

when he died, Maḥmūd succeeded him. However, since Maḥmūd was very young, the government was carried on by his tutor, Habash Khān. Meanwhile, another Habashī, Sīdī Badr, nicknamed Dīwāna ("the Mad"), killed Habash Khān and declared himself Regent. He then put to death the young king by winning over the palace guards, and himself ascended the throne of Bengal. Maḥmūd had reigned only for about a year.

*Bibliography:* See that for MAHMŪD I.

√3. MAHMŪD III, GHĪYĀTH AL-DĪN (940-5/1533-8), ruler of Bengal. He was one of the eighteen sons of 'Alā al-Dīn Ḥusayn Shāh (899-925/1493-1519) of Bengal, and had been nominated by his elder brother, Nuṣrat Shāh (925-39/1519-32) as his heir-apparent. But Maḥdūm-i 'Ālam, his brother-in-law and governor of North Bihār, raised to the throne Nuṣrat's son, Abu 'l-Badr, with the title of 'Ālā' al-Dīn Firūz. He ruled only for a few months because, in 940/1533, he was put to death by his uncle, Maḥmūd, who declared himself Sulṭān and ascended the throne as Ghīyāth al-Dīn Maḥmūd III. Maḥdūm, however, refused to recognise him and allied himself with Shīr Khān (later Shīr Shāh), whose power was steadily growing. Maḥmūd, on the other hand, made the mistake of entering into an alliance with the Nūhānīs of Bihār, who were weak and without an able leader. The result was that, when in 940/1533 Maḥmūd sent the Nūhānīs with Kutb Khān, governor of Monghyr, against Shīr Khān, Kutb was defeated and killed.

Maḥmūd next sent an army against Maḥdūm, who was defeated and slain, as the Nūhānīs were able to prevent Shīr Khān from coming to his assistance. However, the victory did not benefit Maḥmūd because before setting out to fight, Maḥdūm had entrusted all his treasure to Shīr Khān's envoy.

Meanwhile, Djalāl Khān, the Nūhānī ruler of Bihār, plotted the assassination of Shīr Khān, but his attempt having failed, he was affected with panic, and crossed over to Bengal with his supporters and sought the protection of Maḥmūd, which was given. Maḥmūd succeeded in occupying Bihār and, in Ramaḍān 940/March 1534, a strong force under Ibrāhīm Khān moved out of Monghyr and met Shīr Khān on the plain of Suradjgāh, near the town of Barh. But Ibrāhīm was defeated and killed, while Djalāl Khān again fled to Maḥmūd.

Now it was Shīr Khān's turn to retaliate and, taking advantage of Humāyūn's pre-occupation in Guḍjarāt, he opened a campaign in 942/1536. Since Maḥmūd had strongly fortified the Teliyāgāfhī Pass with Portuguese help, Shīr left behind a detachment under his son, Djalāl Khān, and having made a detour, marched through the Jharkand country and appeared before Gawr, Bengal's capital. Maḥmūd was taken by surprise. The Portuguese advised him to hold out until the outbreak of the monsoon, when Shīr's retreat could be cut off by their navy. But Maḥmūd was so demoralised that he did not follow their advice and, instead, came to a settlement with Shīr Khān, by agreeing to pay him an annual tribute of ten lacs of tankas and to cede the territory from the river Kosi to Hādīpūr and from Gāfhī to Monghyr, which was of considerable importance to the security of Bengal.

Shīr Shāh (who had by now assumed the title of Shāh) was too ambitious to remain satisfied with these gains and, on the pretext of non-payment of tribute by Maḥmūd, invaded Bengal. He entered the Teliyāgāfhī Pass, which the Bengalis failed to defend, and laid siege to Gawr. But hearing that Humāyūn had invested Čunār, he at once set out to relieve it,

leaving behind his son Djalāl to continue the siege. Maḥmūd despairing of any outside help, for the Portuguese refused immediate assistance, and being faced with dwindling supplies, sallied out of the fort to give battle. But he was wounded and fled to north Bihār. Meanwhile, on 6 Dhu 'l-Ḳa 'da 944/6 April 1538, the Afghāns captured the fort by an assault. Maḥmūd, now a fugitive, appealed to Humāyūn, who immediately marched towards Gawr. But before he could reach the city, Shīr Shāh had carried away all its treasure. It was on his way to Gawr with Humāyūn that Maḥmūd heard of the murder of his two sons by the Afghāns. This effected him so much that he died soon afterwards.

Maḥmūd was a voluptuary, but the Portuguese account that he had 10,000 women in his harem is an exaggeration. He was incompetent, and inept in the art of diplomacy, lacking courage, tact and imagination. His mistake in antagonising Shīr Shāh and his failure to make an alliance with the Mughals and the Sulṭān of Guḍjarāt led not only to his own overthrow but also to the loss of Bengal's independence.

*Bibliography:* See that for MAHMŪD I; and for the relations of Maḥmūd III with the Afghāns, consult the following: Kh'wādja Ni'mat Allāh, *Ta'rikh-i Khān-i Dīhānī*, i, ed. Imām al-Dīn, Dacca 1960; 'Abd Allāh, *Ta'rikh-i Dāwūdī*, ed. 'Abd al-Rashīd, Aligarh 1954; Aḥmad Yādgar, *Ta'rikh-i Salāṭin-i Afghāna*, ed. Hidāyat Ḥusayn, Bibl. Ind., Calcutta 1939; K. R. Qanungo, *Sher Shah and his times*, Calcutta 1965; I. H. Siddiqi, *History of Sher Shah Sur*, Aligarh 1971. (MOHIBBUL HASAN)

MAHMŪD, the name of two of the Dihlī sultans of mediaeval India.

1. MAHMŪD I, NAṢIR AL-DIN was the son of Ilutmish (Firishṭa, i, 70-1; Minhādī-jī Sirādī Djūzdjānī, i, 471-2) and not his grandson, as some modern historians have asserted. He ascended the throne on 23 Muḥarram 644/10 June 1246 through the joint efforts of Balban [*q.v.* in Suppl.], and Maḥmūd's mother. Since Maḥmūd was weak and of a retiring disposition, devoting himself "to prayers and religious observances", and he owed his throne to Balban, the latter became very powerful. He further strengthened his position by marrying his daughter to the young Sulṭān and securing the important office of *nā'ib-i mamlakat* and the title of Ulugh Khān (Premier Khān). His younger brother, Sayf al-Dīn Ayybak, was given the title of Kashlī Khān and made *amir-i ḥādīb*, while one of his cousins, Shīr Khān, was appointed governor of Lahore and Bhatinda.

In 651/1253, however, a eunuch named 'Imād al-Dīn Rayḥān, who was jealous of Balban, organised a group of discontented Indian Muslims and some Turks and succeeded in persuading the Sulṭān to dismiss Balban and his relations. They were accordingly ordered to leave for their respective *ikṭā'as*. Balban was replaced by Rayḥān, who now became *wakil-i dar* and virtual ruler. Shīr Khān was replaced by Arslān Khān as governor of Lahore and Bhatinda.

Deprived of power and position as a result of these changes, the Turkish element became discontented and organised itself under Balban's leadership to overthrow Rayḥān and, in Ramaḍān 652/October 1254, marched towards Dihlī. Maḥmūd, under the influence of Rayḥān and his followers, moved out against the rebels and encamped near Samana. Rayḥān wanted an armed conflict, but Maḥmūd refused, because most of his nobles favoured Balban, and agreed on a compromise. Rayḥān was dismissed and transferred first to Bahrā'īṭ and then to Badā'ūn. Balban was reappointed *nā'ib* and his