

# Dara Shikoh

December 31, 2021

**In news-** Recently, the Union Minister for Minority Affairs Shri Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi has said that Dara Shikoh was 'deliberately' not given due importance by certain governments due to prejudiced politics.

## **A brief note on him-**

- Dara Shikoh was the **eldest son and heir-apparent of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.**
- He was **born on 11 March 1615 in Ajmer**, the land of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, to whom his father Shah Jahan had prayed for a son.
- He was **designated with the title Padshahzada-i-Buzurg Martaba** and was favored as a successor by his father and his older sister, Princess Jahanara Begum.
- He had developed a **keen interest and proficiency in Sufi mysticism and the Quran at a young age.**
- At the age of twenty-five, **Dara wrote his first book, Safinat-ul-Awliya** , a concise document detailing the lives of the Prophet and his family, the Caliphs and of saints belonging to the five major Sufi orders then popular in India.
- He was **initiated into the Kadiri order of Sufis by his pir (spiritual guide), Mulla Shah.**
- He was a follower of the Armenian Sufi-perennialist mystic Sarmad Kashani, as well as Lahore's famous Qadiri Sufi saint Mian Mir, whom he was introduced to by Mullah Shah Badakhshi (Mian Mir's spiritual disciple and successor).
- He had completed the **translation of fifty Upanishads** from their original Sanskrit into Persian in 1657 so that they could be studied by Muslim scholars.
- **His translation is often called Sirr-i-Akbar ("The Greatest Mystery")**, where he states boldly, in the

introduction, his speculative hypothesis that the work referred to in the Qur'an as the "*Kitab al-maknun*" or the *hidden book*, is none other than the Upanishads.

- **His most famous work, Majma-ul-Bahrain ("The Confluence of the Two Seas")**, was also devoted to a revelation of the mystical and pluralistic affinities between Sufic and Vedantic speculation.
- He had also commissioned a translation of Yoga Vasistha.
- **Other works by him include** 'Risala-i-hak Numa' (The Compass of the Truth), the 'Shathiyat or Hasanat-ul-Arifin' and the 'Iksir-i-Azam'.
- He had developed a friendship with the seventh Sikh Guru, Guru Har Rai.
- **In the war of succession** which ensued after Shah Jahan's illness in 1657, Dara was **defeated by** his younger brother Prince Muhiuddin (later, the Emperor **Aurangzeb**) in the **Battle Deorai**.
- He was **executed in 1659 on Aurangzeb's orders** in a bitter struggle for the imperial throne.