



### Key words

- **Sharia law** – A set of religious laws based on the Qur'an and the Hadith, guiding Muslims on what is right and wrong.
- **Deccan** – Area in southern India.
- **Viceroy** – Ruler in charge of an area.
- **Farmans** – Royal orders.
- **Rajputs** – Warrior rulers who did not want to be part of the Mughal Empire.

### Who was Aurangzeb?

Aurangzeb was born on 3 November 1618, the third son of Shah Jahan and Mumtaz Mahal. From an early age, he trained in military strategy, administration and Islamic studies. At 18, he became Viceroy of the Deccan. Aurangzeb was ambitious and wanted power.

### Aurangzeb's personal lifestyle

Aurangzeb avoided luxury, living simply with a focus on religion, the military and ruling the empire. He followed strict Islamic ideas, spent time praying, studying religious texts, and memorising and copying the Qur'an. He wore simple clothes, kept his court modest without music or big celebrations, and ate plain, often vegetarian meals without large feasts.

### The resolution of family conflict

Between 1658 and 1659, Aurangzeb fought his brothers for control of the empire. He won, and his brothers Dara Shikoh, Murad Baksh and Shah Shuja were executed by 1661. Shah Jahan was imprisoned overlooking the Taj Mahal until his death in 1666. Aurangzeb ruled alone from 1658 to 1707.

### Sharia law and the suppression of other religions

Aurangzeb wanted everyone to follow Sharia law, so the legal system followed Muslim beliefs. He appointed new officials (muhatasibs) in each large town to enforce this. He ordered a book, the *Fatawa-e-Alamgiri*, to guide judges. Muslim scholars gained more power. Other religions were suppressed: Hindu temples were demolished, festivals restricted and fairs banned.

### Methods of control in the north and south through administrative reform

#### North – Areas already part of the Mughal Empire. Aurangzeb focused on administration.

- All decisions were made by Aurangzeb.
- He issued farmans and created a new legal code called the *Fatawa-e-Alamgiri*, based on Islamic law.
- He changed the way taxes were collected and appointed royal officials to remove corruption and improve efficiency.
- He kept a strong army in the area that could act quickly if there were problems.
- He restricted some Hindu practices and destroyed some temples.

#### South – As Aurangzeb moved further into southern India, it was harder to keep control through administration alone.

- He kept troops in the Deccan to maintain control.
- He appointed governors to oversee new areas and enforce his rules.
- He made new areas pay heavy taxes to help pay for the army.
- He enforced Islamic laws.
- He strengthened the defenses around important cities.
- He restricted some Hindu practices and destroyed some temples.

### Reactions to rebellions and military campaigns

Date	Rebellion	Cause	Aurangzeb's reaction
1669–1691	Jat revolts (near Delhi)	A Jat leader disobeyed a Mughal official.	Sent an army, cut off the leader's limbs in public and demolished a temple.
1670–1707	Maratha resistance	Area wanted independence under a Hindu ruler.	Sent an army; resulted in a long, costly conflict.
1672	Satnamis	Fight between a Satnami trader and Mughal soldier led to rebellion.	Sent troops and defeated the rebels.
1672–1674	Afghan rebellions	Afghans stopped trade in the area.	Led an army and restored order.
1679–1707	Rajput rebellions	Aurangzeb imposed a ruler in Marwar, angering the people; Rajput princes rebelled.	Sent his son Akbar, who joined the rebels; Aurangzeb later tricked the Rajputs and Akbar fled to the Deccan.

### The threats facing Aurangzeb by regional revolts and breakaway states

- Aurangzeb faced many rebellions and some areas broke away from the Mughal Empire.
- **The Marathas** became an independent state ruled by its own king and grew during Aurangzeb's reign.
- The **Rajputs** were independent for a short time, showing that Aurangzeb did not have total control.
- These breakaway states showed that it was possible to resist Mughal rule and leave the empire, influencing others to try to become independent.

### The consequences of the campaigns against the Marathas in the Deccan from 1681

- **Economic drain:** Wars were expensive, so heavy taxes were used to pay for the army. regions like the Marathas.
- **Military overstretch:** There were not enough troops to control regions like the Marathas.
- **Decline of power:** Focus on the Deccan meant other areas ignored orders; regional powers grew stronger.

### The condition of the empire on Aurangzeb's death

When Aurangzeb died in 1707, the empire was weaker, although larger. Heavy taxes used to fund wars were unpopular, and some officials had become corrupt. Force was used to maintain control, which increased costs. Peasants paid high taxes (about 50% of crops), making life hard, so some moved to cities. The Marathas, Rajputs and Sikhs remained threats. Later Mughal leaders were unable to keep the empire together.