

MUGHAL EMPIRE

Mughals came to the Sub-continent (today's India and Pakistan) when Zahiruddin **Babur** conquered Delhi in 1526.

This also laid the foundation for the Mughal Empire, which then went on to rule the Sub-continent for next three centuries. Babur was a very dynamic and enterprising ruler. He ruled for only four years as he died in 1530.



Humayun, Babur's son, succeeded him but he faced several tough times when he ascended the throne because his father had died before he could consolidate his empire. There were Afghan rulers who were powerful enough to compete with Humayun for the throne. Sher Shah Suri brought Afghans to power and temporarily put an end to the Mughal rule after he defeated Humayun in 1540.

Sher Shah Suri was quick to capture most of the Sub-continent and this opened a great chapter of excellent administration in the history of India. His five-year rule ended tragically with his accidental death in 1545. After his death, his son reigned for nine years and his son Firuz Shah succeeded him in turn in 1554.

But all this was only a temporary hindrance in the restoration of the Mughal Dynasty, which was established once again by Humayun in 1555. But Humayun died just a year later, in 1556.



It was then that the most important and by far the most eventful period of Mughal reign began when **Akbar**, son of Humayun, took over after his father's death.

Akbar was hardly thirteen when he ascended the throne and went on to rule for almost half a century. Akbar is well remembered for his statesmanship, which was based upon good will towards all. Akbar was a great admirer of art and architecture and constructed many palaces and monuments during his reign. The famous ones are the Red Fort and the Fateh Pur Sikri located at

Agra. Akbar was tolerant of all other religions and did not differentiate between Hindus and non-Hindus.

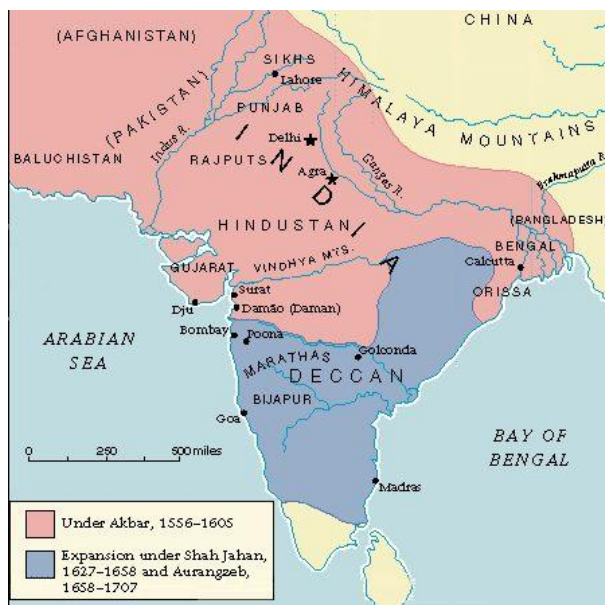
Akbar's death brought his son **Jahangir** to the throne in 1605. Jahangir's reign is dented with many rebellions which he successfully countered. His greatest achievement was the conquest of the fortress of Kangara in Punjab. It was captured after a struggle, which lasted 14 months.

Shah Jahan followed Jahangir in 1628, and to this day Shah Jahan is known for the magnificent monument of Taj Mahal which he had built in memory of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. But Shah Jahan was accused by his son, Aurangzeb Alamgir, of extravagance and he held his father captive; and after some resistance from his brothers came to power in 1658. Shah Jahan remained imprisoned for eight years where he was treated very well but was kept away from the administration of the Empire.



Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and his wife, Mumtaz Mahal

Aurangzeb Alamgir is known in history for his Islamic works. He was a pious man who lived like any other ordinary man of India while he was on the throne. He had seen the way his father had led his life and despised it strongly. Therefore, he preferred to work more for the social good of his people.



Although the Mughal Empire continued after the death of Aurangzeb, it's decline started right after the birth of this great Mughal Emperor.

Bahadur Shah Zafar was the last Mughal emperor. He ascended the throne in 1837 and was forced to leave in 1857 after the famous rebellion after which the British imprisoned Bahadur Shah in a fort and from then became the real rulers of the Sub-continent till 1947.