

REASONS FOR DECLINE OF MUGHAL EMPIRE

1) Role of AZ5807 [Aurangzeb 1658-1707]

- a) Mughal empire reached its **peak territorially** however **decline began** during his reign.
- b) constant **warfare for 40 years** drained resources, hurt agrarian production & overland trade due to law & order instability.
- c) Wars increased **economic burden on Mansabdars** responsible for maintaining army.
- d) AZ5807-wanted to capture whole Deccan. Annexed **Bijapur**(1685) & **Golkonda**(1687)- the two autonomous Muslim Kingdoms. But failed to defeat Marathas decisively who began winning from 1705 & by 1750s reversed most gains of AZ5807. Finally wars proved futile & Marathas caused military & territorial decline of Mughals.
- e) **AZ5807's Religiously Divisive Policies**
 - i) They alienated masses. e.g. - application of **jizya** on non-Muslims.
 - ii) Policy of not repairing **temples** & reducing lands allocated to temples.
 - iii) Demolished some important Hindu **temples**.
 - iv) **executed** important leaders
 - (1) Eg 1675- 9th **Guru Teg Bahadur**
 - (2) 1689- **Sambhaji**, elder son of Shivaji7480 (1674-1680) executed after 3 weeks of torture. Both were political rivals of AZ5807 & refused to convert.

2) Institutional failure

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- a) There was **Lack of Impersonal loyalty** in Mansabdari system & what existed was personal loyalty to King & a give & take relationship between King & Mansabdars.
- b) if King couldn't give desired Mansabs & Jagirs, **Mansabdars became disloyal**.
- c) "**Later Mughals**" i.e. Weak emperors post AZ5807 failed to control Mansabdars & couldn't maintain Balance of power in Mughal court leading to crippling court politics & factionalism. This led to poor governance & neglect of military reforms.

3) Military weakness

- a) Mughal empire was a military state & **when military weakened, the state weakened** (*nation state= state setup by ppl; military state = state setup with military victory, maintained with military power & thus exists till military defeat).
- b) lack of technological & organizational **reforms** (*eg Regiments; Fire firing, Grape Shot based guns, Bayonets, Brown Bess Musket rifle of Europeans etc) because time & energy consumed by factionalism.
- c) **Weak war commanders** especially after AZ5807 (* factionalism decides who becomes commander not merit)
- d) **Military corruption** as Mansabdars stopped maintaining army as per Sawar due to high war expenditure @AZ5807 wars & Jagirdari crisis of 18th c.

4) Factionalism [is infighting @ Royal vs Royal; Royal vs Mansabdar; Mansabdar vs Mansabdar]

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- a) After 1580 factionalism increased as now weak emperors.
- b) **Mansabdars competed for influence** over existing Emperor or wanted their favorite to be next emperor- to extract better Mansabs & Jagirs.
- c) Contenders to throne, also wanted support of militarily strong Mansabdars which contributed to factionalism.
- d) Later Mughals were weak rulers with weak personalities uninterested in administration. Thus couldn't control factionalism. eg Md Shah Rangila 1648 spent most time in leisure away from political matters.
- e) Capable Mansabdars acted selfishly & instead of strengthening the emperor focused on establishing their own principalities (*successor states)

1.	Irani Group	Shias with Persian background
2.	Turani group	Turkish Uzbek background same as Mughals (Sunnis)
3.	Hindustani group	converted Indian Muslims
4.	Hindus	like Rajputs etc.
5.	Deccani group	Nobles from Golconda 1687 & Bijapur 1685

5) Jagirdari Crisis (17th c)

- a) Nobles of Bijapur 1685 & Golconda 1687 were made Mansabdars after annexation but 1687 declared **most lands of these Kingdoms as khalisa lands** to fund his war against Marathas. Therefore, mansabdars increased but jagir land did not.
- b) **"Later Mughals" appointed more Mansabdars** to win support of different Mansabdar Groups, either to stay in power or to come to power.

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c) Further only 5% Mansabdars controlled 61% LR from Jagirs causing insecurity among smaller Mansabdars.

d) Impact of Jagirdari Crisis

i) Many Mansabdars stayed **jagirless for years**.

ii) **Insecurity** among Mansabdars due to frequent transfer of jagirs by emperor

iii) Therefore, now they **over extracted LR** from Jagirs & there was greater use of Ijaradari system.

iv) Due to insecurity of tenure of holding Jagir, they had **no incentive to invest in productivity** of land therefore income of peasants further decreased.

v) Hence many peasant revolts in 18th c against Mughals, led by Zamindars.

(1) Example – **JAT Kingdom** under Churaman JAT, a Zamindar was product of peasant revolt in 1695.

vi) **Factionalism** increased due to greater competition for jagirs.

vii) Jagirdari crisis led to **military corruption** causing military weakness.

Proof of Decline of Mughals

1. Factionalism

a. Jahandar Shah(1712-13; JS1213) came to power by executing father of Farukhsiyar1319 (*FS1319). FS1319 removed & executed JS1213 with help of Sayyid brothers of Hindustani group.

b. But FS1319 didn't want to be puppet of Sayyid Brothers therefore allied with other groups. Sayyid bothers allied with Marathas (Peshwa

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Balaji Vishwanath) & defeated & executed FS1319 & placed Md SHAH1948 in power as puppet emperor.

- c. Then Nizam-ul-Mulk(1724-Governor of Hyderabad, 1740- left Delhi permanently, 1748 died; Nizam2448), of Turani group allied with Irani group to defeat Sayyid brothers. From 1722-24 Nizam2448, served as Wazir.

2. Military decline:

- a. Beginning 1705, Marathas began defeating Mughals & reversed most territorial gains by 1750s.
- b. 1737- Peshwa Bajirao2040 plundered Delhi & kept Md Shah1948 prisoner temporarily.
- c. 1738- Marathas defeated a large Mughal army whose commander was Nizam2448 & signed Treaty of Bhopal Jan 1739.

d. 1738-40: Invasion by Persian Nadir Shah

- i. His empire extended from Iran to Afghanistan where Mughals also had territory, hence conflicts + wanted to plunder India's wealth.

ii. Why Nadir shah won?

1. Mughals were military weak (*as discussed above)
2. Recent military defeat in 1738 by Marathas.
3. Sadat Khan (Nawab of Awadh 1722-40; Sadat2240) changed sides when Nizam244048 was made Mir

Bakshi instead of him (*=war paymaster/commander)

(*factionalism leading to military weakness)

4. Better military leadership of Nadir shah.

iii. Result/Impact :

1. **Battle of Karnal 1739** was decisive after which Delhi was captured, Md Shah1948 imprisoned & Nadir Shah became emperor for 60 days
2. Sadat Khan2240 committed **suicide** after he was insulted by Nadir post victory.
3. Huge **loss of prestige** for Mughals as-
 - a. Md Shah1948 was insulted & he did not stand up for his dignity & lost political prestige among Mansabdars
 - b. **2 lakh civilians** of Delhi massacred leading to loss of prestige for Mughals among masses i.e. Mughals can't protect us anymore
 - c. Loss of military prestige as huge defeat & this increased chances of future attacks by others e.g. 1st Afghan Invasion 1748.
4. Huge economic loss & now Mughals could not maintain strong army. Nadir shah took away wealth worth roughly 100cr eg took away peacock throne that had

Kohinoor. Mansabdars were also drained of their wealth as they had to contribute.

3. In 1752 Mughal came under Maratha protection due to fear of Afghan invasions +++ Alamgir II 1759 was a Maratha puppet.

- Q- By mid-18th c Mughal empire was figment of imagination, elaborate.

 - Answer decline of Mughals with focus on political & military & territorial decline with proofs.
 - Also, by mid-18th century, India became summation of regional powers i.e. successor State, rebel States & those which were already autonomous with Marathas as the top power among them & Mughal emperor rule was limited to small area around Delhi & Agra.

By mid-18th c India was spectre of fragmented polity. Elaborate.

Ans- decline of Mughals with more focus on rise of regional powers (given below) + smaller focus