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**B. A. SEMESTER - II      Unit - I**

**History**

**Lesson - 1**

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**POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF NORTHERN INDIA ON  
THE EVE OF GHORIDIAN INVASION  
ESTABLISHMENT OF TURKISH SULTANATE WITH  
REFERENCE TO QUTUB-UD-DIN AIBAK**

Introduction

Objectives

Political condition of northern India on the eve of Ghori Invasion

Qutub-ud-din Aibak and the establishment of the Turkish Sultanate

Problems faced by Qutub-ud-din and how he overcame these problems

Estimate of his personality

Conclusion

Glossary

Self Assessment Questions

Suggested Readings

**INTRODUCTION**

The founding of the Delhi Sultanate was the result of the conquests made by Shihabuddin Muizuddin Mohammad Ghori in India towards the end of the 12th century AD. The time period allotted to the Delhi Sultanate is from AD 1206 when Qutub-ud-din Aibak ascended on the throne of Delhi, upto AD 1526 when Ibrahim Lodi, the last Sultan

of the Lodi dynasty was defeated and killed in the first battle of Panipat by Babur. Babur laid the foundation of the Mughal dynasty. The above mentioned period is known in medieval Indian history as the Sultanate period because all the Turko-Afghan rulers who sat on the throne at Delhi assumed the title of Sultan.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this lesson is to enable the student to understand

- the political condition of northern India on the eve of the Ghori invasions.
- the active military role played by Qutub-ud-din Aibak, the most trusted and loyal lieutenants of Mohammad Ghori.
- the challenges faced by Aibak, who laid the foundation of the Sultanate in AD 1206 and the means he resorted to, in order to overcome the challenges. The importance of his brief reign (AD 1206-1210) will be emphasized.

### **POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF NORTHERN INDIA ON THE EVE OF THE GHORIDIAN INVASION**

Mohammad Ghori first invaded northern India in AD 1175 and he continued to wage war in the region till AD 1205 either for the extension of his territory or for the consolidation of the conquests that had been made earlier.

The political conditions prevailing at that time in northern India were not at all happy. The paramountcy of the Gurjar Pratiharas was now over and there was no real or nominal sovereign of the whole of northern India. The Indus Valley constituted the gateway of India. There were two Muslim principalities ruling over it. Towards the north lay the Ghaznavid kingdom of the Punjab with headquarters at Lahore while the southern portion was dominated by the Ismailian Shias of Multan. If these regions were conquered by a Muslim ruler, not much resistance would have been offered by the masses. Moreover, their resources were poor and limited. To the east and south of these border states there were numerous Rajput principalities. Four out of these were more powerful than the others. They were -

The first of these was the kingdom of the **Chauhans of Delhi and Ajmer**. The contemporary ruler was Prithviraja and he was brave and had won praise for his successful wars against his neighbours. He had to devise special measures for counter-acting the

hostile moves of the Ghaznavids. Hansi, Pakpattan and Bhatinda were the main frontier outposts of this kingdom. Their commanders were always vigilant to neutralise any hostile move of the Turks. Prithviraja was a courageous and valiant Commander and had considerably weakened the Chandela Rajputs.

The second were the **Rathor Ghadwals with Kanauj** as its capital. The contemporary ruler was Jayachandra. Personal and political considerations had made him a determined rival to Prithviraja Chauhan.

The third important kingdom was that of the **Senas who ruled over eastern India**. Their power was declining rapidly.

**The Solankis of Gujarat** was the fourth powerful house. Their capital Anhilwara was a large and populous city and they had established their paramountcy over Western Rajputana and Madhya Bharat.

The point worthy to note is that there was no love lost between these Big Four of Northern India. Each Power was concerned only with the extension of his territory. And this was so despite the continuance of Turkish raids. They could never sink their differences in the face of the common danger - i.e. the Turks. In fact, the mutual rivalry and enmity was so deep rooted that they were utterly incapable of devising a permanent strategy for securing their frontiers and driving the Turks outside the country. They exhibited little political wisdom. They had no diplomatic relations with the Turks. Their espionage system was defunct. It may be said that utter neglect of the proper organization of the foreign department proved to be a fatal mistake, a glaring administrative fault on the part of the Rajput Rulers. Their infighting and mutual rivalry made the task of conquest further easy for the Turks.

### **QUTUB-UD-DIN AIBAK AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TURKISH SULTANATE**

Qutub-ud-din Aibak was the most powerful among the lieutenants of Mohammad Ghori. He was of Turkish origin for we know that his parents were residents of Turkistan. When still a boy, he was purchased by Qazi Fakhruddin of Nishapur. Being greatly impressed by his personality and etiquettes, the Qazi gave him a thorough schooling. Later, he was further sold to Shihabuddin of Ghor who was then the master of Ghazni. Henceforth, the destiny of Aibak began to rise. Shihabuddin, also known as Mohammad Ghori was greatly impressed by the valour, heroism and loyalty of Aibak. He was first appointed as

**Amir-i-Akhur** (Lord of the Stables) and later appointed as the Governor of the Punjab and the Doab. Between AD 1192-1197, Aibak defended the newly founded Turkish empire and extended its frontiers despite stiff opposition by the Rajputs. Between AD 1197 - 1205, he assisted in the defeat of the Chandelas, Senas and Khokhars and since AD 1196, he was formally appointed the viceroy of Shihabuddin's Indian possessions. Thus we see that Aibak had virtually controlled the destinies of the Turkish empire in India. Consequently all the Turkish officers in the land had got accustomed to looking upon him as their chief.

After the death of Mohammad Ghori, it was natural for Aibak to accept the invitation of the Turkish nobles of Lahore and assume the sovereign power in India. The generally accepted opinion is that he ascended the throne on 24 June 1206, after the title of Sultan was conferred and the royal insignia and standard were sent by Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud, the ruler of Ghor. It is quite likely that his formal letter of manumission was not granted till AD 1208. This gives us a reasonable explanation regarding the absence of any higher titles than 'Malik' and 'Sipahsalar' against his name in the inscriptions of that time as also, the fact that no silver and gold coins of his reign have yet been discovered. Thus, in this way, the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate was laid by Qutub-ud-Din Aibak.

### **PROBLEMS FACED BY QUTUB-UD-DIN AND HOW HE OVERCAME THESE PROBLEMS.**

After having obtained the formal letter of manumission (which freed him from his slave status, for legally, a slave could not be a sovereign) from Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud of Ghor, Aibak finally succeeded in separating Hindustan from Ghor. But there were several knotty problems that he had to solve thereafter.

The first problem was regarding the other ambitious lieutenants of Muizuddin who held high posts.

- The first of these was Nasiruddin Qubacha, the governor of Multan and Uchh who was ambitious and gaining more and more prominence since AD 1205. In a clever move, Aibak offered one of his daughters in marriage to him. Henceforth, Qubacha agreed to acknowledge Aibak's suzerainty.
- The second noble that Aibak had to contend with was Tajuddin Yaldoz (also known as Ealdauz). Yaldoz regarded himself as heir to the dignities of Muizuddin as he had

successfully occupied Ghazni, the seat of government of the late Sultan. He was eager to bring India under his suzerainty. To meet with the challenge thrown by Yaldoz, Aibak won over Qubacha to his side and then sat down at Lahore to reinforce the defences of the Punjab. Yaldoz felt infuriated with Qubacha and tried to seize Lahore. But Aibak not only defeated and drove him out of the land but retaliated by occupying Ghazni itself. But the people of Ghazni seem to have preferred the rule of Yaldoz hence they rose in revolt in his favour. Aibak had no choice but to return to India. Yaldoz felt satisfied. The people of Ghazni had stood up in his favour. This was so probably because they could not reconcile to being governed by a lieutenant of the ruler of Delhi. Yaldoz had got a measure of power of Aibak and therefore, he caused him no trouble in future. We may, however say that despite his visible failure to hold Ghazni, Aibak nevertheless was successful in sealing his own frontiers.

- Aibak had to face another problem, this one was by Ali Mardan. The latter had usurped the government of Bengal after murdering Ikhtiyaruddin. He now aspired for independence. However, he had to face the stiff opposition of the Khilji nobility of Bengal. Failing to establish his authority in Bengal, Ali Mardan fled to Aibak to secure his support by pleading innocence. Aibak showed his political wisdom. His reoccupations left him little time to dabble in the affairs of distant Bengal. He therefore decided to maintain his authority over Bengal by lending support to Ali Mardan. He sent Ali Mardan to Bengal with a contingent of his own troops. Seeing the changed circumstances - Aibak's support to Ali Mardan, the Khilji nobles bowed down before the latter. This clever move on the part of Aibak not only put an end to trouble in Bengal but also established his suzerainty over it.

- Aibak also had to face the revolts of the Hindus. The Hindus, including the Rajputs had been stunned into submission by the rapidity of the Turkish conquests during the life time of Muizuddin. But since then, they had sufficiently recovered to indulge in offensive action. By A.D. 1206, in fact, Kalinjar had been recovered by the Chandela king while the Gahadwala ruler Harichandra openly challenged the newly founded Sultanate by annexing the districts of Farrukhabad and Badaun. Similarly, the Pratiharas succeeded in regaining the fort of Gwalior which was well known as a 'jewel amongst forts'. The Senas were pressing towards the west to regain their lost possessions. A number of chiefs in the Doab stopped paying tribute and cleared the land of all turks. Aibak faced these problems bravely. He re-occupied Badaun and appointed one of his slaves, Iltutmish as

the governor there. However, he was unable to secure Kalinjar or Gwalior. In A.D. 1210, Aibak died as a result of a fatal fall from his horse while playing **Chaugan**.

### **ESTIMATE OF HIS PERSONALITY**

Medieval Indian historians regard Qutub-ud-din Aibak as an able commander and a vigorous leader. He served his master with consistent devotion. Habibullah says that although Muizuddin gave the inspiration, it was Aibak who organised every aspect of the Sultanate of Delhi according to a systematic scheme. Aibak deserves to be given the credit for the success of the various schemes which may have been given by his master but which eventually became successful because of the modifications made in them by Aibak. It was Aibak who crushed the enemies of the infant Turkish empire and gave it a tentative government. In fact his greatest achievement was that he severed the kingdom of Delhi from the non-Indian territories of the Ghorian empire and thereby gave it an independent status.

Though not a brilliant administrator, Aibak protected the life and property of his subjects and laid the rudiments of civil administration through the agency of his military officers. Local administration was left in the hands of the village panchayats and other local agencies of the pre-Muslim era. He granted partial civil liberties to the Hindus in return for the payment of **jazia**.

Qutub-ud-din Aibak was a lover of learning. Intellectuals like Hasan Nizami and Fakhre Mudir dedicated their books to him. He was also generous and kind hearted. He earned the title of **lakhbaksh** because of liberal distribution of money in charity to the poor and the needy. He also exhibited some taste for architecture for we know that he got two mosques built. Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque was got built at Delhi and Adhai-din ka jhopra at Ajmer. He also laid the foundation of the first of the so-called 'seven cities' of medieval Delhi by constructing buildings in the vicinity of the old Rajput fort, called Qila i Rai Pithaura. He also started the construction of the Qutub Minar, the tallest minar (stone tower) in India, having a height of 238 feet after the name of Khwaja Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, a renowned Sufi saint of his times. Qutub Minar was however completed by his son-in-law and successor, Shamsuddin Iltutmish.

## CONCLUSION

Aibak had a short reign period, of only four years. (1206-1210 AD). In this short period, he could not consolidate his gains. However, he must be given his due credit for founding an empire which was to last for centuries together. By severing the Indian dominions from Ghazni, he gave an independent status to the Sultanate of Delhi. His conquests proved far more permanent than his predecessors. While the Ghorian dynasty lapsed into oblivion, the empire founded by Qutub-uddin Aibak was not lost to Islam.

## **ILTUTMISH : CONQUEST AND CONSOLIDATION**

Introduction

Objectives

Problems faced by Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1211-1236 A.D)

His Conquests/Campaigns

His Administrative policy

Death of Iltutmish

Character and estimate of Iltutmish

Conclusion

Glossary

Self Assessment Questions

Suggested Readings

### **INTRODUCTION**

Shamsuddin Iltutmish (1211-1236 A.D) was the son of an Ilbari chief named Yelam Khan. As he was handsome, energetic and a promising young man, he became the favourite of his father. But his brothers and relatives became jealous of him on that ground. They soon sold him to a horse dealer. After passing through many hands, he was finally purchased by Aibak. By virtue of his merits, Iltutmish soon won over the trust

and confidence of Aibak. In 1205 A.D, he defeated the Khokhars and thereby earned the praise of Sultan Muizzuddin himself who got him manumitted forthwith. Under Aibak, he was made the governor of the iqtas of Gwalior and Baran in succession. In 1206 A.D, he held the charge of Badaun as one of the most trusted lieutenants of Aibak. During the wars that he fought, Iltutmish exhibited such firmness, ability and capacity for military leadership that a majority of the nobles at Delhi decided to make him the successor of Aibak. According to Minhaj-us-siraj, Iltutmish married one of Aibak's daughter after his elevation to the throne. But other chroniclers ascribe this marriage to the life time of Aibak.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this lesson is to enable the student to understand -

- the importance of the reign of Shamsuddin Iltutmish.
- the problems faced by him and his response to the challenges.
- the conquests made by him
- the important administrative changes brought by him.
- to analyze the character and personality of Iltutmish.

### **PROBLEMS FACED BY SHAMSUDDIN ILTUTMISH (1211-1236 A.D.)**

Soon after accession to the throne of Delhi Sultanate and laying the foundation of the rule by the first Ilbari dynasty, Shamsuddin Iltutmish faced a number of problems. The first and foremost problem was to unite the Turkish nobles into a homogeneous whole under his sovereignty. Since Iltutmish was the choice of the Delhi group of Amirs and although the people of Delhi had sworn allegiance to him, yet the amirs of other regions continued to harbour discontentment and there were possibilities that a revolt may break out. Lakhnauti, under Ali Mardan Khan had bowed down before Aibak. However, Ali Mardan was now not in a mood to acknowledge Iltutmish as his sovereign. In the same way, Qubacha, the Governor of Sindh seemed determined to extend his authority to Lahore and Upper Punjab. Yaldoz, who was based in Ghazni, went a step ahead. Pretending to be the rightful successor of Mohammad Ghori, he issued a commission of viceroy to Iltutmish and also claimed suzerainty over all the Indian conquests. The Rajputs also posed a big problem. Just like the disgruntled Turks, they too took advantage of the prevailing unsettled conditions.

They withheld the payment of tribute. The principalities of Jalor and Ranthambhor declared their independence. Iltutmish also had to face the challenging task of reconciling a hostile and non-Islamic population who had not only lost their property but also their liberty. On the other hand, the threat of the fierce Mongols, under Chengiz Khan was looming large. The Mongols had already routed Central Asia and they could cross into India any time.

Thus, we see that Iltutmish was faced with a very difficult situation. He had not only to re-conquer the lost dominions but also to win over the subjects by imparting lasting peace, law and order. Fortunately, Iltutmish had immense courage, intelligence and power. He geared himself and was ultimately successful in strengthening the roots of the Sultanate of Delhi by infusing fresh vigour into it.

### **HIS CONQUESTS/CAMPAIGNS**

Iltutmish undertook the following campaigns and wars of conquest in order to subdue the rebellious elements and establish the Sultanate on a firm footing :

**(i) Subduing rebellious Turkish amirs and Hindu Chiefs :** Iltutmish was of the opinion that he must first suppress all unruly elements in the Doab and in the environs of Delhi. As several Muizzi and Qutbi amirs were collecting their forces near Delhi, Iltutmish marched against them, taking them by surprise and managed to defeat them. Most of the rebel leaders were killed. Thereafter he vanquished the Hindu and Turkish chiefs of Delhi, Badaun, Awadh, Varanasi and Tarai regions and compelled them to acknowledge his sovereignty. The above actions made the capital secure. Now Iltutmish could think of tackling other pressing problems.

**(ii) Campaigns against rivals :** Tajuddin Yaldoz was a formidable rival of Iltutmish. He had, no doubt, recognized Iltutmish as the Sultan of Delhi but at the same time tried to assert his own supremacy over him by sending him insignia of royalty. This was in a way derogatory to the power of Iltutmish, yet he made no protests for the time being because of the exigencies of the situation.

In AD 1214, Khwarizm Shah drove Yaldoz from Ghazni so that the latter had to seek refuge in Lahore. Soon after, he defeated Qubacha, the Governor of Sindh and established himself in Punjab. Iltutmish, who was well aware of the potential danger of a formidable enemy who was so close to his northern frontiers, protested against this act of

aggression. But Yaldoz disregarded this warning. Therefore in AD 1215, Iltutmish marched to Lahore and inflicted a severe defeat on Yaldoz. He was imprisoned and later put to death. Thus, Iltutmish managed to liquidate one persistent opponent of the Delhi Sultanate

**(iii) Defeat and Death of Qubacha :** After the defeat of Yaldoz, Qubacha accepted the suzerainty of Iltutmish and reoccupied Lahore. But he did not remain sincere to Iltutmish. In AD 1217, Iltutmish sent his forces to conquer Lahore. Qubacha could not hold Lahore which fell to Iltutmish. He was ultimately killed in AD 1227 after a long chase.

**(iv) The Mongol Problem :** The Mongols were a Central Asian nomadic tribe and originated from the uplands of Tartary. They had a steep and rapid rise under Chengiz Khan. The Shah of Khwarizm also failed to check their advance. Suffering a defeat at their hands, he fled towards the Caspian sea. The crown prince, Jalaluddin Mungbarani crossed the Indus and entered Punjab in AD 1221. There he asked for Iltutmish's help. Now, this posed a real dilemma for Iltutmish for he could neither afford to provoke the Mongol hostility nor could facilitate Jalal's entry into India. He realized that Jalaluddin might be preferred as Sultan because of his noble birth and impressive personality. Hence he politely brushed off the request for help and conveyed that 'the hot climate of the place will not suit such a high born prince.' In this way, Iltutmish escaped the brunt of the Mongol wrath and thus saved the infant Turkish Sultanate.

**(v) Conquest of Bengal (AD 1225-1230) :** When Iltutmish learnt that Ghiyas-ud-din Khilji had struck coins and read the Khutba in his name, he decided to conquer Bengal. In AD 1225, the Sultan himself proceeded towards Bengal at the head of a huge army. However Ghiyas soon accepted Iltutmish's authority and also paid large tributes. However, he was not true to his words. Iltutmish had barely returned, when Ghiyas-ud-din reasserted his independence. Finally, Bengal was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate in AD 1230 and Iltutmish also separated the provinces of Bengal and Bihar.

**(vi) Wars against the Rajputs (AD 1226-1234) :** The Rajputs had over a period of time gradually recovered their territory of Kalinjar, Gwalior, Ranthambhor, Ajmer, Bayana and Thangir. In AD 1226, Iltutmish recaptured Ranthambhor. He defeated and annexed Mandor and Jalor. The principalities of Bayana, Thangir, Ajmer and Sambhar were also re-occupied. In A.D 1231, Iltutmish besieged Gwalior which ultimately fell after a year-long resistance.

In AD 1233-34, Kalinjar also fell. However, Iltutmish suffered a setback in Nagdah and Gujarat. Supremacy over Malwa also was short lived. The Paramaras remained in possession of Malwa for the rest of the century. In the Gangetic valley, Iltutmish was able to crush the turbulent Hindu chiefs. He also recaptured the principalities of Badaon, Kanauj, Banaras, Awadh and Doab region.

### **HIS ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY**

Till the time of Iltutmish, the turks had established practically no contact with the rural masses. Such an arrangement had many drawbacks. It was difficult for a sense of loyalty to develop among the masses. The Hindu Rajas and chiefs remembered their former status and privileges. They regarded the Turks far inferior in culture and civilization and hence were always looking for an opportunity to flout their authority and to stop paying tribute. The rule of the Turks was thus essentially based on military strength. This was the basic reason for the outbreak of violent outburst soon after the death of Muizuddin and Qutubuddin. As Iltutmish was well aware of the prevailing state of affairs, he adopted a number of measures to improve the situation and also to give a stable government to the people. He undertook the following administrative measures:

**1. Organising a Corps of Forty Slaves :** In order to instil implicit obedience among subordinate officers, he organized a Corps of forty slaves. All the high offices and positions were given by Iltutmish to his own favourites. These were his loyal forty slaves. Hostile and disaffected Muizzi and Qutubi nobles were either killed in battle or dismissed from service. This made other nobles submissive to the Sultan. Rapid promotions of the 'Forty' impressed on their minds the need of similar devotion and loyalty or else they too might lose their jobs. In this way, Iltutmish enhanced the prestige of the Sultan by organising a new order of nobility. In order to impart greater stability to the state, Iltutmish made his selection of all persons even from foreigners as well as local inhabitants. Thus Minhaj-us-siraj was appointed chief **Qazi** and **Sadr-i-Jahan** while Fakhr-ul-mulk Isami was made **wazir**.

**2. The Iqta System :** The old pattern of dividing the kingdom into Iqtas, districts and villages continued. Each Iqtadar was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in his Iqta. Although, no detailed account of his administrative machinery are available yet there is enough evidence to prove that peace, law and order prevailed in the

countryside. Iltutmish never imposed any extra taxes and collected only what was due from the districts.

**3. Dispensation of Justice :** Iltutmish made adequate provision for justice. Ibn Batuta, the Moroccan traveller tells us that there were statues of two lions on the palace gates bearing chains in their mouths. When an aggrieved person pulled the chain, it rang a bell at the other end. Royal officers appeared promptly and did the needful. This was meant particularly for the night. During daytime, the aggrieved simply had to wear red garments. The Sultan had ordered prompt redressal of their grievances. He had also appointed amirdads in all important towns while at Delhi there were a number of **qazis**'.

**4. Coinage :** Iltutmish was the first Sultan who issued a purely Arabic coin called the **tanka** weighing 175 grains to replace the former Hindu coins. There were both gold and silver issues. The issue of these coins was another means of impressing upon the common man that the new administration had acquired stability and strength.

**5. Patron of art and learning :** Iltutmish was a great patron of learning and culture. His court at Delhi was flocked by intellectuals and poets. Minhaj-us-Siraj, the author of **Tabqat-i-Nasiri** mentions that many scholars, including those of Central Asia who had been driven by the Mongols had found asylum in his court. Amir Khusrau's father was the chief amongst them. Iltutmish is also known for his buildings. The Qutub Minar, a monument of strength and grace was built during his reign. He also built a magnificent mosque at Ajmer while his own tomb in Delhi is described as 'one of the richest example of Hindu art applied to Muslim purposes that old Delhi affords'.

**6. Secured a letter of investiture from the Abbasid Caliph :** The crowning glory of Iltutmish's career was securing a letter of investiture or a legal and spiritual sanction from the Abbasid Caliph, Al-Mustan-sir-Billah. On 19th February 1229 A.D, the emissaries from the Abbasid Caliph arrived from Baghdad and invested Iltutmish with the robe of office as the recognised "Sovereign of India and as the Aid of the Commander." His title to sovereignty now acquired a legal basis and all those who had cast aspersions on his family or former status were silenced. The investiture officially recognised the Muslim state in India as a separate entity, independent of Ghazni. Later, Iltutmish strengthened monarchy in yet another way. Prior to his death he made a will nominating his daughter Razia as his successor. In this way, the principle of hereditary monarchy was introduced in Delhi polity.

## **DEATH OF ILTUTMISH A.D 1236**

In religious matters, Iltutmish had Sunni leanings. A majority of the Turks and Indian Muslims were also Sunnis. Thus, both conviction and prudence demanded that he should make Sunnism the state religion. In order to strengthen his position, he sought the cooperation of the Sunni theologians. However, the latter misused their power to oppress their opponents. This made the Shias hostile to the state. One of their sub-sects was called the Ismailias. The Ismailias wished to capture power and therefore attempted to assassinate Iltutmish while he was at his prayers. But luckily, Iltutmish survived the attempt. All the conspirators were captured and executed. The above incident took place in about AD 1235. Soon after Iltutmish planned a fresh offensive against the Khokhars. However, he fell ill on the way and had to return to Delhi. He could not recover from his illness and died a few days later in April, A.D 1236. He was buried in the magnificent tomb which he had got constructed for himself in Delhi.

## **CHARACTER AND ESTIMATE OF ILTUTMISH**

Just, benevolent, impartial, an enthusiastic warrior, Iltutmish was a handsome, intelligent and sagacious Sultan who rose by his own efforts, to the highest peak of glory. Aibak's legacy could have proved a liability for a personality weaker than Iltutmish's. He consolidated the empire of Aibak by reconquering all that had ever belonged to it. He then gave the good system of government which though not faultless, was definitely better than the earlier one. He also managed to secure the letter of investiture from the Abbasid Caliph. He rightfully became the first Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate, both in legality and in the practical sense, for the Khutba was read and the coins were struck in his name. Iltutmish enjoys an honorable place among the empire builders of the thirteenth century. He deserves credit for consolidating the newly founded Sultanate of Delhi.

## **CONCLUSION**

Several historians have expressed their opinion as regards the personality of Iltutmish. Dr. K.A Nizami remarks, "the administrative set up of the iqta and the maintenance of the army of the Sultan were his contribution to the administration of the Delhi Sultanate". Moreover, introduction of the purely Arabic coinage was also an important contribution of Iltutmish. Professor Nizami further says, "It was he, who

gave the country a capital, an independent state, a monarchical form of government and governing class." Professor A.B.M Habibullah writes, "Aibak outlined the Delhi Sultanate and its sovereign status. Iltutmish was unquestionably its first king."

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**B. A. SEMESTER - II    Unit-I**

**HISTORY**

**Lesson - 3**

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**RAZIA SULTAN : ACCESSION AND ROLE OF NOBILITY**

Introduction

Objectives

Accession of Razia Sultan

Problems faced by Razia (1236-1240 A.D)

Her Policy

Role of the Nobility

Deposition of Razia

Her Death (1240 A.D)

Personality of Razia Sultan

Conclusion

Glossary

Self Assessment Questions

Suggested Readings

**INTRODUCTION**

Razia-al-Din, better known as Razia Sultan was born in 1205 AD at Badaun. She was the daughter of Sultan Shamsuddin Iltutmish and Qutub Begum. Razia was very dear to her father. He doted on her, provided her education and

military training. She was a good horse rider too. She used to attend the court of her father like other princes and acquired sufficient experience in statecraft in her youth. She possessed all the qualities befitting a ruler. Nasiruddin Mahmud, the eldest son of Iltutmish, who was by far the most capable of his children, died a premature death in 1229 A.D. Iltutmish did not have a good opinion of his second son Rukunuddin Feroze because of his ease loving habits and excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures. He, therefore, wished his daughter Razia to succeed him to the throne. Nevertheless, on Iltutmish's death, contrary to his wishes, the Qazis of Delhi and the Wazir, Nizam-ul -Malik Muhammad Junaidi in alliance with Shah Turkan, the mother of Feroze, put Rukunuddin Feroze Shah on the throne. But Rukunuddin was a weak and incompetent ruler. He was soon deposed. Razia, with the support of the military officers and the people of Delhi, ascended the throne. Shah Turkan and her son died where they were imprisoned.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this lesson is to enable the student to understand the following :

- to know the important role played by Razia Sultan, the only woman to be seated on the throne of Delhi Sultanate in the 13th Century A.D.
- to learn that her short reign period was full of struggle-a struggle for supremacy, between the crown and the ambitious but orthodox nobility.
- to realize that the only fault that Razia had, despite having all the qualities needed to be a good ruler, was that she was born a woman and hence not considered worthy enough to rule in the 13th Century medieval India.

### **ACCESSION OF RAZIA SULTAN**

Razia's enthronement in 1236 AD had offended many people. It had provoked the hostility of the provincial Governors of Badaun, Multan, Hansi and Lahore as also of the Wazir, Nazam-ul-Mulk, who continued to feel ignored and isolated from the Delhi politics. There was a likelihood of a revolt breaking out.

### **PROBLEMS FACED BY RAZIA (1236 A.D TO 1240 A.D)**

Razia had managed to wear the crown but it was a crown of thorns that she wore. There were many nobles and provincial governors who were unhappy to see her on the throne. They broke out in revolt. There was a possibility of their revolt taking alarming

proportions, had Razia not acted swiftly and deftly handled the situation. Razia knew about the weakness of her armed forces. Hence, she avoided a military confrontation and instead, resorted to diplomacy. She exploited the mutual jealousy of the rebel chiefs to her advantage. She won over Izuddin Salari and Kabir Khan to her side and they gave wide publicity to the fact that a number of rebel chiefs had joined her and had promised to bring others in chains before her. This caused such distrust among the rebels that they fled to safety without reference to anyone else. Razia now took the offensive against the erstwhile allies of Salari and Kabir Khan. She had succeeded in her conspiracy. The morale of the rebels had been broken. The prestige of Razia suddenly went up. The provincial governors were so overawed by her, that they willingly submitted to her.

### **HER POLICY**

Having strengthened her position, Razia next took a number of steps to enhance the prestige of the sovereign. To assert her position effectively, she abandoned **pardah**, held open court, listened to the grievances of her subjects and exercised general supervision over the work of every department. She impressed everyone by her ability, love of justice, recognition of merit and capacity for hard work.

Razia bestowed the **wazarat** on Muhazzabuddin. The jagirs of Kabir Khan and Salari were enhanced. Kabir Khan was made governor of Lahore. Tughril-i-Tughan Khan, the governor of Lakhnauti was rewarded with vice-royalty, for having kept himself aloof from the revolt. In order to break the ascendancy of the Turkish Amirs, she appointed a number of non-Turkish nobles to high posts. A number of Indian Muslims were appointed as **Qazis**. She appointed an Abyssinian officer, Jamal-ud-din Yaqut as **Amir Akhur**. Malik Hasan Ghorī was given command over the army. She also organized an offensive against the Rajputs of Ranthambhor and after capturing the fort got it razed to the ground, lest it should fall into their hands again.

### **ROLE OF THE NOBILITY**

The growing power of the **Chihalgani** Turkish nobles was thus checked by Razia. But she could not keep them under control for long. To add to the troubles, there were many people who could not bear the idea of a woman being the head of the state. Others felt unhappy because she would not allow them as much latitude as they desired. Others started a whispering campaign against her because she had shown some favour to Jamaluddin Yaqut. In 1238 A.D, Razia summoned Ziauddin Junaidi, governor of

Gwalior, to court because he was suspected of preparing for rebellion. After his visit to the court, he was heard of no more. This had very unfavourable repercussions. It was rumoured that the queen had got him treacherously murdered. His offense was that he was a relative of Junaidi, the **wazir**. Thus, Razia was charged with organising political murders. The outcome of this incident was that all those who feared being suspects in the eyes of the Queen became apprehensive about their security and became political rebels. Some Provincial governors became hostile because they thought that the Queen would annihilate all the Shamsi nobles.

### **DEPOSITION OF RAZIA**

The Turkish nobles, disgruntled as they were, formed a plan of an organized resistance. They wanted to weaken royalty permanently vis-a-vis the nobility. The leader of this conspiracy was Aitigin who had risen from the office of the governor of Badaun to be the **Mir Hajib** at Delhi. Aitigin felt that no large scale rising was possible in Delhi as long as the Queen was present there. Nor was it possible to murder her because of her precautionary measures. Nor was there any guarantee of success even if the provincial governors combined to lay siege to Delhi. The plans were therefore chalked out very carefully. Firstly, Altuniya, the governor of Bhatinda revolted. Razia at once proceeded against him at the head of an army. In the meanwhile, Aitigin and other conspirators captured and killed Yaqut. Then they joined hands with Altuniya to defeat and capture Razia. She was entrusted to the care of Altuniya and the rest of the nobles returned to Delhi.

In the meanwhile, in Delhi, the third son of Iltutmish, Bahram was elevated to the throne, when the news of Razia's imprisonment reached the capital. It is sad that although the people of Delhi were in favour of Razia, they could do little since they did not have a leader. The nobles who returned from Bhatinda recognised Bahram as the Sultan, thereby strengthening his position.

### **HER DEATH (1240 A.D)**

Razia was in prison. She wanted to regain her lost position and seize Delhi. In the meanwhile Altuniya succumbed to the charming personality and intelligence of Razia and married her. He tried to seize power on behalf of his wife and sovereign but was defeated. Altuniya and Razia were both killed by Hindus while they were escaping in disguise.

## **PERSONALITY OF RAZIA SULTAN**

Razia Sultan occupies a remarkable place among the 13th Century Turkish rulers of India. She was intelligent, prudent, benevolent, was popular among the people of Delhi, a good warrior and one who possessed diplomatic skills. She handled many difficult situations with her tact and ability. She was successful in reducing the power of the Turks and was carefully building up an alternative group but her reign was suddenly cut short. Her success was, therefore partial. Upto A.D 1238, she succeeded in almost every undertaking but since A.D 1239, opposition gained momentum and she failed to overcome it. Although a powerful and charismatic personality, two things went against her. The first was, that she was a woman and secondly, the orthodoxy, selfishness and strength of the nobility.

Razia has an honoured place in the medieval Indian history, for she was the first and only woman sovereign to sit on the throne of Delhi Sultanate.

## **CONCLUSION**

The death of Razia in A.D 1240 ushered in any era of continuous struggle between the crown and the nobility. This continued for another six years. The nobles had become powerful over the years and wished to rule in actuality. The descendants of the family of Iltutmish could not rule for long and were deposed in quick succession. It is at this point of time that the age of Balban began. This will be discussed in the forthcoming chapter.

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**B. A. SEMESTER - II      Unit-I**

**History**

**Lesson - 4**

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**GHIYAS-UD-DIN BALBAN : THEORY OF KINGSHIP AND  
ACHIEVEMENTS**

Introduction

Objectives

Balban as minister under Nasir-ud-din Mahmud

Balban, as Sultan (1266-1287A.D) Problems faced by him

Balban's Theory of Kingship

Main principles of Balban's theory of kingship

Personality assessment of Balban

Greatest of the Mamluk Sultan

As a military genius

A staunch Sunni Muslim

A kind hearted man

An efficient administrator

As a patron of learning

Conclusion

Glossary

Self Assessment Questions

Suggested Readings

## INTRODUCTION

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban belonged to the Ilbari tribe of his master Iltutmish. His original name was Bahauddin. In his youth, he fell into the hands of the Mongols who sold him as a slave to Jamaluddin of Basra. Jamaluddin was a virtuous man and brought up Balban 'like a son'. In 1232AD, Balban was purchased by Iltutmish who made him his personal attendant. He quickly rose to be one of the '**Corps of Forty Slaves**' - the most trusted and powerful Turkish slave officers of Iltutmish. He became more powerful under the weak successors of Iltutmish. He was **amir-i-shikar** or lord of the stables under Behram and **amir-i-Hajib** (lord Chamberlain) under Masud. The territories of Hansi and Rewari were held by him as personal estate. He played a prominent role in the installation of Nasiruddin Mahmud to the throne. As a result, Nasiruddin not only gave him the highest office but also his confidence. Balban gave his daughter in marriage to Sultan Nasiruddin and this matrimonial alliance made him the most honoured person in the state. Later, a daughter of the Sultan Nasiruddin by another wife was betrothed to Balban's son, Bughra Khan. Consequently, when the Sultan died after a prolonged illness, Balban had no difficulty in mounting the throne. Balban had already been nominated as the successor of the late Sultan. The officers of the state had got used to acting under the directions of Balban and hence raised no hue and cry. Hence when Balban ascended the throne in 1266 A.D and ushered in the rule of the second Ilbari dynasty, it was welcomed by all.

## OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lesson is to enable the student to understand -

- the personality of Ghiyas-ud-din Balban who emerges as the greatest of the Mamluk Sultan.
- the theory of kingship enunciated by Sultan Balban.
- to know about the achievements of this multi faceted personality.

## BALBAN AS MINISTER UNDER NASIR-UD-DIN MAHMUD

Balban had played a prominent role in the installation of Nasiruddin Mahmud as the Sultan of Delhi Sultanate. To cement his position further, he gave his daughter in marriage to the Sultan. He managed to get all the key appointments in the state for his close relatives. Balban himself was appointed as the **Naib-i-Mamlakat** in 1249 A.D. He had

emerged as the most powerful and influential minister at that time. The next step of Balban was to do away with the importance of the non-Turkish Amirs. He managed to do it very shrewdly. Now Balban became the **de facto ruler**. Nasir-ud-din, although the Sultan, was now fully aware of the helplessness of his situation and therefore devoted most of his time to calligraphy etc. He eventually faded away into oblivion.

Balban had now two objectives, viz. of strengthening his position and consolidating the State. He was faced with three immediate tasks -

- (i) to suppress the rebellions of scheming Muslim rivals.
- (ii) to crush the Hindu revolts.
- (iii) to keep the Mongols away from the North-West frontier

In order to tackle these problems successfully, Balban adopted a policy of severity, coercion and ruthless repression against all those who dared to question his authority and jeopardize the security of the state. And this included the Turks too. As a result of following such a strong and ruthless policy, he earned the epithet of '**being a man of blood and iron.**'

Balban remained the **de facto** ruler during Nasiruddin's reign, for a period of twenty years. In these twenty years, Balban achieved twin objectives, viz. consolidation of his own position in the State as well as safe guarding the security of the State itself.

#### **BALBAN, AS SULTAN (1266-1287 A.D)**

**Problems faced by him :** On his accession to the throne, Balban was faced with a number of political and administrative problems. First and foremost he had to raise the prestige of the crown. Owing to the incompetence of the successors of Ilutush, the nobles, particularly those who belonged to the gang of 'Forty' treated the Sultan like a puppet. The nobles were so power-drunk that they became virtual king makers. The provincial governors were willful and usually insubordinate towards the central government. The danger of Mongol raids was looming large. Powerful Hindu states in Rajputana and central India had resumed their offensive while the rebellious Hindu chieftains in the Doab and the Gangetic valley posed serious law and order problems within the State. The financial structure of the State was in a tottering condition. Balban was thus faced with several challenges that he had to face bravely. He, therefore took the following steps:-

**Reorganisation of Army :** Balban realised fully well that it was the military upon whose strength and solidarity depended the existence of the state. Therefore, he re-organised the royal army and put it on a war footing. The army establishment was separated from the rest of the civil department. Imad-ul-Mulk, a capable military general was appointed the **Diwan-i-Ariz** or the army minister with powers equivalent to those of the other central ministers. However, the supreme command of the royal forces was reserved and it remained in the hands of the Sultan. Although reluctant, Balban also continued the policy of granting lands to the nobles in lieu of military service. The provincial governors, **iqtadars** and other fief holders were supposed to provide military contingents to the central government as per specifications, as and when required. Balban took personal interest in the whole matter, remained vigilant and thereby the efficiency and tone of the feudal contingents was considerably improved.

**Restored law and order :** Protection of life and property of the people living in and around the capital was taken up as a priority, by Balban. As per the details provided by Ziauddin Barani, during the period of the weak successors of Iltutmish, the Meos or Mewatis in the neighbourhood of Delhi had grown in power and multiplied in numbers.' These Meos had become so bold that they resorted to highway robbery on a large scale. They even carried out plundering raids within the capital, They broke into the houses of people at night and looted them. Trade could not be carried out because of their activities. During the first two years of his reign, Balban suppressed the Meos with all his might. Forests around Delhi were cut down, forts were built and Meos were ruthlessly slaughtered. The Afghans were assigned many **thanas**' or military outposts. Tax free villages were set apart for their maintenance. Thus, Delhi was freed from the fear of Meos. Similar actions were taken in regions like the doab, Awadh, Katehar etc. These harsh measures of Balban had the desired effect. All opposition was crushed and the people bowed down before the might of the new Sultan.

**Tackling the Mongol menace :** The menace of the Mongols constantly exercised the mind and energies of Balban. It resulted in confining Balban to the areas near the capital. The recurring invasions of the Mongols were faced by Balban with a great deal of forbearance and fortitude. He became the first Delhi Sultan who undertook long term measures to systematise and strengthen the North-West frontier. He did away with the disloyal chiefs and re-organised the frontier provinces. He built forts and garrisoned them with able Afghan soldiers. After the death of Sher Khan, he divided the frontier province

into two parts. Sunam and Samana were given to Bughra Khan while Multan, Sindh and Lahore were placed under Prince Muhammad. Muhammad was Balban's son and heir apparent. In this way, the duo successfully contained the Mongol expansion. In 1286 A.D however, the Mongols attacked again. Prince Muhammad was killed in this contest.

**Suppression of Tughril's rebellion in Bengal :** During the reign period of Balban, only one Turkish noble rebelled. He was Tughril Khan, the governor of Bengal. Tughril probably thought that the Sultan being an old man, was preoccupied with the Mongol problem. So, at such a time, he declared his independence . He assumed the style of Mughisuddin. Not only this, he minted coins and had the **khutba** read in his own name. When Balban was informed of this revolt, he was infuriated. The first Imperial army sent against him was however, defeated. Many soldiers of this imperial army deserted to the enemy, probably due to lure of gold. A second expedition was thereafter sent by Balban. This too, much to the chagrin of the Sultan met with a similar fate. Thereafter, the Sultan himself led the third expedition. He was beside himself with rage when he learnt that Tughril Khan had fled towards the jungles of Jajnagar. Balban pursued the rebels. Tughril was mercilessly beheaded. Barani informs us that a punishment of unprecedented intensity was inflicted upon the people and armies of Bengal. Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan as the Governor with a warning that if he ever dared to rebel, a similar fate awaited him. The ruthless suppression of the revolt in Bengal in 1279 A.D greatly enhanced the prestige of Balban.

#### **BALBAN'S THEORY OF KINGSHIP**

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban was a despot. As discussed in the foregoing pages, he succeeded in establishing an absolute monarchy by suppressing all oppositions to the crown. He traced his descent from the mythical Turkish hero, Afrasiyab and thereby sought to create a halo of superiority round the monarchy. He claimed to have the divine sanction to rule as the Sultan. The Caliph of Baghdad was no more but Balban continued to inscribe his name on the coins so that his co-religionists might extend their whole hearted obedience to him as 'the right hand man of the Caliph' Barani informs us that the Sultan occasionally spoke to his dear son Muhammad about his principles of government and advised him to follow them in his conduct.

## MAIN PRINCIPLES OF BALBAN'S 'THEORY OF KINGSHIP'

(i) **Sovereign is 'shadow of God on earth'** : Balban laid great stress on the epithet Zil-i-Ilahi viz. 'the shadow of God' for his own self. It was even inscribed on the coins. As 'vice regent of God on earth', Balban wanted it to be known that he was above law as well as the Turkish ruling elite who had brought the Sultanate into existence. He ruled by divine sanction' and was hence not answerable to any worldly authority for the discharge of his powers and functions as sovereign. By doing so, he attempted to raise the status and prestige of the crown.

(ii) **Adopting a dignified reserve** : Balban wanted to substantiate that he had a claim of divine origin. Hence, he brought about a radical change in his attire as well as social etiquettes. He gave up drinking, stopped mixing with his courtiers, banned public drinking by the nobility and remained aloof and reserved from the people at large. Balban always maintained the external dignity and displayed an awe-inspiring personality.

(iii) **Organised a grand durbar** : Balban behaved like a typical 'oriental despot' who displayed his autocratic powers and the grandeur and pomp of his realm through his court. He organized a grand durbar on the Persian model which earned a fame far and wide for its magnificence. Balban sat on a huge throne, bedecked with rich drapery and precious diamonds which dazzled the eyes of the onlooker. Tall and muscular Turkish guards stood behind him, with drawn out swords. His courtiers wore the prescribed rich garments. He introduced two Persian customs in his court. The first was **Sijda** or prostration before the Sultan and **paibos** or kissing the feet of the Sultan. Such customs obviously left the nobility and all other visitors utterly humbled and dumb struck with awe and fear. The court followed strict discipline. All persons except two representatives of the Caliph had to remain standing throughout the court proceedings. Balban spoke little and neither allowed people to speak without seeking his permission. None dared to interrupt the Sultan or disobey his orders.

(iv) **Preference given to high born Turks** : Balban openly discriminated between the high born and the low-born people. Even among the high born, preferential treatment was given on the basis of race considerations. He never gave high posts to non Turks or men of doubtful antecedents. Noble pedigree became a fad with him. On many occasions, his behaviour was unjustified. Yet no one dared to raise their voice.

(v) **Deeply religious and devoted to Islam** : Balban conducted himself as a deeply religious man. He offered namaz and observed other Islamic rituals as prescribed. He had great reverence for the ulema and the saints and held discussions with them on shariat and religious philosophy. However, as per information provided by Ferishta, he discarded all humanitarian considerations and committed untold barbarities on innocent subjects under the garb of restoring law and order.

(vi) **Establishment of spy system** : As Balban wanted to establish an absolute monarchy, he set up a network of spies throughout the Sultanate. These spies or **barids** were under the direct control of the Sultan. They dispatched prompt reports to the Sultan about all the important developments in their areas of posting. A watch was kept on everyone - nobles, princes and other members of the royal household. The **barids** were paid well by the Sultan. The efficient spy system struck terror into the hearts of the government employees and strengthened the hold of the Central Government and the Sultan over them.

### **PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT OF BALBAN**

Balban was one of the greatest Sultans of Delhi. He was a multi faceted personality and succeeded in establishing an absolute monarchy, thereby consolidating the Turkish rule in Northern India.

**Greatest of the Mamluk Sultan** : Ghiyas-ud-din Balban has been regarded as the greatest of the Mamluk Sultan. He came on the throne during difficult times. Yet, he managed to tide over the difficulties and even enhanced the dignity of the sovereign vis-à-vis the nobility.

**As a military genius** : Balban was a seasoned military genius. Before becoming the Sultan and after sitting on the throne of Delhi Sultanate, he discerned clearly the necessity and importance of a strong army. Hence, he took steps to make it efficient. True, he did not resort to fresh conquests, yet he kept a firm hold over the territorial heritage that he received from his master, Iltutmish. Balban also managed to protect the Sultanate from internal disorders as well as external dangers like the Mongols. He restored law and order in the Sultanate and crushed the insubordinate officials and anti social elements.

**A staunch Sunni Musalman** : Balban scrupulously followed the principles of his faith.

He understood that according to the Islamic ideals, it is the duty of the sovereign to promote by his conduct, respect for the faith among his people. He gave up wine and gaming, partly because they were forbidden by the Islamic law but chiefly because they promoted good fellowship and familiarity. He spent his leisure in the company of saints and scholars. He respected the **ulema** though he did not permit them to interfere in state affairs. He continued to display the name of the Caliph on his coins despite the fact that the office of the Caliph had ceased to exist.

**A kind hearted man** : Despite his stiff exterior, Balban was a kind person. He helped the poor and the helpless with doles and charity. As Sultan, whenever the army camped at a particular place, he gave special attention to the poor, the helpless, women, children and the old. He ensured that none of them suffered any loss or was harmed in any way. Whenever there was a river or a marsh, he helped the people to cross, providing them with boats or even his own elephants. He loved his sons dearly. When he was given the news of the death of his dear son and heir apparent Muhammad, who died fighting the Mongols in 1286 A.D, he was deeply shocked. He could not survive the grief for long and passed away in 1287 A.D.

**An efficient administrator** : Balban organised his administration efficiently. Centralization became the key note of his administration. The Sultan was the fountain of all authority and none including his own sons, who held important provinces, were allowed much initiative. All important issues were to be forwarded to the Sultan and his orders were enforced with strict rigour. He also imparted justice with utmost rigour. The Sultan thus managed to raise the prestige of the crown. His might was made known to one and all.

**As a patron of learning** : Balban was a great patron of learning. A galaxy of scholars, saints and poets adorned his court. This included Amir Khusrau also known as Tuti-e-Hind. He gave shelter to several literary personalities who had fled Central Asia due to the Mongol menace. They were also provided with economic assistance.

## CONCLUSION

Balban was at the helm of affairs in the Delhi Sultanate, first as a minister of Sultan Nasir-ud-din and then a Sultan for over forty years. This period is unique not only on account of the length of Balban's rule but also because of his incessant and untiring efforts to consolidate the monarchy and the State. Balban was an ambitious Sultan. Once he attained the office of the Sultan, he never allowed his personal sentiments to encroach upon the sovereignty of the Sultan. He imparted security and law and order to his dominions and successfully elevated monarchy as the hall-mark of all activity. While on the one hand fear and awe of him gripped the hearts of amirs, nobles, **ulema** and the commoners, his fair sense of justice won the hearts of his subjects and they became his ardent supporters.

**JALAL-UD-DIN FIRUZ KHILJI (1290-1296 A.D)**  
**CONQUESTS**

Introduction

Objectives

5.3 Early life of Jalal-ud-din

Early Measures

The Policy of Jalal-ud-din

Encounter with the Mongols (1292 AD)

War against the Rajputs

Conquest of Bhilsa (1292 AD)

Conquest of Devgiri (1296 AD)

Return of Ala-ud-din to Kara

Murder of Jalal-ud-din

An Estimate of Jalal-ud-din Firuz

Suggested Readings

Possible Questions

**INTRODUCTION**

**Barani** says that the Khiljis were distinct from the Turks. But he does not mention the race to which they belonged. Later historians have indulged in a lot

of speculation about their origin. The fact however is that as **Tarikh-i-Fakhruddin** records, the Khiljis were one of the 64 clans of the Turks. Modern research also lends support to this view. The Khiljis migrated to Afghanistan in the 4th century A.D. and in course of time they adopted the habits and modes of life of their neighbours. This led to their being mistaken for Afghans. Pressure of Mongols pushed the Khiljis into India. This happened in the twenties of the thirteenth century. Stray individuals of this clan had come to India even earlier with the armies of Ghazni and Ghor. From the time of Iltutmish, they started pouring in large groups and the worthier sort among them entered the service of the Ilbaris.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of writing this lesson is to enable the students to understand:

- (a) Origin of the Khiljis and Jalal-ud-din's rise to power.
- (b) The new policy and principles adopted by the Sultan to achieve his political objectives.
- (c) Expansion and Consolidation of the Khilji empire under Jalal-ud-din.

### **EARLY LIFE OF JALAL-UD-DIN:**

We have no reliable account of the genealogy and early life of Jalal-ud-din. All that we know is that he entered the service of the state under Nasiruddin or Balban and was enrolled in the army. The generals deputed by Balban to defend the north-western frontier included Jalal-ud-din also. Under Kaiqubad, he held the government of Samana and was appointed **Sar-i-Jandar** (chief of the royal body guards). After Nizam-ud-din's downfall, Kaiqubad appointed him **Ariz-i-Mamalik** and conferred on him the title of Shayasta Khan. After this, his rise was meteoric. As head of the family, he won the support not only of the Khiljis but also of some Turks and a large number of Indian Muslims. Khiljis included many ambitious young men. They incited Jalal-ud-din to capture the throne and did things which left him no alternative but to do so. Ala-ud-din killed Aitmar Kachchhan. This necessitated bringing the child king under their control. Again on their exhortation and

forced by the then political situation, he had first to accept the office of the regent and then in June 1290, he had to occupy the throne itself in the interest of peace and security of the realm.

### **EARLY MEASURES**

Jalal-ud-din secured sovereign authority no doubt but he did not try to enter the old capital Delhi. Instead, he had himself crowned at Kilughari, the new capital of Kaiqubad. Many Turks and citizens of Delhi remained disaffected towards Jalal-ud-din even after his accession to the throne. But by the nobility of his character, justice, generosity and piety, he soon won the confidence of his people and the sentiment of hatred was replaced by that of affection. This was the outcome of Sultan's early measures. He appointed Khiljis to most of the higher offices in the state. But to make his authority broad-based, some posts were offered to non Khiljis too. All these appointments were announced in the court so that it may be widely known that the Sultan did not regard himself the representative of any particular group or race but that he regarded himself as the custodian of all his subjects and particularly that of the Muslims.

### **THE POLICY OF JALAL-UD-DIN**

This liberal policy brought the Sultan in good repute and his competence as a ruler was now generally recognized. Gradually, opposition of the citizens of Delhi died down. On an assurance by the Kotwal, the Sultan agreed to go there. During the six years of his rule, Jalal-ud-din followed a new policy. Till then, the Sultans had tried to rule by terror and force. Jalal-ud-din tried to base his government on the gratitude, affection and devotion of the people. In suppressing internal disorder or defence against foreign invasion, he was prepared to indulge in unavoidable bloodshed but because he recognized the worth of every human life he was opposed to needless spilling of even one drop of blood. Without in any way relaxing or undermining the efficiency of the state, he was determined to put his liberal ideas into practice. The various campaigns and conquests of Jalal-ud-din Firuz may be discussed as under:

#### **Encounter with the mongols (1292 A.D.):**

In 1292, there was a Mongol invasion. Abdullah, the grandson of

Halaku Khan was leading an army of 1, 50,000 soldiers in India. The Mongols spread themselves all over the north western region and penetrated as far as Sunam which was plundered and laid waste. Jalal-ud-din marched at the head of 30,000 soldiers to reinforce the frontier army. He strongly held the eastern bank of the Indus to arrest their advance. After some skirmishes, the Mongols were able to cross the river in force. The Sultan quickly moved to attack them and inflicted a crushing defeat on them. Thousands of Mongols were taken captives. Finally Abdullah and Jalal came to terms and Abdullah returned to Afghanistan. About four thousand Mongols embraced Islam and settled down in India. The Sultan married his daughter to Ulghu Khan, a descendant of Chengez Khan and leader of the Mongol settlers. They were assigned quarters in the neighbourhood of Delhi and it came to be known as Mughalpura. The youthful Khilji noble criticized Jalal-ud-din for having followed a policy of appeasement towards the Mongols. As a matter of fact, it was a great achievement of Jalal-ud-din Feroz that he had been successful in the propagation of Islam among the Mongols. His policy also led to establishment of friendly relations between the Sultan and the Mongols so that they never invaded the country again during his reign. Notwithstanding this, Sindh was placed under the unified command of Arkali Khan for better integration of plans of frontier defence.

### **Wars against the Rajputs**

Jalal-ud-din's foreign policy is also said to have been 'weak and imbecile'; his feeble-mindedness and tender nature cast its reflection on his dealings with the neighbouring Rajput states:

In 1291, Jalal-ud-din led an expedition into the Rajputana against the Chauhanas, whose power was then centered at Ranthambhore under the famed Hamir Deva and was expanding in all directions. They had practically isolated Ajmer and even the province of Haryana felt their pressure, already intensified by the Mewati tribesmen, whom even Balban's exertions had failed to reduce. A large scale offensive against them was indeed as urgent as the recovery of the Indus frontier. By inclination and

long experience, Jalal-ud-din Firoz longed for an opportunity to carry on 'holy war and fight open battles'; but a sustained campaign to reimpose paramountcy required more calculated aggressiveness and persistence than what he admittedly possessed.

Passing through Rewari and Narnaul, the royal forces entered Alwar and invested Manadawar, perhaps the northern most outposts of Chauhans. The fortress offered no great resistance and the ravaged countryside yielded a rich booty in cattle. Advancing towards Ranthambhore through the Kerauli region, west of the Chambal, the royal forces arrived in two weeks near **Jhain**, which guarded the approaches to the Chauhan capital. A reconnoitering party sent under Qara Bahadur having repulsed a Rajput sally, a larger detachment was sent the next day, which pushing to within two farsangs of the fort, signally defeated a much stronger force of Rajputs, who foolishly came out of the fortress to engage the attackers in a frontal battle. The Chauhan commander, a renowned warrior named **Gardau Saini**, was killed and the vanquished Rajputs, fleeing in all directions, were pursued across the Chambal, Kunwari and Banas rivers. Following this defeat, the commandant evacuated the Jhain fortress and retired to Ranthambhor. Jhain was then dismantled while the soldiers plundered and gathered booty, the Sultan's iconoclastic zeal sought satisfaction in breaking the idols even though he admired the sculptures and the carvings.

While **Jhain** was thus reduced, reportedly with surprising ease, the capture of Ranthambhore proved a more difficult proposition. The fortress was strong and situated on a steep hill. A siege was laid to the fortress. The Sultan went round inspecting the dispositions of his army and the defences of the fort. His scouts were also active collecting relevant information. They told him that the local Raja had collected a large force and was preparing for a long siege. The Sultan himself had been impressed by the strength of its defences. The fort could, therefore, be conquered only after a protracted siege which might drag on for years. The Khilji revolution was only a recent affair and it was not quite safe to stay away from the capital for a long period. He, therefore, raised the siege and retired to Delhi.

The decision of the Sultan has been described as an act of cowardice and weakness. Barani says that Ahmad Chap had also insisted that the Sultan should retreat only after capturing the fort. But the Sultan did not agree. He is reported to have said that he valued a hair of Muslims far more than ten such forts and therefore, he would not waste Muslim lives in an attempt to conquer the fort. This statement of Barani does not appear reliable because if the Sultan was really so anxious to save the lives of Muslims, he should have forsaken the very idea of conquest even after this campaign. The retreat from Ranthambhore was thus inspired not by senility but by weighty reasons of state and military necessity.

In 1292, he attacked **Mandor and Jhain** a second time. But finding permanent conquest untenable Jalal-ud-din satisfied himself with mere plunder and loot. All these efforts were probably a part of a larger scheme of conquest of Ranthambhore.

### **Conquest of Bhilsa 1292 A.D. :**

Jalal-ud-din Khilji's reign is marked by two more successful expeditions by the Sultan but by his youthful nephew and son-in-law Ali Gurshasp later on known as Ala-ud-din Khilji, the governor of Kara since 1291 A.D.

After making necessary preparations, Ala-ud-din sought permission for an attack on Bhilsa. It was readily granted. Ala-ud-din went so far that the people of Bhilsa came to know of his approach only when he had come very close to the town. They could improvise no defence so that the city passed into the hands of Ala-ud-din who systematically plundered the treasures of temples and rich merchants. He thus secured immense booty. Ala-ud-din carried it all to Delhi and presented the whole of it to the Sultan who was greatly delighted at the sight of various articles of booty. As a reward for this brilliant exploit, the sultan appointed him **ariz-i-mumalik**- 'the minister of war' and doubled his administrative assignment by adding Oudh to the **iqta** of Kara.

### **Conquest of Devagiri (1296 AD)**

This meant a steep rise in the position and status of Ala-ud-din. This unexpected success acted as a further incentive to his designs. He now

planned the conquest of Devagiri. While busy with the Bhilsa campaign, he had heard numerous stories about the wealth of the King of Devagiri. The kingdom of Devagiri extended over the entire tract of land lying between the Vindhya and the Krishna, i.e., modern Maharashtra. Under the wise and benevolent rule of its kings, the people of Devagiri had enjoyed internal peace and freedom from external invasions for over a century. They had flourishing trade and commerce relation with the overseas countries. The Yadava rulers had garnered much wealth, power and prestige by successful wars against Malwa, Gujarat and Mysore. From the beginning of the 13th century, their fame rose so high that none dared invade their territory.

Initial success at Bhilsa, emboldened Ala-ud-din to plan a bigger expedition against Devagiri and lay his hands upon the fabulous wealth of the south which had so far remained free from muslim invaders. He made vigorous preparations for over two years for the proposed enterprise; and secured adequate information, through the native travellers as well as his own spies, regarding the southern route and the political developments of the region albeit he kept his plan a closely guarded secret. Ala-ud-din obtained sanction from the Sultan for the conquest of Chanderi and its adjoining territories and left Kara with 8000 picked cavalry on February 26, 1296. The administration of Kara and Oudh was entrusted by him to his close associate Malik Alaul Mulk, uncle of Zia-ud-din Barani, the celebrated historian of the times to come. Alaul Mulk kept Delhi in ignorance about the real designs and movements of Ala-ud-din Khilji by sending 'fabricated news'. Ala-ud-din's younger brother Almas Beg safeguarded his interests at the royal court in Delhi.

Ala-ud-din actually marched to the neighbourhood of Chanderi, then took a sharp turn towards the south, crossed the Vindhya and reached Ellichpur-'the northern outpost' of the Yadava Kingdom. In order to lull the suspicions of the neighbouring Hindu chieftains, he spread the rumour that he was a run away prince from the Sultanate, intending to seek refuge in the south. After allowing two days' rest to his troopers at Ellichpur, Ala-ud-din thundered at the gates of Devagiri to the great bewilderment

of Raja Ram Chandra Deva. It was a bolt from the blue for the latter. About this time, the best part of the Maratha army had been taken farther south by the crown prince Singhana to settle some border dispute with a neighbouring state, a fact which seems to have been already known to Ala-ud-din Khilji through his secret agents. Ram Chandra Deva shut himself up within the hill-fort, giving a free hand to Ala-ud-din to plunder the town and take its leading citizens as captives. The invader laid siege to the fort and gave out that he constituted only an advance guard of Delhi and that the Sultan was on his way to Devagiri with 20,000 strong army. Totally nonplussed and dejected, Ram Chandra Deva sued for peace and the release of his citizens on payment of a huge ransom. Before the transaction could be completed, Singhana rushed back from the far south with the Maratha army. His father sent him a message that a deal had already been struck with the invader; nonetheless, Singhana challenged Ala-ud-din to surrender the booty and vacate their kingdom. A dare devil Ala-ud-din left his lieutenant Nusrat Khan with only one thousand horse to continue the siege of the fort and himself gave battle to the Marathas at a short distance from Devgiri. After a day long battle, the Turks were heavily outnumbered and badly mauled. They were on the verge of collapse where Nusrat Khan, without seeking permission from Ala-ud-din, raised the siege of the fort and jumped into the battle field with his small contingent to the great relief of his colleagues. The Marathas mistook them for the royal army of Delhi, lost courage and fled the field. Undaunted courage, better, war strategy and good fortune turned the scales in favour of Ala-ud-din who quickly returned to the siege of the fort and within a couple of days, brought Ram Chandra Deva to his knees. The latter had to part with a far greater war indemnity than before and promised to pay the revenues of Ellichpur as tribute to Ala-ud-din, who hastened back to Kara, laden with immense booty.

#### **Return of Ala-ud-din to Kara:**

Ala-ud-din now quickly retraced his steps towards Kara. Jalal-ud-din had in the meantime marched to Gwalior and his scouts had informed him that instead of attacking Chanderi, Ala-ud-din had gone to Devagiri

from where he was returning with an immense booty. The Sultan was greatly delighted to hear of his success. He fondly hoped that this time too Ala-ud-din would place the entire booty at his feet. Still he called a meeting of the chief dignitaries of the state and took counsel with them about the proper course of action. Ahmad Chap had always recommended strong measures. He recommended that anybody in the possession of huge booty that Ala-ud-din had secured would turn rebellious. The Sultan should, therefore intercept him on the way in which case Ala-ud-din would be forced to surrender all his booty to the Sultan whether he liked it or not.

The Sultan might then take him to Delhi, if he liked, in all honour and might confer on him additional jagir, in recognition of his service. That would involve no risk. But if Ala-ud-din were permitted to return to Kara, serious consequences might follow. Others opposed this view probably to curry favour with the Sultan. They argued that if an attempt was made to intercept Ala-ud-din, he would naturally be frightened and at least his soldiers would run away for safety. This may mean dispersal of the booty and consequent loss to the Sultan. Jalaludin approved this suggestion and decided to return to Delhi.

**On his way back**, the Chauhans of **Asirgarh** attempted to intercept Ala-ud-din's train laden heavily with booty, but were repulsed by Ala-ud-din's archers. The victor reached Kara on June 3, 1296.

#### **MURDER OF JALAL-UD-DIN:**

Ala-ud-din evaded a visit to Delhi on various pretexts and through 'treacherous communications' persuaded the Sultan to come to Kara and receive the booty. Blinded by the affection for his nephew, Jalal-ud-din disregarded the advice and protests of his courtiers and proceeded to Kara. Jalal-ud-din and his nobles travelled by boats while a small contingent of a thousand horses, commanded by Ahmed Chap, marched along the bank of the Yamuna. He reached Kara on July 20, 1296. Through the connivance of the traitor Almas Beg, the aged sultan ordered his horsemen and bodyguards also to stay behind, 'whilst he, with two boats and a few personal attendants and friends, passed over to the other side'. In the midst of Ala-ud-din's army

Ala-ud-din 'advanced to receive him, he and all his officers showing due respect'. He 'fell at the feet of the Sultan' and the latter 'treating him as a son', hugged him, 'kissed his eyes and cheeks' and chided him for doubting his uncle's love. About this time, two of Ala-ud-din's guards struck the Sultan down with their swords and chopped off his head.

#### **AN ESTIMATE OF JALAL-UD-DIN FIRUZ:**

Such was the end of this liberal and affectionate monarch. Jalal-ud-din is the first man who tried to govern the Sultanate on principles of liberalism. Before and after his accession, he had achieved success in numerous wars but he did not believe in needless bloodshed. That is why he had withdrawn his troops from Ranthambhor and had entered into an agreement with Mongols. He could govern with severity but he did not regard that as an ideal arrangement. Once in his life, he was generous to the extent of neglecting his personal security that proved fatal. The death of Jalal sounded the death-knell also of his new theory of government.

**ALA-UD-DIN'S KHILJI : CONQUESTS  
OF NORTH INDIA.**

Introduction

Objectives

1.3 Aims and policy of Ala-ud-din Khiliji

Wars of Conquest

Gujarat (1299 A.D)

Ranthambhore (1300-1301 A.D)

6.4.3 Chittor (1302-1302 A.D)

Central India (1305-1306 A.D)

Siwana (1308 A.D)

Jalor (1311 A.D)

Extent of the Empire

Suggested Readings

Possible Questions

**INTRODUCTION**

The original name of Ala-ud-din was Ali Gurshasp; he was a nephew of Jalal-ud-din Khilji. He was born in 1266 A.D. and was brought up by his

uncle because of the untimely death of his father. He did not receive proper schooling but grew up to be a brilliant warrior who, unlike his uncle, proved to be extremely ambitious, aggressive and selfish by nature. He was married to a daughter of Jalal-ud-din Khilji.

After the successful expedition of Devagiri (1296 A.D.) his ambition soared high; and he hatched a conspiracy to usurp the throne. As luck would have it, the unsuspecting Sultan fell a victim to the treachery of his beloved nephews and sons-in-law-Ala-ud-din and his younger brother Almas Beg and facilitated the task of the latter. Of course, the plan to murder the Sultan was not preconceived; the decision to commit this crime seems to have been taken by Ala-ud-din on the spot when the unscrupulous nephew found the old monarch landing into Ala-ud-din's armed forces unattended.

Ala-ud-din was declared Sultan of Delhi immediately after the murder of Jalal-ud-din at Kara on July 20, 1296. However, he took three months to reach Delhi; by this time, he had under his command more than a lakh of the army. On the way to Delhi, he had literally been showering gold and silver over the heads of the people to win their support. He entered the capital on October 26, 1296 'in great pomp' and was accorded reception by the entire populace amidst great rejoicings. The members of the Jalal family had already fled to Multan. He took his seat upon Balban's throne in the **Daulat Khana-i-Julus** and was formally crowned with the title of **Abul Muzaffar Sultan Aland Duniya Wa Din Muhammad Shahi Khalji**. He offered high offices to his friends and associates **albeit** many of the Jalali nobles were confirmed in their old assignments so much so that even the **Wazarat**- 'the office of the prime minister', continued to be held by the old incumbent **Khwaja Khatir**. Ala-ud-din's younger brother Almas Khan became the premier noble of the state with the title **Ulugh Khan** while Malik Sanjar was styled **Alp Khan**. Malik Hazbaruddin, now styled **Zafar Khan** became **Ariz-i-mumalik**. Nusrat Khan was appointed **Kotwal** of Delhi while Ala-ul-Mulk received appointment as governor of **Kara**. All the soldiers were granted six months salary as a reward; **the ulema, the shaikhs** and other nobles and officials received grants of land and titles while all the visitors to the capital as well as its inhabitants received liberal gifts from the Sultan.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

The main objective of this lesson is to enable the students:

- (a) to understand how an ambitious person could capture power and rise to the highest position and also as to how he could remain in power;
- (b) to know in detail the aims and policy of Ala-ud-din;
- (c) to know in detail the various campaigns of the Sultan and also to analyse the various causes of his success;

## **AIMS AND POLICY OF ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI:**

Zia-ud-din Barani says that the Sultan met with such unexpected success in his early years that he began to formulate impossible designs. But when Qazi Ala-ul-Mulk advised the Sultan to have due regard for time and place in fixing his plans, he was sobered and adopted the path of reason. No doubt, Ala-ud-din was an ambitious monarch. He wanted to achieve something which might immortalize him in the history of the world.

### **(a) Imperialism:**

He first thought of going on world conquest like Alexander and giving to his worldwide empire a new religion. Ala-ud-din planned to raise a large army with the help of the Deccan gold. He was assured of the ability and devotion of his generals like Zafar Khan, Ulugh Khan, Nusrat Khan and Alp Khan. He himself was a bold leader. He, therefore, concluded that conquest of the world would be easily achieved. But when Qazi Ala-ul-Mulk drew his attention towards domestic and foreign problems and told him that the world had considerably changed from the days of Alexander; that he could find no minister like Aristotle; and that planning world conquest before subjugating the whole of India was opposed to reason; he changed his mind and concentrated all his energy over establishing an all-India empire. He was the first Muslim monarch who imposed his suzerainty over most of the Deccan and the Far South.

### **(b) Secularism:**

In regard to founding a new religion, Qazi Ala-ul-mulk said that was the

privilege of prophets alone. No religion could be founded by mere force and design. For that, divine inspiration was essential. Besides, the duty of the Sovereign is to govern the state and not to dabble in religion. Ala-ud-din gave patient thought to his suggestions and finally decided that he would not only give the idea of founding a new religion but would keep religion and politics apart from each other and thus found a secular state. Ala-ud-din did nothing which might incur the hostility of the orthodox **Ulema**. He made no change in the practice of appointing them to most of the offices in the judicial department. He would occasionally consult them and enforce teachings of Islam in the social sphere as far as practicable.

(c) **Defence of Frontiers:**

In the defence of his frontiers, Ala-ud-din modeled his policy on that of Balban. ut he was no blind imitator and made numerous changes whenever necessary.

(d) **Relations with the Rajputs:**

Ala-ud-din realized that the roots of the empire could not be strengthened without the support of the Hindus in general and the Rajputs in particular. He therefore, showed greater consideration towards Rajput rulers. He utilized some of them even in the suppression of their brethren. He married himself as well as the heir apparent to Rajput princesses and gave them a place of honour in the royal household. At the time of his death, he even nominated as his successor a son born of a Rajput princess. But in the political sphere, there was such deep-seated rivalry between the Turks and the Hindus that it was impossible for him to secure respect and loyalty of the latter by founding a government free from all discrimination.

(e) **Turkish monopoly of power ended:**

Ala-ud-din maintained sovereign authority and high dignity of the Sultan as under Balban but he had no undue fascination for higher birth. Breaking the monopoly of the Turks, he allowed new Muslims and even Hindus to render service to the state. **Malik Kafur** was a low caste Hindu who had been converted to Islam. The Sultan made him

his principal advisor and during the last years of his reign, he did almost everything as he suggested. Thus under the Khiljis and specially from the time of Ala-ud- din, Turkish monopoly of power came to an end and it became possible for any of the Sultan's subjects to secure high office if he had merit and the will to co-operate.

**(f) Centralized Administration:**

Ala-ud-din established a highly centralized autocracy. He forced everyone to bow before his judgement. Muslim nobles, Hindu landlords and local officials, rich merchants and petty traders, Muslims divines each and all of them were compelled to act according to his wishes. He maintained a firm grip over them by ruthless punishments, efficient espionage and strong militarism.

**(g) Precautionary Measures:**

Ala-ud-din had captured the throne by chicanery and murder. His constant fear, therefore, was that his example might be imitated by others. He knew that he himself had succeeded mainly because of three reasons: he had enough resources to build a strong army, the Sultan reposed undue confidence in him and did not keep a proper eye over his movements and local Hindu chiefs lent him the aid of their troops. Ala-ud-din took the precaution of pursuing a policy which should prevent accumulation of surplus wealth with the Hindu and Muslim nobility. Abolition of jagirs and payment in cash and stringent measures against Chaudhuris, Muqaddams, Khots and Balahars were a part of this very policy. When his suspicion was aroused, he not only secured the murder of his highest generals but threw even his own sons into prison.

For some time that policy proved a great success. His treasury overflowed with gold and precious stones. In the sphere of war, he scored numerous and rapid successes so that his authority extended over practically the whole of India. But as soon as disease disabled him, signs of opposition became visible. Hindus started counter-offensive while Kafur's intrigues hastened the end of the empire and the dynasty itself. The policy of

Ala-ud-din failed to strike roots in the land because it rested too much upon force and repression. His success was purely political and ephemeral.

### **WARS OF CONQUEST:**

Ala-ud-din ruled for twenty years. Most of his time was spent in wars. In Northern India, he followed the policy of annexation and appointed his own governors for the administration of conquered territory. His various campaigns in northern India may be discussed as follows:

#### **Gujarat (1299 A.D.):**

The fertility of its soil and a liberal policy towards trade and industry had made the province very prosperous. Arab and Persian traders frequented the ports of Gujarat and acted as the carriers of Indian goods to Western Asia and the Mediterranean lands. This made cities and ports of Gujarat extremely wealthy. There was internal peace and security too. The **Chalukya Solankis** had been ruling over the province since the days prior to even Mahmud's invasion. Gujarat had retained its independence for about a hundred years even after the foundation of Muslim dominion in India.

The ruler of Gujarat at this time was **Karna Baghela**. The Baghelas were related to Solankis and had succeeded them in the government of Gujarat. A two pronged attack was planned on Gujarat. **Nusrat Khan** proceeded across Rajputana while Ulugh Khan marched from the side of Sindh. The two armies formed a junction near the frontiers of Gujarat and then made a joint advance into its territory. Karna failed to make a stand and fled in such utter haste that his treasure and family was left behind. He sought shelter in **Devagiri**. This cowardly flight of Karna Baghela simplified the task of the invaders. They freely plundered the towns like **Surat, Anhilwara, Cambay and Somnath**. In course of loot and arson many temples, including the celebrated shrine of Somnath were desecrated. Towns and villages were laid waste and thousands of people were killed or enslaved.

On their return march from Gujarat to Delhi, the victorious generals demanded a fifth of the spoils from the soldiers as state's share and adopted harsh measures to extract the valuables hidden by the latter in their personal baggage. It led to a mutiny by a few thousand 'new mussalmans'- the mongol converts, which was crushed by the generals with an iron hand.

### **Consequences:**

The conquest of Gujarat is memorable for the emergence of two historic personalities of Ala-ud-din's reign. The Sultan was captivated by the beauty and royal dignity of **Kamla Devi** whom he married with full honour and made his chief queen, i. e., **Mallika-i- jahan**, soon afterwards. Ala-ud-din's second great find was a very handsome hindu turned muslim eunuch, named **Kafur**; whom Nusrat Khan had acquired for one thousand dinars. He rose to be a brilliant military general and the **Malik naib** of Ala-ud-din in his later life.

The easy conquest of Gujarat intoxicated Ala-ud-din with power and pride. It increased the prosperity of the sultanate through maritime trade and commerce and enhanced the reputation of Ala-ud-din throughout the muslim world. After this victory, he launched a full-fledged campaign of imperial conquests with the object of bringing the whole of the Indian subcontinent under his control. Like **chakravartin** monarchs of ancient era, Ala-ud-din aspired to become the undisputed lord paramount of India. Having envisaged an imperial policy, he did not need any other plausible reason or excuse to invade the various hindu states of the subcontinent; he carried on ruthless and unprovoked wars against them and ultimately, transformed the Kingdom of Delhi into a mighty Indian empire.

### **Ranthambhore 1300-1301 A.D.**

In the pursuit of his imperial policy, Ala-ud-din Khilji had to reckon with the powerful Rajput state of **Ranthambhore**. With the conquest of Gujarat, Rajputana was surrounded on three sides by the territories of the Delhi sultanate and Alauddin's task seemed to have become comparatively easier. Ranthambhore was then ruled by **Rana Hamir Deva**,

a descendant of **Prithvi Raj III Chauhan**. The fort had been conquered first by Qutb-ud-din Aibek and then by Iltutmish. Rajputs recovered it after the death of Iltutmish. In 1291 A.D., Jalal-ud-din had made an abortive attempt to conquer it.

Ala-ud-din ordered the victors of Gujarat, Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan to measure their swords with the Chauhans in 1300 A.D. The plausible excuse for the attack was that Hamir Deva had given shelter to some mongol fugitives who had revolted during the Gujarat Campaign. The royal army laid siege to the fort which was gallantly defended by the Rajputs. It compelled Ala-ud-din to take the field in person. The siege lasted almost a year and fort was ultimately taken though the treachery of **Ranmal**, the minister of Hamir Deva, who was won over by the Sultan with the promise of gold and high office. The Rajputs performed **Jauhar**, the Rajput ladies saved their honour by throwing themselves into the fire while the males led by Hamir Deva died to a man in their hand to hand fight with besiegers. After his victory, Ala-ud-din ordered Ranmal and his accomplices to be put to death for having betrayed their own people.

The conquest of Ranthambhore, though hard-earned gave an overwhelming confidence to Ala-ud-din that none of the hindu kingdoms, however strong, were invincible, when dealt with one by one. No other Rajput chief came to the rescue of Hamir Deva during a year long siege; instead he was confronted, in that hour of trial with defection and treachery on the part of his close associates. The Rajputs as a class displayed utter lack of the feelings of collective security and self-defence; their clannish rivalries and narrow regional loyalties stood in their way of concerted action against the common enemy; as a result they crumbled to dust and were defeated one by one by the imperial armies of Ala-ud-din Khilji.

#### **6.4.3 Chittor (1302-1302 A.D.):**

Next 'the loud drums proclaimed the royal march from Delhi, undertaken with a view to the capture of Chittor,' the capital of Mewar, by far the most powerful state of Rajputana at that time. Its younger ruler **Ratna Singh** had ascended the throne in 1301 on the death of his father **Samar Singh**;

he belonged to the Guhilot clan of the Rajputs who had held their sway in Mewar since the eighth century A.D. They had successfully withstood the invasions of the muslim invaders ever since the conquest of Sindh by the Arabs.

The fort of Chittor stood on the crest of a hill and was almost impregnable. But as it lay on the route of Gujarat, it had to be conquered. It is said that one of the declared objectives of Ala-ud-din Khilji in invading Chittor was to acquire Padmini, the peerless queen of Rana Ratna Singh. The siege lasted about eight months and ultimately, the Sultan resorted to a stratagem in order to achieve success. The Rana was taken captive by Ala-ud-din through treachery but the Rajputs, under the youthful leadership of Gora and Badal liberated him from his clutches. It was followed by a bloody clash of arms between the rival parties, resulting in the collapse of the Rajput resistance. Ratan Singh died fighting in the battle-field while queen Padmini along with other Rajput ladies performed **jauhar** and burnt herself on the funeral pyre.

Ala-ud-din was deeply incensed by the stubborn fight put up by the Rajputs. After the occupation of the fort, he ordered general massacre of the populace of Chittor; and as a result, 30,000 Rajput men, women and children were put to the sword in a single day. Ala-ud-din appointed his eldest son, **Khizer Khan** to be the governor of Chittor and the town was renamed after the Prince as **Khizerabad**. It was here that the Prince was declared as heir apparent to the throne of Delhi. The fort was heavily garrisoned by the imperial troops led by competent military generals who carried on the administration on behalf of the Prince.

#### **6.4.4 Central India (1305-1306 A.D.):**

The conquest of Ranthambhore and Chittor broke the backbone of the Rajput power; it had an overall demoralizing effect upon other hindu rulers of Rajputana and central India. Ala-ud-din therefore, sent Ain-ul-mulk Multani with 10,000 horses for the conquest of Malwa and central India. He first encountered opposition of **Mahlakdeva**, the ruler of Malwa. The Rajput commander was **Koka Pradhan**, a brother

of Raja himself and equally gifted as a general and as a diplomat. The Malwa army is said to have numbered 40,000 horses and a lakh of infantry but the battle went in favour of the Sultan. Ain-ul-mulk gradually occupied **Mandu, Dhar, Ujjain and Chanderi** and the Sultan was pleased to appoint him the governor in that region.

#### **6.4.5 Siwana (1308 A.D.) :**

After the conquest of Malwa, the Sultan led an army against **Raja Shitaldeva** of Siwana. Although the war lasted for many months, ultimately the Rajputs were defeated and a larger part of the kingdom was annexed to the empire and Malik Kamaluddin Gurg was appointed **iqtadar** of Siwana.

#### **6.5.6 Jalor (1311 A.D.) :**

The last important campaign in Northern India was directed against the Chauhan prince **Raja Kanhardeva** of Jalor. He had accepted the suzerainty of the Sultan sometime in 1304 but he was allowed internal autonomy and his attitude towards the Sultan was not respectful. Ala-ud-din was unhappy with his arrogant conduct. Therefore, in 1311, he sent an army for the reconquest of Jalor under the command of Malik Shahin, an illegitimate son of the Sultan from a slave girl Gul Bahisht. Malik Shaheen died fighting the rajputs. The royal army suffered some reverses in the beginning but when reinforcements arrived, the tables were turned and Jalor was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate. Treachery also had its share in this development because Maldeva, the brother of Kanhardeva was appointed governor at Chittor ostensibly in recognition of his services during this campaign.

This completed the conquest of northern India. Ala-ud-din's conquest of Rajputana did not, however, prove conclusive or permanent. His conquest of Rajputana, for the most part lay on quicksands; the territories slipped out of the control of Delhi Sultanate soon after the death of Ala-ud-din Khilji. The misfortune of the rajputs was that they had learnt nothing and forgotten everything from their repeated failures in the long

struggle against the turks ever since the days of Muhammad Ghori. They possessed the same narrow and parochial outlook as ever before and failed to forge a united front against the common foe. Their defeat was principally due to their organization defects as well.

**EXTENT OF THE EMPIRE:**

The maximum limits of Ala-ud-din's empire had been reached by the end of the year 1311. His imperial sway extended roughly from the Indus in the northwest to the borders of the Bihar in the east, and from the 'foothills of the Himalayas' in the north to Rameshwaram in the extreme south. His empire in the north comprised practically the whole of the medieval Punjab and Sind, the Indo-Gangetic Valley i.e., modern Uttar Pardesh, Rajputana, Malwa and Gujarat.

**ALA-UD-DIN'S DECCAN POLICY**

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Immediate causes

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Invasion of Warangal (1309-1310 A.D)

Campaign against Dwarsamudra (1310-1311 A.D)

Campaign against Maabar (1311 A.D)

Reconquest of Devgiri (1312 A.D)

Nature of his Deccan policy

Success of his Deccan policy

Consequences

Conclusion

Suggested Readings

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Deccan plateau, separated from Northern India by the Vindhyas and the Satpura ranges, enjoyed a geographical hegemony which though never impenetrable, taxed the energies and forbearance of every invader. Nevertheless, its very seclusion and legends of incalculable wealth invoked the imperialistic ambition of mighty rulers. The Turks, themselves, had heard countless legends of its enormous wealth by the Arab merchants who traded at the coromondal coast, as early as seventh century A.D. Mahmud of Ghazni had successfully penetrated upto Gujarat. However, the early Turkish rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, preoccupied with the Mongols and the consolidation of their newly conquered territories were confined to Northern India.

Ala-ud-din's Khilji was the first Muslim ruler whose zest for imperial glory and lust for wealth constantly compelled him to explore and exploit fresh venues. His Deccan campaign was an offshoot of this passion.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

The main objective of this lesson is to enable the students to understand:

- (a) The various causes that impelled Ala-ud-din Khilji to undertake various campaigns in the Deccan plateau
- (b) Course of the invasion;
- (c) Nature of his deccan policy;
- (d) Why he succeeded in the deccan;
- (e) Consequences of his deccan campaigns.

### **CAUSES OF ALA-UD-DIN'S DECCAN INVASIONS (1307-1313 A.D.)**

- (a) Ala-ud-din, as Governor of Kara, in 1294 A.D., had successfully invaded Devgiri. The fabulous wealth acquired from the plunder of Devgiri had made Ala-ud-din the sultan of Delhi; the conquest of the Deccan, therefore, constituted but an indispensable part of the imperial policy. Devgiri to Ala-ud-din, was a gateway to the treasure-trove of

the legendary 'forty thieves' and the Sultan was eager to possess it by playing the role of **Ali Baba**. Devagiri was bequeathed the status of a tributary power. Raja Ramchandra promised to "send yearly revenues of Ellichpur province to Ala-ud-din" and continued to do so till 1304 A.D.

- (b) The states of the Deccan had grown weak by mutual warfare. The fact that its frontiers were ill-defended acted as a further incentive.
- (c) But besides these above mentioned causes, there were in 1307-08 some special grounds also for invading the Deccan. His army consisted of 4, 75,000 soldiers. Unless they were kept engaged, they would stir up trouble at home. When the conquest of the north had well high concluded and the invasion of the Mongols had stopped, the only place where the army could be provided with some employment was the Deccan.
- (d) Besides, Ala-ud-din needed Deccan gold for his top heavy administration and huge army.
- (e) Ala-ud-din wanted to make good the loss of face by the failure of his expedition to Bengal and Warrangal in 1302 A.D. This could be done only by a vigorous successful campaign.

#### **INTERNAL CONDITIONS OF THE DECCAN STATES:**

While conquest of the north was still proceeding, Ala-ud-din sent his armies into the Deccan as well. There were four principal states in the south at that time.

- (a) South of Vindhya, in the modern Maharashtra region lay the **Kingdom of the Yadavas** with their capital at **Devagiri**. They had subjugated the entire territory upto the river Krishna. They had acquired great prominence by diplomacy and war against their neighbours. Its ruler **Ramachandra** was famed for his wealth even in northern India.
- (b) The south-eastern neighbour of the Yadavas was the house of the **Kakatiyas** of **Telingana**, with its headquarters at **Warrangal**. The contemporary ruler **Pratap Rudradeva II** was daughter's son of the

Yadava princess **Rudramba Devi**. Warrangal was a famous town in the Deccan and its rulers had amassed a large treasure of gold and jewels by a prosperous foreign trade.

- (c) To the south of Devagiri and west and south-west of Telingana lay the Kingdom of the **Hoysalas** whose capital was **Dwarsamudra**. The **Hoysalas** were constantly fighting against the Yadavas in the north and the Cholas in the south. At the time of Ala-ud-din's invasion of the Deccan, **VirBallala III** was the ruler at Dwarsamudra.
- (d) In the far south was situated the **Kingdom of Pandyas** with its capital at **Madura**. The contemporary ruler **Kulashekhar** was a great and powerful ruler. But he was fonder of a son born of a concubine. This offended his legitimate son **Sundara** so much that he murdered his father in 1310 A.D. and tried to seize the kingdom by force. It was during this civil war that the Turks invaded the kingdom.

Like the states of the north, these kingdoms were also engaged in mutual warfare. They too, had neglected defence of the frontiers. It was therefore, easy to attack them. In each of these kingdoms, the royal coffers were full of gold and precious stones, collected from foreign traders. Merchants and craftsmen had also grown rich. Then there were temples where large accumulations of wealth had taken place because of strong religious sentiments of the people. It was therefore natural for a powerful ruler of the north to desire the conquest of the south.

#### **IMMEDIATE CAUSES:**

The **casusbelli** or the necessary pretext was provided by Ramchandra Deva of Devgiri, who capitalized on the Sultan's preoccupation with the Mongols and Rajputs, and stopped paying annual tributes after a decade. Moreover, he provoked the Sultan's wrath, by sheltering RaiKarna Deva II, the fugitive ruler of Gujarat and his beautiful daughter, Deval Devi, a prize worthy of imperial possession.

## **COURSE OF THE INVASION:**

### **War Against Devagiri (1307-1308 A.D.):**

Ala-ud-din Khilji called back surplus contingents of soldiers from the north western frontier and constituted them into 'an army of the Deccan' under the command of **Malik Kafur** who had by then come to occupy the exalted office of **maliknaib** - 'the deputy Sultan'. He was destined to conquer the whole of south India under the direction and control of Ala-ud-din Khilji. He led an attack, in 1307, on Devagiri with 30,000 soldiers. He was assisted in this enterprise, by AinulMulk and Alp Khan, the governors of Malwa and Gujarat respectively.

Karna Deva was defeated and turned out of Ellichpur; his daughter Deval Devi fell into the hands of Alp Khan's soldiers near the Ellora caves. She was taken to Delhi where she was married to Khizer Khan, the crown prince after a few years. Ram Chandra Deva suffered a defeat and sued for peace. He, with his wives and children, was sent to the Sultan. Ala-ud-din accorded him an exceptionally generous treatment; the latter gave one of his daughter in marriage to the Sultan and stayed at the capital as a royal guest for about six months. A number of hindu princesses were taken by the Sultans of Delhi as their queens but this is an exceptional case in which a royal marriage took place with the full consent of both the parties. Ram Chandra Deva received a personal estate and one lakh gold coins as a gift, as well as the title of **RaiRayan** (King of Kings) from Ala-ud-din. According to **Barani**, 'the Rai was, ever afterwards obedient; and sent his tribute regularly as long as he lived'. (**Tarikh-i-FirozeShahi**). He collaborated whole heartedly with the imperial armies in the conquest of south India. Ram Chandra, as critics point out, was known to be a man of mild disposition. Ala-ud-din sought to overwhelm him with generosity so that he should become a loyal and faithful ally. It was political expediency that dictated this unusual generosity.

### **Invasion of Warangal (1309-10 A.D):**

After allowing the army a little respite, it was sent again to the Deccan, this

time against the Raja of Warrangal. In November 1309, Malik Kafur, accompanied by the **ariz-i-mamalik** and quite a few distinguished military generals, led an army which comprised a hundred thousand soldiers. A complaint had probably been made against undue severity of Kafur during the last campaign. This is why the Sultan gave him detailed instructions in regard to general discipline and conduct of troops, peace with the Raja and other allied matters. The emphasis of the Sultan was principally on two things-

(i) That PratapRudra Deva should be obliged to part with his treasure but he should not be subjected to humiliating terms

(ii) That the soldiers and generals should be kept under general discipline but care should be taken that they do not become mutinous or disaffected because of maltreatment. Ala-ud-din had taken special precautions also because the first expedition to Warrangal (1302) had been a failure.

Acting on the Sultan's advice, Kafur reached Devagiri safely. Ramachandra treated him with respect and helped him in numerous ways. He lent him the service of picked soldiers who were conversant with the roads leading into Telingana. For the convenience of the soldiers and maintenance of good relations between Delhi and Devagiri, he established bazars at short intervals all along the route so that the soldiers could purchase all that they needed at reasonable rates. He also made arrangements for encampment of the army and supply of its commissariat wants.

On reaching Warrangal, Kafur laid siege to the fort. PratapRudra Deva offered a stiff opposition so that the siege lasted many months. PratapRudra carried on a defensive war from inside the fort and also organized a guerilla force to disrupt the supply lines of the Turks and to destroy their stores. The guerillas completely disrupted the postal services of the Turks. The situation eased after a month and Malik Kafur was able to establish his hold en route to Delhi. Still it seemed impossible to capture Warrangal in the face of PratapRudra's excellent leadership.

When PratapRudra learnt that the Turk could be bought off, he agreed to pay a stipulated amount to put an end to the sufferings of his people. There is no specific mention of the terms of the treaty. Barani says that he gave 100 elephants, 7000 horses, plenty of gold and silver and numerous precious jewels. The last probably included the famous diamond later described, as the Koh-i-noor. Laden with booty, Malik kafur returned to Delhi on June 11, 1310 to the great delight of Ala-ud-din.

#### **Campaign Against Dwarsamudra (1310-11 A.D.)**

Kafur's third invasion was directed against Dwarsamudra. He reached Devagiri in February 1311. Raja Ramachandra offered similar help this time also. He made satisfactory market arrangements and instructed his officers not to pick up quarrels with the Muslim soldiery. Yadava officials posted on the southern frontier furnished much useful topographical information to Kafur. The Hoysala ruler, **VirBhallala III** had gone south to participate in the Civil war raging in the Pandya Kingdom. He was siding with VirPandya. Just then he heard of Kafur's arrival. He hastily returned home and fought a few skirmishes just to keep up appearances. But he had no faith in his competence to defeat Kafur when the rulers of Devagiri and Warrangel had failed to do so. He, therefore, made peace, on terms of paying an annual tribute. This was Kafur's third great success in the south. This made him still more ambitious.

#### **Campaign against Maabar ( the Pandya Kingdom: Madura-1311 A.D.)**

Muslim historians called the Pandya Kingdom Maabar. Kafur learnt of Civil War going on between the Pandya princes, Vir and Sunder Pandya. He, therefore, regarded it as the most opportune moment for defeating them. He took VirBallala as his guide. He decided to intervene on behalf of Sundar Pandya and did his best to capture VirPandya. But despite a vigorous search and zealous pursuit lasting for many months, he could not get at him.

Vir Ballala III had rendered great service during the campaign. In order to recompense him for this, Kafur took him to Delhi. The Maabar campaign was unsuccessful in the sense that Kafur could neither defeat Vir Pandya nor impose any terms to him. But in respect of financial gain, this was the most lucrative of all his campaigns. Kafur had scoured practically the whole kingdom in pursuit of Vir Pandya. When on reaching an important town he found that the fugitive prince had again eluded him, he sought satisfaction in pulling down and desecrating Hindu shrines and despoiling them of their wealth. He had thus amassed untold riches. Amir Khusrau says that he brought to Delhi 512 elephants 7000 horses and 500 maunds of precious stones of various types and much other booty.

Ala-ud-din honoured Kafur and other generals by lavishing favours and praises on them in the open court VirBallala was treated with the same generosity and kindness as Ramachandra.

### **Reconquest of Devagiri (1312 A.D.):**

Ramachandra died in 1312 A.D. and was succeeded by his eldest son **Singhanadeva**. He was a staunch opponent of submission to the Turks. He had a personal grudge against Ala-ud-din because he had seized his fiancée Deval Rani. He, therefore, put an end to all semblances of submission of the Turks and started ruling like an independent prince. Just then, it was felt that somebody ought to be sent to the Deccan to realize tribute from the local rulers. Malik Kafur was naturally picked up again for this assignment. He defeated Singhana Deva who was probably killed in course of fighting.

Kafur now thought of settling down at Devagiri as its governor. He seized a part of Hoysala and Telingana territory also. He had no intention of returning to the north and he wished to found an independent kingdom in the south after the demise of Ala-ud-din. This was principally due to his quarrel with Khizir Khan and MalikaJahan and his suspicion that on Khizir Khan's accession to the throne his life would not be spared. But Ala-ud-din came in the way and sent him urgent summons to return to Delhi, handing over the administration of Devagiri to some member of the last dynasty.

He, therefore, recognized Harpaladeva as the next ruler of Devagiri and himself returned to Delhi in 1315 AD.

#### **NATURE OF HIS DECCAN POLICY:**

Ala-ud- din Khilji proved to be extremely successful. His imperialism had two facets; he resorted to annexation of territories and establishment of direct civil administration in northern India. On the other hand, he thoroughly exploited the south for the acquisition of its fabulous wealth and was contended by the acknowledgement of paramountcy of the hindu rulers. He, thus, avoided responsibility for the direct civil administration of the far flung territories, nor did he come into clash with the people in general, who were left to deal with their own regional rulers, good or bad. The means of communication and transport, in those days, were very poor; therefore, outright annexation of the distant lands might have created untold difficulties for the imperial government, or led to rebellions or disaffection among the people at large. Ala-ud-din Khilji saved himself from all these hazards.

In order that he might continue to receive regular tribute and might maintain his hold over the local Rajas, he treated them with courtesy and generosity. Raja Rama Chandra was so completely won over that he became his loyal collaborator in the Deccan and never went against him. The Sultan similarly won the confidence of VirBallala III by showering gifts and honours on him.

#### **SUCCESS OF HIS DECCAN POLICY:**

The primary success of Ala-ud-din's Deccan policy may be attributed to his realism. Ala-ud-din must be given due credit for foreseeing the impossibility of establishing a permanent rule over Deccan given the conditions prevalent at the time of his accession. His constant wars with the Mongols and the Rajputs had brought home the disadvantages of an annexationist policy. Consequently, in the Deccan, he preferred to accomplish his imperialistic designs in stages. Hence of the two alternatives viz., outright annexation or reducing the Deccan powers to tributary states, he discerned correctly.

It is a different matter that in the long run, even the latter alternative did not prove to be lasting. Ala-ud-din's suzerainty over the Deccan lasted only so long as he held sway. Soon after his death, the Deccan and Southern Kingdoms declared their independence.

#### **CONSEQUENCES:**

The Khilji invasions destroyed the impregnable myth of Deccan and the South Indian Kingdoms. Hence forth, the way was opened for the future Sultans to invade Southern India. Consequently, incalculable wealth was carried off causing an irreparable loss to Hindu temples and Hindu architecture.

The invasions further ended the cultural and religious seclusion of Deccan from Islam for all times. Hitherto, these regions had successfully nurtured Hindu culture. Gradually, however, the Muslim population grew in number culminating in the establishment of the Bahmani Kingdom and later, under the Mughals in Bijapur and Golconda regimes.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Ala-ud-din's policy never led to a permanent subservience of the Deccan Kingdoms. This was partly because distance and poor means of communication rendered a permanent hold over the Deccan regions impossible and partly due to the fact that Ala-ud-din's forces had neither the time nor the inclination to win over the local people. While the former would have facilitated an effective control over the Deccan kingdoms, the latter would have allowed a strong grass-roots base for a viable empire to emerge in the long run. Yet, given the constraints of his time, Ala-ud-din must be given due credit for pioneering, and for inserting the Islamic wedge in the Deccan and Southern India.

**REVENUE ADMINISTRATION\* AND  
MARKET CONTROL POLICY OF ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI**

Introduction

Objectives

Al-ud-din's Revenue Administration

Causes of Price Regulation and Market Reforms

Officers of the Market

Market Regulations

Consequences of Ala-ud-din's measures

Conclusion

Suggested Readings

Possible Questions

**INTRODUCTION:**

Ala-ud-din Khilji proved not only a great conqueror but an equally zealous administrator. However, his various administrative reforms accrued neither from any philanthropy, such as the amelioration of the general welfare of his people; nor were they an exercise of any brilliance of mind or originating from a love

for reform, as in the case of enlightened despots. Instead, they were solely motivated by the need for political and military security so very essential for the security of the empire and the personal strength of the Sultan.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

The objective of the present lesson is to enable the student to peep into the working of the administration of medieval India. The idea is to enable the student to glance at a novel feature introduced by Ala-ud-din Khilji. This lesson makes the student understand how the Sultan was able to make the market regulations a great success in his life time by devising the scheme meticulously and implementing it thoroughly with the help of elaborate administrative machinery and committed officials.

### **ALA-UD-DIN'S REVENUE ADMINISTRATION**

The main objective of Ala-ud-din's revenue administration was to increase the income of the state and to root out possibilities of revolts. A large, well equipped army was also the requirement of the hour and for this too he needed to enhance the income of the state. By implementing his revenue policy, he succeeded in fulfilling his aims and also in establishing an authoritative and despotic state. The Sultan took the following measures in order to fulfil his objectives.

- Ala-ud-din realised that the class of people which worked as middlemen between the state and the peasants had increased their landed property without the consent of the state. It was noticed that while they collected maximum revenue from the peasants, they paid the minimum to the state. In this way, they enjoyed the best advantages at the cost of the state. By implementing various financial policies Ala-ud-din wanted to break up their power and influences on the people.
- The next step that Ala-ud-din took was to order the confiscation of all those lands which were given to the people by the previous Sultans as **milk** (stage grant), **inam** (state gift), **waqf** (charitable endowment) and pension in return of state service. He confiscated the lands of those people who were not serving the state in any form and again redistributed it among those who were doing good service to the state. A complete record was also maintained regarding

who was given how much land and of what quality. These measures of Ala-ud-din increased the Khalisa land (state land), gave the possession of land in the hands of competent persons and diminished the authority of the old nobility.

- Ala-ud-din did away with the privileged position of hereditary hindu revenue officers like **Khuts**, **Muqaddams** and **Chaudhuris**. It was alleged that these officers collected maximum revenue from the peasants but appropriated the bluk amount for themselves. They also did not pay the prescribed taxes like **Kharaj**, **Jaziya**, **Ghari** and **Charai**. Consequently, they became rich and affluent. Ala-ud-din abolished their privileges and snatched their right to collect revenues. They were hence forth ordered to pay all the prescribed taxes. In this manner, Ala-ud-din saw to it that there remained no distinction between the **Khuts** (Zamindars) and the **Balahars** (ordinary peasants). By this policy, Ala-ud-din broke up the power of the Hindus to rise in revolt.

- In order to enhance the income of the state to meet the rising expenditures, Ala-ud-din raised the revenue demand to one half of the gross produce. The land revenue was henceforth to be assessed by the technique of measurement on the basis of standard yields. Ala-ud-din was the first Muslim ruler who introduced this system which certainly marked a progress upon the customary sharing system. The Sultan preferred to collect the revenue in kind instead of cash. He also imposed two new taxes-grazing tax on all milch cattle and the house tax. Other taxes like **Jaziya**, irrigation tax and import and export duties continued as before.

- Ala-ud-din established a new department known as **Diwan-i-Mustakhraj** to look after his revenue administration. He also employed a large number of junior and senior officers for the same purpose. He raised the salaries of revenue officers so that they remained satisfied and did not resort to bribery. In this way Ala-ud-din managed to bring about a fair improvement in the revenue administration by his stern approach to both his officers and the subjects. Severe punishment were given to the people in case of non-fulfillment of their responsibility.

The revenue system of Ala-ud-din khilji imposed a heavy burden on the peasantry. The peasants had to pay seventy five percent of their income to the

state as taxes. Among the trading communities, the muslim merchants had to pay five percent of the value of their merchandise as tax while the hindu merchants were asked to pay ten percent. This revenue system of Ala-ud-din could not be implemented universally within the entire empire. The collection of revenue by state officers after measurement of land was done only in Delhi and its nereby territories. The system was not introduced in lower Doab, Awadh, Bihar, Bengal, Malwa, West Punjab, Gujarat and Sindh.

#### **CAUSES OF PRICE REGULATION AND MARKET REFORMS:**

- (a) Ala-ud-din's ambition to expand his kingdom and the anxiety to protect it from the Mongol menace prompted him to raise a huge standing army. Its dire necessity was felt in 1303 A.D. when he was suddenly caught between the two whirlwinds- the prestigious siege of Chittor and the mongol invasion of Delhi. Ala-ud-din was successful in the two-pronged struggle but he made up his mind, thereafter to recruit a permanent army 'not only large, but choice, well armed, with archers and all ready for immediate service. His soldiers were not an ordinary lot; they were the favoured children of the Sultanate, upon whose faithful and efficient service depended the safety of the crown; they were materially rich and lived much more comfortably than the masses. Ala-ud-din was confronted with the problem how to increase the strength of the the armed forces on payment of a moderate salary without adversely affecting their standard of living.
- (b) His successful military exploits had already resulted in the excessive flow of gold and silver in the capital and its adjoining towns. It led to the rise of prices; and with the increase of armed personnel, the circulation of money in the market and consequent rise of the price level seemed to be a natural corollary. This might, in turn, necessitate increase in the salaries of the soldiers in the years to come.
- (c) It was apprehended that in case the Sultan was called upon to 'settle a large amount of pay on the army' year after year, the royal treasury, which was full to the brim at that time, would be exhausted within five or six years.

- (d) The Sultan was equally anxious to save the state economy from the vicious circle of inflation and price rise.
- (e) After considerable deliberations, he introduced a salary structure in conformity with a dignified standard of living of the various categories of soldiers. The Sultan desired that the salary structure should be made rigid and permanent. His 'sagacious advisers' argued that in case 'the necessities of life could be bought at a low rate,' it would be possible 'to maintain a large and permanent army' upon the scales of pay as fixed by the Sultan. The salary of a foot soldiers was fixed at 78 **tankas** (one tanka of silver was of one **tola** in weight) per annum while a horseman who was provided with a horse by the state, got double the amount, i.e., 158 **tankas**. The advisors of the Sultan further explained that 'the necessities of life would never become cheap until the price of grain was fixed by regulations and tariffs'.

#### **OFFICERS OF THE MARKET:**

The entire scheme of market regulation was entrusted to care of **diwan-riyasat** and Ala-ud-din appointed **Yaqub** to fill this office. For different trades a separate market was instituted and was placed under a separate **Shahna**. **Malik Qabul** was the **shahna** in the grain market while **Yaqub** himself acted as the **shahna** for horse market, cattle market etc. Below the **shahnas** were number of **barids** who checked prices, weights and measures and supervised general arrangements of the market and sent daily reports to the Sultan. There were some secrets reporters also. They were called **munhias**. They too sent their reports but direct to the Sultan.

#### **MARKET REGULATIONS:**

Ala-ud-din Khilji, therefore, issued a number of economic regulations to determine the prices of various necessities of life and ensure their regular supply to the people at fixed prices and without any inconvenience. The fixation of prices was not done by the Sultan arbitrarily, nor was his price structure based on the fluctuating supply and demand, good or bad weather or the speculative trends of the business community who raised or lowered the prices with motives

of making the maximum profits. Instead, Ala-ud-din fixed the prices of goods on the progressive principle of 'production-cost'.

- (a) **The first set of eight regulations** dealt with corn and cereals. The first regulation (zabita) fixed the price per maund of wheat at 7.5 **jitals**, barely at 4 **jitals** while cereals like **mash and mukhud** were to sell at 5 **jitals** and **moth** at 3 **jitals** per maund. (The jital was a copper coin. There were fifty **jitals** to one silver **tanka**. The **maund** as mentioned by Barani comprised 40 **seers** and each **seer** weighed 24 **tolas**).
- (b) The land revenue from the **Khalsa** villages was realized in kind (regulation 3). The grain was stored in the state granaries and during the days of scarcity, sold at tariff rates, according to the needs of the people.
- (c) All grain carriers (**the caravans**) of the kingdom were brought into a single corporation (**Yak Wujud**) under the charge of **Shahna-i-mandi**. The merchants were registered and issued licences to bring grain from the far off villages; the provincial and local revenue officials helped them in the procurement of grain at fixed rates (regulation 6). It was either acquired by the state granaries or sold by the merchants in open market at the rates dictated by the government. The merchants were allowed to charge a moderate profit plus the cost of carriage over and above their procurement price. It is said that the margin of profit permissible to the merchants was so low that at the initial stage, some of the caravans did not abide by the government regulations. Barani records that the heads of such **caravans** were brought in chains before the **Shahni-i-mandi** and kept in confinement 'until they agreed upon one common mode of action and gave bail for each other.'

The grain carriers were asked to settle, along with families, in the villages on the banks of Yamuna so that they might be able to transport grain from various parts of the country under the supervision of the government officials and prevent the prices from rising above 'the royal standard.' As a result, so much grain found its way into the markets that in normal times, it was unnecessary to open the royal stores.'

- (d) The fifth regulation provided for securing the cheapness of grain against (**ihhtikar**) - buying and hoarding of goods with a view to retailing at a profit. This rule was enforced so rigidly that no corn-dealer, farmer or anyone else 'could hold back secretly a **maund** or half a **maund** of grain' and sell it for a **dang or a diram** above the fixed price. The regrated grain, if discovered, was forfeited to the state and the regrator was fined.
- (e) The Sultan received the daily report regarding the market rates and the transactions of goods from three distinct sources-the controllers of the market, the **barids** and the **munshis** (regulation 7). If there was any variance in these reports the defaulters were hauled up by the Sultan. According to 'Barani's testimony, the specified scales of prices were maintained as long as Ala-ud-din lived, irrespective of whether the 'rains were abundant or scanty.' The unvarying price of grain in the market was 'looked upon as one of the wonders of the time'.
- (f) The eighth regulation provided for the rationing of grain in times of drought of famine. A quantity of corn sufficient for the daily supply of each **mohalla** to the capital was consigned to the local corn dealers every day from the government stores, and half a **maund** was allowed to the ordinary purchases in the markets. The people from the adjoining villages also flocked to Delhi to purchase grains at the fixed rates. If, in times of scarcity, 'any poor reduced person' went to the market and did not get his requirement, the official incharge of the market was taken to task whenever the Sultan came to know of it.

Of course, there were seasons of drought and shortages, but we do not hear of any large scale famine and deaths by starvation during the reign of Ala-ud-din. It must have been made possible only by the wise economic reforms and strict control of the market by the government. **Farishta** gives the following price list of groceries for the capital:

Sugar candy, one <b>seer</b>	:	2 <b>jitals</b>
Coarse sugar, 1 <b>seer</b>	:	1 <b>jital</b>
Gur, 1 <b>seer</b>	:	0.5 <b>jital</b>

Salt, 5 seers : 1 jital

Onion and garlic, 1 seers : 1 jital

- (g) The second set of regulations were issued by the Sultan for the purpose of securing low prices for cloth and groceries. The extensive lawns, which had long been out of use near the Badaun gate of the capital, were converted into an open market, called the **Sarai Adl**, for the sale and purchase of these commodities. A wing of this market was reserved for all transactions in cloth, piece goods and garments; it constituted the 'cloth market' which was put under the charge of **rais parwana** (permit officer). All the Indian and foreign merchants, who happened to be in the capital, were required to bring every sort of cloth to this market and sell it at the rates prescribed by the government. Like the corn dealers, the cloth merchants were also organized into a corporation; their names were registered in the office of the **rais parwana** and they had to execute bonds to the effect that they would bring specified quantities of cloth, from wherever they could find, for sale in the capital's market.

The coarse cloth and garments for common use were sold at the normal rates, based on the production cost principle albeit this was not the case with the superior qualities of cotton cloth, silks and other luxurious wear of the aristocracy. There was a heavy demand for such commodities in the capital. These goods were, therefore, sold at subsidized rates for the benefit of the aristocracy. The multani traders who were experts in cloth trade were assigned the job of bringing the costly stuff from all over India and sell it in Delhi on the prices fixed by the Sultan. They acted simply as the commission agents for the government, and all the losses in the transaction were met by the state exchequer. Such being the case, the purchase of these commodities was rationed. Permits were issued by the **rais parwana** to the aristocracy according to their status and purse for the purchase of specified quantities of goods. **Farishta** states that the export was prohibited in order to prevent the crafty businessmen from buying the stuff from Delhi at a low price and selling it at higher rates elsewhere.

The contemporary historians like Barani and Farishta quote the following rates of different varieties of cloth:

<b>Chadar</b> , i.e., ordinary bed sheet per piece	:	10 <b>jital</b>
Long cloth coarse, per 40 yards	:	1 <b>tanka</b> (silver)
Long cloth, fine per 20 yards	:	1 <b>tanka</b>
Cheer (silk) Delhi per piece	:	16 <b>tankas</b>
Cheer (silk) Kotla per piece	:	6 <b>tankas</b>
Sillahuti fine, per piece	:	4 <b>tankas</b>
Sillahuti, middling, per piece	:	3 <b>tankas</b>
Kirpas, fine, 20 yards	:	1 <b>tanka</b>

- (h) **The third set** of regulations dealt with the sale and purchase of live stock-the horses and cattle and the slaves. The superior brands of horses, approved for the army, were divided into three grades; their prices were fixed at 100 to 120, 80 to 90 and 65 to 70 **tankas** for the first, second and third grade respectively. An ordinary pony for common use could, however, be had from 12 to 20 **tankas** only. Farishta writes that a number of horse dealers, who defied the government regulations, were either put to death or whipped out of the capital.

The cattle-buffaloes, cows, oxen, camels, goats, sheep etc., in short, every domesticated animal, could be purchased or sold only within the range of prices fixed by the government. The Sultans of Delhi had the practice of enslaving the prisoners of war. Al-ud-din's reign was marked by continuous wars for imperial conquests; therefore, there was abundance of slaves, both male and female, in the country who were sold and purchased at nominal prices just like cattle. According to Barani, the price of a slave girl was fixed at 5 to 12 **tankas** and that of a concubine at 20 to 40 **tankas**. A handsome young lad could be had for 20 to 30 **tankas** whereas the price of slave labourers varied from 10 to 15 **tankas** each.

### **The controlled Area:**

This price control and regulation of markets applied to Delhi alone or to the whole empire is still a moot question. Barani sometimes seems to refer to Delhi alone while at other places he generalizes for the whole empire. But the crucial thing to remember in this connection is that the Sultan had enforced price control essentially for the convenience of the army. The army was spread all over the empire and everywhere it received the same salary. Consequently, unless this applied to all cantonment towns, it could not meet the requirements of the army. It therefore, stands to reason that either price control applied to all provincial headquarters and fort towns where the entire arrangement was a mere replica of the arrangements at Delhi so that no special mention of each place was thought necessary or that the government made all its purchases for the army at Delhi and arranged for supply of commodities to the soldiers throughout the empire through the commissariat department of the army.

### **Consequences of Ala-ud-din's measures:**

The success or failure of any measure is based on two primary factors:

- (a) The effective projection and implementation of the requisite regulations;
- (b) Their effect on various classes of people and on the state as a whole.

### **Effective Projection and Implementation:**

The thoroughness which Ala-ud-din displayed in the exhaustive survey of the commodities and the strictness with which the market regulations and the price-line was enforced is unquestionable and undoubtedly without a parallel in medieval history. Barani has confirmed the success of his policy by mentioning that the things became excessively cheap and were reduced to the price of water. **Moreland**, too, has praised "Ala-ud-din's control of supplies, control of transport, with rationing of consumption when necessary, the whole system resting on a highly organized intelligence and drastic punishment of evasions." He in fact, has found it akin to the system of control which was adopted in

England as a war time measure. To **Moreland**, Ala-ud-din was more successful as "he was strong, just where modern systems are weak, for he could rely on an elaborate organization of spies."

Barani has given four reasons of Ala-ud-din's success:

- (a) He enforced his orders in very harsh way from which there was absolutely no escape.
- (b) The taxes were oppressive and these were extracted rigorously so that the people had to sell grain and other articles at the rates fixed by the Sultan.
- (c) The scarcity of money among the people was so great that the proverb got in vogue, "a camel may be had for a **dang** but where is the **dang** to be had?"
- (d) The impartiality and consequent harshness of the officials was another factor of Ala-ud-din's success.

Measured, therefore, in terms of effective implementation, Ala-ud-din's reforms were successful to the extent that the prices were reduced and stabilized for a period of about twelve or thirteen years.

Also the measures benefitted the state to the extent that the prices were reduced and stabilized for a period of about twelve or thirteen years.

Also the measures benefitted the state to the extent that Ala-ud-din achieved the objective of reducing the economic status of all classes so that no major revolts took place in the latter half of his reign.

As far as Delhi was concerned, it never suffered from famine and drought which might have occurred in distant provinces, a factor that must have added considerably to the stability of his rule.

#### **Effects on various classes:**

The state of various classes of people, the government benefitted the most, for it successfully achieved its objective of maintaining a large standing army at unusually low salaries. Because of his market reforms, Ala-ud-din raised such a strong and contented army that whether at home or in foreign kingdoms, it always defeated its adversaries. Besides the army, the government servants, the nobility and all those people who resided in Delhi were the main beneficiaries.

### **Merchants and Traders:**

The fixation of exceptionally low prices, as also the policy of coercion and severity adopted towards the merchants and traders left no incentive for trade and industry to flourish. The fixation of price-line, divorced from profit orientation, resulted in the temporary prevalence of an artificial economy, which lasted as long as the over-powering personality of the Sultan was existent. Although Barani's statement that "Even life became so distasteful to them and they longed for death," is an exaggeration nevertheless, it does indicate the frustration of a class which has always been an essential part of the economic machinery of a state.

### **Manufacturers, Craftsmen and Artisans:**

They also suffered an economic setback, for a reduction in prices correspondingly reduced the payment of raw-materials including that of skilled labour. Moreover, the merchants in spite of the statutory preventions, could always devise means to purchase commodities at cheaper rates than the state fixed prices, passing the maximum financial burden to the manufacturers and artisans.

### **Peasants:**

The most hit, however, were the cultivators who formed the back-bone of an agricultural economy. Although Moreland feels that the revenue regulations of the Sultan were meant to crush the rich middle class and not the poor peasants, it is difficult to imagine how a peasantry forced to part with all its produce except the bare minimum could enjoy prosperity. While the market regulations relieved the cultivators of drudgery of taking their grains into the grain markets of big cities and were saved from falling a victim to the seductions of the profiteering middlemen and speculators, still they could never be happy in selling their grains at cheaper price fixed by the government without having the choice of selecting a market for themselves and trying for a profit.

### **CONCLUSION**

The concept of market regulations and price-control was in itself a bold and daring measure. The idea by itself was rational. Its mistake however lay in the

principles on which it was founded. Had Ala-ud-din aimed at the maintenance of a rational price-system which was broad-based to include the interests of all classes of people, and relied more on popular support than more severe methods of conquest and force, his system would have probably proved more enduring. But unfortunately, Ala-ud-din's economic reforms were narrowed down to the maintenance of the Imperial army. Consequently, his measures to reduce their salaries and fix the price-line without paying any heed to its economic repercussions on other classes, is to be viewed in this light. To his admirers, his measures viewed in the present day context, of staggering cost of living and the presented growth of black marketers, hoarders and corrupt officials, seem quite practicable.

Nevertheless, Ala-ud-din while deservant of praise for the idea itself, needs to be condemned for the coercive methods used to maintain the artificial price-line.

**WORKS OF GHIYASUDDIN TUGHLAQ (1320-1325 A.D.)**

Introduction

Objectives

Early Career

Internal Policy

Land Revenue

Public Welfare Activities

Justice

Religious Policy

Foreign Policy

To sum up

Glossary

SAQ/CYP/Possible Answers

Lesson End Exercise / Examination Oriented Questions

Suggested Reading

**INTRODUCTION**

Following the death of Allaudin in 1316 A.D., the Delhi Sultanate was plunged into confusion. Malik Kafur sat on the throne for a few days, only to be

deposed by Qutubdin Mubarak Shah. During this period, rebellions broke out in Devgiri, but were harshly suppressed. Qutubdin Mubarak shah was soon murdered and Khusrav ascended the throne. However, he too did not last long as some dissatisfied officers, led by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq defeated and killed him in a battle. Thus only four year after the death of Alauddin, the Khilji dynasty came to an end and power passed into the hands of the Tughlaqs. The founder of the Tughlaq dynasty was Ghazi Malik who ascended the throne as Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq in September 1320 A.D. He rose to an eminent position in the reign of Allaudin Khalji. He was made the warden of the marches in the north west frontier holding the charge of Dipalpur. He was an experienced man and faced all the difficulties with determination.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson you will be able to:

1. Identify the role played by Ghiyasuddin in the foundation of Tughlaq dynasty.
2. Describe the expansion of the Sultanate under Ghiyasuddin.
3. Understand the reforms of Ghiyasuddin.
4. Describe the internal and external policy of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq

### **EARLY CAREER**

Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq was a man of humble origin. According to Firishta his father was a Turkish slave of Balban and his mother a jat woman of the Punjab. On the account of his parentage, Ghazi Malik typified in his character the salient features of the two races the modesty and mildness of the Hindus and the virility and vigor of the turks. Tughlaqs were also called Qaraunah Turks as Marco Polo tells us that this name was given to them because they were the sons of the Indian mothers by Tartar fathers.

Ghiyasuddin seems to have begun his life as an ordinary trooper but rose to a position of importance by dint of his ability and hard labour. In 1305A.D he was appointed governor of the Punjab with his headquarter at Dipalpur. He was entrusted with the duty of the protection of the north

western frontier from the Mongols. It is said that he encountered the invaders on twenty nine occasion and defeated them. Hence he was called Malik-ul-Ghazi. Towards the end of Ala-ud-din's reign he became one of the few powerful Turkish nobles in the kingdom. He retained his position during the reign of Qutb-ud-din Mubarak. On his accession, Khusrav tried to conciliate him and conformed him in the governorship of the Punjab but he and his son , fakh-ud-din Jauna had their own ambition. This, together with Ghazi Malik's thirteenth century racial and religious orthodoxy promoted him to organize the opposition to Khusrav Shah, who was eventually defeated and killed. After this he entered Delhi as a conqueror. He is said to have caused an enquiry to be made whether there yet remained any descendant of Ala-ud-din Khalji whom he might raise to the throne. It is doubtful whether he was sincere in this enquiry or whether he had made this display in order to win popular sympathy. whatever the situation remained, he ascended the throne on September 8, 1320, under the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq Shah Ghazi. He was the first Sultan of Delhi to add the word Ghazi ( slayer of the infidel) after his name.

### **INTERNAL POLICY**

The first work of the new Sultan was to conciliate the nobles and the people. He enjoyed the advantage of pure Turkish lineage on his father's side and hence felt no difficulty in establishing his authority over the Turkish nobles and officers. He made an arrangement for giving away in marriage the Khalji girls who had survived the downfall of their house. Like a wise politician he did not take steps against the nobles who had supported Khusrav and confirmed all important officers in their posts. He dealt strictly with the confirmed partisans of the later regime who were dismissed from their offices and deprived of their lands. He restored the lands of those who had been deprived of them by Ala- ud-din Khalji. He tried to recover the treasure which had been squandered by Khusrav or plundered during the confusion that followed his downfall, but he encountered much opposition from some of those who had been benefited by its prodigal distribution. Large sums of money had been given away by Khusrav to the leading Shaikhs of Delhi, some of whom returned it, but Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Auliya, who had received

five lakhs of **tankas**, refused to pay back the sum and replied that he had given it away in charity. The Sultan was highly enraged but he was helpless as the Shaikh was a holy man and very popular with all classes of people. Ghiyas-ud-din endeavored to denounce him for indulgence in the ecstatic songs and dances of **dervishes**, a form of devotion regarded as unlawful by rigid Sunnis of the established religion. In this policy he did not succeed, as fifty- three theologians whom he consulted on this point did not find fault with the above form of devotion. With other people, however his policy was successful and he recovered most of the treasure squandered by Khusrav Shah.

### **Land Revenue**

Ghiyas-ud-din followed the policy of encouraging agriculture and protecting the cultivators. He ordered that the Diwan-i- Wizarat should not enhance the land revenue of any **iqta** beyond one tenth and one-eleventh in a year. His instructions were that the enhancement should be gradual and should be spread over a number of years. The state demand was not ascertained by measurement of the land as in the time of Ala-ud-din Khalji. He gave up the practice of survey of land as it did not work satisfactorily in the hands of his officers, and as it required an elaborate and technical staff. Instead the Sultan ordered that the land revenue should be assessed by the collectors in person, which meant in practice the revival of the old sharing ( Ghalla-bakshi or Batai) and Nasq or Kankut system. The revenue collectors were not to be paid a commission on the sum collected by them, but by grants of land which were exempted from taxation. In addition, they were permitted to charge a nominal fee from the cultivators. Here also Ghiyas-ud-din abandoned Ala-ud-din's scientific system and reverted to the practice that existed before the Khalji times. His next regulation was directed towards extending the area under cultivation. He believed that the cultivators should not be driven into despair and rebellion by an excessive demand and that the best method of increasing the revenue was the extension of cultivation not the enhancement of the demand. This policy led to happy results. Much waste land was reclaimed and the area under cultivation

was increased. Many ruined villages were repopulated Canals, and wells were dug for irrigation and gardens laid out.

### **Public Welfare Activities**

The revenue reform was followed by an attempt to improve the means of communication. Roads were cleared and work of public utility such as building of forts, bridges and canals were undertaken. To Ghiyas-ud-din, belongs the credit of improving the system of communication, particularly perfecting the postal system which had existed in India from time immemorial. In his time as well as long before, the posts were carried by runners and by horsemen who were stationed at distances of two-third of a mile and seven or eight miles, respectively all over the kingdom. News travelled at the rate of one hundred miles a day.

### **Justice**

Ghiyas-ud-din reformed the department of justice which had fallen into decay during the weak rule of Qutub-ud-din Mubarak and Khusrav. He prohibited torture in the recovery of the State debts. This form of punishment however continued to be given to thieves, revenue defaulters or to those who embezzled state money.

Ghiyas-ud-din's treatment of the Hindus was not praiseworthy. He retained some of the restriction imposed on them by Ala- ud-din Khalji. He ordered that the Hindus should not be permitted to amass wealth. They were therefore left with as much fruit of their labour as was necessary for them to live in moderate comfort. We are told by Zia- ud-din Barani that if the Sultan did not over tax the Hindus it was with a view not to compel them to desert their lands and business in despair. The lot of the vast majority of the people during his reign could not have been happy.

### **Religious Policy**

Ghiyas-ud-din was in his personal life, an orthodox sunni Musalman. He was devoted to the ordinances of his faith and was punctual in observing its rites. He ascended the throne as a champion of orthodox Islam. It was,

therefore, natural for him to behave like fanatic. He forbade the manufacture and sale of liquor and tried to enforce the ordinances of his religion on the Muslim section of his subjects. Perhaps he was not very much of a persecutor of other faiths, but he did indulge in temple destruction and image breaking during the course of his campaigns.

## **FOREIGN POLICY**

### **a) Expedition of Warangal**

Ghiyas-ud-din was a great annexationist. His foreign policy was directed towards reducing to submission those States which had renounced their allegiance to Delhi during the weak reign of Khusrav. But he would not stop short of their reconquest. He wanted to annex them and to bring them under the direct rule of Delhi. In 1321 A.D he sent his heir-apparent, Fakhr-ud-din Muhammad Jauna now entitled Ulugh Khan to reduce Prataprudra Deva, the Kakatiya ruler of Warangal who had repudiated his vassalage to the Sultan. Ulugh Khan besieged Warangal and so harassed the ruler that he sued for peace. Ulugh Khan wanted unconditional surrender and therefore rejected the peace offer. Prataprudra Deva thereupon, grew desperate and cut the lines of communication of besiegers with the result that news from Delhi ceased to come. There arose rumors that Ghiyas-ud-din had died at Delhi. On the advice of some of his friends, such as, Ubaid the poet and the Shaikhzada of Damascus the prince raised the siege and started for Delhi in order to be there in time to obtain possession of the throne. He was much harassed on the way by the ruler and the people of Telengana. The first Dakhin expedition of the prince was therefore, a failure.

### **b) Second Expedition of Warangal**

Reaching Devagiri, Jauna Khan learnt that the news of his father's death was false. So he traveled quickly to Delhi and apologized to his father for the mistake that he had committed. He was forgiven, but his associates and the Sultan's enemies were put to death. In 1323 A.D the prince was again sent to Warangal. This time he arranged to see that his lines of communication remained safe so as to ensure a regular flow of news from Delhi. The prince captured

Bidar and then marched on Warangal. This time the siege was prosecuted with such vigour that Prataprudra Deva and his family and nobles fell into the hands of victors. The Raja was sent to Delhi. Telengana was occupied and was divided into districts which were allotted to Turkish nobles and officers. The capital city of Warangal was named Sultanpur and it became the capital of a province of the Sultanate of Delhi.

**c) Conquest of Utkala**

While on his way back to Delhi from Telengana prince Jauna undertook a raid into the kingdom of Utkala in Orrisa ( Jajnagar of Muslim writers), where he captured fifty elephants besides other valuable articles .He returned to Delhi laden with rich spoils and treasure from Telengana and Utkala.

**d) Rebellion in Bengal**

There was a dispute for the throne of Bengal between the three brothers, Ghiyas-ud- din, Shihab- ud-din and Nasir-ud- din. Ghiyas- ud-din who was governor of East Bengal, overthrew Shihab-ud-din and occupied the throne of Lakhnauti in 1319 A.D Their third brother Nasir-ud-din, who too was eager to rule over Bengal appealed to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq for help. The Sultan responded and proceeded in person towards Bengal. On the way at Tirhut, he was joined by Nasir-ud-din and the Sultan dispatched one of his capable Officers, Zafar khan, to Lakhnauti. Ghiyas-ud-din of Bengal was defeated and taken a prisoner. Nasir-ud-din was reinstated on the throne of west Bengal as a vassal of Delhi. East Bengal was annexed to Delhi. After arrangement the Sultan returned with large booty.

On his way back from Bengal Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq attacked Raja Hari Singh Deva of Tirhut (Mithila) as the loyalty of this Hindu ruler was doubtful. He reduced him to submission and proceeded to Delhi by quick marches.

**TO SUM UP**

At the time of his accession, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq was an experienced soldier and a seasoned general. He had also enjoyed the reputation of being a loyal and faithful official and a successful warden of the marches. He was

possessed of almost all the qualities a good ruler should have. He established peace and order in the kingdom and stamped out theft, robbery and brigandage. By his policy of moderation he conciliated the old nobility and won over most of the half-hearted supporters of Khusrav. He seems to have been the first Sultan of Delhi to take a correct view of the position of the agriculturists as he believed that the prosperity of the state depended upon the well being of the tillers of the soil. That was why he issued instructions that revenue officers should do their best to extend the area under cultivation rather than to increase the rates of the land tax. He followed the middle course with regard to the hereditary official class in the department of revenue, namely **Muqaddams, Khuts and Chaudharis**. Hence his reign was marked by some kind of material prosperity of the people.

Tughluq Shah was careful about the administration of justice. He held his daily court twice, that is morning and evening and endeavored to maintain the prestige of the Sultanate. He also believed in the policy of military domination. Some of the modern writers have called him a mild and benevolent ruler. But this is not a correct description of his character. He was mild and generous to his courtiers and former friends and colleagues for whom his elevation to the throne brought no change so far as his attitude towards them was concerned. But for the common people, particularly the Hindus, he was fairly strict. He also pursued the policy of aggressive warfare against his Hindu neighbors.

Ghiyas-ud-din paid special attention to the army. He kept the military machine in proper trim and retained Ala-ud-din's reforms, such as, taking down of the descriptive rolls of the soldiers and the branding of the horses. He was a rigid Sunni Musalman and though not bitterly hostile to the religion of the vast majority of his subjects, he was surely not sympathetic towards it.

Ghiyas-ud-din was fond of building. Early in his reign he laid the foundation of a big palace fort which became known as Tughlaqabad. Within the enclosure of this building were erected his palaces and other buildings. His main palace was built of gilded bricks which shone so brilliantly in the sun that none could gaze steadily upon it. Ibn Battuta relates that the Sultan had his

treasure rooms, in one of which there was a cistern into which molten gold was poured so that it became one solid mass. He was also a patron of learning and had scholars and poets at his court.

**MOHAMMAD TUGHLAQ : TRANSFER OF CAPITAL;  
TOKEN CURRENCY; TAXATION IN DOAB**

Introduction

Objectives

Transfer of Capital

Criticism of the Scheme

Token Currency

Reasons for the Introduction of Token Currency

Mistake committed by the Sultan

Taxation in Doab

Creation of Agriculture Department

To sum up

Glossary

SAQ/CYP/Possible Answers

Lesson End Exercise

Suggested Reading

**INTRODUCTION**

After the death of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq who was the founder of the Tughlaq dynasty his eldest son Juna Khan sat upon the throne under the title of

Muhammad bin Tughlaq. Historians have different opinion regarding the death of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq. According to some scholars he died of an accident whereas the contemporary chroniclers, Ibn Batuta and Isami blamed the prince for the death of the Sultan. Prince Juna Khan had a wooden platform erected for the Sultan's reception in Afghanpur when the Sultan returned from Bengal. As the Sultan and few of his followers were dining, the platform collapsed and the Sultan was killed under the building.

The sudden death of Sultan Ghiyasuddin paved the way for his elder son. Juna Khan to succeed him. Thus there are sufficient reasons to believe that Sultan's death might be the result of a deep rooted conspiracy. He seated himself on the throne soon after the death of his father in 1325 A.D. He marched to Delhi after his stay of 40 days at Tughlaqabad and put himself in the Red palace of Balban. He distributed silver and gold among the people at the time of his coronation to win them to his side. And there was no revolution or opposition by the people or nobles. He ruled for 26 years.

Fakhr-ud-din- Muhammad Jauna Khan was brought up as a soldier. Even as a boy he had distinguished himself in this profession. From his ability as a scholar, when he was in the prime of his life, it is clear that he must have been given the best possible literary education in his boyhood and he must have been a brilliant child. The first important office that he held was that of the master of the horse under Khusrav Shah. He was an extremely ambitious youth who saw the possibility of his reaching the throne of Delhi. To realize this object he set afoot an agitation. Khusrav, his patron who had endeavored to placate him and his father, Ghazi Tughlaq, seems to have acted simply on the advice and initiative of his more clever and ambitious son. His opportunities came when his father became the Sultan of Delhi in 1320 A.D. He was nominated heir apparent and given the title of Ulugh Khan. In 1321 A.D, he undertook an expedition to Warangal which failed disastrously. Two years later, he was again sent to reduce Prataprudra Deva to submission. This time he succeeded in defeating the ruler of Warangal and bringing him as a prisoner to Delhi. Early in 1325 A.D he brought about his father's death, probably because he would not wait but wanted to anticipate the course of nature. Four years before that date he had believed in

the rumours of his father's death and had almost carried out his accession. These facts show beyond doubt that he was an over ambitious and unscrupulous youth. He believed in his ability and wisdom and thought that he would do better as a ruler than any of his predecessors.

He is remembered as a ruler who undertook a number of ambitious projects. However these projects failed and earned him only the unhappiness of the people. That is why, Muhammad is often called an ill starred idealist. It was his personality that was responsible for the failure of his projects.

Muhammad Tughlaq was a unique personality. He was a great scholar, deeply read in religion and philosophy and had critical and open mind. He gave high offices to people on the basis of merit, irrespective of their belonging to noble families. He was an ambitious ruler and desired to conquer not only the Indian subcontinent but also Khurasan.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson you will be able to :

1. Identify the various experiments of Muhammad bin Tughlaq.
2. Discuss the rationale of the transfer of capital from Delhi to Daulatabad.
3. Identify the reasons for increase of taxes in the doab.
4. Discuss the reasons for the issue and failure of token currency.
5. Assess the impact of these experiments.

### **Domestic Policy**

As regards to domestic policy, Muhammad Tughlaq began to look into the details of administration from the very beginning of his reign. Soon after his accession he issued numerous ordinances for the improvement of the administration of revenue. The first ordinance was for the compilation of a register of the revenue and expenditure of the provinces of his kingdom. He directed the governors of the provinces to send to the capital all relevant records and other materials for its compilation. A summaries of income and expenditure came to Delhi from distant parts of the empire like the Dakhin, Bengal and Gujarat and

the work proceeded smoothly. The Sultan seemed to have undertaken this labor in order to introduce a uniform standard of land revenue and to see that no village remained unassessed. He undertook a number of visionary schemes like the transfer of capital, the token currency and the taxation in Doab. We will discuss all these one by one.

### **TRANSFER OF CAPITAL ( 1326-27 A.D)**

An important political experiment of Muhammad Tughlaq was the transfer of the capital from Delhi to Devagiri which was renamed Daulatabad. Several reasons led to this decision. The first was that the Sultan was anxious to have a capital which should not only be situated at a strategic place but should also be in the centre of his far-flung kingdom. Mohammad Tughlaq was impressed by Devagiri, and we are told by Barani that the geographical importance of the place was one of the reasons for its selection as the metropolis. As he writes : “This place held a central situation; Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhanauti, Sonargaon, Telang, Malabar, Dwarasamudra and Kampil were about equidistant from thence.....”. Secondly Delhi was too near to the north-western frontier which was constantly threatened by Mongol raids while the Sultan wanted the new capital to be at safe distance from the invaders from the north-west. Thirdly, while northern India had almost been conquered and pacified, the Dakhin was a new and uneasy partner in the Sultanate. It could be effectively subdued and managed by a government that had its headquarter in southern India. Lastly, he must surely have felt that southern Indian was so rich and that he would be able to utilize its resources more easily and effectively by an intimate contact with it. Ibn Battuta gives another reason namely that Muhammad was disgusted with the citizens of Delhi who had written anonymous letter full of abuse and he undertook the transfer of the capital in order to punish them. Curiously enough, this tale has been accepted by a great historian like Wolseley Haig. It is impossible to imagine that so serious a measure could have been decided on so frivolous a ground.

Having decided the measure, Mohammad Tughlaq ordered the transfer of the capital and also the people of Delhi, men, women and children to

Daulatabad with all their belongings. The people would not like to leave Delhi which had been endeared to them by long association, but Sultan was bent upon taking all the inhabitants with him. Ibn Battuta tells us that he caused a search to be made and a blind man and a cripple were found in the city unwilling to leave it. It is said that cripple was put to death while the blind man was ordered to be dragged to Daulatabad with the result that only one of his legs reached the new capital. The Sultan had a look over the deserted town from his palace and was satisfied to see that there came no smoke from the chimney or the kitchen of a single house. These stories are nothing more than bazaar gossips

The Sultan made commendable arrangements for the comfort of the people during their journey from Delhi to Daulatabad. It is said temporary huts were set up along the seven hundred mile road and free food and drink were supplied. Shady trees were also said to have been planted but these should have hardly afforded any shelter to the travelers, for they could not have grown up in such a short time. The people suffered tremendously from fatigue, privation and mental agony. Many of them died on the way and many after reaching their destination.

### **Criticism of the Scheme**

The scheme was a complete failure, not because the transfer of the capital was undesirable without precedent and should not have been undertaken but because the Sultan failed to see that the only desirable thing to do was to shift the court. Courtiers, officers and big merchants and traders would themselves have sooner or later accompanied the court to Daulatabad. It was unnecessary to order the transfer of the whole population bag and baggage. Secondly, the Sultan did not realize that people would not abandon their homes and hearths except in extreme and unavoidable circumstances. The people of Delhi who loved their city as their ancestral abode were no exception to this rule. Thirdly, the Muslim population of Delhi was unwilling to live in the Hindu surroundings in the Dakhin. Fourthly, Delhi was without doubt a better place for the capital of India than Daulatabad which could not have successfully controlled distant province like Bengal or the Punjab. Above all, it was very difficult if not impossible for the government to

resist the Mongols and protect the north-western frontier of the country from their attack from Daulatabad. Hence Muhammad Tughlaq committed a twofold mistake, wrong choice of the place and wrong method of bringing about the transfer.

In fairness to the Sultan it must be added that as soon as he realized that the scheme had failed, he ordered the people to return from Daulatabad to their homes in Delhi. But Daulatabad now became a deserted town while Delhi was only partially repopulated. It did not regain its former prosperity for years to come. Even assuming that the statements of some historians are exaggerated, it is concluded that this action of the Sultan was not a rational one.

### **Token Currency (1329-30 A.D)**

The reign of Mohammad Tughlaq is an important landmark in the history of Indian coinage. He has been called a prince of moneyers. He reformed the entire system of coinage, fixed the relative values of the precious metals and issued various type of coins. Most of these coins were noted for their artistic designs and execution. His most notable experiment in the field was the introduction of token currency.

#### **Reasons for the Introduction of token currency**

There were several reasons for introducing brass and copper coinage.

1. There was the want of precious money in the treasury which had been drained by wars and rebellions and also by costly experiments in the field of administration.
2. Owing to famine and harsh taxation policy in the Doab, there was a considerable fall in the State revenue
3. He was anxious to augment his revenue. Hence, he undertook the conquest of the distant province of India and of some foreign countries.
4. Mohammad Tughlaq was fond of experimentation and therefore wanted to open a new chapter in the history of coinage in India.
5. He was encouraged by the examples of Chinese and Persian rulers before him who had introduced token currency in their countries in the thirteenth century.

With the above object in view, Mohammad promulgated an order making copper coins the legal tender and putting these coins on par (in value) with gold and silver coins.

#### **10.4.2 Mistakes committed by the Sultan.**

The Sultan ordered that the people should use these coins in all transactions just like gold and silver coins. But he took no steps to make the mint the monopoly of the State. Those days, in make and design and in execution and finish, the coins turned out by the royal mints were not such that they could not be easily imitated by private persons. And as the Sultan made no arrangement for preventing the circulation of counterfeit coins, private persons began to manufacture copper coins. Barani says in right orthodox Muslim fashion that the house of every Hindu became a mint. There is no reason to believe that Musalamans resisted the temptation to which, according to Barani, the Hindus succumbed. People hoarded gold and silver coins and paid their revenue in the new ones. Foreign merchants purchased Indian commodities with the token currency in the country, but refused to accept the latter while selling foreign products. Trade came to a standstill. Business was very much hampered and gold and silver became scarce. The result was a great confusion and the Sultan was bewildered to see his scheme crumbling down before his very eyes. He was compelled to withdraw the token currency and to order the people to take from the royal treasury gold and silver pieces in exchange for brass and copper coins. The state was defrauded, while private people made huge profits at its expense.

The failure of the scheme was due not so much to the backwardness of the people and their prejudice and ignorance ( though they failed to appreciate it) as to the failure on the part of the Sultan to prevent the manufacture of counterfeit coins by private individuals and their circulation in the market. It was a mistake on the part of Mohammad Tughlaq to have failed to appreciate the limitation and circumstances of the age. He must be therefore primarily held responsible for the failure of the scheme.

## **TAXATION IN DOAB**

The next administrative measure was to increase taxation in the Doab with a view to augment his resources. Probably he wanted to raise the revenue by five to ten percent, not by increasing the land tax but by certain other taxes. Probably these taxes were the house tax and the grazing tax. We are told by a later though standard authority, that in order to realize these the houses of the people in the rural areas were numbered and their cattle's were branded. He attempted to realize the land revenue and the newly imposed taxes with rigour. Unfortunately, when the policy of additional taxation was enforced in the Doab, there occurred famine owing to the failure of rains. The people offered resistance. The Sultan's officers continued realizing the taxes. The cultivators had, therefore, to abandon their land and take to the highway robbery. Muhammad bin Tughlaq made an attempt to help the cultivators by giving them loans to buy seed, bullocks etc and making arrangements for the digging of wells for irrigation but the policy failed. In the first place, it was too late to have introduced the grant of loans. Secondly, as people had nothing to eat they utilized the loans for purpose different from those for which they were intended. Thirdly, the house and grazing taxes had been unpopular since they were introduced by Ala-ud-din Khalji. They had been allowed to fall into misuse under Ala-ud-din successors. Their revival by Mohammad Tughlaq was very much resented. The Sultan got no extra revenue. In fact even the usual revenue could not be realized from the Doab. Worst of it all, the Sultan himself became thoroughly unpopular with his subjects.

### **Creation of Agriculture Department**

The next experiment of Mohammad Tughlaq was the creation of the department of agriculture. It was called **Diwan-i-Kohi**. The main object of this department was to bring the uncultivated land under cultivation by giving direct financial support from the state treasury. A large tract of land, sixty miles square in area, was first chosen for this purpose. The land was cultivated and different crops were sown. The government spent over seventy lakhs on the scheme in two years time. The land was distributed among those who were in the need of it and a large staff of officers and guards was appointed to look after it. But the experiment

failed for several reasons. Firstly, the piece of land chosen for the experiment was not fertile. Secondly, the experiment was altogether new with no precedent and therefore required great attention from the Sultan himself which he could not give. Thirdly, three years were inadequate to yield any tangible result. Fourthly, the money earmarked for the purpose was badly spent, part of it was misappropriated by corrupt officials and a part was spent by the people on their personal needs. The experiment which was one of the best in the history of the revenue administration in the country, had therefore, to be abandoned.

### **TO SUM UP**

Mohammad had a brilliant mind. He was a scholar of logic, mathematics and theology. He based his actions on reason, rather than religion. He desired to achieve the political and cultural unity of India. By transferring his capital from Delhi to Daulatabad he hoped to remove the barriers that separated the north and the south.

Mohammad showed a progressive mind, when he introduced the token currency. However he could not understand the psychology of the people. He failed to establish a sound relationship with his subjects. His suspicious mind did not allow him to trust any person. He doubted the intentions of the people and the people suspected his motives. The failure of one project after another increased the bitterness between the Sultan and the masses.

Similarly the programme to extend agriculture was very far sighted. Barani states that the Sultan spent four years in Delhi trying to restore agriculture to normal conditions. Ibn Batuta tells us that during the famine years, the Sultan ordered the digging of wells outside the city and cultivation of crops there. For this purpose he provided the people with seeds as well as requisite sum of money. This shows that the Sultan had the best interests of the state in mind.

But Unfortunately Mohammad bin Tughlaq's reign of twenty six years was a tragic story of schemes and projects, correctly conceived, badly executed and diastereously abandoned. He has been described as a mixture of opposites. He had his faults also. While he was kind, generous and humble, he was also most cruel. He had no balance or patience.

## **CONQUEST OF KHURASAN AND QUARACHIL UNDER MOHAMMAD-BIN-TUGHLAQ**

Introduction

Objectives

Foreign Policy

Conquest of Khurasan

Conquest of Quarachil

To sum up

Glossary

SAQ/CYP/Possible Answers

Lesson end exercise

Suggested Reading

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mohammad bin Tughlaq was not content with his vast Indian possessions and had the vision of universal conquests like Allaudin Khilji. There was nothing unusual about this ambition. Moreover the Delhi Sultanate was not free from external dangers. In 1328 -29 A.D, Taramshrin Khan, the Chaghtai Chief of Transoxiana, invaded India. It appears that the change of capital from Delhi to Daulatabad and the neglect of the defence of the north-western frontiers

encouraged him to attack the country. Although they were soundly defeated by Tughlaq forces but they occupied Khanaur for some time.

Meanwhile in Central Asia at this time there was a political vacuum because the power of Ilkhans had declined. The large number of princes and armies, who came from Iran and Khurasan to the court of Mohammad Tughlaq, encouraged him to invade this region and extend his boundaries.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson you will be able to:-

1. Understand the foreign policy of Mohammad Tughlaq.
2. Know the reasons for his visions of universal conquest.
3. Assess the motivating factors for the invasion of Khurasan.
4. Know the political condition of Central Asia which encouraged the Sultan for the expedition.
5. Understand the necessity of raising such a huge army.

### **FOREIGN POLICY**

Having become the master of practically the whole country, Mohammad Tughlaq made plans to conquer the neighbouring countries like Allaudin Khilji. And there was nothing unusual about this ambition. Early during his reign he formed design of conquering Khurasan, Iran and Transoxiana. Barani and Farishta tell us that soon after the retreat of Taramshirin, the Mongol Chief of Transoxiana, the Sultan began to dream of extending his empire by the conquest of foreign countries. Khurasan was the first to catch his fancy.

### **CONQUEST OF KHURASAN (1332-33 A.D)**

The country of Khurasan formed a part of the Persian empire of the ilkhan Mongols. Abu Sayed, then Mongol emperor of Persia, being minor, his empire was coveted by Taramashirin, the Chaghatai chief of Transoxiana. Tarmashirin, having suffered an unexpected defeat at the hands of the Persian armies near

Ghazni, was compelled to cross the Indian border, in 1326 A.D, with 40,000 soldiers. As mentioned earlier, Mohammad bin Tughlaq made effective arrangements for the defence of his dominions and Taramashirin was constrained to beat a hasty retreat towards Afghanistan. Before his return to Transoxiana, Tarmashirin is said to have formed a friendly alliance with Mohammad bin Tughlaq for the conquest of Khurasan, it appears that they had also taken the ruler of Egypt into confidence in connection with this campaign, thus leading to the formation of what may be called a 'triple alliance'. On reaching Transoxiana, Tarmashirin sent his son-in-law Amir Nauroz, with a number of Mongol chiefs to the court of Mohammad bin Tughlaq. They joined his army and Amir Nauroz remained in the service of the Sultan until the latter's death in 1351. Barani writes that, on the instigation of these foreigners, the Sultan prepared a wild project of conquering Khurasan and Iraq.

In pursuance of this project vast sums were lavished upon the officials and leading men of those countries. These great men came to him with insinuating proposals and deceitful representations, with the intention of robbing the Sultanate of its wealth.

From Barani's complaint we infer that Mohammad bin Tughlaq spent lavishly upon the foreign chiefs with the object of electing information about the countries of Khurasan and Iraq. Afghanistan was then under the control of Taramashirin and Mohammad bin Tughlaq's plan seemed to establish some sort of joint sphere of influence in the Muslim world. It is said that Taramashirin opened Ghazni to direct communications and negotiations with Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Ghazni thus became a diplomatic centre and came within the political influence of the Sultan who frequently sent money to its government and almost took the the Qazi of Ghazna into his pay, a fact which Barani repeatedly deploras. Ibn Battuta on the basis of his personal experience in the court of Tarmashirin at Bukhara tells us that Mohammad bin Tughlaq was extremely kind to Tarmashirin and that brotherly relations existed between the two. Taramashirin was not an infidel like his predecessors, he had adopted sunni form of Islam as the state religion of Transoxiana. This was perhaps an additional reason for the close intimacy of Taramashirin and Mohammad bin Tughlaq.

According to Zia-ud-din Barani the Sultan made a special recruitment of 3,70,000 armed personnel for the proposed conquest of Khurasan and Iraq. This new force known as the Khurasan Army, was obviously over and above the regular imperial army of Delhi and the contingents of the provincial governors. It included a large number of the Rajputs and Hindus of the Doab as well as the Mongol mercenary troops. As the entire force had been raised within a year the terms of recruitment must have been very liberal and attractive. The incident took place sometime in 1333- 34 A.D, before the death of Abu Sayed the minor ruler of Persia. He expired in 1335 A.D.

As luck would have it, the Khurasan expedition did not materialize and the army could not be put to use. Its maintenance and equipment caused a heavy drainage of wealth. In the words of Barani, “for a whole year these soldiers were supported and paid but as they were not employed in war and conquest, when the next year came round there was not sufficient money in the treasury to support them”.

Barani however, gives no reasons why the Khurasan expedition was not undertaken. It was probably because of the sudden and unexpected changes that came about in the diplomatic and political relations of Persians, Egypt and Transoxiana. These were, the restoration of friendly relations between the court of Persia and Sultan of Egypt, and the deposition of Taramashirin by one of his cousins. The triple alliance was thus broken. Unaided Mohammad bin Tughlaq was constrained to call off the expedition.

#### **CONQUEST OF QUARACHIL ( 1333-34 A.D)**

According to Barani the Qarachil expedition of Mohammad bin Tughlaq was a part of the project called ' Khurasan expedition'. After the failure of his scheme for the conquest of Khurasan the Sultan utilized a part of the Khurasan army for this purpose. Firishta who himself did not know the exact nature of the expedition, writes that it was directed against China. Some of the modern writers have blindly followed Firishta's account. Barani state that the Sultan's object was to conquer the mountain of Qarajal or Qarachal which was situated between the territories of Hind and those of China, so that the

passage for horses and soldiers and the march of the army might be rendered easy. His statement implies that the expeditions was directed against Himachal or the Himalayas. Some of the modern writers have wrongly criticised Barani for having made this statement which had nothing to do with securing of a passage for the Khurasan expedition. It has, however, been correctly suggested that by Qarachil the contemporary writers probably meant Kurmachil. The old name of kumaun. Thus the imperial army was sent against some independent Rajput states in the kumaun-Gharwal region. These hilly tracts usually served as a place of refuge for the rebels against the government of Delhi. That is why Mohammad bin Tughlaq wanted to bring them under his direct control.

Khusrau Malik, a nephew of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq, was the commander-in-chief of the Qarachil army. After a careful analysis of the situation, the Sultan instructed him to establish military posts at interval along the route through the mountains between the position to be stormed and the base on the plains. These posts were to serve the twofold purpose of facilitating the transport provisions and serving as places of refuge in case of retreat or disorder. So long as these instructions of the Sultan were acted upon, Khusrav Malik met with success. The royal troops captured 'Jidya' and the surrounding country at the foots of the Himalayas. They seized the lands and treasures of the hostile chieftains and then climbed up the heights and captured Warrangal. Khusrav Malik sent a written intimation of his victories to the Sultan who dispatched a **Qazi** and a **Khatib** to take charge of the civil administration of the newly acquired territories. It so appears, however, that the initial success turned Khusrav Malik's head and he transgressed the Sultan's orders. Flushed with victory, he took the whole army across the mountain into Tibet where it was overtaken by ice- cold winds and rains, followed by the outbreak of plague. A panic seized the army and the tables were turned. The mountaineers having got the upper hand hurled blocks of stones form the hill tops on to the retreating troops in the valley below. The military posts established previously to safeguard the retreat, fell into disorder. As a result the whole of the army was destroyed. Only a few survived, three according to Ibn Batutta and ten as per narrative of Barani to tell the tale of misery to the frustrated Sultan in Delhi, who immediately got them hanged for reasons better known to him.

The Qarachil army perished albeit the Sultan achieved the political objective which had necessitated this expeditions, Ibn Batuta makes a significant statement in this connection :

“After this the Sultan made peace with the inhabitants of the hills on condition that they should pay him a certain amount since these people held possession of the territory lying at the foot of the hills, they were unable to use it without his permission”.

The Hindu ruler of Nagarkot ( Kangra) was also subjugated a couple of years later ( 1337-38 A.D) though plundered by Mahmud of Ghazni, Nagarkot had never constituted a part of the Sultanate of Delhi before.

### **TO SUM UP**

As we have discussed earlier that Mohammad Tughlaq was an ambitious ruler. He had undertaken number of experiments such as token currency, transfer of capital and taxation in Doab. In the series of that Qarachil and Khurasan expeditions were also done. The country of Khurasan formed a part of the Persian empire of the Ilkhani Mongols. Taramshirim is said to have formed a friendly alliance with Muhammad Tughlaq for the conquest of Khurasan. They had also taken the ruler of Egypt into confidence and formed a triple alliance.

The Sultan raised an army of 3,70,000 armed personnel for the proposed conquest of Khurasan and Iraq. But perhaps a sudden and unexpected change came about in the diplomatic and political relations of Persia, Egypt and Transoxiana. These were the restoration of friendly relations between the court of Persia, Sultan of Egypt and the deposition of Taramshirin by one of his cousins. The triple alliance was broken and Mohammad Tughlaq was compelled to call off the expedition.

The other expedition i.e. the Qarachil expedition also failed due to the mountainous nature of the country and the heavy rainfall which compelled the Sultan to retreat.

**FEROZ SHAH TUGHLAQ : PUBLIC WELFARE  
ACTIVITIES AND RELIGIOUS POLICY**

Introduction

Objectives

Public Welfare Activities

Religious Policy of Feroz Shah Tughlaq

Patronage to Slavery

Let Us Sum Up

Glossary

SAQ/CYP - Possible Answer

Lesson End Exercise / Examination Oriented Questions

Suggested Readings

**INTRODUCTION**

Feroz Shah Tughlaq (1351-1388 A.D) has earned praise from several writers and has been called as the ideal monarch. He is particularly noted for his administrative reforms and public welfare activities. He treated his subjects kindly during his long reign period. The public utilities that he created were not a monopoly of the ruling class. The welfare of his muslim subjects was the

watchword of the new administration that was lead by Feroz Shah. However, while Sultan Feroz has been praised for his public welfare activities, he has been criticised for his religious policy. Since he was born of a lady who had been Hindu in her early life, so he thought it necessary to show that he was also a Musalman like the ones who were born of parents of pure Turkish lineage. And it is for this reason that he became a religious bigot.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson you will be able to:-

1. Assess the public welfare activities of Feroz Shah Tughlaq.
2. Understand the basic objectives of his religious policy.
3. Understand the reasons for which he gave more importance to **amirs** and **ulema**.
4. Explain the reasons that lead him to strictly enforce **jaziya**.
5. Understand the circumstances in which he revived the jagir system.

### **PUBLIC WELFARE ACTIVITIES**

Feroz Shah Tughlaq had record of some benevolent measures to his credit and his long reign of thirty seven years was a period of comparative prosperity and happiness for the people.

Firuz was a great builder of works of public utility. He is said to have founded many towns.

The important towns of Firozabad (the Kotla Firoz Shah in Delhi), Fatehabad, Hissar, Jaunpur and Firozpur (near Badaun) were founded by him. He built four mosques, thirty palaces, two hundreds caravan-serais, five reservoirs, five hospitals, a hundred tombs, ten baths, ten monumental tombs, and a hundred bridges.

In order to encourage agriculture, the Sultan paid a lot of attention to irrigation. Two streams are mentioned by Shams-i-Siraj 'Afif to have been excavated under the order of Feroz-one from the Sutlej and the other from the

Jumna. But Yahiya, who as an inhabitant of Sirhind, had a better knowledge of the canal system, writes of four canals being constructed during this reign:

- i) One from the Sutlej to the Ghaghar,
- ii) A second opened in the vicinity of the Mandavi and Sirmur hills, and joined by seven creeks, was extended as far as Hansi, and thence to Arasani, where the foundation of the fort of Hissar Feroz was laid.
- iii) The third flowing from the Ghaghar by the fort of Sirsuti went up to the village of Hirani-Khera
- iv) And the fourth being excavated from the Jumna was extended to Firuzabad and then passed further beyond it. Feroz employed skilled engineers to superintend the canals and especially to examine and report on them during the rainy season.

The remains of some of the canals can be seen even today. 150 wells were also dug during his reign for irrigation purposes and also their use by travelers. As a result of the irrigation facilities provided by the Sultan 52 colonies sprang up the Doab alone. Superior crops such as wheat, sugarcane, etc were cultivated. Fruits were also grown in large quantities.

Another beneficial step on his part was the reclamation of waste land, the income from which was spent for religious and educational purposes.

Besides Canals, Feroz also built many dams for the purpose of irrigation. He planted many orchards and is supposed to have planted 1200 new gardens around Delhi and restored 30 old gardens of Ala-ud-din.

The Chief architect of the State was Malik Ghazi Shahana who was assisted in his work by Abdul- Haq. The plan of every building along with its estimates was required to be submitted to the Diwani-i- Wizarat before money was sanctioned for its construction.

Feroz Shah was peculiar in devoting much attention to the repair and re-building of the structures of former Kings and ancient nobles... giving the restoration of those buildings the priority over his own constructions". The two pillars of Ashoka were brought to Delhi from Meerut and Topra ( in the Ambala

District). The pillar from Topra was re-erected at Delhi near the palace and great mosque at Firuzabad. The pillar from Meerut was set up on a mound near the Qushki-i-Shikar on hunting palace near the Rao Hospital at Delhi.

Feroz established a hospital at Delhi described as **Dar-ul- Shifa or Shifakhana**. Competent and trained physicians were employed to look after the patients. The medicines were supplied free. The staff was ordered to be very polite to the people. The revenue of certain villages were utilised for the maintenance of the hospital.

He set up a public work department which repaired many old building and mausoleums. Thus, he repaired the Qutub Minar, a storey of which had been destroyed by lightning, and restored the Mosque and the tombs of Iltutmish and Alauddin near it. He also repaired the Shamsi tank (south of Qutub Minar), and the Hauz-i- Alai ( present Hauz Khas), the water channel to which had been choked).

A new department of **Diwan-i- Khairat** was set to make provision for the marriages of poor girls. Any one who had a daughter of marriageable age and lacked the required money for her wedding, could apply to the **Diwan-i- Khairat**. The offices of this Department made enquiries about the financial position of the applicant and fixed the amount of money that was to be paid to him. Poor men and widows came to the capital from all parts of the country to get the names of their daughters registered in the **Diwan-i- Khairat**.

The Sultan also set up another Department known as Diwan-i-Istihaq. This Department gave financial help to the deserving people. 36 lakhs of **Tankas** were annually set apart for this purpose. The view of Afif is that about 4,200 men received help from this department. To provide relief to those who had been the victims of recklessness and fitfulness of Muhammad Tughluq, the Sultan made liberal grants.

### **RELIGIOUS POLICY OF FEROZ SHAH TUGHLAQ**

Feroz Tughlaq was a staunch sunni Muslim and has been criticized for his religious policy. He was elevated to the throne by prominent nobles and **ulemas**.

So he gave them a high place in society and government. According to Barani, Feroz Shah's coronation was a bloodless one and Feroz ascended the throne in true regal pomp and show. He immediately began to rectify the damages that had been caused by the policies of Mohammad Tughlaq. On the advice of his **wazir**, he wrote off the huge amounts that had been given as loan by Sultan Mohammad to the peasants for increasing agriculture. He reappointed those **ulema** and **amirs** who had been cast away by his predecessor. In fact, he gave a handsome compensation as well as letters of forgiveness to the heirs of those who had been tortured to death or mutilated by Sultan Mohammad. He was prepared to help all those who belonged to his faith. He arranged for the marriages of the daughters of poor Muslims.

As he was the born of a lady who had been Hindu at least in her early life, the Sultan thought it necessary to show that he was also a Musalman like the ones born of parents of pure Turkish lineage. For this he became a religious bigot and persecuted the Hindus and was very intolerant towards the Shias and other non- sunni Musalmans.

He entertained a great regard for the Khalifah of Egypt. For the first time in Indian history of Muslim period he styled himself as his deputy, and twice received a patent of ruler ship and robes of honour from him during the first six years of his rule. On the coins he struck his own name with that of the Khalifah. He tried to conduct the state affairs according to the theocratic principle of his faith.

Feroz Shah Tughlaq encouraged his subjects to embrace Islam. For this he offered all kinds of temptations to induce people to embrace Islam. The Hindus who became muslims were not required to pay **Jazia**. They were also offered temptations of **Jagris**, rewards in cash, titles, honour and state employment in case they became Muslims. He also ordered a Brahman to be put to death on the charge that he was encouraging Muslims to give up their religion. Once it was reported to the Sultan that certain Brahman was inviting Muslims to worship idols. The Sultan referred his case to the **ulema** and **Muftis**. All of them demanded the conversion of the Brahman. He was given the option but as he stuck to his principle, he was burnt to death.

Feroz Shah demolished as many Hindu temples as he could and broke their images to pieces. The Sultan imposed **Jazia** on the Brahmans who had never been taxed before. He called a meeting in these words, "The Brahmans are the keys of the chambers of idolatry and infidels are dependent on them. They ought therefore to be taxed first. The **ulema** also agreed that they should be taxed. The Brahmans protested against the action of the Sultan and threatened to die and burn themselves alive before his palace. The Sultan was much impressed by the sincerity of Brahmans that he reduced the amount of Jazia to be realized from them.

Probably with a view to conciliating the nobles and the officials, Feroz revived the **jagir** system, which had been abolished by Alaudin Khilji, and framed out the whole kingdom among them besides granting them increased salaries and allowance. Though these measure apparently strengthened the position of the new Sultan, they ultimately served to engender a tendency to decentralization, which undermined the authority of the central government in the times to come.

Feroz also made concessions to **ulemas**, who had been ignored by Sultan Mohammad. Although the **ulema** did not become policy framers yet that received grants of land and high posts in darbar. Their power and prestige increased, as the Sultan turned to them for advice. The Sultan had imposed **Jazia** on the Brahmans with the approval of the **ulema**. He did not oppose the ulema even when they ordered the public burning of a brahman who had been preaching to the Muslims. According to some scholars, Feroz's benevolence was limited to the Muslims only. In fact, even the Shias and muslim dissenters were not favoured by him.

Sultan Feroz ruled in accordance with the laws of the **Shariat**. He desired that only such money should come to the treasury which is in conformity with Shariat. He therefore accepted taxes like **Kharaj**, **Khams**, **zakat** and **Jaziya**. According to the **Shariat**, 1/5 part of **Khams** (plunder in war) should go to the Sultan and 4/5 should be distributed among the members of the army Sultan Alauddin Khalji had reversed this. Feroz ratified it in accordance with the **Shariat**.

He also tried to administer justice in accordance with the law of Shariat. He respected the advice of the **Qazi** and the **ulema**. According to **Fatuhati- Feroz Shahi**, he abolished all those inhumane punishments which were against the **Shariat**. He also abolished capital punishments for the Muslims. Barani writes that capital punishment was given to the rebels only.

Feroz Tughlaq absolutely ignored the majority section of the population that is Hindus. Hindus were extremely harassed so they turned hostile to the Sultan. Thus, this religious policy of Feroz Tughlaq was one of the main cause of downfall of Tughlaq Empire in India.

### **Patronage to Slavery**

Shamsi-i-Siraj Afif tells us that the Sultan was diligent in procuring slaves and he carried his case so far as to command his great fief-holder and officers to capture slave whenever they were at war and to pick out and send the best for the service of the court where they were first converted to Islam and then assigned different duties. Those chiefs who brought many slaves received the highest favour. About 12,000 slaves became artisans of various kinds. Forty thousands were in readiness to attend as guard in the Sultan's equipage or at the palace. Altogether, in the city and in the various fiefs, there were 1,80,000 slaves for whose maintenance and comfort the Sultan took special care. The institution took root in the very centre of the land and the Sultan looked upon its due regulation as one of his incumbent duties. The Sultan set up a separate treasury a separate Jao- Shughuri and a separate Diwan.

We are told that as many as 1,80,000 slaves poured into the capital. They were given training in different vocations. Some of them became artisans and craftsmen, some joined the army and became warriors some were employed in the Royal Karkhanas a few of them mounted guard at the Royal palace. There were some who occupied such odd jobs as libraries, curtain bearers, weapon bearers, keepers of medicines and libraries and some held the charge of elephants, precious birds and hunting panthers. Some of them were appointed Amirs and Maliks.

Some of the slaves had fixed salaries ranging from 10 to 100 **Tankas** per head. There were others who were remunerated through assignments and grants of villages. These slaves amassed wealth for themselves and their kinsfolk. It is stated that a slave named Bashir Sultani was appointed Muqti of Rapri but he paid no state dues for several years. When the matter was reported to the Sultan, he observed thus: "What difference does it make whether it is my property or the property of Bashir?"

These slaves became undistinguishable from the military aristocracy of the Turks. They carried the germs of corruption into the higher classes of society. All the departments of the government were affected by this vice. The slaves were neither attached to the person of the Sultan nor to his dynasty. It is well known that these very slaves cut off ruthlessly the heads of the children of the Sultan and displayed their bodies in public.

### **LET US SUM UP**

Following the death of Mohammad bin Tughlaq, the **amirs** and **ulemas** placed Feroz Tughlaq on the throne. He was a mild ruler, who undertook many reforms and public welfare activities for his co-religionists. He adopted a conciliatory policy towards the **ulema**. It was probably due to their overbearing influence that Feroz turned very intolerant towards the Hindus and also towards the Shias and other non-sunni muslims. He totally ignored the majority section of the population who in turn became hostile towards the Sultan. Thus, this intolerant religious policy of Feroz Tughlaq was one of the main cause for the downfall of the Tughlaq dynasty in medieval India.

## **TIMUR'S INVASION OF INDIA**

Introduction

Objectives

Timur's Invasion of India-Causes

Effects of the invasion

Let us Sum Up

Glossary

SAQ/CYP-Possible Answers

Exercise

Suggested Reading

### **INTRODUCTION**

Timur was a great military commander and conqueror of Central Asia. He conquered one kingdom after another. In course of a fight his one leg got wounded and thereupon he limped for the rest of his life. Thereafter he came to know as Timur- the- lame. The Persian called him 'Timur-I- lung'.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After studying this lesson you will be able to

1. Understand the condition due to which Timur invaded India.

2. Understand the political situation of India which provided him the easy access.
3. Understand the economic and cultural effects of Timur's invasion.
4. Explain the condition of Tughlaq dynasty after Timur's invasion.

### **TIMUR'S INVASION OF INDIA-CAUSES**

Amir Timur or Timur Lang was born in 1336 A.D at Desh about 50 miles south of Samarkand. He was the son of Amir Turghay, who was the chief of the Gurgaon or Chaghtai branch of the Barlas Turks. He ascended the throne of Samarkand in 1369 A.D at the age of 33 years. Then he launched on a career of aggressive conquests in Persia, Afghanistan and Mesopotamia. The wealth of India excited him to invade this land.

The disintegration of the Delhi Kingdom also afforded him a suitable opportunity. All the later rulers of the Tughlaq dynasty, who followed Feroz were incompetent, without any ability or strength of character. They were puppets in the hands of ambitious nobles who only watched their own interests without caring for the state. All this led to civil wars among the rival claimants to the throne. And thus the vast kingdom built up by the valour, ability and labours of the successive monarchs from Qutb- ud-din to Muhammad Bin Tughlaq fell to pieces. And this already broken kingdom was given a final blow by the Timur's Invasion in 1398 A.D.

It is difficult to find out the real motive of invasion by Timur. He was a great military adventurer and was fixed with the lust for dominions. But being a clever diplomat, he pretended that his main objective in undertaking an expedition to India was to put down idolatry which was tolerated by the Sultans of Delhi. He had no desire what so ever of conquering Hindustan and ruling over it either directly or indirectly. It is stated that Timur summoned a council of warriors and the **ulemas** to seek their advice. Shahrukh referred to the vast areas of India and the advantages that were sure to come account of its conquest. Prince Muhammad pointed to the resources of India and her precious metals, jewels and pearls. He also emphasized the religious aspects of the matter. Some nobles pointed out to the evil consequences of settling

down in India. Having heard all this, Timur is said to have observed thus " My object in the invasion of Hindustan is to lead an expedition against infidels, that according to the law of Muhammad, we may convert the people of the country to a true faith and purify the land itself from the filth of infidelity and polytheism and that we may overthrow their temples and idols and become Ghazis and Mujahids before God".

Thus, we can say that he used his championship of the faith as a pretext to win the support of the nobles and warriors, who were not in favour of his meditated invasion of this distant land.

Now before setting out himself to invade India, Timur sent his grandson, Pir Mohammad, son of Ghiyasuddin Jahangir, to do the preliminary work. Pir Mohammad crossed the Indus and captured Uchh. After that he proceeded towards Multan which was captured after a long siege of six months. Pir Mohammad also overran the whole of Dipalpur and Pak Pattan and reached the river Sutlej and waited for his grandfather.

Timur left Samarqand in April, 1398 A. D , at the head of a large army, and having crossed the Indus, the Jhelum and the Ravi in September, appeared before Talamba, situated seventy miles to the north-east of Multan on the 13th Oct. of the same year. He sacked Talamba and massacred or enslaved its inhabitants. On 26th oct. he was joined by Pir Mohammad. During the rest of Indian campaign of Timur, Pir-Mohammad commanded the right wing of his army.

The town of Pak Pattan and Dipalpur had incurred the displeasure of Timur by rising against Pir. Muhammad. The citizens of Pak pattan were flogged, plundered and enslaved. Five hundred citizens of Dipalpur, were put to death to avenge their slaughter of the garrison of Pir Muhammad in that town. Rai Dul Chand, a Bhati Rajput was the ruler of Bhatnir. He offered a tough resistance but ultimately surrendered on 9th November, 1398 A.D. The assessment and collection of ransom of Bhatnir provoked resistance on the part of the inhabitants and after a general massacre, the city was burnt and laid waste.

On 13th November, 1398 A.D, Timur left Bhatnir and marched through Sirsa and Fatehabad, pursuing and slaughtering the inhabitants who fled before

him. Aharwan was plundered and burnt. At Tohana, about 2,000 Jats were slain. On 29th November, the whole army assembled at Kaithal and marched to Panipat. On 7th December, 1398 A.D, the right wing of the army reached the north of Delhi overlooking the Jamuna. On 9th December, the army crossed the river. On 10th December, Timur captured Loni whose Hindu inhabitants were put to death.

Nasir-ud-Din Mahmud and Mallu Iqbal collected their troops within the walls of the city. On 12th December, Mallu Iqbal attacked the rear-guard of Timur. Two divisions were sent to help the rear-guard and Mallu was defeated and driven back to Delhi. The only fruit of his enterprise was a terrible massacre. At the time of the attack by Mallu on the rear-guard there were about one lakh of adult male Hindus who had been captured by Timur and they showed their joy at the time of the attack. That was noticed by Timur and he caused them all to be put to death. Timur feared that on the day of battle they might, "break their bonds, plunder our tents and join the enemy".

In spite of the warnings of astrologers and misgivings of the troops, Timur crossed the Jamuna on 15th December, 1398 A.D and early on the morning of 17th December drew up his army for the attack. Mallu Iqbal and Mahmud Shah also led their forces out of Delhi. The Indian army consisted of 10,000 horse, 40,000 foot and 120 elephants clad in armour with their tusks armed with poisoned scimitars and bearing on their backs strong wooden structures occupied by Javelin and quoit throwers of combustibles. The fighting line of the invading army entrenched itself with a ditch and screens of thatch before which buffaloes were hobbled and bound together to break the oversight of the elephants. Timur placed the right wing of his army under Pir Mohammad and Amir Yadgar Barlas, his left wing under Sultan Husain, Prince Khali and Amir Jahan and he himself commanded the centre. The two armies confronted each other outside Delhi and the battle commenced with loud shouts and cries on both sides. The assault was begun by the generals of Timur who separated themselves from the advance guard and moved off to the right and came behind the advance guard of the enemy and fell upon them and" scattered them as hungry lions scatter a flock of sheep and killed 600 of them in this one charge".

Pir Mohammad smashed the left wing of the enemy and compelled it to flee from the battle field. Sultan Mahmud Shah and Mallu Iqbal attacked the central wing. They fought with great courage.: The frail insect cannot contend with the raging wind nor the feeble deer against the fierce lion, so they were compelled to take to flight." Mahmud Shah and Mallu Iqbal ran away from the battle-field and Timur hoisted his flag on the ramparts of Delhi. The Sayyids, the Qazis the Shaikhs and the **Ulemas'** of the City waited upon Timur and in response to their requests, he granted an amnesty to the people of Delhi. However, the license of the soldiery, rigour of the search for fugitives from other towns who were not included in the amnesty and assessment of the ransom led to disturbances. The result was that bloodshed continued for many days. A large number of persons were captured and made slaves. Artisans were sent to various parts of the empire of Timur. The three towns of Siri, Old Delhi and Jahan Panah were laid waste by Timur who occupied them for 15 days.

Timur had no desire to stay in India. After halting at Delhi for fifteen days, he returned through Firuzabad (1st January, 1399 A.D), stormed Meerut (9th January), on the way and advancing further north defeated two Hindu armies in the neighbourhood of Hardwar in January. Marching along the Siwalik Hills, he captured Kangra ( 16th January) and sacked Jammu, the inhabitants of those places being slaughtered in large numbers.

He appointed Khizr Khan Sayyid to the government of Multan, Lahore and Dipalpur, and reclosed the Indus on the 19th March, after inflicting on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single invasion".

Nature also proved cruel to the people of Delhi at this critical time and added to their miseries caused by the ravages of bloody wars and devastations. "All this time," writes Badauni, "such a famine and pestilence fell upon Delhi that the city was utterly ruined, and those of the inhabitants who were left died, while for two months not a bird moved a wing in Delhi. Timur, in short, completed the dissolution of the Tughlaq kingdom, the vitality of which had long been affected; Khwaja Jahan had been ruling over an independent kingdom, comprising Kanauj, Oudh, Kara, Dalmau, Sandila, Bahraich, Bihar and Jaunpur;

in Gujarat, Muzaffar Shah owed no allegiance to anybody ; in Malwa, Dilawar Khan exercised royal authority; the Punjab and Upper Sind were held by Khizr Khan as Timur's viceroy; and Ghalib Khan had established his power in Samana, Shams Khan Auhadi in Bayana and Mohammad Khan in Kalpi and Mahoba. To make confusion worse confounded, the decay of political authority in Delhi emboldened the unscrupulous nobles and adventurers to indulge more and more in base intrigues. Some of them helped Nusrat Shah, who had been so long lurking in the Doab, to take possession of Delhi in 1399 A.D but he was defeated and expelled from that city by Mallu Iqbal. On returning to Delhi in 1401 A.D, Mallu Iqbal extended an invitation to Sultan Mahmud, who had found shelter at Dhar after experiencing many bitter humiliations in Gujarat, to return to Delhi. He thought that the “ prestige of the fugitive Mahmud Shah would be useful to him”. Sultan Mahmud return to Delhi only to remain as a puppet in the hands of Mallu iqbal till the latter's death in a fight with Khizar Khan, the Governor of Multan, Dipalpur and Upper Sind, on the 12th Nov., 1405 A.D. Being a weak king, Mahmud could not make proper use of his restored position. He died at Kaithal in Feb., 1413 A.D, after a nominal sovereignty of about 20 years, and with him the dynasty founded by Ghiyas- ud-Din Tughlaq came to an ignominious end.

#### **EFFECTS OF THE INVASION**

- (1) After the departure of Timur, the whole of Northern India was in indescribable disorder and confusion. Delhi was in ruins and almost depopulated. It was without a master. Whatever inhabitants were left, they had to face famine and pestilence. Famine was the natural consequence of the wholesale destruction of the stores of grain and standing crops by the invading army. Pestilence had its origin in the pollution of the air and water supply of the city by the dead bodies of thousands of inhabitants. So complete was the destruction that, “the city was utterly ruined and those of the inhabitants who were left died, while for two whole months not a bird moved its wing in Delhi”.
- (2) The Tughlaq empire was completely dissolved. Khwaja Jahan was an independent ruler at Jaunpur. Bengal had long been independent.

Muzaffar Shah in Gujarat did not recognize any master. Dilawar Khan in Malwa wielded royal authority. The Punjab and Upper Sind were governed by Khizr Khan as the Viceroy of Timur. Samana was in the hands of Ghalib Khan. Bayana was in the hands of Shams Khan of Auhadi. Kalpi and Mahoba formed a small principality under Muhammad Khan. Mallu Iqbal remained at Baran for the present. Nusrat Shah became for some time the Lord of Delhi but he was expelled from that place by Mallu and forced to take refuge in Mewat where he died soon afterwards. It cannot be denied that the invasion of Timur gave a death-blow to the tottering Tughluq dynasty which was replaced by the Sayyid dynasty in 1414 A.D.

- (3) Timur destroyed the prosperity of India. Great building and works of art in Delhi, Bhatnir, Divalpur, Meerut and Haridwar were destroyed. Loot, plunder and arson deprived India of her great wealth.
- (4) The invasion of Timur widened the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims. On account of their intolerance towards the Hindus, the Muslim had failed to win over the Hindus who considered the Muslim as **Mlechhas**. The wholesale massacres of the Hindus and the building of towers with their skulls by Timur added to the existing bitterness. The invasion of Timur made it all the more difficult for the Hindus and Muslim to come nearer to each other.
- (5) Another effect of the invasion was that Indian art found its way to Central Asia. A large number of Indian artists and craftsmen were taken away by Timur to Samarkand where they were employed to construct mosques and other buildings.
- (6) Timur's invasion paved the way for Mughal conquest. Babur was a descendant of Timur and he claimed the throne of Delhi partly on account of his descent. In Timur's conquest of the Punjab and Delhi, Babur found a legal and moral justification for his conquest of India.
- (7) According to Dr. K.S Lal, in spite of what Timur or his chroniclers have written, he was not clear in his mind why he was undertaking the

invasion of India. His was an aimless visitation. It was a terrible calamity. The vanquished had lost all and the victor had gained nothing.

### **LET US SUM UP**

Timur's invasion gave a death blow to the vanishing Tughlaq Empire. The last Sultan, Mahmud Shah was defeated and put to flight with the result the revolts in different parts of the country occurred in quick succession. Thus, the invasion of Timur affected the political, social and economic life of India, particularly of northern India. Timur was successful in his aim of collecting wealth and riches from India. His invasion caused much confusion in India.

**CONQUESTS OF SIKANDER LODHI  
AND IBRAHIM LODHI**

Introduction

Objectives

Coronation of Sikander

Problem before Sikander

Suppression of Rebellions

Subduing Barbaq Shah

Conquests of Sikandar Shah

Administrative Reforms of Sikander

Religious Policy of Sikander

Death of Sikander Shah Lodhi

Estimate of Sikander Shah Lodhi

Accession of Ibrahim Lodhi

War against Jalal Khan

Conquest of Gwalior (1517-1518)

War with Mewar

## Ibrahim's conflict with Afghan Nobles

### Supereession of Azam Humayun

Death of Mian Hussain Farmuli and Mian Bhua

Revolt of Islam Khan

Rebellions in the East

Revolt of Daulat Khan

Battle of Panipat, April 21, 1526

Estimate of Ibrahim Lodhi

Conclusion

Glossary

SAQ/CYP/Possible Answers

Suggested Readings

## **INTRODUCTION**

After the downfall of the Sayyids a new dynasty was founded by Balhul Lodhi which came to be known as Lodhi dynasty in the history of Delhi Sultanate. It was the last ruling dynasty of the Sultanate of Delhi. The Lodhis were Afghans. They were also called Pathans. They were very powerful and courageous but they had to fight on different fronts such as the rulers of Jamur, Malwa, Yugrat and Mewar, nobles and jagirdars of Delhi sultanate and opponents of Afghans nobles. It weakened the central Government which ultimately resulted in their downfall and the establishment of Mughal Empire in India.

Bahlol Lodhi was the founder of the Lodhi dynasty in India. He was a brave soldier and an energetic ruler. Soon after his accession to the throne he tried to restore somewhat the faded splendor of Delhi. Born of a fighting clan, he was active, war-like and ambitious and was determined to restore the strength of the Sultanate. First of all he established peace and order in the surrounding Delhi and brought under his control those fief-holders and chieftains who had enjoyed varying degree of autonomy for the last so many years.

Then he waged a continuous war against the Sharqi rulers of Jaunpur, who had become a great danger to the Lodhi Empire. He conquered that territory and put it under the charge of his son Barbaq Shah. Thus success greatly strengthened the position of Bahlol Lodhi. Then several expeditions were sent against the chiefs of Mewat, Sambhal, Kalpi, Dholpur, Koil and Rewari and they offered their submission. Raja Pratap Singh of Mewar was confirmed in his possession and he acknowledged the supremacy of Bahlol Lodhi

Bahlol Lodhi was a pious and generous ruler who led his life strictly according to the Islamic law. He hated pomp and show and sat with his chief on the carpet. He was very kind to the poor and often distributed huge moments among them. He was a great lover of justice and took personal interest in redressing the grievances of his subjects. In 1388 A.D Bahlol Lodhi died and was succeeded by his son Sikander Lodhi.

### **OBJECTIVES**

After going through this lesson, students will be able to understand:

1. The Consolidation of the power of Lodhis under Sikander Shah.
2. The problems faced by Sikander and the measures adopted by him to overcome his problems.
3. The conquest and administrative reforms of Sikander Shah and also the conquests made by Ibrahim Lodhi.

### **CORONATION OF SIKANDAR:**

Bahlol had nine sons. The eldest son Prince Bayazid, born of Shams Khan predeceased his father. In 1487-88 A.D. Bahlol had appointed his son Azam Humayun as the governor of Kalpi and Luknow. Among his other sons Bahlol Shah was the Governor at Jaunpur and was enjoying semi regal powers. Alam Khan held Kara and Manikpur while Nizam Khan was acting as the Sultan's deputy at Delhi. According to Ferishta, Sultan Bahlol desired that Nizan Khan should be the head of the Afghan Empire and should hold the districts of Delhi and Doab while his other sons and grand sons should act as provincial governors. He had accordingly assigned them Jagirs, proportionate to their merit. But as

soon as Bahlol was dead, the Afghans decided to make a free choice of the next sultan. The names of Nizam Khan, Azam Humayun and Barbaq shah were proposed. But the mother of Nizam Khan advised her son to come immediately. Nizam Khan came to the camp of the head of his troops and he was immediately elected the Sultan with the support of Khan -i- Khanan Farmuli and other nobles. He sent the body of Bahlol to Delhi and himself followed soon after at the head of the army. On July 17, 1489 A.D he was formally crowned at Jalali and he assumed the style of Sikander Shah.

### **PROBLEMS BEFORE SIKANDER**

Before his accession, Nizam Khan had held a number of offices. His first appointment was governorship of Sarhind and during the absence of Bahlol from the capital he had acquired experience of running the central government as his deputy. He had experience of fighting too. Despite of all his experience, his task was by no means easy and he had to face numerous problems. Firstly he was born of a goldsmith's daughter and Isa Khan had even taken exception to this. He must therefore give evidence by his behaviour and attitude that he was in no way inferior to any orthodox Musalman or a pure Afghan. Secondly, he had to consolidate his power by suppressing all rivals and rebels to his authority. Bahlol had assigned the government of a number of important provinces to members of the royal family. Among them Barbaq Shah and Azam Humayun were even tipped for the throne. Alam Khan his uncle was trying to declare his independence in Rapri, Chand war. Tartar Khan governor of Jhanta was also his opponent. Beyond the eastern frontier lay Hussain Shah in wait for reconquering his lost possessions. This would require strong vigilance in the Jaunpur region. Towards the south, the rulers of Bayana and Gwalior were semi-independent. Their power had to be curbed. To crown all, he had to reorganise the finances because Bhalol had left the government almost in a state of bankruptcy.

### **SUPPRESSION OF REBELLIONS**

Sikandar had to justify his selection. By his policy, character and firm administration he showed in a short time that he was the right choice and fittest of all the sons of Bahlol to fill the throne of Delhi. His first task was to set his own

house in order by reducing his rivals to sub-mission and increasing the strength of his followers. Alam Khan, the uncle of Sikander was one of the candidates of the throne and was preparing to declare his independence. Sikandar besieged him at Rapari, defeated him and drove him away from his kingdom. Alam Khan took shelter with sc Khan, who was one of the front-rank men who had opposed Sikandar's accession. By a conciliatory policy, Sikander won over Alam Khan, separated him from Isa Khan and appointed him to the fief of Etawah. He then defeated Isa at Patiala, the latter dying after a few days of the battle. Next Sikandar defeated his nephew, Azam Humayun, who was a candidate for the throne, took away Kalpi from him bestowed it to Mahmud Khan Lodhi. Then Sikanadar defeated Tartar Khan Lodhi another opponent, but erroneously allowed him to remain in possession of Jhatra. Thus within a year of his accession, Sikandar succeeding in either subduing or pacifying his opponents and consolidating his power.

### **SUBDUING OF BARBAQ SHAH**

Barbaq Shah was the elder brother of Sikandar. He was the ruler of Jaunpur. In the beginning both of them had cordial relations with each other. Sikandar Shah after consolidating his position and crushing some nobles sent a messenger to Barbaq Shah and directed him to accept him as Sultan but on the instigation of Hussain Shah Sharqi, Barbaq Shah ignored the royal command and began to make preparations to wage a war against Sikanadar Shah. Having come to know the designs of his brother Sikandar at once marched against him. A fierce battle was fought between the armies of the two brothers in which ultimately Sikandar Shah succeeded; Barbaq Shah in order to save his life fled away to Badaun. He was chased down. He was captured and presented before Sikandar who treated him very kindly. Barbaq Shah was appointed a titular King of Jaunpur again, but Sikandar kept a close eye on the activities of his brother. Barbaq Shah however proved failure and could not face even local rebellions. He fled from his capital. Sikander suppressed the rebellions again, placed Barbaq Shah on the throne. Ultimately Sikander Shah finding him incapable imprisoned him and appointed his own governor at Jaunpur.

## **CONQUESTS OF SIKANDAR SHAH**

Comparatively Sikandar Lodhi was more of an imperialist than his father Bahul Lodhi. He recovered the lost territory of Delhi sultanate and extended the frontiers of his kingdom.

### **Conquest of Bihar**

Sikandar unlike his father was a man of lofty ambitions and had formed the design of conquering as many of the lost provinces of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi as possible. His subjugation of his brother Barbak shah and annexation of Jaunpur to his kingdom brought him in conflict with Bihar which was then considered a part of Bengal. Some of the Zamindars of the Jaunpur Province had intimate relations with Hussain Shah Sharqi who now lived in exile in Bihar. Sikandar was anxious to reduce these zamindars to complete submission. He therefore led an expedition against Phaphamau (near Allahabad) whose ruler RajaJuga was a leader of the disaffected barans. In spite of the Sultan's exertion, the Raja could not be effectively subdued. On the other hand in the expedition of 1449 A.D the Sultan's army suffered greatly and a considerable number of the horses died in the campaign. The rebel Rajas, who were in league with Hussain Shah invited him to invade Jaunpur and fight against Sikandar writing to him that nine-tenths of the horses of Sikanadar's army had perished and that he was not in a position to offer resistance. Hussain Shah in response to this invitation arrived from Bihar with a huge force. Sikander proceeded to obstruct his passage and a severe battle was fought near Benaras : which resulted in the defeat and flight of Hussain Shah (1494 A.D). Sikandar pushed the retreating enemy and occupied Bihar which thus became a part of the Sultanate of Delhi. He stayed in Bihar for sometime and retained Tirhut whose Raja was obliged to submit and pay a tribute.

### **Treaty With Bengal**

The invasion of Bihar was resented by Alau-din Hussain Shah, king of Bengal, who had treated Sultan Hussain of Jaunpur as his protege and Bihar as part of his Kingdom. He sent his son Daniyal to oppose the progress of the Delhi army and the latter made Mohammad Khan Lodhi and Mubarak

Khan Lodhi got ready to fight. But both Sikandar and Alau-din Hussain agreed to conclude a treaty without fighting. Each treaty bound itself not to invade the territory of each other. The king of Bengal promised in addition not to give shelter to Sikandar's enemies. Thus, the eastern boundary of Sikandar's dominion was pushed to the western frontier of Bengal (1495).

### **Conquest of Dholpur and Other Rajputs States**

Sikandar's next serious encounter was directed against the raja of Gwalior. Raja Man Singh (1479-1517 A.D) was a very capable and war like ruler. During his reign, the fort of Gwalior had been further improved and strengthened. He was by no means eager to pick up a quarrel with Sikandar but he was neither prepared to accept a status of complete subordination. Sikandar thought that the conquest of Gwalior would enhance his prestige and would facilitate subjugation of the rest of the Madhya Bharat. He therefore was determined to put an end to the independence of Gwalior. He first attacked the Raja of Dholpur, a vassal of Gwalior. He put up a stiff resistance lasting for about three years till 1504 and Sultan had to be satisfied with his mere submission. It was not possible for him to set aside Vinayakdeva and replace him by Afghan governors. Sultan Sikandar made fresh preparations and renewed his hostilities after some time against the Rajput's. He made Agra his capital in 1504, which had been a mere village and a dependency of Bayana upto that year, in order to make it new army cantonment and set base of operations against Dholpur, Gwalior and Malwa. After many years of hard work he occupied Mandrael in 1505 and appointed Qamaruddin to rule over Dholpur. In 1506-1507 fighting continued in the ravines of the Chambal but that did not weaken the Raja of Gwalior appreciably. Sikandar occupied Awantgarh in 1507 and Narwar in 1508. In 1512-13 he took advantage of the dissensions in Malwa and occupied Chanderi but the Raja of Gwalior could not be brought to his knees. The Sultan thus failed in his main objective.

### **Conquest of Nagor 1509-10 A.D.**

The Sultan was luckier in another quarter. A civil war was going on in Nagor. Fearing intervention by Sikandar, the local ruler Muhammad Khan accepted the

suzerainty of the Sultan and introduced his name in Khutba and the Sikka. He narrowly missed securing Ranthambhor also in similar circumstances.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS**

### **Subduing Nobles and Amirs**

After the suppression of Barbaq Shah Sikandar devoted himself to the work of establishing control over the nobles and in making them disciplined. The Sultan was not interested in making any basic changes in the administration but he was well acquainted with the rebellious feeling of the nobles, hence he wanted to curb their independent nature. He emphasized upon his subedars and officials to maintain upto date and correct accounts of their income and expenditure. He also awarded severe punishments to those who either embezzled the royal money or fabricated the accounts. He punished Musark Lehan Lodhi, who was appointed to realize the revenue of Jaunpur and had embezzled a greater part of it. He was forced to deposit the embezzled amount in the royal treasury. Once, when the Sultan was playing horse polo, some nobles struggled together in his presence. It made the Sultan so angry that he lashed the noble's publicly. The nobles in their own turn, in order to avenge the insult tried to dethrone Sikandar and to enthrone his brother Fateh Khan but the conspiracy could not be hatched successfully and Sikandar turned out the twenty two nobles from the court. Thus Sikandar established his control on the nobles. By his stern policies nobles like Alam Khan, Azam Humanyan and Tartar Khan were also set right by the strict attitude of the Sultan.

### **Spy System**

Sikandar Lodhi established spy system on the ideals of Alaudin Khilji which helped him for strengthening law and order. The Sultan appointed his spies on all significant posts. Even the houses of the nobles and Amirs were full of spies of the Sultan who used to relate all the activities going on within the four walls of the nobles. Seeing that he was always posted with the latest information, people began to say that he had some super natural powers by which he knew of all the activities going in the Empire. He gave mild and impartial justice to the people.

## **RELIGIOUS POLICY**

Sikandar's religious policy was that of a fanatical Muslim. Even as prince he had given evidence of bigotry. He wanted to prohibit the Hindus from bathing in the tank at Thanesar. When he became king he indulged in policy of destroying temples and images and building mosques in their places. He broke the sacred image of the Jwala mukhi temple at Nagarkot and gave its pieces to butchers to use them as weights to weigh meat with them. (Says Dr. A.L. Srivastava). He destroyed many temples at Mathura, Mandrail, Utagir, Narwan, Chanderi and other places. He collected the Jiziya and the pilgrim's tax from the Hindus with severity. He ordered a Hindu named Bodhan to be done to death for no other offence than saying that Hinduism is as true a religion as Islam. Sikandar did not permit Hindus to bathe in the Yamuna at bathing ghats and he prohibited barbers from shaving their beards. Like Feroz Shah Tughlaq, he made an attempt to reduce Hinduism and convert them to Islam. Such a policy was bound to alienate a large section of his subjects.

## **DEATH OF SIKANDAR SHAH LODHI**

The later years of the Sultan's reign were spent in aggressive wars with the Hindu chiefs of Gwalior, Dholpur, Narwar and some other principalities on the border of Rajasthan. Incessant military activity impaired his health. He was taken ill on his return from Bayana where he had gone in order to lead his projected expedition against Malwa. Despite all possible medical aid he died on Nov. 21, 1517 A.D.

## **ESTIMATE OF SULTAN SIKANDAR**

Sikandar was the greatest ruler of the Lodhi dynasty. Medieval chronicles bestow lavish praise on him and maintain that he was an extremely able, just benevolent and god fearing ruler. Their opinion has generally been endorsed by modern writers. A critical examination of the important events of his reign and the details of his administration and policy will however, show that there were two facets of Sikandar's personality and character. He was, without doubt a competent ruler. But his policy of religious persecution

was calculated to alienate the sympathy of the vast majority of his subjects and neutralize the effects of his other wise good administration.

Sikandar -Lodhi was gifted with kingly looks. He was tall, handsome and well built. He was quite brave and generous and owing to his military virtues he successfully curbed the revolts and enhanced the power and prestige of the sultanate. Dr. K.S. Lal has written "Sikandar Shah's rule of twenty-nine years was full of glory and distinctions. He was the greatest ruler of Lodhi dynasty and outshines both his father, Bahlol and his son Ibrahim Lodhi.

Sikander had almost all the merits which made him the master of a handsome personality and good character. He was not lacking in political wisdom and far sightedness. Besides being an efficient ruler he was fond of arts and literature. He loved discipline most. He was kind to everybody and gave charity to the poor and the needy. He was the benefactor of Muslims. He used to favor his Muslim- subjects blindly. Born of a Hindu mother, he was anxious to show to his co-religionists that he was a true Muslim, not inferior in any way to those who belonged to Afghans lineage. Hence the Hindus began to oppose him. The greatest short coming in his otherwise magnificent character was this.

Sikander Lodhi was a very efficient ruler. He had gained a lot of experience of administration before his accession and had worked on various significant posts during the reign of his father. Hence he succeeded in eliminating the chaos and anarchy and established a mighty central govt. He enhanced his power and prestige by maintaining his control over the nobles and amirs of the sultanate. Besides, he recognized the importance of the army and made it very effective and efficient. He checked the accounts of the provincial officials very strictly to avoid all possibility of mis-appropriation of the royal money. As he introduced severe punishments, the number of crimes lessened in his reign.

Sikander Lodhi was a brave warrior and a capable general. He suppressed the revolts of his opponents with high hand. He waged many wars against his enemies, but he did not possess military talents of a high order. He attained victories against Jaunpur, Bihar, Chanderi, Dholpur, Nagor etc.

But he was unable to defeat the Raja of Gwalior and was not good at sieges. There were occasions when the army suffered heavily either because supplies ran short or because it had lost its way. He tried to conciliate the nobility and issued a series of administrative reforms.

Besides extending and consolidating his empire Sikandar was a great lover of art and literature. He patronized various men of letters. He was an educated man and encouraged the scholars. Some significant books on Ayurveda were translated during his time, under the title, Tibb-I-Sikandar. He built various buildings which indicate his love towards architecture. The greatest blot on Sikandar's character as a successful ruler was his relentless bigotry. Otherwise he was the most significant ruler of the Lodhi dynasty and had all the qualities of head and heart.

### **IBRAHIM LODHI**

Ibrahim Lodhi remained the last ruler of the Lodhi dynasty. He was son of Sikandar Lodhi. After the death of Sikandar Lodhi he ascended the throne of Delhi. In order to avoid civil war and to enhance his power, the Amirs divided the Kingdom of Sikandar Lodhi among his two sons. Ibrahim was given the charge of Delhi and Agra region and the region of Jaunpur and Kalpi was bestowed on Jalal Khan. This partition was not liked by Ibrahim and he considered his brother to be his great foe and wanted to get rid of him. Thus his conflict with his brother Jalal Khan and his desire to conquer Mewar were his primary political difficulties. But he was a capable, laborious, just and well-meaning Sultan. And more than that he was daring commander. But he was rash and impolite. He failed to understand the character and sentiments of his own race. This weakness of his character led him into trouble for himself and his empire and certainly proved one of the causes of his defeat in the first battle of Panipat against Babar in 1526 A.D. which resulted in his down fall as well as the downfall of his dynasty.

### **ACCESSION OF IBRAHIM LODHI**

Sultan Sikandar, just before his death had summoned all the nobles to court. Probably he was planning an all-out offensive against the ruler of

Gwalior. The presence of the nobles facilitated an early choice of the successor. It appears that there was at first general meetings of the nobles in secret from which princes were excluded. It was decided to divide the empire between Ibrahim and Jalal with Delhi and Jampur as their respective capitals. It was felt that it would suit all parties. Both the prince would be satisfied and danger of civil war averted. Farishta says this partition was done by Amirs because they did not like Ibrahim. At the open assembly, nobles proposed partition of the empire. Jalal was to hold Kalpi and Japunpur while Ibrahim was to be the master of Delhi and Agra. Jalal gladly accepted it. Ibrahim did not like it but he too gave his consent for fear that in case of opposition he might be set aside and thrown in prison.

The following day, Jalal and the nobles of the east departed and Ibrahim Lodhi was crowned sultan of his portion of the empire. But when Khan-i-Jahan Nuhani, the governor of Rapri came to offer his congratulations to the Sultan, he strongly condemned the act of partition. Another meeting of the nobles was hurriedly summoned and it was decided to call Jalal back to the capital by soft words and on his arrival partition was to be cancelled. Ibrahim then sent individual farmans to leading nobles of the east warning, them not to accept Jalal as their sovereign or else they would be treated as rebels. They were, at the same time, promised confirmation in their posts if they acknowledged the authority of the sultan. On receipt of these farmans, Darya Khan Nuhani, Nasir Khan Nuhani, Sheikh Zeda Muhammad farmuli and number of others accepted the suzerainty of Ibrahim. Jalal now had only Kalpi left to him. In this changed environment Ibrahim was crowned a second time in December 1517 and the Sultan gave Khilats and presents to the nobility.

#### **WAR AGAINST JALAL KHAN (1518-AD)**

Ibrahim Lodhi considered Jalal Khan to be his greatest foe and wanted to get rid of him, hence he sent Azam Humayun to invade Gwalior but he joined hands with Jalal Khan due to some reasons. First Azam Humayun was annoyed with Ibrahim due to some reasons and secondly, Jalal had appointed Fateh Khan, the son of Azam Humayun his wazir. Therefore the joint forces of Jalal and Azam

Humayun made an invasion against Sayed Khan the governor of Avadh. Sayed Khan requested Ibrahim for help, so Ibrahim marched against Jalal Khan and Azam Humayun with powerful army. Azam Humayun was terrified to know it so he once again changed the party and joined hands with Ibrahim and left Jalal Khan in the lurch. Jalal Khan, in order to save his life fled towards Kalpi. The army of Ibrahim chased him and besieged the fort of Kalpi. Jalal was defeated in a battle and was prepared to surrender provided he was permitted to continue to be governor of Kalpi but the condition was rejected by Ibrahim. He sought refuge in Gwalior, Malwa and Gondwana but in vain. At last he was imprisoned by the gond ruler and handed over to Ibrahim. He was sent to the fort of Hansi for imprisonment but was killed on the way on the instigation of sultan. Thus the civil war came to an end and the nobles of Jalal also accepted the supremacy of Ibrahim. It further enhanced his power.

### **CONQUEST OF GWALIOR (1517-1518)**

Ibrahim had sent an army against Gwalior immediately after his accession. He wanted to accomplish what his father had left half-done. It was a little delayed because of Jalal's rebellions and the treason of Azam Humayun Sarwani. The death of Raja Man Singh just about this time weakened the enemy; Raja Man Singh was succeeded by his son Vikramjit, who was much inferior to his father in ability and wisdom. Ibrahim dispatched Azam Humayun Sarwani at the head of an army of thirty thousand horse and three hundred elephants to besiege Gwalior. But when he heard of the escape of Jalal he suspected Azam Humayun and recalled him. Another army was sent from Agra Ibrahim besieged the fort and Vikramjit finding it difficult, was unable to face the royal army and concluded a treaty with Ibrahim Lodhi. He handed over the City and fort of Gwalior to the sultan and in return he was appointed the governor of Shamshabad. The victory of Gwalior increased the power and prestige of the Sultan.

### **WAR WITH MEWAR**

Ibrahim Lodhi was very anxious to carry forward his father's policy of aggressive conquest. Ibrahim Lodhi undertook an expedition against Mewar,

then the most notable state in Rajasthan. Its ruler was the valiant Rana Sangram Singh popularly known as Rana Sanga with whose subjugation the Sultan Ibrahim Lodhi could not hope to establish his supremacy in central Hindustan. So he despatched a powerful army under the command of Mian Makhan with whom were associated such well known Afghan's officers as Hussain Khan Zerbakshsh, Mian Khan- I- Khanan Qarmali and Mian Maruf. The army comprised of thirty thousands horses and three hundred elephants. But it suffered from dissension and disaffection among its chief officers. As it reached the frontier of Mewar, it was encountered and defeated by the Rana with great slaughter. Mian and his forces were attacked by Rajputs near Ghatoli (in the border of Bundi) and considerable number of them were annihilated and Ibrahim Lodhi was unable to do anything in the future.

### **IBRAHIM'S CONFLICT WITH AFGHAN NOBLES**

Ibrahim came in serious conflict with the Afghan nobility. The rebellions of Jalal Khan had made him suspicious of his nobles. While nobles in turn had started to doubt his intentions. Ibrahim desired to keep them under his strict control while nobles found his attitude over bearing. But the main issue involved in the conflict was the concept of absolute monarchy of the Sultan on the one hand, and on the other hand, the Afghan concept of regarding Sultan as one among equals. Ibrahim started behaving as an absolute despot. Unlike his father who had slowly asserted royal authority without outraging the sentiments of Afghans nobles, Ibrahim resolved to centralize all power by outright suppression of the Afghans nobility. He declared that "kingship knows no kinship" and treated nobles only as his subordinates. The Sultan established some guidelines to be maintained in the court according to which the nobles were forced to stand up in the court so long as the Sultan was present in his court. The Sultan punished those nobles who did not follow his command. Being offended with the senior nobles, Ibrahim began to appoint the younger nobles on high and lucrative posts in order to attain their confidence and support. All these efforts made by the Sultan annoyed the nobles. They were not ready to pocket this insult and some of them raised the standards of revolt against the Sultan. A.L. Srivastva has written "he imposed a rigid court

ceremonial on the Afghans nobles who would not brook this humiliation”. Beside the Afghan nobles some of the close relative of Ibrahim also conspired against him. The series of revolts could be unchecked only after the invasion of Babur on India.

### **Supereession of Azam Humayun**

Owing to hard hearted policies of Ibrahim many revolts broke out in various parts of the country under the leadership of afghan nobles who were annoyed with the behavior of the Sultan. He joined hands with Jalal khan first and later on again returned to the camp of Ibrahim Lodhi. As Ibrahim did not forget his treacherous design, he imprisoned Azam Humayun and his son Fateh Khan. After sometime Azam Humayun breathed his last in imprisonment. The nobles smelt some conspiracy behind the death of Azam Humayun and hence they were very much annoyed with Ibrahim.

### **Death of Mian Hussain Farmuli and Mian Bhua**

Mian Hussain farmuli was also put to death like Azam Humayun. When Ibrahim Lodhi had launched expedition against Rana Sanga, Mian Farmuli joined hands with Rana. But Ibrahim not only pardoned him for his grave fault but also appointed him the governor of Chanderi but later he was killed. It was a very stern attitude taken by the Sultan that he killed two afghan nobles one after the other; hence a feeling of revenge gripped the Afghan nobles.

Another notable instance is that of Mian Bhua. He was the popular wazir of Sikandar. But he had grown too old and his eye sight had got impaired. Besides he did not show due regard to the wishes of the Sultan and even flaunted his orders. If Ibrahim had been wise and tactful he would have retired him on grounds of old age. But he dismissed him threw him into prison and appointed his son to take his place. This was utter folly. The old man could not survive for a long time. The opponents considered this act of Ibrahim a murder of the old wazir and felt much offended.

### **Revolt of Islam Khan**

After the assassination of Azam Humayun the Sultan suspended Islam Khan, the second son of Azam, who was governor of Kara and Manikpur. As a result, Islam Khan raised the standard of revolt against Ibrahim with the help of other nobles. He occupied the royal treasury and invaded Agra with a large army. Islam Khan also defeated the first troops sent by Sultan under the command of Ahmad Khan. The defeat of Ahmed Khan annoyed Ibrahim greatly and he sent a powerful army against him under an efficient commander. A fierce battle was fought between both the armies-Islam Khan was defeated and killed in the battle and his supporters were imprisoned.

### **Rebellions in the east**

These rebellions exposed the military weakness of the Sultan. It also added to the vanity of the nobles in the east. They began to boast that the defeat of Islam Khan was entirely done to their effort. Then came the news of successive deaths of Azam Humayun, Mian Bhua and Mian Hussain Farmuli. This made many older nobles anxious about their own security and they become critical of the policy of the Sultan. The Sultan now started whole sale arrests of all suspects and put some of them to death. Darya Khan felt that he might be the next victim. He, therefore, decided to declare his independence. Soon after this he died and was succeeded by his son Bahadur Khan who assumed the style of Muhammad Shah and introduced his name in the Khutba and the Sikka. The Sultan ordered Nasir Khan Nuhani to march against him but he went over to the enemy. Mohammad Shah now took the offensive against the Sultan. He was joined by all the Afghans in the eastern districts and his authority was acknowledged as far as western Sambhal.

### **Revolt of Daulat Khan**

The Punjab too revolted under its governor Daulat Khan Lodhi. Ibrahim Lodhi did not get success against Bahadur Khan, so he invited Daulat Khan one of his relatives and governor of Punjab in order to tackle

this situation. But Daulat Khan sent his sons Dilawar Khan to Ibrahim Lodhi with the request that since he was feeling unwell he would be present before Sultan as soon as he recovered. The Sultan felt much offended with this act of Daulat Khan. Dilawar Khan was taken round the prison and was showed the sight of important nobles being executed, encased in masonry or under going tortures. He told Dilawar Khan that if Daulat Khan did not obey his command he would also meet with same fate. Dilawar Khan fled from Delhi went to his father and narrated all he had seen. In the view of this fear Daulat Khan assumed Virtual independence and opened negotiations with Babar, the king of Kabul, whom he invited to invade India and over throw Ibrahim. The proposal was accepted by Babar who was himself desirous of conquering Hindustan. Daulat Khan Lodhi seems to have believed that Babur would come, plunder the country and go back and thus enable him (Daulat Khan) to establish his power in Punjab. He was however mistaken. At this very time another ambitious Lodhi Chief,' named Alam Khan an uncle of Ibrahim, also appeared on the scene. He was ambitious of becoming king of Delhi and opened negotiations with Babur. The result was the famous battle of Panipat.

#### **BATTLE OF PANIPAT APRIL 21, 1526**

On the invitation of Daulat Khan and Alam Khan Babar at once started from Kabul in 1524. He defeated Daulat Khan Lodhi who had turned hostile against Babar. After defeating Daulat Khan, he went to Kabul. After making preparations Babur once again started from Kabul in Nov. 1523. On having the news of Babar's approach Ibrahim collected a huge force and advanced towards Babur. Both the armies met on 21, April 1526 on the historic place of Panipat. In this battle Ibrahim Lodhi was defeated and killed and thus ended the rule of Lodhis and the sultanate. Babar then laid the foundation of Mughal dynasty in India.

#### **ESTIMATE OF IBRAHIM LODHI**

Ibrahim Lodhi was the last ruler of the Lodhi dynasty. It would be a

wrong estimation of Ibrahim Lodhi if we say that there were only demerits in his character and he lacked the qualities of head and heart. In fact, he was a handsome, honest and industrious ruler. He was fond of music and a patron of men of letters. He did not lack in power and wisdom and hence the contemporary scholars have praised him a lot. He was a lover of justice and had a great love for his subjects. But he failed due to some weaknesses in his character.

He decided to strengthen the central government and left no stone unturned to achieve his motive. In spite of severe opposition of the nobles and Amirs he did not make any change in his behaviour. He was acting like an autocratic despot. He was the supporter of the theory of divine right of kings as propounded by Balban and Alladin Khilji. In fact, he was destroyed by his own over bearing ambitions.

Although he was himself an afghan he was ignorant of the feelings of the Afghans. He forgot that the Afghans regarded the king first among the equals. He gave up the policy of his father and grand father and tried to impose restrictions on nobles. It offended the nobles and they raised the standard of revolt one after the other. Ibrahim Lodhi used all his power in suppressing these revolts and weakened himself. One of his relatives, Daulat Khan invited the ruler of Kabul for an invasion over India. He failed to defeat him and was himself killed in the battle of Panipat in 1526 A.D.

### **CONCLUSION**

Sikandar shah Lodhi was a successful ruler. Before his death in 1517 A.D. he had succeeded in consolidating and extending the empire which he had inherited from his father. Besides, he was more successful than his father and his son Ibrahim Lodhi in dealing with the nobility as well. Therefore Dr. A.L Srivastava has rightly regarded him as the greatest king of the lodhi dynasty. On the other hand, Ibrahim lacked political wisdom. He was very ambitious despot and failed to feel the pulse of his nobles. As a result, there were conflicts between him and his nobles. This led to his ultimate downfall. He was killed in the Battle of Panipat in 1526. This paved the way for laying the foundation of the Mughal dynasty by Babur.

**ADMINISTRATION OF THE DELHI  
SULTANATE (1206-1526)**

Introduction

Objectives

Components of Central Administration

Sultan

Ministers and other Officers

Wazir

Diwan-i-Ariz

Diwan-i-Insha

Diwan-i-Rasalat

Sadr-us-Sudar

Majlis-i-Khalwat

Other Departments

Dabir-i-Khas

Barid-i-Mumalik

Vakil-i-Dar

Amir-i-Hajib

Amir-i-Shikar

Amir-i-Majlis

Diwan-i-Amir Kohi

Diwan-i-Khairat

Sar-i-Jandar

Conclusion

Glossary

SAQ/CYP/Possible Answers

Suggested Reading / Reference

## **INTRODUCTION**

During the period 1206-AD to 1526 AD the administrative set up of the sultanate was not of similar nature under all the Sultans. There was bound to be some variations though of minor character, under different rulers. But the chief characteristics of their administrative set up were almost similar. The seed of Muslim kingdom in India was established by Mohammad Ghori. The Sultans of Delhi organized their government on the principle of Quran and Hadis.

The Sultans believed in the divine rights of the king. The Sultan was regarded to be representative of God on earth. His words were therefore law and none could disobey him.

## **OBJECTIVES**

To enable the students to understand the various components of central administration under the Sultan (1206-1526)

## **COMPONENTS OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION**

### **SULTAN**

The head of the Sultanate of Delhi was Sultan. In theory Sultan was elected by **millat** (sunni-muslim population) but in actual practice, it was difficult to get together all the sunni muslims in the country to choose

Sultan and therefore the franchise was restricted and became confined to a few notable men (nobles and **ulemas**) the right of nomination by the dying king was also recognized. There were no hereditary principles of succession and the office of the Sultan was open at least in theory to any bonafide Muslim. But in practice, it was restricted to immigrant Turks or members of ruling family.

In strict Islamic theory the true king of a Muslim state is God and the Sultan is his agent and has to work on the principle of quran. The Sultan was thus the chief executive of the Sultanate of Delhi. He was not only to enforce the laws, but he was also its interpreter. In this work he was guided by **Hadid** in the time of Controversy. The Sultan was also the highest judicial authority in the country. Besides he was commander of army. His powers were very 'wide. He was a perfect autocrat. The basis of his power was religion and military. As long as he followed quranic laws, his authority was supreme. There was however certain Sultans of Delhi like Jala-ud-din Mubarak Khilji and Mohammad Tughlaq who defered the Quranic law, yet no one dared to remove them, because they had the support of powerful army. There was no constitutional law to remove the king from the throne. The only way was successful rebellion which meant civil war. The Sultan was a despot. All powers in the state were concentrated in his hands. Entire administration functioned under him. The Muslim jurists assigned functions or duties to the Sultan. These comprised -

1. Protection of faith
2. Defence of Muslim territories
3. Protection of the frontier of the state against foreign aggression
4. War against the enemies of Islam
5. Enforcement of criminal code and maintenance of law and order
6. Administration of justice
7. Collection of revenues
8. Disbursement of grants and wages.

9. Appointment of trustworthy and capable counselors and administrators
10. Control of public affairs through personal inspections and supervision of the initiative machinery.

His duties towards the non-Muslim subjects were also well defined by the Islamic law. The infidels were not treated as full fledged citizens of the Islamic state. Once they accepted the suzerainty of the state and agreed to pay jazia, they acquired the state of the Zimmis and it was obligatory for the Sultan to protect their lives and property and grant them freedom of worship and social life.

### **MINISTERS AND OTHER OFFICERS**

There were ministers and other officers who assisted the Sultan in the work of administration their number varied from time to time. During this period there were four ministers namely, the **wazir**, the **Ariz-I-Mumlik**, the **Diwa-I-Insha** and **Diwan-I-Rasalat**. There was some times the **Naib** or **Naib -I-Mamlik** whose office was next to King, the deputy Sultan, the **Naib** enjoyed great authority when Sultan happened to be weak. Subsequently the **Sudur-us-sudur** and **Diwan -I-Qaza** who happened to be one person, was raised to the status of minister. Thus there were five central ministers during the time of sultanate.

#### **Wazir**

The prime minister was called the **wazir**. He stood midway between the sovereign and his subjects. He enjoyed great authority and exercised the powers and prerogatives of the Sultan with some restrictions. He appointed important officers in the name of the Sultan and heard complaints against all officials. He acted for the king when the latter was ill or absent and also when the Sultan was a minor. His next important duty was to keep the Sultan and to act his adviser in the affairs of the administration; he was, particularly, the head of the finance department. In this capacity he was responsible for laying down

the regulations of revenue settlement and fixing the rates of other taxes and for controlling the expenditure of the realm. In addition, he had to superintend the civil servants. He controlled the military establishment also, as all the requirements of the Department had to be referred. His subordinates kept accounts and disbursed salaries of the military officers and troops. The **wazir** was also in charge of stipends and subsistence allowances given to learned men and the poor people. Thus every branch of public administration came within the wazir's purview and every man, from the governor to the servant, had directly or immediately to deal with him. In view of those wide powers, he enjoyed a great prestige and was paid handsomely by assignment of the revenues of a large estate.

The office of the **wazir** was called **Diwani-I-Wazarat**. He had an assistant, called **Naib Wazir** who was in charge of this office. Next to the **Naib wazir** was the **Mushrif-I-Mamalik** (accountant general). Then came the **Mushrif- I- Mamalik** or ( auditor general) the accountant general used to enter the accounts received from the provinces and the various Departments, while the auditor general used to audit them. During the reign of Feroz Tughlaq, however a change was introduced. The accountant general dealt with income, while the auditor general with the expenditure. The auditor general too had an assistant both had big offices with numerous clerks.

### **Diwan-i-Ariz**

The next important minister at the capital was **Diwan-i-Ariz** or **Diwan-i-Arz**. He may be called the army minister or the controller general of military establishment. His main work was to recruit troops and to maintain the descriptive rolls of men and horses, and to hold military reviews in order to inspect the forces. As the Sultan was the commander in chief of the army, the **Ariz-i-Mamalik** was generally speaking, not required to command the royal troops, but some times he commanded a part of the army. He particularly looked after their discipline and equipment and their disposition on the field of battle. This department was so important that sometimes the Sultan personally performed some of the duties relating to it.

Ala-ud-din Khilji for instance, was greatly interested in the organization and up keep of his military establishment and hence, paid personal attention.

### **Diwan-i-Insha**

The **diwan-i-Insha** was the third minister. This minister was in charge of royal correspondence. He was assisted by a number of dabirs, that is, able writers who had established their reputation as master of style. All correspondence, much of which was of confidential nature, between the Sultan and the rulers of other states and important vassals and officials of the kingdom passed through this department. Important royal orders were drafted in this department and then forwarded for the Sultan's sanction after which they were copied, registered and dispatched. Owing to the confidential nature of the work in his charge, the head of this department was a very trusted official.

### **Diwan-i-Rasalat**

The next minister was **Diwan- i-Rasalat** or **Dewan- i-Risalat**. There is difference of opinion regarding the functions of this minister. According to Dr. I. H. Qureshi, he dealt with religious matters and was also in charge of grant of stipends to scholars and pious men. Dr. A.B. Habibullah, on the other hand, maintains that he was a minister of foreign affairs and was, therefore, in charge of diplomatic correspondence and the ambassadors and envoys sent to and received from foreign rulers. Dr. A. L. Srivastava rejects the theory of Dr. Qureshi and accepts Dr. Habibullah's views. He said that from the very beginning an officer in charge of religious affairs, endowments and charity was called Sadr-us-Sadur. The Diwan-i-Rasalat was very important officer, as the Sultan's were anxious to maintain diplomatic relations with central Asian powers besides those in the country.

### **The Majlis-i-Khalwat**

The minister was not all of the same rank and status. The **wazir** enjoyed a definitely higher status and privileges. The four other ministers

were ministers by courtesy and were, more or less, like secretaries to the Sultan. There was no council of minister as they were not called to advice the king at one and the same time. As they were appointed and dismissed by the king at will, the advice of anyone of them or all of them consigned was not binding on the Sultan. Moreover the king ,had a large circle of advisers many of whom were non-officials and they constituted sultan's personal friends, his trusted officials and some of the notable nobles. They were called to give advice to the sultan from time to time. Their advice like that of the ministers was not binding on him. Nevertheless, sometimes they exerted some influence on the administration.

### **Sadr-Us-Sadar**

The other two ministers were the **Sadr-Us-Sudur** and **Diwan-i-Qaza**. Very often only one minister was appointed to carry on the work of these two departments, that is, the department of religious endowment and charity and the department of justice. The chief Sadr (Sadr-us-Sadr) was required to enforce Islamic rules and regulations and to see that the muslims observed them in their daily life and that they said their five daily prayers regularly, kept the fasts of Ramzam. He had, also to disburse a large amount of money in charity and to reward learned Muslim divines and grant subsistence allowance to scholars and men of piety. The chief wazir was the head of the judicial department and had to supervise the administration of justice in the kingdom.

### **OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

Besides the four first rate ministers and one or two second rate ministers there were some other departmental heads at the capital who were entrusted with important duties.

### **Dabir-i-Khas or Amir Munshi**

He was the head of the records department which was called Diwan-i-Insha. The farmans of the Sultan were issued from this department. High level correspondence also passed through his hands.

### **Barid-i-Mumalik**

He was the head of the information and intelligence department. News and posts were also under his control.

### **Vakil-i-Dar**

Was in charge of the royal house hold and can be better called the lord high steward. He was also incharge of the royal karkhannas and workshops. His post was thus of the great importance and was generally offered only to highly reliable persons.

### **Amir-i-Hajib**

Scrutinized all visitors to the court and presented them before the Sultan according to the court etiquette.

### **Amir-i-Shikar**

Organized royal hunts and all those close to the Sultan used to go hunting and were under his direct control and authority.

### **Amir-i-Majlis**

Made arrangements for assemblies, feasts, and special celebrations.

### **Diwan-i-Amir Kohi**

It was department of agriculture time which was created by Mohammad Tughlaq.

### **Diwat-i-Khairat**

It was department of charity created by Firoz Tughlaq.

### **Sar-i-Jandar**

Every Sultan had a number of personal body guards or Jandars. Thus the royal body guards and slaves were commanded by officers called Sar-i-Jandar.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus we can say that government of the Delhi Sultans was highly centralized,

having despotic principles. The strength and weakness of the Govt, depended upon the personality and character of Sultan. Some of the Sultans formally introduced the Islamic law within their dominions. There was no rule of law in the sultanate; words of the Sultan were treated as law. The Sultan was assisted in the discharge of his functions by a number of dignitaries. There were also well developed provincial administration under Sultanate. The provincial government was an exact replica of the the central government.

**ARCHITECTURE DURING  
SULTANATE PERIOD (1206-1526 A.D)**

Introduction

Objectives

Salient Features of Architecture During Sultanate Period

Architectural Development During Slave Rule (1206-1290 A.D)

Architectural Development During Khilji Rule (1290-1320 A.D)

Architectural Development During Tughlaq Rule (1320-1414 A.D)

Architectural Development During Sayyid's and Lodhi Period (1414-1526 A.D)

Conclusion

Glossary

SAQ/CYP/Possible Answer

Suggested Readings/Reference

**INTRODUCTION**

The art of architecture made a remarkable progress under the Delhi sultanate. Various art critics like Hevell. Hold that the style of the architectural monuments or buildings of the sultanate is a modified form of the Hindu art and it had borrowed nothing from the foreign styles. But certain other critics, like

Ferguson, hold quite the opposite view and say that buildings of the Delhi Sultans borrowed a good deal from the Muslim world. But the truth lies some where in between these two extreme views. Sir John Marshall has rightly suggested that the Indo-Muslim art was a fusion of two styles of the Hindu and Muslims, though the proportion of these two inter-mingling styles was different in different places.

## **OBJECTIVES**

After reading this lesson students will be able to learn about the architectural development during the period 1206-1526 AD

### **SALIENT FEATURES OF THE ARCHITECTURE DURING SULTANATE PERIOD**

- a) **A Mixture of Indian and Iranian Style :** The Sultans of Delhi wanted to construct their building on the pattern of Iran and central Asia. However these buildings could not be exact copies of these buildings. They had to employ Indian craftsman who had their own ideas about the form and method of construction. Obviously the buildings had a combination of Indo-Islamic architecture.
- b) **Pointed arch in the Muslim Structure :** It is noted that the Hindus used square pillars which supported their temple roofs. On the other hands, the Muslim used the arches. Besides, arches they also used domes over their buildings and minarets. The use of arches and domes added charm to the Muslim buildings and also enabled them to dispense with the need of a large number of pillars to support the roof.
- c) **Carving :** The Hindus carved the figures of gods and goddesses and various ornamental things on their buildings. The Hindu workmen who were skilled in decorating the pillars and walls were allowed the use of flowers and trees in the decoration of Muslim buildings.
- d) **Use of geometrical designs:** During the Sultanate period geometrical designs began to be used for decoration purposes.
- e) **Quaranic Ayats :** The use of Quaranic Ayats in the buildings served two purposes i.e religion as well as decorative.

- f) **Use of stone and lime** : During the Sultanate period several types of colored stones, like red, light black, yellow and white marbles were used. Very good quality of stones were used to make the buildings strong.

### **ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT DURING: SLAVE RULE (1206-1290AD)**

The first architectural construction erected by Qutb-ud-din Aibak was the well-known Quwat-ul-Islam mosque at Delhi which was begun in 1195 and finished in 1199. It was built on the Plinth of a Hindu temple and art of the materials of twenty-seven Hindu and Jain shrines. Most of the columns, shafts and capitals of this mosque were originally parts of Hindu temples and were hurriedly adapted to the needs of a Muslim mosque. The images and carvings on the column, shafts and capitals were either defaced or cancelled by being turned upside down. The only Islamic features of the building are the presence of a screen in front, with Muslim designs and ornaments and a calligraphic reproduction of the Quranic text. The next Turkish building erected at Ajmer is also a mosque. It is known as Dhai-Din Ka Jhompra. This too was built by Qutub-ud-din Aibak. The building was originally a Sanskrit college and temple built by the great Chauhan emperor Vigraharaja. The upper part of it was demolished and domes and arches were erected. Even a casual visitor can notice count less human figures on the pillars and even on the graves inside, with defaced faces and hands and feet. The third important Turkish architecture is the Qutb Minar which was planned by Aibak a little before 1199 and completed by Iltutmish. It was originally intended to serve as a place for the muazzin to call the faithful to prayer, but later on became famous as a tower of victory. This building is essentially Islamic in form and design. Iltutmish, besides completing the Qutab Minar, added some buildings of his own, the most prominent among them being a tomb built on the grave of his eldest son, known as Sultan Ghari. Unlike the Qutab Minar, the buildings being the first tomb erected by the Turks are more Hindu in architectural details and decorative motif than any other tomb in existence. From the time of Iltutmish the buildings of the Sultanate began to show a marked increase in Islamic elements. That monarch extended the Quwat-ul-Islam mosque and put up a screen in the

building. He has made some additions to the Dhai Dinka Jhonpra also. Balban built his palace known as Red Palace. His tomb in Delhi is purely Muslim in execution. The arch in the entrance of the terms is the best so far erected by the Turks in the country.

### **ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT DURING KHILJI RULE (1290-1320 AD)**

The Khilji rulers was also great builders. Ala-ud-din Khilji took great interests in architecture. He built many mosques, forts and tanks and laid the foundation of some great cities. He built a new city of Siri now in New Delhi and embellished it with beautiful buildings, two of which, the forts of Siri and Palace of Hazar Situmb had won praise at the hands of Contemporary authors. Very close to Qutab Minar, there stands Alai Darwaja which was built by Ala-ud-Din in 1311-A.D. It has been praised by Percy Brown as one of the most treasured gems of Islamic architecture". In Delhi Ala-Ud-Din Khilji got constructed a big tank Known as "Hauzkhas" which was till recently a picnic spot for the visitors to Delhi.

### **ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT DURING TUGHLAQ RULE (1320-1414 AD)**

The fourteenth century was a period of stress and storm and the Mongols were constantly hammering at the door of Delhi, so the Tughluq Sultans could never afford to spend much time on their buildings, consequently the buildings of Tughlaqs lacked beauty and grace and are characterised by their simplicity and massiveness. Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughlaq laid the foundation of Jahapanah, a new city near Delhi. Nothing is now left of this city except Muhammad Tughluq's palace known as Vijay Mandal and a mosque very close to it. Firoz Tughluq was a great builder who built a number of cities and other great edifices. Some of his great cities were Fatehabad, Hissar Firoza, Jaunpur and Firozabad. It is said that Firoz Shah built as many as 845 public works including towns, bridges, hospitals, caravan sarais, public baths, dams, mosques, colleges, reservoir, palace, public wells and pillars. Firoz shah's love of art was so great that he shifted two of Ashoka pillars to Delhi after facing a lot of difficulty.

## **ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT DURING SAYYID AND LODHIS' RULE (1414-1526 AD)**

After the Tughlaq's, the resources of the Sayyids and Lodhis got so limited that they could not pay any attention to the advancement of art and architecture. Any how best of the buildings of this period were the tombs of Mubarak and Mohammad shah sayyid and the tomb of Sikandar Lodhi, tombs of Bara Khan and Chhote Khan and Moth-ki-Masjid.

Although most of the buildings built during the period of Delhi Sultanate do not exist now, yet some tombs, mosques and other ruins which are available prove that these were the best specimens of Indo-Islamic architecture.

### **CONCLUSION**

We can say that the art of architecture made a remarkable progress under the Delhi sultanate. The Sultans of Delhi are known to have been great builders. They founded many new towns throughout their dominions. They built royal palaces, forts, public buildings, mosques, madrasas dargahs, serais and mausoleums. Most of the buildings of the Sultanate period have disappeared but many buildings are still in existence which attract many people even today. Thus as regards the socio-cultural advancement of early medieval period, the Sultanate of Delhi made greatest contribution in the field of architecture.