Muazzam was challenging his brothers for the Mughal throne, Guru Gobind provided military assistance and spiritual guidance to the liberal prince.[dubious – discuss]

### Reign

After Aurangzeb's death, Muazzam Bahadur Shah took the throne. A war of succession began immediately after Aurangzeb died. One younger brother, Prince Azam Shah, proclaimed himself emperor and marched towards Delhi, where he unsuccessfully fought Bahadur Shah and died after a nominal reign of three months. Another brother, Muhammad Kam Baksh, was killed in 1709.

Aurangzeb had imposed Sharia law within his kingdom with harsh enforcement of strict edicts. This led to increased militancy by many constituencies including the Marathas, the Sikhs and the Rajputs. Thus, rebellion was rife at the time of Aurangzeb's death and Bahadur Shah inherited a very unstable polity. A more moderate man than his father, Bahadur Shah sought to improve relations with the militant constituencies of the rapidly crumbling kingdom. Bahadur Shah was successful in retreating Sikh General Banda Singh Bahadur to hills and was also able to gain control over Assam purely because of the assistance he got from his son, Azim-ush-Shan. Bahadur Shah never abolished jizyah, but the effort to collect the tax became ineffectual. Support to music was apparently renewed during his brief rule of five years. There was no destruction of temples in his reign. During Bahadur Shah's brief reign of five years, although the empire remained united, factionalism in the nobility reached a new height. However, he could do little to mitigate the damage already done by his father. Moti Masjid, Mehrauli, was built by Bahadur Shah I.

Indeed, Bahadur Shah's shortcomings — his lack of military skills and old age — added to the problems of the empire. After his short reign of less than five years, the Mughal Empire entered a long decline, attributable both to his ineptness and to his father's geographical overextension. Reports are that he was courageous and intelligent, but that his father's repression had harmed his abilities. All accounts agree in representing Bahadur Shah as a man of mild and equable temper, learned, dignified, disciplined and generous to fault. Although not a great sovereign like his predecessors, Bahadur Shah may be called, at least in comparison with his successors, a fairly successful one. Bahadur Shah hardly shared Aurangzeb's orthodox views. Unlike his father, Aurangzeb, he was a liberal sufi in outlook. In fact, it is true that after his sudden death the disintegration of the Mughal Empire became very much evident. He has helped greatly in expanding the empire and making the mughal empire into one that is unforgettable. Bahadur Shah had 12 sons and 183 daughters.

Bahadur Shah died on February 27, 1712 in Lahore while making alterations to the Shalimar Gardens. He was succeeded by his son Jahandar Shah. His grave lies, next to the dargah of 13th century, Sufi saint, Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki at Mehrauli, in a marble enclosure, along with that of Shah Alam II, and Akbar II.

### **Muhammad Shah (1719-1748 )**

Son of Khujista Akhtar Jehan Shah

Muhammad Shah (محمد شاه) (1748 – 1702) also known as Roshan Akhtar was a Mughal emperor of India between 1719 and 1748.[1][2][3] He was son of Khujista Akhtar Jahan Shah, the 4th son of Bahadur Shah I. Ascending the throne at the age of seventeen with the help of the Syed Brothers, he later got rid of them with the help of Nizam ul Mulk Chin Qilich Khan. He was nicknamed as Rangeela meaning merry-maker by many historians. [4]

During his reign, the Mughal empire eventually broke up into a loosely-knit collection of several regional states, each with its own ruler, thus declining the authority of the emperor into a greater extent[citation needed].

In February 1739, the Persian emperor, Nader Shah decided to conquer India[citation needed]. Due to poor tactics, Muhammad Shah's army was easily defeated, and Nader Shah triumphantly entered Delhi within the span of one month, where he had the Khutba read in his name[citation needed]. In the violence that followed, more than 30,000 civilians were killed by the Persian troops, forcing Muhammad Shah to beg for mercy and handing the keys to his treasury[citation needed].

In response, Nader Shah agreed to withdraw, but Muhammad Shah paid the consequence - handing over the keys of his royal treasury and losing even the Peacock Throne, along with the Koh-i-Noor and Darya-ye Noor diamonds, to the Persian emperor[citation needed].

### **Ahmed Shah Bahadur (1725-1775)**

was born in 1725 to Mohammed Shah. He succeeded his father to the throne as the 15th Mughal Emperor in 1748 at the age of 23. His mother was Udhambai, (also known as Kudsia Begum). When Ahmed Shah came to power the rule of the Mughal Empire was collapsing. During the reign of his father the city of Delhi (the Mughal capital) had been plundered and much of northern India had been ransacked by the invading army of Nadir Shah).

Ahmed Shah inherited a much weakened Mughal state and after ruling unsuccessfully for 6 years, he retired in 1754, badly afflicted by disease. He was blinded and killed in his sleep on a night in January 1775 at the age of fifty by Wazir Ghazi-ud-Din (Son of Asaf Jah I). His son Bidar Baksh the Second temporarily rose to power in 1788 as puppet of Ghulam Qadir.

### **Bengal after Emperor Mohammed Shah**

Bengal is important in the Indian history, as through its weakness, the British made their first foray in bringing the Indian subcontinent under their control. It is therefore important to know what went before this period, and how the polity in India was demoralized and led to factionalism which was easily exploited by the British.

Murshid Quli Khan was the first Nawab of Bengal. In fact circumstances resulted in his being the first independent ruler of Bengal post the death of Emperor Aurangzeb. Though he continued to recognize the nominal overlordship of the Mughal Emperor, for all practical purposes he was the de facto ruler of Bengal.

[Continued Evolution of the position of the Nawab of Bengal.](#)

