



## UNIT

10

# Advent of Arabs and Turks

### Learning Objectives

- To learn the nature and outcome of the Arab Conquest of Sind and the military raids of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor
- To acquire knowledge about the nature of Delhi Sultanate under its various dynasties.
- To know the socio-economic conditions of the country under the Sultanate.
- To understand the impact of Islam in India with reference to syncretism in literature, art, music and architecture.



### Introduction

The period from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries (1206-1526 CE) saw the arrival of Islamic institutions and Islamic culture in India. Historians have interpreted the history of this period from differing perspectives. Conventionally the regimes of the Sultanate have been evaluated in terms of achievements and failures of individual Sultans. A few historians, critiquing this personality-oriented history, have evaluated the Sultanate as having contributed to material and cultural development, leading to the evolution of a composite culture in India. Historians focusing on history of class relations, have argued that the medieval state served as the agent of the ruling class and hence, the regimes of the Sultanate were diminutive in their institutional advancement when compared with the Great Mughals. Thus there is no consensus yet amongst scholars in determining the true nature of the Sultanate.

The two-fold objective of this lesson are: (a) to introduce the students to a conventional study of rulers, events, ideas, people and their conditions under the Sultanate, and (b) to structure the content

in such a way that the students examine it critically and raise new questions.

### Advent of Arabs: The Context

The geographical location of Arabia facilitated trade contact between India and Arabia. As sea-faring traders the pre-Islamic Arabs had maritime contacts with the western and eastern coasts of India. Arabs too settled in Malabar and the Coromandel Coast. The Arabs who married Malabar women and settled down on the West Coast were called Mappillais (sons-in-law). Arab military expedition in 712 and subsequent Ghaznavid and the Ghori military raids, intended to loot and use the resources seized to strengthen their power in Central Asia, created a relationship of the conqueror and the conquered. Following the invasion of Afghanistan by Khurasan (Eastern Iran) Shah and later by Chengiz Khan severed the ties of North India Sultanate with Afghanistan. Mongol invasions destroyed the Ghurid Sulatanate and Ghazni, and cut into the resources of Sultan Nasir-ud-din Qubacha (1206-1228), the ruler of Uchch and Multan. Thus the Sultan Iltutmish had the opportunity of expanding his influence in northern India that enabled Muslim rulers to

rule Indian provinces with Delhi as capital for about four centuries.

Though it is customary to describe this period as the Muslim period, the rulers of medieval India came from different regions and ethnicities: Arabs, Turks, Persians, and Central Asians were involved militarily and administratively. Iltutmish was an Ilbari Turk and many of his military slaves were of different Turkish and Mongol ancestries brought to Delhi by merchants from Bukhara, Samarkhand and Baghdad. There were some slaves of other ethnicities as well (notably Hindu Khan, captured from Mihir in Central India) but Iltutmish gave them all Turkish titles.

The Sultanate (1206–1526) itself was not homogenous. Its rulers belonged to five distinct categories: (a) Slave Dynasty (1206–1290) (b) Khalji Dynasty (1290–1320) (c) Tughlaq Dynasty (1320–1414) (d) Sayyid Dynasty (1414–1451) and (e) Lodi Dynasty (1451–1526).

### Sources for the Study of Delhi Sultanate

- Al-Beruni: *Tarikh-Al-Hind* (Indian Philosophy and Religion written in Arabic)
- Minhaj us Siraj: *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri* (1260) (World Islamic History written in Arabic)
- Ziauddin Barani: *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* (1357) History of Delhi Sultanate up to Firuz Tughlaq
- Amir Khusrau: *Mifta Ul Futuh* (Victories of Jalal-ud-din Khalji); *Khazain Ul Futuh* (Victories of Allauddin Khalji - Texts in Persian)
- *Tughlaq Nama* (History of Tughlaq dynasty in Persian)
- Shams-i-Siraj Afif: *Tarikh i Firuz Shahi* (after Barani's account of Delhi Sultanate in Persian)
- Ghulam Yahya Bin Ahmad: *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* (Written in Persian during the reign of Sayyid ruler Mubarak Shah)
- Ferishta: History of the Muslim Rule in India (Persian)

Persian chronicles speak about the Delhi Sultanate in hyperbolic terms. Their views dealing with the happenings during the period of a certain Sultan were uncritically appropriated into modern scholarship.—  
Sunil Kumar, *Emergence of Delhi Sultanate*

## 10.1 The Arab Conquest of Sind

The Arab governor of Iraq, Hajjaj Bin Yusuf, under the pretext of acting against the pirates, sent two military expeditions against Dahar, the ruler of Sind, one by land and the other by sea. Both were defeated and commanders killed. Hajjaj then sent, with the Caliph's permission, a full-fledged army, with 6000 strong cavalry and a large camel corps carrying all war requirements under the command of his son-in-law, a 17-year-old Muhammad Bin Qasim.

### Muhammad Bin Qasim

Muhammad Bin Qasim marched on the fortress of Brahmanabad where Dahar was stationed with a huge army. Dahar's wazir (Prime minister) betrayed him, which was followed by the desertion of a section of his forces. The predecessors of Dahar, the Brahmin rulers of Sind, had usurped power from the earlier Buddhist ruling dynasty of Sind and, with the patronage of Dahar Brahmins, had occupied all higher positions. This led to discontentment and therefore Dahar lacked popular support. In this context it was easy for Muhammad Qasim to capture Brahmanabad. Qasim thereupon ravaged and plundered Debal (Port) for three days. Qasim called on the people of Sind to surrender, promising full protection to their faith. He sent the customary one-fifth of the plunder to the Caliph and divided the rest among his soldiers.

The Arab conquest of Sind has been described as a "triumph without results" because it touched but a fringe of the country, which, after Qasim's expedition had a respite from invasions for about three centuries.



## Mahmud of Ghazni

In the meantime, the Arab empire in Central Asia had collapsed with several of its provinces declaring themselves independent. One of the major kingdoms that emerged out of the broken Arab empire was the Samanid kingdom which also splintered, leading to several independent states. In 963 Alaptigin, a Turkic slave who had served Samanids as their governor in Khurasan, seized the city of Ghazni in eastern Afghanistan and established an independent kingdom. Alaptigin died soon after. After the failure of three of his successors, the nobles enthroned Sabuktigin.

Sabuktigin initiated the process of southward expansion into the Indian sub-continent. He defeated the Shahi ruler of Afghanistan, Jayapala, and conferred the governorship of the province on Mahmud, his eldest son. When Sabuktigin died in 997, Mahmud was in Khurasan. Ismail, the younger son of Sabuktigin had been named his successor. But defeating Ismail in a battle, Mahmud, aged twenty-seven, ascended the throne and the Caliph acknowledged his accession by sending him a robe of investiture and by conferring on him the title Yamini-ud-Daulah ('Right-hand of the Empire').

To Arabs and Iranians, India was Hind and the Indians were 'Hindus'. But as Muslim communities arose in India, the name 'Hindu' came to apply to all Indians who were not Muslims.

## Mahmud's Military Raids

Mahmud ruled for thirty-two years. During this period, he conducted as many as seventeen military campaigns into India. He targeted Hindu temples that were depositories of vast treasures. Though the motive was to loot, there was also a military advantage in demolishing temples and smashing idols. The Ghaznavid soldiers viewed it also as a demonstration of the invincible power of their god. The religious passions of Mahmud's army expressed itself in slaughter of 'infidels'

and plunder and destruction of their places of worship. However, there is little evidence of any large scale conversion of people to their faith. Even those who became Muslims to save their lives and properties, returned to their original faith when the threat of Ghaznavid invasion ceased.

After defeating the Shahi king Anandapala, Mahmud went beyond Punjab, penetrating deep into the Indo-Gangetic plain. Before reaching Kanauj, Mahmud raided Mathura. In later historiography, of both the British and Indian nationalists, Mahmud is notorious for his invasion of the temple city of Somnath (1025) on the seashore in Gujarat. Many scholars argue that these plundering raids were more of political and economic character than of religious chauvinism. Desecration of temples, vandalising the images of deities were all part of asserting one's authority in medieval India. Mahmud's raids and his deeds fit this pattern, though their memories went into the creation of communal divide.

This apart, the plundering raids of Mahmud were meant to replenish the treasury to maintain his huge army. The Turks relied on a permanent, professional army. It was built around an elite corps of mounted archers who were all slaves, bought, trained, equipped, and paid in cash from the war booty taken alike from Hindu kingdoms in India and Muslim kingdoms in Iran.

Persian sources contain exaggerated claims about the wealth seized from these raids. For instance, it is claimed that Mahmud's plunder of the Iranian city of Ray, in 1029, brought him 500,000 dinars worth of jewels, 260,000 dinars in coins, and over 30,000 dinars worth of gold and silver vessels. Similarly, Mahmud's raid on Somnath (1025) is believed to have brought in twenty million dinars worth of spoils. Romila Thapar points out that those who had suffered from these predatory invasions seemed to maintain a curious silence about them, as Hindu and Jain sources available on Somnath expedition do not corroborate the



**Somnath Temple**

details or viewpoints found in Arab chronicles. Such plundering raids were economic and iconoclastic in nature, and communal character was attributed to them later. They represented the kinds of disasters that were inseparable from contemporary warfare and the usual plundering nature of rulers of the medieval period.

The history of the Ghaznavid dynasty after the death of Mahmud is a story of endless clashes over succession between brothers, cousins, and uncles. There were, however, exceptions like Sultan Ibrahim who ruled for over forty-two years and his son Masud who ruled for seventeen years. The ever-hanging threat from Ghurids from the north and the Seljuq Turks from the west proved to be disastrous for the kingdom. The later rulers of Ghaznavid dynasty could exercise their authority only in the Lahore region and even this lasted only for three decades. In 1186 Ghuri prince Muizz-ud-din Muhammad invaded Punjab and seized Lahore. The last ruler Khurav Shah was imprisoned and murdered in 1192. With his death the Ghaznavid house of Mahmud came to an end.

Al-Beruni, mathematician, philosopher, astronomer, and historian, came to India along with Mahmud of Ghazni. He learned Sanskrit, studied religious and philosophical texts before composing his work *Kitab Ul Hind*. He also translated the Greek work of Euclid into Sanskrit. He transmitted Aryabhata's magnum opus *Aryabattiyam* (the thesis that earth's rotation around its axis creates day and night) to the West. He was the inter-civilizational connect between India and the rest of the world.

## Muhammad Ghori

If Ghaznavid invasions were intended for loot, the Ghurids enlarged their scope to establish garrison towns to ensure the regular flow of plunder and tribute. Muizzuddin Muhammad of the



**Muhammad Ghori**  
(modern representation)

Ghori dynasty, known generally as Muhammad Ghori, invested in territories he seized. Through the 1180s and 1190s Ghori established garrisons in the modern provinces of Punjab, Sind, and Haryana. These centres of military power soon attracted the in-migration of mercenaries in search of opportunities. These mercenaries were recruited to organize fiscal and military affairs of the Sultanate. The Sultan's military commanders in north India were drawn from his elite military class. Specially trained in warfare and governance these slaves were different from agrestic (related to land/field labour) and domestic slaves. Lahore, then Uchch and Multan were initially considered significant centres of power. In 1175 Ghori headed for the city of Multan which he seized from its Ismaili ruler. The fort of Uchch fell without a fight. The Chalukyas of Gujarat inflicted a crushing defeat on Muhammad Ghori at Mt. Abu (1179). After this defeat Ghori changed the course of his expedition, consolidating his position in Sind and the Punjab.

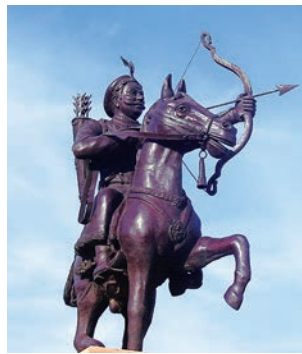
## Prithviraj Chauhan

Ghori attacked the fortress of Tabarhinda (Bhatinda), a strategic point for the Chauhans of Ajmer. The ruler of Ajmer Prithviraj Chauhan marched to Tabarhinda and faced the invader in the First Battle of Tarain (1191). Prithviraj scored a brilliant victory in this battle but failed to consolidate his position believing this battle to be a frontier fight, and did not expect the Ghurids to make regular attacks. Ghori was wounded and carried away by a horseman to safety. Contrary to the expectations of





Prithviraj Chauhan, Muhammad Ghorī marched into India in the following year (1192). Prithviraj underestimated the potential danger of the enemy. In the Second Battle of Tarain, one of the turning points in Indian history, Prithviraj suffered a crushing defeat and was eventually captured. Ghorī restored him to his throne in Ajmer. But on charges of treason he was later executed, and Ghorī's trusted general Qutb-ud-din Aibak was appointed as his deputy in India.



**Prithviraj Chauhan**  
(modern representation)

### Jaya Chandra of Kanauj

Soon Ghorī was back in India to fight against the Kanauj ruler Jaya Chandra. When all Rajput chiefs had stood by Prithviraj in his battles against Muhammad Ghorī, Jaya Chandra stood apart, as there was enmity between Prithviraj and Jaya Chandra, on account of Prithviraj's abduction of Jaya Chandra's daughter Samyukta. So Ghorī easily defeated Jaya Chandra and returned to Ghazni with an enormous booty. On the way while camping on the banks of Indus, he was killed by some unidentified assassins.

### Rajput Kingdoms

By the beginning of the tenth century two powerful Rajput Kingdoms Gurjar Pratihara and Rashtrakutas had lost their power. Tomaras (Delhi), Chauhans (Rajasthan), Solankis (Gujarat), Paramaras (Malwa), Gahadavalas (Kanauj) and Chandelas (Bundelkhand) had become important ruling dynasties of Northern India. Vigraharaja and Prithviraj, two prominent Chauhan rulers, Bhoja of Paramara dynasty, Ghadavala king Jayachandra, Yasovarman, Kirti Varman of Chandelas were all strong in their own regions.

The world famous Khajuraho temple complex consisting of many temples including the Lakshmana temple, Vishwanatha temple and Kandariya Mahadeva temple was built by the Chandelas of Bundelkhand who ruled from Khajuraho.

The Rajputs had a long tradition of martial spirit, courage and bravery. There was little difference between the weapons used by the Turks and the Rajputs. But in regimental discipline and training the Rajputs were lax. In planning their tactics to suit the conditions, the Turks excelled. Moreover, the Turkish cavalry was superior to the Indian cavalry. The Rajput forces depended more on war elephants, which were spectacular but slow moving compared to the Turkish cavalry. The Turkish horsemen had greater mobility and were skilled in mounted archery. This was a definite military advantage which the Turks used well against their enemies and emerged triumphant in the battles.

### Foundation of Delhi Sultanate

#### 10.2 The Slave Dynasty

After the death of Ghorī there were many contenders for power. One was Qutb-ud-din Aibak, who ascended the throne in Delhi with his father-in-law Yildiz remaining a threat to him for the next ten years. The three important rulers of this dynasty are Qutb-ud-din Aibak, Iltutmish and Balban.

The Slave dynasty is also known as the Mamluk dynasty. Mamluk means property. It is also the term for the Arabic designation of a slave.

#### Qutb-ud-din Aibak (1206-1210)

Qutb-ud-din Aibak was enslaved as a boy and sold to Sultan Muhammad Ghorī at Ghazni. Impressed with his ability and loyalty the Sultan elevated him to the rank of viceroy of the conquered provinces in India. Muhammad Bin Bhakthiyar Khalji, a Turkish general from Afghanistan assisted him in conquering Bihar and



Bengal. Qutb-ud-din Aibak reigned for four years (1206 to 1210 CE) and died in 1210 in Lahore in an accident while playing chaugan (Horse polo).

Bhakthiyar Khalji is charged with destroying the glorious Buddhist University of Nalanda in Bihar, who is said to have mistaken it for a military camp! Detailed descriptions of Nalanda is found in the travel accounts of Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang. The manuscripts and texts in the hundreds of thousands in the Nalanda library on subjects such as grammar, logic, literature, astronomy and medicine were lost in the Turkish depredations.

### Iltutmish (1211–1236)

Shams-ud-din Iltutmish (1210-36) of Turkish extraction was a slave of Qutb-ud-din Aibak. Many of his elite slaves were also of Turkish and Mongol ancestry. They were brought to Delhi by merchants from trade centres like Bukhara, Samarqand and Baghdad. (There were some slaves of other ethnicities as well). But Iltutmish gave them all Turkish titles. Iltutmish's reliance on his elite military slaves (*Bandagan*) and his practice of appointing them for the posts of governors and generals in far-off places did not change despite the migration into North India of experienced military commanders from distinguished lineages fleeing from the Mongols.

Shams-ud-din Iltutmish, the slave and son-in-law of Qutb-ud-din Aibak, ascended the throne of Delhi setting aside the claim of Aram Shah, the son of Qutb-ud-din Aibak. During his tenure he put down the internal

rebellions of Rajputs at Gwalior, Ranthambor, Ajmer and Jalore. He overcame the challenge of Nasiruddin Qabacha in Lahore and Multan, and frustrated the conspiracy of Alivardan, the Governor of Bengal. He diplomatically saved India by refusing to support the Khwarizmi Shah Jalaluddin of Central Asia against the Mongol ruler Chengiz Khan. Had he supported Jalaluddin, the Mongols would have overrun India with ease. His reign was remarkable for the completion of Qutb Minar, a colossal victory tower of 243 feet at Delhi, and for the introduction of copper and silver *tanka*, the two basic coins of the Sultanate period.

Since the dynastic traditions of the 'slave regime' were weak, succession to the throne was not smooth after Iltutmish's death. The monarch was succeeded by a son, a daughter (Sultana Razia), another son, and a grandson, all within ten years, and finally by his youngest son Sultan Nasir al-Din Mahmud II (1246–66). Iltutmish's descendants fought long but in vain with their father's military slaves who had been appointed as governors of vast territories and generals of large armies. They constantly interfered in Delhi politics, dictating terms to Iltutmish's successors. Though Iltutmish's royal slaves (*bandagan-i-khas*) were replaced by junior *bandagan*, the latter were not oriented to their master's vision of a paramount, monolithic Sultanate to the same extent as their predecessors.

The slave governors located in the eastern province of Lakhnauti (modern Bengal) and the Punjab and Sind provinces in the west were the first to break free from Delhi. Those in the 'core territories' the regions of Delhi

**Raziya Sultana (1236-1240).** Raziya was daughter of Iltutmish, who ascended the throne after a lot of hurdles put up by the Turkish nobles. According to Ibn Battuta, the Moroccan traveller, 'Raziya rode on horseback as men ride, armed with a bow and quiver, and surrounded by courtiers. She did not veil her face.' Yet Raziya ruled for only three and half years. The elevation of an Abyssinian slave, Jalal-ud-din Yaqut, to the post of Amir-i-Akhur, Master of the Stables, a very high office, angered the Turkish nobles. The nobles overplayed her closeness with Yakut and tried to depose her. Since Raziya enjoyed popular support, they could not do anything in Delhi. But while she was on a punitive campaign against the rebel governor Altuniya in southern Punjab, the conspirators used that occasion to dethrone her.



Bandagan is the plural of banda, literally military slaves. They were graded according to the years of service, proximity and trustworthiness. This trust led to their appointment as governors and military commanders. The Ghurid bandagan in North India were the slaves of Muiz-ud-Din Ghuri. Since these slaves were without a social identity of their own they were given new names by their masters, which included the nisba, which indicated their social or regional identity. Slaves carried the nisba of their master: hence Mu'izz al-Din's slave carried the nisba Mu'izzi and later Sultan Shams-ud-Din Iltutmish's slave were called the Shamsi bandagan.

and its suburbs sought to resist the intervention of Delhi by consolidating their home bases and allied with neighbouring chieftains. After two decades of conflict amongst the Shamsi *bandagan* and successive Delhi Sultans, in 1254, Ulugh Khan, a junior, newly purchased slave in Iltutmish's reign and now the commander of the Shivalikh territories in the North-West, seized Delhi. He took the title of *na'ib-i mulk*, the Deputy of the Realm, seizing the throne as Sultan Ghiyas ud-din Balban in 1266.

### Balban (1266-1287)

The political intrigues of the nobility that destabilised the Delhi Sultanate came to an end with the accession of Balban as the Sultan. Assertion of authority by Balban led to constant military campaigns against defiant governors and against their local allies. Barani mentions Balban's campaigns in the regions surrounding Delhi and in the *doab*. During these campaigns forests were cleared, new roads and forts constructed, the newly deforested lands given to freshly recruited Afghans and others as rent-free lands (*mafruzi*) and brought under cultivation. New forts were constructed to protect trade routes and village markets.

### Balban and the Problem of Law and Order

When Balban took over the reins of power the law and order situation in the Ganga, Jamuna Doab regions had deteriorated badly. The Rajput zamindars had set up forts and defied the orders of the Sultan. Meos, a Muslim community from north-western region, living in the heavily forested region around Mewat

were plundering the area with impunity. Balban took it as a challenge and personally undertook a campaign to destroy the Mewatis. Meos were pursued and slaughtered mercilessly. In the Doab region the Rajput strongholds were destroyed, jungles cleared. Colonies of Afghan soldiers were established throughout the region to safeguard the roads and deal with rebellions.

### Punitive Expedition against Tughril Khan

Balban was ruthless in dealing with rebellions. He appointed one of his favourite slaves, Tughril Khan, as the Governor of Bengal. But Tughril Khan soon became rebellious. Amin Khan, the governor of Oudh, sent by Balban to suppress the rebellion meekly retreated. Enraged by this, Balban sent two more expeditions, which also suffered defeat. Humiliated by these successive reverses, Balban himself proceeded to Bengal. On hearing Balban's approach, Tughril Khan fled. Balban pursued him, first to Lakhnauti and then towards Tripura, where he was captured and beheaded. Bughra Khan, a son of Balban, was thereupon appointed the Governor of Bengal, who carved out an independent kingdom after the death of Balban. He did not claim the Delhi throne even in the midst of a leadership crisis and his son Kaiqubad's indulgence in debauchery.

### Measures against Mongol Threats

Balban used the threat of Mongols as the context to militarise his regime. The frontier regions were strengthened with garrisoning of forts at Bhatinda, Sunam and Samana. At the same time, he took efforts to maintain a good relationship with Hulagu Khan, the Mongol Viceroy of Iran and a grandson of Chengiz Khan.





The term Mongol refers to all Mongolic-speaking nomadic tribes of Central Asia. In the twelfth century, they had established a very large kingdom, which included most of modern-day Russia, China, Korea, south-east Asia, Persia, India, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, under the leadership of Chengiz Khan. Their phenomenal success is attributed to their fast horses and brilliant cavalry tactics, their openness to new technologies, and Chengiz Khan's skill in manipulative politics.

Balban succeeded in obtaining from him the assurance that Mongols would not advance beyond Satluj. Halagu Khan reciprocated this gesture by sending a goodwill mission to Delhi in 1259.



Balban's Tomb (New Delhi)

However, Muhammad Khan, the favourite son of Balban, who was given the charge of governor of Multan to protect the frontiers from Mongol aggression, was killed in an encounter. Saddened by this tragedy, Balban fell ill and died in 1286.

### 10.3 The Khaljis (1290-1320)

#### Jalal-ud-din Khalji (1290-1296)

As Balban's son Kaiqubad was found unfit to rule, his three-year-old son Kaymars was placed on the throne. As there was no unanimity on the choice of a regent and a council to administer the empire, the contending nobles plotted against each other. Out of this chaos a new leader, Malik Jalal-ud-din Khalji, the commander of the army, emerged supreme. While he ruled the kingdom for some time in the name of Kaiqubad, he soon sent one of his officers to get Kaiqubad murdered and Jalal-ud-din formally ascended the throne. However, Jalal-ud-din faced opposition on the ground that he was an Afghan and not a Turk. But Khaljis were indeed Turks settled in Afghanistan before the establishment of Turkish rule and so they were Afghanized Turks. Jalal-ud-din won many battles and even in old age he marched out against the Mongol hordes and successfully halted their entry into India (1292).

Ala-ud-din, a nephew and son-in-law of Jalaluddin Khalji, who was appointed governor of Kara, invaded Malwa and this campaign yielded a huge booty. The success of this campaign stimulated his urge to embark on a campaign to raid Devagiri, the capital city of the Yadava kingdom in Deccan. On his return he arranged to get Jalaluddin Khalji murdered and captured the throne.

#### Ala-ud-din Khalji (1296-1316)

##### *Ala-ud-din and Nobles*

Ala-ud-din spent the first year of his rule in eliminating the enemies and strengthening his position in Delhi. Soon he turned his attention to establishing a firm hold over the nobles. He dismissed several of his top officers. He was particularly severe with the nobles who had shifted loyalty and opportunistically joined him against Jalal-ud-din.



Ala-ud-din Khalji  
(modern representation)

##### *Mongol Threats*

Mongol raids posed a serious challenge to Ala-ud-din. During the second year of his rule (1298), when Mongols stormed Delhi, the army sent by Ala-ud-din succeeded in driving them back. But when they returned the following year with more men, people of the suburbs of Delhi had to flee and take refuge in the city. Ala-ud-din had to meet the problem head-on. In the ensuing battle, Mongols were routed. Yet raids continued until 1305, when they ravaged the doab region. This time, after defeating them, the Sultan's army took a large number of Mongols as prisoners and slaughtered them mercilessly. But the Mongol menace continued. The last major Mongol incursion took place in 1307-08.





Attack of Mongols

## Military Campaigns

The inability of the Sultanate to effectively harness the agrarian resources of its North Indian territories to sustain its political ambitions was evident in its relentless military campaigns in search of loot and plunder. Ala-ud-din's campaigns into Devagiri (1296, 1307, 1314), Gujarat (1299–1300), Ranthambhor (1301), Chittor (1303) and Malwa (1305) were meant to proclaim his political and military power as well as to collect loot from the defeated kingdoms. It was with the same plan that he unleashed his forces into the Deccan. The first target in the peninsula was Devagiri in the western Deccan. Ala-ud-din sent a large army commanded by

Malik Kafur in 1307 to capture Devagiri fort. Following Devagiri, Prataparudradeva, the Kakatiya ruler of Warangal in the Telengana region, was defeated in 1309. In 1310 the Hoysala ruler Vira Ballala III surrendered all his treasures to the Delhi forces.

Malik Kafur then set out for the Tamil country. Though Kafur's progress was obstructed by heavy rains and floods, he continued his southward journey, plundering and ravaging the temple cities of Chidambaram and Srirangam as well as the Pandyan capital Madurai. Muslims in Tamil provinces fought on the side of the Pandyas against Malik Kafur. Malik Kafur returned to Delhi with an enormous booty in 1311.

## Ala-ud-din's Internal Reforms

The vast annexation of territories was followed by extensive administrative reforms aimed at stabilising the government. Ala-ud-din's first measure was to deprive the nobles of the wealth they had accumulated. It had provided them the leisure and means to hatch conspiracies against the Sultan. Marriage alliances between families of noble men were permitted only with the consent of the Sultan. The Sultan ordered that villages held by proprietary right, as free

### The Forty System (Chahalgani)

The nobles occupied a position next only to the king in status and rank. Enjoying high social status and commanding vast resources they at times became strong enough to challenge the king. In the Delhi Sultanate, nobles were drawn from different tribes and nationalities like the Turkish, Persian, Arabic, Egyptian and Indian Muslims. Iltutmish organized a Corps of Forty, all drawn from Turkish nobility and selected persons from this Forty for appointments in military and civil administration. The Corps of Forty became so powerful to the extent of disregarding the wishes of Iltutmish, and after his death, to place Rukn-ud-Din Firoz on the throne. Razziya sought to counter the influence of Turkish nobles and defend her interest by organizing a group of non-Turkish and Indian Muslim nobles under the leadership of Yakut, the Abyssinian slave. This was naturally resented by the Turkish nobles, who got both of them murdered. Thus in the absence of rule of primogeniture, the nobles sided with any claimants to the throne and either helped in the choice of the Sultan or contributed to the de-stabilization of the regime. The nobles were organized into several factions and were constantly engaged in conspiracies. Balban therefore abolished the Corps of Forty and thereby put an end to the domination of "Turkish nobles". Alauddin Khalji also took stern measures against the "Turkish nobles" by employing spies to report to him directly on their clandestine and perfidious activities.

gift, or as a religious endowment be brought back under the royal authority and control. He curbed the powers of the traditional village officers by depriving them of their traditional privileges. Corrupt royal officials were dealt with sternly. The Sultan prohibited liquor and banned the use of intoxicating drugs. Gambling was forbidden and gamblers were driven out of the city. However, the widespread violations of prohibition rules eventually forced the Sultan to relax the restrictions.



Copper coin of Ala-ud-din Khalji

Ala-ud-din collected land taxes directly from the cultivators. The village headman who traditionally enjoyed the right to collect them was now deprived of it. The tax pressure of Ala-ud-din was on the rich and not on the poor. Ala-ud-din set up the postal system to keep in touch with all parts of his sprawling empire.

### Sultan's Market Reforms

Ala-ud-din was the first Sultan to pay his soldiers in cash rather than give them a share of booty. As the soldiers were paid less, the prices had to be monitored and controlled. Moreover, Ala-ud-din had to maintain a huge standing army. In order to restrict prices of essential commodities, Ala-ud-din set up an elaborate intelligence network to collect information on black-marketing and hoarding. The transactions in the bazaars, the buying and selling and the bargains made were all reported to the Sultan by his spies. Market superintendents, reporters and spies had to send daily reports on the prices of essential commodities. Violators of the price regulations were severely punished. If any deficiency in weight was found, an equal weight of flesh was cut from the seller's body and thrown down before his eyes!

### Ala-ud-din's Successors

Ala-ud-din nominated his eldest son Khizr Khan, as his successor. However, Ala-ud-din's confidant at that time was Malik Kafur. So Malik Kafur himself assumed the authority of the government. But Kafur's rule lasted only thirty-five days as he was assassinated by hostile nobles. Thereafter there were a series of murders which culminated in Ghazi Malik, a veteran of several campaigns against the Mongols, ascending the throne of Delhi in 1320 as Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. He murdered the incumbent Khalji ruler Khusrau and thereby prevented anyone from Khalji dynasty claiming the throne. Thus began the rule of the Tughlaq Dynasty, which lasted until 1414.



Ala-ud-din's Tomb (New Delhi)

## 10.4 The Tughlaq Dynasty

### Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq (1320–1325)

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq followed a policy of reconciliation with the nobles. But in the fifth year of his reign (1325) Ghiyas-ud-din died. Three days later Jauna Khan ascended the throne and took the title Muhammad bin Tughlaq.

### Muhammad Bin Tughlaq (1325-1351)

Muhammad Tughlaq was a learned, cultured and talented prince but gained a reputation of being merciless, cruel and unjust. Muhammad Tughlaq effectively repulsed the Mongol army that had marched up to Meerut near Delhi. Muhammad was an innovator. But

he, unlike Ala-ud-din, lacked the will to execute his plans successfully.

### Transfer of Capital

Muhammad Tughlaq's attempt to shift the capital from Delhi to Devagiri in Maharashtra, which he named Daulatabad, was a bold initiative. This was after his realization that it was difficult to rule south India from Delhi. Centrally located, Devagiri also had the advantage of possessing a strong fort atop a rocky hill. Counting on the military and political advantages, the Sultan ordered important officers and leading men including many Sufi saints to shift to Devagiri. However, the plan failed, and soon Muhammad realised that it was difficult to rule North India from Daulatabad. He again ordered transfer of capital back to Delhi.

### Token Currency



Tughlaq's Coins

The next important experiment of Muhammad was the introduction of token currency. This currency system had already been experimented in China and Iran. For India it was much ahead of its time, given that it was a time when coins were based on silver content. When Muhammad issued bronze coins, fake coins were minted which could not be prevented by the government. The new coins were devalued to such an extent that the







government had to withdraw the bronze coins and replace them with silver coins, which told heavily on the resources of the empire.

### Sultan's Other Innovative Measures

Equally innovative was Muhammad Tughlaq's scheme to expand cultivation. But it also failed miserably. It coincided with a prolonged and severe famine in the Doab. The peasants who rebelled were harshly dealt with. The famine was linked to the oppressive and arbitrary collection of land revenue. The Sultan established a separate department (*Diwan-i-Amir Kohi*) to take care of agriculture. Loans were advanced to farmers for purchase of cattle, seeds and digging of wells but to no avail. Officers appointed to monitor the crops were not efficient; the nobility and important officials were of diverse background. Besides, the Sultan's temperament had also earned him a lot of enemies.

Ala-ud-din Khalji had not annexed distant territories knowing full well that they could not be effectively governed. He preferred to establish his suzerainty over them. But Muhammad annexed all the lands he conquered. Therefore, at the end of his reign, while he faced a series of rebellions, his repressive measures further alienated his subjects. Distant regions like Bengal, Madurai, Warangal, Awadh, Gujarat and Sind hoisted the flags of rebellion and the Sultan spent his last days fighting rebels. While he was frantically engaged in pursuing a rebel leader in Gujarat, he fell ill, and died at the end of his 26<sup>th</sup> regnal year (1351).

### Firuz Shah Tughlaq (1351–1388)

Firuz's father, Rajab, was the younger brother of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq. Both had come from Khurasan during the reign of Ala-ud-din Khalji. Rajab who had married a Jat princess had died when Firuz was seven years old. When Ghiyas-ud-din ascended the throne, he gave Firuz command of a 12,000 strong cavalry force. Later Firuz was made in charge of one of the four divisions of the Sultanate.

Muhammad bin Tughlaq died without naming his successor. The claim made by Muhammad's sister to his son was not supported by the nobles. His son, recommended by Muhammad's friend Khan-i Jahan, was a mere child. Under such circumstances, Firuz ascended the throne.

The vizier of Firuz Tughlaq, the famous Khan-i Jahan, was a Brahmin convert to Islam. Originally known as Kannu, he was captured during the Sultanate campaigns in Warangal (present-day Telangana).

### Conciliatory Policy towards Nobles

Firuz Tughlaq followed a conciliatory policy towards the nobles and theologians. Firuz restored the property of the owners who had been deprived of it during the reign of Muhammad Tughlaq. He reintroduced the system of hereditary appointments to offices, a practice which was not favoured by Ala-ud-din Khalji. The Sultan increased the salaries of government officials. While toning up the revenue administration, he reduced several taxes. He abolished many varieties of torture employed by his predecessor. Firuz had a genuine concern for the slaves and established a separate government department to attend to their welfare. The slave department took care of the wellbeing of 180,000 slaves. They were trained in handicrafts and employed in the royal workshops.

### Firuz Policy of No Wars

Firuz waged no wars of annexation, though he was not averse to putting down rebellions challenging his authority. There were only two Mongol incursions during his times, and both of them were successfully repulsed. His Bengal campaign to put down a rebellion there, however, was an exception. His army slew thousands and his entry into Odisha on his way helped him extract the promise of tribute from the Raja. A major military campaign of his period was against Sind (1362). He succeeded in routing the enemies on the way. Yet his



enemies and a famine that broke out during this period gave Sultan and his army a trying time. Firuz's army, however, managed to reach Sind. The ruler of Sind agreed to surrender and pay tribute to the Sultan.

### Religious Policy

Firuz favoured orthodox Islam. He proclaimed his state to be an Islamic state largely to satisfy the theologians. Heretics were persecuted, and practices considered un-Islamic were banned. He imposed jizya, a head tax on non-Muslims, which even the Brahmins were compelled to pay. Yet Firuz did not prohibit the building of new Hindu temples and shrines. His cultural interest led to translation of many Sanskrit works relating to religion, medicine and music. As an accomplished scholar himself, Firuz was a liberal patron of the learned including non-Islamic scholars. Fond of music, he is credited with establishing several educational institutions and a number of mosques, palaces and forts.

Jizya is a tax levied and collected per head by Islamic states on non-Muslim subjects living in their land. In India, Qutb-ud-din Aibak imposed jizya on non-Muslims for the first time. Jizya was abolished by the Mughal ruler Akbar in 16th century but was re-introduced by Aurangzeb in the 17th century.

### Public Works

Firuz undertook many irrigation projects. A canal he dug from Sutlej river to Hansi and another canal in Jumna indicate his sound policy of public works development.

Firuz died in 1388, after making his son Fath Khan and grandson Ghiyas-ud-din as joint rulers of Delhi Sultanate.

The principle of heredity permitted for the nobles and applied to the army weakened the Delhi Sultanate. The nobility that had regained power got involved in political intrigues which undermined the stability of the Sultanate. Within six years of Firuz Tughlaq's death four rulers succeeded him.



Firuz Tughlaq's Tomb

### Timur's Invasion

The last Tughlaq ruler was Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah (1394–1412), whose reign witnessed the invasion of Timur from Central Asia. Turkish Timur, who could claim a blood relationship with the 12<sup>th</sup> century great Mongol Chengiz Khan, ransacked Delhi virtually without any opposition. On hearing the news of arrival of Timur, Sultan Nasir-ud-din fled Delhi. Timur also took Indian artisans such as masons, stone cutters, carpenters whom he engaged for raising buildings in his capital Samarkhand. Nasir-ud-din managed to rule up to 1412. Then the Sayyid and Lodi dynasties ruled the declining empire from Delhi till 1526.



Timur

## 10.5 Sayyid Dynasty (1414–1451)

Timur appointed Khizr Khan as his deputy to oversee Timurid interests in the Punjab marches. Khizr Khan (1414–21) went on to seize Delhi and establish the Sayyid dynasty (1414–51). The Sayyid dynasty established by Khizr Khan had four sultans ruling up to 1451. The early Sayyid Sultans ruled paying tribute to Timur's son. Their rule is marked for the composing of *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* by Yahya bin Ahmad Sirhindi. By the end of their rule the empire was largely confined to the city of Delhi.



In the entire history of the Delhi Sultanate there was only one Sultan who voluntarily abdicated his throne and moved to a small town away from Delhi, where he lived for three full decades in contentment and peace. He was Alam Shah of the Sayyid dynasty. – Abraham Eraly, *The Age of Wrath*.

## 10.6 Lodi Dynasty (1451–1526)

The Lodi Dynasty was established by Bahlul Lodi (1451–1489) whose reign witnessed the conquest of Sharqi Kingdom (Bengal). It was his son Sikander Lodi (1489–1517) who shifted the capital from Delhi to Agra in 1504. The last Lodi ruler Ibrahim Lodi was defeated by Babur in the First Battle of Panipat (1526), which resulted in the establishment of Mughal Dynasty.



Ibrahim Lodi  
(modern representation)

## 10.7 Administration of the Sultanate

### State and Society

The Sultanate was formally considered to be an Islamic State. Most of the Sultans preferred to call themselves the lieutenant of the Caliph. In reality, however, the Sultans were the supreme political heads. As military head, they wielded the authority of commander-in-chief of the armed forces. As judicial head they were the highest court of appeal. Balban claimed that he ruled as the representative of god on earth. Ala-ud-din Khalji claimed absolute power saying he did not care for theological prescriptions, but did what was essential for the good of the state and the benefit of the people.

The Delhi Sultanate deserves to be considered an all-India empire. Virtually all of India, except Kashmir and Kerala at the far ends of the subcontinent, and a few small tracts in between them had come under the direct rule of Delhi towards the close of Muhammad bin Tughlaq's rule. There were no well-defined and accepted rules of royal succession and therefore contested succession became the norm during the Sultanate. The Sultans required the holders of *iqta's* (called *muqtis* or *walis*) to maintain troops for royal service out of the taxes collected by them. Certain areas were retained by the Sultans under their direct control (*khalisa*). It was out of the revenue collected from such areas that they paid the officers and soldiers of the sultan's own troops (*hashm-i qalb*).

The territorial expansion was matched by an expansion of fiscal resources. The tax rent (set at half the value of the produce) was rigorously sought to be imposed over a very large area. The fiscal claims of hereditary intermediaries (now called *chaudhuris*) and the village headmen (*khots*) were drastically curtailed. The continuous pressure for larger tax-realization provoked a severe agrarian uprising, notably in the Doab near Delhi (1332–34). These and an ensuing famine persuaded Muhammad Tughlaq to resort to a scheme of agricultural development, in the Delhi area and the Doab, based on the supply of credit to the peasants.

Military campaigns, the dishoarding of wealth, the clearing of forests, the vitality of inter-regional trade – all of these developments encouraged a great movement of people, created a vast network of intellectuals and the religious-minded. These factors also made social hierarchies and settlements in the Sultanate garrison towns and their strongholds far more complex. Through the fourteenth century the Sultanate sought to control its increasingly diverse population through its provincial governors, *muqti*, but considerable local initiative and resources available to these personnel, and their propensity to ally with local political groups meant that they could



often only be controlled fitfully and for a short period, even by autocratic, aggressive monarchs like Muhammad Tughlaq.

The Turko-Afghan political conquests were followed by large-scale Muslim social migrations from Central Asia. India was seen as a land of opportunity. The society in all stages was based on privileges with the higher classes enjoying a better socio-economic life with little regard of one's religion. The Sultans and the nobles were the most important privileged class who enjoyed a lifestyle of high standard in comparison to their contemporary rulers all over the world. The nobility was initially composed of the Turks, Afghans, Iranians and Indian Muslims were excluded from the nobility for a very long time.

The personal status of an individual in Islam depended solely on one's abilities and achievements, not on one's birth. So, once converted to Islam, everyone was treated as equal to everyone in the society.

## Religion

Unlike Hindus who worshiped different deities, these migrants followed monotheism. They also adhered to one basic set of beliefs and practices. Though a monotheistic trend in Hinduism had long existed, as, for example in the Bhagavad Gita, as noted by Al-Beruni, its proximity to Islam did help to move monotheism from periphery to the centre. In the thirteenth century, the Virashaiva or Lingayat sect of Karnataka founded by Basava believed in one God (Parashiva). Caste distinctions were denied, women given a better status, and Brahmans could no longer monopolise priesthood. A parallel, but less significant, movement in Tamil Nadu was in the compositions of the Siddhars, who sang in Tamil of one God, and criticised caste, Brahmans and the doctrine of transmigration of souls. Two little known



Al-Beruni

figures who played a part in transmitting the southern Bhakti and monotheism to Northern India were Namdev of Maharashtra, a rigorous monotheist who opposed image worship and caste distinctions and Ramanand, a follower of Ramanuja.

An important aspect of Islam in India was its early acceptance of a long-term coexistence with Hinduism, despite all the violence that occurred in military campaigns, conquests and depredations. The conqueror Mu'izzuddin of Ghor had, on some of his gold coins, stamped the image of the goddess Lakshmi. Muhammad Tughlaq in 1325 issued a farman enjoining that protection be extended by all officers to Jain priests; he himself played holi and consorted with yogis.

The historian Barani noted with some bitterness how 'the kings of Islam' showed respect to 'Hindus, Mongols, Polytheists and infidels,' by making them sit on masnad (cushions) and by honouring them in other ways, and how the Hindus upon paying taxes (jiziya-o-kharaj) were allowed to have their temples and celebrations, employ Muslim servants, and flaunt their titles (Rai, Rana, Thakur, Sah, Mahta, Pandit, etc), right in the capital seats of Muslim rulers.

## Economy

The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate was, however, accompanied by some important economic changes. One such change was the payment of land tax to the level of rent in cash. Because of this, food-grains and other rural products were drawn to the towns, thereby leading to a new phase of urban growth. In the fourteenth century, Delhi and Daulatabad (Devagiri) emerged as great cities of the world. There were other large towns such as Multan, Kara, Awadh, Gaur, Cambay (Khambayat) and Gulbarga.

The Delhi Sultans began their gold and silver mintage alongside copper from early in the thirteenth century and that indicated brisk





commerce. Despite the Mongol conquests of the western borderlands, in Irfan Habib's view, India's external trade, both overland and oceanic, grew considerably during this period.

### Trade and Urbanization

The establishment of the Delhi Sultanate revived internal trade, stimulated by the insatiable demand for luxury goods by the sultans and nobles. Gold coins, rarely issued in India after the collapse of the Gupta Empire, began to appear once again, indicating the revival of Indian economy. However, there is no evidence of the existence of trade guilds, which had played a crucial role in the economy in the classical age. The Sultanate was driven by an urban economy encompassing many important towns and cities. Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Kara, Lakhnauti, Anhilwara, Cambay and Daulatabad were the important cities that thrived on the mercantile activities of Jain Marwaris, Hindu Multanis and Muslim Bohras, Khurasanis, Afghans and Iranians. The import-export trade flourished well both through overland and overseas. While the Gujaratis and Tamils dominated the sea trade, the Hindu Multanis and Muslim Khurasanis, Afghans and Iranians dominated the overland trade with Central Asia.

### Industrial Expertise

Paper-making technology evolved by the Chinese and learnt by the Arabs was introduced in India during the rule of the Delhi Sultans. The spinning wheel invented by the Chinese came to India through Iran in the fourteenth century and enabled the spinner to increase her output some six-fold and enlarged yarn production greatly. The subsequent introduction of treadles in the loom similarly helped speed-up weaving. Sericulture centre was established in Bengal by the fifteenth century. Building activity attained a new scale by the large use of brick and mortar, and by the adoption of the vaulting techniques.

### Education

Certain traditions of education were now implanted from the Islamic World. At the base was the *maktab*, where a schoolmaster taught

children to read and write. At a higher level, important texts in various subjects were read by individual pupils with particular scholars who gave instruction (*dars*) in them. A more institutionalised form of higher education, the *madrasa*, became widely established in Central Asia and Iran in the eleventh century, and from there it spread to other Islamic countries. Usually the *madrasa* had a building, where instruction was given by individual teachers. Often there was a provision of some cells for resident students, a library and a mosque. Firoz Tugluq built a large *madrasa* at Delhi whose splendid building still stands. From Barani's description it would seem that teaching here was mainly confined to "Quran-commentary, the Prophet's sayings and the Muslim Law (*fiqh*).” It is said that Sikander Lodi(1489–1517) appointed teachers in *maktabs* and *madrasas* in various cities throughout his dominions, presumably making provision for them through land or cash grants.

### Historiography

In addition to secular sciences that came with Arabic and Persian learning to India, one more notable addition was systematic historiography. The collection of witnesses' narratives and documents that the *Chachnama* (thirteenth-century Persian translation of a ninth-century Arabic original), in its account of the Arab conquest of Sind, represents advancement in historical research, notwithstanding the absence of coherence and logical order of latter-day historiography like Minhaj Siraj's *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, written at Delhi c. 1260.

### Sufism

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, two most influential orders emerged among the *sufis*: the Suhrawardi, centred at Multan, and the Chisti at Delhi and other places. The most famous Chishti Saint, Shaik Nizamuddin offered a classical exposition of Sufism of pre-pantheistic phase in the conversations (1307–1322). Sufism began to turn pantheistic only when the ideas of Ibn al-Arabi (died 1240)





began to gain influence, first through the Persian poetry of Jalal-ud-din Rumi(1207–1273) and Abdur Rahman Jami (1414–1492), and, then, through the endeavours within India of Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (early fifteenth century). Significantly this wave of qualified pantheism began to dominate Indian Islamic thought about the same time that the pantheism of Sankaracharya's school of thought was attaining increasing influence within Vedic thought.

**Caliph/Caliphate** : Considered to be the successor of Prophet Muhammad, the Caliph wielded authority over civil and religious affairs of the entire Islamic world. The Caliph ruled Baghdad until it fell before Mongols in 1258. The Caliphs then ruled in Egypt until the conquest of Ottomans in 1516-17. Thereupon the title was held by Ottoman Sultans. The office of Caliph (Caliphate) ended when Ottoman Empire was abolished and Turkish Republic established by Mushtafa Kemal Attaturk in the 1920s.

## Caste and Women

The Sultans did not alter many of the social institutions inherited from 'Indian Feudalism'.

Slavery, though it had already existed in India, grew substantially in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Both in war and in the event of default in payment of taxes, people could be enslaved. They were put to work as domestic servants as well as in crafts. The village community and the caste system remained largely unaltered. Gender inequalities remained practically untouched. In upper class Muslim society, women had to observe *purdah* and were secluded in the *zenana* (the female quarters) without any contact with any men other than their immediate family. Affluent women travelled in closed litters.

However, Muslim women, despite *purdah*, enjoyed, in certain respects, higher status and greater freedom in society than most Hindu women. They could inherit property from their parents and obtain divorce, privileges that

Hindu women did not have. In several Hindu communities, such as among the Rajputs, the birth of a girl child was considered a misfortune. Islam was not against women being taught to read and write. But it tolerated polygamy.

Sultan Firoz Tughlaq was reputed to possess 180,000 slaves, of which 12,000 worked as artisans. His principal minister, Khan Jahan Maqbul possessed over 2000 women slaves.

## Evolution of Syncretic Culture

The interaction of the Turks with the Indians had its influence in architecture, fine arts and literature.

### Architecture

Arch, dome, vaults and use of lime cement, the striking Saracenic features, were introduced in India. The use of marble, red, grey and yellow sandstones added grandeur to the buildings. In the beginning the Sultans converted the existing buildings to suit their needs. Qutb-ud-din Aibak's Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque situated adjacent to Qutb Minar in Delhi and the Adhai din ka Jhopra in Ajmer illustrate these examples. A Hindu temple built over a Jain temple was modified into Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque. Adhai din ka Jhopra was earlier a Jain monastery before being converted as a mosque.

With the arrival of artisans from West Asia the arch and dome began to show up with precision and perfection. Gradually local artisans also acquired the skill. The tomb of Balban was adorned with the first true arch and the Alai Darwaza built by Ala-ud-din Khalji



Alai Darwaza



Qutb Minar, originally a 72.5 metre tower when completed by Iltutmish, was increased to 74 metres by the repairs carried out by Firuz Shah Tughlaq. The Minar is facilitated by 379 steps and it is magnificent for the height, balconies projecting out marking the storeys, the gradual sloping of the tower and the angular flutings creating a ribbed effect around the tower.



as a gateway to the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque is adorned with the first true dome. The palace fortress built by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq and Muhammad bin Tughlaq in Tughlaqabad, their capital city in Delhi, is remarkable for creating an artificial lake around the fortress by blocking the river Yamuna. The tomb of Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq introduced the system of sloping walls bearing the dome on a raised platform. The buildings of Firuz Tughlaq, especially his pleasure resort, Hauz Khas, combined Indian and Saracenic features in alternate storeys, displaying a sense of integration.

### Sculpture and Painting

Orthodox Islamic theology considered decorating the buildings with animal and human figures as un-Islamic. Hence the plastic exuberance of well-carved images found in the pre-Islamic buildings was replaced by floral and geometrical designs. Arabesque, the art of decorating the building with Quranic verses inscribed with calligraphy, emerged to provide splendour to the building.

### Music and Dance

Music was an area where the syncretic tendencies were clearly visible. Muslims brought their musical instruments like Rabab and Sarangi. Amir Khusrau proclaimed that Indian music had a pre-eminence over all the other music of the world. The Sufi practice of Sama, recitation of love poetry to the accompaniment of music, was instrumental in promotion of music. Pir Bhodan, a Sufi saint, was considered a great musician of the age. Royal patronage for the growth of music was also forthcoming. Firuz Tughlaq evinced interest in music leading to synchronisation by translating an Indian Sanskrit musical work *Rag Darpan* into Persian. Dancing also

received an impetus in the official court. Zia-ud-din Barani lists the names of Nusrat Khatun and Mihr Afroz as musician and dancer respectively in the court of Jalaluddin Khalji.

### Literature

Amir Khusrau emerged as a major figure of Persian prose and poetry. Amir Khusrau felt elated to call himself an Indian in his *Nu Siphir* ('Nine Skies'). In this work, he praises India's climate, its languages – notably Sanskrit – its arts, its music, its people,



Amir Khusrau  
(modern representation)

even its animals. The Islamic Sufi saints made a deep literary impact. The *Fawa'id-ul-Fawad*, a work containing the conversations of Sufi Saint Nizam-ud-din Auliya was compiled by Amir Hassan. A strong school of historical writing emerged with the writings of Zia-ud-din Barani, Shams-ud-din Siraj Afif and Abdul Malik Isami. Zia-ud-din Barani, emerged as a master of Persian prose. Abdul Malik Isami, in his poetic composition of *Futuh-us-Salatin*, records the history of Muslim rule from Ghaznavid period to Muhammad bin Tughlaq's reign.

Persian literature was enriched by the translation of Sanskrit works. Persian dictionaries with appropriate Hindawi words for Persian words were composed, the most important being *Farhang-i-Qawas* by Fakhr-ud-din Qawwas and *Miftah-ul-Fuazala* by Muhammad Shadiabadi. *Tuti Namah*, the Book of Parrots, is a collection of Sanskrit stories translated into Persian by Zia Nakshabi. Mahabharata and Rajatarangini were also translated into Persian.



Delhi Sultanate did not hamper the progress of Sanskrit Literature. Sanskrit continued to be the language of high intellectual thought. The Sanskrit schools and academies established in different parts of the empire continued to flourish. The classical Sanskrit inscription (Palam Baoli) of 1276 in Delhi claims that due to the benign rule of Sultan Balban god Vishnu sleeps in peace in the ocean of milk without any worries. The influence of Arabic and Persian on Sanskrit literature was felt in the form of translations. Shrivara in his Sanskrit work *Kathakautuka* included the story of Yusuf and Zulaika as a Sanskrit love lyric. Bhattavartar took Firdausi's *Shah Namah* as a model for composing *Zainavilas*, a history of the rulers of Kashmir.

## SUMMARY

- Muhammad Bin Qasim's expedition against Sind in 712.
- The first three decades of the 11<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the military raids of Mahmud of Ghazni whose intention was to loot and plunder.
- Muhammad Ghori's invasion by the end of 12<sup>th</sup> century led to the establishment of Delhi Sultanate in 1206 under Qutb-ud-din Aibak.
- Rajput rulers lost their supremacy in the beginning of 13<sup>th</sup> century in the face of superior military tactics.
- The contributions of five dynasties that constituted the Delhi Sultanate focusing on important rulers of Slave, Khalji and Tughlaq dynasties.
- Ala-ud-din Khalji's several radical military and market reforms
- Muhammad bin Tughlaq's innovative measures that were far ahead of his time and their fallout.
- Firuz Tughlaq's reforms and measures which earned him the goodwill of the people.
- A cultural syncretism and reciprocal influence in the fields of literature, art, music and architecture.



## EXERCISE



### I. Choose the Correct Answer

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was the ruler of Sind when the Arabs invaded it in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.  
(a) Hajjaj  
(b) Muhammad-Bin-Qasim  
(c) Jaya Simha  
(d) Dahar
2. Mahmud of Ghazni conducted as many as \_\_\_\_\_ military campaigns into India.  
(a) 15 (b) 17 (c) 18 (d) 19
3. The Palam Baoli inscription is in \_\_\_\_\_ language  
(a) Sanskrit (b) Persian  
(c) Arabic (d) Urdu
4. The world famous Khajuraho temple was built by \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Rashtrakutas (b) Tomaras  
(c) Chandelas (d) Paramaras
5. Mamluk is the term for the Arabic designation of a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Slave (b) King  
(c) Queen (d) Soldier
6. Ibn Batuta was a traveller from \_\_\_\_\_.  
(a) Morocco (b) Persia  
(c) Turkey (d) China
7. \_\_\_\_\_ was the only Sultan who resigned kingship and lived away from Delhi for three decades in peace.  
(a) Mubarak Shah (b) Alam Shah  
(c) Kizir Khan (d) Tugril Khan
8. Match and choose the correct answer  
(A) Ramachandra 1. Kakatiya  
(B) Khan-i-Jahan 2. Padmavati  
(C) Malik Muhammad Jaisi 3. Man Singh  
(D) Man Mandir 4. Devagiri  
(a) 2, 1, 4, 3 (b) 1, 2, 3, 4  
(c) 4, 1, 2, 3 (d) 3, 1, 2, 4

## II. Write brief answers

1. Mahmud becoming the ruler of Ghazni.
2. Scholars patronized by Mahmud of Ghazni.
3. Important ruling Rajput dynasties of Northern India during the Turkish invasion.
4. Forty System.
5. Musical instruments brought by Muslim musicians.

## III. Write short answers

1. Describe the immediate cause for the military expeditions of Muhammad-bin-Qasim?
2. What were the reasons for the military raids of Mahmud of Ghazni in India?
3. Why was Razia Sultana thrown out of power?
4. Write briefly about the south Indian campaigns of Malik Kafur.
5. What were the causes for the failure of the experiments of Muhammad Tughlaq?

## IV. Answer the following in detail

1. Mahmud Ghazni's plundering raids were more of political and economic character than of religious chauvinism. Elaborate
2. How did the Second Battle of Tarain prove to be a turning point in Indian History?

3. Compare and contrast Mahmud Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor.
4. Discuss the economic reforms of Ala-ud-din Khalji.
5. Estimate the rule of Firuz Tughlaq.
6. Give an account of the administrative system of the Delhi Sultanate.

## Activity

1. Preparing an album with pictures and images of Sultans and the monuments they left behind.
2. Enact a drama on Pirithiviraj, Samyukta episode.



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## A-Z GLOSSARY

<b>chauvinism</b>	aggressive support to one's own group or creed	குறுகிய நோக்குடைய தேசியவாதம்
<b>investiture</b>	ceremony to install someone in authority or office	சடங்குகள் செய்து பதவியில் அமர்த்துதல்
<b>magnum opus</b>	a great work of literature, history or art	தலைசிறந்த கலைப் படைப்பு
<b>treacherous</b>	unreliable, betraying	துரோக
<b>intrigue</b>	plotting to do something illegal or harmful	சதி
<b>conciliatory</b>	willing to accept mediation in a dispute	இணக்கத்தை ஏற்கும்
<b>exuberance</b>	liveliness	உயிர்ப்பு மிக்க
<b>punitive</b>	punishing	தண்டிக்கிற
<b>garrison</b>	troops stationed in a fortress	கோட்டைக் காவற்படை
<b>collision</b>	clash or conflict	மோதல்
<b>incursion</b>	invasion	திடீர் படை யெடுப்பு