



## Department of Distance Education

### Punjabi University, Patiala

**Class : B.A. I (History)**

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#### ***Lesson No.***

- 1.1 : *Invasions of Mahmud Ghazni and their effects*
- 1.2 : *Conquests of North West India by Muhammad Ghori and the causes of the success of the Turks*
- 1.3 : *Foundation of the Sultanate of Delhi under Iltutmish*  
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**LESSON NO. 1.1**

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**INVASIONS OF MAHMUD GHAZNI AND THEIR EFFECTS****Rise of the Turks :**

Although Arabs were the first Muslims to invade India, yet the Arab invasion was a mere episode in Indian history. It had its influence only on the population of Sindh. The rest of India remained aloof from the Islamic world. After the Arab conquest of Sindh in 712 A.D. the second wave of attacks in the north-west of India commenced towards the end of the 10th century with the emergence of Ghazni as a powerful kingdom adjoining the territories of the Hindushahi rulers in the extreme north-west of India. It provided a powerful base for further advance into Punjab and India.

The first Turkish ruler of Ghazni was Alaptagin. He was originally a slave of Samanid ruler of Persia and by dint of his ability had raised himself to the rank of Hajib-ul-Hujjab<sup>1</sup>. In 956 A.D. he was appointed the Governor of Khurasan. In 962 A.D. he established his independent kingdom in Khurasan. He also added Kabul and Ghazna to his kingdom. In 963, he died and after his death Ghazna was ruled by several unimportant rulers.

**SUBUKTGIN AND JAIPAL**

The real founder of the Ghazni dynasty was Subuktgin, slave and son-in-law of Alaptagin. He extended his power to Peshawar in India and to Khurasan in Iran "leaving a rich legacy to the ambition of his son Mahmud (998-1030)."

Subuktgin the ruler of Ghazni (977 A.D.-997 A.D.) made raids into the territories of the neighbouring Indian ruler Jaipal of Hindushahi dynasty, who was the master of the territories extending from the river Kabul to Chenab. In retaliation, Jaipal marched into his territories in 986 A.D. and captured Lamghan. In the battle that followed for several days Jaipal was defeated, sued for peace and consented to pay one million dirhams as war indemnity. But on reaching back in his territories, he refused to carry out the terms of peace. Once again Subuktgin marched against him. Jaipal had now gathered a large army of other Indian rulers. His own armies marched side by side with those of other rulers of Northern India. The allies were, however, defeated in 995 A.D. at Lamghan and Subuktgin annexed the Hindushahi territories upto Peshawar (to the west of Indus). It was probably during this battle that Sukhpal a grandson of Jaipal fell into the hands of the Muslims and was subsequently converted to Islam.

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1. The, guard of the palace

**INDIA AROUND 1000 A.D.****Political Divisions**

When Harsha in the north and Pulkaasen in the south held sway they did not rule over the entire territory which recognised them as its overlord. They were recognised sovereign over rulers, big and small, who numbered about 80 at that time. In the countries that followed no great ruler appears to have taken their place either in the north or south. So, the number of political units in the country must have increased considerably.

A striking feature of time was the emergence of what came to be called , Rajput dynasties. The use of word 'sons of rulers' to describe them and the legend that they rose armed to the teeth out of a sacrificial fire performed at Mount Abu to bring into existence new lines of rulers seems to suggest that at least some of these ruling houses did not represent old Kashytriyas. Their title of warrior class related to their having grasped power and passed it on to their descendants. The new names by which these came to be known could sometimes be connected with some of the ruling houses. Some Kashtriyas lines may have survived under new names but some at least, of the Rajput lines are of non Kashtriya origin. Some may represent the new ruling lines that some of tribes of non Indian origins founded when they were absorbed into Hinduism. The emergence of a large class of people calling themselves Khatris in the Punjab, U.P. and elsewhere and engaged in trade does seem to indicate that a large number of the old warrior group took to trade.

In about 1000 A.D. we have Guhilots ruling Mewar and three branches of Chauhans in Jaipur, Nadol and Pratapgarh. Chandelas were ruling at Kalinjar and the Kachhawahas held Gwalior & Parmars were ruling at Ujjain. Solankis were masters of Gujarat with Patan as their capital, Multan was under a local Muslim dynasty. In Sindh, it seems that the local Muslim dynasty had come to an end. Jats and Meds seems to have regained power but soon gave place to the Surma Rajputs, Hindushahi with their capital on the Jhelum ruled the territories between the Kabul and the Chenab. Lahore was the capital of another local dynasty which, however was turned out by the Hindushahis in 999 A.D. Bhera OR Bhatinda was another seat of power, Bengal and Bihar were under the Palas. Kashmir was under its rulers representing the old lines. At Basmi in Jammu Raja Janki held power under the ruler of Kashmir, his overlord Tomras held Delhi which seems to have been a small state. But it included Thanesar and Narayanpur (in Alwar District of Rajasthan) was its capital. Chalukyas and Parmars wielded authority in central India. Pandyas and Chalukyas shared authority over the eastern coast, where as on the western coast, Kambhas and Sihars held sway. The boundaries of these states fluctuated very often and a weak ruler did not hesitate to seek the protection of powerful neighbour.

**(1) Government**

The ruler did not usually maintain large standing armies. Adults in arms flocked to the king's standard when the call came. In India, as elsewhere in the contemporary world, the army was an unorganized collection of subjects in arms with a hard core of king's guard. The rulers were helped by a band of high officers many of whom held hereditary office. Diwans, the king's Chief Minister, seems to have emerged as a distinct office-holder. He was the Raj Purohit also. In the cities there were trade guilds. The land was held by cultivators on a permanent tenure, superior Land Lords were sometimes created who usually took the place of the state in their relations with the cultivator. The cultivators enjoyed right in the common land which they could use as a pasture and whence they could cut wood also. One-sixth of the produce was given to the state as land revenue. Law was codified in Smirties but its latest commentator represented the current authentic opinion. For the common people, it was custom that ruled their lives. Cases were decided by the elders of the village acting as the panch.

**(2) Social Life**

By then the four castes had become static. The Brahman and the Rajputs alone seem to have represented the two old divisions. The rest of the community was divided into innumerable sub-castes more conscious of belonging to their respective group than forming a part of higher group, the main caste. The foreigners admitted into Hinduism during the preceding centuries had been absorbed as Brahmins and Rajputs, but majority had taken to trade and agriculture and thus provide a large number of sub castes. Purdah was unknown. Women appeared at social gatherings, functions and fairs etc. accompanied by their menfolk. Beliefs in omens and astrology was common.

**(3) Religious Life**

Pilgrimages to Benaras, Hardwar, Nasik, Allahabad etc. were undertaken. Most of the Hindus seem to have been Vaishnavas. But Kashmir was Shaktik and Shiva was worshipped at many other places too. Educated Hindus believed that 'God is eternal'. One without beginning or end, almighty, and all wise. Idol worship was popular among the low classes and the illiterate people. However, Hindus were in the habit of praising one god to the sky and then hinting that there was some one greater than him.

**(4) Language and Literature**

Sanskrit was the link language of all the scholars, Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. The Puranas and the Epics provided religious solace to millions of people. Shankar's Vedant seem to have appealed to the intellectuals. His Mayabad had become an article of common faith. Though many short cuts to salvation had become popular, yet the insistence on good conduct continued as the cardinal faith of the people. Several languages had become current e.g., Maghadhi, Marathi,

Avantiki, Pasishchi, Prakrit and Hindi in the north; and Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam in the south. Indians were proud of their literature but the old capacity to absorb new ideas and influences had become static.

### **Mahmud of Ghazni**

**Introduction :** After Subuktgin's death in 997 A.D. his son Mahmud succeeded him in 998 after defeating his brother (Ismail). By 999 A.D. he had extended his sway to Khurasan and Bukhara. On the bestowal by the Khalifa Qadir Bellah got the title of Yamin-ud-Daulah (i.e. the right hand of the lofty empire) and Amil-ud-Miliat (i.e. the custodian to the faith), he vowed that he would lead an expedition to India every year. In the course of thirty one years till his death in 1030 A.D. he led seventeen expeditions to the Punjab, Doab (territories lying between the Ganga and Jamuna) Multan, Gujarat and Kashmir though of these both his expeditions to Kashmir failed. The expeditions of the Doab in 1019 A.D. to Somnath 1025 A.D. and to Nagarkot in 1009 A.D. yielded rich booty to whet the appetite of the warriors for many more such raids.

**(1) Conquest of the Punjab :** Though ultimately Mahmud succeeded in wresting the Punjab and North Western Frontier from the control of its Hindushahi rulers, but only after he led several expeditions against them. It took him nineteen long years to break the power of these rulers. Defeated they would rise again. Humiliated by his defeat and imprisonment in 1001 A.D. Jaipal burnt himself to death. However, his son Anandpal was up in arms and had re-captured Waihind (on the Indus). Mahmud took it again in 1006 A.D. but Anandpal remained still at large. Sukhpal, who had been converted to Islam was appointed Governor of Waihind now. But he was re-admitted to Hinduism and rose in rebellion in 1008 A.D. He was defeated and made a prisoner but this availed Mahmud nothing. Anandpal was again contesting his right to penetrate into the country and advanced on Ghazni. The two armies met at Waihind in 1009 A.D. Though defeated yet Anandpal established his authority in the salt range (Suleman and Kirthar). After his death in 1011 A.D. his son Trilochanpal carried on the struggle. Mahmud made an attempt to dislodge him from this area in 1014 A.D. but after months of pursuit, he took the new capital of Trilochanpal, Nandana now in Jhelum district in Pakistan and situated in remarkable dip of the Salt Range) yet Trilochanpal again escaped to the Doab where he organised a strong confederacy against Mahmud. Defeated in the Doab in 1019 A.D. he died in 1020 A.D.

**(2) Campaigns against Bhera (Bhatinda and Nagarkot (Kangra)) :** The Hindushahis were not the only rulers who opposed Mahmud in the Punjab. In 1004 A.D. Mahmud led an army against Bajirao of Bher (or Bhatinda) and defeated him.

Anandpal's defeat in 1009 A.D. left the way open to Mahmud to Nagarkot (Kangra) where the rich treasures beckoned him. The temple fort fell easily, it

yielded rich booty, said to have formed the treasures of several Hindu rulers who had stored them there in apparent safety. From here, says Farishta, Mahmud got 7,000 gold dinars, 700 maunds of jewels. According to Dr. Ishwari Prashad such rich booty further whetted his appetite. After the death of Anadpal in 1012 A.D. his son Trilochanpal, and grand son Bhimpal had to face the challenge of Mahmud's attacks.

**(3) Conquest of Multan :** Multan was an independent state under a Muslim ruler, He, however, was a heretic and infidel for the Sunni Mahmud who led two expeditions, the first in 1006 A.D. and the second in 1011 A.D., before Multan finally fell into hands.

**(4) Expeditions against Naryaonpur, Thanesar, Buland Shehar, Mathura, Kanauj, Kalinjar and Gwalior :** After the fall of Anandpal in 1009 A.D. Mahmud carried his plundering expeditions into the Doab. In 1010 A.D. Narayanpur, located near Delhi, was sacked and plundered Thanesar in 1012 A.D. or 1015 A.D. From 1013 to 1018 A.D. there was a lull in Mahmud's attacks. In 1018 Mahmud again marched from Ghazni. This time he planned to advance upto Kanauj. He crossed the river-Jarnuna in Dec. 1018 A.D. After the conquest of Bulandsher he attacked Mathura, whose ruler Kulchand offered resistance and later sacked. In January 1019 A.D. Mahmud invaded the famous city of Kanauj. The weak hearted ruler Rajya Pala did not have the courage to face him and surrendered. The "Town of Temples" was then taken plundered and sacked. In 1022 A.D. he plundered Gwalior and Kalinjar. Trilochanpal again met Mahmud at the head of a strong combination of Hindushahis and Partiharas. Trilochanpal was killed. His son Bhimpal became a fugitive and in 1026 on Trilochanpal's death Mahmud annexed the whole of Punjab to, Ghazni and appointed his able officer Malik Ryaz, the Governor of Lahore, Mahmud ruled Punjab for fourteen year.

**(5) Sack of Somnath :** Of all the expeditions of Mahmud, the Somnath campaign occupies a special place in his career. The concentration of wealth of Somnath was well known and it was undoubtable that Mahmud attacked it. The thirteen storeyed temple of Somnath was situated in Kathiawar. Its fame had spread far and wide by the sailors who visited in large number. It was rich in its treasures and the gold and silver idols. Some idols studded with precious stones were of various gods and goddess in attendance on Shiva who was represented by a stone lingam, 5 cubit (cubit is equal to 18" -20) in height above ground and three cubits in girth. The temple-bell was of gold weighing 400 pounds.

By now Mahmud had learnt how rich would be the plunder to be had from an attack on the famous Hindu temple. Though the way to the place by across the arid desert and was very dangerous, but the stories of its riches made him decide on an attack thereon. Authors of the Cambridge History of India. Vol III are of the opinion that Mahmud thought, if Somnath was destroyed it would convert

the Hindus to Islam. So in 1022 A.D. he set out from Ghazni and after reaching Multan, he embarked on a journey across the desert. Passing Ladarva now in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan, he moved towards the sea and entered Gujarat. Then he reached Delwara which he sacked. He reached Somnath early in 1026 A.D. and was successful in affecting a breach in the defence of the city after a siege of several days. As the Muslim army entered the temple fort, it busied itself in-killing the inhabitants and plundering the wealth stored in the temple. The minor idols of silver and gold yielded a rich booty. The stone "Lingam" was broken into pieces which were carried away to Ghazni as a witness of Mahmud's zeal as an idol breaker.

In his march on Somnath, Mahmud does not seem to have been apposed anywhere by the Indian rulers. He seems to have avoided an engagement with Raja Bhim Dev of Anhilwara. The Indian rulers probably counted on retaliating on Mahmud's army in its way back to Ghazni. Bhim Dev now disrupted Mahmud's path probably near Patan but Mahmud once again avoided an encounter with this powerful ruler. He plunged into Sindh by way of Mansura. But even then the journey back to Multan was to cost him heavily. Many lives were lost for want of water; more fell to the onslaught of the jats and Bhattis who harassed Mahmud continuously. A part of the rich booty actually reached Ghazni where it was placed under the steps, of the Friday Mosque. To conclude in the words of Dr. Nazim, the exploit of Somnath was 'one of the great feats of military adventure, Khalifa bestowed great honour upon him. The Muhammadan world called him a great episode of Islam.'

**(6) Mahmud's last Expedition :** So greatly did Mahmud feel the harassment to which his army had been subjected to Sindh that he returned next-year to punish them. He inflicted heavy losses on them and returned to Ghazni where he died in 1030 A.D.

#### **Motives and Cause of Mahmud's Expeditions :**

There are three causes and the motives of the invasions of Mahmud. These were i.e. political, religious and economic. However, as regards the political motive. Mahmud himself was not very clear. He had realised that he could not control two empires, one in Central Asia and the other in India. So of his Indian conquests he annexed only some portions of the Punjab Sindh and Multan. Further, Mahmud's expeditions of India seem to have been inspired more by a desire for plunder than zeal for Islam. However, great might have been his activities in destroying Hindu temples and breaking Hindu idols it represented no solid gain to Islam. If anything they probably created an aversion against the religion which represented by the one who indulged in such vandalism. This tended to create a gulf between Islam and Hindus. The call of holy war in distant lands was, however a convenient slogan for gathering under his standard, fiery warriors who in turn were probably

more attracted by rich plunder than concern for religious glory by participation in a holy war.

**Results :-**

By the conquest of Multan Mahmud succeeded in opening the way to the establishment of a subsequent Muslim empire in India. As such, his raids formed a turning point in Indian history. Contemporary Hindu rulers do not seem to have seriously reacted to the invasions, since early they were hardly impressed by his military skill and generalship. His raids did not make India aware of its world to her northwest or of the happenings there. There was not acknowledgment of his superiority either as a leader of the army or a great warrior. The fact that he recruited Indian soldiers, probably for service outside India seems to imply that he had no mean opinion of their value as a fighter. But at the same, his successful attempts to strike against Somnath, in Gujarat and Kanauj in the Doab was no mean feat of military daring. He has a sure place among the great commanders of the world, even though, like most of them he indulged in cruel orgies of plunder and carnage. His exploits robbed India of art and literature. Economically, a great amount of Indian wealth was drained out to Ghazni. Religiously, as noted by Dr. Jaffer in the train of Muslim warriors and Warlords came Muslim saints and savants who permeated the ranks of Indian society propagated Islam and won a number of converts. Besides Ghazni grew rich and became a centre of education and art enriched by the wealth, literature and pieces of art carried from India by Mahmud Ghazni. Ghazni began to be counted among the famous and civilized cities of Central Asia.

**Character and Estimate of Mahmud**

Mahmud's character was complex. We find him fanatical with no regard for human life while at some other places he is cultured and doing best for the uplift of the people of Ghazni. Various aspects of his personality can be studied as under :

**As a General :** Mahmud of Ghazni was an "intrepid and gifted soldier." He was genius. He never suffered a reverse in his life. His military exploits eclipsed even those of Alexander and Napoleon. He did not depend merely upon his generals but he used to go to the battlefield to inspire his soldiers.

**Lover of justice :** He had also very keen sense of duty and justice. His sense of justice was well illustrated "by the severe treatment meted out by him to his nephew for acting illicit connection with the wife of poor man." He would also not spare even any high officer when they tried to take law in their own hands.

**Deeply Religious :** He was deeply religious and performed daily prayers regularly. He paid Zakat-and distributed alms among the poor. On the other hand, towards the Hindus he was fanatic and massacred many of them during his

invasions. But it is also said that many Hindu soldiers were in his service and one Hindu officer. Tilak held very high office in his court.

**A Lover of Learning :** He was great patron of art and letter. Great architects scholars poets, artists flocked his court at Ghazni. Some of the well known was Firdausi the poet, Utabi, the historian and Alberuni the great mathematician and philosopher. In Ghazni a museum and mosque are best examples of Islamic architectural style. Alberuni's work on Indian history named *Tahqiq-I-Hind* contains profound insight and observations on Indian civilization. The most important of Mahmud's building was the Celestial Bride, " which is generally described as a wonder of the East."

**Demerits of his character :** As noted earlier he acted cruelly while dealing with the Hindus. He was fickle and uncertain in temper. But the greatest weakness was the greed. He loved money so much that when he was about to die he ordered that all his wealth be displayed before him.

**Conclusion :** To conclude in the words of Dr. S.A.P. Rizvi, "Mahmud won his first great victory against Jayapala near Peshawar in November, 1001. The ruler of Multan was his second target. After finally crushing the Ismailis in 1008, he carried fire and sword as far as Kangra, he completely overthrew the Hindushahi kingdom, opening the doors for repeated invasions of Ganga and Yamuna Doab. The fabulously rich spoils from the temples repositories of wealth, helped him consolidate his rule in Khurasan and embellish Ghazni with palaces and mosque, but he had' neither the will nor the human resources to rule his Indian conquests."

#### RELEVANT BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Singh, Meera : Medieval History of India
2. Habib, Mohammad : Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni

#### QUESTIONS

1. Describe the political and social condition of North India on the eve of Mahmud Ghazni's invasions.
2. Write a detailed note on the conquest of India by Ghazni. What were his motives ? Explain.

#### SHORT NOTES

1. The Rajput Dynasties.
2. Jaipal.
3. Rise of Ghazni.
4. Mahmud as a patron of art and learning.
5. Mahmud's Empire.

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**LESSON NO. 1.2**

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**CONQUESTS OF NORTH WEST INDIA BY MUHAMMAD GHORI  
AND THE CAUSES OF THE SUCCESS OF THE TURKS**

**Introduction :** In the previous lesson, we discussed the political conditions of India on the eve of the Ghaznavi's conquests, invasions of Mahmud Ghaznavi and motives and effects of his invasions, Ghaznavi had a free hand in the further conquests, planning campaigns and expansion of territories. We also analysed that Mahmud was not very clear about the political objectives of his invasions. He only annexed Sind, Multan and the Punjab to Ghazni. Credit for founding the first Muslim Empire in India has been accorded by most of the historians to Muiz-ud-Din Muhammad-bin-San, popularly known as Muhammad Ghori.

**Indian Expeditions of Muhammad Ghori**

**Early Career of Muhammad Ghori :** Ghori was the real founder of the Turkish rule in northern India. He belonged to the ruling house of Ghori in Afghanistan. After the death of Mahmud Ghazni, the Ghoris were involved in the struggle for the possession of Ghazni. Finally, in 1173 A.D. Ghazni was conquered by Ghiasuddin of Ghori (1163-1203), who expanded towards Khorsan and Shihabid-Din (Later Muizzud-Din) Muhammad (1173-1206) who conquered Punjab and Hindustan.

**Conquest of Multan, Sind and Lahore :** The Ghoris in their scheme of proving themselves the true successors of Ghaznavides were drawn to the Punjab. "Muizzud-din's army was comprised of both Ghori and Afghan troops and the Turkish slaves crossing to India via Bolan pass. Shahab-ud-Din conquered Multan in 1175 A.D. While he was consolidating his authority there, he received an invitation from the Rani of Uch to attack Sind. He did so and added a portion of Sind to his territories. In 1178 A.D., he moved eastwards through Khyber pass and snatched Peshwar from the feeble hands of Khusro Malik, the last Ghaznavide ruler of Lahore. When he again came to Punjab in 1181 A.D., the Raja of Jammu named Raja Chakra Deo had fallen put with Malik Khusro, helped against Khusro Malik. Shahabud-ud-Din was able to extend his authority to Sialkot where he left a garrison. Shahabud-ud-Din advanced to Lahore when Khusro malik sought safety in submission. On the pretext of setting the terms of peace Shahbud-ud-Din invited Khusro malik, made him a prisoner and sent him to Ghazni, where he was put to death. Thus, the kingdom of Lahore passed on to his hands and the dynasty of Mahmud Ghazni came to an end.

**The First Battle of Tarawari (1191 A.D.) :** The defeat of the Ghaznavides left to Shahab-ud-Din the task of strengthening his authority in the Punjab. He was again in Lahore in 1191 A.D. when a garrison commander of his captured

Bhatinda and Sirhind which was claimed by the Chauhans under a large army and marched against the enemy. Prithviraj advanced upon Lahore via Karnal, Meanwhile, Muhammad Ghori had left Lahore. The two armies faced each other at Tarwari or Torrdin the north of Delhi and at present located in Haryana. When the battle began next morning the Rajputs made an onslaught on the enemy's forces which Muslim armies failed to withstand, Shahab-ud-Din was wounded by Gobind Raj, brother of Prithviraj. However, a slave recognized him and hastened with him away from the battlefield. So complete was the shock of their defeat that the Muslim armies did not dare to pass before they had covered thirty miles. When they were safe in their own territories, they nursed their wounds and went back to Lahore. Prithviraj pursued them as far as forty miles. But the Rajputs did not pursue the enemy into territory. Still Bhatinda was occupied by the Rajputs.

**Defeat of Prithviraj (1192 A.D.) :** It was humiliation, which Muhammad Ghori did not easily forget. Gathering a select army of his veterans numbering 120,000 he left Ghazni and reached Lahore in 1192 A.D. When the news of his advance reached Prithviraj he moved his forces once again. It is believed that 150 Rajput princes joined him and solemnly swore to stand by their leader whatever the consequences of the battle might be. Jai Chand was the only notable chief who did not join him. Once again, when he reached Tarain, Shahab-ud-Din had reached the neighbourhood. Prithviraj sent a messenger to Shahab-ud-Din and asked him to desist from advancing further lest he once again taste the humiliation of defeat. Shahab-ud-Din feigned to listen carefully to his reminder but pleaded that as he was advancing by the orders from his king and elder brother Ghas-ud-Din and could not turn back till he communicated with him and received his orders. Prithviraj's messenger brought back this reply, and the allies thought Shahab-ud-Din would stay hands till heard from his brother. Hostilities, they thought, were for the time being postponed.

But on the other hand, after the departure of Prithviraj's messenger, Muhammad Ghori disclosed to his troops his plan of the campaign as follows: they would fall upon the unsuspecting Rajputs under the darkness of night. A picked force of 12,000 soldiers was kept in reserve under his own command to join the battle when he thought the time was opportune. Instructions were given to the various wings of the army that after engaging the enemy they should turn back as if in flight but stop at pre-determined signal and once again fall upon the enemy. He would then order the reserves into battle. The shock of being pressed by reserves and the main army, he hoped would bring disruption of the enemy.

When the night had advanced enough for him to hope that Rajputs were unsuspectingly asleep, Shahab-ud-Din gave the signal to march. In the night the Muslim forces, anxious to conceal their movement, got lost and it was not

till dawn that they spotted the Rajput camp. The Rajputs were taken by surprise, but they soon formed themselves into ranks and fell upon the enemy. The battle once again raged fiercely. The Rajputs seemed not only standing their ground but also pressing the enemy hard. When they saw various wings of the Ghori army in pursuit they broke their ranks. As the enemy timed round and fell upon them, they felt the pressure of the fresh reserve who now joined the battle. Prithviraj was killed and his army was defeated and dispersed. Muhammad Ghori's armies also captured Hansi (in Haryana), Samana (in present Punjab) and Kuhram. Advancing to the Chauhan capital at Ajmer Shahab-ud-Din recognised Prithviraj's son as a successor on his promising to pay the tribute. Thus, Delhi, Ajmer and the surrounding territories passed under the control of Muhammad Ghori.

**Importance :** Dr. Rizvi regards this battle as a landmark in the history of the Turkish expansion. For it shattered the Rajput power from Punjab to Ajmer. Some feudatory chieftains were allowed to continue ruling as tributaries. An army of occupation was stationed at Indraprasth near Delhi which seized Baran (Buland Shahar) and Meerut and then occupied Ranthambore fort and Ajmer garrisoning all the forts there. The defeat and death of Prithviraj in the second battle of Tarain was a turning point in the history of India. Dr. V. A. Smith writes about this battle that it may be regarded as decisive contest which assured the ultimate success of the Muslim invasion of Hindustan. All the subsequent victories were the consequences of the overwhelming defeat of the Hindu league at the historic plain (Tarain) to the north of Delhi.

**Conquest of Meerut and Koil (Near Aligarh) :** After his brilliant victory over Prithviraj Muhammad Ghori himself returned to Ghazni. He left Qutab-ud-Din Aibak (a slave of Muhammad Ghori) as his Viceroy in India. Qutab-ud-din made Delhi his seat of power in 1193 A.D. Soon after, Qutab-ud-Din led campaigns against Meerut and Koil (In Doab) which surrendered very soon.

**Conquest of Kanauj :** In 1194 A.D., Shahab-ud-Din Muhammad Ghori returned to India and attacked Jai Chand of Kanauj in a battle which was fiercely fought. An enemy arrow pierced Jai Chand's eye and killed him. His army broke ranks and admitted defeat. Shahab-ud-Din followed his advantage and advanced up to Benares and established his authority all over this far flung area. According to S.R. Sharma, this important victory made Muhammad the master of the political as well as religious capitals of Hindustan, i.e. Kanauj and Benares.

**Aibak's Failure in Gujarat :** Aibak's attempt at conquering Gujarat in 1195 A.D. failed though he was able to advance as far as modern Patan (earlier known as Anhilwara), the capital, killing and plundering as he retreated. The ruler, however refused to offer submission and asserted his independence soon after Aibak's return.

**Aibak's Conquest of Kalinjar and Mohoba :** After Gujarat, Quatab-ud-Din

Aibak advanced against the Chandela Raja Parmala of Bundelkhand who did not offer tough resistance and surrendered the strongly fortified town of Kalinjar. Advancing from there Quatb-ud-Din captured Mahoba and capital of the Chandelas.

**Conquest of Bihar and Bengal by Bakhtiyar Khilji :** Another Ghorid general Bakhtiyar Khilji conquered Bihar and a part of Bengal. In 1197 A.D. had attacked Bihar and plundered its capital, Odantpuri. Its ruler Raja Indruman of the Pala Dynasty proved himself a coward by kneeling without fighting. Buddhist Viharas were demolished and thousands of monks were slain and Bihar also passed into the hand of the Muslims.

In 1202 A.D., Bakhtiyar Khilji with a small contingent invaded Bengal and reached Nuddea, its capital. Its ruler, Lakshman Sena was caught unaware while dining and he fled barefooted from the backdoor of the palace. In 1202 A.D. Lakshman Sena established himself at Vikaranpur where he continued to rule for some time. On the other side, Bakhtiyar Khilji advanced to Gaur (Lakhawati) and made it the seat of Muslim power in Bengal. He recited Khutba in the name of Muhammad Ghorid and thus Bengal was annexed to the Delhi Sultanate.

**Bakhtiyar Khilji's Diasater in Assam Hills :** Bakhtiyar Khilji's easy conquest of Bihar and a part of Bengal made him rather over ambitious. In the opinion of some historians as the head of a force 10,000 strong, he decided to invade and conquer Assam but according to the Cambridge History of India (Vol.III, P. 514), he invaded Bhutan or Tibet. V.A. Smith, in the Oxford History of India, supports the latter view and perhaps he intended to invade Turkistan also. He found an ally in the Raja of Kamarup (Assam) who on being defeated had accepted Islam. Bakhtiyar found his onward march ever easier than he had thought possible. He met with little resistance every where. His advance was, however checked by the treachery of the ruler of Kamrup. The disaster was so complete that hardly ten souldiers (according to some 100 soldiers) and Bakhtiyar Khilji him self returned alive. Bakhtiyar Khilji died of this shock.

**Rebellion of Khokhar (or Khokhars) and Muhammed Ghorid's Death :** In 1205 A.D., Muhammad Ghorid was defeated by Turkmans under Khawarizm Shah at Andkhui in Central Asia. As a result, he lost his military glory in India rather for some time he was believed to have been dead. Consequently, the Raja of Jhelum (Rai Sae) who had accepted Islam earlier, embraced his old faith and proclaimed his independence. Khokhar in the north of Salt Range rose in revolt under him.

Receiving the news of this serious rising in salt Range, Shahab-ud-Din hastened once again to the Punjab. Qutab-ud-Din was already trying to deal with the rebels as best as he could. Muhammad Ghorid mercilessly and successfully crushed the rising. But while Shahab-ud-Din Ghorid was returning to Ghazni, he was killed on March 15,1206 A.D. somewhere on the banks of the Indus near Dhamyak by a Khokhar or a heretic Muslim.

**Extent of Shahab-ud-Din's Conquests and Annexation :** By 1206 A.D.,

When Shahab-ud-Din died he had his authority acknowledged in about half of the northern India. The north-western frontier, Multan, part of Sind, plains of the Punjab, Delhi, Ajmer, the plains in the Doab, Bihar and a part of Bengal were under his sway but Gujarat, Central India, Rajputana beyond Ajmer, the sub-mountainous area in the Punjab (now in Pakistan and India) the entire Himachal Pradesh, submountainous districts of U.P., Bihar and Bengal were still independent. However, he left no heir. His conquests in India passed into the able hands of Qutab-ud-Aibak, his viceroy in India who had made Delhi the seat of his authority.

**Character and Estimate of Muhammad Ghori and Comparison with Mahmud Ghaznavi :**

Muhammad Ghori as compared with Mahmud Ghaznavi, was not a dominating personality and was not brave and adventurous as Mahmud. Mahmud never suffered a setback or a big defeat but Muhammad Ghori had to face many. For instance, he was defeated by a petty Raja Bhim Deva of Anhilwara. He was also defeated by Prithviraj in the first battle of Tarawari and also suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of the Shah of Khawarizm. Ghori was a good strategist. His achievements were not very spectacular but he made a substantial contribution to the founding of Muslim Sultanate in India. He learnt his lessons from his defeat and made another attempt.

Though historians like Ferishta have praised Muhammad Ghori for his patronage of learned men, yet he displayed less interest in art and literature than Mahmud of Ghaznavi, Muhammad Ghori took more interest in extending his dominions than in raising buildings and making liberal grants to scholars. It is due to this reason that Lane-poole says, "When compared with Mahmud, Ghori is an obscure figure."

But on the contrary Muhammad Ghori was not as fanatical as Mahmud. To quote Sir Hunter, "He was no religious Knight-errant of Islam like Mahmud Ghaznavi but a practical conqueror. The objects of his distant expeditions were not temples but provinces." He wanted to found a permanent empire in India.

Muhammad Ghori's work, thus was more enduring and permanent than that of Mahmud. Dr. Ishwari Parasd says, "Wealth not territory, extirpation of idolatry and not conquest, were the objects of his (Mahmud's) raids; On the other hand Muhammad Ghori from the very outset had made up his mind to build an empire in India in spite of several initial reverses in his Indian campaigns."

**Acquisition of Power by Muslims in India :**

As we have seen already, Islam first obtained a footing in India in 712 A.D. Multan and Lahore passed into hands of the Muslim rulers 300 years thereafter in the first quarter of the eleventh century. The Sultanate of Delhi under a Muslim rule came into existence about the beginning of the thirteenth century under

Muhammad Ghori. Thus, it took Muslim armies almost 500 years to establish dominion in about half of northern India. Compared with the sweep of the Muslim arms elsewhere in Europe, Asia and Africa the establishment of Muslim authority in a part of northern India proved difficult and long drawn out affair. Again unlike the success of Muslim conquerors in converting entire population of the countries they conquered in Asia and Africa, Islam had limited success in India as religion.

### **Causes of the Failure of the Indian Resistance and the Turkish Success**

The success of Turks in India calls for an explanation. Several apparent reasons have been offered to account for it which; however do not explain what actually happened. Muslim soldiers as such were no hardier or brave than their Hindu opponents. Habibullah writes, "In Individual fighting (Rajputs) rather surpasses the Turks." Had this been not so, Mahmud would not have raised Hinduism of his arms. Still the Indians were defeated due to the following causes.

#### **Military Causes :**

**Muslims Armies were trained and were almost Regular Troops :** The Turkish generals and their armies represented those who, in their home territories, had established their power recently and had extended their territories by their fellow Muslims, but the Indian soldiers normally represented armies raised in time of peace. The Muslim soldiers thus formed a more experienced almost a professional group. The constant warfare in which Mahmud and Shahab-ud-Din were engaged in their home in Central Asia and India gave them almost a hard core of professional soldiers to form a standing army. In India, on the other hand, there were no standing armies of the Indian rulers. Jagirdars (Zamindars) provided such troops for war that most of them were inexperienced and lacked the unity of command.

**Muslims knew Better War Strategy and Tactics :** Both Mahmud and Shahab-ud-Din were great military commanders constantly putting themselves against their Muslim neighbours in their own country. Against them, the Indian generals, though equally brave, lacked the ingenuity of their Muslim opponents who had developed new tactics unknown to Indians. When Shahab-ud-Din was faced with an Indian army under a great commander Prithviraj, he resorted to duplicity, putting the enemy into security by false assurance, delivering a surprise attack, feigning fight and a fresh reserve at the critical moments which accounted for the defeat of Prithviraj. But as Dr. A.L.Srivastava writes the Rajputs treated battle, "as a tournament in which they exhibited their chivalry and valour accompanied by morality, but Muslims fought a battle to win and adopted means both fair and foul."

**Out dated mode of Fighting of the Indians :** Habibullah observes that the Rajputs would take all their force in a single battle to defend a single fort. They could die but would not retreat to replenish their troops. Women performed

Jauhars and this converted every defeat due to their ignorance of war strategy into a catastrophe.^ Also Indians never took an offensive against the enemies and always remained on the defensive, but offensive wars were essential to repulse the attacking Turks and make them taste the devastation of the wars in their own territories. Besides, Indians even while victorious did not pursue to annihilate the enemy. Had Prithviraj pushed Muhammad Ghori beyond Sirhind when the latter entered his territory, the history of India might have been different.

**Too much Reliance on Elephants :** The Turks had better mounts, namely, the sturdy horses of Central Asia. They had learnt to use them so as to all speed in his army strength of onslaught on the enemy. No doubt Mahmud also raised a pack elephantary in his army but Indians put too much reliance on the elephants who could not stand against the dynamic Turkish cavalry. Once terrified, they were often trampled their own as became uncontrollable. An important cause of the defeat of Dahir at the hands of Muhammad-bin-Qasim was that the elephant carrying him ran mad.

**Indian Frontiers were not guarded :** The foreign traveller who visited India in the 9th century writes that India was strange country; there was no check on the foreigners; there was not even single police post or military guard on the Khyber pass.

**Miscellaneous Military Causes :** Mahmud of Ghazni was successful in all his campaigns and whenever Muhammad Ghori's troops were defeated in India, they were cheered up and encouraged by the victories of the Muslim armies in Central Asia, etc. On the contrary, Indian forces had been demoralised by constant defeats. The regions of Central Asia, etc. also supplied fresh recruits, Another important cause was that the Muslims were fighting far away from their homes and hearths. They knew if they won they would carry the war booty to their homes to warm their hearths and enrich their families, and if they failed, they would be slain to the last man. It created more unity and provided them motivation in their fight.

**Political Causes :**

Muhammad Ghori's battles bring forth the fact that Indians did not muster their united strength to decide the issue, e.g., Jai Chand, a very powerful ruler of the powerful kingdom of Kanuj did not join the league against Muhammad Ghori and was himself overpowered two years later. Its probable that had India been under a Chandragupta Maurya, or Vikramaditya or even a Harsha, stiffer resistance might have been successfully offered to the enemy. The weak Indian rulers eventually prepared and marched to face challenge of advancing Turkish armies in the vicinity of their capitals.

**Social Causes :**

To some extent, the caste system was also responsible for Indian dependence on the hereditary warrior class exclusively for the defence of the country despite

the fact that the Jats attracted Mahmud's flanks in Sind. But against it, the slave system of the Muslims helped them in establishing and maintaining the Sultanate in India. Both Qutab-ud-Din Aibak and Bakhtiyar Khilji were the slaves of Muhammad Ghori and their role in carving out the Muslim territories in India was considerable. Besides there being no hereditary rule of succession among Muslims, a slave of merit could aspire to any high office of the state, e.g., Qutab-ud-Din Aibak was appointed by Muhammad Ghori the viceroy of his Indian possessions. Elucidating the point Lanepoole writes 'while a brilliant father's son is apt to be failure, the slaves of real leader of men proved the equals of their master.'

**Religious Causes :-**

Indian belief in astrology did contribute on several occasions to India's defeat. Defence in Sind fell partially because of the fall of the temple. It was thought to mean that withdrawal of God's favour from his devotee Lakshman Sena of Bengal is said to have easily yielded Nadya to the enemy because the astrologers had told him that opposition would avail him nothing.

The Indian practice of having temples as parts of the fort-palaces of rulers added greed to the incnclastic (breaking of images of idols) fervour of the Muslims. On the other hand, Islam inspired the Muslims either to convert the 'Kafirs' (non Muslims) or to kill them. They called it a holy war.

**An Estimate of Muhammad Ghori :** Ghori was a gifted general and a successful conqueror. From the beginning, he was clear about establishment of an empire in India. In his great scheme, he was loyally served by able lieutenants whom he trusted . He achieved a series of grand victories (occasional failure did not put him off) and finally laid the foundation of Turkish rule in India.

**RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING**

1. Narang, K.S. and Sethi, R.R. : A History of Bharat of 1526, pp. 369-79.
2. The Cambridge History of India, Vol. III, pp. 38-40.
3. Smith, V.A. : The Oxford History of India, p. 232-35.
4. Majumdar, Rai Chaudhari and Datta, K.K. : An Advanced History of India, pp. 276-80.
5. Ishwari Prasad, A Short History of Muslim Rule in India, pp. 73-79.

**SUGGESTED QUESTION IN YOUR PRACTICE**

- Q. Compare and contrast the characters and achievements of Mahmud Ghaznvi and Muhammad Ghori.

**SHORT NOTES**

- |                                       |                       |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Ghori's early life                 | 4. Bakhtiyar Khilji   |
| 2. First Battle of Tarawari or Torain | 5. Character of Ghori |
| 3. Prithviraj                         |                       |

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**LESSON NO. 1.3**

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**FOUNDATIONS OF THE SULTANATE OF DELHI-ILTUTMISH****Qutab-ud-Din Aibak :**

With the initial conquests of Ghori, a major step had been taken in the foundation of the Delhi Sultanate. After Ghori's death, Qutab-ud-Din Aibak and finally Iltutmish strengthened the foundations of the Turkish Sultanate in India.

Aibak was the slave of Qazi Fakhruddin of Nishapur, who had purchased him from some trader. The Qazi treated Aibak very well. He also made an arrangement for his education. After Qazi's death, his son sold him away to a trader from whom he was purchased by Shahab-ud-Din Ghori. Shahab-ud-Din found him a promising young man and provided the distinctive slave opportunities to show his capabilities. After the second battle of Tarain Muhammad Ghori appointed him the administrator of his Indian possessions.

Ghori on one occasion had stated with pride about his slaves. "Other monarchs may have one or two sons, I have so many thousand sons, namely my Turki slaves who will be the heirs of dominions and who, after me, will take care to : preserve my name in the Khutba throughout these territories."

**Aibak's role in the military campaigns of Muhammad Ghori :**

As a representative of Muhammad Ghori Aibak after the victory of Tarain was put in charge of Ghori's Indian conquests from 1194 to 1206 A.D., he gave proof of his ability as an army officer and loyalty to his master. During this time, Aibak wrested Ajmer from its ruler Hem Raj and the areas between Delhi and Ajmer came under the control of the Turks. Aibak saved the fort of Hansi from going into the hands of the Jats. On his return, he took possession of the fort of Meerut. Later, Aibak placed Delhi under his control which earlier was in the hands of the Rajputs.

In 1198, the Meghs of Ajmer in collaboration with Raja Bhim Dev of Gujrat planned to drive out the Musalman from India and revolted. Aibak, at that time, was at Ajmer. He faced the rebels strongly. The Meghs surrounded the town but on learning about the reinforcement from Muhammad Ghori, they lifted the siege. Shortly after that, in order to avenge the defeat of Muhammad Ghori by the ruler of Gujarat. Aibak attacked Anhilwara the capital of Gujarat. Bitter fighting took place between the rival forces and ultimately Hindus were defeated. It is said that 15,000 Hindu soldiers died and in the end Aibak plundered the city of Anhilwara.

In 1202, Aibak, defeating the Chandela Rajputs captured the fort of Kalanjar. It is said that Aibak made 50,000 men and women his captives. After this he conquered Mahoba also. In 1206 A.D. he was formally vested with Viceregal powers.

**Assumptions of sovereign power and early difficulties :** Sultan Muhammad Ghori died in 1206 A.D. At that time Aibak was functioning in India as Muhammad Ghori's viceroy. As soon as he heard the death of Muhammad Ghori, Aibak declared himself to be the ruler. Some writers believe that Muhammad Ghori. nominated Qutub-ud-Din Aibak as the successor before his death. But Minaj Siraj writes that Muhammad Ghori did not take any specific decision with regard to his successor during his life time, When some one enquired from Muhammad Ghori about it, he replied that he had a number of slaves who would look after his conquests. Ghori had settled the problem of succession during his life time and we concluded that the position of Aibak at the time of his succession to the throne was fairly weak and he was confronted with many difficulties. Before ascending the throne Aibak had contracted matrimonial relations with many Turkish families. Aibak's sister was married to Nasir-ud-Din Qabacha, the Subedar of Multan. Aibak had married his daughter to one of his slaves, Iltumish. He had himself married the daughter of Tajuddin Yaldoz, the ruler of Ghazni. But these close relatives of Aibak were not happy over his assumption of royal power Yaldoz claimed to be successor of Muhammad Ghori. Nasiruddin Qabacha had declared himself to be independent in his inheritance. Besides this, Aibak was a slave and unless he obtained a letter of manumission he could not be recognised as Sultan. According to the Islamic law, a slave had no right to become a sultan. Aibak was faced with another difficulty with regard to Lahore. Lahore had been under Ghazni for a long time and rulers of Ghazni always considered it a part of Ghazni.

**Clash with Tajuddin Yaldoz :** After the death of Muhammad Ghori, Yaldoz took possession of Ghazni. But the people of Ghazni did not like him. Tajuddin Yaldoz came to India and after defeating Nasiruddin Qabacha of Multan, captured Multan. Aibak took action against Yaldoz immediately and after defeating him proceeded towards Ghazni and captured the place. But after forty days he was obliged to vacate Ghazni and Taj-ud-Din Yaldoz again established himself at Ghazni. It is said that during his 40 days stay at Ghazni, Aibak secured a letter of manumission from Muhammad Ghori's nephew.

The Ghazni campaign of Aibak had far reaching political consequences. It marked the severance of ties of the Indian dominions with the region beyond the Indus.

**Crushed the rebellion to Bengal :** After the death of Bakhtiar Khijli, the political condition of Bengal and Bihar became unstable. There was a possibility of these distant areas becoming independent of Delhi. The imperial forces attacked Bengal and the Khijli Sardars of the place accepted the over lordship of Aibak. Ali Mardan was appointed the subedar of Bengal. He promised to pay annual tribute to the Sultan regularly.

**Iltumish-Career and achievements :** Iltumish was formally known as Shamsu-ud-din Iltumish. He was an Albari-Turk. Very early in life, he was found to be promising and intelligent. Out of jealousy his brothers sold him to a trader Jamaluddin. Iltumish after passing through many hands was purchased by Aibak. By dint of his ability he became Amir-I-Shikar. Later, he was made the Subedar of Bhilland Shahr. Aibak married one of his daughters to him and then appointed him the Subedar of Badaun.

**Elevation to the throne and his difficulties :** After the death of Aibak, the Turkish nobles of Lahore put Aram Shah on the throne. But Aram Shah was weak and incompetent. The nobles of Delhi did not approve of the hereditary succession of Aram Shah and invited Iltumish then governor of Badaun to make a bid for the throne.

Iltumish challenged Aibak's son Aram Shah in 1211 A.D. A battle was fought on the banks of River Jamna in 1211 A.D. and Aram Shah was defeated. The capital was now shifted from Lahore to Delhi. At the time of his accession Iltumish faced a number of problems with regard to the stability of Sultanate and his personal survival as the Sultan.

**Disintegrated Territories :** Aibak administered only for four years, therefore, he could not consolidate his possessions. The Sultanate faced many problems including disintegration. After Aibak's death the Khalji Sardars became independent in Bengal and Bihar. Nasiruddin Qabacha placed Multan and Sind under his control and Tajuddin Yaloz the governor of Ghazni became the ruler of North Western region. The control of Iltumish was confined only to Delhi and its surrounding areas. In order to strengthen his position Iltumish had to conquer and assert his authority in the areas that were outside the sphere of his influence.

**The position of the Qutabi and Muizzi Amirs :** Many Sardars of Muhammad Ghori and Qutab-ud-Din Aibak were present at Delhi on the eve of Iltumish's accession. They did not consider themselves less powerful than Iltumish and cherished ambitions of making a bid for the throne. He had to deal with all these Sardars.

**Nasir-ud-din Qabacha :** Qabacha was the real brother-in-law of Qutub-ud-din Aibak. At the time of Aibak's death he was the Subedar of Multan. Sind and Uch and wanted to bring Lahore under him. Iltumish was in great danger from Qabacha's ambition, who also asserted his claim to the throne, being a close relative to Aibak. He was a veteran soldier and seasoned commander.

**Taj-ud-din Yaloz :** He was another prominent general of Muhammad Ghori. After the death of Ghori, Yaloz declared himself to be the successor of Muhammad Ghori. Aibak could not drive him out of Ghazni. Being the ruler of Ghazni he considered himself to be the ruler of the Punjab as well. It was a serious problem for Iltumish to liquidate such ambitious rivals.

**Khajji Sardars of Bengal :** It was during the period of Qutab-ud-din Aibak that infighting infected the Khajji Sardars of Bengal. Aibak had to interfere in the affairs of Bengal, to restore order and had appointed Ali Mardan to be the ruler of Bengal. After Aibak's death, Ali Mardan discontinued to pay to Delhi stipulated annual tribute and became independent. Iltutmish had to re-establish his power in Bengal.

**Rajput rulers and jagirdars :** Rajputs continued their struggle to recover their lost independence. They were hostile to the Delhi government. Therefore, it was very urgent for Iltutmish to deal effectively with them.

**Khokhar Tribe :** The Khokhars inhabiting the areas between Jehlum and Sind were posing a serious problem for Iltutmish. Khokhars had been hostile to the Turks for a long time. They had offered tough resistance to Muhammad Ghazni also. They had also strongly opposed Muhammad Ghori. Probably Ghori met his end at the hands of the Khokhars.

**North Western Frontier :** It was a difficult problem for Iltutmish to defend the north western frontier. The Mongol menace in central Asia had also made north west India vulnerable to their attack. The Mongol invasions had made this problem more serious. Mongols had annihilated many rulers in central Asia. Iltutmish was confronted with these dangerous enemies and possibility of destruction of his inheritance.

**Weak Claim :** Iltutmish did not belong to any royal family. He was a slave from the beginning and according to Islamic law he had no claim to the throne. Besides, there were others, who could make a bid for the legitimacy and add to his difficulties and problems.

Iltutmish faced many problems at the time of his accession and the situation posed serious challenge to his courage and determination.

Iltutmish had the unavoidable task of re-conquering the lost dominions and to win the subjects by imparting lost peace, law and order."

The new leader, Iltutmish unequalled in beauty, virtue, intelligence and nobleness of character faced the massive challenge with cool courage and determination.

#### **Achievements of Iltutmish**

The record of Iltutmish's achievements is impressive and substantial. Initially, he made massive effort to liquidate his rivals and other contenders for power. Later he consolidated his position and strengthened his Sultanate.

**Crushed the Qutb and Muizzi Sardars :** These Turkish Sardars revolted near Delhi under the guidance of Jahandar. Iltutmish inflicted a crushing defeat on them. Many Sardars were captured, put to death and the others were forced to accept the overlordship to Iltutmish.

**Liquidation of Taj-ud-din Yaldoz :** Yaldoz was the most dangerous enemy of Iltutmish. He had been a prominent slave of Muhammad Ghori. He considered himself to be Muhammad Ghori's successor to his dominions in India. In 1216 Iltutmish attacked Taj-ud-din Yaldoz and made him a captive after the death of Tarain. Then he was imprisoned in the fort of Badaun where he was put to death later.

**Fighting with Qabacha :** Nasir-ud-Qabacha was a close relative of Aibak. He did not consider the claim of Iltutmish as superior to his own. In 1217 A.D. Iltutmish attacked Qabacha. Qabacha accepted defeat immediately. Though he had surrendered but for the next ten years Qabacha more or less remained independent. In 1227 A.D. Iltutmish again attacked him. After giving him defeat, Iltutmish established his control over the province of Sind, To save himself Qabacha tried to run away but was drowned in the river in his attempt to escape.

**Defeat of the Khilji Sardars of Bengal:** In Bengal Ali Mardan declared himself independent of Delhi and assumed the title of Ghias-ud-din. In 1224 A.D. the sultan , attacked and Ali Mardan accepted defeat but soon afterwards he again revolted. The Sultan sent his son Nasir-ud-din who was the governor of Oudh to conquer Bengal. Nasir-ud-din put down the revolt and Bengal was made a part of the Delhi Sultanate in 1229 A.D. Khilji Sardars were again in arms but the Sultan suppressed them with an iron hand and Ala-ud-jeni was appointed the Subedar of Bengal.

**Campaigns against Rajputs (1226-1234):** In 1226 A.D. Iltutmish conquered the fort of Ranthambore and in 1231 A.D. Iltutmish attacked Gwalior and besieged it for ten months. At last Mangal Dev, the ruler of Gwalior fled and left the fort. Iltutmish entered the fort and murdered 700 innocent Hindus. After this Iltutmish attacked Malwa and reached as far as Ujjain. He plundered the town and pulled down the Mahakali temple and captured Malwa.

**Protection from the Mongol Threat :** Mongols were a savage tribe of Central Asia. They were brave and known for their love for plunder and bloodshed. Killings, plundering the civil population and setting houses on the fire were ordinary things for them. In 1227 the Mangols started their devastating incursion and under the leadership of Changz Khan, ruined many rulers of Central Asia. Jalauddin, the ruler of Iran after suffering and defeat at their hands, came to India. Mangols closely followed him and created a delicate situation for Delhi Sultan. When Jalauddin asked for the permission to come to Delhi, Iltutmish put him off by saying that the climate of India would not suit him. To the Sultan's good luck the army of Changez Khan also refused to cross into India because of excessive heat and they returned from the river Indus.

**Investiture from. the Caliph :** One of the greatest achievements of Iltutmish was the attainment of legal and spiritual sanction from Caliph. Through a letter of investiture<sup>1</sup> the Khalifa honoured Iltutmish and sent him a robe of honour.

This strengthened formal and legal position of Iltutmish and gave a set back to his opponents. The name of the Caliph was inscribed on the coins of Iltutmish. The recognition, though formal enhanced his prestige in the Muslim world. Thus with the help of his military activities and his policies, he strengthened his position considerably.

In 1236, A.D. Iltutmish led a campaign to put down the rebellion of Khokhar living in the areas between Jhilm and Sindh. On the way he fell ill and returned to Delhi. Anticipating death Iltutmish requested the Turkish Sardars to accept his daughter Razia as his Successor. Shortly afterwards he passed away.

#### **Reasons for the Success of Iltutmish**

- (1) **Character of Iltutmish** : Iltutmish was a brave and a daring man with initiative and steadfast determination. He would assess the situation very well. Iltutmish was a capable general and shrewd statesman. With his qualities of head and heart he attained much in life.
- (2) **Co-operation from the Forty** : According to Dr. R. P. Tripathy, the Turkish slaves of Iltutmish also gave him cooperation to achieve success. He appointed forty trustworthy sardars at important posts. They rendered loyal and meritorious service to Iltutmish.
- (3) **Mutual rivalries among the opponents of Iltutmish** : The strong opponents of Iltutmish like Taj-ud-din Yaloz and Nasir-ud-din Qabacha were hostile to each other . Using diplomacy he never allowed his opponents to unite.
- (4) **Anarchy in Central Asia** : Many states in Central Asia had been disrupted by the Mongols. In order to save their lives many refugees came to India and some of them found shelter at the court of Delhi. Thus the Sultanate of Delhi gained much because of the political instability in Central Asia.
- (5) **Strict policy towards rebels and rival** : Iltutmish followed lenient policy in dealing with the enemies. But those who defied the Sultan or were not faithful to him were awarded very severe punishments. He created fear in the hearts of enemies of the Sultanate.
- (6) **Iltutmish honoured by Caliph** : Iltutmish made a request to the Caliph of Baghdad for letter of manumission<sup>2</sup> which was issued to him. The Caliph also sent him a robe of honour. This elevated his position in the estimation of the Muslims<sup>1</sup>.
- (7) **Efficient Administration** : According to the contemporary writer. Minhaj-us-Siraj Iltutmish gave an efficient and clean administration to his people. He provided peace and security to the people and obtained cooperation from them.

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1. This letter and its practice is called KHUTBA.

2. Letter of manumission meant charter of liberty. By this letter a slave was released from the slaving.

According to I.H. Quereshi, by consolidating the Sultanate and giving efficient administration **to** the people he made himself popular amongst them.

**An Estimate of Iltutmish :-**

Iltutmish was a gifted person. His early difficulties had made him brave, courageous and hard working . He was a patron of gifted people and men of merit. He opened many schools and colleges and constructed many mosques. Because of his sympathetic attitude and affable personal behaviour he became popular among his subjects. He was a religious person and performed all the five daily prayers as enjoyed by Islam. He spent his free time in the company of Sufis and Saints.

According to Wolseley Haig, Iltutmish was the greatest of Slave Sultans of Delhi. He functioned as a ruler for nearly 26 years. During this period he not only consolidated the Sultanate but also gave peace and plenty to his subjects. He was a very successful ruler and wise and efficient administrator. According to Ibn Batuta the Sultan had a high reputation for his peace-loving and just deposition. He always did his best to satisfy the people and alleviate the suffering of the miserable. He was far-sighted statesman. It was through his intelligence and statesmanship that he saved the Sultanate of Delhi from the attacks of Changez Khan. He also strengthened his position with the help of the Caliph of Baghdad.

Iltutmish had the honour of being the real founder of the ^turkish Sultanate in India. Before him many Muslims attacked India but they could not establish a permanent Muslim state in this country. Muhammad Ghori did not shift his capital from Ghazni. Aibak made Lahore his capital and Iltutmish made Delhi his capital and followed a policy both of expansion and consolidation. The Delhi Sultanate which was consolidated by him flourished for many centuries.

With the determination and political sense, Iltutmish strengthened the legacy of Aibak and imparted a sovereign status to the Sultanate and played a significant role in the consolidation of the Delhi Sultanate. He was clear that the Turkish Sultanate could be strengthened by a tight control over the Turkish nobles to prevent them from breaking away from the Sultanate and becoming independent. By 1220 he had secured the northern frontier along the river Indus and had established his authority over the noble. By now the Rajputs made attempts to recapture their positions and engaged the Turkish armies in the battlefield.

Iltutmish had secured the northern frontier. But the Sultanate was defence less against the Mongols. The Mangols had moved away from their homeland in Central Asia. They harassed the Delhi Sultanate in a series of invasions between 1229-1241 and gained foothold in western Punjab. The death of Iltutmish was followed by weak successors, political instability and intrigues among the nobility. The rule of Iltutmish's daughter Razia was a brief but stable. The conservative nobles resented the rule of a woman and Razia was murdered by intrigue. Struggle

for power at the court continued till 1226 when Balban the minister rose to be the Sulatan.

Iltutmish had been rightly regarded as the first king or Sultan of Delhi. The history of Muslim sovereignty in India as observed by Dr. R.P. Tripathi properly speaking begins with him. It was he who gave the country a capital, an independent state, monarchical form of government and a governing class.

**Chahal or the forty :** Due to the patronage and interest of Iltutmish, the Turk Sardars most of whom were slaves formed themselves into a party which began to be called 'Chahal' The term Chahal means forty and hence this name for the party of forty Sardars. These Turks distributed the big Jagirs or the key posts among themselves. This famous Chahal had such important members as Malik Biadaruddin, Kishlu Khan and Balban. Most of the power of the Sultanate was concentrated in their hands and the Chahal played the role of King-makers during this period. From A.D. 1235-1246 the forty enjoyed full powers and authority at the capital. No ruler considered himself to be safe unless he was supported by this party. It was also responsible for establishing the authority of the Sultan. The party was mainly responsible for revolts against Razia. The 'Chahal' was not willing to have Behram Shah as the Sultan of Delhi. They did not sit idle till they were able to depose Behram Shah After Behram's death this party placed Masud, the grandson of Iltutmish, on the throne of Delhi.

The members of the Chahal had mutual rivalries. They used to lodge complaint to the Sultan against one another. The ruler became a non entity in their hands. The court had become a hot bed of intrigues. This party had become very powerful. Balban broke the spell of their power and strengthened the authority of the Sultan.

#### **BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING**

Singh Meera	:	Medieval History of India
Ishwari Parsad	:	Medieval India
Habibullah	:	Foundations of Muslim Rule in India

#### **SHORT NOTES**

- (1) Taj-ud-din Yaloz
- (2) Qabacha
- (3) The Mongols
- (4) The Caliph
- (5) Achievements of Iltutmish
- (6) Letter of Manumission
- (7) The Khutba

### **CONSOLIDATION OF THE SULTANATE OF DELHI-BALBAN**

**Early Life :** Ghais-ud-din Balban was born in the Bari tribe of the Turks. His father was a Khan of 10,000 families. He was very proud of his high family. Balban was captured in his childhood by the Mongols and was sold to Jamal-ud-din, a trader of Basra. This trader brought him to Delhi where he was purchased by Iltutmish. In the beginning he was given the duty of water-carrier. By dint of his personal ability he soon joined the 'Forty'. Soon after, Iltutmish married one of his daughters to him. During the regime of Razia, he became Amir-i-Shikar. After that Behram Shah conferred upon him the Jagirs of Rewari and Hansi. In 1243 A.D. as Lord Chamberlain, he successfully suppressed a rebellion and repulsed a Mongol invasion under Mangu Khan.

His influence grew rapidly and in 1246 after Nasir-ud-din's accession to the throne, Balban played an active political role. Nasir-ud-din owed his crown to Balban's support and for the next forty years Balban directed the government of the Sultanate first as a 'Naib' and then as the Sultan.

**Balban as a Minister :** From 1246 onwards for nearly 20 years Balban worked as the Naib (Prime Minister) of Delhi Sultanate. During this period of real power of the government remained in his hands as Nasir-ud-din was a ruler just in name. In 1246 he crushed the revolt of Khokhars and compelled the Mongol invaders to retreat. Next year many Hindu Chiefs were suppressed and he took possession of the fort of Kanauj. In A.D. 1249, Balban crushed the rebel Hindus of Mewar with a strong hand and also fought a battle against the ruler of Ranthambore. Balban was able to establish stability and peace in the kingdom as a Prime Minister. If he hadn't displayed his bravery and strength during these years, the Delhi Sultanate would not have survived the domestic rebellions and external invasions.

**Balban's succession and his difficulties :** After the death of Nasir-ud-din in A.D. 1266 Balban succeeded to the throne of Delhi. At that time there were intrigues and conspiracies of many Turkish nobles in the court of Delhi and the Sultanate was vulnerable to Mongol invasions. Balban ruled the Delhi Sultanate during the next twenty years with strong hand.

**Balban's effort to restore royal dignity :** During this period of Nasir-ud-din's rule, Sultan's prestige had suffered a setback. According to Barani, "The fear of the government which is the basis of the good government and source of authority had departed from the minds of the people and the country was in the grip of lawlessness." Nasir-ud-din was a weak Sultan and did not take much

interest in the affairs of the State. Thus the prestige of the office of the Sultan received a rude shock. Balban fully understood the role of the forty in undermining the position of a ruler. So As soon as he succeeded to the throne Balban took certain measures to strengthen the position of the Sultan and undermine the strength of the nobility.

**Change in personal life :** In order to earn the reputation of a royal dignified ruler, Balban made many changes in his personal life. He abstained from drinking and frivolous merry-making. He spent his spare time in the company of Sufis and . Saints. Even at his court he was always serious. Neither he would joke with anybody nor he allowed any person to talk lightly in his presence. He never liked to meet ordinary people. He paid special attention to protocol.

**Splendour of the Court :** In order to raise the position of the Sultan in the estimation of the people, Balban imparted splendour to his court. He also introduced strict discipline at his court. He prescribed a special dress for his courtiers. He introduced 'Sijda' and 'Pabos' (bowing before the Sultan and kissing his feet) for the visitors to the court. Everybody saluted the ruler very respectfully. The Sultan had selected the well built and awe inspiring soildiers as the members of his bodyguards. These soldiers always kept standing on all sides of the Sultan when he adorned his court. At court none could address the Sulan directly except the Prime Minister.

**Divine right of Kings :** In order to further strengthen his position as a Sultan, Balban expressed faith in "divine right of kings". He gave the people to understand that he had been directly appointed by God himself. Therefore, he would be answerable to God alone for his works good or bad . None of his subjects could be his equal as be was Zil-i-Illahi or shadow of God.

**Balban crushed the Forty :** Balban had himself been the member of the Forty. His rise to power was closely linked with the political strength and fortune of the Forty . He thoroughly knew the mode of operation of that clique of the Forty. Balban turned them out of the Darbar or posted them at distant places and scattered and broke their power considerably. He also deprived the nobility of their special rights and privileges and reduced them to the status of ordinary people. Balban got Malik Babak, the Governor of Badaun and Haibat Khan the Subedar of Oudh, flogged for their crimes of killing their servants. Balban also got his cousin Sher Khan, Who was a brave general, pretending as he was not paying due regards to Balban . Similarly Balban removed such of the nobles from their important offices or got them liquidated as they could pose a danger to his position.

**Espionage System :** Balban consolidated the spy system in his administration. The spies supplied information to the ruler from different parts of the country regarding the activities of the officials of the government. The spies did not come under the jurisdiction of the provincial officers or commanders

of the forces. They kept an open eye on the activities of all the government officials, so much as that Balban appointed spies to watch his son also. In the case of any negligence on the part of spies they were severely dealt with.

**Balban consolidated the Army :** He had a strong army . He consolidated his army . The dishonest and corrupt officials were sacked. The old forts were repaired and new forts were built at strategic points. The strength of the army was increased in the border provinces. Though the practice of keeping contingents by the jagirdars or nobles was there but the task of maintaining the forces was entrusted to the Sardards who were faithful to the state.

**Justice :** Balban consolidated his position. He ruled as an overlord and not as a tyrant. According to Dr. Ishwari Topa, Balban never punished anybody unduly. He considered kingship as a sacred 'trust'. He thought that it was the duty of the ruler to provide protection to the life and property of the citizens of the state and administered justice to them as an impartial judge. He lived upto this ideal till the end of his life. He did not grudge to punish even the big officers of the state if they were found guilty of oppressing the subjects.

#### **Measures against the Rebels**

**(1) Suppression of the Mewatis (1266 A.D.) :** The Mewatis were responsible for creating disturbance around Delhi and were defying authority of the Delhi Government. They often committed robberies during the day time and often they forced entry into the capital and plundered the people there. After robbing the people they would run away into forests. Balban led a large army against them and many Mewatis were put to death . The jungles were cleared and their hiding places removed. Roads were laid in these areas and peace was restored in the region of Katehar.

**(2) Rebellion in Bengal:** At the same time, Tughril Khan declared himself independent of Delhi. He issued coins in his name. Balban sent a large army under Amir Khan of Bengal. Amir Khan was defeated and returned without having achieved anything. The Sultan was highly enraged at Khan's cowardice and immediately ordered him to be hanged. Balban personally led a large army to Bengal. Hearing the news of the Sultan personally leading the forces against him, Tughril Khan ran away from his capital in Bengal. He was hotly pursued by the imperial forces. Tughril's head was cut off and presented to the Sultan. In order to revenge himself of the rebellion Balban was ruthless and wanted to teach a lesson to the people of Lakhnauti. It is said that a large number of posts were set up in the bazar of the town and the supporters of Tughrul were hanged on them. On the eve of his return from Bengal, Balban appointed his son Bughra Khan as its next governor. He warned his son that if he ever chose the path of rebellion and defiance he would also meet the fate of Tughril Khan.

#### **Mongol invasions and Measures adopted against them**

During the period of Balban's rule the threat from Mangols increased

immensely. They had penetrated as far as Lahore. Balban took certain measures against the Mongols. These measures went a long way in providing security to the north western frontier of the country and insuring preparedness in case of Mongol attacks.

Firstly, the Sultan ordered the construction of a chain of forts on the route that were generally followed by the Mongols during their incursion into the country and he stationed very strong contingents in those forts. These new forts included the forts of Bhatinda, Sirsa, Abohar and Bhatner. These forts were built at a distance of 50 miles from each other.

Secondly, the sultan repaired the old forts built in the north-west of Punjab and manned them with very brave and efficient soldiers.

Thirdly, in the north-west frontier province, very seasoned commanders and veteran soldiers were posted to look after the border areas. Sher Khan a brave general remained posted in the areas for a long time. Balban's son Muhammad and Bughra Khan also looked after the border areas for quite some time. Muhammad died fighting against the Mongols in the north-west frontier.

Fourthly, in order to be always available for consultation and to be personally in touch with defence of the north-west frontier, Balban never liked to leave Delhi. He also postponed the conquests of other areas with a view to be always ready to meet the Mongol threat.

Fifthly, he re-equipped the soldiers posted in the border areas, with the latest weapons of warfare and only the selected soldiers were posted there.

As a result of these steps of Balban, peace prevailed in the frontier for a long time. In 1279 Mongols again started fresh incursions but the royal forces drove away the Mongols and they did not dare to come to India next five years. In 1285 under Taimur Khan Mongols attacked Multan with a large army. Prince Muhammad fought bravely against the invaders but he was killed in action. Balban was deeply grieved by the death of his elder son Muhammad. The Sultan was so overwhelmed with grief that he died soon after his son's death.

**An Estimate of Balban :** Balban was one of the strongest rulers of medieval India. He rose from a slave to be the Sultan. This bears testimony to the distinctive qualities of the Sultan. According to Dr. Ishwari Parasd, Balban who saved the Delhi Sultanate from ruin at a very difficult time, would always be considered as a great Sultan in the history of medieval India.

**As a man :** Physically Balban was a strong and stout and in appearance he was very ugly. He was a short-stature, dark in complexion and his face was disfigured with small pox marks. Because of his repulsive appearance, Iltutmish had first refused him as a slave. Balban requested him saying, "My majesty, you have purchased so many slaves for yourself. For God's sake purchase me also. " It was perhaps because of his ugly appearance that Iltutmish initially assigned

him the duty of a water carrier.

Although Balban was very strict in dealing with state affairs but in his private life, he was generous and liberal-minded person. He was a good father and a loving husband. He had deep affection for his children. His love for them could never blind him to their shortcomings. He always wanted to keep his children under strict discipline. Because of his kind heartedness he provided asylum to thousands of refugees from Central Asia. At the time of dealing with the rebels he was never restrained or moved by any feeling of sympathy.

**As a Religious minded person :** Balban was a staunch Sunni Musalman and offered Friday prayers along with others. He offered all the five daily prayers. He took pride in writing the name of the Caliph on his coins, although the Caliphate had long since ceased to exist. While narrating the duties of an ideal ruler he would 'quote from the holy Quran. He would often visit the Mausoleums and Khangahs of the Muslim Fakirs and Draveshes.

**Patron of Learning :** Balban was great lover of learning and literature. He would often call the scholars to his Darbar and he showed great respect to them. A prominent poet Amir Khusrau enjoyed his patronage. Another famous poet Amir Hasan enjoyed the patronage of Prince Muhammad. Many other scholars and poets enjoyed the royal patronage.

**As a Soldier and General :** Balban was veteran soldier and general. In his life time he was mostly engaged in continuous fighting. As a soldier, he had many achievements to his credit. As Sultan he did not liquidate the power of Turkish Sardars but also crushed the rebels of Doab, Mewar and the rebels of Rohelkhand. He personally led an army against Tughril Khan of Bengal.

He was an experienced army organizer and administrator. He dispensed with the service of the old and unfit soldiers of his army and appointed in their place young and energetic soldiers equipped with better arms. By consolidating his army he brought peace and order in the Sultanate and diminished the possibility of internal disturbances and external invasion.

**As a Sultan :** Balban was very successful administrator. He effectively put an end to anarchy and lawlessness in the state . He restored the lost prestige and dignity of the office of the Sultan. He maintained strict discipline at his court. It is said that people came from far and wide to witness the splendour of his court. In this way by liquidating the power of the Sardars and their intrigues and adding luster to the office of the Sultan, Balban established his absolute authority. Some historians are of the opinion that there was not much creative or cultural activity during Balban's regime. He took no measures for the welfare of the people . He only established an army rule and ruled with a stern hand.

There is some truth in the above observation but under pressure of the contemporary situation he had to take certain stern measures for the security,

stability and consolidation of the situation for which he is held responsible. He was always confronted with intrigues, rebellions and Mongol invasions. He punished the guilty very severely so that others might learn lessons from them. He kept a vigilant eye on all aspects of administration.

Balban also suffered from certain shortcomings and fundamental weakness in the character. He hated the low-born people. Neither they were given government jobs nor he would ever grant audience to them. He had no faith in new converts. He entrusted key posts only to the Turks.

In the estimation of most of the historians, Balban was the greatest of the slave Sultans. Wolseley Haig considered Iltutmish to be the greatest slave ruler. But many historians do not agree with their view. Firstly, Balban consolidated the Turkish Sultanate that was disintegrating after the death of Iltutmish. If he had not taken action at the proper time, the Muslim state would have ceased to exist. Secondly, by striking at the root of power of Turkish nobles he saved the state from internal dissensions. He also took the necessary steps to save his Sultanate from external dangers, therefore, it is the general opinion of the historians that Balban was the greatest ruler, among the slave Sultans.

In the history of medieval India, Balban enjoyed an excellent reputation as a ruler. He was not in favour of expansion of Sultanate. He wanted to consolidate its possessions. He followed a policy of blood and iron, and through this policy he was desirous of enforcing strict discipline in the state. As a result of this policy, the Sultanate remained secure from the internal and external danger. Balban's policy of blood and iron created a situation in the country that was conducive with efficient administration to meet external dangers. Therefore, these forty years helped to strengthen and consolidate the Sultanate.

#### **BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING**

1. Singh Meera : Medieval History of India
2. Ishwari Parsad : Medieval India
3. I.H. Quereshi : Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi.

#### **SUGGESTED QUESTION**

1. "Balban was the greatest of the slave kings." In the light of the above remark, discuss the achievements of Balban.
2. What measures did Balban adopt to consolidate his position as Sultan.
3. Who in your opinion was the greatest of all the slave Sultans-Iltutmish or Balban ? Discuss.

#### **SHORT NOTES**

1. The court of Balban.
2. The Forty.
3. Barani's view of kingship.
4. Army of Balban.
5. Iron and Blood Policy.

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**LESSON NO. 1.4**

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**ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI : HIS CONQUESTS, ADMINISTRATION  
AND REFORMS**

**Early Life :** Ala-ud-din Khalji was the nephew and son-in-law of Jalaludin. He was very brave and ambitious. Jalaludin had appointed him the Subedar of Oudh. In 1292 Alaludin attacked Malwa and conquered Bhilsa. Later he conquered Devagiri.

**Assumption of Throne :** After murdering his uncle Jalaludin, Ala-ud-din declared himself to be Sultan. He marched towards Delhi. Jalaludin's son Kader Khan who was in Delhi at that time fled to Multan along with his mother. Ala-ud-din entered-Delhi and formally ascended this throne. On this occasion he distributed a lot of money among the courtiers and officers.

**Liquidation of Family of the Jalaludin :** Jalaluddin's elder son Arkali Khan was an experienced and capable commander and was in a position to challenge Ala-ud-din in the battle . At that time he was at Multan. Ala-ud-din sent two prominent generals with a large army against Arkali Khan. They besieged Multan and Arkali Khan and his brother surrendered. Under orders of Ala-ud-din they were blinded. They were taken to Delhi where they were murdered and their mother put in the prison.

**Invasion of Mangols :**

**Kadar's Invasion (1297 A.D.) :** In 1297 at the head of one lakh soldier, Kadar, the Mongol leader, attacked India and plundered areas in Punjab. Ulgh Khan and Zafar Khan at the head of the imperial forces fought against the Mongols. The Mongols were given a crushing defeat near Jullundhur. About twenty thousand Mongols died in battle and their leaders were captured and later put to death.

**Saldi's Invasion (1299) :** Saldi the leaders of the Mongols attacked Multan in 1299. Zafar Khan gave a tough resistance. Saldi and his two thousand soldiers were made captives. The victory of Zafar Khan created a suspicion in the mind of Ala-ud-din in respect of the former and he planned to get rid of him.

**Kutlugh Khwaja's Invasion (1299) :** After a few months of Saldi's invasion two lakh Mongols under the Leadership of Kutlugh Khwaja attacked India. Kutlugh with swift march reached Delhi. Under the circumstances the Sultan was advised to go in for a settlement with the Mongols but the Sultan did not agree. Zafar Khan again fought very bravely against the Mongols who were compelled to retreat. But Zafar Khan died fighting. Mongols were so terrified by the bravery of Zafar Khan that they went back and they never thought of coming back to India during the next few years.

**Invasion of Targi and other Mongol Sardars (1303-1307) :** From 1303 to 1307 Mongols invaded India many time. In 1305 Mangol leader Targi was defeated. After this Ali Beg and Iqbal Mand were defeated by Ghiasuddin Tughlaq, the governor of the border province.

**The Effect of the Invasions :** Although the Ala-ud-din repeatedly defeated the Mongols many a time yet he had to maintain a huge army which incurred great financial burden on the resources of the state to protect the Sultanate.

The defence of the border region assumed a serious priority as new forts had to be built. And he repaired the old forts. The outpost of Dipalpur, Samana, Lahore and Multan that were located on the Mongol route were strengthened. The soldiers posted in the border areas were adequately required and necessary provision were provided to them. The Sultan spent huge amounts on the special measures taken in for the defence of north west frontier province. This affected adversely on the financial condition of the Sultanate. The Sultan had to strengthen his financial structure. So long as there was fear of the Mongols this imperial forces remained posted at the borders. After this Ala-ud-din diverted imperial resources towards his Deccan campaigns.

#### **Conquests of Ala-ud-din**

##### **Conquests of Northern India :**

**Conquest of Gujrat (1299 A.D.) :** Gujrat was a fertile area and commercial towns of Baroach and Spara were situated in Gujrat. An imperial army was sent under Ullugh Khan to conquer Gujrat. Raja Karan could not offer resistance and fled to Deccan with the daughter Deval Devi. The Delhi forces plundered Gujrat and they also captured Kamal Dev, the Raja of Rana kachh. The temple of Somnath was pulled down. Kafur, a Hindu young man was also taken away from a trader, Kafur, later proved to be a very competent officer of the Sultan.

**Conquest of Ranthambore (1301 A.D.) :** Jalaludin has also tried to capture it but he was unsuccessful. Rana Hamir of Ranthambore had given asylum to many Mongols. Ala-ud-din sent an army under the command of Ullugh Khan and Nusrat Khan in 1301. The fort of Ranthambore was besieged. Rana Hamir Dev fought against the enemies valiantly. Nusrat Khan was killed, Rana's commander Ramal betrayed the Rana and Ranthambore was conquered by the Sultan.

**Conquest of Mewar (1303 A.D.) :** Ala-ud-din proceeded towards Mewar at the head of an army. It is speculated that the main object of this expedition was to seek Padmani the beautiful wife of Rana Rattan Singh. She was considered to be the most beautiful and gifted woman of her times. But whatever his objects, Mewar was attacked by. Sultan Rajputs offered strong resistance, Padmani performed the ceremony of Johar. Sultan appointed his son-Khizar Khan to be the Governor of Chitor. But soon afterwards Rana recaptured Chitor.

**Conquest of Malwa and Jalore (1307 A.D.) :** In 1307 Ain-ul-Mulk, the Governor of Multan was sent to conquer Malwa. Mahalik Dev, the ruler of Malwa was defeated and later he was killed. As a result of this conquest the Malwa forts of Bihar, Ujjain, Chanderi, Mandu etc. passed under the control of the Muslims. Soon after the Rajput ruler of Jalore also accepted the overlordship of the Sultans. Thus the whole of the northern India became part of the Delhi Sultanate.

#### **Conquest of Southern India**

**Conquest of Devagiri (1306-1307 A.D.) :** In 1306 Sultan sent Malik Kafur against Ram Chander of Devagiri as they had not received the annual tribute for the previous three years. At the time of Kafur's departure of the Deccan he was asked to bring Deval Devi daughter of Kamla Devi to Delhi, along with her father she had taken asylum in Devagiri. Her mother who was in the Sultan's harem was very unhappy, without her daughter. At the time of the attack of Devagiri Deval Devi fell into the hands of Kafur's men. Sultan married her to his elder son Khizar Khan. Raja Ram Chandra of Devagiri, surrendered. Sultan gave him the title of 'Rai' and gave the district of Niwarsi in jagir to him.

**Attack of Warangal (1309 A.D.) :** Under the command of Malik Kafur the royal force marched towards the Deccan. Partap Rudra Dev, the ruler of Telangana fought against the enemies for a long time. In the end Malki Kafur conquered the fort. Rudra Deva acknowledged the overlordship of the Sultan. He made an offering of 300 elephants, 700 horses and a good amount of precious stones to the Sultan. It is said that Koh-i-noor diamond was bagged by Malik Kafur during the attack.

**Conquest of Dwar Samundra (1310 A.D.) :** At the head of large army Malik Kafur proceeded towards Dwar Samundra, Ram chandra of Devagiri helped Malik Kafur. At that time Vir-Walabh the ruler of state was not in his capital. He had gone to the Deccan on the expedition. Vir Walabh surrendered and handed over the whole of his wealth to Malik Kafur.

**Conquest of Madura (1310 A.D.) :** Raja Ram Chandra of Devagiri died in 1313 . His son Shankra Deva ascended the throne. He did not like to remain under the Delhi rule He declared himself to be independent and stopped the payment of annual tribute to Delhi. Malik Kafur decided to attack Devagiri. In the course of fighting Shankra Deva was killed and Devagiri was conquered.

**Sultan's Deccan Policy :** According to Amir Khusrau, Ala-ud-din attacked the Deccan and in respect of his Deccan policy he had been inspired by considerations of religion. Some historians do not subscribe to this view. According to them the objective behind the demolition of temples was not the spread of Islam. But plundering of wealth from there. These temples were the repositories of wealth in those days. Before becoming the Sultan Ala-ud-din had attacked Devagiri with the same objective. Dr. K.S.Lal writes that the real thing is that the

Deccan Campaigns of Malik Kafur and Mahmud of Ghazanvi's invasions of northern India were inspired by the same objective and it was to Plunder wealth, from the conquered areas. Thus the primary urge behind these campaigns was economic.

#### **Ala-ud-din Administration & his Reforms**

Ala-ud-din was not only a good general and an empire builder but also an efficient administrator. He introduced sweeping reforms in the civil and military administration of the Sultanate. However, it was not so much the welfare of the people but the need for political and military security which was the driving force behind his reforms.

Ala-ud-din built a large empire and realised the need for establishing an absolute monarchy with the Sultan at its head functioning as the source of all authority.

**Theory of Kingship :** According to the Shariat (Islami Law ) the ideal Muslim ruler administered justice and protected his territories and ruled in accordance with the precepts of Islam, paid homage to the Khalifa and strived to spread Islam. In theory Ala-ud-din was an ideal Muslim sovereign but in practice he never put religion before politics.

**Ulemas :** In the political situation prevailing in the 13th century, two classes had taken a prominent part in the struggle for power with the Sultan-the nobility and the Ulemas.

Ala-ud-din was the first Muslim sultan who put forward the view that secular power was superior to the influence of the Ulemas. To him, law was related to the will of the Sultan and not of the prophet. Ala-ud-din very bluntly silenced the Chief Qazi when he expressed his concern about the severe punishment inflicted by the Sultan on the rebels. The Sultan is reported to have observed "I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the state and the benefit of the people. I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful; what I think for the state or suitable for the emergency that I decree and as for what may happen to me on the approaching day of judgement that I know not." (Barani) Ala-ud-din ruled according to the political demands of any particular issue and was not constrained by the interpretation of the law by the Ulemas.

In order to centralize his powers, the Sultan took stern measures to weaken the economic and social base of the nobility as a class.

#### **MEASURES AGAINST THE NOBILITY**

**Confiscation of Jagirs :** After securing the jagirs from the government some nobles became indifferent or disloyal towards the government. Sultan confiscated jagirs for such persons. Instead of conspiring against the Sultan they got more concerned about earning their living.

**Prohibitions from drinking :** The Sultan prohibited drinking. All shops selling wines in the capital were closed. Ala-ud-din broke all the bottles of wines stored in the place. Those who prepared wine secretly were thrown into the deep

wells.

**Restrictions on social intercourse of the nobles :** Sultan prevented the nobles from participating in social meetings so that they might not engineer conspiracies against him. They were not allowed to make matrimonial relations without the Sultan's permission. According to Dr. Ishwari Parsad the social life became dull and burdensome because of these restrictions.

**Organisation of Spy System :** In order to effectively deal with rebellions and conspiracies he organised the espionage system. Government informers/spies were posted to different parts of the kingdom. They gave all news to the Sultan regarding the Sultanate. They did not spare the government officials. Even the influential nobles were so afraid of them that in their house they talked in hushed tones.

**Harsh policy regarding the Hindus :** The Hindu Zamindars, Chaudhries and Muqqadams were deprived of all those special privileges which they enjoyed earlier. The land revenue was raised. The government share was fixed at 50%. The Hindus suffered much because cultivation was mainly in the hands of the Hindus. Jazia and other taxes were also realised with severity. Hindus, Chaudhries, Khuts and Muqqadams were not considered worth of riding horses, wearing weapons, wearing good clothes or chewing betel leaves.

**Military Reforms :** According to Farishta, "Ala-ud-din was the first Muslim ruler who founded the standing (permanent) army. In the permanent army he had 475,130 horsemen who were properly equipped. Nothing concrete can be said about the infantry and foot soldiers. "This standing army was always ready in the capital for service. Every horseman received 234 tankas as his annual salary. He was provided with a horse from the government. In order to bring about efficiency, the practice of 'dagh' and 'huliya' (branding of horses and writing the descriptive rolls of the horseman) was introduced. The recruitment was made by the Defence Minister. The army officers occasionally inspected the Jagirdari contingents..

**Reforms in the Revenue Department :** Sultan Ala-ud-din took special interest in the land revenue department and introduced reforms. These reforms strengthened the government. Sultan planned the measurement of land so that the revenue could be realised accordingly. Many new officials were appointed in this department. The salaries of patwaris etc, were increased so that they did not indulge in corruption. The condition of the peasantry worsened. The reason was that half the produce of the lands was taken away by the government as the state share and out of the remaining a grain of the peasant the surplus was purchased by the government at cheaper rates. The peasantry was dissatisfied with the stern measure of the government and that adversely affected the Khalji rule. Barani writing about the revenue department says, "the officials of the revenue department had very bad reputation and nobody was prepared to marry his daughter

to an official of this department, because most of his time was spent, in the prison where he was subjected to various types of tortures.”

### **Ala-ud-din Khilji's Reforms**

Some historians believe that the object of economic reforms was to make people comfortable and prosperous. But according to Dr. A.P. Saran and Dr.K.S. Lal : Ala-ud-din wanted to maintain a large standing army without further straining the resources of the state because he considered the maintenance of a large army necessary to resolve the political problems. The reforms were introduced four stages. There were (1) Fixation of prices (2) procurement (3) supply and (4) distributions. At every stage administrative control was exercised.

**Rate of Commodities :** The Sultan fixed the prices of all the food stuffs and price list of all the commodities were prepared and displayed in the shops. From the lists of prices given in the contemporary writings, we get the following information regarding the rate of the various things.

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Price</b>
Wheat	One Maund	7 Jitals
Barley	"	4 Jitals
Rice	"	5 Jitals
Mash	"	5 Jitals
Sugar	One seer	1-1/2 Jitals
Butter	2-1/2 seer	1 Jital

Besides these commodities, the prices of vegetables, shoes, utensils, slaves etc, were fixed. The price of maid servant ranged between 5 Tankas and 10 Tankas and slave boys could be Purchased for 10 to 15 Tankas.

**Arrangement for procuring the commodities :** Sultan made arrangements for procuring the things and transporting the same to Delhi. He made big stores in the capital for storing the grains and Multani traders and banjaras were settled in the villages near Delhi. These people worked under the instructions of Malik Yakub who was the officer incharge of grain market. They were responsible for bringing the grain to Delhi. The banjaras and traders of Delhi purchased grain at fixed prices from the peasants living around Delhi.

**Market Control :** There were separate markets for different commodities. The cloth market was in Adi Sarai Bhawan inside the Badauon gate. The officer in charge of every market was Shahnai Mandi. The incharge of grain market was Malik Qabool who gave information to the Sultan regarding the rates to the commodities. He also tried to prevent black-marketing, Besides Shahnai Mandi there were other officials working in the grain market. Barid Mandi was an official of the market. He supplied information to the Sultan regarding the functioning of the markets. The supervisor of all the markets was called Diwan-iRiyasat. He appointed Shahnai Mandi. This high office was held by Malik Yakub.

**Ration System :** For better utilization of resources, Ala-ud-din introduced the system of Rationing. Whenever there was shortage of grains due to famine, the grains were given from the government stores and issued the same to the residents at the rate of 6 to 7 seers of wheat per family per day. During the period of rationing officials worked very efficiently so that there was no hardship of obtaining rations.

**Severe Punishments :** The strict rules of the Sultan were strictly enforced. The shopkeepers found guilty of weighing less or measuring less were severely punished. If a shopkeeper charged more was flogged. Yakub was very notorious for flogging.

**Causes of Success of his Reforms :** The system became successful because it had been properly planned. The Sultan not only fixed the price of commodities but also arranged their procurement. To meet emergencies, the Sultan maintained stocks of wheat.

The officials also played their role in making the reforms a success. Because of the fear of Sultan, the officials performed their duties efficiently. Strict vigilance was observed in respect of the working of the markets and the bazars. The Sultan also took keen interest in the functioning of the market. Sometimes he would send his servants to purchase certain commodities and dishonest shopkeepers were severely dealt with. The severe punishment awarded to the guilty helped in the success of these reforms.

**The merit and demerits of these reforms :** As a result of these reforms, Sultan was able to maintain a large army without incurring more expenditure. With this strong army he repulsed the Mongols and maintained law and order in the country, He conquered many areas. As a result of his reforms, farmers, artisans, traders and other manufacturer had to sell their products at cheaper rates. They suffered financially and hence lost interest in cultivation. Because of these reforms the rates of commodities were much lower in Delhi as compared to the rates prevailing outside Delhi. The condition of the peasantry was very bad. They got only a small portion of their produce. Under these circumstances they could not be happy. Ala-ud-din's government came into disrepute because of severe punishment awarded to the offenders. People considered government even more dangerous than the plague. With Ala-ud-din's death, the market control and related regulations also came to an end and people felt a sigh of relief.

**An Estimate of Ala-ud-din :** Ala-ud-din was one of the greatest of the medieval rulers of India. He conquered a large empire, opened Deccan to the Turkish armies and successfully guarded frontiers of the Sultanate from the Mongol pressure. He set up a strong monarchy and took effective measures to eliminate the power and influence of the Ulemas and the Nobility. An efficient system of administration both civil and military bore distinctive testimony of Ala-ud-din's ability. His economic reforms were a novel experiment in those times. His court

was a centre of learning and literary men of the stature of Amir Hassan and Amir Khusrau enjoyed his patronage, The Sultan was fond of architecture and constructor of some major buildings such as Alahi Darwaza of Delhi and the Palace of thousand pillars was undertaken by Ala-ud-din.

However, the strength and system of the Sultan was based on force. There was a consistent undercurrent of severity and ruthlessness in all his measures and policies. In fact Ala-ud-din sought to crush the power of both Hindus and Muslims to be able to establish a strong Sultanate. Force helped the Sultan to raise and sustain a system but it ultimately proved disastrous and resulted in the collapse of the Khilji.

#### **Causes of the Weakness of the Khilji Rule**

Khilji rule was based on a policy of blood and iron Ala-ud-din had faith in severe and stern measure. He wiped out his uncle and his family. He had taken the crown with the help of his sword and he kept his possession with the help of force. His was a centralised government. He had concentrated all powers of the state in his own hands.

Ala-ud-din adopted a very harsh attitude towards the Hindus as a result of which they lost faith in the government. Many privileges were taken away from the Hindus. His treatment of the Muslim nobles was also not that of honour and respect. Their social and economic life was subject to many restrictions.

The rules of the markets and bazars were not in accordance with the requirements of the people. People began to dislike the Sultan. Ala-ud-din was openly showing weakness for Malik Kafur and always favoured him. This antagonized the nobles.

The Delhi Sultanate suffered much because of the series of rebellions. Lawlessness increased on all sides. The decline of the Khijis had started during the period of Ala-ud-din and shortly after his death, the weakness and political instability of the centre paved the way for emergency of another dynastic change.

#### **BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING**

- |    |                   |   |   |
|----|-------------------|---|---|
| 1. | K.S Lal           | : | History of the Khaljis                                  |
| 2. | Elliot and Dowson | : | History of India as Told by its own Historians, Vol.III |
| 3. | Ishwari Parshad   | : | Medieval India, Cambridge History of India, Vol.III     |
| 4. | Singh, Meera      | : | Medieval History of India                               |

#### **QUESTIONS**

1. Describe the process of expansion of the Sultanate under Ala-ud-din.
2. Discuss the Economic and Administrative reforms of Sultan Ala-ud-din.

#### **SHORT NOTES**

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Difficulties of Ala-ud-din. | 4. Market Reforms.              |
| 2. Conquest of North India.    | 5. The Weakness of Khilji Rule. |
| 3. Ala-ud-din and Deccan.      |                                 |

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**LESSON NO. 1.5**

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**MUHAMMAD TUGHLAQ AND HIS EXPERIMENTS**

Ghias-ud-din Tughlaq, warden of the marches in the north led the revolt against the last Khilji Sultan and in 1320 he became the Sultan at Delhi and founded the Tughlaq dynasty. After Ghiasuddin Tughlaq's death, his son Juna Khan ascended the throne under the name of Muhammad Tughlaq. Muhammad Tughlaq is controversial figure in history. He was a scholar and a capable man. He had attained high proficiency in Mathematics, astrology, history, geography and medical science, he was a man of high ideals and wanted to be the saviour of his subjects. He did not suffer from religious fanaticism. Besides his good qualities he had also some negative traits in his character. He was very proud of his ability. He lacked farsightedness. He was fond of making new experiments but he did not take full interest in details which could carry them to logical conclusions. He lacked a practical perspective to be able to implement ideas and projects. Some writers consider him to be an intelligent and gifted ruler and some other consider him a mad man and a blood-thirsty Sultan. But it is not correct to call him mad. Of course, he was a combination of strange elements and attributes. Was Muhammad an idealist or a visionary or A blood-thirsty tyrant or an enlightened ruler whose intellect was far ahead of his times? His critics have criticized his politics and explained these to be the whims of a mad man. On the other hand he has been praised for his superior intellect and scholarship. His politics have been appreciated and their failure attributed to a combination of circumstances beyond the control of Sultan.

**Experiments of Muhammad Tughlaq**

The successive experiments of Muhammad were a projection of his creative and original personality. He could conceive of new ideas and novel plans and he tried to put these into practice.

**Transfer of Capital (1327-29) :-**

In 1327 A.D. he decided to shift his capital from Delhi to Devagiri. As a result of this decision there was a wave of anger against the Sultan. In the early years of his reign there were rebellions in the Deccan. So he decided that capital should be shifted from the North to a more central location in the Deccan, for better and efficient administration of the country. Devagiri was more or less a central place of his empire. Secondly, the capital in Delhi was vulnerable to Mongol invasions. The Sultan wanted to move the capital to a safer place. Dr. P. Saran does not agree with the second point. In fact it seems the Sultan wanted to tighten up his administration of the Deccan. For the fulfilment of this object, he wanted to settle experienced and veteran Muslims

in the Deccan.

**From Delhi to Devagiri :** Under orders of Sultan, government offices were constructed in Devagiri and for the convenience of officials wide bazars and beautiful buildings were built. The Sultan made arrangements for the transfer of the official and their boarding and loding during their journey to the Deccan. Devagiri was named as Daulatabad. The government officials along with their belongings reached Daulatabad. With the transfer of the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad, Delhi presented the appearance of a deserted place and people felt very angry with the sultan. According to Ibn Batuta the people of Delhi wrote many disparaging letters to the Sultan and threw them within the preciencts of the place. The sultan get enraged by the contents of their letters. He ordered the entire population of Delhi to move to Daulatabad in 1329. According to Barani the royal orders were strictly complied with. From Delhi to Daulatabad it was a long and tiresome journey of 800 miles. The Sultan made arrangements to provide maximum facilities to the people in the course of their journey. Due to hard ship and ritours of journey many people died on the way. People were not at all happy with this change rather they took it as punishment and going into exile.

**Return to Daulatabad :** Soon after reaching Daultabad, the Sultan realised that administration in northern India was going out of gear. The Subedar of Multan revolted and there was fear of lawlessness in the province of the Punjab also. The Mongols started their incursions into the country. Sultan felt the necessity of getting to Delhi again. Therefore, he directed the people of Daultabad to return to Delhi. People suffered great hardship on the way and experiment of the Sultan proved to be an utter failure.

**Criticism :** With the transfer of the capital there was a great loss of men and money. Sultan's prestige also suffered a set back. Many people condemned the ruler for the experiment as the people had to ear untold hardships. In fact the Sultan had made this experiment to strengthen the administration of that region. He tried his utmost to relieve the people of the hardship of the journey. But later when he knew that the transfer of the capital was not in the interest of the government, he accepted to again move to Delhi. Had he ordered only the government officials to move to the new capital, his experiment would not have resulted in such a widespread hardship and misery.

#### **Increase of land tax in the Doab (1330 A.D.)**

Muhammad Tughlaq increased the land tax in the fertile area of Doab in 1330. According to Barani the rate of land tax was increased by 10 to 23 times but according to some recent scholars the land tax was only doubled. Some people believe that the Sultan wanted to punish the people of Doab by raising

their land tax and he wanted to fill the royal treasure at the cost of people of Doab.

Unfortunately, in the year of the increase of land tax, due to the failure of rains there was famine in the Doab. The severity of the revenue collector, further worsened the condition of the people. Many peasant's felt their land and ran into the jungles and that resulted in great harm to cultivation. The run away peasants were severely punished. The fertile area of Doab became desolate and there was lawlessness in the country.

**Criticism :** Some historians think that there was nothing wrong about Sultan's decision of increasing the land tax in Doab as that area was rich and fertile. It was not a new plan. Ala-ud-din Khilji had also increased the land tax. The object behind the increase was to supplement resources to raise the military strength of the Sultanate and to make the administration more efficient with the proposed additional income. The cause of people's hardships was not the increase of land tax but it was failure of rains. Although the above opinions expressed by writers are correct to a large extent still Muhammad Tughlaq is not above blame. In case there were no rain the Sultan should have withdrawn the order to the tax increase and he should have been strict with the tax collectors.

#### **Token Currency (1330)**

In 1333 the Sultan planned to mint copper coins in place of gold coins. Barani writes that with the change of capital and due to famine in the Doab, the royal treasury had suffered a great financial loss. Trade had also suffered immensely. To make up the deficit in the treasury and to promote trade the Sultan introduced copper coins. The modern writers believe that there was no paucity of funds in the State treasury. In fact, he wanted to spend this amount to give better administration to the people and to conquer more territories. The Sultan was familiar with the histories of the China and Persia where token currencies had been experimented with success.

According to his plan the Sultan introduced copper and passed them for gold coins. He did not care to restrict the mining of coins strictly under state control. The people started minting copper coins in their houses and put them into circulation, keeping back the gold coins in their houses. The people paid their taxes in the token currency which resulted in the depleting of the royal treasury. The foreign traders refused to accept token currency, thus adversely affecting trade. The Sultan withdrew the token currency from circulations and issued in their place gold coins. Thus almost the entire stock of good in the treasury went into the pockets of the people and the government was left with heaps of copper coins which could be seen in even a century later.

**Criticism :** Although Muhammad Tughlaq's plan about token currency failed yet he is called the 'Prince of Moneyers'. He made some improvements in the mints. Undoubtedly, he also opened new mints. The sultan's experiment in token currency was based on solid grounds but he showed utter indifference in working out for the details for its implementation. Before introducing token currency the Sultan should have taken special care, that forgery was not resorted to by people in minting coins.

#### **Plans to conquer other countries**

**Invasion of Khurasan :** It was in the blood of the sultan that he was always thinking of new experiments. In 1337, he came to know that because of the mutual rivalries between the Sultan and his Prime Minister there was instability and confusion in Khurasan. Both the Chughtai Sardar, Taram Shirin of Central Asia and the ruler of Egypt decided to collectively go against Khurasan. Muhammad Tughlaq also joined them and he prepared a large army of 3,70,000 soldiers. They were continued to be paid from the state treasury for full one year and they were not put to any use. In the meantime the ruler of Egypt came to be on friendly terms with the ruler of Khurasan. Taram Shirin got discouraged and returned as his own territory had been attached by the ruler of China. This plan of the Sultan proved abortive and drained the state resources considerably.

**Criticism :** Some historians believe that in view of the situation in Khurasan Muhammad Tughlaq's plan was not fantastic and unusual even if he carried out this plan successfully he could not gain any thing from this enterprise and he could not have retained his possession over such a distant place. So it was not wise on his part to have made such a plan.

**Expedition of Quarachal :** Though the Sultan had given up the plan of conquering Khurasan but he harboured designs for the conquest of Quarachal as its ruler had conquered some forts of Delhi Sultanate. Some people believe that by conquering that area Sultan wanted to protect his forces plundered the area and with the coming of rainy season epidemic spread by the people and forces of Quarachal. It is said that out of an army of one lakh soldiers only three persons escaped death and reached Delhi and Sultan's military force was immensely impaired and he could never make up the loss during the remaining period of his rule.

#### **Muhammad Tughlaq's religious Policy :-**

The contemporary writer Barani has branded the Sultan as a Kafir. The charge of Barani is incorrect. Muhammad Tughlaq was a man of liberal views and had full faith in God, in Muhammad the holy prophet. Like Balban, Muhammad Tughlaq also considered himself to be the shadow of God on this earth. Ferishta has admired him for being a religious minded man. The Sultan

was not in favour of recognising the superiority of the religious class (Ulemas) in politics and Administration. He also did not like to follow them blindly. In judicial administration he did away with the control of the religious class. He gave high offices to many people who were not even fully acquainted with the tenets of Islam. Muslim criminals were punished like non-Muslims. The equality between Hindus and Muslims which he observed, lowered him in the estimation of the orthodox section of Muslims.

Muhammad Tughlaq did not follow an intolerant rigid policy toward non-Muslims. He gave important posts to Hindus also. Janaprabhu Suri, a prominent Jain Scholar was given liberal patronage at his court.

In the early period of his rule, Muhammad Tughlaq did not pay due regards to the authority of the Khalifa, but he soon realised that by ignoring the Khalifa he could not be popular among the Muslim. Therefore, there was a change in his policy. The Sultan got the name of the Khalifa inserted in the coins in place of his own name. In 1340 the representative of the Khalifa was invited to Delhi and was highly honoured.

#### **The Military Successes of the Sultan and Suppression of the Rebellions :-**

Muhammad Tughlaq was an able general. There were many rebellions during his regime which he suppressed effectively. But he could not successfully deal with the rebellions in the later days of his regime.

##### **Bhauddin Gursup's Rebellion (1326-27) :-**

In the early days of Sultan's rule, his nephew Bhauddin Gursup revolted in the Deccan. The imperial forces defeated Gursup near Devagiri. Gursup took asylum in the neighbouring state of Kampili. The Sultan attacked Kampili. He had to face strong resistance from his opponents. It is said that the Hindu ruler defeated the Sultan twice but he died fighting in the battle field and his rani performed the johar ceremony and burnt herself.

##### **The End of the Sardar of Kodhal (1328) :-**

Shortly after the transfer of the capital the Sardar of Kodhal revolted and fought against the royal force for eight months and then surrendered.

**Rebellion of Bengal :** The Sultan had partitioned Bengal in three parts and in each province a separate Subedar was appointed. Subedars, Ghis-suddin revolted against the authority of the Sultan. The rebel was captured and the rebel skinned alive.

**Rebellion of Kishlu Khan :** Kishlu's original name was Beharam Atba. He was a close friend of Ghiasuddin Tughlaq. He was the Subedar of Multan, Uch and Sind. He had refused to shift his family from Delhi to Devagiri and revolted. Sultan attacked Kishlu Khan immediately and put him to death. His head was chopped off and it was hung at the city gate.

**Rebellion of Malabar :** In 1335, Ahsan Shah, the Kotwal of Malabar declared himself independent of the Sultan's authority. The Sultan dispatched army against him which was not successful. Sultan personally led an army against the Kotwal. Unfortunately cholera broke out in the ranks of Sultan's army and also there was a revolt at Lahore. The Sultan had to beat a retreat immediately. Malabar became independent.

**Rebellion in Oudh (1340) :** Aid-ul-Mulk, the Subedar of Oudh was a prominent officer of the Sultan. He was transferred from Oudh to Daulatabad. He revolted against the Sultan. His rebellion was suppressed and the supporters of the rebel were severely punished. But because of his earlier services Aid-ul-Mulk was pardoned and he was made the incharge of the royal gardens.

**Rebellion in the Deccan :** The ever increasing revolts in the kingdom gave the Hindu Rajas of the Deccan an opportunity to regain their lost independence. Therefore, Krishan, Nayar, Balal III and HariHar consolidated their military strength and started fighting against the Muslims. Hari Har founded Vijaynagar in Deccan. The kingdom of Vijaynagar founded in 1336 became the dominant power in the South for the next two centuries. The Muslim Subedar of Devagiri harassed the people and inflicted cruelties on them. This resulted in a rebellion against the Muslims. The Sultan could not suppress the rebellions. In the years of Muhammad Tughlaq's reign there were rebellions on all sides.

**The Rebellion of Gujrat (1351) :** When the Sultan was busy in suppressing the rebellion in the Deccan there was terrible rebellion in Gujrat, the leaders of these rebellions was Tagi who enjoyed the support of both the Hindus and Muslims. Tagi could not resist the imperial forces and run away towards Sind. The Sultan hotly pursued the rebel but because of fever the Sultan died in March 1351.

**Mongol and Rajput Policy of Sultan :-**

Although the Sultan acquainted himself effectively in the dealing with the rebellions that took place within the Sultanate but he could not deal with the Mongols and the Rajputs satisfactorily.

**Mongol Invasion (1327) :** In 1327, the Mongols attacked under the leadership of Taram Shirin. Plundering Lamgan, Multan and other areas, the Mongols reached Delhi. According to Ferishta Muhammad Tughlaq bargained for peace from Mongols for a very heavy amount.

**Fighting against Mewar**

Muhammad Tughlaq attacked Mewar's Raja Hamir but suffered a defeat at his hands. Some people believe that the Sultan did not interfere in the

affairs of Rajputana as its ruler was very powerful.

### **Relations with China**

The ruler of china sent his envoy in 1341 to Muhammad Tughlaq and sought permission for the repair of the Buddhists temple in India. The Sultan conveyed to the envoy that if the Buddhists were paying Jazia to the state, they could repair their temples. Sultan sent Ibn Batuta as his envoy to china in 1342.

### **Causes of Muhammad Tughlaq's Failure**

The causes of Muhammad Tughlaq's failure can be attributed to the flaws in his character. However, in the prevailing circumstances, the prejudices of the people and their initial resistances to new ideas also undermined his plans.

**Sultan's Character :** The Sultan's character was a mixture of opposites. He lacked balance and composure which are essential qualities in a good administrator. Therefore, the people could not have faith in him. His contemporaries could not understand him. The Sultan could not win the sympathy of the people even with his honest intentions and good works. Thus his failure was no surprise to any body.

**Sultan's unsuccessful Plans :** Although the Sultan had initiated plans and launched a series of experiments for the well-being of his subject but he could not carry those plans to a successful conclusion as a result of which the government suffered tremendous financial losses and loss in political prestige.

**The severe punishment awarded by the Sultan :** The Sultan lacked balance and sometimes the Sultan was a very kind hearted man and at times behaved like a brute. Sometimes he awarded severe punishment for a very ordinary crimes. This created a sense of hatred and insecurity in the minds of the people towards the Sultan.

**Generosity of the Sultan :** Immediately after his accession to the throne the Sultan distributed a lot of wealth among the poor. He spent much money on lavish parties and giving gifts to his subjects. Every year he distributed clothes amongst the poor worth lakhs of rupees. Thousands of people were used to take their meal from the royal kitchen daily. Thus there wasteful expenses adversely affected the resources of the state.

**Religious Policy of the Sultan :** Muhammad Tughlaq was not a staunch orthodox Musalman. He was a ruler with liberal views. He did not allow the priestly class to interfere in the administration of the state, as a result of which he could not become popular amongst the Muslim religious class and the orthodox section of the population.

**Want of competent advisers :** Unfortunately, Muhammad Tughlaq could not have sympathetic and competent advisers who could give him right and

expert advice in respect of his plan or who could help him in the implementation of his experiments. The circumstances under which he worked as a ruler were not favourable to him.

**Sultan's Deccan Policy :** Muhammad Tughlaq failed to grasp the fact that it was not possible to rule Deccan efficiently from Delhi. He placed the parts of Deccan under his direct control and considerably increased the administrative responsibility of the Sultanate in the region. He appointed Muslim officers there as a result of which there were many revolts which the Sultan could not suppress.

**Provincial Revolts :** Many Governors of the provinces proved to be disloyal to the Sultan. Among those who revolted in Lahore, Multan, Mewar, Gujrat and Oudh were mostly Muslim officers. Although the Sultan had suppressed those revolts but they had adversely affected the stability of the State. Due to chaotic conditions in country the Sultan's personal position as the Sultan and stability of the Sultanate received a serious setback.

**Estimate :** The Sultan died of fever in 1357 in Sind where he had gone to put down a revolt. Lane-poole has summed up the long reign of Muhammad Tughlaq as "a tragedy of high intentions self-defeated". Gifted with very distinctive qualities. Muhammad Tughlaq could not provide effective leadership. His successive experiments were a great political and financial loss for his government.

### BOOK FOR FURTHER STUDY

Meera Singh : Medieval History of India, passim.

### Suggested Questions :-

- Q.1 Mention in the Detail the reforms and polity of Muhammad Bin Tughlaq's ?
- Q.2 Explain the Currency Change and their impact.

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**LESSON NO. 1.6**

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**FEROZ TUGHLAQ AND HIS REFORMS****His Early Career :**

Feroz Tughlaq was the son of Muhammad Tughlaq's uncle Rajab. His mother was the daughter of Ram Mal who was a Bhatti ruler of Abohar, Despite the fact that Feroz was the son of a Hindu mother, he had strong feelings against the Hindus. Muhammad Tughlaq had great love for his cousin Feroz. He gave him a prominent position during his reign.

**Accession to the throne and his difficulties :**

In 1351 A.D. when Muhammad Tughlaq died in Thatta, there was a great disorder in the ranks of the army, the rebels of Sind and Mongols in the royal army plundered the royal camp and two days later the Muslim nobles offered Feroz Tughlaq the throne of Delhi. First he refused to accept, but later on the insistence of his nobles he accepted to be the successor of Muhammad Tughlaq. Barani, his contemporary writers that a decision regarding his successor had been taken by Muhammad Tughlaq himself before his death. Muhammad Tughlaq had no son to succeed him. Muhammad Tughlaq's sister and his minister Khawaja Jahan challenged Feroz Tughlaq's claim to the throne.

The situation was not favourable at the time of Feroz's accession to the throne. There had been rebellion at many places in the Sultanate because of a series of unsuccessful plans and the personal attitudes and policies of Muhammad Tughlaq generated a lot of opposition. Deccan, Gujarat, Sind Bengal etc. had become independent of Delhi and there was confusion and laxity in the civil military administration of the country. Under these circumstances it was one of the important duties of Feroz Shah to consolidate the administration and restore normalcy after the turbulent experiments of his predecessor. It was also very essential for Feroz Tughlaq to bring under his control the areas that had declared themselves independent of the Delhi Sultanate.

**Foreign Policy of Feroz Tughlaq :**

Feroz's foreign policy was not very exciting. Temperamentally he was essentially a man of peace and at best a mediocre soldier. Nevertheless he tried to recover some regions lost to the Delhi by his predecessor. Immediately after his accession to the throne Feroz Shah, tried to recover the territories but he did not meet with any appreciable success.

**Campaign against Bengal (1352—1360) :** This Sultan led an expedition against Haji as styled Alias Shah, the ruler of Bengal in 1353. Alias Shah had of late snapped his relations with Delhi of which Bengal was a part. Hajji Ilyas or Alias took asylum in the Fort of Iqdala and offered resistance to the Sultan of Delhi. Feroz returned to Delhi without achieving any success and as a result of the conclusion of peace between the two, Feroz accepted Alias as the independent ruler of Bengal.

In 1357 after the death of Hajji Alias his son Sikander became the ruler of the Bengal. He was cruel and tyrannical. Hearing about the oppression and cruelties of Sikander. Feroz again attacked Bengal. Sikandar entrenched himself in the fort of Iqdala and offered resistance to Feroz, Feroz could not conquer the fort. Various causes have been attributed to Feroz Shah's failure in Bengal. Some writer advocate that Feroz Shah's military inability was the main cause of his failure against Sikander. But a contemporary writer Afif believes that Feroz Tughlaq gave up the ideas of conquering Bengal thinking that in the event of sever clash between the rival forces thousands of Muslim women in Bengal would suffer dishonour at the hands of invaders. Whatever be the reason Feroz could not establish his authority over Bengal and this is a glaring evidence of his inability to conquer and assert.

**Invasion of Jajnagar (Orissa) 1360 A.D. :** On his return from Bengal Feroz decided to conquer Jajnagar. The Brahman ruler of Jajnagar fled from his capital. The Sultan plundered the town and ruined the famous temple of Jagannath at Puri. Late through a treaty the Hindu ruler at Orissa accepted to offer some elephants to the Sultan. In 1361 Feroz returned to his capital after his two and half year's absence from Delhi. On his way the Sultan placed Chhota Nagpur under his control.

**Invasion of Nagarkota 1362 A.D. :** Feroz Tughlaq was a fanatic ruler. He made a plan to attack the temple of Nagarkota (Kangra). Besides his religious frenzy he hoped to got a lot of wealth also. Feroz had attacked the temple in A.D. 1361 nearly after six months siege of the place Nagarkota surrendered. The Sultan was much impressed by the bravery of the Raja of Nagarkota. Feroz handed over the possession of Nagarkota to its ruler again. The Sultan got 300 Sanskrit books from Kangra as a result to this siege. It was during this invasion that the famous temple of Jawalamukhi was pulled down. Many more temples in the Shiwalik region were pulled down.

**Invasion of Sind (1371-72 A.D.) :** Muhammad Tughlaq could not suppress the rebellion of Sind. Feroz wanted to accomplish this task which could not be completed by Muhammad Tughlaq. In 1372 Feroz started for

Thatta at the head of 90,000 horsemen, 500 elephants etc. Jam, the ruler of Sind made full preparations to face the forces of Delhi. The imperial forces attacked Thatta. But because of the spread of an epidemic in the forces of the Sultan and famine in the area, Feroz could not advance further. It is said that the epidemic killed three fourth of the Sultan's army. In order to bring more forces Sultan wanted to go to Gujrat but he was betrayed into a wrong route that caused a great hardship to Sultan and his forces. To his good luck his able minister Khan-i-Jahan Kakbnul sent reinforcement and Sultan was able to conquer Sind in 1372 A.D. Jam, the ruler of Sind accepted to pay seven lakhs tankas to the Sultan every years.

**Feroz's administration and his administrative reforms :**

Firoz did not like war. He was a peace-loving Sultan. He devoted almost the whole of his reign in improving the administration. He wanted to make up the losses of the people that they had suffered on account of the plants and wild experiments of Muhammad Tughlaq. He kept the welfare and well-being of the people upper most in his mind. But because of his narrow religious out look Feroz was rigid in his attitude to non-Muslims. The reforms during his period may be discussed as under :

**Reforms in Revenue Department :** Revenue administration was not a good shape at the time of Feroz Khan's accession to the throne. The condition of the peasantry had become pitiable because of the over the exactions of the government officials and famine in the reign of his predecessor. He introduced the many reforms with the help of the able officer Khwaja Hasmuddin.

Firstly, the government remitted the loan that the people had taken from them on account of famine. Secondly the land was surveyed and the rate of the land revenue was reduced. It became easy for the peasants to pay the revenue to the state. Thirdly, with the facility of irrigation more land was brought under cultivation. This resulted in the increased production from the land. Fourthly the salaries of government employees in the revenue department were raised so that they did not demand or accept bribes from the peasants. Fifthly, the land that was irrigated by canals was charged at the rate of one-tenth of the produce in addition to the normal land revenue. Thus the Sultan had, no doubt, introduced many a useful reforms in the department of land revenue. But in one case he introduced a very harmful practice and that was the revival of the Jagirdari system which had almost been wiped out during Alauddin Khalji's reign. By reviving the Jagirdari system again, the government suffered a big financial loss. Still, as a result of the reform the general condition of the villages and the peasants became

better, and cultivation received much impetus. According to a contemporary writer Afif, the peasantry became so well off that they were able to have gold and silver in their possession and there was no paucity and shortage of food stuffs in their houses.

**Irrigation Facilities :** For the irrigation of land the Sultan got five canals and two well dug. According to the historian, Ferishta, Feroz got 30 tanks dug and 50 dams built. The longest canal was 150 miles long that was taken out from the river Jamna and its water irrigated areas as far as Hissar. The second canal was 96 miles long. It was taken out from Satluj and irrigated land upto Ghaghra. Third canal was excavated from the neighbourhood of the Sirmur hills and irrigated land upto Firozabad. Better crops as wheat and sugarcane were sown in the land irrigated by canals. Fruit bearing trees were also planted. According to K.M. Panikar, Feroz Shah's administration of land and cultivations is an admirable monument of his farsightedness. It is a big achievement of Feroz.

**Reforms in Revenue System :** Sultan Feroz did away with all the taxes excepting Kharaj Ushr, Tarkat. Khams, Jazia and Zakat which were legitimate taxes according to Islam. He abolished as many as 26 taxes which included grazing tax and house tax. He reduced land tax also. Taxes which were retained were; Kharaj a land tax realisable from the non-Muslims and it was 1/5 to 1/2 of the total produce of land. Ushar was 1/10 of the total produce of land and it was realised from the muslim, Zakat was property of the heirless which went to the state in the event of the death of a person. Khams was the 1/5 of the booty which was deposited in the state treasury and the remaining 1/5 was retained by the soldiers who plundered the booty. Jazia was a discriminatory tax payable only by the Non-Muslims. Zakat was the 2½ percent tax which was realised from the Muslims. The loss sustained by the treasury because of the abolition of various taxes was made up from other sources. For example, through water tax the government received an additional income of two lakh tankas annually. Similarly another two lakh tank were received by the government as an income from the gardens. According to the contemporary historians trade also flourished during Feroz Shah's reign and that brought more income to the state. The prices of the food stuffs fell down considerably.

**Judicial System :** In all matters Feroz sought guidance from his religion. The Chief Qazi of the state lived in the capital and junior qazis lived in provincial headquarters and the town. The Mufti explained the tenets of Islam and the Qazis gave verdicts in accordance with principles of Islam. Feroz wanted to dispense justice in accordance with the Quranic faith.

Therefore, he abolished all those punishment which were not provided in Islam. He abolished the mutilation of limbs. Historians are of the view that Feroz Khan's reforms in his judicial system could not do much good to the non-Muslim population as the punishments for them remained as harsh as ever.

**Reforms in Army Organisation :** Feroz Tughlaq dispensed with the practice of keeping a standing army. He organised his army on jagirdari system. He took some measure to remove the prevailing shortcomings in the army organisation. The horses of the soldiers began to be inspected but this did not have the desired effect. The official appointed to inspect the heroes gave favourable report after receiving bribes from horseman, it is said that once the Sultan gave a gold coin to one of the horseman to get good report about his horse after bribing the government official with that gold coin. Generally the horsemen were given the free pieces of land in lieu of their salaries or they were authorised to realise revenue of particular tract of land.

Through this practice of jagirdari system Feroz Tughlaq could collect a large number of horsemen when required but the Jagirdari system suffered from many shortcomings. So this system could not be very successful. The Sultan had kept even the old soldiers in his services. The army organisation had become very lax. A very serious defect in the Jagirdari system was that when a soldier grew very old his post was given over to his son or son-in-law or his slave. And thus the posts in the army had becomes hereditary. The Jagirdari contingents could not be relied upon as or those contingents were always in the hands of the Jagirdars. Thus the army administration of Sultan Feroz Tughlaq was weak, inefficient and corrupt.

**Works of Public Welfare :**

Feroz founded many towns during his reign, the most prominent of which were Ferozabad, Fatehbad, Hissar and Janunpur. He built 30 schools, 40 mosque, 20 palaces, 100 sarais, 100 baths. 150 bridges and 10 pillars. He laid out 1200 fruit gardens around Delhi which gave the government an annual income of two lakh tankas.

**Humanitarian Works :**

Sultan was a generous and a kind hearted man. He made special arrangements for the orphans, unemployed and poor people. For such humanitarian works many historians have lavishly praised Feroz Tughlaq.

Feroz set up a charity department in Delhi which was called Diwan-i-Khairat. This department looked after widows and orphans. Financial assistance was given to the poor parents for the marriage of their daughters. This assistance ranged from 50 to 20 tankas as according to the Financial

position of the guarantee. This department had a separate branch performing the functions of present day employment exchange. This department provided jobs to the needy. Feroz also opened a very big hospital in Delhi named as Darul-Shafa. This hospital was manned by very competent physicians. The poor patients were treated free of charges and even food was given to them free.

**Slave System :**

It is said that he had one lakh and eighty thousands slaves in his establishment. In his own places forty thousand slaves moved about. Feroz had a separate department for the slaves. This department found jobs for the slaves and looked after them. According to Dr. Ishwari Parshad there was a separate treasury for the slaves. They had a separate Diwan and a separate department. The slave living in the palaces, often indulged in intrigues and one of the causes of the decline of the Delhi Sultanate was the slave system. The Sultan had to earmark a heavy amount annually for the maintenance of slaves. The Sultan looked after the education and employment of the slaves. The maintenance of slaves was a great drain on the financial resources of the government.

**Development of Education and Learning :**

Feroz did a lot for the progress of education and learning. Feroz himself was a learned man. It is said that he opened many schools and colleges. A school was arranged with every mosque. The Sultan was very fond of the subject of history. Barani and Siraj had written their scholarly book on history during the reign of Feroz Tughlaq. He also got Sanskrit works translated into Persian. According to Afif Feroz gave away 16 lakhs tankas to the scholars and reciters of Quran as financial aid.

**Religious Policy of Feroz-Tughlaq :**

Feroz was born to a Rajput mother still he had deep seated religious intolerance towards the Hindus. He had a deep faith in Islam. According to Dr. Ishwari Parsad in Indian History apart from Sikander Lodhi and Aurangzeb, the administration was never so much influenced by the religious consideration as under Feroz Tughlaq. Feroz Shah's administration was undoubtedly dominated by considerations of religion. The Muslims were a privileged class and non-Muslims were harshly treated. Sultan considered himself to be the ruler of Muslims and he considered it to be his duty to look after the welfare of the Muslims in particular. Many historians regard him as an ideal Muslim Sultan.

All important offices were in the hands of the Muslims. The Muslim priestly class and special privileges in the government. Feroz showed great

reward to their view. With regard to the Hindus, the Sultan's policy was far more severe as other rulers. The earlier Muslim ruler had exempted the Brahmans from the payment of Jazia but Feroz imposed Jazia even on the Brahmans. It is said that once the Brahmans collectively approached the sultan and threatened immolation rather than payment of Jazia. As such the Brahman sought exemption. The Sultan showed utter disregard to the threats of the Brahmans, Some Brahmans observed hunger strike and some of them might have died out of starvation but Feroz Khan did not exempt the Brahmans from the payment of Jazia. According to the historian Farishta, Feroz destroyed the temple of Jawalamukhi. Feroz also did a lot of damage to the famous temple of Jagannath Puri. No key post was ever given to a Hindu under feroz. Hindus were harassed much and they were prevented from keeping horses for riding and forbidden to carry weapons on their persons. Hindus had been debarred from wearing good clothes or living a life of luxury. By Sultan's order many Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam Shias were also treated badly.

**An Estimate of his Reforms :** Some of his reforms eventually weakened the Sultanate and contributed to the decline and downfall of Delhi Sultanate. In this context we need to be particularly aware of the financial and economic implications. Administration of the slave system, the revival of the Jagirdari system and neglect of defence organization proved disastrous for the strength and fighting potential of the Sultanate of Delhi.

**Place of Feroz in History :**

The contemporary writers Barani and Afif have admired Feroz very much and presented him an ideal Sultan. In view of his extensive reforms, some people have gone to the extent of comparing him favourably with Akbar and Sher Shah Suri. This comparison is not correct, as neither Feroz possessed the liberal mindness of Akbar nor he had the administrative acumen of Sher Shah Suri. Undoubtedly, Feroz himself was an honest man and he tried to bring about prosperity to his subjects. The condition of the peasantry was much better during his reign than that it was under his predecessors. Trade also flourished and the rates of the commodities of daily use also decreased. Despite all these facts Feroz Tughlaq was not an ideal ruler, the main reason being his religious intolerance. He only looked after the well-being of his co-religionists. Although Feroz introduced many reforms, he cannot be called a farsighted administrator and wise statesman.

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### **SUGGESTED QUESTIONS**

1. Give an account of Feroz Tughlaq's administration.
2. Briefly describe the administrative and economic reforms of Feroz Tughlaq.

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**LESSON NO. 1.7**

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**THE RISE AND FALL OF VIJAYNAGAR KINGDOM AND  
ITS ADMINISTRATION**

During the rule of the Tughlaqs in Delhi, a strong Hindu centre of power was established in the Deccan. It was the kingdom of Vijayanagar. There are many theories prevalent regarding the foundations of the city and kingdom of Vijaynagar, on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra facing the fortress of Angundi on the northern bank. Two of these theories are more popular. According to the first, Sangam the founder of Vijaynagar had two sons, Hari Har and Bukka Rai who were in the employ of Partap Ruder Dev, the ruler of Warrangal. In 1323 when Warrangal was attacked by Mohammad Tughlaq's forces the two brothers escaped from there and sought employment with the ruler of Angundi. There are said to have completed the incomplete town of Angundi, that belonged to Vir Balala of Hoysala dynasty. There the city of Vijayanagar was founded by them in memory of their teacher, Vidya.

According to the second tradition, the two brothers Hari Har and Bukka Rai after leaving Warrangal joined service in Kampili. When Mohammad Tughlaq attacked Kampili, both the brothers were made prisoners and taken to Delhi and were forcibly converted to Islam. In due course of time they managed to escape from Delhi and reached the Deccan and became Hindus again and founded Vidyanagar or Vijaynagar in memory of their teachers Vidya Raya, on the bank of Tingaohantera. The establishment of this Hindu kingdom was the re-assertion of the old Hindu power in the region which had been destroyed by the Muslim invaders from Delhi. The history of the rise of this kingdom is as follows :

**Sangam Dynasty (1336-1485) :**

Hari Har and Bukka Rai and their successors belonged to this dynasty which ruled Vijaynagar for nearly 140 years.

**Hari Har and Bukka Rai (1336-1378)**

Hari Har the first ruler of this dynasty ascended the throne in A.D. 1336. In the beginning his kingdom was small in size and also not very secure. As a measure of defence he got a fort constructed in Vijaynagar and also a well was built around the ancient capital Bademi of the Chalukya dynasty. He appointed competent military officers to look after these places. He also laid the foundation of the famous fort of Udaigiri in the Nilore region. Hari Har announced his brother Bukka Rai to be his successor and gave him the charge

of an important fort. Hari did not adopt symbols of royalty.

He encouraged the peasants to clear the jungles for cultivation at a large scale. He made many changes in the local administrative system. As a result of all these measures the resources of kingdom increased considerably and there was marked improvement in the efficiency of the administration of the kingdom.

After Hari Har's death in 1343 his brother Bukka Rai ascended the throne. In order to consolidate his power he started war against the Bahamani sultan that continued for many years. According to Farishta, no doubt, both rulers had to come to terms but there is no denying the fact that Bukka Rai had an upper hand in the struggle. After dealing with the Bahamani Kingdom Bukka conquered Madura and expelled the Muslims from there. With this conquest almost the whole of Deccan came under the sway of Bukka Rai. Vijayanagar state became Vijayanagar empire. This great ruler died in 1378. According to Neel Kanth Shastri, Rai was a great ruler of his age who had the proud privilege of being the true founder of the Vijayanagar empire. He was a veteran soldier who achieved glorious victories over the Muslim invaders. In those days when the orthodoxy and fanaticism reigned supreme Bukka was a man with liberal views. He encouraged the spread of the teaching of the Vedas. In 1379 Bukka sent an ambassador to China. He died in A.D. 1378.

#### **Hari Har II (1379-1404) :**

After the death of his father Hari Har II became the next ruler in 1379. He assumed the imperial titles of Maharajadhiraja, Rajaparmesvara etc. Sewell states on the authority of some Muhammadan historians that Hari Har's II reign was a period of long peace. But it is proved by certain inscriptions that there were conflicts between the Vijaynagar kingdom and the Muslims during his reign. As a matter of fact, the history of the Vijayanagar like that of the Bahamni kingdom is an unbroken record of bloody wars with different powers. In the winter of 1398, Bukka II son of Hari Har conducted a raid northwards to the Bahamani territory with his father's permission. With a view to seizing the Raichur Doab, situated between the Krishana and the Tungabhadra rivers, which formed the bone of contention between the Vijaynagar Empire and Bahamni Kingdom. He was opposed and defeated by Feroz Shah Bhamani and peace was concluded in 1390. Feroz exacted a heavy indemnity. But as several inscriptions show, the reign of Hari Har II was the extension of Vijaynagar authority over the whole of southern India, including Mysore, Kanare Chingleput Trichonopoly and Canjeveeram. Hari Har II was a worshipper of Shiva. He was tolerant of other religions. He was

very popular ruler. He died in 1404.

**Dev Raya I (1406-22) :**

After the death of Hari Har II in 1404 there was a dispute for the throne among his sons. Bukka II seems to have been on the throne of a couple of years but ultimately Dev Raya I secured the throne for himself on 5th November, 1406. He reigned for sixteen years. He had to fight battle against the Bahamani rulers and also neighbouring Hindu ruler. In the struggle against his enemies he emerged victorious. He extended his empire. In his invasions of Vijayanagar, Feroz Tughlaq met with reverse but ultimately the Delhi Sultanate had to come to terms with Vijayanagar empire.

Dev Raya I was an efficient military organiser. He was the first ruler of his dynasty to realise that the cavalry was most useful branch of the army, so he purchased a large number of good horse from the Arab and Persian traders. He also recruited in his army turkish teachers. During his period the forces of Bahamani kingdom were given a crushing defeat. Like his father he was also the worshipper of Shiva and got many temples constructed. He had at his court very scholarly persons and artists who enjoyed his lavish patronage. During his period Vijaynagar became a great centre of learning. He died in 1422.

**Dev Raya II (1422-46) :**

After the death of Dev Raja I in 1422 his son Vijaya Bukka or Vira Vijaya reigned for only a few months, then Dev Raya II son of Vijaya Bukka ascended the throne. Though Dev Raya II's war with the Bahamanis ended in defeat his reign was marked by reorganisation of administration. To control and regulate trade he appointed his right hand man, Lakhana to the lordship of the southern sea, that is, to the charge of overseas commerce. Niccoli, an Italian traveler and Abdur Razzak an envoy from Persia, visited Vijayanagar in 1420 and 1443 respectively and they have left glowing descriptions of the city and the empire of Vijayanagar. In fact the Empire by this time extended over the whole of the South India, reaching the shores of Ceylon.

After the death of Dev Raja II his successors Malkrjun and Virpakash II proved to be incompetent ruler. Confusion and disorder followed, and some of the provinces revolted. To save the kindgom from disintegration, Nar Singh Sluva deposed his worthless master and seized the throne for himself in 1485.

**Nar Singh of Saluva Dynasty (1485-1490) :**

After overthrowing the Sangam dynasty Nar Singh of Saluva dynasty become the ruler of Vijayanagar Kingdom. He enjoyed the confidence of most of the people. With the interests of the empire at heart, he recovered most of the provinces which had been lost to the empire during his six year's rule.

Unfortunately many of his comrades refused to accept his authority. So from the very beginning he had to face the hostility of chiefs. Though he tried to strengthen his position during his five years rule, he was not very successful. He died in 1490. His successors proved very incompetent. Vir Nar Singh the commander of their forces usurped the throne of Vijayanagar. This second usurpation led to the rule of the Tuluva dynasty over the Vijayanagar kingdom.

**Vir Nar Singh (1503-1509) of Tuluva Dynasty :**

Vir Nar Singh, founder of the Tuluva dynasty, ruled the Vijayanagar Kingdom for five years. His period witnessed rebellions continuously because the people did not consider him the legitimate ruler. He met all opposition strongly. So he could not pay full attention to the affairs of the state. He introduced many reforms in the army administration. He concluded friendly relations with the Portuguese. He abolished some of the taxes also.

**Krishan Dev Raya (1509-1529) :**

Krishan Dev was the younger brother of Nar Singh. He was by far the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar and one of the most famous Kings in India in history. A gallant and active warrior he was always successful in the wars that he waged almost throughout the reign. In 1509 he gave a crushing defeat to the Behamani Sultan Muhmud Shah. Then he went against Gajpati, the ruler of Orissa as he had forcibly taken possession of two provinces of Vijayanagar kingdom. In 1518 peace was concluded between the two and according to the terms of the treaty Gajpati married his daughter to Krishan Dev who returned to Gajpati the areas conquered by him. Krishan Dev attacked Golconda and captured its commander. His last victory was against the ruler of Bijapur which was a Muslim state hostile of Vijayanagar.

Krishan Dev maintained friendly relations with Portugues. He purchased Arab and Persian horses from the Portugues traders. The Portuguese also gained a lot from Krishan Dev in the form of good prices for the horses sold to him. Many Portugues visited his Kingdom and stayed there for long. But he would not allow any Portugese to interfere in the administrative affairs of the state. In 1523 when the Portuguese tried to take possession of Goa he sent an army against them.

Krishan Dev toured different parts of his kingdom and personally listened to the complaints of the people and tried to redress them on the spot. He got dug many tanks and canals in his kingdom. He gave relief to his subjects by abolishing certain undesirable taxes. He also constructed many beautiful buildings and temples.

Krishan Dev was also a lover and patron of art and literature. He

liberally patronised men of letters and artists. He did a lot for the development of Sanskrit language and literature. Telugu language was also enriched during the period. He had eight prominent poets of Telugu language in his court. Krishan Dev died in 1529.

Krishan Dev's successors were incompetent people and gradually parts of the Vijayanagar began to be detached. In 1565 at a short distance of Talikota a severe battle was fought between the Hindu and Muslim rulers. Muslims came out victorious. In this battle the ruler of Vijayanagar and his famous minister Ram Raiya were killed. The glory of the Vijayanagar came to an end this kingdom was devastated by the Muslim invaders.

#### **Administration of Vijayanagar Kingdom :-**

Most of the rulers of Vijayanagar were competent administrators who looked after the state affairs efficiently. The administration may be discussed as under :

##### **Raja :**

He was the head of the state. He had in his hands all powers regarding civil and military affairs. There was no restraint on his authority. He consulted his ministers but final authority lay with him. He could promote or demote or dismiss any official at any time if he found him incapable of discharging his duties properly. The royal court was a thing of great splendour.

##### **Cabinet :**

The ruler had a few ministers also who looked after the various departments of the government. The ministers were appointed by the ruler himself. Some of the offices were hereditary. Besides the ministers, the governors, generals and some state officials were considered important in the government.

##### **Provincial Government :**

The entire territory of Vijayanagar was divided into many smaller units. The largest administrative units was the province which was placed under a governor or a Subedar. The subedar was a sort of petty raja. Some of the old ruler of their respective states which had become a part and parcel of Vijayanagar empire were allowed to continue in their states but required to pay annual tribute to the ruler of the empire.

##### **Revenue Administration :**

The state had many sources of income but the main was that of land revenue. The peasants could pay the state share in kind or cash. Able arrangement for measurement of cultivable land was made. The state share varied from  $1/6$  to  $1/2$ , according to the nature of the soil and its produce. There were other taxes also such as the grazing tax, horse tax, etc. Even the

potters, cobblers, washermen and barbers were not exempted from the payment of (profession) taxes.

**Judicial System :**

There were different types of courts functioning in the state. The Raja was the final court of appeal. The old Hindu law was the basis of the judicial system and operation in the empire. Punishment was severe. Thieves adulteration and traitors were trampled under the feet of the elephants.

**Army Administration :**

The army organization of the state was very efficient. It comprised cavalry, elephantry and infantry. Abdur Razzak who visited Vijayanagar writes that there were many military schools in the state. Even in the capital itself there were 90 thousands such people who knew the use of arms. There are many forts properly stocked with the war material. These were jagirdari contingents also stationed at different places in the state.

**Police and Espionage System :**

The foreign visitors were very much pleased with the police system of the state. Policemen were on duty through the night which prevented the occurrence of thefts. Through his espionage system, the Raja the activities of his officials and others.

**Economic Condition :**

Prosperity prevailed in the empire. Agriculture flourished in different parts of the Empire. The principal industries related to textile, mining etc. There were very big business shops in important towns. The kingdom had inland, coasting and overseas commerce according to Abdur Razzaq with Burma, China, Arabia, Persia South Africa, Abyssinia and Portugal. The principal articles of export were cloth, rice, iron, sugar and spices etc. The imports included horses, elephants, pearls, mercury, China silk and velvet. The coinage of the empire were of various types, both in gold and copper. The coins bore on them emblems of different gods and animals. People particularly upper classes had a high standard of living.

**Social Life :**

Woman in general occupied a high position in society and some of them took active part in the political, social and literary, life of their times. Some of them besides being trained in wrestling, handling towards, music and other fine arts received fair amount of literary education. The state seldom interfered in social affairs. The rite of Sati was very common in the state. There were no restrictions in matters of diet. Besides vegetables, people also ate meat. Oxen and cows were respected. Brahmins were against killing living things. Sometimes the ruler offered animal sacrifices.

**Art and Literature :**

This empire had to its credit brilliant literary and artistic achievements. The rulers were patrons of all languages-Sanskrit, Telegu, Tamil and Kannada. Krishan Dev Rai's period ushered "the dawn of a new era in the literary history of South India. Himself a scholar, a musician and poet, he loved to gather around him poets, philosophers and religious teachers whom he honoured with magnificent gifts of land and money."

There was remarkable development of art and architecture. As the ruins of the old capital highlights a distinct style of architecture, sculpture and painting by native artists. The famous Hazzra temple built during the reign of Krishan Dev Rai was remarkable.

The art of painting attained a high degree of excellence and the art of music rapidly developed.

**Causes of the Decline of the Vijayanagar Kingdom :**

Firstly the rulers of the empire were generally despotic and they had centralised the entire administrative authority into their own hands. Consequently the people remained indifferent even in the hour of the ruler's difficulties. Secondly, Krishan Dev Rai was followed by weak rulers on the throne of Vijayanagar. Owing to continual changes and political instability the empire suffered immensely and the court became a centre of intrigues. Fourthly, there was constant warfare with the neighbouring Bahamani Kingdom. Because of these bloody wars the empire suffered heavy losses in men and money. The rulers could not pay proper attention to their administration. Fifthly the society suffered from the disadvantages of the caste system. There was no unity among the Hindus as among the Muslims only Kashtriyas were held responsible for the fighting and protecting the borders of the Empire. Sixthly, the provincial governors enjoyed a good deal of independence which contributed to the weakening of the central authority and ultimately to the disintegration of the Empire. Seventhly, the empire failed to develop a sustained commercial activity in spite of various facilities. Eighthly, in consideration of temporary gains the rulers allowed the Portugese to settle on the west coast and thus principals of profit overrode the greater cause of the security and stability of their empire. And lastly, the battle of Talikota fought in 1565 gave a severe blow to the grandeur and strength of Vijayanagar Kingdom.

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the Empire

**SUGGESTED QUESTIONS**

- (1) Trace the origin of Vijayanagar Empire.
- (2) Explain the life and achievements of Hari Har the second (II).
- (3) Why and how did the Vijayanagar Empire decline and pass thorough downfall ?Explain.