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Context to the nugget conversation

Pradeep speaks about Jahanara Begum who was Shah Jahan's daughter. Pradeep speaks about how, despite not holding an official title, she had significant influence in the Mughal Kingdom.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And the one thing maybe just to come in here, one thing that struck me about Jahanara when I read the book, you say that she is Shah Jahan's daughter who was never a queen, but she was able to build alliances and achieve her ambitions through the alliances, can you say more about that here, once again, linking it back to what probably Tipu Sultan did not do enough of?

Pradeep Chakravarthy (PC): Yeah. So I think what she has been able to do is, she actually supported Dara Shikoh, Dara Shikoh did not get to power, Aurangzeb came to power after a very bloody violent struggle, and she was not in the best of terms with Aurangzeb and yet, Aurangzeb chose her over her sister who he was much fond of to be the first woman of the kingdom. And this shows, well, we do not know the kind of conversations, yeah, frustratingly, we do not have her diaries, but clearly, she must have been somebody who was able to maintain a sense of respect with somebody like Aurangzeb who was pretty much my way or the highway. So, was it in terms of the principles that she lived by, was it in terms of a sense of fairness, we do not know, but clearly, she is somebody who must have had extraordinary personal resolve to be able to navigate this really complex relationship between a Shah Jahan and an Aurangzeb, a Dara Shikoh and an Aurangzeb. And even when she was in that privileged position, she seemed to have played her cards very carefully. She could have easily tried to do another coup against Aurangzeb, she has not done that, so she is somebody who really played fair by the rules, looked at, accepting the fact that she was never going to have complete control, but within her sphere of influence, she has been able to really work hard and create something for herself, not just financially because she made a lot of money through her private trade with the Dutch, East India Company and others but also in terms of building monuments. So Chandni Chowk in Delhi, for example, is something that she created.

DJ: Wow. And back to her relationship with some of the Mughals around her, any particular event where we get a glimpse of her diplomacy and her skills there?

PC: Well, I think, in the way she managed her father's death and how she was able to work with Aurangzeb after that and come back to power.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is a crucial point I feel for a lot of the entrepreneurs who scale up. They often operate in warrior mode to bring it to a certain scale. But once they start growing beyond a point where they start hiring senior leaders and they lead other leaders, some of the skills around influencing and diplomacy become more and more critical. This is a non-trivial transition for several people who are wired to be a warrior. If you are keen to read up more on building this muscle, one book that comes to mind is Political Savvy by Joel Delucca. Thank you for listening.

End of nugget transcription

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About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock the human potential of senior executive's / leadership teams by working with them as an Executive Coach / Sounding Board / Transition Advisor. You can know more about his work [here](#).

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